Your Genogram

A genogram is a simple tool to help you better understand your family history and generational patterns that may affect your relationships today. For many people, it provides fresh insights into the connection between the past and the present.

For example, if there has been a traumatic event in your family history (like a premature death, divorce, desertion, abuse, etc.), it will likely impact the way you interact with others close to you.

Items of special importance to include in a genogram are:

1) ethnic background
2) faith and religious heritage
3) education
4) occupational history
5) substance abuse (drug or alcohol)
6) abuse (sexual or physical)
7) medical issues (genetic background, obesity, chronic illnesses)
8) military service
9) legal entanglements (incarceration, bankruptcy, court cases)
10) traumatic family events (divorce, separation, financial crises)
11) major moves
12) serious behavioral or emotional problems
13) other items pertinent or of special interest to you

Include all the significant events or issues from your perspective over a three-generation period. Those three generations include: A) your current family (your spouse and all children), B) your parents, and C) your grandparents (to the extent of your personal knowledge). If there are other important people who lived with you or cared for you, include them on the sheet with a notation of who they are. Include names or simple phrases that you can reference when describing a person or event.

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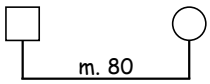
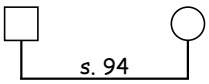
Section A:
Designate the males in your family with a box (□) and the females with a circle (○).

Other significant dates and events should be notated as follows:

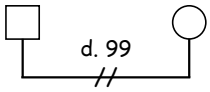
Marriage (date)



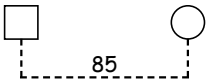
Marital Separation (date)



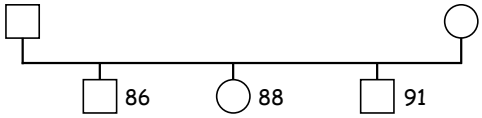
Divorce (date)



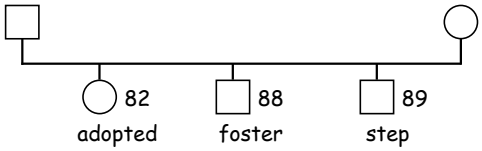
Never married (living together)



Children: List in birth order, beginning with the oldest on left.

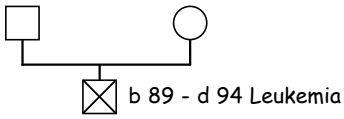


Notate if adopted, step or foster.



Include pregnancies which were miscarried or terminated.

If a sibling or child died, list the cause of death.



Section B:
Here you will evaluate your family strength or interaction patterns. Use lines to show the strength or conflict in the relationship as follows:

Very close relationship

Close relationship

Distant relationship ----------

Conflicted relationship

Overly dependent or enmeshed relationship

An estranged or cut off relationship

cut off 93

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In sections C through G use a word or phrase to describe the issue or event you experienced.

Section C:
Medical history: Record any major illnesses, genetic issues or medical problems.

☒ father b. 32
died 94 (Parkinson's)

Section D:
Identify additive behaviors or patterns in your family.

◯ aunt (alcoholic)

Section E:
Record noteworthy religious or spiritual events like: confirmation, conversion, baptism, rededication, etc.

☐ conversion 74

Section F:
Notate educational, vocational and military service. Include awards or honors earned and any period of unemployment.

◯ H.S. diploma 78
B.A. 84

Section G:
Include any other important or significant events not covered ranging from abuse to unfaithfulness.

☐ father - affair (68?)

Use the Genogram Map on the following page to outline your personal/family history.

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