

## MAKING A TOAST AT MOTHER'S 80<sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY PARTY

### **Some suggested inclusions:**

*Welcome everybody. Thank you for being here and sharing .....’s 80<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration. On behalf of Mum, I thank you for your gifts, cards, and good wishes.*

*I will tell you a little about Mum’s life and ask you to join with me in a toast at the end of my speech.*

A brief outline of .....’s life:

Where born

Parents

Place in the family (how many in the family)

Where she went to school, and how

When and where she married and to whom, married life

How many children she had, and now how many grandchildren

Talk about her qualities

Talk briefly about a story which illustrates a particular quality

Mention a special talent she has

Mention particular things she taught her children, or what you appreciate most about her.

Near the end, say something like, *Mum, all your family and friends here tonight pay tribute to the wonderful/ generous/ loving life you have lived, and for everything you have given us.....*

*Ladies and gentlemen, I ask you to fill your glasses, be upstanding, and to drink a toast to.....*  
[Raising your glass towards your mother, so others will follow] *TO .....*

[Everyone repeats : *TO.....*

*Happy 80<sup>th</sup> birthday Mum.*

[Everyone sits down. Is there a compere to hand over to? If not say “*Thank you everyone*” or similar.]

### **SOME DO’S**

- Give some thought to how you would like one of your children to speak about you in this situation in the future, and apply that now to how you undertake the task.
- Consider asking your mother what she would like you to mention or not mention. You could ask her in advance about what she thinks are her greatest achievements, and weave them into your speech.
- Write out your speech in full. Your mother might like to keep it.
- Consider reducing your speech to some business-sized cards with a paragraph heading and a few key words on each card to remind you of what you want to say. Alternatively, referring to the whole speech in full would be acceptable, but be sure to look at the group often to make eye contact.
- If using cards, number each card in case you drop them.
- A good speaking pace is 120 words a minute, so if you plan to talk for about 4-5 minutes, you would write out about 500-600 words.
- Speak loudly and slowly, looking around the group, to include everyone. Some people may be hard of hearing or at the back. Make sure they can all hear.
- If someone is filming the event, face the camera sometimes.
- Enjoy this unique opportunity to praise and thank your mother among her family and friends. This is a great honour, and gift to your mother. Remember that you are doing something kind for her, and the focus is on her, not you and your nerves. Smile and enjoy.

### **SOME DON'TS**

- Don’t talk about other people or your self or your childhood. This speech is about her.
- Don’t make unkind jokes or make fun of any characteristics. Use your time to speak positively and warmly.
- Don’t apologise for anything – being nervous, having a cold etc
- Don’t repeat anything that your mother said when you were talking about the speech in advance, if it was negative eg “Oh, I’m just an ordinary person” etc. Try to keep everything positive and reflective of your high opinion of her.