**Our Parents, Our Self**

By the time we reach a certain age, we know who we are, right? Or maybe we think we do. But take a moment: Can you hear your father’s voice in your reactions? Your mother’s sage (or scolding) advice in your decisions? Are your thoughts and behaviors uncannily similar to mom or dad? Or have you done your darndest to reject their path and carve out your own.

As part of our monthly *Happenings* health topic series, let’s focus on how your mother and father (and their mother and father) may have contributed to the “you” of today.

**Glass Half... What Exactly?**

Were your parents optimists, radiating hope and silver linings — or were they weighed down with worry, stuck in a negative spiral? Did they fill you with warmth or keep their distance emotionally? Did you feel seen, heard, and cherished — or like a guest in your own home?

**Life of the Party — or a Quiet Corner**

Did your parents host dinner parties with relish — or hide when the doorbell rang? Were they energized by interaction or depleted by it? Their social nature (or lack thereof) may have quietly laid tracks for your own. Are you more like dad or mom in the social department? When a room fills up, do you lean in step back quietly?

**Doing for Others**

Did mom or dad serve soup to the poor or spearhead the annual fundraiser? Were they civic-minded or more focused on family? Do you feel their example shaped your own sense of service?

**Understanding vs Arguing**

Were debates around the dinner table productive or exhausting? Was one parent diplomatic while the other held firm in their views? Do you now avoid arguments like the plague or feel compelled to win them? How might their tone and temperament still echo in your interactions?

**Roots of Roots**

Were your parent’s parents proud immigrants, tough-as-nails survivors, or gentle nurturers? How might their legacy live on in you? Were your grandparents steady fixtures in your life or distant figures in dusty photo albums? Have you considered how their experience and influence filtered through your parents on to you?

**Parenting the Next Generation**

Ah, the joys (and chaos) of raising kids — or grandkids, or even grand-dogs these days. When you think back, did you parent the way your folks did or toss their rulebook out the window? Were you more of a “because I said so” or “let’s talk it through” kind of parent? Can you spot family habits that stuck? Or bold moves you’ve consciously made to parent (or grandparent) differently?

**Full Circle**

As you sit here at Heritage, contemplating your parents, their parents, and possibly your own children and grandchildren (if you have them) — it’s a trip to see how the past tags along, or not, depending on how you steer. But one thing is undeniable: Whether we’ve embraced or rejected our parent’s teachings, behaviors, and ways of being — we carry them with us into our “I” of this very moment.