

life review

It is important to keep a record of some of the stories of your family members, otherwise important details of your family's past may be lost forever. Apart from being enjoyable, it is fascinating to be able to look back at life and to learn or remember the events, the people and the places. How can you sum up your life or the life of someone else, as if it were an autobiography?

Listed below are some prompts and questions that may be useful in order to get a better understanding of a person's life. To add meaning to the stories you can make reference to some of the keepsakes, mementos and artefacts that are part of your family's treasured possessions. In addition, you can use the **Timeline** or the **Quiz** cards provided, to expand the family's knowledge and understanding of each other. Oral family history gives you the chance to audibly record stories or to make notes in written form using the notes and memo sheets provided. This can be done on a one to one basis or as a family group or gathering. The list of questions that you can ask is almost endless. Just be sensitive to the feelings of the person whom you are talking to, as some questions may be difficult to answer or upset them.

Childhood and Growing up

- What were your first childhood memories?
- What do you remember about when you were a young child? What was life like?
- Who looked after you and what were they like? Did everyone get on well?
- Who else was in your family and what were they all like? Brothers or sisters?
- Where did you live as you were growing up?
- What do you remember most about your teenage years?
- What did you really enjoy doing whilst growing up?
- Where did you go to school? What was it like and how did you do at school?
- Who were your best friends?
- Was there anyone that was a great influence in your life or that you admired?
- What was your relationship like with all your immediate family?
- If you remember your grandparents or great grandparents, what do you remember about them?
- Who was your first 'date'? What do you remember about this or other 'dates'?
- Did you go to university, college or further education?

Adulthood

- What was life like for you and your family in your twenties and thirties?
- What kind of person were you? How would you describe yourself to a stranger?
- What did you enjoy doing? Work? Hobby? Sports? Leisure? Entertainment?
- What kind of work did you do? When did you start? Where was it?
- What were the big challenges you faced in your life?
- Did your family generally have good health?
- What ambitions did you have? What goals or dreams did you have?
- Did you do any Military Service? If so, where and when?
- What were the turning points in your life?
- Where did you live? Did you move?
- Did you get married, what are your memories of your wedding and your partner?
- Did you have children, what were they like and what do you recall of their childhood?
- Were you a religious person, of what faith and how did this shape your life?
- What major historical event stands out in your life and memory? Why?
- What would you say was your greatest achievement?
- If you could have changed something in your life, what would you have changed?
- Were there any periods that stand out as either happy or unhappy?
- Were there any special family times, sayings or traditions?
- Who were the most important people in your life and why?
- What was the most difficult problem that you had to sort out?
- What were the biggest changes that you have seen in your life?
- Do you think life changed you or did other people change? If so, who changed and how?
- What is it like for you now at this point in your life?
- How do you deal with the life that is ahead of you?
- If you were to offer some advice to someone about life, what would you say?
- What would you like people to remember you for?

