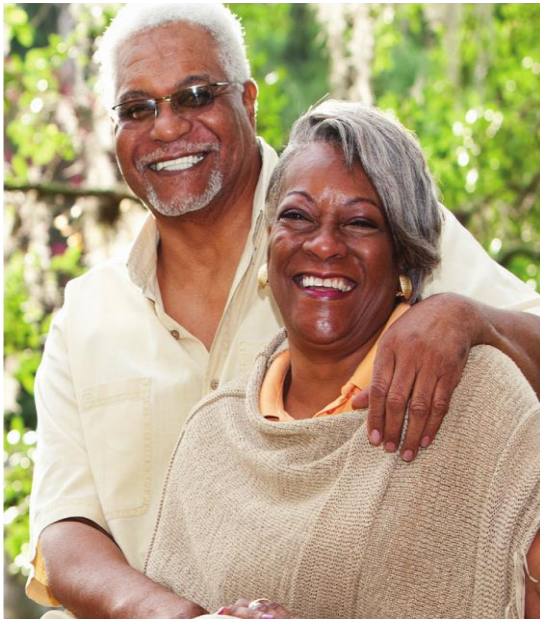




Final Loving Act

A Compassionate Decision


Having meaningful conversations with your loved ones about life and the things that matter most.



There are no rules for how to have the talk with a loved one, only that you make time to do it. Everyone has a story to tell and there's always more you can learn about the one-of-a-kind lives your loved ones have led and the impact they have made on others.

Tips for Starting or Continuing a Conversation

- Don't stress over how or when you will have the talk. A conversation with your loved one should feel relaxed and natural. It can happen at any time or place that feels comfortable.
 - You can have the talk with anyone who matters to you: a parent, grandparent, spouse, aunt, uncle or close friend.
 - Rely on open-ended questions that require more than a one-word answer, such as: *"Describe the time..."*, *"Tell me about..."* or *"How did you feel when..."* Ask follow-up questions to draw out more details.
 - During your conversation, your loved one may want to talk about something they have never shared before. Listen carefully with an open mind and heart. Avoid passing judgment.
- If you mention a topic that your loved one is uncomfortable discussing, respect his or her wishes and move on. Your loved one may have other reasons for not wanting to share a part of their story. They may, however, be willing to revisit the topic later.
 - Family photos, heirlooms and other treasured items may help start a conversation and bring memories flooding back.
 - Just start talking. While the conversation may not go exactly as you'd planned, enjoy it. Your loved one may have things to share that you haven't thought about. No matter where your talk leads, you will walk away with memories and stories you can treasure for a lifetime.



The following questions might be useful as you start talking to your loved ones. These are merely topics to help you get started; there isn't a set order and you don't need to cover everything in one conversation. Depending on with whom you are having the talk – parents, grandparents, other relatives, friends – the things you may want to know and the questions you ask may be different from these suggestions.

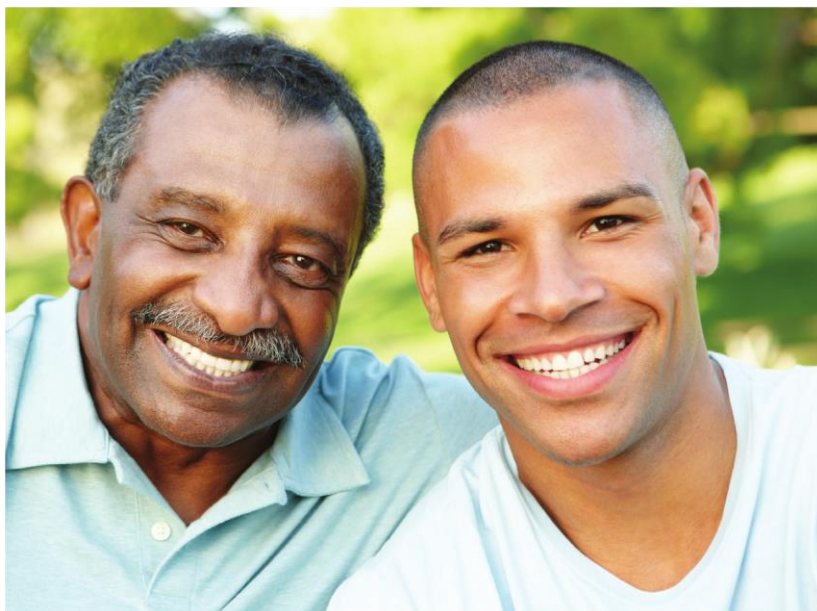
Getting to know you... again

- What is your earliest memory?
- What is the story behind your name? Did you ever have a nickname?
- How would you describe yourself as a child? What is your best memory of your childhood?
- When you were a child, what did you think your life would be like in the future? How is it similar? How is it different?
- Tell me about the schools you attended. What was your best subject? Did you participate in sports, fine arts or math/science clubs? Tell me about a teacher who influenced you.
- Did you serve in the military? Why did you choose to serve? What was your experience? How did your service change you? What lessons did you learn? Are you still friends with anyone with whom you served?
- When did you know that you had finally grown up – the first time you realized you were an adult? What happened? At that moment, did you realize, “Ah ha! I'm an adult now” or did that realization come to you later?
- What lessons has your work life taught you? Did you have a mentor who helped you, especially when you were starting out? Did you ever mentor someone?
- What historical event do you think defined your generation? Why? Tell me what happened? How did it impact your life, family and hometown? Looking back, how do you feel about the event now?
- What family traditions do you hope your children, grandchildren, etc., will carry on?
- What are the most important lessons you've learned in life?
- What words of wisdom would you pass on to me? Do you have advice you'd want to pass on to other people who matter to you?

- How would you like people to remember you? What words do you hope will be used to describe you and your life?
- What, if any, religious/faith tradition has influenced your life? Are there prayers, scripture passages or other religious texts that are important to you?
- Have you ever met anyone famous? What happened?
- Describe your greatest accomplishment. What makes it so special to you?
- What are you proudest of in life?
- What has been the happiest moment in your life? The saddest?
- Do you have any regrets or things you wish you had handled differently?

About the people in their life

- Tell me about your parents. What were they like when you were growing up? What was the best birthday present you ever received from them? What did you learn from them?
- Can you tell me about your grandparents? What were they like when you were growing up? Do you have a favorite memory of the time you spent with them? What did you learn from them?
- Tell me about your sisters and/or brothers. Were you close to them when you were growing up? How has your relationship with them changed?
- Who is your best friend? What made you such good friends? What is your favorite memory of him/ her? Tell me about other friends you've had. What was the nicest thing one of your friends ever did for you?
- Tell me about your first boyfriend/girlfriend. Where did you meet him/her? What was your favorite thing about that person?
- Tell me about your husband/wife. How did you meet? When did you know that he/she was "the one"? Tell me about the proposal. What is your favorite memory from your wedding day? What advice for a happy marriage would you want to share with young couples in our family?
- When did you learn that you were going to be a parent? Can you describe the moment you saw your child for the first time? How has being a parent changed you? What have you learned from your children? What advice would you share with expectant parents in our family?
- Who has been the most important or influential person in your life? Can you tell me about him or her? What did you learn from him or her?



Sharing memories will help your loved ones understand how important they are to you. They will see that their life matters. Think of the exchange as one of a series of conversations during which you can openly talk about any number of things – from reflecting on the past to planning for the future.

The things you discuss and learn will help you get to know your loved one better, appreciate their life story and get a glimpse of the legacy that they will one day leave behind.