

ROADMAP

Introduction

Potential Job Assignments

Suggested Packing List

Forms & Documents

- › Sample Family Survey
- › Blended Family Tree

Reunion Check In

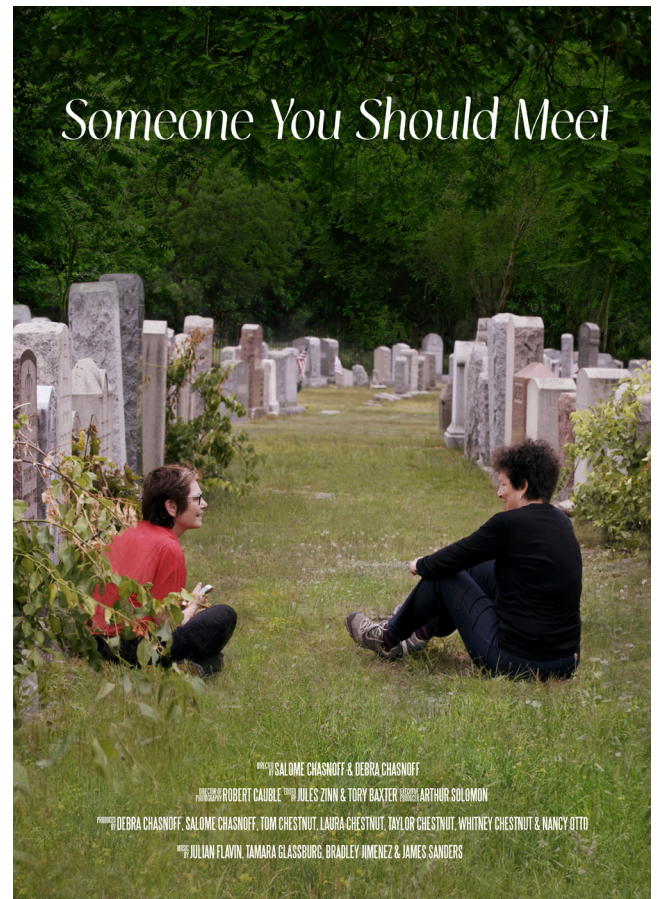
Sample Itinerary

Suggested Activities

- › Scavenger Hunt
- › Cross the Line - Icebreaker
- › Family Tree Activity
- › Storytelling by Branch
- Collectively Construct Your Family History
- › Interview Questions
- › Video/Audio Closet
- › Discussions by Decades Across Branches
- › Closing Activity

Audio/Video Recording Release Form

A Reunion Guide to (Re)discovering Your Family
Inspired by the Film *Someone You Should Meet*



WATCH THE FILM



Send questions or feedback to: salome.chasnoff@gmail.com

by Salome Chasnoff

Welcome to the *Someone You Should Meet* Reunion Workbook!

Maybe you've seen the film. Maybe you downloaded the workbook because you want to make your next family reunion really special. Maybe you teach or lead a genealogy course and you're always hunting for resources. In any of these instances, you've come to the right place.

The film, *Someone You Should Meet*, takes us inside a once-in-a-lifetime family reunion that begins to unfold when two filmmakers are surprised to learn that their grandfathers had been brothers. Their shared journey spans six generations to uncover fractured family roots and a complex, evolving sense of Jewish identity. But ultimately, it is a story of the power of belonging.

When I began showing early drafts of the film, I wanted people to give me feedback about structure, character development, and suggest editing changes to make it stronger. Instead, they were fixated on the reunion itself: they wanted to know how we put it together, what was the process that resulted in such an interesting and effective gathering.

I decided to pull together the many documents I developed with my cousin and co-director, Debra Chasnoff, and her wife and co-producer, Nancy Otto, that would undergird our weekend; and to share them with viewers who might want to create their own event. If you don't have the luxury of devoting an entire weekend to your reunion, consider cherry picking from the Workbook for whatever fits into your time frame and works for your unique family.

You don't have to be Jewish to appreciate or utilize *Someone You Should Meet*. It's a particular story with universal implications. It's also a depiction of a memorable event where family members:

- Become closer and more deeply known to each other;
- Face and release old hurts and grudges;
- Share potentially life-changing information.

By watching the film, you'll see clips of the workbook materials in action. Together, they constitute a turn-key guide for a multi-generational event. Modules include: tools for planning your event; interview questions for unpacking family history; games and icebreakers; meetings by generation, health issues, profession, special interests; and where do we go from here?

How this film and workbook, used together, can serve as a roadmap to a reunion for your unique family:

- Create a more meaningful gathering that can strengthen relationships.
- Get cover-to-cover logistical guidance.
- See ways to approach family conflict.
- Learn about activities that will draw out stories for young family members and future generations.
- Grow a sense of identity as a family, grounded in your specific history.
- Gain insight into how you carry your family history as an individual, and how your family history expresses itself through you.

BACKSTORY

I created this project with my cousin, Debra Chasnoff (Chas). We had already lived most of our lives unaware that we were family. On discovering our connection, we celebrated our new relationship, but we also lamented the lost years we could have shared.

We were fascinated to see the many connections and uncanny similarities in our lives. We were both filmmakers focusing our lens on marginalized stories and social justice education, and we both started niche media organizations to expand access for underrepresented and misrepresented voices. We wondered if DNA had anything to do with it! We also wondered how and why our grandfathers became separated from each other. So of course, as filmmakers, we said, "Let's make a movie!" Or, in filmmaking terms, we decided to bring the whole "documentary apparatus" to a family gathering where we'd meet as many relatives as possible, delve into our common history and try to understand what "family" means – in all its complexity.

We saw this project as a blessing to our relationship and as an opportunity to reunite, even heal, the estranged branches of our family. That decision set us on a thrilling journey of discovery. Finding over 100 new relatives was an incredible mid-life gift — especially for Chas, who had a successful career, an amazing family and a close-knit community of friends, but no connection to her extended family.

Chas' isolation from the larger family came with a tragic price. Six months prior to the reunion, she was diagnosed with breast cancer. At the gathering, we learned that two branches carried the BRCA gene, and over the years, our clan had lost many women to breast cancer. Chas died 18 months after our reunion, and I lost my beloved co-conspirator. I ended up having to edit the film without her and in many ways, her death became the heartbeat of the film.

It is my hope, in sharing the *Someone You Should Meet Workbook*, that others are encouraged to follow through on that urge to discover new family – or to rediscover the one you already have. However your journey unfolds, let this workbook help inspire you along the way.

BEFORE THE EVENT

INSTIGATOR(S)

They are the driving force behind the event, the people who form the head and heart of the steering committee, shape the vision, develop the early blueprint, and get everyone else on board. They hold all the information from start to finish and serve as the communication hub, the effective center of the event. They plan the activities and make sure that required equipment and supplies will be on hand.

PARTICIPANT COORDINATOR

The person in this role sends out an initial survey (or surveys) during the planning stages to gather contacts and reunion-related information (see Introductory Questionnaire as an example). They use it to create a family directory and job assignments, to discern special needs and interests. This information – gathered into one massive spreadsheet or separated into discrete documents – is regularly updated. Family members can track who is responding and who is coming to the reunion. They can help reach those who haven't yet been included. This information should be digital but it can also be printed as a handout at the event registration table.

TREASURER

The Treasurer can be the Venue Planner (see below) or someone else – as long as it's someone who is comfortable with basic accounting. The Treasurer must work with the venue to determine all costs and a payment schedule as well as with attendees to fully and clearly communicate financial expectations and oversee collections. Will there be other expenses besides lodging and meals? A "family fund" to cover miscellaneous expenses? An additional beverage fund? Side trips during a multi-day reunion? A travel fund for airfare support? Think through your event carefully with the Instigators and Venue Planner(s) before announcing costs to family members.

RIDE BOARD/TRIP PLANNER

How will attendees get to the venue? Do rides need to be coordinated? Will some family members who are traveling long distances need financial support to be able to attend? These are some of the considerations to keep in mind. Make sure to provide individualized, reliable directions to reach the venue – especially if it's situated in a rural area that might not be accessible by GPS.

VENUE PLANNER(S)

The research required to find the appropriate venue can be done by the Instigators or by someone else on your steering committee: Will this be a local site or is your family spread out across the state or the country (or beyond!)? How many attendees are you expecting? What is your age range? What are your family's accessibility needs? Will you require overnight lodging? What is your budget? What kinds of activities will you need to accommodate? Will it be a BYO or an all-inclusive affair? Whatever you decide, make sure there's a room large enough for the entire family to gather comfortably and break-out rooms for smaller conversations. Think expansively. Your event can take place anywhere that can accommodate your group: a house of worship, a hotel or conference center, a club or community center, a vacation rental. Send out information about the venue in advance – a brochure or a website link with photos – before asking people to put down a deposit.

ROOM ASSIGNER

If this is an overnight or multi-day gathering, have someone act as the liaison to the venue. They should gain a grasp of the layout to ensure each attendee has a suitable room, appropriate to their physical needs. Other considerations may include keeping some family members together or keeping others apart (for now). In addition to sleeping arrangements, the Room Assigner will work with the Instigators to figure out in advance where each activity will take place. Keep in mind how much space each activity will require, what if any amenities (A/V, whiteboard, chairs, tables, etc.) will be needed, and how long it will take participants to get from room to room.

BEVERAGE COORDINATOR

Will the venue allow you to BYOB? The beverage coordinator should survey family members to predetermine preferences and figure out how best to satisfy them. And bring plenty of water if the venue doesn't provide it!!

MENU PLANNER

Will you be bringing the food, or will the venue provide it? In either case, you'll need 3 satisfying meals/day plus plenty of snacks. Be sure to determine food needs in advance, ranging from special diets to s'mores fixings for the campfire. Will you be celebrating any birthdays? Who will bring the cake(s)?

WEBSITE CREATOR

A tech-savvy person is needed to create a centralized hub for all the files and images you'll generate throughout this process. Having a website can facilitate organization and communication in the lead-up to the reunion and at the event itself. It can also hold additional information (photos & videos, newsletters & announcements, archival documents, links to memoirs, etc.) to be used for years to come by future generations. You may also want to consider a phone app designed especially for family reunions. A phone app can hold family profiles, a family tree, messaging capabilities before and during the event, RSVPs, maps, schedules, payments, and so on.

WEBSITE MAINTAINER

As information changes or gets filled in, someone will need to reflect this on the site. If your family chooses to maintain the site after the reunion to share news, etc., who will keep it updated?

HISTORIAN

Every family has one! During the planning phase, maybe your Historian can start gathering materials to offer a sneak preview: anecdotes, photos, memorabilia, letters, timeline elements, or even a family tree. Perhaps your Historian can bring an activity to the reunion that involves everyone present and is designed to continue the research together.

DETECTIVE

Find someone who can do some sleuthing to locate missing family members and try to get them to attend the reunion! We had one person in each branch doing this job.

KEEPSAKE CREATOR

Many families enjoy taking a keepsake home to help them remember the gathering — an original t-shirt or tote bag, a photo album, a memory book, a tree ornament. Get creative!

NAME TAG MAKER

This was a big job in our family. Many people were meeting each other for the first time. We wanted enough information to facilitate connection while keeping the tag legible. We chose a simple graphic and a color scheme to resonate with the setting (a summer camp). We used a different harmonizing color for each family branch. The tag identified the person by name, place of residence, and family branch. People wore their name tags all weekend.

AT THE EVENT

CHECK-IN / REGISTRATION

Assign two or more people to welcome attendees as they arrive, check them in, hand out name tags, lodging information, job assignment, the weekend schedule, and any other documents particular to your gathering. In our case, we asked folks to sign video releases.

STAGE MANAGER

This is the person who leads whole-group activities (ice breaker, family history discovery, talent show, etc.). They always have the weekend schedule in hand with time and location for each activity, a map of the venue, and the cell phone number of each activity lead. They see to it that everything runs on time and they identify and solve problems as they arise. The Stage Manager can designate a support team to let people know what the next activity is, where it's taking place, and help them find their way if needed.



GAMES COORDINATOR

In addition to whole-group and small-group storytelling activities, you might want to schedule physical activities like team sports to enjoy during breaks. Our extended family has a higher-than-average number of yoga teachers, so we offered morning yoga. The camp also had an old-school game room with ping pong, etc., so our coordinator made sure everything was equipped and functioning. Because our reunion took place at a camp, we offered softball, badminton, boating and swimming. In addition, tennis and basketball courts were available. To cover all eventualities, find out if you'll need to resolve any liability issues with the venue in advance of your event.

CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES COORDINATOR

Providing activities for smaller children, like arts & crafts or low-key carnival games, lets them get to know each other while giving parents a break.

VIDEO/AUDIO CLOSET FACILITATOR

The Video/Audio Closet offers a way for people to share stories in a private setting. They can be recorded solo or in pairs, on video or just audio. Provide sample questions (ours are included below) to inspire reflection. Some of the best stories might result when children interview parents or grandparents. You can give detailed instructions for people to record in privacy, or you can position someone in the space to operate the technology.

AUDIO/VISUAL TEAM

The person/people in this position should contact the venue in advance to research the A/V setup. Think about the various activities and events on your agenda that will require A/V to anticipate additional equipment needs or on-the-spot snafus.



SMALL-GROUP DISCUSSION FACILITATORS

Facilitators should belong to the discussion group they lead: e.g., family branch, people in their 40s, meetup by profession or health issue. Discussion questions can be provided in advance by the Instigators or developed collaboratively in a meeting before the reunion.

PHOTOGRAPHERS

You will want lots of photos documenting the entire event. Identify people in advance who are willing to assume this assignment. Don't take it for granted that people will take pictures. Sometimes we get caught up and forget to take pictures! Take several whole group photos that can include your photographers! Who can take it that doesn't need to be in it? Find a good location for the whole group photos in advance.

MUSIC/PERFORMANCE COORDINATOR

Will you have a talent show and a campfire with a drum circle? Will you stage an all-family jam session? Is karaoke your jam? Or maybe just a good old-fashioned dance party with someone DJing. Whatever you choose, make sure to assign this job to the person or people in your family with the passion, know-how and resources to do it right.



Suggested Packing List

We sent this packing list out to our family with a brief explanation of what our lodging would provide and what to expect. While everyone might not use all your suggestions, it can be a guide that saves people time and helps them prepare for your event.

The camp provides all needed bed linens, blankets, pillows, and towels for showers. It has a full dining room, a lake, a swimming pool, and a movie screening room.

Reunion activities will include a drum circle, sing-along, and yoga opportunities. We will probably have limited access to basketball, tennis, and softball facilities. Phone service is difficult, but there is Wi-Fi in the dining room. Dogs are not allowed. The dress will be camp casual.

- Prescription medications and OTC aids
- Casual clothes for 2 full days including at least 1 long pants and sweatshirt/fleece for cool evenings
- Yoga or athletic apparel
- Rain Jacket
- Umbrella
- Swimsuit
- Beach towel
- Beach/shower cover-up
- Floaties for Children
- Shoes for beach/boats
- Athletic shoes
- Mosquito repellent
- AfterBite stick
- Sunscreen
- Hat and sunglasses
- Camera
- Water bottle and portable coffee mug
- Musical instruments (for drum circle - doesn't have to be elaborate - shakers/spoons, etc)
- Hairbrush, shampoo, conditioner, shower gel (they only have soap in the bathrooms)
- Moisturizers and Chapstick
- Toothbrush, paste, floss
- Deodorant
- Extra pair of glasses/contacts and solution
- Chargers (phone, ipad, hearing aids, etc.)
- Book, book light
- Flashlight (with extra batteries?)
- Notebook/journal
- Plastic bag for wet bathing suit/laundry
- Small day pack for around camp
- Pen
- Business/contact cards
- Snacks
- Tennis racket/shoes/balls; Basketball shoes; softball glove
- Songbook
- Family pictures and archival documents if you'd like them on the website - either on a flash drive or we can scan them



INTRODUCTORY QUESTIONNAIRE

Please fill out this survey so we can start getting to know each other. Even if you are not planning to come to the reunion, we are still hoping to collect some basic information on everyone in the family to help people start making connections, and to create a directory. If you have information on a relative, please feel free to complete a profile for them also.

Please submit this form by [date] to be part of the reunion directory.

If you have any questions please contact the Participant Coordinator at [your@email.com]

I am filling this out for someone else

- Yes
- No

Johnson Family Connection (Choose 1)

Children of James & Joan Johnson

- John Johnson
- Jane Johnson Jones
- Jim Johnson
- Jack Johnson
- Other:

How many generations are you from James & Joan Johnson?

Street Address

City

First, Middle & Last Name

Date of Birth

Email Address

Mobile Phone Number

Home Phone Number

State

Country

INTRODUCTORY QUESTIONNAIRE (CONT.)

Introductory Paragraph

Briefly tell us a little about yourself (interests, experiences, etc.)

High School(s)

Occupation Highlights

What if any special needs (diet, accessibility, etc.) should the organizers be aware of?

Can you contribute to a travel fund to assist those who can't afford to come otherwise?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

May we highlight something about you on the reunion website?

- Yes
- No

Higher Education with Area of Study (if applicable)

Are you interested in attending an in-person reunion?

- Yes
- No

Would you be interested in helping organize?

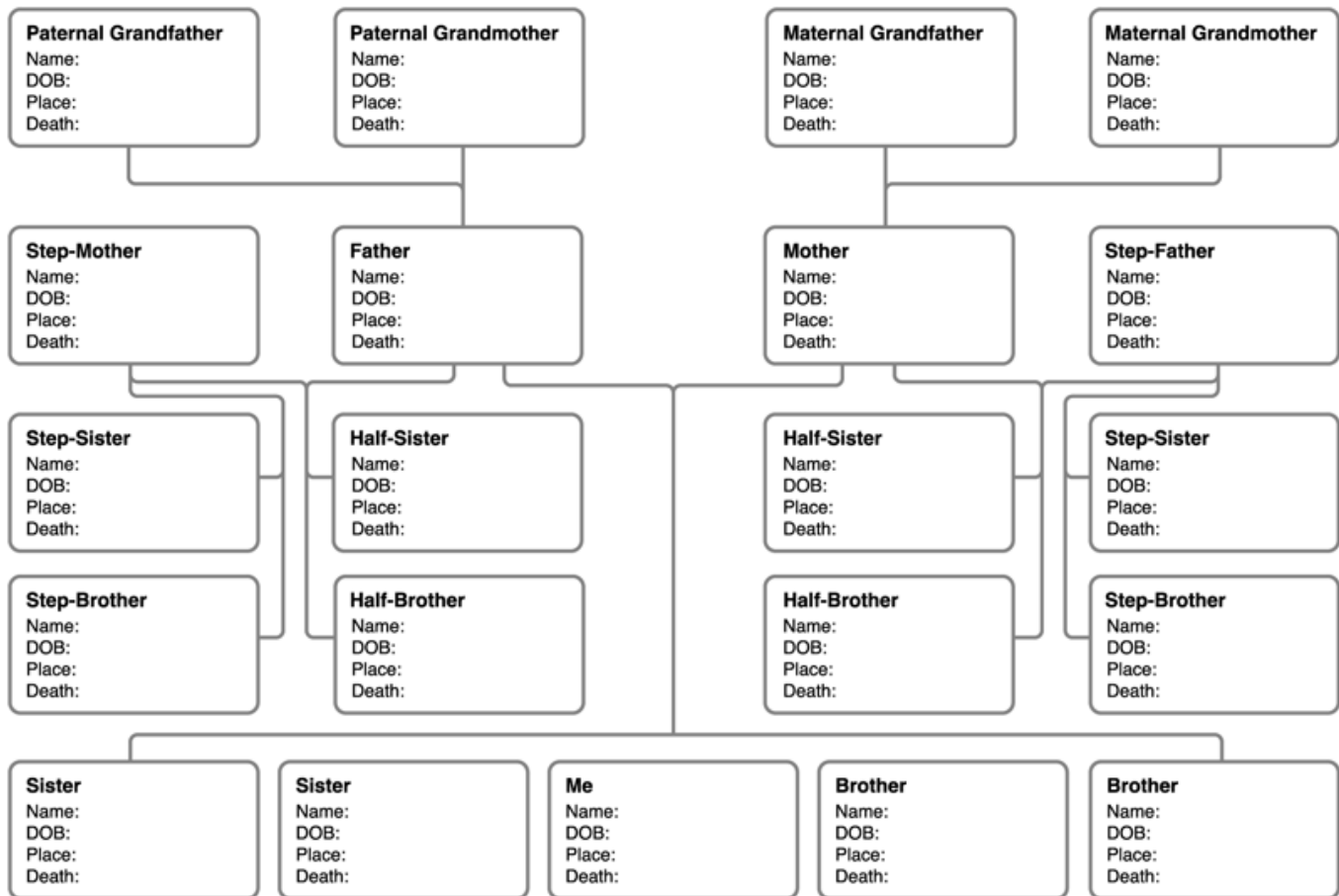
- Yes
- No

What are the skills/talents/interests you have to offer the gathering?

Comments/Suggestions

BLENDED FAMILY TREE

Blended Family Tree



- Room Number & Location
- Name Tag
- Weekend Itinerary
- Attendee Directory
- Job Assignment
- Video Release Sign, if applicable
- Any additional forms or documents for your event
- Venue Map

It's also helpful to include materials provided by your reunion venue (hotel, cruise, campground, etc) to give them specifics such as lodging details and amenities.

Sample Itinerary

FRIDAY

3:00pm - 5:00pm	Check In Swimming, Table Games
5:00pm - 6:00pm	Welcome Reception & Scavenger Hunt Activity
6:00pm - 7:30pm	Instigators' Intro & Dinner
7:30pm - 7:45pm	Venue/Event Tour: Lay of the Land in a Nutshell
7:45pm - 8:15pm	Icebreaker: Cross the Line
8:15pm - 8:30pm	BREAK
8:30pm - 9:30pm	Our Roots Story Family Tree Activity
9:45pm - Bedtime	Campfire & Music

SATURDAY

7:30am - 9:00am	Breakfast & Announcements
9:15am - 10:30am	Meet by Family Branch: prepare for evening presentation
10:30am - 11:00am	BREAK
11:00am - 12:15pm	Free Time: Organized Games, Children's Activities, Swimming & Boating, Video/Audio Closet
12:15pm - 12:30pm	Full Group Photo
12:30pm - 1:30pm	Picnic Lunch
1:30pm - 2:30pm	Discussions by Decade Across Branches Free Time: Organized Games, Swimming & Boating, Video/Audio Closet

SATURDAY

5:00pm - 6:00pm	Gather by Professions & Special Interests, with Drinks
6:15pm - 7:15pm	Dinner & Announcements
7:30pm - 8:15pm	Story Sharing by Branch
8:30pm - 9:30pm	Talent Show & Line Dancing
9:45pm - Bedtime	Campfire & Music

SUNDAY

7:30am - 9:00am	Breakfast & Announcements
9:15am - 10:15am	Small Group Discussions: Topics Generated From Attendees (Health Issues, Meet by Geographical Location, etc.)
10:15am - 10:30am	BREAK
10:30 am - 11:15am	Next Steps
11:15am - 12:15pm	Closing Activity
12:30pm - 1:30pm	Lunch & Departure (Check Out Coordinator)



SCAVENGER HUNT: GET TO KNOW YOUR RELATIVES

The purpose of this activity is to get into conversations with each other quickly; not to linger too long or quibble about the correct answer. If you've learned just one thing about each other, you've done it right! Approach someone, fill in the name of that person under one description, then move on to the next person. The goal is to connect with as many people as possible in the time allowed!

I have produced a film

I am an athlete

I am a visual artist

I am a performing artist

I am a writer

I am a musician

I regularly do yoga, Pilates, meditation, et al

I work (ed) in or like Science

I work(ed)/ want to work in fitness/healthcare

I work (ed) / want to work as a teacher

I have one or more pets in my family

I have taken an unusual vacation

I have/had my own business

I have an unusual hobby

I am someone from a different branch of the family

CROSS THE LINE – ICEBREAKER

The objective of this activity is to learn about each other through the lens of similarities and differences.

What you'll need:

- Tape or string to make a line across the floor.
- A room big enough to hold your whole group lined up along one side. Move any chairs out of the way.
- Prepared questions that relate to your event.

Procedure

1. Create a line on the floor.
2. Direct everyone to stand on one side of the line.
3. As the facilitator, you should be off to the side, not the center of attention but able to see everyone.
4. Explain that you will read a series of statements starting with, "Cross the line if..." They should step to the other side of the line if the statement is true for them.
5. Read each statement: "Cross the line if...(e.g., you came to the reunion in a car; you came to the reunion on a plane from another part of the country; you came to the reunion on a plane from a different country; you will be going to a new school next Fall; you are an artist; you work in a healthcare profession.)." Participants should step across the line or remain behind the line in accordance with their response to the statement.
6. Ask participants to look around to see who is standing with them and who is not. Don't rush the process. Give them time to observe and reflect.
7. Then ask them to go back to the starting side of the line. Pause before reading the next statement.



FAMILY TREE

If you don't have a family tree already and this is something people want, use the planning phase of the reunion to get the ball rolling – or the seeds planted, I should say. Ask the Historian to take the lead on this project.

In advance of your event, family members should share as much information as they have access to. Tell them to try to distinguish facts from guesses and assumptions. Choose a format or template for your Family Tree. You'll find lots of options online. Find one that suits your family structure. We chose Blended Family Tree as our example because it captures so many families today.

Print the Family Tree on banner-size paper at a commercial copy shop. Hang it up in the central meeting room at the reunion. Provide plenty of writing utensils. Will these be pencils & erasers, pens, colored pencils, markers? This decision has consequences! On the first night of your event, when you are exploring your family history together for the first time, give people time to study the Family Tree, confer with each other, and fill in missing information or correct any errors they see. Leave the Family Tree up all weekend so people can revisit it and add information as they make discoveries.

STORYTELLING BY BRANCH – COLLECTIVELY CONSTRUCT YOUR FAMILY HISTORY

This two-part activity is both rewarding and self-led. Part One takes place in the morning. Each branch meets separately to construct a collective history by stitching together the bits and pieces of story and memory contributed by the family members present. They then decide on the presentational mode that suits their story.

Part two takes place that evening, when each branch presents their story to the rest of the family in their own distinctive style. In our case, the performance choices showed us as much about each family as the stories they told. The two eldest members of the largest branch served as narrators, frequently pointing out their cousins' contributions and creating spaces for them to jump in. The smallest branch chose to remain seated and trade vivid anecdotes back and forth. Another branch appointed a solo narrator. And for the closing presentation, the whole group took the stage and each person spoke in their own voice to tell their piece of their story.

This activity gave everyone a heightened appreciation of our shared family history and strengthened our relationships through collective storytelling.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS – MAIN CAMERA

You won't see this listed as an activity on the Sample Itinerary because we built a movie set for the main camera/crew and shot interviews there throughout the weekend. We called these interview questions "main camera" because we asked everyone we interviewed the same questions, for continuity. But you don't have to be making a film at your reunion to use these questions. Use them or questions like these that are appropriate for your family if you want to create a large family portrait or a continuum of thoughts, feelings, positions and stories that constitute "your family." This list includes questions and terms that are specific to our family history. Of course, change them!

1. What origin stories or roots stories were you told about being a <FAMILY NAME>? What does being a <FAMILY NAME> mean to you?
2. Which version of <FAMILY NAME> was/is your family name? (Ask only if the last name has been changed within or between the branches of the family.)
3. What does "family" mean to you? Has its meaning changed since your childhood? Does it carry the weight of legacy or is it something fresh and new? Is it a choice or a destiny?
4. Do you have any family stories to share? [Ask people in advance to bring an object if they have something, like an heirloom or treasured object or family memorabilia.]
5. Tell a story about the most senior family member you remember.
6. How do you identify religiously? How do you practice?
7. What does being Jewish mean to you? What is your relationship, if any, with religious or ethnic life?
8. What is your position on Israel? How do you relate to the existence of the state of Israel?
9. Do you relate to Ukraine? What, if anything, does it mean to you? Do you see it as the ground of our family's roots? Our "homeland"? Or is it just a faraway place that your ancestors came from?



VIDEO/AUDIO CLOSET (SELF-MANAGED RECORDING)

The purpose of the Video or Audio Closet is very different from the exercise above ("Main Camera"). The Closet allows people to record unique stories in a private setting. They don't need to resonate with anything or anyone else. They stand alone. These stories and interviews can be recorded solo or in pairs.

Find a quiet place – away from all the excitement – where people can get centered, recall their long-held memories, and focus on storytelling. Make sure that the ambient sound at the Video/Audio Closet location won't interfere with recording.

SET UP:

A camera on a tripod, 2 chairs, instructions & prompts. People have the option to interview in pairs or talk by themselves to the camera. An audio-only option should also be offered.

If you prefer, assign someone to manage the Video Closet, operate the camera, keep track of the footage, and provide any assistance people might need.

Suggested prompts (to be tweaked or individualized for your family):

GENERAL (LOW-RISK) QUESTIONS:

- What is your job? Or, if you are still in school, what is your year/major?
- How would you describe your lifestyle?
- What are some of your favorite activities?
- How would you describe your political profile?
- What's your favorite place to visit and why?
- What is one of your favorite memories?
- Where would you like to live, if you had a choice?
- What's your favorite kind of music?
- What do you love/hate to eat?
- What was your best subject in school?
- Do you have any unique hobbies or habits?

Consider more personalized prompts.

Our included these:

- Did you know that Machman and Judith belonged to a collectivist community?
- What does that mean to you?
- Can you see the urge to be part of something express itself in your life?

VIDEO/AUDIO CLOSET (SELF-MANAGED RECORDING)

FAMILY IDENTITY

- Are there certain traits you think of as <INSERT LAST NAME> traits?
Do you feel like you have any of these traits?
- What is/was your <INSERT LAST NAME> parent like? Your <INSERT LAST NAME> grandparent?
- What is your favorite memory of your <INSERT LAST NAME> parent?
Your <INSERT LAST NAME> grandparent?
- Who has been the most important <INSERT LAST NAME> family member in your life or the biggest influence?
Could you talk about that person?
- Can you recall any funny stories or memories or characters from the <INSERT LAST NAME> side of your family?
- Is there anything in our family history that you feel uncomfortable about?
- Could you talk about it?
- Do you think other family members know about this?
- How does that make you feel?
- How did the <INSERT LAST NAME> name feature in your life?
- What do you think about immigrants feeling they need to change their names to succeed in the US?
- Using the <INSERT LAST NAME> family as an example, what richness might immigrants bring to a new country?

PERSONAL HISTORY

- What is your earliest memory?
- What was your childhood like?
- What was a really happy moment in your life?
An especially sad moment?
- Are there any funny stories your family tells about you that come to mind?
- How would you like to be remembered?
- What are the most important lessons you've learned from your family?
- If you have children, what are your hopes for their futures?
- Is there anything that you've never talked about regarding your family but want to talk about now?
- Who were your favorite relatives and why, or who did you feel closest to?
- Do you remember any of the stories they used to tell you?
- What was your relationship with them like?
- Describe your siblings.
- Without naming names, are there any unexpressed issues in your family history?
- Have you sat with any secrets? You don't have to describe them if you don't want to, but can you paint or describe the emotion you feel?

WORK

- What do you do for a living?
- How did you get into that line of work?
- Is there any member of the family that inspired or influenced your vocational path or interests?

VIDEO/AUDIO CLOSET (SELF-MANAGED RECORDING)

RELIGION

- What is your religion?
- How does it show up in your life?
- What was the most profound spiritual moment of your life?
- Do you believe in God?
- Do you believe in the afterlife?
- How do you feel about religion in relation to your family?
- Do you have a connection to <INSERT FAMILY RELIGION(S)>?

FOR GRANDCHILDREN INTERVIEWING GRANDPARENTS

- Where did you grow up?
- What was your childhood like?
- Did your life turn out as you thought it would or were you surprised? If so, then how? Are you happy or disappointed with how your life has turned out?
- Who were your favorite relatives?
- Do you remember any of the stories they used to tell you?
- What was my mom/dad like growing up?
- Was she/he well-behaved?
- What is the worst thing she/he ever did?
- What were your parents like? What was your relationship with them like?
- What were your grandparents like?
- How would you like to be remembered?
- How am I a <INSERT FAMILY NAME>? Can you give specific examples?
- Is there anything I haven't asked that you want to tell me?

HEALTH

- How would you describe your health?
- What are your health-related strengths and weaknesses?
- Do you have or have you had any health challenges? Could you talk about them?
- How are you treating them?
- Are any of your health-related strengths and/or challenges hereditary?
- Did your family talk about hereditary strengths and/or weaknesses? How? What did they say?

FAMILY HERITAGE

- Do you know where your <INSERT LAST NAME> parent grew up? Have you ever been there? What was that experience like? Could you describe your visit?
- What traditions or rituals have been passed down in your family?
- Do you have any family members who have written about your history?
- What are the classic stories in your family? Jokes? Songs? Games or activities?
- Who were your favorite relatives?
- Do you remember any of the stories they used to tell you?

CLOSING ACTIVITY

An emotional and action-packed weekend such as the one described here needs a meaningful closing activity to bring people together one last time to summon their shared journey. But people also need to finish packing, get on the road, perhaps catch a plane. This closing activity can be completed quickly even with a large group; gives participants an opportunity to reflect on the rich weekend and show thanks; and affords a satisfying way to say goodbye.

The leader begins by telling everyone to form a big circle and join hands. After offering a brief reflection on the weekend, the leader asks participants to think of one word that can express how they are feeling right now: (1) remind people to call out their words loudly enough to be heard by those on the other side of the circle; (2) choose the person to start the activity (3) indicate which direction to move around the circle.

Once you've gone around the circle and everyone has called out their word, the leader pauses to let the moment gather resonance, then directs participants to look at each person in the circle, one by one, and says, "This is your family. You had an amazing experience this weekend. You created it together."

The leader then asks participants, still holding hands, to meet in the center of the circle, raise their hands together and yell _____ (a word or phrase chosen to suit your family event).

And that's it!



Audio/Video Recording Release Form

I _____ give permission for (myself/my child or children) to be videotaped, photographed, or recorded by <INSTIGATORS> for a documentary project centered around the descendants of <FAMILY NAMES>.

I understand that <INSTIGATORS> will be the sole and exclusive owners of all rights to (my/my child's or children's) appearances in these recordings. Such rights include, but are not limited to, the exclusive right to use the video/audio recordings and photos in any and all media/format, whether now known or hereinafter devised, without restriction.

I release <INSTIGATORS> from any liability or any harm that could be caused by the use of (my/my child's or children's) image and/or voice in the video and give my permission for the recordings of (myself/my child or children) to be used in the manner described above.

I understand that no remuneration or cash consideration will be received for my participation.

Signature

Date

Printed Name

Address

Child/Children's Name(s), if applicable

Phone

Email

How would you rate your experience at the family reunion?

What worked for you? What didn't work for you? Be expansive in your response!

Would you want to have another family reunion?

If so, how often do you think we should have one?

Should the next family reunion be a one-day event or another weekend-long event?

How would you rate the venue?

What did you like about the venue? What didn't you like?

In the future, do you think we should hold the family reunion in a different geographical location?

How would you rate the organization in the run-up to the family reunion?

How would you rate the organization at the family reunion?

What kind of follow-up, if any, would you like to see?

Would you like to help organize the next family reunion? If so, in what capacity?

Additional comments