

## **What If My Estrangement is On and Off?**

**While some adult children close the door until they finally open it, others engage in repeated estrangements and reconciliations. This is often a source of great confusion for the parent.**

**If this is the case for you, here are some recommendations:**

- \* It's typically best to let the adult child come in and out as they see fit. Sometimes it isn't personal and other times it may start out as not personal but become personal if the child feels criticized for wanting to be in charge of how much contact there is.**
- \* Try not to sound negative if you're observing that your child is less available than they were before. Our adult children often have busy lives and while they're at the forefront of our minds, we're not necessarily at the forefront of theirs.**
- \* Criticizing or complaining rarely buys you anything. If your child acts triggered you could say in a friendly or upbeat way, "You didn't do anything wrong. I just like seeing you. I know you have your own life."**
- \* Or if there was an earlier complaint about you that you have tried to repair you can say something like "Wondering if you're still having feelings about the past? The door's always open to talk about that."**

**It may also be useful to observe to your child that the estrangements are on and off and you're wondering if there's something that you're doing that is contributing to that.**