

UNITED WISDOM

When parenting ceases to be the centre of life

Meaning and Direction

Andrey Zarinsh & Maria Evilkut

P-13-N03 · EN

@andrey.zarinsh @ilkutki

When parenting ceases to be the centre of life

Epigraph

> *“For they have their own thoughts.”*

— Kahlil Gibran, The Prophet, On Children; exact sentence in the 1923 English text displayed by Project Gutenberg.

What this article is about

When an adult child has a day of their own, familiar parental activity may change before a new personal rhythm appears. This essay considers parenting’s changing function as the principal organiser of daily life, distinguishing a family bond, care, and authority to decide for another. An invented scene involving Irina and her adult daughter explores a particular weekend, an offer of assistance, a conversation, and available time. Gibran’s poetic speech, the Gospel account of twelve-year-old Jesus, and Buddhist instruction to Sigala retain distinct grounds rather than forming a common family schedule. No single transition age or immediate new mission is prescribed. Continuing needs and limits deserve separate attention. The voluntary concluding exercise clarifies one changed question without rating an entire family history or promising an established result.

I. A space has opened in the calendar

Imagine Irina, whose adult daughter has been living elsewhere for several months. This is an invented scene, not an account of a researched family. On Saturday Irina habitually buys food for two, then notices a message: her daughter has arranged to meet friends. There has been no quarrel and no announced break. Yet the familiar sequence of actions no longer assembles itself. Questions about weekends once almost always included lunch together, a journey, washing, or a small request. A space has now appeared in the calendar without acquiring another purpose. Irina wants to understand this change before making it evidence of her own uselessness or a complaint against her daughter. One familiar arrangement has changed; their entire shared history has not been explained by that fact.

The title needs clarification. Parenting itself, and certainly a family relationship, need not be ending. What may end is its function as the principal organiser of daily life: the centre around which hours, conversations, plans, and a sense of being needed were arranged. This change takes different forms. Some responsibilities remain for a long time, some alter, and others

@andrey.zarinsh @ilkutki

really do finish. We are discussing a parent and an adult child, not withdrawing care from a minor. There is no single age, distance between homes, or number of calls that establishes a correct transition. First name a particular function that has changed; only then ask what this change means to the person whose day was organised around it.

When Irina says she is no longer needed, the words may join several questions. Is lunch needed today? Would her daughter like to meet? Is there still room for conversation? What does Irina herself want to do? One negative answer does not settle the others. Lunch may be unnecessary this Saturday, a meeting welcome next week, and a new interest of Irina's still absent altogether. Separating questions does not require her to feel relieved. It gives her account a sufficiently precise subject. She can miss the previous arrangement without making another person responsible for immediately restoring the whole pattern. She can also acknowledge an awkward new Saturday without declaring her earlier care wasted or demanding a final explanation of the relationship.

II. The relationship exceeds its former function

A daily function can be more visible than a relationship because it is easier to list. Driving, reminding, checking, buying, and waiting are actions with recognisable times and results. When some are no longer required, their absence is immediately apparent. Another form of closeness may be less defined: hearing a story, sharing an interest, inviting someone for a walk, or offering advice that need not be accepted. It may occupy fewer hours and does not have to prove its value through an equal workload. Irina needs to distinguish an ongoing bond from restoration of her own busyness. Her daughter may love her without supplying the former number of tasks. A mother can remain part of a relationship without directing each of the other person's next steps.

This distinction becomes difficult when gratitude has habitually been recognised through requests for help. An adult child's independent action can then seem to reject a parent's contribution. Remembering assistance and needing it repeatedly are nevertheless different. Someone may remember who taught them to cook and cook alone, or value support in choosing a profession and later reconsider their work. Earlier contribution remains part of a history rather than a continuing right to determine the future. Nor does an adult child have to reject everything received in order to express a present choice. A conversation about a particular change can retain both sides: acknowledging what was done and clarifying what should no longer count as a current task or permission to act on someone else's behalf.

Irina is not obliged to master a new form of relationship in one conversation. Perhaps the first exchange will only establish whether she should buy food for their next meeting. That is enough for one arrangement, although insufficient for an entire life. Her daughter does not immediately have to provide a new meaning for her mother in order to spend Saturday

differently. A meeting can be arranged while a larger question remains open. Such incompleteness may appear inadequate to the scale of the change, yet it prevents an ordinary request from becoming an examination of love. An answer about groceries concerns groceries. A more personal conversation has a time of its own; both participants may clarify whether they want it now and what they are prepared to discuss.

III. Another mind does not mean an absence of love

In On Children in Kahlil Gibran's The Prophet, parental love is distinguished from a child's thoughts; the image of a bow and living arrows follows. This is Almustafa's poetic speech about Life and an archer, not research into family transitions. It determines no age for departure or compulsory end of assistance. Its narrow question for us is whether a bond can remain when another person thinks differently. The metaphor offers language for distinction, not an action schedule. The parent does not disappear with the departing arrow, but poetry does not decide what care a particular family should arrange today. [1]

If her daughter chooses work Irina does not understand, the difference alone does not explain the state of their bond. Irina may have questions about activities, time, travel, or particular arrangements. She can ask without calling different thoughts ingratitude. Her daughter can also decline to turn every conversation into a defence of all her decisions. Sometimes the subject simply needs clarification: I am telling you about my day, asking for assistance, or actually inviting discussion of a choice. These are different kinds of exchange. A story is not an application for management, and requesting help does not necessarily transfer decisions about everything else. They may notice disagreement more accurately if neither assumes every conversation continues the former parental function.

Understanding difference does not require Irina to learn a formula to repeat whenever she doubts. Her experience may be useful in one situation, advice unwanted in another, and the subject unclear to both in a third. This variety need not receive one overall relationship rating. A mother remains a person with views rather than having to perform complete agreement to earn a meeting. An adult daughter retains choice rather than proving independence by refusing every offer. Their conversation may contain gratitude, disagreement, and an ordinary joke. None of those parts acquires sole authority to explain the whole bond. Different thoughts become a particular fact of conversation instead of an automatic announcement that love has ended.

IV. Care begins by clarifying what is needed

Previous care often relied on knowledge that was accurate at the time. Irina knew when lessons ended, which clothes were needed, and what her daughter liked after a journey. As the day changes, some of that knowledge needs updating. The question is not whether to stop remembering but whether memory is being treated as a current instruction. A particular need can be asked about: should I bring the bag, is a meeting convenient, would you like to talk now? Such a question leaves room for an unexpected answer. If an offer has already been carried out without clarification, the resulting inconvenience can be discussed separately. Good intention explains Irina’s action but does not itself establish her adult daughter’s agreement to this form of involvement.

No may concern timing, the object, or the manner of assistance. Understanding it does not require discovering a hidden assessment of every previous year. The daughter may decline a lift because she has already arranged one with a friend. That does not make the mother’s offer absurd or turn the other arrangement into betrayal. Irina may feel upset; a feeling needs no courtroom proof to be acknowledged. It also does not replace the content of the answer. She can say that the familiar Saturday feels different without demanding cancellation of an agreed plan. Conversely, accepting needed help does not restore permanent direction. One shared action can remain one action with a subject both understand beforehand.

It also helps to clarify one’s own capacity to assist. A new relationship form need not leave a parent continually available for any request. Agreeing to bring one item is not a promise to free the whole day. Irina can name a convenient time or decline an additional task. Her daughter can choose another solution without constructing an indictment of her mother. Both participants have boundaries. Naming them is not equivalent to coldness: it makes an offer intelligible and reduces guessing about what has not been said. A new request may call for a new arrangement. Earlier agreement need not expand indefinitely, just as earlier care need not disappear altogether because its conditions are now being stated aloud.

V. Continuing assistance has conditions of its own

An adult child’s life may include needs for which parental assistance remains important. Adulthood alone does not describe someone’s capacities, daily circumstances, or family arrangements. A discussion of an opening calendar should therefore not become a demand that everyone immediately establish a separate life. In our imagined scene Irina’s daughter has stated her own Saturday plan; another family may need an entirely different arrangement. Particular activities can be distinguished: accompanying someone, making a shared purchase, helping with a document, or finding time to talk. Each may have its own reason and duration. Some functions end while others continue. Their differing timetables do not make a transition unsuccessful or require one label for an entire family’s way of living.

Even when one activity continues to occupy most of a day, its meaning for the parent may change. Participation once felt self-evident; now time, division of work, available people, and personal limits may need new arrangements. This essay establishes no standard allocation. It asks which conditions are known and which are merely assumed. An assumption of unlimited availability can remain invisible precisely because someone has previously done so much. Their earlier involvement does not, by itself, establish what is possible today. A parent can discuss a limit and an adult child can express preferences even when assistance is needed. An honest arrangement keeps care specific and allows other circumstances to be considered instead of requiring everyone to sustain a previously imagined family picture.

Newly available time can also be partial. Irina has one free Saturday, not an unlimited reserve of energy for any undertaking. An ordinary activity, a postponed conversation, or a quiet evening may be enough. The possibility need not be assessed solely by whether it immediately becomes a major project. Conversely, having almost no free time does not prevent someone noticing that a former role has changed. The change may concern decision authority, the form of a request, or an expectation of reporting rather than a number of hours. Naming it more accurately can retain both participants’ dignity. Discussion of a role’s changing centrality need not erase continuing assistance or require adulthood to be demonstrated through complete independence from every other person.

@andrey.zarinsh @ilkutki

VI. A close person need not be immediately understood

In Luke2:41–52 the parents seek twelve-year-old Jesus and find him in the temple; they do not understand his answer about his Father’s business. Return, subjection to the parents, and his mother’s keeping of the sayings follow. This is a Christian account of Jesus’s calling, not an ordinary adult departure. Closeness, incomprehension, and an ongoing relationship coexist within its theological grounds. It authorises neither disregard of care nor complete parental control. Our comparison is limited to acknowledging incomprehension without immediately reaching a final verdict about someone else. [2]

Irina may not understand why her daughter no longer wants the familiar Sunday discussion about work. Hearing the change does not require understanding an entire new life plan in advance. She can ask about the next meeting, a welcome subject, or a convenient form of involvement. Incomprehension remains a part of the conversation that she may express in her own words. It does not authorise filling uncertainty with an explanation about coldness. A demand to understand everything immediately can equally put her in an impossible position, requiring the performance of clarity she does not yet have. A more precise exchange may sound modest: I have not worked this out, but I heard that this conversation is unwanted today. Knowledge’s limit and an actual answer can be acknowledged together.

An adult child may likewise not know how a parent experiences a changed day. A message about meeting friends does not contain Irina’s complete account of Saturday. If the daughter wants to hear it, her question should permit an answer without compulsory reassurance. Her mother may speak of sadness, interest, irritation, or still lack words. None automatically appoints the daughter as the sole person responsible for removing the feeling. A parent’s inward life remains that person’s own life, with other relationships, memories, and wishes. A family conversation can support it without automatically carrying all responsibility for it. Acknowledging incomprehension therefore works both ways: each participant may learn something important without promising immediately to explain or repair everything that emerges.

VII. One’s own day need not immediately acquire a new mission

Irina has available time, but her familiar way of choosing an activity still follows her daughter’s needs. In a shop she notices things another person might use; at home she remembers postponed family matters. Attention need not instantly rearrange itself with the calendar. She can notice this habit without declaring it a character defect. Some activities will remain welcome, others may now be convenient by request, and some are no longer needed. Choosing something for herself can begin with a small interest instead of a solemn promise of a new life. She might remember a walk she has wanted to take and decide only about the coming evening. Choosing one evening does not establish a final replacement for her former centre of life.

A new interest is not less real because it supplies no obvious family benefit. Reading, talking, learning, cooking, and walking can have different reasons. A parent does not have to explain all of them to an adult child in advance, nor must the child certify their adequacy. Allowing one’s own life should not become a new demand that Irina find a hobby and appear pleased. The possibility of choosing includes being unsure for now. Ordinary available time may contain bewilderment, rest, and an unfinished idea. Its value is not established by producing an impressive account of personal development for acquaintances. What matters is the choice Irina actually makes and the meaning that it has for her, which can remain modest or private.

Sometimes looking for a new centre quietly assigns another person the job of replacement. A parent may expect an adult child to suggest activities continually, invite them to every meeting, or validate each new day. The opposite can happen too: a child prescribes a compulsory programme for a parent to avoid hearing uncertainty. Both need separate agreement if they become actual proposals. Helping choose a walk does not entail permanently organising another person’s meaning. Irina can approach different people or keep her first attempts private. A new relationship with her own day may develop through separate decisions. Its incompleteness need not become another family task someone must immediately bring to a supposedly correct result.

VIII. Reciprocity needs distinct participants

In DN31, the instruction to Sigala, parents and children appear as the East among six directions within Buddhist lay ethics. The selected passage names responsibilities on both sides, including parental training for a profession and timely transfer of inheritance. It also names arranged marriage, which we do not adopt as present permission to decide for an adult child. Our comparison is narrow: reciprocity involves distinct participants' actions rather than endless unilateral authority. Buddhist context, household customs, and religious purposes remain the text's own; this editorial conversation does not replace them with a common family doctrine. [3]

Irina and her daughter must determine their own arrangements today. They might retain a family meal, share a particular task, or meet without the earlier routine. Reciprocity does not establish in advance whether their actions should take equal time or effort. It directs attention to who proposed something, who accepted, and which conditions are known. A mother's extensive earlier involvement does not automatically become an unlimited current invoice. Equally, a daughter's independence does not make every request addressed to her an intrusion that must be rejected. A request can be heard and considered separately. Both need to remain distinct people with capacities, wishes, and the possibility of clarifying an answer rather than disappearing into one prescribed family role.

Some accounts of debt have no definite subject. An adult child is continually asked to prove that parental involvement has been valued sufficiently. No single action can settle the question because the next conversation demands proof again. Irina can value gratitude without turning it into daily verification. Her daughter can remember assistance without promising permanent agreement. Thanks for a particular action may be expressed in her own words. Gratitude need not cancel discussion of a difficult part of the past. A relationship's history can contain differing assessments. No general formula of reciprocity authorises us to decide in advance what these two women feel or what continuation they would consider appropriate for their own lives.

IX. Other relationships have lives of their own

When parenting ceases to occupy its former central place, other relationships become more visible. Irina has an old friend, a neighbour, a brother, and acquaintances from work. Each already lives a day of their own. She can approach them with a particular interest or invitation without automatically requiring them to take over the vacated role. A friend may welcome a meeting without being available every evening. A brother may support one conversation without sharing every view of the family change. Separate agreement need not expand into continuing support for every new idea. Irina can see these relationships accurately: not as a reserve circle appointed to fill an entire vacancy but as distinct bonds with histories and present conditions of their own.

If a partner is present, renewed attention to a shared day also calls for conversation. Activities may long have been arranged around a child’s needs; their order can now be discussed again. An available Saturday does not mean both people simultaneously want the same thing. One might wish for a trip and the other for quiet; the difference does not explain all their years together. They can begin with the immediate proposal: is meeting convenient, do we want to plan, and what has already been promised elsewhere? This is not a test of whether partners have finally used the transition correctly. It prevents a newly available hour becoming another person’s obligation to participate. A chosen shared rhythm grows from intelligible offers and answers that have been heard.

In these conversations Irina may notice again her own right to ask. Organising a meeting for her daughter once felt easier than proposing one for herself. An invitation can now simply express interest: wanting to meet, listen, or walk a familiar route together. It needs no proof of exceptional necessity in order to be voiced. The right to ask nevertheless includes the possibility of a different answer. A busy friend’s response concerns one meeting and need not immediately mean every relationship has vanished. New attempts can also proceed at Irina’s pace, without a public report. Attention can acquire a wider subject while preserving the difference between an offered contact and a preassigned responsibility for another person to manage the entire transition.

@andrey.zarinsh @ilkutki

X. The new form can remain open

No one has to decide in advance which part of a parental role has ended forever. Irina and her daughter can clarify their relationship as circumstances arise. A changed weekend arrangement does not establish holidays, assistance, work, or future meetings. Some questions remain familiar and others need a separate conversation. Modest precision helps: we know what is agreed today without presenting it as a universal plan. Openness retains the possibility of returning to a question if a need changes. Asking for help again need not cancel an independent decision, and another refusal need not erase previous closeness. A relationship can have a history in which different actions have different grounds rather than becoming one irreversible examination of whether a role has been completed.

The earlier life also needs no single assessment. Years of care may contain joy, fatigue, accurate decisions, mistakes, and much about which this essay knows nothing. Naming today's change does not require Irina to call all those years either her best or lost years. Her daughter need not endorse one overall rating to arrange a future visit. If they choose to discuss the past, that conversation has its own subject and conditions. A list of correct conclusions about growing up cannot replace it. Space remains between memory and a current arrangement: something important can be retained, something particular reconsidered, and other things still difficult to describe. An earlier centre of the day ending supplies no automatic knowledge of an entire family history or each person's inward experience.

At the end of our scene Irina has not discovered a major new pursuit. She has put away an unnecessary purchase, clarified their next meeting, and decided to walk to a familiar park. This invented sequence proves nothing about an exercise's efficacy or the speed of change. It shows a possible scale of response: one amendment to an ordinary day without a final verdict on personal worth. Parenting remains in the history and forms of connection that actually continue. The space in the calendar also has room to exist while its meaning remains unsettled. Someone can be a parent, love, ask, decline, learn, and remain a separate person. What Irina chooses next belongs to her life rather than to a ready-made prescription supplied by an essay.

What this means in practice

If you wish, choose one small activity whose arrangement has actually changed: a meeting, purchase, journey, or conversation. Name its former function and what is known today. No whole-life explanation, difficult memory, or correct closeness rating is required. Keep a private note or make no record.

Separate what no longer needs habitual action, what remains agreed, and what has not yet been asked. A question concerning another adult may become one particular offer that allows

refusal. Agreement to an activity is not permission to manage the rest of their day. Your own capacity and limit can be named too.

Choose a small step for your day, or leave things unchanged for now. An interest need not replace an entire former role. Continuing necessary assistance has separate practical conditions. This voluntary editorial exercise concerns attention to an arrangement; it is no diagnosis, family examination, or proven transition method. Its efficacy is unestablished. Neither disclosure, compulsory gratitude, nor reconciliation is required. Another question may remain open.

Key quotation

> *“his mother kept all these sayings in her heart.”*

— Luke2:51, subordinate clause after but, King James Version. Initial lower case preserved; fragment presented with its source final period.

Connections between traditions

1. **Love and a separate inward life — On Children ↔ Luke 2:49–50.** Gibran distinguishes offering love from possessing a child’s thoughts; in Luke, Jesus’s answer about his Father’s business remains misunderstood by his parents. The shared field of this editorial comparison is a bond that does not ensure identical understanding. Irina can distinguish hearing her daughter’s answer from understanding her whole plan without treating incomprehension as absent love. The boundary remains: poetic Life differs from the Christian narrative of twelve-year-old Jesus’s particular calling. Neither passage establishes a departure age, shared family timetable, or compulsory inward disclosure. The present conversational question is the article’s application; necessary care needs separate consideration.

2. **Relationship and a particular action — Luke 2:51 ↔ DN31, East, children’s and parents’ actions.** Jesus returns with his parents and remains subject to them; Sigala’s instruction names deeds, including children’s support for parents and parents’ training for a profession. The comparative field is a bond expressed through particular involvement rather than its role-name alone. The article asks what assistance is actually needed and agreed today. Gospel childhood subjection establishes no authority over an adult, while Buddhist household duties retain their religious setting rather than becoming a present consent procedure. Accepting one task certifies no agreement with every later choice; changed routine removes no real need.

3. **Involvement and claiming the future — On Children, the bow image ↔ DN31, East, parental actions.** Gibran presents parents as bows and children as arrows moving forward; DN31 names professional training, timely inheritance, and historically arranged marriage. The article compares involvement directed towards another’s future with that future route itself. It

asks which assistance continues and which former habitual action has ended. The poetic Archer and Buddhist household order form no single independence doctrine. Arranged marriage supplies no authority to choose for an adult, and inheritance is no universal transition condition. Present meetings, advice, and assistance need their own grounds and the affected participants' responses.

4. **Incomprehension and clarification — Luke 2:49–51 ↔ On Children, love and thoughts.** Luke records parental misunderstanding followed by return and the mother's keeping the sayings; Gibran's offered love does not make the child's thoughts parental possessions. Their comparative field is incomplete understanding within a continuing bond. The article distinguishes hearing one answer from claiming knowledge of the entire plan. A particular Christian calling and poetic Life retain different foundations. Neither supplies a ready modern clarification exercise or demands complete disclosure. A family's actual conditions determine the needed conversation; attention to an unknown does not remove necessary communication about an accepted meeting or continuing assistance.

5. **Reciprocity and an offer's limit — DN31, East, both parties' involvement ↔ On Children, love and separate thoughts.** DN31 distinguishes children's support from parents' encouragement towards good and professional preparation; Gibran separates offered love from another's thoughts. The editorial mechanism considers parties and the content of their involvement separately rather than allowing one role to answer everything. Irina's offer still needs her daughter's response, while Irina retains capacities and limits. Buddhist religious instruction differs from poetic imagery and sets no modern equal-help quota here. Earlier contribution becomes no endless invoice; independence requires no refusal of every request. Actual duties and consent need particular consideration.

6. **Memory and today's arrangement — Luke 2:51 ↔ DN31, East, assistance and continuity.** Jesus's mother keeps the sayings in her heart; DN31 names parental support, household duties, and family tradition alongside parents' actions. The comparative field distinguishes a continuing history from particular involvement. One Saturday answer need not rate every year, nor must every purchase reopen the past. Christian remembrance of this event differs from Buddhist household continuity. Family tradition becomes no compulsory present script; the article's distinction erases neither another's experience nor necessary assistance. Neither passage demonstrates that the proposed exercise changes relationships or resolves earlier disagreement. A current arrangement requires its own examination.

Primary sources

1. Kahlil Gibran — The Prophet, complete On Children. Actual reading scope and limitations are retained in the source ledger.

2. Luke; King James Version translators — Luke2:41–52 KJV. Actual reading scope and limitations are retained in the source ledger.

3. Buddhist Pali Canon; Narada Thera translator — DN31, Sigalovada Sutta, East/parents passage. Actual reading scope and limitations are retained in the source ledger.

Tags

parenting, adult children, life transition, role, meaning, daily life, care, closeness, independence, consent, request, assistance, boundaries, time, calendar, memory, gratitude, reciprocity, dialogue, incomprehension, Gibran, The Prophet, Luke, Gospel, DN31, Sigala, Buddhism, family, personal choice, one’s own day

About the authors

Andrey Zarinsh is the author and founder of United Wisdom. He explores inner transformation, the unity of traditions, intercultural dialogue, and contemporary spiritual discipline. Instagram: @andrey.zarinsh.

Maria Evilkut is a co-author of United Wisdom. Alongside her research, she seeks to test these ideas in practice and observe how principles of unity and mutual understanding work in real life between people and cultures. Instagram: @ilkutki.