
B O N U S C H A P T E R

10 Things My Adult Children Still Say To Me Today

*A companion chapter to Why My Adult Children Still
Call Me First*

By Demi F. O.

Mother of three · Certified Child & Adolescent Counsellor



When people ask me why my adult children still call me first, I usually smile.

Because the truth is, I didn't have a grand parenting strategy. I wasn't trying to raise children who would call me every day once they became adults. I was simply trying to give them what I wished I had received more of as a child: love, safety, respect, understanding, consistency.

Looking back now, I realize that children often tell us whether we're getting it right — not through parenting awards or report cards — but through the things they say years later.

The comments below may seem simple. But to me, they are some of the greatest rewards of motherhood. Not because they make me feel successful. But because they tell me the relationship survived. And that, to me, is what matters most.

01

“When I was going through depression and cut everyone off, you refused to leave me alone. You kept calling and checking on me.”

— My oldest son

At the time, I wasn't trying to do anything extraordinary. I simply knew he was struggling. Many people had stopped trying to reach him. But I couldn't — not because I had the answers, but because I wanted him to know that no matter how dark things became, he wasn't alone.

Sometimes love looks like persistence. Sometimes it sounds like *“Just checking on you.”* And sometimes those simple words save people more than we realize.

02

“You are the only one that understands.”

— My second son

The first time he said it, I remember feeling emotional. Not because I understood everything — I certainly didn't. But because he felt understood. There is a difference.

Parents do not need to know everything. They simply need to listen enough that their children feel seen.

03

“We can always talk things over.”

One thing I worked hard to create was a home where conversation was possible. Not agreement — conversation. My son once told me: “Even when you don’t agree with me, we can talk things over.” That meant a lot to me.

Because many children stop talking when they know disagreement will automatically lead to rejection. I wanted my children to know that disagreement does not have to end connection.

04

“I can always count on you.”

As parents, we sometimes think support only means money. It doesn’t. There were times when I couldn’t solve a problem — times when I couldn’t provide what my children needed financially. But I could provide something else: presence, encouragement, faith, belief.

One day my son told me: “Even when you don’t have the money to help, you still support me.” That reminded me that support comes in many forms.

05

“I always feel better after talking to you.”

This is probably one of my favourite comments, because it tells me something important: people return to places where they feel lighter, safer, more hopeful.

Many parents focus on giving advice. Sometimes what children need most is comfort, understanding, a listening ear — a place to exhale.

06

“You never judged me.”

Please understand — this doesn't mean my children never made mistakes. They did. Plenty of them. Just like I did. But I tried very hard not to make mistakes feel like permanent labels. A bad decision is not the same thing as being a bad person.

Children need correction. But they also need grace. And grace is often what keeps communication alive.

07

“I knew I could tell you.”

When my sons experienced relationship problems, they came to me. When my daughter had challenges in school, she came to me. Not because I had magical solutions — but because they knew I would listen.

Trust is built over years. One conversation at a time. One response at a time. One moment at a time.

08

“You always made us feel included.”

This one touches me deeply. Whether we were discussing challenges, family decisions, or important events, I tried to help my children feel like they belonged to the family story — not as spectators, but as participants.

Children who feel included usually develop a stronger sense of belonging. And belonging is powerful.

“You always believed I could do it.”

Sometimes children borrow confidence from us until they develop their own. There were moments when my children doubted themselves — moments when life felt difficult, when failure seemed overwhelming.

During those times, I tried to lend them my belief until they found theirs again. Many years later, I realize how important that was.

“I love talking to you.”

This may be the simplest statement on the list. But it might also be the most meaningful — because no adult child says this out of obligation.

They say it because the relationship feels good. Because there is connection. Because being together still brings comfort. And after everything parenting requires, that is a beautiful reward.

What These Quotes Really Mean

When I look at all these comments, I don't hear perfection. I hear something else. I hear trust. I hear safety. I hear connection. I hear a relationship that survived childhood, adolescence, mistakes, disagreements, distance, and adulthood.

That was always the goal. Not perfect children. Not perfect parenting. A strong relationship.

And if there is one message I hope you take from this book, it is this:

The little things matter.

The listening.

The apologies.

The conversations.

The hugs.

The encouragement.

The consistency.

The “How was your day?”

The “I love you.”

The “Tell me what happened.”

The “I’m proud of you.”

Those moments may feel small today. But one day they become the reason your adult child still calls you first.

Final Reflection

Imagine your child is 30 years old. They are going through one of the hardest seasons of their life.

Who do you hope they call?

More importantly — what kind of relationship must you build today so that they will want to make that call?

That relationship starts now. One conversation at a time.

Thank you for reading.

— Demi F. O.

Mother of three. Certified Child & Adolescent Counsellor.
Lifelong learner. Imperfect parent. Forever grateful.

