

Helping Someone Tell Their Stories

110 INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What was your name at birth?
2. How did your parents pick your name?
3. What date were you born?
4. Did your parents talk about giving birth to you?
5. What else happened the day you were born?
6. Who is / was your mother?
7. Describe what she looked like.
8. Describe your Mother's personality.
9. What's your mother's full name including maiden name?
10. Who were your mother's parents (your maternal grandparents)?
11. Where did they come from?
12. Where were they born and when?
13. Who are your mother's siblings, your aunts and uncles?
14. Where did your mother grow up?
15. What did your mother do in her life?
16. Who is / was your father? What is his full name?
17. How did they choose his name?
18. Describe what your father looked like.
19. Describe your father's personality.

20. Who were your father's parents (your paternal grandparents)?
21. Where did they come from?
22. Where were they born and when?
23. Who are your father's siblings, your aunts and uncles?
24. Where did your father grow up?
25. What did your father do in his life?
26. .What is your earliest memory?
27. What kind of a child were you?
28. Did anyone in your family (including aunts, cousins, etc.) have unusual or special characteristics?
29. Was anyone especially funny, intelligent, loud, rich or talented?
30. How would you describe the home you grew up in?
31. Did you have your own bedroom?
32. What did it look like?
33. Describe your family's celebrations or parties like Christmas, Chanukah, etc.
34. What was your neighborhood or community like?
35. Did you have favorite places you liked to go in your neighborhood?
36. What kind of student were you?
37. Did you enjoy school?
38. Did you get good grades?
39. Were there any school teachers you particularly liked?
40. Were you involved in any clubs, sports, activities or hobbies?
41. Name your siblings and describe them.
42. What were your brothers and sisters like when they were children?

43. What trips or travels did your family do together when you were a kid?
44. Did your family attend a church, synagogue, mosque, or temple?
45. What role did religion or spirituality play in your childhood family?
46. Did you have a best friend or friends while in school?
47. Who were they and what brought you together?
48. Who were the people you were especially close to?
49. Were there any adults you admire, respected or trusted?
50. What advice did your parents give you?
51. What lessons did they try to instill?
52. How did your relationship with your parents change as you all got older?
53. How have your relationships with your siblings changed over time?
54. When did you feel you had become an adult?
55. When did you leave home and what were the circumstances?
56. Were you ever married?
57. How did you meet your spouse?
58. What made you first notice your spouse?
59. What did you like best about him or her?
60. How did the marriage proposal happen?
61. What did they say?
62. What did you say?
63. How did you decide to marry your spouse?
64. What was the opinion of your family and parents?
65. Describe your wedding? The dress, the ceremony, and the reception.
66. What was the honeymoon like?

67. Where did you go?
68. Where did you and your spouse first live after your wedding?
69. Did you have children?
70. What was it like to become a parent?
71. Who are your children?
72. What are their names and dates of birth?
73. What traits do your children share?
74. How do your children differ from one another?
75. What level of education did you reach?
76. How did you approach studying?
77. What was your first job?
78. How did you get that job?
79. How old were you?
80. How did you decide on your most recent or current career?
81. Were there other career paths you considered taking?
82. What are you most proud of in relation to your career or vocation?
83. Do you have any regrets about your career or work?
84. If you could go back and start over again, would you make different choices? If so, what?
85. If you are retired, what was it like leaving work and starting your life of retirement?
86. Were you in the military? What branch? What were your activities? How did it affect your life or values?
87. Have you ever done volunteer work? If so, what did you do and why?
88. When you go to vote on Election Day, how do you decide who to vote for?
89. What do you think about the political system and politics?

90. If you and your spouse have separated and/or divorced, talk about that process and what you learned about relationships and yourself?
91. What would you tell your grandchildren about love relationships?
92. If your spouse has died, describe their passing. How has that affected you? What have you learned about yourself?
93. How do you most like to spend your time these days? Do you work? Attend classes? Volunteer?
94. Do you make donations to charities? If someone approaches you on the street with their hand out, what do you do?
95. What new things have you learned in the past year? Describe your most favorite meal? Do you know the recipe? What languages do you read, write, or speak?
96. What countries have you lived in?
97. Have you traveled to foreign countries? What was the reason for your travels?
98. What are the things that most interest you these days?
99. What political issues or world events most concern you?
100. What is a typical day like for you?
101. What are your relationships with your parents like? Siblings? Kids?
102. Who do you go to in your family when you need advice or need a “shoulder to cry on?”
103. How would you describe yourself now?
104. If you were to say something unique and inspirational to each grandchild or great grandchild, what would you tell them?
105. Have there ever been rumors about you, unfounded or otherwise?
106. Have there ever been newspaper, radio, or television stories written about you? What was the story?

- 107. Have you ever received awards or certificates? For what and why?
- 108. Have you ever been to a casino? How do you feel about gambling?
- 109. What is your favorite game for fun? Chess, checkers, cards, etc?
- 110. How have you handled your emotions like sadness, anger, fear?

WISDOM

How do I balance my life? The way I find balance in my life is ...

How do I choose friends and manage close relationships? The way I choose my friends and manage my close relationships is...

How do I choose a life partner? How am I sure I have the right one? The way I know if I have chosen the right person as a life partner is...

How do I deal with people who have opposite opinions or values to mine? How I deal with...

How do I love someone unconditionally?

What is the secret to being a good parent / father?

How do I know what my purpose is?

BLESSINGS

These sentence completions are directed individually to each of your children, grandchildren, great grandchildren and to anyone else you care about. You'll be filling their hearts forever.

One person at a time, you would imagine they are inside the camera and you look directly at the lens. Say their name and voice some or all the following:

[Name:] What I like about you is

The reason I'm glad you've been in my life is ...

What I love most about you

The time we had the most fun together was ...

The potential that I see in you is ...

To me, you're famous for ...

One gift you've given me that I cherish is

One wish I have for you is

End with

[Name] I love you