



Webinar Discussion Guide

Grandparents, Tell Your Story to the Next Generation

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Purpose

This guide provides prompts for discussion of the JGN webinar *Grandparents, Tell Your Story to the Next Generation: How to Pass on Your Legacy* led by Justin Mertes. Grandparent groups, social meet-ups, and program facilitators can view the recording together and use the following prompts to reflect on the legacy they want to leave and how they can engage their grandchildren in meaningful conversations about family values and stories.

Key Takeaways

- **Legacy as Connection:** Legacy is not just about passing down material items but sharing stories, values, and meaningful lessons with future generations. A legacy is a “collection of meaningful stories, values, and people that one passes down to future generations.”
- **Making Legacy Practical:** Engage with your legacy actively by reflecting on life milestones and meaningful relationships. Share the highs, lows, and pivotal moments that shaped who you are.
- **Themes > Anecdotes:** It’s easy to get lost in the sharing of stories... and once you start, it’s hard to stop! Zoom out to look at your life in themes, then pick the stories that are important to communicating those themes.

Tips and Tricks for Sharing Your Legacy with Grandchildren

1. **Prepare ahead of time:** You never know when the right moment will come for you to pass on your wisdom. By thinking through your story now, you'll be ready when the time comes!
2. **Preserve it while you can:** We never know when our last day will be—by prioritizing telling your story (however you can!), you'll ensure you steward your life's experiences well.
3. **Be honest about highs and lows:** By being vulnerable and embracing your full story, it will help your grandchildren relate to you as a person, not just as a grandparent
4. **Create Regular Legacy Moments:** Set aside regular times to share stories or talk about family history. This could be during holidays, birthdays, or family gatherings. These rituals can become something grandchildren look forward to.

Discussion Questions

- **Reflect on a Story:** What is one story from your life that you feel represents an important value or lesson? Why do you think this story should be passed on to future generations?
- **Engaging with Grandchildren:** What challenges have you encountered when sharing stories with your grandchildren? How have you adapted to make your stories engaging for them?
- **Handling Sensitive Topics:** Is there a challenging story from your life that you would like to share with your grandchildren? How might you approach this topic in a way that is constructive and meaningful?
- **Legacy and Values:** What are some of the core values you hope to pass down to your grandchildren? How can you incorporate these values into your storytelling?
- **Memorable Connections:** Share a time when you felt deeply connected to your grandchildren through a story or activity. What made that moment special, and how can you create more opportunities like it?
- **Looking to the Future:** What goals or dreams do you have for your family's future? How might sharing your legacy now impact how future generations view family history and values?