The Indian family is changing. There's no 'ideal family' defined by children or married couples. The concept of 'family' has expanded to include same-sex couples, single parents, and even childless families. "It's okay to have had a broken relationship or a broken marriage," says Karthik. But the unorthodox family that he's helping to form must navigate societal expectations. For instance, if a non-family member is considering adoption, the concept of 'families without children' is currently unaccepted. But as the world becomes more accepting, these arrangements may become more common.

Embracing choices

The Indian family is redefining itself. It no longer sees the care of grandchildren as its duty. "They value their independence," says Kanwar Chaudhuri. Everyone needs a new sense of the 'I' is developing," she says. Hence, society is now more accepting of the fact that society is changing.

Navigating society

Sujatha Sriram, dean, School of Human Ecology at Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai, who works on marriage, says, "Yes, there is still stigma around women remarrying, but I have seen some cases where relationships have failed, others where the daughter-in-law hasn’t accepted the mother-in-law," says Patel. But there have also been instances when daughters-in-law have come with their mothers-in-law to find partners for themselves. "As you grow older, the caste, creed, and region divide begins to merge." Retired seniors, with both the time and money to travel, read and relax, have come with their mothers-in-law on vacation.

Multiple generations, same-sex couples, many sets of in-laws: the Indian family is evolving with the times.