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Transformational Learning: An Investigation of the Emotional Maturation Advancement in Learners Aged 50 and Older

Susan Lorraine Lundry
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TRANSFORMATIONAL LEARNING:
AN INVESTIGATION OF THE EMOTIONAL MATURATION
ADVANCEMENT
IN LEARNERS AGED 50 AND OLDER

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Abstract

Human beings have spent much time and effort in trying to understand themselves, others, and their world. Mankind uses intellect when trying to understand life but the majority of people continue to encounter frustration, confusion, and a variety of obstacles when dealing with daily challenges and people. Theorists and researchers understand that successful existence requires more than mere knowledge; it requires a level of understanding, a form of wisdom foreign to the bulk of the populace. The missing ingredient for this kind of wisdom is the ability to ‘know thyself,’ which is the beginning of establishing a higher level of emotional maturity. This qualitative study focused on the transformational learning process of the adult learner, aged 50 and older. In studying the learning processes, an online survey was implemented and then Partridge's (1985, 2014) Maturity Reasoning Index Program (MRIP) was used as a psycho-educational program and administered after the participants answered five vignettes regarding current perspectives of five areas of their logic reasoning. After completing the MRIP, participants answered five additional vignettes regarding similar areas of reasoning. This study investigated participants’ transformational learning experiences as they developed a higher level of emotional maturity compared to previous reported emotional maturity findings. A group of 32 volunteers, recruited from a university listserv and networking among family and friends, spent several months completing the online study. The study included an initial four-part survey, a brief pre-test survey, an extensive psycho-educational program, and a brief post-test. At the end of the study, 23 participants completed the study. Findings indicate an increase in using a higher level of logic of
reasoning or potential transformation after completing the psycho-educational program.

Additional research is recommended in the area of emotional maturation, life satisfaction, wisdom, and trust-of-self for adult learners aged 50 and older.
Acknowledgements

The journey between what you once were and who you are now becoming is where the dance of life really takes place.

Barbara Deangelis

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Dear committee members, it is folks like you who make the challenges learners face doable and give us courage to stay focused and persevere. As I move forward in working with other learners of all levels and ages, I will remember and share with them some of my journeys and the support I have received; and, I will make certain that they know I am there for them as you were there for me.

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Chapter One: Introduction

Knowledge of self is the source of our abilities.

Lao Tzo

Human beings have spent much time and effort in trying to understand themselves, others, and their world. Globally, mankind uses intellect when trying to understand life (Guss, 2005; Hyatt, Hyatt, & Hyatt, 2010; Landau, 1998; Merriam, Caffarella, & Baumgartner, 2007) but a majority continue to encounter frustration, confusion, and a variety of obstacles when dealing with daily activities and people (Hawkins, 2002; Lipton, 2005). Therefore, it has become obvious to theorists and researchers (Ardelt, 1997, 2000a, 2000b; Hyatt et al., 2010; Landau, 1998; Lindeman, 1933; McKee & Barber, 1999) that successful existence requires more than mere knowledge; it requires a level of understanding, a form of wisdom foreign to the bulk of the populace. Partridge (1985, 2014), Hyatt et al. (2010), and Merriam, Caffarella, and Baumgartner (2007) suggest that the missing ingredient for this kind of wisdom is the ability to ‘know thyself,’ which is the beginning of establishing a higher level of emotional maturity (Partridge, 1985, 2014).

Emotional maturity can be defined as a process requiring development within both the physical and nonphysical realms or the conscious and unconscious life experiences leading to the ability to function successfully in daily life (Partridge, 1985, 2014). As people develop an enhanced level of emotional maturity, they are better able to articulate their thoughts or beliefs, and communicate them to others. Communication is a skill of listening and having the ability to hear whether it is one's own thoughts and / or beliefs or the thoughts and / or beliefs of others (Landau, 1998;
Ryff, 1989; Williams & Thomas, 2005). Partridge (1985, 2014), Landau (1998), Ryff (1989), Williams and Thomas (2005) posit that before individuals can effectively communicate with others, they must have firsthand knowledge of their own psyche and understand their personal needs, fears, and desires. Once they are able to understand themselves, they are better able to transfer such knowledge into understanding others. Partridge (1985, 2014), Landau (1998), Ryff (1989), and Williams and Thomas (2005) postulate that communication is the ability to feel each individual’s intention behind or within the communicative process. Therefore, when individuals take the time to develop an awareness of their emotional maturity, they will have achieved the ability to experience a considerably broader range of joy and satisfaction within their life experiences than they had prior to this development (Hawkins, 2002; Lipton, 2005; Partridge, 1985, 2014).

Acquiring an advanced level of emotional maturity requires that people find balance within multiple dimensions (Hawkins, 2002; Hyatt et al., 2010; Landau, 1998; Lipton, 2005). The current study will use the term emotional maturity in discussing an evolutionary process requiring development within both the physical and nonphysical realms and the conscious and unconscious life experiences. In addition, partially blind are individuals who omit either part of the equation since emotional maturity requires awareness in both the physical / nonphysical and conscious / unconscious dimensions. Without both parts working in unison, individuals are unbalanced and tend to function in a confused manner within their daily activities (Hawkins, 2002; Hyatt et al., 2010; Nelis, Quoidbach, Hansenne, Kotsou, Weytens, Dupuis, et al., 2011).
Goleman (2006) states that emotional maturity has been studied by many well-known theorists such as Sigmund Freud, Erik Erikson, Howard Gardner, and William James. Erikson (1971) and Nelis, Quoidbach, Hansenne, Kotsou, Weytens, Dupuis, et al. (2011) assert that emotional maturity contributes to the solidarity of all aspects of personality and the fulfillment of intellectual, emotional, and social needs. Hawkins (2002), Landau (1998), Lipton (2005), Partridge (1985, 2014), and Sternberg (1988) emphasize that appropriate emotional maturity is a learned part of one’s development, which is often gained by the daily interaction / instruction and / or role-modeling of parents, educators, and superiors within the life experience and / or learning environment. Landau (1998) found that some individuals, given information that required only cognitive utilization, were able to relate to the more concrete paradigms of sciences and mathematics. They had no desire to relate to people or social phenomena that required an understanding of the abstract perspectives. This lack of instruction and role-modeling creates a deficit in the learning capabilities of society (Beauchamp & Anderson, 2010; Landau, 1998; LeCapitaine, 2001; Whiddon, 2009) and leads to many adult learners suffering the consequences of the deficiencies of their childhoods and those of prior generations. Therefore, older adults need the ability to understand concrete and abstract life perspectives in order to have a balanced life experience.

Researchers (Merriam, Caffarella, & Baumgartner, 2007) found that there are a variety of perspectives regarding the aging adult learners’ learning processes or their ability(ies) to learn and grow intellectually. For example, some believe that older adults are not as ‘with it’ or aware as younger adults (Merriam et al., 2007). Braver
and West (2008) reported that the working memory and decision-making functions related to conscious deliberation declined with age. Peters, Hess, Vastfjall, and Auman (2007) agreed with this finding; however, they also found that aging adults' intuitive mode was stable. On the other hand, findings (Hess, Pullen, & McGee, 1996; MacPherson, Phillips, & Della Sala, 2002) revealed that the majority of adults' intellectual abilities were sound and thriving during the majority of their lives—even though the intellectual strengths differed from adult to adult (Dixon, 2003). Therefore, the learning ability of aging adults is a controversial topic with a variety of beliefs and perspectives.

Lindeman (1933) surmised that feelings are often more accurate than thoughts in that when given appropriate attention and validity, they reveal much of what individuals are experiencing, need, or desire. Therefore, in order to be true to themselves, people must place faith in their feelings. Unfortunately, a large majority of human beings have not followed this pattern. This lack of connection to feelings has led people to experience massive frustration and confusion, because they are not in balance with themselves (Nelis, Quoidbach, Hansenne, Kotsou, Weytens, Dupuis, et al., 2011; Partridge, 1985, 2014). In addition, researchers (Molleman, Nauta, & Buunk, 2007; Partridge, 1985, 2014) investigating learners' self-trust found that there was a relationship between the level of trust an individual has of him / her abilities and personal growth and educational success. The knowledge / wisdom, and ability to trust oneself, can be very helpful in guiding oneself toward gaining clarity of their current perspectives and ability to achieve life goals.
Older adult learners learn in a variety of ways. Experiential (Dewey, 1938; Knowles, 1970; Lindeman, 1989), critical (Freire, 1970, 1993, 2000; MacIsaac, 1996), and transformational (Kitchenham, 2008; Mezirow, 1985) are some of the many learning theories that help us understand how adults learn. Learning through one's experiences is experiential learning. Many well-known philosophers (Dewey, 1938; Lindeman, 1989; Knowles, 1970) support the progressive and humanistic mindsets that utilize the experiential learning method of higher learning. One of the meanings of critical learning or critical thinking in education is seeking emancipation: liberating human beings from conditions that enslave them in life and within the learning process (Freire, 2000). This philosophy of learning is called radical adult education. Two philosophers that support this mindset are Jurgen Haberamas and Paulo Freire (Freire, 1970, 1993, 2000; MacIsaac, 1996). Mezirow's (1985) transformative learning theory includes three types of learning: (a) instrumental: learners want to know how to best learn the information; (b) dialogic: learners want to know when and where the learning can best occur; and (c) self-reflective: learners ask why they are learning the material. At least two philosophies of learning that relate to transformational learning are humanistic and radical adult education. These styles of learning provide a scaffolding or constructive learning experience for the older adult learner.

Adult learners' ability to reach a balanced life experience rests on their insight and understanding of concrete and abstract mindsets or perspectives. One without the other leaves the learner unbalanced and with confusion and frustration. Attaining a
higher level of emotional maturity has provided learners with tools to better understand themselves and others, which leads to an enhanced ability to communicate with themselves and others. One way of developing a higher level of emotional maturity is through the utilization of experiential learning, critical learning, and transformational learning activities.

**Problem Statement**

Researchers (Hyatt et al., 2010; Mayer & Geher, 1996; Sternberg, 2003; Vakola, Tasaosis, & Nikolaou, 2004) suggest that individuals require guidance in order to develop adequate levels of emotional maturity necessary for successful living and life satisfaction. A review of the literature (Hawkins, 2002; Lipton, 2005; Mayer & Geher, 1996; Reinsch, 2006) indicates there is still a need for a reliable tool or a theory-based psycho-educational program that will provide assistance for people to better understand themselves, others, and life. There are several such programs available (i.e., Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-I), EQ-360, EQ-I: YV, Bar-On Model of Emotional-Social Intelligence, and others). Another such program is the Maturity Reasoning Index Program (MRIP). According to Partridge (1985, 2014) and Krasnoff and Partridge (1985), the MRIP has proven effective as a program that improves mental health. It was effective in improving the mental health of male adults residing in a correctional facility in the Midwestern United States (Krasnoff & Partridge, 1985). Research is needed within that population to determine whether the transformational learning process and the utilization of a psycho-educational program can provide emotional support for older adult learners.
In an attempt to understand the mind patterns of the populace, this research intends to focus on learners, aged 50 and older, as the population area of interest. Learners of this age, also known as baby boomers (Merriam, Caffarella, & Baumgartner, 2007; Reinsch, 2007; Schaefer, 2010; Wolf & Brady, 2010), are coming into a time when self-exploration and the understanding of inner beliefs and needs are expected to have been established; however, too often this is not the case (Wolf & Brady, 2010). A psycho-educational program, such as the MRIP, would be beneficial in better understanding this group of learners' transformational learning experiences.

**Purpose of the Study and Research Questions**

The purpose of the study is to investigate if older adults' level of emotional maturity and life satisfaction can be improved by a transformational learning process with the use of the Maturity Reasoning Index Program (MRIP). The primary question is: What are the perceptions of older adult learners (OAL) after participating in a psycho-educational program? The sub-questions are:

a) How do older adult learners’ (OAL) emotional maturity, life satisfaction, and trust of oneself change after participating in a psycho-educational program?

b) How do OAL define emotional maturity after participating in a psycho-educational program?

c) How do OAL define wisdom after participating in a psycho-educational program?
d) How do OAL define their transformational learning experience after participating in a psycho-educational program?

In addition, these variables are measured with participants’ responses that are provided in the journaling activities after reading each of the eight sessions of MRIP.

**Significance of the Study**

Although past research offers valid perspectives, this researcher proposes that additional in-depth research be conducted to ascertain the impact of emotional maturity on adult learners. Partridge (1985, 2014) reports that taking abstraction to a different level by stressing that what people think creates their reality. Are all people capable of creating their experiences through thought? Partridge suggests that chronological age is not a factor in the creation of one’s experience. Additionally, as people are taught to trust themselves and change the way in which they interpret and perceive life situations, they become successful beings and experience a more fulfilled life (Erikson, 1971; Freire, 1993; Hawkins, 2002; Lipton, 2005; Nelis, Quoidbach, Hansenne, Kotsou, Weytens, Dupuis, et al., 2011; Partridge, 1985, 2014; Ryff, 1989). Therefore, because adults are now living longer and the numbers of older adult learners are increasing, this study will provide the understanding needed to achieve the desired life experiences.

In addition, learners, regardless of age, may benefit from experiencing transformational learning from participating in a psycho-educational program such as the Maturity Reasoning Index Program (MRIP) because understanding life and attaining personal happiness and a pursuit of a higher quality of life are important and desirable goals (L. R. Partridge, personal communication, September 1, 2010). There
is a need for better understanding and improved communication skills when assisting learners and the general society to experience improved life outcomes and satisfaction. This study will establish a process in which adult learners, of all ages, might achieve a higher level of emotional maturity, interpersonal / intrapersonal communication skills, and enhanced insight into the importance of physical / nonphysical and conscious / unconscious dimensions of learning. This understanding will contribute to a variety of higher education areas. For example, the field of psychology may find the results beneficial and also increase our knowledge of adult learning as it relates to adult education and increase the knowledge base for adult educators in higher learning and the general community.

**Delimitations**

The span of this study is restricted to the investigation of variables stated in the instruments: Demographic Survey and the Vignettes provided before and after the implementation of the Maturity Reasoning Index Program (MRIP). The research does not examine additional factors that might influence perceived life satisfaction. The sample population included 32 adults, located in the Midwestern United States, aged 50 and older, who are self-selected and interested in personal growth.

The Internet was used to gather data. The participants were a demographically diverse population of learners regarding gender, education, race, cultural and ethnic backgrounds, belief systems, and economic status. The online reflection process utilized private journaling procedures.
**Definition of Terms**

The following information names and defines terms that will be used in this research:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Behaviors</td>
<td>Stated as “activities designed to occur during the teaching-learning process to support the learners in reaching their goals” (Dawson, 1997, p. 5).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective Communication</td>
<td>The ability to present information to others with precision, clarity, diplomacy, and simplicity (L.-R. Partridge, personal communication, October 28, 2011; Williams &amp; Thomas, 2005).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Maturity</td>
<td>A developmental process that is measured by demonstrating the ability to function successfully in the typical daily living experience (Partridge, 1985, 2014). Although this study uses the term emotional maturity, some authors define emotional maturity and emotional intelligence (EI) similarly. However, in this study, the term ‘emotional maturity’ is used.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life Satisfaction</td>
<td>An underlying variable or theoretical concept that cannot be directly observed (Byrne, 2001). According to many successfully aging adults</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
interviewed, aged 70 and older, key elements relating to education, curiosity, energy level, staying active, maintaining physical exercise and activities, accepting uncontrollable physical limitations, participating in diverse and novel experiences, maintaining psychological continuity during one's lifespan, participating in friendships and social activities, and utilizing social links with younger people, assist in having a successful aging experience (Restak, 1997).

Mind Patterns

Macmillan Publishers (2015) shows synonyms for mind patterns as an approach or particular way of thinking or dealing with something; perspective; viewpoint; logic; mindset; and school of thought.

Older Adult Learners (OAL)

Miller (2012) objectively defined aging as “a universal process that begins at birth” (p. 3) that applies to all people; and, she subjectively defined aging as the term “typically associated with being ‘old’ or reaching ‘older adulthood,’” (p. 3), which relates to “personal meaning and experience” (p. 3). Therefore, the aging process
for older adults can be viewed from a physical or nonphysical perspective as well as the emotional maturation status and experiences of individuals. For the purpose of this study, OAL is defined as adults, aged 50 and older.

Third-Age
The period of life that starts at approximately 50 years of age and ends with death (Laslett, 1996).

Trusting Oneself
The ability to understand one’s process of learning and make the right choices regarding the learning process desired (Henschke, 1994).

Transformational Learning
A learning process that involves an experienced problem, followed by critical reflection, and then a new interpretation of the experience of the problem is concluded (Mezirow, 1996).

Summary
In Chapter One, the importance of emotional maturity and the transformational learning process was introduced as essential tools to better understand the self and others. The need for such a process utilizing a tool or psycho-educational program that can assist learners in developing an enhanced level of emotional maturity was also discussed. In addition, three learning styles, the purpose and significance of this study, delimitations, and list of defined terms used in the work was provided. Chapter Two provides a review of the literature on emotional maturity that includes: (a) older adult learners, (b) life satisfaction, (c) educational
programs, (d) emotional development, (e) experiential learning theory, (f) critical learning theory, and (g) transformational learning theory. Lastly, Chapter Three introduces the qualitative research design of this study.
Chapter Two: Literature Review

No human being can safely be trusted with power until he has learned how to exercise power over himself.

Eduard C. Lindeman

Chapter Two is separated into seven primary parts: Older Adult Learners, Life Satisfaction, Educational Programs, Emotional Development, Experiential Learning Theory, Critical Learning Theory, and Transformational Learning Theory. The review of older adult learners and life satisfaction focuses on the population increase of older adults, concerns for their care, and the manner in which helping them will assist in their becoming self-directed in order to improve their quality of life. The review of educational programs, considers how educational programs influence adult learning processes. The review of emotional development discusses the need of older adults developing the skills necessary in order to experience the level of life satisfaction they seek. Finally, the experiential learning, critical learning, and transformational learning theory sections discuss the mindsets of these concepts and how they help learners achieve the desired perspective needed for life satisfaction and personal growth.

Many educators and theorists have written about the concepts of emotional maturity. According to Partridge (1985, 2014) and Reinsch (2007), the act of being emotionally mature requires a balanced development within both the physical and nonphysical realms and the conscious and unconscious life experiences in order to function successfully in daily activities. Gardner (1993) focuses on his theory of multiple intelligences and the importance of individuals understanding their own thoughts and emotions. Hargrove (2003) believes that creativity is produced as
educators focus on the potential success of learners as individuals; therefore, she advocates creativity through emotional understanding and "higher order thinking skills" (p. 30). Hyatt, Hyatt's, and Hyatt's (2007) perspective regarding emotional competency is comparable to other works/theories regarding emotional intelligence; however, it places extra importance on the societal framework of emotional performance and emotional self-efficacy.

**Older Adult Learners**

Research has found that a large percent of this nation's population are older adults (Hayward & Liu, 1992; Merriam, Caffarella, & Baumann, 2007; Reinsch, 2007; Schaefer, 2010; Wolf & Brady, 2010). Currently, older adults are not given the level of respect deserved for their achievements and societal contributions. However, as the population grows, so does the attention and consideration regarding the interests and needs of older people. Therefore, as the number of older adults increases, people will have more direct contact with aging family, friends, and community members (Mason, Darnell, & Prifiti, 2010) providing opportunities to develop a better understanding regarding an aging population.

**Aging**

In general, the aging process means different things to different individuals. For example, Jung stated in his 1933 work, "A human being would certainly not grow to be 70 or 80 years old if this longevity had no meaning for the species for which he belonged. This afternoon of human life must also have a significance of its own and
cannot be merely a pitiful appendage to life's morning" (p. 109). And, Myseh (1978) recounts words stated by an aging Jewish gentlemen, Heschel, regarding his perspective of the aging process.

In old age, we got a chance to find out what a human being is, how we could be worthy of being human. You could find in yourself courage and know you are vital. Then you're living on a different plane. To do this you got to use your brain, but that's not enough. The brain is combined with the soul. Do you know what I'm talking about? I don't think you could get to this understanding too young, but when you get to it, then you couldn't go before your time, because you are ready. (p. 198)

Another definition of the aging process was described by de Magalhaes (2012) as “the passage of time and can even have a positive connotation as in ‘aging wine’” (p. 1); and, he continues with “unless otherwise noted, the term ‘aging’ refers to the biological process of growing older in a deleterious sense” (p. 1) sometimes referred to as “senescence” (p. 1). Miller (2012) objectively defined aging as “a universal process that begins at birth” (p. 3) that applies to all people; and, she subjectively defined aging as the term “typically associated with being ‘old’ or reaching ‘older adulthood,’” (p. 3), which relates to “personal meaning and experience” (p. 3). Therefore, the aging process can be viewed from a physical or nonphysical perspective as well as the emotional maturation status and experiences of individuals.
Characteristics of Older Adult Learners in General

The significance of issues and basic characteristics of older learners has become a frontline interest in higher education. For example, Fok (2010) investigated older Chinese adults and their learning experiences when taking courses in Hong Kong and identified four themes that included enhanced self-image, integration into society, older adults as learners, and re-organization of time. In addition, during a further review of literature of older adult characteristics several theorists/theories were identified; and, each focused on a specific area of interest regarding their work. Theorists Erik Erikson’s, Jane Loevinger’s, Daniel Levinson’s, and Abraham Maslow’s work ranged from utilizing a developmental process reviewing perspectives that utilize and not utilize stages. In addition, other authors focused on learner profiles or predispositions (Butcher & Street, 2009) and the biological societal clock perspectives (Bee & Bjorklund, 2004) were reviewed as well.

Erikson's (1982) theory of identity development proposes that social development continues during the entire life of the individual. The interaction takes place among inner instincts and drives with outer cultural and social challenges. In essence, his theory states that individuals follow a simple plan (utilizing a span of years, stage of activity, and area of strength gained) and are required to successfully pass through eight identity dilemmas during the lifetime in order to create a stable identity (Bee & Bjorklund, 2004; Bee & Boyd, 2003; Green, 1989; Ryckman, 2004; Schaie & Willis, 2002).

Initially, the last two stages of Erikson's theory focused on the older adult's detached perspective of life and an understanding and belief that much was learned
during the lifespan. Interestingly, when Erikson personally reached the final stage of
his theory, he found wisdom which he initially defined as "informed and detached
concern with life itself in the face of death" (1982, p. 61) to not have the substance he
first believed. Instead, he found a weaker experience of the stage. Bee and Bjorklund
(2004) report Erikson changed his original belief and theory to "disdain, which flows
from the feeling of helplessness or confusion that is likely as death approaches. The
sense of physical limitation and, of loss, contributes often to an increased self-
centeredness, a quality that is in sharp contrast to the universalism or altruism" (p. 37)
Erikson later stated in his writings regarding the final stage. During that time,
Erikson also felt himself,

burdened by physical limitations and confronting a personal future that
may seem more inescapably finite than ever before, those nearing the
end of the life cycle find themselves struggling to accept the
inalterability of the past and unknowability of the future, to
acknowledge possible mistakes and omissions, and to balance
consequent despair with the sense of overall integrity that is essential
to carrying on. (Erikson, Erikson, & Kivnick, 1986, p. 56)

Loevinger's 1976 theory of ego development (Bee & Bjorklund, 2004; Head
& Shayer, 1980) suggests similar perspectives of Erikson's work; however, her model
was created around an empirical approach. Her perspective is not as logical or
cohesive a theory and the stages are not as structured. She focused more on
milestones or markers along a continuous path. Therefore, Bee and Bjorklund (2004)
labeled her work between the stages and no stages dimensions.
In essence, Loevinger's theory "builds on" (Bee & Bjorklund, 2004, p. 38) the phase or stage "preceding it" (p. 38) rather than "move through and successfully resolve eight crises or dilemmas over the course of a lifetime" (p. 34) as Erikson's theory suggests. In addition, according to Loevinger (Bee & Bjorklund, 2004; Head & Shayer, 1980), "a shift to the next stage occurs only when a person has completed the development of the current stage" (Bee & Bjorklund, 2004, p. 38) and "the rate of movement and the final stage achieved differ widely from one person to the next, and that difference is the basis of different personality types" (p. 38). Her theory included levels of impulsive, self-protective, conformist, self-aware, conscientious, individualistic, autonomous, and integrated stage with basic characteristics labeled as impulse control, interpersonal mode, and conscious pre-occupation.

The last three levels of Loevinger's work focused on individualistic, autonomous, and the integrated stage. The individualistic stage utilized a tolerant impulse control, mutual interpersonal mode, and individuality / development roles within the conscious pre-occupation characteristic. The autonomous stage utilized coping with conflict within the impulse control characteristic, interdependent in the interpersonal mode, and self-fulfillment / psychological causation within the conscious pre-occupation characteristic. And, the integrated stage, which is rarely seen in the population, has enhanced development of the previously mentioned levels as well as fundamental concerns with one's own life and the larger societal group (Bee & Bjorklund, 2004; Head & Shayer, 1980). This might also be known as utilizing wisdom.
Levinson's theory of seasons of adulthood focused on life structure as the underlying guide or plan of an individual's life at any particular timeframe. His empirical work focused on the key components of relationships with other people such as one's spouse or partner, children, employer or work-related subordinates, an important group or social organization, or nature. According to Levinson's 1967 work, the relationships provided the foundation for one's life course (Bee & Bjorklund, 2004; Bee & Boyd, 2002; Santrock, 2002).

In essence, Levinson's theory included 10 stages. The last four stages, as related to the older adult learner, include the developmental periods, ranges of chronological ages, and the tasks associated with those groups. For example, the: (a) age-50 is considered a time of transition, with an age range of 50 to 55, and the tasks are similar to the previous stage by creating a new life structure such as a new career / job, intimate relationship, or general life work. If a crisis has not occurred until this time, Levinson believed one may be susceptible to occur during this period; (b) the culmination of middle adulthood, had an age range of 55 to 60, and the tasks included building a second mid-life arrangement, similar (Dewey, 1938; Lindeman, 1989; Knowles 1970) to relaxing with activities of middle adulthood, and was especially noted if the adult has successfully adapted to current changes up to this point; (c) late-adult transition, with an age range of 60 to 65, and the tasks included leaving middle adulthood and entering late adulthood. The adult prepares for retirement and the physical processes of aging. This is a primary point in the individual's life span; (d) late adulthood, with an age range of 65 and older, and those tasks included developing a new life perspective and structure suitable for retirement along with the
process of physical aging. At that time, individuals are developing the ability to accept their loss of youth (Bee & Bjorklund, 2004; Bee & Boyd, 2002; Santrock, 2002).

Maslow's (1954) theory of hierarchy of needs or positive well-being proposed that an individual's lower needs dominated the person's motivations and the higher level of needs occurred or were stronger later in life after the individual's lower level of needs were met. His developments of motives or needs were grouped into: (a) deficiency motives and (b) being motives. Basic deficiency motives can be found in animals and being motives are noted in humans. Maslow believed that deficiency motives contributed to one's inner balance and assisted in curing illness, and being motives created positive well-being. He believed that positive motives developed well into the adulthood stage when in a supportive environment (Bee & Bjorklund, 2004; Bee & Boyd, 2002; Miller, 2012; Santrock, 2002).

Maslow's hierarchy of needs consisted of five levels. The four lower levels included deficiency needs and the top / fifth level was that of self-actualization, a being motive. He believed that they emerged in sequence and surfaced from the bottom level to the top level. The levels included: (a) physiological needs, (b) safety and security needs, (c) love and belongingness, (d) self-esteem, and (e) self-actualization (Bee & Bjorklund, 2004; Miller, 2012; Santrock, 2002). Self-actualization was Maslow's perspective of a more mature / wiser being.

Butcher and Street (2009) used four phases of learner profiles (predispositions) and needs to be met: (a) "mid-life re-evaluation" (p. 67) that usually occurs in the 40s to late 50s with a focus on re-evaluation, exploration, and
transition" (p. 67); (b) "liberation and usually occurs in late 50s to the early 70s with a focus on liberation, experimentation and innovation" (p. 67); (c) "summing up and usually occurs in late 60s to the 80s with a focus on recapitulation, resolution, and contribution" (p. 67); and (d) "encore and usually occurs from the late 70s to the end of life with a focus on continuation, reflection, and celebration" (p. 68). “The non-learner is the learner who avoids organized learning and sees little benefit in the investment in learning” (p. 68). "In contrast, the permanent learner is described as one who is highly motivated to learn and becomes adept at self-directed learning” (p. 68). Therefore, learners experience a variety of life phases and learning processes. Although aging adult learners may transition through a variety of phases, their learning types or styles are unique and individual to the learner(s).

Santrock (2002), Bee and Boyd (2003), Bee and Bjorklund (2004) report that the "biological clock" (Bee & Bjorklund, 2004, p. 368) regarding the process of physical changes becomes apparent from the ages of 40 to 65. For example, many adults require glasses for reading; a loss of skin elasticity makes wrinkles more notable; the capacity to reproduce lessens; and the risk of diseases (i.e., heart disease or cancers) are increased for both genders, although, it is reported that women experience a higher level of risk for those possibilities. In addition, a slightly slower, but observable, reaction time in the walking / running ability can occur along with memory issues such as difficulty(ies) with name recall or other particular information from the long-term memory ability.

Researchers Santrock (2002), Bee and Boyd (2003), and Bee and Bjorklund (2004) found that the early phase of the physical aging process does not typically
hinder functional activity. However, cognitive skills may slow down and become a bit more challenging. For example, individuals can continue to learn and teach themselves skills such as using a computer and maintaining their job; although activities may require a little more effort and focus in order to operate at a level in which they were once accustomed. For example, if a person has been "out of shape" (Bee & Bjorklund, p. 369), it is still possible to regain the level of a 30-year-old person, although it may take additional effort and focus in which to do so. The "social clock" (Bee & Bjorklund, 2004, p. 369) as referred by Santrock (2002), Bee and Boyd (2003), and Bee and Bjorklund (2004), is reported as to become less important. For example, if adults establish a family in their 20s, during their 40s and 50s the children are launched; the work life is often near the highest level of achievement within that company; and the drive or desire to achieve may begin to decline.

During the research of older adult learner characteristics, much literature was reviewed, and this information was found. Unfortunately, the author is unknown. However, it is important to include this information in this area.

Someone who approaches death without fear has the strength Erikson calls wisdom. He calls it a gift to children, because 'healthy children will not fear life if their elders have integrity enough not to fear death.' He suggests that a person must be somewhat gifted to be truly wise, but I would like to suggest that you understand 'gifted' in as broad a fashion as possible: I have found that there are people of very modest
gifts who have taught me a great deal, not by their wise words, but by their simple and gentle approach to life and death, by their 'generosity of spirit.' (Author Unknown, 2012b, p. 3)

**Characteristics of Older Women versus Men as Learners**

Education for both genders is an essential accomplishment. It not only supplies an individual with a broader foundation of knowledge and skill set for employment opportunities, an adequate education can also provide economic assistance for later years by enhancing one's capability to save funds when employment is no longer an option. Therefore, the better financially prepared aging adults are, the more independence they have during the later years of the aging process (Bee & Bjorklund, 2004).

Lamb and Brady (2005) provided conflicting findings regarding demographics, as their investigation revealed that white females with high levels of income and educational opportunities participated in higher learning activities more often than males; and, females in lower income brackets also attended higher learning activities more often than their counterparts. Thus, there is more to understanding the participatory experience of higher learning than only the demographic variable(s).

According to American Council on Education ACE (2007), a 2006 study revealed that approximately 30% of U.S. citizens within the age bracket of 55 to 59, completed an undergraduate degree or higher. However, this number decreases as the group ages. For example, learners aged 60 to 69 have attained at least an undergraduate degree in comparison to 18% of those learners aged 70 and older. In the same way, the percentages of learners with two-year degrees also decreased with
age. For example, the numbers show that nine percent of learners aged 55 to 59, seven percent of learners aged 60 to 69, and five percent of learners aged 70 and older had fewer degrees (U. S. Census Bureau, 2006).

Another report from the American Council on Education (ACE) (2005) stated, “the majority of older adults have never participated in postsecondary education and are not currently engaged in lifelong learning” (p. 4). The ACE (2008) stated that, “older adults currently represent a very small percentage of students enrolled in for-credit courses at degree-granting institutions of higher education” (p. 5). ACE (2008) noted that “half of college-going adults who are 50 or older are enrolled in community colleges, compared with just 33% of adults aged 25 and younger” (p. 5).

In addition, seven percent of aging learners were found to attend “private, for profit institutions” (p. 5) compared to two percent of their younger counterparts; however, these enrollment numbers vary according to types of institutions reviewed. The same report also addressed the “national issue” (p. 4) of reaching and providing learning opportunities for older adults with, "higher education's role in serving older adults might not yet be defined" (p. 4) although a start has been made. Targeting learners’ needs for their ongoing "mobility and connection" (p. 4) and "hard-to-reach" (p. 4) issues are essential concerns currently being addressed. They found, demographers, researchers, and policy experts have emphasized how this aging demographic will change the face of our society in numerous ways, from threatening the country’s economic stability, to straining the resources of communities across the nation. (p. 5)
Therefore, this group of learners provides a complex makeup as to the reasons of pursuing formal and informal learning experiences.

Regarding the different learning styles, interests, and desires, Hiemstra (1993) and Fisher and Wolf (1998, 2000), found older women learners, aged 55 and older; differ from older men as learners in many ways. Some of those included:

- Women participate in additional learning activities and are more self-directed. They also seem to have a greater sense of life satisfaction;
- Women are more likely to learn or show an interest in personal or self-fulfillment type subjects;
- Women are more likely to state a preference for future learning activities that are communicative (delayed fulfillment) rather than instrumental (immediate fulfillment) in nature;
- Situational (arising from one’s circumstances in life) and dispositional (self-perceptions) barriers to learning are more likely to be expressed than are institutional ones (institutional practices and actions); and
- Women are more prone to use reading and travel as educational resources.

In essence, Hiemstra reports that older women learners are able to learn new skills (including computer skills), learn to be increasingly self-directed, and understand the importance of using life experiences when learning new information.

Currently, there is a paradigm shift taking place; and, people are living longer. According to the U.S. Census data, women are living longer than men and show an average lifespan of 81 years of age compared to men’s average lifespan of 75 years of age (Kinsella & He, 2009). In addition, as learners, women are self-observant and
excited regarding classroom learning activities (Fisher & Wolf, 1998, 2000; Kegan, 1994). According to Bee and Bjorklund (2004), women are emerging from domestic or non-career activities and experiencing a late-midlife revision. They perceive midlife as a growing time, full of opportunities. On the other hand, men prefer to slow down, relax, and become better acquainted with family and friends.

**Role reversals in older adulthood.** A review of literature by Bee and Bjorklund (2004), Bee and Mitchell (1980), Gutmann (1975, 1987), Helson and Wink (1992), Levinson (1978), and Santrock (1992) revealed that a significant change occurs during the age of 40 through about 65 years old. For example, women become more assertive or aggressive, and men allow their feminine side to surface and become more sensitive or affective. The result of these changes provide a more androgynous and balanced mindset / attitude than the stereotypical expectation of women having feminine and men having masculine personalities. It is believed that the transformation is due to hormonal changes where women have relatively less estrogen, and men have less testosterone; thus, the two groups experience hormonal similarities (Bee & Bjorklund, 2004; Helson & Wink, 1992). Sinnott and Shifren (2001) found that “gender role development in older adulthood involves transcending roles as they were conceptualized in earlier life and continuing to develop a sense of individual identity, meaning, and community” (p. 55).

In addition, often during older adulthood, the children are grown and women are free to explore previous careers or dreams placed on hold while raising their family. And, men's previous competitive or assertive nature is lessened allowing them to participate more in family activities. Bee and Mitchell (1980) found that
during this time of a "post-parental phase" (p. 620) or a time of no longer being responsible for one’s children’s life activities and experiences, both marital and work satisfaction was higher than during previous years when family responsibilities were a primary focus.

Post-parental life researcher, Deutscher (1970), conducted interviews within 33 post-parental households with spouses aged 40 to 65. As a way of expressing her new-found freedom, one mother and wife stated,

There's not as much physical labor. There's not as much cooking and there's not as much mending; and well, I remarked not long ago that for the first time since I can remember my evenings are free. And we had to be very economical to get the three children through college.

Last fall was the first time in 27 years that I haven't gotten a child ready to go to school. That was very relaxing. (p. 265)

Another interviewee talked about changes she noted in her husband, "My husband was a very nervous, jumpy man when the children were younger. If he wanted to do something, he would do it. We would have an argument if I tried to stop him. Now he is altogether a different man" (p. 265). In continuing the interview, the woman was asked, "What do you think brought about this change in him?" (p. 265). And, she replied, "Well, I think that when the girls grew up and he saw how well I was trying to raise them that he was really proud of them. Of course, as a man grows older he doesn't want to go out so much. He gets to be more of a homebody" (p. 265). A
husband shared his views of his and his wife's post-parental lifestyle:

> We get along better—we always got along very well—but we get along so much better since we're by ourselves. I know I have appreciated and enjoyed her company more in the last year or two than I did before. The main change is like with me; she's not as nervous since the children left home. (p. 265)

Gutmann (1975) found evidence that women decrease in femininity and men decrease in masculinity. Santrock (2002) noted that as men age, they “become more feminine (nurturing), sensitive as older adults,” (p. 595) and women become more assertive or masculine. However, the effects of cohorts should also be considered in gender roles. Additionally, Achenbaum (1993) stated that some societies used gerontocracy social systems or systems where older adults attain positions of power and authority. These kinds of systems are found in ancient and present times and within a variety of environments / societies and varying levels of complexity depending on the political philosophy of the group. Other researchers, Bee and Bjorklund (2004), reported that it is common in Native American cultures for older women to be allowed to participate as members of tribal councils, which would have been prohibited to them previously. It is also said that older Iroquois women may develop a type of masculine heartedness not previously noted in their youth. Japanese women, aged 60 and over, have been seen making "bawdy" (p. 181) jokes in mixed public demonstrating a freedom from earlier social rules. And, similarly, Lebanese women demonstrated "bawdier, more aggressive, and more controlling" (p. 181) attitudes during their late- to middle-age activities. Again, this is believed to
occur because the children are gone and the women experience less pressure to conduct themselves in more traditional ways as well as other personality-type changes. Bromberger and Matthews (1996) believe that these personality changes provide positive "protection against depressive symptoms and menopause symptoms for middle-aged women who score high on measures of traditional femininity" (p. 182). Thus, according to Bee and Mitchell (1980), from age 65 and on, men and women often experience a continued form of "blending of male and female roles" (p. 621) and some aging adults “discard some roles” (Bee & Boyd, 2003, p. 513) in an effort to allow themselves more “individuality” (p. 513); and, according to Peck (1970):

If a person takes positive action at this point, redefining men and women as individuals and as companions, with the sexual element increasingly significant, it would at least be understandable that interpersonal living could take on a depth of understanding which the earlier, perhaps inevitably more egocentric, sex-drive would have tended to prevent to some degree. (p. 89)

**Personality changes in older adults.** Describing the changes in personality is not a simple task, as there are many factors to consider (Bee & Bjorklund, 2004; Miller, 2012). When comparing the concept of personality to that of a ball of string, one must consider the "many loose ends" (Bee & Bjorklund, 2004, p. 302). For example, as researchers, we must ask, which "loose ends" (p. 302) do we investigate? Do we evaluate the "length and fiber composition" (p. 302)? And, some personalities "have string from the center and some from the outer layers" (p. 303), which do we
consider first, second, etc.? This complex topic has been explored from the understanding of a variety of theorists and viewpoints. For example, a study by Duncan and Agronick (1995), looking at personality(ies) and the development of women in middle adulthood, found that “understanding how social events shape integral aspects of identity (e.g., gender, work, and family role expectations) can lead us to a richer understanding of individual lives” (p. 566). Therefore, understanding the many personalities and characteristics found in aging adults is a complex area to research and understand.

In 1937, Gordon Allport suggested that personality “is the dynamic organization within the individual of those biosocial systems that determine his or her unique adjustment to the world” (Schaie & Willis, 2002, p. 252). According to Singer, Verhaeghen, Ghisletta, Lindenberger, and Baltes (2003) and Ryckman (2004) many physical, psychological, and social changes take place during the aging process. Roberts, Walton, and Viechtbauer (2006) stated that personality traits change during older adulthood, specifically “in the trait of openness to experience” (p. 1). The ability to be open to different experiences follows an inclination to vigorously look for fresh and cognitively inspiring experiences, to consider ideas, to reflect creatively, and to appreciate intellectual hobbies (McCrae & Sutin, 2009). Some researchers (Allemand, Zimprich, & Hertzog, 2007; Donnellan & Lucas, 2008; Mroczek & Spiro, 2003; Ryckman, 2004; Small et al., 2003) believe that the ability to be open to new experiences declines as the individual ages and others such as Partridge (1985, 2014) believe it depends on the person and their current learning experiences.
Initially, "psychoanalytic theorists Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung saw old age as similar to childhood" (Santrock, 1992, p. 624). Other researchers have developed a perspective of aging that is adaptive and constructive (Erikson, Erikson, & Kivnick, 1986; Ryckman, 2004). For example, according to Erikson's (1968) final stage of development, integrity versus despair, experienced during the later years of life, "aged 60 years and older" (Author Unknown, 2012a, p. 1), one reviews experiences and activities that were completed. He defined ego integrity as "the individual views their whole of life with satisfaction and contentment. The ego quality that emerges from a positive resolution is wisdom" (p. 1) and he viewed wisdom as an "informed and detached concern with life itself in the face of death itself" (Erikson, 1982, p. 61). On the other hand, he viewed despair as "the result of the negative resolution or lack of resolution of the final life crisis" (Author Unknown, 2012a, p. 1), which was often manifested when individuals feared their own death, saw their life as short, and experienced depression (Author Unknown, 2012a; Miller, 2012; Ryckman, 2004; Schaie & Willis, 2002). Erikson provides an example / illustration of the integrity and despair stages with the following quote:

A meaningful old age, then ... serves the need for that integrated heritage which gives indispensable perspective to the life cycle.

Strength here takes the form of that detached yet active concern with life bounded by death, which we call wisdom in its many connotations from ripened 'wits' to accumulated knowledge, mature judgment, and inclusive understanding. Not that each man can evolve wisdom for himself. For most, a living tradition provides the essence of it. But
the end of the life cycle also evokes 'ultimate concerns' for what change may have to transcend the limitations of his identity...

To whatever abyss ultimate concerns may lead individual men, man as a psychosocial creature will face, toward the end of his life, a new edition of the identity crisis which we may state in the words: 'I am what survives of me.' (1968, pp. 140-141)

Green (1989) referenced Erikson’s final development stage, integrity versus despair, as,

Erikson believes that a successful resolution the crisis of integrity versus despair requires a lifetime of earlier conflict resolution as well as a sense of peaceful satisfaction with one’s past. The successful aging individual gains a broader vision of life and gains ego strength from this awareness. Ego integrity also helps one adjust to the frailties of aging and one’s eventual death. In contrast, despair results when one fears the inevitability of old age and death. (p. 76)

Green continues by noting that sometimes aging adults may try to compensate for lost time or experiences by attempting to make amends with those they feel to have had uncomfortable or regretful experiences. In addition, Comstock (2005) references Erikson’s perspective of spirituality as viewed from his final developmental stage, integrity versus despair, “it is believed that the individual’s task is to review one’s life as having been meaningful and satisfying” (p. 325).

Another researcher, Peck (1970), believed that Erikson's final stage could be viewed as three phases: a) differentiation versus role preoccupation, b) body
transcendence versus body preoccupation, and c) ego transcendence versus ego preoccupation. During the differentiation versus role preoccupation phase, older adults need to pursue activities in the time that was previously spent with career and children. In the body transcendence versus body preoccupation phase, older adults may experience declining physical well-being. For those who once viewed their identity as physically healthy, their perspective of who they are as individuals and their life satisfaction may be threatened. Those individuals are best served by enjoying relationships with other people, animals, and nature in order to get past preoccupations of their aging physical body. And, in the ego transcendence versus ego preoccupation phase, developing a sense of ease with themselves, their world, and contributions to life assists in the transition toward the inevitable death experience.

Butler (1975) states that the review of life is best experienced by looking forward to the death experience. The activity of life review can take place quickly or in spurts; however, during the process, the aging adult "surveys it, observes it, and reflects on it" (Santrock, 1992, p. 626). Haight (1991) believed that as the aging adult reconsiders previous experiences, the individual experiences an expanded mindset through the revision process.

As the aging individual continues through the review of life, the individual may find comfort in disclosing previous unknown issues and/or experiences to a spouse, children, or friends. A change of how the individuals view themselves can occur during the process of revealing unknown information. However, in order to age successfully, one does not need to think about the past, as one study found that
those who focus too heavily on past are not as well-adjusted as those who integrate the past and present (Miller, 2012; Wong & Watt, 1991). In addition, Jensen, Munk, and Madsen (2010) studied the coping processes of eight aging men and found that when the group used avoidance and distractions as coping strategies rather than active resignation strategies during or after stressful situations, they experienced depression and were unable to accept limitations or changes in their lives. Thus, the ability to discuss, release, and move through past situations / problems is helpful in the aging process.

The aging population is growing. Through that growth, adults experience a multitude of feelings, thoughts, and activities that reflect their aging processes. For example, it was noted that although many aging adults do not receive the respect and attention desired and needed, this issue is decreasing as the aging population grows; and, the aging process means different things depending on the perspective in viewing the concept. Some view the aging process as an education in order to better understand ‘life’ and themselves as living participants. Another way of looking at the aging process is through a more concrete perspective such as the biological functioning of the body’s aging process. Additionally, gender role reversal and personality changes during the aging process were discussed along with the complexities of the issues within the processes. For example, women are found to become more assertive and men become less assertive, demonstrating a kind of exchange and melding of mindsets and goals. Finally, Erikson’s final developmental stages of integrity verses despair were reviewed along with how the aging adult views the final years of life and the inevitable death experience.
Life Satisfaction

Life satisfaction is connected to a multitude of demographics and personal traits. For example, individuals experience a satisfactory life when they have: a) higher income than some of their peers, b) are slightly better educated, c) are employed, d) are married, e) have a sense of personal control, and other attributes (Bee & Bjorklund, 2004; Miller, 2012). Restak (1997) believes that successful aging is related to the function of the brain and cognitive capabilities. According to many successfully aging adults interviewed, aged 70 and older, key elements relating to education, curiosity, energy level, staying active, maintaining physical exercise and activities, accepting physical limitations, participating in diverse and novel experiences, maintaining psychological continuity during one's lifespan, participating in friendships and social activities, and utilizing social links with younger people, assist in having a successful aging experience.

Aging and Life Satisfaction

Successful aging is often referred to as having life satisfaction. Other ways of measuring success in the aging process is to consider one's physical and emotional well-being (Wolf & Brady, 2010). Satisfaction in the aging process is related to many factors such as culture, work and family characteristics, and goals.

Culture. Images of older adults' cultural and diverse activities are changing. For example, the past "image of the old man in the rocking chair is now matched by the white-haired man on the golf course" (Neugarten, 1996, p. 316). A popular television show, from 1985 to 1992, The Golden Girls, portrayed four women. Three of the women were in their 60s, and the fourth woman was a parent of one of the first
three women; and, she was in her 80s. All four dated, attended a variety of social functions, and would return home to discuss their various activities and sometimes sexual experiences. These women were liberal, sometimes forceful, and led active lives, similar to women much younger than themselves. Another television series from the 1970s, Sanford and Son, illustrated a close, supportive relationship of an older man and his adult son. During the episodes, the father utilized his life experiences and gained wisdom to assist both to have successful daily life situations. These examples are only a few demonstrations of the life many of today's aging adults live and continue to experience in their daily activities.

Bradley and Longino (2001) report that “age may not be central in defining who older people think they are” (p. 17). The perceptions of what aging entails are changing (Bradley & Longino, 2001). In addition, Miller (1992) states that as adults age, “they become less and less like others of the same age” (p. 805) and are not a homogenous group. According to Whitelaw (2000), utilizing chronological age as a primary indication of the aging experience no longer applies. In addition, Bradley and Longino (2001) found that many of today’s aging adults do not recognize categories such as “the elderly” (p. 17), and aging adults once known as ‘old’ are now placed in smaller groups such as ‘young-old’ and ‘old-old’ as well as a variety of other categorical breakdowns; similarly, the American Council on Education (ACE) (2008) reported that "terms such as third age and lifelong learning are appealing to older adults across age cohorts because they imply a continuum of learning" (p. 3). Furthermore, rather than refer to the chronological component of one’s age, aging adults prefer to utilize how they ‘feel’ emotionally and physically or their “functional
age” (Santrock, 2002, p. 534) when processing and placing their identity within their developmental lifespan. Thus, Bradley and Longino (2001) believe that healthy older adults tend to derive their sense of identity from past achievements and future accomplishments rather than the chronological perspective of their age.

Researchers Treas and Longino (1997) reviewed the demographics of older Americans and found a wide range of variables contributing to their perceived life satisfaction; and, they included points such as assets, education, employment, health status, and income. According to Casalanti (1996), some differences that could account for the variations among the aging populace include “older women and men differ on a wide variety of economic and health measures” (p. 18); and, “African Americans and European Americans” (p. 18) also differ regarding those measures as well. Therefore, background and gender play a major part in the implications of the aging process.

**Work and family characteristics.** Another area to consider when discussing the aging process and life satisfaction is work and family characteristics. According to Hayward and Liu (1992), the retirement years and well-being of older adults may be affected by the way individuals spend their time and the programs available for assisting the aging population. For example, Shankar, McMunn, Banks, and Steptoe (2011) found that "both loneliness and social isolation have been associated with an increased risk of developing health problems, hospitalization, poor cognitive function, and mortality” (p. 377). They reported that aging adults often face social isolation and feelings of loneliness, and the lack of social support affects their decisions
regarding appropriate health and behavioral choices. In addition, while family members may provide support for aging family members, years of caregiving can create strained relationships as well as health issues for the caregivers (Monin & Schulz, 2010). Therefore, community assistance is an essential part of successful aging and life satisfaction for the aging group.

In addition, some societal stereotypical beliefs, regarding positive / negative person characteristics may also change during the lifespan experience. A study by Gruhn, Gilet, Studer, and Labouvie-Vief (2011) revealed that "beliefs about development appear to be linked to one's own actual development" (p. 376). For example, researchers (Hong, Chiu, Dweck, Lin, & Wan, 1999) found that when aging individuals believed in their abilities, more effort or corrective action was used during setbacks than with individuals who did not believe in themselves. In addition, those who have positive stereotypical views of the aging process engaged in healthier behaviors during a long-term period than adults with negative perspectives of the aging process (Levy & Meyers, 2004); and, researchers (Kotter-Gruhn, Kleinspehn-Ammerlahn, Gerstorf, & Smith, 2009; Levy, Slade, Kunkel, & Kasl, 2002) found that when one believed negatively regarding the aging process and effect, higher mortality rates were experienced. Thus, according to these examples, beliefs can influence developmental outcomes within the aging experience.

Schoklitsch and Baumann (2011) refer to Erikson's concept of generativity, "the concern in establishing and guiding the next generation" (Erikson, 1950, p. 267) as "an important factor in maintaining one's psychological health in old age" (p. 32). A researcher (Fisher, 1995) talked with older adult employees and concluded that
having a sense that their work and life had provided purpose or generativity was essential to their belief that they had established a successful aging process. Kruse and Wahl (2010) report that based on idealistic (i.e., experience, knowledge, and time) and material assets acquired, the aging process offers opportunities to understand and appreciate the generativity stage of life.

**Goals.** Mayser, Scheibe, and Riediger (2008) state, "through the selection and pursuit of goals, people are assumed to actively influence their own development" (p. 126). According to Austin and Vancouver (1996), goals are "internal representations of desired states" (p. 338). Freund and Riediger (2003) suggest that by selecting and pursuing goals, adults can "actively influence and shape their own life course" (p. 126).

In looking at the goals of aging adults, Rapkin and Fischer (1992) investigated: (a) the manner in which specific goals are connected to life satisfaction, (b) when confronted with age-related losses, do adults adjust previous goals in order to sustain satisfaction; and, (c) are the relationships between the predictors of satisfaction and actual satisfaction affected by the differences of the personal goals of the aging adult. Their study revealed that personal goals are critical aspects of how aging adults view their lives. For example, Holahan (1988) looked at the maintenance of life goals such as autonomy, being involved, and achievement. She found that sustaining one's goals contributed to the health and emotional / physical well-being of aging adults. Therefore, understanding and maintaining personal goals provided satisfaction and understanding of the criteria for self-valuation.
Another concept identified by Carstensen (1995) and Carstensen, Isaacowitz, and Charles (1999) suggests that aging adults search for ways to make the most of their feelings and emotions and utilize positive rather than negative stimuli in processing information. For example, research revealed that when individuals view their life's opportunities as expansive, they tend to focus on situations and activities leading to a gain in the future. However, when individuals note their time in life as limited, they focus on improving current situations and experiences. Therefore, according to socio-emotional selectivity theory, researchers (Blanchard-Fields, 2007; Carstensen & Mikels, 2005; Carstensen et al., 2006; Mather & Carstensen, 2005) found that aging adults focus on goals that are associated with positive rather than negative and emotional rather than nonemotional experiences. In essence, older adults prefer to experience positive situations and the emotions that accompany those activities.

**Education and Life Satisfaction**

Past and future practice for educators and program planners have been to create and secure programs that would attract aging learners. An in-depth review of the literature revealed conflicting thoughts. Donahue (1952) stated that higher learning institutions are setting up "a wide variety of courses, institutes, and research studies aimed at the ultimate goal of making man's later years his golden years" (p. 119). Hansman and Mott (2010) believe that these ideals are still going strong; and, the numbers of aging adults seeking formal education continue to increase.

According to Wolf and Brady (2010), discussions regarding the aging learners focus on understanding the role of education within the learning process. For
example, some reasons aging adults learn are: a) to understand something, b) vocational needs, c) improve literacy skills, d) a social activity, or e) personal growth. One older learner, aged 70 plus was interviewed Restak (1997); and, he shared his perspective of education and the impact learning can have on the aging adult. He stated,

When you boil it down to the essentials that means keeping your heart pumping, your noodle active, and your mood cheery. One theory is that the best way to stimulate your mind is to receive and absorb a constant supply of information. Keep the gears moving, so to speak. Don't just read the morning newspaper. Get out of the house. Lunch with friends. Go see these movies the young describe as 'awesome.' Read something that challenges the conventional wisdom in whatever field holds your lifelong interest. Travel is tremendously stimulating, but you have to do your homework. (p. 127)

In addition, another aging individual interviewed, aged 70 plus, stated,

The more education you have in terms of knowledge and curiosity about the world, the more you are able to further your enrichment. Education enables you to extend your life into periods that preceded you. A familiarity with history, for instance, gives you an opportunity to live in any century you want and live the life in your imagination of anybody who has ever lived before. That's what education and history are all about. (p. 127)
The second interviewee also stated,

That's why we can never stop learning or stop asking questions. I often tell people who neglect the opportunity for additional learning and education that they are living in a house with five rooms that they have yet to visit. (p. 127)

The American Council on Education (ACE) (2008) sought to understand "how these adults view themselves as community members, workers, and learners; how they are viewed by colleges and universities; and how these perspectives interact to influence program development and participation" (p. 6). Their work found answers to questions such as "what do older adults themselves have to say about higher education?" (p. 5). And, "how exactly are colleges and universities serving this population, if at all?" (p. 5). In addition, a focus group was conducted and perspectives from the discussion are provided below. For example, one group member Deborah, age 55, "who has a high school diploma, and has never participated in higher education" (p. 8) stated,

she wanted to learn 'just for me,' but also to connect with other people and pursue a career. 'I’m the CEO of my family,' she said. 'I’ve got my mother on one side, and my son on the other. I’ve been out of the workforce for 23 years. I want to go back. . . . I want to know what’s out there, what there is to learn. (p. 8)

Another group member, Rose, age 79,

while not participating in higher education programs, continues to pursue lifelong learning actively—from fitness classes to activities
related to theater and current events. She also volunteers at senior centers in her community. 'I’m recovering from surgery, so as I get stronger, I’ll do more.' (p. 8)

And, one male member, Tim, age 56, is still in the workforce and engaged in higher education programs, sees learning as an integral part of his life, now and in the future: 'In 10 years . . . I’ll still be taking courses. Because of the era [in which] I was raised—and I think you’ll find this from other people in this generation—I don’t want to sit and do nothing. I want to learn.' (p. 8)

In addressing the second question, the ACE (2008) also found that "older adults currently represent a very small percentage of students enrolled in for-credit courses at degree-granting institutions of higher education" (p. 5). For example, approximately 3.8% of the 17 million students served by higher education institutions are at least 50 years old (ACE, 2008). In addition, the ACE found that “older adults are also more likely to attend private, for-profit institutions” (2008, p. 5) than their more traditional-aged counterparts; although “the percentage of enrollment varies by institutional type” (p. 5) as much as two to six percent. These findings do not include the older adults who are registered in noncredit and other various types of classes often provided by two-year colleges and other institutions. However, they do suggest that many postsecondary institutions “have much to learn about older adults’ educational needs and expectations, as well as about outreach strategies, programs and services, and financial assistance that would expand participation” (p. 5).

Therefore, it was concluded that older learners are a group with changing behavioral
lifestyle patterns requiring higher education institutions to move and change with the needs of this group if successful service is to be provided (ACE, 2008). The opportunity for strong aging is all around us as a people. Wolf and Brady (2010) view adult education as a "basic human right" (p. 373), and Cohen (2005), Freire (1993, 2000), and Manheimer (2007) see opportunities for older adult learning as fundamentals of life as well.

Agruso (1978) believes that life-span education, lifelong learning, and andragogy models of education that depend on “other disciplines for comprehensive input” (p. 13). Similarly, Monk (1977) and Peterson (1975) state that life-span education emphasizes a planned series of activities that relate to more of a formal education environment with an organized curriculum and interaction between the learner and educator. Lifelong learning is similar to life-span education (Peterson, 1975) in that it is a continuing process with changes connected to a learning context, may have a type of developed program, and can be either formal or informal. Agruso (1978) found that "the common denominator observed among people is that virtually all of their behavior is learned or is otherwise influenced by experience" (p. 23).

Henschke (2010) states "lifelong learning seeks to address global issues and challenges, such as equipping us with control of our destinies, to build and achieve equity, tolerance, inclusion, sustainability, alleviating poverty, and achieving a knowledge-based society" (p. 113).

Meyer (1977) defines andragogy, as "the art and science of helping adults learn" (Henschke, 2010, p. 112) as a way for learners to develop and / or improve their self-concept; and, Houle (1996) agrees with Knowles' in that the learning
environment should be learner-centered and the climate conducive to the adult learning process. Knowles (1970, 1980) established six assumptions that stated his perspective of the andragogical mindset. They include: (a) adults are self-directed learners (learner's concept of self); (b) adults use their experiences as a resource of understanding; (c) adults focus their learning needs around their social roles (the learner is ready to learn due to his need to know); (d) as adults mature, they utilize an immediate application of what they learn (the learner enters into the learning situation due to a life-, job-, or problem-solving perspective); (e) adults utilize an inner motivational mindset (can be both intrinsic / internal or extrinsic / external--although intrinsic / internal is most often found); and, (f) adults prefer having a reason to learn (Henschke, 2009; Henschke, Cooper, & Isaac, 2003; Smith, 2002). Therefore, considering all aspects of the kinds of educational practices discussed and understanding the adult's basic learning process, one may also grasp the level of human behavior and intent leading to life satisfaction (Agruso, 1978).

This section discusses life satisfaction within the aging and learning process. In looking at the aging process and life satisfaction, a few key areas that contribute to the older adults' ability to experience life satisfaction include culture, work and family characteristics, and life goals: change is also a primary factor relating to life satisfaction during the aging process. For example, researchers (Bradley & Longino, 2001; Gruhn, Gilet, Studer, & Labouvie-Vief, 2011; Hong, Chiu, Dweck, Lin, & Wan, 1999; Whitelaw, 2000) showed that cultural ideals and beliefs change with time and that aging adults prefer to think of themselves as third-age and / or lifelong learners rather than their chronological age or societal stereotypical beliefs / titles.
Additionally, what institutions are doing and needing to do in order to secure programs for aging learners was reviewed. Hansman and Mott (2010) believe that the process is working and going strong. Finally, Wolf & Brady (2010) explores the reasons why older learners participate in educational programs. Several testimonies were provided demonstrating how aging adult learners view their lifelong learning experiences. All areas demonstrated a significant importance to the life satisfaction experience.

**Educational Programs**

Robinson and Lakin (2007) found that the number of older adults aged 66 to 74, taking one or more adult education courses in a school or postsecondary institution at least doubled by 1999. In addition, the American Council on Education (ACE) (2005) reports that these participation trends, regarding learners aged 55 and over, are expected to continue well into the first 10 years of the 21st century. In looking at the older adults’ needs for education, Fisher and Wolf (2000) list care giving, the desire for intellectual maintenance, employment, health and wellness, learning as meaning making, leisure and travel, personal development, self-efficacy, socialization, and spiritual development as desired learning activities for older adult learners.

An example of informal education is learning through religious organizations. Wolf and Brady (2010) report that faith-based educational programs offer many learning opportunities that underserved older adults might not normally access. One example Wolf and Brady (2010) mention is Shepherd’s Centers. They are not-for-profit community-based organizations sponsored by a partnership of spiritual groups
who are dedicated to the deliverance of programs and services that consist of adult education opportunities. Some classes that are offered include: art, current events, health, history, music, science, and religion. These classes provide an atmosphere where aging learners can share their life experiences and knowledge, skills, and newfound interests with like-minded individuals (Manheimer, 2007).

Havighurst (1976) notes that because life roles and learning/living expectations are known to change as individuals grow, educational programs should be designed to meet those needs. For example, some older learners view education as a way to prepare for employment, an avenue to better understand themselves and others and how to improve communication with friends and family members, accepting civic and/or social responsibilities, or adapting to biological changes that they or family/friends are experiencing. Additionally, Kim and Merriam (2004) confirm that older learners are more affected by cognitive interests than by other factors. They found that the educated mind has an intellectual curiosity that seeks fulfillment. In essence, continuing one’s education is a way of staying aware of oneself as well as to better fit into the societal mode of living.

Program planners are currently faced with the challenge of helping adults release/overcome forces that deter their participation in continuing education. The areas reviewed included the general characteristics of the older adult learner, characteristics of older women versus men as learners, barriers to participation in adult education, and educational programs of older adults. Overall, lifelong learning is a unique concept and means different things to different people. Learning could be in a variety of settings such as in formal or informal environments. In addition, basic
issues and characteristics are considered when working with older adult learners; and, several developmental theories / perspectives (i.e., Erikson’s, Loevinger’s, Levinson’s, and Maslow’s work) were reviewed in understanding those concepts. Additionally, the different characteristics of older women and men as learners were reviewed and compared. Further, the barriers to older adult learners’ learning opportunities / experiences were reviewed along with agencies that provide support for older adult learners. Educational programmers must become more aware that older adults learn into their 60s, 70s, 80s, and, that coursework and activities should be designed accordingly. Finally, curriculum planners strive to understand the kinds of educational programs that older adult learners are seeking and the manner in which those learners thrive were also explored. Older adult learners have the attention of facilitators / educators in higher learning as they strive to fulfill and meet those needs.

Psycho-Educational Programs

Research (Blumenthal, Babyak, Wei, O’Connor, Waugh, Eisentein, Mark, Sherwood, Woodley, Irwin, & Reed, 2002; Partridge, 1985, 2014; Raskin, Mghir, Peszke, & York, 1998) regarding psychosocial factors have shown to significantly contribute to improved life experiences. In addition, the utilization of psycho-educational programs has benefitted individuals in their work to better understand themselves and cope with difficult life situations. For example, a study conducted by Raskin, Mghir, Peszke, and York (1998) found that, as a whole, caregivers of the chronically mentally ill appreciated the mental health component of the program along with being able to interact with other caregivers who were family members or friends of the mentally ill. Partridge’s (1985, 2014) study found that the participants
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reported a significant benefit of understanding their own actions and feelings regarding life situations when taking part in her psycho-educational program’s activities. Another study by Blumenthal, Babyak, Wei, O’Connor, Waugh, Eisentein, Mark, Sherwood, Woodley, Irwin, and Reed (2002) found that a psycho-educational program assisting in stress management and exercise interventions led to significant improvement in coronary artery disease (CAD) as well as substantial and immediate reduced medical costs. Therefore, psycho-educational programs are helpful in assisting those who are coping with difficult life situations and physical / emotional issues.

**Emotional Development**

As human beings grow and develop physically, they acquire experiences and memories of those activities. Life experiences form emotional connections and associations that are then linked to new events and experiences. This process creates an imprint within the memory. Therefore, those memories, positive and negative, may affect the person's cognitive awareness as well as future ability to function appropriately (Edison, 2002; Knowles, 1980).

Investigating affective learning, Boucouvalas and Lawrence (2010) believe that the emotions play a significant part in influencing the learning process. Emotion is defined as "to stir, to move, or to disturb" (p. 37) and is derived from the Latin word form "e + movere" (p. 37). Partridge (1985, 2014) states emotions are reflections of an individual’s inner feelings. Boucouvalas and Lawrence describe emotions such as anger, joy, sadness, or confusion which impact individuals in profound and intimate ways that cannot be ignored. In order to learn from one's
emotional activities, it is important to discipline the mind and become aware of the emotions experienced while simultaneously monitoring the feelings being experienced within the inner self. Although this may be challenging at first, it is well worth the effort as the practiced individuals eventually become better equipped and understand that when certain feelings are experienced, they are often followed by specific emotional outbursts and discomfort (Partridge, 1985, 2014). Therefore, the more one develops the muscle of monitoring and understanding the feelings, the better the individual's emotional experiences.

In addition, Boucouvalas and Lawrence (2010) also share similar views as Partridge (1985, 2014) with their findings that "emotionality can extend our learning by considering the feelings that underlie the assumptions and imagining alternative realities" (p. 37). For example, a learner with strong negative feelings or beliefs about a particular ethnic group could critically review his mindset regarding the group of people, come to see that the viewpoints are faulty and mistaken, and reconsider his previous perspective. This form of learning is transformative. Mezirow (1991) believes that the transformative learning process contains a strong affective element. Dirkx (2001) states, "emotionally charged images, evoked through the contexts of adult learning, provide the opportunity for a more profound access to the world by inviting a deeper understanding of ourselves in relationship with it" (p. 64).

Another way of explaining emotional development is by viewing it as a process leading to emotional competence (EC). For example, Nelis, Quoidbach, Hansenne, Kotsou, Weytens, Dupuis, et al. (2011) and Kotsou, Nelis, Gregoire, and Mikolajczak (2011) reported that all individuals experience emotions; however, the
way in which they are processed differs among people. For example, some people have the ability to identify their emotions and express them in a socially acceptable way; however, others are overwhelmed when trying to understand their emotions or explain them to other people. Therefore, the process of learning or developing the skill(s) to identify, express, understand, regulate, or utilize their emotions is the process of emotional development or developing an understanding of one’s emotional self(ves).

Additionally, Jung and Jaffe (1963) concluded that emotional development was a process that gradually revealed a complex, unconscious, and diverse part of the psyche to a person's conscious self. Such illumination created emotional development or emotional maturity. Jung assisted clients through a painful growth process toward a higher level, a more mature and insightful way of thinking. He called this growth process self-realization.

The learning process is significantly affected by one’s level of emotional development. There are several ways of viewing emotional development. Some see the emotions as a manmade or physical reflection of one’s feelings or inner beliefs, and that controlling one’s thoughts or beliefs assist in coping with the emotions. Overall, emotional development is a process that can be completed in a variety of ways, as long as the method assists in the ability to identify, explain, comprehend, and successfully cope with or work through daily emotional experiences.

**Benefits of Emotional Maturity**

Pratto's (1994) research referred to consciousness as the "Mind's Eye" (p. 115). She viewed consciousness as a compelling experience and that the act of
consciousness demonstrates that "what we are conscious of at the moment is what our minds are doing at that moment" (p. 115). In earlier literature, Greenwald (1992) described another view. He stated:

One of the chief ways we respond is by feeling, rather than conscious knowing. If we can feel things we cannot know, does the 'Heart's Eye' see better than the Mind's Eye? Do we understand the sources of our feelings, the process by which we arrive at them, and how they influence us more than we understand our conscious thought processes? If the Mind's Eye has a blind spot, does the Heart's Eye see the missing information? (p. 115)

According to Peters, Finacane, MacGregor, and Slovic (2000), the emotions influence an individual's decision-making process and judgments; therefore, "affective reactions to stimuli are the first reactions, they guide information processing and judgment" (p. 151). In addition, Goleman (2006) reported that affect and the emotions are essential contributors to the process of making decisions. Therefore, Byran (2006) concluded that positive and negative feelings were a part of the motivational element(s) found in specific behaviors.

Partridge (1985, 2014) informs that emotional maturity has been called ego development, healthy self-image, mental health, moral judgment, self-actualization, and more. Other investigators perceive emotional maturity as an ideal whereby individuals are true to themselves, are guided by their own intellect and trust themselves unconditionally during all of life's activities (Erikson, 1971; Hyatt et al., 2010; Landau, 1998; Mayer & Geher, 1996; Nelis, Quoidbach, Hansenne, Kotsou,
Weytens, Dupuis, et al. (2011). Mayer, Salovey, and Caruso (2008) see emotional maturity as a way of benefitting oneself and others by having the ability to “pay attention to, use, understand, and manage emotions” (p. 503). Thus, they are able to fulfill desires and maintain continued personal growth.

**Intrapersonal and interpersonal relations.** Schutte et al. (2001) investigated the relationship connecting emotional intelligence and interpersonal relations. They define emotional intelligence as “the ability or tendency to perceive, understand, regulate, and harness emotions adaptively in the self and in others” (p. 523). Gardner (1983), Partridge (1985, 2014), Hawkins (2002), and Reinsch (2007) believe that individuals with higher levels of emotional maturity have an enhanced ability of having compassion for others. Barrett and Murk (2006) believe that life satisfaction is a “theoretical construct” (p. 2) that one cannot directly see, which they believed to be a “latent variable” (p. 2). Neugarten, Havighurst, and Tobin (1961) provided an operational definition of life satisfaction using five variables: (a) zest vs. apathy, (b) resolution and fortitude, (c) congruence between desired and achieved goals, (d) self-concept, and (e) the tone of one’s mood. Participants’ comments from Barrett and Murk’s (2006) research utilized the five variables from Neugarten, Havighurst, and Tobin (1961) research. It showed that the ability to better understand the five variables mentioned can lead to better understanding a psycho-education program such as a program used by Partridge (1985, 2014) in her dissertation focusing on one’s inner thoughts and beliefs. Therefore, a higher awareness, insight, and emotional maturity provides people with skills essential to communicating more effectively with themselves and others.
In reviewing the mindset of older adults, Coats and Blanchard-Fields (2008) reported that older adults focus on and prefer to utilize a more positive belief system. When investigating emotion regulation strategies, Birditt and Fingerman (2005) and Blanchard-Fields, Stein, and Watson (2004) found that most aging adults strive, more than younger adults, to withdraw from conflict into their worlds. In addition, older adults utilize fewer strategies such as confronting negative emotions (Blanchard-Fields & Coats, 2007; Blanchard-Fields et al., 2004). Therefore, many aging adults control their emotions in a different way than younger adults.

Additionally, when controlling their emotions, many older adults tend to use passive strategies such as sidetracking or distracting themselves from the situation or subduing their feelings. This type of emotional control involves careful attention on the individual’s phenomenological way of avoiding conflict or placing the issue out of one’s thoughts (Blanchard-Fields et al., 2004). In essence, older adults prefer to engage in problem-solving activities more than younger adults (Blanchard-Fields, Chen, & Norris, 1997; Kotsou, Nelis, Gregoire, & Mikolajczak, 2011; Nelis, Quoidbach, Hansenne, Kotsou, Weytens, Dupuis, et al., 2011; Watson & Blanchard-Fields, 1998).

Verduyn, Van Mechelen, and Tuerlinckx (2011) understood that "emotions change and evolve over time" (p. 20). During their investigation, they found that people process emotional activities intrapersonally as well as share their experiences with other people; and, during those activities, a variety of outcomes were observed. For example, when experiencing negative emotions, discussing the situation with another person provides a coping strategy receiving validation of the experience. In
addition, decades earlier, Scheff (1979) found that by talking about the problem and sharing one's thoughts and feelings with another individual, the emotional discomfort of the event(s) is lessened or dissolved. On the other hand, conflicting findings gathered by Finkenauer and Rime (1998) and Zech and Rime (2005) found that talking about the negative event does not always reduce the situation and may even increase the discomfort level, depending on the length of the discussion regarding the negative event. According to Verduyn, Van Mechelen, and Tuerlinckx (2011), a primary concern accounting for the importance of the inconsistency of the sharing and outcome is the eliciting situation, as the initial intensity of the emotional discomfort plays a major part in determining how to resolve the issue. Therefore, intrapersonal and interpersonal communication after the emotional onset may be affected by the duration of the experience; these communication findings were noted to also extend to experiencing and understanding joy and gratitude (Verduyn, Van Mechelen, & Tuerlinckx, 2011).

Creativity. How individuals feel may affect their life's work and creativity (Amabile, 2005). However, it is not just whether people's emotions are positive or negative that is important; specific types of emotions are influential as well.

Strenger (2009) posited a psychodynamic theory that focused primarily on a transition period, referred to as a "productive midlife change" (p. 246), often noted in creative people who realize that they have not fulfilled their capabilities by the middle of their perceived lifespan. For example, aging adults may encounter divorce, one or more career changes, or the awareness that they have not yet fulfilled their potential (Strenger & Ruttenberg, 2008). This understanding and noted changes are sometimes
called the "midlife crisis" (p. 247). Levinson believed that the process of dealing with the many changes found during the midlife period was more than many adults could handle and a crisis was created (Bee & Boyd, 2003). In contrast, an earlier researcher, Gallagher (1993) agreed that there are stresses and jobs specific to the adult’s mid-life experience; however, she found little evidence to support the assertion that adults would be more overwhelmed at midlife than any other time of the life experience. Bee and Boyd (2003) and Strenger (2009) believe it to be around the 40- to 50-year mark in the human lifespan and not gender specific. During that time, issues such as relationship burnout or career burnout may occur. Or, it is during that time that aging individuals come to the realization that "death is coming inexorably closer" (Strenger, 2009, p. 253); and, they begin to accept their mortality as well as question their life’s journey or self-fulfillment. Some individuals ask themselves questions such as, “What am I really good at? What gives my life the most meaning? On what do I have to focus in order to leave a creation that has some lasting value?” (p. 250). These questions alert individuals to the realization that may spark a desire to address any areas of lack and initiate a more focused intent to create the level of life satisfaction and legacy that they desire and initially believed themselves to complete during their life’s work. Therefore, life becomes more focused, as people understand that their life’s work cannot be taken for granted if they are to experience the desired level of achievement and fulfillment they intend to achieve.

**Wisdom.** A stereotype of the older adult is that with age comes wisdom; this is not necessarily accurate. Or, the belief that taking the time to consider and think at
a deeper level is a sign of age and maturity and related to the mindsets of an elderly individual is also not accurate. According to English novelist John Cowper Powys, if individuals have not grasped that life is a bundle of paradox and contradictions nor understand that good and bad are closely connected during those daily activities, then there are things not achieved during one's lifetime (Restak, 1999). Currently, living to the age of 100 could provide an individual with knowledge as to how the world works; or, depending on the individual, it could simply provide him / her some of the information needed in understanding life's learnings.

Baltes (2004) of the Max Planck Institute in Berlin, defines wisdom as knowledge and the human condition, how the knowledge is gained and the experiences that shaped acquiring that knowledge, how difficult situations are worked through, and how an individual organizes his / her life when reaching the elderly stages that demonstrates what is important. Baltes (2004) created a wisdom scale; and, his work found that the level of analytic and emotional sharpness did not depend on the age of the individual. In addition, although one's reaction time may get longer with age, that situation can be compensated for by using life experience or one's acquired wisdom (Restak, 1999). Sternberg (1986) studied the interrelationship between creativity, intelligence, and wisdom and found that people have strong ideals regarding creativity, intelligence, and wisdom.

In this section, emotional development was discussed and how the benefits of emotional maturity played a part in the learning and life experiences of the aging adult. In addition, to the benefits of emotional maturity, the areas of intrapersonal and interpersonal relations, creativity, and wisdom were explored.
**Experiential Learning Theory**

Some of the primary contributors to experiential learning or service learning theory include John Dewey, Kurt Lewin, and Jean Piaget. In addition, others include Carl Jung, Erik Erikson, Fritz Perls, Abraham Maslow; and, they came primarily from the field of therapeutic psychologies and psychoanalysis. The psychotherapeutic perspective states that a healthy description needs efficient assimilation of both affective and cognitive processes and the formation of socio-emotional development during the life process. It is believed that together, the cognitive and socio-emotional development create a holistic outline to describe the learning processes of adult development (Kolb, 1984).

Lewin's work focused heavily on social psychology, the appreciation of experiential learning, group dynamics, and action research. His action model was similar to Dewey's conception of learning from experience. It suggested that a person would identify an initial idea, participate in reconnaissance or fact finding, exercise a plan, take an initial step of the plan, evaluate the situation, amend the plan, take another step composed of more planning, executing, and reconnaissance or fact finding—and consider the situation before taking the third step and moving forward (Smith, 2012).

Dewey viewed experiential learning as a way to create social reform: a society that encouraged education and experiences from that place will continue to grow and thrive. In addition, he believed that experience, as used by the progressive mindset, has two components, active and passive. This means that it is not simply what a person experiences but also how a person uses those experiences. Dewey
(1938) views this as how a person interacts with the environment or the world around him / herself. He also believes that experience and education are not the same; the part played by the instructor is significant and must also be taken into consideration.

In studying the subject of education, Piaget focused on accommodation and assimilation. According to Piaget, assimilation is the way in which people perceive and adapt to new material presented them. It is a way in which people settle in to their environment and new information is fit into the current cognitive schemas. Assimilation is used when people are confronted with new places or information and refer to previously understood information. Accommodation, unlike assimilation, is the skill of accepting one's new environment and information and being able to adjust pre-existing schemas in order to take in the new information. According to Piaget, one cannot exist without the other; and, the balance of the functions creates mental schemas of the operative intelligence (McLeod, 2012).

Although Dewey intended to incorporate real-life experiences into a conservative academic environment, many higher learning institutions equate experiential learning with adult education. This mindset emphasizes work / study programs, internships, cooperative learning experiences, and more. In addition, experiential learning brings to mind the learner receiving academic credit for real-life experiences (Knapper & Cropley, 1985). Although this is not considered in all institutions, it is a growing process under consideration.

**Critical Learning Theory**

Jurgen Habermas and Paulo Freire are two influential philosophers regarding critical learning theory. Habermas' perspective focuses on three areas of human
interest: work knowledge, practical knowledge, and emancipatory knowledge. Work or instrumental action is based in analysis and ruled by procedural guidelines. Practical knowledge or concepts are based on identifying human social communication, the mutual understanding of the intent of what is said. Emancipatory knowledge focuses on self-knowledge and the reflective process of knowing oneself. This type of knowledge leads to consciousness transformation or transforming one's perspective.

Freire's perspective also focuses on consciousness transformation. He was dedicated to empowering an oppressed people, impoverished Central Americans, using methods such as self-directed learning, critical self-reflection, and an arduous process of transformation (Freire, 1993, 2000). Freire strived for social transformation of the Central American political activists and people that included oppressors and those oppressed (MacIsaac, 1996). Donaldo Macedo states that students in Central America, South America, Chile, Guinea-Bissau, Tanzania, and other nations risked imprisonment if they were caught reading photocopied chapters of Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, which are lived experiences of Freire, as their countries struggled to stop totalitarianism and oppression (Freire, 1993, 2000).

Freire viewed humanization as one of mankind's primary issues and included humanization and dehumanization in his perspective. Dehumanization suggests that not only those oppressed or whose humanity has been stolen is dehumanized, but it also includes those who perform the act of abuse and allowing themselves to be distorted from acts of being truly human. The distortion of being fully human,
eventually led those experiencing oppressive conditions to struggle and address the pain and abuse suffered (Freire, 1993, 2000).

Traditional education, in Freire's mind, was a form of 'banking' knowledge; or, a form of instruction where educators deposited knowledge into a learner's passive brain. Freire preferred a problem-solving and critical reflection approach to learning rather than 'banking' education. He believed through reflective action and critical reflection people could release themselves from the position of oppression (Freire, 1993, 2000).

**Transformational Learning Theory**


Transformational learning theory is defined by Mezirow's (1996) emancipatory paradigm as adult learning in an evolutionary process. Mezirow
summarized his theory by utilizing 12 key propositions; and, they consisted of: (a) a learning theory should be based in people communicating; (b) learning is the ability to take prior knowledge or thoughts and grow or develop to future thoughts and action; (c) make meaning out of images and interpret them toward fresh experiences; (d) understanding may be intentional or unintentional, propositional or incidental, presentational or the use of feelings, intuit awareness, kinesthetic experience, or motion; (e) logic perceptions are filtered through an outline of understanding that selects cognition and by utilizing given expectations, intentions, and purposes; (f) an outline of references consists of the operational processes of the mind and a group of attitudes, beliefs, feelings, and value judgments; (g) an action guided by belief; (h) the ability to utilize existing schemes, learn new schemes, and transform the new information into understanding that is viable; (i) understanding and utilizing communicative and instrumental learning processes; (j) establishing validity of communicative and instrumental learning processes; (k) acting on the insight gained; and (l) knowing that the journey of adulthood is a learning process. Wolfe (2009) stated that adults are products or results of individual experiences that affect their attitudes, thoughts, and conceptualizations of life; and, Mezirow (1996) believed that adults could be changed or transformed by a process called the "disorienting dilemma" (p. 1). This process involved an experienced problem, followed by critical reflection, and then a new interpretation of the experience of the problem is concluded. When this occurs in the classroom, educators should encourage learners to utilize critical thinking skills, consider other potential outcomes, and assess for the validity of the outcome. This process creates the potential for new ideas to
develop. The nature of transformational learning requires learners to invest in their learning rather than being given information and simply accepting it without considering it.

Freire's (1970, 2000) emancipatory education reflects on his work with poor and illiterate Brazilian learners who experienced passive acceptance of information that kept them in a state of disenfranchisement. Freire viewed education as a way to liberate people and strived to have his learners discuss and reflect on their life's important issues, which included low salaries. This form of learning helped them better understand the level of oppression they were experiencing in comparison to other parts of society and that with appropriate action changes could occur. Therefore, this kind of enlightenment empowered the workers toward transforming their current world to a more respectful experience.

Daloz (1986, 1999), an administrator and college instructor, looked at the interplay between education and the developmental process and understood that learners are often working through a developmental transitional life progression and utilizing education to assist in understanding daily experiences in their world. He found that the transformational process was a holistic, intuitive, and contextually-based experience. Daloz viewed the process as a mythical activity whereas mentors guide learners onto a path influenced by their family dynamics and social setting and class.

Dirkx (1997, 1998) and Healy (2000) supported a connection between spirituality and learning. Dirkx (1998) talked about the role of utilizing imagination in facilitating a learning experience through one’s inner being or soul. This belief
goes past thinking with one's ego or utilizing merely rational mind patterns. It relied on the ability to communicate thoughts toward an extra rational, inner-being type of learning that focused on one's feelings, images, or vision. Healy (2000) researched insight meditation practices and found that those utilizing these techniques experienced expanded self-awareness leading to an in-depth understanding of one's inner self and ability to be in-the-moment.

Initially, the transformational learning route was believed to be a linear process; however, a brief exploration shows that it refers to a flowing, individualistic, and recursive activity. Mezirow (1996) viewed transformational learning as an understanding that it is developed by interpreting one's experiences and then re-interpreting those experiences and a perspective as the individual grows and matures. Baumgartner (2001) suggested that transformation evokes the belief that insightful physical or psychological changes happen. Freire (2000), Daloz (1986, 1999), and Dirkx (1997, 1998) and Healy (2000) provided only a few viewpoints or explanations of this form of learning experience; however, the essences of experiencing a transformation in thinking is an enduring activity that continues to evolve.

**Summary**

This literature review explored older adult learners, life satisfaction, educational programs, emotional development, experiential learning theory, critical learning theory, and transformational learning theory. In addition, an in-depth look at the literature demonstrated the significance of each concept mentioned as well as their contribution to the aging learner's enhanced development: all three theories of experiential learning, critical learning, and transformational learning were utilized
during the developmental process of utilizing Partridge’s (1985, 2014) MRIP psycho-educational program as well as the overall learning experiences when other psycho-educational programs are used. The primary differences were in the informal and formal learning experiences.

Additionally, this extended research utilized a curriculum from a previous study conducted in 1985 and a demographic survey focusing on learners’ perceived life satisfaction and emotional maturity. A qualitative research design was used when analyzing the data and assisted in providing insight regarding the advancement of emotional maturity of participants, aged 50 and over. As the participants gain clarity and better understand themselves and others within their daily life experiences, they also experienced personal growth and perceived life satisfaction.
Chapter Three: Methodology

A qualitative methods experimental research design is discussed in this chapter. This chapter is separated into six parts: (a) research questions, (b) participants, (c) procedures, (d) instrumentation—the demographics portion of the initial survey and a psycho-educational program and two vignettes, (e) data collection, and (f) data analysis.

Research Questions

This research investigated the primary question: What are the perceptions of older adult learners (OAL) after participating in a psycho-educational program? The sub-questions were:

a) How do older adult learners’ (OAL) emotional maturity, life satisfaction, and trust of oneself change after participating in a psycho-educational program?

b) How do OAL define emotional maturity after participating in a psycho-educational program?

c) How do OAL define wisdom after participating in a psycho-educational program?

d) How do OAL define their transformational learning experience(s) after participating in a psycho-educational program?

Participants

A convenience sampling of volunteers, self-selected, and interested in participating in a self-improvement / educational program located in a suburban area in the Midwest region of the United States were used as the participant group. Thirty-
two participants participated in the study; 23 participants completed the entire study and 9 partially completed the study. They were mostly well-educated, some with graduate-level degrees, had a desire to continue to improve themselves at a personal level, aged 50 years or older, and had the time to participate in online learning activities for approximately four weeks. Although computer skills were helpful, it was not required, because the researcher was available (as needed) to assist participants in completing the online activities. Further, a diverse (i.e., race, ethnicity, culture, socioeconomic, education, age, and gender) group of participants volunteered for the study.

**Instrumentation**

Partridge's (1985, 2014) Maturity Reasoning Index Program (MRIP) was used because her 1985 study provided a significant positive outcome, demonstrating the tool was appropriate for this research, two sets of Vignettes, Pre and Post Test (see Chapter 6), and a Demographic Survey created by this researcher (2012) (see Appendix C) focused on basic demographic areas affecting one’s emotional maturity and perceived life satisfaction during the transformational learning process.

**Maturity Reasoning Index Program (MRIP)**

Partridge’s (1985, 2014) MRIP is a program created to help individuals better understand themselves, others, and life. The program was first used in her 1985 study that focused on male volunteers assigned to a work release program in a Midwestern part of the United States. Her initial intervention MRIP was developed from a comprehensive range of educational, personality, and psychotherapeutic outlooks that demonstrated an extensive eclectic methodology (Krasnoff & Partridge, 1985). Since
that time, Partridge found success using her program as a foundational tool during her work as a counselor, consultant, and psychologist (L.-R. Partridge, personal communication, January 10, 2012).

The purpose of Partridge’s research was to determine if the emotional maturity and psychological regulation of the participants, as evaluated by an assortment of psychological measures, could be improved through contact with the MRIP’s six to eight-week face-to-face sessions, totaling about 16 hours. According to Krasnoff and Partridge (1985), it was possible to interpret the findings in two ways.

One interpretation is that the intervention procedure induced some positive mental health changes in members of the experimental group. An alternative possibility is that the changes found to favor the experimental group was a result of non-specific effects associated with the additional activity involved in participation in the program which the control group did not receive. (p. 41)

Partridge’s program guided people and helped them to understand and see that the way the world operates is different from what they were taught. In essence, people need assistance and guidance in order to view life from a more insightful perspective, and then they must live it for a little while (L. R. Partridge, personal communication, August 1, 2010).

Partridge (1985, 2014) found that effective communication skills are required for successful relationships, whether family, social, or vocational in constitution. She felt that often a most important aspect regarding effective communication was overlooked. That aspect was the emotional level of reasoning of the individual
attempts to communicate, as well as the level of emotional maturity of the person
the individual is attempting to communicate with (L.-R. Partridge, personal
communication, August 1, 2010).

The MRIP program consisted of five paradigms. Partridge (1985, 2014)
called the first four paradigms of logic, the (1), (2), (3), and (4), ‘Universe I.’
Whenever individuals interpret any event using Universe I logic, they are unaware of
a larger meaning of existence. They simply react to whatever situation seems to
mysteriously come into their experience. Logic from Universe I advocates that there
is a world 'out there' that is independent of human beings, individuals using that level
of logic believe that people and circumstances constituting the external world
haphazardly inflict their will and power upon them. In self-defense, they react and
protect themselves from random events, some positive and some negative. Often
there are no explanations as to the reasons why certain events occur, so such
occurrences are attributed to the actions of God(s) or demon(s). Personal self-
identity at these primitive levels implies a state of powerlessness or victimization, and from
these fearful states they feel a need to retain control over the circumstances in their
life. Therefore, from the (1), (2), (3), or (4), people frequently expend a lot of energy
trying to control the people and circumstances around them. The constant vigil drains
much of their energy and life becomes a struggle and often loses much of its sense of
excitement and joy. This is a very physical point-of-view (L.-R, Partridge, personal
communication, August 1, 2010).

The (5) paradigm of emotional maturity signals entrance into ‘Universe II.’
The level of the (5) requires a quantum leap in human beings’ consciousness and
awareness. From this perspective, they comprehend reality from an elevated dimension of understanding. From the (5), they are introduced to the perspective of reality whereby the world’s individual experiences are not independent of them. Their world is a mirror or reflection, in symbolic form, of the thoughts, expectations, and beliefs they have about themselves and life at any given moment in this reflective world, their world treats them the way they treat themselves. Now, their task will be to learn just how they treat themselves, emotionally, as well as physically and mentally and to make certain that they treat themselves with the respect of the (5) (L. R, Partridge, personal communication, August 1, 2010). The instrument is the online curriculum, psycho-educational program. The program is located in Partridge’s 1985 dissertation appendices, and an outline of the program is located in Appendix B of this study.

**Procedures**

Three procedures were attempted in gathering participants: (a) an adult education listserv and a campus-wide listserv from a Midwestern university were used, (b) brief discussion by the researcher with peers and family members and snowballing, and (c) community centers and organizations known to provide educational services to older adults and located within a 50-mile radius or more of the Midwestern university were visited.

In contacting faculty and students of the Midwestern university, the adult education program's coordinator within the College of Education was contacted and a request was made to utilize the adult education listserv. In addition, a representative of the Student Affairs Office of that same university was contacted, and a request to
utilize the campus-wide listserv during the study was placed. And, a letter fully explaining the study was provided as an attachment within the email when utilizing both of those listservs. In addition, approximately 10 community centers or agencies, within a 50-mile radius, and their organization directors were contacted by email or telephone or both. Seven of the emails did not receive responses. Two agencies were contacted by telephone. Both managerial personnel strongly discouraged using their staff and members. One agency stated that they had attempted to gather participants from their membership in past studies and the results were disappointing, few to no participants volunteered. The other agency stated they were short staffed and the process of using their staff was difficult for their agency. After the simplicity of the process was explained, a manager stated that they would introduce the study to their members in a few months. Due to the constant discouragement from the agency, communication with the agency was discontinued. Thirty-two volunteer participants from the combined volunteers from the listservs and family / friends completed data collection process.

**Limitations**

The extent of this research is limited to the exploration of variables stated in the assessment tools used in the qualitative methods research design. The work did not look at factors outside of the assessment variables listed on those instruments. The sample population included 32 adults, aged 50 and older, self-selected and interested in a self-growth study.
Data Collection

An online program that encompassed an online demographics survey, two groups of vignettes, MRIP, and the participants' journaling responses were used to collect data. The assessment instruments, that were previously discussed, were developed and placed online using the Blackboard computer database. The instruments had clear and concise instructions that led the participant through the online program in a seamless manner. All participants were asked to journal their thoughts to the prompts provided at the end of each of the eight sessions presented in the psycho-educational program.

Online Survey

The participants completed an online survey, Qualtrics.com, consisting of their demographics information. The survey took approximately five minutes to complete. All participants were asked to complete the online survey as a first step in the process of the study.

Vignettes (Scenarios with Prompts / Questions)

Two sets of brief scenarios were provided to each participant before and after participation in the psycho-educational program. Each scenario contained five questions with multiple-choice answers. Each question came from the (1) through (5) paradigms discussed in Partridge's (1985, 2014) MRIP. The information collected was used as a before- and after-type of assessment format.

Pre psycho-educational program. Before beginning the psycho-educational program, each participant was asked to answer five questions; and, each question had five multiple-choice options as presented in Partridge's (1985, 2014) MRIP. The
answers provided in the initial set of questions were used as a baseline in understanding the transformational learning process of the participant's journey of personal growth.

**Post psycho-educational program.** After completing the psycho-educational program, each participant was asked to answer a second set of five questions; and, each question had five multiple-choice options. The five multiple-choice options came from the (1) through (5) logic of reasoning material presented in Partridge's (1985, 2014) MRIP. Although the questions were similar in logic of reasoning, they were different questions. The answers provided in the second set of questions were used as one part of determining the transformational learning process of the participant's journey of personal growth. In addition, the answers provided during the journaling process also contributed to understanding the participant's journey of personal growth.

**Maturity Reasoning Index Program (MRIP)**

The online curriculum was set up in eight sessions, Session II had two parts. Each session was completed individually. Each session was written in a very simple format; and, it was believed that most participants could complete a session during a one- to two-hour period without difficulty. Each session consisted of a number of pages. For example:

- **Session 1.** Contains 6 pages and a reflection prompt.
- **Session 2.** Contains 24 pages, two parts with one reflection prompt in each part.
- **Session 3.** Contains 16 pages and a reflection prompt.
Session 4. Contains 9 pages and a reflection prompt.

Session 5. Contains 11 pages and a reflection prompt.

Session 6. Contains 14 pages and a reflection prompt.

Session 7. Contains 22 pages and a reflection prompt.

Session 8. Contains 18 pages and a reflection prompt.

Participants completed the sessions in a variety of timeframes depending on their level of energy and desire to continue through the study. Thus, all participants had the option of choosing their unique timeframe in completing the sessions.

**Written Reflection or Journaling**

In addition to the online demographics survey, two vignettes, and the psycho-educational program, participants were asked to write a reflection of their responses to the prompts provided at the end of each of the eight sessions within the psycho-education program process. The reflections included critical self-reflective information believed to provide in-depth information regarding the participants' understanding and transformational learning experiences of their participation within the study. Research (Cranton, 1996, 1997; Lukinsky, 1990) showed that "active journal writing jogs the memory, brings lost potentials to the surface, and instigates retrievals" (Lukinsky, 1990, p. 219); and, "journals occupy a unique place in the array of reflective practices by giving students a safe place to withdraw temporarily and create an ongoing, informal record of meaningful aspects of their own learning process" (Mills, 2001, p. 1). Therefore, writing creates a connectedness to the information written; and, during the process, new thoughts are allowed to surface (Eyler & Giles, 1999; Fritson, 2008; Lukinsky, 1990).
Narrative Text

This researcher was an active participant of Partridge’s (1985, 2014) program since approximately 1987. As an active participant in utilizing the materials from the psycho-educational program for nearly 25 years, I observed my own transformational learning processes take place. Through meditation, written reflection or journaling, and critical self-reflection I have matured and transformed from an insecure, untrusting, and angry individual to a more secure person, one who trusts herself, and slowly becoming a less-angry individual. Although it is possible in qualitative research for the experiences of the researcher to influence the process and findings of the research, it is the intention of this researcher to be mindful and keep all influences to a minimum ensuring that all findings are applicable beyond the researcher's experiences.

Timeframe

This study is comprised of an online demographics survey, two sets of vignettes, and the psycho-educational program. The online survey was beta tested. Its length was approximately 5 to 20 minutes depending on the participant's computer skills. Each set of vignettes took approximately 5 to 10 minutes to complete. And the psycho-educational program was anticipated to be completed within four to eight segments of time, totaling approximately 20 hours or less.

As an incentive to complete the online demographics survey, a drawing was held that provided for two $100.00, four $50.00, six $25.00, and 15 $10.00 gift cards. The majority of the funds for this drawing came from a grant awarded to this researcher by the College of Education of the university where this research was
conducted, and the remainder of the funds came from a personal account from this researcher. The drawing was conducted by giving all participants a number, placing a slip of paper with each participant’s number in an empty container, and a committee member pulled 22 slips of paper from the container. It was expected that the voluntary process of gathering a sample and conducting an incentive of 22 gift cards provided a fuller diverse grouping outcome regarding gender, age, ethnicity, race, education, and socioeconomic status, as it was hoped that the drawing encouraged a wider variety of participants would complete the study which would enhance the strength of the research project. This was determined by a study (Moehl, 2011) that utilized this similar type of drawing and found success in their data collection process.

Before the study began, all participants received access to documentation with five parts of information: (a) the letter from the Institutional Research board (IRB), (b) an explanation regarding confidentiality, (c) an explanation of the research design to be used, (d) an overview of the MRIP, and (e) an explanation of the logistics of the online program and assessment processes. The introductory letter with an explanation of consent and confidentiality informed all participants that participation was voluntary and their confidentiality was assured. The researcher was the only person with access to their information. In addition, a statement was included within the online demographics survey stating that when the participant clicked on the link and began the psycho-educational program, they gave their consent to participate in the study. After the participants read and clicked on the link to begin the assessment process and / or psycho-educational information, the program's online activity began
immediately thereafter. After all data was collected, all records were kept in a locked cabinet or password-protected computer that only this researcher could access. The study was officially closed at the end of August 2014. The next step was the data analysis process.

**Data Analysis**

The data was input to a computer via an online process. It was organized and placed into main categories and subcategories utilizing an individualized computer process that addressed the primary and secondary questions of the study. The researcher started by placing information in separate computer program folders and ultimately arrived at specific themes or categories. Next, the researcher continued by breaking the categories down into subcategories, properties, and dimensions.

Two doctoral candidates, Myrna True and Julie Bertram, and one individual with a Ph.D., Veeranuch Vatcharasirisook, agreed to review the data and assist in the coding process in order to lessen any bias issues and increase reliability of the analysis processes. This established trustworthiness of coding the data when someone read at least some of the text or data and confirming that they would also code it the same way that the researcher coded it. The additional review and coding of the data showed that the researcher was not biased and not trying to pick out information that satisfied a predetermined outcome of the study. This process increased reliability or trustworthiness by providing a clear and accurate study result.

**Summary**

This chapter described the methodology that was used in this study. It discussed the research questions, participants, procedures, instrumentation, data
collection, and data analysis measures of the study. All areas were described in-depth as completed in a qualitative methods experimental research design study.
Chapter Four: Descriptive Analysis

This chapter provides the result of the descriptive portion of this study. The data gathered explored the current demographics information. These results provide a comprehensive analysis of the information collected and is organized into two sections: participants with demographic survey responses and chapter summary.

Participants

The entire participant group consisted of 32 volunteers; 23 of those individuals completed the entire study. The remainder of the group withdrew from the study for a variety of reasons.

Demographics

After the data collection process concluded, 32 participants had completed the initial demographics survey. However, the results of the Qualtrics.com survey system used to conduct this study showed that 13 males and 25 females completed the survey. Of those initial numbers, the results of the survey system listed the participants’ names and showed that 11 males and 21 females completed the survey questionnaire. This suggests that some participants completed a survey multiple times. For example, in the female statistics information, two females’ names were noted as completing the survey two times each. In recording the statistical data, the Qualtrics.com system divided the participants into two groups, male and female. As indicated in Table 4.1 below, the statistics are provided in each area.
Table 4.1

**Participant Demographics**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic</th>
<th>Female N(%)</th>
<th>Male N(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Race</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caucasian/White</td>
<td>13(52%)</td>
<td>10(77%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>9(36%)</td>
<td>1(8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native American</td>
<td>1(4%)</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian/Pacific Islander</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>2(15%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2(8%)</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-64</td>
<td>17(68%)</td>
<td>7(54%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65-84</td>
<td>8(32%)</td>
<td>6(46%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Well-Being (Self-Reported)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>5(20%)</td>
<td>5(38%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>15(60%)</td>
<td>8(625)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mediocre</td>
<td>4(16%)</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1(4%)</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of Education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some College</td>
<td>1(4%)</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical School</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor Level (4-Year Program)</td>
<td>3(12%)</td>
<td>1(8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master’s Level</td>
<td>18(72%)</td>
<td>4(31%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level</td>
<td>Doctoral Level</td>
<td>Other Professional Level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>--------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1(4%)</td>
<td>8(62%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2(8%)</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Previous Formal and Informal Education**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Several</th>
<th>Some</th>
<th>None</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13(52%)</td>
<td>8(32%)</td>
<td>4(16%)</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4(31%)</td>
<td>2(15%)</td>
<td>6(46%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Reading Completed Before the Study**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Many</th>
<th>Some</th>
<th>None</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6(24%)</td>
<td>12(48%)</td>
<td>5(20%)</td>
<td>2(8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4(31%)</td>
<td>6(46%)</td>
<td>3(23%)</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Employee Status**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Part-Time</th>
<th>Full-Time</th>
<th>Retired</th>
<th>Unemployed</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7(28%)</td>
<td>7(28%)</td>
<td>6(24%)</td>
<td>1(4%)</td>
<td>4(16%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2(15%)</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>3(23%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Racial breakdown.** The female racial breakdown consisted of 25 participants, 13 (52%) Caucasian / White, nine (36%) African-American, one (4%)
Native-American, two (8%) Other. In addition, the male participant racial breakdown was comprised of 13 participants, 10 (77%) Caucasian / White, one (8%) African-American, and two (15%) Asian / Pacific Islander. The female participants’ age range indicated 17 (68%) were in the range of 50 to 64 and eight (32%) were in the range of 65 to 84. Seven males were between the ages 50 to 64 (54%) and six (46%) were in the age range of 65 to 84.

Physical well-being. There were some similarities between the males’ and females’ well-being. Five (20%) females rated their well-being as Excellent. A majority (15 to 60%) indicated their well-being was good and four (16%) were mediocre. A smaller percentage of men reported their well-being as five (38%) as Excellent and eight (62%) as Good.

Level of education. In reviewing the participants’ level of education, the female participants indicated: one (4%) Some College or Technical School, three (12%) Bachelors Level or (Four-Year Program), 18 (72%) Master’s Level, one (4%) Doctoral Level, and two (8%) Other Professional Level (e.g., MD, MFA, JD). The male participants indicated: one (8%) Bachelors Level or (Four-Year Program), four (31%) Master’s Level, and eight (62%) Doctoral Level.

Previous formal / informal education. In addition, a review of the female participants’ previous formal / informal learning experiences regarding emotional maturity and emotional self-improvement indicated their background as: 13 (52%) Participated in Several Formal / Informal Learning Experiences, eight (32%) Participated in Some Formal / Informal Learning Experiences, and four (16%) Participate in No Formal / Informal Learning Experiences. A review of the male
Transformational Learning

participants’ previous formal / informal learning experiences regarding emotional maturity and emotional self-improvement indicated their background as: four (31%) Participated in Several Formal / Informal Learning Experiences, two (15%) Participated in Some Formal / Informal Learning Experiences, six (46%) Participated in No Formal / Informal Learning Experiences, and one (8%) Other.

**Employment status.** In addition, a review of the employment status of the female participants showed: seven (28%) were employed Part-Time, seven (28%) were employed Full-Time, six (24%) were retired, one (4%) was Unemployed, and four indicated Other. A review of the employment status of the male participants showed: four (31%) were employed Part-Time, four (31%) were employed Full-Time, two (15%) were Retired, and three indicated Other.

**Reading before the study.** In looking at the female participants’ amount of reading they had done before this study, they indicated: six (24%) Many Books / Articles were Read, 12 (48%) Some Books / Articles were read, five (20%) No Books / Articles were Read, and two (8%) Other was indicated. The male participants’ amount of reading they had done before this study indicated: four (31%) Many Books / Articles were Read, six (46%) Some Books / Articles were Read, and three (23%) No Books / Articles were Read.

**Additional thoughts, questions, or concerns.** In reviewing additional thoughts, questions, or concerns noted while completing this survey, six primary themes surfaced. For example, I noted “mental health,” “physical health,” “learning,” “other,” among both female and male participants. In reviewing additional thoughts, questions, or concerns, the themes and responses are provided in Table 4.2 below.
Table 4.2

*Themes and Responses*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mental Health (Females)</td>
<td>1. Background and education are in mental health.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. I’m not sure I have done anything with emotional maturity, but I have with emotional self-improvement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Presently dealing with a spouse with early Alzheimer’s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Males)</td>
<td>1. Am self-confident.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Health (Females)</td>
<td>1. I must remind myself to make my health a priority, because I am having fun and enjoying life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning (Females)</td>
<td>1. There is a need to make adjustments and fine tune these skills in response to situations and people in each season of life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. I enjoy learning and being a lifetime learner. But I consider myself a slow learner. I learn a lot through life experiences and take advantage of opportunities to give me insight. This includes discussions conducted at work through weekly consultations and supervision, and reading done at home, and counseling that I have participated in.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. My learning perspective—develop a support of myself in learning? I wasn’t sure what that meant, but could not remove the bullet I chose (Sometimes).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Summary

When participants began the survey, they were required to answer each question before the system would allow the survey to be submitted. Therefore, these findings encompass the 32 participants’ data who partially and fully completed the survey.
Chapter Five: Qualitative Analysis

This chapter provides the results of this study’s qualitative methods design. In this portion of the study, the investigation began with the belief that older adult learners do experience a transformational learning experience after participating in an eight-week psycho-educational program. In this chapter, details of the data gathered are provided. In addition, the data analysis process, as it was performed in investigating the participants’ potential transformational processes after completing a pre- and before completing the post-test research design, will be discussed.

Grounded theory, a way in which theories are established or created throughout the process of the research (Strauss & Corbin, 1990), was used for analysis. It began with the initial gathering of the data and moved through the intricate data analysis that resulted in the identification of four categories: (a) how do or do the three components of adult learning, emotional maturity, life satisfaction, and self-trust, change after older adult learners (OAL) participate in a psycho-educational program; (b) how do OAL define emotional maturity after participating in a psycho-educational program; (c) how do OAL define wisdom after participating in a psycho-educational program; and (d) how do OAL define their transformational learning experience(s) after participating in a psycho-educational program. Next, the process of coding the data and creating categories and sub-categories as well as any concluding findings will be explained. The analysis concludes with how the findings relate to the study’s primary research question and sub-questions.
Initial Beliefs

Although the results showed that many OAL did not experience a transformational learning experience, some participants did experience a transformational learning experience; and, this study’s findings provided significant data. Within those results, the reasons for the transformational learning experiences were noted and explained.

Another area of important information included the data from the total 32 initial volunteer participants and 6 potential volunteer participants. Within the 32 total participants, 23 completed the study and 9 partially completed the study. All participants who did not begin or complete the study explained that they did not have the time and/or energy available to continue participation. Within the group that completed the study, those that experienced a transformational learning experience(s) began the study with an open mind to the process and outcome of possible learning opportunities for them.

Analysis Process

During the participation process, a list of each participant’s progress was noted in a written explanation type of chart and a matrix. In creating anonymity and categorizing all participants, each participant was given a number. This numbered system was continued throughout the data collection and analysis process. The initial chart was helpful in understanding when participants duplicated or possibly missed or skipped one or more activities; and when these issues were found, the participants were emailed about the discrepancies. In maintaining the chart and matrix, the
Qualtrics.com system was reviewed daily and, updates were noted from the beginning of the participants' activities in October 2013 through the final participants' activities in August 2014.

**Initial Steps of the Analysis Process**

In the seven steps provided, the preparation process is explained step-by-step.

The initial preparation process was completed for all nine sessions. After that process was completed, the data was coded.

**Step one.** Individual files were created for each participant. This was done as a safety step and a precaution to protecting all completed session work. For example, as participants completed a session or moved forward in the study’s activities, their work was copied from the Qualtrics.com system and pasted into their individual file and stored in a secure area in my home office. This included all of the participants’ work who completed the study; those who initially intended to participate in the study, and those who did not complete the study.

**Step two.** Files for each session were created. Initially, there were eight sessions. However, Session II had a Part A and B; and, each part had its own prompt to be addressed with a journal entry. Sessions I, III, IV, V, VI, VII, and VIII, each had one prompt to address with a journal entry. Therefore, there were a total of nine sessions in the file. Each session’s file had an inclusive list of all 32 participants, plus the unidentified participants that are labeled entries without names (EWN). Each EWN is data gathered that did not have a participant’s name included with the entry.

In creating each session’s file, the number of each participant was listed.

Next, the Qualtrics.com data was reviewed. In inserting each participant’s journal
entry, the Text Response area was reviewed first. That area included a list of all participants’ names along with a link to their individual entry. In addition to the names provided in the Text Response area, a Value number was provided. This number indicated the total number of names listed in that area. Each participant’s name and individual view of their journal entry was matched to their given number in the session file. After each match was created, their text response (journal entry) was copied and pasted into the session file in the appropriate numerical order. After the entire session file was created, an overview of the entire Text Response area was reviewed. Each text response was compared to each numbered journal entry. All matching entries’ first line was highlighted in red indicating that their work matched the overview of the text responses reviewed. Next, a file was created of the entire page or group of pages of all of the Text Response area, and all text responses not having a match in the session file were completely highlighted in red indicating that the entry was either a duplicate entry or an entry that was submitted without a participant’s name.

**Step three.** All missing data for a participant’s number was noted. This information was noted in purple. It was believed that missing data indicated that a participant did not complete that session or did not provide a name when submitting the session.

**Step four.** Note when a participant had not begun that session yet. All participants not completing the session ‘yet’ were indicated with green highlighted wording. As participants completed the session, the highlighted wording was changed to the appropriate color, which was often black wording and bolded.
Step five. A note was made regarding participants discontinuing their participation in the study. If a participant discontinued their work in the study, their area in the session listing was noted in blue highlighted wording along with a brief note stating the reason for discontinuing their participation.

Step six. On the first page of each session’s list of participants’ information was a title of the session and a listing of the four highlighted colors and an explanation of what the highlighted coloring indicated.

Step seven. Under the explanation of the highlighted wording was the italicized prompt of that session. After each session’s prompt, the entire group of participants’ numbers were listed with their journal entry next to each number. In addition, the entire listing was numbered by the Word document system. At the end of each session’s listing was a written summary of the highlighted wordings’ findings.

Coding the Data

There were four steps in the coding process. First, the initial coding of the data was completed for all nine prompts within the eight sessions. After that process was completed; second, codebooks were created for each of the nine areas of prompted information; and, third the sub-categories were developed. Fourth, all data was grouped into nine sessions.

Step one. The first step in the coding process was to work with each individual session’s file document. In starting with Session I, the prompt for the session was reviewed and each individual participant’s entry was reviewed. Next, in coding the data, the Word document format provided a process to create a comment;
and, a comment was created for the summary of the participants’ individual lines or group of lined data as appropriate. Some entries had comments created for each line and some were created for a group of lines. Each comment entry was individualized according to the participant’s data provided. This process was completed for all nine prompted groups of data of the eight sessions.

**Step two.** Three experts of qualitative analysis each coded journal entries of four participants. Each of their coded work was inserted into the already coded data by placing each of their participants’ entries directly after the participants’ entry in the original data’s grouping. Next, the researcher’s coding was compared to the experts’ coding. The comparisons showed similar coding wording. Therefore, this indicated that there was no researcher bias within the coding process; and, this process increased reliability or trustworthiness that a clear and accurate study result would follow. See the example below.

(Initial Coding) Previously, I considered emotional maturity as being a "big boy" sucking up whatever came my way and making the best of the situation. Previously believed EM was being a big boy and sucking up and making best of situation. Now EM means taking life in stride, not sucking up, and making best of situation. It means fight for your beliefs, picking battles carefully, and know you are right.

Currently emotional maturity to me means taking it in stride, not just sucking it up and making the best of the situation. It means to get in there and fight for what you believe is right, picking your battles
carefully and making sure that you are in the right. I believe now that I have created the life that I have always wanted/deserved, not just take what life hands me. Believes has created the life desired and not just taking what life hands out. Believes in driver’s seat and creates own life. I am in the driver’s seat and my life is what I make it.

(2nd Coding) Previously, I considered emotional maturity as being a "big boy" sucking up whatever came my way and making the best of the situation. Previously, emotional maturity means “sucking up whatever came to my way and making the best of the situation.”

Currently emotional maturity to me means taking it in stride, not just sucking it up and making the best of the situation. It means to get in there and fight for what you believe is right, picking your battles carefully and making sure that you are in the right. I believe now that I have created the life that I have always wanted/deserved, not just take what life hands me. I am in the driver's seat and my life is what I make it. Currently, emotional maturity means taking it in stride. To fight for what you believe is right. I am the driver’s seat and my life is what I make it.

**Step three.** Codebooks were created for each group or session’s coded data. The nine groups of coded sessions were broken down further in categories, sub-categories, properties, dimensions, and examples. The codebooks were titled Session
I, IIA, IIB, III, IV, V, VI, VII, and VIII. Under that title process, the journal prompt was stated and the sub-research question(s) was stated and applied to each session as appropriate.

**Step four.** The final step was to group all data into individual sessions. Therefore, there were nine groups when considering Session II had a Part A and B.

**Analyzing the Data**

After the data was organized and coded and the codebooks were created, the assessment process began. First, the primary research question was reviewed; and next, the sub-questions were reviewed. They were: What are the perceptions of older adult learners (OAL) after participating in a psycho-educational program? The sub-questions were:

a) How do older adult learners’ (OAL) emotional maturity, life satisfaction, and trust of oneself change after participating in a psycho-educational program?

b) How do OAL define emotional maturity after participating in a psycho-educational program?

c) How do OAL define wisdom after participating in a psycho-educational program?

d) How do OAL define their transformational learning experience after participating in a psycho-educational program?

Next, each session was assessed in a step-by-step manner. For example, the prompt, “After reading the Session I information, consider your current definition of emotional maturity… If possible, provide examples of how you view yourself and
current level of emotional maturity within your reflection.” Then, the sub-question, “How do older adult learners (OAL) define emotional maturity after participating in a psycho-educational program?” that fits this session was reviewed. Third, the category, sub-category, properties, dimensions, and examples of data provided were reviewed. Next, each individual participant’s data was reviewed; and, there were 27 from the potential 34 participants’ entries for Session I’s data collected. Each participant’s data was separated by beginning the individual lined areas of the set of examples with the participant’s number, in parenthesis, followed by the line number of the data stated in each example area. The remainder of data provided in the example area begins with an ‘L’ and is followed by the line number(s) matching the participant’s data listed in the initial coding process. An example of Session I’s codebook set up using Participant Number 1’s data and is provided in Table 5.1 below.

Table 5.1

*Session I: Codebook Example for Participant 1*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Sub-Category</th>
<th>Properties</th>
<th>Dimensions</th>
<th>Participant No.</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Definition</td>
<td>Emotional Maturity (EM)</td>
<td>Previous definition/ perspective</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>P L17 … When I was young, maturity meant getting older and assumed wiser.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Current definition/ perspective</td>
<td>L17-18 … Now, it means making intelligent decisions in situations.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>View of self and level of EM</td>
<td>L18-20 … I view myself as gaining more maturity each</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
day through life’s experiences. I am pleased with my current level of maturity.

How EM affects ability to learn and experience life

L20-21 … My current level is still growing which, in turn, increase my quality of life. As an example, I’m currently gaining more emotional maturity by taking a tutorial which will qualify me to teach online courses at universities. This makes me happy.

Changes
noted after reading and considering session

N/A

Session I

In analyzing Session I and all subsequent sessions, the only participants that are mentioned or listed in the following charts are the participants that provide data applicable to the category, sub-category, property, dimensions, and example of the session. Throughout all nine sessions, intermittently, some participants were not
included due to three reasons: (a) participant’s data was missing, (b) the participant did not complete the study, and (c) the participant’s data was listed in the entries without names (EWN) group for two reasons (i.e., participant submitted duplicate entries or the participant submitted an entry without a name). Those participants were listed at the beginning of each session’s analysis explanation. For example, participants 5, 11, 21, 25, 27, 28, 32, and 34 were not listed in Session I’s data.

In analyzing Session I, the session’s prompt was reviewed. It stated, “After reading the Session I information, consider your current definition of emotional maturity. Please write a reflection that includes your previous and current definition of emotional maturity. In your reflection, also include how you view yourself and your current level of emotional maturity. Include how your current level of emotional maturity affects your ability to learn and experience life. If possible, provide examples of how you view yourself and current level of emotional maturity within your reflection.”

Next, the sub-question relating to the session’s prompt was reviewed. It stated, “How do OAL define emotional maturity after participating in a psycho-educational program?” Next, two pieces of information were used from this group’s data. The information was the properties that stated, “Previous definition / perspective,” and “Current definition / perspective.”

In reviewing each participant’s data, an informal process—not included in the formal chart—was used. If the data was provided, a ‘P’ for positive was noted in pencil next to the example of the data in the codebook. A detailed example of the ‘P’
labeled data, Participant 1, was taken from Session I’s codebook and is shown below in Table 5.2.

Table 5.2

**Session I: Example of ‘P’ or Positive Data for Participant 1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Sub-Category</th>
<th>Properties</th>
<th>Participant No.</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Definition</td>
<td>Emotional Maturity (EM)</td>
<td>Previous definition/perspective</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>P L17 … When I was young, maturity meant getting older and assumed wiser.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Current definition/perspective</td>
<td></td>
<td>L17-18 … Now, it means making intelligent decisions in situations.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If no data was provided that addressed these properties, an ‘N’ for negative was noted in pencil next to the example of data. If data was provided that was neutral or not applicable to the area reviewed, an ‘N/A’ was noted in pencil next to the example of data. An example of the data, using Participant 2 and Participant 14,
Table 5.3

Session I: Example of ‘N’ or Negative and ‘N/A’ or Not Applicable Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Sub-Category</th>
<th>Properties</th>
<th>Participant No.</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Definition</td>
<td>Emotional Maturity (EM)</td>
<td>Previous definition/perspective Current definition/perspective</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definition</td>
<td>Emotional Maturity (EM)</td>
<td>Previous definition/perspective Current definition/perspective</td>
<td>(14)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In reviewing and considering the two properties mentioned, Session I’s data showed each participant’s previous and current mindset or belief system. As stated before, all positive data is fully provided, negative data is indicated with an ‘N,’ and all neutral or not applicable data is indicated with an ‘N/A.’ See Page 208 in Appendix F for Table 5.4 that includes all available data, P, N, and N/A, to defining emotional maturity (EM) using those definitions / perspectives.

In reviewing the data, it was noted that 28 participants’ data was collected, and one entry was an entry without a name (EWN). Twenty-two responses were positive, 4 responses were negative, and 2 responses were neutral or not applicable to the properties or sub-question addressed in the analysis process. Ranking in the positive range indicated that at least one or both properties’ data provided a definition...
for EM. See Pages 216 through 222 in Appendix F for Tables 5.5, 5.6, and 5.7 that the provides EM definition and indication of life experience and / or age influence.

Fifteen participants did not provide a previous definition; however, they did provide a current definition. See Table 5.9 on Page 224 in Appendix F. Additionally, one participant, Participant 13, provided a definition of emotional maturity and only his / her perspective of a current definition. However, the participant stated that he / she did not agree with the session’s information and provided his / her own perspective of the definition. See Table 5.8 on Page 223 in Appendix F.

**Negative responses.** In reviewing the negative data, four participants earned this ranking. Responses earned this ranking because they did not provide a previous definition / perspective or a current definition / perspective.

**Neutral or not applicable responses.** In looking at the data ranked neutral or not applicable, two participants’ responses received this ranking. One participant responded by including his / her answer and did not address the properties reviewed or define emotional maturity. Examples are provided in Table 5.9 on Page 224 in Appendix F.

**Additional considerations.** Within the total group of participants, six participants’ answers did not mention the reading or session; however, they did mention that one’s fears played a part in the definition or their data suggested fear played a part in finding or developing their definition. This is important, because the session discussed fears and how one’s fears plays a part in EM level(s). Therefore, there may be a connection to reading the session’s information and finding or
developing a definition to EM. See Table 5.10 on Page 225 in Appendix F that provides the list of data suggesting fear as an element in developing an EM definition.

Also, when reviewing and considering the two properties mentioned of the previous definition / perspective and current definition / perspective, Session I’s data addressed sub-question, “How do OAL define emotional maturity after participating in a psycho-educational program?” Definitions included calmness, emotional stability, and inner balance. See Table 5.11 on Page 226 in Appendix F for current EM definitions.

**Summary of Session I.** In summary, the participants’ data showed a variety of perspectives regarding their previous and current level of EM. Although there were a variety of definitions provided, many were similar in nature. Therefore, the data shows that EM varies somewhat with the individual and the individual’s previous and current mindset or belief system.

**Session II A**

In analyzing Session II A, participants 4, 11, 12, 14, 21, 24, 25, 28, 32, 34, and 35 were not listed for reasons explained in the first paragraph of Session I’s analysis. The prompt for this session was,

“The After reading the Session II information, please complete Prompt One. Consider your own behavior as well as the behavior of those around you for the past week or longer. Identify the levels of perceptions you generally utilize and what problems these perspectives generate. For example, do you use strictly what people say or what they do in understanding who they are? Do the procedures you use
provide you accurate information regarding understanding people?

Please reflect on your observations of the (1), (2), (3), (4), and (5) behaviors and activities. Include how your current levels of perceptions affect your ability to experience life satisfaction. Also, include how your current ability to experience life satisfaction affects your ability to learn.”

Next, the sub-question, “How do older adult learners’ (OAL) emotional maturity, life satisfaction, and trust of oneself change after participating in a psycho-educational program?” One piece of information was used from this group. The information was the property that stated, “Changes noted after reading and considering session.” As before, a ‘P,’ ‘N,’ and ‘N/A’ were used to reflect positive, negative, and neutral or not applicable examples, respectfully.

See Page 228 in Appendix F for Table 5.12 that provides a list of statements indicating how emotional maturity, life satisfaction, and trust of oneself change for OAL after participating in a psycho-educational program. The table includes all available data; P, N, and N/A.

As indicated in table 5.12, only four participants had positive statements. Ranking in the positive range indicated that the participant stated that a change had occurred after reading the session.

**Summary of Session II A.** In summary, although there were only four positive responses from the participants, each provided a different or slightly different perspective regarding the change they experienced. Therefore, change is found to be individual and unique to the participants’ current and past experiences and needs.
Session II B

In analyzing Session II B’s data, the same participants as Session II A’s data are listed. Similarly to analyzing Session II A’s data, Session II B also reviewed the session’s prompt. It stated, “Please complete Prompt Two. Carefully consider previous beliefs and actions that you had before reading this material, and now reflect on any ‘new’ beliefs and / or actions you may now see within yourself.”

The sub-question relating to the session’s prompt was reviewed. It stated, “How do older adult learners’ (OAL) emotional maturity, life satisfaction, and trust of oneself change after participating in a psycho-educational program?” Next, one piece of information was used from this group’s properties. The information was the property that stated, “Changes noted after reading and considering session.” See Page 231 in Appendix F for Table 5.13 that shows the data indicating how do or do older adult learners’ (OAL) emotional maturity, life satisfaction, and trust of oneself change after participating in a psycho-educational program. The table includes all available data; P, N, and N/A.

In reviewing the data, 14 participants’ responses were positive. The participants noted a change in their understanding and knowledge of something, improved their perspective or viewpoint of something, solidified or confirmed their previous thinking, and / or reminded them of information previously understood. Ranking in the positive range indicated that the participant stated a change had occurred after reading the session. In addition, two responses were negative ranking and nine were neutral or not applicable.
Three participants stated they did not experience any changes in their thinking or beliefs, however, they found the session’s information interesting, could relate to the information by understanding one or more theories found within the information, appreciated the way the author presented the information, and experienced being connected to the information in the session. One participant “was aware of the different levels of learning but do not always use them or think about them in real world interactions.” Another participant appreciated reading about two to three behaviors, although he/she could not find him / herself within any one level discussed in the session. See Page 234 in Appendix F for Table 5.14.

**Summary of Session II B.** The majority of the participants indicated an improved awareness and insight regarding their own EM and the EM of others they associate with in their life. In addition, some participants indicated a new or improved awareness of the concept of EM; and, others indicated they experienced confirmation of what they previously believed EM meant or what the general definition of EM included. Lastly, the majority of participants who did not experience change indicated that they found the session’s information interesting or that they had similar beliefs prior to reading the information.

**Session III**

In analyzing Session III, participants’ 4, 11, 12, 14, 17, 18, 19, 21, 24, 25, 27, 28, 29, 32, 34, and 35 were not listed for reasons explained in the first paragraph of Session I’s analysis. In addition, in analyzing Session III, the session’s prompt was reviewed. It stated,
After reading the Session III information, carefully consider your own behavior from the previous day’s or week’s activities to determine the way you generally see your life events. Next, consider, the way people in your life generally see their life’s events. Please write a reflection that includes your previous way of viewing your life events and the way that the people in your environment have also interpreted life events. In your reflections, include how you view yourself and your current level of emotional maturity as you consider your past interpretations. Include how your current level of emotional maturity influences your ability to learn and experience life. If possible, provide examples of how you view yourself and your current level of emotional maturity within your reflection.

Next, the sub-question relating to the session’s prompt was reviewed. It stated, “How do older adult learners’ (OAL) emotional maturity, life satisfaction, and trust of oneself change after participating in a psycho-educational program?” See Page 236 in Appendix F for Table 5.15 that outlines the participants’ responses.

As indicated from the table, 24 participants had positive responses. Ranking in the positive range indicated that the participant stated that a change had occurred after reading the session. In addition, from the 24 data collected, 18 participants’ responses earned a negative ranking including 3 EWN data; and, none earned a ranking of neutral or not applicable.

They provided a variety of perspectives to their noted change. For example, the first positive response stated that what he / she is learning and relearning about
their EM continues to be a work in progress. Participant 23 stated that he / she will be more aware and accepting to consciously not attach emotion to behaviors. Participant 26 related the session’s information to his / her mother’s actions and how those situations carried over to his/her early adulthood. The fourth response indicated that he/she was learning to choose what battles to fight when dealing with family members—while breaking down the behaviors into the 1 through 5 perspectives. The fifth response indicated that he / she did not like any of the 1 through 5 scenarios or perspectives—considered them vague/unclear and too cut and dried—preferred to take aspects from each level discussed in order to create a well-rounded individual. Finally, the sixth participant indicated he / she viewed him / herself as growing and switching from the 4 to 5 mindset or understanding. In general, the responses suggested the participants viewed their changes as learning experiences or growth.

**Summary of Session III.** In summary, the six participants provided similar responses. For example, they either considered the session’s information interesting, related it to their life activities / circumstances, and / or considered how the information could be beneficial to better understanding their life.

**Session IV**

In analyzing Session IV, participants 4, 11, 12, 14, 15, 18, 21, 24, 25, 27, 28, 32, 34, 35, and EWN 1 were not listed for reasons explained in the first paragraph of Session I’s analysis. The session’s prompt stated,

After reading the Session IV information, carefully consider your past and current subjective experiences. See if you notice a variety of selves within yourself by watching for different reactions to different
events in your life. Write a reflection on your findings. If you notice
different reactions to different events in your life, how does this
awareness make you feel?

Next, the sub-question relating to the session’s prompt was reviewed. It
stated, “How do older adult learners’ (OAL) emotional maturity, life satisfaction, and
trust of oneself change after participating in a psycho-educational program?” The
participants’ responses are found in Table 5.16 located on Page 239 in Appendix F.

A review of the positive responses showed, as in previous sessions, that what
some participants are learning and relearning about their EM continues to be a work
in progress. Three participants (7, 10, and 26) indicated noticing a flux or a
vacillation within themselves—considered attitudes or moods by the participants.

Seven participants (7, 10, 22, 23, 26, 29, and 31) indicated that they gained
insight and desired further thought or research regarding the newly learned
information. In general, the data indicated that the participants viewed their changes
as learning experiences or growth.

**Session IV summary.** In summary, the participants who responded were
open to the learning experience, and a few stated they desired additional information.
Other participants did not provide data indicating additional desired learning.

**Session V**

In analyzing Session V, participants 11, 12, 14, 18, 21, 24, 25, 27, 28, 32, 34, 35, and EWN 2 were not listed for reasons explained in the first paragraph of Session
I’s analysis. Additionally, in analyzing Session V, the session’s prompt was
reviewed. It stated,
After reading the Session V information, carefully consider your past and current abilities to detach yourself from the emotions of others in your life. Consider how you do or do not allow them their emotions without allowing them to affect your mood in any way. Please provide a reflection of what you have learned about your past and current abilities to detach yourself from the emotions of others in your life. How does this feel? Is it a tool that is beneficial in your daily learning experiences? Please define wisdom. Does this information and skill provide a new found level of wisdom? Please provide as many examples as is comfortable for you in your reflection.

There were five sub-questions relating to the session’s prompt. They stated, How do older adult learners’ (OAL) emotional maturity, life satisfaction, and trust of oneself change after participating in a psycho-educational program? How do older adult learners (OAL) define emotional maturity after participating in a psycho-educational program? How do OAL define their transformational learning experiences after participating in a psycho-educational program? How do OAL define wisdom after participating in a psycho-educational program? How do OAL define a transformational learning experience after participating in a psycho-educational program?

From this data, the definition of wisdom was used. Wisdom meant different things to different participants. Wisdom was defined as something gained as we get
older, being right about how an event might turn out, or knowing oneself. As indicated in Table 5.17 located on Page 242 in Appendix F, the definition of wisdom varies.

**Session V summary.** In summary, the participants who responded positively viewed wisdom as having inner peace, insight, common sense, the ability to work with and understand others, the ability to utilize and apply life experience to current experiences. They also believed that gaining wisdom was an endless life process and journey.

**Session VI**

In this Session, participants 7, 11, 12, 14, 18, 21, 24, 25, 27, 28, 32, 34, and 35 were not listed for reasons explained in the first paragraph of Session I’s analysis.

The prompt for this session was,

After reading the Session VI information, carefully consider the above information. Has this information initiated any changes in your thinking? Would you describe your current thinking as having a level of awareness or insight or understanding or wisdom? Please provide a written reflection about how the above information has affected your current thinking. Please provide as many examples as you can in explaining your thinking”

Next, the sub-questions relating to the session’s prompt were reviewed. They stated,

How do older adult learners’ (OAL) emotional maturity, life satisfaction, and trust of oneself change after participating in a psycho-
educational program? How do older adult learners (OAL) define emotional maturity after participating in a psycho-educational program? How do OAL define their transformational learning experiences after participating in a psycho-educational program? How do OAL define wisdom after participating in a psycho-educational program?

Participants provided a variety of responses. The responses included beliefs that fearful beliefs come from within rather than external sources; understanding how the multiple levels of one’s mind or thinking can create or contribute to one’s fears or fearful experiences along with the importance of having balance in one’s thinking processes; viewing fear as a friend along with understanding the importance of tempering or controlling one’s fears in order to experience improved life experiences or the ability to function better; struggles with viewing fear as a friend, although understands how emotional pain comes from having fears; was better able to relate feelings to over eating issues and open to address those issues; gained clarity to understanding the importance of staying away from negative people, found it interesting that people who felt powerless would resort to criminal activity in order to experience relief from his/her pain and to correct any wrong doings, appreciated the information that the physical environment reflect one’s state of mind; and was better able to understand one’s fears. See Table 5.18 located on Page 246 in Appendix F.

In reviewing the data, it was noted that 24 participants provided data for this session, including 2 EWN data. From the 24 participants’ data collected in this area, 7 were ranked as positive including 1 EWN data collected. Ranking in the positive
range indicated that the participant stated that a change had occurred after reading the session. In addition, from the 24 data collected, 4 earned a negative ranking; and, 13 participants’ responses earned a ranking of neutral or not applicable.

**Session VI summary.** In summary, the participants who responded positively viewed fear as something from within. They understood the importance of balancing one’s thinking and that emotional pain was related to having fears. They also understood the importance of staying positive, as one’s environment is a reflection of one’s mindset. In addition, the majority of the not applicable responses stated the session provided confirmation of previous beliefs along with understanding that experiencing fear can be both positive and helpful.

**Session VII**

In analyzing Session VII, participants 4, 10, 11, 12, 14, 17, 18, 21, 24, 25, 28, 30, 32, 34, and EWN 1 were not listed for reasons explained in the first paragraph of Session I’s analysis. Additionally, in analyzing Session VII, the session’s prompt was reviewed. It stated,

After reading the Session VII information, carefully consider your views on spirituality and other dimensions of existence. Has this information influenced your thoughts regarding your daily life and/or existence? If you answered yes, please explain your thoughts and provide examples. If you answered no, please explain your thoughts.
Next, the sub-questions relating to the session’s prompt were reviewed. They stated,

“How do older adult learners’ (OAL) emotional maturity, life satisfaction, and trust of oneself change after participating in a psycho-educational program? How do OAL define their transformational learning experience(s) after participating in a psycho-educational program? How do OAL define wisdom after participating in a psycho-educational program?”

Next, one piece of information was used from this group--. “Changes noted after reading and considering session.” Twelve participants reported no changes. However, six participants did experience changes. In some instances their belief system changed. See Table 5.19 located on Page 250 in Appendix F.

**Session VII summary.** The participants who responded positively indicated that the session helped them think more spiritually, consider other dimensions of life / near death experiences, potential reincarnation experiences, potential presence of angels, and some desired to give the information additional consideration.

Participants who provided neutral or not applicable data generally indicated they did not experience a change after reading the session, were already familiar with the session’s information, may or may not believe in the session’s information, did not utilize spirituality or religious perspectives, and believed in the Bible’s teachings and / or had personal religious beliefs. Therefore, although the data provided some positive responses, the majority of the data indicated a neutral or not applicable ranking.
Session VIII

In analyzing Session VIII, participants 4, 5, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 18, 21, 24, 25, 28, 32, 34, 35, and EWN 3 were not listed for reasons explained in the first paragraph of Session I’s analysis. Additionally, in analyzing Session VIII, the session’s prompt was reviewed. It stated,

After reading Session VIII’s information, carefully consider that thought creates your reality and the other concepts stated. How does this make you feel? Is this information a new way of thinking for you? If yes, please explain and describe your experience in understanding this information. If your answer is no, please describe your thoughts of the information provided. Also, please consider how you trusted yourself in making daily life decisions before this session and how you now trust yourself in making daily life decisions. Please explain what you are noticing. For example, are there any changes in your previous ability to trust yourself and your current ability to trust yourself in making daily life decisions? If yes, please explain the changes you are noticing. If your answer is no, please explain that as well. Include how your current level of trusting yourself affects your ability to learn and experience life.

The two sub-questions, How do older adult learners’ (OAL) emotional maturity, life satisfaction, and trust of oneself change after participating in a psycho-educational program” and “How do OAL define their transformational learning experience(s) after participating in a psycho-educational program?”
were examined. “Changes noted after reading and considering session” was reviewed. Nine people indicated no changes after the session. Table 5.20 located on Page 254 in Appendix F outlines the participants who reported changes and those who did not.

In reviewing the data, it was noted that 23 participants provided data for this session, including 4 EWN data. From the 23 participants’ data collected in this area, 7 were ranked as positive. Ranking in the positive range indicated that the participants indicated that a change had occurred after reading the session. In addition, from the 23 data collected, 16 earned a neutral or not applicable ranking including 4 EWN data.

**Session VIII summary.** In summary, the participants’ responses provided a variety of data. The majority of the participants were familiar with the session’s information. Several indicated that the session’s information was helpful, and they experienced a change in their thinking. A few participants indicated they experienced no change in their thinking, and other participants did not agree with the session’s information and/or indicated the study was difficult to complete.

In addition, two important areas were mentioned: (a) the understanding that one’s thinking effected one’s world, life, or reality; and (b) the understanding that human beings have or do not have control over their life’s experiences. This is important because the session focused some of its concepts on this perspective. Although several participants indicated that they understood and agreed that their thinking and actions play a part in their life experiences, several other participants indicated that they did not agree, understand, and that there is more to life than a cut
and dried belief system. In essence, there were as many perspectives or thoughts of this session’s information as participants. The majority of participants seemed to have a perspective that fit their world and way of life before reading the session(s).

**Summary**

When participants began the eight sessions, they were asked to complete all or as many sessions as possible. These findings encompass the 32 participants’ data who partially and fully completed the survey. Definitions of emotional maturity and wisdom varied among participants. Although a few participants indicated they experienced no changes in their thinking, several indicated that sessions’ information was helpful, and they experienced a change in their thinking.
Chapter Six: Pre- and Post-Test Descriptive Analysis

This chapter provides additional descriptive analysis focusing on pre- and post-test results within the study’s qualitative research design. In this portion of the study, the investigation compared the two sets of vignettes, each set was comprised of five multiple-choice questions that correlated to Partridge’s (1985, 2014) psycho-educational program. Each participant completed the first set before beginning the psycho-educational program and then completed the second set after completing the psycho-educational program. In this chapter, details of those completed pre- and post-test vignettes are discussed.

Initial Beliefs

The purpose of these pre- and post-test vignettes were to review and gain an understanding of the level of emotional maturation before beginning the psycho-educational program and the level of emotional maturation after completing the psycho-educational program. That data will show if growth occurred from participating in the psycho-education program. It is believed that after completing the psycho-educational program, there will be an improvement in the answers provided in the data indicating a transformation of improved emotional maturation for the participants in the study.

Participants

According to the Qualtrics.com system, 30 participants completed the pre-test Vignettes I survey and 25 participants completed the post-test Vignettes II survey. However, one participant completed the pre-test survey twice and, two participants completed the post-test survey twice. This provided that 29 participants completed
the pre-test Vignettes I survey and 23 participants completed the post-test Vignettes I survey. In addition, six participants—including one participant’s duplicate completion of the survey—dropped out of the study. Therefore, this accounted for 23 participants who completed the Vignettes I and II surveys.

**Vignette Surveys**

The two vignette surveys consisted of five questions regarding scenarios one may encounter on a daily basis. Each question had five options to choose as the best answer in handling the scenario. The five options were made up of the five levels of logic of reasoning from Partridge’s (1985, 2014) psycho-educational program. Level 1 is the lowest level and Level 5 is the highest. All five levels are discussed in the psycho-educational program. In completing each set of vignettes, participants were asked to read each question, review the five options provided, and choose the best answer to each question. After all five questions were answered, participants were asked to click on the arrow in the bottom of the page, right-hand corner. Clicking on this arrow indicated they completed the set of vignettes, and they were asked to begin the psycho-educational program. A review of those surveys provide data of the level of transformation experienced in this study.

**Vignettes I Survey**

In the survey set of Vignettes I each option focused on one of the five areas of logic of reasoning from Partridge’s (1985, 2014) psycho-educational program. The five options encompassed the five areas of logic of reasoning discussed in the psycho-educational program.
**Question 1.** Question 1, “Your best friend has a new boyfriend and now completely ignores you. You …,”

- let the air out of your friend’s new boyfriend’s tires.
- recognize that your friend is currently preoccupied, not take it personally, and find other things to do.
- feel hurt and offended but say nothing.
- call your friend and ball her out for ignoring you.
- gossip to everyone about the loose morals of your friend’s activities.

Below Table 6.1 provides the results of Question 1’s five multiple-choice options.

Table 6.1

**Vignettes I, Question 1’s Responses and Percentage**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Choice Option</th>
<th>Level of Logic of Reasoning</th>
<th>Number of Responses</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data indicated that 26 participants, 87%, chose Option 2—a 5 level of higher thinking; and, 4 participants, 13%, chose Option 3 as the best answer to the question. Therefore, 26 participants used a Level 5 logic of reasoning and 4 participants used a Level 4 logic of reasoning when answering Question 1.
**Question 2.** Question 2, “A sales person is rude while helping you. You …,”

- smile at the sales person and state, “I’d like to see your supervisor please.”
  
  When the supervisor comes, you have him help you and nicely explain the other individual was obviously having a bad day and unable to help you.

- become indignant and storm out stating you will never buy from that company again. You then write a scathing letter to the company about the stupid, outrageous behavior of their employees.

- meekly report that the representative spoke obscenities to you while waiting on you.

- you back off, become quiet, and attempt to be even nicer, and leave the premises as soon as possible.

- yell obscenities at the representative and insist if he/she wants a fight you’ll give it to him.

Below Table 6.2 provides the results of Question 2’s five multiple-choice options.
Table 6.2

Vignettes I, Question 2’s Responses and Percentage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Choice Option</th>
<th>Level of Logic of Reasoning</th>
<th>Number of Responses</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nineteen participants, 63%, chose Option 1—a 5 level of higher thinking; and, 8 participants, 27%, chose Option 4 as the best answer to the question. Thus, 19 participants used a Level 5 logic of reasoning, and 8 participants used Level 4 logic of reasoning when answering Question 2.

**Question 3.** Question 3, “You learn a co-worker is telling the boss lies about you. You …,”

- don’t take it personally, wait until the boss says something, and then calmly explain what has been going on.
- go to the boss and ask for their assistance reporting that your co-worker is spreading rumors about all of your co-workers.
- ignore it for a time, and then complain to your boss that the individual is lying and causing you tremendous problems.
- become outraged, find the individual, and beat him.
go to your boss and demand that the company follow its own policies or you’ll call the office of EEOE.

Below Table 6.3 provides the results of Question 3’s five multiple-choice options.

Table 6.3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Choice Option</th>
<th>Level of Logic of Reasoning</th>
<th>Number of Responses</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>37</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As outlined in Table 6.3, 7 participants, 23%, chose Option 1—a 5 level of higher thinking; and 12 participants, 40%, chose Option 3 as the best answer to the question. Therefore, 7 participants used a Level 5 logic of reasoning, and 12 participants used a Level 4 logic of reasoning when answering Question 3.

**Question 4.** Question 4, “When facing a difficult situation, you seek comfort from your closest friend; however, their support is not so helpful. You …,”

- begin to twist the story, pointing a finger at one of their insecurities.
- defend your position to him/her and try to get him/her to see your point.
- become offended and stomp off pouting.
- thank him/her for his/her assistance but suddenly have to be somewhere else.
○ judge your friend’s advice, remarking he/she is not smart enough to be helpful

Below Tables 6.4 provides the results of Question 4’s five multiple-choice options.

Table 6.4

*Vignettes I, Question 4’s Responses and Percentage*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Choice Option</th>
<th>Level of Logic of Reasoning</th>
<th>Number of Responses</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on the data, 15 participants, 50%, chose Option 4—a 5 level of higher thinking; and 14 participants, 47%, chose Option 2 as the best answer to the question. These answers indicated that 15 participants used a Level 5 logic of reasoning, 14 participants used a Level 4 logic of reasoning when answering Question 4.

**Question 5.** Question 5, “You are wrongfully pulled over for speeding. You …,”

○ attempt to flatter the police officer and attempt to bargain your way out of the ticket.

○ sincerely ask the police officer specifically what he observed because of your strong belief that you were not speeding.
o complain loudly, protesting your innocence and complain about unfair
treatment, prejudice, and threaten to call your attorney.

o apologize profusely, explaining how you did not realize you were speeding.

o get angry and state you did nothing wrong; and ask, “Why are you detaining
me?”

Below Table 6.5 provides the results of Question 5’s five multiple-choice
options.

Table 6.5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Choice Option</th>
<th>Level of Logic of Reasoning</th>
<th>Number of Responses</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data indicated that 24 participants, 80%, chose Option 2—a 5 level of higher
thinking; and 6 participants, 20%, chose Option 4 as the best answer to the question.
These answers indicated that 24 participant used a Level 5 logic of reasoning and 6
participants use a Level 4 logic of reasoning when answering Question 5.

Approximately 87% of participants used a higher level of logic of reasoning in
all questions; and a smaller group, approximately 13%, of participants used a lower
level of logic of reason in answering the questions. Therefore, the data indicated that
the majority of participants used a higher level of logic of reasoning when answering
the Vignette I survey. Below Tables 6.5 and 6.6 provide those lists of data.

Table 6.5

**Vignettes I, Participants’ Responses, Percentages, and Level of Logic of Reasoning**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Number of Responses</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Logics of Reasoning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 6.6

**Vignettes I, Summary of Participants’ Responses, Percentages, and Level of Logic of Reasoning**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Number of Responses</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Logics of Reasoning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 through 5</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>5 and 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 through 5</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Vignettes II Survey**

Like the Vignettes I survey set, each of the questions in the Vignettes II survey focused on one of the five areas of logic of reasoning from Partridge’s (1985, 2015) psycho-educational program. Vignettes II’s questions were potential daily life experiences, each question focusing on a level of logic of reasoning of Partridge’s program.

**Question 1.** Question 1, “Your sibling is constantly delving into your life and then relaying this private information on to your parents. You …,”

- call him/her a liar and snitch about all his/her bad deeds over the last year, exaggerating a few for good measure.
- defend yourself and explain over and over to your parents how he/she gets into your affairs, which are none of his/her business and for them to stop him/her.
- grab your sibling and beat him/her soundly.
o quietly take him/her to the side and with a smile promise you will expose him/her the very next time he/she does something wrong if he/she doesn’t mind his/her own business.

o steal some money from your parents then make certain that it is found in your sibling’s room and / or pocket.

Below Table 6.7 provides the results of Question 1’s five multiple-choice options.

Table 6.7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Choice Option</th>
<th>Level of Logic of Reasoning</th>
<th>Number of Responses</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data indicated that 15 participants, 60%, chose Option 4—a 5 level of higher thinking; and, 10 participants, 40%, chose Option 2 as the best answer to the question. These answers indicated that 15 participants used a Level 5 logic of reasoning and 10 participants used a Level 4 logic of reasoning when answering Question 1.

**Question 2.** Question 2, “Your neighbor is playing their music too loudly while you are trying to sleep. You …,”
o call the police anonymously with false accusations of more serious offenses such as drugs.

o call and question their intelligence telling them they have no respect or tell them you will call the police and press charges.

o turn your own music up to overcome theirs or bang on their door and throw a fit or call on the phone and threaten to bomb.

o roll over and try to go back to sleep while complaining silently or to a significant other or pet.

o graciously and respectfully speak to the neighbor and ask them to turn the volume of their music down.

Below Table 6.8 provides the results of Question 2’s five multiple-choice options.

Table 6.8

Vignettes II, Question 2’s Responses and Percentage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Choice Option</th>
<th>Level of Logic of Reasoning</th>
<th>Number of Responses</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data indicated that 20 participants, 80%, chose Option 5—a 5 level of higher thinking; and 5 participants, 20%, chose Option 4 as the best answer to the question.
These answers indicated that 20 participants used a Level 5 logic of reasoning, and 5 participants used a Level 4 logic of reasoning when answering Question 2.

**Question 3.** Question 3, “While waiting in a supermarket where there are no clear lines to check-out, someone blatantly pushes their cart in front of yours. You …,” provided five multiple-choice options. They were:

- give a calm but stern lecture, threatening to call the manager.
- make a scene and verbally threaten the offender.
- distract him/her and add things to his cart when he/she is not looking.
- stand back and pretend that offense did not even occur.
- calmly back up and allow the offender to remain while not taking anything personally.

Below Table 6.9 provides the results of Question 3’s five multiple-choice options.

Table 6.9

**Vignettes II, Question 3’s Responses and Percentage**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Choice Option</th>
<th>Level of Logic of Reasoning</th>
<th>Number of Responses</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
The data indicated that 18 participants, 72%, chose Option 5—a 5 level of higher thinking; 5 participants, 20%, chose Option 4 as the best answer to the question.

These answers indicated that 18 participants used a Level 5 logic of reasoning and 5 participants used a Level 4 logic of reasoning when answering Question 3.

**Question 4.** Question 4, “Your neighbor complains to you that your dog is bothering them. You …,”

- ask the neighbor how you can cooperate so that both he/she and the dog can win.
- apologize profusely explaining that your dog chases suspicious individuals and is only trying to defend the property.
- act innocent and hurt that they are being mean about your dog.
- fiercely threaten him/her that if anything bad happens to your dog, someone at his/her house will be dead.
- explain to your neighbor that if he/she weren’t such a pervert, your dog wouldn’t be such a nuisance.

Below Table 6.10 provides the results of Question 4’s five multiple-choice options.
Table 6.10

Vignettes II. Question 4’s Responses and Percentage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Choice Option</th>
<th>Level of Logic of Reasoning</th>
<th>Number of Responses</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data indicated that 24 participants, 96%, chose Option 1—a Level 5 level of higher thinking; and 1 participant, 4%, chose Option 2 as the best answer to the question. These answers indicated that 24 participants used a Level 5 logic of reasoning, and 1 participant used a Level 4 logic of reasoning when answering Question 4.

**Question 5.** Question 5, “Your significant other accuses you of being unfaithful, and it is true. You …,”

- strongly deny the accusation and tearfully blame him/her for hurting you with his/her twisted mind and suspicious nature.
- remain calm, apologize for sneaky behavior, and explain that the other relationship was a symptom of a major problem within this relationship.
- become outraged and slap him/her for whining and having a pity party.
- deny the allegations and remind him/her of how stupid and paranoid he/she has become lately.
o tearfully admit to every detail, profusely apologizing and promising anything to make up for your guilt.

Below Table 6.11 provides the results of Question 5’s five multiple-choice options.

Table 6.11

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Choice Option</th>
<th>Level of Logic of Reasoning</th>
<th>Number of Responses</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data indicated that 19 participants, 76%, chose Option 2—a 5 level of higher thinking; 2 participants, 8%, chose Option 4 as the best answer to the question. Thus, 19 participants used a Level 5 logic of reasoning and 2 participants used a Level 4 logic of reasoning when answering Question 5.

Around 95% of participants used a higher level of logic of reasoning in all questions; and a smaller group, 5%, used a lower level of logic of reason in answering the questions. The data indicated that the majority of participants used a higher level of logic of reasoning for Vignette II. Below Tables 6.12 and 6.13 provide those lists of data.
Table 6.12

Vignettes II, Participants’ Responses, Percentages, and Level of Logic of Reasoning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Number of Responses</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Logics of Reasoning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 6.13

Vignettes II, Summary of Participants’ Responses, Percentages, and Level of Logic of Reasoning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Logics of Reasoning</th>
<th>Number of Responses</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5 and 4</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Summary**

After reviewing the Vignettes I data results and the Vignettes II data results, it was found that 87% of the responses rated in the higher level of logic of reasoning at the beginning of the study. This percentage was found by referencing Table 6.5 and adding all of the percentages of the Levels 5 and 4 from all five questions in Vignettes I, and then dividing that number (433) by the five questions. The answer was 86.6% or 87%. Next, an exact procedure was performed by referencing Table 6.12 and adding all of the percentages of the Levels 5 and 4 from all five questions in Vignettes II, and then dividing that number (476) by the five questions. The answer was 95.2% or 95%. This calculation indicated a higher level of logic of reasoning was used at the end of the study. Therefore, the pre- and post-test survey indicated an improved level of logic of reasoning after completing the psycho-educational program.

When participants began the surveys, they were required to answer each question before the system would allow the survey to be submitted. Therefore, these
findings encompass the 29 participants’ data who completed the first set of vignettes and 23 participants’ data, approximately 80% of those who began the study, completed the second set of vignettes and fully completed the survey.

In reviewing the experiential learning theory, critical learning theory, and transformational learning theory perspectives, it is believed that participants gained some insight after completing Partridge’s MRIP and was able to utilize a higher level of thinking. Thus, when completing the Vignettes II questions, the participants were able to address the questions from a more insightful and aware perspective and mindset.
Chapter Seven: Discussion and Conclusions

A detailed review, discussion, and conclusions are provided in this chapter. It is separated into five parts: (a) research questions, (b) psycho-educational programs (c) adult learning theories, (d) adult development, and (e) conclusions. The information provides a comprehensive summary of the data collected in this study as well as final thoughts of the investigative process.

In 1987, I was introduced to Linda Partridge, Ph.D. and her psycho-educational program, the Maturity Reasoning Index Program (MRIP); also referred to by Partridge as the 1 through 5. The 70s and late 80s were a challenging time for me, and I began an extensive search for a better way of thinking and viewing and experiencing life. After meeting Partridge and learning about the 1 through 5 material, I began my ongoing approximate 28-year transformational journey.

As with any process, a person must be open and desiring the learning experience. For me, that was easy; because I was not happy with the way my life was currently going. Therefore, using the MRIP on a consistent basis proved easy and productive. On the other hand, I clearly received from the program what I wanted to receive because of my strong desire to grow and mature on a variety of levels.

This study has demonstrated that in order to grow, to experience a transformational outcome, one must want the learning while utilizing the tool. Although Partridge’s 1 through 5 information has demonstrated for approximately three decades its validity and potential of assisting those desiring the learning experience, it is a program, like many others. This means that it enlightens those
ready for specific levels of learning it offers. Therefore, the 1 through 5 information was an excellent psycho-educational program for this study and for those asking for information provided on its level of insight.

**Research Questions**

In reviewing and understanding the data, a few steps were used. The primary research question was reviewed; and then, the sub-questions were reviewed. Those questions were: What are the perceptions of older adult learners (OAL) after participating in a psycho-educational program? And,

a) How do older adult learners’ (OAL) emotional maturity, life satisfaction, and trust of oneself change after participating in a psycho-educational program?
b) How do OAL define emotional maturity after participating in a psycho-educational program?
c) How do OAL define wisdom after participating in a psycho-educational program? And,
d) How do OAL define their transformational learning experience after participating in a psycho-educational program?

**Psycho-Educational Programs**

Robinson and Lakin (2007) stated that older adults aged 66 to 74, participating in one or more adult education courses in a school or postsecondary institution is increasing. Additionally, the American Council on Education (ACE) (2005) reported that these participation trends, are expected to continue into the 21st century. Fisher and Wolf (2000) report that care giving, a desire for intellectual
upkeep, employment, health / wellness, learning as meaning making, leisure / travel, personal growth, self-efficacy, socialization, and spiritual growth are important activities older adult learners desire.

Research (Blumenthal et al., 2002; Partridge, 1985, 2014; Raskin, Mghir, Peszke, & York, 1998) concerning psychosocial influences has shown to significantly add to and enrich life experiences. In addition, the utilization of psycho-educational programs has helped individuals in their efforts to better understand themselves and manage difficult life conditions. Additionally, Partridge (1985, 2014) found that participants reported a significant benefit of understanding their own actions and feelings regarding life situations when taking part in her psycho-educational program activities. Another study by Blumenthal, et al., (2002) revealed that a psycho-educational program helping in stress management and exercise interventions led to substantial improvement in coronary artery disease (CAD) as well as considerable and immediate reduced medical fees. Therefore, it is believed that psycho-educational programs are accommodating in supporting those who are handling problematic life issues and physical / emotional problems.

**Adult Learning Theories**

As part of a framework in looking at adult learning theories, Critical Learning Theory, Transformational Learning Theory, and Experiential Learning Theory were chosen because they work well together in explaining adult needs and growth processes. In addition, some of the findings of this study were supported by these theories. Therefore, they are reviewed in this section and explain the mindset of participants in this study.
Critical Learning Theory

Leading critical learning theory philosopher Jurgen Habermas (1971, 1984) focused on three areas of interest: work knowledge, practical knowledge, and emancipatory knowledge. Work or instrumental action is grounded in analysis and led by procedural guidelines. Practical knowledge or ideas are centered on recognizing human social communication. Emancipatory knowledge focuses on self-knowledge and the philosophical process of knowing oneself. These kinds of knowledge may lead to consciousness transformation or transforming one's perception.

In looking at emancipatory knowledge, a participant indicated “I see how being mindful of some 5 attributes could further reinforce the direction I need to go.” In addition, he / she stated, “I have already been working to help people around me become more self-sufficient.” Yet another person stated, “This is a new way of thinking. What I have accepted as just occurring, I now think there is a reason behind events.” Therefore, knowing oneself is a primary element that can be used in helping others develop and grow in their ‘human social communication’ process as well as better understanding one’s life experiences.

Transformational Learning Theory

Transformational learning theory is outlined by Mezirow's (1996) emancipatory model as an adult learning evolutionary process. Mezirow summarized his theory by applying 12 key suggestions consisting of: (a) a learning theory should be centered in communication; (b) learning is the skill using previous knowledge or thoughts and developing future thoughts; (c) make sense out of descriptions and
create new experiences; (d) understanding may be intentional / unintentional, propositional / incidental, presentational / the use of feelings, perceptive awareness, or kinesthetic experience; (e) logic perceptions are sifted through a framework of cognitive understanding; (f) a summary of references consists of the functional practices of the mind and a group of attitudes, beliefs, feelings, and value judgments; (g) an action led by belief; (h) the ability to utilize existing schemes, learn new schemes, and change new information into understanding that is practical; (i) understanding and utilizing communicative and instrumental learning processes; (j) establishing validity of communicative and instrumental learning processes; (k) acting on the insight gained; and (l) knowing that the path of adulthood is a learning process. Adults are products or results of individual experiences that affect their attitudes, thoughts, and conceptualizations of life (Wolfe, 2009); and, Mezirow (1996) reported that adults could be improved or transformed by a procedure called the "disorientating dilemma" (p. 1). This procedure involved a problem, followed by one’s critical reflection, and a fresh understanding of the situation is determined. Educators should encourage learners to use their critical thinking skills when this occurs, consider further learning experiences, and consider the accuracy of the result. This process creates the possibility for new thinking to cultivate. This level of transformational learning encourages learners to participate in their learning experiences rather than simply be fed information and accept it without thinking about what is best for them.

The findings of this study espoused that he / she agreed with this theory when he / she indicated that he / she needed to ‘get with the program’ utilize the
information life had presented him/her. In addition, he/she was pleased that he/she had “a lifetime” to practice and develop the information life had presented him/her. In addition, another participant indicated, “I think after participating in this study, I put a little more thought into making daily life decisions. Some even mean writing the pros and cons …“ This response supports the transformational learning theory as the learner ‘acts on the insight gained’ and understands that ‘the path of adulthood is a learning process.’

Not surprising, everyone’s transformational learning experiences were not the same. Participants’ responses provided below show how two people had different experiences than the perspectives Mezirow stated. For example,

(7) L142-149 … The article reflected much of what I learned as I have studied Change, was trained in Cognitive Coaching, read the Five habits of highly Effective People, did a field-based study for my master’s, and did action research in my classroom. Therefore, my reflection brings up the following questions: How does one learn these levels in order to improve oneself? Or, are these levels of maturity learned through the nurturing and support of family, and love as the article in the first session suggest?

(23) L494-495 … I’ve never given much thought to emotional maturity and don’t have a previous definition.

L495-501 … After reading this, I suppose emotional maturity means accepting people for who they are, not judging them. Sometimes I do that well and sometimes I don’t—even with the same person. As for situations, I tend to let my life get dull, not necessarily out of fear but out of a need to rest
(or sometimes just being lazy). And then I routinely shake things up by 
moving to a new house, interviewing for jobs, or trying something new at 
work.

**Experiential Learning Theory**

Experiential learning is a way to construct social reform (Dewey, 1938). 
Additionally, he believed that experience, had two components, active and passive, 
which means that it is not only what a person experiences but how an individual uses 
such experiences. This mindset highlights work / study programs, internships, 
cooperative learning experiences, and more. In addition, experiential learning brings 
to mind the learner receiving academic credit for real-life experiences (Knapper & 
Cropley, 1985).

Lewin’s (1935) work looked at social psychology, the appreciation of 
experiential learning, group dynamics, and action research. His action model was 
much like Dewey’s idea of learning from experience. That model followed the plan 
that an individual would recognize a primary idea, participate in fact finding, 
implement a plan, begin to use the plan, assess the situation, modify the plan, take 
additional steps composed of more planning, executing, and fact finding, and 
continue to consider the situation before continuing to move forward (Smith, 2012).

During the study, participants indicated that they noticed that their level of 
emotional maturity, self-esteem, and confidence had grown during the aging process. 
Thus, participants’ responses supported the experiential theory’s perspective that 
practicing daily life skills are appropriate ways to achieve one’s goals / dreams.
The critical learning theory, transformational theory, and experiential theory emphasize a perspective of life-long growth, and those thoughts were reflected in the participants’ responses. Therefore, these theories are important in one’s ability to experience a successful aging process.

**Adult Development**

Researchers (Hayward & Liu, 1992; Merriam, Caffarella, & Baumgartner, 2007; Reinsch, 2007; Schaefer, 2010; Wolf & Brady, 2010) have stated that a significant portion of this nation’s population are older adults. In the past, older adults have not received the level of respect they deserve for their achievements. However, a change is occurring; society is beginning to focus more on the interests and needs of the older population (Grosso, 2015; Mason, Darnell, & Prifiti, 2010). Therefore, the older population is growing and ‘waking up’ to their needs along with the attention and understanding they deserve. Some of those needs and desires are reviewed and discussed in the emotional maturity, wisdom, and life satisfaction sections.

**Emotional Maturity**

As people grow and develop on a physical level, they have experiences and memories of those experiences. Life experiences form emotional links and associations that are related to fresh events and experiences. This progression creates an imprint in one’s memory. Therefore, those memories, positive / negative, may affect the person’s cognitive consciousness as well as future capability to operate properly (Edison, 2002; Knowles, 1980).
Boucouvalas and Lawrence (2010) believe that the emotions play an important part of influencing the learning progression. Emotion is defined as "to stir, to move, or to disturb" (p. 37) and is derived from the Latin word form "e + movere" (p. 37). Partridge (1985, 2014) states emotions are manmade reflections of an individual’s inner feelings. Boucouvalas and Lawrence describe emotions as activities such as anger, joy, sadness, or confusion that can affect individuals in deep and intimate ways that cannot be disregarded. In order to learn from one's emotional experiences, it is necessary to control the mind and become mindful of the emotions experienced while also noting the feelings experienced within one’s self. Even though this may be difficult at the beginning, it is worth the work as skillful individuals ultimately improve and understand that when specific feelings are experienced, they are followed by particular emotional flare-ups and distress (Partridge, 1985, 2014). Therefore, the more one develops the strength of monitoring and understanding his / her feelings, the better the individual's emotional experiences.

Another way of explaining emotional development is by seeing it as a process leading to emotional competency (EC). For example, Nelis, Quoidbach, Hansenne, Kotsou, Weytens, Dupuis, et al. (2011) and Kotsou, Nelis, Gregoire, and Mikolajczak (2011) stated that all individuals experience emotions. Although, the way in which they are managed varies among individuals. For example, some people have the capability to recognize their emotions and express them in a socially suitable way; and, others are overcome when trying to recognize their emotions or explain them to others. Thus, the method of learning or developing the skill(s) to identify, express,
recognize, order, or apply their emotions is the process of emotional development or developing an understanding of one’s emotional self(ves) or parts.

Additionally, Jung and Jaffe (1963) determined that emotional development was a process that slowly exposed an intricate, unconscious, and varied part of the psyche to a person’s cognizant self. Such enlightenment created emotional development or emotional maturity or self-realization.

The learning process is strongly influenced by one’s level of emotional development. There are numerous ways of looking at emotional development. Some see the emotions as a manmade or physical image of one’s feelings or inner beliefs, and that controlling one’s thoughts or beliefs helps in managing the emotions. Overall, emotional development is a process that can be completed in a multitude of ways, as long as the method helps in the ability to identify, explain, comprehend, and successfully manage one’s day-to-day emotional experiences.

In looking at the benefits of emotional maturity, Pratto’s (1994) research referred to consciousness as the "Mind's Eye" (p. 115). She saw consciousness as a fascinating experience that "what we are conscious of at the moment is what our minds are doing at that moment" (p. 115). Partridge (1985, 2014) reported that emotional maturity has been called ego development, healthy self-image, mental health, moral judgment, self-actualization, and more. Other investigators perceive emotional maturity as an ideal whereby individuals are true to themselves, are guided by their own intellect and trust themselves unconditionally during all of life's activities (Erikson, 1971; Hyatt et al., 2010; Landau, 1998; Mayer & Geher, 1996; Nelis, Quoidbach, Hansenne, Kotsou, Weytens, Dupuis, et al., 2011). Mayer,
Salovey, and Caruso (2008) saw emotional maturity as a process of supporting oneself and others by having the tools and skills to “pay attention to, use, understand, and manage emotions” (p. 503).

Several participants agreed with the literature’s perspective of emotional maturity. One participant indicated, “the ability to interpret and respond to reality with truth and logic” and another “the ability to find calmness during a time of great uncertainty and doubt.” These are indicators of a higher level of emotional maturity. These responses support the findings of previous research.

**Definition of emotional maturity.** In reviewing the way emotional maturity was defined, some participants provided a previous and current definition or perspective; however, others simply provided a current definition reflecting their thoughts after reading the session. Those responses indicated that when one is young, they anticipate emotional growth with age. Another indicated growing toward / and achieving the goal of making “intelligent decisions in situations.” Yet other participants indicated achieving the ability to be calm during difficult situations. All indicated that attaining emotional maturity was a process or a desired lifelong learning goal.

**Level of emotional maturity affects one’s ability to learn and experience life.** The findings of the study indicated that some participants believed that their thinking affected their life experiences. One response stated, “Our thoughts and mental images play a major role in our behavior. So often, what we tend to encounter are the results of our thinking.” Another response was, “About ‘thought creates your reality,’ etc... that is very empowering. On the whole, it is a new way of thinking for
me. I've always thought one should have positive thoughts, if at all possible, but this is much more emphatic.” These findings and others within the data support the research (Edison, 2002; Knowles, 1980) that life experiences and one’s positive / negative memories contribute to the development of appropriate societal operations.

**Wisdom**

Some believe (Restak, 1999) that when individuals age, they gain wisdom; and, this is not always true. In addition, it is sometimes thought that when one takes time to consider and think at a deeper level, it is a sign of age and maturity and related to the mindsets of an elderly individual. This is also not always true. Living to the age of 100 could offer an individual the knowledge as to how the world operates; or, dependent on the person, it could simply provide some of the information required in understanding life's learnings (Restak, 1999).

Baltes (2004) defines wisdom as knowledge and the human condition, how the knowledge is gained and the experiences when acquiring that knowledge, how difficult situations are worked through, and how an individual organizes his / her life when reaching the elderly stages demonstrates what is important to them. In addition, Baltes (2004) created a wisdom scale; and, his work found that the level of analytic and emotional sharpness did not depend on the age of the individual, as much as having those qualities depended more on the person than the age of the person. Additionally, even though a person’s time to react could increase with age that issue could be modified by using life experience or acquired wisdom (Restak, 1999). Participants’ responses that supported this perspective includes, “true wisdom is understanding that life and people can bring us happiness and sadness; of being aware
that most problems of today go away or change while being aware that our own personal problems will only change if we take control of them and take action to solve the problem as best we can.” And, another response was, “I think wisdom is truly knowing yourself or selves. And knowing when to bring forth the self that is applicable for the situation.” Therefore, participants’ responses supported the literature’s findings.

In addition, three themes emerged from the participants’ responses with a relationship to the literature. Those primary themes were: (a) “wisdom is a journey not an end in its self;” (b) “wisdom is a deep (or higher) knowing and understanding gained from the collective experiences of life,” and (c) “wisdom is truly knowing yourself or selves. And knowing when to bring forth the self that is applicable for the situation.” In comparing the literature and the noted themes, there was a similarity / relationship between the groups. Baltes (2004) defined wisdom as knowledge and the human condition. It was also noted that how the knowledge was gained and the experiences that shaped a person acquiring that knowledge, how difficult situations are worked through, and how an individual organizes his / her life when reaching one’s elderly stages plays a part in having and utilizing wisdom. Therefore, the participants’ responses and the literature agree with how one develops and utilizes wisdom.

**Definition of wisdom.** In looking at the way participants defined wisdom, the responses indicated that wisdom meant different things to different participants. Some of those unique definitions indicated, “I could define wisdom as being right about how things will turn out. Being able to project / predict results and
consequences;” and others indicated simply having knowledge that one acquires over time and with life experiences. Although each definition was unique, each definition was supported by the literature.

**Higher level of wisdom after participating in the psycho-educational program.** In addition to defining wisdom, a higher level of wisdom was stated. Participants’ responses indicated that a “deep (or higher) knowing and understanding gained from the collective experiences of life” was important. Others indicated that the ability and achievement of “knowing oneself” along with understanding and using the “art of detachment” were both important skills that they gleaned from the program.

**Life Satisfaction**

Life satisfaction is a part of many demographics and personal traits. For example, some people experience a satisfactory life when they have: a) higher income than their peers, b) a better education, c) employment, d) spouses, e) a sense of personal control, and other characteristics (Bee & Bjorklund, 2004; Miller, 2012). Restak (1997) believes that successful aging is related to the function of the brain and cognitive capabilities. Other researchers (Wolf & Brady, 2010) report that experiencing life satisfaction is successful aging. In addition, some measure success in the aging process by considering one's physical and emotional well-being. In general, satisfaction in the aging process is related to many factors such as culture, career and family characteristics, and one’s dreams and goals.

**Ability to experience life satisfaction.** Participants’ responses showed their belief in the importance of better understanding themselves in order to successfully
experience life. Participants’ responses indicated that they felt the same as beginning the study, however, they had an improved understanding of the process of experiencing life. In addition, with the additional information from the program, others experienced an improved sense of trusting themselves.

**Change in emotional maturity, life satisfaction, and trust of oneself after participating in the psycho-educational program.** Several participants found that completing the study providing them an opportunity to grow and learn more about themselves. For example, one participant stated, “Before, reading the comments, I didn’t think about looking at things / events in this way. It has helped in my own thinking and perceptions.” Another participant stated, “After reading this, I will probably look at my coworkers in a different way and say to myself, ‘They’re a level’ or now I understand why they act the way they do.” These diverse responses show that growth and change is an individual and unique experience.

**Conclusions**

A comparative review of the Vignettes I and II data results reveal that 87% of the participants rated in the higher levels of logic of reasoning at the beginning of the study and 95% of the participants rated in the higher level of logic of reasoning at the end of the study. Thus, these findings suggest that the pre- and post-test survey show an 8% improvement after completing the psycho-educational program.

When participants started the surveys, they were asked to answer each question and the system would allow the survey to be submitted. That process
encompassed 29 participants’ data who completed the first set of vignettes and 23 participants’ data who completed the second set of vignettes and who fully completed the survey.

The results of this study found that when Older Adult Learners (OAL) participate in a psycho-educational program, a transformational experience does occur. In addition to the 8% improvement found after reviewing the pre- and post-test data, many of the thoughts and mindsets provided by the participants were similar thoughts and mindsets stated in the literature. Therefore, this study revealed that the literature was supported by participants’ data that they provided. They indicated having a better understanding of themselves and a new found respect for those of different levels of emotional maturity. In addition, they stated that they now better understand the importance of utilizing a higher-level of thought and life. Therefore, the program introduced and / or reminded participants of the importance to monitor their thoughts and actions.

**Contradictions Found**

Overall, there were no contradictions found that related to the literature. However, OAL do want to learn and grow both emotionally and spiritually. Many do think about their level of trusting themselves, life satisfaction, and wisdom gained. OAL are very open and aware of the transformational learning experiences that their lives have offered them, although it may take an activity such as participating in a study to remind them and to see themselves in that role. Overall, many OAL are a group of individuals desiring to continue to learn and grow. They are individuals who educators will continue to meet in a variety of learning environments.
Limitations

The most significant limitations of this study was that the majority of the participants were highly educated individuals with graduate-level degrees, several with doctoral degrees. Although the group showed an improved level of emotional maturity after participating in the psycho-educational program, it is believed that an even greater level of improvement would have been demonstrated during the investigation if the participants were not an elite group with a high-level of education. Due to administrative conflicts experienced when contacting community adult education programs, participants from an adult education listserv and some networking with family and friends were the primary sample group of participants for this study.

Recommendations

It is recommended that further research be conducted using community adult education facilities and programs. During this study, efforts to work with a few community facilities / programs were unsuccessful. This was partially due to the researcher not having a sufficient amount of time and resources to focus / communicate with the facilities and programs as was required. This means that this researcher was working and taking classes as well as conducting research for this study. In order to truly communicate with the facilities at the level that they needed and desired, it is believed that a future researcher should be prepared to visit the facilities multiple times, be available to take their return calls while meeting their
diverse schedules, be available to provide in-depth presentations while meeting their diverse schedules, and any other conveniences that would meet the approval and convenience of the facilities / programs.

In addition, future researchers should be prepared to work with participants on a one-on-one basis as needed, be available / on call to answer any questions, and meet any scheduling needs of participants and the facilities / programs. Although an effort was made to meet these conditions, the process became too time-consuming and utilizing a university adult education listserv and networking with family / friends proved more appropriate in an effort to complete the study.

Additionally, it is suggested that future researchers be prepared to work with administrators and their staff who have had uncomfortable and unsuccessful experiences with past researchers along with issues of their already having an overfull workload. If a researcher can keep all of these potential issues in mind and have lots of patience, funding, and time / energy, it is believed that they can find or reach volunteer participants open to personal growth and willing to complete a research study that provides a wealth of data.

Finally, although Partridge’s (1985, 2014) psycho-educational program was an excellent choice in conducting this study, there are many fine instruments that would provide the desired information for participants completing future studies. The psycho-educational program should be chosen to fit the needs of the study being conducted. For example, available funding is a primary concern when conducting a study. Partridge’s program fit the needs of the study and the funding aspect of the study as well.
In looking at the gaps in the literature, Partridge’s MRIP has not been used by anyone except Partridge in her 1985 study and her own 30-year private practice. Therefore, this psycho-educational program is new to adult education programs, literature, and educators. Partridge’s perspective of combining spirituality and quantum physics is certainly a new way of viewing life experience that has not been studied before within the area of adult education.

**Closing Thoughts**

My initial thoughts were that this study did not introduce any ‘new’ information, although it did confirm my belief that OAL are simply people, at a different stage of life than some younger groups, who are interested in continuing to grow and learn. This is a group of individuals worthy of the time and energy educators have to communicate with them and learn with them as a fellow learner.

In addition, my final thoughts are that OAL are simply people. However, they are people who are open to taking an in-depth look at themselves and others within their world and at least briefly explore why people do and act the way that they do. The MRIP introduces people to other ways of viewing life and life experiences. It helps people consider their previous / current level(s) of emotional maturity, understanding of life satisfaction and wisdom and ability to trust oneself. After completing this study, it was found that many people, very busy professional people, are open to this level of learning and self-exploration.
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Appendices
March 21, 2012

Ms. Susan Lundy
Doctoral Candidate, Educational Leadership and Policy Studies
Educational Leadership and Policy Studies Division
University of Missouri-St. Louis
College of Education
One University Boulevard, 269 Marillac Hall
St. Louis, Missouri 63121

Dear Ms. Lundy:

It is with great pleasure that I hereby grant permission for you to use my copyrighted program, Maturity Reasoning Index Program (MRIP), in your dissertation research. I look forward to reading your work and expect appropriate citation for this program in your study and any publications that result from its use.

If I can provide further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me. Best wishes to you and your study.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Linda R. Partridge, Ph.D.
Appendix B

Maturity Reasoning Index Program

A Program and Theory of Emotional Maturation Development

By Linda R. Partridge, Ph.D. (1985)

Program Outline

Session One

1. Introduction
   a. Introduce instructors
   b. Encounter groups
2. Feelings versus Emotions
   a. Emotion motivates
   b. Break
   c. Love and fear-based emotions
      i. List of love-based emotions
      ii. List of fear-based emotions
      iii. Discussion on love and fear
   d. Questions and discussion
   e. Handouts
      i. Desiderata
      ii. What is Success
      iii. A Bargain with Love
      iv. “Of Love” – Kahlil Gabrain
      v. Booklist – for those interested in additional reading
   e. Assignment
   f. Class dismissed
Session Two

3. Maturity Reasoning Index
   a. Introduction
   b. Emotional maturity level one
   c. Emotional maturity level two
   d. Emotional maturity level three
   e. Discussion and questions
   f. Break
   g. Emotional maturity level four
   h. Emotional maturity level five
   i. Discussion and questions

4. Basic Rights
   a. Handout: *The Ten Basic Human Rights* (Sutphen)
   b. Discussion
   c. Assignment
   d. Class dismissed

Session Three

5. ABC Theory
   a. A matter of interpretation
   b. Event one: Spilled milk
   c. Event two: Murder
   d. Break
   e. Event three: Gay rights
   f. Event four: “Jesus Saves”
   g. Discussion of other events
   h. Assignment
   i. Class dismissed
Session Four

6. Multiple Personalities
   a. The clinical multiple personality versus “Normal Personality”
   b. Class discussion
   c. Break
   d. Handouts and discussion
      i. Poem: *Education of the Soul* (Partridge)
      ii. Poem: They sent me searching … (Kay)
      iii. Poem: At morning star (Kay)
   e. Assignment
   f. Class dismissed

Session Five

7. Perception
   a. A matter of perception
   b. Discussion
   c. Cups of poison
   d. Discussion
   e. Break
   f. Push buttons and the art of detachment
   g. Poem: Sermons we see (Guest)
   h. Assignment
   i. Class dismissed

Session Six

8. Know Thyself
   a. Fear as your friend
   b. Discussion
   c. Poems and handouts
      i. The monument (Unknown)
      ii. The weaver (Unknown)
   d. Break

9. Create Your Own Experience
   a. World: Mirror of your thoughts
   b. Poem and discussion: Beware of what you tell yourself (Raven)
   c. Assignment
   d. Class dismissed
Session Seven

10. Other Dimensions of Existence
   a. Introduction
   b. Death and after-death states
   c. Spirit guides and guardian angels
   d. Break
   e. Ghosts

11. Reincarnation
   a. Life: before and after
   b. Famous quotes
   c. Poem and discussion: Imagine you were given a world … (Partridge)
   d. Handout: In search of little tree
   e. Assignment
   f. Class dismissed

Session Eight

12. In search of Little Tree
   a. Introduction
   b. The story
   c. Questions and discussion
   d. Break

13. The Effects of Your Thinking: A review
   a. Class questions and answers
   b. Discussion
   c. Review
   d. Personal observations about MRI program
   e. Instructors farewell
   f. Class dismissed
Appendix C

Survey | Qualtrics Survey Software

Research Survey

Directions: Please read each statement below and either fill in the blank or click on the answer that most closely reflects your attitude toward the statement above the responses. Year opinion on each of the statements is important. Thank you for your participation in this survey.

Please provide your first and last name in the space below.

My Life

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree Somewhat</th>
<th>Agree Somewhat</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>As I grow older, things seem better than I thought they would be.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This is the dreariest time of my life.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am just as happy as when I was younger.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would enjoy my life more if it were not as dull</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My life could be happier than it is now.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The things I do are boring or monotonous.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I expect interesting and pleasant things to happen to me in the future.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The things I do are as interesting to me as they ever were</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My life is great.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Everything is just great.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As I look back on my life I am well satisfied.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I enjoy everything that I do.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

About Me

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Virtually Never</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>Virtually Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am aware of the physical reactions (flushes, opioids, sudden changes)</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>that signal a &quot;fight or flight&quot; reaction.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I readily admit mistakes and shortcomings</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I let go of problems, anger, or hurts from the past and I can move beyond</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>these things.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I generally have an accurate idea of how another person perceives me</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>during a particular interaction.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

https://jfe.qualtrics.com/survey/SV_Sap4wjdplePd2
12/17/2014
| I have several important things in my life that I am enthusiastic about, and I let it show. | ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ |
| I can easily meet and initiate conversation with new people when I have to. | ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ |
| I take a break or use another active method of increasing energy when I sense that my energy level is getting low. | ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ |
| I have little trouble taking prudent risks. | ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ |
| I “open up” with people appropriately — not too much but enough so that I don’t come across as cold and distant. | ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ |
| I can engage in an interaction with another and pretty well size-up that person’s mood based on non-verbal signals. | ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ |
| Others usually feel inspired and encouraged after talking to me. | ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ |
| I have no trouble making presentations in front of groups or conducting meetings. | ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ |
| I take time every day for quiet reflection. | ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ |
| I take initiative and move ahead on tasks that need to be done. | ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ |
| I refrain from making up my mind on issues and expressing my opinion until I have all the facts. | ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ |
| I have a number of people I can turn to, and I ask for their help when I need it. | ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ |
| I try to find the positive in any given situation. | ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ |
| I can deal calmly, sensitively, and pandemonium with the emotional displays of others. | ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ |
| I can usually identify the emotion I am feeling at any given moment. | ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ |
| I am generally comfortable in new situations. | ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ |
| I neither bury my anger nor let it explode on others. | ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ |
| I can show sympathy and match my feelings with those of another person in an interaction. | ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ |
| I can keep going on a big project, despite obstacles. | ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ |
| I am respected and liked by others, even when they don’t agree with me. | ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ |
| I am clear about my own goals and values. | ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ |
| I express my views honestly and thoughtfully, without losing poise. | ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ |
| I am good at managing my moods, and I seldom bring negative emotions to work. | ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ |
| I focus my full attention on another person when I listen to them. | ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ |

My Learning Perspectives

Listed below are 11 statements reflecting beliefs, feelings, and behaviors that you may experience while being involved in a project or situation. Please indicate how frequently each statement typically applies to you.

How Frequently do I:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Always</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I believe the work I do day-to-day has meaning and value to society.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can effectively persuade others to adopt my point of view without censoring them.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Learning Perspectives</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Demographics

Directions: Please read the information below and click on the answer that describes you. Again, thank you for your participation in this survey.

Gender:
- Male
- Female

Race:
- 

https://jfe.qualtrics.com/form/SV_Sap4wJtplePd2

12/17/2014
Survey | Qualtrics Survey Software

- African-American
- Asian/Pacific Islander
- Hispanic/Latino(a)
- Black
- Native American
- Multi-Racial
- Other

Age:
- 50 to 54
- 65 to 84
- 85 and older

Employment Status:
- Part-Time
- Full-Time
- Retired
- Unemployed
- Volunteer
- Disabled
- Other

Highest Level of Education Completed:
- Less than High School or GED
- High School or GED
- Some College or Technical School
- Associate's Level (2-Year Program)
- Bachelor's Level (4-Year Program)
- Master's Level
- Doctoral Level
- Other Professional Level (e.g., MD, MBA, JD)

Indicate the person or persons that you provide care or perform care-giving activities (include all that apply in addition to yourself):
- Spouse
- Child

https://jfe.qualtrics.com/form/SV_Sap4wJispflePd2

12/17/2014
Survey | Qualtrics Survey Software

Current physical well-being (health):
- Excellent
- Good
- Mediocre
- Poor
- Other

Indicate your previous formal/informal learning experiences regarding emotional maturity and emotional self-improvement:
- Participated in several formal/informal learning experiences.
- Participated in some formal/informal learning experiences.
- Participated in no formal/informal learning experiences.
- Other

Indicate the amount of reading you have done, before this study, regarding emotional maturity and emotional self-improvement:
- Many books/articles were read.
- Some books/articles were read.
- No books/articles were read.
- Other

Please provide any additional thoughts, questions, or concerns noted while completing this survey:

---

https://jfc.qualtrics.com/form/SV_5ap4w1splePd2

12/17/2014
Appendix D

Informed Consent for Participation in Research Activities

Transformational Learning: An investigation of the emotional maturation advancement in learners aged 50 and older

Participant ___________________________ HSC Approval Number ________________________

Principal Investigator Susan Lundry ___________________________ PI’s Phone Number 314-831-9379

1. You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Susan Lundry, Doctoral Candidate, and Dr. Paulette Isaac-Savage. The purpose of this research is to investigate the transformational learning process of adult learners' emotional maturation as measured by a psycho-educational program.

2. a) Your participation will involve completing two sets of study instruments. The study instruments include:
- Initial Survey
- Online Curriculum
  - First set of vignettes—five multiple-choice questions
  - Group of online readings—eight readings followed by a request for journaling responses
  - Second set of vignettes—five multiple-choice questions

Approximately 75 may be involved in this research at the University of Missouri-St. Louis. Approximately 10 research sites or community centers, located within the St. Louis area, are projected.

b) The amount of time involved in your participation will be approximately 10 to 15 hours, which is totally on a volunteer basis. At the completion of the study, a drawing will be conducted and all participants will have an opportunity to win one of the following: two $100.00, four $50.00, six $25.00, or 15 $10.00 gift cards in appreciation for your time.

3. There are no known risks associated with this research.

4. The possible benefits to you from this research are gaining a better understanding about yourself and others that you communicate with daily.

5. Your participation is voluntary, and you may choose not to participate in this research study or withdraw your consent at any time. If you choose to withdraw from the study, you can contact Susan Lundry at 314-831-9379 or email me at lundrsey@umsl.edu. You will NOT be penalized in any way should you choose not to participate or withdraw.

6. We will do everything we can to protect your privacy. As part of this effort, your identity will not be revealed in any publication that may result from this study. In rare instances, a researcher's study must undergo an audit or program evaluation by an oversight agency (such as the Office for Human Research Protection) that would lead to disclosure of your data as well as any other information collected by the researcher.

7. If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study, or if any problems arise, you may call the investigator, Susan Lundry at 314-831-9379 or Dr. Paulette Isaac-Savage at 314-516-5941. You may also ask questions or state concerns regarding your rights as a research participant to the Office of Research, at 314-516-5899.

Transformational Learning Page 1 of 2
I have read this consent form and have been given the opportunity to ask questions. I will also be given a copy of this consent form for my records. I hereby consent to my participation in the research described above.

Participant’s Signature

Date

Signature of Investigator or Designee

Date
Appendix E

November 6, 2013

Study Participant

RE: Welcome to My Study and Instructions

Dear Study Participant:

Welcome to my research study, Transformational learning: An investigation of the emotional maturation advancement in learners aged 50 and older. After academically and emotionally preparing for this study for the last 25 years, I am excited to finally begin this research. Now, it is my hope and belief that you will enjoy the learning process as you progress through the program. As you know, your participation is completely volunteer oriented and will be conducted totally online. In addition, you are welcome to discontinue the study at any time it becomes necessary or uncomfortable to participate. For participants who struggle with online work, I will be available to assist you as needed. The majority of those arrangements have been discussed and pre-arranged.

A letter of confidentiality is also attached in your introductory email. It provides my contact information; and hopefully, it addresses any questions or concerns regarding confidentiality procedures. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me, as it would be my pleasure to discuss or explain any procedures of the study to you.

As you complete the entire study’s activities, including the initial survey, the first set of vignette questions, the eight sessions with reflections from the prompts, and the second set of vignettes, your name will be placed in a drawing for two $100.00 gift cards, four $50.00 gift cards, six $25.00 gift cards, and 15 $10.00 gift cards. The drawing will be conducted after all participants have had an opportunity to complete the study activities, approximately in February 2014. The drawing will be conducted by giving all participants a number, placing a slip of paper with each participant’s number in a container, and a committee member will pull 27 slips of paper from the container. This is my way of saying thank you for participating in my study’s activities.

Now, let’s begin the study. Please copy and paste the following link into your URL:

https://mygateway.uml.edu/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp?tab_tab_group_id=143_1&url=%2Fwebapps%2Fblackboard%2Fexecute%2Flaunchber%3Ftype%3Dcourse%26id%3D_13452_1%26uri%3D

This link will take you to an Announcements page with a blue banner that reads, “Transformational Learning.” Please read the announcement provided. The announcement will direct you to begin the study by clicking on the Initial Survey tab. It is essential that you fill in
the space requesting your name for each piece of information you provide. This will allow that
proper credit is given you for the activities completed and gift cards awarded.

Again, thank you for taking this journey and participating in this study. It is my sincere
hope that you enjoy your experience. If you have any problems along the way, please feel free to
contact me at my home number 314-831-9379 or email me at lundr4s@umsl.edu.

Warmest regards,

Susan L. Lundry
Doctoral Candidate, Educational Leadership and Policy Studies Department
University of Missouri-St. Louis
### Appendix F

#### Table 5.4

**Session I: Previous and Current Definitions/Perspectives of EM**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Sub-Category</th>
<th>Properties</th>
<th>Participant No.</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Definition</td>
<td>Emotional Maturity (EM)</td>
<td>Previous definition/perspective</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>P L17 … When I was young, maturity meant getting older and assumed wiser.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Current definition/perspective</td>
<td></td>
<td>L17-18 … Now, it means making intelligent decisions in situations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Previous definition/perspective</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Current definition/perspective</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Previous definition/perspective</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>P L40-41 … Previously, I considered emotional maturity as being a ‘big boy’ sucking up whatever came my way and making the best of the situation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Current definition/perspective</td>
<td></td>
<td>L41-45 … Currently emotional maturity to me means taking it in stride, not just sucking it up and making the best of the situation. It means to get in there and fight for what you believe is right, picking your battles carefully and making sure that you are in the right.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Previous definition/perspective</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Current definition/perspective</td>
<td></td>
<td>L57-58 … Emotional Maturity is the ability to interpret and respond to reality with truth and logic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Previous definition/ perspective</td>
<td>Current definition/ perspective</td>
<td></td>
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<td>---------------------------------</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6) P</td>
<td>L70-72 … Emotional maturity is the ability to find calmness during a time of great uncertainty and doubt. Emotional maturity is being able to ‘exhale’ with assurance.</td>
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<tr>
<td>(7) P</td>
<td>L84-86 … Emotional maturity develops with maturation. It does not happen to everyone in the same way. I believe that emotional maturity is relative to the individual. L162-163 … (second entry) Emotional maturity is a change that comes about through experiences and what one learns from those experiences.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(8) P</td>
<td>L198-201 … Emotional maturity involves me having the emotional stability or healthy emotional balance to determine and make the kind of positive choices or decisions without negatively becoming controlled by the negatives or fear-based forces that can be summoned by my emotions.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(9) P</td>
<td>L223-224 … Emotional maturity involves the ability to balance or overcome fear with love.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Current definition/perspective

L228-231 … Emotional maturity is hinged upon the ability to control your emotions rather than allowing your emotions to control you. People who are emotionally mature have the ability to be honest with and supportive of themselves and others.

Previous definition/perspective (12) P

Current definition/perspective

L258-261 … Emotional maturity is, I think, the thoughtful assessment of emotional situations and everyday emotional disturbances. To demonstrate that thoughtful response is to be aware of the triggers, or fears, that can be encountered.

Previous definition/perspective (13) P

Current definition/perspective

L268-285 … Emotional maturity is a bit more elusive than how it was defined in the previous Session reading. At least that is my opinion. My definition includes less of the unconditional component. Emotional maturity is more how we deal with the issues and love relations and how we respond to loss and grief of separation and disappointments in a relationship. Commitment and defined attachment really governs the depth and breadth of relationships. As I read the session reading I believe the correct term was used and the reference to detachment is more a correct term. Detachment is not emotional maturity it is in fact detachment and non-feeling response to emotionally charged situations. Detachment is just that and not maturity. Our feelings for others is not necessary as cut and dried as the reading suggested. I have had those
relationship emotions in both my primary relationship and my secondary (friends, close friends) relationships. It was not as easy to maneuver through the emotions no matter what age a person might be. The Emotional Maturity portion I feel comes with understanding the depth and level of the attachment and commitment with each other. My close friends have in fact been sometimes harder to deal with than my own family because the commitment and history is not present.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Previous definition/perspective</th>
<th>(14)</th>
<th>N/A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current definition/perspective</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Previous definition/perspective</th>
<th>(15)</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current definition/perspective</td>
<td></td>
<td>L315-319 … My definition of emotional maturity it identifying and accepting responsibilities and things that need to be done. Not trying to dodge or escape those responsibilities and working towards taking care of them. Emotional maturity also includes trying to see one's own faults and strengths. Having the will power to change one's behavior for the better is a plus.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Previous definition/perspective</th>
<th>(16)</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current definition/perspective</td>
<td></td>
<td>L335-337 … My current definition of emotional maturity is to be able to view all events as external, meaning that what others do is not a threat toward me or does not have power over me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Previous definition/perspective</td>
<td>(17) N</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current definition/perspective</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Previous definition/perspective | (18) P |
| Current definition/perspective | L408-409 … Emotional maturity has a lot to do with acceptance of who we are and what life has given us. |

| Previous definition/perspective | (19) P |
| Current definition/perspective | L413-415 … I agree with the definition of emotional maturity that was summarized in the article. Any type of fear will keep us from growing into our full potential. In focusing on the fear we miss life going on around us. |

<p>| Previous definition/perspective | (20) P L425-426 … When I was younger I may have defined emotional maturity as the ability to distance yourself from other people’s rants, raves, and tirades. L426-434 … Now that I am older I define emotional maturity as patience, understanding, and tolerance of other people’s rants, raves, and tirades. Today I try to take into consideration the reason people act as they do and I am less offended by their actions. Today I find it easier to have sympathy and compassion for what they may be going through. Today I do not have to know what they are going through in order to have empathy and concern for their sufferings. Today I recognize that we all have demons and need consideration from our peers. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Previous definition/perspective</th>
<th>Current definition/perspective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P L448-452 … And for me it is always fear that prevents love. When I was younger I protected myself by never allowing myself to be vulnerable to others; I usually did just what I wanted to do—often with a willful disregard for how my actions would affect others—selfish—self-centered—it was a meanness that I regret.</td>
<td>L452-461 … As I have matured I’ve come to understand how interdependent we all are and how our actions affect those close to us—I am better able to give of myself now and to identify and control my own selfish behaviors. But I am painfully aware of how deeply flawed I am—I think of my children and wonder if I am giving them anything close to what they need—in terms of love and security. One thing that I am proud of is that I am not a mean person anymore—that is, I can be moody, irritable, unreasonable, say and do stupid things that I regret—but I am not mean—I think am aware of this because of the experiences I had when I was younger—so I am growing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P L494-495 … I've never given much thought to emotional maturity and don't have a previous definition.</td>
<td>L495-501 … After reading this, I suppose emotional maturity means accepting people for who they are not judging them. Sometimes I do that well and sometimes I don't—even with the same person. As for situations, I tend to let my life get dull, not necessarily out of fear but out of a need to rest (or sometimes just being lazy). And then I routinely shake things up by moving to a new house, interviewing for jobs, or trying something new at work.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Transformational Learning

Previous definition/perspective (24) P
Current definition/perspective

L511-512 … Emotional maturity is determined by how well one knows himself and how one project that knowledge in one’s life.

Previous definition/perspective (26) P
Current definition/perspective

P L539-546 … Before, I would have just said emotional maturity would be a state of emotional stability developed through age and/or experience—the opposite of juvenile behavior. I have always believed if a person did not love themselves or could not love themselves that they could not be as open to others, perhaps overly critical, possibly defensive or bitter…. I have trouble with a definition, current or previous, as I don't feel I am as emotionally mature as I should be at my age because I do think age should lend perspective.

Current definition/perspective

L537-539 … I guess a current definition, after reading, is that emotional maturity means being able to understand the fears that can hold one back, and then working through them.

Previous definition/perspective (29) P
Current definition/perspective

L558-559 … Emotional maturity for me has always been for me the ability to handle life's situations good or bad without falling apart.

Previous definition/perspective (30) P
Current definition/perspective

L564-566 … Emotional maturity is responding rationally and not emotionally to confrontation as it
is happening.

| Previous definition/perspective | (31) | P L576-577 ... Someone who can handle the ups and downs of life without having a total meltdown. |
| Current definition/perspective  | L578-579 ... Someone who is content, who can decide to love without needing anything in return from another. |

| Previous definition/perspective | (33) | N/A |
| Current definition/perspective  |  |

| Previous definition/perspective | (35) | N |
| Current definition/perspective  |  |

| Previous definition/perspective | (EWN 2) | N |
| Current definition/perspective  |  |
Table 5.5

Session I: EM Definition and Indication of Life Experience and/or Age Influence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Sub-Category</th>
<th>Properties</th>
<th>Participant No.</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Definition</td>
<td>Emotional Maturity</td>
<td>Previous definition/perspective</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>L17 … When I was young, maturity meant getting older and assumed wiser. L17-18 … Now, it means making intelligent decisions in situations. (7) L84-86 … Emotional maturity develops with maturation. It does not happen to everyone in the same way. I believe that emotional maturity is relative to the individual. L162-163 … (second entry) Emotional maturity is a change that comes about through experiences and what one learns from those experiences. (20) L425-426 … When I was younger I may have defined emotional maturity as the ability to distance yourself from other people’s rants, raves, and tirades. L426-434 … Now that I am older I define emotional maturity as patience, understanding, and tolerance of other people’s rants, raves, and tirades. Today I try to take into consideration the reason people act as they do and I am less offended by their actions. Today I find it easier to have sympathy and compassion for what they may be going through. Today I do not have to know what they are going through in order to have empathy and concern for their sufferings. Today I recognize that we all have demons and need consideration from our peers. (22) L448-452 … And for me it is always fear that prevents love. When I was younger I</td>
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protected myself by never allowing myself to be vulnerable to others; I usually did just what I wanted to do—often with a willful disregard for how my actions would affect others—selfish—self-centered—it was a meanness that I regret.

As I have matured I’ve come to understand how interdependent we all are and how our actions affect those close to us—I am better able to give of myself now and to identify and control my own selfish behaviors. But I am painfully aware of how deeply flawed I am—I think of my children and wonder if I am giving them anything close to what they need—in terms of love and security. One thing that I am proud of is that I am not a mean person any more—that is, I can be moody, irritable, unreasonable, say and do stupid things that I regret—but I am not mean—I think am aware of this because of the experiences I had when I was younger—so I am growing.

Before, I would have just said emotional maturity would be a state of emotional stability developed through age and/or experience—the opposite of juvenile behavior. I have always believed if a person did not love themselves or could not love themselves that they could not be as open to others, perhaps overly critical, possibly defensive or bitter.... I have trouble with a definition, current or previous, as I don't feel I am as emotionally mature as I should be at my age because I do think age should lend perspective.

I guess a current definition, after reading, is that emotional maturity means being able to understand the fears that can hold one back, and then working through them.
Table 5.6

Session I: EM Definition and Indication of Session’s Influence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Sub-Category</th>
<th>Properties</th>
<th>Participant No.</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Definition</td>
<td>Emotional Maturity (EM)</td>
<td>Previous definition/perspective</td>
<td>(19)</td>
<td>L413-415 … I agree with the definition of emotional maturity that was summarized in the article. Any type of fear will keep us from growing into our full potential. In focusing on the fear we miss life going on around us.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Current definition/perspective</td>
<td></td>
<td>(23) L494-495 … I've never given much thought to emotional maturity and don't have a previous definition.</td>
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### Table 5.7

**Session I: Current EM Definitions**

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<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Sub-Category</th>
<th>Properties</th>
<th>Participant No.</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Definition</td>
<td>Emotional Maturity (EM)</td>
<td>Previous definition/perspective</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>L57-58 … Emotional Maturity is the ability to interpret and respond to reality with truth and logic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Current definition/perspective</td>
<td></td>
<td>L70-72 … Emotional maturity is the ability to find calmness during a time of great uncertainty and doubt. Emotional maturity is being able to ‘exhale’ with assurance.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>L162-163 … (second entry) Emotional maturity is a change that comes about through experiences and what one learns from those experiences.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>L223-224 … Emotional maturity involves the ability to balance or overcome fear with love.</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>L228-231 … Emotional maturity is hinged upon the ability to control your emotions rather than allowing your emotions to</td>
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L258-261 … Emotional maturity is, I think, the thoughtful assessment of emotional situations and everyday emotional disturbances. To demonstrate that thoughtful response is to be aware of the triggers, or fears, that can be encountered.

L268-285 … Emotional maturity is a bit more elusive than how it was defined in the previous Session reading. At least that is my opinion. My definition includes less of the unconditional component. Emotional maturity is more how we deal with the issues and love relations and how we respond to loss and grief of separation and disappointments in a relationship. Commitment and defined attachment really governs the depth and breadth of relationships. As I read the session reading I believe the correct term was used and the reference to detachment is more a correct term. Detachment is not emotional maturity it is in fact detachment and non-feeling response to emotionally charged situations. Detachment is just that and not maturity. Our feelings for others is not necessary as cut and dried as the reading suggested. I have had those relationship emotions in both my primary relationship and my secondary (friends, close friends) relationships. It was not as easy to maneuver through the emotions no matter what age a person might be. The Emotional Maturity portion I feel comes with understanding the depth and level of the attachment and commitment with each other. My close friends have in fact been sometimes harder to deal with then my own family because the commitment and history is not present.
My definition of emotional maturity is identifying and accepting responsibilities and things that need to be done. Not trying to dodge or escape those responsibilities and working towards taking care of them. Emotional maturity also includes trying to see one's own faults and strengths. Having the will power to change one's behavior for the better is a plus.

My current definition of emotional maturity is to be able to view all events as external, meaning that what others do is not a threat toward me or does not have power over me.

Emotional maturity has a lot to do with acceptance of who we are and what life has given us.

I agree with the definition of emotional maturity that was summarized in the article. Any type of fear will keep us from growing into our full potential. In focusing on the fear we miss life going on around us.

Emotional maturity is determined by how well one knows himself and how one project that knowledge in one's life.

Emotional maturity for me has always been for me the ability to handle life's situations good or bad without falling apart.

Emotional maturity is responding rationally and not emotionally to confrontation as it is happening.
Table 5.8

Session I: Current Individual EM Definition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Sub-Category</th>
<th>Properties</th>
<th>Participant No.</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Definition</td>
<td>Emotional Maturity (EM)</td>
<td>Previous definition/perspective</td>
<td>(13)</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Current definition/perspective</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

L268-285 … Emotional maturity is a bit more elusive than how it was defined in the previous Session reading. At least that is my opinion. My definition includes less of the unconditional component. Emotional maturity is more how we deal with the issues and love relations and how we respond to loss and grief of separation and disappointments in a relationship. Commitment and defined attachment really governs the depth and breadth of relationships. As I read the session reading I believe the correct term was used and the reference to detachment is more a correct term. Detachment is not emotional maturity it is in fact detachment and non-feeling response to emotionally charged situations. Detachment is just that and not maturity. Our feelings for others is not necessary as cut and dried as the reading suggested. I have had those relationship emotions in both my primary relationship and my secondary (friends, close friends) relationships. It was not as easy to maneuver through the emotions no matter what age a person might be. The Emotional Maturity portion I feel comes with understanding the depth and level of the attachment and commitment with each other. My close friends have in fact been sometimes harder to deal with then my own family because the commitment and history is not present.
### Table 5.9

**Session I: Neutral or ‘N/A’ or Not Applicable Responses**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Sub-Category</th>
<th>Properties</th>
<th>Participant No.</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Definition</td>
<td>Emotional Maturity (EM)</td>
<td>Previous definition/ perspective. Current definition/ perspective.</td>
<td>(14)</td>
<td>P L309-311 ... I understand that many people are fearful and that determines how they interact with others. This is probably one of the reasons for ‘pettiness.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(33) P L632-636 ... Initially, I would define me as being emotionally mature because I recognize and deal with anxiety and anger. I express my feelings when I'm hurt, angry, afraid, and have done something wrong as well as when I am pleased, happy, and/or satisfied. I realize no-one or nothing is perfect (including me), the only perfect One died on the cross for our sins.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>L619-621 ... After reading session I, I realized that at times, I have courage to try new things, but most of the time, I’m not going to attempt things that I fear!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5.10

Session I: Data that Suggests Fear as an Element to Definition of EM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant No.</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>L198-201 … Emotional maturity involves me having the emotional stability or healthy emotional balance to determine and make the kind of positive choices or decisions without negatively becoming controlled by the negatives or fear-based forces that can be summoned by my emotions.</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>L223-224 … Emotional maturity involves the ability to balance or overcome fear with love.</td>
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<tr>
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<td>L258-261 … Emotional maturity is, I think, the thoughtful assessment of emotional situations and everyday emotional disturbances. To demonstrate that thoughtful response is to be aware of the triggers, or fears, that can be encountered.</td>
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<td>L413-415 … I agree with the definition of emotional maturity that was summarized in the article. Any type of fear will keep us from growing into our full potential. In focusing on the fear we miss life going on around us.</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>L448-452 … And for me it is always fear that prevents love. When I was younger I protected myself by never allowing myself to be vulnerable to others; I usually did just what I wanted to do—often with a willful disregard for how my actions would affect others—selfish—self-centered—it was a meanness that I regret. L452-461 … As I have matured I’ve come to understand how interdependent we all are and how our actions affect those close to us—I am better able to give of myself now and to identify and control my own selfish behaviors. But I am painfully aware of how deeply flawed I am—I think of my children and wonder if I am giving them anything close to what they need—in terms of love and security. One thing that I am proud of is that I am not a mean person any more—that is, I can be moody, irritable, unreasonable, say and do stupid things that I regret—but I am not mean—I think am aware of this because of the experiences I had when I was younger—so I am growing.</td>
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</table>
L539-546 … Before, I would have just said emotional maturity would be a state of emotional stability developed through age and / or experience—the opposite of juvenile behavior. I have always believed if a person did not love themselves or could not love themselves that they could not be as open to others, perhaps overly critical, possibly defensive or bitter…. I have trouble with a definition, current or previous, as I don't feel I am as emotionally mature as I should be at my age because I do think age should lend perspective.

L537-539 … I guess a current definition, after reading, is that emotional maturity means being able to understand the fears that can hold one back, and then working through them.

Table 5.11

Session I: Current EM Definitions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant No.</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>L17-18 … making intelligent decisions in situations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>L41-45 … taking it in stride, not just sucking it up and making the best of the situation. It means to get in there and fight for what you believe is right, picking your battles carefully and making sure that you are in the right.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>L57-58 … the ability to interpret and respond to reality with truth and logic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>L70-72 … the ability to find calmness during a time of great uncertainty and doubt. Emotional maturity is being able to 'exhale' with assurance.</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>L162-163 … a change that comes about through experiences and what one learns from those experiences.</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>L198-201 … having the emotional stability or healthy emotional balance to determine and make the kind of positive choices or decisions without negatively becoming controlled</td>
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</table>
by the negatives or fear-based forces that can be summoned by my emotions.

9 L223-224 … the ability to balance or overcome fear with love.

10 L228-231 … the ability to control your emotions rather than allowing your emotions to control you. People who are emotionally mature have the ability to be honest with and supportive of themselves and others.

12 L258-261 … the thoughtful assessment of emotional situations and everyday emotional disturbances. To demonstrate that thoughtful response is to be aware of the triggers, or fears, that can be encountered.

13 L268-285 … how we deal with the issues and love relations and how we respond to loss and grief of separation and disappointments in a relationship.

15 L315-319 … identifying and accepting responsibilities and things that need to be done. Not trying to dodge or escape those responsibilities and working towards taking care of them. Emotional maturity also includes trying to see one's own faults and strengths. Having the will power to change one's behavior for the better is a plus.

16 L335-337 … view all events as external, meaning that what others do is not a threat toward me or does not have power over me.

18 L408-409 … acceptance of who we are and what life has given us.

19 L413-415 … fear will keep us from growing into our full potential. In focusing on the fear we miss life going on around us.

20 L426-434 … patience, understanding, and tolerance of other people’s rants, raves, and tirades.

22 L452-461 … to understand how interdependent we all are and how our actions affect those close to us.
Transformational Learning

23. L495-501 ... accepting people for who they are not judging them.

24. L511-512 ... determined by how well one knows himself and how one project that knowledge in one's life.

26. L537-539 ... able to understand the fears that can hold one back, and then working through them.

29. L558-559 ... the ability to handle life's situations good or bad without falling apart.

30. L564-566 ... responding rationally and not emotionally to confrontation as it is happening.

31. L578-579 ... someone who is content, who can decide to love without needing anything in return from another.

Table 5.12

Session II A: Changes after Participating in a Psycho-Educational Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Sub-Category</th>
<th>Properties</th>
<th>Participant No.</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Maturity,</td>
<td>Behavior</td>
<td>Changes noted after reading and</td>
<td>P L31-33</td>
<td>Before, reading the comments, I didn’t think about looking at things/events in this way. It has helped in my own thinking and perceptions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life Satisfaction,</td>
<td></td>
<td>considering session</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>and Self-Trust</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(2)</td>
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<td>(5)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(6)</td>
<td>N</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(7)</td>
<td>L142-149 ... The article reflected much of what I learned as I have studied Change, was trained in Cognitive Coaching, read the</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Five Habits of Highly Effective People, did a field-based study for my masters, and did action research in my classroom. Therefore, my reflection brings up the following questions: How does one learn these levels in order to improve oneself? Or are these levels of maturity learned through the nurturing and support of family, and love as the article in the first session suggest?

After reading this, I believe most of my friends fall into 4, with a few 5s. I probably am a 4 because I don't believe one has to go along with the group or that there is anything wrong with others who don't conform (I'm not speaking criminally!). I do see myself sometimes trying to be overly helpful; something I have been able to tone down a bit, but not totally. But, I have finally learned not to give
advice, most of the time. I don't totally fear conflict—depends on the circumstances, though. I do know my self-esteem can be all over the map, depending on a situation, although, at the core I believe it is fairly strong.

L423-429 … From this reading, I realize my "current levels of perception" of others may impede life satisfaction, but I more and more just try to ignore as the years go by. I can see how working on my own personal perception of maturity could enhance my life satisfaction and I would learn more about myself and others. As far as learning in an academic-type meaning, I compartmentalize that from life satisfaction.

(27) N
(29) N
(30) N
(31) N
(33) L504 … I have learned a great deal by participating in this study.
### Table 5.13
**Session II B: Changes after Participating in a Psycho-Educational Program**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Sub-Category</th>
<th>Properties</th>
<th>Participant No.</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Maturity, Life Satisfaction, and Self-Trust</td>
<td>Beliefs and Actions</td>
<td>Changes noted after reading and considering session</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>P L567-569 … As far as making much of a change, I don’t think that is happening. However, I do think I understand myself better.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(2) P L575-575 … However, this may help me better understand and respect those who are at different levels of emotional maturity than I am.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>(3) P L579-581 … After reading this, I will probably look at my coworkers in a different way and say to myself, ‘They’re a level’ or now I understand why they act the way they do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>(5) N/A</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>(6) P L592 … I realize that I have not reached the level 5 maturity as much as I thought I had.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>(7) P L612-614 … Reading the article has helped to remind me of where I would like to be (at this age) at the stage of my emotional maturity.</td>
</tr>
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<td>(8) N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>(9) P L635-636 … New beliefs would include a more reluctant giving of advice. It worked for me, but might not work for others.</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>(10) P L646-648 … There was the revelation that although I function as a 5, I sometimes fall back into behaviors and</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
thinking patterns associated with a 4 when feeling insecure.

(13) P L654-656 … The readings really clarified what I already have seen as a teacher and a soldier. It didn’t change my belief system but it did solidify the issues that I face day to day.

(15) N/A

(16) P L678-682 … I think my direction toward taking on the role of a 5 has been solidified by reading this selection. I recognize a path I have been on for some time, and I see how being mindful of some 5 attributes could further reinforce the direction I need to go. For example, I have already been working to help people around me become more self-sufficient.

(17) P L689-691 … I can see that my own emotional maturity has grown along with my self-esteem and confidence in myself as I have gotten older.

(18) P L700-703 … I see now that I can do many things that I feel uncomfortable with, if I want. This is a minor thing, but I shall reflect on and be more aware of choices I have, based on these levels of emotional maturity.

(19) N/A

(20) N

(22) N/A

(23) N/A

(26) P L764-777 … I didn't realize there were so many levels of maturity and aspects of each, nor that one could achieve the highest levels of emotional maturity at age
15--that surprised me greatly. As I mentioned above, I already am trying not to give advice and to not always try to jump in to be helpful, but this gives more perspective of what I should aim for: ".....as his actions are assertive and detached in many instances. His detachment is not indifference; however, as he respects those around him yet allows them the consequences of their own behavior." After reading, I do see this in myself: "...excuses misconduct from that individual that he would normally not allow if he felt the person were truly able to be responsible for his actions." I see more clearly why I feel that way. While I can't say I am *totally* unafraid of death, I do think this resonated with my efforts to think that way: "...has no fear of physical death for he believes the body to be simply his physical vehicle...."

(27) N/A

(29) N/A

(30) N

(31) P L791-798 … All I can say is, it is to my advantage to 'get with the program' and practice that '5' a lot more frequently. Sounds like it needs a lifetime of practice, but then, I DO have a lifetime to practice! I also have figured out that we do not learn in isolation, we 'plant seeds' of ideas in each other. Sometimes they grow and blossom, sometimes they have to wait for another lifetime. I have seen some of those seeds, dropped into my consciousness by others, slowly take root and grow. I am usually amazed when I figure something out and gain some wisdom. All effort is worth it.
(33) P L814-817 … Level 4 somewhat describes me. From reading Level 2, I can see why my 15-year-old Bipolar son has the emotional problems he has. I also see his father at that same level. ‘The (4) personality feels worthy on weekdays; worthless and unhappy on weekends or days off.’ is not applicable to me.

(EWN 2) N/A

Table 5.14

Session II B: Indicated Changes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant No.</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>L567-569 … As far as making much of a change, I don’t think that is happening. However, I do think I understand myself better.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>L574-575 … However, this may help me better understand and respect those who are at different levels of emotional maturity than I am.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>L579-581 … After reading this, I will probably look at my coworkers in a different way and say to myself, ‘They’re a level’ or now I understand why they act the way they do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>L592 … I realize that I have not reached the level 5 maturity as much as I thought I had.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>L612-614 … Reading the article has helped to remind me of where I would like to be (at this age) at the stage of my emotional maturity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>L635-636 … New beliefs would include a more reluctant giving of advice. It worked for me, but might not work for others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>L654-656 … The readings really clarified what I already have seen as a teacher and a soldier. It didn’t change my belief system but it did solidify the issues that I face day to day.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
L678-682 … I think my direction toward taking on the role of a 5 has been solidified by reading this selection. I recognize a path I have been on for some time, and I see how being mindful of some 5 attributes could further reinforce the direction I need to go. For example, I have already been working to help people around me become more self-sufficient.

L689-691 … I can see that my own emotional maturity has grown along with my self-esteem and confidence in myself as I have gotten older.

L700-703 … I see now that I can do many things that I feel uncomfortable with, if I want. This is a minor thing, but I shall reflect on and be more aware of choices I have, based on these levels of emotional maturity.

L764-777 … I didn't realize there were so many levels of maturity and aspects of each, nor that one could achieve the highest levels of emotional maturity at age 15--that surprised me greatly. As I mentioned above, I already am trying not to give advice and to not always try to jump in to be helpful, but this gives more perspective of what I should aim for: "....as his actions are assertive and detached in many instances. His detachment is not indifference; however, as he respects those around him yet allows them the consequences of their own behavior." After reading, I do see this in myself: "...excuses misconduct from that individual that he would normally not allow if he felt the person were truly able to be responsible for his actions." I see more clearly why I feel that way. While I can't say I am *totally* unafraid of death, I do think this resonated with my efforts to think that way: "...has no fear of physical death for he believes the body to be simply his physical vehicle...."

L791-798 … All I can say is, it is to my advantage to 'get with the program' and practice that '5' a lot more frequently. Sounds like it needs a lifetime of practice, but then, I DO have a lifetime to practice! I also have figured out that we do not learn in isolation, we 'plant seeds' of ideas in each other. Sometimes they grow and blossom, sometimes they have to wait for another lifetime. I have seen some of those seeds, dropped into my consciousness by others, slowly take root and grow. I am usually amazed when I figure something out and gain some wisdom. All effort is worth it.
L814-817 … Level 4 somewhat describes me. From reading Level 2, I can see why my 15-year-old Bipolar son has the emotional problems he has. I also see his father at that same level. ‘The (4) personality feels worthy on weekdays; worthless and unhappy on weekends or days off.’ is not applicable to me.

---

Table 5.15

**Session III: Changes after Participating in a Psycho-Educational Program**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Sub-Category</th>
<th>Properties</th>
<th>Participant No.</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Maturity, Life</td>
<td>Behavior</td>
<td>Changes noted after reading and considering session</td>
<td>(1) N</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(2) N</td>
<td></td>
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<td>(3) N</td>
<td></td>
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<td>(5) N</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>(6) N</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(7) P L142-147</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

As you can see I'm all over the place in my current level of emotional maturity. In many ways far from the (5) perspective, yet, moving closer as I reflect and learn more from this experience. There are influences in my environment that affect my emotional maturity. However, what I am learning and relearning about my emotional maturity continues to be a work in progress.

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(8)</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(9)</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(10)</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I think after reading these sessions, I will be more aware but I will still have to make a conscious decision to not attach emotion to behaviors—or to decide it's OK to do that. I hope that makes sense!

Reading this session, I realized that the spilt milk example (and I do remember an incident where I dropped the bottle of milk) is exactly how my mother reacted: "The (4) parent feels responsible for the happiness of the child and attempts to help, often repeating that there is no need to be upset and that all is well." "...the parent feels the pain of rejection and what he/she considers to be a lack of appreciation for his/her 'help.'" "Children of (4) parents often suffer feelings of inferiority and incompetence...." That carried over to an incident in my early adulthood, when I didn't do something major as my mother would and she articulated her hurt ...for all she had taught and done for me...that I didn't do....

Over time, I have learned to choose which battles to fight; this was one not worth it. His consequence from
me will not be able to use my cell phone charger for a period of time. (In the past, my son has lead me to levels II (having power over me/us), III (manipulating the situation), and IV (has not been able to accept responsibility for his own actions). Joining an organization such as NAMI and learning more information regarding Bipolar (and other mental illness) have allowed me to be more compassionate and to mature as I deal with my son and his struggles. I view myself at Level V of emotional security.

(EWN 1) N

(EWN 2) P L545-550 … When I read those scenarios I don’t like the outcome of any one of those levels, but if you could take aspects of each one, it would make a better-rounded person. I don’t think it is clear, cut and dried. I believe we all have qualities from the different levels, but the emotional maturity is reached when we are able to look at ourselves honestly and learn from our mistakes and experiences. That is what I achieve to do.

(EWN 3) P L564-566 … I do ask myself at times, should I be so hard and uncaring, but having read through the (5) behavior, I think I’m just having growing pains as I switch from (4) to (5).

(EWN 4) N

(EWN 5) N
Table 5.16

**Session IV: Changes after Participating in a Psycho-Educational Program**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Sub-Category</th>
<th>Properties</th>
<th>Participant No.</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Maturity, Life</td>
<td>Awareness</td>
<td>Changes noted after reading and considering session</td>
<td>(1) N</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life Satisfaction, and Self-Trust</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(2) N</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(3) N</td>
<td></td>
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<td>(5) N</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>(6) N</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(7) N</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

P L140-149 … My ‘close-reading’ of this article understands the importance of reacting as a (5). The idea of having the Gestalt personality communicate with the integrate personalities is the ideal way to experience intellectual, physical, emotional, and spiritual emotional maturity. It’s what I strive to work toward. Having all my attitudes and selves aligned as a (5) to help me grow WOULD be like Heaven on Earth. However, as I look at the article more critically from my lens and experiences and my struggle not to vacillate as sometimes a three and four, my efforts are stifled; my efforts toward strengthening myself as a (5) run into detours that cause me to yield and proceed with caution.

(8) N

(9) N
This lesson affirmed my earlier journal entry regarding the fluctuation in reactions and/or responses to specific events. Certain events may trigger a latent emotional response from a previous issue that has not yet been resolved. The concept of multiple personalities is one that I would like to research further to increase my knowledge and understanding.

I will definitely be thinking about this in the future and observing my reactions more to test this out. Perhaps being more observant of those areas that would be less mature in response will help them to mature more and I will gain a ‘deeper learning or wisdom.’ I also like the idea of being more forgiving of that part of my personality that still needs more wisdom and maturity.

I never really thought about it this way but perhaps my currently dominant self gets tired of dealing with the rest of my ‘selves’—not sure if dominant self is always current (60s) self, though … who knows.

Part of me says, oh I can just blame that behavior on my ‘other’ and make fun of myself, and part of me is a bit disturbed by it. Maybe I’m afraid I’m not as mentally balanced as I think I am!
(26) P L526-528 … I do see that I vacillate between logic and attitude systems,’ and have fluctuations in mood, etc., but I’ve always believed that is because I am not a consistent person—a certain lack of emotional maturity.

(29) P L546-547 … Now that I have read lesson III it makes me wonder perhaps there is truth to a variety of selves within us.

(30) N

(31) P L577-580 … Never did look at the situation as getting a ‘consensus’ out of the selves. That is a new one for me to consider. Bet I am going to need a referee! Ha! Ha! Am going to roll this concept around in my head today and see what comes of it. Thanks for the new insight.

(33) N

(EWN 2) N

(EWN 3) N

(EWN 4) N
### Table 5.17

**Session V: Definitions of Wisdom**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Sub-Category</th>
<th>Properties</th>
<th>Participant No.</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Maturity, Life Satisfaction, and Self-Trust</td>
<td>Detachment</td>
<td>Define wisdom</td>
<td>(1) P L23-28 ... Wisdom is reacting to all of my past experiences (possibly sometimes perceived) to formulate current or future life/learning experiences. As noted, it does affect my ‘wisdom’ with every life event. One example is learning to be a pilot. I had to rely on past life experiences and projected visions to master living/operating in a three-dimensional environment.</td>
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<td>(2) P L29-39 ... Wisdom? We gain it in with living and experiencing life, but do we gain it by just reminding the same life processes and approaches? Wisdom is understanding our self and others while recognizing subtle signs, but is recognizing these signs enough to make us any wiser if our same actions continue? To me, true wisdom is understanding that life and people can bring us happiness and sadness; of being aware that most problems of today go away or change while being aware that our own personal problems will only change if we take control of them and take action to solve the problem as best we can. Wisdom is being willing to change when we need to change and to accept that which we cannot change. Wisdom is a journey not an end in its self. My family, and they might tell I, have grown and changed over the years.</td>
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<td>(3) P L56-60 ... Now after reading this session, I'm not going to let them take the power from me, I will just ignore when they say it and see how long it takes for them to quit saying it. I believe that a couple of them say it just to get a rise out</td>
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</table>
of me. My goal is to not let them get a rise out of me.

(4) P L74-75 … Wisdom is a deep (or higher) knowing and understanding gained from the collective experiences of life.

(5) P L83-87 … I could define wisdom as being right about how things will turn out. Being able to project/predict results and consequences. Surely, the greater one's experience and clarity in understanding of that experience, the greater their potential to be wise.

(6) P L115-119 … I think wisdom is truly knowing yourself, or selves. And knowing when to bring forth the self that is applicable for the situation. So yes, I would say the ART OF DETACHMENT is a powerful tool. DON'T ALLOW ANYONE TO MOVE YOU OFF YOUR SQUARE.

(7) P L190-193 … My definition of wisdom has become, 'Know when to hold them and know when to fold them.' It's a card player's saying. But, if you are a serious card player, it is a skill that provides a new found level of wisdom. Wisdom is 'showing not telling.'

(8) P L252-253 … Wisdom is determining how I handle those emotions of others while having a watchful care of my own emotional state of being.

(9) N

(10) N

(13) P L343-345 … Wisdom is a level of understanding yourself enough to care about yourself and your surroundings but
not get so wrapped up as to destroy who you are or who you will or have become.

(15) P L375-380 ... To me this is wisdom, recognizing that there is nothing I can say that will change their mind. Still working on the problem of what then? Since they will never agree that I am ever in the right and I can't accept their point of view and logic won't work with this people, where does that leave the impasse? Once I have figured that part out I feel I will have found true wisdom.

(16) N

(17) P L415-417 ... To me, wisdom is having had the life experience to fully understand how to have peace and be content with one's life. I believe that as I practice more detachment with love, I will definitely gain more wisdom.

(19) P L431-436 ... Wisdom brings to mind the Serenity Prayer - Grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can and wisdom to know the difference. Knowing when to pick your battles is part of wisdom, also understanding where someone is coming from is another aspect. Wisdom is also being open to other ideas and mulling them over before deciding to accept or reject the information.

(20) P L441-442 ... Wisdom is a healthy sense of learning and understanding that comes with time and experience.

(22) P L454-457 ... I think ‘Wisdom’ is knowing that there is so much we don’t know about ourselves—wisdom is accepting ourselves as we are as always within a process (and often a struggle) towards becoming.
(23) P L488-489 ... I guess that's at least part of my definition of wisdom--knowing what I have control over and what I don't. I have a long way to go!

(26) P L521-525 ... So, for several reasons it is a tool that is very beneficial. I define wisdom as the combination of knowledge and experience. Your question brought to mind the saying: '...the serenity to accept the things I cannot change.... And the wisdom to know the difference.' I'd say the ability to detach does take a certain level of wisdom.

(29) P L540-543 ... I would define wisdom as the ability to know right from wrong and to make logical choices based on this understanding. Most people understand right and wrong, but their perception of how to apply this knowledge may be different.

(30) N/A

(31) P L592-594 ... Not sure what wisdom is, not sure I am running around with an excess of it, but I know if I am content, I am doing the right thing for me and wisdom surely follows that. Just have to be true to myself.

(33) P L647-648 ... To me wisdom is knowledge that is received from life's experiences over a period of time.

P L665-671 ... (This is a second entry.) To me wisdom is knowledge that comes from your education, experience, insight, and common sense. Yes, over time, I have become wise to what to do in regards to my bipolar son. At times it feels scary, because I don’t know if my son will hurt me. But I put my trust and faith in God.
At times, it does affect my mood in that you ask, ‘why am I going through this?’ I’m sure the answer is to share with someone else who may be experiencing the same them.

(EWN 1) P L715-716 … Wisdom is experience plus knowledge. I have to practice and observe myself to move to the next level of wisdom.

Table 5.18

Session VI: Changes after Participating in a Psycho-Educational Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
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<th>Properties</th>
<th>Participant No.</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Maturity, Life</td>
<td>Change</td>
<td>Changes Noted After Reading</td>
<td>(1) L16-21 …</td>
<td>It certainly gives me the new perspective that fear comes within me and not from some external source that I thought caused my fear. I think my thinking level encompasses all three. I had not given much thought about the process of fear and the article has me now thinking about fears itself. I have fear of seeing spiders, but already am getting the perception that I am causing the fear, not the spider.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life Satisfaction, Self-Trust, and Wisdom</td>
<td></td>
<td>and Considering Session</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

(2) N

(3) N/A

(4) N

(5) N/A

(6) N/A

(8) L114-124 … Somewhat yes; my current think has levels of insight and understanding. The written reflection allowed a greater understanding of how much our minds, our thinking, and
perceptions play a major part in the development of destruction of our fears. The written reflection provided more clarity to information that I previously had gathered throughout my adult years. the non-physical world that exists within our human makeup (i.e., our thinking, feelings, emotions) is so effected by the kinds of thinking and mental processing the we create. How we tend to interpret events and deal with adversities plays a huge part in our mental processing. Attempting to bring proper balance into our lives by using physical methods or physical things.

(9) N

(10) N/A

(13) L224-229 ... The biggest change has been the realization that the idea of fear can be a friend. I have had that feeling from time to time that fear controls all of the issues that I currently face and I have not been able to face other issues due in part that I have let the fear consume me at times. If I allow the fear to be tempered and measured and controlled, I can function much more reasonably.

(15) N/A

(16) N/A

(17) N/A

(19) N/A

(20) N

(22) N/A

(23) N/A
I think fear as friend is hard to wrap one's mind around. But I can understand that emotional pain can come from fears. I'd say that the Session VI information has increased my awareness, but I would not go as far as saying deep understanding or wisdom. The reading reinforced the benefit to be around positive people. It also reinforced the fact that one should not, if at all possible, 'beat up on oneself.' For example, if I get frustrated because I can't physically do something... Or, if I say that phrase to myself or out loud: 'how stupid of me....' I don't know if this fits in here, but when a cousin was in Iraq and his family was not doing well back home, I felt the weight of it because of their distance from the rest of family and the fact that I was the only one who knew how really bad things were--being the only one who had been able to visit at that time. (I did call my cousin's parents to try to explain....) I had a lot of stress and anxiety that ended up going away one night after having engrossed myself totally in a music concert. I still worried, naturally, but not in the unhealthy, unproductive way I had been doing. Unfortunately, my cousin's wife could not on her own overcome her fears, and she later said it had brought up issues from her past. During that time, she just kept dwelling 24/7 on her husband; understandable, but very destructive.
Transformational Learning

has been my teacher for many years. Sometime I give it a hard time for being so good at teaching, but all in all I am grateful for the wisdom that resides in these cells and organs. They are a miracle unto themselves. I just have to work a little harder at appreciating them. Onward to more improved thinking and creating...

(33) L470-475 … Yes, Session VI did initiate a change in my thinking. Although my current thinking would include to stay away from negative thinking peoples, I found it interesting that powerless people would seek out crime as a way of relieving his/her pain and to correct the wrongs. I thought this was a powerful statement ‘YOUR PHYSICAL ENVIROMENT WILL FAITHFULLY REFLECT THE STATE OF YOUR MIND.’

L476-482 … (This participant entered data twice for this session.) I do not think reading this information initiated changes in my thinking, but instead added to my insight. Remember I have a bipolar son, so reading this information provided me with insight into what he may be thinking and feeling. He talks a great deal about fairness, lashes out at others, and takes not responsibility for his actions. It is always someone else’s fault, not his. I wish he was old enough to read and comprehend this information and that this would solve his problems.

(EWN 1) N/A

(EWN 2) L588 … The information helped me to grapple more with fear.
Table 5.19

Session VII: Changes after Participating in a Psycho-Educational Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>Change</td>
<td>Changes Noted After Reading and Considering Session</td>
<td>(1) N/A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life Satisfaction, Self-Trust, and Wisdom</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</table>

(2) N/A

(3) L47-53 … After reading this session, I believe that there are ‘others’ out there; they are here to help us. I think of myself as more spiritual, than religious. I can remember a time while on vacation with mom, dad, and my sisters; I saw a woman walk across the room we were sleeping in, but no one saw anything. She was dressed in a white gown of some sort and moved effortlessly across the room. That's all she did, nothing else. I am a true believer that spirits/ghosts walk amongst us and help us throughout our day.

(5) N

(6) L68-77 … I don’t know if it has influenced my daily life or existence on spirituality per se’, but I am beginning to believe that people can have a ‘conscious’ near death experience. However, I’m in no hurry to die. I don’t think I fear or welcome it any more than I did prior to reading Session VII. I have
always believed in reincarnation. In fact, I wrote a persuasive paper about reincarnation when I was a senior in high school, sitting scriptures in the Bible as my proof. I believe that babies born into a family can possess intrinsic qualities of someone who has passed in the family. As well as there are those children who seem to have a mature wisdom about themselves. We tend to call them ‘old souls’ and say ‘That child has been here before.’

(7) L108-119 … I thought this article had some profound ideas of other dimensions of existence. Many I have thought about myself. I truly believe that the mind is a mass of unused space that has the capability of many uses we have not conscientiously used. I don't believe that alcohol, drugs (even the ones used for medical healing) are the only solution to healing. I also believe that we make many return journeys to life to get ‘it’ right. I believe that the bright light seen at death is the bright light of birth. I am even considering the idea mentioned in the article that the young/child dies as a choice of starting over to begin their journey again. I am beginning to believe that somehow our journey in this world is an unconscious decision influenced by the conscious mind. Could this be ‘the Christ’ in us? Could this be the meaning behind believing Christ to be the Son of God, the trinity, and everlasting life?

(8) N/A
L332 … Yes, *some* of the information has influenced me.

L346-349 … And, I still believe in angels, but until this reading I hadn't really thought of them as a presence in my daily life, versus in a Biblical or in a prayer way, such as when I pray the Hail Mary, which includes an angel's words to Mary.

L385-400 … My husband died 11 months ago and the family was not there to send him off. I would usually see him about 3 to 4 times a week. I did not drive and could not afford taxi far everyday so I tried to visit him as much as I could. My husband was incapacitated and living in a nursing home after a fall on his job. My children and I had visited him on because they were leaving for vacation on Thursday. I had went on to see him on Thursday as well. I usually did every other
day. I had a rough week so I wanted to have my weekend to just stay home. Therefore, I decided to see him on Friday instead of Saturday. I did get to stay in and relax on Friday. Unfortunately, I received a call at 10:00 that night saying he had passed that night. I regret not being there that day. Even though I always visit him during the late evening I will always wondered if he had felt my presence there during that time would he have been comforted. I just pray that he was there ‘out of body’ watching as family mourned his passing. I pray that he felt or saw every kiss and hug, every tear that fell, and every expressing of love. This lesson will stay with me for a while.

(31) N/A

(33) N/A

(EWN 1) L487-504 … I absolutely do believe in other dimensions of experience. Most of my belief is based upon my religious and biblical beliefs, that there is an active spirit world around us all the time, of both good and evil, and that there are spiritual battles constantly being played out. I believe that we have been given the Holy Spirit to help us here on earth, and I personally have experienced His presence in my life. As far as spiritual guides, because of my biblical beliefs I tend to be very cautious of those kinds of things and worry whose side they may be on. I have known people who have had after-death experiences and describe them similarly to this information. I think
there are many things in the spiritual realm that we cannot explain. I believe in an afterlife as described in the Bible, but I don't discount reincarnation - there are too many things unexplained. Reading about Elizabeth Kubler-Ross reminded me of my experience in Hospice when my mother was dying. The people who work there have an exceptional ability to discern spiritual matters and understand death and its process. I don't believe reading this information has influenced my thoughts and beliefs any, but I did find it very interesting.

Table 5.20

Session VIII: Changes after Participating in a Psycho-Educational Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
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<th>Participant No.</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Maturity, Life</td>
<td>Change</td>
<td>Changes Noted After Reading and</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>L22-31 … I feel ok and about the same, only I understand the process more. This is a new way of thinking. What I have accepted as just occurring, I now think there is a reason behind events. It probably won’t change much about the event unless it is of such a magnitude that it can’t just occur on its own. At that point, what I have learned in this course will be helpful as I will try to put a twist on the event to change a negative to a positive or alleviate the fear factor. I see no difference in trusting myself in making daily life decisions. I feel maturity, life experiences, knowledge and learned ‘things’ make this</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
possible. I trust myself to continue learning and having happy quality life experiences.

(2) N/A

(3) N/A

(6) N/A

(7) N/A

(8) L251-226 ... Our thoughts and mental images play a major role in our behavior. So often, what we tend to encounter are the results of our thinking. Sometimes our thinking provides grounds for our expectations. This causes me to feel that my thought life is important to my living. This is not a new way of thinking for me. I believe the information provided rational conclusions about the power of our minds and thoughts. I still trust myself in making daily life decisions. I believe that though our thinking is not always rights and our decision making is not always productive; we do not have to continue to live as victims or imprisoned to such results that were created by our thinking. There are not changes in my ability to trust myself in making daily decision. So often what I evaluate tends to be my motives behind by decisions. I am still open to learning.

(13) N/A

(16) N/A
(17) N/A

(19) L279-285 … These concepts are not new to me. The books I enjoy reading are non-fiction such as Depok Chopra books or Conversations with God by Neale Donald Walsh. I enjoy learning about how we control our own world and make our own realities. But I have to admit there are times when it is hard to understand why some things happen such as the Sandy Hook shootings and the kidnapping and killing of the Illinois girl just a couple weeks ago. Those are hard to rationalize.

(20) N/A

(22) N/A

(23) L382-387 … After reading all of this information, I wonder now if there was something going on sub-consciously (instinct maybe?) that played a part I wasn't aware of at the time. I think (hope!) I will trust my decisions better now. I grew up in that Little Tree family where love was conditional. I didn't respect or trust myself much. I've heard some of this before--about creating my own successes (or failures) --and it was good to be reminded.

(26) L409-435 … About ‘thought creates your reality,’ etc... that is very empowering. On the whole, it is a new way of thinking for me. I've always thought one should have positive thoughts, if at all possible, but this is much more
emphatic. I am still not on board with a person being ‘god.’ I will grant that it is perhaps because I cannot understand; I do believe that a person ideally reflects God and should work toward being God-like and should have respect for ourselves. I guess it is because I cannot fully understand, but one example: a big life experience which I believe just happened to me, not that I attracted, was when I was driving home after listening to a nice set of music and a drunk driver, who had made his own choice to drive, all of a sudden swerved into my car—leaving me with ‘life threatening’ injuries. I do believe that I was in control of how I chose to deal with my life down the line, but not that I brought it upon myself. Since I believe we all have freedom of choice, I believe that others freedom of choice can impact us, but that we then choose how we will handle it. I chose to not think about the driver and just concentrate on myself. ‘...how you now trust yourself in making daily life decisions.’ I do believe the readings have given me a better capacity to improve my making daily life decisions and to reinforce that one is not a *victim* of circumstances. These readings do give me impetus in my life to try and change myself and not others (which, as pointed out, can't be done, anyway--so is just a frustration). And, realizing that what I have to be aware of/work on may be certain fears--fear of losing out, of abilities, of self and own performance.... using that
information and combining it with the knowledge that I can do more to create my own experience will help me with a couple of work relationships, for example. Also, I hope to not pay as much attention to what others are doing--to concentrate more on what I am doing/thinking.

(27) N/A

(29) L446-481 … I am familiar with the thoughts and ideas in lesson 8. I agree with the concept ‘we create our own destiny.’ I often wonder about the millions of people who are living in poverty and uneducated. Is their state of living not a result of the environment they are born in? Yes, there are some who are able to pull themselves out but not many. If these people are not in a situation where they can receive the information needed to reach a level 5 are they not a product of their physical environment? Isn’t there mind just stagnant until it is fertilized with the information needed to grow? I don’t know. It just seems like everything sounds good on paper and in theory, but I think in reality it is not just that ‘black and white.’ I know that I have not reach level 5 completely. Even though I do on some instances. Lesson 8 though brought back to reality things that I have been taught in the past and know deep down inside (spiritually) but may not have manifested in the physical world. Presently since the loss of my husband and his income my life has financially dropped to
an all-time low. I am fearful of the consequences of that. I try not to think about it or be negative but then I say to myself you are not facing the reality of your situation. But I am reminded that I cannot dwell on these things too much or else they will draw other similar situations to you. As the old adage goes ‘when it rains it pours.’ That is how I have been feeling lately. I am struggling financially and seems like everything in the house is breaking. I am waiting on money from several different sources and none of it is coming through. Am I really causing this to happen because I certainly do not want to be in this situation? There are days when I attack my negative thoughts with positive thoughts and change my mood so I am not sad or depressed. I do know that will make me sick. I must become more consistent with training my mind to manifest the knowledge that I possess. As stated in the lesson I must not judge myself too hard when I fail but continue to uplift myself until all of me has reached the level 5. I do have faith that things will turn around for me and the money will come through. My question is why do things take so long? I am being patient, but a few months can seem like years when you are in need. Another saying says, ‘the Creator knows how much we can bear.’ I am glad he knows. Because there are days when I say ‘he knows me better than I know myself.’ Yet I always come out on top and keep moving forward. Lesson 8 was a great lesson for my present life
situation and I learned all over again what I need to do to get to where I need to be! Thanks!

(30) N/A

(31) L493-515 … This way of thinking is not new to me. This list of readings and questions is a review of things I was introduced to many years ago. I know Linda Partridge and have had many discussions with her about creating our own reality. This, like anything else, takes time and lots of practice (for me, anyway) to get the right feel until the ‘5’ is reached. I have also noticed that there are many, many layers of learning about situations. It is as if learning is likened to peeling the layers off of a very large onion. I have had pet names for the levels of creating and living. The ‘1’ is the chameleon; the ‘2’ is the terrible two…as in a toddler’s behavior; the ‘3’ is the judge; the ‘4’ is the good Samaritan. I have certainly lived to see the pros and cons of each of these levels of creation. There are definitely pros that go with each number. So far the ‘1’ seems to elude or confuse me. I really have to work to get that one understood or even recognized. Reading all of these sessions has been a very, very rewarding refresher course. I have been concentrating these last few years on different levels of consciousness and think that running into this work by Susan has been the nudge to combine what I know about all of these levels. This has also been a reminder call to ‘pay attention’ to
what I am doing day to day and what the thoughts are that randomly dance around in my head. Do I trust myself in my daily decisions? Depends on which number/self I am manifesting at any given moment. I can say that my life has been quite a ride as far as learning goes. I definitely have multiple selves and they do still tend to run the show. This survey has been a nudge to pay more attention and continue onward and upward. What fun! Thanks, Susan.

(33) L548-552 … I think after participating in this study, I put a little more thought into making daily life decisions. Some even mean writing the pros and cons (example: what to present to my son's probation officer and the court at his upcoming status hearing concerning his recent behaviors). With my faith in God, I trust I will make the best decision for the both of us.

(EWN 1) N/A
(EWN 2) N/A
(EWN 4) N/A
(EWN 5) N/A
Appendix G

Protecting Human Subject Research Participants

Certificate of Completion
The National Institutes of Health (NIH) Office of Extramural Research certifies that Susan Lundy successfully completed the NIH Web-based training course "Protecting Human Research Participants".

Date of completion: 09/23/2009
Certification Number: 300557

http://phrp.nihtraining.com/users/cert.php?c=299557

9/23/2009