

e-Thoughts — Sharing life stories

December 2014 Newsletter



Our e-Thoughts feature provides close-up views on topics and areas of interest from everyday life.

Our multi-generational family always gathers over the holidays. Adults, elders, teens and youngsters all get together for a day or so.

It can be great fun but sometimes it's also stressful. Why?

- Some of the older set feels disconnected or that they “don’t matter” as much as they used to.
- Most of the kids are more interested in their tablets and video games than in their relatives.
- Those of us in the middle feel stressed about making it all work out!

We're trying something new this year

This year we're trying something to help bridge the generations. What we have in mind will create storytellers and listeners. We're hoping it will give the whole group a sense of the importance of each of our lives. Here's what we're planning...

Sharing with each other

Starting with the eldest family members, we're going to ask if they'll tell some of their life stories to us. We expect that a few may be shy or not know where to start. So we've prepared some icebreaker questions:

- What's your very first memory?

- What was the home like where you grew up?
- How much was your first allowance?
- Who were your best friends when you were a child?
- When did you get your first pet, bike or car?
- What was your favorite toy, food or holiday?
- Where did your parents work?
- As a child, what did you want to do when you grew up?

Saving the stories

Next, we're asking our tech-savvy kids to listen and make video and/or audio recordings of the stories. If elders are reluctant to talk, we may ask some of our middle-aged adults to get the ball rolling. Then maybe the elders will find it easier to join in.

Enjoying the process

We hope this will turn into a fun, interesting experience for all. We expect it to open lots of windows into our our loved ones' lives.

Consider trying it for your holiday. You don't need to be a family to do it. Friends can enjoy this pastime too.

Everyone can learn a lot about each other and what life was like in a different time or place. Who knows? The kids may even turn off their electronics for a while.