

Building Your Family Tree and The Stories of Your Family's Past While Engaging Your Relatives

Ways to evoke memories:

- Old photographs of the family or of the era (if you don't have family photos)
- Music from their teenage & young adult years
- If you have started a family tree, show what you have created, and review the branches together
- Talk about your life, when you were born, growing up, getting married and ask if they have stories about you, or about their own life
- Sometimes you'll be able to ask direct questions, or you may need to take a different and more creative approach

Direct questions, or other ways to get to the information?

- Where were you born? Or... You were born in Spain, was it in Barcelona or a town nearby?
- When were you born? Or... I have found your birth year is different on these 3 documents; can you help me - which is the correct year?
- What was it like growing up?
- What were the names of your siblings? Or...besides you, there was Joe and Janey. Did you have other siblings?
- Did you have a good time together?
- Did you have cousins?
- Where they your age?
- Did they live nearby?
- What were your parents' names?
- What was your mother's name before she was married?
- Where were they from?
- Did they ever tell you about their lives back then?
- When were they born?
- Did they live a long time? Or... How old were you when they passed away?
- Did they have siblings?
- Are you a mix of ethnic groups? Which ones?
- Were there any "black sheep" in the family? What is the story?

If you are able to capture some of this information, you are well on your way to building a family tree and some chapters in your life story.