

Tell Your Story! Children who know their family history are healthier and happier

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June 19, 2023



Coach Myrna June 19, 2023

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Tell Your Story!

Are you aware that children who know details about their family history-- where their parents and grandparents grew up, how they overcame difficulties, what their hopes and dreams were as a child or teenager, where certain family traditions came from, how their parents and grandparents met, what their first car or house was like--are emotionally healthier and happier? Dr. Marshall Duke and Dr. Robyn Fivush developed the "Do You Know...?" scale, sometimes called "The 20 Questions," that tap into different kinds of family stories. The questions were designed as a starting point for sharing family stories and the result was that knowing about one's family history gave rootedness in something bigger than themselves. The process of families sharing stories about their lives provides bedrock upon which to build our own future. The links at the bottom of this blog give more details about the research.

As a child, I remember visiting my mother's parents in Doylestown, PA where my grandfather had a shoe store. My mother told me that in the beginning, my grandfather would buy shoes in Philadelphia and sell them out of the trunk of his car before he opened a store. I was impressed with his entrepreneurship! My father, as the youngest of ten children, became his family's historian and has authored several books that provide a rich history of where I come from. As a teenager, I enjoyed wearing bib overalls, much to the amusement of my father. I learned that he was eager to put wearing bib overalls behind him when he entered high school. As the youngest son of a farmer, it was a practical thing to wear and often, the clothes were handed down because times were hard during WW2.

Whether you are a parent or a grandparent or even a beloved uncle or aunt, the children in your lives need to hear stories of where they came from. Below are some questions to get you started in the family tradition of telling your stories.

- Do you know how your parents met?
- What traditions did they have growing up?
- What was their first job?
- What was their favorite vacation?
- What were they doing/where were they living when you were born?
- Why did they choose your name for you?
- Where did your grandparents meet?
- What kind of work did they do?
- What kind of car did they drive?
- Who in the family do you most look like?

Resources:

Dr. Marshall Duke at Emory University:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=8jE_oaW-ezc

Dr. Robyn Fivush: www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/the-stories-our-lives/201611/the-do-you-know-20-questions-about-family-stories

To purchase my book on

Amazon: www.amazon.com/gp/product/B09L7KS5VH

If you would like to know more about what I offer as a coach, please visit my website: www.coachmyrna.org/ Find out more about Safe Conversations www.coachmyrna.org/safe-conversations.html.

