

## GIVING THE PAST A FUTURE TODAY

### DO-IT-YOURSELF TIPS ON LIFE STORY WRITING

So, you've decided to write your own or your loved one's life story! It's no small undertaking but some of the tips below may help you with the organisation and presentation of your book:

- 1 Discuss with your loved one (the narrator) what the turning points were in their life.
- 2 Have them relate how these events influenced their years. Ask them about their behaviour, thoughts and body reactions to demonstrate feelings, rather than just a simple label such as: "I felt scared"
- 3 Work those turning points into the chapters and sub-headings they would like included in their book.
- 4 Beginning at the beginning is not a MUST. **Start with impact!** You can begin anywhere in your narrator's life - perhaps the best highpoint - then go back. Just like in the movies and novels!
- 5 Organise the images (photos, documents etc) for each chapter and sticky label each image on the back with the chapter they relate to and the name of the caption (with date where appropriate).
- 6 Plan the paper size and margins to be used for each page and what kind of binding you prefer. (The binding will influence your margins). If you decide to use A4 with a simple spiral type binding then the above is easy.
- 7 Be consistent with punctuation, style and layout.
- 8 Be disciplined in your writing - target how much you will write each month and stick to it, otherwise it will be a "forever" project.
- 9 PROOF-READ, PROOF-READ, PROOF-READ then proof-read again!
- 10 **Have fun!** You will derive huge joy from this exercise and it will give your loved one a newfound purpose and project in their lives.