

# Over the River and Through the Woods

If images of holiday gatherings with family, aromas of holiday treats, and the sounds of excited children filled your mind when you read this headline, chances are you're a baby boomer.

Throughout the holiday season, no matter what your tradition, there are often more opportunities to take time away from daily schedules and simply visit with others. In the roles of adult children, friends and neighbors, we often find ourselves at a loss for words when visiting with our older relatives and friends.

Adding "visit value" to your relationship happens when you build on what you already know. And knowing the limitations and vulnerabilities of older relatives, such as deficits in eyesight or hearing, are all important considerations.

Your senior family members and friends hold a deep reservoir of wisdom and knowledge of the past. Often, holiday celebrations can ignite those very special memories from those days of yesteryear. The familiar and tempting aromas from baking easily bring back memories of their childhood. Seeing grandchildren or great grandchildren full of activity and excitement will prompt memories of parenting during a very different era. Here are just a few tips to add "visit value" to your holiday experiences:

- Dust off the family photo albums! These are great discussion starters; a picture is worth a thousand words and even more memories!
- Use this time to catch up on friends and families scattered over the country. Take time to reading cards and letters sent to our older relatives together.
- Be sure to reminisce about holiday activities from the past, such as the days when the candy man, milk man and others made their rounds and stopped by for some favorite holiday treat.
- Take time to learn a new craft or hobby. If you are spending several days together, use this time to pass the legacy in the family. This might be crocheting, a special recipe or wood working.
- Ask questions. What was the best gift you ever received? How old were you when your family got a TV, or even their first car (depending on the relatives' age.) Keep your ears open – questions will just come naturally.

Many of our older relatives and friends are eager to tell their story. Help them to feel affirmed for the contributions they have made to your life and family, and courageous for the challenges they have faced and overcome.

**Happy Holidays  
from Liberty at Home!**

