

Conversation Starters: 20 Questions to Ask Your Parents

■ Marlo Sollitto

We care for our parents every day, in the most intimate of ways. But how well do we really know them? Our parents are the most familiar people in the world but also, sometimes, the most mysterious. Who are they as a person? What were they like when they were growing up? What experiences most impacted their lives? What were their hopes and dreams and regrets?

As adults, so many of us don't ask enough about our parents. Yet there's no better way to become closer to a person, even if you've known her all your life. AgingCare.com has gathered the questions that our elder care experts and editors would most like to ask their own parents. Try them out for yourself. You might gain a new perspective on your parents – and learn something about yourself.

1. In what ways do you think I'm like you? And not like you?
2. Who is the person who influenced your life the most?
3. Which new technology have you found most helpful in your life.....and which is most annoying?
4. Is there anything you have always wanted to tell me but never have?
5. Is there anything you regret not having asked your parents?
6. Do you wish anything had been different between us, or would you still like to change anything?
7. What was the happiest moment of your life?
8. What are you most proud of?
9. How did your experience in the military mold you as a person?
10. What are the most important lessons you've learned in life?
11. What is your earliest memory?
12. Did you receive an allowance? How much? Did you save your money or spend it?
13. Who were your friends when you were growing up?
14. What was your favorite thing to do for fun (movies, beach, etc.)?
15. What was school like for you as a child? What were your best and worst subjects?
16. What school activities and sports did you participate in?
17. Do you remember any fads from your youth? Popular hairstyles? Clothes?
18. What world events had the most impact on you?
19. Do you have a lost love?
20. How would you like to be remembered?

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