



GREAT QUESTIONS LIST

GREAT QUESTIONS FOR ANYONE

- Tell me about one of the most important people in your life.
- Tell me about the person who has had the greatest influence on your life. What lessons did they teach you?
- Who has been the kindest to you and why?
- Share some important lessons you've learned in life.
- Share some of your earliest childhood memories.
- Are there any funny stories people tell about you from when you were growing up?
- What have you accomplished so far—personally and professionally—that makes you proudest? Why?
- Tell me how you would like people to remember you.
- Would you be willing to share a happy or sad memory with me?
- Thinking about future generations, and knowing that they may hear this recording, is there wisdom or advice you would like to share with them?

FAMILY HERITAGE

- Tell me about some traditions that have been passed down through our family. When and how did they get started?
- Are there any classic family jokes, stories, or songs you can share with me?
- What do you see as our family's legacy?
- Where were our ancestors born? If they moved to the United States, when did they arrive?
- What are some of the jobs/careers held by past generations in our family?
- Of all the family members you have either known or heard stories about, who do you think lived the most interesting life? Why?
- What are your favorite family holidays, and why?

GRANDPARENTS

- Tell me about your parents.
- Tell me about your grandparents.
- Where did you grow up, and what was your childhood like?
- Share with me the story of how you and grandma/grandpa met.
- Tell me about when you found out you were going to be a mother/father.
- What was my mother/father like when she/he was growing up? Do you have any favorite stories about her/him?
- Do you remember any songs you sang to her/him when she/he was a baby? Can you sing any for me now?

GROWING UP & SCHOOL

- Tell me about where you grew up and what your childhood was like.
- Did you like going to school? Why/why not?
- What are your most vivid memories of school?
- Tell me about a teacher or other adult that impacted your life while you were growing up.
- What did you do during the summer when you were off from school?
- What jobs did you have when you were a teenager? What did you do with the money you earned?
- If you could go back and relive your teenage years, would you? Why/why not?
- Did you have a nickname? What was it, and how did you get it? Does anyone still call you by that nickname?
- Has your life been different from what you imagined as a teenager?



LOVE & RELATIONSHIPS

- Tell me about the love of your life.
- How did you meet your wife/husband/partner?
- Describe your first date with your husband/wife/partner.
- Describe your marriage proposal.
- Tell me about your wedding day. Did it go as you imagined?
- Where did you spend your honeymoon?
- What have you learned from your wife/husband/partner?
- Tell me about your happiest moments together.

WORKING

- What job do you currently hold, and what jobs have you held in the past?
- How did you find your way to your current job/career?
- Thinking of the jobs you've held, is there one that stands out as your favorite?
- When you were younger, what did you imagine your job would be?
- What lessons has working taught you?
- If you could choose any career, what would you pick? Why?

ELECTIONS & CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

- How do you feel affected by the current election?
- What elections stand out in your mind, and why?
- What was it like to vote for the first time?
- Has there ever been a time in your life when you wanted to vote, but were not able to? What was that like?
- What issues do you consider when choosing a candidate?
- What advice would you give to a first-time voter?
- What does civic participation mean to you?
- Has a changing role in your community, job, or home ever affected your civic participation?
- Over the years, have you changed your opinion about any major political issues? If so, which issues and why?

MILITARY SERVICE

- When were you in the military? Which branch did you serve in?
- What motivated you to join the military?
- Tell me about basic training. Were you prepared for military life? What were you unprepared for?
- Describe your daily life while in the service.
- What is the most difficult part of being in the military?
- Did you serve in a war zone? When and where?
- What lessons did your service teach you that you still carry with you?
- Describe your transition from military to civilian life. Was it easy or difficult? Why?
- If given the opportunity, would you serve in the military again? Why?

RELIGION AND SPIRITUALITY

- When you were growing up, what role did religion/spirituality play in your life?
- What does religion/spirituality mean to you, and what role does it play in your life today?
- Have you ever had a profound religious/spiritual experience? Will you tell me about it?
- What important lessons have your religious/spiritual beliefs taught you? Will you share them with me?
- Do you have any favorite religious holidays? What do they mean to you?



COVID-19-SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

- What has it been like for you to live through this pandemic?
- How has this experience made you feel?
- Are you afraid? What frightens you?
- What has given you comfort and hope during this time?
- What has been the most challenging part of this experience?
- How is this experience different from other historical events you've lived through?
- Do you or have you had COVID-19? What was that experience like for you?
- What memory of this time do you think will stay with you?
- Has this experience changed you? If so, how?
- What lessons have you learned from living through this pandemic?
- Is there anything you want to say to me given what we're living through at this moment?

QUESTIONS ABOUT THE BLACK LIVES MATTER PROTESTS

- What have been your thoughts and feelings as you've watched (and/or participated in) the Black Lives Matter demonstrations this year?
- What lesson(s) do you hope our country can take from this moment?
- What has been hardest for you at this time?
- What are your hopes for the future of this country?
- What are your dreams for me?

QUESTIONS ABOUT SEGREGATION AND CIVIL RIGHTS

- Do you have any stories about how segregation was for your family or you? How, if at all, has the ending of segregation changed your life?
- Do you have any stories that can help me understand any personal reaction you had to an incident of prejudice?
- Can you talk about how your family or you participated in the Civil Rights movement?
- How, if at all, has the Civil Rights Movement affected you personally?
- Can you talk about any barriers your parents or you have faced in education, housing, health, work, entertainment, shopping, or otherwise?
- If your family has not always been able to vote, what were the circumstances that kept them from voting?
- Do you have any stories about how things have changed for the better? Or any stories that show how things have not changed?