worksheet: personal history questions

Childhood
■ What was your childhood home like?

■ Your neighborhood?

■ Was your parents’ relationship a strong one?

■ Which of them were you closer to?

■ When you were growing up, what was the biggest disagreement you ever had with your parents?

■ What was your role in the family?

■ What were your siblings like back then, and how did you get along with them?
At school, what were you like?

Other than family, who were the most important people in your life when you were growing up?

What were the happiest times of your childhood?

What were your biggest disappointments?

What were your hobbies as a kid?

Who was the first person you ever kissed?

Tell me about your first serious romance.

When you were a kid, what did you imagine your adult life would be like?
Work
■ What was your first job, and how did you get it?

■ How did you decide what field to enter?

■ Did your parents influence your approach to work or your choice of career?

■ Was money a big factor for you?

■ Was there one person—a mentor, maybe—who had a big impact on your working life?

■ Is there anything you think is absolutely crucial to success at work?

■ What was the best job you ever had? The worst?

■ When you were a kid, what did you imagine your adult life would be like?
Did your career have any major turning points?

What were the best moments of your working life? Any lingering regrets?

On balance, how did you like your chosen field?

If you had it all to do over again, would you choose the same path?

Love and Family

Were you and your spouse in love from the start, or did the relationship take time?

When did you decide to have children?

Over the years, what was the most rewarding thing about raising kids?

The toughest?
What do you remember as the best times you had as a family?

Which family vacation was your favorite?

What was the worst thing you went through with your family?

Did you dream about doing anything special once I'd/we'd all grown up?

What are the secrets to a good relationship or marriage?

Do you have any advice about being a good parent?

Is there anything you'd do differently as a mother/father now?

Would you try to do anything differently as a spouse?
What would you say love is? Have your ideas about it changed over time?

Now that you’re all adults, what are your relationships like with your siblings?

How are you like your parents? How are you different?

Who in the family is most like you?

What have you always regretted not asking your parents?

You and Me

Is there anything you’ve never been able to ask me or say to me?

In what ways do you think we’re similar? In what ways different?

What were your favorite times with me?
■ Is our relationship anything like the one you had with your parents?

■ Are you happy with the way you and I get along?

■ Is there anything you wish had been different between us? That you’d still like to change?

You as You
■ Who knows you better than anyone?

■ Other than family, who are the most important people in your life right now?

■ What’s the key to a great friendship?

■ Who makes you laugh the hardest?

■ Do you have a favorite book or author?
- A favorite movie?
- What was the best trip you ever took?
- The most amazing place you've seen?
- If you could go somewhere you've never been, where would it be?
- Would you rather be living somewhere else?
- What are five things you couldn't live without?
- What's your most beloved personal possession?
- What's the bravest thing you've ever done?
The scariest? The dumbest?

Is there anything you always wanted to do but never did?

What would I be surprised to learn about you?

The Kind of Life You’ve Lived

What were the best years of your life?

What was the hardest decision you’ve made?

What are the most important things in life?

What do you consider to be your strongest character traits?

What traits or habits do you wish you didn’t have?
Do you believe that people can change?

Do you believe in God?

Has life made you more cynical or more hopeful?

What do you consider to be the most important world events of your lifetime?

Do you think life now is harder or easier than when you were young?

If you could do anything over in your life, what would it be, and what would you do differently?

What are you most proud of?

What do you hope to be remembered for?