



Ardent Workshop

AN ARDENT WORKSHOP PRODUCT

Three Stories to Capture First

The three questions worth asking before any others — and room to write.

Free from Ardent Workshop



TELL ME YOUR STORY — BEFORE IT'S LOST

ardentworkshop.com

Three stories to capture first

If you only ever sit down once, sit down with these three. Print the page, put a phone on the table recording, and ask them one at a time — then **stop talking**. The pause will feel far longer to you than it does to them, and the real answer almost always arrives on the far side of it.

THE SMALLER LINE UNDER EACH QUESTION

That's the follow-up. Ask it **after** they've finished answering the first one, not to rescue a pause — its job is to get the second, better layer once the first is out.

1 Walk me through an ordinary day when you were eight years old, from waking up to going to bed.

› Who woke you? What did you eat? Who was in the house at night? · 2. Childhood

2 How did you and your partner meet? Tell it the way you'd tell a stranger.

› What did you think of them at first? Were you right? · 5. Love and Partnership

3 If this book is read by someone in this family a hundred years from now, what do you want to say to them?

› Say it directly to them — use their name if you like. · 10. Lessons and What You'd Pass On

What a captured answer looks like

This is one story from the worked example inside the paid journal — the same three-question method, written up. Notice what's been kept: her words, her rhythm, the specific objects. Not "she kept a tin of treasures under her bed."

The tin box under the bed · 2. Childhood · about 1949

› What was your most precious possession as a child?

"It was a cocoa tin. I kept a blue jay feather, two buffalo nickels, and a photograph of my father in his uniform that I wasn't supposed to have. I hid it under the bed and I checked it every single night before I slept. When we moved I carried it on my lap the whole way and my mother let me, which she never did with anything."

The Marchetti-Okafor family is invented, for illustration.

Then what?

Three stories is a real start, and more than most families ever manage. But a life doesn't fit on a page. The full **Life-Story & Memory Keepsake Journal** carries all 200 questions across ten eras — and, more to the point, a workbook that tells you which decade is still blank, which of the 57 Cornerstone questions are still open, and which conversation to have next.

THE FULL JOURNAL

A 10-tab workbook for Excel, Google Sheets and LibreOffice — a Story Coverage dashboard, the full 200-question Prompt Library, a Session Planner, a Story Register, a Life Timeline, a People & Places index and a Photos & Artifacts log — plus 63 pages of guides on how to ask. [See the full journal at ardentworkshop.com](https://ardentworkshop.com) ›

A keepsake, not advice. This page helps a family capture what one person remembers, in their own words. It is not medical, legal, financial, or mental-health advice, and it is not genealogical research. These conversations can reach grief and hard memories; if one surfaces distress beyond a difficult memory, stop and help the person reach real support.

© Ardent Workshop LLC. Free to use and print; please don't resell or redistribute.