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REMINISCENCE AND THE YOUNG ADULT: EXAMINING THE
EFFECT PERCEIVED LIFE TRANSITIONS HAVE ON
RECALLING THE PAST

SHAWN R. HARRISON

To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a thesis written by Shawn R. Harrison entitled "Reminiscence and the Young Adult: Examining the Effect Perceived Life Transitions have on Recalling the Past." I have examined the final copy of this thesis for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science, with a major in Guidance and Counseling with emphasis on Community and Mental Health Agency.

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Reminiscence and the Young Adult: Examining the
Effect Perceived Life Transitions have on
Recalling the Past

A Thesis
Presented for the
Master of Science
Degree
Austin Peay State University

Shawn R. Harrison

May 2001

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my parents

Gerald and Linda Martin

for their love and support

throughout my life endeavors

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Abstract

The reminiscence of the elderly has to date been examined extensively, yet the memories of younger populations continue to be ignored. According to Continuity Theory, individuals of all ages reminisce during transitions in their life (Atchley, 1989). This study examined the effect perceived life transitions had on the frequency of reminiscing. Ninety-seven university students ranging in age from 18 to 50 completed the Reminiscence Functions Scale (RFS) to assess the frequency of recalling the past, and the Life Change Inventory (LCI) to determine the amount of stress the participant was currently experiencing. A Pearson correlation was computed to determine the relationship between the total frequency of reminiscing ($M = 137.1134$, $SD = 25.80249$) and the amount of stress ($M = 311.84247$, $SD = 163.6869$) one was currently undergoing. At an alpha level of .05, the correlations were found to be statistically significant, $r(95) = 0.323318$, $p < .005$. This study provided support to the notion that perceived life transitions, measured by stress, and reminiscing have a positive relationship.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

"I remember when..." is a statement most often associated with the aged. When picturing an older person, individuals often imagine a grandfather figure reminiscing about the "good old days." The reminiscing, or act of recalling the past, of the elderly has often been regarded as a symptom of aging and has been devalued and thought of as a senseless need to live in the past (Butler, 1974).

Life review, sometimes used as a synonym for reminiscence, was first introduced by Robert Butler in 1963. Butler defined life review as the natural tendency to recall past memories in order to evaluate one's life. This process involved selected episodes of one's life as well as life as a whole and was age-related. (Rubinstein, 1995). Butler furthered his definition by suggesting that this process was prompted by the feeling of approaching death and the urgency to establish ego integrity, a quest which is exhibited in the elderly. As a consequence, this process was observed in the elderly due to the closeness of actual death. Not surprisingly, most of the research concerning life review has focused on the elderly population.

In opposition to Butler's (1963) seminal article, Atchley (1989) proposed another reason for reminiscing. He stated that individuals reminisce, not because of their age or approaching death, but because of discontinuity in their life. According to Continuity Theory, individuals utilize reminiscing in order to

establish continuity or consistency throughout their transitions in life (Atchley). Life transitions, whether they be positive (marriage) or negative (death of a loved one), can create disequilibrium. This imbalance can result in stress, otherwise defined as the response to a stimulus. When this occurs one has a tendency to readjust in order to create balance (Greenberg, 1996). When faced with a perceived life transition an individual will reminisce in order to regulate past experiences with their current situation (Parker, 1995).

For the purpose of this research the terms *reminiscence* and *life review* are used interchangeably and are defined as the act of recalling the past. It is believed that people, regardless of their age, who are in a perceived life transition will reminisce more frequently than those who do not feel that they are undergoing a life change. This is congruent with Continuity Theory. For the purpose of the present study, perceived life transitions will be measured by the amount of self-reported stress a person is currently experiencing as measured by the Life Change Inventory (Greenberg, 1996).

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Although acknowledging the idea that life review may occur at any age, Silver (1995) focused on the elderly because of the frequency with which this process occurs in this population. She stated that in order to achieve ego integrity one must unify the past and present self. Not only must the acceptance of both selves occur, but one must also accept the closeness of death in order to establish integrity. If successful, the elderly person can continue into the future and leave a legacy behind. If however, one fails to achieve ego integrity, the person may become engulfed in the past resulting in depression (Butler, 1963). The integration of the past with the present substantiates self-worth, boosts self-esteem, and stimulates the approval of one's past (Stevens-Ratchford, 1993).

A predominance of the studies investigating the benefits of life review acknowledge the therapeutic value of this process. Blankenship, Molinari, and Kunik (1996) discovered that symptoms of depression declined with the introduction of life review therapy. Twenty-five veteran patients from a geropsychiatric unit were administered the Hamilton Depression Rating Scale (HDRS) upon admission to the unit. After completing four weeks of life review therapy, scores on the HDRS declined significantly. Individuals who participated in life review therapy, sometimes referred to as structured reminiscence therapy, had significantly more reduced signs of depression than individuals in a control

group. These individuals also exhibited increased feelings of self-worth and self-confidence (Fry, 1983).

Stevens-Ratchford (1993) administered a pre and posttest of the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Survey and the Beck Depression inventory to twenty-four elders participating in either a life review activities group or a control group. The posttest demonstrated little sign of depression and high levels of self-esteem in the life review group. It was further noted that all of the participants in this group characterized the sessions as being positive and rewarding. Implementing a life review program to new residents at a nursing facility was suggested as having a positive impact on the residents' lives.

Tabourne's (1995a) case study suggested that the participant exhibited increases in orientation, personal competence, personal control, and social interaction while showing decreased signs of depression. McDougall, Blixen, and Suen (1997) found that feelings of anxiety, despair, and isolation decreased in homebound elderly when they participated in residential life review sessions.

Life review programs appear to have resulted in improvements not only in the healthy aged population, but also in individuals diagnosed with certain cognitive disorders. Individuals diagnosed with a cognitive disorder who participated in a life review program demonstrated signs of improvement in specific abilities such as recognition for time, person, and place. They also increased their social interactions and attention spans (Tabourne, 1995b).

Research findings also suggest that gender plays a role in the frequency of reminiscent behavior (Merriam & Cross, 1982; Whitbourne & Powers, 1994).

When examining the life drawings of seventy-eight female residents in a retirement community, Whitbourne and Powers (1994) discovered that the majority of the participants' drawings were past-oriented.

Due to the nature of the life review process, some researchers felt there was a need for a more structured approach when conducting life reviews. In response, a Life Review Interview Guide was developed to provide interviewers with a more methodical approach (Beechem, Anthony, & Kurtz, 1998). According to Beechem, et al., this guide not only provides more structure but also assists in promoting cultural and social appreciation and boosting levels of self-esteem.

Although many studies suggest enhanced self-esteem as a result of implementing life review therapy (Butler, 1963; Stevens-Ratchford, 1993; Beechem, Anthony, & Kurtz, 1998), other research fails to support this position (Weiss, 1994; Tabourne, 1995b). When compared to cognitive group therapy, it was discovered that the two treatments were not significantly different from one another. This led Weiss to conclude that the social interaction among the group members may have been the critical factor rather than the treatment method.

Even with the vast amount of support for life review, investigators have suggested problem areas with the research. First, a majority of the research lacks theoretical focus and is methodologically weak. Many investigations consist of case studies and offer few insights into the processes involved (Haight, 1991). Second, a concise operational definition has not been established for either reminiscence or life review. These terms have been used

synonymously since their inception in the research. Because Butler (1963) used both words in his definition of life review, researchers have failed to differentiate between the two (Height & Burnside, 1993). Both terms suggest the use of memory and recall and have the potential to evoke both positive and negative emotions with such memories (McDonald & Curl, 1997). Reminiscence and life review, unlike other types of recall, are used as therapeutic interventions. However with life review, memory serves more of a cognitive function; where as reminiscence utilizes memory on a more affective level (Height & Burnside). Reminiscence has a vast array of goals which include improvement of communication skills, increased socialization, and friendship. Life review, on the other hand has only one main goal, establishing ego integrity (McDonald & Curl).

In an attempt to provide a more operational definition for reminiscence, Merriam (1989) described the structure of simple reminiscence. After careful analysis of reminiscence transcripts, four components were posited as making up the structure of simple reminiscence: selection, immersion, withdrawal, and closure. Reminiscing begins as a selection process. When prompted by a stimulus such as an odor, occurrence of a special celebration, or the sight of an old friend, the individual selects a certain past experience. Next, that individual becomes immersed in that memory. Often the memories are so vivid that when told to a listener that person feels transported to that time. Third, the reminiscer withdraws from the memory. The most common means of withdrawal is by comparing the memory to the present. Last, most reminiscers bring closure to

the memory by providing a summation of the experience (Merriam).

The majority of the research follows Butler's parameters of life review: life review is (1) universal, (2) age-specific, and (3) brought on by the realization of impending death (Webster, 1999). Oddly enough, Butler (1963) acknowledges the notion that life review can be triggered by a "crisis of various types, of which imminent death seems to be one instance," and can occur at any age but focus is still directed toward the elderly (p. 67).

With the discrepancies in the literature, even within Butler's article, a more inclusive theory is needed to reduce some of the contradictions concerning reminiscence research (Parker, 1995). Butler (1963), stated, "One tends to consider the past most when prompted by current problems and crises" (p. 73). This idea lies within the framework of Continuity Theory (Atchley, 1989). In this theory, the term *continuity* does not represent sameness but a consistency of patterns over time. As individuals progress from one transition to another, they attempt to regulate and explain changes by summoning memories of the past. In order to maintain continuity when faced with a change in life one must utilize the experience of the past (Parker). Furthering this idea, Parker stated that individuals who do not perceive themselves as being in a transition may not be motivated to reminisce.

This study examined the effect perceived life transitions have on the frequency of reminiscing. It was hypothesized that those who reported being in a period of transition would have a higher frequency of reminiscing than those who did not report being in a transition.

CHAPTER III

METHODS

Participants

The sample consisted of 97 students (six freshmen, eight sophomores, thirty-five juniors, thirty-eight seniors, and ten graduate students) who attended Austin Peay State University, a four year liberal arts university in Clarksville, Tennessee. These students, 85 females and 12 males whose age ranged from 18 to 50 ($M = 26.6701$, $SD = 7.639974$) were recruited from psychology classes offered on the main campus. Participation was voluntary and extra credit was given at the professor's discretion.

Measures

The Life Change Inventory (LCI) was used to assess the presence of life change in the participants' recent history (Greenberg, 1996). Participants were asked to read each item and state whether or not they had experienced each item within the last year. This 50-item inventory weighs each item in terms of "life change units" (LCU) and the sum of the LCUs make up the Total Life Change score. According to Greenberg stress is triggered by life transitions or stressors. By measuring the total amount of change in one's life, the inventory is in turn, measuring the amount of stress that the individual is experiencing. The Total Life Change score, in essence, represents the total amount of stress one is experiencing. This instrument is reported to have an internal consistency of .87 in a sample of 433 undergraduate students. After administering the inventory to

two groups, 65 participants in the first group and 44 in the second, with a week time lapse between tests, the test-retest coefficient ranged from .68 to .88 respectively (Constantini, Braun, Davis, & Iervolino, 1974).

The Reminiscence Functions Scale (RFS) was administered to determine the frequency of participant reminiscing. This scale, developed by Webster (1993), is a 43-item questionnaire designed to examine the ways people reminisce. Participants are asked to rate statements according to a 6-point Likert scale ranging from 1- "rarely" to 6- "frequently" The statements represent eight specific uses of reminiscence: Boredom Reduction, Death Preparation, Identity, Problem Solving, Conversation, Intimacy Maintenance, Bitterness Revival, and Teach/Inform. Boredom Reduction measures the tendency to reminisce when the environment fails to provide enough stimulation and there is a lack of goal-direction. Death Preparation assesses how one utilizes thoughts of the past when faced with the imminence of finality. Identity measures one's tendency to use reminiscence as a way of discovering who one really is while Problem-Solving assesses the tendency to use reminiscence to cope with situations in the present. Conversation measures how one invokes the past to build rapport or reconnect with others and Intimacy Maintenance measures the reminiscences of influential people in one's life. Bitterness Revival taps into one's memories to remember unjust experiences and finally, Teach/Inform measures how one employs past experiences to instruct others. This instrument is reported to have good predictive validity and reliability with internal consistency ranging from .79 to .89.

Procedure

After signing an informed consent form, ninety-seven participants were asked to complete a general demographic sheet. After completing this sheet, individuals were given the RFS, the LCI, and asked to complete both questionnaires in their entirety. The assessment was administered in a group setting.

After completing both assessments, participants were then given a debriefing statement which explained the purpose of the research. This statement also included details concerning how to acquire a one page summary of the results once the research was completed. The assessments were then scored and a Pearson correlation was run in order to determine the relationship between life stressors and reminiscence.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The hypothesis that individuals who believed they were in a life transition would reminisce more frequently than those who did not report a transition was supported. The specific results are outlined below.

The LCI and RFS were scored and the means and standard deviations for all scales were calculated (See Table 1). Pearson correlations were computed to address the relationship between life stressors ($M = 311.8247$, $SD = 163.6869$) and the subscales of the RFS (See Table 2). For an alpha level of .05, the correlations were found to be statistically significant for the following: Boredom Reduction, $r(95) = .165568$, $p < .05$, Death Preparation, $r(95) = .328032$, $p < .005$, Identity, $r(95) = .302198$, $p < .005$, Problem-Solving, $r(95) = .2513138$, $p < .01$, and the total RFS score $r(95) = 0.323318$, $p < .005$.

These scores indicate that there was a positive relationship between life stressors and reminiscing. For example, when an individual perceives him or herself as being in a life transition, such as a change in job status, he or she would be more likely to remember the past during this time.

TABLE 1

 MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS FOR RFS SUBSCALES AND LCI

<u>ASSESSMENTS</u>	<u>MEAN</u>	<u>STANDARD DEVIATION</u>
LCI	311.82470	163.686900
RFS BOREDOM REDUCTION	16.81443	5.817234
RFS DEATH PREPARATION	11.86598	5.648799
RFS IDENTITY	22.98969	6.395791
RFS PROBLEM SOLVING	23.13402	5.906615
RFS CONVERSATION	16.87629	5.109749
RFS INTIMACY MAINTENANCE	15.40206	5.459433
RFS BITTERNESS REVIVAL	12.85567	5.910777
RFS TEACH/INFORM	17.17526	5.232133
RFS TOTAL	137.11340	25.802490

TABLE 2

PEARSON CORRELATIONS BETWEEN LCI AND RFS SUBSCALES

<u>RFS SUBSCALES</u>	<u>DF</u>	<u>r</u>
BOREDOM REDUCTION	95	.165568*
DEATH PREPARATION	95	.328032***
IDENTITY	95	.302198***
PROBLEM-SOLVING	95	.253138**
CONVERSATION	95	.053489
INTIMACY MAINTENANCE	95	.101503
BITTERNESS REVIVAL	95	.143963
TEACH/INFORM	95	.080250
TOTAL	95	.323318***

* = .05

** = .01

*** = .005

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

As stated previously, *Life review*, sometimes used as a synonym for reminiscence, is defined as the natural tendency to recall past memories in order to evaluate one's life (Butler, 1963). The process of life review was considered to be age-related involving selected episodes of one's life as well as life as a whole (Rubinstein, 1995).

Unlike Butler's theory, Atchley (1989) stated age was not a major factor in reminiscing. He believed that individuals reminisce, not because of their age or approaching death, but because of the inconsistency in their life. According to Continuity Theory, remembering the past is used to establish continuity, or consistency, during transitions in a person's life.

Expanding on this theory, the current study examined the relationship between life transitions, measured by stress, and reminiscence. Significance was found between the Life Change Inventory and the following subscales of the Reminiscence Function Scale: Boredom Reduction, Death Preparation, Identity, Problem-Solving, and the total RFS. Overall, those in the sample with a high stress level reminisced more often than those who experienced less stress. In other words, the results indicated that people who felt stress had a tendency to reminisce more, supporting the initial hypothesis.

Not only was there a significant relationship between life stress and the total amount of reminiscence, but there was also significance between stress

and four of the RFS subscales: Boredom Reduction, Death Preparation, Identity, and Problem-Solving. As previously stated, each subscale provides additional information regarding the function of reminiscing.

Boredom Reduction examines the tendency one has to reminisce when under stimulated. Interestingly enough, the results indicate a high chance of reminiscing when bored. These results suggest that stress may be influenced by the level of boredom that an individual experiences. This supports research which implies that boredom can produce stress (Freeman, 1997). Freeman stated that stress could result from boredom produced when learning at a level which is not perceived to be stimulating. The current sample, drawn from a college population, may have been experiencing this same degree of under stimulation during the time of the experiment.

Death Preparation is defined as the tendency one has to reminisce when faced with death or finality. According to the results, one has a tendency, when stressed, to reminisce more about finality and/or death in general. As Butler (1963) stated reminiscence was often used within the elderly population to help them cope with approaching death. This research implies that this technique is also utilized by younger populations. Lennon (1997) stated that younger populations experienced more anxiety related to death than older populations. Research also suggests that women have greater death anxiety than men (Abdel & Ahmed, 1991; Schumaker, Barraclough & Vagg, 1988). Because the participants in this study were primarily female (85 females and 12 males), the significance found between Death Preparation and stress could relate to this

phenomenon.

Identity measures one's inclination to reminisce as a way of discovering one's true image and adding meaning to his or her life. The elderly have been known to reminisce to establish ego integrity (Stevens-Ratchford, 1993; Silver, 1995). The results of the present study indicate that individuals may not participate in life evaluation at a certain age. It may instead be a continuous process that is affected by stress. The results of this experiment indicate that a relationship does exist between stress and the act of reminiscing to reestablish one's identity. The results indicate that individuals at younger ages may tend to use reminiscing as a way to discover one's identity.

The RFS subscales of Bitterness Revival, Teach/ Inform, Intimacy Maintenance, and Conversation were not significantly related to stress. When examining these subscales in relations to stress, one factor emerges. Although these functions of reminiscing can at times be stressful, they do not always constitute stress. Engaging in conversation, remembering unjust experiences, instructing others, and maintaining a relationship are not necessarily stressful. However, feeling bored, thinking of death/ finality, identifying one's role in society, and coping with problematic situations is almost always stressful. Subsequently, one could argue that because these four subscales invoke stress, it is only logical that a relationship between these scales and stress exists.

Another possible explanation for the differences in the subscales of the RFS is that the subscales that were not significantly related to stress are more external. In other words, there is a necessary interaction between the

participant and at least one other individual in order to perform that function of the scale. In order to Teach and Inform, one must have another individual present. One cannot functionally engage in conversation by oneself, and without someone else there would be no relationship to maintain. A person will have difficulty being bitter about an unjust experience without the involvement of another person. However, those subscales that were found to be significant are more internal. A person can contemplate death without involving another and problems arise quite often that do not revolve around someone else. People can often be bored when alone and it is possible to attempt to find one's identity without concerning another person.

Through analysis of these data, the research was able to support the hypothesis that the amount of stress may effect the frequency of reminiscing. This leads to the question of which occurs first. Does reminiscence serve as a tool in alleviating the amount of stress in one's life? Does stress act as a trigger in initiating the motivation to reminisce?

Although this study provided more answers to the mystery of reminiscing, it did have its limitations. First, the research was not designed to address the cause and effect relationship between stress and reminiscence. Does high stress cause an increase in reminiscing? Even though it is a logical assumption, this research did not provide data that supports this notion. Further research is needed to determine causality between these two variables. Second, due to the age homogeneity of the sample, the role age played when examining stress and reminiscence could not be examined.

As a result of this research, individuals may begin to focus on other areas where reminiscence can be beneficial. This process may be helpful if implemented in stress management. It may also assist in building more adequate coping skills in handling daily stressors. Reminiscence can be a powerful tool in handling the occurrences of daily life. Although research has sufficiently supported its benefits with the older population, younger generations have often been overlooked. It is time to move on from early beliefs encompassing this process; reminiscing is not just for the elderly anymore.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Informed Consent to participate in Research

Austin Peay State University
Clarksville, TN 37044

The purpose of this research is to investigate the effects life transitions have on reminiscing or the act of recalling one's past. You are asked to complete each assessment in its entirety. The assessments ask questions concerning the reason why people reminisce or what goals are accomplished by thinking about the past. You will also be asked to complete a short demographic sheet. It will take approximately a half an hour to complete these assessments.

You are being asked to respond honestly to each question. Every precaution will be made to keep all information given confidential. If at any time, you wish to discontinue the study, you may do so without any ramifications. You may withdraw your data up until identifiers are removed from the surveys after which it would not be possible to extract your particular answers from the group data.

If you have any questions or would like to withdraw your information, please feel free to contact Shawn Harrison or Dr. Lewis at 221-7233. If you have any questions concerning your rights as a participant, please contact the Office of Grants and Sponsored Programs at 221-7881.

INFORMED CONSENT STATEMENT

I agree to participate in this study. I have been informed both orally and in writing of my rights to terminate participation at any time. If I have any questions or concerns, I have been informed on how to contact the researcher to withdraw my information. By signing this form, I give the researcher permission to use my data in this study.

SIGNATURE

DATE

DEBRIEFING STATEMENT

You have just participated in a research study concerning reminiscence. We are examining the effect perceived life transitions has on the frequency of reminiscing. We hypothesize that individuals who are in a transition in life will reminisce more frequently than those not going through a change of life. Unlike other research, this study is not focusing on age as a factor.

If you would like further information concerning this study, please feel free to contact me via email at harrison7@prodigy.net or leave a message with Dr. Jean Lewis at (931) 221-7233. A one page summary of the result will be left in the main office of the psychology department once the analysis has been completed. If you would like to pick up a copying, please stop by the office during regular working hours

Thank you for your participation

Reminiscence Functions Scale

At different points throughout their lives, most adults think about the past. Recalling earlier times can happen spontaneously or deliberately, privately or with other people, and may involve remembering both happy and sad episodes. The process of recalling memories from our personal past is called reminiscence, an activity engaged in by adults of all ages.

This questionnaire concerns the why, or functions, of reminiscence. That is, what purpose does reminiscence fulfill, or, what does retrieving certain memories help you accomplish?

Below are listed 43 statements which other people have identified as possible uses or functions of reminiscence. You are to carefully read each statement and then rate each statement on the scale describing how frequently you reminisce with that particular purpose in mind. Note that we are not asking you how frequently you reminisce in general, but rather, WHEN YOU DO REMINISCE, how frequently is it for a particular purpose. For example, a statement might read:

"I reminisce to help me solve current problems"

If you have NEVER used reminiscence for that purpose, rate that statement as 1, RARELY is rated as 2, SELDOM as 3, OCCASIONALLY is rated as 4, OFTEN is rated as 5, and if you VERY FREQUENTLY reminisce for that stated purpose, the rate the statement as 6.

Please answer each question separately. That is, soon of the statements may seem to be describing similar functions, but rate each statement independently of both earlier and later statements. Answer as truthfully as possible and work relatively quickly, as your first impressions are often the most accurate. Thank you.

When I Reminisce It Is:

1. To teach younger family members what life was like when I was young and living in a different time.
2. To help me "put my house in order" before I die.
3. Because it fills the gap when I find time "heavy on my hands."
4. To help me plan for the future.
5. To keep alive the memory of a dead loved one.
6. Because it brings me closer to newer friends and acquaintances.
7. Because it promotes fellowship and a sense of belonging.
8. Because it helps me contrast the ways I've changed with the ways I've stayed the same.
9. Because it gives me a sense of personal completion or wholeness as I approach the end of life.
10. To see how my past fits in with my journey through life.
11. To pass the time during idle or restless hours.
12. To help resolve some current difficulty.
13. To keep painful memories alive.
14. Out of loyalty to keep alive the memory of someone close to me who has died.
15. To rehash lost opportunities.
16. To reduce boredom.
17. To remember an earlier time when I was treated unfairly by others.
18. To remind me that I have the skills to cope with recent problems.
19. To relieve depression.
20. To transmit knowledge that I've acquired to someone else.
21. For lack of any better mental stimulation

22. To create a common bond between old and new friends.
23. In order to teach younger persons about cultural values
24. Because it gives me a sense of self-identity.
25. To remember someone who has passed away.
26. Remembering my past helps me define who I am now.
27. As a way of bridging the "generation gap."
28. As a "social lubricant" to get people talking.
29. Because it helps me prepare for my own death.
30. In order to leave a legacy of family history.
31. To put current problems in perspective.
32. To try to understand myself better.
33. Because I feel fearful of death after I finish reminiscing.
34. To create ease of conversation.
35. Because it helps me see that I've lived a full life and can therefore accept death more calmly.
36. As a means of self-exploration and growth.
37. For something to do.
38. Because it helps me cope with thoughts of my own mortality.
39. To see how my strengths can help me solve a current problem.
40. To rekindle bitter memories.
41. To remember people I was close to but who are no longer part of my life.
42. To avoid repeating past mistakes at some later date.
43. To keep memories of old hurts fresh in my mind.

Life Change Inventory

please indicate, by circling "y" or "n" next to the statement, which changes you have experienced within the past year

- | | | | |
|-----|---|---|---|
| 1. | Marriage | Y | N |
| 2. | Change in frequency of use of alcohol | Y | N |
| 3. | Change in frequency of use of tobacco | Y | N |
| 4. | Major change in attitude towards drugs (favorable or unfavorable) | Y | N |
| 5. | Death of a close family member | Y | N |
| 6. | Major change in vocational goals or pursuits | Y | N |
| 7. | Major change in sleeping habits (a lot more or less sleep or change in time of when asleep) | Y | N |
| 8. | Major violations of the law and subsequent arrest | Y | N |
| 9. | Death of a close friend | Y | N |
| 10. | Major change in eating habits (e.g., increase or decrease in amount of food intake, or very different meal hours or surroundings, or change in specific nature of diet) | Y | N |
| 11. | Major change in financial state (e.g., increase or decrease of financial worries) | Y | N |
| 12. | Outstanding personal achievement | Y | N |
| 13. | Major change in attitude towards friends (i.e., friendship carrying greater or less importance) | Y | N |
| 14. | Change in number of personal or social relationships that you've formed and/ or dissolved | Y | N |
| 15. | Major change in sexual morality (beliefs and attitudes) | Y | N |

16.	Major change in frequency or nature of sexual experiences	Y	N
17.	Major change in the health or behavior of a family member	Y	N
18.	Death of a spouse	Y	N
19.	Change in religious affiliation	Y	N
20.	Major change in church activities (a lot more or less time attending, etc.)	Y	N
21.	Major change in dating activity (more or less time; dating one person vs. many, etc.)	Y	N
22.	Major change in relationships with members of your immediate family (improved vs. worsened, etc.)	Y	N
23.	Major change in dependencies on parents (more or less)	Y	N
24.	Major change in social demands or responsibilities due to your age (becoming of age legally; reaching retirement age, etc.)	Y	N
25.	Major personal injury or illness	Y	N
26.	Divorce or martial separation from spouse	Y	N
27.	Major change in amount or nature of social activities (more or less time spent in going to organizations, dancing, movies, parties, etc.)	Y	N
28.	Change in awareness of activities (political or social, etc.) in external world (increased or decreased concern)	Y	N
29.	Major change in political views or affiliations	Y	N
30.	Major change in social status (due to financial reasons, new group associations, etc.)	Y	N
31.	Major change in arguments with spouse or lover (e.g., either a lot more or less than usual)	Y	N
32.	Major change in arguments with roommate (e.g., either a lot more or less than usual)	Y	N

33.	Vacation	Y	N
34.	Change in mobility (availability or lack of availability of public transportation; gaining or losing use of a car, etc.)	Y	N
35.	Major change in environment (e.g., moving from rural to urban community or vice versa, etc.)	Y	N
36.	Change in address (move to new location or residency)	Y	N
37.	Major change in living arrangements and conditions (new roommates, with spouse, out of family home, etc)	Y	N
38.	Change in amount of material possessions and subsequent responsibilities (e.g., taking an apartment, owning a car, new home, etc.)	Y	N
39.	Changes in degree of interest in school or attitude towards education	Y	N
40.	Changing to a new school	Y	N
41.	Beginning formal higher education	Y	N
42.	Spouse beginning or ceasing work outside of the home	Y	N
43.	Detention in jail or other institution (psychiatric hospital, etc.)	Y	N
44.	Beginning or ceasing service in the armed forces	Y	N
45.	Major change in feelings of self-reliance and independence	Y	N
46.	Major change in own personality (e.g., more extroverted or introverted, etc.)	Y	N
47.	Pregnancy of self or spouse	Y	N
48.	Change in amount of in-law troubles (more or less than usual)	Y	N
49.	Gaining a new family member (through birth, adoption, etc.)	Y	N
50.	Major change in general outlook on life (more pessimistic or optimistic, etc.)	Y	N

VITA

Shawn R. Harrison was born in Martinsville, Virginia on March 20, 1974. She graduated from Laurel Park High School (Martinsville, Virginia) in May of 1992. She then entered Radford University in the fall of 1992. She graduated in May 1996 with a Bachelor of Science in Psychology and Anthropology. She entered Austin Peay State University in August of 1996 and received her Master's of Science degree in Guidance and Counseling with an emphasis in Community and Mental Health Agency in May of 2001.