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[Speaker = Lithuanian]

My name's Rimas Vilkas and I come from Vilnius, the capital city of Lithuania. I live in Chicago now, but I grew up in Vilnius in the '80s and '90s in an apartment with my immediate family—my sister, my mother, and my father, and of course, me!

My parents, however, didn't grow up in Vilnius. They grew up in a small village in the east. Both my parents came from very large families. And they both lived with their extended families when they were growing up. At that time, it was the common **(1)** \_\_\_\_\_ that three generations would live together in a house: children, parents, and grandparents. My mother said that everyone—her seven brothers and sisters, her parents, and her grandparents—all ate dinner together every night of the week. This kind of togetherness was pretty different from the way my family grew up. When I was growing up, my sister and I usually ate with our parents. But sometimes, when they had to work, we didn't. We'd have to eat by ourselves.

This may be why my father says that families were closer back then—he says there was more parental **(2)** \_\_\_\_\_ in teenagers' lives. My dad thinks that closeness is the reason why teenagers had fewer problems. He says it was rare for a teenager to be a troublemaker at school—he thinks **(3)** \_\_\_\_\_ and disrespect are more modern teen problems. In his day, he says, that kind of disobedience would have been highly unusual.

A lot of other things were different when my parents were growing up. Lithuania was still a part of the Soviet Union, and life was very limited in some ways. My parents dealt with a lot of **(4)** \_\_\_\_\_. Back then, they didn't have as many choices—you know, for things like what direction your career would take, or traveling abroad—not so many opportunities. And it was very rare that someone would move away and live somewhere else. Because of that, when my parents were teenagers, they really didn't know much about life outside the Soviet Union—at least firsthand. Most people got married at about the same age and had children shortly afterward. And they usually had one job for their whole life. For all those reasons, I would say there was a difference in the world view that teenagers had then different from the one I had when I was growing up, which was, of course, during the breakup of the Soviet Union.

By the time I was in my teens, a **(5)** \_\_\_\_\_ had pretty much opened up. Teenagers began to develop different tastes in music . . . the way they dressed. It's not surprising when you think about it—a lot of the food Lithuanians eat now, a lot of the movies they watch, even some of the fashions, come from Western Europe or the U.S. Before, in my parents' generation, it used to be a big deal if somebody left their small village and moved to Vilnius! But today a lot of my friends have moved away from Lithuania altogether. I have friends

living all over Europe, some in the States, and even a friend in New Zealand. That was almost unheard of for my parents' generation. My parents can't understand that kind of (6) \_\_\_\_\_—why anyone would want to move so far away. So, mobility is a huge difference.

So, some of the changes I'm describing shouldn't be too surprising: young people are leaving home earlier; they're more likely to move far away, marry later, and choose a career instead of having children right away. I still consider myself close to my parents, but I can't deny that there is a generation gap. My parents find it hard to understand why I live far away from them, why my wife and I don't have children yet. And they can't figure out how it is that I've had so many different jobs over the years. It's hard for me to explain to them. Sometimes it's so frustrating! They worry about me, about my security—like parents have always worried about their kids. And I think they worry a lot about whether I'll be able to handle the (7) \_\_\_\_\_ of taking care of them in their old age the way they took care of their own parents.