

Chapter 5

SUMMARY, FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS, DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The Problem

The purpose of this investigation was to determine if there was a difference in purpose in life and family adjustment among adolescents identified as constructive and those who were identified as destructive. The purpose was also to determine if there was a correlation between purpose in life and family adjustment for both those identified as constructive and destructive and whether the correlation differed for the two groups.

The Literature Review

The literature review consisted of the basic concepts that appear to influence constructive-destructive behavior from the framework of Erich Fromm, namely parent-child relationships and boredom or purpose in life.

The second section reviewed the concept of homeyness-homelessness, referred to as H-ness, the Family Adjustment Test as a measure of H-ness perceived and the Purpose in Life Test as a measure for meaning in life and boredom. The third section reviewed those studies related to constructive-destructive behavior: family relationships, boredom and

purpose in life as related specifically to this study.

The Procedure

From a population of 439 high school juniors, a selection committee identified the most constructive and destructive students within the class, according to their definition of constructive-destructive behavior, and as defined for the study. The upper and lower 27 percent were selected on the basis of the highest number of votes to obtain a total of 214 students from which 107 students were assigned to the constructive and destructive groups.

All juniors who were enrolled in United States History and Government were administered the Purpose in Life Test (PIL) and the Family Adjustment Test (FAT). To obtain the sample data, the two instruments were separated from the total group by matching the identification number with that of the selection committee who identified the students. The responses from the instruments were key-punched and computer scored to obtain the data for analysis.

Analysis of Data

For the five hypotheses generated by this study, three statistical procedures were implemented in the analysis of the data: (1) Analysis of variance was used to determine if there was a difference between the constructive and destructive groups on the Purpose in Life total score and items and on the Family Adjustment Test, total score and subtests, to determine if there was a difference between males and females, and to determine if there was an interaction between the constructive and

destructive groups and sex; (2) the Pearson-product moment correlation coefficient was used to measure the degree and the direction of the relationship between PIL of the constructive and destructive groups and Family Adjustment total and subtests; and (3) the t -test for the Fisher Z transformation was used to determine if there were significant differences in the relationship between PIL and FAT for the two groups.

Findings and Conclusions

The results of the data, as analyzed by analysis of variance, Pearson-product moment correlation, and t -test for the Fisher Z transformation supported the following conclusions. The .05 level of significance was chosen to reject the null hypotheses.

Hypothesis 1

The null hypothesis was rejected. The constructive adolescents differ from destructive students as they score higher on purpose in life. There were no significant differences due to sex nor significant interactions between group and sex.

Subhypotheses:

1. Subhypothesis 1 was rejected. Constructive adolescents believe they are more enthusiastic and less bored than destructive adolescents and females are more enthusiastic than males.

2. Subhypothesis 2 was rejected. Constructive adolescents believe that life is more exciting and less routine than destructive adolescents.

3. Subhypothesis 3 was rejected. Constructive adolescents believe they have more clear goals and aims than the destructive adolescents who

believe they have less clear goals and aims. Males believe they have more clear goals than females.

4. Subhypothesis 4 was rejected. Constructive adolescents believe their personal existence is more purposeful and meaningful than the destructive adolescents who feel their personal existence to be less meaningful and without purpose.

5. Subhypothesis 5 was retained. Constructive adolescents do not differ from the destructive adolescents in feeling every day to be new and different or exactly the same.

6. Subhypothesis 6 was rejected. Constructive adolescents prefer to choose nine more lives like this one rather than prefer to never have been born more than the destructive adolescents. The two-way interaction revealed the difference between constructive and destructive females to be greater than the difference between the constructive and destructive males.

7. Subhypothesis 7 was rejected. Constructive adolescents look forward to doing more exciting things after retiring from work life than choosing to loaf the rest of their life more than the destructive adolescents who were less inclined to look forward to doing exciting things.

8. Subhypothesis 8 was rejected. Constructive adolescents feel they are progressing more to complete fulfillment in achieving life goals than the destructive adolescents who feel less progress or little progress whatsoever.

9. Subhypothesis 9 was retained. Constructive adolescents do not

differ from destructive adolescents in feeling their life to be empty or running over with exciting good things.

10. Subhypothesis 10 was rejected. Constructive adolescents feel their lives to be more worthwhile than the destructive who feel life to be less worthwhile.

11. Subhypothesis 11 was rejected. Constructive adolescents feel more of a reason for being here than the destructive adolescents who see less reason for their existence.

12. Subhypothesis 12 was retained. Constructive adolescents do not differ from the destructive adolescents in their view of the world in relation to their lives, as to it being confusing or fitting meaningfully with their lives.

13. Subhypothesis 13 was rejected. Constructive adolescents see themselves as more responsible and less irresponsible than destructive adolescents who feel themselves to be less responsible.

14. Subhypothesis 14 was retained. Constructive adolescents do not differ from destructive adolescents concerning man's freedom to make all life choices or being completely bound by limitations of heredity and environment. The two-way interaction revealed the difference between constructive and destructive females to be greater than the difference between constructive and destructive males. Constructive females felt more free, while destructive females felt more bound by the limitations of heredity and environment, as compared to the males, who did not differ greatly, and felt less free.

15. Subhypothesis 15 was retained. Constructive adolescents do

not differ from destructive adolescents with regard to death in feeling prepared and unafraid or unprepared and frightened. There was a difference due to sex, revealing males to believe themselves to be more prepared and unafraid of death than females.

16. Subhypothesis 16 was retained. Constructive adolescents do not differ from destructive adolescents with regard to suicide as a way out or seem to never have given it a second thought. The two-way interaction revealed the difference between constructive and destructive females to be greater than the difference between constructive and destructive males. Constructive females were more likely to never have thought of suicide while destructive females were more likely to see it as a way out, as compared to the males, who did not differ greatly, and were more likely to never have thought of suicide.

17. Subhypothesis 17 was rejected. Constructive adolescents regard their ability to find meaning in life to be greater than the destructive adolescents who feel they have less ability to find meaning in life.

18. Subhypothesis 18 was rejected. Constructive adolescents believe their lives to be in their hands and that they are in control more than the destructive adolescents who feel less control of their lives and feel their lives to be more controlled by external factors.

19. Subhypothesis 19 was retained. The constructive and destructive adolescents do not differ in the way they report that facing their daily tasks is a source of pleasure and satisfaction or a painful and boring experience.

20. Subhypothesis 20 was rejected. Constructive adolescents believe they have discovered clear cut goals and a satisfying life purpose more than the destructive adolescents who believe they have discovered less satisfying goals and purpose in life.

Hypothesis 2

The null hypothesis was rejected. Constructive adolescents differ from destructive adolescents as they score lower on the FAT. Constructive adolescents reported a feeling of more love and a more positive attitude about home life. There was no difference due to sex, nor significant interactions between group and sex.

Subhypotheses:

1. Subhypothesis E was retained. Constructive adolescents do not differ from destructive adolescents in their struggle for independence.

2. Subhypotheses A, B, C, D, F, G, H, I, and J were rejected. Destructive adolescents differ and score higher than constructive adolescents on all FAT subtests, reporting greater friction toward mother, greater friction toward father, greater preference for mother, greater Oedipal feelings, greater parent-child conflict, greater inter-parental friction, greater family inferiority, greater rejection and greater parental qualities of homelessness.

Hypothesis 3

The null hypothesis was rejected. There is a significant correlation between purpose in life and family adjustment among those adolescents identified as constructive.

Subhypotheses:

1. Subhypotheses A, B, E, F, H, I, and J were rejected. There is a significant correlation between purpose in life for adolescents identified as constructive and the FAT subtests: Struggle for Independence, Parent-Child Friction-Harmony, Attitude toward Mother, Family Inferiority-Superiority, Attitude toward Father, Parental Qualities and Rejection. The subtests presented above are in the order of the strength of the correlation.

2. Subhypotheses C, D, and G were retained. There is no correlation between purpose in life among constructive adolescents and the FAT subtests, Father-Mother Attitude Quotient indicating parent preference, Oedipal and Interparental Friction-Harmony.

Hypothesis 4

The null hypothesis was rejected. There was a significant correlation between purpose in life and family adjustment among adolescents identified as destructive.

Subhypotheses:

1. Subhypotheses I, E, F, A, B, H, G, and J were rejected. There is a significant correlation between purpose in life for destructive adolescents and the subtests: Rejection, Struggle for Independence, Parent-Child Friction-Harmony, Attitude toward Mother, Attitude toward Father, Family Inferiority-Superiority, Parental Qualities, Interparental Friction-Harmony and Oedipal. The subtests are presented in the order of the strength of the correlation.

2. Subhypothesis C was retained. There is no significant

correlation between purpose in life and parent preference, Father-Mother Attitude Quotient, among adolescents identified as destructive.

Hypothesis 5

The null hypothesis and subhypotheses were retained. There are no significant differences in the correlations between purpose in life total score and family adjustment total score and subtests between adolescents identified as constructive and those who were identified as destructive.

Discussion

The central thrust of this study was to determine if there were differences in purpose in life and perceived family relationships between adolescents who were identified as constructive and those who were identified as destructive.

Purpose in Life Test

This section will discuss how constructive adolescents differ from destructive adolescents and how they are similar on the Purpose in Life Test.

On the total score constructive adolescents differed in purpose in life ($m = 106.18$) from the destructive adolescents ($m = 96.57$). On 13 of the 20 items of the PIL, constructive adolescents differed from the destructive adolescents. The findings indicated that the constructive adolescents believe they are more enthusiastic and less bored, believe that life is more exciting and less routine, prefer to choose nine more lives like this one and tend to look forward to exciting things after

retiring. They also believe themselves to be more responsible, believe they are in control of their lives, feel they have a reason for being and believe their existence is purposeful and meaningful. They believe they have the ability to find meaning, believe they have a satisfying life purpose, believe they have clear goals and aims, feel they are making progress toward their goals and feel that their lives are worthwhile.

As the constructive adolescents who were identified for this study reported a higher purpose in life than the destructive adolescents, these results provide evidence of construct validity of the PIL test developed by Crumbaugh and Maholick (1944) based on Frankl's theory.

The lower PIL reported by the destructive adolescents is similar to the finding of studies by Padelford (1973), Clark (1973), and Roberts (1978) among students who had a negative attitude toward school, who did not participate in activities and who used drugs and alcohol. According to the selection process for destructive adolescents, it appears that low PIL is related to other destructive behaviors, such as truancy, resistance to authority and lack of respect for adults and property.

Females believed they were more enthusiastic than males, while the males believed they had more clear goals and believed they were less afraid of death than females. The differences on these items tend to reflect the traditional roles assigned to males and females, in that males are not to express emotions such as fear and are to be goal oriented.

Constructive adolescents did not differ from destructive adolescents in (1) seeing every day as exactly the same or constantly new and different; (2) feeling their lives to be empty, filled only with despair or running over with exciting good things; (3) viewing the world in relation to their lives as fitting meaningfully with their lives or completely confusing; (4) believing man is absolutely free to make all life choices or feeling completely bound by limitations of heredity and environment; (5) feeling prepared and unafraid of death or unprepared and frightened; (6) having thought seriously of suicide as a way out or never given it a second thought; (7) feeling that facing daily tasks was a source of pleasure and satisfaction or seeing it as a painful and boring experience.

The two-way interaction revealed the difference between constructive and destructive females to be greater than the difference between the constructive and destructive males in believing man is absolutely free to make all life choices or feeling bound by limitations of heredity and environment and in having seriously thought of suicide as a way out or to never have given it a second thought. On both items, the constructive females believed themselves to be more free and to never have thought of suicide while the destructive females felt more bound and were more likely to have considered suicide as a way out. Both the constructive and destructive males perceived themselves as similar to the constructive females. Although the males did not believe themselves to be as free as the constructive females, there was less difference reported between the male groups.

The two-way interaction also revealed constructive females are more inclined to choose nine more lives like this one while destructive females would prefer to never have been born. The difference between the constructive and destructive females was greater than the difference between the constructive and destructive males, who did not differ greatly in their choice of nine more lives like this one.

The greater difference between the females than the males could be attributed to the cultural changes reflected in the women's movement. As indicated by Ramsey (1974), females are no longer satisfied with lives of undeveloped potential and unrealized dreams. On the other hand, there are females who feel a sense of gratification in the feminine role. The differences in parental role models may be greater for females than males, where it is traditional that society provides more opportunities for males and different expectations for males than for females. There are also different moral standards for males than for females. Unconventional behavior among females labels them as bad, while society does not tend to provoke the same feelings of guilt on males who would participate in unconventional behavior. These factors could tend to have some influence that attributes to the greater difference between the females than the males.

Family Adjustment Test

This section will discuss how constructive adolescents differ from destructive adolescents and how they are similar on the FAT.

Constructive adolescents did differ in their perceptions of their home and family life, as reported on the FAT. They reported a feeling

of more love and a more positive attitude about home life ($m = 250.87$) while the destructive adolescents reported less love and more negative feelings ($m = 280.83$).

The responses of the destructive adolescents indicated greater friction toward mother, greater friction toward father, greater preference for mother, greater Oedipal feelings, greater parent-child conflict, greater interparental friction, greater family inferiority, greater rejection and greater perceptions of homelessness qualities observed in their parents.

It appears that those students who were perceived by the committee as being constructive have more positive perceptions about their families, while those who were perceived as destructive had more negative perceptions about their families.

These differences between the constructive and destructive adolescents' perceptions of their families were very similar to the results obtained by Elias in the reliability and validity studies of a population identified as homey and homeless. It was found in those studies that the juvenile delinquents perceived their families as more homeless than the general population.

The results obtained from the study are similar to the findings of Elias (1949) who reported that the total score reflected the degree of perceived H-ness. The subtests were so highly correlated with each other, that they were of little value with the exception of the Struggle for Independence subtest as was also found in this population. Elias indicated that the highest scores of homelessness were reflected in

this age group and after 19 years of age, the scores begin to taper off, as teenagers have a more realistic appraisal of their family relations.

Although we can make no specific conclusions from the individual subtests, it appears that the positive reports of the constructive adolescents to the items show a relationship to Fromm's viewpoint, that a good relationship of the child to the mother provides security and psychological rootedness and a good relationship to the father provides the ability to cope with the everyday world. In view of the significance of the family relationships as indicated by Fromm (1947), Bach (1966), Bowen (1978) and supported by Lackowitz (1961), Birdwood (1969, 1971), Pope (1971), Marin and Cohen (1971), a relationship of love fosters constructive behavior while other relationships lead to destructive behaviors. The destructive adolescents, who reported a feeling of homelessness, were also more negative in their responses to the items of the various subtests related to their perceptions of their families.

In the present study, the constructive adolescents did not differ from the destructive adolescents on the subtest, Struggle for Independence. At this stage of development, it would be expected that both groups are in the process of individuation. They are in the continuing conflict of independence versus dependence, feeling a need for freedom, yet fearing to risk taking the responsibility for themselves.

This study found no significant differences between the males ($m = 268.16$) and the females ($m = 261.99$) which concurs with the findings of Elias (1944) among college students but differs from Richmond's (1950) study which found differences within the 16- to 18-year-old group.

Richmond felt these differences were expected due to the revolt of males against the family during adolescence and due to females being trained to repress their hostilities.

Correlation Among Constructive Adolescents

This section will discuss purpose in life of constructive adolescents correlated with FAT total and subtests.

For constructive adolescents, there was a significant correlation between purpose in life and their perceptions of family adjustment on the FAT. There were also significant correlations between PIL and their perceptions of family adjustment on the FAT subtests, Struggle for Independence, Parent-Child Harmony, Attitude toward Mother, Family Superiority, Attitude toward Father, Parental Qualities of love and Rejection, presented in the order of the strength of the correlations.

There was no significant correlation between PIL and their reported perceptions on the FAT subtests, Father-Mother Attitude Quotient indicating parent preference, Oedipal and Interparental Friction-Harmony.

These reports indicate that a high PIL is associated with positive perceptions of family relationships on the FAT, and low PIL is associated with negative perceptions of family relationships.

Correlation Among Destructive Adolescents

This section will discuss purpose in life of destructive adolescents correlated with FAT total and subtests. For destructive adolescents, there was a significant correlation between purpose in life and their perception of homelessness (lack of love) on the FAT. There were also

significant correlations between purpose in life and their perceptions of family adjustment on the FAT subtests, Rejection, Struggle for Independence, Parent-Child Friction, Attitude toward Mother, Attitude toward Father, Family Inferiority, Parental Qualities, Interparental Friction and Oedipal, presented in the order of the strength of the correlation.

There was no significant correlation between PIL and reported parent preference.

These reports indicate that a low PIL is associated with negative perceptions of family relationships on the FAT, and high PIL is associated with positive perceptions of family relationships.

Differences in Correlations

This section will discuss differences in PIL and reported attitudes about family adjustment. There were no significant differences in the correlations between PIL and reported family adjustment on the FAT total and subtests between the constructive and destructive groups.

Implications and Recommendations

The results of this study revealed that constructive and destructive adolescents differed in purpose in life. The findings revealed the constructive adolescents to believe themselves to be more enthusiastic, responsible and future oriented.

Constructive adolescents did not differ from destructive adolescents on (1) seeing every day as exactly the same or constantly new and different; (2) feeling their lives to be empty, filled only with despair or running over with exciting good things; (3) viewing the world

in relation to their lives as fitting meaningfully with their lives or completely confusing; (4) believing man is absolutely free to make all life choices or feeling completely bound by limitations of heredity and environment; (5) feeling prepared and unafraid of death or unprepared and frightened; (6) having thought seriously of suicide as a way out or never given it a second thought; (7) feeling that facing daily tasks was a source of pleasure and satisfaction or seeing it as a painful and boring experience. The awareness of these differences and lack of differences may lead schools to re-evaluate both the guidance services and teaching personnel.

The Purpose in Life Test could become a part of the freshman testing program and the results could be used to help schedule students into a course designed toward finding meaning in life. This is a critical time for students, who may feel a sense of alienation in a large setting, after being separated from their smaller peer groups, where they felt a sense of belongingness. This course, designed as a small group experience, could serve as a dual purpose--purposeful guidance and identity. If during the freshman year at the beginning of the dependency-independency struggle, the schools could offer constructive support groups that would provide a sense of belongingness, it could be that these groups would be a deterrent for some of the destructive behaviors evidenced by juniors, as seen in this study.

In the initiation of these groups, counselors could also become facilitators for constructive change. As a supplement to this process, training programs could be made available for those teachers who show an interest in learning skills for group leadership in structured programs

as developing purpose in life.

The evidence gathered in this study revealed that constructive and destructive adolescent behavior may be influenced by the perceptions adolescents have of their relationships within the family. It was also found that there was an inverse relationship between PIL and perceptions of the family. As low PIL has been found to be associated with destructive behaviors, it may be possible for schools to implement programs that would improve PIL, with the purpose of decreasing destructive behavior in the schools and increasing the number of students perceived as constructive. We do not know whether changing the school behaviors would also change the perceptions of the families; however, with the change in behavior it could be possible that their perceptions of their families would change. We know that the destructive adolescents reported more negative perceptions of their families, while the constructive adolescents reported more positive perceptions.

The results of this study found that the Struggle for Independence subtest, which measured the desire to be freed from parental control, did not differ for the two groups. It was also found that the groups did not differ on the PIL item in believing man is free to make choices or is bound by environment, or in feeling their lives to be empty or running over with good things. As the groups did not differ, it could be that an analysis of the rules within schools may provide useful information regarding those rules that seem to label some students as destructive. This analysis could suggest a need for a change in philosophy of forced obedience, which results in rebellion or emptiness,

to a philosophy of student involvement in decisions. This may reduce the feeling of powerlessness and resistance to superimposed rules. If the goal of education is for students to become responsible individuals who feel a sense of purpose in life, there must also be the need for students to have the freedom to make choices, to use their sense of reason and to feel a sense of belongingness and involvement.

Recommendations for Future Research

1. A replication of this study should be done in high schools of different areas of the country composed of different populations to extend the evidence presented in this study regarding adolescents' constructive-destructive behavior as related to perceptions of the family relationships, boredom and meaning in life.
2. As the constructive and destructive adolescents did not differ in their perceptions on the Struggle for Independence subtest, a follow-up study should be done to see if there would be differences between the two groups or would they keep the same perceptions.
3. A longitudinal study should be done with a population of potentially destructive students at the onset of adolescence by developing programs focused on family life to determine whether changing perceptions would show a relationship with behavior change.



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APPENDICES



Appendix A

Parent Child Relationships and Purpose in Life As Related to Adolescent Constructive- Destructive Behavior

Dear Mr. _____:

I appreciate both your verbal and written consent, granting me permission to use the high school population for my research.

Should there be questions that would necessitate your response, I am submitting a brief copy of the proposed research.

Sincerely,

Helen Hatchett



PROPOSAL

Parent Child Relationships and Purpose in Life As Related to Adolescent Constructive- Destructive Behavior



Parent Child Relationships and Purpose in Life As Related to Adolescent Constructive- Destructive Behavior

INTRODUCTION

Throughout the country there is concern about the increase in destructive behaviors, such as underachievement, truancy, vandalism, violence, alcohol and drug abuse being exhibited by our adolescent population. These behaviors appear to reach a heightened level of concern as it disrupts the educational process, affecting both the adolescent and his peers.

This disruption is not restricted to the confines of the school environment. It also disrupts the relationships within the family environment. This is especially evident when adolescents appear to disregard the values parents believe necessary to becoming responsible individuals.

Within a school or family setting, the individual who chooses nonconforming and often destructive ways of behaving becomes the focus of concern. At the other end of the continuum are the individuals who display exemplary behavior and are identified as well adjusted and responsible by both the school personnel and the respective families, and consequently receive little or no display of concern.

The interest and pursuit of this study grew out of the author's experience with adolescents in a school setting who would be identified on either end of the continuum, yet similar in their fight in a demand

for freedom either at home or at school or both. A study by Yanker in this same high school (1973), using the Rokeach Value Survey, revealed that the students rated freedom as their highest priority, while teachers and parents rated sense of accomplishment and family security as priority. The same conflict was evident on the other values. There is always a continued search for variables that can differentiate why some individuals are successful and others unsuccessful, though they appear to come from much the same environment. A difference must exist and, if this be true, the difference could be in the types of relationships established which provide or do not provide for the development of a sense of purpose and identity.

The educational institution and the family are the two most influential agencies which promote the values of our society that can help our youth become productive, mentally healthy individuals or they can hinder the process; yet, we find both institutions perplexed in their efforts to reverse this destructive trend during this critical stage of development and decision making.

Those who work in the mental health professions are aware of the fears, conflicts and ambivalence the adolescent experiences during the process of individuation from his parents. Many adolescents tend to make the transition smoothly, feeling a sense of freedom to choose between available alternatives and find a sense of purpose for their lives while other adolescents are emotionally unprepared. These unprepared adolescents frequently manifest the destructive behavior, which is often displayed as defiance of authority, negation of the values

of the family, the school and society.

Some theorists indicate that basic characterological factors resulting from definite family interaction patterns appear to determine why some individuals find meaning and others go astray. It is also indicated by other theorists that when an individual chooses to be destructive, it is because he has not been successful in finding meaning to his existence that would give his life a sense of personal identity.

Fromm (1955) states:

The need for identity is imperative for man to remain sane. Man's sense of identity develops in the process of emerging from the primary bonds which tie him to mother and nature. The degree to which he is aware of himself as a separate self depends on the extent to which the process of individuation has developed. By teaching the individual to think for himself and freeing him from authoritarian pressure, one hoped to enable him to feel I in the sense that he was the center and active subject of his powers. (p. 62-64)

It appears that lack of success, lack of meaning and purpose, lack of identity and factors related to family occurrences each have some relationship to how an individual directs his life. As these variables seem to be interdependent, so does the individual's functioning within the school and home. Whatever relationships existed between the individual and his family initiated specific kinds of attitudes and behaviors and consequently extended within the school setting. Whatever the relationships may be, it seems reasonable to assume that some relationships lead to a more adequate and constructive method of coping than others.

Statement of Problem

The problem of this study is to examine the relationships that

exist between family adjustment and purpose in life among adolescent students who exhibit generalized behaviors that could be identified as constructive and destructive.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to obtain empirical knowledge about the relationship that exists between family adjustment, purpose in life and constructive-destructive behaviors among high school eleventh grade students that may aid those in the mental health professions who work with adolescents of this age.

Procedures

To study the problem and achieve the purposes of this study, the procedures are listed as follows:

Permission will be obtained from the principal to use the population within the high school and to obtain the cooperation of the teachers. The purpose of the investigation will be explained verbally, and will be followed by a brief summary prior to the testing. The department chairman will be contacted to establish the date of test administration so that he can inform the teachers. Prior to the date, class size information will be obtained. On the day prior to testing, the test booklets will be given to the teachers, including a copy of brief instructions.

The verbal commitment of six selected staff members who know all of the students will be obtained to identify the students for the two groups. The members will be three deans, two of whom were teachers,

and one presently the Guidance Department chairman; one police counselor, who is also a juvenile and public relations officer; and two hall monitors, who are part-time instructors.

From the current enrollment of 465 students, all juniors enrolled in United States History, consisting of twenty-two classes, will be given the test. Prior to the testing date, the researcher will go to the classrooms and inform the students of the study to be done, why it's being done, why their names are not important to the study, and why the ID numbers are necessary.

The Family Adjustment Test and the Purpose in Life Test will be administered to all the history classes during one class period by the classroom teachers on the scheduled date. A complete list of students, consisting of name and ID number, will be given to the six selected staff members who are asked to identify the upper and lower 27 percent who are most destructive based on their written criteria. Upon completion of the identification, they are to return the list and the written criteria they used as validation of this selection. Constructive and destructive behavior will be defined in this study on the basis of the criteria used and the two groups will be formed on the basis of their identification.

The Purpose in Life and Family Adjustment Test for the identified sample will be drawn from the total population tested. The responses will be keypunched into computer cards for scoring. Upon completion, the appropriate analyses will be run to test the hypotheses of this study.

Significance of Study

We are continually seeking variables that will aid us in our understanding of how individuals differ and why some are successful and others unsuccessful. The empirical evidence provided in this study should extend our knowledge in understanding differences, specifically as it pertains to family interactions and the degree to which one feels his life to be meaningful.

Studies have shown that purpose in life has a relationship to drug and alcohol usage and violence. This study could add to the current existing knowledge by the empirical evidence of other behaviors of a similar nature that show this same relationship to purpose in life.

Logotherapy has been highly successful in rehabilitation centers as a short term therapy. If it is found that purpose in life relates highly to the destructive behaviors, we can aid our educational system by helping these students find a meaningful goal and perhaps reduce the increasing trend toward destructiveness. This may be one way that may aid both the family and the school.



Appendix B

Instruction to the Selection Committee

All students enrolled in U.S. History have been given two tests. They have been informed of the research and the need for their ID, age and sex. Their personal identity as to how they scored is not the purpose of this study.

You have been given a list consisting of names and ID numbers of the Junior Class which is the population used in this study. As you know all of the students, I am asking that you select the students to form the two groups. The sample size for each group will consist of the top 27 percent and the bottom 27 percent of the class. This will be approximately 108 for each group. You are to select the most constructive and most destructive students on the basis of your own operational criteria for constructive and destructive behavior.

As an identification code, use C or D to the left of the ID number.

When the list is returned to me, include the criteria you used in the selection of the students for the two groups, as this will be used as the definition for constructive and destructive behaviors in this study.



Appendix C

Presentation to Classes

I am Mrs. Hatchett, a member of the staff and also a student. As a part of my school requirement, I must do a research project. As my interest is in high school students, their attitudes and feelings, I chose to do a study that would provide information for the development of programs that would benefit students, if not you, future high school students and those who work with them.

In order to accomplish this project, I need your help. I selected the Junior Class as most of you will be enrolled in U.S. History. Your teachers are cooperating by allowing me to use one class hour. You can help by taking the two inventories during that hour within the next two weeks.

The two inventories have no right or wrong answers and require only a rating of your feelings and opinions. They will be given in class by your teachers. I am asking that you complete all the items. I am also asking that you state your ID number, age and sex. This identification is important for the scoring as it differs for ages and sex and also important to insure that the scores for the two instruments are coded correctly on the computer card for each individual by ID number, sex and age. The tests will be scored and processed at Northern Illinois University. I will not see your responses nor will the teachers or other staff members. The information will be used solely for research study.



The purpose of the identification is not to identify any specific individual or this high school; therefore you can respond freely.

My purpose in explaining why the inventories are being given is to enlist your cooperation and allay any questions that you may have. You are not obligated to participate; however your participation is very important in helping obtain the information for the project.

Appendix D

Instructions to Teachers

I. Purpose in Life Test (first)

- a. Part A - 20 items
- b. Instructions are to not open the booklets until you have asked them to complete identification.
- c. Instructions - Appendix E
- d. Please check to see if identification is on booklets after collection.

II. Family Opinion Test

- a. Complete ID age (not birthdate) sex/grade
- b. Open to 1st page.
 1. Directions are condensed in Appendix F given you.
 2. An enlarged sample sentence is available on the cardboard to place on chalk board as a reference.
- c. They should complete in 25 minutes or less.
- d. Check for identification numbers where seniors are involved.

For those seniors who wish to take the test, emphasize the need to code 78 as they will not be included in the sample.

III. If ID is not listed--name is listed. ID preferably for easier coding and nonidentity.

Appendix E

Instructions for Purpose in Life Test

Do not open booklet. Please indicate your ID number, age, sex and classification on the front cover. Your initial participation in this project will consist of responding to Part A only, the twenty items on this attitude scale by circling the number that most clearly describes your feelings. Open the booklet. You will observe that the numbers always extend from one extreme feeling to its opposite kind of feeling. "Neutral" implies no judgment either way; therefore, try to use this rating as little as possible. Rate the items on the scale in a manner most descriptive of your feelings about yourself.



Appendix F

Instructions for the Family Adjustment Test

This is the second phase of data needed to assess how well your needs are being met. We would like to know what you, as students, think about your family or about families in general.

The questions sometimes have different meanings for different people. The meaning which comes easiest to you is the best one to use. If you are not sure about any question, give it the meaning it would have if you had made it up yourself and were saying it to a friend. Give the first answer that comes to your mind. There are no right and wrong answers.

For each question decide which of the following words: "always, often, sometimes, rarely, or never" makes the statement most correct for you and circle the letter that stands for the word. In selecting your answer, keep in mind that we are interested in what you remember quickly at this moment.

Circle "Always" where you do not quickly remember when the condition did not exist. Circle "Never" where you do not quickly remember of any time when the condition did exist. Circle "Sometimes" where the condition occurs about 50 percent of the time. If it occurs much more than 50 percent of the time, circle "Often." If the condition occurs less than 50 percent of the time, circle "Rarely."

It is necessary that you finish the entire questionnaire quickly.



To do so, please do not spend much time on any one question. The directions will be written on the chalkboard to aid you in remembering how to circle your responses.



Appendix G

Instruments -- Purpose in Life Test and the Family Adjustment Test



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THE PURPOSE IN LIFE TEST

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VETERANS ADMINISTRATION HOSPITAL
GULFPORT, MISSISSIPPI

LEONARD T. MAHOLICK, M.D.
THE BRADLEY CENTER, INC.
COLUMBUS, GEORGIA

NAME _____ DATE _____

AGE _____ SEX _____ CLASSIFICATION _____

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FORM 1
TEST #1



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 go-
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 4 3 2 1
constantly new (neutral) exactly the same
and different
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 complete fulfillment
whatsoever
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 why I exist (neutral) always see a reason for my living 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 person (neutral) very responsible person
14. Concerning man's freedom to make his own choices, I believe man is:
7 6 5 4 3 2 1
absolutely free to make all life choices (neutral) completely bound by limitations of her 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 serious 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 _____

PART C

Write a paragraph describing in detail your aims, ambitions, goals in life. How much progress are you making in achieving them?



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ELIAS FAMILY OPINION SURVEY

GABRIEL ELIAS

EDITED BY H. H. REMMERS

Name Birth date Male Female
 FIRST MIDDLE LAST MONTH DAY YEAR

SCORES

Subtests

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	M	Total Test
Raw Scores	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Percentiles	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

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INSTRUCTIONS

We would like to know what people think about families in general. Give opinions about the people who were parents and children when you were a child. Even if you are married and have children, be sure to give opinions only about the general family life that existed in your neighborhood when you were a child.

You don't have to base your opinions on your family alone. Many people base their opinions on all the families they have known.

The questions sometimes have different meanings for different people. The meaning which comes easiest to you is the best one to use. If you are not sure about any question, give it the meaning it would have if you had made it up yourself and were saying it to a friend.

Work quickly. Give the first answer that comes to your mind. This is not a test. There are no right or wrong answers. It is necessary that you finish this entire questionnaire quickly. To do so, you cannot spend much time on any one question.

Following is a sample sentence:

1. Parents and children _____ play together A O S R N

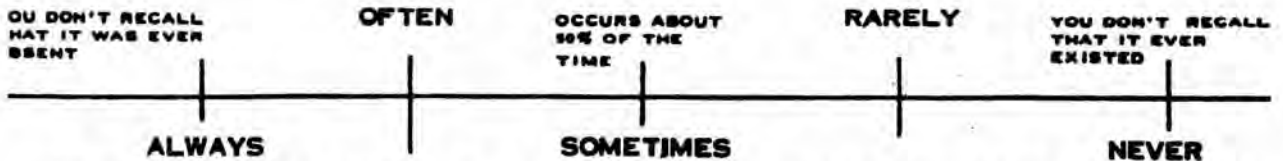
For each question decide which one of the following words: "Always, Often, Sometimes, Rarely, or Never" should be put in the place of the blank to make the sentence most correct for you. Then circle the letter on the right that stands for the word you have chosen.

"A" stands for Always "R" stands for Rarely
 "O" stands for Often "N" stands for Never
 "S" stands for Sometimes

Thus, if you believe that parents and children "ALWAYS" play together, you should put a circle around the "A" on the right of the question in the following manner:

1. Parents and children _____ play together Ⓐ O S R N

In selecting your answer, consider the five answer words as if they were points on the same straight line, thus:



Note that the word "Never" is not on the exact end of the line. That is because we do not mean by the word "Never" that it is impossible for the condition to exist. We are interested in what you remember quickly at this moment – not in whether the sentences are possible or impossible. Use "Never" where you do not think quickly of any time when the condition existed.

Note, too, that the word "Always" is also not on the exact end of the line. Use "Always" where you do not think quickly of any time when the condition did NOT exist.

Use "Sometimes" where the condition occurs about 50 per cent of the time. If it occurs much more or less than 50 per cent of the time, use "Often" or "Rarely," as the case may be.

PLEASE DO NOT TURN THE PAGE UNTIL TOLD TO DO SO



ANSWER KEY

"A" ALWAYS "O" OFTEN "S" SOMETIMES

"R" RARELY "N" NEVER

4

A B C D E F G H I J M

1. Parents are _____ happy when they are together A O S R N
2. Children _____ have to make excuses for their parents A O S R N
3. Children _____ wish their mothers would act differently A O S R N
4. Fathers _____ show dissatisfaction with their families A O S R N
5. Fathers are _____ hard to get along with A O S R N
6. Mothers are _____ close friends with their children A O S R N
7. Father is _____ jealous of the love his children have for their mother A O S R N
8. Children _____ fight with one or both of their parents A O S R N
9. Mothers _____ love their children equally A O S R N
10. Parents _____ handle their kids well A O S R N
11. Children _____ have trouble with their families A O S R N
12. Mothers _____ keep their promises with children A O S R N
13. Children _____ do things to spite their parents A O S R N
14. Children _____ think their fathers are sorry they had them A O S R N
15. Fathers _____ are mean A O S R N
16. Children _____ feel that their families are disliked A O S R N
17. Mothers _____ nag their children A O S R N
18. Children _____ feel "gypped" because they do not get what they want A O S R N
19. Children _____ can reason with their mothers A O S R N
20. Children _____ are spanked unjustly A O S R N
21. Mothers _____ neglect their children A O S R N
22. Mothers are _____ ashamed of their husbands A O S R N
23. One or both parents of a child _____ become angry easily A O S R N
24. When things go wrong, fathers _____ blame it on the fact that they have children A O S R N
25. Children can _____ discuss sex matters with both their parents A O S R N
26. Children _____ feel they bring trouble to their parents A O S R N
27. One or both parents of a child _____ stop him from having fun A O S R N
28. A child _____ thinks the parents of his friends are better than his own A O S R N
29. Children are _____ afraid to show great love for one parent in the presence of the other A O S R N
30. Fathers _____ nag their children A O S R N
31. Parents _____ show that they are disappointed in their children A O S R N
32. Fathers are _____ happiest when their wives are not around A O S R N
33. Children are _____ afraid of their mothers A O S R N
34. When something goes wrong, mothers _____ blame it on the fact that they have children A O S R N

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

A B C D E F G H I J M

PLEASE TURN TO THE NEXT PAGE

4



ANSWER KEY

5

"A" ALWAYS "O" OFTEN "S" SOMETIMES

"R" RARELY "N" NEVER

A B C D E F G H I J M

- 35. Children are _____ let down by one or both of their parents . . . A O S R N
- 36. Mothers _____ act queer before their families A O S R N
- 37. Fathers are _____ afraid of their wives A O S R N
- 38. Mothers _____ love their husbands A O S R N
- 39. Matters dealing with sex _____ cause trouble between children and their parents A O S R N
- 40. Mothers _____ scold their children unjustly A O S R N
- 41. Children _____ distrust their mothers A O S R N
- 42. Parents _____ love their children less than they show A O S R N
- 43. Both parents _____ understand their children A O S R N
- 44. Mothers are _____ cruel A O S R N
- 45. Mothers _____ show dissatisfaction with their families A O S R N
- 46. Children _____ feel their parents are better to other people than to them A O S R N
- 47. Mothers _____ get in the way of their children when it is none of their business A O S R N
- 48. Children are _____ jealous because their mothers love another person very much A O S R N
- 49. Children are _____ ashamed of their fathers A O S R N
- 50. Mothers are _____ mean A O S R N
- 51. Children _____ want more love from their fathers than they get A O S R N
- 52. Children are _____ jealous of their brothers or sisters A O S R N
- 53. Children _____ believe their parents should not have married A O S R N
- 54. Children _____ like their homes as they are A O S R N
- 55. Children _____ hate their fathers A O S R N
- 56. Children _____ make fun of their mothers A O S R N
- 57. Children _____ have grudges against their mothers A O S R N
- 58. Fathers are _____ selfish A O S R N
- 59. Fathers disbelieve their children A O S R N
- 60. Children _____ love one of their parents in ways that aren't nice A O S R N
- 61. Fathers _____ do things to spite their children A O S R N
- 62. Children _____ love one parent while fearing the other A O S R N
- 63. A child _____ hears his parents say bad things behind each other's back A O S R N
- 64. Parents _____ get so mad they do not talk to each other A O S R N
- 65. Fathers _____ love their wives A O S R N
- 66. Husbands are _____ ashamed of their wives A O S R N
- 67. Fathers _____ scold their children unjustly A O S R N

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

PLEASE TURN TO THE NEXT PAGE

A B C D E F G H I J M

5



ANSWER KEY

"A" ALWAYS "O" OFTEN "S" SOMETIMES
 "R" RARELY "N" NEVER



- 68. Children ___ wish their fathers would act differently A O S R N
- 69. Children ___ want to run away from home A O S R N
- 70. Children ___ think their mothers are sorry they had them . A O S R N
- 71. Parents ___ dislike their in-laws A O S R N
- 72. Fathers ___ wish they had never married A O S R N
- 73. Mothers ___ disbelieve their children A O S R N
- 74. Children ___ can rely on their fathers when help is most needed A O S R N
- 75. Children ___ fight to become free of their parents A O S R N
- 76. Children ___ distrust their fathers A O S R N
- 77. Fathers ___ are moody before their families A O S R N
- 78. Parents ___ respect each other A O S R N
- 79. Parents ___ disagree on religious matters A O S R N
- 80. Mothers ___ act moody when with their families A O S R N
- 81. Children ___ have grudges against their fathers A O S R N
- 82. Fathers ___ try to run their children's lives A O S R N
- 83. Children are ___ jealous of other families A O S R N
- 84. Parents ___ disagree in ways that make children suffer . . . A O S R N
- 85. Fathers ___ get in the way of their children when it is none of their business A O S R N
- 86. Parents ___ force their children to eat A O S R N
- 87. Parents ___ blame each other when they should not A O S R N
- 88. Children are ___ afraid of their fathers A O S R N
- 89. Children are ___ jealous because their fathers love another person very much A O S R N
- 90. Mothers are ___ happiest when their husbands are not around A O S R N
- 91. Fathers ___ neglect their children A O S R N
- 92. Children ___ hate their mothers A O S R N
- 93. Fathers are ___ close friends with their children A O S R N
- 94. Children ___ make fun of their fathers A O S R N
- 95. Mothers are ___ hard to get along with A O S R N
- 96. Fathers ___ love their children equally A O S R N
- 97. Parents ___ nag each other A O S R N
- 98. Fathers are ___ cruel A O S R N
- 99. Children ___ want more love from their mothers than they get A O S R N
- 00. Mothers are ___ selfish A O S R N
- 01. Children ___ dislike the size of their families A O S R N

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	M

PLEASE TURN TO THE NEXT PAGE





ANSWER KEY

"A" ALWAYS "O" OFTEN "S" SOMETIMES
"R" RARELY "N" NEVER



- 102. Parents ____ argue with each other A O S R N
- 103. Fathers ____ keep their promises with their children A O S R N
- 104. Children ____ like to spend time with their parents A O S R N
- 105. Mothers ____ do things to spite their children A O S R N
- 106. Children ____ can rely on their mothers when help is
most needed. A O S R N
- 107. Parents ____ force children to do what kids do not like A O S R N
- 108. Mothers are ____ afraid of their husbands A O S R N
- 109. Mothers ____ act worried before their children A O S R N
- 110. Children are ____ afraid they cannot come up to their
parents' expectations A O S R N
- 111. Mothers ____ wish they had never married A O S R N
- 112. Fathers ____ act queer before their families A O S R N
- 113. Children are ____ ashamed of their mothers A O S R N
- 114. Mother is ____ jealous of the love her children have for
their father A O S R N

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M





ABSTRACT

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Department: Leadership and
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Title: Purpose in Life and Family Adjustment as Related to Adolescent
Constructive-Destructive Behavior

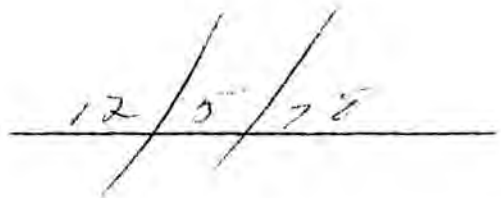
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ABSTRACT

This study investigated whether there was a difference in perceived family adjustment and purpose in life among high school adolescents identified as constructive and destructive.

From a population of 439 high school juniors, a selection committee identified the most constructive and destructive students within the class. The upper and lower 27 percent of students were selected on the basis of the highest number of votes received, producing the constructive and destructive groups of 107 students each.

All juniors enrolled in United States History and Government were administered the Purpose in Life Test (PIL) and the Family Adjustment Test (FAT).

The data for the five hypotheses was analyzed by analysis of variance, Pearson correlation coefficient and the t -test for the Fisher Z transformation. Statistical significance was established at the $P < .05$ level.

The results of this study revealed:

1. Constructive adolescents had a higher purpose in life than the destructive adolescents.
2. Constructive adolescents reported more love in their family relationships than destructive adolescents.
3. There was a significant relationship between purpose in life and family adjustment among adolescents identified as constructive.



4. There was a significant relationship between purpose in life and family adjustment among adolescents identified as destructive.

5. There were no significant differences in the correlations between purpose in life total and family adjustment total and subtests between adolescents identified as constructive and those identified as destructive.

The results revealed no significant differences due to sex on either the PIL or the FAT total. Upon item analysis of the PIL, females were more "enthusiastic and less bored than males," while males had "more clear goals and were less afraid of death" than females.

On 13 of the 20 PIL items, constructive adolescents scored significantly higher than destructive adolescents. The constructive adolescents believed themselves to be more enthusiastic, and more responsible for making their lives worthwhile in their present and future goals. On seven items there were no significant differences between the groups.

The two-way interactions on the PIL revealed the difference in the means between the constructive and destructive females to be significantly greater than the difference in the means for the constructive and destructive males "in their choice of nine more lives like this one or to never have been born," "in believing they were free to make all life's choices or they were bound by limitations of heredity and environment" and in "having never thought, or having thought, of suicide as a way out." In each interaction the constructive and destructive males were more similar to the constructive females' beliefs which were more positive, while the destructive females' beliefs were more negative.



The results of the analysis of variance of the total and ten subhypotheses of the FAT revealed that constructive adolescents differ from destructive adolescents who consistently reported feelings of rejection, negative attitudes and friction. The two groups did not differ on the Struggle for Independence subtest.

The results from the FAT correlated with PIL evidenced that purpose in life is significantly related to perceived family adjustment for both groups. There were no significant correlations for the constructive group on the subtests Oedipal and Interparental Friction-Harmony and for either groups on parent preference.

The results of this study tend to support the concept of Erich Fromm's theory, that different patterns of family relationships are related to purpose in life and constructive and destructive behavior. Those students who were identified as being constructive had more positive perceptions about their families and higher purpose in life while those who were identified as destructive had more negative perception about their families and lower purpose in life.