



Birthright Family Story Exploration

A Journey of Self Through Family Discovery

Step 1: Explore Your Tools	Step 2: Dive Into Inquiry	Step 3: Connect The Dots	Step 4: Prepare Your IG Live (optional)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Make a genogram <input type="checkbox"/> Explore historical records 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Conduct family interviews <input type="checkbox"/> Flesh out the details of gaps in your family knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Analyze and reflect on discovered patterns <input type="checkbox"/> Make meaning of your discoveries and link to resilience patterns in yourself and your present family 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Create an IG Live to share your family exploration with the world **See example for a chance to be featured to do a Birthright AFRICA IG Takeover

Setting Expectations for Family Exploration:

- ☐ There is NO judgment in your family structure. The genogram is a borrowed TOOL and may or may not reflect your reality in family organization.
- ☐ It's ok if you have gaps in your family knowledge. Mining the histories of the African Diaspora is sometimes a challenge because of our complicated histories.
- ☐ Our goal is to tease out stories of family strength and resilience. Sometimes in identifying family weaknesses, we find examples of resilience embedded.
- ☐ Genograms may bring up unexpected emotions for yourself and those you interview. You gauge how deep or intimately you want to explore.

Identifying your Approach:

You may have an inkling about a family story or individual you always wanted to explore deeper. Or you may just have an open-ended burning desire to know more about your family history. Wherever you find yourself beginning your journey, it is helpful to develop a guiding inquiry question to focus your exploration.



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Step 1: Explore Your Tools

Make a Genogram

A Genogram is a detailed family tree that also highlights cultural and relationship patterns. It can be created electronically or drawn out by hand. They often reflect 3 generations. Explore the included resources to learn how to create one of your own!

[Intro to Genograms](#) | [Genogram Example](#) | [Creating a Genogram](#) | [Genogram Symbols](#)

What to Consider Including in your Genogram:

- ☐ Name
- ☐ Age (in center); year of birth on top
- ☐ Race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, religious/spiritual affiliation*
- ☐ Migration history, socio-economic status, vocational choices*
- ☐ Characteristics of emotional relationships

* will require you to create your own symbol and key

Things to Pay Attention to:

- ☐ Gaps in family knowledge
- ☐ Patterns (what choices, behaviors, experiences etc. reoccur generation to generation)
- ☐ Deviations from patterns
- ☐ Family stories/context underlying strong relationships
- ☐ Family stories/context underlying weaker relationships
- ☐ Information that stands out as novel/different/unexpected

Explore Historical Records

Use www.familysearch.org to locate historical records pertinent to your family.

Step 2: Dive into Inquiry

Conduct Family Interviews

Now armed with your family exploration tools, you may have noticed some gaps in your family knowledge or some interesting stories/family figures you want to explore more deeply. Family interviews will help you fill those gaps and flesh out the details first uncovered with your family exploration tools.



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- ❑ Identify family members with strategic proximity to the information/story you are hoping to explore deeper. Plan conversations to fill gaps in your family knowledge or better understand parts of your exploration that stood out to you.
- ❑ Consider speaking with family members in your current generation/peer group to share your discoveries with and also gather a well-rounded perspective on the subject/person of your inquiry.

Step 3: Connect the Dots

Analyze and Reflect on Discovered Patterns

After conducting family interviews, you will use the following tools to help draw insights and make connections in what you have discovered. The resilience and cultural patterns you observe in yourself and in your present family generation are **not accidental**. These tools will heighten your awareness of the cross-generational transmission of such patterns.

- ❑ Read the chapter in the provided excerpts from *Ethnicity and Family Therapy* (see Appendix) reflecting the ethnicity you most identify with. **How does this chapter offer context for the patterns you have observed in your own family exploration?**
- ❑ Psychologist Carlfred Broderick coined the term “Transitional Character,” and defined it as “one who, in a single generation, changes the entire course of a lineage. The changes might be for good or ill...They break the mold.” (1992). *Marriage and the Family*. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall. **Have you recognized any transitional characters in your exploration whose choices changed the trajectory for your family members? Consider migration choices, vocation, family patterns, emotional patterns, belief patterns etc.**
- ❑ Consider the following reflection questions using all the information gathered thus far:
 - ❑ For every point of pride you uncover in your family story, try to identify its origin (in terms of skill, value, belief, resources, individuals, etc.)
 - ❑ What values, beliefs, and behaviors emerged as recurrent generation to generation?
 - ❑ What was the socio-political context surrounding some of the major shifts, movements and decisions in your family?



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- ❑ What do you think your family forerunners wanted for you (before you were even born)? If they were still alive, what would they want for you now?
- ❑ How do you think your cultural heritage influences the values, beliefs, and/or behaviors you observe in your family history now? In yourself?
- ❑ What strengths that you observed in your family story have you noticed are currently in your arsenal now?
- ❑ How does your exploration answer the guiding inquiry question you began your exploration with?

Step 4: Prepare Your Birthright IG Live Takeover

After completing your family exploration, we hope you'll feel empowered to share your discoveries with the rest of the Birthright Tribe. The following "How to Thrive on Instagram Live" guide will help you to organize and convey your experience and family history during a Birthright IG Live Takeover.

[Sample Birthright IG Live Family Exploration](#)

What to Consider When Preparing:

- ❑ PREPARE, PREPARE AND PREPARE.
- ❑ Create a [storyboard](#) to organize the content of your Live before debuting it on Instagram. Build a story arc that takes your listeners on a journey from beginning to middle to end.
- ❑ Collect as many visual artifacts as you can (photos, symbolic objects, documents, etc.) to anchor your talking points in your storyboard.
- ❑ Insert moments into your storyboard to vocalize what you processed. Use the framework: Head (what are you thinking?); Heart (What are you feeling?); Bones (What are you experiencing viscerally?)
- ❑ Plan a timed run through in advance with a practice audience member to give you feedback

How to Coordinate the Technical Aspects of an IG Live:

- ❑ Step 1: Title your Instagram Live. Example: "Birthright Family Story Exploration"
- ❑ Step 2: Slides are a new feature on Instagram that allows you to upload camera roll photos while on Live. When looking to apply slides to your Live, you can find them at the bottom of the screen in the right hand corner.



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- ❑ Step 3: When exiting from slides, click on the circle with the slash through it at the bottom left side of the screen.
- ❑ Step 4: Your Instagram Live should have a main idea that follows through to the end. You only have 55 mins so make sure you have this planned beforehand.
- ❑ Step 5: If/When viewers ask questions, be prepared to answer, but don't let answering the questions overwhelm you. Make sure to take your time. Plan breaks during your Live to respond to some of the questions that have appeared in chunks.
- ❑ Step 6: Don't forget to save your IG live once it's over. Save and post to IGTV. The options to do both will be featured at the end of your Live.
- ❑ Step 7: Relax and have fun! The Birthright Tribe is with you!

Appendix

[Ethnicity and Family Therapy Excerpts](#)

McGoldrick, M., Giordana, J., Garcia-Preto, N. (2005). *Ethnicity and Family Therapy*. New York, NY: The Guilford Press.

Contents Include:

- ❑ Families of African Origin
- ❑ African American Families
- ❑ African Immigrant Families
- ❑ Brazilian Families
- ❑ British West Indian Families
- ❑ Central American Families
- ❑ Colombian Families
- ❑ Cuban Families
- ❑ Dominican Families
- ❑ Haitian Families
- ❑ Latino Families Overview
- ❑ Puerto Rican Families