



The Mass Observation Project

Summer 2010 Directive

Part 1: Families and holidays

Holidays away from home, away from the pressures of daily life, can provide an opportunity for members of families to spend time together. Does this have a positive effect on family relationships? Does it create expectations of family harmony that are hard to live up to? In this part of the Directive we are interested in your experiences of holidays as 'family time'.

As usual, please start each part of your directive reply on a new sheet of paper with your MO number (NOT name), sex, age, marital status, the town or village where you live and your occupation or former occupation.

Remember not to identify yourself or other people inadvertently within your reply.

Do you have experience of family holidays, past and present?

Please describe your own experience of family holidays – being away from home and normal routines with other family members. It could be just for a day or two, or for longer.

Please think back as well as telling us about what happens now. We are interested in whether you had family holidays when you were a child, any family holidays taken during your own adult life, and the most recent family holiday which you have taken.

Did you have lots of family holidays or only a few, and was there any pattern in the kinds of family holidays you have taken. We are interested in where your family holidays have been spent, what you did and who you went with (including people who weren't members of your family).

If you don't have direct experience of family holidays, have you observed families on holiday?

Please tell us about your observations of other families on holiday. We are interested in where and when the holiday was, what the family groups were doing, how big the groups were and who seemed to be involved, what made you think they were family, how they seemed to be getting on and anything else you thought was of interest.

How relationships change on holiday

We would like to hear your experience of whether family relationships are different on holiday from everyday life. Does having more time together change how you get on or what you do? In what ways? Do the differences last when the holiday ends? Please tell us your experiences of this.

PLEASE TURN OVER

If you have ever had a holiday with another family, or had a friend come on one of your family holidays, please tell us about that experience and its effect on your and their family relationships.

Spending time together may not always have a positive effect on relationships. Do you have experience of holidays making relationships worse, or causing tensions between family members or others who have holidayed together?

Advice about families and holidays

Most families do want to spend more time together, and a holiday provides that opportunity. Do you have any advice for other people, from your own experience, on how to get the best out of a holiday which is meant to be 'family time'?

Part 2: Belonging

This is about your experiences of belonging or not belonging.

Please start Part 2 of your directive reply on a new sheet of paper with your MO number and a brief biography (see page 1).

You may have experienced a sense of belonging in relation to a variety of things: individual people, a group or a community of people, a place, a culture or a nation.

We are interested in hearing about all of these (and more) ways of belonging. We would however be interested in hearing not only about the positive, but also about less happy experiences when you may have felt 'not at home' or 'an outsider'. A sense of belonging can be connected to powerful emotions, so you may find that this directive gives rise to some difficult feelings and I hope you will write about that if you can.

Below are some questions and tasks to help you think about this somewhat abstract notion of belonging. Please do not feel that you are tied to these – you are free to answer this question in any manner you feel is best.

Your own experience

Could you describe what it means to you to belong? Do you feel you have experienced a sense of belonging?

Could you give us examples of particular times when or settings where you felt a sense of belonging and of how this has felt to you?

What do you think contributed to your sense of belonging? What about times and places when you have felt you did not belong – why do you think this was?

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Belonging continued.....

Has your sense of belonging changed during your lifetime? Was there for example a place where you felt a sense of belonging, but where you no longer feel you belong, or vice versa? What do you think has caused these shifts?

Are they perhaps the result of moving, a change in your social networks, a change in job, or has the area in which you live undergone significant changes?

Or has your sense of belonging been affected by changes in your personal life, such as having children, getting married or divorced, experiencing bereavement or ageing?

The people you belong with

Could you please draw a diagram or map consisting of a number of concentric circles, placing yourself in the middle, with those people with whom you have a strong sense of belonging on the circles closest to you, and those people with whom you feel a weaker sense of belonging on the circles further away from you.

NB: Please use initials instead of people's full names, and indicate their relationship to you (eg, spouse, sister, friend or neighbour).

Then draw the same diagram or map depicting your relationships 10 years ago. Is there a difference between these two relationship maps? Why do you think that is? What has changed?

The places you belong in

List all the places or settings you feel at home in today, and the places where you felt you belonged 10 years ago (eg home, work, a particular landscape, city or neighbourhood).

Is there a difference between these two sets of places? Why do you think that is? What has changed?

Please post your response to:

**The Mass Observation Archive, FREEPOST BR 2112, The Library, University of Sussex,
Brighton BN1 1ZX**

Or by email to: moa@sussex.ac.uk