Questions to ask aging parents

Pick one theme at a time and listen more than you speak. Your parent does not have to answer everything. Write down what they say, in their words.

What matters to them

- [ ] Where do you want to live as you get older, and what would make that possible?
- [ ] What matters most to you day to day? What would you hate to give up?
- [ ] Who do you want involved in decisions, and who would you rather keep out of them?
- [ ] Is there anything you are worried about that you have not told us?
- [ ] What would help most right now, and what would you refuse?

Health and medicines

- [ ] Which doctors, specialists and clinics do you see, and how do we reach them?
- [ ] What medicines and supplements do you take, and can we see the list?
- [ ] Which pharmacy do you use?
- [ ] Do you have any allergies we should know about?
- [ ] Are you comfortable with us coming to appointments? Would you sign the practice's consent form so we can speak to your doctor?

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Paperwork and wishes

- [ ] Do you have a will, and where is it kept?

- [ ] Have you named someone to make health decisions or manage money if you cannot? Who?

- [ ] Do you have a living will or care directive, and who has a copy?

- [ ] Where are your important papers, and who knows where they are?

- [ ] When were these last reviewed? (The US National Institute on Aging suggests at least once each year and after any major life event.)

Money and bills

- [ ] Which banks and accounts do you have, and who could help if you were unwell?

- [ ] How are the regular bills paid?

- [ ] Which insurance policies and benefits do you have, and where are the cards kept?

- [ ] Is there anything you would like a professional to look at?

Home and safety

- [ ] Is the home still easy and safe to get around? Is anything getting harder?

- [ ] Who is nearby that you trust, and who has a spare key?

- [ ] What would you like us to do in an emergency, and who should we call first?

- [ ] Would you like an emergency information sheet by the door?

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