



“Workshopping” Your Family History

In workshopping these questions, you will want to interview as many of your family members as reasonable in the limited time that you have. This may be 2 or 3 people or it may be several more. Talking to everyone is often not possible.

You may want to call a family gathering (if people live within some proximity) and take 2 or 3 hours going over your family genogram as you have crafted it, and welcome their reflection and input. You will probably be amazed at what you hear.

The questions on this paper are designed to help you listen to your own life and to the lives of your various family members. You will find that the questions will lead you into some of the “deeper areas” of your unfathomed family. You will also discover aspects of your own “forgotten” life.

You won’t ask all the people that you interview all the questions – perhaps only 1 or 2 questions will be appropriate for some members of your family.

Many of the questions are intentionally vague. This is to provoke you into thinking and wondering. The point of many of the questions is to lead you to the key “drivers” that motivate your life.

Go slowly over the questions; better yet, go prayerfully! There is no race to complete the questions. Some people complete the questions in just a few hours; for others, they will take a lifetime.

Have a great time.

1. What kind of lives did your parents / grandparents lead?
2. What is your position in the family?
3. Who was around when you were born? What was life like when you were born? What was your family like?
4. Whom were you named after? What difference does this make?

5. Where does your surname come from? How is this meaningful to you?
 6. What did they call you as a child? What were your nicknames?
 7. What medical problems did you have as a child? Were you thought of as sickly? Were you the healthy one of the family? What relevance is this to your life now?
 8. If you are married, did you change your name? What difference did this make (if you did or didn't)?
 9. What would you like to do with the years that you have left in your life?
 10. What sibling did you relate best to when you were growing up? Now?
 11. What parent do you relate best to? What parent did you relate best to?
 12. What 3 or 4 family gifts have been given to you?
- At this point the question move from history to a deeper reflection.
13. Who in the family were addicted to drugs or alcohol? Or to work? Or to sexual activity? Or to something else?
 14. What happens to people like you? What happens to people like you when you get old? What happens to people like you when you get into trouble?

15. What did your parents say to you when you were little? How has this made a difference in your growing up?
16. What was your favorite fairy tale as a child? Who did you identify with? Who do you wish that you could identify with?
17. How did your parents react when things got tough? How did you react? Your brothers and sisters? Relatives? Others?
18. What kinds of feelings bother you the most? What kinds of feelings do you lack most? Sadness? Fear? Anger? Longing/lust? Love? Joy? At home-ness? Others?
19. What did your parents talk about at the dinner table?
20. What were your parents' hang-ups? What motivated your parents to do what they did? To not do what they did not do?
21. What do you expect to be doing 5 years from now? (10 years, 25 years?)
22. What would you put on your sweatshirt so people would know it was you coming? What color would it be?
23. Who has committed suicide in your family? Who died suddenly? Who has died without reasonable explanation? Or tragically? How did this affect you?
24. What will you do in your old age? What will you think of yourself then?

25. How far ahead do you begin to worry about things? How long do you worry about things after they are over?

26. How do you show that you are suffering? How do you show that you are happy? How do you show that you are afraid? How do you show that you are angry?

27. How do you usually choose people? How do people usually choose you?

28. How do you usually benefit from others? How do you benefit from others in your family?

29. After you pray how do you feel? How do you feel before you pray?

30. If you could change one thing about your life, what would it be?