

Questions for an oldest friend

The decades of friendship, told from the other chair.

You need this paper, a phone that records, and an unhurried hour. Three or four questions are plenty for one sitting — follow the light in their eyes, not this list.

Before you sit down

- ☐ Asked permission a few days ahead, so they can warm to it.
- ☐ Charged the phone and tested the voice recorder once.
- ☐ Turned off the television; silenced my own phone.

The questions

1. What's your first memory of them — where were you, and what were they doing?

2. What were they like back then that people today wouldn't guess?

3. What's the hardest you two ever laughed?

4. When did they show up for you when it counted?

5. What did you two get away with that you can finally admit?

6. How did they change after they met their partner — or after the kids came?

7. What's a talent of theirs that never got the audience it deserved?

8. What did your friendship survive that surprised you both?

9. If you had to describe them to a grandchild who never met them, where would you start?

Afterward

- ☐ Moved the recording off the phone the same day (computer, family folder, or private archive).
- ☐ Named the file with person, date, and subject.
- ☐ Told them what it meant to me.