



Ask The Questions That Matter, Never Assume

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DNA testing is all the rage in today's day and age. It is great tool to help you find relatives and discover what ethnicities are in your heritage, but it is unable to describe to you the personality traits and adventures of your ancestors. The only way to achieve this blessed gift is to ensure that it is passed down from generation to generation. When people grew up with their grandparents or great-grandparents right next door or even living in the same home, those stories surfaced often and were instilled in the youngest of family members. Elders felt it was important to pass on family stories as part of the learning and growing process of the newest generation.

Today, many grandparents and parents live far from each other, or separately in the same town, thus hindering this natural exchange of ancestral facts. It is still as valuable as ever and we should put some time and effort into not only discovering our DNA, but also the wonderful stories that each and every family holds.

Start with your parents. They are the most familiar people in the world to us, but sometimes they can also be the most mysterious. You know them as parents, but how well do you really know them as people. What were they like growing up? What experiences most impacted their lives? Here are a few sample questions you could ask:

- In what ways do you think I am like you? And not like you?
- Who is the person that influenced your life the most?
- Is there anything you have always wanted to tell me, but never have?
- Is there anything that you regret not having asked your parents?
- What is your earliest memory?
- Who were your friends when you were growing up? What did you like to do?
- Do you know any stories about the history of the family name?

- What did you want to be when you grew up?
- How old were you when you met mom/dad, got engaged, got married? Tell me about your wedding.

I think you get the picture. If you draw a blank and need more help, check out sites on the internet like AgingCare.com. Basically, your goal is to open up the conversation and see where it takes you. And don't forget about your grandparents or great-grandparents, if you are lucky enough to still have them with you! The same questions work, and here are some additional ones:

- What are the most difficult and most rewarding things about growing older?
- What life advice would you like to pass along to your grandchildren?
- What were your children like when they were growing up?

The insight you gain from these questions could be the greatest gift ever. And remember to pass these gems of knowledge and family stories on to the next generation. They might not think to ask and wake up one day and realize how much they are missing. Remember the old saying, "It Takes a Village," and family is an instrumental part of that village! Be sure to ask today and "Do Not Assume" (DNA) that tomorrow is a given. You don't want to regret not taking advantage of learning about the true DNA of your family and what makes them tick!

As a member of the team at Independence Hill Retirement Community, I feel blessed to be a part of the Village where residents share their remarkable stories with us and we are able to take away life lessons daily. Stop by and let us show you around. Call Sherrill or Laura at 210-209-8956 for a tour today.

Independence Hill Retirement Resort Community is located at 20450 Huebner Rd., San Antonio, TX 78258. For more information, call (210) 209-8956 or visit www.independencehill.com.



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