

Australians' reflections and regrets



The holiday and new year season provides a time for Aussies to set new goals and aspirations, as well as a time for reflection. So how do Aussies feel about their experience of life so far? We surveyed 1,011 Australians to find out.

Our biggest regrets are around family

To gauge a sense of what Australians' regrets are, we asked the question 'if you were to die tonight, what would be your biggest regret?'

Australians biggest regrets (in order of prevalence)

1. Family / relationships

2. Not pursuing dreams / not living life to the full
3. Travel
4. Money
5. Career
6. Education

Australians' biggest regrets are around family and relationships, with the overwhelming majority saying that if they died tonight their biggest regret would be 'not getting married or having kids', 'leaving family behind' or 'not seeing children or grandchildren grow up'. Not only are Australians family-orientated but they are also ambitious, with many Aussies' biggest regrets falling into the category of not pursuing dreams or 'living life to the full'. Many cite that being 'too scared' or 'not having the courage' to step out and take a risk or chance would be their biggest regret.

The third most common regret among Australians is about 'not having travelled more' or 'seeing the world', followed by regrets around money. Many Australians also indicate that they would have regrets about their career and education. Unfulfilled goals like 'not pursuing [their] career earlier' or 'lack of career success', as well as 'not finishing their studies' or 'not receiving an education' would cause them to regret.

The fact that Australians' biggest regrets are about family shows where their priorities lie. Many of those who have regrets about money are in fact about family as well, and 'not owning a home for my families security' or 'leaving enough money for kids' shows the familial motive behind the regret of not having enough money.

Life is better than expected for more than 2 in 5 Australians

Overall, more Australians think their life is better than expected than those who think it is worse. More than two in five Australians are of the opinion that their life is significantly or somewhat better than they expected (44%), compared to those who feel it is significantly or somewhat worse than expected (22%). A third (34%) say it is similar to what they expected.

Australians are living in the 'lucky country' when it comes to health, education, economic opportunities and even political participation. While we all endure hardship, we value independence but in a community-minded way. Despite our differences we know that when adversity strikes, whether in the form of personal tragedy, natural disasters or international conflict, there'll usually be a fellow Aussie there to help out. It's the tradition of the digger,

the character of mateship, and it's still the essence of the Australian community.

-Ashley Fell

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Contact

Ashley Fell: ashley@mccrindle.com.au