



Personal History

In this section we ask you to fill out a personal history to the best of your knowledge and return it. Your answers are key to figure out what age the person with Alzheimer's is living in their mind, the significant possessions to trigger fond memories and the individual attributes so we can remind them who they are. Knowing they are Catholic isn't enough. Knowing they have always carried around a rosary and recited a prayer every night before bed is priceless information. They may always have worn jewelry and now are crying or yelling, which we blame on Alzheimer's. In actuality, they are unable to communicate that they are upset because the jewelry they have worn for a lifetime is gone. We want to find out what the person enjoyed doing during the day in their own "home": folding clothes, stacking wood, sewing, gardening, cooking etc. Now simplify, simplify, simplify. They can no longer make a dress, but they can still sew on buttons, roll yarn, feel fabrics and talk about the memories - the experience triggers. We cannot give them back their memory, but we can give them an experience that triggers their whole memory and that's exciting!

It's also important to incorporate "habits of a lifetime". For instance, the person may have always taken a bath in the evening. So, if we give him/her give a sponge bath in the morning just to fit our schedule, it will only create confusion. We are all wonderfully different, with very different "habits of a lifetime"!

I recommend you give the questionnaire to a variety of people who are close to the person with Alzheimer's or Dementia. This not only makes the family member or friend feel like they are helping along the journey, but it also gives you a wide range of personal history. Enjoy diving into their history! We guarantee this journey will be easier and you will find more joy because you are giving them back their history, their accomplishments, and their fond memories. In other words, together we get to put a smile on their face, a comfort in their eyes, and a joy in their hearts.



Personal-History Questionnaire

1. Name: _____ Maiden Name: _____

2. Preferred to be called: _____

3. Name of person filling out form: _____
Relationship: _____

4. Please describe marital status and if they were married more than once.

5. What is their spouse's name?

6. Describe distinct characteristics of spouse (funny, hardworking, beautiful, smart):

7. What did spouse do during the day (baking, working (what kind of job), running errands, volunteer work, taking care of children, work in the field, at church, in the kitchen, visiting family/friends (give specific names), farm work)?

8. Do they have any children? _____ How many?
What are the children's names and type of relationship?

9. Do they have grandchildren (names and ages)? Are they close?

10. Significant others (who does the person talk about or ask for) and if not by marriage, how do they know each other?

11. What age do you think the person is living in their mind?

Do they ask for their spouse but do not recognize them?

Do they look for their children but do not recognize them?

Do they look for their mom?

Do they perceive them self as younger?

If yes, please describe _____

12. What is their exact bathing routine (morning or night, soap (bar or liquid), washcloth, sponge bath, tub or shower, what areas need assistance)? Is privacy of importance?

13. What is their exact morning routine (early riser or sleeps in, what areas need assistance, need for privacy, grooming before or after dressing, habits of a lifetime)?

14. What is their exact evening routine (time resident goes to bed, snacks, specific night wear, grooming, evening activity, how do they relax)?

15. What type of clothing does the person prefer (pants, dresses, shoes, color of clothing, hats)?

16. What will they get "cleaned up" for? (church, outing, friends coming over)

17. What makes this person feel valued (talents, occupation, accomplishments, family, hobbies)?

18. What items are significant (familiar) to them (favorite chair, sewing box, jewelry, furniture pieces, tools, purse, wallet, keys, hat, family pictures, heirlooms)? What is the story behind each item?

19. What are their "habits of a lifetime" (daily activities, housework they enjoy, nap time, usual eating times, smoking, drinking, walking, working, etc)?

20. Describe the "home" they remember (i.e. ranch, small town, farm, city).

21. Describe the person's personality prior to onset of disease (outgoing, introvert, etc.).

22. List significant interests throughout their life (i.e. hobbies, recreational, intellectual, job related, such as sewing, cooking, raking, fishing, gardening):

Age 8 to 20:

Age 20 to 40:

Age 40 to 60:

23. What is their religious background? (religious affiliation, prayer time, significant spiritual symbols, traditions, favorite verses, attending church)?

24. What is their cultural background?

25. What type of music did he/she like?

26. TV programs? Movies?

27. Can he/she tell the difference between someone on TV and a real person?

28. Does/did the person have musical ability?
If yes, what was the nature of his/her talents?

29. Are there any life traumas the person remembers and still struggles with (death of child or sibling, holocaust, being abused)? Describe:

30. What causes stress (noise, people, certain subject, getting dressed)?

Over

31. What calms the person down (poetry, favorite song, massage, familiar activity, hug, bible verse)?

32. Would the resident be comfortable going on scenic drives with other residents? Or might it cause stress? (do they get motion sickness?)

33. Other information that would help us bring joy to the person?

34. Describe a fond memory you have with this person.