

# Home for the Holidays!

Ideas, prompts and conversation starters that inspire  
creative connection.

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# Introduction

The holidays are a special opportunity to bond with loved ones, share family stories, and learn from each other. In the midst of all the together time, strong emotions and festivities, it can also be hard to balance the desire to bond with family members with the demands of the day.

But it is important to have special moments with loved ones, and to take time to connect in a way that is productive, warm and inspiring!

These conversation starters, guiding questions and collaborative activities can be completed one-on-one or with larger groups, to create lasting memories.

## Conversation Sparks

### **Family History**

Family history conversations resonate when they are made relevant to the present day. This can be accomplished by going deeper than dates and names, and giving context to the stories that you're telling. Just as with any good story, family history conversations can benefit from character development, plot, conflict and resolution.

Family history conversations are more interesting when they're a two-way street. Encourage your loved one to speak freely, and ask probing questions. Even if you're hearing information that you've heard before or think you understand, ask about it again to hear it from a different angle in their own words, or to get new information from other parts of the story that may have been previously overlooked.

### **Family Folklore**

Nearly every region has a Bigfoot, Sasquatch or similar big furry guy (or gal!) who lives in the woods. Bigfoot, the Loch Ness Monster, the Wampus Cat and other legends are cryptids - creatures claimed to exist but never proven. Unless...could your family members have seen one? Perhaps they've come close. Ask your family about its folktale lore, and any close encounters they may have seen, heard, or learned through the grapevine.

### **Family Culture: Art, Craft, Food and More**

Where did Auntie's quilt come from? Why does Grandpa carve those designs? Exactly what is it that makes Cousin Ana's pozole taste so good? Art, craft and food are just three ways that culture is passed down through families. Even many of the songs we sing and the games we play through the generations begin and evolve before we are born. You would be pleasantly surprised at how much friendly competition can be had with a simple deck of cards or box of tiles! Whether you're playing dominoes or mah jong, Go Fish! or 42, use family game night to learn more about your roots.

## **Family Homes and Journeys**

Whether you're going over the river and through the woods, across an ocean, or just two houses away, journeys play one of the most important roles in the story of your family. Talk to your family about the journeys they made, and why. What drew them to a particular area? What motivated them to leave? If they've been in the same place for a while, how has it changed or stayed the same?

## **Memories of the past**

Memories don't have to be heavy to be priceless. Sometimes, memories of silly times or even challenging times can be priceless. Talk about family memories that changed you, challenged you, or always make you smile. What are some of your family's favorite memories of each other? What memories do older relatives have that younger people can appreciate or learn from? In what ways are younger people like ancestors that they have never met? Do they have shared interests, strengths or mannerisms?

## **Hopes for the future**

What memories and traditions do you hope your family continues? What are the most important values that you can share? Your family legacy is different from your estate, and the best things to carry into the future are intangible.

## **Activities**

### **Show and tell family photos**

Everyone brings a selection of family photos to discuss and share. Taking "photos of photos" is a good enough way to make sure everyone has at least some images that they'd like to keep, and technology has evolved to the point where basic prints can be taken from cell phone photos.

### **Conversation Starters**

Break up into small groups and explore thought starters like:

What do you remember about the day that (younger family member) was born?

What is your earliest memory of visiting (older family member)?

Can you remember when (younger family member) was born or joined the family?

### **Family History "Pictionary"**

Take a stack of index cards and write down collective family memories to draw. Keep it light hearted with subjects like pets, favorite dishes, or a vacation memory.

### **Time Capsule**

Have each person contribute a piece to include in a family time capsule that you store in a trunk, shelf or other safe place to be opened by future generations. Items can include copies of photos, handwritten notes, newspaper clippings or anything else that tells the story of your family through collected artifacts.

# Epilogue

The holidays are a time to celebrate older family traditions while making new ones. With these creative conversation starters and projects, connecting with family can not only be captured for future generations, but put good habits in place for closer connections all year long!

# Contact

Want to learn more about creative activities for closer family connection? Get in touch for 1:1 coaching sessions or [click here](#) to join my newsletter list to learn when new programs, ebooks or other helpful, inspiring content drops.