



Memory Lane

As we get older, our greatest pleasure often comes from the moments we share with children, grandchildren, friends, and other loved ones. Photographs capture these happy memories we've created throughout our lifetime- and it's likely that someone has a treasure trove of them. Looking at old photos with them can offer significant psychological, emotional and practical value.

One of the most important things you can ever do for someone is sit and listen. Photos can be a great way to trigger a lifetime of memories and can prompt them to share their stories, even if you don't consider them to be an avid talker.

Make a point of asking if they have old photographs around the house, and that you'd like to see them and hear about them. It's a great way to get them to open up and share memories, plus it serves a dual purpose:

It boosts emotional health

Talking about our loved ones and reliving special moments from our lives is one of the easiest roads to happiness. It makes us feel our life has had a purpose by reminding us of the people who know, value and love us. This drives away loneliness, which is [perhaps the biggest epidemic of all for seniors](#).

It boosts mental health

Organizing photos, recalling names, and even placing certain favorite photos in an album, are fun ways to get their neurons moving. This mental stimulation can slow [cognitive decline](#) and is the key to good *neuroplasticity*- our brain's ability to stay flexible and sharp!

Photography projects are a true win-win on the cognitive-emotive spectrum, and it's important to take as much time as needed. As they discover more photographs and mementos they've stashed away, your time working with them on these projects could span several visits, or even weeks of time. Whatever happens, remember to never rush a good story!