

MY LIFE STORY

Use this book to record your life history. I need an outline of your life, starting from where you were born and ending with the present. Write in this book as if it is only for your eyes. You will have a chance to share it with me only if you choose to do so.

DO NOT WRITE ABOUT THE CRIME YOU ARE CHARGED WITH. Your life is a timeline of events, some more important than others. All of which have made you who you are today. How did these events impact you? How do you feel writing about them? How have they affected your choices in life? Your feelings?

Here a few questions to get you started.

1. Where were you born? How many brothers and sisters do you have? Who else was living in your home while growing up? Did mom and dad live together? Were they married? Divorced? Did your parents get along? Do you and your siblings share the same parents?
2. What have you heard about your developmental years? What are the stories that are told about you while growing up? Did you have any nicknames? Did you feel loved? Alone? Angry? Sad? Were you safe? Scared? What did this tell you about yourself and your world?
3. What was your home life like while growing up? Who raised you? Who were you closest to in your family? Why? Did you move from place to place? Why? How many addresses can you remember? What were the neighborhoods like where you lived? Could you play outside without the fear of being hurt? Did you witness violence often? What are some of these experiences? How many times did you have to change schools? What was that like for you?
4. What were your school-age years like? Did you enjoy school? List the schools you attended and as many teachers as you can remember. Who were your favorite teachers? Did you ever have any special education classes? Did you ever have any problems learning? Did you ever speak to a guidance counselor while attending school? What memories stand out for you while in school?
5. Have you ever been hospitalized? How many times? What have you been hospitalized for? What hospitals? Have you ever been taken to the emergency room? Have you ever fallen and hit your head? Have you ever needed stitches? Have you ever lost consciousness? Have you ever fainted? Do you have any medical conditions? Do you take any medications?
6. Was the Department of Human Services (DHS) ever involved with your family? If so, what are your memories of this? Do you remember your DHS worker's name? Were you ever in a children's home? Do you remember the name? Do you remember the names of any counselors? Were you ever placed in a foster home? Where? What were your foster parents names? Were there any other children or adults in the house? Where did you live? How did you feel? To the best of your knowledge, what was the reason that you were in DHS custody?
7. Have you ever received any counseling? Have you ever spoken to a therapist? As a child? As an adult? Have you ever been in an inpatient therapeutic setting?

- before? Have you ever been hospitalized for any psychiatric reasons? Have you ever tried to harm yourself? Have you ever tried to commit suicide? Have you ever been prescribed any psychiatric medications to stabilize your mood? Do you get depressed easily?
8. Who have been the most important people in your life? During your childhood? During adolescence? During young adulthood? Now? Are any of them deceased? How and when did they die? How did this affect you? How did you cope with this?
 9. What is your drug and alcohol history? How old were you the first time you tried a drug / alcohol? Did any drug become regular for you? What do you think influenced your decisions to use drugs / alcohol? (Marijuana, alcohol, heroin, pcp, cocaine, pills, etc.). How much were you spending on your habit? Was it daily? How did this make you feel about yourself? Were you self-medicating? Was it numbing any kind of emotional pain for you?
 10. Did any adults in your life have any drug or alcohol problem? Was mom or dad addicted to anything? Did any family member have any mental issues? Any psychiatric problems? Have any of them been hospitalized? For how long? When? Where?
 11. Outline your legal history. Do you have a juvenile history? Did you ever get placed in a juvenile facility? Where? How long did you stay? Do you remember the names of any counselors? What are the approximate dates of your arrests? How old were you each time? What you were arrested for and if you were incarcerated, where, and for how long.
 12. What is your relationship history? Who was your first significant relationship with? What was their name? How long did this relationship last? What did that relationship teach you? Were you ever the victim of abuse, emotional, physical or sexual, as a result of any of these relationships?
 13. Do you have any children? What are their names and ages? Who is their other parent? Are they active in the child's life? Are they still in your life? How do you feel about them?
 14. What are your positive qualities? What are your negative qualities? (What do you need to work on?)
 15. What is your favorite memory growing up? Why? What is your worst memory growing up? Why?
 16. If you could make three wishes, what would they be? (unrelated to your case...can't be "to get out of jail" etc.).
 17. If you could change ANY three things in your past, what would those changes be? Why? (Again, not related to your case).