

FAMILY OF ORIGIN RITUAL BEHAVIOR AND ITS IMPACT
ON NEVER-MARRIED WOMEN'S CURRENT SENSE OF MEANING

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I am submitting herewith a dissertation written by Leslye King Mize entitled "Family of Origin Ritual Behavior and Its Impact on Never Married Women's Current Sense of Meaning." I have examined the final copy of this dissertation for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, with a major in Marriage and Family Therapy.

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Leslye King Mize

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the research investigation was to understand the essential features and structures of ritual as experienced by 26 women in their families of origin and how this may have impacted their current sense of meaning. This understanding was facilitated by a review of theoretical perspectives, primarily phenomenological. Further, the study utilized findings from previous research in the areas of ritual, gender differences (primarily femininity), and self-meaning. A goal was to explore the possibility of a link in these areas through the feminist concept of affiliation (Gilligan, 1982).

Ritual scholars describe the ritual experience as the experience of being connected to the whole (Rappaport, 1975). Feminist scholars view the identity of women through a sense of belonging (Gilligan, 1977). One's self-meaning is derived from being connected to others, according to Frankl (1959); an experience he calls self-transcendence. The present study utilizes these concepts to formulate a

method for understanding the inner world and dynamics of consciousness of the women in the study.

This qualitative design yielded descriptive data and offered a holistic approach to the problem under investigation. The unit of analysis was the individual, and it afforded the investigation the opportunity to understand the individual's perspective of the world.

The indepth interviewing method was used to collect data. Subjects were asked to describe their experiences of different types of rituals and were probed for information concerning the properties of the rituals chosen. The raw data were transcribed verbatim then analyzed for significant statements and common themes.

The experiences of the subjects were classified into groups of information: level of ritualization and level of will-to-meaning. The level of ritualization (high to low) was compared to the level of will-to-meaning (high, moderate, low) for common patterns as well as underlying similarities and differences.

The results of this investigation indicated a central theme of high ritual experience impacting high will-to-meaning. Further, ritual was a female-centered experience that added significantly to women's ability to

recognize current affiliations. This, in itself, is the major issue for women in experiencing will-to-meaning.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Throughout the world, in all times and under every circumstance, humans have enacted rituals. They have, in many cases, been the living inspiration of whatever else may have appeared out of the activities of the human body and mind. Campbell (1968) stated that

It would not be too much to say that ritual is the secret opening through which the inexhaustible energies of the cosmos pour into human cultural manifestation. (p. 2)

"Ritual," as defined in its broadest sense by Webster's Unabridged Dictionary (1971) refers to "any practice...regularly repeated in a set, precise manner so as to satisfy one's sense of fitness." Such a definition easily accommodates some obsessional behaviors: the stereotyped but adaptive interactions between a mother and her infant, the antic interplay of the wine waiter and her customer, the formal aspects of daily social life and religious services, and others in a broad range of behaviors identified by behavioral scientists, family scholars, anthropologists, and others (Erikson, 1966; Fortes, 1966; Freud, 1907; Goffman, 1956). Basically, however, ritual has

been used to mark the passage from one state of experience to another. Ritual is the actualized struggle of humans attempting to give inner experience an outer form (Papp, 1983). Further, it also is seen as the opportunity for participants to experience being connected to their whole context (Keeney & Sprenkle, 1982).

The purpose of this research was to attempt an understanding of the phenomenon of ritual, which consists of celebrations, traditions, and patterned family interactions. Further, ritual was explored on two levels. First, how ritual may have affected women by exploring their perceptions of their families of origin ritual behaviors. Secondly, how that aspect may have impacted the women's current self-meaning. This understanding was paralleled and facilitated by a review of theoretical perspectives which were primarily phenomenological. Further, the present study delved into previous research in the concepts of ritual, gender issues (specifically femininity), and self-meaning and explored the possibility of a link in these areas through the feminist concept of connection (Gilligan, 1982). Further, by exploring these concepts, the research generated questions which were addressed during the exploration of the problem.

Statement of the Problem

Although there has been considerable research done in the areas of ritual in family life, gender differences, and self-meaning, there is a need for linking these three concepts. These three concepts have common threads which, linked together, could impact how one views the female experience and a woman's view of herself. Ritual scholars describe one important phenomena of ritual as the experience of being connected to the whole context (Keeney & Sprenkle, 1982; Rappaport, 1971). Feminist scholars also talk as if the identity of women is achieved through this feeling of being connected to others and through a sense of belonging (Gilligan, 1977). One's self-meaning, according to Frankl (1978), is looked upon as the sense of meaning one experiences from being connected to others, a term he calls self-transcendence. To Frankl, "being human with a sense of meaning is being always directed, and pointing, to something or someone other than oneself..." (1978, p. 35).

This study pursued a link in these three concepts through the exploration of the perceptions of 26 women who comprised the sample. By understanding these concepts and generating research questions from a phenomenological

viewpoint, the study located, synthesized and compared common elements.

Studies related to the concept of ritual life in families explore variations in the power of ritual practice in these families. Scholars propose that all families struggle with finding a suitable role for rituals in their collective lives, but their actual achievement varies greatly from family to family (Rappaport, 1971; Wolin, Bennett, & Noonan, 1979). Rituals have been explored from a family rather than an individual viewpoint in terms of impact (Rappaport, 1971). The present study aimed to broaden that viewpoint. By exploring the perspectives of women in their families of origin, and questioning how that experience may have affected their current view of themselves, the individual's viewpoint is considered. Family theoretical avenues were utilized, but only as they affect a woman's individual experience.

Gender differences have also been explored in social behavior. The discrepancy between concepts of womanhood and adulthood is nowhere more clearly evident than in the studies of sex-role stereotypes reported by Broverman, Vogel, Broverman, Clarkson, & Rosenkrantz (1972). The repeated finding is that the qualities deemed necessary for

repeated finding is that the qualities deemed necessary for adulthood, such as the capacity of autonomous thinking, clear decision making, and responsible action, are those associated with masculinity. These are considered undesirable as attributes of femininity. The gender stereotypes suggest a splitting of love and work. This relegates the expressive capacities, which are a requisite for love, to women while the instrumental abilities, which are necessary for work, to the masculine domain (Gilligan, 1977). These stereotypes reflect a conception of adulthood that is itself out of balance, favoring the separateness of the individual self over its connection to others and leaning more toward an autonomous life of work than toward the interdependence of love and care. Gilligan (1984) compares the feminine experience to the metaphor of a web and states that to look at reality through a web of relationships is to emphasize the "oneness of all things" and thus the connection of all things. This difference in point of view was a major point of the present study. By examining this sense of connection in the expressive capacities through the experience of ritual in families of origin, this exploration further examined ways women conceptualize themselves.

The present study addressed research questions utilizing, as a basis, important research and theory in the fields of family studies, family therapy, anthropology, and other related areas. Further, it was designed to study the effect of ritual on women in their families of origin and how this relates to their current view of themselves. By exploring several variables on a perceptual level through a qualitative design, the research examined new questions concerning rituals and how their impact on women may help them formulate views of themselves.

Theoretical Orientation

The present study integrated several significant theories in the field of family studies. The major thrust was the phenomenological approach which supported the features and structures of the research questions examined. Phenomenology itself has a long and complex origin and the various systems of thought surrounding it have proliferated (Colaizzi, 1978). This section provides some of the general perspectives of this approach, as well as integrates the general systems and developmental approaches as adjuncts to the theoretical framework of the study.

Phenomenological Approach

Phenomenology is a philosophical enterprise (McLain & Weigert, 1979). Investigators, in this view, have profited in the writings of Schutz for the basis of phenomenology in the social world. For Schutz (1967), the fundamental task is to create a "reduced" sphere of reality as it appears in consciousness, by bracketing or focusing only on the individual's relevant features of phenomena. This focus on the reduced sphere produces, philosophically, irrelevant features of phenomena which allows the individual to operate within a specific attitude or perspective called epoche. Within the epoche, the method of phenomenological reduction can be uncovered. Phenomenological reduction, or the operation within the epoche, attempts to unveil the unique constitution of the social world as a perspective in the daily consciousness of factors. The central concept of this view of the social world is the "lifeworld". The lifeworld is created through perception of the individual and is that which is experienced and experienceable. This everyday, immediately given world of things is experienced as corporally, spatially, temporally, and intersubjectively structured (Husserl, 1970).

Schutz (1967) further explains the "lifeworld" by saying that it is the paramount reality according to phenomenologists. Two fundamental claims support this view. One is that the structures of the lifeworld are invariant and universal. The other is that the structures of the lifeworld are the basis for all predication, or meaning construction from the ordinary predications of everyday life to even the methodical predications of science (Husserl, 1970). This reality that phenomenological scholars characterize as a taken for granted feature of the lifeworld is called the natural attitude. In the natural attitude, the lifeworld of the individual is simply taken for granted as having an independent existence and as suitable for the purposes at hand. Because of this, the natural attitude cannot be investigated from within the natural attitude. Its analysis must be conducted from the position of the phenomenological epoche which, in contrast, suspends belief in the world's reality. This is not to abandon the natural attitude but to make it the focus of inquiry.

In this focus of inquiry, several ideas are clear. First, the concept of intentionality underlies the concepts of the theory. Intentionality is an expansive principle on the nature of mind and it implies that all thinking is

directed toward an object. Second, the phenomenological position claims that the question of the relationship between subject and object is that the two are inseparable; thus, to be conscious is to be conscious of something and to be something is to be an object of consciousness. Third, consciousness is not a passive receptacle of impressions but a meaning-giving activity. Fourth, it is this meaning-giving character of consciousness that is captured by the notion of intentionality. Fifth, the basic claim associated with the concept of intentionality is that human beings encounter a world that is meaningfully structured prior to, and as a condition for, its further construction in terms of sociohistorically derived meanings. Finally, a claim is that each epoche, or specific bracketing of reality, is a particular modification of the paramount reality of everyday life that is characterized by an individual. Further, the idea supports the claim that families of individuals are finite provinces of meaning (Husserl, 1970).

The major thrust of this theory arises from the approach to family as it appears in human consciousness as an object of intentionality. According to McLain & Weigert (1979), family as a phenomenon must be described as it

appears in the consciousness of the specific actors who are the subjects of the investigation of the families. The object is a collective gestalt that cannot be reduced to its parts. The focus is always on the description and classification of family as it appears in the consciousness of the real actor.

The scholars of the phenomenological approach stress the importance of understanding the inner world and dynamics of consciousness. They speak of the world as it appears within the experience of the individual and emphasize the importance of reflection in attempting to understand phenomena. Their struggles seem to center around the desire to articulate the nature of inner experience, revealing in their efforts a psychological meaning. The phenomenological approach strives to incorporate these ideas into an overall gestalt. Because of these features of phenomenology, it is the basic theoretical avenue of the study.

General Systems Approach

Another approach significant to this research is the general systems approach. Implicit in this viewpoint and relevant here, is the acknowledgement of the existence of boundaries that delineate the elements belonging to a system and those belonging to its environment (Broderick & Smith,

1979). According to Rappaport (1971), a system is a collection of specified variables in which a change in the value or state of any one will result in a change in the value or state of at least one of the others. This definition supports the understanding of the process of ritual in which a sense of fitness is gained through participation (Rappaport, 1971).

The general systems approach also provides support for the complexity of interacting elements within a system and the relationships which organize them. This organization can be looked upon as the process of ritual itself. Ritual is a unit with a feedback structure and therefore capable of processing information. According to Bateson (1972), this is the definition of a system.

Because of the theoretical support of the systems approach, the enactment of ritual as a bonding effect upon participants and the identity they achieve as a group is realized. These properties of ritual demonstrate the power of form and structure on the collective mind of the group. They imply, for example, that collective ceremony, wherever it is held, transforms group attitudes, abolishes differences between otherwise competing members, and articulates common rules for coexistence.

Developmental Approach

Another relevant theoretical approach is the developmental approach. According to scholars in this view, individuals as well as families can be looked upon as moving through developmental stages in the midst of the life-span, with resonating plateaus and peaks of transition. In the transition, the experience of change and structure disintegration can be stressful to participants and their families (Erikson, 1959). Family rituals mark the passage of time and the progress of the individual or family through its developmental stages (Wolin & Bennett, 1984). Through this theoretical orientation, the important property of ritual known as transformation is supported. Transformation from one state of being to another is punctuated most dramatically by the rites of passage themselves.

It is important to note that in the present study the unit of analysis was the individual. However, because of the importance of the perceptions of the individual's experiences in the family systems of which they were a part, family theoretical views were taken into account and were an important component to the research. This was done by noting, during the interviews of study participants, that

noting, during the interviews of study participants, that¹³
they are part of a complex, interactive system with patterns
and themes of behaviors.

Basic Assumptions

The present study used phenomenology as a basis for design and data analysis. Further, this phenomenological view required the research to state assumptions regarding the phenomenon under investigation, and then "suspend" these preconceptions in order to fully illuminate and reveal the experience of the subjects. These building blocks for the study were established on the basis of ethnographic and clinical observations in research by the various scholars listed with each assumption. The assumptions drawn were the following:

1. Rituals both provide insight into a family's shared identity and help to establish and preserve this basic sense of unity (Wolin & Bennett, 1984).

2. Rituals are of value to human beings as they serve as a window into a family's underlying shared identity, providing special access to the behavioral and emotional tenor characterizing the group (Rappaport, 1971).

3. Rituals define and alter social roles and relationships by carrying their message directly to the unconscious (Van der Hart, 1983).

4. Human's search for meaning is a primary force in one's life and not a secondary rationalization of instinctual drives (Frankl, 1959). This is known by Frankl as the "will to meaning".

5. According to various scholars (Rappaport, 1971; Van der Hart, 1983; Wolin & Bennett, 1984), families vary in their ability to use rituals and their actualization varies across generations.

6. The boundaries between ritual and non-ritual are not clear cut but the concept should not be abandoned because of its lack of clarity (Wolin & Bennett, 1984).

7. Ritual is a primary mechanism used by a family to conserve its paradigm (Reiss, 1981).

8. Two factors serve to determine a woman's family of origin use of rituals (Wolin & Bennett, 1984):

- a. The family of origin commitment to the use of ritual in establishing and maintaining a family identity

- b. The family of origin's ability to adapt ritual behavior from one phase of family development to the next

Research Questions

The present research describes the effect of ritual behavior as it was experienced by 26 women in their families of origin, and its impact on their current functioning. A review of the literature of the theoretical constructs relevant to the present research provides a linkage among the concepts of ritual, femininity, and self-meaning. The study was conducted with an interview method to help illuminate the women's experience of ritual in their pasts, and their current view of personal meaning. The interview was done in hopes of finding a link in the concepts presented with the level of ritualization. By exploring these ideas, the investigation attempted to answer the following major research questions:

1. What is the woman's perception of her family of origin level of ritualization?
2. What is the woman's current view of her sense of meaning or "will to meaning"?
3. How do these themes compare with one another in terms of level of ritualization? For example, does low

ritualization relate to low self-meaning?

4. What is the relevance of the above linkage and does it have implications in terms of further research?

5. How does the concept of connection effect all of conceptual frameworks in the study?

Sample Description

The sample was comprised of 26 women ranging in age from 20 to 35 years of age, who were willing to participate in the study. The women were residing in Texas, never-married, graduated from high school, and at a minimum attended one year of college.

Traditionally, women have had less identifiable developmental markers at transition points than men (Gilligan, 1984). Those that have been in effect, historically, have been through the rites of passage of marriage. For women who have not chosen that route, no markers are noted. The present study explored never married women to identify possible alternative markers.

The sample was a homogeneous one to explore the experience of ritual behavior from a perceptual level on a particular population under investigation. Further, it was necessary to have a common foundation on which to explore the research questions.

Limitations

In this study, the investigator generated ideas for further exploration. This resulted in descriptions of the structure of ritual behavior of the past and how, if at all, it affects current functioning as experienced by the subjects themselves. No truths are to be concluded but patterns are generated for further research.

Definition of Terms

High level Commitment Families. This category is one of two dimensions that rate a woman's family of origin overall level of ritualization. According to Wolin & Bennett (1984), this dimension has a historical perspective and pays attention to the past, whether to prior generations or to events from the previous year. It further implies that this historical perspective endows the members with meaning as it connects past with present. It connects individual roles with an overall group identity.

Level of Ritualization. The level of ritualization is the assessment of the number of rituals practiced in each woman's family and whether their observance appeared to be meaningful or shallow from their perspectives. Based upon these distinctions, the researcher identifies several determinants of ritual practice.

Logotherapy. A system of belief that deals with the human search for meaning developed by Frankl.

Low level Commitment Families. This category is one of two dimensions that rate overall level of ritualization of a woman's family of origin. This group downplays the importance of ritual and are more oriented to the present. According to Wolin & Bennett (1984), this group often lacks the force of symbolic meaning behind its rituals, thus having a minimal sense of identity as a group.

Ritual or Rites of Passage. Ritual is a symbolic form of communication acted out in a systematic fashion over time (Rappaport, 1971).

System. A system is a collection of specified variables in which a change in the value or state of any one will result in a change in the value or state of at least one of the others (Rappaport, 1971).

Will-to-Meaning. Humans have an inherent search for meaning (Frankl, 1973). This inherent search is known as the will to meaning. This word is used interchangeably throughout the study with the term self-meaning.

Summary

Chapter I has provided a foundation for an exploration of the perceptual experience of ritual behavior on women in their families of origin, and how that experience may or may not effect their current sense of meaning. The study was concerned with the link of ritual behaviors of the past with current sense of meaning through the female experience of connectedness. A review of the literature revealed that there was a significant amount of research concerning ritual, sex differences, and women's sense of meaning and the effect of stereotyping; however, there is a need for investigation on the linking of these concepts and how they effect one another. The chapter provided perspectives of the major theoretical view of the study, the phenomenological approach, and also pointed out the research questions that will be explored throughout the project. The following chapter reviews literature pertinent to the present study.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

This research focused on developing a link between various concepts derived from the exploration of the perceptual experiences of the women in the study. In order to explicate the experience of the women, this chapter discusses these relevant concepts and how they have been presented by anthropologists, family researchers, theorists, and various other scholars in the current literature. Salient concepts include ritual behaviors, gender issues (most specifically femininity), and search for meaning. Common themes identified are summarized to focus the structure of the connection between concepts.

This chapter is divided into three sections. The first section reviews the literature surrounding the ritual experience and how it impacts current views. The next section deals with the literature concerning femininity and gender differences, and implications for these ideas are discussed. The third section deals with the current views surrounding the human search for meaning literature and the implications of the work of Frankl (1959; 1975; 1978) with feminist thought.

Ritual Behavior

Ritual behavior has been studied for many years in international and American cultural anthropology and its importance has not been taken lightly. Recently, the importance of ritual has had a surge in the family therapy literature, as well. Ritual is seen as symbolic communication composed of conventional or stereotyped movements, performed regularly that have an affective value (Wolin, Bennett, Noonan, & Tietelbaum, 1980). The advantages of symbolic over non-symbolic communication, as in ritual, are enormous due to the amount of unconscious behavior humans communicate. Symbolic communication stems directly from the unconscious. Anthropologists have claimed that the emergence of ritual can be compared to the importance of the emergence of life due to the vast impact ritual has on communication (Rappaport, 1971). This is due also, in part, to the ability of ritual to influence on many dimensions. As Turner (1969) states "ritual has a multivocal character - with many meanings that together are capable of setting people in motion on many psychobiological levels" (p.116).

In the preface of Van Gennep's (1960) classic book The

Rites of Passage, Kimbali states that rituals are tools society provides for making adjustments. These adjustments are inherent in being male or female, aged, or in one being challenged by relationships within the family.

Research Studies in Ritual

In 1950, Bossard and Boll published Ritual in Family Living, a landmark study that systematically examined ritual behavior in 186 families, based on published autobiographies and on report writing by college students regarding rituals in their families of origin. In bringing family ritual to our attention, Bossard and Boll came to some dramatic conclusions regarding its importance. They proposed that these repetitious, highly valued, symbolic family occasions were the core of family culture and the "index to the level of the family's integration" (p. 19).

As a phenomenological process, Bossard and Boll saw ritual as transmitting the family's enduring values, attitudes, and goals. Another researcher, Reiss (1981), added that another role of ritual is maintaining and perpetuating a family's paradigm that shapes its interactional style in the outside world. Based upon 15 years of study with over 400 families, Reiss's work points to different assumptions that lead to radically different

between the family and the rest of the world. He states from this phenomenological approach, that some families are predominately environment-sensitive, or relatively open to experience, and seeking to align shared beliefs with the environment. Other families are more consensus-sensitive, seeking primarily to coordinate beliefs among family members. According to Reiss, rituals point this information out and help define a family's construction of reality (Reiss, 1981).

Wolin and Bennett (1984) describe rituals as symbolic forms of communication, owing to the satisfaction participants experience through repetition, acted out in a systematic method over time. Ritualistic behaviors contribute significantly to the establishment and preservation of the participant's collective sense of self through special meaning and a repetitive nature. Rituals stabilize this identity over time by clarifying expected roles, delineating boundaries within the context and through rule definition. Using the family systems theory framework, Wolin and associates (1979) examined the extent of change in family rituals in 25 families in which at least one parent was or had been identified by their criteria as an alcoholic. What these researchers found was that families

whose rituals were altered during the period of heaviest parental drinking, were more likely to evidence transmission of an alcohol problem to the children's generation than families whose rituals remained intact. From this, the research concluded that the children in ritual-protected families fare better in the transition to adulthood when compared to ritual-disrupted counterparts. Further, extreme ritual disruption was found to be significantly correlated with greater intergenerational recurrence of alcoholism, whereas ritual protection was associated with less transmission.

Ritual As Method

Wolin and Bennett (1984) describe ritual as an injunctive concept. "Injunctively defined concepts lack a sharp borderline but merge by graduation into neighboring concepts " (p.402). One can understand it better through an accumulative array of examples across many behaviors rather than through a narrow view. Laughlin (1979), in his work on animal behavior, found ritual to be injunctive as well. He stated also that injunctively defined concepts, such as ritual, lack a sharp edge but merge by graduation into neighboring experiences.

Wolin and associates (1984) continue along this line of thinking by describing ritual as gradually disappearing into other notions such as simple, interactional behavior. They further state, however, that the concept should not be dismissed or abandoned because of this lack of clarity. Its elusive nature should not get in the way of the power of its reminder that communication can be symbolic, that form gives meaning, that repetition promotes learning, and that the past is embedded in the present.

Van der Hart (1983) discusses the importance of ritual to members. He states the original function of ritual was to promote well-being of all those involved, not coercion, and the view is traditionally held that the well-being of the individual cannot be detached from the entire community. He goes further when he states that if new generations are to experience well-being from an established ritual, they will have to adjust the ritual to changed views and circumstances in the present. He stresses that ritual has to be flexible to incorporate new meanings.

MacLean (1978) mentions in his work concerned with brain function that too much environmental novelty frustrates organisms and may lead to anxiety and eventual systemic breakdown. On the other hand, too little novelty

leads to boredom. In general, the brain strives to balance novelty and redundancy and fit new environmental stimuli into events. Noting this, ritual works toward this balance in the brain.

Other scholars, such as Bourguignon, study altered states of consciousness in anthropological research, and are interested in the primary biological function of ritual behavior. Researchers see rituals as facilitators through the cybernetic flow of information. Bourguignon (1981) states ritual suggests "the synchronization of individual action into corporate action--action directed toward some environmental challenge that may not be met successfully through individual action" (p. 177). Further, to ensure that a ritual is effective, there must be two levels of coordination. On the individual level, there must be integration of different functions of verbal and non-verbal brains and an appropriate balance between the sympathetic and parasympathetic systems governing levels of arousal. To facilitate interaction of individuals within the group, there must be further synchronization of the individual subsystems of each individual.

Ritual necessitates the exchange of information. Often, however, information about physiological and genetic

predispositions is not available to the individual's own consciousness. Because of this, the information cannot be passed on orally. Ritual behavior, according to Bourguignon (1981), is especially suited to providing an indication to others of this kind of information which, although nonverbal and below the level of ordinary consciousness, nevertheless does have an effect on an individual's behavior. This below-consciousness sharing of information is quite often achieved through ritual.

Van der Hart (1984) suggests that rituals aim at instigating changes in the consciousness of those that perform them. Minimally, he writes, they must fixate the attention of those involved so the messages of the ritual can be unconsciously digested. In this context, symbolic acts form concrete acts. That is, they are genuine rites that penetrate the screen of consciousness. From here, they carry their message directly to the unconscious.

Typology Of Rituals

Scholars of ritual behavior classify them into three categories: family celebrations, family traditions, and patterned family interactions (Rappaport, 1972; Wolin & Bennett, 1984). Despite differences in socioeconomic background, ethnic and religious orientation of

participants, the universality of all three types of rituals is intact (Wolin & Bennett, 1984). Scholars acknowledge the celebration of holidays or rites of passage regardless of stage of development of family and these are influenced by cultural, religious, and ethnic origins (Rappaport, 1972). There are traditions that symbolically represent family and the practices of the prior generation. Scholars report patterned and symbolic daily routines as a part of the ritual process; these interactions being most unique to the nuclear family.

Family Celebrations

Family celebrations are rituals widely practiced throughout the culture and are special in the mind of family members. In this category belong annual religious rituals such as Christmas, Easter, Passover; secular holiday observances such as Thanksgiving, New Year's day, or the Fourth of July. These rituals characterize the relative standardization across American society or are usually specific to the subculture of which they are a part. They are noted by the universality of the symbols that pertain to them. Rappaport (1971) notes that these rituals assert the larger group identification for the nuclear family and its members. These ritual observances contribute to a group's

stability and sense of connectedness to the whole. Members may have diverse feelings toward these rituals but significance is usually evident.

Family Traditions

Family traditions are less culture-specific and more idiosyncratic for each nuclear family. These rituals are moderately organized in comparison to celebrations. Participants usually describe their perceptions of traditions (commonly including summer vacations, visits to and from extended family members, birthday and anniversary customs, or parties of various kinds) with special food or music. There is an element of choice that contributes to the high degree of meaning family members attribute to traditions and attachment that is exhibited to continued observances.

Patterned Family Interactions

The least deliberate and covert of rituals are patterned family interactions. These are most frequently enacted but least consciously observed. Whatever the patterns, interactions help define the woman's roles and responsibilities and are means of organizing daily life. They are least standardized and the most variable over time. These may include places at the dinner table, expectations

of sitting at the dinner table through dessert, or watching a favorite television program.

Each category of ritual enhances different aspects of self as well as family identity. Celebrations mark passage of time and progress through developmental stages. They also give a group identity as a member of a larger context. Uniqueness is expressed in traditions. These promote internal continuity and cohesiveness and thereby define identity. Finally, interactions provide individuals with a sense of identity that grows out of family identity. Boundaries are drawn between inside and outside the family by these daily interactive rituals.

Properties Of Ritual

As stated earlier, the enactment of ritual has a bonding effect upon participants, and the identity one achieves with the group is in turn perpetuated as the performance is repeated time after time. The properties of ritual demonstrate the power of form and structure of the collective mind of the group. These three properties, according to Rappaport (1972), Turner (1969), and Wolin and Bennett (1984), are transformation, communication, and stabilization.

Transformation

Transformation consists of preparatory events that constitute a transitional period, a passage from nonritual to ritual. Turner refers to this period as the "liminal" period which involves a move away from well-known interactions into less predictable and less certain territories associated with change. The participants are literally on the threshold of new possibility and are likened to be in an altered state of consciousness. Kobak and Waters (1984) write:

"Liminality...literally being on a threshold means a state or process which is betwixt and between the normal day to day cultural or social states. Since liminal time is not controlled by the clock, it is a time of enchantment when anything might happen. It is full of potency and potentiality." (p. 94).

This transition from one state of being to another is seen most dramatically in the rites of passage themselves in which transition is formally prescribed and symbolically executed as in the giving away of the bride, the Torah reading of the bar mitzvah, or a funeral procession. Even an ordinary evening at home can have its liminality such as

coming in after work and processing the day with a spouse. At these times, the notion that "we are not what we were before" is strongly felt. The participants are on the threshold of experience. Individual boundaries are minimized in importance as participants achieve a heightened sense of group identification.

The phenomena of transformation is related to the idea of context dependency, in which special learning is thought to take place and be reproduced only in a particular state or context. Members begin in the nonritual condition of everyday life; next they enter a preparatory state, anticipating the performance. When the ritual commences, all members become aware of their connectedness to each other and act out roles with an exactness and clarity seldom obtained. As the ritual comes to an end, the heightened sense of awareness diminishes (Rappaport, 1971).

Many scholars (Rappaport, 1975; Van der Hart, 1983) feel there are neurophysiological correlates of that state of consciousness associated with ritual performance. The symbols used in ritual performance may be a means of inducing the altered state of consciousness; the threshold phase or transformation of ritual participation appears to

generate its onset. This transformational process appears to motivate the participants to repeat their family rituals.

Communication

As a property of ritual, communication takes two distinct but interactive forms, the affective and the symbolic. In the affective form, ritual fosters communication through the release of strong feeling. The rules and structure of ritual make it usually "safe", states Rappaport (1975), for the expression of feelings. All senses are engaged and sights, smells, and sounds evoke vivid memories of rituals past. The family is in a hyperaffective state. Events or rituals can be dramatized and stylized with the same potential for the intensification and subsequent discharge of affect without doing harm to the family equilibrium. For example, the drama of a family wedding may evoke an array of feelings, loss and gain, mourning and responsibility, by following a predetermined formula. Bedtime rituals in families are a discrete, orderly means for children and adults to deal with anxiety of leave-taking of consciousness and fear of the unknown night. These routines permit the participants to express their feelings in the safety and the conventions of ritual.

Symbolic communication differs somewhat from affective communication as it focuses on meaning. Many symbols are used in ritual performances. Some are concrete which can easily be tokens for negotiation and exchange. Others may take place through behavior such as seating arrangements at the celebration which may symbolize power relationships, generational ties, or unsettled conflict to all members involved. Each family determines what is symbolic for the group and confirms the validity of the symbols each time the ritual is enacted.

Stabilization

Ritual behavior within a family makes for predictability because it gives structure to events. Further, in the face of ongoing external change, ritual gives the family a stable way of recognizing itself. As the ritual is repeated over time, members experience stabilization. Although groups gain and lose members, the ritual itself is a holding action against change.

Rituals stabilize in two aspects of time. In the present, rituals act as anchors for participants to find their own balance between spontaneous and the deliberate, or between the novel and the familiar. As in bedtime stories with children, introducing a new story versus reading the

same ones over, and how that impacts the experience, is an example of this dilemma.

Similarly, ritual has the ability to link past, present, and future. This property is at work when ritual practices from a previous generation are adopted and adapted by the present generation, with the expectation or implicit assumption that the offspring will repeat the same procedure. In the present study, stabilization is examined in reference to the families of origin of the women in terms of their perception of particular repeated events during the current generation, with some element of the impact of previous generations.

Gender Differences

Another relevant concept is the area of gender differences. Gender issues are dealt with as a whole to emphasize the aspects of the female experience through contrast with the masculine experience. Although there has been considerable research on gender differences, women's sex roles and related levels of self-esteem and achievement, there is a paucity of research concerning a woman's own view of self-meaning and how she obtains and maintains that view.

Studies related to gender differences explore variations between men and women in intelligence and

aptitude. Because men and women differed in the correctness of response to items on the Stanford-Binet, these responses were eliminated from the final version of the test. Thus, general measures of intelligence are not indicators of differences between genders. In several cases of ability, however, gender differences have been recognized. For example, females are generally better than males at academic achievement and females tend to outscore males on tests of verbal ability (Sherman, 1971).

Research also reveals gender differences in social behavior. Cooper (1979) and Eagly (1978) found that women are more likely than men to conform when group pressure is applied. Maccoby and Jacklin (1974) found that men are more aggressive than women and indicate a possible biological basis as an explanation for this difference.

Considerable research also abounds in the area of achievement motivation as it applies to gender. This research indicates that women's desire to affiliate overpowers the achievement factor (Hoffman, 1972). Other explanations come from the studies of Stein and Bailey (1973) in which they found that men and women are equally concerned with achievement; however, the areas in which women choose to excel differ from men's.

Other areas of exploration have been in the area of stereotyping of differences. According to various studies, there is a high degree of agreement in adjectives used to describe the typical man and woman (Broverman et al., 1972; Carlson & Levy, 1970; Ellis & Bentler, 1973). Two groups seem to reveal themselves when exploring these characteristics: one group represents competence and independence, and the other, warmth and expressivity. Males are seen as generally embodying the independence cluster while women fall in the expressive cluster. Further, a study done by Broverman and associates (1970) showed that the healthy adult was synonymous with male characteristics. Both the healthy adult and the healthy adult male, for example, were described by adjectives from the independence cluster as rated by mental health professionals.

Gilligan's (1984) research on moral development suggests that men and women speak different languages that they assume to be the same, using similar words to encode disparate experiences of self and social relationships. She further states that the failure to see the different reality of women's lives and to hear the differences in their experiences stems in part from the assumption that there is a single mode of social experience and interpretation. This

concept is important in the present study. Further, this research supports Gilligan and others by positing instead two different modes, which arrive at a more complex rendition of human experience. Further, this view recognizes the separation and attachment in the lives of women and men but recognizes as well their differential refraction. Understanding how the tension between the two modes sustains the balance of the human drama is also to recognize their interdependence (Rubin, 1983). Thus, the dialogue generated from the recognition of differences creates a better understanding of the relations between genders and provides a basis for a more comprehensive conception of family dynamics and individual perception of relationships. Important to the present study is the idea that women are more influenced by the connectedness factor of relationships than men (Gilligan, 1977; Stein & Bailey, 1973). Gilligan stated that throughout the women's descriptions, identity is defined in a context of relationship and judged by a standard of responsibility and care. Identity is seen by women as arising from the experiences of connection and conceived of as a problem of inclusion rather than one of balancing claims (Miller, 1978; Rubin, 1983). Rubin (1983) stated

...differences in the psychology of women and men are born of a complex interaction between society and the individual. At the broadest social level is the rending of thought and feeling that is such a fundamental part of Western thought. Thought, defined as the ultimate good, has been assigned to men; feeling considered at best a problem, has fallen to women. (p. 72)

Human's Search for Meaning

Another variable in the study is the innate struggle of humans to create a sense of meaning in their existence. Frankl (1975) writes about this struggle for meaningfulness when he discusses humans' lacking of drives and instincts, unlike other animals. Modern humans are lacking in traditions and traditional values that usually provide a structure for what to do. Without these directives, Frankl suggests that humans are caught in a dilemma and lose a sense of meaning and purpose to their existence. Survival depends on the direction of a "what for" or a "whom for" and in his view, existence is dependent on a "self-transcendence". "Being human is being always directed and pointing to something or someone other than oneself"

(p. 78). Reality presents itself always in the form of a specific concrete situation, and since each life situation is unique, it follows that the meaning of a situation must be unique. In this struggle for meaning, the more one forgets oneself, giving oneself to a cause or another person, the more human one is. Further, the more one is immersed and absorbed in something or someone other than oneself, the more one really becomes oneself.

One might begin to question the validity of Frankl's emphasis on affiliation and connection, which he labels "self-transcendence", because of his gender. How can a male understand this female experience? This question might be explained through the writings of Miller (1978). She explains that there is, in most instances, a factor of inequality arising from the differential distribution of resources, fundamentally those of status and power in the dominant/subordinate relationships such as gender, class, race, and ethnicity. Because of this differential in power, these relationships assume a moral dimension that pertains to the way in which power is used to sustain or dissolve inequality.

Miller (1978) distinguishes between relationships of temporary and permanent inequality. Temporary inequality,

she states, is a product of the context of human development such as parent and child or teacher and student. In this case, power is ideally used to foster the development that removes the initial disparity. On the other hand, permanent inequality is the condition of psychological oppression. Power cements dominance with subordination and oppression is rationalized by theories that explain the need for its continuation. Miller thus concludes that the psychology of women arises out of the combination of their positions in relationships of temporary and permanent inequality. Dominant in temporary relationships of nurturance that dissolve with the dissolution of inequality, women are subservient in relationships of permanently unequal status and power.

In many ways, Frankl's personal history reflects this exact experience (1959). As a longtime prisoner in bestial concentration camps, he found himself stripped to naked existence with his entire family perishing in these camps. He states in autobiographical accounts that he was not known as a doctor and dug tracks for railroads for many years. He was known by a number only. He went on to describe deep, intimate relationships with friends and family and an early adulthood of relationships that focused in their entirety on

protection and care. He went further in describing relationships of economic dependence and rigid social class and indicated how class, race and ethnicity were used to justify and rationalize the inequality of an economic system that benefited some at the extreme expense of others.

In Frankl's theory, affiliation is valued higher in one's development of meaning than self-enhancement. This is taken to such an extreme that Frankl criticizes Maslow's self-actualization as not being a possible aim and must be attained only as a side effect of self-transcendence. Frankl (1959) states:

By declaring that man is a responsible creature and must actualize the potential meaning of his life, I wish to stress that the true meaning of life is to be found in the world rather than within man or his own psyche, as though it were a closed system. By the same token, the real aim of human existence cannot be found in what is called self-actualization.

Self-actualization is not a possible aim at all, for a simple reason that the more a man would strive for it, the more he would miss it. For only to the extent to which man commits himself to the fulfillment of his life's meaning, to this extent he also actualizes

himself. In other words, self-actualization cannot be attained if it is made an end in itself, but only as a side effect of self-transcendence (p. 175).

Much like the ideas of feminist thought such as Gilligan (1984), Miller (1978), and Rubin (1979), Frankl points to a psychology of adulthood that would recognize that development does not displace the value of ongoing attachment and the continuing importance of relationships. The differences in his theory would stem from simply the language he used to describe his ideas. This is due to the times in which these ideas were written.

Summary

This chapter examined three significant variables in the nature of the research. These variables were: ritual behavior, gender differences most specifically femininity, and human's search for meaning or will to meaning. These variables were being probed to create a bridge from past perceptual views of the women in the study with their current sense of self meaning. This chapter has seen the impact of the feminist need for affiliation and connection as the building block of this bridge through previous research as well as theory.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The present study investigated the relationship between family of origin ritual patterns of 26 women and their sense of self-meaning in current life patterns. The foundations for the study were in the concepts of rituals, gender differences (primarily femininity), and self-meaning. Through the examination of the responses of the women in the study, the researcher proposed to answer a series of research questions related and derived from the concepts at hand.

The theoretical framework which guided this investigation was primarily phenomenological. The influence of general systems and developmental approaches was felt due to seeing the individual as a part of a complex pattern of interaction in a family that evolves through time.

This qualitative research proposed to reveal, understand, and illuminate the link known as affiliation or connection to the concept of ritual as experienced by the subjects and its possible current effect. The qualitative method yields descriptive data and offers a holistic approach to the problem under investigation. Further, it directs itself to individuals and affords the researcher an

opportunity to understand the individual's experience of the world (Taylor & Bogdan, 1984). The intentions of the present study complement the natural science method which was discussed in Chapter I.

Sample

This research required data collection in two areas from a voluntary sample of 26 women ranging in age from 20 to 35. The 26 women were from the central to east Texas area. They were single (never-married) and had at least one year of college. Women, traditionally, have had fewer and less-identifiable developmental markers at transition points than men (Gilligan, 1977). Those that have been in effect, historically, have been through the rites of passage of marriage. For women who do not choose this route, no markers are noted. This study explored those women who had not chosen marriage currently and explored further alternative identifiable markers such as family ritual behavior. Such a homogenous sample allowed for the exploration of impact, through perception, of ritual behavior on the particular population under investigation.

The sample was obtained by asking clergy, therapists, schools and universities, and singles' groups for names of women who would fit the criteria. Thirteen of the women

were from the researcher's own psychotherapy private practice. Ten of these subjects were former or current clients of her own and three were the clients of another therapist in the practice. All the women at some time had participated in psychotherapy. Also, all of the women were employed. The population's anticipated income range was between \$10,000 - 60,000 annually.

Design

The research design utilized the in-depth interviewing method (Taylor & Bogdan, 1984). This exploratory technique included face-to-face encounters between the researcher and informants directed toward understanding perspectives on the lives, experiences, and situations expressed in the words of the subjects. This process relied exclusively on the perceptions of the subjects rather than a context for observation. With this in mind, it is important to note that the emphasis was on the subject's perception of their experiences rather than the accuracy of the event.

Procedures

There were three steps in gathering data. First, subjects were questioned concerning demographic data relevant to the study (see Appendix B). These data were age, education, ethnicity, religious affiliation as a child

and currently if applicable, income status, and living arrangements. Second, subjects participated in the ritual interview process which included tape recording descriptions and responses. This section of the interview was divided into sections of questions exploring specific types of ritual. The types of rituals were family celebrations, family traditions, and patterned family interactions. Third, subjects were given the PIL or Purpose in Life Inventory which was devised by Crumbaugh and Maholick (1976). This inventory was given for information gathering purposes only, to assess the subject's current perception of self-meaning or will to meaning (Frankl, 1959).

Protection of Human Subjects

The study was presented to the Human Subjects Review Board chairperson for examination before beginning the interview process. The study was exempted from further review due to the exploratory nature of the study and lack of treatment procedures. Then, each participant in the study was given Form 1 (Appendix A) for her written consent to participate in the study. After the participants agreed, they were asked to sign Form 2 (Appendix A), which gave the researcher permission to have their descriptions tape recorded.

Pilot Studies

The first pilot study was conducted to test the workability of the procedure. Three subjects were given the first ritual instrument and the results analyzed by a three-person committee for problem areas and interviewer consistency (Babbie, 1983). Revisions were made to the interview and are demonstrated in Appendices B and C.

A second pilot study was done to further assess the workability of the procedure. During this period, a fine tuning was made in probing for information for particular classification schemes. Results were that further exploration was needed concerning the roles of the subjects in their families of origin including current living status.

Another problem area that was clarified was the examples of the types of rituals. The participants in the second pilot had a difficult time making distinctions between types of rituals. This problem was solved by further review of the literature and making clearer distinctions in the typology of the rituals.

Instrumentation

The ritual interview followed a format developed by the investigator (Appendix C). The three types of rituals interviewed (family celebrations, family traditions, and

patterned family interactions) were further examined for specific properties that act as indicators that the ritualization did indeed exist. These properties are transformation, communication, and stabilization. As mentioned in Chapter II, these properties are important to assess the power of the rituals and to distinguish the structure and form for existence.

The Purpose In Life Inventory (PIL) was given, following the ritual interview, to measure participants self-meaning or "will to meaning" (Frankl, 1959). The PIL was given for information gathering purposes only and was an attitude scale constructed by Crumbaugh & Maholick (1976) from the theoretical orientations of Frankl. The scale contained two parts. Part A consisted of 20 items with a likert scale that ranged from one to seven. The subject was asked to circle the number next to the feeling that best described the impact of the statement. The numbers always extended from one extreme feeling to its opposite feeling. Part B consisted of 13 sentence completion items and although those answers were important to the overall exploration, they were not a part of the raw score. According to Crumbaugh and Maholick (1976), PIL raw scores above 112 indicated the presence of definite purpose and

meaning in life. Scores in the 92 through 112 range were indicative of the indecisive range. Scores below 92 indicated a lack of clear meaning and purpose.

Both construct and concurrent validity of the PIL have been assessed and are well documented. Crumbaugh and Maholick (1976) evaluated the scale by two measures: (a) correlation between PIL scores and therapists' ratings of the degree of purpose and meaning in life demonstrated by the patient (the therapist completed a PIL as he thought the patient should have completed it in order to represent the true facts), and (b) correlation between PIL scores and ratings by ministers of the degree of purpose and meaning exhibited by their participating parishioners. The relationship between the scale and therapists' ratings was .38 (Pearson Product-Moment, $N=50$). The relationship between the scale and ministers' ratings was .47 (Pearson Product-Moment, $N=120$). These results are in line with the level of concurrent validity which can usually be obtained from a single measure of a complex trait.

Analysis of Data

Qualitative researchers typically define data analysis as an ongoing process (Taylor & Bogdan, 1984). This study was no exception to that. The research setting was one in

which the observer obtained easy access, established rapport quickly, and gathered data directly related to the research interests. Of major importance was the idea that data collection and analysis proceeded together. Throughout the interviewing, the researcher kept track of emerging themes and developed concepts and propositions to begin to make sense of the data.

Analysis of data entailed certain distinct phases of operation (Taylor & Bogdan, 1984). The first was the discovery phase which identified themes, concepts, and propositions. In this phase several steps unfolded. These were:

1. Reading and rereading the data.
2. Keeping track of themes, hunches, interpretations
3. Constructing classification schemes.
4. Developing concepts and theoretical propositions.

This phase is an intuitive process. By studying emerging themes, constructing typologies, and relating different pieces of data to each other, the research gradually formulated implications.

The second phase of data analysis was that of coding. This occurred after the data had been collected. The process involved formalizing the data bearing on the

important statements and classifying them in particular clusters of themes that had evolved. These themes allowed the researcher to distinguish between levels of ritualization. These distinctions were made by examining the following characteristics described by the subjects in the interviews to distinguish properties:

1. Preparatory events. This was indicated from very elaborate and complex (high ritual) to non-existent (low ritual).

2. Roles. This was from rigid (high ritual) to interchangeable (low ritual).

3. Routine and time of event. This varied from being carried out in exactly the same way during each occasion (high ritual) to evidencing no set routine.

4. Affect. This would range from very strong expression of emotion and meaning by family members (high ritual) to virtually no emotion exhibited (low ritual).

5. Attendance. This would extend from always the same people attending and taking part (high ritual) to a laissez faire approach taken as to who is in attendance (low ritual).

6. Symbolism. This would range from those families where the performance clearly represents the family's sense

of symbolic value (high ritual) to those in which it is observed mainly for the functional reasons (low ritual).

These characteristics distinguished the specific properties of ritual. Transformation was indicated when the women described the preparatory events that occurred prior to the ritual experience. Roles, affect, and symbolism indicated the presence of communication in the families. Routine, time of event, and attendance indicated the presence of stability in the ritual event. These properties helped designate the woman's family of origin level of ritualization. There were four levels of ritualization possible. These were high level, indicated by a score of 4, moderately high indicated by a score of 3, moderately low indicated by a score of 2, and low indicated by a score of 1. These categories were designed so to obtain accessibility to the data.

The next task was to refine the analysis. By coding the data, the researcher was then ready to compare different "pieces" of data relating to each theme and hence refine and tighten up the ideas. This process then proceeded into formulating implications.

Limitations

The major limitations of the study are that the results of this research are confined to the parameters of this sample only. Also, even though a subject may be categorized in low commitment to ritual as well as score low in the PIL, the implication is not that this is a permanent outcome for the subject. This qualification also holds true for the other classifications as well. The results are only designed to act as a springboard to help create new avenues of exploration.

Summary

The impact of ritual behavior on women in their families of origin was explored from a perceptual level in this study. The participants were being interviewed to gather information concerning their perceptions of ritualization and current sense of meaning in their lives. Primarily, the research was concerned with finding a link in these aspects by exploring the concepts of ritual, gender differences particularly feminism, and self-meaning. This chapter explored the methodology of the project and took into account its qualitative design as well as indepth interviewing method.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF DATA

In this chapter, the data obtained from the clinical interviews is presented and discussed in relation to the research questions presented at the outset. The present research attempted to describe the effect of ritual behavior as it was experienced by 26 women in their families of origin and its impact on their current sense of meaning. The research questions this study addressed were:

1. What is the woman's perception of her family of origin level of ritualization? In the woman's terms, was ritual important to the family or not. The researcher assigned the low to high level of ritualization status to her family according to her perception.
2. What is the woman's current view of her sense of meaning or "will to meaning"?
3. How do these themes compare with one another in terms of level of ritualization? An example of this would be a low ritualization status of a family of origin seems to compare with a low self meaning score on the Purpose of Life Inventory for a particular subject.
4. What is the relevance of the above linkage and does it have implications in terms of further research?

5. How does the concept of connection effect all of the conceptual frameworks in the study?

This chapter is divided into two parts. The first part deals with the presentation of the findings and is divided into significant topical areas. These are: demographic findings, level of ritualization, low level of ritual, high level of ritual, and Purpose In Life Inventory. The Appendix contains the significant statements for both the ritual interview and the PIL under significant classifications. The second part discusses the research questions as they apply directly to the present findings in relationship to the topical headings.

Presentation of Findings

Demographic Data

After all the clinical interviews took place, the raw data were transcribed for each subject. Demographic data for the subjects are listed on Table I and a discussion of the results follows.

Table 1

Demographic Description of the Sample

Category	N	%
Age Range		
20 - 25	11	42%
26 - 30	10	38%
31 - 35	5	19%

Living Status		
Alone	12	46%
Family	7	27%
Friend	7	27%

Education		
1 Year College	2	8%
2 Year College	6	23%
3 Year College	3	12%
4 Year College	1	4%
Bachelors	4	15%
Bachelors + 1	3	12%
Masters	6	23%
Masters +	1	4%

Income Range		
\$10,000 - 19,999	12	46%
\$20,000 - 29,999	7	27%
\$30,000 - 39,999	6	23%
\$40,000+	1	4%

Ethnic Background

Czechoslovakian	1	4%
German	1	4%
Hispanic	1	4%
Italian	1	4%
Mixed	19	73%
Polish	1	4%
Russian	1	4%

Family of Origin Religious Affiliation

Baptist	9	35%
Catholic	6	23%
Church Of Christ	1	4%
Episcopal	2	8%
Jewish	3	12%
Lutheran	1	4%
Methodist	3	12%
Protestant	1	4%

The sample was a homogeneous one chosen through various resources in southeastern Texas. The age range of the sample was between the ages of 21 to 35 with all participants having never been married. The largest group was the 20 - 25 age range at 42% of the sample. The mean age of the sample was 27.

All subjects had completed at least one year of college. The sample's academic background was varied and diversified. Two subjects had gone one year to college, six subjects had gone two years, three subjects had gone

three years, five had gone four years with four of those completing their degrees, three had completed bachelor's degree with one year toward their master's, six had their master's degrees, and finally one subject had a master's degree and a doctorate in jurisprudence. The mean of the educational level of the group was 15.9 or nearly four years of college.

The subjects' families of origin religious affiliations were diverse as well. Three subjects were Jewish, six subjects were Catholic, eight were Baptist, three were Methodist, three were Episcopal, one was Church of Christ, one was Lutheran, and one simply stated Protestant.

The ethnicity of the group was primarily mixed. The mixed category was designated when no specific ethnic group was identified in the woman's grandparents generation. The mixed category was 73% of the subjects. Other categories were designated however. One subject was primarily of Polish decent, one of German decent, and one of Russian decent. One subject reported having a grandmother of Czechoslovakian decent and another subject reported grandparents of Italian decent. The subject of German decent reported an ethnic flavor to her rituals with foods

and ceremonies derived directly from German traditions. All of the women were Caucasian.

The income level was lower than anticipated. The anticipated range was from \$10,000 to \$60,000 annually. The range of the subject's in the study was from \$10,000 to \$40,000. Only one subject or 4% of the subjects had an income of \$40,000, six subjects or 23% had incomes over \$30,000 annually, seven subjects or 27% had incomes of \$20,000 or greater, and twelve or 46%, which is close to half of the subjects, had incomes less than \$20,000 annually. The mean income of the subjects was \$21,269.

Level of Ritualization

In this study, the subjects were asked to judge, from their perception of their families of origin, whether three types of rituals were important. These rituals were family celebrations, family traditions, and patterned family interactions. Following this inquiry, the subjects were asked to describe an experience in their past of each of the rituals and were further probed concerning particular aspects of each one. Through this process, information concerning the rituals was gathered in order to categorize the rituals into levels of ritualization. Table 2 indicates the levels of ritualization found in the sample.

Table 2

Levels of Ritualization

Category	N	%
High Level Of Ritualization Score 4	11	42%
Moderately High Level Of Ritualization Score 3	7	27%
Moderately Low Level Of Ritualization Score 2	3	12%
Low Level Of Ritualization Score 1	5	19%

Total	26	100%

Almost half of the subjects came from the high ritual category. The combination of high level of ritualization and moderately high level of ritualization indicated 69% of the entire sample. The low - moderately low category indicated 31% of the sample.

On coding these rituals, the focus was on the central event presented for each type of ritual by the subject. In some interviews, the subject described a variety of events encompassed within one ritual area. If one event was particularly highly ritualized where others were less so,

the ritual area was coded as highly ritualized. The higher the ritual experience the higher the score with a range of four (high) to one (low).

Low Level of Ritualization

In this category, the subject made little reference overall in the interview to any specialness of the event, even though she may have described patterning in what goes on. The interview reflected a paucity in detail regarding the ritual observance. There may have been a flavor of pulling information from the subject concerning detail and memory was poor. Roles were not well described, and very little affect was detected in their descriptions. While the event may have occurred with some regularity, the specific features about the observance were highly variable. Further, low level of ritual was indicated in this exploration if the subject chose an event as the ritual, yet was unable to give much detail to the event. Examples of these types of responses were:

"My mother worked and didn't get home till late so we were out on our own till fairly late. We really fended for ourselves almost the entire time I grew up."

"People came in and out and would grab what they could to eat. Dinner was real flexible."

"Mom liked to go and do her own thing and I always felt like we kids were in the way. I felt she was real inconsistent how she felt about us."

"People felt neither closer together or further apart. It seemed just like all the other times. We could take it or leave it and come if we wanted."

There were also some cue words that indicated lower levels of ritualization. Some of those words were used directly in the verbal descriptions while other times they were indirectly described. These words were: inconsistent, unimportant, unknown, variable, loose, ahistorical, present oriented, and flexible. In the moderately low ritual category, the subject was able to describe some type of pattern and was not so unritualized to be categorized a 1.

High Level of Ritualization

In the high level, the subject referred to the event as being strictly carried out in a repeated fashion over a period of years, as evidencing little variability except under unusual circumstances. The ritual was invested with special meaning (positive or negative) as though the way the event occurred represented the way the family was. Events were highly stylized and entailed careful planning and elaborate execution. Pressure may have been brought to bear

upon the family from those individuals who clearly benefited from a sense of control and constancy. Further, subjects illustrated high ritual by speaking of the family as a whole with characteristics like one might describe to an individual. Examples of this would be: "we know how to share", "we feel close but we just don't talk about it a lot", and, finally, "this is the way we have always done it and I can't imagine doing it any other way". Roles were stable over a longer period of time. Things were accepted at face value because that just was the way the family was structured. There was a high feeling state associated with the event. Though there was a consistency to the ritual performance over time, there was also some room for variability but not much. Some examples of high ritual functioning were:

"My grandmother made our ornaments for the tree at Christmas and we still use the same ones every year."

"We bake Christmas cookies every year. My mother bakes every year and she got that from her mother. The recipe is still the same. I do that now also."

"There was a real group feeling at Christmas and it seemed that this was the only time of the year that people did things without having to be told over and over."

"There is virtually no other way to celebrate Christmas in this family. This is the way we have always done it, and it is hard to imagine doing it another way."

Some of the cue words in this type of ritual were: confining, stability, forced, emotional, meaningful, predictable, and compelling. In the moderately high commitment to ritual category 3, the subjects reported characteristics of relatively high commitment functioning but not enough to warrant a rating of 4.

Purpose In Life Inventory (PIL)

The Purpose In Life (PIL) Inventory was given to the subjects following the ritual interview to explore their current level of functioning concerning their "will to meaning". The results of the exploration are listed in Table 3.

Table 3

Scores For PIL

Category	N	%
Group A: Definite Purpose And Meaning In Life		
112 - 131	10	39%
Group B: Indecisive Range		
92 - 111	7	27%
Group C: Lack Of Clear Meaning And Purpose		
Below 92	9	35%

Totals	26	100%

The scoring of the PIL was for information gathering purposes to explore the women's will-to-meaning. The scores ranged from the lowest of 71 to the highest of 131. The mean score was 104.1 for the sample. According to Crumbaugh and Maholick (1976), PIL raw scores from 92 through 112 were in the indecisive range. Scores above 112 indicated the presence of definite purpose and meaning in life. Scores

below 92 indicated a lack of clear meaning and purpose. The mean score of the sample fell in the indecisive range.

Group A was the high range, or the women who indicated the presence of definite purpose and meaning in life. The mean score on the PIL for this group was 122.6. These ten women seemed to have some similar characteristics. First, more than half (seven) of the subjects lived alone. Three subjects reported living with friends. None of the subjects in this group reported living with her family of origin. Second, the mean ritual score was 3.3. This means that the women averaged between moderately high to high on their family of origin ritualization. Third, the income level averaged higher than the other groups. The mean income for this group was \$25,300. Fourth, the educational level of this group was higher than the other groups. The mean average of this group was 16.9, which means almost five years of college. Finally, the mean age of this group was 27.5 which was slightly higher than the middle group, which was 26.6, and slightly higher than the low group, which was 26.

Group B had seven subjects with a mean score of 106.3 on the PIL. This indicated that they fell in the indecisive range. This group had a ritual level mean of 3. This

indicated that their level of ritualization was at the moderately high level. Two of the subjects lived with their families of origin and the other five lived alone or with a friend. The mean income of this group was \$19,000 and their educational level was 15.2 which indicated an average of 3 years of college.

Group C was the low score group with a mean of 87.2 on the PIL. According to Crumbaugh & Maholick (1976), this put them in the lack of clear meaning and purpose range. More than fifty percent of this group lived with their families of origin and the rest lived alone or with a friend. The ritual level mean for this group was 2.4 which was lower than either group. This put them in the moderately low level of ritualization range. Finally, this group had nine subjects with an average income of \$18,555 which was slightly lower than the middle group and lower still than the high scorers. Their educational level was 15.3 which was over three years of college.

Discussion

Research Question #1

What is the woman's perception of her family of origin level of ritualization? The question was addressed in the women's descriptions of their experiences in their families

of origin ritualization memories that were shared in the interview. Although the women's ratings are indicated on Table 2, the themes and generalizations are discussed here for the grouping as a whole.

All the women in the study agreed to having some type of experience in the family celebration type of ritual. Most of the subjects chose Christmas to describe as their memory, although one chose Thanksgiving, and one chose Easter. There were several factors that probably supported this finding. First, the transformation property of ritual is highly supported in family celebration in a universal sense. If the family experience was not strong, the subjects still had an experience outside the home to prepare them for the holidays. The five subjects that reported low ritual experience were able to indicate some experience with Christmas. Second, the communication property is also in effect during this holiday. The symbology of this holiday is all around and for most affect is high, with anticipation, whether in a positive or negative sense. Third, stabilization is high in a universal sense for this holiday. Decorations and reminders of the holidays are a routine event for most cities and towns as well as in most families.

Twenty-one of the subjects described some type of experience with family traditions and repeated at least a moderate low to high rating. The other five subjects did not describe much detail of an experience in that category. The strongest experience seemed to be annual family vacations, birthdays, and weddings. The transformation property seemed to be somewhat strong for vacations and weddings but some breakdown occurred for birthdays. About birthdays, one subject reported, "This doesn't seem to be as big a deal as Christmas so things go back to normal quicker." The communication property seemed strong for vacations with reactions like, "I couldn't sleep the night before when I was a kid because I was so excited about our trip." Finally, stabilization seemed an indicator of this type of ritual as statements like this appeared: "We all got in the car and drove to Nebraska every year at the same time to visit the same people all my life."

In the patterned family interaction category, eleven of the subjects reported very high ritualization, seven reported moderately high, and eight reported minimal experience. Of the three categories of ritual, the patterned family interaction category was the highest indicator of ritualization breakdown. This may be due to

the minimal effect of the ritual property of transformation. If transformation does not contain the quality of liminality which was discussed in Chapter II, this property is hard to maintain in many families on a daily basis. Finally, stabilization was a big factor in the breakdown of ritual in patterned family interactions. As one subject reported, "My mother worked and didn't get home till late so we were out on our own till fairly late. We really fended for ourselves almost the entire time I grew up."

One key factor that seemed to exist with all five subjects in the low ritual category was mother gainfully employed outside the home. Further, the ten subjects that reported high ritual experience reported their mothers working in the home. One strong factor that came up as a theme was the mother-centered quality of the ritual experience in all the categories. One subject reported, "Mom did it all and was the center of all the organization".

Research Question #2

What is the woman's current view of her sense of meaning or "will to meaning"? This problem was explored by examining the themes and trends that surface in the data of the PIL. The women's scores were indicated on Table 3 in

this chapter, but this section discusses generalizations of groupings.

As mentioned earlier, Group A had several common characteristics or themes. One was that none of the group lived with their families of origin. What this may have indicated was that this group has successfully launched from childhood and established themselves as adults. Their higher incomes may represent a sense of affiliation and success with work and an ability to be self-supporting. The higher educational level could also be an indicator of affiliation in an education setting and the achievement of academic success.

Group C had several characteristics that warrant further discussion. Over half of the low group still lived with their families of origin. Because this age group (early adulthood), developmentally, had the task of launching or leaving home (Haley, 1973), the subjects still at home could be experiencing frustration and stagnation. Second, this group had several members that indicated very low ritualization. One woman from this group stated about her family: "I cannot remember one thing that was a tradition for our family. We did not do one thing as a

family by ourselves." Due to the lack of experience of family affiliation, this woman may not be able to recognize current connections as indicated on the PIL due to no frame of reference. Third, on Part B of the PIL where the subjects were asked to complete the sentences, several subjects from the low score category answered in the following way: "More than anything, I want to have a happy family and a good husband." "I hope I can give to others so they like me." "My highest aspiration is to be married to a decent guy that will put me first and have complete and total consideration for me." "The most hopeless thing in my life is the loss of a friend." "The most hopeless thing is my father's inability to understand feelings." "The whole purpose of my life is to first make my parents happy." "I get bored when I have nothing to look forward to." "More than anything, I want to be married." "I hope I can be loved." "My highest aspiration is to have a family." What these responses may be indicating is a longing for connection and affiliation that the subjects are not perceiving. Further, these sentences indicate an incompleteness and an experience of disassociation. The theme of disassociation which could indicate a lack of frame

of reference of connection may be a lifelong struggle for some.

Research Question #3

How do these themes compare with one another in terms of level of ritualization? Some interesting generalizations emerged in the analysis of data for this sample. Table 3 indicated these findings.

Table 4

Ritual Groupings With PIL Scores

Category	N	%
High Level of Ritualization		
PIL Scores		
Definite Purpose And Meaning In Life	4	36%
Indecisive Range	4	36%
Lack of Clear Meaning And Purpose	3	27%
Total	11	100%

Moderately High Level Of Ritualization		
PIL Scores		
Definite Purpose And Meaning In Life	5	71%
Indecisive Range	1	14%
Lack Of Clear Meaning And Purpose	1	14%
Total	7	100%

Totals for High/Moderately High Level of Ritualization	18	100%

 Moderately Low Level Of Ritualization

PIL Scores

Definite Purpose And Meaning In Life	1	33%
Indecisive Range	0	0%
Lack Of Clear Meaning And Purpose	2	66%
Totals	3	100%

 Low Level of Ritualization

PIL Scores

Definite Purpose And Meaning In Life	0	0%
Indecisive Range	3	60%
Lack of Clear Meaning And Purpose	2	40%
Totals	5	100%

Total For Low/Moderately Low Level of Ritualization	8	100%
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First, in the high/moderately high ritual group, nine out of the 18 subjects scored in the high range on the PIL. Five of the subjects scored in the moderate range, and four scored in the low range. What this may have indicated was the high ritual group had a somewhat varied to high sense of

the high ritual group had a somewhat varied to high sense of self-meaning with fifty percent indicating high meaning. Second, in the low/moderately low ritual group which consisted of eight subjects, only one subject scored in the high will-to-meaning range on the PIL. Two subjects scored in the indecisive range and five scored in the low will-to-meaning range. What this indicated for this sample was that the low ritual group seemed to have a lower will-to-meaning with over fifty percent scoring in the low will-to-meaning range.

In summary, level of ritualization related highly in this sample with will-to-meaning. Although certainly other factors seemed to play major parts in making distinctions for the groupings, it generally indicated that level of ritualization had impact on the sample's will-to-meaning. Part of the reasoning behind this may have been that, because of the experience of being strongly affiliated in a group whether positively or negatively, the high ritual women simply may have the ability to make distinctions concerning current affiliations. As research indicates that women get a sense of meaning through affiliation and connection (Gilligan, 1984), it would be of major importance that in order to experience meaning, one would need to be

able to recognize it. The low ritual women simply may not be able to perceive current affiliations as clearly, as they do not have a frame of reference.

Research Question #4

What is the importance of the linkage of level of ritualization with will-to-meaning and does it have implications in terms of further research? In exploring the linkage, one has to look at the two groups of data for implications. The first grouping is level of ritualization and several themes are clear. First, the high/moderately high ritual women seem to indicate high will-to-meaning and a clear purpose and meaning in life. According to Gilligan (1984), women such as these indicate a sense of belonging. Second, the low/moderately low ritual women indicate low will-to-meaning scores and fall in the low indecision range. For women in this group a low sense of belonging or connection is indicated by their perceptions.

The second grouping under study was the PIL score classifications, which include high or Group A, middle or Group B, and low or Group C scores. Group A had several themes. First, the high scoring subjects had indicated high levels of ritualization. Second, all the subjects lived alone or with friends and none lived with their families of

origin. Third, the income and educational level of this class was higher than the other two groups. Fourth, the subjects in this class were slightly older than the other groups.

Several ideas emerged from this. First, the linkage of Group A whose members seemed to feel a greater sense of affiliation, as indicated by their scores on the PIL, with the assumption that women get a sense of meaning through affiliation (Gilligan, 1984) may create an understanding of why these women may create better opportunities for themselves. One assumes by feeling a part of a job or educational opportunity, one will be more likely to succeed. That seems a possibility with this group. Further, increasing age may provide time to establish oneself in those affiliations and to have a longer period to feel a part. Finally, the living alone or with a friend status of this group might indicate that this group's affiliative needs had been met at an earlier time through family ties, so that they could now experience being on their own.

The low scoring subjects or Group C had common characteristics as well. First, over 50% of these subjects were still living in their families of origin. These subjects may have difficulty with establishing affiliations

and a sense of belonging because they have an unclear frame of reference.

Secondly, however, the level of ritualization in this group was somewhat lower than the high score group. This group seemed to have a more abstract and varied experience as a whole in affiliation with their families of origin than the previous group. Their frame of reference for a sense of belonging and affiliation may be more difficult for them to pinpoint as a group. As a result, there was a flavor of "something longed for" that existed in the significant statements of the subjects. Examples were: "More than anything, I want to be happy." "My life is empty." "I hope I can give to others so they like me." "My highest aspiration is to be married to a decent guy that will put me first and have complete and total consideration for me." "I hope I can be loved."

The implications for further research in this area is dealt with here briefly and expanded in Chapter V. Comparing subjects of high ritual/low meaning with high ritual/high meaning and in more depth might elaborate the issues of launching and support on being an adult in one's family of origin. Further, comparing groups of various religious affiliations in terms of level of ritualization

could be pursued. Information concerning birth order and the perception of the importance of ritual in the family could be explored.

Research Question #5

How does the concept of connection effect conceptual frameworks in the study? The concept of connection has been a major focus in much of the feminist literature as an important element in the feminine experience (Gilligan, 1977; Rubin, 1983). The present study supported this concept further. Through the examination of the 26 women in the study, several themes emerged that indicated the impact of this concept.

First, through the statements of the women in the study, the impact of affiliation and connection on the women in response to their ritual experiences was realized. Statements such as: "It was a time of sharing, peace, and love." "It was the one clear time I felt close to everyone." "I could physically go up and touch people during that time." "The problems of the world could not get in at least at this meal. We were a family during this time and everybody seemed to feel like a family." "It was acceptable to do the huggings and the 'I love yous' during this time."

Second, the impact of affiliation on the concept of will-to-meaning or self-meaning on the sample was felt. This was especially recognized in the responses on Part B of the PIL. Such statements as: "More than anything, I want to get married." "To me, all my life is doing my best to be content and happy with myself and those around me." "To me all life is giving to others." "I get bored when I am alone." "The whole purpose of my life is to give life and make other people happy." Finally: "My highest aspiration is to have a relationship with a person that I can communicate with and love and vice versa."

Finally, affiliation in response to femininity was an important aspect to the study. It was actualized by viewing the family of origin ritual perspectives of the women and how that compared with their sense of meaning. The sample indicated, through their responses both direct and indirect, that affiliation, through rituals, was an important aspect to them as women. Many indicated by their responses that women, in general from their experiences, valued rituals for the closeness and connecting qualities they facilitated. Some of the responses were: "The women are in charge of the rituals and the preparatory events for them in my family." "All the females do all the labor and get it all together

but the males in my family including my father and my brother did nothing to help and I resent that to this day." "We are the only females in my family and she and I are the ones that care about those things like birthdays." "I remember being angry around dinner because the men would be watching TV and the women would be in the kitchen cooking and cleaning up. They would not even take in their plates."

In summary, affiliation was highlighted as a major link in addressing the conceptual frameworks of this study. The undercurrent of importance it holds to these concepts was a major issue throughout the study.

Summary

This chapter summarized the findings of the study. The first part discussed the demographic findings. The second part explored the results of the level of ritualization for the women and the Purpose In Life Inventory (PIL). The third area dealt with discussing the research questions within the topical areas examined.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This research investigation is summarized and the findings of the study discussed. Conclusions, implications, and recommendations for further study are noted.

Introduction

The present study discussed five research questions:

1. What is the woman's perception of her family of origin level of ritualization?
2. What is the woman's current view of her sense of meaning or "will-to-meaning"?
3. How do these themes compare with one another in terms of level of ritualization?
4. What is the relevance of the above linkage and does it have implications in terms of further research?
5. How does the concept of connection effect all of the conceptual frameworks in the study?

The purpose of the research was to attempt an understanding of the phenomenon of ritual, which consists of celebrations, traditions, and patterned family interactions of women in their families of origin and how that ritual experience impacts their current will-to-meaning. This understanding was paralleled and facilitated by a review of

theoretical perspectives which were primarily phenomenological. Further, the study delved into previous research in the areas of ritual, gender issues, and self-meaning and explored the possibility of a link in these areas through the feminist concept of affiliation (Gilligan, 1977).

Although there has been considerable research done in the areas of ritual, gender differences, and self-meaning, there is a need for existing research linking these three concepts. These three concepts have common threads, which linked together, could impact how one views the female experience. This study pursued these common threads, through the concept of affiliation, by exploring the perceptions of 26 women of their family of origin ritual behaviors, and linking those perceptions with their current will-to-meaning. By understanding the concepts presented and generating the answers to the research questions from a phenomenological viewpoint, the study located common elements and compared them.

The major theoretical orientation of the study was the phenomenological framework, which stresses the importance of understanding the inner world and dynamics of consciousness. Additionally, its focus is how the world appears within the

experience of the individual, and emphasizes the importance of reflection in attempting to understand phenomena.

This qualitative, exploratory research design yielded descriptive data and offered a holistic approach to the problem under investigation. It utilized the in-depth interviewing method discussed by Taylor and Bogdan (1984) and included face-to-face encounters between the researcher and informants. The interview was directed toward understanding perspectives of the lives, experiences, and situations expressed in the words of the subjects.

Three steps were used to gather the data. The first step was the gathering of demographic data relevant to the study from the subjects. The second step was the ritual clinical interview process and included tape recording descriptions and responses. The third step was the administration of the PIL or Purpose In Life Inventory that was devised by Crumbaugh and Maholick (1976). This inventory is based on Frankl's logotherapy which is based on his philosophical view of human's search for meaning. This inventory was given for information gathering purposes only to access the subject's current perception of her will-to-meaning.

The data analysis was ongoing. Emerging themes were identified both during the interviews and after. Types of rituals were identified and their properties evaluated. Properties were focused upon by looking for particular characteristics during the interviews. Those characteristics included preparatory events, roles, affect, symbolism, routine, and attendance. With these characteristics examined, the research was able to further break down the subjects into classification groups ranging from high ritual behavior to low ritual behavior. Further, typologies were devised for examining responses of the PIL and these included high will-to-meaning groups and low will-to-meaning groups.

The next process was to explore the possible significance of the linkage between level of ritualization and will-to-meaning of the sample. Discussions of the possible implications of the concept of connection with conceptual frameworks in the study were examined.

Discussion of Findings

The data were reviewed and the analysis resulted in the formation of two related groupings. These two groups shared many of the same themes and patterns; however, their attitudes and responses varied.

The first grouping was the ritualization grouping which had two classifications. The first was the high/moderately high class. These classes had characteristics that determined them. The high/moderately high class seemed satisfied with their current affiliative needs as they scored in the high will-to-meaning range on the PIL. Because, as indicated throughout the study, women receive their sense of identity through a sense of belonging (Gilligan, 1984), a high score on the PIL would indicate a high sense of affiliation for those women. The second class was the low/moderately low. These women scored in the low indecisive range on the PIL which would indicate a lack of clear meaning and purpose. For women, that strongly indicates a lack of affiliation and connection and would indicate a longing for such.

The second grouping was the score classifications of the PIL. These classes numbered three and were high scores, moderate scores, and low scores. The high score group had the highest level of ritualization score, which meant they had experience of a sense of belonging and affiliation. Because they had a frame of reference to draw from due to the affiliative nature of their families of origin, they seemed more able to identify current affiliations and value

them. Some of these seemed to be work and educational opportunities. The low group seemed to have a harder time with sensing affiliations. This group had a lower experience of ritual which might indicate a more abstract frame of reference of affiliation from which to draw. With this group, there seems to be more indication of a "longing for" and less ability to identify current affiliations.

Finally, these findings are strengthened by examining the research of Gilligan (1984) on women's development issues, and the theoretical implications of Frankl (1959) on the importance of self-transcendence toward meaning. These foundations were reviewed and utilized as a means of understanding the nature of the women's responses. In both approaches, the emphasis is placed on going beyond oneself, through affiliation, to gain a sense of fit. For Gilligan, this is achieved through the contrast of the male experience which emphasizes independence and separateness. For Frankl, it is gained in the quest for meaning through self-transcendence. Frankl (1959) contrasts self-transcendence with Maslow's self-actualization. He states that one cannot realize one's own self-actualization except through the experience of secondary gain during

self-transcendence. He goes further in that he believes that a human cannot find meaning within oneself, as though he/she were a closed system, but only in the world of relation to others.

Conclusions

The results of the research indicate that affiliation is a major need for women in the sample. Further, it is especially realized through the experience of ritual. Due to several factors that emerged from the interview, several patterns resulted.

First, characteristic of this sample is the idea that high ritual experience in the past is related to a higher sense of meaning in current life situations. Since ritual supported a sense of belonging for participants and, for women, a sense of meaning is established through a sense of belonging, a link was established. Although other factors played a part in the current sense of meaning for participants, results showed that the experience of ritual had an effect. The idea of the development of a frame of reference for affiliative pattern recognition in the high ritual women was supported.

Second, the results indicated that the ritual experience itself, emphasizing sense of belonging among

participants, is a female-centered experience. Most of the women reported their mothers were the center of the activity. One women reported: "Mom did it all and was the center of all the organization." Further, many women reported the importance of grandmother and the handing down of the ritual traditions from mother's family primarily. An example was when one women stated: "We had lots of festivity at Grandmother's and I have tried to carry her traditions on, as she taught me so much about those special times." Some of the women even reported inheriting the performance of the ritual centering activities from their mothers. One woman reported: "My grandmother ran it for a while, then my mother, and now it is my job."

Third, for this sample, the gainful employment of mothers seemed significant. The implication was that a strong female influence seemed to be crucial for the preservation of ritual stability. In the high ritual group, all eleven women reported mothers who were full-time homemakers. In the low ritual group, the opposite was reported. All the mothers of the five subjects in this category, worked outside the home. The impact of this could be explained two-fold.

First, the ritual property of stability becomes influenced by the lack of structure. Expectations can become vague and members may have the experience of taking care of themselves outside a group experience. One woman reported concerning this: "My mother worked all the time and we never had a dinnertime or a bedtime. We just ate what we could and fell asleep when we got tired wherever." Another reported: "My mother worked and didn't get home till late so we were out on our own till fairly late. We really fended for ourselves almost the entire time I grew up."

Second, organization of daily life for functional reasons and time constraints, in a mother working family, can stifle the family's sense of symbolic value which is indicative of high ritual. One woman shared: "We never sat down to a table together." Another stated: "We did not have regular routines. Things were done randomly whenever. People came in and out and would grab what they could to eat." Finally, the issue is not whether women work in or out of the home, but the impact women have, by their presence, on the stability of ritual behavior.

Fourth, a major finding of the study was the implication that the women in the sample of high ritual families seem to develop a frame of reference that aids them

in recognizing current affiliations. These affiliations possibly support a sense of meaning for the women. Women who reported low ritual experiences found it difficult to recognize affiliations and their responses seemed to reflect a sense of "longing for" throughout their responses. Examples of these were: "My highest aspiration is to be married to a decent guy that will put me first and have complete and total consideration for me." "The most hopeless thing is my father's inability to understand feelings." "I hope I can be loved."

Fifth, whether the women in this sample felt positive or negative about the ritual or the direction of affect of the experience on participants did not seem to impact the major task of the ritual experience. That task was to help facilitate a frame of reference for future affiliative recognition abilities. The opportunity to construct this skill helps a woman to experience a sense of meaning through affiliation. One woman reported: "Before it happened, I always felt Yuk! that we had to do this again tonight. I would try getting sick or to fall asleep but that didn't work." "Sometimes it was wonderful to look forward to these events, but sometimes it was a have-to thing, and something you could not get out of."

In summary, as an outcome of this study, the value of the experience of affiliation and connection can be recognized as an important aspect of the development of women and how they conceptualize a sense of meaning. Further, by recognizing the power of ritual and its implementation, one might recognize its potential for facilitating an understanding of the feminine experience.

Research Implications

Recommendations for further research include:

1. Incorporating single men into a study similar to this one might be a method for generating issues involving gender differences with an emphasis on affiliation.
2. Interviewing older, never-married women might be an avenue for exploring affiliative markers and incorporating how ritual may impact those markers.
3. Expanding the sample might be a method for increasing the reliability of the study. Since a homogeneous sample is important, one might choose a large population of women with similar characteristics and randomly select a sample from them.
4. Focusing the research on comparative ethnic and religious rituals and the impact of them on participants might increase our knowledge of affiliation.

5. Examining the impact of divorce on the breakdown of ritual behavior in the family could be examined on its effect on members.

6. Exploring previous generational ties through ritual behaviors and their impact on current generations could be an important contribution to the field.

Summary

This chapter provided an overview of the project as well as a discussion of the major findings. Further, it explored conclusions and limitations of those conclusions for future endeavors. Recommendations for further research were also examined.

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APPENDICES
RITUAL INTERVIEW INSTRUMENTS

APPENDIX A
FORM 1

Consent to Act as a Subject for Research
and Investigation

1. I authorize Leslye Mize to:
 - a. conduct an interview designed to understand my family of origin ritual experience as well as current sense of meaning
 - b. analyze the data from the interview
 - c. publish findings in a dissertation in the future. Names and identifying information will not be used.
2. The investigation described to me has been explained to me by Leslye Mize.
3. I understand that the investigation described may involve the following risks or discomforts:
 - a. possible improper release of data
 - b. questions asked may be ones I may not wish to answer

The following measures will be taken to reduce these risks:

1. The subjects may terminate participate at any time
2. The subjects will be given an opportunity to review the data after analysis
3. The subjects will be given an opportunity to have a follow up session to answer any questions the interview situation may have evoked
4. The investigation described has the following potential benefit:
 - a. increase self-awareness
 - b. understand interpersonal relationships
5. No medical service or compensation is given to subjects by the University as a result of injury from participation in research.
6. An offer has been made to answer all my questions regarding this study. I understand that I may terminate my participation at any time.

name

date

APPENDIX A
FORM 2

CONSENT TO TAPE RECORD DESCRIPTIONS

I, the undersigned, do hereby consent to the recording of my voice and or image by Leslye Mize, acting on this date under the authority of the Texas Woman's University. I understand that the material recorded today may be made available for educational, informational, and/or research purposes; and I do hereby consent to such use.

Signature of participant

Date

APPENDIX B
DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Name _____ Race/Ethnic Background _____

Age _____ Religion (if appli.) _____

Education _____ Family's Religious Aff. _____

Income _____ Employer _____

Where you reside? apartment, condo, house, other (circle)

Who you reside with? parents, siblings, friends, alone,
other (circle)

How long have you lived there? _____

What is your reason for moving to this area? employment,
family, friends, recreational opportunities, other
(circle)

How close are you living to your parents at present? _____

How often do you see them? daily, weekly, monthly, yearly,
not at all (circle)

What is the typical reason for those visits? _____

Who do you spend holidays with? _____

APPENDIX C
FAMILY OF ORIGIN RITUAL INTERVIEW

Instructions: Please read the following definition of the type of ritual listed. The questions following the definition are for probing purposes only to be asked sometime in the interview process.

FAMILY CELEBRATIONS

Definition: Family Celebrations are those holidays and occasions that are widely practiced throughout our culture and are sometimes special in the minds of family members. They are characterized by their relative standardization across our society and have a universality to their symbols. Examples of these occasions are Christmas, Thanksgiving, Easter, Rosh Hashanah, etc.

1. From your memory, were these occasions an important aspect of your family experience? yes, no, somewhat
2. Remember an incident for me now when you were a child.
3. Describe the memory.
4. Now, I'm going to ask you to hold the memory and I'm going to ask you some things about the memory.
5. What type of preparatory events occurred in the family with this memory? (T)
6. What type of special symbols did you use? (C)
7. Did relationships change during this memory? (C)
Did people feel closer as a family or further apart?
Do you remember strong feelings? (C)
8. Was this the only memory that you can remember like this or was this a regular event? (S)

FAMILY TRADITIONS

Definition: Family traditions are less culture-specific and more unusual for each family. They have less

standardization and have their own set of traditions. The family itself chooses the occasions it will embrace as traditions. Examples of such events are annual community events with kin or friends or summer vacations to be with relatives.

1. From your memory, were these occasions an important aspect of your family experience? yes, no, somewhat
2. Remember an incident for me when you were a child.
3. Describe the memory.
4. Now, I'm going to ask you to hold the memory and I'm going to ask you some things about the memory.
5. What type of preparatory events occurred in the family with this memory? (T)
6. What type of special symbols did you use if any? (C)
7. Did relationships change during this event? (C)
Did people feel closer as a family during these times or further apart? (C)
Do you remember strong feelings? (C)
8. Was this the only memory that you can remember like this or was this a regular event? (S)

PATTERNED FAMILY INTERACTIONS

Definition: Patterned family interactions are the least deliberate of family rituals. These include daily routines such as dinnertime meals or bedtime routines. They are a means of organizing daily life.

1. From your memory, were these occasions an important aspect of your family experience? yes, no, somewhat
2. Remember an incident for me now when you were a child.
3. Describe the memory.
4. Now, I'm going to ask you to hold the memory and I'm going to ask you some things about the memory.

5. What type of preparatory events occurred in the family with this memory? (T)
 6. What type of special symbols did you use? (C)
 7. Did relationships change during this memory? (C)
Did people feel closer as a family or further apart?
Do you remember strong feelings? (C)
 8. Was this the only memory that you can remember like this or was this a regular event? (S)
-

T = transformation property of the ritual
C = communication property of the ritual
S = stabilization property of the ritual

APPENDICES
PURPOSE IN LIFE INVENTORY INSTRUMENTS

Name _____ Date _____

Age _____ Classification _____

P I L

James C. Crumbaugh, Ph.D.
Veterans Administration Hospital
Gulfport, Mississippi

Leonard T. Maholick, M.D.
Atlanta Psychiatric Clinic
Atlanta, Georgia

PART A

For each of the following statements, circle the number that would be most nearly true for you. Note that the numbers always extend from one extreme feeling to its opposite kind of feeling. "Neutral" implies no judgment either way; try to use this rating as little as possible.

1. I am usually:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
completely			(neutral)			exuberant,
bored						enthusiastic

2. Life to me seems:

7	6	5	4	3	2	1
always			(neutral)			completely
exciting						routine

3. In life I have:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
no goals or			(neutral)			Very clear goals
aims at all						and aims

4. My personal existence is:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Utterly meaningless			(neutral)			very purposeful
without purpose						and meaningful

5. Every day is:

7	6	5		3	2	1
constantly new			(neutral)			exactly the same

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PSYCHOMETRIC AFFILIATES

1020 EAST MAIN STREET
MEMPHIS, TN 38104

Test #168

6. If I could choose, I would:
- | | | | | | | |
|-----------------|---|---|-----------|---|---|-----------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| prefer never to | | | (neutral) | | | Like nine more |
| have been born | | | | | | lives just like |
| | | | | | | this one |
7. After retiring, I would:
- | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|---|---|-----------|---|---|---------------------|
| 7 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| do some of the exciting | | | (neutral) | | | loaf completely |
| things I have always wanted to | | | | | | the rest of my life |
8. In achieving life goals I have:
- | | | | | | | |
|------------------|---|---|-----------|---|---|--------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| made no progress | | | (neutral) | | | progressed to com- |
| whatever | | | | | | plete fulfillment |
9. My life is:
- | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|---|---|-----------|---|---|----------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| empty, filled only | | | (neutral) | | | running over with |
| with despair | | | | | | exciting good things |
10. If I should die today, I would feel that my life has been:
- | | | | | | | |
|-----------------|---|---|-----------|---|---|------------|
| 7 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| very worthwhile | | | (neutral) | | | completely |
| | | | | | | worthless |
11. In thinking of my life, I:
- | | | | | | | |
|--------------|---|---|-----------|---|---|---------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| often wonder | | | (neutral) | | | always see a |
| why I exist | | | | | | reason for my |
| | | | | | | being here |
12. As I view the world in relation to my life, the world:
- | | | | | | | |
|------------------------|---|---|-----------|---|---|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| completely confuses me | | | (neutral) | | | fits meaningfully |
| | | | | | | with my life |
13. I am a:
- | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|---|---|-----------|---|---|------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| very irresponsible | | | (neutral) | | | very responsible |
| person | | | | | | person |

14. Concerning one's freedom to make one's own choices, I believe humans are:

7	6	5	4	3	2	1
absolutely free to make all life choices			(neutral)	completely bound by limitations of heredity and environment		

15. With regard to death, I am:

7	6	5	4	3	2	1
prepared and unafraid			(neutral)	unprepared and frightened		

16. With regard to suicide, I have:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
thought of it seriously as a way out			(neutral)	never given it a second thought		

17. I regard my ability to find a meaning, purpose, or mission in life as:

7	6	5	4	3	2	1
very great			(neutral)	practically none		

18. My life is:

7	6	5	4	3	2	1
in my hands and I am in control of it			(neutral)	out of my hands and controlled by external factors		

19. Facing my daily tasks is:

7	6	5	4	3	2	1
a source of pleasure and satisfaction			(neutral)	a painful and boring experience		

20. I have discovered:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
no mission or purpose in life			(neutral)	clear-cut goals and a satisfying life purpose		

PART B

Make complete sentences of each of the following phrases. Work rapidly, filling in the Blanks with the first thing that pops into your mind.

1. More than anything, I want _____
2. My life is _____
3. I hope I can _____
4. I have achieved _____
5. My highest aspiration _____
6. The most hopeless thing _____
7. The whole purpose of my life _____
8. I get bored _____
9. Death is _____
10. I am accomplishing _____
11. Illness and suffering can be _____
12. To me all life is _____
13. The thought of suicide _____

APPENDICES: RAW DATA

RITUAL INTERVIEW
SIGNIFICANT STATEMENTS

TRANSFORMATION:

Family Celebrations:

1. We always put the tree up every year at the same time. That always got people in the Christmas spirit.
2. The house was always decorated. We always started three or four weeks before Christmas.
3. When I was small, I would make everyone's Christmas presents early. Later, I would make a list and go out and buy presents.
4. I would always go out with either parent and buy the other parent's gift. This was a regular event that was handed down from my mother's family.
5. Before Christmas, it was always a hectic time with lots of anticipation and excitement.
6. We always had to clean the house up and down for Christmas before we could decorate. I always knew Christmas was on the way when Mom started cleaning the house for Christmas.
7. We would start planning Christmas in September; my mother, grandmother, and me.
8. There is so much pressure on the holiday to be a happy holiday. We all get into fights two days before Christmas and then make up Christmas Day.
9. My mother spends lots of time decorating the house and fixing cookies and lots of things for people to eat in anticipation for Christmas.
10. Mother spends a lot of time buying presents and getting people together.
11. Mother creates the famous Christmas list for everybody and we all plan for gifts throughout the year.

12. The first of December, Mom and I would put up the tree and decorate the house to prepare for Christmas.

13. We were the only women so she and I would wrap the presents. I'd get under the tree and shake them all and my job, I guess, was to set the tone for Christmas.

14. Baking lots of fattening things is mine and Mom's jobs and it really gets everyone in the Christmas spirit.

15. We usually put up decorations and lights. It was both a pleasure and a chore. It got us in the mood.

16. Mother use to bake Christmas cookies and you could smell them all over the house to let you know Christmas is near.

17. We always do a lot of planning for Christmas even though we are Jewish. We have lots of company during this time.

18. Mom has real high expectations for the holidays for things to be just right. The day before the event she is just awful to live with. Then, she has a good time.

19. Some of the thrills like being out of school and decorating the tree got me in the mood.

20. Mom, Dad, and I would put up the tree around the 15th.

21. I remember the advent calendar I had and I would mark off the days till Christmas.

22. It is important to start cooking days ahead and do lots of shopping.

23. At Christmas, we would have to sing "Silent Night" before we opened the presents.

24. Mother got more secretive around Christmas and that was a cue to my little sister to start looking around the house for the presents.

25. Dad seemed to move closer and closer to the family during this time and he would begin to play the piano with us.
26. We put lots of lights around the windows the Sunday before Christmas to set the tone.
27. Mom gets real angry a couple of days before the big event but as we get ready to go to church, she seems to calm down and then she becomes downright pleasant. It is probably because she has so much to do. She is real bad about letting anybody help her.
28. On Thanksgiving, Mom would spend hours and hours cooking ahead for the event.
29. Before Christmas, Mom would hide the presents and she would decorate the house and we would always have our tree.
30. My mom and the other mom would share the preparation of the food as they both worked and it seemed easier on both of them.
31. I can remember in preparation, we would watch the Thanksgiving Day parade and smell the turkey cooking in the oven.
32. We would always get up early because you would start smelling the food cooking.
33. Just before the event, there seemed to be a lot of tension and Mom seemed especially irritable. I just think she had so much to do.
34. We went to a 100 year old cabin for a country Christmas. We went to cut down a tree but we couldn't find one that we felt like we could cut down. We bought an artificial tree from K-mart and laughed all the way home. That really got us in the Christmas spirit.
36. We hung a string of lights every year that got us in the mood.
37. Dad always hung the outside lights every year and the boys always helped. That really got things rolling.

38. The cooking is the biggest thing we do to prepare for Christmas.

39. The housecleaning is very important to prepare for Christmas as we have lots of guests this time of year.

40. The women in my family are the ones that prepare for Christmas.

41. Everybody has their specialty that they cook for Christmas and people prepare weeks ahead about the menu. We have buffet style but we prepare long ahead what we are each going to bring.

42. Everybody looks forward to tasting everybody's best recipe.

43. Dad gets real excited about the holiday coming and talks about it a lot but relies on my mom to do it all.

44. My parents divorced when I was two months old so my mother worked all the time and we didn't have a lot of time to prepare for Christmas. Dad would send a little money to help with expenses however.

45. Because my mother was not religious, we did not do any decorating or preparation for Christmas.

46. There was ten kids in my family so Christmas was a major event with lots of preparation and anticipation. We made ornaments and decorated the house a lot. We would always have house guests during December for the whole month. Usually, it was someone who had no place to spend Christmas.

47. Midnight mass was a big event in my family and we would come home and start Christmas. We usually did not sleep until the day after Christmas. Mass really got me in the spirit of Christmas.

48. I was the youngest and my siblings were grown so not much was done to prepare for Christmas.

49. We would start getting lots of presents in the mail from relatives far away and that would always get me going with Christmas.

Family Traditions:

1. In preparation for the event, people asked the honored person what they wanted and shopped for the gift.
2. As we got close, I would get real excited, and I would see landmarks and know we were close.
3. I would really be excited about going, and I would plan about a week in advance.
4. Everything is so well planned out for weddings in my family that two days before the wedding, there is nothing more to do and everyone relaxes. It works out well.
5. I organize the birthdays in the family and I start by asking the person what they want. The whos and whens are coordinated by me and my mother.
6. Mother was always in charge to get things done. She kept the routine going in preparation.
7. We knew six months in advance who would be at my sister's wedding and the roles people would play in the celebration. Lots of things are put on hold until the ritual is over in our family.
8. The women are in charge of the rituals and the preparatory events for them in the family.
9. Everybody knows it is going to happen and prepares for it. No one considers doing anything else. Things have to get done come hell or high water.
10. Sometimes it was wonderful to look forward to these events, but sometimes it was a have-to thing, and something you could not get out of.
11. We would pack the car two days in advance and I even had clothes that I called my "Nebraska clothes".

12. We usually plan on the event of Sunday steak dinner a couple days in advance. Mom always plans it and it is quite formal.

13. On the way over, we would see the hills of West Virginia and that always got me real excited.

14. I call everyone now and get it arranged, but before me, it was my mother's job. She just got tired of doing it, so, I have inherited it.

15. We make lots of homemade ice cream and I am the one who gets everyone together.

16. I didn't do anything this year and as a result, it didn't happen.

17. It doesn't seem like anyone cares except me although they will ask what happened to me that I didn't prepare for the event.

18. In anticipation and preparation, Mom would do all the getting together of everybody and cook all the food for the entire trip.

19. We always asked the person what they wanted for their birthday and where they wanted to eat.

20. When we would go to get the plane tickets, I would begin to get excited.

21. Mother would start organizing us weeks ahead, and we had certain things we had to pack.

22. Before the trip every year, the dog would run and hide in the car so she would not be left behind.

23. I now try to plan ahead and help mom by asking her what we are going to do for so and so's birthday.

24. I always looked forward for months for this event.

25. Mother would plan about a month ahead trying to get everybody's input on where they wanted to go.

26. I went out of town before my birthday one year and I was afraid I wouldn't get back in time for my birthday.

27. My uncles and aunts would start preparing the barbeque pit days before the reunion so to get it just right for the event. They even painted it the same color red every year.

28. My brother and I would start getting our stuff together days before we took our trip to the relatives. We had to not forget anything.

29. I always looked forward to the trip and we would always buy new clothes in anticipation.

30. Mom had to work especially hard those two summers we went to the recreational park to make enough money to go, so we just stopped going as it was just too expensive for my family.

31. My mom would start making cakes and pies to take with us to the 4th of July family party and my dad would buy fireworks. I liked to go with him to buy them.

32. I would wash my horse and get him all fixed up in his show tackle for the relatives and friends who came by.

33. I remember we would be dressed usually too early and then we would just walk around and be bored until people came. I usually got in trouble by getting dirty.

34. It was hard to get any special attention before the event as everyone seemed so busy.

35. We would all start talking about the vacation and where we wanted to go.

Patterned Family Interactions:

1. My sister and I would set the table for dinner.

2. Before it happened, I always felt like yuk! that we had to do this again tonight. I would try getting sick or to fall asleep but that didn't work.

3. The first of the week Mom was tolerable as the house was clean and she just seemed happier. As the week went on and

the house deteriorated, Mom got more and more angry and out of control.

4. We would sit on the couch. My father would honk the horn and my mother would say, "go greet your father" and then we would wash our hands and sit down to eat. This happened the same way all my life until I moved out on my own.

5. I always wash my face and brush my teeth before bedtime. It's funny, but I can't go to sleep if I forget to do that.

6. My mother prepared dinner every night and you even knew before hand what you were going to have by what night it was.

7. I had my job of setting the table and helping Mom who did all the cooking.

8. We always said a prayer before dinner.

9. Kids would set the table and Mom always had kids helping. Mom worked hard getting dinner ready every night for seven and still watch kids. Dad didn't do much other than just come home and eat.

10. We always said grace and no one could eat until everyone was at the table.

11. We would always have to do our homework first before we could watch TV.

12. My dad would always get up before everyone else and start the day.

13. My dad has his favorite chair and sits in it every night before dinner.

14. We always said grace before dinner.

15. We always asked who was going to be there for dinner and how many determined where we ate.

16. We were suppose to do our homework as soon as we got home from school.

17. It was always a chore for my mom to help me collect all my stuff to go to school.

18. Mom always prepared a list of things we were suppose to do when we got home from school. Rarely did we do it but she kept it up anyway.

COMMUNICATION

This area contains information concerning roles, affect, and significance and symbolism.

Family Celebrations:

1. Lots of conflict happens, especially with my father and myself.

2. Dad can really set the tone of Christmas with his mood.

3. One Christmas I ran away from home because of the conflict between Dad and I.

4. Yes, there was always a lot of excitement around Christmas, always.

5. I still feel the excitement about Christmas and still decorate my apartment right after Thanksgiving.

6. My sister and I would prompt the decorating of the house when we became teenagers. Mom didn't do that anymore.

7. My grandmother made our ornaments for the tree and we still use the same ones.

8. My favorite thing to do with Dad when I was little was to listen to the Santa spotting report. That was the only time I remember feeling special to him.

9. It was really difficult being one of the youngest. You didn't get much attention.

10. Christmas was important and we celebrated like most families and go out and by gifts, etc. but, there always was a strong spiritual component.

11. My mother and father organized Christmas although my dad did a lot because my mom worked a lot and he didn't.
12. We had all kinds of fruit cake and strudel that came from my mother's side of the family. There is a strong German tradition in my family.
13. My grandmother was pure German like my grandfather and they always brought an ethnic flavor to things. I always remember her waisel without alcohol.
14. Resentments on my mother's part toward my dad seemed to be put away for a few days.
15. It was a time for me to connect with people and acknowledge them and let them know I loved them.
16. I think Christmas has always been the family favorite.
17. It seemed to be the happiest time for the family.
18. It seemed to be the one day that there wasn't any fighting or bickering.
19. Everybody seemed to be thankful for what they had.
20. When I was younger, we didn't have a lot of money but it seemed like those were the best times.
21. You had to give of yourself rather than what you could buy.
22. My dad was laid off and the only income was my mom's Avon route and I wanted a bicycle real bad. We couldn't afford it but I woke up Christmas morning and there was that darn bike. Dad had gone to salvage yards and collected parts and made a bike for me and that meant so much. I really knew they loved me at that moment.
23. That Christmas always sticks out in my mind because there was a lot of feelings and a lot of emotions. Everything we got for one another was hard earned.
24. Mom always put the lights on the tree. Everybody had their tasks and roles in the family. Mom was always the

center of getting things together but now she has handed this to me.

25. There was a real group feeling at Christmas. It seemed that this was the only time of the year that people did things without having to be told over and over.

26. There was always so much food and very special foods that we do not fix any other time of the year.

27. My grandmother's cornbread dressing is always a sign of something going on special as we do not have it unless there is a very special event going on.

28. There is a coffee table cover that is a symbol to me of a very special time and I got it this year. It really meant to me that I was grown up and my parents had accepted me as such.

29. People feel closer together generally during this time. I wanted this time of the year to be something pure and true, do you think I'm crazy? Everyone put on a face and were nice to each other but I really felt the way I was feeling. I was happy everyone liked one another. But I could not always trust anybody else. It always felt as if everyone else was putting on a front.

30. Grandmother had ornaments that been given to her by her mother and it was just wonderful.

31. This was such a happy occasion.

32. We had lots of festivity and I have tried to carry her traditions on, as she taught me so much about those special times.

33. My grandmother ran it for a while, then my mother, and now it is my job.

34. There always seems to be good tones at the table during this time and you only hear laughter and acknowledgements.

35. The problems of the world could not get in at least at this meal. We were a family during this time and everybody seemed to feel like a family.

36. It was acceptable to do the huggings and the "I love yous" during this time.

37. It was the one clear time that I felt close to everyone.

38. I could physically go up and touch people in my family during this time.

39. My grandmother always treated me special and she touched and loved on me a lot and it was great. It was great being her favorite.

40. Mom is the organizer of all the events.

41. My mother is the influence of the occasion. Her family was the same way and we got lots of our rituals from her family.

42. For me, it is more of a time of giving to others than receiving them. I like to acknowledge people at Christmas.

43. In our relationships, we wanted to please each other. The family is a very festive family due to the Italian influence.

44. People made sacrifices to acknowledge each other in the family and especially during this time of year.

45. I was the youngest so everyone looked to me to have a good time so everyone else would have a good time.

46. My role was to wrap all the presents that were not mine and we would put them under the tree, Mom and I.

47. My job was to figure out what was in each box.

48. I play Santa and hand the presents out.

49. It just is not the excitement that it use to be now that I'm not a child. The surprise element is gone.

50. I even decorate my apartment now although I'm alone because it was such an important event for me all my life.

51. Relationships seem closer during this time.

52. There seems to be more conflict than usual within me as I can't buy what I would like for everybody.
53. After Dad left, we still kept Christmas going although it wasn't the same after that.
54. We all chipped in, but Mother kept us on track.
55. My mother's parents were a strong influence and we got lots of tradition from them. They were big on M & Ms and they were always there. I cannot see M & Ms and not feel Christmas.
56. I remember feeling close.
57. My mom collected things from all over the world but we did not have anything special for Christmas.
58. It gave us a chance to share even though we did not have a lot of money.
59. It was a time of sharing, peace, and love.
60. My mother organized these events when she was alive and we always had a good time. Now my older sister does it.
61. I would sit on Santa's knee every year when I was a kid and I was always scared to even up to the last time when I was about 10.
62. I think people feel closer together during Christmas.
63. All my relatives spend Christmas together and Dad will always dress up like Santa.
64. We use a special menorah that has been handed down from my mother's family that is real sacred and beautiful.
65. People felt neither closer together or further apart. It seemed just like all the other times. We could take it or leave it.
66. When I was real young it was somewhat regular but as I got to be four or five, especially after my parents divorced, it became real irregular and sad.

67. I remember after Christmas, feeling the "is that all there is?" feeling.

68. My mother raised us by herself but she tried to keep the holidays a special time.

69. I was the oldest so I was expected to help a great deal and I really think I was like another parent to the younger kids especially during this time.

70. I do all the rituals in the family now as my mother has permanently retired and left that job to me.

71. All the females do all the labor and got it all together but the males in my family including my father and my brother did nothing to help and I resent that to this day.

72. Although I enjoy it, I still feel the impact of a lot of work.

73. We now will pick on the one sister and the men who do not help out.

74. The coming together sure will bring up some of the differences.

75. Christmas was a special time and everybody seemed especially nice to one another.

76. We make up a Christmas story and everyone adds to the story as it goes around. I started the tradition as I wanted to do something that the whole family was involved in. I wanted us to have the experience of closeness as a family. We have never given gifts to each other much as we have never had enough money but we do the story and that acts as a gift to each other.

77. It seems as if people are getting further and further apart. There has been so much loss and death in the family that getting together just reminds us of who is not there.

78. There is a lot of strain to get together and that has always been the case ever since I was a child. It seems like no one wants to get together like I do.

79. I remember my brother gave me a big, pink stuffed gorilla and that was the best thing anyone has ever done for me. It was wonderful.

80. My mother was emotionally ill most of my childhood so nothing happened.

81. I remember my parents fighting before we went to see the Christmas lights because he did not want to go and Mother would have a fit and make him.

82. You could loose yourself in the fantasy of the lights.

83. People always seemed disappointed that Christmas was not a bigger deal than it was.

84. When I am in a relationship, it is not so bad (Christmas) but just with my family, it is awful.

85. Although my mom and I had lots of tension between us usually, we still felt the same way about the celebrations in the family and that they were important.

86. My job was to help Mom and see that everybody else was doing their part.

87. We all felt real close together and I always felt great.

88. We went out and had great fun with all the stockings and gifts and all the fantasy of Christmas.

89. My oldest sister would not participate in the early morning celebration so we left her alone.

90. It was great fun, except for the underlying tension of my oldest sister, who always had a growl on her face. I don't know when that got started but it must have been pretty early. She always resented being awakened by her little sisters and brother.

91. Mom did it all and was the center of all the organization.

92. We have particular places to sit to open our gifts and my sister usually sits the furthest away.

93. If my sister was not in charge, she did not want anything to do with it.

94. It seemed that my mother and father really communicated well during this time.

95. The youngest sibling rivalry seemed to get worse during this time.

96. Dad was always in control of how much turkey everyone got, which irritated me.

97. We have a 100 year old table cloth that has been handed down from my relatives in my mother's family.

98. My mother was the center of all that getting done.

99. It is a real special time for me and still is because my grandmother is there and she thinks I'm great. She is the only person I know that I'm a favorite of.

100. People use to come home for Christmas but since my dad's death, Mom and I go to other people's homes.

101. Mother was always the organizer of our lives and holidays anyway, so his passing on changed things a little, but we kept on going.

102. I kind of felt like an outcast a lot of the time and my brother and I had a serious rivalry going on.

103. We just felt like there was never enough attention for all of us.

104. A lot of times holidays were difficult because my dad was an alcoholic; so, a holiday was never the way you wanted it to be.

105. Holidays were very mother centered.

106. My brother did not participate in the preparation but he liked to fight over who had the biggest present or basket at Easter.

107. My dad was alcoholic and he had a bad habit of getting real drunk on those days like Christmas. But good, old Mom

would keep them going and pretend that nothing was happening.

108. We ate a lot in my family and people acknowledged each other with food and felt support with it.

109. I am the single person in the family and a lot of times, I feel like an outcast waiting to be asked to come to Christmas somewhere with some of the married sisters.

110. Since we don't have husbands, Mom and I do that together, that is, wait to be asked by some of the married sisters.

111. I don't like my family when we are all together, but my mother seems to have a fantasy that we need to do that or that it is going to work well sometime which it doesn't.

112. Mother was the center of the activity and she wanted us all to participate.

113. Usually money was an issue, but Mother seemed to make it special anyway.

114. Mother would do a lot of cooking and baking and now I'm doing a lot of that in her place.

115. It was definately a mother-centered activity and the other mom really made things easier on my mom by sharing the load.

116. I liked Thanksgiving as it was short and people seemed to get along well unlike Christmas.

117. In my family, Christmas was difficult and I had lots of disappointment.

118. I always wanted for people to express how they felt to one another and to feel special but that never happened and I always was disappointed.

119. Everyone seemed to get along real well and my family seemed to do a lot more touching and holding. My brother even hugged me one year on a holiday.

120. I think that was the time (4th of July) we were really a family and everyone felt connected to everyone else.

121. My mom's real brothers got along great but my mom's step side of the family really irritated me. They seemed quite different than us.

122. The Christmas holidays are the best time for my family and we always have lots of fun.

123. My grandmother cooked the turkey upside down one year and was real embarrassed but it was great anyway.

124. My mom is the center of getting everything together especially with extended family. I am the center of the immediate family as I am the most dependable of the children.

125. I think Mom is tired and has raised her family and wants to retire secretly.

126. Dad relies on Mom to do everything and he likes her to do it. He thinks she does it the best.

127. My mom started collecting Christmas ornaments when we were young and we still have them now. They mean a lot to me.

128. I have always looked forward to Christmas except for the expense. Money means a lot to my family and people buy expensive gifts to let them know how much they feel about each other. I wish we had another way.

129. My mother was not religious and to her it was just a religious holiday and it just irritated her.

130. We always felt closer as a family during this time and, even though we are not an openly affectionate family, we still knew how each other felt.

131. We always sat in special places while opening presents and each of us would watch as everyone opened their presents one at a time. I think this was important so everyone could acknowledge everyone else.

132. My grandmother would always start her long winded prayer and there were a few times my cousins and I would get in trouble because we would start laughing.

133. Food represented a lot of things in our family and we ate a lot. I think it was a way people nurtured one another and took care of one another. I had a weight problem for years I think because of this.

134. We always had Christmas dinner buffet style and everyone could sit where they wanted. Everyone always seemed so happy doing it that way.

135. I wrapped up my sister's library book up one time when I was little because I wanted to give my mother a present. I remember feeling bad that we did not have a lot and my mother worked so hard.

136. I looked forward to Christmas but I always felt let down afterwards.

Family Traditions:

1. We had a policy that you could do whatever you wanted on your birthday and everyone would go along with it.

2. Even when we are far away from each other, my sisters send me a present. The guys don't though, and don't even buy cards.

3. My oldest sister graduated and all the adults took her to dinner and I was real angry about that and couldn't wait till I graduated so they would do that for me. That was a tradition with all the kids.

4. Family reunions occurred every year that my grandmother organized it, and it was an all day affair. I looked forward to it.

5. We would take a trip to Alabama every year and we would go by car and my mother and father would fight. About halfway, things would subside.

6. I would have to hang out with my dad because my mom would get close to her family and he would feel left out.

7. I always didn't want to leave and I would cry every year. I felt loved and accepted by my mother's family.

8. My grandmother has traditionally made the wedding veils for everyone in my family and she said to me last year that I had better hurry up and get married soon because she may not be around to make my veil.

9. I have sung in the last 16 weddings in my family. It is becoming a tradition for me to sing.

10. Most people feel closer together at the weddings especially the married people. Us singles feel left out and I find myself feeling very jealous and depressed. I have a tendency to pull back because that person is getting what I want.

11. When my sister got married, I totally withdrew. We are twins and we always had a pact that we would get married together and have a double wedding and stick it to our parents. I felt betrayed and was angry at her for a long time about that.

12. Mother always cooks and drives herself crazy.

13. This doesn't seem to be as big a deal as Christmas so things go back to normal quicker.

14. I want it to be more special than it is.

15. It disappoints me that it is suppose to be a happy occasion and then we have friction.

16. When I was a child, my mom went all out, but, now we just go out to dinner and it is just not as fun.

17. It seems to be breaking down as we are getting older.

18. Special foods are an important part. Dad gets his favorite chicken and dumplings while my sister gets her favorite pie.

19. Relationships don't change during this time as much as they do Christmas.

20. It's not as loving a time as Christmas.

21. I feel irritated that people don't get into it more than they do.

22. After the hurricane came and our house was wiped out, my mother still went to a lot of trouble to have a celebration for me at my aunt's house even though it had only been a few days after the disaster. That really sticks out in my mind. I felt really loved and cared for.

23. My mother took a special secretarial job parttime just to get me a special tape recorder I wanted for my birthday. I almost felt guilty about it.

24. Acknowledging each other is a big deal in my family.

25. Food is a big symbol in my family for nurturance and people get their favorite food if it is their special day.

26. You had to act on family loyalty in order to look good and receive love.

27. Resentments came up around the have-tos in the family.

28. Everybody had a strong sense of duty in the family.

29. In every hotel, because I was the youngest, I slept on the cot or rollaway bed and I hated it. I would have rather slept in the car. No one paid any attention to me.

30. I always hung around Mom more and I always paired up with her.

31. The boys were fighting all the time and wanted more attention than usual on the vacations.

32. My mother's maiden name is O'Brian and so we definately take the St. Patrick's Day holiday seriously.

33. Valentine's Day was a big deal, and if I don't get something from someone that means something to me on that day, I can really get depressed.

34. Mother organized all the traditions, but she has handed that to my oldest sister and I don't think she does as good a job.

35. Our family does feel closer when it parties.
36. I never wanted to go back home afterwards, and I would cry about the first hour of the drive back.
37. When I see the cornfields of Nebraska, it reminds me of our ritual to Nebraska every year.
38. I couldn't sleep the night before when I was a kid because I was so excited about our trip.
39. My dad lights a menorah every year on the day my grandfather, his father, died as a tribute to his life and he still does. It is quite a beautiful gesture to me. I don't know if it is a handed down gesture or my father's idea.
40. It seems as if our family is closer together during the Jewish holidays especially. I feel better after I have gone through these events.
41. When it happened (trip to Ocean City), I was on top of the world. It was the only time the family was ever together. We even got along because we had a great time. It did not happen often.
42. For a while, they did not have indoor plumbing so we had an outhouse that we went in. I don't see a picture of an outhouse that I don't think of that time.
43. We argued, my mom and I, during that time but I think we argued because there was so much anticipation and excitement.
44. My father left my mother to raise the four kids so we never had much money for vacations to go anywhere or do anything.
45. I had a fantasy that families should be close, and I had some disappointments in it being different than that.
46. I cannot remember one thing that was a tradition for our family. We did not do one thing as a family by ourselves.

47. Three summers in a row we went to Garner State Park and we had fun because we could get away from our parents and the tension of the family. I always felt we were not going to get there because of the fight between my parents before we went.
48. I have good memories not because of my family but because of my friends.
49. My sister and I hated the fighting between our parents before our trips.
50. Relationships seem to change and people felt closer. People forgot their battles for a few days and we all got along. I felt real good about it.
51. Jealousy would sometimes flare up during these times between siblings.
52. I use to get real angry at Mom's compulsiveness during this time.
53. Everytime I see a cabin in the woods in a picture or movie, I think of our cabin. It had been in the family for years on my mother's side. People were always more relaxed there, and we seemed to accept each other more and get along. I miss those times a lot.
54. Mother was the center of getting these things going especially birthdays.
55. There would always be a homemade cake with candles and food was the center of things.
56. Now, even though my sisters are far away, we still try to remember birthdays.
57. We sometimes forget and it is kind of bad if we forget. Nobody ever forgot when I was child.
58. We hated Dad's pickiness during this time, and Mom and the kids would join together and fight Dad.
59. He wanted things done a certain way all the time. I resented that.

60. Mom really tried to go out of her way for people to be special on their birthday, but it was hard to do.
61. Mom would ask us what we wanted and she would try to get everybody together.
62. We are the only females in my family and she and I are the ones that care about those things.
63. I always felt uncomfortable because I did not like being the center of attention.
64. People did things more or less because that is what you do.
65. People may have wanted to be there but you just couldn't tell because no one let anybody know what you felt.
66. Mom makes things into something special. It is real important to her and I really appreciate her for that.
67. We had conflict around where we wanted to go and I always lost.
68. Once we were on vacation, everyone seemed to have a good time.
69. I liked being with my little brother on vacation and he seemed to do things with me more. He also would claim me as a sister for once.
70. I use to resent that we didn't have the things other families had. We couldn't go on vacation or do like others.
71. The only time I ever saw my mom in a bathing suit was on a vacation. I really felt good about that.
72. With all the kids, we would go on vacation in shifts. I never got to go with my older siblings and that always made me mad. Of course, they really didn't want me to go.
73. Birthdays weren't quite as big a deal as Christmas although everybody got their favorite cake. You were special on that day.

74. I went out of town with my boyfriend one year and I was miserable. It is just not the same not being home on your birthday.

75. We are not a real hugging family but there is still a lot of closeness. I have several girlfriends that are real jealous of my family. They come from divorced families and they say it is wonderful being in my house on special occasions like birthdays.

76. We feel real close to one another but we just don't talk about it a lot. We just tell you by giving you things and recognizing your birthday.

77. My dad has adopted my mom's family as he really loves them and they love him. He never was close to his family. They love him just like a son and have a big party for his birthday.

78. People really closer during this time and do a lot of sharing.

79. It seemed like we had lots of conflict when ever we started getting ready for the relatives. I don't think any of us looked forward to it. It was just a big chore. But we kept doing it anyway.

80. There was always a lot of drinking at these events and I hated it.

81. We had this tradition where we would tell the dumbest thing that the birthday person had done all year. It was great fun until my brother told a real bad thing on my sister and we stopped that fast. She was mad for a long time about that.

82. Everyone just feels loved even though we don't talk about it.

83. We do a lot of sharing on the Sunday steak dinner and I usually start out first. That usually is my role since I am the oldest. If I start it, it goes well. If not, it doesn't seem to happen. This meal can go on for hours.

Patterned Family Interactions:

1. We all ate together and Mother always prepared the food.
2. My father always sat at the head of the table and my mother always sat near the kitchen so she could get things.
3. My father doled out what everybody ate, and you had to eat what was on your plate, or you couldn't leave the table. I hated that.
4. My oldest brothers and sisters always told about what they did at school, and I always felt left out, because they were so much older than me.
5. No one seemed to be interested in what happened to me.
6. We shared events of the day so everyone felt closer together.
7. I don't eat dinner now and it may be that it is because dinnertime was not fun for me.
8. The bedtime devotional was a real obsession with my dad. At times, it was real okay to have happen, but at other times, it felt real empty. I didn't feel connected to my parents spiritually. I didn't feel they had the right to tell me when I should pray.
9. My dad used a special Bible, but I remember the Southern Baptist Daily Devotional, and I can't see it now without thinking about that time.
10. That was a way Dad had to try to feel connected to me and Mom. Mom resisted a lot as I did.
11. I went through a lot of anger about it as I got into the teenage years. I would even go into it stoned at times.
12. Mother was definately in charge of the ritual of cleaning the house.
13. It seemed to be a perpetual thing, and I got sick of it. I started to work early when I was an adolescent, because I got sick of cleaning the house.

14. The way my mom cleans the house is, she tells you how to do it, then goes in and reads the newspaper, then later comes in and tells you that you did not do it right. That drove me nuts.

15. It was frustrating, and you could do your best job, but she would still tell you that it was just shaping up.

16. People do not compliment people in my family. They just give less criticism when they are pleased. The idea is to make you work harder I guess.

17. There was always a lot of yelling and Mom was always abusive if the house was not clean.

18. The house clean represented to my mother control and things being okay.

19. It was her way of pulling her life together but to do that she used us.

20. I wonder if she didn't blame us kids for her unhappiness.

21. Mom doesn't seem to be as picky about the house since she started work.

22. It was a neat experience getting ready for school, because we had to go in order, and if you didn't, you were lost.

23. The elementary school we went to is still in my neighborhood, and symbolizes lots of warm times for me.

24. We felt closer because we had to consider the other person's feelings. We were all squashed in the front seat of Dad's truck and we touched a lot there.

25. It was a special time to be with my father without my mother running interference.

26. With six people in the house, somebody always gets irritated, but nobody leaves mad, according to my mother.

27. Either me or my sister would be in the kitchen helping my mother cook dinner.

28. My mother was the assigner of duties and we did them.
29. It meant a lot to my dad that my sister and I would run out the door when he honked after he came home from work. Until recently, he thought we did it voluntarily.
30. Dinner seemed to have a conflictual tone. We liked to debate and argue, but my father would not allow that at the table.
31. People express how they feel in my family and I felt tension at the table because I'm not good at that.
32. I was the quiet one and I didn't feel that what I had to say was important.
33. We would have guests at the table every now and then, but we would just argue in front of them.
34. Mom would always come to my room with me every night and put me to bed. Even when I go over there, now, she still puts me to bed and I make her.
35. I have always turned on the TV. I go to sleep with it on because it is a sense of someone being there. I always have had someone near me.
36. When the family dwindled away, the dinnertime broke away.
37. When my parents divorced, things changed, and the routines were less rigid. I missed them.
38. People shared their days together and mainly my brother and sister talked about what they did at school.
39. My mother always made me clean my plate whether I was full or not. I resented that.
40. Flowers on the table are a symbol of the formality of the event. People dress for dinner also.
41. People seem closer together during this time, and I look forward to this time. We do not ask guests, usually, to this dinner, as, this is for family only.

42. My mom's side of the family handed the Sunday dinner tradition down and did this every Sunday as well.
43. People felt lots of anger all the time and out of place and in the way.
44. Mom liked to go, and do her own thing, and I felt like we were in the way most of the time.
45. I resented washing dishes every night.
46. Relationships seemed closer during this time, and we shared our thoughts about the day with one another.
47. I remember dinnertime with fond memories.
48. I admire my sister as she has her girls all organized for bed every night, and, it amazes me as we never had that.
49. The only thing I can remember is my sister and I fighting over who was going to take a bath first.
50. There was a lot of unhappiness and conflict. My sister ran away and got married at 16 and my brother died in the war.
51. Everybody seems to be so unhappy all the time.
52. Mother was always tired and distraught.
53. We depended on Mother to structure things, and if she was not in a good place, it did not get done.
54. My sister and dad use to fight a lot.
55. Some days I was in charge, and the next day was someone else's day.
56. We always felt further apart, as we felt like we had to be there which everybody resented.
57. Everybody had to share something about their day. It was more a time for the kids to talk than the parents.

58. The youngest siblings rivalry sometimes got difficult at this time.
59. When my dad was gone, no one sat in his chair and we continued just the same.
60. Mother was the center of everything and was the boss.
61. People sat in regular places, and if they were not there for some reason, no one sat in their place.
62. We could not play at the table and things had a serious tone.
63. I got real annoyed at Mom being so picky about manners. I use to want to be rude to annoy her, but, I didn't very often, as we all were afraid of her secretly.
64. Mostly Mom, Dad, and the older kids talked at the table and I was just invisible, as usual.
65. My role was to make sure everyone did their part for dinner for years.
66. I remember being angry around dinner because the men would be watching TV and the women would be in the kitchen cooking or cleaning up. They would not even take in their plates.
67. Eating is a problem in my family. My mother carries lots of weight and my sister is even bigger than Mom. Eating was a way of comfort in my family. It was also a way people nurtured one another.
68. I always felt closer as a family especially when we would discuss the shows afterwards.
69. I think we always looked forward to eating and watching TV together.
70. My mom always cleans the kitchen and my dad always reads the paper.
71. My dad gets up at five every morning as long as I can remember.

72. My mom has never worked and has always been the little homemaker type.

73. I really appreciated that about her being home because she was always there for us whenever we needed her and was accessible.

74. My dad has his own chair as the head of the house and he sits there every night and my mom waits on him.

75. Mom use to be more family oriented than she is now. Dad seems to be more so now.

76. I am the most dependable child so I have inherited the organizational role.

77. We always had dinner the same way every night and you had to be there no matter what. My parents were real rigid about that. It really bothered me that they weren't more flexible.

78. I always set the table for dinner every night. It was the way I contributed to the family.

79. I always looked forward to dinner as we would share our days together.

80. My step-father was a real tyrant and I was afraid of him so I did not look forward to dinner when my mother was married to him.

81. My brother and I had a good time with each other during this time and we would kick each other a lot under the table.

82. After the divorce, we went back to the no schedule bit which worked best for me. I was use to it.

STABILIZATION

Family Celebrations:

1. Christmas was a very important aspect of my family.
2. Everyone was expected to come home for Christmas.

3. We always went to midnight mass together and still do.
4. No one would miss midnight mass, not even now.
5. I use to come home from school and just bake and bake.
6. We always put up the Christmas tree the same time every year.
7. My mother made our stockings and we all had one.
8. Things are different now that we are older. People now come and go as they please. This is very different.
9. Christmas was the same way every year. Recently, it has changed because the children are becoming more spread out.
10. We would go to the church for a service the day before Christmas.
11. We had the Christmas tree like most Catholic families but we didn't travel anymore, we stayed home.
12. The house was always decorated. We always started three or four weeks before Christmas.
13. The same star was always on the tree and that was my dad's contribution to Christmas.
14. We always had wo or three manger scenes all over the house.
15. Christmas day was with the traditional meal. I sometimes brought a friend to dinner but we always had the dinner.
16. Extended family really didn't participate except for my grandmother.
17. We always sat in the same places with my dad at the head of the table.
18. Christmas was the same every year.

19. It was a giving time for me. I would invest lots of time and effort in giving gifts. I would go Christmas carolling and do things with the church group.

20. This was the same way every year in my family.

21. We pick one night that everybody goes together and picks out the tree.

22. Mom's family always did Christmas the same way we did except that my grandfather would go out and chop down a tree.

23. There was no other way for our family to be at Christmas. We did it the same way every year.

24. We use to go to my grandmother's for Christmas. She would home bake everything and there was lots of people around all the time. We loved going there. She had lots of Christmas books and movies and lots and lots of tradition.

25. We would have a big table dinner with lots of formality.

26. People toast alot in our family at the big formal Christmas dinner.

27. It was a very predictable, stable event in my family.

28. Giving out presents at Christmas, everybody sits in certain places, and the same routine happens the same way since I can remember.

29. We celebrated every holiday that came around the calendar. We are a festive family with any excuse to get together.

30. Soon as everybody arrived, we would dive into the presents.

31. Dad always sits in his chair, and we all sit around him.

32. Before my parents divorced, I knew that Christmas would be almost the same even if we were in a new place. Later,

that was not true and Christmas was not reliable. I was 10 when my parents divorced.

33. My family is Jewish but we celebrate Christmas too because we live in a Christian neighborhood.

34. I always had a stocking, and I could open one gift on Christmas eve. I always begged to open more, but they never let me. We would get up early the next day and open gifts and Mom would fix breakfast.

35. We would never miss the candlelight service.

36. There are the same holiday foods that we have served for generations in my family. We have a three generation fruit salad that is even made in the same crystal bowl.

37. My dad was not an instigator of anything and he never bought Mom or the kids a gift or anything.

38. My grandmother made us a star for the top of the tree and we used it when we had a tree. Sometimes my mom didn't want a tree when she was ill and we didn't have one.

39. My grandmother would play the organ every year, and we all loved to hear her, and we would stand around the organ and listen.

40. Everybody always went to church, and then, we would come home and open presents, one at a time, so we could all enjoy them.

41. My little brother and sisters still wake me up on Christmas morning early so we can go out and enjoy the excitement.

42. A tradition now is that we throw our Christmas paper at my youngest sister and she is in charge of throwing the paper away.

43. Everyone cooked or prepared something so that made it especially great, even the men.

44. Some of the change came from people growing up.

45. Christmas was a stable event in the family and Mom would always cook her special cake.
46. We always had the same meals that we did not eat any other time of the year.
47. Extended family was a big part of Christmas every year.
48. We always went to my grandmother's and had a great time.
49. We don't open presents with the extended family just with the immediate family members.
50. We all live at home still and my older sister even moved back home after her divorce. She missed Christmas with the family.
51. My mother always makes her homemade bread and my grandmother always makes the stuffing.
52. My dad always sends us money at Christmas to help out.
53. My mom is always the center of organizing Christmas especially with the extended family.
54. Dad doesn't help Mom that much but he does cut the meat every year.
55. We always decorate the tree together and always buy the tree together. My sister got real mad one Christmas because we bought the tree without her.
56. We always spend at least 50 dollars a gift. That means you love that person.
57. We have lots of baked goods that are homemade.
58. My dad always sits on the floor and hands out the presents every year. Nobody can do that but him.
59. We all wait for each person to open their present and take turns.
60. We always spend lots of money at Christmas especially my parents. Its getting harder for me and harder.

61. Even though there are ten children, we still buy everyone presents. It doesn't have to cost that much and some things are even made. We just seem to hold on to that. Everyone brings their wives and boyfriends to my parents for Christmas.

Family Traditions:

1. Since we are Catholic, baptisms and the first confession are big events. These events happened regularly as we are a large family and they are always the same way for each person.
2. We went to Alabama every year to visit my mom's family.
3. In our family, the bridal shower is always two full months before the wedding.
4. It use to be mandatory to attend to get love and now it isn't.
5. It happens just like the postman.
6. We all got in the car and drove to Nebraska every year at the same time to visit the same people all my life.
7. Mom would always fix a picnic lunch to take on the way, and we rarely stopped except to go to the restroom.
8. I know no matter where I am on the earth, my mother and father will be in a synagogue on the Jewish holidays.
9. We went around the same time every year, around the fourth of July. We would have a big party for my grandmother, as it was her birthday at that time, and we would make the traditional homemade ice cream.
10. My little brother always wraps his birthday present to whoever in Christmas paper. That is a tradition.
11. Everyone gets a cake on their birthday and everyone is treated with special care.
12. Mom always makes your favorite cake for your birthday. My brother likes a special pie.

13. We told the person's dumbest act for the year at their birthday dinner.

14. Everyone is usually there for the birthday dinners.

15. My mother worked all the time and we never had any money so we really didn't recognize any birthdays or anything. It really does feel good when my friends do now however.

16. You can always depend on Dad barbequing on Sunday afternoon for steak dinner.

17. You always got to go to the resturant of your choice for your birthday.

Patterned Family Interactions:

1. We lived in a very structured, predictable household although as we got in our teenage years, things got more chaotic.

2. My brother couldn't drum at the table or sing. The rules were set by my dad and strictly enforced.

3. Every night I would take my bath, have supper, and then every night I would go to my parents room and we would have devotional. My dad would always lead the devotional and my mom would always be asleep by the time it was over. We did that from the time I can remember until the time I went to college.

4. Housecleaning was a definite ritual at our house. It started on Friday afternoon and continued until Sunday afternoon and there were certain tasks we all had to perform.

5. Getting ready for school was something, as we all went to the same elementary school, and Dad took us in the front seat of his truck every morning.

6. My sister sat beside me because I was her protector and was in charge of her.

7. Supper was served every night at six since I can remember. We each had our own colored glass and mine was green and my sister's was pink.
8. For breakfast, lunch, or dinner, my place was my place only.
9. We always said grace and rotated it at every meal.
10. My mother was a teacher and she would come home sometimes later than we did and be tired. She would have liked someone to have started dinner and if you wanted to eat, you had to help prepare.
11. My mother prepared dinner every night and you even knew before hand what you were going to have by what night it was.
12. We did not have regular routines. Things were done randomly whenever. People came in and out and would grab what they could to eat.
13. My mother worked all the time and we never had a dinner time or a bed time. We just ate what we could and fell asleep when we got tired wherever.
14. We never sat down to a table together.
15. Mother did leave a list of all the things she wanted us to do on the air conditioning unit and my brothers would beat me up if I did not do their chores so I usually did them all.
16. My mother worked and didn't get home till late so we were out on our own till fairly late. We really fended for ourselves almost the entire time I grew up.
17. My mother worked in the school cafeteria and she brought things home from there for us to eat.
18. When I got home, I had to clean the house and get dinner fixed before my mom came home.
19. Dinnertime was very important and we had to always use our best manners there.

20. Mom sat next to the kitchen so she could maintain control.

21. I think my mom tried to make things as structured as possible to try to counteract the alcoholism.

22. Dad would be late for dinner, or not show up, or show up drunk.

23. We all loved TV and still do and we would always watch a favorite show together and discuss it afterwards.

24. It was just eat when you can at my house.

25. We didn't have a set time to eat because I think my father worked shift work and my mom worked.

26. There was a definite rule that my brother and I had to eat dinner no matter what.

27. When we lived with my mom between marriages, we did not have much routine and you just didn't know what was going to happen next.

28. Since there were eight children in my family, routine was important. The only change was when my dad had an industrial accident and we thought he may die for several months. Everything was suspended for a while and we were on our own. He pulled out of it though and is now a body builder. It really changed his life.

29. We always had to eat Sunday breakfast with the family before church if you wanted to or not. That was a pain. Sometimes I just wanted to sleep especially when I was a teenager. I don't think I spoke at that meal for years because I was so resentful. They made me come anyway.

30. Dinner was a real problem solving time in our family and we always talked things out.

31. Dad was always up first every morning and made the coffee for he and Mother. Mother worked too but it was harder for her to get up. We always had to get ourselves up and looking back I think we did pretty good considering that we were kids.

32. We had to straighten our rooms every Saturday before we could go anywhere. It was the law and we all did it even if it meant shoving it in the closet or under the bed which I did. When I finally would clean it out, especially the closet, lots of times it smelled bad from food left uneaten and dirty clothes. My mother must have known about it but she just let me handle it.

33. I always had to help Mother clean the house and I resented that my brother never had to. He really got by with murder.

34. When we were young we had a set dinnertime but as we got more active in after school activities, dinner got later and later.

35. Mother always had a list of things to do and we always ignored it basically.

36. We sisters shared a bathroom and we always took our showers in the same order. We also put on our makeup at the same time in the bathroom. It was funny how that worked out. I don't even remember much conflict during that time just later in the day.

SIGNIFICANT STATEMENTS
PURPOSE IN LIFE INVENTORY

Part B of the PIL deals with the subject's own statements about purpose and self-meaning.

- A. More than anything, I want to live with the Lord.
- B. More than anything, I want to have a happy family and a good husband.
- C. More than anything, I want peace and personal growth.
- D. More than anything, I want to do something good with my life.
- E. More than anything, I want to be free to experience all that life has to offer.
- F. More than anything, I want my PhD.
- G. More than anything, I want to eventually get married.
- H. More than anything, I want to be happy in my future goals.
- I. More than anything, I want to be happy.
- J. More than anything, I want to be successful.
- K. More than anything, I want to be happy with myself.
- L. More than anything, I want to have a very successful and fulfilling life.
- M. More than anything, I want to have a beautiful home full of beautiful furniture.
- N. More than anything, I want freedom.
- O. More than anything, I want to join the Peace Corps.
- P. More than anything, I want to be happy.
- Q. More than anything, I want to be happy.
- R. More than anything, I want to get married.
- S. More than anything, I want a peace of mind.
- T. More than anything, I want to feel comfortable with myself and others.
- U. More than anything, I want peace.
- V. More than anything, I want to decide what to do about my work situation and do it.
- W. More than anything, I want to find the right balance between responsibilities and good times.
- X. More than anything, I want a fulfilling career and a happy family.
- Y. More than anything, I want to graduate from college and find a good job that I enjoy.

Z. More than anything, I want to be married.

Statement #2:

- A. My life is wonderful.
- B. My life is getting better.
- C. My life is filled with good.
- D. My life is sometimes a little crazy.
- E. My life is better today than it ever has been.
- F. My life is fulfilling and changing.
- G. My life is uncompleted as far as marriage goals.
- H. My life is up and down with great happenings.
- I. My life is empty.
- J. My life is going too fast.
- K. My life is out of control.
- L. My life is not as exciting as I would like.
- M. My life is very routine at this time.
- N. My life is boring.
- O. My life is on hold.
- P. My life is confusing.
- Q. My life is happy.
- R. My life is nuts.
- S. My life is confusing.
- T. My life is exciting and challenging.
- U. My life is in turmoil at times.
- V. My life is busy.
- W. My life is routine but not boring.
- X. My life is exciting and satisfying.
- Y. My life is very busy but I enjoy it.
- Z. My life is hectic.

Statement #3:

- A. I hope I can continue to grow toward my goals.
- B. I hope I can give to others so they like me.
- C. I hope I can trust minute by minute.
- D. I hope I can put to use the things I learn.
- E. I hope I can fulfill my expectations to the fullest.
- F. I hope I can feel contented.
- G. I hope I can save more money.
- H. I hope I can achieve some good in a way to benefit people's lives.
- I. I hope I can live to be successful.
- J. I hope I can be extremely rich someday.
- K. I hope I can over come guilt and be content.

- L. I hope I can meet a great looking rich Jewish guy who makes more money than I hopefully will make.
- M. I hope I can make enough money to take trips to wherever I'd like by myself.
- N. I hope I can learn how to be a better person.
- O. I hope I can be free of debt one day soon.
- P. I hope I can reach my goals.
- Q. I hope I can live a complete and satisfying life.
- R. I hope I can pay my bills.
- S. I hope I can make a decision about my life situation.
- T. I hope I can maintain my high standards in all areas of life.
- U. I hope I can accept myself.
- V. I hope I can become more understanding of my boyfriend's feelings so I can understand him more.
- W. I hope I can always be open-minded and ready to learn.
- X. I hope I can be the best I can at being me.
- Y. I hope I can someday be a good wife and mother.
- Z. I hope I can be loved.

Statement #4:

- A. I have achieved great things.
- B. I have achieved a lot in the educational/professional world.
- C. I have achieved a feeling of being worthy of wonderful things.
- D. I have achieved several goals in my personal but still have a ways to go.
- E. I have achieved the greatest goal in life "finding me".
- F. I have achieved much.
- G. I have achieved a successful and meaningful career.
- H. I have achieved many of my educational goals; some of my vocational goals.
- I. I have achieved very little with my time.
- J. I have achieved getting myself almost through college.
- K. I have achieved things most people my age have not.
- L. I have achieved most of my goals.
- M. I have achieved responsibility in that I finally have a decent paying job.
- N. I have achieved a lot of things.
- O. I have achieved education.
- P. I have achieved emotional progress.
- Q. I have achieved most of my goals.
- R. I have achieved I'm not sure what.
- S. I have achieved surviving.

- T. I have achieved good in lifting the self esteem of my brother.
- U. I have achieved lots of things.
- V. I have achieved my goal of becoming an engineer and working in the space program.
- W. I have achieved what I want to academically.
- X. I have achieved being able to handle the world on my own.
- Y. I have achieved some of my goals but have many more to go.
- Z. I have achieved independence.

Statement #5:

- A. My highest aspiration is to participate in the manifestation of God's kingdom of earth.
- B. My highest aspiration is to be happy.
- C. My highest aspiration is to learn and grow.
- D. My highest aspiration is to go to school.
- E. My highest aspiration is to be myself.
- F. My highest aspiration is a private practice, travel the world, and teach at UHCLC.
- G. My highest aspiration is to have a relationship with a person that I can communicate with and love and vice versa.
- H. My highest aspiration is to be the best "me" I can be.
- I. My highest aspiration is to be rich.
- J. My highest aspiration is to be a director of nursing.
- K. My highest aspiration is to conquer the fear of a college education.
- L. My highest aspiration is to marry and have a wonderful family and to have enough money to live like I want.
- M. My highest aspiration is to be married to a decent guy that will put me first and have complete and total consideration for me.
- N. My highest aspiration is to do good.
- O. My highest aspiration is to work in a job where I can help others.
- P. My highest aspiration is to get my PhD before I am forty.
- Q. My highest aspiration is my persistence.
- R. My highest aspiration
- S. My highest aspiration is to succeed.
- T. My highest aspiration is to be a great person and to offer kindness to all.
- U. My highest aspiration is a deeper connectedness with self and others.

- V. My highest aspiration is to have a husband and no children and to share all the good things in life with him such as holidays, nice house, and vacations. I want to continue in my own career.
- W. My highest aspiration is to be respected as an engineer and liked as a person.
- X. My highest aspiration is to have good health and happiness.
- Y. My highest aspiration is to be the best I can be at whatever I do.
- Z. My highest aspiration is to have a family.

Statement #6:

- A. The most hopeless thing is despair.
- B. The most hopeless thing is to get in a defeatist attitude.
- C. The most hopeless thing is to lose hope and faith.
- D. The most hopeless thing is feeling sorry for myself when I can't control what happens.
- E. The most hopeless thing in life is to not live it.
- F. The most hopeless thing is depression.
- G. The most hopeless thing is getting a promised raise from my boss and not getting it.
- H. The most hopeless thing is life without other human beings.
- I. The most hopeless thing in my life is the loss of a friend.
- J. The most hopeless thing is my relationships with men.
- K. The most hopeless thing is the guilt I carry.
- L. The most hopeless thing is finding the right guy.
- M. The most hopeless thing is trying to get out of debt and to obtain the financial position I want to obtain.
- N. The most hopeless thing is to be depressed all the time.
- O. The most hopeless thing is being in debt.
- P. The most hopeless thing is my father's ability to understand feelings.
- Q. The most hopeless thing is to be sick and alone.
- R. The most hopeless thing is a little lost kitten.
- S. The most hopeless thing is pleasing everyone.
- T. The most hopeless thing is to be without control - utterly lost.
- U. The most hopeless thing is useless pain.
- V. The most hopeless thing is the fact that I don't like kids and probably will never have any of my own.

- W. The most hopeless thing is to watch a loved one carry on a self-destructive practice.
- X. The most hopeless thing is nothing is hopeless.
- Y. The most hopeless thing is ?
- Z. The most hopeless thing is peace and justice in Nicaragua.

Statement # 7:

- A. The whole purpose of my life is to grow, learn, love, live, and be.
- B. The whole purpose of my life is to give life and make other people happy.
- C. The whole purpose of my life is to process, enjoy, forgive, and love.
- D. The whole purpose of my life is yet unknown.
- E. The whole purpose of my life is to love people and enjoy life.
- F. The whole purpose of my life is to feel good about my life and enjoy.
- G. The whole purpose of my life is to make myself happy and serene.
- H. The whole purpose of my life is to become what God intends for me to be.
- I. The whole purpose of my life is to give us the opportunity to be happy.
- J. The whole purpose of my life is to make people happy.
- K. The whole purpose of my life is not easy to understand.
- L. The whole purpose of my life is to help others and to be satisfied.
- M. The whole purpose of my life is to go to heaven when I die.
- N. the whole purpose of my life is to love and be loved.
- O. The whole purpose of my life is to achieve happiness for me.
- P. The whole purpose of my life is to first make my parents happy.
- Q. The whole purpose of my life is to get satisfaction out of helping others.
- R. The whole purpose of my life is
- S. The whole purpose of my life is to make myself happy.
- T. The whole purpose of my life is to be happy and make others happy.
- U. The whole purpose of my life is evolving.

- V. The whole purpose of my life is to live semi-comfortably as far as having a nice house, nice car, etc., and sharing those things with someone else.
- W. The whole purpose of my life is something that will probably never be real clear.
- X. The whole purpose of my life is to share love and respect with fellow humans.
- Y. The whole purpose of my life is to be the best I can and maybe help others in their life.
- Z. The whole purpose of my life is to be loving.

Statement # 8:

- A. I get bored only when I am depressed.
- B. I get bored when there is no structure in my life.
- C. I get bored when I choose to get bored.
- D. I get bored when things get too routine.
- E. I get bored when I'm with people who do not enjoy life.
- F. I get bored with stagnant people.
- G. I get bored when there is not anything structured or productive to do.
- H. I get bored waiting.
- I. I get bored with myself.
- J. I get bored waiting for the phone to ring.
- K. I get bored easy.
- L. I get bored having a routine life.
- M. I get bored when I don't have a set routine to follow.
- N. I get bored easily.
- O. I get bored working on the same type of project.
- P. I get bored when I have nothing to look forward to.
- Q. I get bored easily.
- R. I get bored easily.
- S. I get bored when I am alone.
- T. I get bored with routine.
- U. I get bored with too much routine.
- V. I get bored at work sometimes.
- W. I get bored doing only one thing at a time.
- X. I get bored never.
- Y. I get bored when things aren't going as I expect.
- Z. I get bored easily.

Statement #9:

- A. Death is scary but a transition to a different form of life.
- B. Death is scary.

- C. Death is a natural step but I am apprehensive about it.
- D. Death is sad.
- E. Death is coming some day. I am ready and willing.
- F. Death is absolute.
- G. Death is confusing.
- H. Death is not a real concern presently; but something I feel okay about.
- I. Death is to cease functioning.
- J. Death is scary to me and I am not ready.
- K. Death is strange.
- L. Death is something I don't understand but know that everyone has a time to die.
- M. Death is not as frightening to me as it was last year.
- N. Death is the end.
- O. Death is certain but not scary to me.
- P. Death is one of the only truths we know.
- Q. Death is always there.
- R. Death is OK.
- S. Death is eternity.
- T. Death is frightening but unavoidable.
- U. Death is a reality.
- V. Death is something I realize I will have to cope with someday but I'm not looking forward to it. No one has died close to me as yet.
- W. Death is not as frightening as being left disabled.
- X. Death is natural, a little scary, but not feared.
- Y. Death is not as bad as most think. It will be easier to accept when they have lead a full life.
- Z. Death is scary.

Statement #10:

- A. I am accomplishing many great things.
- B. I am accomplishing a great deal through introspection.
- C. I am accomplishing working through traumas through childhood.
- D. I am accomplishing certain goals just as I need to.
- E. I am accomplishing more today than I ever thought I could.
- F. I am accomplishing my goals rapidly.
- G. I am accomplishing personal goals.
- H. I am accomplishing my educational and career goals at the present.
- I. I am accomplishing my broker's license.
- J. I am accomplishing one of my goals - college.
- K. I am accomplishing existing.

- L. I am accomplishing some of my goals but not as fast as I would like.
- M. I am accomplishing very little, very slowly.
- N. I am accomplishing what I want to accomplish.
- O. I am accomplishing personal growth; albeit slowly.
- P. I am accomplishing my educational goals.
- Q. I am accomplishing my life.
- R. I am accomplishing
- S. I am accomplishing the goals that I have set out for.
- T. I am accomplishing some goals that at one point were unattainable.
- U. I am accomplishing growing up.
- V. I am accomplishing
- W. I am accomplishing
- X. I am accomplishing my goals of getting an education and starting my career.
- Y. I am accomplishing the goals I want presently.
- Z. I am accomplishing getting an education.

Statement #11:

- A. Illness and suffering can be productive.
- B. Illness and suffering can be traumatic.
- C. Illness and suffering can be worked through with positive results.
- D. Illness and suffering can be turned into something of a learning experience.
- E. Illness and suffering can be emotionally draining.
- F. Illness and suffering can be very sad.
- G. Illness and suffering can be painful but sometimes a catalyst for growth.
- H. Illness and suffering can be viewed as good if it teaches me something.
- I. Illness and suffering can be part of the natural order of things.
- J. Illness and suffering can be very traumatizing.
- K. Illness and suffering can be painful most by those who love you.
- L. Illness and suffering can be hard to cope with.
- M. Illness and suffering can be very depressing and disheartening to me.
- N. Illness and suffering can be a way toward growth.
- O. Illness and suffering can be a part of life; you have to take these things in stride.
- P. Illness and suffering can be unexplainably miserable.
- Q. Illness and suffering can be lonely.

- R. Illness and suffering can be awful.
- S. Illness and suffering can be painful.
- T. Illness and suffering can be a building block to a greater understanding to life.
- U. Illness and suffering can be growthful.
- V. Illness and suffering can be a horrible experience because it can change the lives of the people involved completely.
- W. Illness and suffering can be very painful for those close to the afflicted person.
- X. Illness and suffering can be dreadful if you are alone.
- Y. Illness and suffering can be sad.
- Z. Illness and suffering can be painful.

Statement # 12:

- A. To me all life is a gift.
- B. To me all life is secondary to the life after.
- C. To me all life is what we choose to do with it.
- D. To me all life is fun and games.
- E. To me all life is wonderful.
- F. To me all life is precious and important.
- G. To me all life is doing my best to be content and happy with myself and those around me.
- H. To me all life is exciting and relative to my relationship to God.
- I. To me all life is what you make it.
- J. To me all life is precious. Isn't that a cliché?
- K. To me all life is a whirlwind.
- L. To me all life is treasured and should not be taken for granted.
- M. To me all life is a routine or schedule that gets one so bogged down that time slips away to nothingness.
- N. To me all life is change.
- O. To me all life is on hold.
- P. To me all life is hopeful.
- Q. To me all life is giving to others.
- R. To me all life is
- S. To me all life is beautiful.
- T. To me all life is precious but not to the point of sacrificing one for another.
- U. To me all life is purposeful.
- V. To me all life is having too little time to do the things I need to do.
- W. To me all life is
- X. To me all life is exciting and full of love.

Y. To me all life is very fulfilling but some things are harder to reach and take more work.

Z. To me all life is a mystery.

Statement #13:

A. The thought of suicide is never taken seriously by me as an alternative.

B. The thought of suicide is very scary when it is real.

C. The thought of suicide has crossed my mind but I was always too curious about life to go through with it.

D. The thought of suicide is not as strong as it was a few years ago. I've learned it is a scared person's way out.

E. The thought of suicide is a decision which should not be considered. It's final.

F. The thought of suicide is sad.

G. The thought of suicide is understandable at times but not a solution.

H. The thought of suicide is not an option.

I. The thought of suicide doesn't bother me.

J. The thought of suicide is frightening.

K. The thought of suicide is not the way to go.

L. The thought of suicide is an easy way out.

M. The thought of suicide is completely out of the question.

N. The thought of suicide occurs to me on occasion.

O. The thought of suicide is not something I would do.

P. The thought of suicide has crossed my mind but I am too scared to die.

Q. The thought of suicide has gone.

R. The thought of suicide has crossed my mind in the past but not now.

S. The thought of suicide scares me.

T. The thought of suicide has crossed my mind at times of great stress.

U. The thought of suicide has occurred.

V. The thought of suicide is pretty scary.

W. The thought of suicide must be very tempting to people trapped in unhappy situations.

X. The thought of suicide does not cross my mind.

Y. The thought of suicide has never crossed my mind.

Z. The thought of suicide is a last resort.