

Questions About Your Journey To Adulthood

The following questions are designed to help you think about the events and influences that helped shape you. This is an opportunity to reflect and talk about these important topics to get more insight into yourself, which is always a good thing. You don't need to explore any question if you don't want to. You may find it helpful to write your answers but it's ok if you don't.

1. What do you know about your birth and your family when you were born?
2. How would you describe your relationship throughout childhood with each of your parents, siblings, and any other significant family members? How did these relationships change as you aged?
3. What was your childhood understanding of what it meant to be an adult? A man? A woman? Who or what helped shape or represent this vision?
4. How were affection and nurturance (or their lack) shown in your family? Did this change over the years? How did your family express difficult emotions like anger, conflict, anxiety and sadness?
5. How were you disciplined and rewarded, and for what?
6. Who or what did you fear or worry about as a child?
7. How did you feel about yourself as a child and teen? What was your overall level of self-esteem?
8. What did you like to do, including any hobbies or special interests?
9. What losses, sadness or painful memories did you experience in childhood, and how did these affect you?
10. What do you know about the past generations in your family tree? What experience did your ancestors have with wars, famine, slavery, atrocities and other significant historical events? What's significant about your cultural heritage?
11. Describe any of abuse or misuse of power or authority over you. What are examples of times you felt shame or embarrassment? How did you cope with these difficulties?
12. How was school? How did you get along with teachers and other students? Any history of being bullied or teased?

13. How did you relate to your own body as you grew up? Any significant childhood illness or injuries?
14. What were your relationships like as a child and adolescent? Were you outgoing or shy?
15. What and how did you learn about money? What was your family's financial situation? How did you get, save and spend money?
16. What were you good at as a kid? What were your special interests or hobbies?
17. What were some "rites of passage" along your road to adulthood?
18. How did you learn about sex? How did your romantic and sexual feelings develop? What in this category would you consider traumatic, embarrassing, confusing or especially noteworthy? When and how did you learn about masturbation, and what was its role in your life? How did you talk about any sexual concerns or questions you had?
19. What role did alcohol and drugs have in your life?
20. Did you have any legal trouble? What about your family?
21. Describe your religious and spiritual development growing up.
22. How did you learn about your cultural and racial identity? Describe the messages you received and lessons you learned about race, culture and politics.

Now that you have reflected on these questions, consider how these categories may influence your life as an adult. How have these questions helped you to understand and appreciate yourself better? Consider talking about your answers with another person you can trust.