

## **Life Review**

Life review involves looking back over one's life and recalling turning points, cherished memories, conflicts, achievements, perceived failures, successes, relationships, life changing events and anything else that was significant in the life of your loved one. Life review gives your loved one the opportunity to reminisce, finish unfinished business, and leave a legacy for you, family members and/or friends. It can bring about a sense of resolution, healing, meaning, and purpose to your loved one's life, all of which help achieve peaceful life closure.

Life review tends to be a natural process for those at the end of life as they try to make sense of their life and prepare for death by telling the story of their life. Chances are that you have probably been engaged in life review with your loved one without realizing it. Life review is simply asking questions about their life, listening to the answers, and being present with them as they reminisce and work through the process.

Life review does not have to be a formal process, nor does it need to be lengthy. As the caregiver, you can initiate life review at any time: while giving a bath, while cooking dinner, while waiting in the doctor's office, or while sitting together quietly in the evening. It can occur in short periods over time. As the caregiver, your greatest contribution in the life review process is to listen closely, identify and validate your loved one's feelings, and cherish the opportunity to be a part of your loved one's life review.

### Questions to Help Initiate Life Review

- What was the world like when you were growing up?
- What are your fondest memories of childhood?
- What significant historical events do you remember?
- What do you remember about being a teenager?
- What was your family like?
- Who were your closest friends when you were younger?
- What was your first work experience like?
- What were some of the "defining moments" of your life?
- Of what are you most proud?
- What role has religion played in your life?
- What is most important to you today?
- What was the happiest part or time of your life?

➤ **What would you like to be remembered for and who would you like to be remembered by?**