SAMPLE

The Legacy Interview

Questions to ask a parent and a way to keep the answers: how to ask, ten core questions, follow-up questions, questions by topic, a photograph session and a recording log. 10 printable and fillable pages.

This sample shows "How to ask" and the follow-up questions.

The full edition is $3.99.

Get it at:
https://agingathomesupport.com/write-your-legacy/legacy-interview/

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How to ask

So it feels like a visit, not an interrogation

- **Ask for a favor, not a project.** “The kids keep asking how you and Dad met. Would you tell me so I can write it down?”
- **Pick a calm time and a familiar place.** A kitchen table and a cup of coffee work better than a formal sit-down. Mornings are often best.
- **Record it if they agree.** The voice memo app on any phone is enough. Say the date and both your names at the start, then set the phone screen-down and forget it.
- **Bring a few old photographs.** A picture loosens memories that a question can’t.
- **Ask one question, then wait.** Silence is where the second half of the answer comes from. Count to five before you speak.
- **Follow the story, not the list.** If she starts talking about the neighbor, ask about the neighbor.
- **Ask for scenes, not summaries.** “Tell me about one Sunday dinner” gets more than “What were holidays like?”
- **Don’t correct dates or details.** Write them down as told. You can check later.
- **Let a grandchild ask.** People tell grandchildren things they never told their children.
- **Stop while it’s still enjoyable.** Forty-five minutes is plenty. End by setting the next time.

Questions to avoid opening with

- Anything about money, the will or who gets what. Save that for the planner.
- Questions that start with “Why didn’t you…”
- Painful subjects, until they bring them up themselves

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Follow-up questions

Use these when an answer is short. Pick one, then listen.

- [ ] Tell me more about that.
- [ ] Who else was there?
- [ ] What happened next? What happened the next morning?
- [ ] How did that feel?
- [ ] Is there a story behind that?
- [ ] Did that change anything for you?
- [ ] What did you call it back then?
- [ ] Can you show me where that was on a map?
- [ ] Is there anyone from that time I should talk to?
- [ ] What did that cost, back then?
- [ ] What did it look like? What did it smell like?
- [ ] How old were you?
- [ ] What did you think at the time? What do you think now?
- [ ] What did your mother (or father) say about it?
- [ ] What do you wish you had known then?
- [ ] Who would remember this differently?
- [ ] What did people your age do for fun?
- [ ] What would you want your grandchildren to understand about this?
- [ ] What's a smaller moment from that time that you still remember?
- [ ] What do you miss about it?

> **A good pattern:** question → short answer → "What did it look like?" → longer answer → "Who else was there?" → a story you have never heard.

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