

The Life Story Interview – II Outline

Dan P. McAdams
The Foley Center for the Study of Lives
Northwestern University
Revised, 2007

Introduction

A. Life Chapters: If you look back on your life, how would you divide your life into chapters of a book? Spend some time coming up with the chapters (as many as you want, but try from 2 to 7 chapters), give each chapter a title, and say a bit about what the main thrust of the chapter is

B. Key Scenes in the Life Story

1. High Point
2. Low Point
3. Turning Point
4. Positive Childhood Memory
5. Negative Childhood Memory
6. Vivid Adult Memory
7. Religious, Spiritual, or Mystical Experience
8. Wisdom Event

C. Future Script

1. The Next Chapter
2. Dreams, Hopes, and Plans for the Future
3. Life Project: Do you have a project in life?

D. Challenges

1. Life challenge: what was the greatest single challenge in your life?
2. Health
3. Loss
4. Failure, Regret

E. Personal Ideology

1. Religious/Ethical Values
2. Political/Social Values
3. Change, Development of Religious and Political Views
4. Single Value: What is the most important value in human living?
5. Other: What else can help me to understand your most fundamental beliefs and values about life and the world?

F. Life Theme: Do you discern a central theme, message, or idea that runs throughout the story of your life?

G. Other