

From Chapter 3: Biographical Statements

Birth/Early Childhood

- Where and when were you born?
- Were there any complications at your birth?
- What do you remember or were told about your first few years of life?

Family

- Parents
 - Are your parents alive?
 - Are your parents still together?
 - If your parents are no longer living, what do you recall about their deaths?
 - What do you know about your parents' history?
 - If you had three words or brief phrases to describe your mother what would they be?
 - If you had three words or brief phrases to describe your father, what would they be?
 - What was the most important thing you remember learning from your mother?
 - What was the most important thing you remember learning from your father?
 - How would you describe the relationship between your parents?
- Siblings
 - Do you have siblings?
 - What are the ages of your siblings?
 - Are all your siblings still alive?
 - If you had siblings who are now deceased, what do you remember about their deaths?

Excerpted from *The Healing Power of Writing:
A Therapist's Guide to Journaling with Clients* by Susan Borkin.

- Dynamics
 - What was your birth order?
 - Who were you closest to in your family?
 - Who were you the least close to in your family?

School & Education

- What was the start of school like for you?
- Generally, how did you do in school?
- Do any incidents stand out about the years you were in school?

Home & Neighborhood

- Did you move around much or did you live in one home for most of your life?
- Did you grow up in a city, in the country, in a suburb?
- Describe whatever you can remember about the neighborhood you grew up in?
- What do you recall about the home(s) you lived in as a child?
- Do any incidents stand out regarding your neighborhood?

Meal Times

- Did your family eat together?
- What do you recall about meal times when you were growing up?
- What was the atmosphere like at meal times?
- Do you recall where various members of your family sat during meal times?
- What was the atmosphere like at meal times?
- What were the attitudes about eating and food in your family?

Religion & Spirituality

- Did you practice a religion growing up?
- What religion was it and what do you remember about it?

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- Did your religion or spiritual practice as a child influence you as an adult?

Health & Medical

- Did you have any serious or unusual medical problems when you were younger?
- Were you ever hospitalized?
- What do you remember about your hospitalization experience?
- Did any other members of your family have any serious or unusual medical problems when you were younger?

Traumatic Events

- Was there any alcohol or substance usage in your family?
- Was there any sexual abuse in your family? If so, what do you recall?
- Do you recall any particularly traumatic events in your childhood and adolescence?