



WALK A MILE IN MY SHOES

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This plan helps us to experience to a certain degree, what our ancestors experienced, to draw closer to them, learn from them and discover our lives may not be that different

BEFORE YOU BEGIN: Be sure to visit our website and fill out the Pre-Experiment Survey!

TAKE SURVEY

1 DISCOVER YOUR ANCESTOR(S)

Choose an ancestor(s) that you would like to use for this project. Gather as much information as you can by accessing Family Search (familysearch.org) Ancestry (ancestry.com) or other family database records, personal journals, letters, ship's logs, etc. talking to family members, searching historical libraries, etc. Research their birth countries and places they lived. Using The People History (thepeoplehistory.com) collect information that helps you understand the time period of your ancestor. You may find a lot or a limited amount of information, either will work. What you have found will help you to know somewhat of who they were. Keep this information together so that it is accessible for other activities in this project. This activity will help you see things from their perspective and will help you walk a mile in their shoes more authentically as you proceed through these 21 days.

2 WRITING JOURNAL ENTRIES

Write a journal entry as if you were the ancestor you researched in activity #1. Choose a significant event from your ancestor's life or a significant world event from the time period of your ancestor and write about it from your ancestor's perspective. Include as much of their personality as you can using the information you gathered to guide your writing. Include other members of your family by having them write about the same event from your ancestors perspective, then compare your journal entries. What have learned about your ancestor by seeing events from their perspective? What have you learned from each other by comparing your journal entries? As an additional activity, write about this event from your perspective. How is it different or the same as your ancestor's might have been?

3 WRITE A LOVE LETTER

Find out about how one of your ancestors met their spouse and then write a love letter to the spouse based on the information you have gathered. You may want to find love letters from history or other ancestors from the same time period to help you know how they would have written at that time. If you don't have personal information about an ancestor then write a love letter based on historical accounts that your ancestors might have written.



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- 4 SHOPPING TRIP** Go on a real, virtual, photo, or from a list, shopping trip. What kinds of foods would your ancestors have bought? What fruits, vegetables, meats, etc. were available to them during their time period and in the place they lived. What would they have access to from a garden or farm of their own? How would their shopping have been different from yours? Did they shop daily, weekly, etc.? Actually shop as they did (as much as possible) and make a meal from what you bought. Discuss with your family what they liked about it, what they didn't etc.
- 5 EVOLUTION OF MUSIC** Create a play list of music dating back to your ancestor up to your present time, including the music that you like to hear. Pick an age i.e. teenager, 20s, etc. and follow the music likes of that age throughout. How has music evolved? What would your ancestor think of your music? What are the differences and similarities? Learn to play something from their time period or learn a dance from that time.
- 6 MODERN CONVENIENCES** What modern conveniences do you take for granted that your ancestor would not have had? Now eliminate those conveniences from your life for a day, a week, etc. Duplicate as much as possible what your ancestor would have had to do during a day. (make bread by hand, kneading it and not using a bread hook, cook over a fire, etc) Write about how it impacted your life.
- 7 TALENTS** Find out what talents your ancestor(s) had. Try your hand at doing what they did, i.e. carpentry, sewing, embroidery, gardening, painting etc. Or find photos, or actual heirlooms that you can display in your home of these things that you ancestor did.
- 8 A CUP OF SUGAR** Many of our ancestors had to walk miles to attend church, to visit a friend, or to get help from a doctor. Next time you are going to visit a friend, walk instead of drive (make sure it isn't just next door. You need to experience what your ancestor did). Next time you are short of sugar, eggs, etc. try borrowing from a neighbor instead of running to the store. Write about the connections you make when you do these things.
- 9 CLOTHES MAKE THE MAN** *"Clothes make the man. Naked people have little or no influence on society." - Mark Twain*
Research what your ancestor wore. Compare it to what you wear? How are they different or the same? What are the advantages and disadvantages of each? Make a photo journal of the comparisons. What was/is the psychology behind the styles, i.e. modesty, easier movement, warmth, to make us feel protected or beautiful, etc. Have your children make paper doll clothes for your ancestor. Using a full body picture of your ancestor, they can draw clothing from your ancestors time period to your time period. If you don't have a full body picture just use a head shot and draw a body.



10 BEARING CHILDREN

"I looked on child rearing not only as work of love and duty but as a profession that was fully as interesting and challenging as any honourable profession in the world and one that demanded the best I could bring to it." Rose Kennedy

Find a story from an ancestor about when they had a child. What were some of their concerns? What were some of the risks? What were the expectations of the day about having children, number of children, etc.? How did they take care of their children i.e. cloth diapers, baby bottles, etc. Did the children go everywhere with them? If you can't find this out from the history of an ancestor then research the time period. Now go back and find out about your ancestor. How many children did he or she have? How many lived to adulthood? Did they live near family for extra support? If you can find pictures of their children or babies, how were they dressed? Did the baby boys wear dresses, etc.?

11 LOSS AND SURVIVAL

Find an ancestor that lost a baby or a young child. Write an obituary for that child that reflects the feelings of the mother or father or both. If you have lost a child what can you learn from your ancestor? If you haven't, how can you help someone in your family or your friends that have experienced this and how will the story of your ancestor help?

12 LIVING THROUGH DISASTER

"The disaster did not force us to abandon our ideal; on the contrary, from the very first months of the conflict, it led us to define precisely the conditions for its realization." Leon Jouhaux

Find an ancestor that has gone through a huge event, i.e. pandemic, earthquake, drought, etc. Find out about the event. Compare it to the pandemic that we are going through. Find journal entries about the event. How did these people cope. (These may be journal entries of your ancestors or historical entries that will give a perspective for comparison.)

13 NATURAL REMEDIES

"Nature itself is the best physician." Hippocrates

What natural remedies (i.e. mustard plaster for illnesses, etc.) did your ancestor have access to during their life time? How would they have treated some of our everyday maladies?



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FACING FEARS

"He who is not everyday conquering some fear has not learned the secret of life." Ralph Waldo Emerson

Write about, record, or video some of your greatest fears. Why are you afraid of these things. Have your family members write about their fears, then discuss and compare what we fear at different ages. What do you think your ancestors feared the most? Did they fear mobs and persecution, did they fear their babies dying, did they fear war, did they fear not being able to feed their families, did they fear snakes crawling into their sod homes, etc. What world circumstances elicited those fears?

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CONNECTING LOST FAMILY

Find an ancestor that needs to be connected to family, perhaps a missing child in your family tree, or one linked to the wrong spouse, etc. Is there anyone in your living family that needs family connection that you could reach out to and connect with? Find ways that you can do both of these things to strengthen family bonds and include the missing people.

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WHERE THEY LIVE

Go to [google maps](#) and take a walk down the streets your ancestors would have walked down. What do you see? How is it different from what you experience? Search the internet for historical pictures of the area of the time your ancestor lived. How has it changed? What stands out to you as a challenge, an opportunity? From what you see, outline a day in their life based on what you see.

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RELIGIOUS BELIEFS

Find out about your ancestors religious beliefs or lack there of? Did they change religions in their life time? Find one of their stories that impacts your life and how you approach your beliefs. If they were not religious and you are not religious, find out what foundation or beliefs they had about life. What can you learn from them and their perspective? What was the religious culture in their era? Did they stand out as different? What challenges did that cause? If you don't have this information in your family history then research the time period.

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ATHLETIC PROWESS

"You miss 100% of the shots you don't take." Wayne Gretzky

Sports are great connectors. Sometimes athletic prowess is passed on from generation to generation. What sport(s) did one of your ancestors participate in? To what level did they ascend? Are there others in your family that share this same penchant? As a family have a sports night centered around this sport or attend a sporting event of the same genre.



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19 MODES OF TRANSPORTATION

Modes of transportation - As we move toward self-driven cars as the common mode of transportation, what do you see as the possible future inventions? We will be able to “beam up” to another place in the future? Have your family make drawings of the future modes of transportation and then compare them to what your ancestors used. What is the difference in the time required to go from point A to point B? How far could they travel in a day? How often did they travel? If possible find a historic park and ride a train, or ride a horse for a distance etc.

20 FREEDOM

*"For to be free is not merely to cast off one's chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others."
Nelson Mande*

Freedom – As we look at racism in our present day and how that affects various portions of our society, we certainly need to consider what freedoms we have and what freedoms other cultures, colors and religions are denied in our own countries even if only by our prejudice. What can we do to help rid our society of this? Research what rights and freedoms were denied your ancestors or ones that even they, may have participated in, in denying them to others. What legacy has that left for you? How can you use that knowledge for good? If you do not have this information then research their time period and find out about freedoms that have been gained over the centuries, i.e. the right for women to vote, the right to own land, etc.

21 TYING IT UP

Write about what you have learned. What can you learn from your ancestors experiences? How are your lives similar? How does this help us feel connected? How does knowing these things help you to face your life and your challenges? How connections to family now and then help you find more of the positive?

WHEN YOU'RE DONE: Be sure to visit our website and fill out the Post-Experiment Survey!

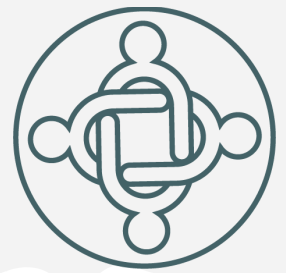
TAKE SURVEY



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DAY 1

Discover Your Ancestor(s)

DAY 12

Living Through Disaster

DAY 2

Writing Journal Entries

DAY 13

Natural Remedies

DAY 3

Write a Love Letter

DAY 14

Facing Fears

DAY 4

Shopping Trip

DAY 15

Connecting Lost Family

DAY 5

Evolution of Music

DAY 16

Where They Live

DAY 6

Modern Conveniences

DAY 17

Religious Beliefs

DAY 7

Talents

DAY 18

Athletic Prowess

DAY 8

A Cup of Sugar

DAY 19

Modes of Transportation

DAY 9

Clothes Make the Man

DAY 20

Freedom

DAY 10

Bearing Children

DAY 21

Tying It Up

DAY 11

Loss & Survival