Sheffield Hallam University

Women's retirement : The self in process of transition.

HAIGH, Janice.

Available from the Sheffield Hallam University Research Archive (SHURA) at:

http://shura.shu.ac.uk/19740/

A Sheffield Hallam University thesis

This thesis is protected by copyright which belongs to the author.

The content must not be changed in any way or sold commercially in any format or medium without the formal permission of the author.

When referring to this work, full bibliographic details including the author, title, awarding institution and date of the thesis must be given.

Please visit http://shura.shu.ac.uk/19740/ and http://shura.shu.ac.uk/information.html for further details about copyright and re-use permissions.

LEARNING CENTRE
COLLEGIATE CRESCENT CAMPUS
SHEFFIELD S10 2BP

25 367

Sheffield Hallam University
Learning and IT Services
Adsetts Centre City Campus
Sheffield S1 1WB

b1435917

REFERENCE

ProQuest Number: 10697042

All rights reserved

INFORMATION TO ALL USERS
The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send a complete manuscript
and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if material had to be removed,
a note will indicate the deletion.

ProQuest 10697042

Published by ProQuest LLC (2017). Copyright of the Dissertation is held by the Author.

All rights reserved.
This work is protected against unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code
Microform Edition © ProQuest LLC.

ProQuest LLC.
789 East Eisenhower Parkway
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106 – 1346

Women's Retirement:

The Self In Process Of Transition

Janice Haigh

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of
the requirements of
Sheffield Hallam University
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

June 2005

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many thanks go to my supervisors, Professor Ann Macaskill and Dr Janet Empson, for their wisdom, encouragement, guidance, patience and friendship.

Thanks also to all the women who took part in the research and made this thesis possible by opening up their lives. Thank you for your honesty, your trust, the sacrifice of your time and your willingness to share an important time in your lives so openly.

Thank you to my husband Paul whose practical help with the computer has been invaluable and whose patience and belief in me has never failed.

Thanks also to Janet Hepworth, for your help in proof reading the whole thesis and for your continued interest in the face of ploughing through all my errors.

Thank you also to friends and family, for love, support and encouragement.

A very special thank you to Roger and Alison, for greatly treasured gifts of freedom and friendship.

CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	**1**
CHAPTER 1	**2**
Introduction	3
CHAPTER 2	**7**
Literature Review	8
CHAPTER 3	**73**
Methodological Issues	74
CHAPTER 4	**89**
Methodological Procedures	90
CHAPTER 5	**123**
Study 1a: Individual Perspectives of Six Recently Retired Women	124
CHAPTER 6	**198**
Study 1b: Group Perspectives of Six Recently Retired Women	199
CHAPTER 7	**227**
Study 2: Perspectives of Four Women Retired Six To Nine Years	228
CHAPTER 8	**246**
Study 3: Perspectives of Two Women Retired For Over Ten Years	247
CHAPTER 9	**259**
Discussion and Critique	260
Conclusions, Contribution to Knowledge and Further Research	297
REFFERENCES	**307**
APPENDICES	**331**
Contents	332

ABSTRACT

This thesis develops a grounded theory of the personal experience of being retired, for twelve women who previously had jobs of a professional/semi-professional status. The focus of the study is on evidence of the ways in which the self-awareness of the participants is challenged and adapts to the changed situation of their lives.
The longitudinal study (Study 1) comprises a core group of six women, interviewed three times over 18 months starting soon after retirement. Study 2 comprises a group of four women interviewed once, at a time 6 to 9 years after retirement. Study 3 comprises a group of two women, interviewed once, at a time more than 10 years after retirement. Case studies form the empirical basis of the work, in-depth interviews being the main technique used. Self-descriptive instruments of narrative exercises and diary accounts support interview data. Measures of depression (Beck, 1990; 1987), and self-esteem (Battle, 1981; 1992), are also utilised.
Data was analysed using Grounded Theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Glaser, 1978; Strauss, 1987; Strauss and Corbin, 1990).
A *process model of the transition of the Self in retirement* emerged from the data. This model shows a process of fragmentation and subsequent re-integration of the Self during the retirement transition. Data from the core group of six women initially identify seven components of the Self: 'Known Self', 'Adjusting Self', 'Defining Self', 'Discovered Self', 'Ageing Self', 'Adapting Self' and 'Community Self'. A process of re-examination of these components of the Self by participants facilitates a process of reintegration of the Self. This process involves gradual reintegration of the seven initially identified component fragments back into the Self that was known and familiar, the Known Self. Negative aspects of ageing, and the potential threat these aspects of ageing are to the maintenance of the Known Self, are acknowledged and incorporated into self-definition ('Threatened Self' and 'Self in Limited Time'). Data from studies 2 and 3 confirm the aspects of 'Known Self', 'Threatened Self', and 'Self in Limited Time' to be aspects of the Self that are carried forward in defining the Self in later life. The fragmentation of the sense of Self was experienced in varying degrees by participants, and was evidenced most clearly in the women's sense of identity and self-definition.
Positive aspects involved in the process of adjustment of the Self to retirement included the realisation that the Known Self has continuity, together with the potential for freedom and new discoveries. Maintenance of the Known Self, however, was found to be more difficult without the medium of the work role for its expression.
The proposal that the move from work to retirement involves a psychosocial transition (Parkes, 1971; 1975; Thériault, 1994) is supported by the present study. Also supported are findings by Antonovsky and Sagy (1990), Mann (1991), and Taylor Carter and Cook (1995), indicating that retirement involves re-definition and can have a disruptive influence on a woman's sense of Self. The *process model of the transition of the Self in retirement* that emerged from the data further develops the work of Antonovsky and Sagy (1990), which identified the developmental outcome of psychological re-integration following retirement. The present investigation develops the process of this re-integration. Hanson and Wapner's (1994) findings, that women experienced that their sense of Self changed with retirement, are also further developed by the present study whereby a more detailed analysis of the process and particulars of the changes in the sense of Self are uncovered.

INTRODUCTION

Lev Trotsky once wrote "Old age is the most unexpected of all the things that happen to a man." (Diary in Exile, 8th, May, 1935), a paradoxical statement considering old age comes to all who do not die unexpectedly young. Most people, however, are not very consciously aware of changes occurring within them, because change is often subtle, gradual and occurs in familiar surroundings where there are familiar demands to be met (Atchley, 1982). Adaptation to growing old seems, therefore, to occur gradually, almost as a life long adaptation as we actually do grow old. Nevertheless, ageing is brought to the fore at events such as particular birthdays and anniversaries. Are conversations about age at these events a way of coping, which help us adapt to our changing selves? Or are they just reflections of an ageist or age conscious society?

The initial research interest concerned adaptation to growing old, and the possible relationship with depressive illness in older people. The literature on depression appeared to be in dispute as to whether older people suffer any more depression than anyone else. Aldwin et al (1989) argued that it should not be assumed that growing old increases the risk of mental illness, as there was increasing variability in the extent to which individuals experienced emotional distress. This variability of the experience of emotional distress may be due to varying life circumstances. Varying life circumstances later in life may lead to older people experiencing different and unique stressors, which require a period of adaptation. This adaptation, according to Parkes (1971, 1975), and Antonovsky (1990), may itself lead to a period of depression.

To study adaptation to ageing and a possible link to depression, therefore, it was necessary to investigate life circumstances in later life requiring a period of adaptation. It was decided to follow Parkes' (1971, 1975) work on psychosocial transitions, and Thériault's (1994) findings, that retirement fits the criteria of a psychosocial transition. The study therefore focuses on the later life transition of retirement.

Attempts were made to recruit a group of women who were about to retire and to follow them through retirement and the initial transition period. This proved very difficult to accomplish and a convenience sample of women recently retired was settled upon.

Initially interest was in a quantitative study of coping with, and adaptation to, retirement. However, in reviewing literature on coping and adaptation it became evident that coping and adaptation were inextricably bound up with the idiosyncrasies and individual humanity of the person. Focusing on coping and adaptation as component parts of the whole person would, it was thought, minimise the importance of the unique individuality of the lives under examination, and the role of the same in adaptation to a life transition.

It seemed that one of the central issues in adaptation to a life transition is the role of the Self. Aspects of the Self include the concept of Self and a sense of sameness and life perspective. During a life transition the changes which may be required in roles, tasks, relationships, expectations, time and activities may disrupt or interrupt the continuity of one or all of the aspects of the Self, requiring a re-evaluation or re-organisation of not only external life but possibly internal assumptions, expectations, identity and life perspective (Parkes, 1971, 1975; Antonovsky, 1990; Mann, 1991). It was this possible 'interruption' of the Self, which became of interest.

It was decided to study the Self in transition, and the continuity, or discontinuity, of the Self over time and during change. The later life transition of retirement was chosen as the context of a psychosocial adaptation, and a study of the Self in transition at retirement was decided upon (Parkes, 1971, 1975; Thériault, 1994).

Main questions for the study developed from a foundation of Atchley's (1989) work on continuity in ageing. The question of continuity was an important one. For example the question of whether there were parts of the Self that remain continuous throughout the life transition of retirement, and if so what role, if any, these parts played in this transition. Also of interest whilst considering continuity was the question of whether there was a process of readjustment of the Self on retirement, and if there was, what

form this process took. The question of whether a sense of continuity of the Self was important in positive adaptation was also important to consider.

The work of Thériault (1994) informed questions about the nature of any internal reorganisation that might take place. Questions were provoked about what 'reorganisation,' if any, goes on within the sense of Self throughout the retirement transition. Were there aspects of the Self that it was felt necessary to preserve following retirement and, if so, why? Also, what is it about oneself that is being carried through into retirement and into old age?

The work of Mann (1991) informed questions about psychological changes i.e. self-esteem, self-concept and depression. What role did the sense of Self have in the maintenance of a sense of stability throughout a life transition such as retirement, despite all the obvious changes within and without which have to be negotiated? Would measures of self-esteem and depression reflect the subjective responses of participants about their changing or unchanging Self? Was there a loss of some part of the Self which accompanies other potential 'losses' in retirement?

Also the work of Antonovsky and Sagy (1990) provoked questions around what part of the Self, if any, individuals perceived as unchanging. Did these parts of the Self have a specific role to play, e.g. in positive adaptation?

Plan of the Thesis

The thesis begins by giving a review of relevant theoretical work in the area of development and ageing, life transitions, retirement and the Self, which includes work on depression. This is followed in chapter 3 by an introduction to the ontological, epistemological and methodological issues surrounding this work. This includes a statement of the researcher's theoretical orientation, an introduction to the methodology of Grounded Theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Strauss and Corbin, 1990), and an introduction to the present study including research aims and objectives. Chapter 4 examines the procedural issues surrounding the present study and includes the rationale

and design for the methods and measures used, analysis, a discussion on ethical issues and a reflexive account. Three studies are then presented in chapters 5-8. The first study, the main longitudinal study, is presented in two parts as both an individual analysis (chapter 5) and a group analysis (chapter 6). Following a presentation of these results, studies 2 and 3 (chapters 7 and 8) are presented together with results. Finally, there is a discussion of the findings of the study. Critique of the study and implications for further research are considered within the discussion. Conclusions from the study are identified, and the contribution of this work to existing knowledge is presented (chapter 9).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

More women than ever are entering the work force and continuing in their work throughout their childrearing years (Erdner and Guy, 1990). A continuation of this work into late adulthood and even old age is the rule rather than the exception, with older women pursuing their careers for longer than older men (Herz, 1988). Retirement for women, therefore, has become a normative life event and historical views that retirement was not a relevant life transition for women are now being challenged (Price, 2000). The assumption that women's retirement was an easy transition 'back' into the roles of wife and mother (Belgrave, 1989) are also being challenged (Price, 2000). However, there remains little research concerning the independent experiences of women's retirement. Most research is inadequate in that it uses already established male models of retirement to compare male and female experiences (Calasanti, 1993). The various roles women have in home and work and the potential experience of discontinuity in work life due to family responsibilities make women's retirement a unique experience worthy of study separately from that of men's experiences.

The present study, in examining the experiences of women in the transition to retirement and focusing on the Self, is involved in an investigation of a subject area which is enormous. Although it has been necessary, for the sake of space, to be selective in choice and presentation of the relevant literature, the chosen literature reflects areas of study directly and specifically relevant to the transition of the Self in retirement.

This chapter begins by exploring the approaches and theories of development and ageing. This is to clarify the foundations and assumptions the present study has at its roots and to present the rationale for these assumptions through looking at the historical context for them. Work on life transitions is presented to give evidence for, and to rationalise, the assumption the present study makes that retirement is indeed a life transition. Research on retirement, and more specifically women's retirement, provides

a theoretical background to the present study. Literature on the Self, its 'properties', namely self-concept and self-esteem, and ageing, is also presented in this chapter as the present study focuses specifically on the Self in process of transition to the later life experience of retirement.

Approaches and Theories of Development and Ageing

The focus of developmental psychology is on developmental change in individuals as they grow older, and how differing patterns of behaviour, development, and changes in capability, are shown in different people (Rybash, Roodin and Hoyer, 1995). Development is about growth, and there are many factors affecting that growth. Our history in particular affects who we are now. Normative history, which consists of common, expected, widely experienced, predictable life events, and non-normative, or idiosyncratic, life events like chance occurrences, unique experiences or unexpected events, serves to affect our development, which continues throughout the lifespan, even into old age. Of course, as society changes so too does the definition of 'normative' history. What was the 'norm' 20 years ago may now have changed. Particularly pertinent to this study are changes in the age at which people retire. It is becoming more of a social 'norm' to have the opportunity of early retirement (Herbertsson, 2003).

There are various approaches and theories of development, and the following are those relevant to the topic under investigation.

Disengagement and Activity Theories

An early theory of ageing is Cummings and Henry's (1961) theory of Disengagement. This theory proposes that a mutual withdrawing or disengagement takes place by the ageing individual from society. At the same time society disengages from the individual (Rybash, Roodin and Hoyer, 1995). According to this theory, as a normal consequence of ageing, a reduction of activity and social interaction and an increase in self-preoccupation occurs in later life. Further research into ageing, however, has not

supported this theory (George, 1990). Also, Havighurst's Activity theory (1963) developed by Neugarten, Havighurst, and Tobin (1968), argues that the life satisfaction of the more active personality types was greater than that of the less active personality types. There is some support for this theory (Dreyer, 1989), but neither the theory of Disengagement (Cummings and Henry, 1961), or Activity theory (Neugarten, Havighurst, and Tobin, 1968), appear to go far enough in acknowledging the individual differences and continuities of the adult moving into old age. Neither do these theories acknowledge the complexities of the integration of change into the life-span of the individual.

The acknowledgment of individual differences and continuities of the adult, and the integration of change into the life-span of the individual is explained and explored further by looking at the life-span approach to adult development and Continuity theory.

The Life-Span Approach

The life-span approach is a relatively recent area of study, which suggests that, during all the major epochs of the life span, positive developmental change is likely to occur. (Baltes and Baltes, 1973, 1987). Change is defined as "A measurable alteration in a particular skill, ability, or function." (Baltes and Baltes, 1990, p.4), and development as "a form of change that is organized and adaptive (positive) in nature." (Baltes and Baltes, 1990, p.4.)

> *"Development cannot be solely equated with steady incremental growth or change. Instead, development is characterized by the simultaneous appearance of gain and loss."*
>
> (Baltes and Baltes, 1990, p.4)

The life-span approach is considered especially relevant to the study of a transition specific to older people where positive developmental change could be overlooked.

As mentioned previously, individual differences, continuities of the adult, and the integration of change into the life-span of the individual are considered in the life-span

approach to development. Developmental theories of ageing also acknowledge these factors whilst describing and explaining the empirical evidence for changes in behaviour with age (Rybash et al., 1995). A developmental theory of ageing that also considers differences in such changes between individuals or groups is Continuity theory.

Continuity Theory

Atchley (1989) has developed a dynamic concept of continuity and applied it to the issue of adaptation to normal ageing, he describes this concept as a:

> *"dynamic view of continuity ... a basic structure which persists over time, but it allows for a variety of changes to occur within the context provided by the basic structure."*
>
> (Atchley, 1989, p.183)

This change, according to Continuity theory:

> *"assumes evolution, not homeostasis, and this assumption allows change to be integrated into one's prior history without necessarily causing upheaval or disequilibrium."*
>
> (Atchley, 1989, p.183)

Thus Continuity theory rejects homeostatic or equilibrium models such as Activity theory (Havighurst, 1963; Havighurst et al., 1969; Rosow, 1963) that assume restoration of equilibrium to be the typical response when a change occurs. Ageing produces changes that are irreversible; there can be no going back to the prior state. However, the preservation and maintenance of internal and external structures, when making adaptive choices, is the objective for middle aged and older adults. The fact that continuity (familiar strategies in familiar arenas of life) is the preferred way of achieving this is the central premise of Continuity theory (Atchley, 1989).

Internal continuity requires memory so that identity and Self can be experienced as continuous. It is an important part of individual mastery and competence, as day-to-day

decision making relies on a continuity of knowledge to interpret and anticipate events. Also internal continuity is essential to a sense of ego integrity and self-esteem.

External continuity requires an outward continuity of social behaviour and circumstances and is an important means of coping with physical and mental changes that may accompany ageing.

Thus, change occurs within a framework of continuity. Continuity theory is widely accepted and respected in adult development. It has the strength of acknowledging change and continuity from a dynamic perspective so that familiarity and stability can reside with change. Changes in ageing, therefore, do not necessarily follow a negative stereotypical viewpoint. The acknowledgement of positive aspects of ageing are demonstrated in research by Maas and Kuypers (1974) who in reflection on their forty year longitudinal study of adult life styles and personality, explain that:

> *"most clearly ... the majority of lives in this study run contrary to the popular and literary myth of inescapable decline in old age."*
> (Maas and Kuypers, 1974, p.215)

Continuity theory has been related to the study of retirement and will be discussed under the subject of retirement later.

In summary, of the approaches and theories of development considered so far, it can be seen that theories of Activity and Disengagement demonstrate a lack of sufficient attention to individual differences and continuities of the adult experience. The issue of continuities of the adult are addressed in the life-span approach to development and Continuity theory. Change and continuity are viewed from a dynamic perspective, acknowledging that familiarity and stability can reside with change. Within these approaches, age changes in behaviour and differences in such changes between individuals or groups are also acknowledged. Thus, continuities of the adult and individual differences are considered within the life-span approach and Continuity theory. Nevertheless, it is thought necessary to investigate further theoretical perspectives on individual differences in development when considering the role of individual differences in a study of the Self in transition. Theories, which focus on the

particulars of development of these individual differences are, therefore, considered next.

Psychosocial and Psychodynamic Theories

Two theories that emerge from a psychoanalytic tradition will be reviewed here. Both theories, like those previously mentioned, acknowledge development as being a life long and dynamic process reflecting continuity with the potential for change. However, the focus of these theories is on emotional conflicts and unconscious mental processes, therefore acknowledging a greater role of the individual in development. Within the theories chosen here however, the role of the social world and environment are nevertheless acknowledged as very important.

Erikson's Psychosocial Theory

Erikson (1950, 1963) uses the psychoanalytic approach, placing an emphasis on the ego, which directs action, helps in coping with the world and facilitates the integration of competing urges within the Self. Erikson formulated a stage theory of development. This theory describes a sequence of qualitative changes where each stage consists of the integration and extension of the previous stage. An important aspect to Erikson's model is the Epigenetic Principle, which means that each stage unfolds from the previous stage. Development therefore occurs in a series of stages, which are universal, and have a pre-determined sequence. A central component of each stage is the growth of the ego throughout the lifetime.

Each stage involves a developmental crisis or psychosocial turning point in the individual's sense of identity. The crisis is a turning point marking each stage, which may have a positive or negative resolution. The emphasis is on the person as a biological and social being and is based on a premise that in human nature there is a general tendency to resolve crises as a movement towards a strong self-identity. A strengthening of the ego occurs in resolving these crises in a positive way. This results in development of a new 'virtue', an inherent strength, at each stage.

In Erikson's (1950) 'Eight Ages of man' he discusses the development of the ego throughout life, charting the whole human life cycle. The stage of Generativity versus Stagnation is the second stage of adulthood, Generativity being the opposing possible outcome of development to Stagnation. The stage of Integrity versus Despair is the final stage of life, Integrity being the opposing possible outcome of development to Despair.

In the stage of Generativity versus Stagnation, healthy adults, who are positively resolving the crisis, have a strong ego identity, a career or other meaningful activity, and mature relationships with others. Primary responsibility is the establishment and guidance of the next generation. Generativity also involves creativity in ideas, work, and relationships. Generativity versus Stagnation is about the "individual trying to make his or her mark on the world, and to affect future events" (Logan, 1986). Parenthood easily fits into this stage, but is not necessary. The virtue of care results from a positive resolution, and Erikson stresses caring in this stage; caring to do something, or for someone, and taking care not to do something destructive. Surrounding this is the initiative of creativity and productivity. Stagnation is the opposing and negative resolution to the crisis. Boredom, interpersonal impoverisment and a lack of productivity are the result. An obsessive need for pseudo intimacy may result, demonstrated by self-absorption (Erikson 1950).

It is not uncommon for individuals in the 21st century to retire at this time of creativity and productivity, the proposed time of Erikson's stage of Generativity vs. Stagnation. Might this be a problem? As Rubinstein (2002) points out "It would appear that nothing about, say, playing golf is generative" (Rubinstein, 2002, p.33). However, Rubinstein argues that generativity might be given a larger meaning than Erikson gave it. He proposes that along with the concerns Erikson highlights, such as parenting and grandparenting, generativity might more globally be a concern with "what will happen after one's death and the dissolution of the Self" (Rubinstein, 2002, p.33). Generativity might then, according to Rubinstein, be found in any activity, "social, political, or cultural – that concerns itself with the settings in which one's children and grandchildren will live"(Rubinstein, 2002, p.33). The playing of golf therefore, seen in

this way, could be seen as modelling an active, enjoyable life for future generations of older people.

Erikson's stage of Integrity versus Despair occurs in late adulthood and lasts until death. This stage brings a time of reflection and involves individuals looking back over their lives and perhaps deciding that they were well ordered and meaningful This would then result in a sense of integration. Alternatively they might feel that life had been unproductive and meaningless, resulting in a sense of despair. In Erikson's view, healthy people adapted to the successes and disappointments in their life and learned not to fear death.

> *"Erikson (1950) specified a number of features related to ego-integrity, including, adapting to triumphs and disappointments, spirituality, acceptance of the course of one's life as necessary, tolerance or acceptance of others, acceptance of one's place in history, absence of death anxiety, freedom from the feeling that time is running out, emotional integration, and satisfaction with life."*
>
> (Santor and Zuroff, 1994, p.295)

A sense of ego integrity is the positive resolution of this stage. Selfish, uncaring lives led to the experience of despair because it was too late to try new paths to integrity. Wisdom is the virtue accompanying the notion of Integrity versus Despair, and it is associated with meaningful old age. Erikson stresses that wisdom involves being able to renounce things from earlier in your life. Attempting to capture what you had or did not have as a youth meant, in this scheme, that you were not very wise (Erikson 1963).

Erikson's work is well respected and clearly relevant in any study of ageing. The stages described correspond with the stages of development focussed on in the current investigation and are therefore important. However, whilst Erikson's theory is well used and valuable, as Santor and Zuroff (1994) point out, there are difficulties in defining the constructs as definitions have not been formalised and there are difficulties in operationalising the constructs. There may also be a need to re-visit the ages Erikson proposes for the stages of ego development (Rubinstein, 2002; Sheehy, 1995), as Erikson did write for a particular historical and cultural setting, which is potentially less relevant today. Erikson's qualitative changes however, like Atchley's theory, emphasize

development and continuity. A balanced view of Erikson's theory is demonstrated and commented on by Vaillant (1977). Vaillant continued the work of the Grant study started in 1937 which chose apparently healthy men and followed them throughout a large section of their lives to "inquire into the kinds of people who are well and do well" (Vaillant, 1977, p.3). Vaillant's focus was on adaptive mechanisms or strategies, but he suggested that the adult life patterns outlined by Erikson were confirmed in the Grant study. Vaillant commented however, that freedom and opportunity to mature were prerequisites for the full life cycle unfolding.

Erikson's theory of psychosocial development, as mentioned, emphasizes continuity within the individual alongside the potential for growth and change. Erikson's theory is also a life-span theory. In this way Erikson's theory is consistent with the life-span approach and Continuity theory. However, Erikson's theory gives greater insight into the development of individual differences and, in a study of individual's experiences, makes an invaluable contribution. Another theory that adds further insight into the developing adult is that of Nemiroff and Colarusso (1985), which will now be discussed.

A Psychodynamic Theory Of Adult Development

Nemiroff and Colarusso (1985) take on Spitz's (1965) definition of development as "The emergence of exchanges between the organism on one hand, and the inner and outer environment on the other". Individuals, child or adult, are therefore dependent on the environment. Development during the adult years is seen as an ongoing, dynamic process, which is concerned with the use and continuing development of the existing psychic structure. Central aspects of adult life are altered forms of the fundamental issues of childhood, although developmental processes in adults are influenced by the adult past as well as the childhood. This is not unlike Erikson's work. However, Nemiroff and Colarusso take a particular interest in the effects of physical processes on psychological expression after adolescence. The body and physical changes are believed to have profound influence on development. Also, according to Nemiroff and Colarusso, the growing awareness of death is an issue affecting the later developmental process.

> *"A central, phase-specific theme of adult development is a normative crisis precipitated by the recognition and acceptance of the finiteness of time and the inevitability of personal death."*
>
> (Nemiroff and Colarusso, 1985, p.16)

This corresponds with Erikson's concept of ego-integrity and the absence of death anxiety, which is the identified feature of ego-integrity. The issues of body and physical changes and a growing awareness of death are clearly relevant issues in a study of development and change involving older people.

Theories on development and ageing are obviously diverse in their focus. Nevertheless it is clear that there are links between the most respected, such as Erikson's theory of ego development and Atchley's theory of Continuity. The concept that familiarity and stability can reside with change, inherent in Continuity theory, sits well with Erikson's concept of a sequence of qualitative changes where each stage consists of the integration and extension of the previous stage. Acknowledging the limitations of any theory, it is mainly these two theories that inform the approach of the present study. In investigating lives undergoing transition and change at a specific time of life it would seem that Erikson (1950, 1963) and Atchley (1989) contribute necessarily relevant thinking.

Some discussion of the literature on life transitions now follows in order to rationalise the assumption in the present study that retirement is a life transition.

Life Transitions

Parkes (1971) introduced the concept of psycho-social transitions as a result of drawing together stress, crisis and loss research. Psycho-social transitions are seen as turning points for adjustment, for better or worse and are defined as:

> *"major changes in the life space which give rise to the need for a person to give up one set of assumptions about the world and to develop fresh ones."*
>
> (Parkes, 1975, p.131)

The life space is defined as:

> *"those parts of the environment with which the Self interacts and in relation to which behaviour is organized."*
>
> (Parkes, 1971, p.103)

Parkes' focus is on the adaptation to a major change in the life space and he argues that individuals have strongly held assumptions about the world and the Self. He calls this our 'assumptive world'. Marris (2002) describes our assumptive world as "what we believe we understand and have come to rely on as we live our lives from day to day" (Marris, 2002, p.16). He argues that our assumptive world is something very important to us. A life event, for example bereavement, causes a major change and renders obsolete a large part of the assumptive world. Parkes suggests that the importance or unimportance of the change is measured by the influences these changes in the life space have on the assumptions made about the world. He suggests that, if changes in the life space fulfil expectations, then they require little or no change in the assumptive world and are therefore not as important. Other changes necessitate a major restructuring of that world and the abandonment of one set of assumptions and the development of a new set to enable coping with the new altered life space. These are important changes (Parkes 1971).

In the development of this work Parkes (1975) focuses on one aspect of the reaction to psychosocial transitions. These are the changes taking place in the old assumptive world after an event, which makes a large part of the internal model of the world obsolete. Parkes explains that we have working models of our environment and a major change in that environment means that changes to the model need to take place. A life event can mean a major change is needed in assumptions about the world and the Self and he describes three types of change in world models:

1. They may be abandoned and cease to influence behaviour. (This is successful only when losses are minor.)

2. They may be modified or abandoned incompletely and therefore continue to influence behaviour in major or minor ways. (To be successful, repeated reality testing of the accuracy and usefulness of old models must happen,)

3. They may be retained in encapsulated form independently of the new model, as an alternative determinant of behaviour. (This attempts to retain a rewarding world preferable to the unrewarding world.)

Disruption and distress, even depression, is a common and sometimes necessary step in the process of restructuring the assumptive world according to Parkes (1971, 1975). There can be added problems in coping with this the older we get. Weiss and Bass (2002) comment that when fundamental change occurs in later life the effectiveness of prior ways of managing may be lost. Confusion, dislocation and even distress may be the result. Although Marris (2002) suggests that age differences in adapting to change are not "differences in adaptability but in the historical experiences through which we have learned to adapt and in what we have to adapt to at each stage of life," (Marris, (2002, p.15), he considers the loss of our assumptive world to be deeply threatening to us.

Clearly therefore, a life transition may involve difficult and uncomfortable adjustments depending on its importance, possibly our age, and our past experiences of major life changes.

Thériault (1994) sought to verify whether the work-to-retirement process met the inherent requirements of the 'psychosocial transitions model' (Parkes, 1971; 1975). She came to the conclusion that because retirement triggered a series of 'internal reorganisations' within the individual's life, and because these changes were of a psychosocial nature, then retirement fulfilled the criteria of the psychosocial transitions model and thus could be considered to be a major life transition. Specific changes found by Thériault were moves toward a progressive increase of personal interests and introspective capacities.

Particularly relevant when looking at retirement as a psychosocial transition is Parkes' (1971) suggestion that if changes in the life space fulfil expectations then they require little or no change in the assumptive world. This leads to the question about how people who have very different expectations about retirement than were realised experience the adjustment. Also relevant, because the change for those choosing to retire is usually one of a perceived more 'ideal' state, are the following comments:

> *"It is often the case that the transition from a deficient world to one which is, in some respects, more 'ideal', involves us in changes which were not foreseen. Unexpected deficits in our ability to cope with the new world give rise to awareness of fresh gaps and the situation which we have struggled to reach is found to be full of pitfalls."*
>
> (Parkes, 1971, p.104)

In light of the work by Parkes (1971; 1975) and Thériault (1994) this study assumes retirement to be a psychosocial transition, which can be considered a major life transition. This transition requires internal reorganisations, which may mean major changes resulting in a period of distress or depression.

It is now necessary to examine the literature on retirement for an indication of issues and factors surrounding this transition.

Research on Retirement

Definitions

Defining retirement is complex, as it is not simply a matter of being retired or not being retired. Voluntary versus involuntary retirement, early versus on time, and partial versus complete retirement are but a few distinctions made in defining retirement (Palmore, George, and Fillenbaum, 1982). These variables have been considered important determinants in the assessment of retirement, and operationalising them in all research on retirement has been strongly recommended (Talaga and Beehr, 1989). However, Kasl (1980) points out that even the distinction between voluntary and involuntary is

not a good one as the latter classification would pick up mostly those in poor health or in poorer financial circumstances. Tinsley and Bigler argue that retirement is:

> *"no longer uniquely defined as the point at which an individual begins to collect a social security pension or an annuity from a company or organisation ... retirement has now taken on more of an individual psychological significance."*
>
> (Tinsley and Bigler, 2002, p.379)

Tinsley and Bigler (2002) argue that the defining variable in a classification of 'retired', is the subjective decision of the individual that they have achieved the 'status of retirement'. This is a useful definition as an individual's personally assigned categorisation probably does much to influence their attitude and behaviour regarding retirement.

Despite the difficulties in definition, various aspects of retirement have been studied and many theories have been developed from the theories of development and ageing mentioned earlier.

From Ageing Theories To Retirement Theories

A particular area of study focuses on the issue of activity in retirement and its relation to life satisfaction.

An early theory of ageing related to the issue of activity is the previously mentioned theory of Disengagement (Cummings and Henry, 1961). The implications for retirement, according to this theory, would be a reduction of activity and social interaction and an increase in self-preoccupation. This, according to Cummings and Henry, would lead to greater life satisfaction. Further research into ageing however, has not supported this theory (George, 1990). In contrast to Disengagement theory, also previously mentioned, is Havighurst's Activity theory (1963) developed by Neugarten, Havighurst, and Tobin (1968). This theory proposes that a continuation of activities enjoyed in middle age leads to greater life satisfaction. Dreyer (1989) agrees in part,

finding the basic premise of the continuity hypothesis to be supported in his work in that:

> *"people who maintain their basic life-style with its attendant psychological attitudes, values, gratifications from pre- to post retirement will most likely experience high levels of life satisfaction."*
>
> (Dreyer, 1989, p.127)

Atchley (1975, 1977, 2000) also agrees, suggesting that activities and attitudes do not change dramatically following retirement. However Dreyer (1989) found little support for other aspects of the activity hypothesis reporting that, "the kind or number of activities a person engaged in after retirement showed little power to predict life satisfaction" (Dreyer, 1989, p.126).

The idea of the relationship between levels of activity in retirement and adjustment to retirement was premised on earlier work suggesting that a void is created in an individual's life at retirement. This void is due to the loss of certain satisfactions which need to be substituted, and is the basis of 'substitution theory' (Friedmann and Havighurst, 1954). The premise of Substitution theory is that, for good adjustment, an individual must substitute other activities for those lost in the work role and these activities must provide the same degree of satisfaction. It is questionable whether occupation could be replaced by activities of leisure, as the two are different in kind, but it seems the idea of some degree of continuity being necessary from work to retirement is obviously not a recent one. The idea of continuity, although simplified initially to levels of activity, has not been lost, and has played some part in most theories of retirement, not least Atchley's Continuity theory itself.

The activity or inactivity of retirees and the relationship of the same to life satisfaction have clearly been of interest in retirement research. It appears that activity in retirement can only be related to life satisfaction in the context of it being a continuity or discontinuity of activity previous to retirement, and in the context of retirement plans and expectations. What emerges in other research on retirement is that individuals differ in their styles of retirement adjustment and activity (Walker, Kimmel, and Price, 1981). As the title of the Walker et al. paper suggests 'not all retirees are alike', and life

satisfaction and adjustment cannot only be related to levels of activity or disengagement. To explore this, further research on adjustment to retirement needs to be examined.

Adjustment To Retirement

The study by Walker, Kimmel, and Price (1981) previously mentioned, was a survey study of retirees (primarily men). The study assessed retirees' work habits and perceived ability to be active. Four styles of adjustment were identified: "Reorganizers" who were active and satisfied in a reorganized lifestyle; "Holding On" who were also active, but wanting to continue a working lifestyle; "Rocking chair" where reduced activity was planned, accomplished and satisfying, although, within this style of adjustment poor health meant reduced satisfaction; and the "Dissatisfied" who were the depressed and frustrated, reporting reduced life satisfaction. These tended to be lower income individuals and those forced to retire. Here the diversity of adjustment styles in retirement can be seen alongside the differing levels and variety of activity, which lead to satisfaction in individuals.

The Walker et al. study cannot be compared directly to the current study for several reasons. The Walker et al. study was a survey, of men primarily, with a focus on perceived ability to be active, and the work habits of retirees. Walker et al's findings nevertheless have value in highlighting the potential for diversity in adjustment styles when any study of adjustment to retirement is undertaken and is included for this reason.

Research on adjustment to retirement is mainly focused on particular aspects of that adjustment. The relation of goals to retirement adjustment is a specific interest picked up by some psychologists such as Atchley (1976; 2000) and Robbins, Lee and Wan (1994). Atchley proposed a theoretical approach around the development of a set of personal goals for life, which are arranged in a hierarchy. The importance of work in the hierarchy will affect the amount of adjustment needed. Most individuals, therefore, must reorder their hierarchy to some degree on retirement. If job related goals rank high

in the hierarchy then more extensive reordering is necessary. Substitution of new activities for old ones may enable goals to be attained, or priorities and goals can be reconsidered, thus altering the hierarchy. Poor adjustment happens when the discrepancy between goals and achievements are not reconciled. Braithwaite and Gibson comment: "Although Atchley uses the term goals rather than needs, wants, and values, these psychological terms can be readily substituted." (Braithwaite and Gibson, 1987, p.4)

It can be seen then that adjustment to retirement can be related to activity, as previously mentioned, but may also be related to personal goals and achievements. These factors are related to the assessment of retirement adjustment by linking them with life satisfaction as a measure of adjustment. However, life satisfaction in retirement has been shown to be affected by other issues too and these will now be considered.

Life Satisfaction In Retirement

Anderson and Weber (1993), in their study of the impact of pre-retirement planning on life satisfaction, found that there were significant differences in life satisfaction for retirees who planned for retirement and those who did not plan for retirement. They concluded that individuals might improve their chances of achieving satisfaction in retirement by active planning.

Perhaps this planning enables individuals to be alerted to some of the unforeseen changes that Parkes (1971) highlights as having a potential for causing problems, even when the life to which the individual is moving is more desirable than the one from which they have come. The following quote summarises the sense and value of pre-retirement planning.

> *"The scheduled character of these kinds of transitions means that people are able to begin preparing themselves in a way that may preclude or reduce the sense of loss that would otherwise result."*
>
> (Pearlin and Mullan, in Wykle et. al., 1992, p.121)

Pearlin and Mullan make assumptions that retirement is both scheduled and ordinarily results in a sense of loss. Both of these assumptions are not necessarily the case, as will be discussed. However, Pearlin and Mullan's findings show that planning can help. It is important to acknowledge however, that for some, retirement is suggested, or even forced before the chance to make plans is given.

In a study of 157 blue- and white-collar workers who retired early from a manufacturing industry, Robbins, Lee and Wan (1994) aimed to obtain enough detailed information to allow for independent ratings of an individual's leisure quality and life satisfaction. Equal numbers of men and women aged between 50-65 were involved in semi-structured interviews assessing a number of domains concentrating on participant's use of time and quality of leisure activities, well-being and life satisfaction, factors contributing to and from retirement adjustment, social support and retirement planning behaviours. Robbins, Lee and Wan proposed that adaptation, which meant maintaining continuity, occurred through goal-directed, purposeful behaviour as goals serve to direct behaviour toward an end goal (in this case retirement adjustment behaviour). Their study concluded: "the combination of stable and meaningful goals is crucial to leisure quality and life satisfaction." (Robbins, Lee and Wan, 1994, p.23)

It is open to question whether age 65 can be classed as early retirement as Robbins et al state, and, therefore, whether people retiring aged 50 can be assumed to have similar goal-directed behaviour to maintain continuity as those aged 65. Nevertheless, the focus of Atchley (1976, 2000) and Robbins, Lee and Wan (1994) on the relation of goals to retirement adjustment as measured by life satisfaction, confirms the importance of goals and purpose in midlife and older adult development.

It seems that life satisfaction in retirement can be linked to activity (or lack of it) where that activity is related to substitution of activities, making plans and having expectations. At the core of satisfaction and adjustment however, seems to be an essence of continuity involving goals and purpose as perceived by the individual.

Life purpose in retirement and adaptation to later life was the focus of a study by Rappaport, Fossler, Bross and Gilden (1993). In a study of future time, death anxiety

and life purpose among older adults of a retirement community, they found that life purpose and death anxiety were negatively correlated (as measured by the Death Anxiety Scale and the Purpose-In-Life Test). Life purpose was found to correlate positively with projection of future time. Death anxiety was positively correlated with temporal density in the present, 'temporal density' being "the degree to which a person fills a particular time zone with events, plans or thoughts" (Rappaport, Fossler, Bross and Gilden, 1993, p.373-374). However, the original hypothesis of a negative correlation between purpose in life and temporal density in the present was not supported.

This is interesting and indicates the complexity of relationships involving goals and life purpose and the relationship to life satisfaction and adjustment. Adjustment and life satisfaction in retirement is clearly a large area of study and there are some complexities. Examining research on the initial impact of retirement on individuals and their subsequent adjustment is necessary to broaden the picture further.

The Impact Of Retirement And Subsequent Adaptation

Talaga and Beehr (1989) in their research into the impact of retirement on the individual concluded that, contrary to popular conceptions, retirement was not stressful i.e. does not have generally negative effects on mental or physical health. Dreyer describes retirement as "not so much a 'normative life crisis' ... but a new developmental phase or transition that individuals control to a large degree" (Dreyer, 1989, p.119). Also, McGoldrick (1994) reported that work on retirement regarding adaptation and experiences was more optimistic in its propositions and results than the negative viewpoints dominating earlier studies. Mattila and Joukamaa found that in adjustment to retirement "a confident attitude toward the future was one of the most important indicators of a good subsequent adjustment" (Mattila and Joukamaa, 1990, p.155).

Retirement, therefore, may not be the stressful life event it was once thought to be (Talaga and Beehr, 1989), and research is generally optimistic surrounding the retirement experience (McGoldrick, 1994). This however does not mean that the

transition to retirement is an easy one for all people. The lack of individual research on the process of the transition to retirement for individuals (Price, 2000) must lead to caution about statements about the ease with which individuals accomplish this transition.

As previously discussed, the importance of the change to retirement for an individual may be determined by the influences these changes in the life space have on the assumptions made about the world (Parkes, 1971). Changes requiring major restructuring of the life space will inevitably disrupt individuals' assumptions, particularly if expectations are not fulfilled (Parkes, 1971), potentially leading to uncomfortable and difficult emotions.

Clearly there are complexities which, at face value, may look like contradictions. In order to understand more about adjustment to retirement from the initial impact onwards it becomes necessary to examine the 'process' of that adjustment. This is an important issue in the literature and is very pertinent to the present study.

Retirement As A Process

Atchley (1975, 1976) suggested that within the process of adjustment to retirement a series of adjustments occur. A 'Honeymoon' period, where people do all the things they've been dreaming of doing on retirement, is followed by a period of 'rest and relaxation'. It is within this stage that there may be a time of depression, especially when expectations of retirement are not fulfilled or illness occurs. This is thought to happen to only a small number of people however. Following rest and relaxation comes a time of reorientation, the 'Reorientation period'. This is where new avenues of involvement are explored, and the 'Final period' is the development of this new routine. Support for this theory comes from Theriault (1994) and Bosse, Aldwin, Levenson and Workman-Daniels (1991). However, to claim this process is equally applicable to men and women alike assumes the experiences of men and women in retirement are similar. This may be a false assumption and will be discussed further in 'women's retirement'.

Tinsley and Bigler (2002) also view adjustment to retirement as a process. They claim retirement is a 'developmental process' involving "self-assessment, goal-identification and prioritisation, learning to apply existing skills to new roles and situations, and developing new skills as needed" (Tinsley and Bigler, 2002, p.379). This is the time, say Tinsley and Bigler, when redefinition and renegotiation of roles and activities take place, although they do not say what causes them to hold this view.

Viewing retirement as a process sits closely with the view of retirement as a transition. Developmental transitions are defined by Maughan and Champion as "times of greater than usual change" (Maughan and Champion, in Baltes and Baltes, 1990, p.296). As previously mentioned, Parkes (1975) expands the concept of transitions in specific cases to psycho-social transitions, where the transition means that major changes in the life space are required needing a person to "give up one set of assumptions about the world and to develop fresh ones" (Parkes, 1975, p.131). The work-to-retirement process was verified as a psychosocial transition by Thériault (1994), as discussed earlier. The process of adjustment to retirement therefore is a transitional process, involving greater than usual change which requires internal reorganisation. Research viewing retirement as a transition will now be examined further.

Retirement As A Transition

Taylor, Carter and Cook (1995) use a role theory perspective and propose retirement as a "transition that involves role expansion, redefinition, and change" (Taylor, Carter and Cook, 1995, p.68). Taylor et al. conclude that psychological characteristics of the individual such as an internal locus of control and a positive sense of retirement self-efficacy may help in a positive retirement transition.

Antonovsky and Sagy (1990) also view retirement as a transition. In an adaptation of Erikson's (1956/1980, 1982) work they identify four developmental tasks confronting people going through the retirement transition. These consist of 'Active involvement', 'Re-evaluation of life satisfaction', 'Re-evaluation of a world-view', and a 'Sense of health maintenance'. Antonovsky and Sagy propose that successful coping with these

conflicts plays a large part in determining location toward one or the other pole of a reintegration-disintegration continuum of adaptation.

> *"Reintegration-disintegration refers to the putting together again, or the falling apart of, in adaptation to a set of considerably changed circumstances, the social, the emotional, the psychological, the intellectual, and the biological wholeness of the person."*
>
> (Antonovsky and Sagy, 1990, p.366)

This 'reintegration-disintegration' is the label given to the developmental outcome of the retirement transition. Within the task of Re-evaluation of a world-view, Antonovsky and Sagy write of Erikson's challenge of integrity vs. despair and the sense of coherence and wholeness within the Self, which was at risk during this challenge. Antonovsky and Sagy suggest that this sense of coherence is challenged by the retirement transition, a transition occurring before Erikson's stage of integrity vs. despair. They criticize Erikson, suggesting he neglects a crucial phase of life. Antonovsky and Sagy take up the challenge to redress the balance arguing that this crucial phase of life produces some degree of psychological conflict and therefore should not be neglected. The particular developmental task of 'Re-evaluation of a world-view' in Antonovsky and Sagy's work can easily be related to Parkes' (1971, 1975) work on life transitions, where he describes the necessary task of giving up one set of assumptions about the world for a new set of assumptions.

The work by Antonovsky and Sagy (1990) demonstrates the multiplicity of issues within the process of transition to retirement and the potential for difficulties in one or other of these areas. Others have also suggested that the change required in retirement may induce psychological difficulty, even depression (Mann 1991). Mann (1991) suggests that psychological change is an important part of retirement, this is because all changes involve loss, even changes for the better: "Loss induces depression and an accompanying drop in self-esteem" (Mann 1991, p.43). Initially, this is not evident in the transition to retirement, but two or so years later Mann expects to see psychological conflict within individuals and a degree of depression.
Both Antonovsky and Sagy (1990) and Mann (1991) seem to see retirement as provoking some sort of crisis within the individual.

Retirement clearly requires psychosocial adjustment, and examining the process of retirement as a transition appears to suggest some degree of conflict or crisis. These studies, together with the previously mentioned work by Thériault (1994), show that the transition to retirement may not be straightforward and uncomplicated and there may be psychological conflict. It is acknowledged however, that resolution and potentially very positive outcomes are possible (Talaga and Beehr 1989; McGoldrick 1994).

This review of literature on retirement has so far highlighted the many and varied aspects of the retirement adjustment process researched. All work culminates in the idea that retirement is a life change requiring a complex interplay of various inner and outer adjustments and that this happens over time, a time of transition. The nature of the process of this transition is complex and may involve psychological conflict. Many of the previously mentioned studies have either not used women as participants at all, or have studied men and women together. This leaves open questions regarding any differences there may be in the experience of retirement for men and women, and whether the present study can be compared or contrasted with studies using all male or male and female participants. Women's experiences of the transition to retirement are the focus of the present study and it is therefore necessary to look at work on retirement specific to women.

Women's Experiences of Retirement

Retirement has become a normative life event for women as the numbers of women in the workforce have increased. Prior to the mid 1970s research examining women's retirement was non-existent (Slevin and Wingrove, 1995; Szinovacz, 1982, in Price, 2000). Despite a dearth of studies on women's retirement experiences there is recognition that women's experiences might differ from those of men. McGoldrick (1994) notes that, although some research has been attempted there are "still many questions requiring investigation" (McGoldrick, 1994, p.155), in particular questions around issues of gender differences in adaptation to retirement and the reasons women retire.

Research on women's retirement remains on the increase and findings indicate that women's retirement experiences do in fact differ from those of men. Studies indicating gender differences in the retirement transition, which use both male and female participants, have been the foundation for studies focusing specifically on women. The findings of some of these studies have led to the need for more in-depth research on women's retirement experiences, as will be discussed later.

The following is some of the work already established.

Gender Differences In Retirement

A study of twenty four individuals, 14 men and 10 women, (Wapner and Hornstein, 1980, in Hanson and Wapner, 1994; Hornstein and Wapner, 1984, 1985) drawn from a range of occupational groups and intensively interviewed one month prior to, and six to eight months following, retirement, uncovered four modes of experiencing the transition to retirement:

1. Transition to old age (a time to wind down)
2. New Beginning (beginning a new phase of life)
3. Continuation (continuing valued activities in a less pressured and more satisfying manner and
4. Imposed Disruption (loss of a part of themselves as a result of undesired, forced retirement).

The question has to be asked as to whether the timescale used in Hornstein and Wapner's original study was long enough to observe a transition to retirement to have taken place. The present study advances the end of study timescale to coincide with participants having retired for a minimum of eighteen months in order to take account of the potential for the transition to take longer than the eight months Hornstein and Wapner used. Many researchers consider retirement to be a lengthy process of adjustment (Ekert, Bosse, and Levkoff (1985).

Hanson and Wapner (1994) subsequently advanced the work by Hornstein and Wapner (1980), replicating the retirement categories found in the previous studies and focusing on gender differences. Interestingly, they advanced the timescale, ensuring participants had been retired for up to eighteen months.

Amongst nine gender differences in this subsequent study, Hanson and Wapner (1994) found that more women than men (where the retirement categories were pooled) indicated that they experienced their sense of Self changed with retirement, and more women than men in category 2,'New Beginning', indicated that they gained a sense of Self with retirement. These and the other findings in the study led Hanson and Wapner to conclude that, in general, women appeared to be more "positively influenced by retirement then men" (Hanson and Wapner, 1994, p.203). They also concluded that:

> *"The overwhelming numbers of women who experience the transition to retirement as a 'continuation' may be explained by research that suggests formal roles have relatively less importance for women than for men."*
> (Hanson and Wapner, 1994, p.203)

Here the importance of the informal domestic role for women has to be considered, as it is a role which potentially gives continuity. However, Price (2000), investigating the retirement experiences of professional women, found that women's work roles are an important aspect of their identities. This may be a difference attributed to professional women only but it is important to note and will be discussed further. Contrary to Hanson and Wapner's (1994) findings, Seccombe and Lee (1986) found that women were less happy in retirement than men. In predictors of satisfaction, that is, health, marital status and income, the results were the same for both genders, yet the women reported being less happy. Szinovacz and Washo (1992) studied gender differences in exposure to life events surrounding the retirement transition. This was a questionnaire study of 452 women and 378 men who had retired within the past five years (participants being relatively equally distributed by retirement age). Findings showed that women experience significantly more events than men before retirement, and even after retirement women's life event experiences still exceed those of men. Experience of two or more life events after retirement was found to have a negative influence on

retirement adaptation and this has a more detrimental effect on women's retirement adaptation than on men's:

> *"Men's and women's retirement experiences, although similar in some respects, differ in important ways. ... women are more vulnerable than men to accumulation of life events surrounding the retirement transition, and such life event accumulation negatively impinges on women's but not on men's retirement adaptation."*
>
> (Szinovacz and Washo, 1992, p.195)

Clearly the particulars of women's retirement and events surrounding their retirement do have an effect on adaptation. The results of large scale questionnaire studies such as the one by Szinovacz and Washo, which identify potential areas of gender difference in the retirement transition, help to inform more in-depth studies on the intricacies of these particulars. The present study aims to address this by looking in-depth at women's experiences.

Matthews and Brown (1988) also found that men and women experience retirement in different ways. They compared the experiences of men and women, focusing on retirement as a "crisis" event. 'Crisis' referred to "a major transition requiring ongoing life adjustment, whether positive or negative in character" (Matthews and Brown, 1988, p.549). All participants in this study were retired for a minimum of one year but under five years. This was a study of 176 men and 124 women, and used questionnaires and measures of life-events and a crisis assessment technique. Matthews and Brown's data confirmed that there are "important and notable differences in the way in which men and women experience retirement as a specific event and in terms of overall life satisfaction" (Matthews and Brown, 1988, p.563). Matthews and Brown's results concluded that retirement was a less critical life event than much previous research had suggested, although individual variation in the experience of retirement was extensive. According to Matthews and Brown's study, the factors that most strongly affect the experience of retirement for women are health and attitude towards retirement. Attitude towards retirement, it can be argued, is more complex than a label of 'positive' or 'negative' might suggest. Further examination of the intricacies is clearly required.

It is clear that in a variety of ways the retirement experiences for women and men are different. However, gender comparison research tends to be quantitative, focusing on measurements of attitudes and satisfaction with retirement, and based on male models and theories of retirement as standards of comparison (Calasanti, 1993, 1996). This is problematic when the experiences of each are obviously showing differences. Knowing the subtleties of those differences when the basis of the research is from a theoretical standpoint directly formulated from a male perspective raises questions of validity. Another problem is that much research also appears to be focused on the question of whether women or men find retirement more or less difficult. In commenting on this Connidis (1982) made the point that:

> *"a more fruitful approach to the entire question rests in considering male-female differences in the process of adjustment to retirement instead of attempting to determine who is better at it."*
>
> (Connidis, 1982, p.19)

More studies are therefore needed to examine in-depth, the process and the meaning of retirement for women and for men. The present study attempts to look specifically at how women experience retirement and the process of their transition.

Though more are needed, there are some studies researching women's experience of retirement specifically. This work will be examined now.

Research On Retirement Specific To Women

Skirboll and Silverman (1992) used a case study approach to examine the process and meaning of retirement for women who were either anticipating retirement or had recently retired. They found that women's retirement was much more complex than previously reported.

Twenty two women were interviewed once, the youngest was 57, the oldest 78. Focused interviews based on a systematic set of guidelines were used. Women were interviewed

at various phases of the work/retirement cycle, with some women still working at the time of the interview.

Skirboll and Silverman identified three patterns of retirement styles: 'anticipators', 'resistors who have retired', and 'resistors who are of retirement age, but still working'. They grouped participants into two patterns of post-retirement reactions: 'happy/adapted', those who felt relief at being retired and engaged in a wide range of activities, and 'Loss of Status and Added Burdens', those who, even though relieved of the pressure of work, often felt an immediate loss of status.

Findings from this study concluded that there was complexity in the decision-making process of retirement in that spousal or family pressure had a significant impact on women's decision to retire. Also, some women find the adjustment to retirement difficult because they no longer have the prestige they once had. Sufficient stimulation and self-esteem was found difficult to replace.

Skirboll and Silverman's study is very useful in identifying issues for women undergoing the retirement transition. However, they claim to be studying the 'process' of retirement whilst interviewing each participant only once. Retirement patterns are identified and assumed to be fixed, not allowing the potential for women to move from one pattern into another, for example from 'resistor' to 'happy/adapted'. To examine the process of the retirement transition within an individual, a longitudinal design following the same participant through an appropriate timescale of transition is preferable. The present study addresses this issue by interviewing the same participants three times over a period of eighteen months.

An interesting finding from Skirboll and Silverman's (1992) study was that, once retired, women feel the demand to care for ill members of the family. This is often a negative consequence of retirement but continues a caregiving role these women had when working. Similar findings were identified by Szinovacz (1987, 1989) and Brody et al (1987) in that care needs of relatives were important considerations in decisions about whether to retire and/or how much to work.

Calasanti (1993) found a contradiction in the lives of working class women in that:

> *"there emerged an important reality in these women's lives that I finally recognized: they do not retire....Regardless of whether or not the women re-enter the labor market, their labor (sic) continues – in the home."*
>
> (Calasanti, 1993, pp.143-144)

An interesting finding by Belgrave (1988) showed that some women, when retired, referred to themselves as housewives. These same women had been employed full-time since their teens and had not left work until their sixties. Could this be a reluctance to identify with the 'retired' label, or an acceptance of a non-retired status in the housewife role, or even adoption of a new role title?

> *"Whether an older women is retired or not generally has been decided by the researcher; rarely has she defined her own role ... yet it may be that how women define themselves has an important relation to their adjustment in late life. ... Retirement, for example, has been described as a 'roleless role' (see Hatch 1987)"*
>
> (Adelmann, Antonucci and Jackson, 1993, p.68)

In their study of how older women define their roles Adelmann et al (1993) found that a substantial proportion of women chose to define themselves as both homemaker and retired. Those who called themselves retired only were less likely to be married, and

> *"whether a woman had a retired husband was related to how she defined her role in late life. Women who called themselves retired were liable to have a retired husband. ... Homemakers only were least likely to have a retired husband. Thus, for women, at least part of how they define their later years is in relation to their husband's role rather than their own."*
>
> (Adelmann, Antonucci and Jackson, 1993, p.77.)

Clearly there is some complexity, even confusion, surrounding the issue of continuity and definition of roles following retirement. The issue of roles also relates to questions of identity. Defining who we are as people often incorporates the roles we perform. This was studied by Price (1998, 2000).

Price (1998) interviewed 14 professional women ranging in age from 64 to 82 and retired between 7 and 15 years. Each participant was interviewed twice. The first

interview was to establish rapport and to give personal and occupational histories. The second interview was semi-structured and addressed specific topics identified during analysis (i.e. the importance of friendships, identity issues, and the structure of time). The results of this study were presented as a four-stage process model: (1) Decision to Retire, (2) Relinquishing Professional Identity, (3) Re-establishing Order, and (4) Life in Retirement (Price 1998).

Further work by Price on the stage of 'Relinquishing Professional Identity' showed that although the women in her study identified the loss of their professional role as a significant component of their retirement they "did not reveal a negative impact of this loss of professional identity on their self-esteem or personal identity" (Price 2000, p.84).

Price found that the process of relinquishing one's professional identity at retirement varied individually. However, the women in her study reported no decrease in sense of Self or personal identity following retirement.

Price reported that most of her participants experienced the transition to retirement with relative ease but did feel a loss of social contact, a loss of professional challenges, a need to be productive and a need to confront stereotypes of ageing and retirement. Price concluded that the fact these women had successfully survived many previous life transitions may have contributed to the ease of their entrance to retirement.

Price's work is valuable in that it explores in-depth the experience of retirement for women, and identifies issues pertinent to professional women's retirement adjustment. However, Price interviewed women who had been retired for between 7-15 years. She did this purposely to avoid any 'honeymoon' period in the adjustment to retirement. By avoiding this initial period of retirement however, Price may have missed subtle but important transitional issues felt by these women but not clarified by them because of their complexity. For example any initial personal identity disorganisation experienced by these women could have been rationalised eventually as a role issue or difficulty in relinquishing professional identity. Any initial confusion or disruption involving difficulty separating professional and personal identity may not have been identified. Cook (1993) acknowledges that a woman's career is "a central component of her self-

concept that she seeks to integrate with other important components of her life such as family and children" (Cook, 1993, p.378). The potential for disruption of the whole self-concept is clear when the self-concept consists of integrated parts.

Whilst the complexity of issues of roles, identity and self-concept are acknowledged, it is thought that Price's study does not go far enough in exploring the process of the transition to retirement. Again, as with other studies mentioned, one interview identifying the topics relevant to the process of the retirement transition cannot be enough.

Researching the 'process' of the transition to retirement is always going to be difficult as it probably begins with expectations of the experience accumulated long before the retirement event actually occurs. The 'ending' of the transition is most probably equally unclear. Nevertheless, interviewing women during or very close to the actual event of their retirement will explore the raw and not-yet-organised thoughts and feelings of the women as they experience the transition to retirement. Following this through with further interviews will enable the 'process' to be examined alongside the participant's experiencing and making sense of their own adjustment. This goes much further than the method employed by Price (1998), of one interview, in some cases as long as 15 years after retirement.

Clearly women's retirement experiences are varied and complex, and there is very little research specific to women. An obvious gap in the literature is work on the process of transition to retirement specific to women, a gap the present research aims to fill. The previously mentioned research specific to women's retirement suggests the importance of status and self-esteem (Skirboll and Silverman, 1992), roles (Skirboll and Silverman, 1992; Szinovacz, 1987, 1989; and Brody et al 1987.), self-definitions (Belgrave, 1988; Adelmann, Antonucci and Jackson, 1993), professional identity (Price 1998, 2000) and self-concept (Cook 1993). This, combined with work on psychosocial transitions (Parkes, 1971, 1975; Thériault, 1994), suggests that central to the individual's process of transition, is the role of the Self. It is therefore important to examine this subject more fully.

The Self

There are many approaches to the Self. There are those that view the Self as pre-existent to experience, for example, arguably, Rogers (1951, 1967); conversely, there are those who suggest that the Self develops as a result of experience rather than as a precursor to it, for example Mead (1934). All approaches argue for a Self that is dynamic and fluid, but with different levels of coherence and consistency. The following theories and perspectives have been chosen for review either because they contribute to the development of ideas in the thesis (Rogers, 1951, 1967; James, 1890, 1892), or because they enable a comparative analysis of the Self to be made (Mead, 1934; Gergen, 1991, 1994; Wetherell and Maybin, in Stevens (ed), 1997; Bruner, 1990; Kondo, 1990; Potter and Wetherell, 1987; and Gough and McFadden, 2001).

The review begins with the symbolic interactionist perspective on the Self that argues for a Self that develops through social experience (Mead, 1934). Mead (1934) argues for a Self that develops as the individual experiences the social process of relationship with others. The social constructionist perspective on the Self is examined next (Gergen, 1991, 1994; Wetherell and Maybin in Stevens (ed), 1997; Bruner, 1990; Kondo, 1990; Potter and Wetherell, 1987; and Gough and McFadden, 2001). This is another perspective like Mead's which views the Self as developing through experience. Unlike Mead, the social constructionists point to a fragmented Self continually re-constituted, a Self with less coherence than Mead's conceptualization.

Examined next are views of the Self having aspects pre-existent to experience which are unlike the two perspectives already mentioned which argue for a Self developing through experience. Roger's humanistic theory of the Self (Rogers, 1951, 1967) assumes a Self that is determined from 'within', pre-existent to experience, although Rogers also argues that core elements in the formation of the structure of the Self exist within the environment. The phenomenological perspective of the Self (James, 1890; 1892) is then examined, leading to a discussion on the 'Self as Known' and the 'Self as Knower'. This will clarify theorists' understandings of the Self and the variations in the importance theorists give to the 'Me', the 'Self as Known' and the 'I', the 'Self as Knower', in the development of the Self.

The Symbolic Interactionist Perspective of the Self (Mead, 1934)

How the Self arises

Mead (1934) suggests that the Self develops as the individual experiences the social process of relationship and of experiencing other individuals. Mead was concerned with social and cultural influences on individual minds. The processes of individual thought, according to Mead, reflect the outer social world. Moreover, mind and Self emerge from a social process rather than being an aspect of the individual prior to social experience. Nevertheless Mead avoids total social determinism, as will be explained later in 'Self as knower'. Mead proposed that it was interaction itself that led to mental activity and not the reverse (Ashworth 1979). Thus "society was to be regarded as prior to the development of mental processes in the individual" (Ashworth, 1979, p.8).

According to Mead, symbolic forms of interaction such as language, play and games, enable children to develop the capacity for using symbols and for reflecting on and developing the Self. This is brought about by role-taking and modelling others' minds. Interactions with others are developed as these skills are used in an increasingly complex way, based on shared meanings about the world and people's intentions and behaviour (Stevens 1997). The 'conversation of gestures' according to Mead is the process of social experience and activity, and the response of the individual to it (Mead, 1934). Within the conversation of gestures individuals interpret the meaning of the gestures and meaningful symbols, most notably language, from other individuals at the same time as learning, responding, acting and communicating as individuals within society. Part of that response of the individual involves the 'internal dialogue' of the 'I' and the 'Me'.

The 'I' and the 'Me'

Mead used the distinction between the 'I' and the 'Me' to label different aspects of our internal dialogues. Nevertheless it is not Mead's view that the Self is divided (Ashworth

1979). This is illustrated in Mead's relation of the 'I' to memory. The 'I' is a historical figure, one that was a 'Me' in past experience, but is now a memory of that 'Me'. Mead argues, "it is in memory that the 'I' is constantly present in experience" (Mead, 1934, p.174).

As mentioned, the 'I' and the 'Me' are used by Mead to label different aspects of our internal dialogues. These internal dialogues consist of an internal conversation of significant gestures. Ashworth (1979) clarifies this in his presentation of Mead's two stage analysis of the internal conversation of significant gestures. He describes:

> *"the one – reflecting the 'I' – is the initial impulse to act, the unorganized tendency of the person; the other – a function of the 'me' – is the incorporated other within the individual. Thus it comprises the organized sets of attitudes and definitions, understandings and expectations – or simple meanings – common to the group"*
>
> (Meltzer, 1964, p.10; Ashworth, 1979, p.93).

The 'I' according to Mead is "the answer which the individual makes to the attitude which others take toward him when he assumes an attitude toward them" (Mead, 1934, p.177). In this way the 'I' is seen as the initiative behind the response. The 'Me' is continually modified throughout our lives by way of dialogues with others and by changing social groups, for example by becoming parents.

It is not easy however to be very clear about what the 'I' and the 'Me' really represent in Mead's work. A possibility suggested by Ashworth (1979) is that the 'I' represents the 'Self as Knower', and the 'Me' represents the self-concept. This will be discussed further when the 'Self as Knower' is examined.

Summary

The Self in Mead's analysis is therefore made up of other people, their relationships and interactions. This assumes a fluid Self as it is made up of internalized others and relationships, a Self that is not 'inside' each of us prior to the internalization of these relationships and a Self that is without a boundary because of the inevitability of it changing with social experience.

> *"Mead's endeavour is to show that mind and the Self are without residue social emergents (sic); and that language, in the form of the vocal gesture, provides the mechanism for their emergence."*
>
> (Morris, 1962, in Mead, 1962, p. xiv)

The Self, according to Mead therefore, arises out of the process of social experience. That experience involves the internalizing of the attitudes of other people in a highly organized way, such that those attitudes are related to each other, as a social attitude and interaction, and to the individual's own "conversation of the 'I' and the 'Me" (Mead, 1934, p.179). This means that the Self is a process, one that is fluid or 'being modified'. Mead calls this process of social experience and activity, and the response of the individual to it, the "conversation of gestures" (Mead, 1934, p.178). The process of internalizing this conversation of gestures constitutes the Self.

Mead's work is very well respected and accepted. There are however aspects of his theory where the exact meaning is not very clear, for example the 'I' and the 'Me' (Ashworth, 1979). Nevertheless, Mead's work has formed the precursor to many subsequent theories of the Self, not least social constructionist accounts, which will be examined next. Mead (1934) placed great emphasis on language, considering the role of action and consequences and the process of constructing reality through language in a way that allowed the concept of an individual to develop through his or her reflection on symbolic forms of interaction. Thus, Mead had a wider perspective on the construction of meaning between and within individuals than the social constructionist perspective, which, as will be discussed, allows little room for the concept of the individual.

Like Mead, the social constructionist perspective on the Self views the Self as arising out of the process of social experience. The social constructionist view however is less coherent than the symbolic interactionist perspective of Mead, and points to a fragmented Self continually re-constituted.

The Social Constructionist perspective of the Self

For social constructionists, 'the person', 'consciousness', 'mind,' and 'Self' are social. The 'person' and their 'social context' are therefore not easily separated. Our physical bodies, according to the social constructionist, mislead us into taking a 'separatist' view of our psychologies (Stevens, 1996). The sense of a private and self-contained space within us, within our minds, is a combination of the experiences, dialogues and associations from the social world that we have incorporated into ourselves. This 'social experience' incorporated into the person, is described by Wetherell and Maybin as, "a line momentarily and arbitrarily drawn around pieces of the public world" (in Stevens, (ed) 1996, p. 222). The 'Self' is therefore forever changing, 'emergent', in the sense that the Self is never complete but continually constituted. Gergen describes the Self as 'a continuously changing and fluid history of relationships' (Gergen, 1991; 1994). Also Bruner (1990) argues that the Self has to be seen as distributed. He describes the Self as continually spreading, changing, grouping and re-grouping, and this all occurring within a social and relational experience.

The social constructionist perspective therefore dismisses any notion of thought or sense being produced 'from within', in the sense that 'within' means an aspect of the person uniquely separated from their social experience, i.e. 'individual'. Thought, according to the social constructionist, is always a social product, the Self a product of combined social experiences, not worthy of a capital 'S'! As these experiences change and differ, so the Self is re-constituted.

Questions as to what extent people are independent and autonomous are raised by anthropological evidence for the social construction of the Self (Kondo, 1990). Kondo's work demonstrates the intertwining of the Self and the social context. The 'emergent Self' is evident, whereby the Self is incomplete in its formation, and is continually constituted. Also the multiplicity of selves, sometimes contradictory, are demonstrated by Kondo (1990), and argued as an inevitable fact of life in highly differentiated societies where the person is embroiled in different social contexts and thus different identity possibilities.

What social constructionists argue to be a multiplicity, that is, differing social contexts leading to different identity possibilities, could be argued to be merely differing aspects of a whole Self. It appears that social constructionists fragment the Self more than is evident in most people's experience. Social constructionists do talk about 'plausibility', about having identities not too fragmented so as to lose consistency and recognition of 'themselves', but this seems to give more independence and autonomy to individuals than social constructionists would like to admit to. Gough and McFadden (2001) argue that a Self that is flexible and dynamic, adopting and discarding 'multiple roles' as the situation demands, points to a fragmented Self rather than a unitary Self. They comment that:

"The debate about how much autonomy a person has – and how to conceptualize this – is one which is complex and ongoing within critical social psychology" (Gough and McFadden, 2001, p.12).

The connecting of the individual to the social world is a fairly non-contentious issue. The social context of any activity is clearly of relevance in the interpretation and analysis of a given phenomenon. It is, however, to what extent the individual is lost or non-existent within that phenomenon that is at issue. Critical social psychologists such as Gough and McFadden (2001); Edwards and Potter (1993); and Parker (1998), suggest that the individual has room to manoeuvre within given social constraints, but it is not clear where this limited autonomy comes from or how it can be manifested. Others, such as Csikszentmihalyi (1988, 1992) claim that the qualities of subjective experience cannot be regarded merely as a product of culture. According to Csikszentmihalyi, if culture and experience totally shaped our sense of Self, the flow of events in our experience would be focusing our attention for us. Csikszentmihalyi argues rather, that the Self has great capacity to direct feelings, sensations, thoughts and interactions. This capacity of the Self to 'direct' is, according to Csikszentmihalyi, an invaluable skill in living life.

As mentioned the social constructionist views the Self as a product of combined social experiences. Language forms a large part of that social experience and the social

constructionist links power to language and representation (discourse), (Gough and McFadden, 2001). It is the focus on language that needs to be examined next, as for social constructionists all knowledge, including knowledge of the Self, is constructed with the emphasis on language.

The Role of Language in the Social Construction of the Self

Social constructionism highlights the role of language in defining (constructing) reality. As previously discussed, Mead (1934) also highlighted the role of language in the construction of the Self and Mead's work is considered a pre-cursor to the social constructionist emphasis on language (Gough and McFadden, 2001). Harré (in Gergen and Davis (eds), 1985) discusses the fact that Vygotsky, Mead, Wittgensein and Bruner all suggest that language precedes any concept within the person of the Self. That Self is a product of "social forces mediated by favored grammatical models for self-ascription and self-exhortation" (Harré 1985).

Burr (1995) argues that the sharing of a culture and of language enables the reproduction of conceptual frameworks and categories of meaning that exist within that culture. Language therefore is considered a 'form of action'. When people talk they not only express themselves but also actively produce a framework of meaning for the thoughts they have. Language is used to create, or 'construct', meanings. Social constructionists therefore highlight the role of language in defining, or constructing reality. Power is also intimately bound up with language and representation (Gough and McFadden, 2001). Therefore the aim of data analysis within social constructionism is to "carefully examine a text, highlight recurrent patterns of talk and to locate such talk within social and political ideals and practices" (Gough and McFadden, 2001, p.18). Discourse analysis is the name given to such analysis and, although there are many types of discourse analysis, the dominant activity in all is the analysis of discourse.

Discourse Analysis

Of interest within the 'bottom-up' approach of discourse analysis (Potter and Wetherell, 1987) is the 'variability' in people's accounts and the multiple and conflicting ways in

which people talk about something. The social effects of such 'speech acts' (Austin, 1962 in Gough and McFadden, 2001) or their function, is analysed. This follows the detailed categorisation of the way the person has constructed, or created, meaning from the cultural context they are in to represent a concept. A more 'top-down' approach is concerned with discourses that maintain particular positions and relationships (Gough and McFadden, 2001). The issue of power is of importance here and institutions such as the government represent historical and cultural positions and relationships. Foucault (1972) influenced this approach, characterizing discourses as "practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak" (Foucault, 1972, p.49).

The issue of discourse and reality is of relevance with regard to the concept of the Self. The emphasis in discourse analysis is that of an 'anti-foundational stance' (Gough and McFadden, 2001). That is, there is no objective reality to which language is referring. In fact language is actually constructing a 'reality'. Thus the Self is a social construction created among people by the way they talk about themselves. The notion of the 'individual' Self is rejected and replaced by the distributed Self, a result of all the different kinds of interactions and participations in a person's social life.

Summary and evaluation

Social Constructionists see the Self as socially and linguistically created and constituted (Gergen, 1985). Any notion of thought or sense, or of 'Self' being produced 'from within', is dismissed, in the sense that 'within' means an aspect of the person uniquely separated from their social experience, i.e. 'individual'. The 'Self' is forever changing, 'emergent', in the sense that the Self is never complete but continually constituted. The Self is therefore constructed and continually re-constructed within the framework of a person's language and culture. According to the social constructionist, the Self is constituted through language that does not refer to some reality beyond the text or speech, but only to itself. The experience of the Self is therefore relative to social experience.

Greenwood (1994) argues that:

"Social constructionism involves a direct denial of both the linguistic and epistemic objectivity of theoretical descriptions, including theoretical psychological descriptions" (Greenwood, 1994, p.37).

Greenwood argues however, that the general social constructionist position actually presupposes the linguistic objectivity of theoretical descriptions, including theoretical psychological descriptions. He argues that:

"theoretical and empirical descriptions are linguistically objective by virtue of their being descriptions: by virtue of attributing properties or relations to postulated or observable entities. In consequence, to deny that theoretical or empirical descriptions are linguistically objective is to deny that they are descriptions at all – which is what much of the social constructionist argument concerning theoretical discourse comes down to" (Greenwood, 1994, p.41).

The relativist epistemology of discourse analysis, being grounded in constructionist thinking, has concerned many social psychologists (e.g. Parker, 1998). As Gough and McFadden comment:

"The absence of any agreed or neutral version of reality beyond discourse can inhibit critical comments to the specific causes or groups ... the constructionist focus on diversity can discourage researchers from making claims about the collective situation of a specific group." (Gough and McFadden, 2002, p.63)

The value of the perspective of a Self never complete but continually constituted ('emergent'), and of the multiplicity of selves, sometimes contradictory and forever changing, could be seen to give 'voice' and acceptance to diverse and 'unconventional' views on the Self in humanity. This all encompassing relativist perspective however is overshadowed by the difficulty of making any claim about anything. The rejection of any reality either denies the plausibility of its own position, or presumes the reliability of reason and possibly therefore the objectivity of truth.

Though both the symbolic interactionist and the social constructionist advocate a fluid and dynamic Self arising from experience, the symbolic interactionist argues for a more coherent Self than the social constructionist. Both perspectives argue that the Self develops as a result of experience rather than as a pre-cursor to it, for a Self that is developed through experience. Others suggest a Self that is pre-existent to experience, Rogers (1951), for example, assumes a Self partly determined from 'within'. This theory is examined next.

Rogers (1951) Humanistic Theory of the Self

Humanistic psychology originated as a reaction to behaviourist and psychoanalytic thinking. The intention was to find ways of becoming more intensely aware of one's feelings and experience. Influencing this thinking was phenomenology, which focuses on what is experientially real rather than abstractly true, and existential thinking, which focuses on awareness of the human condition and the dynamic quality of human existence (Stevens 1997). These influences are evident in Roger's ideas about the Self.

Rogers attempts to bring together positivism and existentialism and he begins with the assumption that there are laws of the dynamics of human behaviour. He also argues that the human person is fundamentally rational, constructive and trustworthy, attributes pre-existent to experience within individuals. However, Rogers also argues that individuals are defended against being the people they are determined to be and are instead "determined by the factors in the existential situation" (Rogers, 1961, p.163). Here Rogers is arguing that the circumstances and experience of the environment more often than not determine the expression of Self. Moreover, Rogers' describes how, by interaction with the environment, a growing child gradually builds up concepts about herself, the environment, and the relationship between the two. It appears therefore that there are, according to Rogers, both intrinsic and extrinsic determinants in the development of the Self. Rogers appears to concentrate on the development of the self-concept as being that which is developed by environmental factors. Underlying the self-concept are the pre-determined 'essential' characteristics of the Self.

Rogers defines the Self as:

> *"an organized, fluid, but consistent conceptual pattern of perceptions of characteristics and relationships of the "I" or "Me", together with values attached to these concepts."*
>
> (Rogers, 1951, p.498)

The fluid but consistent attributes of the Self highlighted by Rogers clearly derive from existential and phenomenological thinking and sit comfortably with the concepts of stability and change ascribed to development by Atchley (1989) and mentioned previously. Rogers uses the terms the 'I' and the 'Me' in the nature of James (1890; 1892), which will be discussed later.

The Self is the determining aspect of personality according to Rogers and the aim of life is to "be that Self which one truly is" (Rogers, 1967, p.166). According to Rogers the Self is always in flux, and 'real freedom' is found when we choose to be the people, the Self, we are determined to be. This begins to be realised when the 'self-actualising' tendency is engaged within, driving us to be who we are meant to be.

Rogers selected samples of clients in therapy who had shown some progress during their therapy. From these samples he made generalisations and theories arguing that his theory is universal (Rogers 1967). Rogers has been criticised for this unrepresentative sample (Sarason, 1981, in Brazier (ed), 1993). Sarason argues that Rogers defines the problems of people independently of the nature and structure of the social order. Rogers is also criticised for the ethnocentric western view of the Self that he presents (Sarason, 1981, in Brazier (ed), 1993). Sarason argues that:

"Alternative concepts of Self which are inextricably embedded in the framework of society, culture and time have been presented" (Sarason, 1981, in Brazier (ed), 1993, p.240).

Sarason suggests this 'individuocentric' approach to the Self needs revising. Such revision of a theoretical concept of Self, derived from objective laws of the dynamics of human behaviour, seems a little incongruous however.

Rogers' theory, for the purpose of this thesis, is regarded as having some value in that it acknowledges a Self partially pre-existent to experience. The theory also sits comfortably with the concepts of stability and change previously mentioned and valued. It is necessary therefore to explain a specific Rogerian term used within the thesis, 'congruence'.

Rogers uses this term to indicate outward expressions of a Self existing internally. As the Rogerian concept of the Self influences the work in this thesis the term 'congruence' is made use of within the analysis. An explanation of this term is therefore necessary. The term 'congruence' indicates:

> *"an accurate matching of experiencing and awareness. It may be still further extended to cover a matching of experience, awareness, and communication."*
>
> (Rogers, 1967, p.339)

Experiencing and communicating an emotion would constitute congruence. Experiencing but not communicating an emotion would be incongruence, or not experiencing (in conscious awareness) an emotion, but communicating it would also be incongruence. It is therefore possible for it to be very obvious to others that a person is both experiencing and communicating an emotion, and yet for that person to not consciously experience the emotion and not be consciously aware they are communicating it.

Summary

Clearly Rogers assumes the Self to be fundamentally determined from 'within', but with some characteristics determined in the environment. Thus the Self is partly pre-existent to experience and partly determined by the environment. The Self is nevertheless the determining aspect of personality. The Self according to Rogers is always in flux, and is

dynamic in that real change, but of a consistent nature, is possible, even desirable. The environment has a very important part to play in the development of the Self, particularly the self-concept. Nevertheless Rogers' theory has limited generalisability in its attempt to be objective and to demonstrate laws of the dynamics of human behaviour. It is also criticised for its ethnocentric, western and individualistic view of the Self (Sarason , 1981, in Brazier (ed), 1993).

There are, as discussed, many perspectives on the Self. Despite their differences they all emphasize the Self as changing and yet, with varying emphasis, they also describe continuity within the Self. The one perspective not yet examined is that of James (1890). James, like all others previously discussed, noted the experience of continual change within the Self (James, 1950), whilst also stressing the sense of continuity and flow. James presented a phenomenological description of consciousness, his interest being in the 'universal features of consciousness' (Stevens 1996), and a detailed work on the Self. James's influence can be seen in most of the previously mentioned perspectives on the Self. James perspective will now be discussed.

The Phenomenological Perspective on the Self (James, 1890; 1892; 1950)

To enable a broader understanding of James' perspective on the Self a brief examination of James' general ideas on consciousness is necessary.

James (1890; 1892; 1950) was interested in the 'universal features of consciousness' (James, 1950, in Stevens, 1996). By this he meant those features or aspects of consciousness which we all feel that we possess within ourselves. Also emphasized by James is the role of experience in developing and shaping our minds and selves.

James noted how "our state of mind is never precisely the same" (James, 1950, p. 233). And how "experience is remoulding us every moment" (James, 1950, p. 234). However, James also stressed continuity alongside change. He described the 'stream-like' nature of consciousness, and the fact that it 'feels unbroken' (James, 1950 in Stevens, 1996). Stevens (1996) gives a helpful summary of James' ideas on consciousness, he writes:

> *"It is continuous, constantly changing, always located in a person. It contains sub-worlds and differences in quality and pace. It involves selection from possibilities and attention applied in either a responsive or deliberate way. There is a less clearly perceived 'fringe' around a central focus."*
>
> (Stevens, 1996, p. 157)

According to James our sense of Self and will are core aspects of our conscious experience. By will James means our ability to direct thought and action. Csikszentmihalyi, mentioned previously, agrees, arguing that the Self has great capacity to direct feelings, sensations, thoughts and interactions. Csikszentmihalyi argues that this capacity of the Self to 'direct' is an invaluable skill in living life.

For James, conscious awareness is characterized by continual change alongside continuity, and this is most evident in his work on the Self, which will be examined later. Although James considers "our mental reaction on every given thing is really resultant of our experience of the whole world up to that date" (James, 1950, p. 234), which might imply social determinism, he regards consciousness as always personal and therefore essentially private (Stevens, 1996). In fact, James' work on the Self dismisses the notion of total social determinism as will be seen later.

James' ideas on consciousness, briefly examined previously, are most clearly elaborated in James' writings on the Self, which will be examined next.

The 'I' and the 'Me'

The 'I' and the 'Me' are not unfamiliar terms in writings on the Self. Although, as previously mentioned, it is not always clear what theorists mean by the terms. If we consider, as James does, the 'I' to be the 'Self as Knower', and the 'Me' to be the 'Self as Known', this will enable a discussion as to the variations in theorists' understandings of the 'Self as Knower' and the 'Self as Known'. Using this distinction does not contradict any of the theorist's understandings of the Self where the Self is understood as the 'I' and the 'Me'. The 'I' and the 'Me' are used by Mead (1934) to label different aspects of our internal dialogues and Rogers uses the terms the 'I' and the 'Me' in the

manner of James (1890; 1892). What James means by the 'I' and the 'Me' will be examined further in the following discussion on the 'Self as Known' and the 'Self as Knower'.

The Self As Known

James regards the 'Me' as the 'Self as Known', the 'Me' being that part of the Self that is known by the 'I'. The 'Me', or 'empirical ego' in James terms, includes the 'Material', 'social' and 'Spiritual' 'Me'. The 'Material Me' consists of our body, where it is acknowledged that there are certain parts more intimately ours than the rest: our clothes, as we identify ourselves with them; our immediate family; evidenced in the perceived loss of part of the Self experienced on their death; and our home, as a reflection of a part of ourselves. Of the 'Social Me', James suggests, "a man has as many social selves as there are individuals who recognize him and carry an image of him in their mind" (James in Gorden and Gergen, 1968, p. 42). The 'Spiritual Me' James defines as the "entire collection of my states of consciousness, my psychic faculties and dispositions taken concretely" (James in Gorden and Gergen, 1968, p. 43). The spiritual aspect of the 'Me' is therefore bound up with the 'I', the 'Self as Knower'. It is this relationship which combines the aspects of the Self. This will be discussed later.

Sameness In The Self As Known

"If in the sentence, 'I am the same that I was yesterday,' we take the 'I' broadly, it is evident that in many ways I am not the same" (James in Gorden and Gergen, 1968, p. 47). There are ways in which we are different but also ways in which we are the same. James calls these ways in which we are the same, 'the essential ways'. Atchley (1989) in his theory of Continuity argues for a 'basic structure', which persists over time but allows for change within its context. Although Atchley drops the subjective Self, probably because it is fairly inaccessible to research as will be mentioned later, the parallels between the 'essential ways' of James and Atchley's 'basic structure' can be seen. The roots of Continuity theory can be seen further in the following quote:

> *"Moreover the Me of now and the Me of then are continuous: the alterations were gradual and never affected the whole of me at once... The past and present selves are the same in kind. But this generic sameness coexists with generic differences just as real"*
>
> (James in Gorden and Gergen, 1968, pp. 47-48)

The 'Self as Known' has material, social, and spiritual aspects, which have a sameness co-existing with difference. As mentioned, the spiritual aspect of the 'Me' is bound up with the spiritual aspect of the 'I', which excludes any notion of separateness between the 'I' and the 'Me'. James comments:

> *"When we think of ourselves as thinkers, all the other ingredients of our Me seem relatively external possessions. ... The more active-feeling states of consciousness are ... the more central portions of the spiritual Me."*
>
> (James in Gorden and Gergen, 1968, p. 43)

The 'I', or 'pure ego', in James' terms is that which <u>is</u> conscious, the 'Me' being that of which it is conscious. The 'Self as Knower', or the 'I', will now be examined.

<u>The Self As Knower</u>

The 'I' is the thinker, considered by most philosophers to have permanence, a sameness, about it, behind the passing state of consciousness which is ever changing. 'Soul' or 'Spirit' are some of the names given to this permanent thinker. This permanent part of the 'I' is seen as a combining medium of the many ideas of the passing states. Which is/are the true 'Knower' is a difficult question. The passing "states" (thoughts, ideas), which collectively know all things together, are deemed to be the exclusive agents of knowledge because their existence has to be assumed for there to be a psychology at all. The main grounds for admitting the existence of this 'soul' come from the concept of the sense of personal identity in that there is a sense of coherence about our thoughts belonging to "some one thinker and not to another" (James in Gorden and Gergen, 1968, p.47).

Ashworth (1979), in proposing two fundamental meanings of the Self from James (1892), that is, the Self as 'Knower' and 'Known', helpfully clarifies the distinction between Knower and Known using the sentence, 'I have a self concept' (Ashworth,

1979, p. 91); the concept of Self I am aware of is the 'Self as Known', this Self is Known by the Knower, which is the 'I' who knows.

Mead's perspective on the 'I' and the 'Me' has already been discussed under 'Symbolic Interactionism', and therefore need not be discussed fully again. Mead sees the 'I' as the initiative behind the response and the 'Me' as being continually modified throughout life by way of dialogues with others and by changing social groups. As previously discussed it is not easy to be very clear about what the 'I' and the 'Me' really represent in Mead's work. Also previously mentioned, according to Mead, the 'Self as Knower', the 'I', is "an impulsive, biological, individual tendency" (Ashworth, 1979, p. 94). This point enables Mead to avoid total social determinism, although Mead's suggestion that the capacity for internal reflection, a process in which the 'I' has a key role, is developed through social interaction does seem to attribute the 'I' with social determinism. According to Mead this 'impulsive, biological, individual tendency' of the 'I' does have a purpose in the process of reflection, together with the 'Me' in the internal dialogue of mind. In general however, Mead seems to be suggesting the Self is developed through social interaction, as the following quotation demonstrates:

> *The Self is something which has a development; it is not initially there, at birth, but arises in the process of social experience and activity."*
>
> (Mead, 1934, p.135)

According to Mead, therefore, the 'Self as Knower', the 'I', is the 'initiative behind the response', "the unorganized tendency of the person" (Ashworth, 1979, p.93), and as such appears to have a more impulsive and less rational and organized role. Ashworth (1979) argues that Mead distinguishes between the 'Self as Knower' and the self-concept (the 'Self as Known), the self-concept developing as a result of social relationships and experiences. The 'Self as knower' having a less defined role of enabling a capacity for internal reflection:

> *The process of reflection is a 'dialogue' between the 'I' and the 'me'. In this way one can reflect on oneself one's conclusion being the result of the 'I' and 'me' interchange."*
>
> (Mead, 1934, in Ashworth, 1979, p.93)

Rogers' on the other hand gives the 'Self as Knower' characteristics. He views the 'Self as Knower' as rational, constructive and trustworthy, although he argues that life experiences and circumstances shield this aspect of the Self. James views the 'Self as Knower' as a combining medium through the spiritual aspect of the Self. The 'I' taken as the "Thinker, as that to which all the concrete determinations of the 'Me' belong and are known" (James in Gorden and Gergen, 1968, p.48), seems to 'know' the 'Me' of the past and present, and discards the non-me. This appears to be, in James' words, "a permanent abiding principle of spiritual activity identical with itself wherever found" (James in Gorden and Gergen, 1968, p.48).

The role of the 'Self as Knower' remains under dispute. Ashworth (1979) regards the distinction as redundant favouring "the view of the Self as known which sees it as a result of the capacity – developed through interaction – for reflective thought" (Ashworth, 1979, p.94). James himself argues that, if the passing states of consciousness are in themselves taken as realities, then no such 'abiding principle' is necessary.

The Self as James defines it fits with the knowledge we have about ourselves and is not difficult to relate to from a subjective position. James himself acknowledges the philosophical and common sense nature of the doctrine. The debate, about which aspect of the Self has which characteristics, particularly when the aim is not to fragment the Self, is clearly a difficult one.

The Self often refers to a person's identity or character and to a sense of sameness about which some continuity is felt. However, the meanings of the concept of Self in psychology, as discussed, are not always clearly defined. Characteristics can be attributed to the 'Self as Knower' (i.e. Rogers) as well as to the 'Self as Known', (what most refer to as the self-concept). There is a problem in the definition of the Self, and therefore with studies of the same, especially so far as the 'Self as Knower' is concerned. Consequently Self is most often implied by its components, for example the self-concept and self-esteem. These are regarded as more objective aspects of the Self that enable empirical study. What role the 'Self as Knower' has in these components of the Self is a moot point.

Manheimer (1992) examines the problem in defining the Self and concludes that:

> *"The problem the word* Self *presents is that it is held to be entirely subjective and, therefore, since it cannot be observed, it is unverifiable. ... For analytic philosophy, linguistic use should be describable so that the rules become clear. Only propositions that allow clear descriptions that can be "operationalized" and tested through empirical observation would be considered meaningful. Hence it would be consistent to identify modifier uses of the word Self (self-esteem, self-conception, self-help) that have the potential of being studied empirically, rather than concentrating on the abstract noun* Self."
>
> (Manheimer, 1992, p.321-322)

Manheimer clearly prefers to limit the Self in investigation to that which is verifiable and describable. However, the problem with failing to acknowledge the Self that cannot be observed empirically, any study of the Self is reduced to fragmenting what should be regarded as whole. For Mead (1934) the subjective and objective selves cannot be detached from one another as the Self is "always an ongoing conversation" (Manheimer 1992, p.325). Also, according to Mead as the sense of Self is constantly emerging relative to the changes in one's body, the body and Self are mutually influential (Mead 1934). The subjective Self is dropped by Atchley (1989), but can be seen, as mentioned earlier, to have influenced his work. The concept of the Self is central to the question of continuity and status of the person across time. The difficulty is in defining the concept.

Kaufman's 'Ageless Self' (1986) "emphasizes the plasticity of the Self, she also stresses its unity, understanding the Self as the product of narrative activity, where storytelling becomes a mode of adaptation" (Manheimer 1992, p.323). Kaufman shared in-depth interviews with 60 older people and discovered narrative themes of continuity, which she felt suggested an immunity to chronological ageing.

> *"When older people talk about themselves, they express a sense of Self that is ageless - an identity that maintains continuity despite the physical and social changes that come with old age".*
>
> (Kaufman, 1986, in Manheimer, 1992, p.323)

Kaufman (1986) challenges the narrow view of adaptation, measured by scales of "contentment", arguing that the "ageless Self" reveals a process "by which a person creates meaning, organizes the past, explains events and communicates with others" (Kaufman, 1986, in Manheimer, 1992, p.323). Kaufman seems to equate the Self with the sense of identity, proposing that the Self is created and recreated over time as a person progresses through the life span. This assumes that there is no identity that comes from the unconscious through the interaction of past experiences and the developing parts of the person's personality. Identity appears to be defined by Kaufman as something a person creates within themselves by making some things a more important part of themselves than others. This completely discounts identity as having anything to do with personality and is a narrow view of the Self, making a recognised and acknowledged continuity within the Self over time nothing more than an illusion or self-deception. The post-modern influence on the definition of the Self is summed up by Manheimer. "Post-Modernist writers tend to regard the Self as a literary illusion in need of replacement" (Manheimer, 1992, p.327).

It is clear that in a study of psychological adjustment the Self has to be central. Whether aspects of the Self are disregarded, and the definition therefore narrowed, is a choice to be made. Working with James' definition, which in itself is not verifiable, is difficult because it cannot be operationalised and can only be inferred from subjective experience. However, it seems just and right to avoid fragmentation, to acknowledge difficulties of definition and verification, and to defer to the subjective reflections of the great philosophers in order to justify acknowledgement of the Self as more than Kaufman's 'self-identity', and the use of the term Self as more than Manheimer's 'modifier terms' allow. In this study therefore, the subjective, and what are considered more 'objective' aspects to the Self, i.e. those Manheimer suggests can be tested empirically, are acknowledged, with accompanying difficulty in definition. Rogers' definition of the Self is regarded as valuable and useable. Definitions of aspects of the Self that can be made with more clarity follow, always acknowledging that the whole is more than the sum of its parts.

Self Concept

Despite the fact that modifier uses of the word Self are considered more useful in study because they can be tested empirically, there are still a variety of definitions available. Suls and Mullen (1982) suggest that the self-concept "is a summary of one's evaluations of one's abilities, competencies, successes, and failures" (Suls and Mullen, in Suls (ed), 1982, p.84). Neisser (1988) argues that the 'Conceptual Self' provides:

> *"A roughly coherent account of ourselves as persons in interaction with our neighbours; an account that is almost always similar in structure, though different in detail, from the one that our neighbours would give of us."*
>
> (Neisser, 1988, p.55)

Also;

> *"'Self concept' draws its meaning from a network of socially-based assumptions and theories about human nature in general and ourselves in particular."*
>
> (Neisser, 1988, p.35)

Epstein (1973) refers to the self-concept as "the theory an individual holds about himself or herself as an object" (Epstein, 1973 in George and Bearon, 1980, p.73-74).

George and Bearon agree but take the definition further:

> *"Self-concept is the cognitive component of the Self and consists of the individual's perceptions of himself or herself as an object (i.e., what I am really like)."*
>
> (George and Bearon, 1980, p.73)

In some form, most agree that the self-concept is about the perceptions we have of ourselves. This could however be confused with self-esteem. George and Bearon (1980) helpfully distinguish between self-concept as a cognitive component of the Self and self-esteem as consisting of the affective judgements or evaluations emerging from a person's comparisons of what they are like and what they would like to be like. These affective judgements and perceptions are regarded as consciously available to the individual. Self-esteem will be discussed in more detail later.

Bengston et al (in Birren et al, eds., 1985) focus on self-conceptions (plural) originating from the Self as object. These self-conceptions are considered as attitudes enabling analysis and interpretation, as other attitudes are. Rosenberg's (1979) definition of the self-concept is used, "the totality of the individual's thoughts and feelings that have reference to himself as an object" (Bengston et al in Birren et al 1985). Because of the multiplicity of these thoughts and feelings Bengston et al feel it necessary to pluralize the self-concept into self-conceptions. Following James (1892) and Hilgard (1980), (in Bengston et al in Birren et al 1985), Bengston et al consider the trilogy of the mind: Cognition, Affection, and Conation. They do not refer to the 'I' that does the perceiving, interpreting and evaluating, preferring to consider aspects of the 'Me' that are perceived, interpreted and evaluated. This is because of the potential for studying empirically the Self as object, as previously discussed, and more particularly, the self-conceptions as attitudes. In defining these 'attitudes towards the Self' Bengston et al consider the cognitive component to be how the individual perceives him or herself, including their perceived 'identity.' The affective component is about the feeling, emotional, or evaluative aspect of an individual's attitude, their liking or disliking for their Self. The conative component consists of the 'orientations to action insofar as these orientations reflect the Self, i.e. how the individual acts on the basis of motivation deriving from particular self-conceptions. This component is particularly important in the analysis of change or stability of the Self through time. This three part division of the Self as attitude, as well as enabling empirical investigation, clarifies ambiguity in examining change and continuity in personality dispositions over time.

Bengston et al's three part model of the Self as object helpfully imposes a structure on an otherwise abstract concept. However, in so doing, the Self is reduced to attitudes about the Self. These can no doubt be measured and the issue of stability and/or change within the Self can be reported. This is undeniably helpful, although it does ignore a whole 'other' aspect to the whole Self, as previously discussed, that of the 'I' that does the perceiving, interpreting and evaluating. In ignoring this other part of the Self, integration between the two parts of the Self is, by definition, also ignored. The influence of the 'I' as perceiver, on the 'me' as perceived, is merely taken for granted. If the 'I' as perceiver also underwent change in development and was the impetus for any change in the 'Me' as perceived, the reported change in the Self would be explained

with quite different 'origins' of change, which may detract from the worth of the discovered shift. This tends to move away from James' original definition of the Self as discriminated aspects but not separate things. As discriminated aspects not separate from each other a shift in one is very likely to effect a shift in the other. Despite these problems it is helpful to examine an aspect of the Self with some structure imposed upon it whilst acknowledging the limitations of the same.

Self Esteem And Depression

Self-esteem

Self-esteem is a problematic concept to define and has been defined in several different ways.

Rosenberg (1965) understood self-esteem to be an attitude and suggested in his definition that, "the individual simply feels that he is a person of worth" (Rosenberg, 1965, p.30). Coopersmith (1967) defined self-esteem in the following way:

> *"By self-esteem we refer to the evaluation which the individual makes and customarily maintains with regard to himself: it expresses an attitude of approval or disapproval, and indicates the extent to which the individual believes himself to be capable, significant, successful, and worthy. In short, self-esteem is a* personal *judgement of worthiness that is expressed in the attitudes the individual holds toward himself. It is a subjective experience which the individual conveys to others by verbal reports and other overt expressive behaviour."*
>
> (Coopersmith, 1967, p.4-5)

Mruk (1999) says of Coopersmith's definition:

> "[It] *invites us to think about just how important it is to a person's identity and awareness. If self-esteem is truly 'subject-ive' (meaning 'of the subject') in this way, then expressions of that subjectivity (namely, one's behaviour) ought to involve and include their self-esteem."*
>
> (Mruk, 1999, p.19)

Self-esteem can therefore be expressed as an attitude reflected in behaviour. This idea is not new however. Mruk summarises James' (1890) contribution to defining self-esteem:

> *"we can say that it is something that is affective (emphasizes feeling), competence-orientated (it depends on the effectiveness of one's actions), and dynamic (open to change)."*
>
> (Mruk, 1999, p.16)

Despite the variety of definitions, 'worthiness' is a central feature of the most used definitions of self-esteem (Mruk, 1999). Mruk himself develops a phenomenological theory of self-esteem that focuses on the interaction of worthiness and competence. Here self-esteem appears to be connected to two broad dimensions of human behaviour, positive mental health and general psychological well-being (Mruk, 1999). High self-esteem is correlated with good personal adjustment, an internal sense of control and healthy adjustment to ageing (Bednar Wells and Peterson, 1989; Coopersmith, 1967 in Mruk 1999).

In reviewing all the major approaches to self-esteem Mruk (1999) concluded that each approach had something to offer on the definition of self-esteem and that they all had some features in common. These included the fact that self-esteem was understood as a developmental phenomenon and a motivating factor in behaviour. Also present was the link between self-esteem and well-being, or the lack of it. This will come into the discussion on depression following this section.

These features of a variety of approaches to self-esteem led to the use in the present study of both a measure of self-esteem, interview data, and self-report data for analysis of behaviour and sense of well-being.

The definition of self-esteem used in the Culture-Free Self-Esteem Inventories 2 (CFSEI-2), the measure used in this study, is as follows:

> *"Self-esteem refers to the perception the individual possesses of his or her own worth. An individual perception of Self develops gradually and becomes more differentiated as he or she matures and interacts with*

significant others. Perception of self worth, once established, tends to be fairly stable and resistant to change."

(Battle (1990), in Battle, 1992, p.21)

Self-esteem components of the CFSEI-2 for adults (form AB) are General, Social, and Personal.

"General Self-Esteem	*is the aspect of self-esteem that refers to individual's overall perceptions of their worth.*
Social Self-Esteem	*is the aspect of self-esteem that refers to individual's perceptions of the quality of their relationships with peers.*
Personal Self-Esteem	*is the aspect of self-esteem that refers to individual's most intimate perceptions of self-worth."*

(Battle 1992, p.3-4)

Both the definition, and therefore, the measure are recognised as having limited value when taken alone, especially the comment about self-esteem being 'fairly stable and resistant to change'. It is necessary to be aware of studies questioning this statement. For example, Andrews and Brown (1995) found that self-esteem did change and that the most powerful predictors of positive self-esteem change were favourable changes in the quality of close relationships and increases in work status (men and women). James (1890) described self-esteem as similar to a barometer that rises and falls as a function of one's aspirations and success experiences. However, he also felt that the overall sense of self-esteem was derived by averaging out feelings about oneself across different social situations.

In the light of work on self-esteem it was felt that, when looked at alongside a measure of depression and interview data, this particular self-esteem measure would provide additional analytic value to the study.

Depression

Whether there is an increased risk of depression in old age remains in dispute. Jolley (1994) claims that "Depressive mood is the commonest psychiatric disorder of late life." (Jolley (1994) in Paykel and Jenkins (eds). Also Busse (1968) claimed that:

> *"elderly subjects are aware of experiencing more frequent and more annoying depressive episodes (a quality of sadness coupled with pessimism).*
>
> (Busse, 1968 in Greenspan and Pollock, 1980, p.530)

Busse (1985) attributes a loss of self-esteem directly to depression concluding that, when needs are unable to be met through the decreased efficiency of the body and environmental changes, a loss of self-esteem ensues leading to depression. This may be more attributable in later life when frailty becomes an issue. However, Blazer (1989), in his review of the clinical investigation of the affective disorders, concludes that the claim that depression increases with age is refuted by clinical and basic research on depressive disorders in late life. Newmann (1989) however, in her review of research on the relation between ageing and depression, concluded that:

> *"diverse measurement approaches, coupled with flaws in design and analysis, make it difficult to draw any definitive conclusions regarding the age-depression relation at this time."*
>
> (Newmann, 1989, p.150)

Recent research evidence however, points to adaptive flexibility and resourcefulness in ageing (Atchley, 1982; Baltes and Baltes, 1990; Brandtstädter, 1993). It seems that self-esteem is maintained despite the challenges of ageing, consequently individuals maintain a sense of well-being (Brim 1988). Also Katona (1994) argues that ageing does not appear to be an important aetiological factor for depression as cohort effects may confound the relationship between age and depression, e.g. Burke et al (1991) in Katona (1994, p. 43). "Subjects born before 1917 are less likely to have had depressive episodes before the age of 30 than cohorts with later dates of birth." It is important to consider however that there may have been difficulty assessing the frequency of depressive episodes given the medical services in use at that time.

Data from the older participants of Brandtstädter et al's (1993) 'Project 1', as mentioned earlier, support the notion that the maintenance of integrity and a positive view of life and Self come from powerful resources within elderly people. The apparent resourcefulness of the elderly population has led to the conclusion that the elderly have protective mechanisms safeguarding them from depression and that these mechanisms are modes of coping that reflect progressive evolutionary life-management (Brandtstädter et al, 1993). In this study, measures of depression, self-esteem and life satisfaction were administered cross-sectionally. Findings indicated a stability of well-being across the age range of 54-78, the oldest group (74-78) showing a weak drop in life satisfaction. These were cross sectional findings and the concomitant issues and difficulties arising from use of this data have to be acknowledged. Brandtstädter and Renner (1992) report similar findings in a longitudinal study reducing the problems with generation effects.

Low self-esteem however, has been shown to be a significant risk factor in the development of clinical depression (Coopersmith, 1967; Brown et al, 1986, 1990; Miller et al, 1989). Findings of a study done by Battle (1977) of the relationship between self-esteem and depression found that as self-esteem increases, depression decreases, and vice versa (Battle, 1992):

> *"Although self-esteem correlates with both anxiety and depression, our data indicate that the correlations between self-esteem and depression are higher. These findings support the position that depression and anxiety are different entities."*
>
> (Battle, 1992, p.25)

Battle stresses the importance of self-esteem:

> *"Self esteem is a fundamental human need at all stages of development (Battle, 1987, 1990; Branden, 1969) that affects one's level of achievement, ability to adjust to environmental demands, and general state of well being."*
>
> (Battle, 1992, p.3)

Thus the importance of self-esteem in any study of the Self, particularly the Self in transition, cannot be ignored.

Self Identity/Self Evaluation and Ageing

Metcalf-Kendall (1995) argues that the stereotyping of older women is deeply rooted in Australian society and as women reach 60 years or more they are:

> *"Dismissed as 'women who were once women', becoming deprived of status, significance and sexuality."*
>
> (Metcalf-Kendall, 1995, p.70)

Stereotyping, or social labelling, are considered important influences in the way older people evaluate themselves. Kuypers and Bengtson (1973) argue that the elderly in western society are susceptible to, and dependent on, social labelling because of unique social re-organisations in late life, e.g. role loss. Consequences of the dependence on external labelling, generally negative, are the loss of coping abilities and the development of an internalised sense of incompetence. They suggest three definitions of competence:

1. Performance in social positions of society;
2. Ability to cope with the environment;
3. Feelings of mastery and internal locus of control.

Wood (1989) also argues that comparison with other people provides an important source of knowledge about oneself. The individual, according to Wood, "may exert much more influence on the comparison process than social comparison researchers have assumed" (Wood, 1989, p.243). She suggests that, if one encounters an unfavourable comparison, then restoration of self-esteem may be attempted by, "postcomparison comparisons. If one learns that one is inferior on some dimension, for example, one may emphasize other dimensions in subsequent comparisons" (Wood, 1989, p.243). For example, a lack of comparable intelligence with a peer will be

compensated for by imagining that the peer was not up to much on the social front. In conclusion Wood explains that:

> *"As Goethals (1986) pointed out, individuals fabricate and ignore social reality in ways that support a particular view of themselves. Thus, social comparison often may be a process of construction; it may not always involve comparisons with other people in any usual sense."*
>
> (Wood et al. (1985) in Wood 1989, p.244)

Suls and Mullen (1982) agree with Wood (1989) and point out that students of the self-evaluation process have not always appreciated the importance of temporal comparison. By temporal comparison Suls and Mullen mean our own attempts to assess the adequacy of our own abilities and self worth. "An individual may compare his or her present attainments with past performances of similar tasks to assess improvement or deterioration" (Suls and Mullen, 1982, p.97). However, Suls and Mullen suggest that as we get older there is evidence for "subtle cognitive shifts that have an impact on social-comparison processes" (Suls and Mullen, 1982, p.116). In this study Suls and Mullen found that older people used temporal comparison more than social comparison.

> *"As the middle-aged individual grows older, he may become increasingly discouraged from making social comparisons if they increasingly provide negative, dissatisfying information. This contributes to the withdrawal from social comparisons and the increasing reliance upon temporal comparisons that characterizes the final stage of the life-span."*
>
> (Suls and Mullen, 1982, p.114)

Hurd (1999) however, studied older single women between the ages of 50-90 to understand how they defined, interpreted and negotiated their 'realities' and identities. These women, through activity and group membership, sought to distance themselves from the category 'old' and the ageist stereotypes. They did this by distancing themselves from those they labelled and considered to be 'old' while constantly having to negotiate "contradictory and threatening messages and meanings concerning their youthful status" (Hurd, 1999, p.436). Holtzclaw (1985) argues that older adults need to have a sense of Self based on experience rather than on judgements of others. He argues:

"having to make decisions concerning roles one is going to take, learning that some are 'suited' and others not, and having the courage to choose preferred roles are all critical in functioning as an older adult."

(Holtzclaw, 1985, p.23)

From the symbolic interactionist perspective "we are as young, or old, as other people make us feel" (Karp, 1988, p.727). According to Karp, the messages we hear at particular points in our life cycle make us conscious of our age, and, although sometimes what we feel doesn't match the messages we hear about our age, eventually a recognition of ageing becomes clearer as we fall ill, or just recognise that we're slowing down, as we become grandparents, as we become the oldest at work or as our peers start to die. Karp concludes that it is the "concurrent experience of multiple reminders that fosters the sense of aging" (Karp, 1988, p.730). However, the notion that people in their 50s felt an "enriched sense of Self and a capacity for coping with complexity" (Neugarten and Datan (1974), in Karp, 1988, p.735) was supported in Karp's work, with people often using the word 'wisdom' to describe themselves.

The role of the stereotype, of comparison with others, and of 'multiple reminders' may all contribute to recognition and acceptance of an ageing identity. This work does appear to have some negative connotations. According to Ryff (1991) however, the elderly perceive higher levels of self-acceptance than in their own past. A reason for this, argue Taylor and Brown (1988), is that mentally healthy people appear to have the capacity to distort reality in a direction that enhances self-esteem, maintains beliefs in personal efficacy, and promotes an optimistic view of the future. The positive illusions of overly positive self-evaluations, exaggerated perceptions of control or mastery, and unrealistic optimism, they argue, may be especially adaptive when an individual receives negative feedback or is otherwise threatened.

Important findings of a large cross-sectional study and a longitudinal study of mid to late adulthood indicate that older people are quite effective in maintaining positive views of their Self and their personal development (Brandtstädter, 1989; Brandtstädter and Renner, 1992; Brandtstädter, Wentura and Greve, 1993; Brandtstädter and Rothermund, 1994; Brandtstädter and Greve, 1994). Brandtstädter et al (1993) studied self-evaluation, perceived control, and well-being in mid-late adulthood. They found

that self-evaluations remained largely unaffected by perception or anticipation of age-related developmental losses, as mentioned earlier. They also found that older cohorts did not differ markedly from younger in perceived control over developmental outcomes, and that there was little evidence of an age related decline in parameters of well-being such as life satisfaction. They concluded:

"The apparent resiliency of the aging Self hinges on the interplay between two basic processes: (1) instrumental activities that aim at preventing or alleviating developmental losses in domains that are relevant to the individual's self-esteem and identity."

(Brandtstädter et al call these assimilative processes) and:

"(2) accommodative processes by which personal goals and frames of self-evaluation are adjusted to changes in action resources and functional capacities." (Brandtstädter et al. 1993, p.323).

Findings from research investigating these coping processes (Brandtstädter and Renner, 1992) have led to the conclusion that as individuals get older accommodative processes become increasingly important aspects of coping and life-management.
As mentioned, findings show how on participants' Self ratings, despite perceived developmental losses clearly outweighing gains, there was no evidence for an age-related increase in the average distance between actual and desired Self ratings (Brandtstädter et al, 1993). Therefore age-related changes in actual Self ratings are accompanied by changes in the desired Self. Thus self-deficits (desired minus actual Self) do not increase with age. People accommodate their Self representations to their perceived developmental changes. This enables preservation of a positive view of the Self and personal development.

It is clear from the aforementioned data that there is largely maintenance of a positive view of life and of Self, despite negative feedback from society and even potentially from our own bodies.

Baltes and Baltes (1990) propose a model of a general process of adaptation to old age called 'selective optimisation with compensation'. This process acknowledges the realities of ageing with the loss of biological, mental and social reserves, whilst reflecting optimism in the lives of older people. Baltes and Baltes' model involves the 'selection' of domains and goals that are manageable and enjoyable, the 'optimization' of quantity and quality of life by engagement in behaviours which enrich and augment general reserves, and 'compensation' when necessary because of restrictions or loss of capacities (mnemonics or hearing aids are examples). This model contributes to knowledge of how older people maintain a positive view of Self and life at a time when reserves are becoming fewer.

It seems therefore that despite the stereotypical social responses, acknowledged diminished reserves in ageing, and changes that would not be regarded as positive, older people do maintain positive views of Self and development without, according to recent research by Brandtstädter et al (1992;1993) and Baltes and Baltes (1990), overly optimistic Self illusions.

Summary of the Theoretical Knowledge Base for the Present Study

The lifespan approach to development (Baltes and Baltes, 1973; 1987; 1990) is the basis of the present study. This approach acknowledges the potential for organized, adaptive and positive change in development. The concept of continuity (Atchley, 1989), 'allowing change within a context of sameness provided by the basic structure', is valued alongside Erikson's (1950) later stages of ego development. Development as an ongoing, dynamic process, and the accompanying importance of the body and physical changes in development of the existing psychic structure (Nemiroff and Colarusso, 1985), are also relevant issues in this study of development and change involving older participants.

Retirement is acknowledged as a major life transition in that it triggers a series of changes and internal reorganisations of a psychosocial nature within the life of an individual ((Parkes, 1971; 1975; Thériault, 1994). Relevant existing research also

comments on retirement as a time of crisis, (Mann, 1991) redefinition and change, (Taylor, Carter and Cook, 1995), a challenge to the sense of coherence and wholeness of the Self, (Antonovsky and Sagy, 1990) and a series of adjustments, (Atchley, 1975; 1976).

A theme of the work on transitions sees retirement as a process, with multiple issues within the process of adjustment to retirement (Antonovsky and Sagy, 1990). Although the transition to retirement may not always be straightforward, uncomplicated resolution and potentially very positive outcomes are possible. Research is generally optimistic surrounding the retirement experience (McGoldrick, 1994; Price, 2000). There is recognition that women's experiences might differ from those of men (McGoldrick, 1994). More specifically, Hanson and Wapner (1994) found that some women experienced their sense of Self changed with retirement. However, Price (2000) found that the women in her study reported no decrease in sense of Self or personal identity following retirement, but that women's work roles are an important aspect to their identities. An obvious gap in the literature is work on the process of transition to retirement specific to women, a gap the present research aims to fill.

Work on psychosocial transitions also suggests that central to the individual's process of transition is the role of the Self. Rogers, (1951) definition of the Self is valued and acknowledged as the determining aspect of personality. However, modifier uses of the concept of 'Self' are useful in study, thus self-concept (Suls and Mullen, 1982; Neisser, 1988; Epstein, 1973; George and Bearon, 1980 and Bengston et al (in Birren et al (eds.), 1985), and self-esteem (Rosenberg, 1965; Coopersmith, 1967; Mruk, 1999; Battle (1990) in Battle, 1992) are important to consider as aspects of the Self. Low self-esteem has been shown to be a significant risk factor in the development of clinical depression (Coopersmith, 1967; Brown et al, 1986; 1990; Miller et al, 1989). Any definitive conclusions regarding the age-depression relation have been difficult to draw (Newmann, 1989), but Andrews and Brown (1995) found that self-esteem can change, and therefore the possible link of depression to changes in the Self and ageing cannot be ignored.

Although stereotyping or social labelling are considered important influences in the way older people evaluate themselves, research evidence points to adaptive flexibility and resourcefulness in ageing. Older people are quite effective in maintaining positive views of their Self and their personal development (Brandtstädter, 1989; Brandtstädter and Renner, 1992; Brandtstädter, Wentura and Greve, 1993; Brandtstädter and Rothermund, 1994; Brandtstädter and Greve, 1994; Baltes and Baltes, 1990; Atchley, 1982).

A study focusing on women and the process of their retirement transition would contribute very specifically to the aforementioned literature, taking the knowledge of the process of transition to retirement for women further.

METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES

Ontological, Epistemological And Methodological Issues

Introduction

Foundational beliefs about ontology and epistemology define relevant questions to be asked in research and restrict the methodology that can be used. This chapter begins by considering the issue of whether there is an objective reality in the physical world, physical including psychological as well as biological/physiological in the case of humanity. This ontological question is relevant because ontology is deemed to precede epistemology and as a consequence both influence the choice of method used in the study.

Constructivist approaches to social reality are examined and distinguished from the critical realist approach of the thesis by debating the issue of truth and reality in social research. Finally the grounded theory methodological approach of the thesis is explained and justified as an appropriate method of choice considering ontological and epistemological commitments made clear beforehand.

Constructivist Approaches

For the constructivist objective reality is a myth and subjective reality is based on the meanings individuals attach to previous experiences (Tindall (1994), in Banister et al, 1994). From the constructivist perspective the researcher and researched 'create' reality through interaction with others (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994). Social 'facts' are 'created' through the interpretation of the production and organisation of everyday life. Interpretive practices of qualitative research are used to discover this 'reality', and largely this 'reality' is all that can be known. "It is the *meaning* that is influential, not the event itself" (Tindall (1994), in Banister et al, 1994).

Personal Construct Approach (Kelly, 1955)

Kelly's (1955) focus is on the individual as the creator of meaning. From Kelly's perspective the individual is constantly searching for meaning, constructing themselves, each other, and their personal reality. These personal meanings are the basis of individual theories, or frameworks, through which the interpretation of experiences is made. Kelly argues for an element of personal agency, commenting:

> *"People are neither prisoners of their environment not victims of their biographies, but active individuals struggling to make sense of their experiences and acting in accordance with the meaning they impose on those experiences."*
>
> (Kelly, 1955, p.15)

Kelly's theory is used in qualitative analysis by way of a technique called repertory grid. This technique can be used quantitatively or qualitatively and aims to show an individual's current understanding of a situation, position, or concern. Meanings are inferred by each individual out of their personal framework or construct system. Tindall (1994) gives a helpful summary of an individual's construct system as being made up of:

> *"a vast collection of similarity-difference dimensions or bipolar constructs ... A construct gains its meaning from both poles; similarity can only be understood in the context of difference, constructs are highly individual and personally understood."*
>
> (Tindall (1994), in Banister et al, 1994, p.73)

And of how the analysis and information gathering are part of the same process:

> *"Information on how the participant understands their world emerges throughout, from the first step of identifying the particular topic to be explored, through to which elements are chosen for inclusion and which excluded, and beyond to how readily constructs are verbalized and which particular constructs are applied. As it is the participant's understanding that is being exposed it is for them to analyse and gain insight from viewing the completed grid."*
>
> (Tindall (1994), in Banister et al, 1994, p.77)

Kelly's (1955) personal construct theory has the benefit of acknowledging and arguably validating the richness and relevance of personal experience (Tindall, 1994 in Banister, et al, 1994). Nevertheless there are problems with the technique. Constructs may oversimplify experience, necessarily because the requirement of the individual to introspect and reflect on their experiences and communicate those experiences to others may necessitate simplification of a complex experience (Tindall (1994), in Banister et al, 1994).

Personal construct theory emphasises the role of the individual as an agent constructing their reality by attaching personal meanings to experiences. This fact is criticised by social constructionists because it ignores the social context and influence of the same in any construction of meaning. The social constructivist position and the associated method of discourse analysis has been explained in the literature review under 'Self' and therefore will not be repeated here. It is sufficient to say that because both perspectives argue for the creation of 'reality' rather than the 'discovery' of reality, their ontological assumptions necessarily presuppose a lack of objective reality. Either constructivist position is clearly at odds with the realist position where an objective reality in the physical world, physical including psychological, is assumed. The importance of this point in the deciding of an appropriate methodology for the thesis will be discussed further within this chapter.

From the point of view of deciding on a method for the present study personal construct theory would appear appropriate as it is the individual's perspective under scrutiny. From the authors point of view however, and despite the fact that personal construct theory is often used with 'scant regard for its theoretical background' (Tindall, 1994 in Banister et al, 1994, p.72), the fracturing of the ontological and epistemological assumptions from the methodological technique is an unacceptable compromise. Without wishing to indicate an assumption that there may be the 'perfect' methodological technique available, it is nevertheless of importance that the idea of an experience being 'an interpretive act of someone' (Kelly, 1955, p.106), without any recourse to an objective reality is relativistic, and as such is encumbered with all the associated problems of relativism previously discussed within the literature review under the 'Self'.

Decided inappropriate for this thesis because of their ontological and epistemological commitments are the 'individual' constructivist approach of Kelly (1955), (and associated technique of the repertory grid), and the 'social' constructivist approaches (with associated techniques of discourse analysis). It is necessary to justify this rejection with a discussion of epistemological and ontological assumptions made within this thesis and their role in choosing an appropriate method for the thesis. Further distinction will be made between the methodology of the thesis and the other approaches previously mentioned in order to clarify the author's position. Further information on the author's position can be found in the reflexive account in the next chapter.

Critical Realism

Previously the relativism of the constructionist assumption in a lack of objective reality was compared with the realist position where an objective reality in the physical world, physical including psychological, is assumed. The constructionist position was rejected. However, to take a realist position that all truth is objective and knowable would be a naïve assumption to make, and is rejected also.

Hammersley (1992) summarises key elements of a "subtle realist" form of realism whereby knowledge is defined as "beliefs about whose validity we are reasonably confident" (Hammersley, 1992, p.50). He goes on to present the aim of social research as that which attempts to:

> *"represent reality ... not to say that its function is to reproduce it (that is, to represent it 'in its own terms'). Rather, representation must always be from some point of view which makes some features of the phenomena represented relevant and others irrelevant. Thus, there can be multiple, non-contradictory and valid descriptions and explanations of the same phenomenon."*
>
> (Hammersley, 1992, p.51)

The adoption of this form of realism allows for the perspective of the human as a being with a reality both objective and subjective in nature, and also for different human perspectives on the same phenomenon.

Hammersley does however argue that "the definition of 'knowledge' as beliefs whose validity is known with certainty is misconceived" (Hammersley, 1992, p.50). However, McCallum argues:

> *"The success of scientific technology is a strong argument that our perceptions of the world are relatively accurate. Countless achievements attest to the reliability of human knowledge. ... We couldn't do these things without an essentially reliable correspondence between our ideas of reality and reality itself."*
>
> (McCallum, 1996, p.52)

McCallum (1996) is therefore saying that objective truth exists and is knowable. This is not denying that there are things that we lack absolute certainty about, but we can know something about what exists apart from and within us. Our judgements about ourselves, other people and the world, while not being infallibly accurate, are nevertheless open to revision by further investigation and thus some accuracy can be assured. Obviously there are some phenomena more accessible than others, as will be discussed later, so the method adopted for this study has been chosen to best facilitate accessibility to the phenomena in question. Meanwhile, as regards an assumption Hammersley makes that we can never know 'absolutely' the validity of claims to truth, there is evidence both for and against this point. As mentioned, to take a realist position that all truth is objective and knowable would be a naïve assumption to make. However, some truth about the phenomena under study can be known and analysed in relation to theory. For example, an objective truth about the 'Self' or more certainly, as there is some considerable debate about whether the Self is itself a reality, about being human, is exemplified in human motivation or quest for meaning. Bartlett (1932) said that human beings are motivated by an 'effort after meaning'. How that 'effort' is manifested/realised will be a subjective individual response by the person to his/her environment, culture, etc. Thus the objective truth and reality about 'humanness' is the origin of a subjective and unique response by the individual human.

Thus, from a 'subtle' or 'critical' realist position the assumption of the possibility of direct access to *all* phenomena is rejected also. On the basis of logical induction it is difficult to deny or argue against there being subjective aspects of being human. In the hierarchy of important aspects of a person, surely consciousness, as made up of probably both subjective and objective aspects, is what makes us who we are and sets us apart from the other animals. It is surprising therefore, and a great pity, that the subjective aspects of humanity have been devalued. This is a contentious issue but the author is unconvinced by the extremes of argument either one way or the other. The question has to be asked 'does this fit with the picture of humanity that we see all around us?' On this basis, the methods of 'discovery' via qualitative methodology need not be rejected, indeed it would be naïve to do so, but may be used from a foundation of the critical realist basis of reality. Some of that reality will be observable and can be reliably measured. However, there may be constructs that can be inferred or interpreted from logical induction or theoretical analysis, but are not measurable in the above sense. These too are classed as reality. Undoubtedly, there will be aspects of reality, which we cannot be certain about. Interpretive practises may also be used in the sense mentioned earlier, by logical induction or theoretical analysis.

Truth in Social Research and Choosing a Research Tool

As a 'critical realist' the author is arguing for an objective and subjective reality within the psychology of a person. Some of that reality can be discovered, examined, quantified, and generalised. Other aspects, probably the subjective aspects, are not so accessible to examination, quantification and generality. Nevertheless this does not discount the fact that there is 'out there' or 'in there' a truth about being human, and about being the individual that we are. The world is 'out there', separate and distinct from any act of interpretation or perception, but it would be foolish to say that we interpret and perceive it 'as it is' all of the time. This is not to say that some of the time we cannot perceive it and interpret it 'as it is'. We can, and we need good methodology and openness to reasoning, discussion, challenge, and verification in order to reach the truth about what is out there and what is involved within the psychology of a human individual. Thus there is objective truth and subjective truth to be discovered. Knowing

all there is to know about ourselves and the world will probably never be possible however. This limited view of reality, as made clear earlier, restricts 'discovery' in psychological research to that which can be measured, via empirical study, or inferred or interpreted from logical induction or theoretical analysis.

> *"For a realist, any science must operate with adequate models of the objects of study, and the methods used to investigate and explain the way those objects operate must be appropriate to the object."*
>
> (Manicas and Secord, 1983, in Banister et al, 1994)

Thus in acknowledging that the human has both subjective and objective aspects, the methods used in this thesis reflect this. Both aspects of the make-up of an individual are equally valued. The interview as a method gives value to the spoken word and credence to the experience of the individual as valid data. Examined from a foundation of known truths about what humanity is like, the spoken word, as a reflection of what goes on in the thoughts and mind and body of an individual, in description and expression, can validate both an objective and subjective experience of the Self, although knowing or labelling the two may be difficult. In studying the Self a validated method of measurement of self-esteem is used. This reflects, arguably, a more confirmed objective aspect of the Self, but, more importantly, will enable a comparison to be made between these measures and verbal Self reports.

> *"The search for knowledge (or 'truth') is the purpose of research. ... In the ongoing debate between the positivists and the naturalists we tend to support the idea that the modern day scientific method is both inductive and deductive, objective and subjective. Design validity is more likely to be built into studies when the researcher is open to both paradigms rather than precluding one or the other. ... the better paradigm (qualitative or quantitative) is the one that serves to answer the specific research question."*
>
> (Newman and Benz, 1998, p.11)

Newman and Benz (1998) argue that, according to the assumptions of science, decisions about data collection and what is done with data following collection should both be dictated by the research question (Newman and Benz, 1998). Therefore, the dichotomy between qualitative and quantitative methods is no longer in existence when the paradigm of methods follows from the research question. Newman and Benz take the

view that "science is both positivistic and naturalistic in its assumptions" (Newman and Benz, 1998, p.16). They argue:

> *"Two fundamental epistemological requirements are made of the researcher: one must clearly and openly acknowledge one's assumptions about what counts as knowledge and maintain consistency in those assumptions and the methods that derive from them. To us this is what makes the research scientific."*
>
> (Newman and Benz, 1998, p.16)

The Method of Grounded Theory

The method of Grounded Theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Strauss and Corbin, 1990) has been chosen for the study because it seems to fit best the previously stated ontological and epistemological standpoint of the author and meets the need of the nature of the research. Glaser and Strauss (1967) and Strauss and Corbin (1990) emphasize the fact that the grounded theory approach is not bound by a particular discipline (Sociology), but that "what counts are the procedures and they are not discipline bound" (Strauss and Corbin, 1990, p.26). Neither is the approach bound by particular philosophical assumptions; "the methodological guidelines and general procedures of grounded theory can be used by researchers of whatever position regarding philosophical assumptions" (Strauss, 1987, p.8). This would in itself make grounded theory a justifiable approach for use by the critical realist, and anyone else. However, to use grounded theory without regard for philosophical assumptions would contradict the previously mentioned argument for rejection of the constructivist methods. Rejected as inappropriate for this thesis because of their ontological and epistemological commitments. Whilst it is necessary to reiterate the fact that there is no assumption by the author of a 'perfect' methodological approach to use in research, Glaser and Strauss' (1967) comments confirm their own assumption of a reality in the physical world (physical including social):

"Building the theory, by its very nature, implies interpreting data, for the data must be conceptualized and the concepts related to form a theoretical rendition of reality (a

reality that cannot actually be known, but is always interpreted)" (Glaser and Strauss, 1967, p.22).

Although Glaser and Strauss also assume that the truth about that reality 'cannot actually be known'. Glaser and Strauss' position is not contrary to the critical realist perspective, although it is pessimistic towards the potential of perceiving and interpreting reality 'as it is' at least some of the time. Nevertheless, when all the aforementioned arguments and positions are taken together the grounded theory approach is clearly an appropriate method of choice.

Methodological Framework

Grounded Theory

The purpose of the grounded theory approach was to develop a grounded theory of the transition to retirement from the reported experiences of women who are experiencing, or have experienced, this transition. This will have value in broadening the understanding of the retirement transition, which will have benefits for retirement preparation and counselling. Although the present study is limited in its generality:

> *"The grounded theory style of analysis is based on the premise that theory at various levels of generality is indispensable for deeper knowledge of social phenomena."*
>
> (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Glaser, 1978 in Strauss 1987, p.3)

Also,

> *"Our discussion of comparative analysis as a strategic method for* generating theory *assigns the method its fullest generality for use on social units of any size, large or small, ranging from men or their roles to nations or world regions."*
>
> (Glaser and Strauss, 1967, p.21-22)

The above quotes confirm that Grounded theory is a relevant method for use in the present study.

Grounded theory is a method involving the gathering and analysing of data to develop a theory about a phenomenon (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). The diversity of social settings, of researcher aims and effects, differing ways and means of data collection and aims in analysis, all mean that any standardization of methods would put constraints on the work of researchers (Strauss, 1987). The suggested methods of Glaser and Strauss therefore, i.e. Grounded theory, are, according to Strauss, to be taken as guidelines while still emphasizing that certain operations are to be carried out. These operations involve the analysing of data using the constant comparative method (Glaser and Strauss, 1967), which involves a series of structured coding strategies (Strauss and Corbin, 1990), including the development of concepts and their linkages (Strauss, 1987). Further discussion on these strategies is detailed below in discussion of Grounded theory as applied to the present study. The specific use of these strategies within this study will be further detailed in chapter 4, and the use of these strategies in analysis of data can be seen in appendices 17-21.

Grounded theory, therefore, appears to be flexible enough to accommodate the variety and diversity of both setting and aims of research, whilst at the same time operationalising sufficiently the method of 'doing Grounded theory' so that research findings can be checked and clearly presented.

Presenting grounded Theory

> *"Grounded theory can be presented either as a well-codified set of propositions or in a running theoretical discussion, using conceptual categories and their properties."*
>
> (Glaser and Strauss, 1967, p.31)

Glaser and Strauss choose the 'discussional' form of presenting their theory. One of the reasons given for this was because theory as process is written with the assumption that it is still developing.

"The discussional form of formulating theory gives a feeling of 'ever-developing' to the theory, allows it to become quite rich, complex, and dense, and makes its fit and relevance easy to comprehend"

(Glaser and Strauss, 1967, p.32)

The present study also adopts this 'discussional' style using conceptual categories and their properties. As previously mentioned, use of these strategies in analysis of data can be seen in appendices 17-21. It is useful to note from Glaser and Strauss that "the form in which a theory is presented does not make it a theory; it is a theory because it explains or predicts something." (Glaser and Strauss, 1967, Note 22 p.31)

Grounded Theory Applied To The Present Study

The present study focuses on part of the process of the retirement transition for recently retired women. This focus is taken further to include 'snapshot' views of women retired for some time. As the Grounded theory method is a theory-generating approach, the 'snapshot' views were considered interesting and necessary to include as additional validation for any theory or model which may emerge. The study concentrates on the psychological transition, within the Self of the women, and uses existing work on the Self.

In this section a brief discussion of the strategies of Grounded theory used in this study will take place, including a rationale for the use of these strategies within the bounds of the philosophical assumptions declared previously.

Comparative Analysis

Comparative analysis is an analytical tool whereby the identification and categorization of concepts is made from the data. The aim is to think analytically rather than merely descriptively about the data by asking questions about the data and making comparisons. This helps thinking 'beyond the obvious' (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). It is an essential part of doing Grounded theory and is evident in the present study throughout every step of analysis. Details of this can be found in appendices 17-21 and

a full example of analysis of one interview from one participant can be found in appendix 22.

Substantive And Formal Theory

Two basic kinds of theory are generated using comparative analysis. Substantive theory, developed for a substantive or empirical area of inquiry, and formal theory, developed for a formal or conceptual area of enquiry.

> *"Substantive theory evolves from the study of a phenomenon situated in one particular situational context"*
>
> (Strauss and Corbin, 1990, p.174)

Any theory emerging from the present study would be substantive in nature, as the study is specifically the situation of part of the process of women's transition to retirement.

Grounded theorists assert that theory emerges from the data, and, rather than being abstract or tentative, it is grounded in the data (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). Thus research should begin largely without reference to other research and without hypotheses. This arguably allows theory to 'emerge' from the data without bias. It is important to mention however that a passive, entirely objective, stance is not possible. Newman and Benz (1998) note that:

> *"Theory does not emerge independent of the person interpreting the data. Data do not develop theory; people do."*
>
> (Newman and Benz, 1998, p.17).

Because of the necessity within a Doctoral thesis to submit a literature review early on in the work a limited literature review was made as part of the process of this study.

There is strength in the Grounded theory methodology, in that it uses all the data initially, has a repeatable structure to the method of analysis whilst giving freedom for theory to 'emerge' from the data, and allows assumptions of objective reality.

> *"Our approach, allowing substantive concepts and hypotheses to emerge first, on their own, enables the analyst to ascertain which, if any, existing formal theory may help him generate his substantive theories. He can then be more faithful to his data, rather than forcing it to fit a theory."*
>
> (Glaser and Strauss, 1967, p.25)

To avoid a 'forcing of data' in the present study, substantive concepts and hypotheses were allowed to emerge first in pilot work, which involved talking to people who had retired from work about their retirement transition.

Strauss and Corbin emphasise the 'fit' that theory should make with the substantive area under observation and that theory should make sense, i.e. be 'understandable', both to persons studied and to those doing the studying.

> *"A well-constructed grounded theory will meet four central criteria for judging the applicability of theory to a phenomenon:* ***fit, understanding, generality,*** *and* ***control.***"
>
> (Strauss and Corbin, 1990, p.32)

These criteria respect the place of both researcher and participant in the process of 'discovery' and at the same time enable a representation of reality as broad as the one Hammersley (1992) adheres to, i.e. allowing for "multiple, non-contradictory and valid descriptions and explanations of the same phenomenon" (Hammersley, 1992, p.51). Hammersley argues that understanding the perspectives of others rather than judging them should be the aim of ethnography. He advises a suspension of any beliefs that conflict with those being described in order to avoid misunderstanding. Here his 'subtle realism' differs from the 'critical realist' philosophy of Bhaskar (1989). Bhaskar is explicit in his assertion that critical realism logically entails evaluation, which he sees as imperative for social research. In the use of Grounded theory, evaluation is necessary in the formulation of theory, but care must be taken in acknowledgement of discrepancies or anomalies. In other words falsifying evidence must be 'heard' and not ignored.

The Research Project

The present study looked only at women's retirement experience; this was because of the quite significant gender differences in experience highlighted in the literature. Maas and Kuypers (1975) argue that the old are too often treated as though their sex makes no difference. Men and women should therefore be considered separately. Szinovocz and Washo (1992) concluded in their study of gender differences in retirement that, although the retirement experiences of men and women were similar in some respects, they did in fact differ in important ways. Hanson and Wapner (1994) also found differences between the retirement experience of men and women in such things as attitude to work, attitude to old age, financial worries, an experienced change in sense of Self, and the level of integration of work and the rest of life. Because of these findings it was felt to be more appropriate to study one gender's experience in depth. Price's (2000) study on women's retirement focused on women who had been retired for more than 6 years in order to avoid adjustment problems and/or a 'honeymoon' period. It was the focus of the present study to look specifically at an earlier phase of the transition to retirement avoided by Price, and follow this through over a period of about a year. Adjustment problems and/or 'honeymoon' periods could thus be examined along with potential 'other' issues of this earlier phase of transition.

It was therefore decided to follow a small group of women through an early phase in their retirement transition in some depth. The changes they perceived themselves to be going through would be examined as well as the adjustments they perceived they were having to make. Measures, tasks and self reports of self-esteem and depression were collected to observe changes, which may not have been as visible or verbal as other changes. Details of the measures and tasks can be found in chapter 4, Methodological Procedures.

The Self in transition was looked at over a period of time rather than taking a single 'snapshot' view of the transition. The qualitative and longitudinal nature of the present study enabled a more in-depth, in-context look at an early phase of the retirement transition, going beyond the use of questionnaires and experimental studies. A major

advantage of this method is the fact that participants were not taken out of the context of their situation, and the study of a life transition enabled a focus on a real and ongoing situation. Studying the Self-in-context fits in with the transactional model of development (Sameroff and Chandler, 1975) and contextual theories of ageing (Schaie and Hendricks, 2000), which acknowledge the importance of social roles and contexts in interaction with the individual.

Research Aims

1. To develop a knowledge of the philosophy/psychology of the 'Self' from the literature.
2. To observe and describe the Self of a small number of individuals in transition.
3. To examine the possibility that there may be part or parts of the Self that are continuous, or how they are discontinuous, in life change.
4. To extend a knowledge of the past work on retirement transition. Particularly relevant is work on the possible relation this transition has to the changes in people's ageing self-conceptions and their self-esteem.
5. To examine the possibility that continuity of some aspect of the Self may contribute to positive adaptation through life change.
6. To understand the varied philosophical and psychological theories on the Self and use them to inform the analysis.

Research Objectives

1. To observe and describe the individual's experience of transition to retirement and the potential resulting changes in self-concept and/or self-esteem.
2. To use the experiences of individuals in transition to identify useful, helpful, and beneficial aspects of their own transition and to examine the 'role of the Self' in positive adaptation, as defined by the individual.

METHODOLOGICAL PROCEDURES

Introduction to Procedure

A separate chapter on procedural issues was considered necessary as more than one study is combined to make the thesis. The procedural issues apply to studies 1, 2 and 3. The method and design of each individual study is discussed at the beginning of each of the studies in chapters 5-7. This is because there are differences in the design of each study. Study 1 is different from study 2 and 3 in that, this being the main study, the six participants were interviewed three times over the course of a year rather than only once as in studies 2 and 3. Study 2 involves one interview with each of four participants, and study 3 involves two participants interviewed once each. The 'Who am I?' task was used once, at the beginning, in all the studies. The measure of depression was used at the beginning of all studies and again at the end of study 1. The measure of self-esteem was used at the beginning and the end of study 1. The 'I am' task was used in study 1 only, at the end of the study. The diaries were given to participants in study 1 only. This chapter discusses the piloting and sampling procedures used in all three studies, the tasks, measures, and interview procedures, analysis, ethics, and reflexive comments.

Pilot Studies

Pilot work prior to all studies consisted of a discussion with a group of retired people at a church social club. Following this, two retired women were contacted for initial conversation about issues relevant to the retirement transition. These discussions helped in the derivation of interview questions for the pilot interview. A pilot interview then took place with a married woman, aged 58, who had recently retired. Two main themes of 'Loss' and 'conflict of identity' emerged from the pilot interview. Further details of these themes can be found following the pilot interview questions in appendix 1. Questions for this pilot study, findings from this pilot interview and initial literature review findings can be found in appendix 1. Together these findings helped in the

construction of questions for interview 1 of study 1. Questions for interview 1 can be found in appendix 13.

Measures and tasks were also discussed at the pilot interview and comments from the participant can be seen to have influenced final decisions, discussed below, on the presentation of the measures and tasks. At this point no decision had been made about asking participants to write a description of themselves at the end of the study so the 'I am' statements were not piloted.

Sampling and Participants

Systematic, non-probabilistic sampling was used (Mays and Pope, 1995). Here

> *"informants are identified because they will enable exploration of a particular aspect of behaviour relevant to the research. This approach to sampling allows the researcher deliberately to ... select key informants with access to important sources of knowledge."*
>
> (Mays and Pope, 1995, p.110)

Atchley (2000) highlights the problem of sampling older people because older people constitute only a small percentage of the total population; "Unfortunately, gerontologists often must settle for the samples they can get rather than the samples they would like to have" (Atchley, 2000, p.16). Recruiting participants for the present study, who were of the right age and at the right point in their retirement, proved very difficult. Details of recruitment are given at the beginning of each study.

Recruitment of Participants for Study 1

It was decided initially that, for the core sample, women who were approaching retirement would be recruited. This would enable following them through the work-to-retirement transition as Hornstein and Wapner (1985) did in their study of 'modes of experiencing and adapting to retirement'. Following a telephone conversation with a City Council official, a letter of information about the study, together with a contact

address and number, was sent to the City Council with a request that it might be sent to employees about to retire. Unfortunately the Council sent the letter to anyone employed by them approaching retirement age, and was interpreted by employees as a 'push into retirement' by the Council. The researcher abandoned this strategy following a number of angry phone calls from Council employees. A contact within a large department store also attempted to recruit women about to retire but there were no replies to the request for help with the study. This reinforces the difficulties of getting older samples mentioned by Atchley (2000). Consequently the sample of participants recruited for study 1 became a convenience sample and there was some variation in the length of time participants had been retired before interviews took place. Participants in the core group varied the most in the time they had been retired, from 1 to 16 months (see 'Participants' chapter 5). The variation in the length of time that study 1 participants had been retired was not considered a problem however as the literature has examples of this such as Price (1998), who completed a study interviewing 14 women ranging in age from 64 to 82 and retired between 7 and 15 years. The results of this study were presented as a four-stage process model of the retirement transition. The acceptance of a variety of ages and length of time retired in the study of the retirement transition is due to the difficulty in deciding when the transition to retirement actually begins and ends.

> *It has been recognized explicitly in recent years that retirement is a process that starts with planning and decision making some time before the actual end of one's working life and is not completed for years after the point of retirement (e.g., Atchley, 1971, Kasl, 1980; Minkler, 1981). Therefore, if one is to study it, longitudinal designs must be employed so that events of some duration can be assessed."*
>
> (Beehr, 1986, p.31)

Retirement is usually conceptualized as a lengthy process of adjustment (Atchley, 1983; Ekerdt, Bosse, and Levkoff, 1985) and so interviewing participants within 2 years of them retiring will capture something of the early experience of the transition. Also, despite these time differences, each of the core group participants raised similar issues to each other in the interviews and therefore it was felt their inclusion in the core sample was valid.

In the present study the decision was made to follow through six participants over approximately a year of their retirement, and this was the core group which formed study 1. These participants were retired between 0-16 months at first interview, meeting the criteria described by Atchley (1983) and Ekerdt et al. (1985) outlined above. This meant they were retired 1yr 4 months-2 yrs 6 months at final interview.

It became clear that interviewing a few women who had been retired for a longer period of time than participants in study 1 would help to confirm, refute, or possibly extend, any findings from study 1 by carrying the focus further on into retirement. It would help to clarify whether the same type of adjustments continued or whether different issues arose. A further six women were therefore recruited for this purpose, four who had been retired for between 7-9 years, study 2, and two who had been retired for longer than 10 years, study 3. These six women were interviewed once only.

Participants for studies 2 and 3

Participants for studies 2 and 3 were again a convenience sample, recruited according to the length of time they had been retired. Details of recruitment, and further details of participants are given at the beginning of each study in chapter 7 (study 2) and chapter 8 (study 3).

Rationale for the Three Studies

Study 1 was designed to examine the experiences of six women who were in the early stages of retirement. Previous studies on retirement indicated that the process of adjustment to retirement is a transitional process, involving greater than usual change which requires internal reorganisation (Antonovsky and Sagy, 1990; Mann 1991; Thériault 1994). Study 1 was designed to investigate that transitional process acknowledging that, as previously mentioned, to investigate it from beginning to end would neither be practical or possible, given the difficulty in defining both the beginning and end of the transition.

Study 2 helped compare the experiences of study 1 participants with the retrospective memories of the initial adjustment to retirement of participants retired five to nine years. However, the main aim of study 2 was to examine the current experiences of these women who were retired seven to nine years and compare those with participants in study 1. This was because it was important to see whether these women (retired seven to nine years), had the same, or different, issues going on for them as the more recently retired women. If the issues were the same then questions needed to be asked about whether it was retirement that initiated these findings or something else.

Similarly the aim of study 3 was to examine participants' perception of their own retirement over 10 years ago and to find out what life was like for them in the 'here and now'. Again it was important to see whether these women had the same, or different, issues going on for them as the women recently retired and those retired 5-9 years. If the issues were the same then questions needed to be asked about whether it was retirement that initiated the findings from the core group participants.

The ideal study of retirement transition would be longitudinal but this was not possible given the time frame for doctoral studies. Using this cross-sectional design to interview women at different stages of retirement allowed a reasonable assessment of continuity and change within the experience over time. The aim of the interviews for studies 2 and 3 therefore was to examine the issues relevant to the Self for women who had been retired for longer periods than the study 1 participants. This helped to confirm or refute the experiences of the study 1 participants as being related to the retirement transition rather than just to growing older.

Measures and Tasks

Comments by the focus group and the pilot interviewee can be seen to have influenced the presentation of the tasks and measures. A table of use of the tasks and measures and when they were administered to participants follows these written accounts of the measures and tasks.

Tasks

'Who Am I?' Task

This task was developed from the Twenty Statements Test (Kuhn and McPartland, 1954), and helped participants to express their concept of themselves in an unrestricted and non-threatening way.

Kuhn and McPartland (1954) developed the Twenty Statements Test from a procedure originated by Bugental and Zelen (1950). In the Twenty Statements Test participants are given a piece of paper and asked to write twenty answers to the question 'Who am I?'. Kuhn and McPartland (1954) considered that the question 'Who am I?' was one which logically might be expected to elicit statements about an individual's identity. This assumption is grounded in the Symbolic Interactionist idea that most human behaviour is organized and directed by internalized but conscious roles, and is therefore accessible to the individual. Further discussion on the Symbolic Interactionist perspective on the Self can be found in the literature review under 'Self'. Kuhn and McPartland compared extended autobiographies with paragraphs written in response to the question 'Who are you?' and found that:

> *"The paragraphs contained virtually all the items which were yielded by rough content analyses of the self-attitudes in their corresponding autobiographies."*
>
> (Kuhn and McPartland, 1954, p.69)

From this Kuhn and McPartland concluded that it was feasible to construct a test aimed directly at self-attitudes. They gave the 'Who am I?' test to 288 undergraduate students and the number of responses evoked varied from the twenty responses requested, to one or two. These responses were analysed using a form of content analysis. Kuhn and McPartland's test has been confidently used to examine the self-concept of individuals, and to make cross-cultural comparisons of the self-concept (Bond and Cheung, 1983).

The test is favoured for its free-response format. Bond and Cheung (1983) advocate the free-response format as an ideal way to approach the question of how the Self is described to others.

For the purpose of this study the Twenty Statements Test was modified into the 'Who am I?' task. The 'Who Am I?' task is simply a piece of paper with the words 'Who Am I?' as a title. It was given to all participants in all 3 studies to complete in their own time prior to the first interview. The restriction of twenty statements was excluded because the purpose of the task was not to *measure* self-concept but to be an additional method of collecting data about the Self. As it was a written task, and one to be completed in participants' own time, it enabled participants to be as open and thoughtful about the task as they desired. Any participant who might have found written responses easier than verbal responses was given an opportunity to freely express who they felt themselves to be. Participants could choose to write about aspects of themselves they felt comfortable to disclose without feeling any pressure to identify attributes or aspects of themselves they were uncomfortable with.

On piloting this task it was advised that a qualifying statement be given indicating that participants need not fill the page, as this might have been quite daunting. Otherwise it was felt to be clear. It was decided to give a written explanation to participants. A copy of the task and instructions can be found in appendix 2.

All participants completed this task, all filling at least one page, some filling two pages. The completion of this task provided valuable additional data to that given verbally at interview about the participant's concept of Self. This also helped to validate data provided at interview or in the other tasks that was specifically about how the women felt about themselves. Giving participants opportunity to write about, rather than verbalise, who they felt themselves to be presented participants with an opportunity to legitimately 'talk' only about themselves. This is an opportunity that may be lacking in many women's lives (Finch, in Hammersley, 1993), and therefore may not be easily undertaken without a clear signal that this is what is being requested. Presenting participants with this task prior to interviewing them also gave them a signal that the

interest was specifically about them as individuals, and that talking about themselves was legitimate and a desired part of the study.

Diary/Notebook Task

An A5 size notebook was given to each core group (study 1) participant with written instructions to use the book to jot down things of relevance they might otherwise have forgotten in the months between the interviews, if they wished to do so. A copy of the instructions can be found in appendix 3. The pilot participant felt this was clear.

The notebook, or diary, provided a means of gaining continuity in the data as it gave an opportunity for information to be recorded in the intervening months between interviews. This strengthened the study, in that participants were encouraged to raise issues that were important to them at the time of writing, and therefore provided additional data to that obtained at interview. This was additional data that also might or might not have verified interview or other data. It was thought important however for there not to be any pressure to write anything at all in the notebook. This was important in that pressure to write something down assumed there would be something of relevance to write, where in fact there may have been nothing of importance to write. Freedom to have no 'issues' in the retirement transition was as important as freedom to divulge any such issues.

Participants did not use the diary a great deal. Those who did used it for specific incidents that had happened to make them reflect on their retirement or 'ageing' experiences. This was useful in that the felt importance and strength of emotion these experiences elicited at the time of writing was captured. This may have been lost by the time it came around to the next interview time.

'I Am' Task

The 'I Am' task was a task developed by the author to help participants express their concept of themselves in an unrestricted and non-threatening way that differed slightly from the 'Who am I?' task. This task was given to each core group (study 1) participant at the end of the study. This consisted of piece of paper entitled 'I Am', with examples at the top of the page of how participants might use the task. Examples were given as it was found that when asked to complete any of the measures participants showed a bit of anxiety about doing the 'correct' thing. The examples given did not appear to detract from participants using the task freely. A copy of the 'I am' task can be found in appendix 4. All participants completed the task.

The strength of the 'I am' task was in the freedom of expression it gave. This task was given as an open exercise, which gave the freedom of self-description and the freedom of comment about the Self or circumstances of the participant.

In this study the 'I am' and the 'Who am I?' tasks provided a useful means of examining the participants concept of themselves at the beginning and end of the study. The completion of these tasks provided useful data, building upon, contributing to and validating or otherwise, data provided at the three interviews or in the diaries.

The use of the 'Who am I?' task, and the devising of the 'I am' tasks provides a contribution to knowledge of useful ways to examine aspects of the Self, ways that are not daunting and are non-threatening. Some people find it easier to write things down than to say them and these tasks provide a means of focusing the individual on the specific task of communicating their concept of Self, and the effect of their circumstances on the same. As discussed in the methodological issues chapter 3, the objective and subjective reality of the psychology of the individual is not always easily discovered, examined, quantified, and generalised. The aforementioned tasks contribute to the work of aiding access to those parts of our psychology not easily identified and examined.

Psychometric Measures

Measures used are those of self-esteem (Battle, 1992, 1981) and depression (Beck, 1987, 1990). These measures were used to provide additional information to that given by participants at interview and in completion of the tasks. The difficulties of examining and accessing the Self have already been mentioned. By using a standardised measure of self-esteem a more objective aspect to the Self could be examined, alongside self-reports at interview, and in data obtained from completion of the tasks. Use of the measure of self-esteem at the beginning and end of study 1 enabled a more objective examination of this aspect of participant's concept of Self alongside their own subjective assessments. A 'before' and 'after' assessment could therefore be made of any changes over the time of the study. The use of the measure of depression, also a standardised test, enabled a more objective examination of an aspect of the participants' emotional state commonly associated with life changes (Parkes, 1971; Mann, 1991), and, in particular, with retirement (Muller-Spahn and Hock, 1994). Any self-reports of depressed feelings by participants, therefore, could be examined alongside the measure for a more objective assessment. Use of the measure of depression in all three studies enabled a clearer picture of this aspect of participants' emotional state to be made should any participant refer to feelings of depression within the interview. Use of the measure of depression at the beginning and end of study 1 enabled any changes in this aspect of participants' emotional state to be examined over the time of the study.

Culture Free Self-Esteem Inventory (CFSEI-2)

Self-esteem was an important aspect of the Self to consider in the present study because of its role in well-being, and its effect on the ability to adjust to environmental demands.

"Self-esteem is a fundamental human need at all stages of development (Battle, 1987, 1990; Branden, 1969) that affects one's level of achievement, ability to adjust to environmental demands, and general state of well-being." (Battle, 1992, p.3)

How a person feels about her own worth, her self-esteem, also has implications in the areas of status and status loss, issues which may or may not have been raised by participants in retirement. Participants were asked about their feelings of worth at interview so a measure of self-esteem was an additional tool of validation for interview data. A measure of self-esteem would therefore enhance the study in that the use of a variety of methods enables a confirmation or otherwise of interview, or written data.

There are numerous measures of self-esteem, many of which correlate poorly with one another (Lopez and Synder, 2003). Wylie (1974) has criticised self-esteem research for a lack of rigor in experimentation, and on the proliferation of instruments to measure self-esteem. Blascovich and Tomaka (1991) carefully examined numerous measures of self-esteem and concluded that no perfect measure exists. Obviously there are problems when choosing a measure of self-esteem. Clearly the definition of self-esteem has obvious implications for how it is measured. Declaration of the definition of self-esteem adhered to by the creators of the measure chosen (see 'self-esteem' chapter 2), allows judgements to be made on the adequacy of the measure in its contribution to data collected for the purpose of this study.

As previously discussed the Culture Free Self-Esteem Inventory was given to participants in study 1 to enable a comparison of this aspect of the Self to be made at the beginning and end of the study, and as an additional tool of information gathering of participant's subjective responses to questions of how they felt about themselves. However, as Rosenberg's (1965) measure of self-esteem is the scale most widely used in research (Demo, 1985; Blascovich and Tomaka, 1991), it is necessary to give some rationale for the choice of measure used.

Rationale for the use of Culture-Free Self-Esteem Inventory

The value of global versus specific component models of self-esteem has been debated in the literature (Pelham, 1995; March, 1995). This is an issue that remains under dispute. The Rosenberg (1965) scale for example, does not look at subcomponents. It is a 10-item scale measuring global self-esteem. According to the global approach, "self-esteem is considered an overall self-attitude that permeates all aspects of people's lives"

(Lopez and Snyder, 2003, p.223). The Culture-Free Self-Esteem Inventory, the measure chosen for the purpose of this study, does look at component relationships (see a description of the measure below). William James (1892) proposed that the specific components of the self-esteem added together made up the global self-esteem. The components themselves were more or less important according to their related importance to the self-concept (Heatherton and Wyland in Lopez and Snyder (eds.), 2003). If an individual felt good about a specific component that was considered important for their self-concept then that would contribute a great deal to an overall good self-esteem. Feeling bad about a component that was considered unimportant for the self-concept would not sway that good self-esteem because of its lack of importance for that individual. It remains a debated and unresolved issue as to the importance of considering specific components or domains (see Marsh, 1995, and Pelham, 1995).

In consideration of all the previously mentioned difficulties with self-esteem research and measures it was necessary to look closely at what the measure would be used for in the present study, and which measure would adequately serve that purpose. The fact that the Culture-Free Self-Esteem Inventory was 'culture-free' did not matter in this instance as participants were from the same culture, although arguably there could be an, 'age sub-culture' issue (see Featherman, Smith, and Peterson, 'graying society' in Baltes and Baltes (eds.), 1990). The issue of a possible 'age sub-culture' being a moot point meant that using the Culture-Free Self-Esteem Inventory addressed the possibility. More importantly, for the purpose of this study it was considered of interest to look at component aspects of self-esteem, and relationships of these identified aspects to other data, particularly from in-depth interviews given by individuals. Also, the Culture-Free Self-Esteem Inventory for adults has been found to be especially effective in identifying individuals experiencing depression (Battle, 1992). This might also be useful in the present study.

The Culture Free Self-Esteem Inventory (CFSEI-2) is a 40 item questionnaire comprising of the following sub-tests; 16 items for General self-esteem, 8 items for social self-esteem, 8 items for personal self-esteem and 8 items on the lie sub-test. The latter are items that indicate defensiveness on answering the questions. The items are divided into those that indicate high self-esteem and those that indicate low self-esteem.

A copy of the test can be found in appendix 5. The participant is required to respond yes or no to every item. The tables for classification of scores can be found in appendix 6. Participants were instructed to read the directions printed on the form. After time had been given for them to read the instructions, and before they started to answer the questions on the form, participants were asked whether they had any questions about what was required of them. Participants were then instructed to follow the directions and answer the questions.

This measure was thought to be quite self-explanatory by the pilot participant but she did suggest that it was stressed to participants that they were to answer questions with who they felt themselves to be in mind, rather than who they wished they were. This was added to instructions given to the participants. All study 1 participants completed the measure without problems.

Scores were derived by totalling the number of items checked that indicate high self-esteem, excluding the lie scale items which are totalled separately. Thus, the total possible score for form AD is 32, and the highest lie score is 8.

Reliability

The Culture Free Self-Esteem Inventory is a reliable standardized measure as tests on its reliability show:

"Correlations for the standardization sample were significant for the total and all subtests as well." (Battle, 1992, p.20)

Validity

The inventories are "intended to measure an individual's perception of Self" (Battle, 1992, p.4), and have been used effectively with adults in all walks of life. There are studies providing quantitative data indicating that the CFSEI constitutes valid measures of self-esteem (Battle, 1992).

Lie Subtest

The lie subtest gives additional information about respondents defensiveness, which if shown to be high, needs to call into question the results of their test.

> *"The lie subtest measures defensiveness. Individuals who respond defensively to self-esteem items refuse to ascribe to themselves characteristics of a generally valid but socially unacceptable nature."*
>
> (Battle, 1992, p.15)

However, most respondents to this test previously have shown a lack of defensiveness in responding to the test.

> *"A standardization study of the lie subtest of form AD indicated that a large majority of the sample displayed a lack of defensiveness when responding to lie items.*
>
> (Battle, 1992, p.17)

Content Validity

Content validity is built into the measure by developing a definition of self-esteem, which can be found in the literature review, and writing items, to cover all areas of the construct. "Factor analysis indicates the items in the subtest possess acceptable internal consistency" (Battle, 1992, p.21).

As mentioned previously the CFSEI for adults has been found to be especially effective in identifying individuals experiencing depression (Battle, 1992). Therefore, this measure was useful in the present study because it gave supplementary information to that of the measure for depression which, in analysis of the combined data, would be beneficial in gaining some depth of understanding of participants' feelings and emotions.

> *"Experimental findings and empirical observations generally reveal that depressed individuals almost always possess low self-esteem as measured by the CFSEI."*
>
> (Battle, 1992, p.5)

Beck Depression Inventory (Beck and Steer, 1987)

As previously discussed under 'measures' above, a measure of depression was taken because the consequences of retirement have been cited as reasons for the onset of depression (Muller-Spahn and Hock, 1994), and masked and minor depression have also been shown to have higher prevalence rates in older people compared with younger people (Angst and Ernst, 1993). As depression would be a significant and relevant variable to overlook in a study of the Self, it was considered important to include this measure.

Rationale for the use of the Beck Depression Inventory (Beck and Steer, 1987)

Children, adolescents, adults and the elderly suffer the symptoms of depression. There are many different screening measures specifically designed to detect depression in these various age groups. In choosing a measure it was important to choose one appropriate to the individuals who would be using it. The measure needed to be easy to use and not take too long to complete because it would be administered, together with the measure of self-esteem, at the beginning of the study when any contact with participants was creating the basis for further interaction during the interviews to follow. A long drawn out personally probing questionnaire, it was felt, would not be a good introduction to the study for participants.

Participants in the present study were at the older age range of 'adult' and the younger age range of 'elderly'. The Beck Depression Inventory is suitable for both adults and the elderly and takes five to ten minutes to complete (Beck and Steer, 1987). It is also the most commonly used depression screening measure for adults (Feinman et al, 2000), and is appropriate for detecting depression in both 'normal' individuals and individuals with psychiatric problems, therefore it was an appropriate measure for use in this study.

The 1987 version of the Beck Depression Inventory (BDI) was used (Beck and Steer, 1987). The BDI is a 21 item self-report inventory designed to assess the intensity of depression in psychiatric patients, and to detect possible depression in 'normal' populations (Beck and Steer, 1987). The questionnaire consists of 21 groups of

statements reflecting the symptoms of depression. There is a choice of 4 responses to each statement rated in severity from 0-3. The BDI is scored by summing its ratings, and the total score can range from 0-63. A copy of the BDI can be found in appendix 8 and the scoring table for classification of scores can be found in appendix 9.
The Beck Depression Inventory (BDI) has been widely used with normal populations for assessing possible depression. Nevertheless it is to be used with caution as a diagnostic tool (Steer, Beck and Garrison, 1985, in Beck and Steer, 1987). In this study the BDI was being used alongside interviews and the self-esteem questionnaire and was not a prerequisite for therapy or drug use, thus it was felt that sufficient caution was used. "With normal populations, BDI total scores greater than 15 may detect possible depression, although an interview with a trained clinician is crucial for confirmation" (Oliver and Simmons, 1984, in Beck and Steer, 1987, p.7).

Participants were given the questionnaire and the instructions at the top of the page were read aloud while the participant followed them. Participants were then asked if they had any questions about what was required of them before they answered the questionnaire. All participants completed the measure without problems.

Reliability

"The revised BDI has high internal consistency in both clinical and nonclinical populations" (Beck and Steer, 1987, p.9). This means that the test is reliable in that it is consistent within itself. As far as the stability of the test goes this has been found difficult to ascertain as patients are expected to get better and therefore their scores will change over time. Test-retests done on non-psychiatric samples were found to be more stable (Beck and Steer, 1987).

Validity - Discriminant Validity

Gotlib (1984) suggested that "the BDI may be measuring a construct or emotional state considerably broader than depression" (Gotlib, 1984, p.20). Strong relationships between depression and anxiety have been found in university students (Craighead, Hickey and DeMonbreun, 1979; Hollon and Kendall, 1980; Blumberg and Hokanson,

1983 in Gotlib, 1984). Depression and anxiety can thus be seen to be interrelated constructs and Gotlib (1984) advises caution in assuming the BDI is measuring the discrete phenomenon of depression in students who have high scores on the BDI. However Steer, Beck, Riskind and Brown (1986) found that the BDI does differentiate between generalized anxiety disorders and depressive disorders.

> *"The sum of the first 13 items creates a cognitive-affective subscale for estimating depression in persons whose vegetative and somatic symptoms might over-estimate the severity of their depressions. The sum of the last eight items creates a subscale which measures somatic-performance complaints. ...* (A) *score greater than 10 on the cognitive-affective subscale was indicative of moderate depression."*
>
> (Beck and Steer, 1987, p.16)

Construct Validity

The BDI shows construct validity and concurrent validity with selected concurrent measures of depression across a variety of studies (Beck and Steer, 1987), although Sacco (1981) argues that the BDI "appears to be a valid measure of depression only for the day on which it was administered" (Sacco, 1981, p.144). However, because the revised BDI asks participants to describe themselves for the 'past week, including today', it is argued that this assesses a more persistent 'trait', rather than 'state' of depression. The reality of transient depressive states, however, must be acknowledged.

A table showing when measures and tasks were used in the present study, and a rationale of timing in the use of each measure and task follows.

Summary of rationale of timing in the use of measures and tasks

Although rationale for the measures and tasks is discussed previously under individual descriptions of each task and measure used in the studies, a summary of this rationale was thought to be useful for the reader.

The 'Who am I?' task was given to all participants prior to the first interview to encourage freedom of expression of who they felt themselves to be before they experienced the questions of the researcher. This was useful supplementary data on participants' concept of themselves prior to the study.

The dairy/notebook was given to participants in study 1 prior to the first interview. This gave participants a legitimate forum to express anything they felt was of importance to them personally before questions were asked and during the time between interviews. This freedom enabled participants to partly set the agenda on discussion about themselves and their retirement experience, and gave them freedom to raise issues the interviewer may not have considered in the interview. This reduced the possibility of the researcher missing important topics. The notebook therefore provided additional, supplementary data throughout the whole timescale of the study, not just at interview times.

The 'I Am' task was given to participants in study 1 prior to the final interview as a variation of the 'Who Am I?' task. This provided useful additional data on the individual's thoughts and feelings about themselves and their circumstances at the end of the study without asking them to repeat what they had done at the beginning of the study.

For study 1 participants, the CFSEI and BDI measures were taken prior to the first interview and at the final interview. This enabled both individual and group comparison to be made, over the time of the study, of self-esteem and depression scores. These measures provided additional confirmatory data to interview and diary data on the way participants were feeling at the beginning and end of the study. Study 2 and 3 participants also completed the BDI prior to their interview.

Table of Use of Measures and Tasks

Study	Measure or Task	Prior to 1st Interview	Prior to Final Interview	Final Interview
1	'Who Am I?'	✓		
	Notebook	✓		
	'I Am'		✓	
	CFSEI	✓		✓
	BDI	✓		✓
2 & 3	'Who Am I?'	✓		
	BDI	✓		

Design and process

Study 1

Six women formed the main core group for study 1, the longitudinal study. These women were contacted twice by letter, see appendix 10, firstly as potential participants in the study and secondly to thank them for their interest in participation and to give further information on the study. Participants were then contacted by telephone to arrange an informal meeting where the details of the study were explained further and consent was gained. The main aims of this first meeting were to introduce the study to the participant, to answer any questions they had about the study, to explain what would be required of them and to get them to sign a consent form if appropriate.

At this first meeting the study was explained and participants were asked if they would like more time to think about whether they would like to participate. No participant wanted more time. Participants were informed that subjects of interest within the study would be the retirement transition and issues around ageing and the Self. It was explained that the study was quite personal in that the women would be asked to look

closely at their own feelings and thoughts. It was made clear that if participants felt they didn't want to answer certain questions then they need not answer them, but much about the study would be personal. Confidentiality was explained, together with the fact that names would be changed along with any details that might identify the participant. Tasks and measures were explained, and participants informed they would be interviewed three times over the course of about a year and a half, each interview lasting approximately an hour to an hour and a half. Participants were given details about the researcher, her place of study and what her work would be contributing to.

Participants were relaxed enough to ask questions about the researcher, about family and career plans, which all served to build up a relationship with the women and to reduce any power differentials that may be around in any interview relationship. Consent forms were then explained and signed, see appendix 11. The plan of the introductory interview can be found in appendix 12. At this first meeting a second meeting was arranged with each of the women and it was explained that this second meeting would be a time when the measures would be administered, tasks explained and where further questions could be asked about the study. It was decided that the first and second introductory meetings would be conducted without a tape recorder. This was because the main aims of the introductory meetings was to build relationships between participant and researcher, which was felt to be particularly important in view of the personal nature of the study, and enable the measures and tasks to be dealt with prior to the interviews taking place.

Approximately one to one and a half years later all measures were repeated with the main core group and these participants were asked to write another description of themselves using the words 'I Am ...' as a prefix. There were approximately six months in between each successive interview, three interviews per participant in total excluding the introductory interviews. Interviews took place in participants' own homes except for two interviews where the participant came to the researcher's home. This arrangement was always the choice, and at the convenience, of the participants.

The following table shows the timing of the preliminary introductory interview, when the measures were taken, and the three taped interviews.

Study 1 Schedule

Prelim Interview	Measures	1st Interview	2nd Interview	3rd Interview
Nov 96	Dec 96/Jan 97	Feb/Mar 97	Oct/Nov 97	Apr/May 98

Study 2 and 3 Participants

The second and third groups of participants were interviewed once in their own homes following an introductory interview where an explanation of the study was given, consent forms signed, and the 'Who am I?' task was left with them to have done by the interview date.

Interviews

Derivation of Interview Items for Study 1

Derivation of interview items for the pilot study has already been discussed under 'pilot studies'. Interview questions for the first interview of study 1 were formulated from the findings of the pilot interview and the preliminary literature review (see appendix 1). Questions for the first interview can be found in appendix 13. Below are examples of how issues raised at the pilot interview and from the preliminary literature review informed the writing of questions.

Loss – Q8
Conflict of Identity – Q's 11, 12, 14, 16, 17
Time – Q's 12, 21
Ambivalence towards work – Q's 5, 6, 15
Internal Reorganisation – Q's 11, 14, 16, 18
Continuity – Q's 4, 7, 24

Whilst acknowledging this 'engineering' of questions, it is very important to mention that responding to and following up issues raised by individual participants was considered very important within the interview situation. If a participant raised issues other than those on the interview schedule these were followed through and given appropriate time and validity. The nature of the semi-structured interview is one of openness and flexibility. Burman (1994) mentions that the semi-structured interview can "document perspectives not usually represented (or even envisaged by researchers)" (Burman, 1994, in Banister et al, 1994, p.51).

The aim of interview 2 was to give participants greater freedom to talk about what was going on for them at the time I was seeing them. It was important that any pre-conceived ideas the researcher might have about the transition becoming easier, or more difficult, were laid aside and participants allowed to freely express 'how they were getting on'. The questions for interview 2 (see appendix 13) are therefore designed to elicit open expression of the experience of participants at that time in their transition.

Some of the questions for interview 3 were designed to examine how participants were at the time of the interview (for example questions 2, 4, 7, 8, 10). These questions used information from interview 1 and the initial literature review to probe issues that might have been issues for participants undergoing a retirement transition, issues such as identity and satisfaction. Other questions were designed to enable participants to look back at their transition so far, for example questions 3 and 13, although there was no assumption that the transition was complete. Further questions were designed to help participants express their thoughts and feelings about the future, for example questions 6, 13. Looking back, examining the 'here and now' and looking to the future were considered relevant and important issues when looking at a transition that involves 'process', that is where individuals' might be expected to experience movement, adjustment, growth and/or development. This is the perspective of the concept of psycho-social transitions (Parkes, 1971).

The design of the interviews for all participants was of the informal but guided type (Coolican, 1990). This design of interview was chosen because some comparison across interviews was important, especially as in the core group of participants the same

women were being interviewed three times. Questions for interviews were always pre-set but rarely asked in the way in which they were written and in the order in which they were written. It was found that often participants answered questions before they were asked. A copy of the interview questions for study 1, 2 and 3 can be found in appendix 13.

The building up of a relationship before initial interviews took place was important because the interview questions probe deeper than 'information gathering' in that they tap into experiences the women are currently negotiating, and are potentially areas that are sensitive, emotive and personal. In a positive sense, the interviews may serve to assist each woman in her exploration of her transition to retirement, while at the same time introducing her to psychological concepts to do with her Self that are unfamiliar and unformed or not yet developed in her mind. Thus an exploration from the point of view of participant and researcher is taking place. This makes the research interview more akin to a counselling interview in the nature of Coyle and Wright (1996), where a focus on process, fostering of a sense of connectedness, and encouragement in elaboration of thoughts and feelings takes place. The ethical implications of this sort of work are of primary consideration in all aspects of the process and are discussed further under 'Ethics'.

Within the counselling interview, interviewers foster counselling attributes and use counselling skills. The counselling interview is used when a research topic is thought to be particularly sensitive.

> *"A research topic is deemed sensitive if it 'potentially poses for those involved a substantial threat, the emergence of which renders problematic for the researcher and/or the researched the collection, holding and/or dissemination of research data.'"*
>
> (Lee and Renzetti, p.5 in Coyle and Wright, 1996, p.432)

It was felt that the research topic under study here had potentially sensitive aspects, particularly when the focus would be on very personal thoughts and feelings about self-identity, self-image and the often sensitive subject of growing old. The counselling interview was chosen as:

> *"interviewers do not require formal counselling qualifications ... to use this approach effectively ...* [as] *... There is no planning or delivery of therapeutic interventions. The therapeutic value of the interview arises from its clarifying, account-forming and cathartic functions."*
>
> (Coyle and Wright, 1996, p.432-434)

> *"Rogers (1951) advocated the development of the attributes of empathy, genuineness and unconditional positive regard for the person and saw them as being conveyed chiefly through the use of counselling skills such as attentive listening, paraphrasing the content of the material offered, reflecting feelings, summarizing and using open questions."*
>
> (Coyle and Wright, 1996, p.433)

These attributes and skills were used to the best of the interviewer's ability within the interviews in this research.

As a standard procedure for all participants following each interview the tape recorder was turned off and a de-briefing session took place. This was explained to the participants as a time when the work was over and anything they said would not be recorded or used in the research. It has to be acknowledged here that, although this material was not formally used in the research, these discussions will have influenced interpretation in analysis of the interviews. The de-brief discussions also contributed to an increased understanding of participants' thoughts and feelings and therefore greater sensitivity and awareness of issues and/or difficulties around for participants. This inevitably will have influenced the interviewer-participant relationship/rapport.

Derivation of Interview Items for Study 2

The questions for study 2 (see appendix 13) were derived partly from the findings of study 1 and partly to examine what life was like for these participants five to nine years into their retirement. Questions that focused on participants remembering their own initial adjustment to retirement (for example 3, 9 and 10), helped in comparison to study 1 participants. Other questions were aimed at finding out what life was like for these women in the 'here and now' (for example questions 11, 13, 16, 20). This was the main aim, and questions were suitably open enough to enable free expression of how these

women felt at the time of the interview. It was important to see whether these women had the same, or different, issues going on for them as the more recently retired women. If the issues were the same then questions needed to be asked about whether it was retirement that initiated these findings.

Derivation of Interview Items for Study 3

Questions for the interview for study 3 can also be found in appendix 13. The aim of these questions was to examine participants' perception of their own retirement over 10 years ago and to find out what life was like for them in the 'here and now'. Again it was important to see whether these women had the same, or different, issues going on for them as the women recently retired and those retired 5-9 years. If the issues were the same then questions needed to be asked about whether it was retirement that initiated the findings from the core group participants. There were questions probing identity issues, such as question 9 and 12, and questions that gave participants freedom to introduce their own perspective on life (for example question 14).

The aim of the interviews for studies 2 and 3 therefore was to examine the issues relevant to the Self for women who had been retired for longer periods than the study 1 participants. This helped to confirm or refute the experiences of the study 1 participants as being related to the retirement transition rather than to growing old.

Analysis

Method Of Analysis

The Grounded theory method according to Glaser and Strauss (1967); Strauss (1987); Strauss and Corbin (1990) was used in this study. The theoretical issues around this method have already been discussed in chapter 3. The practical applications of this method are discussed here.

How the Data was used

Transcribed interview data formed the main source of data for analysis in all three studies. This was accompanied by the previously discussed tasks and measures. The first interview and accompanying measures and tasks for each participant was treated as a quite separate case from the next participants. This enabled participants to give their own individual perspective on their own experience. The second interviews were also treated as separate for each participant, although the first interview for each participant influenced the second interview for that same participant and so on.

The data from the measures and tasks obtained at the time of interview 1 were analysed together with the interview data for that time period. So, for each individual participant in study 1 interview 1, analysis involved interview data, the 'Who am I?' task data, diary data and the first measure of self-esteem and depression. For interview 2 analysis involved interview data and diary data, and for interview 3 analysis involved interview data, diary data, the 'I am' task data and the second measure of both self-esteem and depression. Glaser and Strauss (1967) in comment on the use of a variety of methods of data collection;

> *"There is no fundamental clash between the purposes and capacities of qualitative and quantitative methods or data. ... We believe that each form of data is useful for both verification and generation of theory, whatever the primacy of emphasis. ... Both used as supplements, as mutual verification and, most important for us, as different forms of data on the same subject."*
> (Glaser and Strauss, 1967, p.17-18)

All data was used as a 'supplement' to the interview data, for verification and as an example of 'different forms of data on the same subject'. Initially all data was coded separately to ensure that all issues raised by participants from whatever mode of data collection, would be given attention. This individual attention to each separate group of combined data for each participant formed the basis for the individual analysis of each participant. This can be found in chapter 5. Strauss and Corbin (1990) stress the importance of being clear about the purpose of quantitative measures where they are

used and the importance of not using quantitative measures to validate propositions, they stress that quantitative methods must be,

> *"built into the theory as further verification of conditions, action/integration, consequences, and so forth. ... Any attempt to validate propositions through standardized instruments does not constitute a grounded theory study."*
>
> (Strauss and Corbin, 1990, p.191)

For this reason all data was used in the individual analysis as previously explained, and used to corroborate other data obtained within the same time period for each individual. In this way quantitative measures and data from the tasks was built into the theory as supplementary data to the interview data.

The written data complemented the spoken data in that it often verified and corroborated what was spoken about in interviews. Giving participants the opportunity to write things down in the form of the 'Who am I?' and 'I am' tasks, or the diary, enabled them to reflect on what had been said at interview and/or write down things they particularly wanted to talk about the next time we met. Because the interviews, measures and tasks were centred around the same subjects, for example concept of Self, emotional state, and experiences of the Self in the retirement transition, and because initial coding showed similar issues being raised in all the data, it was decided that putting all the data together following initial coding would not be problematic.

> *"Using multiple measures of the same variable increases the researcher's confidence that the data reflects the phenomenon under study rather than being an artefact of the method of data collection."*
>
> (Sugarman, 2001, p.36)

Immediately following each interview a reflexive account of the interview was written. This involved noting down thoughts and feelings about the interview, any problems that had arisen, any thoughts for improvement of the interview technique, and any thoughts about initial themes that may be emerging. As complete analysis of the interviews did not take place until some time later these notes were helpful and important.

Transcriptions of the interviews were made. The majority of the tapes were transcribed by the researcher. Permission was sought, and given, by participants, for those tapes that were transcribed by someone else. All transcripts of interviews not transcribed by the researcher were checked by her against the original recording of the interviews. Mistakes were corrected and gaps filled in.

Several readings of the transcripts familiarised the researcher with the interview data. Open Coding of the transcribed interview data and the task data then followed. This involved using all the data, reading it through line by line, and identifying provisional concepts or analytic themes, that seemed to fit the data. The aim of this coding is to "open up the inquiry. Every interpretation at this point is tentative" (Strauss, 1987, p.29). The advantage of this form of analysis is that all the data is used initially and the conceptual labels emerge from the data rather than being identified in response to questions the researcher has already in her mind. As mentioned earlier, the influence of the researcher on the identification of concepts cannot be ignored. Following the identification of final conceptual labels for the combined interview and task data the concepts were grouped into categories and this completed the Open Coding. Axial Coding then took place whereby connections between categories were made. Selective Coding followed, bringing the identified categories and their connections to a position where a 'possible core category' was identified. According to Stauss (1987, 1995);

> *"Possible core categories should be given a 'best fit' label as soon as possible, so that there is a handle for thinking about them."*
>
> (Strauss, 1995, p.35)

Finally a Core Category was identified for each of the three interviews, which included the combined task data. A complete example of the analysis of one interview from a core group participant can be found in appendix 22. The precise way in which Grounded theory was used can therefore be seen. The outworking of all the analysis can be found in appendices 17-19, the final completion of which is in chapters 5-8 as the studies are discussed.

Reliability Of Analysis

All interviews were audio taped enabling accurate recording of participant's views. Transcriptions made were verbatim. Conclusions made in analysis are illustrated by participant's own words taken from the interviews. Glaser and Strauss comment on the difficulty of conveying the credibility of the discovered theory;

> *"The standard approach to this problem is to present data as evidence for conclusions, thus indicating how the analyst obtained the theory from his data. ... The analyst usually presents characteristic illustrations."*
>
> (Glaser and Strauss, 1967, p.228)

To enable further scrutiny of the analytic process, and therefore judgement of reliability, a complete analysis of a participant interview together with the measures and task data for that time period can be found in appendix 22. As Glaser and Strauss (1967) report,

> *Another way to convey credibility of the theory is to use a codified procedure for analyzing data which allows readers to understand how the analyst obtained his theory from the data."*
>
> (Glaser and Strauss, 1967, p.229)

Glaser and Strauss also argue that "using the method or methods best suited to the socially structured necessities of the research situation" (Glaser and Strauss, 1967, p.230) assures further reliability. This issue has been previously clarified under 'rationale for the three studies'.

Validity Of Findings

Attention to validity of findings was given in that participants were asked to complete tasks and measures, which could then be compared with oral accounts. Details of the tasks and measures has already been given. This data was examined alongside participants' oral accounts of their thoughts and feelings and gave a more complete picture of participants' experiences. No one means of data collection was relied upon exclusively, although the interviews were the main data collected. The interviews were

of the informal but guided type, which also increases validity of findings (Coolican, 1990).

Another issue around validity is the examination by the researcher of "negative" or "deviant" cases, those cases where there are contradictions or weaknesses around the emerging theory (Waitzkin, 1990). Contradictions or irregularities were not dismissed in analysis.

Two psychologists read the interviews of two study 1 participants, three interviews for each participant. This helped to further validate the categories that were emerging from the data. Both psychologists agreed with work done.

Validity is also demonstrated by showing how the study contributes to, and fits with, the body of work already done on retirement.

Ethics

Ethical considerations are always important in psychological research. Care must always be taken not to abuse the privilege of sharing private lives and thoughts. It was considered ethically important in the present study that all participants were fully aware of the personal nature of the study and the fact that they would be bringing into the public domain something that was essentially private. For this reason it was decided that introductory interviews explaining the study should be given to all participants. It was essential to give all participants as much information as possible about how the received information would be used. This was done at the introductory interview. The introductory interview also served to build the relationship between interviewer and participant enabling the interviewer to be more sensitive to the individual and her life.

The topics covered in the interviews were sometimes of an in-depth and personal nature. At least one direct question of a personal nature gave a message to the participants that it was acceptable to talk about things of a personal nature within the interview. It was therefore of utmost importance that the researcher was sensitive to each individual and

to potential discomfort participants might feel on being asked certain questions. Before interviews began there was always a short chat, with questions asked by participants about how the work was going. This time of self-disclosure served to 'break the ice' and was of benefit before quite personal questions were asked of the participants. It seemed a little less 'one-sided'.

Participants obviously felt comfortable during the interview, as there was evidence of enormous trust in that sometimes participants revealed things they had told no one else. The rapport with participants, and the fact that they did talk about things that were difficult for them to reveal was a strength of the approach used. Participants went beyond what was socially desirable for them to say and revealed things they did not really feel comfortable with in themselves. Consequently there was an enormous responsibility for the researcher to treat participants and their revelations with the utmost care, confidentiality and sensitivity. This is particularly important when women are interviewing women (Finch, in Hammersley (ed), 1993). Finch was startled by the readiness with which women talked to her and felt that the lack of opportunity women have to talk about themselves and to be 'heard' may account for this. The interviewer gave assurance and a commitment to the participants of the respect and value she placed on the information.

De-briefing sessions were given following each interview. The de-briefing was a time for checking that participants were comfortable with the fact that what they had said earlier had been recorded. Participants were asked whether they had found anything in the interview particularly difficult to talk about and whether they wanted to retract anything they had said at the interview. At times it could be seen that the participants valued this time and, whilst there were things said that it would have been helpful to have used in the research it was important that the women had this time to reflect on what had been talked about. Often they would talk very personally at this point about feelings they had about answering particular questions within the interview. This time was regarded as a very important time where participants would not be left 'stewing' in feelings they may have needed to talk about.

Reflexivity

Reflexivity is used in the research method because it is thought that all explicitly made assumptions and presuppositions enable a 'clearer' view of the contribution of the researcher in the researcher/participant relationship.

In the development of theory, and in any interaction with another person, there is a relationship to which both researcher and participants contribute.

With regard to the development of theory mentioned, as ontology precedes epistemology, it is necessary to expand the perspective on the nature of knowledge previously mentioned in chapter 3 'Methodological Issues'. This is necessary in order to be open about the position of the author with regard to ontological commitments set out in chapter 3. From the Biblical Christian world-view of the author, objective truth exists and is knowable. The existence of absolute truth as revealed by God is also acknowledged. That knowledge about *all* things is revealed in the Bible, the source of Divinely revealed truths, is clearly not the case and would a naïve, and false, presupposition to make. Nevertheless, the presuppositions of the author include a foundational ontological and epistemological belief that there are some divinely revealed and absolute truths about being human. This perspective influences the work in this thesis.

With regard to the interaction with another person mentioned, and as a contributor to the expression of an individual's experience, the researcher should be committed to talking about her/his part, especially because she/he is to analyse the participants' words and experience. Reflexivity is "the inevitable accompaniment of any method which demands scrutiny of its own terms and procedures" (Natanson, 1974, p.243). Reflexivity is used to provide an open, self-critical and sympathetic response to the participants' sharing of their experience. Aspects of the researcher's subjectivity as another human being involved in this interaction are acknowledged. Moreover, the critical realist perspective of the author acknowledges that, although in principle there is a reality independent of the knower, it is never, in practice, independent of the knower. Thus, the perspective of the researcher should be fully expressed. It should, however, be

made clear that reflexivity is not used in the sense of the politics of feminism, which give reflexivity a special power i.e. "to overcome the gendered character of supposedly value-free objectivist discourse" (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994, p.568).

CHAPTER 5

Study 1a:
Individual Perspectives of Six Recently Retired Women

STUDY 1a:
INDIVIDUAL PERSPECTIVES OF SIX RECENTLY RETIRED WOMEN

Rationale and Introduction to Individual Participant Analysis

It was thought particularly important in the present study that the individual and unique experience of each participant was not minimised or swallowed up in the group analysis. By its very nature, the study examines the individual's experience in an in-depth and very personal way. Each participant's experience of retirement is unique. In analysing individual data it was clear that similarities in themes between participants were emerging. However, analysis inevitably gets to a point where the individual may appear to be subsumed under themes due to the volume of data and the necessity to order the data. Therefore it was thought to be beneficial to examine and emphasize the very individual and unique way each woman experienced this transition by analysing and presenting the data from each individual perspective as well as from the group perspective. This gave the advantage of having an individual analysis alongside a group analysis, confronting de-contextualisation and fragmentation of data, which can be a criticism of qualitative research. Group analysis focuses on similarities and differences within the retirement transition, but may not do service to the strength of certain individual themes. It was thought that the individual analysis could portray more of the individual participants and their lives to the reader before the group analysis of chapter 6. Also, relevant relationships between themes within an individual interview, or set of interviews, could be highlighted. This can be neglected when there is a large amount of qualitative data to analyse. Presenting the analysis in this way gives additional advantages of further clarification and more information on identified themes in the study.

Following this individual analysis, participant experiences in the study were analysed as a group, and this can be found in chapter 6. The group analysis has the strength of bringing together similarities and comparisons in experience. Summaries of themes from the individual analysis, which can be found in appendix 7, were taken through into

analysis of the group data enabling a continuity of analysis between the individual and group data.

Method and Design

Interviews were of an informal but guided type (Coolican, 1990). More details of the design of the interviews can be found in the methodological procedures chapter 4. All analysis began by the labelling of phenomena from interviews as per grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967, Strauss and Corbin, 1990). 'Who am I?', diary, and 'I am' narrative tasks, were then thematically labelled. Details of these tasks can be found in the methodological procedures chapter 4, and actual examples can be found in appendices 2-4 respectively. A quantitative standardised measure of self-esteem (Battle, 1992, 1981) and depression (Beck, 1987, 1990) was also used. This provided comparative data to the interviews and other tasks enabling any potential suggestions of changes in self-esteem or problems with depression within the verbal or written data to be examined alongside a quantifiable measure of the same. Details of the measures used can be found in the methodological procedures chapter 4.

Original themes and summaries extracted from the 'Who am I?' narratives can be found in appendix 14. Labelled phenomena from the interview data, diary, and 'Who am I?' narratives for interview 1 can be found in appendix 15. Labelled phenomena from the interview data and diary for interview 2 can be found in appendix 16, and labelled phenomena from the interview data and 'I am' narratives for interview 3 can be found in appendix 17. (No participant had any diary data at interview 3.)

Scoring tables for the self-esteem and depression measures used can be found in appendices 6 and 9 respectively. This will enable the reader to see clearly individual participant scores alongside their classification. Details of the measures used can be found in the methodological procedures chapter 4.

An individual analysis was decided upon for the reasons previously discussed. Because the volume of individual participant data is very large, the emphasis in this analysis is

on individual psychological adjustments in keeping with the focus of the study on the transition of the Self in retirement.

From the labelled phenomena of individual interviews and narrative tasks, analysis of data for this particular part of the study was then done thematically. Key themes applicable to all individual participants were selected to enable ordering of the data and clarity of presentation. This can be seen clearly in the summary table of themes at the beginning of each individual analysis. All themes relate to the main theme of adjustment and are relevant for all participants, but because the uniqueness of the individual experience is emphasised these themes were not always relevant at each interview for every individual. Thus, the following theme titles, listed below, arose out of thematic analysis of the combined labelled phenomena and narrative tasks.

Adapting Self
Adapted Self
Adjusting Self
Adjusted Self
Maintenance of Self
Past and Future Self

In essence this analysis is of individual case studies. Individual themes are identified and, whilst strongly relating to the aforementioned titles, they are nevertheless labelled according to the word which best fits the phenomena or experience for that particular individual. The concentration in analysis is on issues specifically unique and of importance to the individual participant.

In summary, interviews were labelled. Labelled phenomena were themed, along with narrative task data. The presentation of this data in summary tables at the beginning of each individual participant analysis makes it easier for the reader to see at a glance the themes arising for each participant. The presentation of data in this way and the availability of further expansion of the same acknowledges the value and use of all data in analysis and presents it in an accessible way. The data from the summary tables is expanded in appendix 7 and used in the group analysis of study 1b found in chapter 6.

Appendices 17-19 show the integration of this individual participant data into the group study data. The more in-depth analysis of participant data in this chapter, which follows the summary tables, concentrates on issues of importance for that particular participant. Theme titles used reflect the strength of an issue for that particular participant.

Each individual analysis begins with an introduction to the participant followed by a table showing, at a glance, themes identified in each interview for that participant. This table gives a summary of themes for the three interviews and serves as a further introduction to the experience of the participant. The table also allows a large amount of data to be tied down to a few words prior to the more in-depth analysis.

An in-depth analysis follows combining all the data, which consists of measures of self-esteem (Battle, 1992, 1981) and depression (Beck, 1987, 1990), interview data, diary notes, 'Who am I?' and 'I am' tasks. Individual scores of the self-esteem and depression measures, together with a brief summary of this data, are presented at the end of each individual participant analysis to enable easy access to this particular data. This is followed by an overview of the whole analysis for that particular participant and a reflexive account of participant interviews.

The gathering of a variety of data from each individual has given strength to the analysis in that findings have often come from more than one source for each participant. No one means of data collection has been relied upon, therefore increasing the validity of the findings.

Participants

This study involves six women, the 'core group participants'. Participants' ages ranged from 55-63 at first interview and they had been retired from between 2-17 months at this point. All but one was married with grown up children. One woman was a divorcee with no family. All the women retired from professional/semi-professional careers. Because financial aspects of retirement have a significant impact on the retirement experience, particularly of women (Kasl, in Cooper and Payne, 1980), it was decided to

study women for whom this aspect would probably not dominate. These six women were the focus of this limited longitudinal study of the retirement transition.

Advertisements placed in a Church magazine recruited two participants, a further two participants were known to two separate members of the researcher's family, and two more were 'friends of friends'. This was, therefore, a convenience sample. Three out of the six core group participants were Church attendees and three were not. This is mentioned because participants who did attend Church knew that the researcher also attended Church, thus there was a shared world-view which was largely unacknowledged but probably accepted by participants. Participants might therefore have felt there were things they need not say, or even things they felt they could not say during the interviews, on the other hand they may have felt more able to share certain things because of the felt connection. This is mentioned in line with the commitment to openness and reflexivity within the study.

The following tables give details of the age of participants and the length of time they had retired at first interview, and the results of the psychometric tests used in the study.

Core Group Participants

Pseudonym	Age at retirement	Retired	Time retired at first interview
Sarah	60	Dec. 1996	1 month
Jenny	57	Aug. 1996	7 months
Molly	55	Aug. 1996	6 months (Supply teacher since retiring)
Flo	59	June. 1996	9 months
Jane	59	Oct. 1995	17 months
Amy	63	Oct. 1995	16 months (Retired from full time 1989)

Results of Culture Free Self-Esteem Inventory (Battle, 1992, 1981) and Beck Depression Inventory (Beck, 1987, 1990)

	Culture Free Self-Esteem Inventory		Beck Depression Inventory	
	Score at beginning of study	Score at end of study	Score at beginning of study	Score at end of study
Jane	19	19	15	14
Jenny	24	29	9	6
Molly	19	19	19	14
Florence	16	24	5	5
Sarah	31	32	5	3
Amy	25	28	2	5

More detailed information about these scores is given in the individual participant analysis. Briefly however, the table shows that both Jane and Molly recorded clinical levels of depression at the beginning and end of the study, which means that, according to the measure, they would both be considered depressed. Molly improved in her score but it remained within the 'depressed' level. Jenny, Flo, Sarah and Amy all registered 'Normal' on both recordings indicating no score of depression at the beginning or end of the study.

Jane and Molly both recorded a 'Low' self-esteem at the beginning and end of the study. Whilst Florence, at the beginning of the study, also registered a 'Low' self-esteem this improved to an 'Intermediate' recording at the end of the study. Both Jenny and Amy also improved their score but both began the study with an 'Intermediate' score, moving to 'High' at the close of the study. Sarah's self-esteem score was registered as 'Very High' on both recordings.

Key to terminology

For the purposes of this study:

Adaptation is about practical action taken to resolve a situation that is unsatisfactory in the mind of the participant, and where satisfaction about that situation in the mind of the participant is achieved.

Adjustment is about mentally coming to terms with, acceptance of, and congruence with, events, circumstances and situations the participant finds herself in.

Individual Participant analysis

'JANE'

Introduction

Jane was fifty-nine years old and had been retired for seventeen months when I met with her for the first interview. I had met Jane briefly on a couple of social occasions where we were part of a large group of people. On these occasions we had chatted briefly and superficially so I couldn't say I knew Jane well at all, although I did feel that this previous contact made meeting and talking with Jane more relaxed for both of us. Jane had been a senior laboratory technician in an educational setting and had planned to retire at aged sixty but a broken wrist left one of her hands weak and painful and she retired early. Jane had not worked for two years when I met her. She had been divorced for six years after thirty-one years of marriage and had no children. She was estranged from her only brother and therefore had no family support at all, but "lots of friends". Jane does not attend a Church at all.

Jane retired in October 1995, first interview was March 1997 (retired 17 months), second interview October 1997 (retired 24 months), and the third interview was April 1998 (retired 30 months).

The following page shows a table summarising themes identified in the three interviews with Jane.

Jane						
	Adapting self	**Adapted self**	**Adjusting self**	**Adjusted self**	**Maintenance of self**	**Past and future self**
Interview 1 and diary **Retired 17 months**	'Getting the house in order' and how practically to fill gaps left by work		Lack of fulfilled retirement plans and association of old age with retirement identity		Independence and freedom to "please herself". Friends were more important than ever and a need not to make any further plans about anything.	Increase in confidence during her working life but an underlying sense of sameness. Future was worrying, especially regarding ill health.
Interview 2 and diary **Retired 24 months**	Pension and finances	Formation of routine and structure of days, joined a group	Age, identity and comparison with others, effect of divorce on finances. Bereavement of past retirement plans. Adjusting to retirement, aloneness and loss of social contact	Feeling 'more settled', enjoying freedom. Appreciating not being in changing work environment. Enjoying being at home (always did)	Managing friendships, enjoying time for friends.	Worrying about future health and financial provision for the future
Interview 3 and diary **Retired 30 months**		Keeping mentally active (crosswords etc.) Satisfaction in keeping house. Making no plans.	Age behaviour and identity. Motivated by anger in having to manage alone. Health and dying. Miss aspects of work.	Adjusted to divorce and retirement at same time! Glad to be retired, enjoying freedom. Time for self.		No plans or ambitions for the future.

Analysis of combined data

Adaptation

Jane planned for retirement and part of that planning was a recognition that financially she wouldn't be as well off. Buying new furniture and 'getting the house in order' was a pre-retirement activity leading into early retirement, foreseeing retirement as a situation where money would be less available.

> Jane "I've done more in the house ... I'd started doing it before I broke my wrist, thought well, I must get things, big items, you know in the house so that when I retire I haven't got to buy, like a three piece suite and this sort of thing ... so that I wouldn't have to spend a lot of money, hopefully ... but I did manage to do that ... I think I'm about finished now ... but you've more time to concentrate on your home" (p.8 int.1)

Difficulties sorting out pension following Jane's 60th birthday and ongoing adaptation to a new financial situation were hurdles to be overcome but they didn't seem to pose much of a problem for Jane.

> Jane "Although no money worries now I have to see to this myself, I do have to be more careful now my income is limited." (Diary 1 p.2)

Jane's divorce caused complications in the calculation of her retirement pension, which was a brief worry but soon resolved.

> Jane "One important point, finances can be a worry mainly until you see what your retirement pension will be, I am hopeful of a full one! ... this has worried me but I am now getting 'sorted out', waiting to hear a final figure." (Diary 2 p.5)

Financial issues are obviously of importance in Jane's experience of retirement. Her attitude towards these issues demonstrates traits of organisation and planning. Although these issues have concerned her, Jane appears to be resolving them without too much difficulty.

Filling gaps left by work was a little more complicated than dealing with financial issues. Jane identified mental stimulation as something she gained from work but was missing now. In the first interview she said,

> Interviewer "Do you feel that now, now you're not working, that you get the same sorts of things from life?"
>
> Jane "No, no, no certainly it's something missing"
>
> Interviewer "Do you know what it is?"
>
> Jane "Well, this stimulation of your mind, I could sum it up, I think that's the thing. But there again the answer is in my hands because I could sort of do something, you know as in courses or, but there again I don't want tying down." (p.4 int.1)

Jane identified her need for mental stimulation but seemed to have a greater need not to be tied down. This will be explored further in the 'adjustment' section. The need for mental stimulation was therefore identified and a resolution was attempted in the increased time spent in an activity which was enjoyed pre-retirement.

> Jane "Mostly I miss the 'mental stimulation' but I can overcome this by keeping my brain active by reading, doing crosswords etc. Just to keep my brain working." (Diary 1 p.1)

Although Jane had identified and made moves to meet some of her needs in a practical way this did not fully replace mental stimulation work gave to her. There were aspects of mental stimulation in work life identified by Jane in the first interview as important, particularly in relating to people who have the same interests and who think along the same lines.

> Jane "I've got a friend who I phone up ... we used to work together ... he's what I call 'scientific minded'. I find that's why I don't like, must sound awful, friend of mine across the road, ... I can't talk to her about scientific, ... you know, ... I do miss that sort of thing, talking about Chemistry." (Int. 1 p.5)

There appears to be no outlet for the sharing of Jane's scientific interest. The skills, knowledge and genuine interest born out of a 'scientific mind' are now no longer shared

although they may still be exercised in a small way in other forms of mental stimulation.

> Interviewer "Would you say that any of the things work gave you are missing?"
>
> Jane "Mental stimulation, but I do a lot of crosswords and puzzle books (adult ones), it is not the same thing obviously, but I buy a lot of these books and sit all night doing them, I've always enjoyed it."
>
> Interviewer "Do you do more of it now?"
>
> Jane "Yes, more now and it keeps me mentally active" (Final Int.p.2)

This pre retirement activity compensates only a little for what Jane has lost in leaving work.

> Jane "... being at work would give you more satisfaction ... somebody asks you to do something, you puzzle it out, so that side yes, I do miss, it comes down to mental stimulation I suppose." (Final Int. p.3)

An attempt to fulfil needs for social contact was made by joining a women's group by interview 2 (though abandoned by the final interview!). Satisfaction was gained from 'keeping house', and a non-restrictive routine and structure to the week had been formed by the final interview.

Taking the definition of adaptation as practical action taken to resolve unsatisfactory situations, it can be seen how resolution of Jane's financial situation appeared satisfactory. Compensation for a lack of mental stimulation, though attempted, was lacking however.

Adjustment

Jane's adjustment to retirement was linked in with her adjustment to being divorced even though divorce took place 4 years ago and she'd been alone for 6 years. Jane had

had plans for life, with her husband, that included plans for retirement and while she was experiencing life without her husband the spectre of unfulfilled past plans appeared to be looming over her. Jane appeared to be holding on to these past plans for retirement. The incorporation of old plans into current retirement plans had been considered by Jane, such as moving to the South as planned with her husband, but now alone. This however was one more thing Jane had to get through alone and it was not without a great deal of struggle.

> Jane "Being divorced MUST play a very important part in this survey and will play a big part in what I say as this changed all my plans and hopes for retirement seeing as it was based on 2 people sharing it. Now I sometimes look back and think what might have been and I could get very depressed (sometimes do) but like the saying is 'not to look back' so I try not to, although what you <u>should</u> do and what I do can be very different." (Extract from diary1 p.1. Written before first interview took place.)

The one fairly straightforward and apparently simple plan that Jane had for her retirement, which would have given her much pleasure, was taken away from her too, not by an absent husband but by a complication following a wrist fracture. Jane had planned to retire at age 60 and enjoy counting the days off the calendar while she was at work until the last day of work. Jane felt very upset about missing this simple but obviously thought about and planned for event. It may have been the symbol of a new life, a new start, and she couldn't enjoy it.

> Jane "I did feel that the actual retirement was a let down because I wasn't working at the time I retired and I would have loved to have worked right up to the end and been like, ticking the days off. ... and I would have liked it to have been more of an occa'.. for me, I don't mean parties, ... I mean just for my own ... because I think that must be the highlight of everybody's life, to finish work .. but I felt that was a bit of a let down. ... It wasn't what I imagined at all." (Int.1 pp.7-8)

> Jane "... how I finished work was not how I'd planned, I was planning finishing in January, counting days off and looking forward to it, but I mean all that went wrong." (Int.2 p.33)

Though enjoying retirement, the issue of the unfulfilled retirement event plans were obviously still around for Jane and can be seen in this diary extract and the 'throw away' comment about lost opportunity in planning the final event.

> Jane "I never regret leaving the 'rat race' even if it was a couple of years earlier than I planned (which I would be doing now)." (Diary extract at 2nd visit)

Jane no longer makes plans and this appears to be an adaptation she has made to the thwarting of plans and consequent pain this has caused.

> Jane "... that's something I've learnt, I don't plan ahead, which I used to do." (Int. 1 p.13)
>
> Interviewer "Have you got any ambitions for the future? Either big or small."
>
> Jane "No nothing that I've thought about particularly. I'm not planning anything, I've realised. No, not planning." (Final Int. p.2)

Jane has, throughout her life, made many and quite extensive plans for the future, evidenced in the retirement plans made long ago with her then husband. Retirement and the fact that these previously made plans were unfulfilled seems to have pre-empted this move towards living a day at a time.

> Jane "I think you spend half your life worrying about what you're going to do and what, can I afford this? Do this? And talking to your partner about it and discussing, instead of what you should be doing." (Int. 1 p.13)

Jane's adamant refusal to make plans appears therefore to be a defensive reaction to hurt, a protection against further plans not working out and causing the same pain. In the second interview Jane begins to hint that although she doesn't want to make plans she does in fact need to think about what would happen should she become ill. This subject is quickly moved on from however and is obviously difficult to talk about.

> Jane "I'm sure finance has got to come into a lot of people's ..."
>
> Interviewer "I'm sure you're right"

Jane "And health of course"

Interviewer "And do you feel healthy?"

Jane "Yes ... thankfully. ... that's the sort of thing that can hit anybody at any time, any place anywhere can't it? ... so you've got to start thinking about what might happen and what, how it should be. So no, no, I'm alright now as far as I can think." (Int. 2p.35-36)

In the beginning Jane's response to these thwarted plans and consequent hurts was to decide not to plan and not to tie herself to anything. This continued throughout the time I saw Jane but appeared to be at odds with who Jane really was, in that she was an ordered person who liked structure and fell easily into 'planning mode'. This defence worked against Jane's personality and may have caused some conflict for her. During the period I was in contact with Jane she showed no signs of resolving this issue about having no plans for the future.

Getting old was of great concern for Jane. She didn't "feel old", and had a dread of getting old. This dread was partly related to the potential ill health associated with old age as Jane had no family to call upon if she needed any care and this was a worry for her.

Jane "The only thing I do worry about is if ill health befalls me and I can't look after myself, as I have no family." ('Who am I?' personal narrative written prior to Int. 1)

On the whole Jane rejected the label 'old': she didn't feel old and found it difficult to accept her 60th birthday.

Jane "I'm sixty next year, woe betide anyone that sends me anything that mentions sixty because I don't feel anything near that, no I don't want to get old." (Int.1 p.9)

Jane "I've even been serving tea and sandwiches to our village 'over 60's club', can join myself next year, but NO WAY as yet, as they all looked and acted YEARS older than me!!!" (Diary 2 p.4)

Interviewer "you were bothered about that last time, about being sixty, are you still bothered?"

Jane "Yes I am"

Interviewer "Are you?"

Jane "Blummin am, not bothered, I don't mean financially, I'm not talking about financially." (Int. 2 p.20)

Jane seemed to adjust to being sixty only after the actual birthday had taken place.

Jane "Yes I feel alright about it now. I think perhaps now it's over I've decided to accept it gracefully. If I feel younger, that's the most important thing, acting and feeling." (Final Int. p.1)

Interviewer "Do you think if you were working now and aged sixty, you'd feel differently about your age?"

Jane "... it probably wouldn't have worried me as much. I was the oldest in the science department, with everyone being younger that keeps you young."

Interviewer "So you probably wouldn't have dreaded it as much?"

Jane "Probably not, no, being at work"

Interviewer "I wonder why you dreaded it so much then"

Jane "I don't know, it's nearer to dying isn't it? (laugh) I think you always wonder if your health is going to hold out. This is what worries me, especially living on my own. Will I get something that will leave me semi-invalid?"

However, despite the dread of old age, Jane could see some advantages of being older related to the advantages of retirement from work.

Jane "I'm glad I'm not young again ... Thank goodness I'm getting, I used to say when I was working, getting towards the end of my career and not starting out, because I think it's getting to be a sad, sad world. ... And jobs, with the job situation ... and young people and all this sort of, getting old has some advantages." (Int. 1 p.14)

Jane "I say <u>many</u> times 'thank goodness my working life is over'. I certainly wouldn't want to be job searching these days. It makes me feel 'glad to be getting older' (there are advantages). To sum up, <u>if my health keeps up</u> I prefer retirement to working IN SPITE of a drop in income." (Diary extract written before interview 1 took place)

Following the final interview when writing the 'I Am' narrative Jane also hinted at a freedom that comes with old age.

> Jane I am – "Sometimes glad to be called an O.A.P. as in some ways it brings a certain peace of mind and you feel yourself 'off loading' a lot of things you don't find necessary to live a normal life." ('I Am' personal narrative written following Final Int.)

Issues around identity were complicated by divorce and it can be seen in the following quote how Jane felt her identity was lost following divorce,

> Jane "I was divorced 6 years since after 31 years of marriage, so this in effect alters 'who am I' as sometimes I don't know, as I seem to have lost my identity, although as time goes on this does get a bit better." ('Who am I?' personal narrative written prior to Int. 1)

and how she has struggled to reassert herself as a worthwhile individual.

> Jane "Well I always said when I was first divorced you lose your identity ... when you are married you are a married woman but when you're on your own you're like nothing, especially when you are divorced you are neither single nor widowed. It seems as though you ... but I think I've got back somehow. ... I think now I've gained that back now, I don't think I feel that loss. I feel better about that now. It has only happened in the last six months or so." ... a lot of things about going to work I still miss ... you are somebody there aren't you? If you are a senior technician you are somebody, but to leave work and be on your own, you lose any identity, you are like nobody's wife, nobody's ... but I seem to have overcome that now and it's quite alright to be Jane so that side has improved." (Final Int. p.5)

Nevertheless she still struggles with the fact that she is on her own and has to manage alone. When asked about what motivates her Jane illustrates this difficulty.

> Jane "Anger very often. If you don't do it nobody else will, like today mowing the lawn, thinking 'I shouldn't have to be doing all ... something I was doing the other day, cutting the hedge with the hedge trimmers, I thought really I should have somebody doing this for me. ... perhaps you could call it anger but something inside of me thinks there should be somebody else there helping me at my age, I very often think that, almost every day. ... I've had a week doing odd jobs ... it keeps me going because I think 'I'm not going to

be beaten, I can do it, who needs anybody', but there are lots of things I can't do."

Interviewer "Do you get angry with anyone in particular?"

Jane "No only myself, it's just a general feeling but that spurs me on. You get on and do it, so really it is a good thing." (Final Int. p.3)

Jane's anger is self-directed but seems to suggest that she has not yet adjusted to life post divorce and that there may be some unresolved issues preventing this adjustment. Nevertheless this is a motivating factor for Jane and may lead to satisfaction on completion of tasks in the long term.

Work gave Jane status, mental stimulation, contact with people, and responsibility and was an outlet for her scientific interest. Most of these attributes of work could be compensated for in some way during retirement although not to the same degree. It seemed that Jane's biggest hurdle was to get over 'what might have been' had she still been married.

Jane "I love being retired ... I would enjoy it all the more if I had someone to share this with (as was planned)." ('Who am I?' personal narrative written prior to Int.1)

Jane "... it's a long time, forty two years, to work and then not to work and, and also be on your own as well. I mean that's a big, a big thing to adjust to when you think about it ... it's a big change isn't it? ... But as I say it's all ... literally it's all in the mind Janice, I've come to, I think you can adjust to anything if you, you know."

Interviewer "Was it difficult do you think, to get to the stage as you are now?"

Jane "Er, probably, yes probably ... yes I suppose ... because you see all this is tied up, not just with retiring, it's being divorced, it's all, I've got to tie it all in together. Because how I feel now, had I been married, would have been entirely different, wouldn't have been any worry or any, so I've got to tie it in together."(Int.2 p.32)

Jane's adaptation and adjustment to retirement seemed to move alongside her adjustment to divorce. Although Jane had been divorced for six years when she retired there were things planned with her husband that she had looked forward to on retirement and these things came back to her at retirement. It seemed that in working

through these issues alone, and not without difficulty, her actual retirement, decisions about moving house, and her sixtieth birthday, Jane felt able to move on and be fairly content about living life as a retired person.

> Jane "feeling better about myself since our first interview due to at last getting over a divorce which really hit me."
>
> Jane "Happier and can now get on with things on my own." ('I Am' Personal narrative)

Jane – Self Esteem and Depression Measures

Results of Culture Free Self-Esteem Inventory (Battle, 1992, 1981) and Beck Depression Inventory (Beck, 1987, 1990)

JANE						
	Overall CFSEI	Social	General	Personal	Lie	Beck Depression Inventory
First interview	**19**	**6**	**10**	**3**	**4**	**15**
Final interview	**19**	**7**	**9**	**3**	**4**	**14**

As can be seen in the table there was no significant change in either Jane's Self esteem or Depression score over the time of the interviews.

On the Self-esteem measure Jane scored 'Low' overall indicating that her overall perception of her self-worth was low. However, on the 'Social' sub-test Jane scored 'High' which indicated that the quality of Jane's relationship with her peers was seen by Jane to be high. This is backed up in the interviews as Jane talks often of the fact that she has lots of friends and that mutual support is gained in most of these friendships. It seems to be Jane's most intimate perceptions of self-worth indicated in the 'Personal' sub-test, that bring Jane's score down low. This makes sense as it is in the area of Jane's Self and identity that she only now, at the end of the interviews, feels that she is beginning to become stronger and happier since her divorce and untimely retirement.

A low self-esteem has been correlated with depression (Battle, 1992). Jane herself writes of her tendency towards depression in both her 'Who am I?' narrative and her personal diary. Jane's depression score is in the mild to moderate range but at the lower

end, nearer to the normal score than the moderate-severe score. This mild depression seems to reflect the difficulties that Jane has had to deal with in the past few years following her divorce. Depression has been linked to bereavement (Parkes, 1986), which Jane has suffered through divorce and loss of past plans, and to self-directed anger (Freud 1916), which Jane says motivates much of what she does. However, just in the six months prior to the end of this study Jane feels she has made real progress in recovering her identity which was lost through divorce and which took another blow at retirement. One can only hope that this is the beginning for Jane of a decrease in feelings of depression and an increase in her feelings of self-esteem.

Overview of analysis

Jane identifies herself as basically the same person throughout her life, changing mainly in the areas of confidence. Jane became more confident after moving into the job as a school laboratory technician (after an initial period of loss of confidence) and has increased in confidence following her divorce because she's had to do things for herself more. Jane enjoys the independence of life alone and realises she was too dependent on her husband during their marriage.

Work was important for Jane in that it gave her status and responsibility and mental stimulation in the area of science, which is a great interest of hers. She misses this relating to people with the same interest and it seems this is the one area that it's difficult to compensate for in retirement. This is important because Jane talks about her scientific interest as being more than just an interest, it is related as a part of her. She describes how she cannot watch a film without wondering about the methods behind special effects and about being interested always in the 'how' of things. Thus this aspect of Jane's Self which feels to her to have been always very much a part of her, is the one thing that is likely not to have an outlet in retirement. Social contact, especially with younger people, is missed also but this is easier to compensate for and if Jane feels the need to be with people she easily has friends she can call upon.

Jane has few regrets. She does not regret being married but regrets being married so young. This however is attributed to the culture of the day. She regrets not going to University to study Chemistry and interestingly does not attribute this to the culture of the day (which probably had an enormous influence on women's career decisions during that time), but to her own silliness!

At first interview Jane doesn't regard her adjustment to retirement as being particularly difficult She had been planning for retirement for some time, getting the house in order, buying new furniture and so on. However, the fact that retirement came earlier than expected was a big disappointment as Jane had been dreaming of the time when she would be at work ticking off the days before she left. As it was, she left on sick leave which turned into retirement. She later relates what a difficult time she had deciding whether or not to move house. This would have been the fulfilment of a plan made long ago with her husband to move to the South on retirement. It seems that Jane had thought and planned quite a lot for retirement and, when the time came, all these plans were thwarted. This may be the precursor to Jane's current attitude, which is one of 'no more planning, take each day as it comes'. Jane talks about not being into hobbies or plans, which is a contradiction of her past behaviour and of the post interview chat where Jane tells me she'd love to join an art class. It seems that Jane may be defending herself against further disappointments by having no plans and no ties. She says she's learned not to plan.

Jane seems to find it difficult to talk about getting older. She explains she has a dread of getting old and doesn't celebrate old age (she's 60 next birthday which she's dreading). Jane feels aged 40 inside and it's only physical things that remind her she's older. However, Jane does manage to see some advantages to being older, in that she believes she's discovered more of herself as she's got older, and she's glad she's at the end of her working life rather than the beginning because of what she sees as the difficulties facing the young today. She reports feeling quite content.

It appears that Jane has adapted and adjusted to many of the things that bothered her initially about her new situation. Adapting and adjusting is, of course, a lifetime's work and it would be unreal if the 'adjusting Self' box on the table were ever empty. It must

also be noted that not all adaptations will be positive or successful long term and this will be reflected in a lack of long term adjustment.

'JENNY'

Introduction

Jenny was fifty-seven when we met for the first interview. I had met Jenny merely in passing prior to this occasion, as she knew my mother. This previous contact, however, gave Jenny and me a link, which I felt made first contact about the research a bit more relaxed. Jenny had been retired for seven months and was formerly a Head Teacher in an infant school. Jenny is married and has two grown up daughters who are also married with children. Jenny described her family as very close and loving. At the beginning of the research Jenny was involved in caring for her daughter's two children whenever a third child needed to go into hospital for treatment for cancer. Jenny does not attend a Church on a regular basis but a belief in 'God' is evident in some of her comments during the interviews.

Jenny retired in August 1996, first interview was March 1997 (retired 7 months), second interview November 1997 (retired 15 months), third interview May 1998 (retired 21 months).

The following page shows a table summarising themes identified in the three interviews with Jenny.

Jenny						
	Adapting self	**Adapted self**	**Adjusting self**	**Adjusted self**	**Maintenance of self**	**Past and future self**
Interview 1 and diary **Retired 7 months**	Making own life around family needs. Making no plans for the future but hopes for hobbies.		Work awful at end. Expecting health decline link to anxiety about death and being 60. Physical appearance. *Regrets:* -decline of profession, no more children. Dare not look forward.	Enjoying new freedom.	Sees need for mental stimulation. Social relationships important. Need to make no future plans.	Sense of consistency, not sameness. Recognition part history played in situation, decisions and circumstances. A lot of self given to caring for parents. A fatalist. Used to look forward.
Interview 2 and diary **Retired 15 months**	Need now to care for husband. Time for self, difficult to work out. Need to take 'each day as it comes'.	Formed more of a structure to week. Husband helps with this, he also is retired.	Coping with shock of husband's heart attack, now caring for him. Perceived need to change life perspective to 'one day at a time', conflict with need to look forward (about time for self.) Anger about family health.	Not missing work at all. Enjoying slower pace of life and more freedom. Helped by perception of society's view of retirement. Feels sense of purpose has been about looking after others.	Need to have something to look forward to. Need family times. Need to be needed, grateful able to help family. Importance of friends. Need to be appreciated. Need a bit of structure.	Family always first.

Jenny (continued)						
	Adapting self	**Adapted self**	**Adjusting self**	**Adjusted self**	**Maintenance of self**	**Past and future self**
Interview 3 and diary **Retired 21 months**	Need a practical way to meet need for caring, (dog?)	Responsibility and key role in family events. Keeping house, satisfying. Organised time for self. Social contact and crosswords.	Retirement adjustment obscured by family events. Missing contact with children. Health and dying, awareness of time passing and old age. Want to be settled.	Time for self and freedom. Role as 'homemaker and wife' preferred. Feel good mentally. Glad to be retired. Fulfilled as 'carer'. Become more mellow.	Not a great need to keep mentally active. Need recognition from others. Need to be needed.	No plans for the future. Ambition only to be settled.

Analysis of Combined Data

Adapting/Adapted Self

Jenny had made some small plans for retirement in that she had thought of hobbies she might take up but all this was put on the back burner when family events took over. Time for herself was difficult to work out initially because of having to care for her daughter's family, and then because of having to care for her husband. Structure and routine were almost non existent because of the events of the family but by the second interview Jenny felt she'd got some sort of structure to life and that this was helpful.

> Jenny "[husband] is a very structured fellar ... so I've got to, you know, I can't lie in bed till dinner time, not that I would want to ... it's nice because I've got somebody who pushes me." (Int. 2 p.5)

Jenny relates that having her husband retired has helped her in her own retirement. She didn't have trouble keeping busy at the beginning because of the family problems but says that this would be a very important thing to do and sharing it would help.

> Jenny "Oh you've got to keep yourself busy, you've got to find some interests ... some activities of some description. ... it's also nice if you've got a husband or somebody ... to do it with ... y'know with [husband] being retired I think that, if one's still working and the other isn't, it might make it a bit tricky. ... but certainly ... make sure you've got plenty, something to look forward to, something to do."
>
> Interviewer "Some sort of purpose?"
>
> Jenny "Oh yes a purpose, that's a good word yes ... mine at the moment seems to be just looking after everybody else (laugh)" (Int. 2 p.12, 13)

Jenny's purpose was looking after everyone else but in that she had to adapt to her own new circumstances. She had made plans for herself and did not now have time for them, and also felt her perspective on life had to change. In the first interview Jenny shares the same feelings when talking about her grandson's illness.

> Jenny "I find now that you tend not to look forward to anything ...in case it doesn't happen. ...like you know, when we're waiting for [grandson] to come out of hospital, you couldn't get excited in case at the last minute he couldn't come so you weren't too disappointed then." (Int. 1 p.80)

This however is difficult for Jenny because she has always needed to look forward to something and now she dare not. In attempting to protect herself from disappointment Jenny makes a sacrifice which leads to disappointment in another form: that of denying herself something to look forward to.

> Jenny "I think, if you can, you've got now to try and take each day as it comes ... and that's not easy. I still look forward, I still need things to look forward to ... I find I need something to fix, to focus on, 'cos otherwise I should get quite depressed." (Int.2 p.2)

At the final interview Jenny seems a lot more settled, her husband and grandson are doing well and at last she feels she can 'retire'. This means that she has time for herself, which she has organised into her routine and feels a sense of satisfaction in things she does. The one thing she may need to fulfil is the need to 'mother'. For this she feels she needs a dog!

> Jenny "I'd love another dog – am working on [husband]. ('Who am I?' personal narrative)

Adjusting/Adjusted Self

Regretful end to career

While Jenny feels no status loss she does feel sadness and regret over the last few years of her work. She had enjoyed being a teacher and felt she was good at her work but the last few years as a Head Teacher had made demands both on her and on the teaching profession in general that had caused Jenny anxiety and problems. It seemed that new constraints in education caused problems for teachers, and the Head Teacher got the brunt of this. Jenny felt the new changes in education to be largely unnecessary but, more importantly, they seemed to undermine her knowledge and experience of children

and of teaching. This is in evidence as Jenny talks about the negative things in her latter work.

> Jenny "I don't like these last few years. I haven't liked the way it's gone and the idea, ... I've just felt like it's teaching your grandmother to suck eggs and I don't like that. ... Also, towards the end ...I could cope with the children but the adults got me down (laugh) ... I can't cope with folks who just don't get on with the job but do a lot of complaining about it. I can't, confrontational people I have great difficulty with. ...
>
> Interviewer "So d'you think it was the tensions in teaching that caused people not to be able to deal with whatever they had to deal with and you got the flack?"
>
> Jenny "Oh yes, oh yes, without a doubt, without a doubt. All the constraints that were put on them ... all the planning ... totally unnecessary half of it. ... to my mind totally unnecessary, and to the minds of most folk of my generation, that's why we've all got out. ...How they thought we'd ever educated children up to then I do not know. (Int. 1. P71, 72, 74)

It seemed that Jenny's experience and knowledge were latterly unappreciated and undervalued. Jenny doesn't seem to take this personally but generalises it as a generational issue. When talking about how she taught children to respect each other's property she talks of a reciprocal agreement with the children about not going into her desk or their trays without permission from the owner. This she felt, was an important part of their education but;

> Jenny "They seem to think all that's old fashioned nowadays, well I think it's very important. Too busy writing plans now and planning for the year, whereas before you did your planning yes, but if a child brought something in one day that you knew you could get some, do a lot of work on, well that's what you did. ... but you haven't got time to do that any more. ... I think some people though take it to extremes ... you've got to use your common sense as well but I'm afraid nowadays some, these, these younger folks, everything's black and white, there's no grey. ... which is sad."

It seems then that Jenny has left work with a lot of valuable experience now deemed old fashioned. This is a cause of some regret for Jenny but doesn't seem to cause her any real problems. Jenny seemed to leave work quite easily although, on retirement, she was thrown into a family crisis which she needed to take a large part in, and was needed by

her daughter a lot. Interestingly, when the family crisis was over, Jenny felt for the first time that she missed some aspect of work, which was being with the children. In the last interview she mentions that sometimes she thinks she'd like to go back to work for a day occasionally.

> Interviewer What do you think you're missing about it, assuming you are missing something?"
>
> Jenny "I think it's contact with the children actually. I love it when I see them now and again, yes, I think that is it, certainly not anything else, feeling needed by them." (Int.3 p.2)

Jenny identifies here a need to 'feel needed'. This need can be examined further when we look at Jenny's relationship with her family and her sense of identity.

Identity

In answer to the question of what provides a sense of identity, she replies,

> Jenny "Well, other than being Mrs ---, I don't know whether I have got a sense of identity, just being (husband's) wife I suppose. Now, whereas at school there was a reversal, I was Mrs --- Head teacher, a divorcee or something, they didn't know I'd got a husband. It's a total reversal now, I'm [husband's] wife, rather than being Head Teacher. I suppose my role has reversed, rather than being Mrs --- who nobody knows whether she's got a husband or not, I'm (husband's) wife, totally reversed, yes, I hadn't thought about that, it's true that is. It's nice being [husband's] wife though, I prefer it this way. What is that lovely saying? Do not walk behind me, do not walk in front of me. I may not follow. Just simply walk by my side and be my friend, and I think that is what I am. I don't like to be behind of course. Now my mother you see, she always liked to be the centre, she liked to be in charge. (Final Int. p.4)

Jenny is very happy being a wife, mother and grandmother. Her identity seems to be wrapped up in these relationships and this role. This was a role Jenny wanted to get right, her family are everything to her. Her past relationship with her own mother was fraught with tension and Jenny often relates how she worked hard not to do things the way her mother did them. Jenny's retirement up until the final interview was taken up completely by caring for her family. Her grandson being ill meant she looked after the rest of her daughter's family a lot, and then her husband had a heart attack, which meant

Jenny looking after him. On reflection Jenny feels she might have been bored with retirement if these things hadn't taken up so much of her time.

> Jenny "Well this might sound stupid but had we not had so much hassle I think I would have been bored. ... it's just as well I did retire when I did because otherwise I don't know how we would've coped, ... I think I would have felt, I should have perhaps handed my notice in. ... What I have done has been right for me because I do like looking after people. ... I like to think I am needed, I love folk really. So although it's been a hassle I've felt fulfilled, it's fulfilled a need in me actually ... everybody likes to think they're needed don't they? (Final Int. p.1)

As events turned out, Jenny was provided with a great sense of purpose and was greatly needed and appreciated at the beginning of her retirement. It is only at the time of the final interview that Jenny feels slightly lacking in something, and, as mentioned earlier, starts talking about missing the children at school because she likes to feel needed by them.

Jenny seems to have worked hard at doing the wife and mother role well. Her own mother, in Jenny's opinion, did things very badly and Jenny has worked to be very different from her own mother. Ironically this has led to Jenny being in a position within her own family which her mother always wanted to be in, that of the centre. Jenny relates to me a conversation with her son-in-law.

> Jenny "[He] did once say 'you are the pivot round which everybody else, you know, you are the centre of everything' ... and I thought what a nice thing to say. ... I'm there when anybody needs me and that is important. I suppose it has been a matriarchal, being a matriarchal figure (laugh)." (Final Int. p.2)

Having this sense of purpose, even of position, and the fulfilment of a need to be needed seems to have been quite important for Jenny in her movement from work to retirement. She enjoys very much the freedom retirement gives both to enable her to support her family but also for enjoyment of activities for herself such as gardening. Nevertheless, Jenny admits that retirement causes her to think a bit about getting old and it does bother her.

Jenny "When I think I'm fifty eight and in two years I shall be sixty and in ten years I shall be seventy and my grandchildren will be, you know, I do tend to think about it. It does bother me a bit because I don't want to, I don't want to die (laugh). ... Yea, it does bother me a bit that does actually." (Int. 1 p.82)

It seems that chronological age rather than retirement itself or even how she felt, was causing Jenny discomfort.

Jenny "... being sixty I'll tell you now is going to bother me."

Interviewer "Mmm, d'you think sixty sounds old?"

Jenny "Yes, yes I do (both laugh), yes I do"

Interviewer "Right, d'you feel old at all?"

Jenny "No (laugh), no ... in my head I still feel very young but the body, you know, I've got tennis elbow and rheumatism in one of my hips and things, so the mind is willing but the flesh gets weaker." (Int.1 p.83)

Physical weakness is a reminder that older age, which brings us nearer to death, is upon us. To Jenny, looking younger than she is makes her feel good and she thinks about her weight and her nails, all indications that physical appearance is important to her. The way our bodies change as we age is an adjustment few of us want to make. At the final interview Jenny was to be sixty next birthday.

Jenny "The thought of growing old and dying upsets me a lot, but I wouldn't like to be twenty one again. I'm quite happy being who I am." (Final Int. p.4)

Jenny – Self Esteem and Depression Measures

Results of Culture Free Self-Esteem Inventory (Battle, 1992, 1981) and Beck Depression Inventory (Beck, 1987, 1990)

JENNY						
	Overall self-esteem	Social	General	Personal	Lie	Beck depression inventory score
First Interview	**24**	**8**	**12**	**4**	**3**	**9**
Final interview	**29**	**8**	**16**	**5**	**4**	**6**

Both Jenny's self-esteem score and depression score improve over the time of the study. She moves from an 'Intermediate' score of self-esteem to one of 'High' self-esteem which boarders on 'Very High'. This improvement is indicated in the increase on the 'General' sub-test score indicating that it is an increase in the general perception of self-worth that Jenny feels. Following very difficult family illnesses where Jenny was carer and main supporter Jenny had just reached a point at the close of the study where it seemed that family members were much improved and the family's appreciation of Jenny's role in that had been shown. Jenny was undeniably invaluable in the family events and this would have given Jenny a great sense of purpose (which she herself identifies in interview). It was hardly surprising that her general sense of value increased as she was seen as a very valuable family member and the obvious appreciation of this shown by her family (related in the interviews as gifts and comments such as the son-in-law made) would have enabled Jenny to internalise this. As far as the retirement goes it can only be seen as happening at the right time to enable Jenny to take on this caring role.

Jenny's depression score also improved but both were in normal range anyway. There was never any indication during the time the interviews were taking place that Jenny struggled with anything other than normal up and down mood changes mainly related to the 'here and now' events of the family.

Overview of Analysis

Jenny's retirement didn't go to plan because as soon as she retired she was required to care for her daughter's family. When that crisis was over Jenny's husband had a heart attack and again she was called upon to be a carer. Jenny regrets none of this, though of course she would have preferred no one to be ill. She does recognise that this situation fulfilled a need within herself to be needed and there is a hint that if she is not needed greatly from now on then she might feel a sense of purposelessness. Jenny enjoys 'mothering' and 'nurturing', and aims to "work on her husband" about having a dog to care for. The adjustments Jenny has had to make in retirement have not been the conventional adaptation issues from work to retirement as she left work to work with her family. Only in the final interview does she start to talk about time for herself and her need to have something to look forward to, something small for herself. Her sixtieth birthday seems a bit of a milestone and something she's not looking forward to because of the reminder that it takes us nearer to the end of our lives. Jenny feels time is passing very quickly now. Jenny's move from the role of Head Teacher to homemaker has been fairly easy because, as she admits, homemaker is the preferred role. Jenny shows no problems with self-esteem or depression. At the time I met with Jenny she was encountering tremendous pressure and she showed great courage during that time.

'MOLLY'

Introduction

Molly had been retired for seven months when I met her for first interview. She was fifty-five years old and had taken early retirement from her work as a school teacher. Molly had taken up supply teaching since retiring, so worked intermittently. Molly is married with two grown up children who are now married (wedding of daughter in progress at time of first interview). Molly regularly attends Church and I had met her many years ago, merely in passing, so didn't know her at all.

Molly retired in August 1996, first interview was March 1997 (retired 7 months), second interview October 1997 (retired 14 months), third interview May 1998 (retired 21 months).

The following page shows a table summarising themes identified in the three interviews with Molly.

Molly						
	Adapting self	**Adapted self**	**Adjusting self**	**Adjusted self**	**Maintenance of self**	**Past and future self**
Interview 1 and diary **Retired 7 months**	Lack of routine. Organisation of time. Loss of social relationships.		Loss in retirement. Work unappreciated latterly. Husband's retirement. Role confusion and confrontation. Self denial. Regrets. Supply teaching. Mood low. No plans. Old age. Guilt.		Need to be useful. Need challenges.	Change in self, caused by children. Sense of sameness too. Influence of family on decisions, isolation and guilt.
Interview 2 and diary Retired 14 months	More supply teaching. Pace of life slowed.	Family responsibilities. Structure and routine created.	Feeling better about some losses. Saw counsellor. Old age and fear of getting lazy. Identity as retired hard to acknowledge.	Justifies some time for self. Confident that changes in self, brought about by new work (post retirement) are good. Feels support from friends. Less guilt. Freedom about time. Husband at home more	Identity as a good teacher needs to be intact. Need to be valued, appreciated, needed.	

Molly (continued)						
	Adapting self	**Adapted self**	**Adjusting self**	**Adjusted self**	**Maintenance of self**	**Past and future self**
Interview 3 and diary **Retired 21 months**	Tends to be working when husband is off.		Family changes. Husband's retirement. Identity as retired. Only at work have own identity. Regrets. Unsatisfied with current role. Loss. Guilt about time for self.	Feel better mentally. Less tense. Decision about continued work.	Need to work at the moment.	No ambition. Past history affects thoughts and feelings about work and self.

Analysis of Combined Data

Status Loss

At retirement Molly felt a great sense of loss of status, which was not replaced even when supply teaching. This seemed to have repercussions on how she felt about herself, her importance, and her value and worth. In the context of the feelings of being undervalued and unappreciated latterly in work, this loss of status had potentially devastating effects on Molly's self-esteem. The following illustrations from the data and the pre retirement situation at work show how Molly felt post retirement, which may have emphasized this feeling of loss.

> Molly "There is a loss of status, a definite loss of status ... I mean to a certain extent I er, regain that when I do supply in that you regain it with the children, but, but, when you go into a school you're not really a, you're a bit of a dogsbody...whereas, you know, before, I was an important member of the staff...the majority of the children, to them you are a teacher, and so you've got your status, but erm, within the sphere of your friends and family, you, I do think you suddenly are, a nobody is rather strong, but ...if somebody said to me ... what do you do ...now you say well I'm a, I mean I tend to say I'm a retired teacher ...which if I analyse that is my way of saying well, I'm just not a nobody, you know."(1st int. p.97, 98)

This loss of status post retirement came after two years of working for a Head Teacher who expected Molly to act as management within the school (because she had the skills, had been there a long time, and had voluntarily done certain management jobs as a favour for the former Head). The new Head Teacher however was not prepared to give Molly the status or acknowledgement of a management position but expected the favours without having earned them.

> Molly "So over the two years I could see what was going to happen in that he wanted me to mop up after him, but I wasn't getting any status from it ...I would have mopped up after my first Head, I often did and got a lot of pleasure from it. ... But he'd been appointed as Head ... and ...he used to say things to me like, 'right, you'll do the Harvest service'. Now I'd always done the Harvest service, I loved doing it, but I wasn't going to do that same favour for him. I mean he'd just been appointed as Head and I felt he should do the

> Harvest. So, because I wasn't an 'anybody' you see, I said well, no, I'm not going to do it. ...So in the end I thought I'm either going to get very bitter and twisted here ... or get out now, which is what I did. And then of course they appointed a deputy head, and the first thing he said to her was 'you'll do the Harvest' etcetera, etcetera."(1st int. p.101, 102)

All this amounted to Molly leaving the job she'd done and enjoyed for many years feeling undervalued, unappreciated and without status. This theme of loss of status came up in the second interview where Molly explained that it was no longer a problem.

> Molly "Having had a complete year away from my permanent job, that sort of loss of status that, that I did feel and erm, has gone. ... I mean, I don't care about it quite honestly."(2nd int.p.45)

The context of this recovery of loss is important, however, as Molly explained that she'd felt a bit of a failure as a supply teacher but that she'd been asked to do six weeks supply and an OFSTED inspection at a challenging school. Molly did this and got a great deal of satisfaction out of it.

> Molly "The OFSTED, from my point of view went well, didn't go so well from the schools point of view, but my personal report was okay. ... everybody was pleased with what I'd done ... it just reinforced the fact that you're not a, one is not a failure, that given a block of teaching to do, all the skills you thought you had but when you went in for one day questioned whether in fact you did have any left, all those skills came back. ... it was good, getting on with colleagues again ... there was another supply teacher there and when I left she said ... 'I can't believe you're going, I'm really sorry.' She said, 'you, you've brought a touch of class to this school.'(2nd int. p.46, 47, 53)

Although Molly said that being away from school for a whole year had helped her put it all behind her, this reinforcement of her skills, value and worth as a teacher, as well as feeling appreciated for the work she had done, must have been an enormous boost to Molly's self-esteem. The reality, however, of what might have been behind the importance of status and value at work for Molly seems to come to the fore in the final interview where Molly identifies the fact that it is only ever at work that she has felt an individual identity.

Molly "At home and amongst our friends and relations I have always been (husband's) wife, that has been me, ... I have never in a way had a strong enough identity of my own to come outside of that. At work and at school I did. And before I retired I was the person who was second in command in that school, that was me." (final int. p.6)

Molly's work role as a teacher has clearly been that which has given Molly her identity, an individual identity, which has worth, is appreciated, recognised as important and one she herself values. Her status as a person, as an individual in her own right is given by the identity her role gives to her. Further evidence of this is shown when we look at Molly's perception of her role now she is retired.

Role Change And Identity

Interviewer "Some people see their work as a role in life. What role do you feel , if any, that you play now?"

Molly "To be honest I feel that the role I play is a 'getter of food', I know that sounds terrible but that is my main function. At work I really feel that for the children ... I have provided some stability that the children in particular have really appreciated and that when I'm there in a way you become a different person, you become the teacher, but outside of that ... my role here is to cook the food but that is what it is."

Interviewer "Are you happy and satisfied in that role?"

Molly "No, I don't particularly like cooking ... no but I don't have a real problem with it because it's part of my philosophy that that is a wife's role. I am not resentful of it in the sense that I feel put on ... a wife's role is to do the shopping and cook the food and I am not resentful of it because that is part of your inner being really, that is what you do, but I cannot say I like it really, that I like doing it."(Final int. p2, 3)

The role Molly is 'left with', when the teacher role is taken away is that of housewife. For Molly it is very clear what that role is, and it is a role she does not enjoy. Leaving behind the teacher role seems to mean relinquishing the expression of Molly's identity as an individual, an identity that includes service for others but enables Molly to receive value, appreciation and satisfaction, and, more importantly, where she is free to express her true Self without the bounds of potential emotional repercussions that are around when family are involved. An example of how Molly's expression of her true Self is

hindered within the family setting is shown by the following illustration from interview 1 where Molly and her husband have been decorating.

> Molly "We'd put up one wall of paper, it was awful, I didn't like it a bit ...my immediate reaction was, we'll go and change it ... and of course he (husband) said 'it's perfectly alright, we'll leave it as it is'. And so you, you leave it, but deep down you think to yourself, well it really wasn't very nice. ... it's partly a confidence thing and partly a well, you know, if you don't need to make an issue of something then don't. Whereas, in an impersonal situation at work, if you want to make an issue of something then you do. Because the people that it affects aren't close to you in that sense."(Int.1 p.96)

Molly seems to legitimise her actions and expressions of herself through the roles she plays. At work she is legitimately confident and assertive, the role demanded it and it seemed congruent with who Molly is. At home the perceived housewife role is submissive and serving. Whilst Molly accepts this role it seems to cause her sadness which could indicate an incongruence with Molly's Self. When asked about what adjustments she's had to make in retirement Molly remarks that she has had to adjust "back to being a housewife" (Int.1 p.114). She explains the difficulties that come with this.

> Molly "... I have found it difficult to be on tap ... to feel that ... this is now my job. I'm here, I'm not working. Therefore if a meal is to be cooked then I cook it. ...that I've found quite difficult." (Int1 p. 114, 115)

This pressure to be 'on tap' for the family Molly feels from within During her retirement she has never tried to go out and do her own thing, feeling too guilty about doing such a thing. The role demands that she is there for whoever needs her in the family now she's not legitimately absent out at work. There is further evidence of this internal pressure to 'do right by the role' when Molly is asked about what motivates her.

> Molly "The only thing that motivates me to do anything is duty, ... most of the things I do, I do because I feel I ought to for one reason or another. ... which is a result of upbringing, not only home but school as well. The school I went to was very strong on the duty aspect. ... In my parents eyes there were two sorts of women. There were the women who looked after their husbands and the tarts who did not. You had to be a good woman who looked after her

husband. The fact that we have come on fifty years has just not registered with me." (Final int. p.5)

Molly is unable to justify within herself time for herself that has no purpose other than to satisfy her own needs. The following extract taken from interview 1 shows the complexity of the issue, in that Molly identifies a need within herself for space and time away from duty, but this could only be justified by doing something with a purpose or reason other than self-indulgence.

Molly "I used to joke before I retired that I was going to take up fishing. Not because I wanted to catch any fish, but that I was going to buy all the gear and, I really thought about this, so that I can book myself a little pad around the lake, and go in the early morning, wrapped up warm, with my butties and my book, and sit there, and 'mum is not available, she's gone fishing'. ... so that I'd got an excuse, I'm fishing, ... and I'm inaccessible, but I've got a reason for being there."

Interviewer You need a reason

Molly Yes ... I need a reason

Interviewer ...you might feel guilty for being inaccessible

Molly Yes, yes (despairing tone) unless it were the real thing. I would ... certainly feel guilty about pretend fishing as it were." (Int.1 p.128-129)

I think at the time of the interviews I failed to pick up on a potential problem of a lack of a sense of purpose for Molly. Other participants had overtly introduced this but Molly didn't. I think however that it nevertheless comes through in much of her sadness in loss of status, and the necessity for her to have a role, even a role that she struggles with (being housewife). Despite the struggle, she seems to need this role to define herself or to give her meaning. This is something supply teaching really doesn't give, as her past job did. Molly's lack of social support also comes through, something again she found at work and doesn't seem to have got at home because of the role she finds (or places) herself in with her family.

Molly has many adjustments to make in retirement but perhaps one of the most difficult issues seems to be adjusting to a new identity as a retired person. Molly's individual

identity is expressed freely in her role as a teacher as long as in that role Molly's skills and attributes are acknowledged and valued. As a retired person Molly is thrust back into a role she does not enjoy and which gives her little or no fulfilment, satisfaction or freedom to express herself. It is hardly surprising that at the last interview Molly had decided that for now she needed to carry on working.

Molly – Self-Esteem And Depression Measures

Results of Culture Free Self-Esteem Inventory (Battle, 1992, 1981) and Beck Depression Inventory (Beck, 1987, 1990)

MOLLY						
	Overall self-esteem	Social	General	Personal	Lie	Beck depression inventory score
First interview	**19**	**7**	**10**	**2**	**6**	**19**
Final interview	**19**	**5**	**11**	**3**	**5**	**14**

Molly's score on the Beck Depression inventory indicated 'Moderate-Severe' depression at first interview and 'Mild-Moderate' depression at the final interview. Molly followed advice to see her G.P. following the first recording of the test and went for a counselling session, which she then decided against continuing. No medication was given.

Molly clearly felt a sense of loss in retirement: loss of status, loss of identity and loss of a role she enjoyed and felt free in. Molly also found herself in a position or 'role' that she does not enjoy at all. She said that she doesn't feel resentment about it because it is the wife's role and that is what she does. I am certain that as a person driven by duty Molly feels she is being right and correct in her role and takes some comfort in that, but wonder whether Molly is defending against a conscious acceptance of the possibility that she may be very resentful about the role she has been forced back into. There seems to be incongruence in the communication of her psychological state of generalised dissatisfaction and depression about the role and her words of not feeling resentment.

The improvement in depression score at the end of the study could be seen to indicate some positive adjustment to her situation. Molly certainly seems to be freeing herself from work as her *raison d'être* towards the end of the study, which may be the beginning of a reclamation or consideration of a worthwhile identity outside of the work role. There is a known correlation however, between low self-esteem and depression (Battle, 1992).

Molly scored 'Low' on the self-esteem measure used, both at first and final interview. Her score on the self-esteem personal sub-test was 'Low'. This is the "aspect of self-esteem that refers to individuals' most intimate perceptions of self-worth" (Battle, 1992, p.4). It is in this aspect of herself that Molly is most unhappy. Her guilt, self pity, unhappiness with how she looks (all self-reported by Molly in the 'I am' exercise) reflect an inner unhappiness with the Self.

Molly's score on the self-esteem general sub-test was 'Intermediate' at both interviews reflecting the fact that Molly does in fact place some value on her overall worth. Molly does show some acknowledgement of her worth in the interview data but only ever when referring to herself as the teacher.

> Molly "We had a stand-in-Head for one year ... she said to me, "You could run this place single handed." She wasn't flattering me she was just saying, that was how it was, and I was happy to do it." (Int.1 p.101).

Also in Molly's 'I am' exercise at the end of the study, her one comment that began 'I am good at ...' was "I am good at my job."

Molly's score on the social sub-test started off 'High' at the first interview and dropped to 'Intermediate' at the final interview. As this subtest "refers to individuals' perceptions of the quality of their relationships with peers" (Battle, 1992, p.3) it is not really surprising that Molly might have lost some confidence in this area as time out of regular contact with known colleagues went on. In the interview data Molly describes how she is easily isolated because;

> Molly "I'm not a gregarious person, I'm not a person who 'belongs to'. And if the people that I would normally do things with, that is the family, are tied up, then you're isolated aren't you?" (Int.1 p.119).

And in the final interview, in answer to the question of what Molly might still be missing from work, Molly answers with;

> Molly "The contact with colleagues definitely ...and the feeling of self-worth that you get because if you did your job well you were aware that other people thought that and to a certain extent just doing two days a week you get some of that ... but it is not the same thing at all, and you don't make the same friends ... as you do with colleagues that you have worked with for thirteen years. ... My problem is that I'm not a meeting type person and work was an excuse, if you like, for lunch with friends." (Final int. p.4)

Molly's past work boosted her self-esteem by allowing her to give free expression to the things about herself that she values the most and by having those things valued and acknowledged by others. Work enabled Molly to be herself and it gave Molly a 'reason for being', a purpose. Social support from colleagues went along with the job but was very important to Molly because close friendship is not easily come by.

Overview of Analysis

In the final interview Molly reports feeling less tense generally and better mentally. This is reflected in the depression score. She has decided to continue with the supply teaching because she feels she needs to do that. In the second interview Molly appears to have justified some time for herself but this is on the back of doing a large block of supply teaching that made her feel better and legitimised some time off.

> Molly "If I don't do any more supply work this year I've already done as much as I did last year ... I feel to a certain extent that I'm sitting in the 'Pound seats' because I've done my bit of work." (Int.2 p.47)

Unfortunately in the final interview Molly is back to feeling guilty about time for herself. It seems that as long as her husband is working Molly will find it difficult to

relax her role and allow herself time for personal enjoyment because her role is to care for him.

> Molly "I am still a housewife, wife and home-maker here with a husband who is partly working and therefore, this goes back to childhood concepts, if a man is working the woman looks after him, and I'm not quite sure who looks after the woman when she is working. I'm not sounding disloyal to (husband) here, but that's the way it is." (Final Int. p.8)

Again however Molly is beginning to think more about herself and making some slight adjustment in this area. After commenting on things she'd enjoy doing but will not do, this interaction took place.

> Interviewer "Do you feel that in any sense you're waiting for (husband) and time together before you do those things?"
>
> Molly "Yes, because by en large if I am off work and (husband) is working, where I would be quite happy to go somewhere by myself for the day, although he would never say anything, he would think that I should wait for him. He would feel left out and I would know that. I am trying to be more positive about that sort of thing ... I'm trying to condition myself to sort of say 'I am leaving you a cold lunch on a plate' but it is hard to do because you feel you should be here, especially if he has been to work." (Final int. p.3)

There is also evidence that Molly has made, or is beginning to make, the adjustment away from work being her whole purpose.

> Molly "For a long time work is your *raison d'être*, you know, your reason for being, and work, and all things connected with it become your sole item of conversation ... and it takes a while to get out of that ... (it) opens up a whole new area of life, the fact that you can do things in the week. ... it opens up areas of time that you can now use ... and makes you look at other areas of life apart from work. So yes, I suppose I'm less intense, less intense really and less narrow."(Int.2 p.68-69)

This seems to be freeing Molly up to think more carefully about her past and about how she might be in the future. In the final interview Molly talks about a philosophy change. There is evidence of regret but also of an opening up of the possibility of thinking more

of her own needs. This is only the second time she mentions her Christian faith and although she mentions it almost in passing it can be seen how Christian values of service could be heightened, if not misinterpreted, by someone for whom duty and service is so fundamental to their being. Nevertheless, Molly is prepared to re-examine her presuppositions, which shows freedom and courage to move in a different direction if she feels that's right.

> Molly "What disappoints me is the big philosophy change. I'm not sure if that is very Christian or what, I'm still working this one out. I previously always thought that you had to be loyal and stay, and give your all to wherever you were and having now, looking back, I don't think you have to think 'I've been here five years, 'this school needs me' ... but you should actually think more about yourself and your career. That never struck me before. I just wanted to stay there and support the school and be loyal to it and I don't think that is the right attitude. ... you should think more about yourself in the best possible way because there comes a time when it's too late. It does not cause me extreme grief, but some regret." (Final int. p.2)

Molly is working through some very major issues in her adjustment to retirement but it can be seen that she is making positive steps to gain a positive outcome.

As specified in the introduction to this individual analysis the concentration is on what is specifically unique and important to each individual. The following participants raised similar issues to the preceding participants but had fewer issues specifically important to them in their transition to retirement.

'FLORENCE'

Introduction

Florence had been a senior nurse within the NHS and retired aged fifty-nine years. She retired ten months before I met her for the first interview. Retirement was slightly earlier than originally planned. Florence is married with three grown up children, two girls and a boy, one other child died very young. The girls are both married and had no children at the time of the interviews. Florence regularly attends Church. I had only very brief professional contact with Florence whilst I was working as a nurse many years ago so did not know Florence at all.

Florence retired in June 1996, first interview was March 1997 (retired 10 months), second interview October 1997 (retired 17 months), third interview was April 1998 (retired 23 months).

The following page shows a table summarising themes identified in the three interviews with Florence.

Florence						
	Adapting self	**Adapted self**	**Adjusting self**	**Adjusted self**	**Maintenance of self**	**Past and future self**
Interview 1 and diary **Retired 10 months**	Miss social contact a little, and having own money. 'Getting house manageable'. New pace, liked routine of work. Responsibility to mother.	Takes daily walk with husband. Talk to husband on deeper level, mental stimulation from this and reading more. Pace of life slower and chores done less rushed.	Expected health decline amounting to fear. Shift in marriage relationship. Adjusting to meaning of workand ret', regarding usefulness, purpose and worthwhileness. Anger about futility of work pre-ret'. Questions and comparisons being made about old age. Mellower.	Sense of loss on leaving work gone, (attributed to tiredness and unstructured freedom).	Financial independence important. Mental stimulation important. Priority of family role important (identity and self concept).	Increase in confidence with life changes and experience. Personal growth through life events. History, circumstances etc. influencing decisions and philosophy of life. Comparing 'old age' with mother.
Interview 2 and diary **Retired 17 months**	Getting house manageable. Husband retired. Financial changes	Got to know more people, very positive. Formed a structure. Mental stimulation.	Loss of identity (nurse). Worthwhileness, purpose. Difficulty with time for self. Old age and identity as pensioner. Potential health decline.	No desire to return to work. Feels mellower. Has a bit of time for creative cooking.	Family first. Need challenges, and to be useful. Mental stimulation for health. Financial independence.	
Interview 3 and diary **Retired 23 months**		Voluntary work. Mental stimulation through crosswords, stocks and shares. New friendships.		Letting go of work. Fulfilment in family responsibilities. Now acknowledged retired. Enjoying freedom and choices. Needs apparently fulfilled. Identity more secure.		

Analysis of Combined Data

Adapting/Adapted Self

Getting the house and garden manageable was important to Flo on retirement as was managing the financial changes, particularly by interview two when Flo's husband had retired too. Flo missed the social contact with colleagues a little and missed having her own money but was enjoying the slower pace of life while attempting to adapt to a lack of routine at first. Flo and her husband soon began to form some sort of structure to their time together, they took a daily walk together and spent longer talking on a deeper level. This adaptation to Flo being at home alone at first, and then both being around more, was quite a change and made quite a difference to Flo in her adaptations to retirement. Nevertheless Flo made positive adaptations which gave her satisfaction, mental stimulation and new social relationships.

One difference from the other participants for Flo was that she had her own mother living fairly close by and saw her very regularly to help her out. Her mother didn't need care as such but needed keeping an eye on. Flo felt a responsibility to visit very regularly. This was made easier in retirement as Flo wasn't rushing to see her mother after work. However Flo acknowledged that there was some limitation of her own choices because of her mother.

> Flo "I think probably, in a perfect world, I'd have done something like VSO, or something that (husband) and I would have enjoyed doing together. ...We'd probably have liked to go back to (country) or somewhere, ... (husband) says the type of information I collected in hospital, ... we really could have done something quite worthwhile. ... But I've got my mother. There'd be nobody else to look after her, it would not be a wise move would it?" (Int. 1 p.40)

> Flo "I try very hard to see my mother every single day." (Int.2 p.26)

The shift in Flo's marriage relationship was evident from the interviews and Flo recalls the initial time after her retirement as a particularly difficult time where adapting to each other's schedules was needed.

> Flo "Well it was just you'd suddenly all this freedom. ... [husband] and I had agreed that he would not give up anything, he would do exactly what he was doing. So, we'd come in one, the first Monday that I'm off, and he's out all week! All day, all everything! And you're thinking, at the end of about three weeks I really got quite irritable, and I said, 'you're never here!' but he said 'but I'm giving you your own space!' ... which was very reasonable, and it's what we had agreed." (laugh). (Int.1 p.28, 29).

This was resolved by Flo finding her own things to do and also by deciding that there were some things her husband did that she could join in with.

> Flo "Now of course I go with [husband] too ... most of the time I go to all the things [he] does as a leader or some of his ---- society type things. I go with him now when I couldn't go before, so I'm back to things I could do in my early married life and voluntarily doing them. I suppose when I was younger I thought this is the thing to do but now if I don't like on a Monday night I say, 'oh no I'm not coming with you' ... more often than not I would go because I could go. I like doing these things again." (Final Int. p.4).

This is interesting in that Flo has reverted back to a pre-work role which was previously enjoyed but done a little out of a sense of it being the 'done thing'. Now out of choice she has taken on this role again and is satisfied with it. Most participants have reverted back to previous roles, usually the housewife role, with varying degrees of satisfaction.

Adjusting/Adjusted Self

Flo feared for her health as did the other participants and had to resolve negative feelings about work pre-retirement as, like Jenny and Molly, she had negative experiences and feelings towards the work she was doing latterly. Flo did do a little bit of work post retirement because she was asked, and it seemed to confirm for her that she'd made the right choice about retiring.

> Flo "I feel better having decided not to undertake any consultancy work. I did the two, six months ago I had just finished the one, anyway I like doing my other things better, and since we can live on what we get it's fine. ... So it was a nice gentle way into retirement." (Final int. p.1)

Flo's difficulty with loss of identity as a nurse was a large adjustment difficulty and although Flo, in common with most participants, has an identity adjustment to make, the relating of this particular experience serves to demonstrate how our work role can be very much a special part of our selves. At one point Flo's UKCC membership was due. This is the fee for registration that all nurses have to make every three years to ensure they are on the United Kingdom Central register which allows them to practice their profession.

> Flo "Right, I'm going through a real panic phase just now because my UKCC membership is due ... and of course now I'll not be a nurse anymore ... it's quite, you know, I don't know, it's something I've always had, I've always paid, since 1959, ... I'd paid every year, and that was something I'd done for myself. ... that's to me much more an end of an era than retiring was....It's weird really because in my heart of hearts I don't want to go back." (Int. 2 p.1, 3)

Flo found the finality of this act the most difficult thing she had to deal with.

> Flo "It's the greatest adjustment really. ... because up until now I've known I could go back any day I liked." (Int. 2 p.4)

This was something that belonged to Flo, she had done this for herself and achieved it for herself and she felt that it was being taken away. Flo's professional status as a nurse was very much a part of herself which could produce a great sense of loss when it was gone. Flo, in fact, paid her registration and felt better for doing so. However, given the freedom to decide not to nurse again Flo made this her decision without a struggle.

> Flo "Probably the change to deciding I did not want to do any more (nursing) actually came after I had paid it, (the UKCC registration) perhaps a month or two after." (Final Int. p.1)

Nevertheless, Flo adjusts to leaving the nursing profession behind and recognises that now she uses skills gained in her nursing career by caring for others in the Church and

for her family. Flo's family receive more time and attention from Flo now she has retired, as was the case for most other participant's families. Again, like other participants, the identity issue seems to be linked in some way to the sense of purpose or of being valued. On initial retirement there seems to be some loss of a sense of worth to society unless there are other areas of life providing this sense of worth. Flo, describes her feelings when she first retired.

> Flo "I was going through a phase ... of thinking about myself ... and when I was thinking about it I was also thinking I ought to really do something worthwhile, but I don't feel all that's so important now. You know I felt it, you know, I should be out saving the world or something. I think I've gone through that phase a bit." (Int.1 p.39)

Latterly at work Flo didn't feel her work was appreciated or valued or worthwhile so this could have caused a feeling of needing worth and recognition, or perhaps it's a feeling of needing to prove one's worth as a retired person in a society which gives little value or worth to retirees.

A clue comes out of a diary extract written by Flo following the first interview.

> Flo "Kofi Annan is only a year younger than me and has just been appointed for 5 years to the most important job of his life as Secretary General. Really I should still be working!" (First Diary extract p.2)

Other participants have related the sense of guilt at leaving work while still young enough to do a good job. Purpose and worth are involved, but a sense of duty to society seems to be involved too, as if in retirement we have no worth or contribution to make anymore.

Unlike previously mentioned participants facing their sixtieth birthday, Flo doesn't approach this day with any negative feelings. The day is celebrated in style and there is lots of walking involved. Flo relates in her diary:

> Flo "I felt relieved that throughout the weekend I could always keep up with them but the walking about was on the flat. I had felt

older walking in the Lake District last month!" (Diary extract following second interview).

However, like other participants, Flo doesn't identify herself as 'old' or even as a pensioner, but feels, like the others, that her health is the determining factor in the case of 'being old'. Health is an important issue and one provoking much anxiety.

> Flo "I also expected, and this sounds silly, but I also expected the minute I retired, just to go down hill like that. ... the cells to stop working, and you know, not to have any interests."(Int.1 p.35)

> Interviewer "Does retirement cause you to think more about getting old?"

> Flo "No, I don't, yes, I suppose so, a bit. ... One of my insurance policies are coming to an end ... one of them said they were paying out the first of March and there was also a box, do you want to continue? So I said I did ... they said I would have to have a medical, and **my goodness** did I feel panicky and uptight, and what would they find now that I'm older, ... and (sharp in take of breath) my goodness. (Int.1 p.36)

Despite these anxieties, which of course were eased as time went on and Flo didn't become ill, Flo adjusted to retirement and felt satisfied with her choices and lifestyle.

Florence – Self-Esteem And Depression Measures

Results of Culture Free Self-Esteem Inventory (Battle, 1992, 1981) and Beck Depression Inventory (Beck, 1987, 1990)

FLORENCE						
	Overall self-esteem	Social	General	Personal	Lie	Beck depression inventory score
First interview	**16**	**3**	**8**	**5**	**4**	**5**
Final interview	**24**	**8**	**11**	**5**	**4**	**5**

Flo moved from measuring 'Low' on the self-esteem score at first contact, to measuring 'Intermediate' at final contact. The difference was eight points. Both the lie and the personal scores remained the same on both measures. The social score went up by five points. This is in keeping with the changes Flo relates in her life throughout the time of the interviews. Socially she feels she knows more people better than ever she did while working, but of course this took time to happen.

> Flo "I'm more friendly with the people I'm friendly with now than I probably was ever friendly with the colleagues" (Final Int. p.3)
>
> Interviewer "What would you say provides you with a sense of identity now?"
>
> Flo "I tell you, being a little cog in the Church family, knowing them all, I don't want to be one of the high profiles, ... but going in there and everyone knowing who I am, and me knowing who the regulars are, that gives me a real sense of identity, and I suppose it has replaced the belongingness of being at the (hospital) which I would not have said a year ago when you first came." (Final Int. p.7)

The general score on the Self-Esteem measure went up by three points. Flo relates in the final interview her perception of retirement so far.

> Flo "I've done a lot of things with my mother that I would not have been able to do, and I certainly have done a lot in different funny ways for my three grown up children, ... I do things like these crèches and things but my life has fast slotted into doing probably what I wanted." (Final Int. p. 2)

At final interview Flo demonstrates a contentedness and satisfaction with life and this is reflected in her self-esteem scores.

On the Beck Depression Inventory Flo scored five both times. This was in the 'Normal' range of scores for depression, and fits with the other data which gave no indication that Flo was feeling depressed during the time the study was conducted.

Overview of Analysis

Florence felt that the work she was doing pre-retirement was futile and undervalued, and she had to work through this after retirement as feelings of a lack of purpose and usefulness crept in. Florence gradually introduced activities in her life that she would not originally have imagined herself doing but which gave her a sense of purpose and value, with the added bonus of new friends and social contacts. Her identity as a nurse was difficult to let go of as this was a sense of herself that was bound up with independence as a person, hard work and the achievement she felt at succeeding being a nurse. At the time of the final interview, Flo could acknowledge her abilities as a nurse had not left her on retirement, and the satisfaction she felt at being of use to her family, who were very important to her, and voluntary activities within the Church, gave a good sense of purpose.

Initially, there were many fears about potential health decline on retirement and Flo was proactive in ensuring mental stimulation through crosswords, reading and working the stocks and shares. Forming a structure was important for Flo and she achieved this

through her activities. Many adjustments were made through recognising needs and working to meet those needs in compensatory activities.

'SARAH'

Introduction

Sarah retired aged sixty, and had been retired only three months when we first met for interview. Sarah was a nurse who worked part time night duty which meant her hours were almost full time. She was also a magistrate and continues that work. Sarah is married and has three grown up children who are all married, one with children, the others without, at the time of interview. Sarah regularly attends Church. We had never met before the research. Sarah's first words on meeting me were, "Oh, you're much younger than I expected!"

Sarah retired in December 1996, first interview was March 1997 (retired 3 months), second interview October 1997 (retired 10 months), third interview April 1998 (retired 16 months).

The following page shows a table summarising themes identified in the three interviews with Sarah.

Sarah						
	Adapting self	**Adapted self**	**Adjusting self**	**Adjusted self**	**Maintenance of self**	**Past and future self**
Interview 1 and diary **Retired 3 months**	Loss of structure. 'Getting the house in order'. Time and pace. Husband's retirement.	Caring and social aspects of work transferred largely to voluntary activity. More time is given to self.	Loss of particular social relationships. Expected health decline. Time. Freedom to please oneself. Thoughts about getting old. (Mum died at this age). Identity and age (feels 40). Surprised in lack of organisation. Husband's retirement.	Sense of usefulness shifted in other directions.	Mental stimulation, physical fitness and financial independence important. Family important. Being of service.	Increase in confidence through life and work. Sense of sameness. Sense of history and circumstances influencing decisions.
Interview 2 and diary **Retired 10 months**	Husband's retirement. Time.	Routine created and organised with husband's retirement. Service to others. Keeping busy. Finances working.	Not as organised or done as much as would have liked. Daughter expecting baby, role in that. Old age. Death anxiety related to a health scare.	Enjoying slower pace. Making plans for the future. Health decision made and feels happy about it.		
Interview 3 and diary **Retired 16 months**		Activities giving mental stimulation and interest established. More voluntary roles. Social compensations made.	Time passing quickly, not much time left.	Home responsibilities enjoyed. Ambitious. Enjoying age and freedom it gives. Age and identity comfort in unchanging self. Time for self in busy life.	Need to be busy.	Ambition for future.

Analysis of Combined Data

For Sarah the situation was different from other participants in that her working hours were at night and were longer shifts. Therefore, retirement gave Sarah two days in the week extra, and, of course, two nights of normal sleep. Nevertheless Sarah was giving up a nursing career spanning quite a few years and for which she had trained.

Adapting/Adapted Self

Sarah felt that her retirement would be about spending more time on the things she had been doing for a long time rather than starting fresh ventures. She was already involved in a voluntary capacity in a number of ventures and hoped to give more time to these and to getting the house organised. Time and organisation seem to be the adaptations Sarah struggles with. She feels she must have slowed down for things to be taking longer than anticipated.

Adjusting/Adjusted Self

Despite the fact that Sarah had a very responsible voluntary position in the Magistrates' Court she still did feel a sense of loss on leaving nursing.

> Sarah "I think I feel occasionally I, I think it. It's a big sort of step I've made, and after all it's all down hill from now on. ... But sometimes I stop and think that gosh, you know, I'll never go back to that, I mean that's something I can never take up again."(Int.1 p.8)

Sarah's remark about life being "all down hill from now on" was interesting as she was the only participant who had very set and determined ideas about what her future ambition was and what she would be filling her time doing. Nevertheless she does demonstrate a sense of joining the older generation. In the first interview Sarah talks

about how retirement makes her think much more about ageing and how she is beginning to show signs of ageing.

> Sarah "There seems to be so much to do, so I must be more slow I think that's it ... I must be slowing down because otherwise I'd get things done more quickly. ... I do think now quite often about getting old ... I suppose it's because you stop something that you can never go back to ... so it does, it makes you think, you're one of the older generation now. When I get on the bus with my pass" (Laugh). (Int.1 p.12, 15)

Despite these comments Sarah, like other participants, does not feel old on the inside, and, while she continues in the further interviews to talk about slowing down, she relates no particular fears or concerns over getting old.

Sarah's husband became semi-retired soon after she retired and this, as with Flo, has made a difference to Sarah in that she now has more time to do things with her husband, which she is enjoying.

Other issues raised by Sarah bring no more to the analysis than when discussing other participants.

Sarah – Self-Esteem And Depression Measures

Results of Culture Free Self-Esteem Inventory (Battle, 1992, 1981) and Beck Depression Inventory (Beck, 1987, 1990)

SARAH						
	Overall self-esteem	Social	General	Personal	Lie	Beck depression inventory score
First interview	**31**	**8**	**15**	**6**	**8**	**5**
Final interview	**32**	**8**	**16**	**8**	**7**	**3**

Sarah scores 'Very High' on both measures of Self-Esteem, in keeping with all that Sarah relates during the interviews. Sarah continues to have status and responsibility within her voluntary work, both possible sources of self-esteem, and shows no problems in leaving her nursing career behind.

Sarah has normal scores on the Beck depression inventory measure. There was never any indication that Sarah tended towards any depressive feelings during the time of the interviews.

Overview of Analysis

Sarah retired from part time work as a night nurse as a planned event following her sixtieth birthday and had other voluntary positions of work in place on retirement. These factors together probably made a great difference in Sarah's retirement experience as she showed no indication at all of difficulty in adapting and adjusting to

retirement. Her only surprises were that she never missed work once she had left, that she wasn't as organised as she thought she would have been, and that she slowed down her pace of life slightly (although this was still a busier life than most led!). With only an extra two days to fill and with plenty of plans of what to do with them Sarah had little difficulty with time management. There were adaptation issues such as getting organised, creating a structure (one thing she did miss a little about work in the beginning), and not wasting the extra time. Adjustment issues were about the fact that she had given up something she'd never return to and that this signalled the perceived down hill slope to old age and death. Nevertheless, Sarah still had lots of plans and a major ambition to fulfil and was, therefore, in no position to take one day at a time just yet.

'AMY'

Introduction

Amy had retired as a Director of Nurse Education seven years before I met her for first interview but after a three month break had then taken a job as a nursing home inspector which she retired from eighteen months before we met for interview. Amy is married with two grown up children who are both married, one son has children. Amy does not attend Church. I knew Amy a little before she became a participant and this served to help us both feel comfortable at the beginning of the research.

Amy retired in September 1995, first interview was March 1997 (retired 18 months), second interview October 1997 (retired 25 months), third interview April 1998 (retired 31 months).

The following page shows a table summarising themes identified in the three interviews with Amy.

Amy						
	Adapting self	**Adapted self**	**Adjusting self**	**Adjusted self**	**Maintenance of self**	**Past and future self**
Interview 1 and diary **Retired 18 months**	Looking to do some sort of course or study. Problem filling time. 'Getting house in order', expect health decline.	Gardening hobby takes up more time now.	Work gave significance, identity, status and responsibility. Part time work taken up after initial retirement. Miss people contact, stimulation, feeling useful. Regrets about grandparenthood. Sense of loss. Death and ill health. Health of husband a worry. Old age.	Getting more used to lack of work/colleague conversation.	Need to be 'doing'. Need to feel useful. Need a lot of stimulation.	Family responsibilities affecting decisions about work. Quite ambitious. Plans are for health and pleasure.
Interview 2 and diary **Retired 25 months**	Changing house and garden to save time and in case of health decline.	Course arranged, life is busy, fulfilled lots of plans. Feels no need for a structure.	Caring for husband. Death of friends increases anxiety. Still losses from work. Preoccupation with doing something useful.	No longer guilt about time for self. Feel better health wise since leaving work. Feels retirement is an opportunity for Self time. Freedom.	Need to be useful and needed.	
Interview 3 and diary **Retired 31 months**		Enjoying course. Mental stimulation through reading and cinema.	Health, age and vulnerability. Guilt about early retirement. Identity. Would like more family involvement.	Feels settled into retirement. Freedom because of age. Responsibilities because of age. Enjoying time for self.	Need independence and mental stimulation.	

Analysis of Combined Data

Adapting Self

Amy was the oldest participant in the core group and was aged sixty five when I met her for the first interview. In the interviews Amy raises many of the same issues some of the other participants raise, but there are some differences too. Like other participants, getting the house and garden in order was one of the priorities for Amy and her husband. In doing this Amy is consciously thinking about the possibility of deterioration in health as they get older.

> Amy "We've had a new kitchen and downstairs loo. Now we've had that deliberately thinking, well, perhaps the time will come when we'll find it harder getting up and down the stairs, you know." (Int.1. p.16)

Like other participants mental stimulation was something very important for Amy and something she missed from work. Though never providing quite the same sort of stimulation, Amy eventually managed to find a course of study she enjoyed and aimed to seek out activities to stimulate her mind more.

> Amy "Had I started my aromatherapy course? ... It's one of the best things I've done, I really enjoyed it, it got me through this winter so well." (Final Int. p.1)

Adjusting Self

Amy felt quite a strong sense of loss of significance, identity, status and responsibility on leaving both full time and part time work. She did feel that coming down to some sort of part time work was a very good thing for her.

Amy does raise the issues of old age, health and death more than the other participants but she was a nurse, and latterly a nursing home advisor, so had a lot to do with the elderly and those 'waiting to die'.

Amy "The idea of being in a nursing home, having seen as many nursing homes as I have, fills me with horror. Absolute horror, even though some of them are extremely good. Even your best nursing home, you're only waiting to die, you know, everybody knows it." (Int.1 p.32)

Amy "So I do view old age with horror ... one of the things I view with horror is the boredom of it. My god it must be so boring to be stuck in the house. ... I have an old retired enrolled nurse whom I visit ... she's been stuck in her top floor flat for three and a half years now ... she does nothing, and she's she is a bit forgetful but my god how she keeps her neurones together at all I don't know ... she looks to me as if she'll make a hundred and she's eighty eight at the moment! (Int.1 p.33)

Amy's experiences give old age a reality she is horrified with and, although she'll admit that she knows many older people go on to be healthy and living in their own homes until they die, she does have a real fear of ill health leading to incapacity. Apart from this pessimistic look at old age Amy has a view of retirement and old age as being a legitimate time for defiance and opportunity. A fight to the last against the inevitable? In answer to the question of what Amy might tell a group of women about to retire she replies,

Amy "I think to expect a sense of loss, but to expect it to pass ... this is a loss but it's an opportunity to be **you**, you know to, and I think this is an opportunity I didn't grasp straight away ... to recognise that this is a time in your life, which may not be very long, ... where you can actually do things that you want to do and follow up things you're interested in. ... another thing is sort of feeling guilty about doing nothing, this is the time to look at the world go by. The other thing is, I think it's quite possible to feel this loss of status, but I think to remember also, you know, as a marketable commodity the elderly are extremely valuable in the community now. They have some money to spend, not a lot, but some money to spend, and as anybody who doesn't take note of the elderly as a group to erm encourage, nurture, adapt, absolutely daft. So I'd tell them a lot of things like that. ... It's not a powerless position. It's only a powerless position if you see it as a powerless position. ... I'd also tell them not to hesitate to be nasty occasionally, I think there is room, space, for being, and it's something I'm trying to encourage myself in, in being the elderly person who speaks with the voice of authority because they've been there and they know." (Int. 2 p.23)

And in her diary notes following the first interview she writes,

> Amy "When I am an old woman I shall wear purple, with a red hat that doesn't go..." poem by Jenny Joseph, ... causing much laughter and discussion about the need for defiance in old age, also our admiration for 'Do not go gentle into that good night' Dylan Thomas." (Diary extract p.1)

Amy has strong feelings about the 'doing down' of the elderly in our society and, being a strong character, she will kick and scream against the unhelpful and untruthful stereotypes.

Amy – Self-Esteem And Depression Measures

Results of Culture Free Self-Esteem Inventory (Battle, 1992, 1981) and Beck Depression Inventory (Beck, 1987, 1990)

AMY						
	Overall self-esteem	Social	General	Personal	Lie	Beck depression inventory score
First interview	**25**	**7**	**14**	**4**	**5**	**2**
Final interview	**28**	**7**	**15**	**6**	**5**	**5**

Amy scored 'Intermediate' and 'High' respectively on the first and final self-esteem questionnaires, general self-esteem rising by one point and personal by two points. Both total scores indicated Amy had no problems with self-esteem, and Amy's personality at interview seemed to reflect this.

The Beck Depression Inventory scores were 'Normal' at both times of measurement. Amy did not indicate that she was depressed in any way during any of the interviews.

Overview of Analysis

Work gave purpose, significance, status, responsibility and stimulation to Amy. As a person who needs a lot of stimulation Amy spent time and energy attempting to fill this gap. An occasional course helped and plans for travel and outings certainly were important in meeting some of Amy's needs for stimulation and being busy. Amy sensed an underlying lack of purpose in her activities and found this difficult, together with loss

of a part of her identity as a nurse. Nursing provided the sense of purpose and usefulness in the past and this was difficult to compensate for. Amy's slight guilt at final interview about retiring from her full time job too early probably reflects a realisation that the skills and attributes she needed and used whilst working were in fact still with her and could still be used. This was not necessarily negative in that it showed Amy's consistent sense of herself as unchanged since retirement.

Reflexive Account Of Participant Interviews

I feel it is necessary to write this account to give a clearer picture of the context of the relationship between researcher and participant as well as to make clear the background from which I come which may or may not have influenced and directed my interview style and relationship towards these women.

I had met some of the participants previously, though only one could I say I knew a little. Those I had briefly met before I personally felt more relaxed about meeting initially but having met all participants prior to the first interview I felt at ease with them all.

My anxieties were more about asking these women to open up themselves and their lives. I was unsure of my skill in helping them to explore their thoughts verbally about things they may not naturally be inclined to think about or talk about and I was concerned that I didn't come across as confrontational or probing too deeply. It was obvious at various points throughout the interviews that participants were thinking and experiencing things which were quite difficult and uncomfortable. I was careful not to push for lots of disclosure if it wasn't forthcoming because I felt very responsible for potentially opening up subjects that might leave participants feeling vulnerable or asking them to disclose things they might later regret. It was difficult to get the balance right and in retrospect I suspect I could have occasionally probed a little further than I did.

I stressed to the participants the relaxed nature of the interviews to allow free expression. Again getting the balance right was difficult as free expression can be daunting for some, possibly making them feel they have to keep on talking about anything and everything. This happened, I think, in at least one of the interviews and I felt I should have had more control. Control, however, was not desirable in one sense because I wanted the participants to be able to tell me how they were and what was going on for them in their own words without me putting words in their mouths. I found myself constantly uncertain as to whether I had given participants enough opportunity

to freely express their thoughts and feelings about an issue and/or whether I'd given them enough guidance to feel comfortable that what they were saying was useful to my research (as they were all concerned about answering my questions 'correctly'). I never underestimated the privileged position I held in experiencing the sharing of these women's thoughts and feelings. I found through many of the interviews that I was asking participants the same questions but in a different way. At first this troubled me and I felt I hadn't planned well enough. However, this seemed to serve to enable participants to go deeper with their thoughts, exploring further points brought up earlier. It also served to make clear to me the things that I could be sure about.

My own personality, circumstances and history will have had an effect on the presentation of myself to participants, my responses to their questions, and how far I probed further with what they were saying. The participants who regularly attended Church knew that I did too as they were recruited via the Church magazine and will have seen me up front reading in Church. Participants for whom this was the case might either have assumed I knew about the importance of their faith to them and therefore not talked about it, or shared it with me only because they knew I shared that faith. In order to be open about this aspect of possible influence I have indicated those participants who attend Church regularly in the introductions to individual participant analysis. Similarly those participants from a nursing background soon learned that I too was from a nursing background. This too may have influenced their answers to certain questions depending on how much they felt I shared their experiences or had 'inside knowledge' about what they were talking about. As well as the importance of acknowledging effects and influences my Christian values and nursing background may have had on participants it is important also to acknowledge that both these aspects of myself meant that I had important values and/or experiences in common with most of the participants. This must surely add to the perceived empathy that was possible in the interviews.

My nursing history means that I fall easily into 'caring' mode and this may have caused me to be over cautious about upsetting or probing participants. When I was aware that participants were either busy that day and might have wanted to get on with other things or had forgotten I was coming but agreed to be interviewed anyway, I was very concerned about being an intrusion, which probably affected my manner and ease.

Similarly, as a psychologist there is a tendency to look beneath the surface behaviour, and to try to interpret words and actions rather than take them at face value. This was difficult to put on one side when talking with these women. Also, in one case, I was particularly concerned that I might be making things worse by asking the questions I did when a participant appeared depressed. I'd like to add here that plenty of time was given post interview for de-brief, and advice was sought from supervisors and acted upon.

Nevertheless, participants seemed to look forward to and enjoy the experience of sharing themselves with me. It was made quite clear that participants were free to withdraw from the study at any time yet none chose to do so despite there being quite traumatic and stressful events occurring in their lives at times. When I mentioned the personal nature of the study to Jenny she said the study "might do her some good". Later she said she had enjoyed the experience but felt she'd talked a lot about herself, as if that was in some way wrong or perhaps rare. At the end of the final interview she said it had been "really rather nice" to have talked about herself because "it's not often folks want to listen, is it?". Jane too had said that she "really enjoyed the in-depth things", and was interested in what I was doing. At the end of the study Molly thanked me for listening to her and said I'd "provided a sounding board" for her to talk about things she wouldn't have shared with other people because of what they might have felt about her (except, interestingly, past work colleagues). In answer to the question of whether our meeting and sharing of her adjustment had changed the way she had thought about retirement at all, Amy replied that "it has had a positive effect on me ... it has made me look at things sensibly and reflect on what we have said afterwards ... I did think it put the whole thing into perspective. It's a good ego trip doing this sort of thing, sitting and talking about yourself. It is very interesting". In some cases I felt that these women had a lot they wanted to tell me about their lives and they told their stories around my questions.

Participants became like friends and were interested in me as I was interested in them. They asked for news of the forthcoming birth of my baby and asked for feedback on what they had contributed to. I was aware that knowing I would be feeding back to participants could potentially affect my analysis but felt that it was important I give feedback if requested.

CHAPTER 6

Study 1b:
Group Perspectives of Six Recently Retired Women

STUDY 1b:
GROUP PERSPECTIVES OF SIX RECENTLY RETIRED WOMEN

Rationale and Introduction

This study is further analysis of the individual data analysed in chapter 5. Six women were interviewed three times over a period of a year to eighteen months of their retirement transition. The focus was on the experience of the individual in adjustment to retirement. The advantage of doing a group analysis as well as an individual analysis is that comparisons in experiences and issues raised can be made between participants. Here similarities and differences in experience can be examined. There was great advantage in interviewing the same participants over a long period of time in that any changes and developments in feelings and attitudes about their retirement could be questioned and looked at alongside the experiences of others.

Method and Design

Interviews were of an informal but guided type (Coolican, 1990). More details of the design of the interviews can be found in the methodological procedures chapter 4.
All analysis began by the labelling of phenomena from interviews as per Grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967, Strauss and Corbin, 1990). 'Who am I?' diary, and 'I am' narrative tasks, were then thematically labelled. Details of these tasks can be found in the methodological procedures chapter 4, and actual examples can be found in appendices 2-4 respectively. A quantitative standardised measure of self-esteem (Battle, 1992, 1981) and depression (Beck, 1987, 1990) was also used. This provided comparative data to the interviews and other tasks enabling any potential suggestions of changes in self-esteem or problems with depression within the verbal or written data to be examined alongside a quantifiable measure of the same.

Original themes and summaries extracted from the 'Who am I?' narratives can be found in appendix 14. Labelled phenomena from the interview data, diary, and 'Who am I?' narratives for interview 1 can be found in appendix 15. Labelled phenomena from the interview data and diary for interview 2 can be found in appendix 16, and Labelled phenomena from the interview data and 'I am' narratives for interview 3 can be found in appendix 17. (No participant had any diary data at interview 3).
Scoring tables for the self-esteem and depression measures used can be found in appendices 6 and 9 respectively. This will enable the reader to see clearly individual participant scores alongside their classification. Details of the measures used can be found in the methodological procedures chapter 4.

Following the labelling of interview and narrative task data for each participant, all participant data was combined and used to identify final conceptual labels for each of the three interviews. The categorising of data for each of the three interviews then took place and a Core Category for each interview was identified.

The gathering of a variety of data from each individual has given strength to the analysis in that findings have often come from more than one source from each participant. No one means of data collection has been relied upon therefore increasing the validity of the findings.

Participants

This study comprised six participants, the core group. Individual details of participants, recruitment of participants and psychometric data for each participant is given at the beginning of chapter 5.

Key to terminology

For the purposes of this study:

Adaptation is about practical action taken to resolve a situation that is unsatisfactory in the mind of the participant, and where satisfaction about that situation in the mind of the participant is achieved.

Adjustment is about mentally coming to terms with, acceptance of, and congruence with events, circumstances and situations the participant finds herself in.

The methods of Grounded Theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967, Strauss, 1987, Strauss and Corbin, 1990) were used in analysis. Details of the method of analysis can be found in the methodological procedures chapter 4.

This chapter shows analysis at the stage of selection of the 'Core Category' for each interview and then develops into the formation of the 'final concepts'. The final concepts form the structure for the in-depth analysis and from the final concepts and analysis emerges a process model of the transition to retirement.

Analysis of Study 1b Data

Categories were Selectively Coded for a Core Category. The Core Category integrates all previously identified categories for this interview. All analysis for this particular interview, up to and including selection of the Core Category, can be found in appendix 17.

Core Category from Interview 1 - 'Aspects of a Past Self in Circumstances of Change'

Known Self

References are made to incidents in the data where participants locate an experience or decision directly to the perceived personality or uniqueness of the individual. Also, the statement 'I am' is given around various examples of talk about family life, work and retirement.

Adjusting Self

The question of 'Who am I?' appears to be being asked around various examples of talk about family life, work and retirement. Regrets and unfulfilled desires/potential, submerged Self, denial of Self, self-giving, guilt, and questions of identity arise. There is talk relating to significance, worthwhileness, meaningfulness, importance, respect, value, status, purpose, and their opposites through the experience of home, work or change.

Defining Self

Self may be expressed through a series of roles, particularly Self as worker in the work role, and Self as homemaker. Linked to roles are feelings of duty, confidence, responsibilities and family expectations. In particular, the relationship with the husband and its effect on defining the retirement role and Self.

Discovered/Re-Discovered Self

Here 'freedom' and time for Self, even discovery (or re-discovery) of Self is discussed.

Ageing Self

This relates to references made by participants about how they see themselves in terms of age and ageing, and perceived changes or continuities in themselves. Also, the way

work used to be and the way work was before retirement show interesting patterns in comparison and seem important in relation to the ageing Self and are linked to the reasons for leaving work.

Adapting Self

This category covers adjustment perceived by participants but it easily fits under the Core variable umbrella and will be incorporated into discussion on all the aforementioned aspects of Self. Adjustment and coping may be positive e.g. a time for personal interests/time for Self and/or negative e.g. a time of isolation, mood change, loss of status and independence. Defences, coping mechanisms/strategies adopted will be discussed as will the 'meaning of work'. What work means to the individual seems to affect and influence what there is to be adapted to. Commonalties of meaning such as mental stimulation seem to emerge from the data. The meaning of 'retirement', that perceived by the participants as being 'the nature of retirement', also affects methods of coping and perceptions of what potentially there is to be coped with. Linked to this are already experienced effects of retirement, time/pace adaptations, plans (or not), expectations and unfulfilled expectations about retirement, goals, loss (e.g. of routine and structure), and how these are adapted to/coped with.

The wider world and perceptions of change in it identified by participants is a small but acknowledged area of life that involves some adaptation.

Community Self

Here the relative importance given by participants to their place in space, time, history and its influence on the people they are and the decisions they made/make, will be discussed. Linked to this is 'perceived importance of influence of family/friends on development'. All participants attributed some influence on their life/work to be family/friend oriented.

Core Category from Interview 2 - 'Self in Adaptation to New Circumstances'

Known Self

This is about identity and knowing who I am but being aware of stereotypes and the views of others. Related to this is the identification by participants of aspects of themselves that have not changed and therefore affect their experience of retirement (e.g. "Never been one for women's groups", "Always liked to be busy"). It can be seen how the 'known Self' is continued in choices made about activities in retirement.

Adjusting Self

This is about psychological adjustment (how I feel compared to when I first retired), and identifying needs and meeting them (link to adaptation), dealing with loss (e.g. of past plans, identity as a nurse, death of friends, purposeful conversation, work related conversation). As well as identifying what needs to be adjusted to (e.g. freedom, a changed life perspective, slower pace, finding a purpose, replacing work, identity as retired, regrets). This is also about support from friendships and/or husband, but as well as ties and responsibilities for husbands and/or families, children, grandchildren. Also adjusting to husband's retirement, or loss through divorce, and how that affects participants.

Defining Self

This covers the issues around purpose, usefulness, how worthwhile I am now (linked to status loss), and being appreciated for what I do/did. It's about having challenges and being busy, being needed or wanted, giving service to others, about replacing work with something acceptable and about having a reason for being. Also there's the aspect of positively feeling mentally better since retirement (link to adjustment).

Threatened Self

Here views on being old, the old, pensioners, perceptions of retirement, not feeling retired, perceptions of family and stereotypes, value and worth as older people and meanings around the 'retired label' (e.g. on the scrap heap), appear to serve to provoke participants to consider changes (about ageing) although most link these changes to lifestyle too. Thoughts on the ageing Self, particularly health, fears, death anxiety, avoidance of poor health, anxieties about a failing body, planning for potential ill health all seem to pose a challenge to the 'known Self'. Comparisons with others are made, and fears about losing aspects of Self particularly skills and capabilities used at work are expressed. Also expressed is the loss of status, credibility, importance, knowledge, and identification with the job (e.g. nurse).

Adapting Self

Pensions, looking to the future, spending money on Self and financial independence come into this, as do creating a structure, routine, filling the day, social (joining groups), changing home/garden to make it more manageable and freeing up time. Adapting to having time for Self and to pursue interests comes here too.

Core Category from Final Interview – 'Continuing Self in a Season of Changes'

Known Self

This is about maintaining, developing and fulfilling the Self in changed roles and a new season of older age. Adaptation to retirement means knowing yourself and your needs and continuing that person in changed roles. Where family is around it plays a big part in determining new roles. This has been very positive for some participants like Jenny who prefers, and feels more comfortable in, her housewife and mother role than she did in her head teacher role. Molly, on the other hand, has assumed this same role out of a sense of duty, which she neither enjoys nor finds any fulfilment in. Balancing freedom and the seeming need to have a role whilst maintaining a sense of who you are seems to

be quite a challenge here. The 'nurturing, supporting, caring for', role seems to be taken on by all participants whether it is towards family, others or the Self.

Participants have a part of themselves that is known and perceived to be continuous. They are also facing old age and their ideas of 'old' do not fit with who they feel themselves to be. Changes are anticipated in behaviour and health, and the inevitability of dying is acknowledged. However there is a strong sense that the Self they know will continue. All but one of the participants sees development and growth as important and all see maintenance of the person they are now, mentally and emotionally and, as far as possible, physically, as very important. The irrelevance of chronological age is evident.

Threatened Self

Here the threat of retirement and all that it means potentially is evident. What work meant to an individual is important as retirement takes this away. It can be seen how some participants may have resisted or delayed the finality of retirement by going back to work, and are upset by decisions which would mean there was no going back (e.g. in the case of the nurse's payment (or not) of her registration which meant she could or could not practice). The Self is threatened because work appeared to be an expression of who participants are. Does the absence of work take away a part of the Self?

Self In Limited Time

All participants had a growing awareness of time passing and how precious time was. This alarmed all participants and was a source of discomfort to most.

Final Core Categories and Emergence of a Model

Categories from the three interviews were then brought together and final Core Category titles were given. This clarified the progression of categories found in more than one interview. The following are the final Core Categories and their components identified in Study 1b.

Core Category - Interview 1 - Self Evaluation

Known Self
Adjusting Self
Defining Self
Discovered Self
Ageing Self
Adapting Self
Community Self

Core Category - Interview 2 - Self Moving On

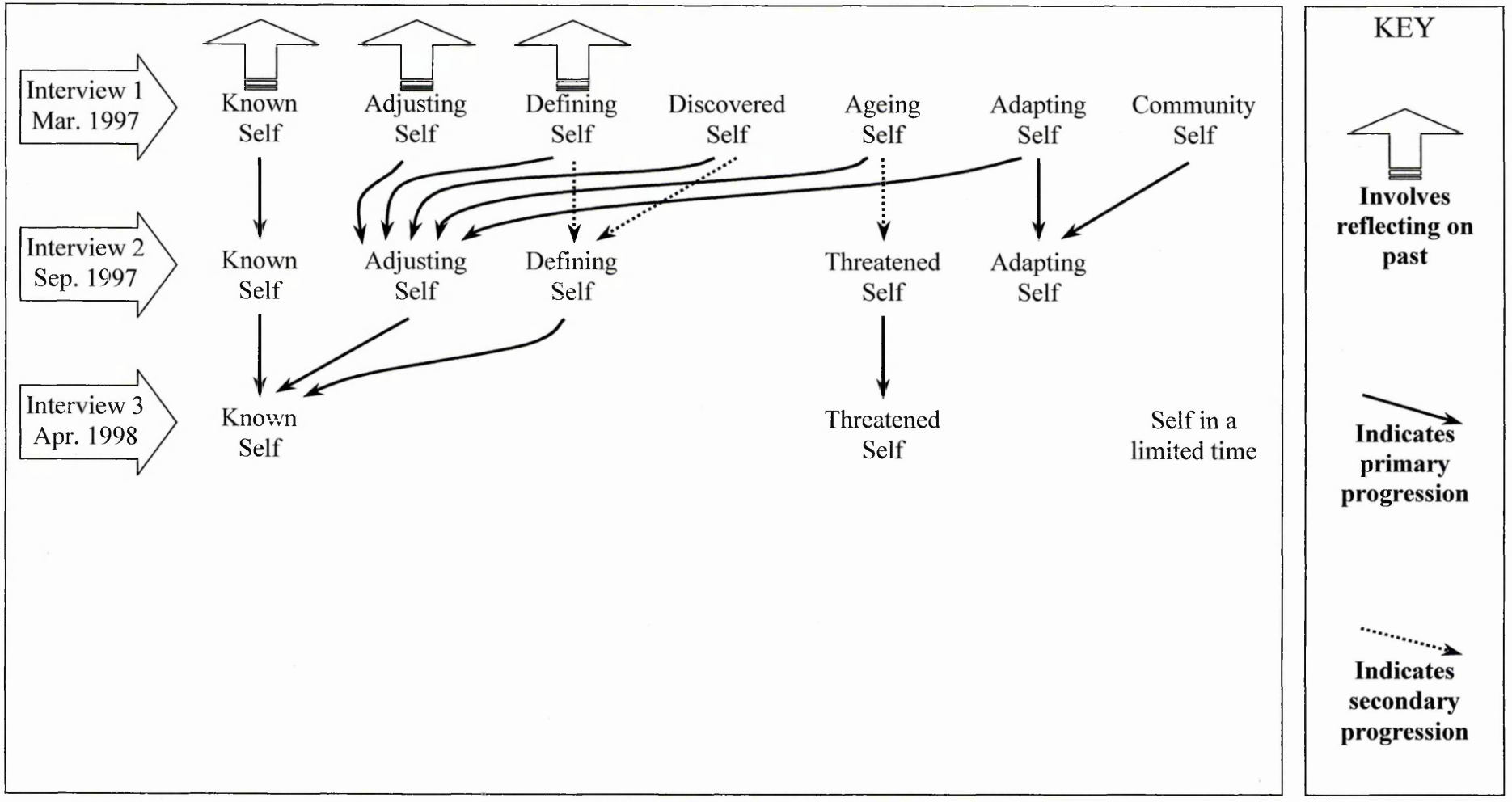
Known Self
Adjusting Self
Defining Self
Threatened Self
Adapting Self

Core category - Interview 3 - Self Discovery

Known Self
Threatened Self
Self in Limited Time

Final Core Categories are identified within each interview. A diagrammatic representation of the components of each category, shown on the following page, shows a progression and development from interview 1 through to the final interview. 'Primary progression', shown by the solid line, indicates the progression of the category through from the first to the last interview. Some categories, as they develop from one interview to the next, are incorporated into other categories. This occurs when a category, in its development, takes on more of the characteristics of the new category than the old. 'Secondary progression', indicated by a broken line on the diagram, indicates where a category develops or retains characteristics of a previous category but in a weaker form than that indicated by the 'primary progression'. Thus, a process model has emerged from the data demonstrating the developmental progression from interview 1 to 3.

Process Model Of The Transition Of The Self In Retirement



The identified developmental progression shown on the diagram is reflected in the way these findings are written in analysis. Inevitably concepts sometimes overlap each other, and the 'best fit' principle applies in these cases as labels are applied to complex human interaction and dialogue.

Known Self

This concept of the 'Known Self' is evident in all interviews with all participants, and although the label remains the same the concept nevertheless follows a developmental progression. In the first interview (Self Evaluation), participants have a good sense of a known part of their Self. They are aware of their personality traits and how being who they are affects, and has affected, their decisions and experiences. They have no problem telling 'who they are' in relation to home and in relation to work. There is a sense of Self here that has not changed since adulthood and is not expected to change.

> Sarah "I like to be busy all the time. Sometimes I wish I could be happy to sit doing very little, but I always seem to think I should be up and doing." ('Who am I?' narrative. Int.1)

> Amy "Restless person in need of lots of stimulation." ('Who am I?' narrative. Int.1)

This known part of the Self continues into retirement and affects decisions about activities in retirement. This continuation of the 'Known Self' is demonstrated in interview 2 (Self Moving On).

> Sarah "So anyway that's the Mothers' Union, and of course the Magistrates' Court, that's a big thing, ... I've always been a busy person, you see, I've been here this morning, and we weren't up all that early, but I've got hoovered round and the washing's done and everything." (Int.2 p.6-7)

> Amy "The other thing, for me, that I'm quite pleased about, and I feel surprisingly interested in, is I've booked myself in an aromatherapy course at the University starting in January ... so I'm looking forward to that." (Int.2 p.2)

Here it can be seen how the 'Known Self' is continued in choices made about activities in retirement. Thus, there are accepted parts of the Self that are fairly easily brought

forward, or moved on, into the retirement experience, though not always without some effort in discovering what exactly might fit a particular need. Even Molly, who struggled with retirement and chose to do some work, was continuing her 'Known Self' in the retirement experience because, although she enjoyed the freedom retirement gave her, work appeared to be a necessary part of expressing the Self that she knew.

By the final interview (Self Discovery), adjustments have been made and participants seem to know more clearly what it is they need and how they can go about fulfilling those needs.

> Amy "My aromatherapy course ... it's one of the best things I've done." (Final interview p.1)
>
> Flo "... so actually there is a lot more people who I know well, or much better, so the actual friendship of colleagues has been replaced by more in-depth in a funny way, colleagues of the home group." (Final Int. p4)
>
> Jane "... if you are senior technician you are somebody ... but to leave work and be on your own ... you lose any identity, you are like nobody's wife, nobody's ... but I seem to have overcome that now and it's quite alright to be Jane so that side is better I think. I know it's better, not think, I know." (Final Int. p5

For Molly it was a little more complicated as her identity was bound up with work and her role at home was something that would never give her satisfaction. Until Molly's husband retired Molly would not feel free to 'be retired'. Molly did the only thing she could and she went back to work, albeit part time.

> Molly "... my only thought is that I retired too early."(Final Int. p1)

Adjusting Self

Despite the fact that participants have a good sense of continuity within themselves the question of 'Who am I?' is still raised after retirement. Participants reach back to past roles such as the housewife role, to 'place' themselves or give themselves a purpose, but a loss of status and recognition of the importance of their role can prompt questions

about the significance of what they do and who they are. The sense of the Self as a worthwhile person with something to give either to the world, family, others or the Self was important for all participants. This was particularly important as all but one participant prior to leaving work had negative experiences of work, feeling unfulfilled, unappreciated or overwhelmed. In interview 1 (Self Evaluation) it was clear how purpose and significance were being evaluated.

> Jenny "Well it got that, I mean, towards the end I was in charge of a quarter of a million pounds. Well that is a responsibility, when you're sorting out staff wages and clerical wages and cleaners, and apparatus, and books and water and electric, well I mean, that's not what I've been trained for!" (Int.1 p.9)

> Flo "Can't honestly say that my last job was the least bit worthwhile ... they made you collect all this information, you told what you could do with it, but they never did it, they just went on in the same way. ... Now there was tremendous futility knowing that you'd collected good information, reliable information, and nobody's bothering to use it." (Int.1 p.33)

For a couple of participants post retirement, a sense of needing to do something significant or to have a purpose was very strongly felt.

> Amy "You know, I shouldn't be sitting here doing nothing, I should be out waving banners." (Int.1 p.38)

> Flo "I was also thinking I ought really to do something really worthwhile, ... I felt it, you know, I should be out saving the world or something." (Int.1 p.39)

More usually participants expressed a significance and purpose related to service, looking after family, or even having time to look after Self. For all participants significance was related to identity as the question of 'Who am I?' was asked and re-evaluated in the light of retirement and the Self in a non-work role. Regrets and unfulfilled desires needed to be either laid aside or worked through.

> Flo "What I really would like to have been was tremendously successful as a family person, little families or wider families. And I don't think ... I've been as successful at that, as I would have liked." (Int.1 p.42)

Jenny "The only thing I regret is not having another child. I wished I'd had more than two ... I always wanted more than two, still that's how it goes." (Int.1 p.12)

Molly "My regret is that the issue of my particular status, within the job, was not, could never, was never rationalised. Had it been, then I think things would have, I would have been happy to have stayed." (Int.1 p.22)

This 'Self Evaluation', the final concept identified in interview 1, of the past and of one's significance, enables an evaluation of the person in the here and now. This is part of the statement of 'Who I am', whether it is comfortable or not. Thus, value, status and purpose both immediately prior to retirement and now as a retired person were important issues to deal with and also part of the evaluation of identity.

Part of this evaluation of life and work also enabled participants to see what it was in their previous work that was giving a sense of significance, was congruent with who they were and which might therefore need replacing. This would enable a 'Moving On', the final concept identified in Interview 2. This would largely boil down to identifying needs and meeting them or compromising on them. Participants did not do this consciously, but, by looking at what they missed from work, and at who they knew themselves to be, they identified things they might enjoy and feel were useful, or they identified gaps that needed filling. This was mentioned under 'Known Self', but is relevant here in that the 'Known Self' needs to be brought through an evaluation of life to a worthwhile and significant continuation following the retirement transition. Thus, in a new life with lots of freedom and few set rules and roles, the focus was suddenly on 'what do I want to do with today?' This was a big adjustment because the person participants knew themselves to be had been expressed automatically in a work role without analysis of 'why I do what I do'. Participants were now beginning to realise why they had done what they did, and were missing it!

Amy "My sister-in-law just said to me, 'You really miss being a nurse don't you?' and I thought yes, she's right in a way, I do, because it's this interfering with other people's lives that gets taken away from you. You know, you haven't the right to sort of say to somebody, 'Now, now, what's the matter with you? Come on, tell me

all about it' sort of thing any longer. ... it's meeting a need in yourself to be needed. (Int.2 p.8)

Moving on was about meeting those needs in a different way, or compromising on them.

Amy "What I would really like to do for Christmas, and I can't bring myself to tell my old man this, is I would really like to get involved ... you know, putting on meals for the homeless or something."

Amy "I wrote to our MP about something ... and I mentioned to (my eldest son) 'Oh my god', he said 'you're not turning into one of those elderly people who writes to their MP all the time.' And I thought 'Oh perhaps I am'."(Laughs). (Int.2 p.13 and 17)

Jenny loves looking after people and likes to feel needed and she had plenty of opportunity when family problems arose as soon as she retired.

Jenny "Oh yes a purpose ... mine at the moment seems to be just looking after everybody else." (Int. 2 p.13)

Sarah was a magistrate both pre and post retirement, which gave her plenty of status, purpose, significance and responsibility. This whole issue of significance never arose for Sarah.

For other participants going back to do a bit of work was part of the solution.

Flo "I'll not be a nurse anymore ... it's kind of being taken away, and yet you've still got all that knowledge...

"... they rang and said would I go and do this study ... I found I'd said yes (laugh) before I came, came off the phone and [husband] wasn't there and when he came in I said, you know, I've just said yes to going back to work!" (Int. 2 p.2 and 14)

Molly too went back to work.

For Jane things were different again as she was adjusting to both divorce and retirement. Jane's purpose for a few years before retirement had involved her attempting to adjust

to life alone and she had had some very difficult times. Now she was retired and previous plans of retirement had gone with the divorce. Jane was feeling better about divorce and retirement and for her significance and purpose was about being 'Jane' in the situation she was in without the shackles of past plans. Jane was happy not to be working and to be at home.

> Jane "But sometimes I, did I ever go out to work? I don't think I was ever cut out for it, ... I can't imagine myself doing it now. ...
>
> "... I like being at home, I always used to, in the holidays, I never minded being at home." (Int.2 p.25 and 40)

In the final interview (Self Discovery) participants see maintenance of the person they are now, mentally, emotionally and as far as possible physically, as very important. They know themselves, are confident about what they know and have moved from adjustment to retirement into fulfilment of the person I know myself to be. Therefore 'adjusting Self' moves into 'known Self' at final interview.

Defining Self

As we have seen, because of the changes that retirement brings about in every aspect of life, questions about 'who am I and what do I need?' arise in the minds of participants. We often express 'who we are' in a tangible way by the role we adopt in work and family life. The cessation of a role, as in retirement, can cause a problem of expression.

Continuing the 'Known Self' in changed or unknown roles can be a challenge in retirement.

> Molly "... I have found it difficult to be on tap ... to feel that ... this is now my job. I'm here, I'm not working. Therefore if a meal is to be cooked then I cook it. ...that I've found quite difficult." (Int1 p. 114, 115)
>
> Jane "I'm alright as I am, as long as I keep seeing people. I would hate not to think I'd got friends and people. I wouldn't like to sit all day every day." (Int.1 p.4)

Retirement doesn't seem to describe what one does, it isn't a role, and seems to suggest that we don't do anything of value. Often that needs qualifying, and part of 'Moving On', the concept identified in interview 2, is to accept or create a new role while not denying the 'Known Self'.

In interview 2 it can be seen how Flo recognises that her work role gave her a forum for a particular expression of herself but she is now attempting to move on from her role as nurse, and to believe in the importance of her new role.

> Flo "You had to go to school. I volunteered to go nursing, ... so I think from that point of view that it's perhaps quite important to me. ... I mean after all I can still nurse as much now as I could've two years ago. ... I mean I do find I've got absolutely plenty to do." (Here follows a long list of the many activities Flo is involved in.) (Int.2 p.5-6)

For Jane the importance of routine and order in her job was carried through into retirement activities.

> Jane "I try to stick to a little bit of a routine, ... I think I myself am better for it."
>
> Interviewer "You like a routine?"
>
> Jane "Yes, because I think I've worked so many years in a job that had to be done orderly." (Int.2 p.26)

For Sarah, in defining herself her past work as a nurse was important to mention before going on to say what her activities now involved.

> Sarah "I probably would have said I was a nurse, but I'm retired now ... then I might say well I'm involved in ..." (p.12)

By the final interview it can be seen that participants are trying to identify with a new role and find a new way of expressing an aspect of the Self that work allowed. This might have been in a continuation of a role previously valued (e.g. the housewife role), but shadowed by the work role, or be something totally new. Where family is around, they seem to play a big part in determining new roles. This has been very positive for

some participants like Jenny, who prefers and feels more comfortable in her housewife and mother role than she did in her head teacher role. Molly, on the other hand, has assumed this same role out of a sense of duty, which she neither enjoys or finds any fulfilment in.

> Jenny "What I have done has been right for me because I do like looking after other people. I must admit it's my mothering instinct coming out, and seeing people are comfortable, because I'd often thought I'd like to do a B & B, yes I do, I like mothering and making sure the bed is nicely made. I like to think I'm needed, I love folk really. So although it's been a hassle, I've felt I've fulfilled, it's fulfilled a need in me actually." (Final Int. p.1)

> Molly "To be honest I feel that the role I play is a 'getter of food' ... that is my main function."

> Interviewer "Are you happy and satisfied in that role?"

> Molly "No, I don't particularly like cooking ... it is part of my philosophy that that is a wife's role. I'm not resentful of it in the sense that I feel put on or anything, I think that's as it is."(Final Int. p.3)

Balancing freedom and the seeming necessity to have a role whilst maintaining a sense of who you are seems to be quite a challenge here. The 'nurturing, supporting, caring', role seems to be taken on by all participants whether it is towards family, others or the Self. All but Molly (who can only so far happily identify herself in the work role) are fairly satisfied with this, and by the final interview there is congruence between the 'Known Self' and the role now taken on. The Self that is known is listened to and participants re-define their roles according to what they know of themselves. For Molly it was important to go back to work.

> Jane "The one (club) that I joined I didn't like, I decided it wasn't me. I'm doing what I want to do. I heard an expression, somebody called it 'off loading' things or people that you don't need. You do what you want to do. I'm quite happy without joining anything." (Final Int. p.1)

> Flo "I do try very hard to ring up people and ask them if they're alright, ... although it's verbal it is following through the caring bit." (Final int. p.4)

Discovered Self

In interview 1, (Self Evaluation) participants are experiencing freedom in retirement and discovering what it is to have this freedom and the choices available. For all participants this new freedom brings more than choices about how to spend time, it becomes a discovery, or re-discovery of something of the Self. This can be negative or positive, and, in the final interview, it can be seen how this freedom has developed self-awareness in individuals and is subsumed into the 'Known Self' category.

The freedom retirement brings has positives and negatives.

> Jenny "I can go out into the garden and think ooh, I shan't have time to finish this border today, but ooh I can do it tomorrow." (Int.1 p.13)

> Jenny "Oh and that day it snowed it was wonderful ... we went for a lovely long walk ... instead of having to 'faff' about at school and worry about the buses coming for the kids and getting the kids home." (Int.1 p.13)

Here Jenny exemplifies freedom retirement brings <u>to</u> do things in her own time, and freedom <u>from</u> the worries of her work. Amy, on the other hand, shows how too much freedom can make for feelings of futility.

> Amy "... your life gets filled, you sometimes find you're filling it and does it matter. You're filling it with erm, things that don't really need to be there, or aren't really your interest." (Int.1 p.16)

And Flo finds that freedom can have obligations that go with it.

> Flo "... because I was there (at work) I made an effort to talk to people, see people, whereas now 95% of the time I'm probably about the house and garden. And I haven't really made as much effort as I should have."
>
> Interviewer "Right, you feel you should have?"
>
> Flo "Oh I think so, I think I, the telephone works both ways really ... I probably leave a longer gap than I should before I ring back ... and sometimes that's just because I'm content, you know,

> it's not that I can't be bothered. ... I quite liked the routine (of work) and I quite liked the 'my goodness Saturday was play day' or you know, Saturday and Sunday you could have friends and things, and I didn't need to feel guilty if I didn't do too much of that during the week. Now I often think, you know, I really should sometimes make more effort." (Int.1 p.22-23)

Each is finding out what it is to have more freedom and choice, and how they, as individuals, respond to those choices. This becomes an issue of expression of the Self and therefore joins the 'defining Self' category in interview 2. In the final interview (Self Discovery), the subject fits more in the category of 'Known Self' as it is seen how this new life with more choice about what to do with each day is affected by the person on the inside, and how this leads to greater awareness of the Self.

In the case of Molly, she discovered that her self-esteem and identity came from work. Whilst she enjoyed some of the freedoms retirement brought it was a costly price to pay. Molly described herself as a "sad person" (Int.1 p.40). The reason she gave was "probably a denial of Self". She describes herself as "propping up" the family. Molly appears to be sacrificing herself for her family's happiness and success. In retirement Molly is completely unable to do anything for her own enjoyment, and as the work she enjoyed and gained status from is now gone she is plunged into further sadness. The freedom of retirement brought home the realities of Molly's situation to her. She could only do one thing which was to go back to work as a supply teacher which gave her back some of her identity, and freedom to be who she was comfortable being.

> Molly "... at home and amongst our friends, I have always been (husband's) wife ... I have never, in a way, had a strong enough identity of my own to come outside of that. At work and at school I did, and before I retired I was the person who was second in command in that school, that was me. Now I am a supply teacher but, ... I know people recognise that I am above the average 'run of the mill' supply teacher, that I give more." (Final Int. p.6)

Jane discovered that she was worth putting first and that retirement gave her the freedom to do that. Although there is a bit of guilt about being selfish, Jane, for the first time since her divorce and then retirement, is happy being 'Jane', and pleasing herself seems to have come on the back of that, perhaps giving attention to her own needs that was not there before.

Jane "I can do it if I want and when I want, that pleases me, that is the most important person. I do things now to suit me, ... I please myself but I put myself above anybody/ I'm not saying that is a good thing. ... I don't think living on your own is a good thing. It makes you very selfish. ... it is important that all the friends are the people I want." (Final Int. p.3-4)

Ageing Self

Here references are made by participants about how they see themselves in terms of age and ageing, and perceived changes or continuities in themselves. Participants have a part of themselves that is known and perceived to be continuous, but they are also facing old age which for them is an 'unknown entity' in their lives. In interview 1 (Self Evaluation) there is evidence that participants are looking at themselves as 'retired' and evaluating that knowledge against preconceptions and/or stereotypes that either they themselves have held, or know others hold, about retirement and ageing. The stereotypes don't fit what they feel about themselves.

Flo "This sounds silly, but I also always expected the minute I erm, retired, just to go down hill like that."

Interviewer "Oh, did you?"

Flo "Yes, the cells to stop working and you know, not to have any interests."

Interviewer "Was that a preconception about retired people or ..."

Flo "Yes, and I think I also did not really want to do the things like the things I'm now doing ... helping in crèches and things." (Int.1 p.35)

Jenny "... being sixty, I'll tell you now, is going to bother me. ... from fifty nine to sixty seems to me, yea, that's going to bother me, being sixty."

Interviewer "Mmm, d'you think sixty sounds old?"

Jenny "Yes, yes I do." (laugh)

Interviewer "D'you feel old at all?"

Jenny "No, no." (laugh) (Int.1 p.83).

Amy "I don't look forward to being, I don't think of myself as old ... I remember my mother at 79 before she died, she'd had a stroke and she had two arthritic hips, and she said inside her head she was about twenty three. ... she didn't feel old inside, and she was not old inside I might say." (Int.1 p.31)

By interview 2 (Self Moving On), age isn't a particular issue except around the subject of health, which is raised as a particular threat. Participants feel the same on the inside, most feel better since leaving work and are experiencing a freedom that comes with retirement and older age. This takes on different forms but is relished by all participants.

Amy "I think there is room, space for being, and it's something I'm trying to encourage myself in, in being the elderly person who speaks with the voice of authority because they've been there and they know. Which can be extremely tedious to one's daughter-in-law (laughs). (Int.2 p.24)

Molly "Somebody invited us out for a meal and we'd organised for a Friday ... then they rang up and couldn't make it on Friday, and he's a retired teacher and his wife ... doesn't work in the winter ... and we suddenly both realised that there wasn't really a reason why it had to be on a Friday. ... that opens up a whole new area of life, the fact that you can do things in the week." (Int.2 p.68)

For all participants chronological age is becoming irrelevant, and maintenance of who they know themselves to be and how old they feel inside takes priority.

Jenny "You don't feel any different up here." (points to head)

Interviewer "So from 40 to 60 ..."

Jenny "You still feel 40." (Final Int. p.5)

Ageing Self Continued Into Threatened Self

From the 2nd interview onwards there does seem to be a slight shift in perception of the 'known', 'stable', 'unchanging' part of the Self in that there is raised in the minds of

participants the potential for change, change that might not be very welcome. An awareness of the potential changes old age may enforce on behaviour due to failing health serves to create a small disruption in the accepted 'Known Self'. These changes are threatening to the 'Known Self'.

> Flo " ... she retired a few months ago, and she said, "I'm not going to do anything, this is my time", ... and now she's going into a home with Alzheimer's. ... so I think perhaps you need things that keep a grip. ... we still do the crossword every day ... again that is just hoping to keep the little grey cells going." (Int.2 p.18-19)

> Jane "... it's going to sound awful but, it made me feel better ... even married couples have still got the worry of retirement, financial side I mean ... I'm sure finance has got to come into a lot of people's ... and health of course ... I mean that's the sort of thing that can hit anybody ... so you've to start thinking about what might happen, and what, how it should be." (Int.2 p.35-36).

The inevitability of dying is also acknowledged by participants and is mixed up with health fears about growing old and being unable to care for themselves. Retirement brought participants closer to thinking about a time when they might be incapacitated or near to death and this can be frightening and threatening.

> Amy "Now that's the first of our set to drop off the perch, you know. ... I did feel , it was a little bit, oh gosh, that's one of us." (Int.2 p.5)

> Jenny "The thought of growing old and dying upsets me a lot." (Final Int. p.4)

> Interviewer "So you probably wouldn't have dreaded (being 60) as much?"
>
> Jane "Probably not, no, being at work."
>
> Interviewer "I wonder why you dreaded it so much then."
>
> Jane "I don't know, it's nearer to dying isn't it? (laugh) I think you always wonder if your health is going to hold out." (Final Int. p.6)

Ageing, and all that goes with it, is not the only threat to the Self, post retirement. Work is often an expression of the identity. Take work away and there is a potential threat to the identity. This is seen clearly when two participants who were nurses came to the point of paying their registration fee to enable them to continue nursing.

> Amy "Periodic fee request from UKCC. Shall I pay it? Money down the drain? Why do I want to stay secured to practice for another 3 years? Feels like giving up a part of myself. Shall I pay it even tho' I shall almost certainly not make use of it – something to do with deferring the inevitable I suppose. -Later- I didn't!" (Diary extract following first interview)

> Interviewer "Did you have to pay your UKCC registration?"

> Amy "Yes, I should have done and didn't. I decided not to do it and regretted it ever since. ... only slightly regretted it." (Final int. p.2)

> Flo "...my UKCC membership is due ... and of course now I'll not be a nurse anymore." (Int.2 p.1)

Older age, possibly ill health, certainly death, are inevitable consequences for participants so the threat to the Self will not go away. However, participants did respond to this threat by sensing perhaps more than ever in their lives the preciousness of time. This was a new concept identified in the final interview and links to the Threatened Self.

Adapting Self

Adapting Self is about the physical adaptations made by participants to meet needs of, for example, mental stimulation, provision of structure, significance and purpose. These issues have been raised and discussed from a more psychological perspective within the other concepts and it is therefore thought unnecessary to discuss them again. It was nevertheless considered important to mention the more practical aspects of dealing with needs as this certainly came up in the data. Examples are making the house more manageable in anticipation of possible health decline, and sorting out a routine or some

structure to life. These adaptations came up in interview 1 and 2 but were not raised by participants in interview 3, suggesting that whatever physical adaptations had to be made were either made or planned for by the final interview.

Community Self

This concept is mentioned in order to ensure that all data is represented though it need not be discussed. It is felt important to mention that all participants had a sense of space, time and history which fed into their sense of themselves in the world in the past and in the 'here and now'. Development of the Self has history and participants were well aware of their developing selves alongside the influences of other people, the work they did, decisions they made and events that occurred. The influence of the 'other' on the development of the Self is therefore acknowledged. Participants acknowledged influences of other people and the importance of other people in their lives at work and retirement. Thus, in retirement they organised their lives to continue this social and relating part of themselves.

Self In Limited Time

Amy demonstrates the preciousness of time in this comment.

> Amy "We are both doing the things we must do rather than the things we like to do, and I know that all our working lives we have done all that but once you retire you begin to resent the things you must do." (Final Int. p.5)

Sarah comments on how she occasionally gets a sense of time being limited.

> Sarah "Sometimes I think gosh, I was going to do that last year. Gosh there may not be all that many more years left." (Final Int. p.6)

This concept arises in interviews with participants retired 6 years and over and will thus be looked at again.

Summary Of Analysis

Known Self

There is an aspect of the Self (the 'Known Self') that is recognised, accepted and continued through adulthood and into retirement. Meeting the needs of this 'Known Self' on retirement calls for some thought and adjustment but doesn't provoke great problems.

Adjusting Self

Significance, worth and purpose are called into question. Questions of identity were raised and an evaluation of the Self in the past and the present was necessary to work through in order to find how the Self they knew could be expressed in retirement. Thus further identification of needs and how to meet them ran alongside maintenance of the Self they knew themselves to be.

Defining Self

Expression of the Self was a potential problem in the 'roleless' state of retirement. Work allowed a particular expression of the Self and participants struggled to find a forum for that expression in retirement. Roles taken on didn't tend to give the same completeness of expression (except for two participants, one of whom was continuing a pre-retirement voluntary role), but were largely acceptable as they didn't conflict with who the participants knew themselves to be.

Discovered Self

A new freedom and choices are experienced in retirement. This is experienced as both positive and negative by participants as they discover new aspects of themselves and of giving expression to themselves. By interview 2 this Discovered Self is involved in the 'defining Self' category and by final interview there is acknowledgement of the fact that freedom and choice work positively only when they fit with being the person you know yourself to be.

Ageing to Threatened Self

Stereotypes informed initial thoughts about the Ageing Self but feelings didn't confirm the stereotypes. There is an enjoyment in being retired and feeling 'not old'. However, from interview 2 onwards the potential threat of old age, meaning illness and limitation, is raised and is a threat to the 'Known Self'. Death anxiety is also evident.

Adapting Self

This is not concentrated on in analysis but practical aspects of meeting needs for the present and anticipated needs for the future were raised and dealt with. At final interview this category was not raised.

Community Self

Again this is not concentrated on in analysis but was about adapting life in retirement to meet known social needs.

Self in Limited Time

At interview 3 the issue of time is raised: time is felt to be precious and limited.

CHAPTER 7

Study 2:
Perspectives of Four Women Retired Six to Nine Years

STUDY 2:
PERSPECTIVES OF FOUR WOMEN RETIRED SIX TO NINE YEARS

Introduction and Rationale

This study was undertaken for a 'snapshot' view of retirement a few years on from the core group in study 1. This study was done with the idea of questioning the assumption illustrated by the process model of the retirement transition (study 1, chapter 6) that, after a period of fragmentation and disruption of the Self early in retirement, a time of relative stability followed. This is in keeping with the call for 'theoretical sensitivity,' advocated by grounded theorists such as Strauss and Corbin (1990). The aim of this study was, therefore, to examine the experience of retirement for those retired for between six and nine years and compare it with the core group findings.

Method and Design

Participants were initially contacted by telephone and an introductory chat was arranged. At the introductory chat the study was explained to participants, a consent form was signed, and the 'Who am I?' task was left with participants to be completed before the interview. The plan for the introductory chat can be found in appendix 12, the consent form can be found in appendix 11, and the 'Who am I' task and instructions can be found in appendix 2. More information on the 'Who am I?' task can be found in the methodological procedures chapter 4. Opportunity was given to participants to withdraw from the study following the explanation of the nature of the study. No one withdrew. Participants were interviewed once in their own homes. Interview questions can be found in appendix 13. Interviews were of an informal but guided type. More information on the interview style can be found in the methodological procedures chapter 4. The methods of Grounded Theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967, Strauss 1987, Strauss and Corbin, 1990) were used in analysis. Further details and rationale for using of this method can be found in chapter 4.

Study 2 begins by the presentation of overviews of the 'Who Am I?' narrative task for each participant. This serves as an introduction to each participant. The core category from all the data is then identified and summarised. This serves as the basis for the analysis which follows. A summary of the analysis precedes a diagram of the process model of the transition to retirement, identified in chapter 5, and extended in this chapter.

Participants

This study comprised a group of four women who had been retired for between six and nine years and these participants were interviewed once. All these women had retired from professional/semi-professional jobs. Two participants for this group were recruited via a friend of the researcher, another had answered the initial church advertisement mentioned in chapter 4 of the thesis, and another was known by the researcher. This was' therefore' a convenience sample. At the time of interview the youngest of these women was aged 61. Out of this group of women two attended Church and two did not.

Analysis

Participants in this group were interviewed only once. Although these interviews were thematically analysed along with the narrative 'Who am I?' task, it was thought that labelling phenomena and categorising data using the method of Grounded theory was a useful adjunct to the thematic analysis.

OPEN CODING

Conceptual Labels

Interviews were read individually and phenomena labelled and compared for similarities and differences. Through this procedure phenomena were closely examined and questions were asked about the data. Common concepts were finally identified which fitted the combined data. Labelled phenomena from individual interviews and the 'Who

am I?' task can be found in appendix 19, together with final concepts identified from the data.

AXIAL CODING

Categorising Data

Concepts were then classified into categories. Concepts were compared with each other and, when appearing to pertain to a similar phenomenon, the concepts were grouped together. Categories identified can be found in appendix 19.

SELECTIVE CODING

Identification of Core Category from Data

Categories were then Selectively Coded for a Core Category. The Core Category integrates all the previously identified categories.

Who Am I? Analysis Of Group Retired 6-9 Years - Overview Approach

Betty

In Betty's description of 'Who am I?' there is a great sense of her past family life influencing her future interests and values. These are interests of sport and music, and values of caring, helping, sharing, friendships, and fighting for justice. Her commitment to education is shown in thirty nine years of infant teaching which she says she wanted to do from an early age. She now spends a lot of time with the over seventies and finds they have a lot in common with her younger charges! (Betty's dry sense of humour is something she cherishes.) Betty is single and has a brother living in Canada. She emphasises how much she appreciates the support and encouragement of her "special group of caring Christian friends". Betty describes herself as a leader, but not through

choice. She values working in team situations. Meaning in life comes from Betty's Christian faith.

May

May separates her description of 'Who am I?' into biological, psychological, emotional, spiritual, sex and family, and gifts and talents. She is very open and reflective about herself and describes herself as "a depressive who lacks confidence". May is highly sensitive to criticism and quite anxious, particularly when meeting people. She describes a great concern for, and love of, people and says she's "probably happiest and most fulfilled when doing something with people". May describes herself as "never being very good at anything, but would have loved to have been good at art, music and sport." May has guilt feelings about her confusion and difficulties with organised religion although she believes in God. She puts her guilt down to her upbringing by strict parents (parson's daughter). Sex with love and understanding is very important to her and helps her cope with life. May describes her relationship with her husband as "forming a good team". Her daughters and grandchildren are "highly valuable" and she finds it difficult to accept they have their own lives to lead and she can't see more of them. Structuring time is very important to May otherwise she quickly becomes aimless which leads to depression. May says it's easy to become selfish with time but feels it is important for people of her generation to give something back to society. She feels it is not a good idea to look back on life as she sees all the negatives. May attempts to get a balance between engaging in good things and finding worthwhile interests which might help others. Meeting new people and learning new skills and knowledge are also her aims.

Ivy

Ivy uses the 'Who am I?' to give a potted life history focusing on childhood and school days. Ivy stayed in one job all her working life, attributing this to laziness and the fact that her job was so interesting. Ivy's hobbies have been with her throughout her life as

she inherited most of them from her parents. In retirement, therefore, she does more of the same. She retired six years before being entitled to a pension but doesn't regret it at all. Ivy wishes she was more organised and had more time to catch up on things, she actually feels too busy.

Meg

Meg opens her life to me in her 'Who am I?'. I feel very honoured to have these things shared with me, a researcher who pops in and out of her life and gives her nothing in return. Meg is an only child who describes herself as painfully shy. Her childhood was difficult, much was expected of her and she knew only of chastisement from her mother and father, for saying the wrong things or nothing at all. Meg described herself as young for her age at school and as being lonely, without a special friend. Her great love then was the organ, she would practice for hours a day, alone and happy. She met a man 15 years her senior and married him within a year. Again she was put on a pedestal and it caused sadness when she fell off. Her marriage was happy, however, and they shared many interests. They had three children, the last of which was stillborn. Meg's husband died following an operation and she describes her life as shattered. Meg came home to mum, from abroad, set up house with her children and "scraped along". She went back to teaching, "sent her son off" to be a chorister and "found" physiotherapy as a career for her daughter. Through all this she says she had a few "skirmishes of the heart," but all with men who were safe and didn't "threaten her citadel". Meg has a lover of 20 years standing, "ageing like myself," who is a good support but she says she's never found another real companion. Meg is busy with many interests and enjoys all that she does. Her Church group gives her peace and inner calm but from the music and ritual rather than Christian doctrine. Meg says her true religion is in her garden, hills, valleys and stars. She says she rages against her father who, before becoming too old, constantly accused her of thoughts and actions that would never have entered her head. Her daughter is like that too, she says. Meg feels guilt at her reactions to her father. When her son comes home (not often), she relaxes completely and can talk to him. "We can talk without me being shouted down," she says.

Summary of Core Category identified from Data (Group Retired 6-9 Years)

'Self in a Precious time'

Known Self (Past)

This is about who I was and the influence of the past Self on who I am now and what I do now (unchanging Self e.g. what I know about myself and my responses, hobbies and interests I have taken up), about accepting the past and the way life has turned out and getting on with the future. It is about accepting the presuppositions of retirement and working with them or moving on from them as well as about identifying the meanings around work, both pre and post retirement e.g. social contact with people of all ages, roles and identity, and moving on to compensate.

Known Self (Present)

This is about contentment with the Self I am now, the acceptance of Self, being realistic and having the strength to be who you are. It's about adaptation to the Ageing Self in the present circumstances (e.g. having a gardener or cleaner to help). Structure and routine (creating one or not having one and coping with a lack of one) are also ongoing issues for the present and the future, as are financial considerations and health (keeping fit).

Threatened Self

This is about thoughts and feelings on expected health decline, plans, fears, the desire to remain independent, and worth in old age.

This is about the whole issue of time (not wasting it, its preciousness, good use of time, guilt about time, value of time). It's about the perception of not having time for Self even when much of the time is spent in chosen activities. And of being busy, even too busy (retirement stress!). It's about the use of time, the pace of life slowing down (or not), freedom to choose to take up classes and education or not, and/or interests, hobbies and volunteer work. It's about the ongoing responsibilities of caring for family or not being involved or in contact (each has a cost). Caring for elderly relatives is a big issue here (the limitations and sacrifice of precious time).

Analysis of Participants (Group Retired 6-9 Years)

'Self in a Precious Time'

Known Self (Past)

All participants acknowledged the influence of the past on the people they now were: the influence of parents and relations regarding work, hobbies and interests, and the influence of parents and events in life on the development of aspects of personality.

> Betty "It's good to be able to do things for other people, and it's something I was brought up to do, so for me that was a natural on-going thing for me to seek avenues of where I could do things for other people and where the obvious need was." (p.7)

> Meg "I think losing my husband, I had to learn to stand on my own feet. Always I hid behind my mother, and then my husband ... and when he wasn't there and I'd got the children, then I had to start being more forceful. I suppose in a way it was a good thing ... for my character." (p.22)

> May "Believe in God but find 'organised religion' very difficult ... Guilt feelings about this – possibly due to upbringing by strict parents (Parson's daughter!)." ('Who am I?' Narrative)

Retirement for all was preceded by feelings of dissatisfaction with, or sadness about, the job. Work had been enjoyable and interesting (for all except Meg), and gave a forum for expression of the Self that they knew. This meant that there was some sadness about giving up work.

> May "... the actual hands on work I was finding very satisfying, ... [but] because of financial restraints and cut backs ... I'd got the message that there wasn't going to be the money available to pay me round the community ... so it wasn't as though I was able to train someone else to carry on. ... It made me feel quite sad and very angry in some ways, ... I felt enough was enough ... it was a sad finish really." (p.4-5)

> Betty "I got less and less happy with the situation and a feeling that I was being frustrated in the post to which I'd been appointed ... so in the end it just got that I was really ready to leave." (p.1-2)

> Ivy "I'd had enough, the amount of work had gone up at least four hundred percent, with no extra staff, and I was getting older, and I'd had enough." (p.1-2)

For some there were presuppositions about retirement that were not fulfilled because they did not fit with the 'Known Self'.

> May "I think we all have dreams of, when I retire I'm going to take up painting and sketching, or I'm going to travel, or I'm going to clean out all the cupboards and drawers ... of course in reality you can only do so many of them ... the cupboards and drawers are still in chaos (laugh)." (p.7-8)

> Meg "I remember thinking, 'Oh, it would be nice to be domesticated for a bit', but it didn't last, it wore off very quickly." (p.19)

Participants talked about difficulties they had experienced in adjusting to retirement.

> May "I think I've tended to become less confident ... May, Senior Physiotherapist had some sort of standing ... sounds silly ... whereas just, you know, retired physiotherapist, housewife ... in the work situation one acquires whatever confidence one needs for the status you are in." (p.25-26)

Betty "Being on my own wasn't anything new ... quietness in a sense was a problem. I missed hearing voices ... so sometimes I'd go into town just simply to hear the voices of other people because I really missed the sound of people." (p.6)

Ivy "Obviously you miss the company ... compensate for that by going out and about and doing other things. ... I miss getting to know what's going off in the town and big jobs that go off, I don't know about them now." (p.3-4)

Known Self (Present)

Whilst there was certainly some continuation of the Self they knew themselves to be, both in personality and in activities chosen in retirement, this group of participants were very accepting and comfortable with 'who they are now'. This acceptance and contentment was a change in the Self that had occurred over time, they were comfortable with the Self they knew and were confident about being that person.

May "... getting older one accepts more, er, certain things about oneself, ... I had a mother who was terribly musical and insisted on me having piano lessons, and I used to get so worried about it because I wasn't really very good, I was never any good at it ... as one gets older you think well why on earth did I, you know make all that effort? ... Why didn't I pack it in and do something else? ... I think there are other things that as you get older you think well really why should I struggle away when I can do without that." (p.19)

Meg "I certainly feel more content with my lot than at any other time in my life." ('Who am I?' narrative)

Meg "I've suddenly realised that I'm not, you know, striving for the impossible any longer, I'm just accepting what I've got and enjoying it." (p.24)

Betty "I'm probably less tense ... maybe more reflective." (p.30 and 32)

It was important to all participants that they were continuing to learn and grow and have new and exciting experiences.

> Betty "I think the day you think you know everything is the day you want shooting really ... there's always new avenues to explore, new interests, new things that are coming to your attention and are developing ... although I've come out of education I follow the issues in education very closely." (p.25-26)

> Meg "There's always something new, you know you don't have to look far to find it really." (p.11)

> Ivy "Still a lot of things that I'm getting to know about that I'm interested in and can follow up." (p.9)

Participants had organised and structured their time since retiring and were doing things that fitted with the Self they knew themselves to be.

> Meg "You've got to sort of establish things haven't you ... I started going to Church, not because I'm religious ... but for the music ... I've always liked the ritual of it, the shape of it ... there again it's a sort of erm, a regular thing that goes on." (p.6)

For some there had been difficulties in this.

> May "I can say I suffer from retirement stress. In other words, when I was working you knew exactly what was happening, you didn't need to look at your diary, ... whereas now you're fitting this in, ... trying to slot all these things in and they don't always fit and I look at my diary and I get quite stressed up." (p.9)

> May "You find after a while, you, all these things are structured." (p.9)

The perception of 'Time for Self' by participants was interesting. All participants had taken up interests and hobbies, or increased time on those hobbies they'd had in the past. Activities such as swimming, playing Bridge and singing in choirs were participated in and enjoyed by all participants and yet all felt they had no 'Time for Self'. May hinted at a possible reason why.

May "I enjoy a game of Bridge, ... so in one sense that's for myself, ... I went to a literature class last winter, in a sense that was for myself, ... but because I went to a class that structured me ... so a lot of things like that, yes I suppose are for myself but they, they are again structured." (p.13)

It seems that possibly only unstructured time was truly 'Time for Self', and unstructured time had potential difficulties of guilt and a lack of purpose. It was this unstructured time that was soon eaten into by an increasingly busy lifestyle and yet was considered a prerequisite of being retired!

Betty "I think I had more time to read the newspapers when I first retired, that was one of the things I was going to enjoy. A leisurely breakfast, er reading the newspaper in the morning and erm, I'm finding now difficulty in finding time to read the newspaper ... in fact it's still there, and I haven't read it yet today!" (p.16)

May "... I suppose I thought well one day I shall pack up and that's it, and I didn't particularly want that time to come."

Interviewer "Didn't you?"

May "No, no, because I, I felt that I wouldn't have, you know, I wouldn't have my time structured, I wouldn't know what to do with myself, I wouldn't be doing anything useful." (p.1-2)

May "Regrettably I find that I still don't have a lot of time for myself ... I always thought, well, when you're retired you'd have time to sit and read a book ... but somehow you don't." (p.12).

Threatened Self

None of the participants considered themselves to be 'old' and didn't think of themselves in terms of age at all. There were adaptations to be made because of physical limitations but these were accepted and just part of life. The word 'old' had very negative connotations for participants, mainly to do with physical limitation and negative attitude.

Ivy "I often think about when somebody says when you think I'm a pensioner and you don't feel like a pensioner ... deep down it feels like you're just thirties or twenties."(p.5)

Meg "I suppose I feel about in the forties." (p.30)

Betty "Can't believe it, they're calling me an elderly person ... I don't think of myself in the least bit as an elderly person. I don't think in terms of age." (p.34)

The word 'old' also had negative connotations surrounding the question of how age might set apart and make different.

Betty "I'm not conscious of age except for one experience ... we went to a garden area to look around ... it said, senior citizens if you've got your pension book, and I had. ... I got in more cheaply ... I was appalled, I didn't think I would be so upset by getting a cheaper rate (laughing) because it made me different from my other four friends." (p.39-40)

There are concerns for all participants about ill health in old age and loss of independence.

May "Seeing the experience of an elderly lady who lived near here, and who I feel, you know, her family cushioned her by insisting she went into a home where I think she would have been much happier ... I think she could have coped, having been involved professionally with elderly people going into care, but they insisted she went into this care home full time. Well after she'd been there a few months she couldn't do anything for herself ... and that's something I don't want to happen ... I've already spoken to, certainly to one of my daughters quite strongly on this. Don't put me in the cats' home before I need to and erm I keep saying I must sit down and write some of these things down, ... while I'm still in a reasonable state of mind." (p.32-33)

Betty "I went to the doctor's ... [I've] got arthritis in [my] back ... I found difficulty walking up the hillside and that was a real practical problem to me because I thought, I'm trapped ... I'm going to have terrible problems getting food into the house, and that really shook me for quite a while. ...

... Yes I do worry, in a sense, about the future ... it's not far from my

thoughts that I, that would be a very lonely time in my life for the first time." (p.18 and 41)

Meg "I sometimes worry, you know, what'll happen later on, perhaps when I can't keep this garden up and I'd have to go into a flat ... and I always think, well, would my children be bothered." (p.25)

Ivy "I've had to sort of make provisions for to be looked after other than my own family ... just got to rely on whatever help, if there's any available, social services or anything like that ... you think about it, what it will be like when I can't do things and I need people to do them. If they're not there I'll just have to manage without. So I don't think about it, well I do think about it but I think well, leave it, we'll see what happens." (p.15-16)

There are issues about being worthwhile

Ivy "A lot of people have no time whatsoever for older people have they? They don't realise what experience they've got, what they can pass on. ... I'm classed as an expert gardener so all the younger ones are wanting to know about how to garden, so there are some who still respect what knowledge I can still pass on. I'm not past it!" (p.20-21)

May "When your children are young you feel that you're the king pin, the vital person, ... as you get older ... what value have you? ... This is why I feel I've always got to justify myself ... I have quite a lot of friends who said 'Oh well, the world doesn't owe us anything ... we've got a few years to enjoy ourselves' ... and life becomes one long succession of holidays ... or whatever ... I couldn't be like that." (p.35-36)

Self in Limited Time

There was still a little unease for some in the use of time. All participants except Ivy felt that the pace of life had slowed, though all were very busy people!

May " ... unfortunately you do all the things that you used to slot in and rush round, you find you're doing them all much more slowly." (p.10)

> Betty "Yes, I have slowed the pace of life ... whereas I used to run when I saw a bus coming, I now just think to myself, 'It really doesn't matter, there'll be another bus following.'" (p.14)

> Meg "In the first year ... you know, just take your time if there was a job doing, well, so what if it took all morning, it didn't matter. There's another day to follow, not quite like that now though (laugh) too busy!" (p.13-14)

Both Meg and Ivy were caring for their fathers at home. Time for them was precious.

> Meg "... That's one thing you are suddenly aware of, time. It's more precious, and I'd hate to waste a day, ... I like to feel I've done something, well, you know, worthwhile to me. ... you don't put some things off as you would because you think well I, you know, I must do it. I might not be able to do it another time." (p.31)

Meg chose to leave her father quite a lot and go out and do things for herself.

> Meg " ... if it's somebody who needs an awful lot of looking after, care and attention, then your own life is passing, and er, you know, you've only got it once, and you're going to miss out in some way, or miss some of it ... His lady friend is appalled that I go out and do things, thinks I should look after my dad. Well I do feed him and keep him clean ... but I've got to the stage now that I think, well if I don't do it now ..." (p.34-35)

Ivy was caring for her fairly active father at home and felt that he was the cause of her being so busy and missing out on time for herself.

> Ivy "I've no time to sit and do nothing, I know that ... I haven't time for myself because of my Father, that's very limiting, so I haven't got my life I wanted ... I don't get a rest from him. He's always doing something, or doing a job and making a mess or working at something or wanting to talk. ... So that's where I've had to make a lot of adjustment. I can't be my own boss, there's somebody else relying on me." (p.6-7)

Betty too was caring for an aunt who lived some distance away and felt this was dominating part of her life.

> Betty "I hadn't thought that going on with that degree of caring would go on for so much a part of my life ... I hadn't ever thought it would go on for such a long time, so that now here I am, well into my retirement, and still having concerns for an elderly relative ... and it's brought all sorts of pressures that hasn't given [me] freedom to do things that maybe [I] would've done had [I] been free." (p.13-14)

For May the preciousness of time wasn't as clearly defined but it was nevertheless around. Having her retired husband around the house in the mornings was difficult as he took things slowly and May was frustrated as her time was being used up.

> May " ... he'd always been a workaholic and even worked Saturdays, so I never, never had him at home in the mornings ... this was the biggest adjustment ... I mean, he's there now, reading the newspaper until about ten o'clock in the morning (laugh). You know, I want to have my breakfast and sort of, you know, clear things away, get up and do something!" (laughs) (p.7)

Thus the presupposition that in retirement there is freedom to use time in whatever way one wishes has to be rejected. There are limitations and frustrations. Nevertheless participants did enjoy more freedom than they'd had whilst working.

> Betty "Freedom to go into Derbyshire when I wanted to go, and to visit friends when I wanted to during the day time." (p.23-24)

> Meg "Initially the sudden thought that this was the beginning of the end ... that this was the final stage as it were ... once that little bit was over I just love the feeling of freedom." (p.12-13)

Time to look at meaning and purpose and doing worthwhile things are all involved in good use of personal time for some.

> May "Spirituality I think is a very big issue, because this is something that one can sort of ride along with and push under the carpet, and one day I shall have time to really sort all this out, and this, this is the time when this sort of thing should happen."(p.23)

> Meg "I like to feel I've done something, well, you know, worthwhile to me." (p.31)

Summary Of Analysis

Known Self

Participants acknowledged the influence of the past on the people they now were. In retrospect, retirement appeared to raise similar issues, especially of value and expression of Self, that the core group were now dealing with. However, in this group there was a confidence in who they were and greater acceptance of the Self they knew themselves to be. Use of time was important, enabling a sense of value and purpose.

Threatened Self

Participants did not consider themselves old. 'Old' had negative connotations of loss of independence, illness and limitation. There were fears that with old age would come a lack of value.

Self in Limited Time

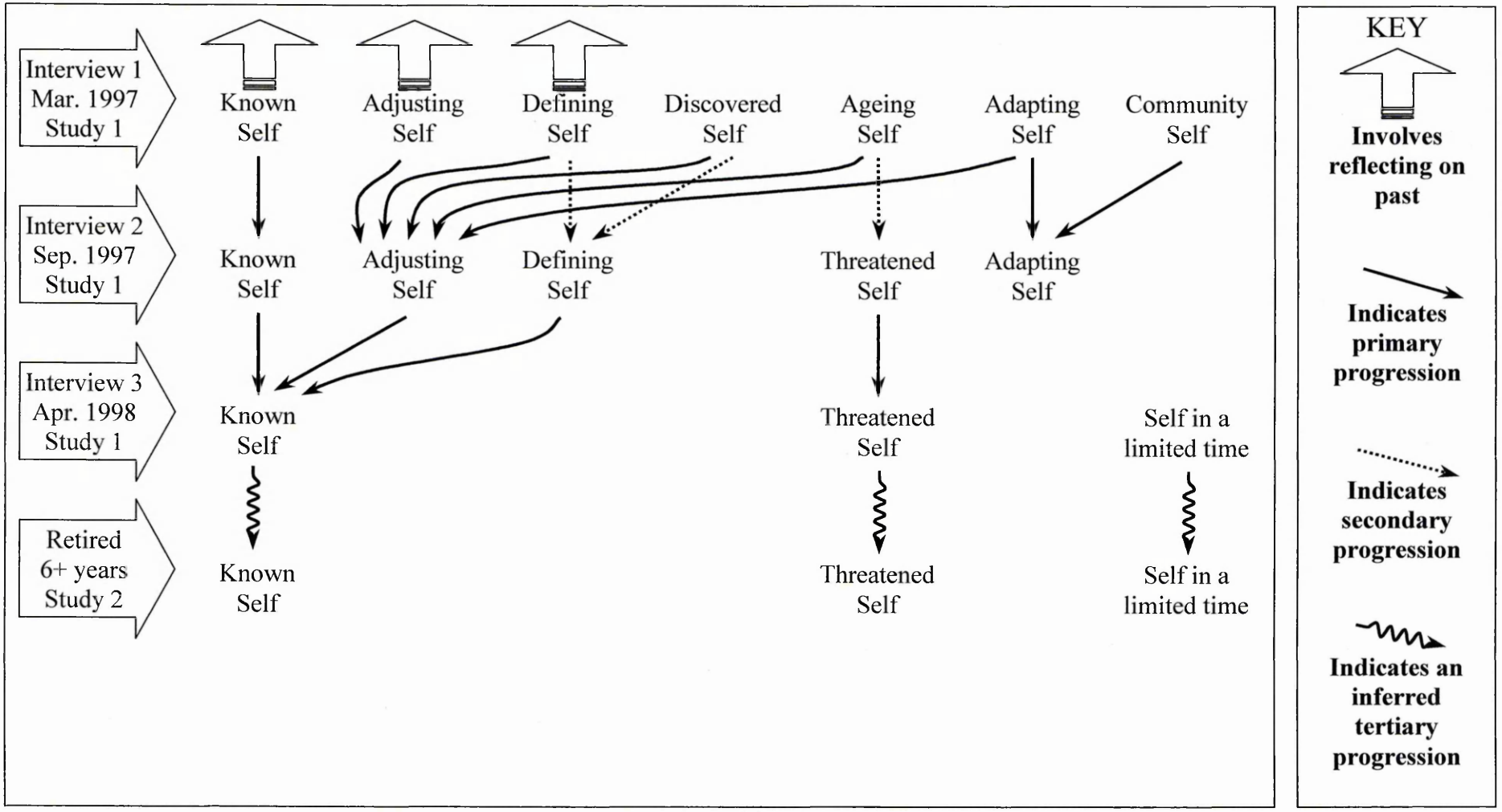
There was some unease in the use of time, the pace had slowed for all but one participant and time was precious. Caring for ageing relatives took up a lot of time for three participants and it was felt that this ate into time that was very precious because it was limited. Freedom was valued and doing things that were considered worthwhile was felt to be important.

Continuation of the Process Model of the Transition to Retirement

This study confirms the findings of study 1 in that identified aspects of the Self in this study fit with those identified by participants at the end of study 1. As participants in study 1 were reaching one to two and a half years into retirement the findings began to

look similar to findings in study 2. In study 2 participants had a greater acceptance of the Self they knew themselves to be, and a greater confidence in who they were, than most participants at the end of study 1, but participants in study 1 had made progress towards this acceptance, and the continuation of this seems likely. The similarity of issues raised by participants at the end of study 1 and those in study 2 led to an extension of the process model of the transition to retirement being possible. This is shown on the following page. As the progression involves different participants a tentative wavy line expresses the continuation from study 1 into study 2.

Process Model Of The Transition Of The Self In Retirement



CHAPTER 8

Study 3:
Perspectives of Two Women Retired for over Ten Years

STUDY 3:
Perspectives of Two Women Retired For Over Ten Years

Introduction and Rationale

This study was undertaken with the aim of moving on from study 2 and further into the years of retirement to examine the issues that may be around for women retired for over ten years. It was also of interest to examine whether the period of relative stability identified in study 2, that seemed to follow the initial transition to retirement, continued further into retirement and old age. This, of course, is a very small sample but was thought to give beneficial insight into later retirement. As study 2 followed questions raised in study 1, so this study follows study 2 in keeping with the call for theoretical sensitivity in Grounded Theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Strauss and Corbin, 1990). At the same time, this study was conducted looking for issues that might differ from those arising in the two previous studies.

Method and Design

Participants were initially contacted by telephone and an introductory meeting was arranged. At the introductory meeting the study was explained to participants, a consent form was signed, and the 'Who am I?' task was left with participants to be completed before the interview. The plan for the introductory meeting can be found in appendix 12, the consent form can be found in appendix 11, and the 'Who am I?' task and instructions can be found in appendix 2. More information on the 'who am I' task can be found in the methodological procedures chapter 4. Opportunity was given to withdraw from the study following the explanation of the nature of the study. No one withdrew. Following the introductory meeting, but on a different day, participants were interviewed once in their own homes. Interview questions can be found in appendix 13. Interviews were of an informal but guided type. Further details of the interview method and rationale can be found in chapter 4. The methods of Grounded Theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967, Strauss, 1987, Strauss and Corbin, 1990) were used in analysis.

Study 3 begins with the presentation of overviews of the 'Who Am I?' narrative task for each participant. This serves as an introduction to each participant. The Core Category from all the data is then identified and summarised. This serves as the basis for the analysis which follows. The process of analysis of all data can be found in appendix 21. A summary of the analysis precedes a diagram of the process model of the transition to retirement, identified in chapter 5, extended in chapter 6 and extended further following this study.

Participants

This study comprised two women who had been retired for over ten years. These participants had retired from professional/semi-professional work. Both participants were known to the researcher and were asked if they would like to participate in the study. This was therefore a convenience sample.

Analysis

Participants in this group were interviewed only once. Although these interviews were thematically analysed along with the narrative 'Who am I?' task, it was thought that labelling phenomena and categorising data using the method of grounded theory was a useful adjunct to the thematic analysis.

OPEN CODING

Conceptual Labels

Interviews were read individually and phenomena labelled and compared for similarities and differences. Through this procedure phenomena were closely examined and questions were asked about the data. Common concepts were finally identified which fitted the combined data. Labelled phenomena from individual interviews and the 'Who

am I?' task can be found in appendix 19, together with final concepts identified from the data.

AXIAL CODING

Categorising Data

Concepts were then classified into categories. Concepts were compared with each other and, when appearing to pertain to a similar phenomenon, they were grouped together. Categories identified can also be found in appendix 21.

SELECTIVE CODING

Identification of Core Category from Data

Categories were then Selectively Coded for a Core Category. The Core Category integrates all the previously identified categories.

Who Am I? Analysis - Overview Approach

Bella

Bella is an 83 year old widow whose mother died when she was aged 12. Bella was brought up by her maternal grandmother together with her brother and sister. Bella's father was frequently away with his work.

Bella worked long hours as a civil servant helping equip divisions for war theatres during the war. Her husband was in the RAF and went back to teaching after the war. Both were very tired after the war and both had big adjustments to make. In 1946 Bella had a son who was now a medical doctor and married with two daughters. Bella stayed at home to look after her son until he was nine when she went back to work part time teaching Secretarial Practice. Bella had a real satisfaction in passing on knowledge to

the next generation. Eventually she took on more teaching and became a marriage guidance counsellor. Bella still keeps in touch with some of her students even now.

Bella's husband died of a heart attack aged 59 and she emphasises in her 'Who am I?' description the fact that she has never come to terms with the death of her husband 21 years ago. Bella was 62 at the time and working up to retire at 65.
When Bella was 74 she moved a long distance from home to be near her son and his family.

Glenda

Glenda is an 84 year old single woman, the fourth daughter of her parents but only one of two to survive. Glenda values her friends, made largely through work, and describes herself as having many interests, though old age and illness has reduced these. Glenda's membership of the local Church is very important to her and many of her interests come out of this. She is an avid reader of poetry, great adventure stories and Christian literature. Glenda loves her home, cooking, washing-up!, making her own clothes, children, animals, birds, the English countryside, good conversation and has a long standing interest in First Aid. 'Fairly buoyant by nature' is how Glenda describes her personality, with an ability to see the funny side of things which at first appear to be a problem. Glenda describes herself as having an 'inventive turn of mind' which has enabled her to 'streamline' whatever job she was given to do and this, she feels, was probably why she was always offered promotion instead of having to apply for it.

Summary of Core Category– 'Self In A Limited Time'

Known Self

This is about knowing who I was as a child, at work, and in retirement, and seeing the continuation of aspects of the Self. Reminiscences are important. Family is part of our history and to be cared about. Losses are about our history and who we are now.

Threatened Self

Physical weakness and limitations mean frustration. Mentally there is a feeling of not being old, but limitations physically mean enforced social withdrawal, concern about physical decline and fear about loss of independence.

Self In Limited Time

Time is precious and yet there are no plans for the future. Arrangements for death are made. There are frustrations in that there is time but not strength, to do all that is desired.

Analysis Of Participants – 'Self in a Limited Time'

Known Self

Both participants had a good sense of who they were and felt this had not changed much over the years except perhaps in increased wisdom and experience and more acceptance of who they were.

> Bella "I think I'm a bit wiser now than I used to be when I was younger ... you get used to who you are (laughing) after you've been living with yourself for eighty three years."

> Glenda "Basically I'm still the same."

Being who they knew themselves to be was becoming more difficult however,

> Bella "You see, I'm still interested in everything and everybody, and I get very little chance now to show that interest to be honest."

> Glenda "I was always brought up to be as independent as possible ... you think you want to do something and then you think, ten to twenty years ago I could do that without even thinking about it, now it takes a major effort. By the time I've hoovered this carpet and that one I have to go and lie down for five or ten minutes."

Reminiscence about how things were seemed to be important for both Bella and Glenda. It seemed to confirm the active life once lived and maintained the fact that they were still the people they once were. They also felt life was better then. Bella mentioned how the old were cared for in those days, and Glenda gave the reason for her reminiscences as:

> Glenda "I suppose you've got more mileage behind than you have in front. ... I think it's because sometimes, I do think really that life generally is not as good as it was. ... The quality of life generally speaking was better. In spite of all the new modern things, there was more community spirit, you could leave your doors open."

Active life and work was important for both participants, both made many friends at work and continued those friendships too. When asked to give chapter headings for a book about her life Bella simply said:

> Bella "Work and the people I've met, I guess."

This seems to reveal how important to her sense of Self work was for Bella and certainly how important people are to her. In her 'Who am I?' Bella relates how:

> Bella "I've always had to work fairly hard but I have found the rewards have been worth having. I still keep in touch with some of my students and see them occasionally. It has given continuity to the effort I have put in with them to hear their progress to date." ('Who am I?' narrative)

Bella takes comfort and pleasure in the fact she has passed on something of herself, her knowledge and skills, to a younger generation. Their continued friendship is of great value and reward. Friends give a sense of continuity of the Self through life.
Glenda also relates how:

> Glenda "I have had a somewhat chequered career, employment wise, but each step on the ladder has given me something of value in my life, not least in the many friends I have gained." ('Who am I?' narrative).

The importance of social contact and past friendships in maintenance of the Self is reflected in Bella's advice to those retiring:

> Bella "Keep in circulation if they can."

It seems that maintaining a sense of the person you are inside is important when all around people may only see the failing body. Maintaining links with the past, not least in friendships made in our working lives, is important in maintaining that person.

This point is illustrated in the concept of the Threatened Self: the deterioration of the body threatens to take over and define the person. Inside, the mind is still alert and active. The person inside is basically unchanged.

Threatened Self

The relating of 'old' to negative stereotypes of physical deterioration is shown here in Bella's answer to the question, "Do you consider yourself to be old?"

> Bella "Yes really, because other people shout at me and think I'm deaf quite often. It's what other people do to you. They look at you and they sort of help you along the road and that kind of thing."

Bella went on to relate an experience at the hospital where she was treated as deaf because she was older. She said she found it hurtful and went on to say:

> Bella "Old people aren't considered to be worth anything ... where ever you go you're just shoved into a corner, you're not considered at all. ... D'you know, in the old days they always used to take old grannies in didn't they, the children. I remember my grandmother taking people in when they got too old. "Oh, we'll find room for her," she used to say, you see, that kind of thing."

Bella was obviously hurt by the attitudes she had encountered towards her age. Inside she felt very different from the person people were treating her as. This led Bella to equate 'old' with the negative stereotype of deterioration. Glenda too had this difficulty with the concept of 'old'. In response to the question, "Do you consider yourself to be old?" Glenda replied:

> Glenda "I'm not old up here (pointing to her head), but here I'm old (pointing to her heart). This is the trouble, I'm trying to do things that I could do ten, twenty years ago without even thinking about them, and now they take a major effort, but up here (points to her head) I'm still as bright as I was, still doing puzzles in the paper."

To illustrate the fact that a person of 84 with a deteriorating physical body can still be the person they were many years before here's Glenda's reaction to being asked how old she was inside.

> Glenda "About 30, and pray the Lord still has a sense of humour!"

The limitations an ageing body puts on a person's expression of who they are causes much frustration. More frustration is imposed by the assumption of others that the body defines the person.

Self in Limited Time

The Self is always living in limited time. This is felt more, however, by those who have lived for many years.

> Bella "You can't ever be sure of the days ahead, you've got no horizon in other words. Your horizon's gone. It's right up here in front of you (holds hand up to face), That's one of the worst things about getting old, your horizon shrinks to a certain extent. ... (I live) day to day, you can't very well make plans for the future, or at least the plans you make aren't very cheerful ones (laugh)."

Glenda too was well aware of the limitation on her time left to live.

> Glenda "I haven't made any plans for my life because erm, I mean, I don't know how much time I've got left, and it certainly doesn't bother me at all, but I have made all plans and arrangements for my funeral ... and I've made my will."

Despite the fact that both Bella and Glenda very much sense themselves in an end time in their life they both use the time they have and value it. In answer to the question "Is time precious to you?" Bella answered;

> Bella "Very much so, I'm very much aware of time always."

Bella relates this to the fact that time has always been important to her and it's a continuation of who she is. The frustration for Bella is that she can't do the things she'd like to do with her time because of physical limitations. Glenda uses her time left to live by writing for the Church magazine, an activity taken up when another activity had to be relinquished due to the difficulty she had in standing for long periods. She also keeps her mind active with puzzles in the paper. Despite this there is a sense in which life is an effort.

> Glenda "Sometimes when I get into bed I say, I thank the Lord for a good day and I say, let me have a good night's sleep, other than that let me wake in heaven ... I can't understand why anybody would cling to this life when there's a so much better one. ... until then I'll just have to soldier on."

Glenda's 'soldiering on' is about her frustration at not being able physically to do all that she'd like to do.

> Glenda [The worst thing about getting old] "I think it's just that you lose your physical strength ... there are so many things that you want to do, and you're limited, you're physically limited."

Summary of Analysis

Known Self

There was an acknowledgement of an increase in wisdom and experience, and an acceptance of who they were by both participants. Reminiscences were important in maintenance of the 'Known Self'. Work appeared to be a part of the past important to hold on to in maintenance of a sense of Self.

Threatened Self

Participants did consider themselves old in body. They took on the stereotypical self-image of 'old' because of the way they were treated by others and because of their physical limitations. The deterioration of the body threatened to take away the known and felt identity of the person on the inside.

Self in Limited Time

Both participants felt themselves to be in an 'end time'. Time was precious to them but life was sometimes an effort and physical limitations were very frustrating. The only plans made were for their death.

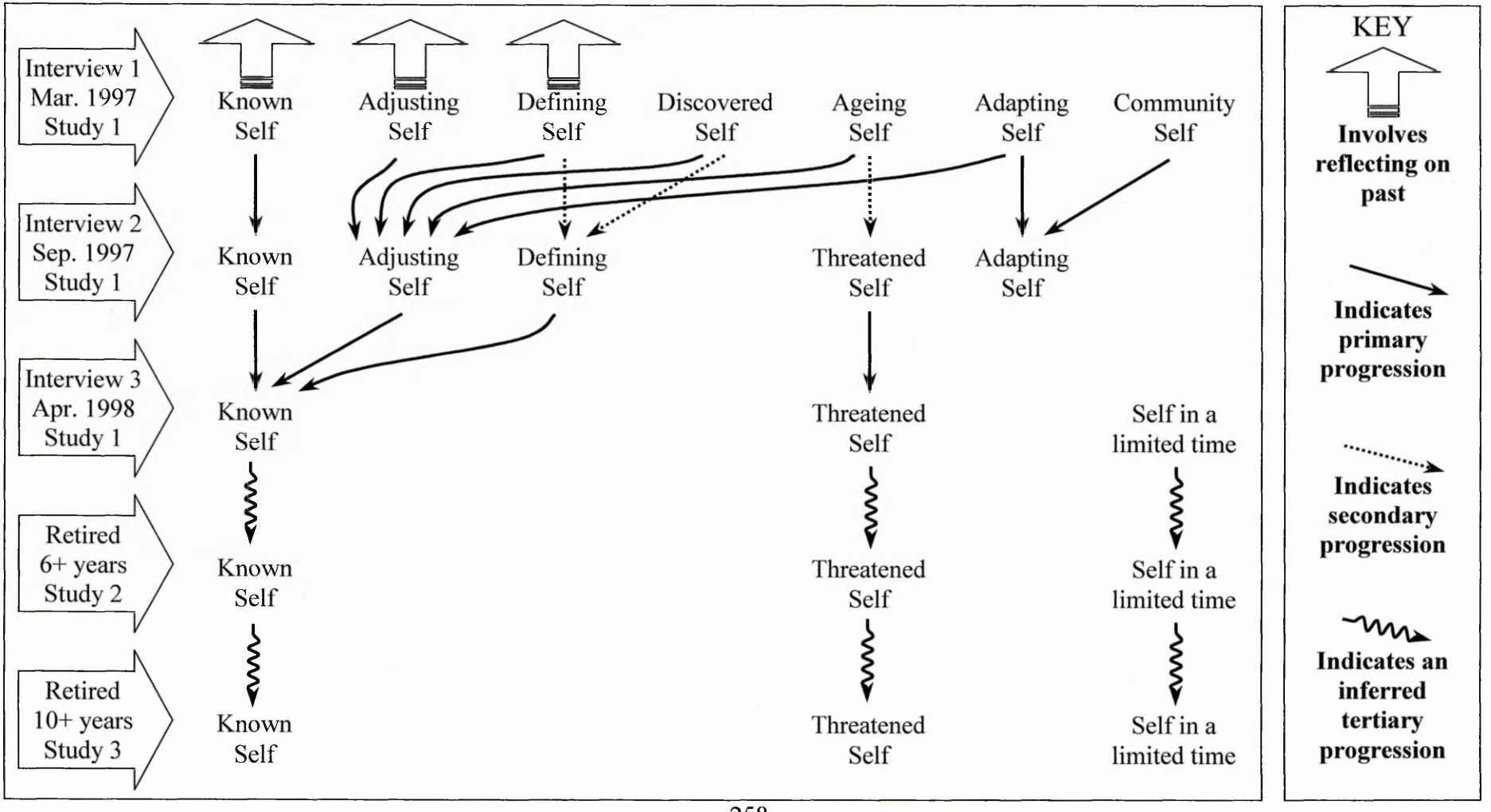
Continuation of the Process Model of the Transition to Retirement

The findings of this study fit with those of study 2 although there is a clear difference in experience of aspects of phenomena identified. A thread running through all studies is the increasing acceptance of Self as participants moved further into retirement and consequently got older. The obvious link in issues raised by participants in this study with the two previous studies led to an extension of the process model of the transition

to retirement being possible. This is shown on the following page. As the progression involves different participants a tentative wavy line again expresses the continuation from study 2 into study 3.

The following chapter will discuss all the studies together for a more comprehensive discussion of the findings.

Process Model Of The Transition Of The Self In Retirement



CHAPTER 9

Discussion and Critique, Conclusions, Contribution to Knowledge, Implications of the Findings and Further Research

DISCUSSION AND CRITIQUE

Framing the discussion will be the aims laid out at the end of chapter 3 and reproduced below.

Research Aims

1. To develop a knowledge of the philosophy/psychology of the 'Self' from the literature.
2. To observe and describe the Self of a small number of individuals in transition.
3. To examine the possibility that there may be part or parts of the Self that are continuous, or how they are discontinuous, in life change.
4. To extend a knowledge of the past work on retirement transition. Particularly relevant is work on the possible relation this transition has to the changes in people's ageing self-conceptions and their self-esteem.
5. To examine the possibility that continuity of some aspect of the Self may contribute to positive adaptation through life change.
6. To understand the varied philosophical and psychological theories on the Self and use them to inform the analysis.

The discussion will examine the findings of the study and the extent to which the aims of the study have been fulfilled. A critique of the research and implications of the findings will accompany discussion of the findings. The conclusion will follow a summary of the discussion. Further research will be discussed following a discussion on the contribution to knowledge the thesis has made.

Introduction

The aims of the research are inevitably linked to each other. However, for the purpose of the discussion those aims directly focusing on the 'Self' will be discussed together followed by the aim (number 4) more directly related to retirement.

The first aim of the research was 'to develop a knowledge of the philosophy/psychology of the 'Self' from the literature'. This was accomplished within the literature review (chapter 2) and informed the research and analysis.

'To observe and describe the Self of a small number of individuals in transition' was the second aim of the research. This aim was taken up in the research study.

The study

There are difficulties in any study focusing on the Self, not least in defining the same. The large element of subjectivity within the Self, whilst not devalued in this study, does nevertheless create difficulties in validation. However, to shy away from studying aspects of humanity that pose difficulties would be to ignore and devalue whole aspects of personhood, which may be central to gaining any depth in understanding aspects of human development. To limit study to easily accessed aspects of psychology restrains and narrows potential exploration of fascinating and clearly relevant aspects of humanity. Within this study aspects of the Self have been observed and examined with openness to the difficulties in accessing and defining the same.

A relatively small group of participants were interviewed in the present study making it a non-representative sample. This limits the generality of the findings. However, the richness of the in-depth data was a definite strength of the study, and this would have been difficult to reach without scaling the study down. Enabling women to apply their own meanings in an in-depth way to their retirement experiences is a direct contribution to knowledge of women's retirement. Also, the longitudinal design of study 1 meant that it was not only retrospective memories of the retirement transition that were

examined. Participants' experiences were examined during the process of transition. This was helpful in that the detail of experiences which might mean a lot at the time, but which may be resolved and then forgotten or felt to be unimportant, were instead captured.

Using a Grounded Theory approach to analysis enables some safeguard against the lack of reliability qualitative analysis is sometimes criticised for. In the present study the method of analysis is clearly set out (see analysis of data in appendices 17-21 and full analysis of one participants' first interview data in appendix 22). The present research has also produced a *process model of the transition of the Self in retirement*, which can be tested out in further research (see further research, this chapter). The methods in the present research, i.e. verbal reports and written data, together with the use of psychometric measures, gives added validation to the study. The psychometric measures validate any qualitative data pertaining to the subjects of depression and self-esteem. Although the psychometric measures were of limited value in contributing to the main findings of the study, they did give insights into study 1 participants' sense of worth and mood, which did have some value in verification of participants' verbal expression of this.

Implications of the findings

More research on women going through the retirement transition is necessary. Confirmation or modification of the 'The Process model of the transition of the Self in retirement' is also needed as again it is based on a relatively small sample. Also, eighteen months was not a long time to look at the transition to retirement. Ideally, examining the transition from retirement preparation through a longer period of time would give a clearer depth of understanding. This will be discussed further under 'further research' later in this chapter.

There were difficulties with the present study, i.e. sample size and limited longitudinal design. Despite this, the fact that a group of women were interviewed more than once early in their retirement experience, and that cross-sectional data from older women was incorporated into the study, gave an added dimension and was a strength of the study.

Much of past research on retirement has tended to use either questionnaire studies (e.g. Matthews and Brown, 1988; Szinovacz and Washo, 1992), which limit the depth of findings, or use just one interview with women to base their findings on (e.g. Skirboll and Silverman, 1992; Price, 1998, 2000).

'To understand the varied philosophical and psychological theories on the Self and use them to inform the analysis' was the sixth aim of the research.

Self definition, identity and the link to purpose

Work on psychosocial transitions suggests that central to the individual's process of transition is the role of the Self. Within this study Rogers' (1951) definition of the Self is valued and acknowledged as the determining aspect of personality. However, modifier uses of the concept of 'Self' are useful in study, thus self-concept (Suls and Mullen, 1982; Neisser, 1988; Epstein, 1973; George and Bearon, 1980 and Bengston et al (in Birren et al (eds.) 1985), and self-esteem (Rosenberg, 1965; Coopersmith, 1967; Mruk, 1999; Battle, (1990) in Battle, 1992) are were also valued in the study, as important aspects of the Self. As low self-esteem has been shown to be a significant risk factor in the development of clinical depression (Coopersmith, 1967; Brown et al, 1986; 1990; Miller et al, 1989) it was also important to consider this as a potential factor in adjustment although any definitive conclusions regarding the age-depression relation have been difficult to draw (Newmann, 1989). However, because Andrews and Brown (1995) found that self-esteem can change, the possible link of depression to changes in the Self and ageing could not be ignored.

As participants in the present study were still quite 'young' old, they were likely to be in Erikson's (1950) stage of 'Generativity versus Stagnation' as well as being influenced by the next stage of ego development, that of 'Integrity versus Despair'. Within the stage of 'Generativity versus Stagnation' caring to do something, or caring for someone is stressed. Being creative and productive is the initiative identified by Erikson for this stage. Productivity in this sense has strong links with purpose, and the present study shows a relation to Erikson's work here. A well ordered and meaningful life is

important in the 'Integrity versus Despair' stage of Erikson's work, and clearly participants were conscious of needing a meaning, a purpose, in their retirement.

Having a 'reason for being' gives self-esteem to a person, and as most paid work gives this purpose in some way, even if it is to earn money, then retirement from work can cause a void in this aspect of the Self. Of course if things outside work immediately replaced that purpose, or other things gave strong feelings of purpose before work ceased, then this feeling will either be non-existent or very small. The women in the study did have this need to be useful, to themselves and others, and to have a purpose. Some, like Jenny, were immediately called upon by family to help out with child care, this was done voluntarily by Jenny, and she commented on how this fulfilled a need within her to feel needed. It was only at the final interview with Jenny, which coincided with her not being needed so much by her family, that she said she felt she missed work, specifically she missed being needed by the children. Another participant wrote about an awareness of a 'lack of usefulness in her life'. As mentioned previously, Parkes (1971) argued that transition from a deficient world to one which, in some respects is more 'ideal,' involves unforeseen changes. A lack of usefulness might be one such unforeseen change. The 'gap' that not having a purpose, or not doing something that expresses an aspect of the Self once valued, produces a surprise as the life of retirement is envisaged as a much more ideal life than when working.

Eventually all participants regained an aspect of individual expression in being who they knew themselves to be, together with a sense of purpose. However, unless participants were in some sort of role of care or 'service' this sense of purposelessness did keep coming back to them and was an issue they were not content to leave alone.

Rappaport et al (1993) found that life purpose and death anxiety were inversely related, a person who has successfully developed purpose in life should have less concern regarding the possibility of death than the person who is less successful in their search for meaning. Wiese (1981, in Rappoport et al, 1993) found that retired elderly persons scored significantly lower than employed individuals of the same age group on an index of life purpose. In the present study the conflict between having a purpose in life and

discomforts with ageing and dying were observed together, confirming the findings by Wiese.

Having a purpose and a sense of being worthwhile is central to most people's identity. Kohut (1977) had the view that in later middle age the feeling or conviction that life still has a meaning and a task to be performed tends to protect the individual against severe depression. Kohut translated these 'meanings' into goals and ideals, goals being a stabilizing influence as the individual encounters life transitions. Robbins et al (1994) focused on the role of goal continuity in their study of early retirees. They found that the combination of stable and meaningful goals is crucial to life satisfaction. However they do suggest that elaboration and comparison of the goal continuity constructs with other self-constructs was needed. Having a purpose is a goal in itself and was found in the present study to be of importance in self-reported life satisfaction. A sense of purposelessness, or a lack of a sense of anything worthwhile in what participants were engaged in, was reported by them as being a negative state to be in and something to be rectified. One of the most difficult issues to address for participants appeared to be finding a purpose.

In the early stages of retirement, defining the Self was an important challenge to these women. Price (2000) also found that the women in her study experienced a loss of identity in retirement. In the present study some of this was about 'what I do', about having a role, where the role seemed to be an outward sign or tangible reality of part of 'who I am'. Even if the job was not enjoyable or a first choice, the person, the Self was still brought into that role and thus part of the Self was expressed through it. For example one participant said that her job had always required her to be ordered, and that's how she was in retirement, because actually it was a part of her personality to be ordered. It was an expression therefore of 'who I am' in a tangible way. Cessation of this role, as in retirement, meant that continuing the person they did know themselves to be in changed roles was a challenge. Obviously the more the role reflected or enabled an expression of the identity of the individual, i.e. the more an individual identified themselves with the role, the greater the challenge was to re-define the Self without the role. This fits with work done by Taylor Carter (1995) who proposed that retirement

was "a period of role change and redefinition" (Taylor Carter, 1995, p.77), and Johnson and Williamson (1980) who explained that:

> *"Because of the lesser importance attached by society to the work role for women, women who retire may experience confusion over who they are or were."*
> (Johnson and Williamson, 1980, p.71 in Matthews and Brown, 1988, p.550)

Also Erdner and Guy (1990) and Price-Bonham and Johnson (1982) found that retirement was viewed negatively by professional women because the work role is an important part of their identity. Dreyer in Spacapan and Oskamp (1989) found that those individuals whose work was central to their sense of Self, resisted retirement as long as possible. However Price (2000) suggested that:

> *"Retired women who define themselves by their family and social roles, in addition to their professional occupations, are less likely to experience a threat to their sense of Self following retirement."*
> (Price, 2000, p.97)

It could be argued that for many women the expression of themselves outside of family roles, where the 'constraints' of being 'mother', 'wife', 'daughter' may inhibit free expression, is a form of completion of their self-definition. This may allow the expression of aspects of themselves untapped in family and even social roles, giving a sense of fulfilment to their self-definition. A good example of this comes into the interview with Molly where she makes it very clear that when putting up wallpaper at home she defers to her husband's decision despite an objection to the style of paper. She comments that at work she would have made an issue of it and made her objection heard. This demonstrates the existence of work enabling a unique expression of the Self. Flo comments that she volunteered to do the job of a nurse and it is one she could still do now if she wanted to. Because it is her own, it is a part of her, and one not lost in retirement. This is an example of James' aspect of the Self, the 'Material Me': work gave Flo a forum for an expression of aspects of herself such as caring. One of Amy's interviews also illustrates how work can be a defining part of the Self and an aspect of the Material and Social 'Me': Amy describes her sense of loss at leaving the school of nursing, and the fact that it felt like her baby that she was giving up.

A felt loss in the forum for expression of the Self seemed to raise the question of 'Well who am I now then?' in the minds of these women, however Maas and Kuypers (1974) reflected that:

> *"for some mothers ... old age provides opportunities for a new and gratifying style of life."*
>
> (Maas and Kuypers, 1974, p.204)

The potential for new opportunities is very real but to take advantage of these opportunities women have to feel that new ventures fit with who they are. There were participants, like Sarah, who felt very little sense of loss at retirement, interestingly she had many ventures that were in existence while she was working and which could now be developed more fully in retirement.

Despite knowing themselves quite well at this point in their lives, for these women, leaving their job, quite a substantial role in their lives, seemed to challenge what they knew about themselves to some degree. Knowing ourselves and our needs requires a certain amount of self-awareness. Most people don't think about 'who am I and what do I need?' on a conscious level very often. Retirement caused those questions to be raised in the minds of participants because of the changes that retirement brings about in every aspect of life. This was more than the cessation of a role, it cut deeper and some re-definition needed to take place. Looking back at 'who I was when working' was part of that process of re-definition. This brought with it some feeling of loss for some of the women, a loss of status, importance or usefulness, and as they saw their identity tied up with that status or role they needed to know what was left of themselves and what was it worth. The two participants who reported very little sense of loss had either continuity of roles pre-retirement, which gave a sense of worth and usefulness, or adoption of a new role of great importance in addressing the care needs of their family, again giving worth and usefulness.

Price (2000), found that although the women in her sample reported a loss of professional accomplishment following retirement they reported also that their sense of Self was not impacted in any way, and that self-esteem or personal identity were not

negatively affected. Certainly the women in the present study did not sense a negative impact on their self-esteem. This was verified in the self-esteem measures taken at first and last interview when the results showed that no participant suffered a reduction of self-esteem score and the self-esteem measure of three participants rose. This demonstrated the strength of the Known Self, and probably the ability of these women to negotiate change well because it was something they had always had to do throughout their lives (Bateson, (1989) in Price, 2000).

There was an element of self-definition still going on at the time of interview 2, and some were struggling to relinquish the work identity. The three nurses still held onto their titles, describing themselves as 'retired nurse', agreeing that they found it difficult not being nurses anymore. The initial response of returning to the homemaker role felt unsatisfactory for most of the participants but it did form the routine and give the structure that work once did. Thus there were losses to be dealt with, and substituted for where possible. Pearlin and Mullan conclude in their work on transition that:

> *"when a loss clearly and unambiguously does occur, the severity and duration of its impact will vary largely under the influence of two factors: it's reversibility and compensability.* (sic) *... The unhappy retiree reenters the labor* (sic) *force and re-establishes himself at his former trade. Though the pain of the initial loss may not be entirely eliminated, the ability to recapture even some of what had been lost would seem to be stress reducing."*
>
> (Pearlin and Mullan (1992), in Wykle et al (eds.), 1992, p.125)

In the present study one participant decided to return to doing some kind of paid work, another had been doing some supply teaching for some time. Clearly these participants were not quite ready to relinquish the work role just yet and going back somehow validated the fact that they hadn't changed dramatically in the short time since they had left work. Price (2000) found in her study that women needed to confront the disturbing stereotype that retired women were incompetent and unable to perform important tasks. There may well have been an element of this going on for these two women.

Implications of the findings

The present study confirmed Erikson's (1950) stage of 'Generativity versus Stagnation'. Being creative and productive, the initiative identified by Erikson for this stage, was important for the women in the study. Because this was important, being retired caused some difficulties in addressing the issue. The link between being creative and productive and having a purpose is clear. Kohut's (1977) view that meaning in life, and the sense of having a task still to be performed, protects individuals' from depression resonates with the findings in this study. The present study also confirms work by Robbins et al (1994) who found that the combination of stable and meaningful goals is crucial to life satisfaction.

Price (2000) found that the women in her study experienced a loss of identity in retirement. Other researchers propose retirement as a time of 're-definition' (Taylor Carter, 1995; Johnson and Williamson, 1980). The present study extends these findings in that it demonstrates some of the 'why' of the importance of the work role in identity. Although the women did define themselves by family and social roles, as well as work roles, for at least three, and probably four, participants the work role fulfilled a very different completion or fulfilment of the Self in that work was when they were most completely who they felt themselves to be. Work was <u>for</u> them, it was <u>about</u> them, not in relation to who they needed to be in the family, and cessation of this role took away, at least for a time, that expression of this part of themselves. Freund and Smith (1999) argue that:

> *"The self-definition does not refer to an 'objective' description of a person, but rather to those self-conceptions which individuals believe to be essential for the definition of their own person."*
>
> (Freund and Smith, 1999, p.55)

The present study demonstrates how work, for these women, was only essential for the definition of their own person because it allowed them to express themselves as the people they felt themselves to be. Retirement took away the forum for that expression,

and until a new forum was found there was disruption in their felt identity. This extends the literature on the disruption to identity in the retirement transition.

The third aim identified for the study was 'to examine the possibility that there may be part or parts of the Self that are continuous, or how they are discontinuous, in life change'. This links with the fifth aim which was 'to examine the possibility that continuity of some aspect of the Self may contribute to positive adaptation through life change'.

Continuity/Discontinuity in the Self

The lifespan approach to development (Baltes and Baltes, 1973; 1987; 1990) acknowledges the potential for organized, adaptive and positive change in development. Within this study the concept of continuity (Atchley, 1989), 'allowing change within a context of sameness provided by the basic structure', is valued alongside Erikson's (1950) later stages of ego development. Development as an ongoing, dynamic process, and the accompanying importance of the body and physical changes in development of the existing psychic structure (Nemiroff and Colarusso, 1985), are also relevant issues in this study of development and change involving older participants.

Although stereotyping, or social labelling, are considered important influences in the way older people evaluate themselves, research evidence points to adaptive flexibility and resourcefulness in ageing. Older people are quite effective in maintaining positive views of their Self and their personal development (Brandtstädter, 1989; Brandtstädter and Renner, 1992; Brandtstädter, Wentura and Greve, 1993; Brandtstädter and Rothermund, 1994; Brandtstädter and Greve, 1994; Baltes and Baltes, 1990; Atchley, 1982).

Part of participants' reorganisation of their definition of Self was to become confident that whatever had changed in their lives, fundamentally they had not! A reason for the doubts or uncertainties about who these women felt themselves to be may have been that initially participants had been susceptible to negative stereotypes about ageing and

retirement, which had influenced their thinking. This is not unusual (Kuypers and Bengtson, 1973). However, these women did not remain dependent on those stereotypes. No participant had gone into a decline, and they were more confident that the people they knew themselves to be hadn't in fact 'gone away' or 'deteriorated' simply by retiring. Their focus became channelling their 'Known Self' into new areas of fulfilment. This could be a fairly simple thing, such as having time to do the housework when and how desired, or it could be more complex, such as acknowledging themselves to be active people with active brains and therefore needing stimulation. How to meet that need was a little more difficult.

After initial uncertainty, by interview 2 participants had a more certain feeling about their 'Known Self': participants felt they had remained the people they knew themselves to be on retirement and were confident that this wasn't going to change very much. Activities they had chosen to do reflected the Self they knew themselves to be and were about 'testing out' new areas of development. This confidence in the Self they knew themselves to be, and working out activities which fitted who they felt themselves to be, was evidence of participants working out, in the nature of Parkes (1971; 1975), which assumptions about the world and the Self still fitted and modifying them where necessary. There was a sense in which these women were questioning why they did what they did in their lives and how they carried that through into retirement. If their nursing fulfilled a need to be needed then how did they fulfil that need now? The acknowledgement of a Self that continued into retirement, and a maintenance of that Self they knew themselves to be, was the important thing.

There was still an element of adjustment going on at the time of interview 2 but the women seemed to find it easier to identify what it was they were struggling with and what they might do about it, or what they had decided to do about it in the short term. This partly involved looking back at 'what I know of myself', looking forward to 'who I would like to be', looking at the here and now, at the 'circumstances I am in', and identifying 'who I am' and 'who I want to be in those circumstances'.

By interview 3 all the women were much more confident about who they were and how they were going to maintain that person in the circumstances they were in. They

identified less with the 'retired' title and more with just being 'me'. This fits with the Continuity theory of retirement (Atchley, 1976) in that retirement is proposed as a legitimate role in itself and assumes that the retiree role allows for the continuation and expansion of other roles.

Participants eventually became more confident to rely on what they knew about themselves in the past. They had significance because they were able and significant people in the past, and they remained so. As Marris (2002) comments, "history is a crucial part of present meanings, ... a person without a history has no identity." (Marris, 2002, p.26).

The two women retired for over 10 years were in their eighties when interviewed. They both had a very real sense of who they were in time, space and history. 'Still' was a word they used about themselves, 'still' interested, 'still' trying to remain independent, 'still' the same person as they always had been. These women felt that they had experience of life that was valuable. They had wisdom and they were more accepting of themselves. This supported Brandtstädter et al's (1993) work, which showed that people accommodate their Self representations to their perceived developmental changes, enabling preservation of the positive view of the Self and personal development.

The continuity of the Self in the Self that was 'Known' was an important aspect of the Self that had a large contribution to make to positive adaptation through this life change of retirement, and it seems is important later on in life when threats to expression of the Self were very real. This will be discussed further when the 'ageing Self' is considered. Continuity of the 'Known Self' was established as important for positive adaptation. There was however the potential for discontinuity of the Self, which appeared to have a de-stabilising effect on participants.

<u>The potential for discontinuity of the Self</u>

At the time of interview 3 a new concept emerged for participants of study 1, that of limited time. Time was related as being more important and more precious as these women acknowledged that life did not go on forever. Doing the things you value doing,

rather than those things you had to do, was important, and everything was that bit more urgent because there may not be that much time left to do these things. They valued so much the time they had. These women were around 60 years of age at this point, with the very real potential of another twenty years of life if not more, and yet this threat of ill health and death seemed to have changed their attitude towards time. This may be part of the process of resolution during a psychosocial transition, an example of what Parkes (1971) calls 'questioning an assumption'. This is when the assumptive world is made the object of introspection and treated as part of the life space. Thus examination of the assumption, for example 'my future', takes place as though 'my future' actually exists as an object. This according to Parkes (1971) is usually a painful time because of the threat it represents to the established assumptive world. In the present study participants who sensed 'limited time' as a threat may have been showing signs that the restructuring of the assumptive world had not quite been completed.

Two of the women, one of whom had experienced serious health problems within her family, the other who found dealing with retirement as a divorcee to be traumatic, felt that taking one day at a time was their safest protective strategy for the moment. The taking of one day at a time rather than facilitating purpose in life, according to Rappaport et al (1993) may be defeating in that it:

> *"constricts the individual's ability to extend into the future and plan ... such a position may indicate the presence of considerable death anxiety"*
> (Rappaport et al, 1993, p.377)

Death anxiety was not measured in the present study but participants raised it themselves in interviews. These two women did raise the issue, both around the issue of their 60th birthdays, which seemed to invoke more death anxiety than did retirement itself.

Time was also of great significance for the women retired for 6-9 years, it was precious and was not to be wasted at all. There were many frustrations here as the time they had hoped for, to be themselves, was now taken up in caring for others, whether this was merely considering a husband who was much slower and willing to take things more easily, or caring for relatives who were unable to care for themselves. For some of these

women caring for ageing relatives was something they had not anticipated at this stage but found themselves doing. Pearlin and Mullan write that:

> *"Because of increased longevity and the technological means to prolong the lives of the ill, caregiving in late life is on its way to becoming a statistically normative experience."*
>
> (Pearlin and Mullan, in Wykle et al, 1992, p.127)

These women were very aware of time moving on and experienced a felt need to do something worthwhile with their time, so they rarely put off things that they needed or wanted to do because of the awareness that this may be their only chance to do it.

Similarly time was important for the women retired for over 10 years but these women had a sense of time being extremely limited. Plans were not made for life but for death, the horizon was described as being 'up close' by one woman. The limitations of the body meant that time could only be a case of 'marking time' or 'soldiering on' as one woman said. This wasn't a miserable life but it was a life of limitation and much frustration. For Glenda, who was an active member of the Church and called herself a Christian, time on this earth seemed to mean very little. "I can't imagine why anyone would want to cling to this life," she said. Rapport et al (1993) found in their study of future time, death anxiety and life purpose that "the individual with higher purpose in life will more often use the future as an area for new meaning or possibilities" (Rapport et al, 1993, p.371). In Glenda's case it was life after death that gave life its meaning, and, though she was "soldiering on", her hope was for tomorrow, for death, her purpose was for life after death. This gave rather a new perspective on time.

Nilsson, Sarvimäki and Ekman (2000) argue that very old persons who also felt old were in a phase of transition. These older people reported physical changes, which were perceived as problems they had to struggle with in daily life. Anxiety, fear and powerlessness were general feelings around this experience and 'taking one day at a time' was a common reaction. Goals were therefore reduced or non-existent and there were no expectations for the future, all things the two women in the present study could relate to. However, Nilsson, Sarvimäki and Ekman found that the older people in their study undergoing this new phase of transition had a sense of being different from their

previous Self, "they did not recognise their former selves, which means that they experienced changes in their identities" (Nilsson, Sarvimäki and Ekman, 2000, p.46). Mental changes were perceived as losses to a greater extent than physical changes and a mistrust of their ability to meet the demands of the future were real fears. The two participants in the present study showed no evidence of this new phase of transition. Although their bodies felt old they still felt young inside. It can be assumed therefore that these women had not yet reached this transition phase of 'growing old'. Nilsson, Sarvimäki and Ekman (2000) conclude:

> *"feeling old when you are very old is a special experience related to being in a stage of transition within the ageing process."*
>
> (Nilsson, Sarvimäki and Ekman, 2000, p.47)

Implications of the findings

Change 'within a context of sameness provided by the basic structure' (Atchley, 1989) was in evidence in the present study, confirming Atchley's view on development. Also confirmed were comments by Weiss and Bass (2002):

> *"Even though the situations of our lives change, our personalities, although they may be modified as we adapt to new situations, have at their core a continuous Self."*
>
> (Weiss and Bass, 2002, p.13)

The present study extended this literature by identifying the 'sameness' or 'continuous Self' as being a conscious 'Known Self'. The importance of the 'Known Self' in the process of undergoing the retirement transition was clearly defined as being the stabilising influence in a period of instability. This fundamental knowledge about the Self also supports James' (1890) 'essential ways' which continue the sense of sameness. Work could easily be considered to be part of the 'Material Me' (James, 1890) as it appeared for these women to be a reflection of a part of themselves. The 'Known Self' was more than merely a sense of sameness however, it appeared to have an essential role in maintenance of stability and as such elements of the 'Spiritual Me' can be seen. The influence of the 'Spiritual Me', which James defines as the "entire collection of my

states of consciousness, my psychic faculties and dispositions taken concretely" (James in Gorden and Gergen, 1968, p. 43), as a combining medium for the aspects of the Self is in evidence. The spiritual aspect of the 'Me' is bound up with the spiritual aspect of the 'I', excluding any notion of separateness between the 'I' and the 'Me'. The present study demonstrates this 'wholeness' of the Self, extending literature on the Self in retirement.

The disruption experienced in that part of the Self which participants thought they were sure of, supports Parkes' (1971; 1975) and Thériault's (1994) work on psychosocial transitions, specifically the triggering of 'internal reorganisations'. Participants all considered themselves good at what they did at work, yet at retirement most questioned their abilities. The present study extends the work of Parkes (1971; 1975) and Thériault (1994) in that the *Process model of the transition of the Self in retiremen* describes the particulars of the 'internal reorganisations' women might face on retirement.

The importance of the body and physical changes to development (Nemiroff and Colarusso, 1985) was also confirmed. Again the present study extended this work by presenting the effect changes in the body and physical changes had on the Self. The expression of the Self was found to be threatened by physical changes which may inhibit that expression.

Atchley (1976) proposes that occupation is not necessarily a major source of self-identification. The present study shows however, through the experiences of this group of newly retired women, how re-definition of identity is part of the process of retirement adjustment. Though generalisation of this study is not possible, because of the small sample, it should be considered that, for retirees, occupation might once have been a major source of self-identification. This difference in research findings may be due to the present study focusing on women only, whereas Atchley's (1976) work was generally about men.

The fourth aim of the research was 'to extend a knowledge of the past work on retirement transition. Particularly relevant is work on the possible relation this transition has to the changes in people's ageing self-conceptions and their self-esteem'.

The retirement transition, ageing self-conceptions and self-esteem

There is a question as to whether the women in the study might have experienced some of the same things surrounding issues of age and identity whether they were retired or not. Because participants were at, or nearing, the age of 60, which seems to have social significance regarding 'old age' identity, the answer could be that they did. This will be discussed further under 'further work' later in this chapter. In relation to Erikson's (1980; 1982), phase specific psychosocial crises, Erikson's concepts of Generativity versus Stagnation and Ego-integrity include many features the participants in the present study were confronted with in their transition to retirement. Whether retirement triggered, worsened, highlighted or merely happened around the same time as Erikson's psychosocial crises would be an interesting focus for future work. At the close of the present study participants still seemed to be looking for activities to contribute to generativity, expressed by them as having some 'usefulness', and this would be interesting to focus on in further work. By studying this period of life within the context of retirement there is enrichment of understanding of the life cycle in general and of women's life cycle in particular.

Retirement is acknowledged in this study as a major life transition in that it triggers a series of changes and internal reorganisations of a psychosocial nature within the life of an individual (Parkes, 1971; 1975; Thériault, 1994). Relevant existing research also comments on retirement as a time of crisis (Mann, 1991), redefinition and change (Taylor, Carter and Cook, 1995), a challenge to the sense of coherence and wholeness of the Self (Antonovsky and Sagy, 1990) and a series of adjustments (Atchley, 1975; 1976).

A theme of the work on transitions sees retirement as a process, with multiple issues within the process of adjustment to retirement (Antonovsky and Sagy, 1990). There is recognition that women's experiences might differ from those of men (McGoldrick, 1994). More specifically Hanson and Wapner (1994) found that some women experienced their sense of Self changed with retirement. However Price (2000) found

that the women in her study reported no decrease in sense of Self or personal identity following retirement, but found that women's work roles are an important aspect to their identities. An obvious gap in the literature is work on the process of transition to retirement specific to women, a gap the present research aims to fill. The identified *Process model of the transition of the Self in retirement* extends the knowledge of past work on retirement. This will be discussed further under 'contribution to knowledge' later in this chapter. Various findings of the study relevant to the retirement literature are discussed next.

Participants in study 1, on looking back at what they knew of themselves, found that there were some things they saw as inevitable in their progression into retirement. If mental stimulation was important to them in the past then it was seen as important for them in retirement, if being busy was important in the past this was important in retirement. This supports Activity theory (Neugarten et al, 1968) and the Continuity theory of Retirement (Atchley, 1989), which would expect to find some level of continuity in the evolution of aspects of the Self from a working life to a life in retirement. A sense of history and self-knowledge continued the Known Self in the lives of individuals. Continuation of the Known Self however, went beyond the continuation of activities previously enjoyed. Early in retirement there appeared to be challenges, which included the maintenance of those things about the Self individuals knew to be important to them. These were largely activity based but, more than this, retirement called upon individuals to re-examine themselves, to reassess, to be really sure of 'who I am now that I am retired'. A concern arose within these women that called them to question what they knew about themselves. This is expanded further in 'Defining Self' but is relevant to mention because retirement seemed to disrupt a fundamental knowledge these women had about themselves. Participants in the present study eventually came to recognise and re-order their needs in relation to what they knew about themselves. At this point all participants had made steps to meet those needs. One participant became convinced she had retired too early and decided that for now she would go back to work, though not quite full time. For this participant her 'Known Self' was very much tied up with her work and she wasn't ready to move on from that and discover other aspects of herself. Certainly Taylor Carter (1995) suggests that, for those deeply attached to the work role, part time work might allow a psychological

preparation for retirement, making it less of a crisis. Walker et al (1981) identified the adjustment style of 'holding on', for those active and wanting to continue a working lifestyle. The reaction of this participant therefore was clearly not an uncommon reaction. However, also hindering this particular woman was the guilt she felt at having time for herself. Until her husband retired she would not be comfortable being free. Adelmann et al (1993) showed how the retirement of their husbands influenced women's decisions to retire and part of how they defined themselves post retirement was in relation to their husbands' role. Work and identity will be discussed further under 'Defining Self'. Tied into this may also be the fact that this participant did not foresee that she would feel guilty about having freedom in retirement, while her husband was still working. Parkes (1971) suggests that transition to a world which might seem more ideal may involve changes which were not foreseen, and this may lead to adjustment problems.

Maintenance of the Self they knew became very important to participants, especially keeping mentally active. A sense of further freedom seemed to come to the women as they trusted what they knew about themselves and started to listen to themselves. A participant who had gone back to work, temporarily, realised that she was still very able and efficient and had not lost any of her skills. She decided it was time to leave and never go back. She needed confirmation of her ability before she could relinquish it for good. Participants showed a greater self-awareness and confidence that what they were doing in their lives was sufficient for now, but there was potential for change.

Marris (2002) comments that it is not the impulse to hold on to what we know and trust that changes with age, or the struggle to re-establish the sense of a meaningful life, but that it is the nature of our vulnerability that changes. He suggests that when familiar bases are threatened, such as loss of something of importance, then purpose can also be lost and this causes disorganisation and a 'crisis of meaning'. This, Marris concludes, provokes grief, a "difficult and painful search for a way to reconstruct a meaningful world" (Marris, 2002, p.18). Defining the Self in a new position of retirement therefore, is not only about compensation and exchange of activities in life to meet felt needs, but is about the felt vulnerability of these women in a position they have never been in before.

Skirboll and Silverman (1992) found that women who had begun to experience stress in their jobs/careers felt a relief when they retired, although this did not stop feelings of status loss. In the present study this relief seemed to come after a period of readjustment although only one participant in this study (Sarah) was interviewed on initial retirement and the relief for her was immediate, perhaps because the 'honeymoon' period (Atchley, 1976; 2000) brought relief before the period of adjustment 'proper' began.

For the group of women retired 6-9 years what was interesting was how similar their attitudes were to those of the newly retired women at final interview. They talked a bit about some of the adjustment problems they had felt on retirement; status loss and missing people came up as it did for the core group of women. These women were, however, very comfortable with who they now were. They knew themselves in time and history, acknowledging past influences in making them who they were today, but feeling much more content, accepting and comfortable with the people they knew themselves to be rather than the people they may have been striving to be for much of their lives. This fits with research by Ryff (1991) who found that older women indicated a higher level of self-acceptance than in their past, and that older respondents were seen to have lowered their ideals about themselves in that their actual self-perceptions were closer to their ideal self-assessments.

The women in the 'retired 6-9 years' group didn't feel old, indeed didn't think in terms of age, they were continuing to learn and grow through new activities or an increased attention to old activities. They had re-structured their lives to some extent, regular things felt comfortable and unstructured time was a rarity for all participants. This issue about use of time was interesting as all participants longed for some 'time to myself'. By this they meant unstructured time, because all were involved in activities which would be regarded as things they did for themselves, gardening, playing bridge, singing in a choir. It seemed that unstructured time had a lack of purpose which created discomfort, and perhaps a lifetime's habit of filling time was hard to break.At the time of interview 1 there was a lot of looking back, at regrets, at an era now ended, at unfulfilled potential in the work role but also at how much of themselves these women had given to home, family and work. Now it was time for them to look to their own

needs. Freedom was experienced and valued and brought about a new excitement about potentials. Participants had time to address a part of themselves they felt had long been neglected, and this led to new discoveries or awakenings. This was very positive but at this stage largely unrealised, though much looked forward to. Wapner and Hornstein's (1980) category 'New Beginning' identified in their work on experiencing the retirement transition is in evidence here (Wapner and Hornstein (1980), in Hanson and Wapner, 1994; Hornstein and Wapner, 1984, 1985). However, there were unexpected dilemmas raised about this aspect of retirement in reality. Guilt feelings about being selfish were weighed with desires to 'do the thing I've always said I'd do when I retired', and there were problems with a lack of purpose and usefulness and a question of whether they were significant at all any more. these were some of the issues these women had to deal with.

This need for a purpose had to be balanced with the desire for freedom and discovery of new aspects of themselves. Before retirement all participants had looked forward to trying new areas of creativity or social life, but all had found some difficulty with this in reality. Price (2000) also found that the women in her study "missed a sense of accomplishment," which Price attributed to a loss of professional challenges and the importance of feeling productive in retirement. The women in Price's study fulfilled this need by becoming involved in their communities (Price 2000). Price, however, interviewed women some time after their retirement and in doing so might have missed an important time of transition for those women. The women in the present study took some time and self-searching before new roles that give a sense of purpose were found and settled into. One participant in the present study went through a time of trying out some form of voluntary contribution, which was eventually rejected. Another two participants experienced a feeling of purposelessness where they related wanting to go and wave banners or 'do something worthwhile'. Another participant was desperately trying to find purpose in further work. The two women who did not feel a lack of purpose were either very involved in voluntary work, which was a continuation of work they were involved with pre-retirement, or were involved in caring in a family crisis.

Purposelessness was not a crisis for these women but it did highlight, by its presence, an important aspect of the work role that fulfilled an essential component within the Self,

that of having a reason for being. Other things, like families, give us a reason for being, which is probably why this was not such a crisis for these women, but it seemed, as mentioned previously, this was much more personal, or more pertaining directly to the Self that we know, because it was more about a purpose which came from an individual expression, 'my choice of work', 'my development of a purpose'. One woman said that work was her '*raison d'être*'. She had a family and was very involved with them but felt that on retirement she lost her reason for being and so she went back to work, feeling she had retired too early. Relevant to this is a study by Hooker and Ventis (1984) where 34 men and 42 women aged 53-88 reported on satisfaction with retirement. Hooker and Ventis found that satisfaction with retirement was directly proportional to the total number of activities in which participants were involved. When such activities were perceived useful by retirees then satisfaction was enhanced. Usefulness does therefore seem an important part of life, and is probably the reason why, for a couple of participants in the present study, both heavily involved in activities perceived by them as being very useful, retirement didn't throw up many difficulties, until for one of the participants this 'useful' activity came to an end. Difficulties with 'not being needed' then began to appear. Friedmann and Havighurst (1954) suggested that retirement would bring:

> *"a loss of certain satisfactions and thus create a void in a person's life which he will seek somehow to fill."*
>
> (Friedmann and Havighurst, 1954, p.6)

This is the basis of 'Substitution theory', which holds that for good adjustment an individual must substitute other activities for those lost in the work role and these activities must provide the same degree of satisfaction. Also Activity theory (Havighurst, 1963; Neugarten et al, 1968) argues that activities enjoyed in middle age which are maintained in retirement increase life satisfaction. Ekerdt (1986) too believes that in retirement the work ethic must be channelled or transferred into productive, useful activities, so by keeping busy retirees remain productive within the freedom provided by retirement. From the present study however, the 'void' is not only to do with substitution of activities, even useful ones, though this seems important, but also with the need for having a platform for expression of the Self, which may not necessarily be in activity.

A question which may also be asked, is why these women chose to retire. This was not focused on in the present study as the transition post retirement was the focus. However it is probably helpful to mention that, although for some of these women their work was very much a part of who they were the stresses of the job seemed to outweigh any benefits they felt in continuing their working lives. Skirboll and Silverman (1992) found that changing technology and job stresses were often responsible for a decision to take early retirement. All but two of the women in the present study took early retirement. It is important to mention that all participants expressed dissatisfaction with their work pre-retirement. Ekerdt and DeViney (1993) found that older male workers nearing retirement were more likely to view their jobs as causing tension and fatigue, and that, in the years preceding retirement, workers were inclined to view the job as burdensome. This, Ekerdt and DeViney proposed, was evidence that workers were engaged in a pre-retirement process of reinterpreting their work situations as they gradually dissociate from roles that have been central to their identity. However, in the present study only two participants retired 'on time', i.e. at the expected age of 60 or over, while other participants had only a short time to consider early retirement offers before taking them up. Dissatisfaction with work pre-retirement may only reflect growing dissatisfaction with work as years in the job advance and responsibilities increase.

In the past for some of these women, being at home and not at work had meant being in a caring role, looking after the children, looking after ageing relatives, looking after the house and husband. This is the role the 'newly retired' core group of participants gravitated towards and felt responsible for on retirement. This homemaker and carer role now seemed to take on more importance. Thus, on retirement these women went back to what was familiar to them, something they could do and something they could hang on to for the moment. This fits with Adelmann et al's (1993) findings on how women define themselves after leaving work where the role of 'homemaker' or 'housewife' was used by a substantial proportion of women following retirement. Also, Calasanti's (1993) findings are supported in that, because women fulfil a domestic role, albeit an unpaid one at home, they do not in fact retire. Only one participant saw this as a satisfactory role however, whilst the other women all said that the caring they were doing for families and the focus on the house was a temporary measure, or they weren't able to be as involved with family in the way they would like. Of course if their families

really needed them then they were very willing to help, but child care roles especially were seen as temporary. Though all the women said that 'housewife' or 'homemaker' was part of their role now, for some their work still had a place in the definition of who they were: retired 'nurse' or retired 'teacher' was the way they described themselves. Bikson and Goodchilds (1989) found that men who strongly identified with the organization for which they formerly worked described themselves as 'retirees' from the organization.

The 'homemaker' role was familiar and already a part of who they were, or what they did, but the work role was not easily relinquished and remained an important part of self-definition.

Assuming the 'homemaker' role may, however, have been more than just 'falling into the familiar' for these women. Although Continuity theory rejects homeostatic or equilibrium models such as Activity theory (Havighurst et al, 1969; Havighurst, 1963; Rosow, 1963), that assume the restoring of equilibrium to be the typical response when a change like retirement occurs, there was evidence that the initial response of these women could have been an attempt at restoring equilibrium by going back to the prior state. For some this was the homemaker role and for two women it was taking on some part time paid work alongside the homemaker role.

By interview 3 participants valued the freedom they had and enjoyed the aspects of their life they had given over to time 'just for me'. For one participant this was in fact going back to work. With this particular participant a relation to Hornstein and Wapner's (1984; 1985) category of 'Continuation' can be seen, whereby valued activities are continued in a less pressured and more satisfying manner, although to make this categorisation reduces the decision of this participant to being rather more simplistic than it actually was.

By interview 3 participants were confident in the people they felt themselves to be and were confident in their abilities, they were able to shake off stereotypes and engage in activities they were happy doing. This fits with Atchley's (1991) proposition that the majority of older people are able to manage the stereotypical attitudes toward them and

are therefore not affected by them. The concept of self-definition merged into Known Self by interview 3, as these women became more trusting of who they knew themselves to be and more comfortable with that person.

> *"What it means to be* the *person, I am, is ontologically 'where it's at' (to use the vernacular) for everyone. This is particularly true at points of passage and transition in the unfolding of one's life in the latter stages."*
> (Sanford (1962) p.28, in Holtzclaw, 1985, p.23)

Ageing self-conceptions

The title 'retired' threw up some new feelings about how participants saw themselves. For example, negative stereotypes of retirement invaded their conscious thought, even leading one woman to believe that on retirement, despite all she knew about her healthy physical and very alert mental capacities, she would very quickly go into a complete decline! Age suddenly became an issue, but only, it seems, because retirement or becoming 60 was stereotypically associated with 'old'. In the present study ageist stereotypes threatened the women because they came from the women themselves, or were perceived to be 'out there' despite no direct confrontation. Price also found that confronting ageist stereotypes was an issue raised by her participants, although only at the beginning of the retirement transition, which was interesting. Price's participants experienced direct confrontation with social stereotypes based on misconceptions of individual abilities, characterizing the women as being incompetent and unable to perform important tasks, and the assumption that retirees have nothing to do. I wonder if on initial retirement there was more sensitivity about being 'old' and 'retired' because of the feelings that were within the individuals. Price notes the lack of available literature addressing this specific issue.

Despite uncomfortable feelings about perceptions of ageing, not one of the women said that she felt old, or considered herself old. It seems that, in the face of adjusting to a new way of life, developing a new structure and routine, meeting the needs that were being slowly identified for a fulfilling life, discovering a sense of freedom and not feeling guilty about it, and trying to continue to be the person you know yourself to be in this new situation the prospect of being slotted into a category of 'old' was

potentially a threat to be addressed. Dealing with perceptions of 'old' did not at this point however amount to a 'crisis', probably because initially participants had not accepted fully their new 'retired' status. The prospect of being old and being seen as old seemed to affect participants a little later on.

Ageing self-conceptions and the potential threat to the Self

Chronological age became less relevant, and threatening, at the time of interview 2, and as participants felt the same on the inside, some even better since leaving work, they were beginning to feel and enjoy a sense of freedom and value about being the retired generation, acknowledging their experience of life and the value this has.

The subject of future health was of slight concern to the women at this stage and was becoming a bit of a threat as these women realised that maintaining who they knew themselves to be, and moving on into new areas of life required them to stay healthy. This threat to health was a threat to their established assumptive world (Parkes, 1971; 1975), but was an imagined or anticipated threat where potentially ill health might require a change in those assumptions and a consequent change in expectations and abilities to live life as desired. This extends what Parkes had to say in that the threat was imagined. Nevertheless the felt threat was very real. The potential for poor health became more of a felt threat at the time of interview 3. A potential area for negative change in the consciousness of these women was the possibility of ill health and the inevitability of dying. Old age meant ill health to these women. Old age in this respect meant a loss of control and the possibility of not being able to care for oneself. This vicarious experiencing of threat is another extension of Parkes' (1971; 1975) work. Baltes and Baltes (1990) argue that perceived control and efficacy are essential to having meaningful goals and that these goals give meaning to life.

> *"Perceived deficits of control over personally significant areas of life ... most likely give rise to feelings of futility and alienation."*
>
> (Baltes and Baltes, 1990, p.207)

Retirement being the last 'era' of life and their knowledge of social stereotypes had made participants think about potential ill health and what that would mean for them.

For those nearing their 60th birthday this subject was brought to the fore of their thinking, a reminder of the inevitable passage of time until death. This was a threat to the Self for these women because ill health could take away all that they cherished about retirement, the freedom and the ability to help family when necessary, to be useful and to discover new things about themselves. Illness and death was a direct threat to the Self, it wasn't an overwhelming threat but it was acknowledged.

Nilsson, Sarvimäki and Ekman (2000) interviewed in-depth fifteen individuals 85-96 years of age in order to illuminate very old people's experiences of feeling old. Eight reported feeling old and Nilsson et al concluded that these individuals were in a phase of transition. Four characteristics of the experience of feeling old were identified: being able to date the beginning of feeling old, fear of helplessness and of being unable to manage one's life situation, not recognising one's former Self, and feeling different from others. Nilsson et al proposed that these properties corresponded to the main properties of this transition process. What is particularly interesting about this study is the identification by Nilsson et al of an uncomfortable aspect of 'not recognising one's former Self' in their very old participants who were in a state of transition and who felt this as a loss. In the present study participants did not experience 'not recognising one's former Self', because they were not in the transition of feeling old. However, it was anticipated by participants that ill health and old age would lead to a lack of independence and autonomy where the Self that is known and valued may be challenged, and even lost. This it seems is confirmed in Nilsson et al's study as a very real threat to the Self.

Erikson (1950) described the negative resolution of the 'Integrity versus Despair' stage as characterized by both depression and fear of death. This was something these women were beginning to work through at this stage in their lives. Klemmack and Roff (1984) found that:

> *"the fear of ageing had a strong inverse relationship with current subjective well-being in older persons".*
>
> (Klemmack and Roff, 1984, p.86)

This is important because the women in the present study were undergoing a transition. There were, as reported, uncertainties and a time of disruption within the Self and well-being. It is interesting that Klemmack and Roff found that a fear of ageing may go along with this. The ordering of the causal relationship was not determined by Klemmack and Roff's study. However if it was that a disruption in well-being caused a fear of ageing then soon after retirement this fear would be there, but it would be expected to reduce as participants settled and adjusted to retirement. The fear of ageing did reduce slightly as the women in the present study felt more settled into retirement, but the fear of illness and death was still there, most probably related, as discussed, to the threat to expression of the Self to independence and autonomy. However, participants now showed acknowledgement of the distinction between being older, and being ill. Perhaps having some contact with peers who were retired, and older people, meant there was some realisation that you could be old and healthy and happy. Kaufman (1986) in her study of the aging Self reported:

> *"The old Americans I studied do not perceive meaning in aging itself; rather they perceive meaning in being themselves in old age."*
>
> (Kaufman, 1986, p.6)

Being themselves means acknowledging who you know yourself to be and being able to express it!

Ill health and a loss of independence were fears the women retired 6-9 years carried. They did think about these things even though there was no way of knowing whether the fears would be realised and what the circumstances would be if they did happen. This was a threat to their sense of Self in that, without good health, they would be limited in doing things that were important to them, and consequently in maintaining the Self that they knew. Ryff (1991) also found that older women anticipated significant deterioration in the years ahead, and that future expectations of the older group in her study were consistently lower than future ratings of younger groups. Ryff's study also included men and the oldest group had a mean age of 74, with some 90 year olds in this group, but she reports being puzzled by this finding as all respondents were, at the time, healthy, well-educated and economically comfortable. Klemmack and Roff (1984) also found that:

"The affluent were as likely as the non-affluent to fear they would experience problems in old age."

(Klemmack and Roff, 1984, p.757)

Ryff accepts that the expectation of reduced environmental mastery might be reasonable but respondents also expected other aspects of well-being, such as positive relations with others to decline significantly in old age. This may reflect future expectations of age stereotypes (Ryff, 1991), or worries about the Self to come, or protective mechanisms (Ryff, 1991). Examining this research against the present study could it also indicate a threat to the present Self, in that the continuation of the Self that is known may not be thought possible? This ties in with Ryff's 'worries about the Self to come', also Ogilvy's (1987) 'undesired Self'. Hurd's (1999) findings of older women distancing themselves from the category 'old' through activity and group membership highlighted the constant need for negotiation of contradictory and threatening messages concerning 'youthful status'. Hurd concluded that:

"The realities of declining health, changing body image, and loss of spouses pose a threat to their sense of well-being and their membership of the 'not old'."

(Hurd, 1999 p.436)

The women in the present study knew the negative stereotypes of the 'old' and, although they didn't class themselves thus, they acknowledged they would get there and therefore not be valued, like all the rest. One participant in this group of retirees of 6-9 years felt that she had to continually justify herself to prove she had some value. This was a frustration because each one of these women knew that they had experiences worth passing on and knew that they were of some value.

For the women retired for over 10 years there were threats to their Self in the form of their own bodies, which did not look, and would not work, the way they would like them to.

"First bodies change with age: They do less than they once did and with greater effort; viewed against the cultural ideals of the society, beauty-if it was ever possessed-slips from our countenances. On top of this,

displacement from roles and statuses accelerates with age ... In short, aging brings loss with it."

(Pearlin and Mullan, in Wykle et al, 1992, p.117)

Also the attitudes of other people served to threaten what these women knew about themselves, attitudes that come from seeing a frail body and assuming a frail mind. These women felt old, but only in body and this threatened their sense of Self because it limited their expression of Self. Hurd Clarke (2001) studied 22 participants aged between 61-92, and examined the influence of the loss of perceived physical attractiveness and deterioration of health and functional abilities on these older women's sense of identity. Hurd Clarke found that the women expressed a tension between their sense of identity and their physical realities as they stated that they did not feel their chronological ages. She concluded that the appearance of these older women masked their felt identity, suggesting that in later life the body is often experienced as a prison of the Self. The findings of the present study confirmed Hurd Clarke's findings.

Pearlin and Mullan, writing in Wykle et al (1992), highlight the deeper threat that comes with diminished health.

"The direct threats and losses that the old-old experience, ... are likely to revolve around their diminished health, vigour, and mobility. ... As difficult as they are in their own right, however, these kinds of limitations and losses come to stand for a more encompassing loss: the ability to control and master one's own life as one would like.

(Pearlin and Mullan, in Wykle et al, 1992, p.129)

Pearlin and Mullan were writing about stress and its diversity. They continue:

"Perhaps nothing is more stressful in the upper reaches of the age structure than the necessity to confront one's own shrinking autonomy and mastery. ... The loss of personal mastery is probably all the more bitter a pill by virtue of the fact that among the old-old it is likely to be both irreversible and noncompensable (sic)*."*

(Pearlin and Mullan, in Wykle et al, 1992, p.131)

It is clear that, in relating this to the present study, part of the stress experienced is about losing the sense of 'Self that is Known' through an inability to express that Self.

Reminiscence was important for the older women in the present study in maintenance of a sense of who they had been and now were. This accords with the suggestions of Suls and Mullen (1982) who maintain that reminiscing may be a form of temporal comparison for the elderly which "is at least the recall of or at most the actual re-experiencing of personally significant experiences" (Suls and Mullen, 1982, p.117). Reminiscing may also be beneficial to the elderly in minimising depression (McMahon and Rhudick, 1964; Butler and Lewis, 1974; Kaminsky, 1978, in Suls and Mullen, 1982), and "provides a useful and multifaceted means of self-evaluation" (Suls and Mullen, 1982, p.118).

Work had been important for both these older women, not least in the friendships they had made there, and they remembered well their skills, accomplishments and value. The deterioration of health threatened to take over and define the person, the Self, and to threaten individual control. It was important for these participants to maintain a focus on who they knew themselves to be. Brown and Taylor (1988) have argued that certain illusions about the Self appear to promote mental health, and may be especially useful and adaptive when an individual receives negative feedback or is otherwise threatened. These illusions comprise overly positive self-evaluations, unrealistic optimism and exaggerated perceptions of control and mastery. The older participants of the present study, however, appeared to assess their situation and Self with great clarity and reality. Brandtstädter, Wentura and Greve (1993) and Brandtstädter and Rothermund (1994) argue that although uncontrollable aversive events and irreversible losses cumulate as we get older, the assumption that there is an age-related deficit in perceived personal control has received little empirical support. This is not as a result of illusions or exaggerated perceptions, according to Brandstädter et al, but by the adjustment of personal ambitions and goals to a feasible range, through a process of 'accommodation,' which keeps goals and ambitions attainable. This in turn enables the attainment of personally valued goals and the maintenance of a sense of power and control.

One of the women in this older group was a widow, the other was single. These very different experiences of life served to have their own influence on the experience of old age. Gubrium (1976) examined social isolation and proposed:

> *"Being single in old age is a kind of premium. Since such persons have no spouses, they do not experience the social disruptions that come with the death of a spouse. Their everyday routines are more likely than the married to have been generated out of lifelong relative isolation."*
>
> (Gubrium, 1976, p.182)

The question has to be asked whether this is likely to be the same for both men and women. The woman in the present study who was a widow certainly lived in the shadow of the death of her husband although he had died many years before her own retirement.

Alongside psychological adjustments to retirement, all the women in the study were attempting to adapt their lives physically and form some sort of routine or gain some sort of structure in their lives, despite the fact they wanted the freedom to do as they chose. This reaction may be what Atchley (1989) is describing when commenting on how efforts to find external continuity in a new situation can result in an attempt to "preserve continuity by dealing with a new environment in familiar ways" (Atchley, 1989, p.189). Atchley goes on to say that "such discontinuity is usually temporary, but the degree of stress connected with it can be substantial" (Atchley, 1989, p.189).

For the women in the core group the physical adaptation of life post-retirement appeared not to be a major problem, although all were slightly alarmed by the fact that they took longer to do everyday tasks. This probably speaks more of the unhealthy 'busyness' of most women's lives when they are trying to juggle paid work with house work and all the other things that go with running a house and having a social life, rather than the fact that these women had suddenly become 'old' and therefore slower. Incredibly the women for whom this 'slowing down' was most noticeable were more willing at first to attribute it to age than the fact that it was probably a healthier pace for everyone to live. The stereotypes have great strength. All admitted to feeling healthier and less tired than when working however!

This physical adaptation went on alongside the psychological adjustments, of course. When a need for more mental stimulation was identified then this was brought into the daily routine, such as doing the crossword every day. These adaptations were a

continuation of what had gone on throughout life, for example decorating the house, planning holidays, and did not seem to throw up any great dilemmas. The social, or community, side of life was also continued, though with a bit more effort as missing work colleagues was one of the losses all participants felt, though to varying degrees. Again this required thinking about and a realisation that social time could be made around meeting other needs. For example, whilst meeting a need for mental stimulation by taking up a course new people could be met. There was no replacement for old friends however. The difficulty with loss of social interaction has been reported in research into women's retirement (Price, 2000), and women have more difficulty adjusting than men in this regard (Hanson and Wapner, 1994). This might indicate that women rely more heavily on friendships for social support than men do.

The women in the study had psychological adjustments to make to the changes brought about by retirement. They looked back at how they had dealt with adjustments in the past, they knew how they usually reacted to change, and they had learned more about what to do in this very specific change in life. They had also learned what not to do, for example, making no plans was on the agenda for at least a couple of participants because of being let down in the past.

Implications of the findings

The present study extends the current literature on retirement by the presentation of the *Process model of the transition of the Self in retirement*. An increase in the understanding of aspects of the retirement transition for women has implications for further work on the retirement transition and for education about retirement for women. The previous discussion highlighted the fact that retirement reduced the forum for expression of the Self, and until a new forum was found there was disruption in felt identity. Also highlighted was the importance of continuity of aspects of the Self. The 'Known Self' was identified as having a stabilising influence. Ageing self-conceptions influenced by stereotypes initially, and the threat to health and expression of the Self latterly, also have great importance when considering the transition to retirement for women. All of these issues have implications for future work on retirement and for the extension of the literature on retirement.

Summary of Discussion

The present study confirms Thériault's (1994) verification of retirement being a psychosocial transition in that it triggers a series of 'internal reorganizations' in a person's life, which are of a psychosocial nature. The reorganisations are seen especially in terms of personal identity, life purpose, value, worth and usefulness. Participants in the core group underwent a de-stabilising of the Self and, through the transition process, came to a point of readjustment. The disruption of the Self was seen to be most evident in the area of self-definition or identity and threats to this Self. This agrees with work by Parkes (1971; 1975) and Thériault (1994).

The theory of Continuity (Atchley, 1989) was shown in the present study to be an important theory where familiarity and stability can reside with change. This is demonstrated in the present study and is important in adaptation of physical life to the circumstantial changes of retirement. The present study builds upon this theory, highlighting the importance of continuity of identity in the form of the Known Self, in adjustment to retirement, i.e. stability and change coexisting.

The two latter stages of Erikson's theory of ego development were shown to have importance regarding goals, life purpose and meaning. All were central themes in the lives of participants in the present study, and were linked to purpose and goals (Atchley, 1976; 2000; Robbins, Lee and Wan, 1994).

Activity theory (Havighurst, 1963), the substitution of activity lost in retirement and its link to satisfaction (Atchley, 1975; 1977; 2000; Dreyer, 1989) was shown to be important but was a small part of a bigger picture of the process of adjustment to retirement, and is linked to continuity.

The present study agrees with Talaga and Beehr's (1989), Dreyer's (1989), and McGoldrick's (1994) findings that retirement is not totally negative. Nevertheless retirement is not always an easy transition and the 'crisis in the individual' identified by

Mann (1991) and Matthews and Brown (1988) is evident in most participants in the present study.

Aspects of Atchley's (1975; 1976) work on the process of retirement are shown in the present study, resulting in development of a new routine, which all participants arrived at. Research on experiencing the retirement transition by Wapner and Hornstein (1980 in Hanson and Wapner, 1994; Hornstein and Wapner, 1984; 1985) is also in evidence.

The present study differs from the work of Price (2000) who found no decrease in the sense of Self or personal identity in her study. Perhaps because Price studied participants who had been retired longer she may have missed a part of the transition to retirement identified by the present study. The transition experienced by participants in the present study did not take a long time to resolve as the present study only lasted eighteen months, but nevertheless issues around the Self and identity were significant at the time. At the end of the study, when most women felt settled and happy, personal identity was not an issue, which is what Price found.

The Process model, which emerged from the data of the present study, can be linked to work by Antonovsky et al (1990) on the process of the retirement transition. *The Process model of the transition of the Self in retirement* was developed from interview, narrative, diary, and psychometric measures of all participants and shows the process of de-stabilisation leading to relative stability, which appears to be a feature in later life. The fact that there is an increase in the older population and a decrease in mortality rates (Schaie and Willis, 2002) dramatically increases a person's chances of surviving to a very old age. Retirement, therefore, may become an extremely long period in a person's life and there may be need for some re-definition of the retirement phase, especially in the light of the initial identity confusion the present study highlights.

The concept of the 'Known Self' identified in the present study reflects the Rogerian concept of an organised and consistent conceptual pattern of perceptions of characteristics and relationships of the 'I' or 'Me'. Participants recognised the 'Me' as reflecting parts of themselves and the 'I' having a permanence and sameness about it.

Although it is acknowledged that the 'Self as Knower', and the 'Self as Known', have elements which exclude any notion of separateness between the 'I' and the 'Me'.

As Atchley (1991) notes, we need to cultivate a variety of approaches to study of the Self. The Process model of the transition to retirement for women is an additional tool to use in work on the Self, provided by the present study. Examined next are conclusions, contributions to knowledge the present study has made, and further research.

CONCLUSIONS, CONTRIBUTION TO KNOWLEDGE AND FURTHER RESEARCH

Conclusions

In the present study retirement was found to be a time when a review of the Self was experienced. An acknowledgement of the inevitability of ageing and of death became prominent. It is potentially therefore a significant experience in development and adaptation to the latter part of life.

Aims of this research included an examination of the possibility that there may be part or parts of the Self that are continuous even in life change, and examination of the possibility that continuity of some aspect of the Self may contribute to positive adaptation through life change. This aim was supported in the present research, and will be discussed below.

Retirement was envisaged by participants as a time when freedom to indulge in activities of a personal interest and with pleasure directed totally towards the Self seemed a very real possibility. This potential self-indulgence and time to reflect on life and to rediscover, or in some cases even to discover for the first time, 'who I am', evoked a sense of excitement even if no definite plans were laid down. However, many and varied problems seemed to arise in fulfilling this potential for freedom and personal interest, and making possible this discovery of aspects of the Self possibly denied previously.

One of the problems in fulfilling this potential for freedom was a participants individual history. Evident in participant interviews was how much past life, society, experience and family influences defined who they saw themselves to be, decisions they made, regrets they had, and decisions they were now making about retirement. Thus, some participants found that past experiences had a stronger hold on them than they imagined and were often a barrier to their desired psychological and physical freedom in

retirement. This was particularly highlighted when participants talked about having a current personal desire to fulfil, and time to fulfil it now they were retired, but were experiencing a sense of guilt or self-reproach if it was fulfilled. This was also evidenced by the plans some participants made for participation in some interest in retirement, but which were commonly never even started. Time for Self was looked forward to, expected, desired, and planned for but was rarely recognised as something achieved in retirement by participants.

The individual history of each participant influenced who they felt themselves to be and, as mentioned, potentially hindered attempts at a life of more psychological and physical freedom. However, this same sense of self-continuity, which was a potential hindrance to change, turned out to be helpful in positive adaptation to retirement. All participants in all three groups had a very real sense of continuation of themselves through work and into retirement. The 'Who am I?' narratives confirmed interview data showing that all women had a sense of history and continuation throughout their lives; these women were not saying they hadn't changed, but there was a sense of knowing and being the same person and continuing that person into retirement. Change occurred 'within a context of sameness provided by the basic structure' (Atchley, 1989). The present study identified part of this 'sameness' or 'continuous Self' as being a conscious 'Known Self'.

Despite this very real sense of continuity of the Self through life and into retirement the present study showed how retirement challenged some aspects of the Known Self in the core group of recently retired women, leading to some fragmentation and destabilising of the Self. This occurred mainly in areas of self-definition and identity, and happened in varying degrees to all participants with the minimum disruption occurring in one participant (Sarah), who had only just retired at first interview, unlike other participants who had all been retired for over 6 months. The need for some form of psychological adjustment to be made was clear. The disruption and fragmentation the women felt can be related to the experience of leaving a job of work at retirement, to the family relationships at the time, and to the women's sense of themselves at this juncture in their lives. Work by Parkes (1971) on psychosocial transitions and specifically retirement as a psychosocial transition (Thériault 1994) became very relevant. An event

such as retirement, triggering internal reorganisations of a psychosocial nature, i.e. perceptions, expectations and goals, in the life of the individual, Parkes (1971) argues, signals a major transition taking place. Thériault (1994) found the transition process of work to retirement could be considered a major life transition and considered the course of this transition to be a "process of change" (Thériault, 1994, p.165).

The continuity of the 'Known Self' and its stabilising influence in a time of change positively confirmed the original question of whether continuity of some aspect of the Self may contribute to positive adaptation through life change. The felt continuity of the Self participants knew themselves to be, though questioned and doubted throughout the transition, eventually gave them confidence to listen to themselves which helped in achieving a positive adjustment. All participants appeared to achieve some resolution to the disruption but not before some self-searching and felt discomfort with aspects of their identity. The concepts identified at final interview with the core group were similar to those raised in interviews with participants retired for longer and even with two participants retired for over 10 years. This demonstrated a potential resolution to disruption for the core group participants and identified potential continuity of normative adjustment to life experienced by ageing people.

Eventually the Self that was known and comfortable was verified, consolidated or confirmed. Difficulties that remained involved maintenance of the Known Self, as this was not necessarily as easy as when expressed through the work role. This maintenance of the 'person I know myself to be' became more difficult as time went on and this is particularly clear when interviews from the two older women are examined. The difficulty in maintaining the Known self, experienced as threats to the Self, came from a lack of purpose and physical difficulties hindering psychological expression.

For the core group of participants Erikson's (1950) developmental theory was in evidence. Within Erikson's stage of 'Generativity versus Stagnation' is the initiative to be creative and productive. Productivity in this sense has strong links with purpose, and the present study shows a relation to Erikson's work here. The potential to wake up with no definite plan for the day raised questions of purpose and meaning for some. Questions of being of value and whether chosen tasks were worthwhile were also

raised. Because retirement seemed to throw up questions about identity and expression of the Self for most participants, the adjustment to new circumstances physically and practically was not as straightforward as might have been imagined.

The importance of the body and physical changes to development (Nemiroff and Colarusso, 1985) was confirmed. Physical changes were a threat to the expression of the Known Self, a potential threat for the younger participants, a real and felt threat to the older participants. However, the 'felt age' of participants, which was always younger than the chronological age, appeared to be an anchor for their identity, a point at which they felt they knew themselves and beyond which they felt they hadn't changed radically. This again was evidence of the continuous 'Known Self' having a protective and adaptive influence.

The 'disruption' in the Self experienced by participants was not a totally negative experience. As these women examined the way they saw themselves and defined themselves they gained a very real confidence about who they were. There was some excitement and freedom about this and all participants to a lesser or greater degree felt that self-discovery and growth were a part of their retirement experience.

Within the present study the second aim of the study, which was 'to observe and describe the Self of a small number of individuals in transition' was fulfilled. Although retirement is usually conceptualized as a lengthy process of adjustment (Atchley, 1983; Ekerdt, Bosse, and Levkoff, 1985), by interviewing participants within 2 years of their retirement, something of the early experience of the retirement transition was captured. Knowing when that transition began or was completed was a difficulty however. This was a difficulty not just confined to the present study (see Skirboll and Silverman, 1992; Price, 1998, 2000). This point will be taken up again when 'further research' is discussed.

The first and sixth aim of the research was 'to develop a knowledge of the philosophy/psychology of the 'Self' from the literature' and 'to understand the varied philosophical and psychological theories on the Self and use them to inform the analysis'. The first of these aims was fulfilled in completion of an extensive literature

review of theories of the Self (chapter 2). The second of these aims proved to be a more difficult aim to fulfil as defining the Self is not an easy task (this was previously discussed in chapter 2). However, Rogers' (1951) definition of the Self as the determining aspect of personality is valued and acknowledged within this study, and modifier uses of the concept of Self, such as self-esteem (Rosenberg, 1965; Coopersmith, 1967; Mruk, 1999; Battle, (1990) in Battle, 1992) are also valued. Also labelled aspects of the Self that emerged from the data and were incorporated into the model of the *'process of the transition of the Self in retirement'* represented the Self as defined by James (1890; 1892; 1950). Analysis within the present study emphasised the importance of the physical body, the 'Material Me', and social stereotypes and influences on the Self, the 'Social Me'. The spiritual aspect of the 'Me', in its relationship with the 'I', the 'Self as Knower' are acknowledged as combining the aspects of the Self, as clarified by Ashworth (1979) in the sentence 'I have a self concept'.

'Extending a knowledge of the past work on the retirement transition' was another aim of the present research. As much of past research on retirement had tended to use either questionnaire studies (e.g. Matthews and Brown, 1988; Szinovacz and Washo, 1992) which limit the depth of findings, or use just one interview with women to base their findings on (e.g. Skirboll and Silverman, 1992; Price, 1998, 2000), it was felt the present study went further in observing and describing the experience of a small number of individuals in transition by repeating interviews which enabled more continuous monitoring of experiences. The fulfilling of this aim will be clarified in the discussion of the contribution the present study has made to existing work which follows this section.

The following section continues with specifics about the contribution to knowledge this study has made and a look at how the work of this thesis could be developed further.

Contribution To Knowledge

A positive contribution, in a variety of ways, has been made to the existing knowledge on women's retirement.

Participants within this study showed evidence of a unique and personal identity, perceived either as lost, fairly stable and continuing, never found, denied or suppressed. The role of work in expression of this personal identity through the Self is clearly shown to be of importance. For participants in this study, work appeared to enable expression of the Self in a unique way, though in varying degrees, which differed from expression of the Self in the family or with friends. Work was something 'for them'. It was a 'legitimate self indulgence' that gave meaning, purpose (even if that was to gain some extra money), significance and status. Retirement from work, therefore, was potentially fairly traumatic, with a continuing 'crisis' particularly in finding new forums for expression of certain aspects of the Self. There were exceptions to this 'crisis' when other things were already in place to enable this expression, but generally new ways to express this important part of the Self needed to be found, or old returned to. An original contribution to knowledge came, therefore, in the findings around defining the Self. These findings have shown that, for these women, work was a forum for an expression of particular aspects of the Self, for which it is difficult to find a substitute in any other arena of life. Price (2000) found that adjustment to retirement for professional women is enhanced by utilizing work-related skills to counter the loss of former professional roles and that maintenance of a sense of Self was important in retirement adjustment. The findings of the present study go beyond Price's work by answering the question of why utilizing work-related skills might help in adjustment and by identifying the link between work roles and the sense of Self and identity, the link being that work is a forum for expression of aspects of the Self rather than a place where identity is gained. This is particularly important because, if women retire at age 60, there is potentially the beginning of another 20 or more years of life. "The average age of death (not including those who die from accidents or violence) is expected eventually to stabilize somewhere around age 85" (Fries, 1985 in Schaie and Willis, 2002, p.10). Post-retirement is potentially a very rich and rewarding time for women, especially those who have given much to raising families as well as contributing to society through

work. Findings of this study indicate that work enables a particular expression of the Self that is difficult to replace on retirement. Awareness of this will hopefully lead to more research on how this can be achieved, thus increasing the chances of a positive retirement experience for women.

Other findings in the present study are linked to the previous discussion in that the threat to the Self by declining health, identified in the present study, indicates that the threat is more than a threat to independence and autonomy but is a threat to the ability to express the person 'I know myself to be' though both are of enormous importance to individuals.

By examining the processes involved in the transition to retirement, this study has also contributed to the knowledge of the process of reorganization which takes place within the Self during this transition. Thériault (1994) confirmed retirement as a psychosocial transition because it triggered internal reorganisations. The emergence of the model of the *'process of the transition of the Self in retirement'* in the present study extends Thériault's work by modelling the internal reorganisations occurring within the Self. The present study has therefore increased awareness of the process of transition to retirement for women, giving value and depth of understanding on a small scale so this can be taken further. The lack of such work is evident by the following quote:

> *"To my knowledge, there have been very few studies of the inner process of symbolic reorganization in later life – of how meanings are modified or sloughed off as lives change. ... Nevertheless, it seems reasonable to suppose that earlier meanings are never lost. But how they are stored, and whether they are compartmentalized away, or somehow integrated when new meanings take centre stage, has as yet been given too little attention."*
> (Rubinstein, 2002, p.33)

The gaining of an in-depth view of the challenges occurring within a person going through the retirement transition has given some insight into potential problems in adjustment for women going through the retirement transition and enables a greater understanding of the needs of those retiring, which would be helpful in retirement preparation.

As already mentioned, the emergence of a model of the *'process of the transition of the Self in retirement'* from the data in the present study is a significant contribution to knowledge of the retirement transition for women. Existing research comments on retirement as a time of crisis (Mann, 1991), redefinition and change (Taylor, Carter and Cook, 1995), a challenge to the sense of coherence and wholeness of the Self (Antonovsky and Sagy 1990), a series of adjustments (Atchley, 1975; 1976) and a major life transition (Parkes, 1975; Thériault, 1994). The process model identified in the present study builds on all this work by identifying issues which may cause crisis, examining in depth the process of redefinition of the Self, identifying the specifics of the challenge to the Self and the adjustments to be made, and confirming retirement as a major life transition with very real potential for positive developmental outcomes.

The model is specific to women and focuses on the early period of transition to retirement. Findings demonstrate a process of de-stabilisation leading to relative stability. Existing work suggesting retirement is not stressful (Talaga and Beehr, 1989), and the reported 'no decrease in sense of Self or personal identity' following retirement (Price 2000), at first glance appear to differ from the findings of the model. However, the uniqueness of the focus on the early transition to retirement in the present study may explain these differing findings, as a time of relative stability was identified in the present study only after a couple of years of retirement. A significant contribution to knowledge is made by the identification of the model in that now it can be tested with other samples, preferably in a longitudinal study, which might further enlighten knowledge of women's retirement.

Examined next are the possibilities for further research following on from the findings of this study.

Further research

There is a question as to whether the women in the study might have experienced some of the same things surrounding issues of age and identity whether they were retired or not. Because participants were at, or nearing, the age of 60, which seems to have social

significance regarding 'old age' identity, the answer could be that they did. Particularly in relation to Erikson's (1980; 1982), phase specific psychosocial crises. Erikson's concepts of Generativity versus Stagnation and Ego-integrity include many features the participants in the present study were confronted with in their transition to retirement. In the words of Pearlin and Mullan:

> *"No one is* only *old or* only *middle aged. One is old and male or female, with family and friends or without, economically deprived or not, living in a safe or dangerous neighbourhood, and so on."*
>
> (Pearlin and Mullan, in Wykle et al, 1992, p.119)

The influence of many and varied factors within the lives of individuals has to be acknowledged. However, to help verify the findings of the present research as being findings related to the retirement transition, and not only an 'age' transition, a study involving participants of the same age as the core group of participants (nearing the age of 60), but who chose not to retire, would be useful. If participants choosing to continue working at retirement age experienced the same sorts of things the participants in the present study experienced, then it would be necessary to look again at whether the present study was examining a 'retirement transition' experience or an 'age experience'. Similarly, examining the experience of women taking early retirement, say at age 55, would also be of interest in verifying that the findings are to do with the experience of retirement and not simply an effect of age.

Whether retirement triggered, worsened, highlighted or merely happened around the same time as Erikson's psychosocial crises would be an interesting focus for future work. At the close of the present study participants still seemed to be looking for activities to contribute to generativity, expressed by them as having some 'usefulness', and this would be interesting to focus on in further work. Dealing with death anxiety, and with the fear that time is running out also came up in the present study. It would be interesting to focus on Erikson's Integrity versus Despair construct and follow through individuals' resolving of these issues in more depth, as the transition to retirement may be a trigger for the beginning of the resolution of this conflict. Rappaport, Fossler, Bross and Gilden (1993), suggest an indication of considerable death anxiety might be an individual's lack of ability to extend into the future. Rappaport et al argue for the

necessity to challenge the old philosophy "when you are old it is best to take one day at a time" (Rappaport, Fossler, Bross and Gilden, 1993, p.377). An examination of this philosophy may give further insight into coping with ageing implications and further extend findings from the present study surrounding issues of threats to the Self and death anxiety.

An examination of how women expressed their sense of Self in a variety of differing work situations would enable extension of the present study. Examining a group of women who are not at the point of thinking about retirement and looking at how and whether work features in their concept of Self, and extending this to look at whether these women have narrower concepts of Self than the retired women in the study would all extend issues which came to light in the present study.

The identification of the model of the *'process of the transition of the Self in retirement'* in the present study means that this model can be utilised to examine data from other samples. Ideally, following a sample of women from the point of their decision to retire, their actual retirement and through the first ten years of their retirement would either confirm or suggest modification of the model, which has inferred progression from the longitudinal study into cross-sectional data. However, the time it would take and the difficulties in funding such a study, probably means that this would not be feasible. The previously mentioned problem of knowing when the transition to retirement began and ended would still remain.

The model could be tested further by operationalising the identified aspects of the Self within the model and testing larger groups of women retiring at various different ages. This would give cross-sectional data to verify the model. Also, using operationalised definitions and related psychometric measures, a larger group of women could be tested over the period of their retirement to explore how well the model generalises to the larger group. This could also be replicated with men and could provide interesting comparisons.

Adelmann, P.K., Antonucci, T.C. and Jackson, J.S. (1993). Retired or Homemaker: How Older Women Define Their Roles, Journal of Women and Aging, 5, 67-78.

Agar, M.H. (1980). The Professional Stranger an informal introduction to ethnography, London: Academic Press Limited.

Aldwin, C.M., Spiro A., Levenson, M.R. and Bosse, R. (1989). Longitudinal Findings from the Normative Aging Study 1. Does Mental Health Change with Age? Psychology and Aging, 4, 295-306

Anderson, C.E. and Weber, J.A. (1993). Preretirement Planning and Perceptions of Satisfaction among Retirees, Educational Gerontology, 19, 397-406.

Andrews, B. and Brown, G.W. (1995). Stability and change in low self-esteem: The role of psychosocial factors, Psychological Medicine, 25, 23-31.

Angst, J. and Ernst, C. (1993). Prevalence of affective disorder among the elderly (pp.5-6) Berlin: Proc Lundbeck Symposium, 6th Congress International Psychogeriatric Association.

Antonovsky, A. (1987). Unraveling the Mystery of Health, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Antonovsky, A. and Sagy, S. (1990). Confronting Developmental Tasks in the Retirement Transition, The Gerontologist, 30, 362-368.

Ashworth, P.D. (1979). Social Interaction and Consciousness, Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.

Atchley R.C. (1982). The Aging Self, Psychotherapy: Theory, Research and Practice, 19, 388-397.

Atchley, R.C. (1971). Disengagement Among Professors, Journal of Gerontology, 26, 476-480.

Atchley, R.C. (1975). Adjustment to Loss of Job at Retirement, International Journal on Aging and Human Development, 6, 17-27.

Atchley, R.C. (1976). The Sociology of Retirement, New York: Wiley.

Atchley, R.C. (1977). The Social forces in Later Life (2nd edition), Belmont: Wadsworth.

Atchley, R.C. (1979). Issues in Retirement Research, The Gerontologist, 19, 44-54.

Atchley, R.C. (1989). A Continuity Theory of Normal Aging, The Gerontologist, 29, 183-190.

Atchley, R.C. (1991). The Influence of aging or frailty on perceptions and expressions of the Self: Theoretical and methodological issues. In: J.E. Birren, J.E. Lubben, J.W. Rowe and D.E. Deutchmann. (Eds.) The concept and measurement of quality of life in the frail elderly. (pp. 207-225). New York: Academic Press.

Atchley, R.C. (2000). Social Forces and Aging (9th edition), Belmont: Wadsworth.

Baltes, M.M. and Baltes, P.B. (1986). The Psychology and Control of Aging, London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Baltes, P.B. and Baltes, M.M. (1990). Successful Aging: Perspectives from the Behavioural Sciences, Cambridge UK: Cambridge University Press.

Baltes, P.B. (1987). Theoretical Propositions of Life-Span Developmental Psychology: On the Dynamics Between Growth and Decline, Developmental Psychology, 23, 611-626.

Baltes, P.B. (1973). Strategies for Psychological Intervention in Old Age: A Symposium, The Gerontologist, 13, 4-38.

Banister, P., Burman, E., Parker, I., Taylor, M. and Tindall, C. (1994). Qualitative Methods in Psychology: A Research Guide, Buckingham: Open University Press.

Bartlett, F.C. (1932). Remembering: A study in experimental and social psychology. Cambridge UK: Cambridge University Press.

Battle, J. (1990). Self-esteem: The new Revolution, Edmonton: James Battle Assoc..

Battle, J. (1992). Culture-Free Self-Esteem Inventories (2nd edition), Austin: Pro-ed.

Beck, A.T. and Steer, R.A. (1987). Beck Depression Inventory, USA: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc..

Beck, A.T. Steer, R.A. and Brown, G.K. (1996). Beck Depression Inventory 2, USA: Harcourt Brace and Company.

Becker, G. (1994). The Oldest Old: Autonomy in the Face of Frailty, Journal of Aging Studies, 8, 59-76.

Beehr, T.A. (1986). The Process of Retirement: A Review and Recommendations for Future Investigation, Personnel Psychology, 39, 31-55.

Belgrave L.L. (1989). Understanding Women's Retirement, Generations, 8, 49-52.

Belgrave, L.L. (1988). The Effects of Race Differences in Work History, Work Attitudes, Economic Resources and Health on Women's Retirement, Research on Aging, 10, 383-98.

Bengston, V.L., Reedy, M.N. and Gordon, C.E. (1985). Aging and Self-Conceptions: Personality Processes and Social Contexts. In: J.E. Birren and K.W. Schaie (Eds.). Handbook of the Psychology of Aging (2nd edition). New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold.

Berger, P.L. and Luckman, T. (1967) The Social Construction of Reality, Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Bernard, M., Phillips, J., Machin L. and Harding Davis, V. (2000) Women Aging: Changing Identities, Challenging myths. London: Routledge.

Bhaskar, R. (1989). Reclaiming Reality a critical introduction to contemporary philosophy. Great Britain: Verso.

Bhaskar, R.(1975). A Realist Theory of Science. Leeds: Leeds Books.

Birren, J.E. and Warner Schaie, K. (Eds.). (1996). Handbook of the Psychology of Aging (4th edition). USA: Academic Press Inc..

Blascovich, J. and Tomaka, J. (1991) Measures of self-esteem, in J.P. Robinson and P.R. Shaver (eds.) Measures of Personality and Social Psychological Attitudes, (pp.115-160). San Diago, CA: Academic Press.

Blazer, D. (1989). Depression in Late Life: An Update. Annual Review of Gerontology and Geriatrics, 9, 197-215.

Bond, M.H. and Cheung, T.S. (1983) The Spontaneous Self-Concept of College Students in Hong Kong, Japan and the United States. Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 14, 153-71

Bosse, R., Aldwin, C.M., Levenson, M.R., and Workman-Daniels, C. (1991). How Stressful is Retirement? Findings from the Normative Aging Study. Journal of Gerontology: Psychological Sciences, 46, 9-14.

Braithwaite, V.A. and Gibson, D.M. (1987). Adjustment to Retirement: What we know and what we need to know. Ageing and Society, 7, 1-18.

Braithwaite, V.A., Gibson, D.M., and Bosley-Craft, R. (1986). An Exploratory Study of Poor Adjustment Styles Among Retirees. Social Science and Medicine, 23, 493-499.

Brandstädter, J. and Renner, G. (1992). Coping with Discrepancies Between Aspirations and Achievements in Adult Development: A Dual-Process Model. In: L. Montada, S.H. Filipp and M.J. Lerner. Life Crises and Experiences of Loss in Adulthood. (pp. 301-319). New Jersey USA: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Brandtstädter, J. (1989). Personal Self-Regulation of Development: Cross-Sequential Analysis of Development-Related Control Beliefs and Emotions. Developmental Psychology, 25, 96-108.

Brandtstädter, J. and Renner, G. (1990). Tenacious goal pursuit and flexible goal adjustment: Explication and age related analysis of assimilative and accommodative strategies of coping. Psychology and Aging, 5, 58-67.

Brandtstädter, J., and Greve, W. (1994). The Aging Self: Stabilizing and Protective Processes. Developmental Review, 14, 52-20.

Brandtstädter, J., and Rothermund, K. (1994). Self-Percepts of Control in middle and Later Adulthood: Buffering Losses by Rescaling Goals. Psychology and Aging, 9, 265-273.

Brandtstädter, J., Wentura, D., and Greve, W. (1993). Adaptive Resources of the Aging Self: Outlines of an Emergent Perspective. International Journal of behavioral Development, 16, 323-349.

Brazier, D. (Ed) (1993). Beyond Carl Rogers: Towards a Psychotherapy for the 21st Century. London: Constable.

Brim, G. (1988). Losing and Winning. Psychology Today, 22, 48-52.

Brody, E.M., Kleben, M.H., Johnson, P.T., Hoffman, C. and Schoonover, C.B. (1987). Work Status and Parent Care: A Comparison of Four groups of Women. The Gerontologist, 27, 201-208.

Brown, G.W., Andrews, B., Bifulco, A. and Veiel, H. (1990). Self-esteem and Depression. 1. Measurement issues and prediction of onset. Social Psychiatry and Psychiatric Epidemiology, 25, 200-209.

Brown, G.W., Andrews, B., Harris, T.O., Adler, Z. and Bridge, L. (1986). Social support, Self-esteem and Depression. Psychological medicine, 16, 813-831.

Bugental, J.F.T. and Zelen, S.L. (1950) Investigations into the self-concept. The W-A-Y technique. Journal of Personality, 18, 483-498, in Bond, M.H. and Cheung, T.S. (1983) The Spontaneous Self-Concept of College Students in Hong Kong, Japan and the United States. Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 14, 153-71

Burman, E. and Parker, I. (1993). Discourse Analytic research. Repertoires and Readings of Text in Action. London: Routledge.

Burr, V. (1995). An Introduction to Social Constructionism. London: Routledge.

Busse, E.W. (1963). Aging or Aged: Development or Pathology. In: S.I. Greenspan and G.H. Pollock. (1980). The Course of Life: Psychoanalytic Contributions Towards Understanding Personality Development, (Vol. 3. Adulthood and the Aging process). USA: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Butler, R.N. (1963). Life Review: An Interpretation of Reminiscence in the Aged. Psychiatry, 26, 65-76.

Calasanti, T.M. (1996). Gender and Life Satisfaction in Retirement: An Assessment of the Male Model. Journal of Gerontology: Social Sciences, 51B, S18-S29.

Calasanti, T.M. (1993). Bringing in Diversity: Toward an Inclusive Theory of Retirement. Journal of Aging Studies, 7, 133-150.

Coleman P., Aubin, A., Robinson, M., Ivani-Chalian C., and Briggs, R. (1993). Predictors of Depressive Symptoms and Low Self-Esteem in a Follow-up Study of Elderly People Over 10 Years. International Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry, 8, 343-349.

Coleman, P. G. (1992). Personal adjustment in late life: successful aging. Reviews in Clinical Gerontology, 2, 67-78.

Connidis, I. (1982). Women and retirement: the effect of multiple careers on retirement and adjustment. Canadian Journal of Aging, 1, 17-27.

Cook, E.P. (1993). The Gendered Context of Life: Implications for Women's and Men's Career-life Plans. Career Development Quarterly, 41, 227-237.

Coolican, H. (1990). Research Methods and Statistics in Psychology. London: Hodder and Stoughton.

Coopersmith, S. (1967). The Antecedents of Self-esteem. San Francisco: Freeman.

Cox, L. and Lyddon, W.J. (1997). Constructivist Conceptions of Self: A Discussion of Emerging Identity Constructs. Journal of Constructivist Psychology, 10, 201-219.

Coyle, A. and Wright, C. (1996). Using the Counselling Interview to Collect Research Data on Sensitive Topics. Journal of Health Psychology, 1, 431-440.

Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1992) Flow: The Psychology of Happiness. London: Rider Press.

Csikszentmihalyi, M., and Csikszentmihalyi, I.S. (1988) Optimal Experience: Psychological Studies of Flow in Consciousness. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Cumming, E. and Henry, W. (1961). Growing Old. New York: Basic Books.

Demo, D.H. (1985). The Measurement of Self-Esteem:Refining our Methods. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 48, 1490-1502.

Denzin, N.K. (1978). Sociological Methods. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Denzin, N.K. and Lincoln, Y.S. (1994). Handbook of Qualitative Research. Newbury Park: Sage.

Dreyer, P.H. (1989). Postretirement Life Satisfaction. In: S. Spacapan and S. Oskamp (Eds.). The Social Psychology of Aging. (pp.109-133). USA: Sage Publications Inc.

Edwards, D. and Potter, J. (1993) Language and Causation: a discursive action model of description and attribution. Psychological Review, 100: 23-41.

Ekerdt, D.J. (1986). The Busy Ethic: Moral Continuity between Work and Retirement. The Gerontologist, 26, 239-244.

Ekert, D.J., Bosse, R., and Levkoff, S. (1985). An Empirical Test for Phases of Retirement: Findings from the Normative Aging Study. Journal of Gerontology, 40, 95-101.

Ekerdt, D.J. and DeViney, S. (1990). On Defining Persons as Retired. Journal of Aging Studies, 4, 211-229.

Ekerdt, D.J. and DeViney, S. (1993). Evidence for a Preretirement Process Among Older Male Workers. Journal of Gerontology: Social Sciences, 48, S35-S43.

Erdner, R.A. and Guy R.F. (1990). Career Identification and Women's Attitudes Toward Retirement. Internatinal Journal of Aging and Human Development 30: 129-139

Erikson, E.H. (1963). Childhood and Society. London: Norton.

Erikson, E.H. (1968). Identity: Youth, and Crisis. New York: Norton.

Erikson, E.H. (1980). Identity and the Life Cycle. New York: Norton.

Erikson, E.H. (1982). The Life Cycle Completed: A review. New York: Norton.

Evans, R.I. (1982). Dialogue with E. Erikson. New York: E.P. Dutton.

Feinman, J.A., Cardillo, D., Palmer, J., and Mitchel, M. (2000), Development of a Model for the Detection and treatment of Depression in Primary Care. Psychiatry; 71, 59-78.

Foucault, M. (1972) The Archaeology of Knowledge, London: Tavistock.

Friedmann, M. and Havighurst, R.J. (1954). The meaning of Work and Retirement. Chicago: University of Chicago press.

Freund, A.M. and Smith, J. (1999). Content and Function of the Self-Definition in Old and Very Old Age. Journal of Gerantology: Psychological Sciences, 54B, 55-67.

Garfinkel, H. (1967). Studies in Ethnomethodology. Englewood Cliffs, Prentice Hall.

George, L.K. (1990). Social structure, social processes, and social-psychological states. In: R.H. Binstock and L.K.George (Eds.). Handbook of Aging and the social sciences (3rd edition). San Diego: Academic Press.

George, L.K. and Bearon, L.B. (1980). Quality of Life in Older Persons Meaning and Measurement. New York: Human Sciences Press, Inc.

Gergen, K.J. (1985) Social Constructionism. In K.J. Gergen and K.E. Davis (Eds). The Social Construction of the Person, New York: Springer-Verlag.

Gergen, K.J. and Davis, K.E. (1985). The Social Construction of the Person. New York: Springer-Verlag.

Gergen, K.J. (1991). The Saturated Self: Dilemmas of Identity in Contemporary Life. New York: Basic Books

Gergen, K.J. (1994). Realities and Relationships Soundings in Social Constructionism. USA: Harvard University Press.

Gibson, D. (1995). Broken down by age and sex - 'the problem of old women' redefined. Australian Govt. Public services Canberra: Proceedings of the Third National Women's Health Conference 1995.

Glaser, B.G. (1978). Theoretical Sensitivity: Advances in the methodology of grounded theory. USA: The Sociology Press.

Glaser, B.G. and Strauss, A. (1967). The Discovery of Grounded Theory. Chicago: Aldine.

Goethals, D. In J.V. Wood (1989). Theory and research concerning Social Comparisons of personal Attributes. Psychological Bulletin, 106, 231-248.

Gordon, C. and Gergen, K.J. (1968). The Self in Social Interaction Vol. 1. Classic and Contemporary Perspectives. London: John Wiley and Sons, Inc..

Gotlib, (1984). Depression and General Psychopathology in University Students. Journal of Abnormal Psychology, 93, 19-30.

Gough, B. and MacFadden, M. (2001) Critical Social Psychology: An Introduction, Great Britain: Palgrave.

Greenspan, S.I. and Pollock, G.H. (1980). The Course of Life: Psychoanalytic Contributions Towards Understanding Personality Development, (Vol. 3. Adulthood and the Aging process): USA: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Greenwood, J.D. (1994) Realism, Identity and Emotion, London: Sage.

Gubrium, J.F. (1976). Time, Roles, and Self in Old Age. New York: Human Sciences Press.

Haan, N. (1977). Coping and Defending: Processes of self-environment organization. New York: Academic Press.

Hammersley, M. (1992). What's Wrong with Ethnography? London: Routledge.

Hammersley, M. (1993). Social Research. Philosophy, Politics and Practice. London: Sage.

Hanson, K. and Wapner, S. (1994). Transition to retirement: Gender Differences. International Journal of Aging and Human Development, 39, 189-208.

Harré, R. (1985). The Language Game of Self-ascription. In K.J. Gergen and K.E. Davis, The Social Construction of the Person. New York: Springer-Verlag.

Havighurst, R.J. (1963). Successful Aging. In C. Tibbitts and W. Donahue (Eds.). Processes of Aging. (pp 299-320). New York: Williams.

Havighurst, R.J., Munnichs, J.M., Neugarten, B.L., and Thomae, H. (1969). Adjustment to Retirement: A Cross-National study. Assen: Van Gorcum.

Herbertsson, T. T. (2003). International Perspectives on Early Retirement. Generations Review, 13, 4-9.

Herz, D.E. (1988). Employment Characteristics of Older Women. Monthly Labor Review, 111, 3-9.

Holmes, T.H. and Rahe, R.H. (1967). The Social Readjustment Rating Scale. Journal of Psychosomatic Research, 11, 213-218.

Holtzclaw, L.R. (1985). The Importance of Self-Concept for the Older Adult. Journal of Religion and Aging, 1, 23-29.

Hooker, K. and Ventis, G. (1984). Work Ethic, daily activities and retirement satisfaction. Journal of Gerontology, 39, 478-484.

Hornstein, G.A. and Wapner S. (1984). The Experience of the Retiree's Social Network during the Transition to Retirement. In: C.M. Aanstoos (Ed.). Exploring the Lived World: Readings in Phenomenological Psychology. (pp. 119-136). West Georgia, USA: College Press.

Hornstein, G.A. and Wapner S. (1985). Modes of Experiencing and Adapting to Retirement. International Journal of Aging and Human Development, 21, 291-315.

Howard, G.S. (1991). Culture Tales: A Narrative Approach to Thinking, Cross Cultural Psychology and Psychotherapy. American Psychologist, 46, 187-197.

Hurd Clarke, L.C. (2001). Older Women's Bodies and the Self: The Construction of Identity in Later Life. Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology, 38, 441-464.

Hurd Clarke, L.C. (1999). "We're Not Old": Older women's negotiation of aging and oldness. Journal of Aging studies, 13, 419-439.

James, W. (1890). Principles of Psychology, Volume 1. New York: Henry Holt.

James, W. (1892). Textbook of Psychology. ('Briefer Course', New York: Holt.

Jensen-Scott, R.L. (1993). Counseling to Promote Retirement Adjustment. The Career Development Quarterly, 41, 257-267.

Jolley (1994). In: E.S. Paykel, and R. Jenkins. Prevention in Psychiatry. London: Gaskill.

Jung, C.G. (1966). Two Essays on Analytical Psychology (2nd edition). England: Routledge and Kegan Paul, Ltd..

Karp, D. A. (1988). A Decade of Reminders: Changing Age Consciousness Between Fifty and Sixty Years Old. The Gerontologist, 28, 727-738.

Karp, D.A. and Yoels, W.C. (1982). Experiencing the Life Cycle. A Social Psychology of Aging. USA: Charles C. Thomas, Springfield.

Kasl, V. (1980). The Impact of Retirement. In: C.L. Cooper and R. Payne (Eds.). Current Concerns in Occupational Stress. (pp. 137-186). USA: John Wiley and Sons.

Katona, C.L.E. (1994). Depression in Old Age. Chichester: John Wiley.

Kaufman, S. (1986). The Ageless Self - sources of meaning in late life. USA: University of Wisconsin Press.

Klemmack, D.L. and Roff, L.L. (1984). Fear of Personal Aging and Subjective Well-Being in Later Life. Journal of Gerontology, 39, 756-758.

Kohut, H. (1977). The Restoration of the Self. New York: International University Press.

Kondo, D. (1990) Crafting Selves: Power, Gender and Discourses of Identity in a Japanese Workplace. Chicago: University of Chicago press.

Kuhn, M.H. and McPartland, T.S. (1954) An Empirical Investigation of Self Attitudes. American Sociological Review, 19: 68-76

Kuypers, J.A. and Bengston, V.L. (1973). Social Breakdown and Competence: A Model of Normal Aging. Human Development, 16 181-201

Logan, R.D. (1986). A Reconceptualization of Erikson's Theory: The Repitition of Existential and Instrumental Themes. Human Development, 29, 125-136.

Lopez, S.J. and Snyder, C.R. (eds.), (2003). Positive Psychological Assessment. A Handbook of Models and Measures.Washington DC. American Psychological Association.

Lyddon, W.J. and Alford, D.J. (2002). Life Review and the Self-Confrontation Method With Older Adults. In: C.L. Juntunen and D.R. Atkinson. Counseling Across the Lifespan, Prevention and Treatment. (pp. 399-416). Thousand Oakes, California: Sage.

Maas, H.S. and Kuypers, J.A. (1974). From Thirty to Seventy - a forty year longitudinal study of adult life styles and personality. California: Jossey-Bass.

MacEwan, K.E., Barling, J., Kelloway, E.K. and Higginbottom, S.F. (1995). Predicting Retirement Anxiety: The Roles of Parental Socialization and Personal Planning. The Journal of Social Psychology, 135, 203-213.

MacRae, H. (1990). Older Women and Identity Maintenance in Later Life. Canadian Journal on Aging, 9, 248-267.

Manheimer, R.J. (1989). The Narrative Quest in Qualitative Gerontology. Journal of Aging Studies, 3, 231-252.

Manheimer, R.J. (1992). In Search of the Gerontological Self. Journal of Aging Studies, 6, 319-332.

Manheimer, R.J. (1995). Redeeming the Aging Self: John Kotre, George Drury and Cultural Generativity. Journal of Aging Studies, 9, 13-20.

Manicas and Secord. (1983). In: Banister, P., Burman, E., Parker, I., Taylor, M. and Tindall, C. (1994). Qualitative Methods in Psychology: A research guide. USA: Open University Press.

Mann, J. (1991). Discussion: Retirement: What Happens to Husband-Wife Relationships? Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry, 24, 41-46.

Marris, P. (2002). Holding onto Meaning through the Life Cycle. In: R.S. Weiss and S.A. Bass (Eds.). Challenges of the Third Age: Meaning and Purpose in Later Life. (pp. 13-28) London: Oxford University Press.

Matthews, A.M. and Brown, K.H. (1988). Retirement as a Critical Life Event - The Differential Experiences of Women and Men. Research on Aging, 9, 4, 548-571.

Mattila, V. and Joukama, A. (1990). Retirement, Ageing, Psychosocial Adaptation and Mortality. Some Findings of a Follow-up Study (The TURVA-Project). European Journal of Psychiatry, 4, 147-158.

Mays, N. and Pope, C. (1995). Rigour and qualitative research. British Medical Journal, 311, 109-112.

McCallum, D. (1996). The Death Of Truth. Minneapolis: Bethany House.

McGoldrick, A.E. (1994). The Impact of Retirement on the Individual. Reviews in Clinical Gerontology, 4, 151-160.

Mead, G.H. (1934). Mind, Self and Society, Chicago: Chicago University Press

Metcalf-Kendall, W. (1995). Women and Ageing: Is She There? She Should Be. Australian Govt. Public services Canberra: Proceedings of the Third National Women's Health Conference 1995.

Midanik, L.T., Soghikian, K., Ransom, L.J. and Tekawa, I.S. (1995). The Effect of Retirement on Mental Health and Health Behaviors: The Kaiser Permanente Retirement Study. Journal of Gerontology: Social Sciences, 50B, S59-S61.

Miller, P. McC., Kreitman, N.B., Ingham, J.G. and Sashidharan, S.P. (1989). Self-esteem, Life stress and psychiatric disorder. Journal of Affective Disorders, 17, 65-75.

Morse, J.M. (1991). Strategies for Sampling. In Qualitative Nursing Research: A Contemporary Dialogue. London: Sage.

Morse, J.M. (1999). Qualitative Generalizability. Qualitative Health Research, 9, 5-6.

Mruk, C.J. (1999). Self-esteem: research, theory and practice (2nd edition). New York: Springer.

Muller-Sphan, F. and Hock, C. (1994). Clinical Presentation of Depression in the Elderly. Gerontology, 40, 10-14.

Natanson, M. (1974). In: B.A. Babcock. (1980). Reflexivity: Definitions and Discriminations. Semiotica, 30, 1-14.

Neisser, U. (1988). Five kinds of self knowledge. Philosophical psychology, 1, 35-59.

Nemiroff, R.A. and Colarusso, C.A. (1985). The Race Against Time: Psychotherapy and psychoanalysis in the second half of life. London: Plenum press.

Neugarten, B.I., Havighurst, R.J. and Tobin, S.S. (1961). The measurement of life Satisfaction. Journal of Gerontology, 16, 134-143.

Neugarten, B.L., Havighurst, R.J. and Tobin, S.S. (1968). Personality and Patterns of Aging. In: B.L. Neugarten (Ed.). Middle age and aging. Chicago: University of Chicago press.

Newman, I. and Benz, C.R. (1998). Qualitative-Quantitative Research Methodology: Exploring the Interactive Continuum. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press.

Newmann, J.P. (1989). Aging and Depression. Psychology and Aging, 4, 150-165.

Nilsson, M., Sarvimaki, A. and Ekman, S. (2000). Feeling Old: Being in a phase of transition in later life. Nursing Enquiry, 7, 41-49.

Nydegger, C.N. (1986). Age and Life-Course Transitions. In: C.L. Fry, J. Keith and Contributors. New Methods for Old Age Research: Strategies for Studying Diversity. (pp. 131-296). Massachusetts: Bergin and Garvey Publishers Inc.

Palmore, E.B., George, L.K., and Fillenbaum ,G.G. (1982) Predictors of Retirement, Journal of Gerontology, 37, 733-742.

Parker, I. (1992) Discourse Dynamics: Critical Analysis for Social and Individual Psychology, London: Routledge.

Parker, I. (1994) Discourse Analysis in Banister, P., Burman, E., Parker, I., Taylor, M. and Tindall, C. (1994) Qualitative Methods in Psychology: A Research Guide. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Parker, I. (1998) Social Constructionism, Discourse and Realism, London: Sage

Parkes, C.M. (1971). Psycho-social Transitions: A field for study. Social Science and Medicine, 5, 101-115.

Parkes, C.M. (1975). What becomes of redundant world models? A contribution to the study of adaptation to change. Br. J. Med. Psychol., 48, 131-137.

Pearlin, L.I. and Mullan, J.T. (1992). Loss and Stress in Aging. In: M.L. Wykle, E. Kahana and J. Kowal (Eds.) Stress and Health Among the Elderly, New York: Springer.

Phillipson, C. (2002) The Challenge of retirement, Generations Review, 12: p. 4-5.

Polkinghorne, D.P. (1991) Narrative and Self-concept, Journal of Narrative and Life History, 1: 135-154.

Porter S. (1993) Critical Realist Ethnography: the case of racism and professionalism in a medical setting, Sociology, 27, p. 591-609.

Potter, J. and Wetherell, M. (1987). Discourse and Social Psychology: Beyond Attitudes and Behaviour, London: Sage.

Price-Bonham, S. and Johnson, C.K. (1982). Attitudes Toward Retirement: A Comparison of Professional and Nonprofessional Married Women in M. Szinovacz. Women's Retirement, (p. 123-138), Beverly Hills: Sage.

Price, C.A. (1998). Women and Retirement: The Unexplored Transition, New York and London: Garland Publishing, Inc.

Price, C.A. (2000). Women and Retirement: Relinquishing Professional Identity, Journal of Aging Studies, 14: 81-101.

Rappaport, H., Fossler, R.J., Bross, L.S. and Gilden, D. (1993). Future Time, Death Anxiety, and Life Purpose Among Older Adults. Death Studies, 17, 369-379.

Reis, M. and Gold, D.P. (1993). Retirement, Personality, and Life Satisfaction: A Review and Two Models. The Journal of Applied Gerontology, 12, 261-282.

Robbins, S.B., Lee, R.M. and Wan, T.T.H. (1994). Goal Continuity as a Mediator of Early Retirement Adjustment: Testing a Multidimensional Model, Journal of Counseling Psychology, 41: p. 18-26.

Rogers, C.R. (1951). Client Centred Therapy, London, Constable and Co.

Rogers, C.R. (1967). On becoming a Person: A Therapists View of Psychotherapy. London, Constable and Co.

Rosenberg, M. (1965). Society and the Adolescent self-image, Princeton, Princeton University press.

Rosenberg, M. (1979). Conceiving the Self. New York: Basic Books.

Rosow, I. (1963). Adjustment of the Normal Aged. In: R.H. Williams, C. Tibbitts and W. Donahue. Processes of Aging: Social and Psychological Perspectives. New York: Prentice-Hall Inc.

Rosow, I. (1976). Status and Role Change Through the Life Span. In: R.H. Binstock and E. Shanas (Eds.). Handbook of Aging and the Social Sciences. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Co.

Rybash, J.M., Roodin, P.A. and Hoyer, W.J. (1995). Adult Development and Aging. USA: Brown and Benchmark.

Rubinstein, R.L. (2002). In: R.S. Weiss and S.A. Bass (Eds.). Challenges of the Third Age: Meaning and Purpose in Later Life. (pp.29-40). London: Oxford University Press.

Ryff, C.D. (1991). Possible Selves in Adulthood and Old Age: A Tale of Shifting Horizons. Psychology and Aging, 6, 286-295.

Sacco, W.P., (1981). Invalid Use of the beck Depression Inventory to Identify Depressed College-Student Subjects: A Methodological Comment. Cognitive Therapy and Research, 5, 143-147.

Sameroff, A.J. and Chandler, M.J. (1975). Reproductive Risk and the Continuum of Caretaking Casualty. In: F.D. Horowitz (Ed.), Review of Child Development Research. Vol.4. (pp. 195-239). USA: University Chicago Press.

Santor, D.A. and Zuroff, D.C. (1994). Depressive Symptoms: Effects of Negative Affectivity and Failing to Accept the Past. Journal of Personality Assessment, 63, 294-312.

Schaie, K.W. and Hendricks, J. (Eds.). (2000). Evolution of the Aging self: Societal Impacts. New York: Springer.

Schaie, K.W. and Willis, S.L. (2002). Adult Development and Aging (5th edition). USA: Prentice Hall.

Seccombe, K. and Lee, G.R. (1986). Gender Differences in Retirement Satisfaction and Its Antecedents. Research on Aging, 8, 426-440.

Sheehy, G. (1995). New Passages. Mapping Your Life Across Time. Great Britain: Harper Collins.

Siebert, D.C., Mutran, E.J., and Reitzes, D.C. (1999). Friendship and Social Support: The Importance of Role Identity to Aging Adults. Social Work, 44, 522-532.

Silver C.B. (1992). Personality Structure and Aging Style. Journal of Aging Studies, 6, 333-350.

Skirboll, E. and Silverman, M. (1992). Women's Retirement: A Case Study Approach. Journal of Women and Aging, 4, 77-90.

Slevin, K.F. and Wingrove, C.R. (1995). Women in Retirement: A Review and Critique of Empirical Research Since 1976. Sociological Inquiry, 65, 1-21.

Smith, L.M. and Klein, P.G. (1986). Qualitative Research and Evaluation: Triangulation and Multi-methods reconsidered. In: D.D. Williams (Ed.). Naturalistic Evaluation San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Steer, R.A., Beck, A.T., Riskind, J.H. and Brown, G. (1986). Differentiation of Depressive Disorders from Generalized Anxiety by the Beck Depressive Inventory. Journal of Clinical Psychology, 42, 475-478.

Stevens, R. (ed) (1996/1997). Understanding the Self, London, Sage.

Strauss, A. (1987). Qualitative research for social scientists. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Strauss, A. and Corbin, J. (1990). Basics of Qualitative Research: Grounded Theory Procedures and Techniques. Thousand Oakes: Sage.

Strauss, A. and Corbin, J. (1994). Grounded Theory Methodology. In: N.K. Denzin and Y.S. Lincoln (Eds.). Handbook of Qualitative research. (pp. 273-285). Thousand Oakes: Sage.

Sugarman, L. (2001). Life-Span Development Frameworks, Accounts, Strategies. 2nd Edition. East Sussex: Psychology Press Ltd..

Suls, J. and Mullen, B. (1982). From the Cradle to the Grave: Comparison and Self-Evaluation across the Life-Span. In: J. Suls (Ed.). Psychological perspectives on the self. Vol.1. (pp. 97-125). London: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Szinovacz, M. (1987). Preferred Retirement Timing and retirement Satisfaction in Women. International Journal of Aging and Human Development, 24, 301-317.

Szinovacz, M. (1982). Women's Retirement. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage

Szinovacz, M. (1989). Decision-making on Retirement Timing. In: D. Brinberg and J. Jaccard (Eds.), Dyadic Decision Making. New York: Springer.

Szinovacz, M. and Washo, C. (1992). Gender Differences in Exposure to Life Events and Adaptation to Retirement. Journal of Gerontology: Social Sciences, 47, S191-S196.

Talaga, J. and Beehr, T.A. (1989). Retirement a Psychological Perspective. In: C.L. Cooper and I. Robertson (Eds.). International Review of Industrial and Organisational Psychology. (pp. 186-211). London: John Wiley and Sons.

Taylor Carter, M. A. and Cook, K. (1995). Adaptation to Retirement: Role Changes and Psychological Resources. The Career Development Quarterly, 44, 67-82.

Taylor, S. and Brown, J.D. (1988). Illusion and well-being: a social psychological perspective on mental health. Psychological Bulletin, 103, 193-210.

Theriault, J. (1994). Retirement as a psychosocial transition: process of adaptation to change. Aging and Human Development, 38, 153-170.

Tinsley, D.J. and Bigler, M. (2002). Facilitating Transitions in Retirement. In: C.L. Juntunen and D.R. Atkinson (Eds.). Counseling across the Lifespan: Prevention and Treatment. (pp. 375-397). Thousand Oakes, CA, USA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Vaillant, G.E. (1977). Adaptation to Life. Boston: Little, Brown and Co..

Waitzkin, H. (1990). On Studying the Discourse of Medical Encounters. A critique of Quantitative and Qualitative Methods. Medical Care, 28, 473-488.

Walker, J.W., Kimmel, D.C., and Price, K.F. (1981). Retirement style and retirement satisfaction:Retirees aren't all alike. International Journal on Aging and Human Development, 12, 267-281.

Wapner, S. and Hornstein, G.A. (1980) Transition to Retirement. Final Report to NRTA-AARP Andrus Foundation, Dec.31. In K. Hanson and S.Wapner. (1994). Transition to retirement: Gender Differences. International Journal of Aging and Human Development, 39.

Wetherell, M. and Maybin, J. (1996) The Distributed Self: A Social Constructionist Perspective. In R. Stevens (ed.), Understanding the Self. London: Sage.

Whitbourne, S.K. (1986). The Me I Know: A Study of Adult Identity. New York: Springer-Verlog.

Wood, J.V. (1989). Theory and research concerning Social Comparisons of personal Attributes. Psychological Bulletin, 106, 231-248.

Wylie, R.C. (1974). The Self-Concept: A Review of Methodological Considerations and Meaning Instruments, Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press.

CONTENTS

APPENDIX 1
Pilot Interview Questions, Findings and Initial Literature Review Findings **i**

APPENDIX 2
'Who Am I?' Task and Instructions **iii**

APPENDIX 3
Diary/Notebook Task Instructions **iv**

APPENDIX 4
Letter to Participants and 'I Am' Task and Instructions **v**

APPENDIX 5
Copy of Culture-Free Self-Esteem Inventory – 2 **vii**

APPENDIX 6
Scoring Tables for Classification of Culture-Free Self-Esteem Inventory – 2 **ix**

APPENDIX 7
Expansion of themes identified from combined data of individual interviews and narrative tasks – study 1 **x**

APPENDIX 8
Copy of the Beck Depression Inventory **xxix**

APPENDIX 9
Scoring Table for Beck Depression Inventory **xxxi**

APPENDIX 10
Letters sent to potential participants (Study 1) **xxxii**
Letter sent to participant identified by personal contact (Study 1) **xxxiii**
Letters sent to potential participants (Study 2) **xxxiv**
Letter sent following returned reply slips (Study 1 and 2) **xxxv**

APPENDIX 11
Consent Form **xxxvi**

APPENDIX 12
Plan Of Introductory Meeting **xxxvii**

APPENDIX 13
Questions for interview 1 – Study 1 **xxxviii**
Questions for interview 2 – Study 1 **xl**
Questions for interview 3 – Study 1 **xli**
Interview questions – Study 2 **xlii**
Interview questions – Study 3 **xliv**

APPENDIX 14
Summaries and Themes of 'Who Am I?' Narrative Task Data - Study 1 **xlv**

APPENDIX 15
Themes extracted from notebook/diary data – Study 1 **l**

APPENDIX 16
Themes extracted from 'I Am' data – Study 1 **liii**

APPENDIX 17
Study 1: Analysis of Interview 1, Diary and 'Who am I?' Data **lv**

APPENDIX 18
Study 1: Analysis of Interview 2 and Diary Data **lxxxiii**

APPENDIX 19
Study 1: Analysis of Interview 3 and 'I Am' Task Data **cvii**

APPENDIX 20
Study 2: Analysis of Interview and 'Who Am I?' Task Data **cxxvii**

APPENDIX 21
Study 3: Analysis of Interview and 'Who Am I?' Task Data **cxl**

APPENDIX 22
An example of the analysis of interview 1, diary, 'Who am I?' task, depression and self-esteem measures for one participant; Flo **cxliv**

APPENDIX 23
Identification of a Process Model of the Transition of the Self in Retirement **cxc**

APPENDIX 1

Pilot Interview Questions, Findings and Initial Literature Review Findings

1. Can you tell me, just briefly, about your work history, what was your first job? (Education, aspirations)
2. In your last job, what position did you hold?
3. What was the nature of your work?
4. Were you good at your job?
5. Were you a different person at work than at home, was there a side to you that your work colleagues never saw?
6. How do you think others saw you at work?
7. What positive things did you get out of work?
8. Is there anything else particularly now, that gives you the same thing?
9. What were the negatives about work?
10. Can you remember your decision to retire? (A difficult decision? If so, in what way?)
11. Did you make any plans for your retirement, if so, what sorts of plans, if not, why didn't you?
12. Can you remember any one overriding feeling on the day or around the time you retired?
13. What adjustments have you had to make since retirement?
14. What has been the most difficult adjustment to make?
15. Do you see yourself differently now than you did when you were working? If so, how?
16. Some people at retirement find themselves reflecting or reminiscing about the past, did you, or do you, find yourself doing this? For example on past achievements, or on your life in other ways.
17. Sometimes when I look back on my work as a nurse I go over the things I would, given the chance, do differently now. Have you thought about things you might have done differently in your work or in your life so far?
18. What were the causes for you not doing things as you feel you would have liked do you think?
19. Does retirement cause you to think more about getting old? If so, what sort of things have you been thinking?
20. Have you noticed any changes in your confidence or your mood since retiring?
21. What have been the successes in your life so far?
22. What have been the frustrations in your life so far?
23. If you were to write a book about your life, how would you divide your life into chapters, or phases?
24. You hopefully have a long period of retirement ahead of you now, how are you going to approach it? (One day at a time, lots of plans?)

Findings of the Pilot Study

Two main initial categories or themes have emerged from the pilot data.

Loss:
Concepts of status, importance, people contact, money, structure to life and mental stimulation were identified. Loss in these areas occurred in varying degrees. It seems that the lack of importance or significance, people contact, and possibly status, was expected to be replaced, or helped along by some form of new significance in relationships with the family. This seems to cause conflict as prior relationships with the family are reviewed. This may mean more feelings of loss as regrets about family come to the fore.

Conflict of Identity:
Concepts of defining oneself, family, and discovering aspects of the self left undiscovered were identified here. In the absence of the possibility of work now providing a strong sense of identity more identification with the family occurred. This was viewed as inevitable but caused both regrets and conflicts.

Other Themes:

Old age:
Ill health, being a burden to family, boredom, and "the horror" of old age.

Time:
Life structure, and organisation, slowing down the pace of life, and independence.

Ambivalence about not working:
Guilt about not working (link - usefulness), guilt about being selfish, sense of freedom, sense of creativity, creation of meaning in life, Lack of purpose, a need to be busy.

First thoughts following Pilot interviews: Loss and a mini identity crisis seem to be occurring initially and invoking reminiscence at past selves. Present and future selves seem to still be "under negotiation".

Issues from Literature Review

- Life transitions
- Coping
- Retirement (stressors inc. ageing)
- Issue of continuity – link to ageing and adaptation
- Concept of Self. Central to continuity?
- Crisis?
- Retirement as a psychosocial transition:
    - Internal reorganisations
    - Changes involving loss
    - Conflicts of activities, life satisfaction, health, re-evaluation of a world view. (Antonovsky et al).

APPENDIX 2

'Who Am I?' Task and Instructions

I have enclosed a paper entitled 'Who Am I?' I would be really grateful if you could fill this in using as many or as few words as you like. Imagine that you are giving a full description of yourself to a stranger (one whom you can trust with the information!) I'll collect this from you when we next meet.

WHO AM I?

Please write an answer to the question 'Who am I?' Be descriptive about all aspects of yourself and include anything that you feel is relevant. Do not revise your initial description just write it out. If you feel you must revise it then give me a revision on a separate piece of paper. There doesn't have to be any order to what you write, I expect it might be jumbled. Remember, this will be as confidential as anything else in the study. Thank you.

APPENDIX 3

Diary/Notebook Task Instructions

A notebook was given to participants with the following explanation:

Enclosed is a notebook. This is available for you to write down any comments, thoughts or experiences, positive or negative, which may occur to you or might make you think again about the view you have of yourself, retirement, getting older etc. If there are particular issues surrounding your retirement that you are having to cope with, for example having too much time or too little time to do all that you had planned to do, or having all your plans for retirement turned upside down, or the feelings you have experienced about a change in roles, etc. jot those down too. If there's nothing to write then that's okay.

Thank you.

APPENDIX 4

Letter to Participants and 'I Am' Task and Instructions

Dept. Psychology
HCS
Sheffield Hallam University
Collegiate Crescent Site
Collegiate Crescent
Sheffield
S10 2BP
8.6.98

Dear ****

Thank you for agreeing to do even more work to help me with my research! I really have appreciated your help and sacrifice of time. The enclosed paper is called 'I am' and is similar to the 'Who am I' that you wrote when we first met. Please don't feel daunted by the number of 'I am' statements on the page. It would be great if you could fill them all but if you can't that's fine. There is nothing specific I am looking for so there are no right or wrong answers, just try and think of a variety of aspects of yourself that you might want to comment on, e.g. physical, social, emotional, personality, family relations, roles etc.
Hope you get on okay with this, and thanks again for your help.

I AM

At the beginning of the study you kindly wrote about 'who am I'. Rather than ask you to do the same thing again I wonder if you would mind doing a similar exercise, which focuses you on some specifics about yourself. I have printed out some statements of 'I am', and I would like you to finish these statements with a sentence or two about yourself. Some examples:

I am a sensitive person especially when ...
I am happiest when ...
I am good at ...
I am fed up with ...

You are free to make as many statements as you like in addition to the twenty.

I am

I am

I am

I am

I am

I am

I am

I am

I am

I am

I am

I am

I am

I am

I am

I am

I am

I am

I am

APPENDIX 5

Copy of Culture-Free Self-Esteem Inventory – 2

CFSEI–2

Culture-Free Self-Esteem Inventories
Second Edition

FORM AD

Name _____ Age _____ Date _____

Location _____ Date of Birth _____

Examiner _____ Total _____ G _____ S _____ P _____ L _____

Directions

Please mark each question in the following way: If the question describes how you usually feel, make a check mark (√) in the "yes" column. If the question does not describe how you usually feel, make a check mark (√) in the "no" column. Check only one column (either yes or no) for each of the 40 questions. This is *not* a test, and there are no right or wrong answers.

© 1992, 1981 by PRO-ED, Inc.
2 3 4 5 94 93 92

Additional copies of this form (#5189) are available from PRO-ED, 8700 Shoal Creek Boulevard, Austin, TX 78758 USA 512/451-3246

	Yes	No
1. Do you have only a few friends?	☐	☐
2. Are you happy most of the time?	☐	☐
3. Can you do most things as well as others?	☐	☐
4. Do you like everyone you know?	☐	☐
5. Do you spend most of your free time alone?	☐	☐
6. Do you like being a male? / Do you like being a female?	☐	☐
7. Do most people you know like you?	☐	☐
8. Are you usually successful when you attempt important tasks or assignments?	☐	☐
9. Have you ever taken anything that did not belong to you?	☐	☐
10. Are you as intelligent as most people?	☐	☐
11. Do you feel you are as important as most people?	☐	☐
12. Are you easily depressed?	☐	☐
13. Would you change many things about yourself if you could?	☐	☐
14. Do you always tell the truth?	☐	☐
15. Are you as nice looking as most people?	☐	☐
16. Do many people dislike you?	☐	☐
17. Are you usually tense or anxious?	☐	☐
18. Are you lacking in self-confidence?	☐	☐
19. Do you gossip at times?	☐	☐
20. Do you often feel that you are no good at all?	☐	☐
21. Are you as strong and healthy as most people?	☐	☐
22. Are your feelings easily hurt?	☐	☐
23. Is it difficult for you to express your views or feelings?	☐	☐
24. Do you ever get angry?	☐	☐
25. Do you often feel ashamed of yourself?	☐	☐
26. Are other people generally more successful than you are?	☐	☐
27. Do you feel uneasy much of the time without knowing why?	☐	☐
28. Would you like to be as happy as others appear to be?	☐	☐
29. Are you ever shy?	☐	☐
30. Are you a failure?	☐	☐
31. Do people like your ideas?	☐	☐
32. Is it hard for you to meet new people?	☐	☐
33. Do you ever lie?	☐	☐
34. Are you often upset about something?	☐	☐
35. Do most people respect your views?	☐	☐
36. Are you more sensitive than most people?	☐	☐
37. Are you as happy as most people?	☐	☐
38. Are you ever sad?	☐	☐
39. Are you definitely lacking in initiative?	☐	☐
40. Do you worry a lot?	☐	☐

APPENDIX 6

Scoring Tables for Classification of Culture-Free Self-Esteem Inventory – 2

Self Esteem

Form AD. Classification of Scores

ADULTS	
SCORE	**CLASSIFICATION**
30+	Very High
27-29	High
20-26	Intermediate
14-19	Low
13-	Very Low

Form AD Classification of Subtest Scores

ADULTS					
Subtest	**Very High**	**High**	**Intermediate**	**Low**	**Very Low**
General	15	13-14	7-12	5-6	4-
Social	8	6-7	4-5	2-3	1-
Personal	8	6-7	4-5	2-3	1-

Battle (1992)

APPENDIX 7

Expansion of themes identified from combined data of individual interviews and narrative tasks – study 1

SUMMARY OF THEMES - Jane

First Interview

Adapting Self

Adaptations to be made included 'getting the house in order' by decorating and the buying of new furniture, this started prior to retirement but was a retirement plan. Also thinking about how practically the gaps left by work could be filled.

Adjusting Self

In the first interview with Jane it was evident that adjustments centred around a lack of fulfilled plans about retirement and the association of old age with retirement identity.

Maintenance of Self

Jane had identified certain needs within herself that she had made steps to fulfil. Jane felt that her independence and freedom to "please herself" was something she needed now, and also felt her friends were more important than ever. Jane also felt a need not to make any further plans about anything.

Past and Future Self

Jane felt that she had increased in confidence during her working life due to life experience, work experience and age, she felt however an underlying sense of sameness too. The future was worrying for Jane, especially regarding ill health.

It appeared at this interview that no adjustments or adaptations were fully complete.

Second interview

Adapting Self
Practical adaptations focus on pension and finances and managing these.

Adapted Self
Jane has formed a routine that is comfortable but not restrictive and has found things to fill gaps in her day (i.e. T.V.). Jane has joined a women's group to gain more social contact.

Adjusting Self
Soon to be aged sixty Jane's thoughts and anxieties are about her age. The questions of identity are addressed by comparison with others. Finances are a particular concern as Jane goes on to retirement pension as a divorcee. Past retirement plans included leaving work as a married woman aged sixty, these plans seem difficult for Jane to let go of.

Adjusted Self
Jane feels more settled, enjoys the freedom retirement brings and appreciates not being in a changing work environment. As she has always enjoyed being at home this has helped in her adjustment to spending more time in the home.

Maintenance of Self
Friendships are much more important to Jane now, she enjoys the new freedom in this.

Past and Future Self
Past events have made a big difference to the Jane of the present and future. Health and finances are only a worry because she may be called upon to deal with them alone.

At this interview it can be seen that Jane has gone some way towards adapting and adjusting to her new situation.

Third interview

Adapted Self

Jane has adapted to retirement by addressing at least some of her perceived needs by a change in activities. Crosswords and word puzzles are enjoyed to keep mentally active, satisfaction is gained in keeping a nice house (although it is acknowledged that it is nothing like the satisfaction of work). Jane makes no plans, this appears to be her practical adaptation to protect herself from further hurt of unfulfilled plans.

Adjusting Self

There are still questions being asked around age appropriate behaviour and identity in older age. It appears Jane may have a continued difficulty with being forced to manage alone since her divorce. Potential poor health and dying are still concerns and there are some aspects of work that are still missed.

Adjusted Self

It seems that divorce and retirement adjustments have come together in Jane's experience and she feels happier and more settled about both. Jane is enjoying retirement, enjoying freedom and has decided to put herself above all other things.

Past and Future Self

Jane has no ambitions for the future and has decided to make no plans.

It appears that Jane has adapted and adjusted to many of the things that concerned her initially about her new situation. Adapting and adjusting is a lifetime's work and it would be unreal to suppose there will not be further adjustments to make. It must also be noted that not all adaptations will be positive or successful long term, this will be reflected in a lack of long term adjustment. This is examined more fully in the in-depth analysis.

SUMMARY OF THEMES - Jenny

First Interview

Adapting Self

Adaptations to be made included fitting her life around the needs of the family. Jenny looked forward to starting some hobbies but chose not to get excited or make serious plans about anything because of the disappointment she would feel if things went wrong.

Adjusting Self

Jenny described work as 'horrendous' at the end. Having had a happy and successful working life there was sadness about the way it had ended. Keeping healthy was on Jenny's mind, there were fears about Alzheimer's and death and more preoccupation with physical appearance. Jenny regrets what she sees as the decline of a much loved profession. She has a continuing regret about her life that she didn't have more than two children.

Adjusted Self

Jenny was enjoying very much her new freedom in retirement.

Maintenance of Self

Jenny sees the need for mental stimulation and her social relationships are even more important now. She also feels a need at present not to make any plans for the future to prevent disappointment.

Past And Future Self

Jenny has a sense of consistency about herself in her life but acknowledges change, even very recent because of family situations. History and family influences are acknowledged as important in life decisions such as choice of career. Jenny describes herself as a fatalist, which she feels helps her to cope.

Second Interview

Adapting Self

Adaptations involved a perceived change in perspective, needed since husband's heart attack. Time for self is difficult to work out, as Jenny needs to care for her husband and take one day at a time.

Adapted Self

Jenny has formed more of a structure to her week, her husband has helped with that because he's very structured and is also retired.

Adjusting Self

Jenny is trying to adjust mentally to the shock of her husband's heart attack and the disappointment of a ruined holiday that was so much looked forward to. She is angry about all the family illness and now feels she needs to take one day at a time when she needs for herself, to have things to look forward to.

Adjusted Self

Jenny is not missing work and is enjoying the lower pace of life and the freedom of retirement. Jenny's perception of society's positive view on early retirement helps her to feel positive too. Jenny feels as though she's experienced a sense of purpose and usefulness in the looking after her family through the illnesses.

Maintenance of Self

As Jenny has got older she has felt more of a need to have something to look forward to, something for her self. Family are very important to her and she has been grateful to have been able to help them as it has fulfilled a need in her to be needed. Friends are very important to Jenny, as is the need to be appreciated. Jenny also feels a bit of structure in her life has helped a lot in retirement.

Past and Future Self

Jenny has always put her family first and continues to do so.

Third Interview

Adapting Self

Jenny has made many physical adaptations to fulfil needs, the need to care has been intermittently fulfilled but many because of unpleasant circumstances. Now Jenny would like a dog, this would meet her self acknowledged need to care for something in a nice way.

Adapted Self

Jenny has a key role in family events and because of freedom in retirement can continue to have this role. Satisfaction is found in small things, which is not a change from the past, things like keeping the house tidy. Time for self has now been made possible and Jenny has organised swimming and gym with a friend. Plenty of social contact and the crossword for mental stimulation have all been successfully made adaptations.

Adjusting Self

Jenny is at a point to know really what being retired is about. The family crises are hopefully over and now she looks back and feels she may have been bored with retirement had she not been so involved with the family. Now she is missing contact with the children from school, missing being needed by them. She'd like to go in to school for a day. Health, dying, the passage of time and old age are still difficulties.

Adjusted Self

Despite many adjustments still being made Jenny feels good mentally and is glad to be retired. Jenny feels fulfilled in her role as carer of her family and prefers the role of homemaker even 'matriarch'. She is enjoying freedom and time for herself. Jenny feels she has become more mellow with age.

Maintenance of Self

Jenny feels no great need to be mentally active but she does need recognition from others and needs to be needed.

Past and Future Self

Jenny has no plans for the future and only wishes to be settled.

SUMMARY OF THEMES - Molly

First Interview

Adapting Self

Molly is attempting to deal with the lack of routine in her life but feels that she's less organised because of it and therefore gets less done. Molly's loss of social relationships is not easily compensated for because Molly is not one for socialising; she does miss people contact however and feels better if she has some.

Adjusting Self

Molly feels a great sense of loss in retirement, most particularly status loss. Her financial independence has gone and she feels a sense of loss of mental stimulation. Molly left work in not so pleasant circumstances and her work latterly she felt was unappreciated. She has some regrets about the way things turned out. Molly's role as housewife is not easily re-adjusted to and she feels some discomfort in that. Also because plans for her husband's retirement haven't worked out her own plans have been thrown off balance. Molly is very low in mood, has a sense of guilt about many things and intends to make no plans for the future. Molly has attempted some supply work as part of a vision to serve post retirement but even that is not working out as expected.

Maintenance of Self

Molly needs to be useful and to have challenges

Past and Future Self

Molly sees a change in herself from happy to morose over the years. This she feels is caused by worry over the children. She has a sense of sameness too and recognises how her upbringing and her own family have affected her decisions, isolation and guilt.

Second Interview

Adapting Self

Molly is continuing to do supply teaching but feels more in control of it. The pace of life has slowed and this is difficult for Molly to adapt to, as she feels guilty about it.

Adapted Self

Family have been put first and Molly feels good about that. She has created a small structure and routine but of course this changes with the work that she does.

Adjusting Self

Molly feels a bit better about the loss of status now. She saw a counsellor about her depression but then felt it wasn't right to continue with it. Molly finds it difficult to see herself as retired and is afraid of getting lazy because she's not old enough to 'slow down' just yet.

Adjusted Self

Molly's husband has been at home more and so that has given them both more freedom. Molly has justified more time for herself, and less of a need to be in when her husband is in. She feels supported by friends and feels less guilty about early retirement. Molly likes the changes within herself that she feels have come with the new work she's done post retirement.

Maintenance of Self

Molly seems to have a need to be appreciated, valued and needed and this is supplied by work. Her identity as a good teacher needs to remain intact.

Third Interview

Adapting Self
Molly tends to work when her husband is off at the moment so that is difficult in that they would like days off together.

Adjusting Self
Molly's daughter has married and left home within the last 4 months so that is another adjustment to make. Her husband's retirement has not quite worked out yet and that has disappointed Molly. Molly feels that she is only truly herself at work and is dissatisfied with the housewife and supporter of husband role. She feels regrets about the past and her work decisions, loss of colleague contact and loss of self worth, both things full time work gave her. The guilt about time for herself has re-emerged.

Adjusted Self
Molly generally says she feels better mentally and is less tense. She has made a decision about continuing work and is happy with that.

Maintenance of Self
Molly needs to work at the moment

Past and Future Self
Molly has no plans or ambitions for the future. She realises how much her past history affects her thoughts and feelings about work and service and duty and that this has a knock on affect on her self.

SUMMARY OF THEMES - Florence

First Interview

Adapting Self

Flo misses social contact a bit from work but not so it's a problem. She misses her own money, which gave her independence and the ability to express herself in a way which she perceives as being different from her husband i.e. extravagant. The routine of work is something Flo valued and she is missing slightly. The house looking nice and being manageable is important now too. Flo's responsibilities towards her mother restrict her choices and although this is not mentioned as regrettable it is nevertheless something Flo has to work around in her plans for the future.

Adapted Self

Flo has made some adaptations such as replacement mental stimulation in conversation with her husband and in wider reading. She also reads avidly for enjoyment and stimulation. Life is at a slower pace and Flo's chores are done at this new pace, which she enjoys and values.

Adjusting Self

On retirement Flo expected to go downhill fast both mentally and physically. This amounted to a fear of health problems. This didn't happen and she feels better than before but she does have some anxieties about old age evidenced in comparisons and questions about the same. Flo is adjusting to the change in her marriage relationship, which occurred on retirement, there are both positive and negative aspects to this. Adjustments also include thoughts and feelings around usefulness and purpose and whether work as opposed to retirement provided a sense of these things. Certainly there is frustration to be dealt with in the feeling of futility around the work Flo was doing immediately before retiring. Flo however feels that she has become mellower as a person.

Adjusted Self

At first Flo experienced a loss at leaving work, which she now feels was her tiredness and lack of adjustment to unstructured freedom. She feels no sense of loss about work at this interview.

Maintenance of Self

Financial independence and mental stimulation are important to Flo but she mainly wants the priority of the family role to be hers. This has links with her identity and concept of self.

Past and Future Self

Flo has experienced increased confidence and personal growth through life changes and circumstances. She has a good sense of how history has influenced decisions and her own philosophy of life. Comparing herself to her mother is something Flo does to 'measure' her likeness to her mother as her mother gets older Flo seems to need to see what she might expect.

Second Interview

Adapting Self

Flo is still attempting to get the house more manageable. As her husband is now retired she has to adjust to his new lifestyle alongside her own and also to the financial changes that this brings to them.

Adapted Self

Flo is quite positive in the fact that she has got to know more people and feels as though she really knows people rather than in a colleague relationship as at work. She has also formed a structure that seems to help her get chores done and feels organised. Flo always does the crossword, a new pastime, done for mental stimulation.

Adjusting Self

Flo feels no sense of identity as a pensioner and is struggling with the loss of identity as a nurse. She feels stripped of a profession that she has worked hard for and still has skills in. This has raised questions of purpose, confidence and worthwhileness. Flo has difficulty organising time for her self but feels she would like it and should have it. Flo is slightly concerned about the potential decline in mental faculties if she doesn't keep the 'grey cells active'. Flo feels that she should be making time to put things right so that she can look back with some satisfaction on her life.

Adjusted Self

Flo feels mellower and feels that she has no desire to return to work and in that way feels more settled. She has managed a bit of time for creative cooking but feels she needs to work on the time for self.

Maintenance of Self

Family come first and Flo gives a lot to her family, this is important to her. Flo needs challenges, mental stimulation to maintain mental health and needs some financial independence.

Third Interview

Adapted Self

Flo does a lot of voluntary work and is happy with what she does. She receives mental stimulation and challenge through crosswords and stocks and shares, and has made lots of new friends.

Adjusted Self

Interestingly Flo has let go of work and has no desire to go back, she made this choice for her self after paying her nurse registration, which would have entitled her to work for another three years. Flo finds much fulfilment in family responsibilities and her family seem to need her more now than in past years, which she's enjoying. Although Flo doesn't 'feel' a pensioner she acknowledges she's now retired and is enjoying the freedom and choices that brings for her. Her needs appear to be fulfilled by compensatory activities and her identity seems more secure in that she acknowledges her nurse identity even without the job.

SUMMARY OF THEMES - Sarah

First Interview

Adapting Self

Sarah finds the loss of structure in leaving work something she misses and needs to put back in life. Time and pace seem different and things are not getting done as quickly. Sarah looks forward to her husband's retirement and to getting the house decorated and organised.

Adapted Self

The caring and social aspect of Sarah's work has largely been replaced by voluntary activity and Sarah finds she has more time for her self to read.

Adjusting Self

Sarah slightly feels the loss of particular social relationships from work, those she has shared with for many years. Sarah expects life to be 'all down hill from here'. She is adjusting to old age and the fact that her mother died at the age she is now is part of her adjustment. There is the conflict with age and identity as Sarah feels no older than 40. Sarah's husband is about to retire which will change things for Sarah too. There is surprise at herself for not being organised and getting planned things done, Sarah puts this down to her slowing down.

Adjusted Self

Sarah's sense of usefulness has been shifted in other directions and she seems to feel no loss of purpose at all.

Maintenance of Self

Mental stimulation, physical fitness and financial independence are all important to Sarah. Her family are important and being of service to people is important to her.

Past And Future Self

Sarah feels she has increased in confidence over the years through life experience and work experience. She has an underlying sense of sameness however, and a real sense of history and circumstances influencing her life choices and directions.

Second Interview

Adapting Self

The difference in time and pace is still slightly unsettling for Sarah as things aren't getting done in the time she'd hoped.

Adapted Self

With Sarah's husband now semi-retired Sarah tends to organise her week around his time at home and this has given some structure and routine to her week which she has found helpful. Although financially Sarah is less well off she hasn't found it much of a problem to adjust to this difference. Sarah is busy and does a lot of voluntary work.

Adjusting Self

Sarah is still adjusting to the fact that she's not as organised as she thought she would have been on retirement and this means she's not done as much as she'd have liked to. Also she had a health scare, which brought anxiety about death to the fore. Sarah's daughter is expecting a baby and Sarah wants to help out as her daughter needs to finish a course she's on, although Sarah doesn't want long term commitments to child care. Sarah notices through physical symptoms signs of ageing.

Adjusted Self

Sarah is enjoying the slower pace of life and takes time to relax. Sarah has plans for the future and has made a decision to come off hormone replacement therapy, this was a big decision for her but she feels it's the right one.

Third Interview

Adapted Self
Sarah does many activities giving mental stimulation and interest. Interest in nursing is sustained by reading. Her voluntary work seems to compensate for all she might have missed from work.

Adjusting Self
Sarah has a sense of time passing quickly and not much time in which to do everything. This might be because she has plans for so much!

Adjusted Self
Sarah enjoys the continuation of her home responsibilities and thus the continuation of her self in this role. She enjoys the freedom her age gives whilst being aware of some changes she's had to make (e.g. clothes). She still feels young inside and the sense of sameness is still with her. She remains ambitious and seems to be happiest in her busy life.

Maintenance of Self
Sarah needs to be busy to be happy.

Past and Future Self
Sarah has a particular ambition yet to fulfil.

SUMMARY OF THEMES - Amy

First Interview

Adapting Self
Amy is looking for some sort of course of study for mental stimulation. She has a problem filling time with things she feels are worthwhile. Amy, together with her husband has been making adjustments to the house and getting decorated in case the future brings a decline in health for either one of them.

Adapted Self
Gardening hobby takes up positive time in the summer.

Adjusting Self
Amy gained significance, identity, status and responsibility from work. She misses these things. Since leaving part time work much of this is gone. She misses people contact, stimulation and feeling useful. The sense of loss is still there in that she hangs on to her nurse identity. Amy regrets not being able to be a more involved grandparent as this would give her greater stimulation and usefulness. She worries about old age and ill health and death.

Adjusted Self
Amy is getting used to the lack of work conversation and colleague contact now.

Maintenance of Self
Amy needs to be busy doing something. She needs to feel useful and needs a lot of stimulation.

Past And Future Self
Amy is aware that family responsibilities, culture and history affected decisions she made about work in the past. She has been quite ambitious despite putting her family first and future plans are for health and happiness.

Second Interview

Adapting Self

Amy is changing the house and garden so that she isn't committed to spending so much time on the upkeep and also in case of health decline in either herself or her husband.

Adapted Self

Amy has arranged a course of study. She has fulfilled lots of plans and is keeping very busy. She feels no need for a structure at this point.

Adjusting Self

Amy has to consider her husband in her plans, as his health has not been so good, she feels slightly anxious about old age and ill health following the death of a friend of a younger age. Amy still misses work conversation and misses the legitimate interference in people's lives that the nursing role gives one. She is preoccupied with doing something useful and feels she needs to sort that out.

Adjusted Self

Amy no longer feels any guilt about having time for her self. She feels physically and mentally better since leaving work and feels that retirement is an opportunity for doing things for herself. She feels she has more freedom to speak out and give advice because of her maturity and experience.

Maintenance of Self

Amy needs to be useful and needs to be needed.

Third Interview

Adapted Self

Amy enjoyed her course and hopes to plan more. She also gets mental stimulation through reading and going to the cinema.

Adjusting Self

Amy has felt slightly vulnerable in situations with her grandchildren mainly in relation to a health problem that caused pain. This however made her think about age and vulnerability and health, as did plans for a holiday abroad. Amy would like more involvement with her grandchildren especially as she feels her identity is slightly reduced being retired as her role is gone, although she still holds on to the nursing identity inside. She feels slightly guilty about retiring from her full time job early.

Adjusted Self

Amy feels much more settled into retirement, she feels a freedom in her age to speak out but the responsibility also as a more mature citizen. She is enjoying time for her self.

Maintenance of Self

Amy needs a bit of independence and mental stimulation.

APPENDIX 8

Copy of the Beck Depression Inventory

BDI

Date: _____

Name: _____ Marital Status: _____ Age: _____ Sex: _____

Occupation: _____ Education: _____

This questionnaire consists of 21 groups of statements. After reading each group of statements carefully, circle the number (0, 1, 2 or 3) next to the one statement in each group which **best** describes the way you have been feeling the **past week, including today.** If several statements within a group seem to apply equally well, circle each one. **Be sure to read all the statements in each group before making your choice.**

1
0 I do not feel sad.
1 I feel sad.
2 I am sad all the time and I can't snap out of it.
3 I am so sad or unhappy that I can't stand it.

2
0 I am not particularly discouraged about the future.
1 I feel discouraged about the future.
2 I feel I have nothing to look forward to.
3 I feel that the future is hopeless and that things cannot improve.

3
0 I do not feel like a failure.
1 I feel I have failed more than the average person.
2 As I look back on my life, all I can see is a lot of failures.
3 I feel I am a complete failure as a person.

4
0 I get as much satisfaction out of things as I used to.
1 I don't enjoy things the way I used to.
2 I don't get real satisfaction out of anything anymore.
3 I am dissatisfied or bored with everything.

5
0 I don't feel particularly guilty.
1 I feel guilty a good part of the time.
2 I feel quite guilty most of the time.
3 I feel guilty all of the time.

6
0 I don't feel I am being punished.
1 I feel I may be punished.
2 I expect to be punished.
3 I feel I am being punished.

7
0 I don't feel disappointed in myself.
1 I am disappointed in myself.
2 I am disgusted with myself.
3 I hate myself.

8
0 I don't feel I am any worse than anybody else.
1 I am critical of myself for my weaknesses or mistakes.
2 I blame myself all the time for my faults.
3 I blame myself for everything bad that happens.

9
0 I don't have any thoughts of killing myself.
1 I have thoughts of killing myself, but I would not carry them out.
2 I would like to kill myself.
3 I would kill myself if I had the chance.

10
0 I don't cry any more than usual.
1 I cry more now than I used to.
2 I cry all the time now.
3 I used to be able to cry, but now I can't cry even though I want to.

11
0 I am no more irritated now than I ever am.
1 I get annoyed or irritated more easily than I used to.
2 I feel irritated all the time now.
3 I don't get irritated at all by the things that used to irritate me.

12
0 I have not lost interest in other people.
1 I am less interested in other people than I used to be.
2 I have lost most of my interest in other people.
3 I have lost all of my interest in other people.

13
0 I make decisions about as well as I ever could.
1 I put off making decisions more than I used to.
2 I have greater difficulty in making decisions than before.
3 I can't make decisions at all anymore.

_____ Subtotal Page 1 CONTINUED ON BACK

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL CORPORATION
HARCOURT BRACE JOVANOVICH, INC.

Copyright © 1978 by Aaron T. Beck. All rights reserved. Printed in the U.S.A.

NOTICE: It is against the law to photocopy or otherwise reproduce this questionnaire without the publisher's written permission.

9-018359

14
0 I don't feel I look any worse than I used to.
1 I am worried that I am looking old or unattractive.
2 I feel that there are permanent changes in my appearance that make me look unattractive.
3 I believe that I look ugly.

15
0 I can work about as well as before.
1 It takes an extra effort to get started at doing something.
2 I have to push myself very hard to do anything.
3 I can't do any work at all.

16
0 I can sleep as well as usual.
1 I don't sleep as well as I used to.
2 I wake up 1-2 hours earlier than usual and find it hard to get back to sleep.
3 I wake up several hours earlier than I used to and cannot get back to sleep.

17
0 I don't get more tired than usual.
1 I get tired more easily than I used to.
2 I get tired from doing almost anything.
3 I am too tired to do anything.

18
0 My appetite is no worse than usual.
1 My appetite is not as good as it used to be.
2 My appetite is much worse now.
3 I have no appetite at all anymore.

19
0 I haven't lost much weight, if any, lately.
1 I have lost more than 5 pounds.
2 I have lost more than 10 pounds.
3 I have lost more than 15 pounds.

I am purposely trying to lose weight by eating less. Yes _____ No _____

20
0 I am no more worried about my health than usual.
1 I am worried about physical problems such as aches and pains; or upset stomach; or constipation.
2 I am very worried about physical problems and it's hard to think of much else.
3 I am so worried about my physical problems that I cannot think about anything else.

21
0 I have not noticed any recent change in my interest in sex.
1 I am less interested in sex than I used to be.
2 I am much less interested in sex now.
3 I have lost interest in sex completely.

_____ Subtotal Page 2

_____ Subtotal Page 1

_____ Total Score

TPC 0528-001 16 17 18 19 20 B C D

APPENDIX 9

Scoring Table for Beck Depression Inventory

BECK DEPRESSION INVENTORY SCORING	
0-9	Normal Range
10-18	Mild-Moderate Depression
19-29	Moderate-Severe Depression
30-63	Extremely Severe Depression

Beck and Steer (1987)

APPENDIX 10

Letters sent to potential participants (Study 1)

Health Research Institute
Sheffield Hallam University
45 Broomgrove road
Sheffield
S10 2BP

Tel: 0114 253 2541

Dear ****

I am a postgraduate research student at Sheffield Hallam University and I am interested in talking with people about important changes in their lives and how they deal with those changes personally. I would be very interested to hear from you if you would be willing to help me with my research. The research will involve talking with me about how you feel about your retirement and the changes you feel are going on in yourself and in your life. This will mean talking with you about three or four times over the period of about a year, each time lasting around an hour. The research will be confidential and I will be very happy to answer any questions that you have before committing yourself, (an initial chat will give you more of an idea about what you might be letting yourself in for so you can still say 'no' even after replying). If you are interested in helping with my research please reply to me, Janice Haigh, at the Health Research Institute using the cut off slip and pre-paid envelope. I can be contacted by telephone (number as above) if you'd prefer. Thank you, and whatever your reply I wish you very well in your retirement.

Yours Faithfully

Yes I would be willing to help with your research about retirement.

NAME: ADDRESS:

AGE:

TELEPHONE NUMBER: PAST/PRESENT OCCUPATION:

Letter sent to participant identified by personal contact (Study 1)

Health Research Institute
Sheffield Hallam University
45 Broomgrove road
Sheffield
S10 2BP

Tel: 0114 253 2541

Dear Mrs ****,

I hope you don't mind me writing to you only I heard about your retirement via my mother, Margaret Baskeyfield, and as I am doing some research for my Ph.D. on retirement I thought that I would ask if you would mind helping. I am a research student at Sheffield Hallam University and my research involves talking with people about important changes in their lives and how they deal with those changes personally. The research will involve talking with me about how you feel about your retirement and the changes you feel are going on in yourself and in your life. This will mean talking with you about three or four times over the period of about a year, each time lasting around an hour. The research will be confidential and because you know my mother I want to emphasise this point. I will of course be very happy to answer any questions that you have before committing yourself, (an initial chat will give you more of an idea about what you might be letting yourself in for so you can still say 'no' even after replying). If you are interested in helping with my research please reply to me, Janice Haigh, at the Health Research Institute using the cut off slip and pre-paid envelope. I can be contacted by telephone (number as above) if you'd prefer. Thank you, and whatever your reply I wish you very well in your retirement.

Yours sincerely

Yes I would be willing to help with your research about retirement.

NAME: ADDRESS:

AGE:

TELEPHONE NUMBER: PAST/PRESENT OCCUPATION:

Letters sent to potential participants (Study 2)

Health Research Institute
Sheffield Hallam University
45 Broomgrove road
Sheffield
S10 2BP

Tel: 0114 253 2541

Dear ****

I am a postgraduate research student at Sheffield Hallam University and I am interested in talking with people about important changes in their lives and how they deal with those changes personally. I would be very interested to hear from you if you would be willing to help me with my research. The research will involve talking with me about how you feel about your retirement and the changes you feel are going on in yourself and in your life. This will mean talking with you at a time to suit you, for about an hour. The research will be confidential and I will be very happy to answer any questions that you have before committing yourself. I would like to arrange an initial chat with you to give you more of an idea about what you might be letting yourself in for so you can still say 'no' even after replying. If you are interested in helping with my research please reply to me, Janice Haigh, at the Health Research Institute using the cut off slip and pre-paid envelope. I can be contacted by telephone (number as above) if you'd prefer. Thank you, and whatever your reply I wish you very well in your retirement.

Yours Faithfully

Yes I would be willing to help with your research about retirement.

NAME: ADDRESS:

AGE:

TELEPHONE NUMBER: PAST/PRESENT OCCUPATION:

Letter sent following returned reply slips (Study 1 and 2)

Health Research Institute
Sheffield Hallam University
45 Broomgrove road
Sheffield
S10 2BP
Tel: 0114 253 2541

Dear ****,

Thank you for your reply to my letter about participation in research about retirement. I will be getting in touch with you in ****. You are of course not obliged to take part in the study just because you have returned the reply slip and we would meet for a chat about what is involved before you made your mind up completely. Thanks again for your interest.

Yours sincerely

APPENDIX 11

Consent Form

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH ON THE RETIREMENT TRANSITION, AGEING AND THE SELF

Thank you for agreeing to participate in research on the subject of your experiences, thoughts and feelings surrounding the events of your retirement and your feelings now. For our administrative purposes at Sheffield Hallam University I need to obtain formal consent from all participants in the study. The conditions surrounding your participation are outlined below and I would be grateful if you would please read the following information and then let me know if you have any questions or problems with it.

a. The interviews will be tape-recorded. The tape will be available for listening to by myself, my tutors, there are two of them, and possibly an external examiner. If you would like a copy of the tape I will be very happy to provide you with one. The tapes will be kept securely at all times.

b. I will listen to the taped interview and will be commenting and writing about my own thoughts and feelings surrounding the interview and about what we have said. With your permission direct quotes may be taken from the tape.

c. The taped interview will be used in the process of writing my Ph.D. thesis. If I have reason to use it for any other purpose I will seek your permission first.

d. The interview will be confidential. I will not talk to anyone, apart from those mentioned earlier, about what is said.

e. You can at any time refuse to answer a question asked by me and you do not have to give a reason.

f. Your name and any personal details, which might identify you will be changed in my report.

g. Each interview will last for no longer than an hour and a half. The aim is for about an hour.

I am happy to participate in the aforementioned study under these conditions.

Signed:

APPENDIX 12

Plan Of Introductory Meeting

1. What is the study about?
    a. Your Transition to Retirement, your feelings/thoughts surrounding the event and your personal feelings about yourself and how you are managing the changes.
    b. The study is of a personal nature, about you.

2. What will the study involve?
    a. Either just one, or about three or four talks, according to which study you are involved in, (I shall call them interviews) with me over approximately a year, each lasting one to one and a half hours.
    b. I will ask some questions but it will be about us discussing your experiences.
    c. There are no rights or wrongs or things I am wanting to prove or disprove, this is sort of an investigation.
    d. If you are willing I would like to use some personal measures that help build up a picture of yourself, this will involve some questionnaire type measures.
    e. Study 1 - I would also like to ask you to take a notebook and jot down any experiences, thoughts, feelings, or anything that you feel is relevant to the study. For example, a particular experience that challenges your thinking about yourself such as someone getting up to let you sit down on the bus or the freedom that you recognise as yours etc. Write down your thoughts and feelings about the experience and what you did. Don't feel obliged to write anything, it's just there if anything comes up.
3. The interviews will be tape-recorded with your consent.
4. Consent form must also be signed.
5. I wonder if you would also write a description of yourself for me before next time we meet. See prepared form.

NOTES

APPENDIX 13

Questions for interview 1 – Study 1

1 I wonder if you could look back to your first place of work and tell me about the sort of person you were. Personality, characteristics etc.

2 And looking at you in your last job, was there anything about you that had changed much?

3 When you were at work was there a side to you that your work colleagues never saw, that perhaps you showed at home?

4 Now you're retired do you in any way see yourself differently than you did when you were working? Who do you see yourself as now?

5 What were the negative things about work? What were the positive things you gained from your work?

6 Is there anything else, particularly now, that gives you the same thing? Mental stimulation of the same kind?

7 Is there anything now, in retirement, that you feel you must hold on to? For example some say that they must keep physically active.

8 Do you regard leaving your job as a loss in any way? If so, what sort of things do you feel that you've lost?

9 Have you thought about things you might have done differently in your work or in other areas of your life?

10 What were the causes for you not doing things as you feel you would have liked do you think?

11 What adjustments have you had to make since retirement?

12 Has anything surprised you about yourself in retirement?

13 Are you a more settled person now than you were 20 years ago?

14 Have you noticed any changes in your mood or confidence since retiring? Can you give me any examples?

15 Have you started to increase your personal interests in retirement or is there still the same balance of doing things for others or whatever?

16 Does retirement cause you to think more about getting old? If so, what sort of things have you been thinking?

17 Do you see yourself as old?

18 Have you become more thoughtful about yourself?

19 What have been the frustrations in your life so far?

20 What have been the successes in your life so far?

21 You hopefully have a long period of retirement ahead of you now, how are you going to approach it? (One day at a time, lots of plans …)

22 What do you look forward to?

23 Do you see the world differently now than you did when you were working? E.g. some people have said that they begin to notice things they hadn't noticed before like the trees and birds etc.?

24 If you were writing a book about your life how would you divide it up into chapters?

Questions for interview 2 – Study 1

1. Have you made any major decisions, or have any major events happened since I last saw you?
2. What's the most important thing, or the biggest issue that you would say is going on for you at this moment
3. Do you miss anything about work? If so, what about it do you miss?
4. Are there things about being a retired person that you find difficult?
5. Do you have a set structure to your day/week?
6. Has your perception of time changed at all?
7. Do you think that you have changed at all since you've retired?
8. If I was talking to a group of people just about to retire, what would you think it would be important for me to tell them about the initial stages of retirement?

Questions for interview 3 – Study 1

1. Are you well and how have things been since we last met?
2. Personal question on major issue identified last interview e.g. How was the sixtieth birthday? How is your husband following his heart attack?, How was the birth of your granddaughter? How do you feel about giving up your UKCC registration now?
3. Looking back to the beginning of your retirement and up until now, how would you say you have coped with the adjustment from work to retirement? Would you do anything differently if you went back to the beginning?
4. If you went back to work now, how important do you think that work would be to you?
5. Some people see their work as just one role that is played in life, If that is so, what role do you feel that you play now?
6. Have you any ambitions for the future, something you really want to do?
7. Previously we've talked about the things that work gives us, like social contact, etc. Would you say that any of the things that work gave you are missing from your life now? Do you recognise that you have specifically replaced what you got out of work?
8. What if anything gives you a sense of achievement or satisfaction? Are these things different from what used to give you these feelings?
9. What do you think motivates you to do the things that you've chosen to fill your week with, the activities that you do? Do those activities fulfil any needs that you recognise yourself to have?
10. Work often provides us with a sense of identity, what would you say provides you with a sense of identity now you don't work?
11. At certain ages there sometimes seems to be certain behaviours which are acceptable, and others that are not. Have you ever felt this, e.g. I cannot do that I'm a retired woman, or I can do that now I'm 60?
12. Do you think you'd feel differently about your age if you were still working or isn't how old you are an issue for you?

13. Has this experience of talking to me about your adjustment through our interviews changed the way you've thought about your retirement at all?

Interview questions – Study 2

1. Did you retire as you'd expected/planned to?
2. Can you remember how you felt about work before you left?
3. When you retired was it difficult to adjust to not working? What sort of things were difficult, if any?
4. Was work important to you? What were the negative and positive things about work?
5. Did you miss anything about work? Do you still?
6. Is there anything else, particularly now that gives you the same thing, e.g. mental stimulation?
7. Had you got lots of plans for things you would do when you retired and have you carried them out?
8. Did anything surprise you about retirement? Has the pace of life changed for you?
9. When you first retired was it nice to have time for yourself, to do the things you wanted to do? If so do you still experience that?
10. Is there anything you used to do when you first retired that you now don't do? Reasons?
11. Is there anything that you now do that you didn't do when you first retired?
12. Can you remember whether, when you first retired, you did any house decorating?
13. Do you still have things to learn and do, are you still growing and changing in that respect?
14. Do you still have the same choices now as you did when you were younger?
15. Are you in any way different now than you were when you retired? How? Is there any bit of you that is the same?
16. What would you say the major issue in your life was at the moment?
17. How do you see the world compared to when you retired?
18. Has your general mood or confidence changed since you retired?

19. Do you consider yourself to be old? What makes a person old, is it just age?
20. How old do you feel?
21. How do you see the future, have you made any plans or do you just live day to day?
22. People at parties when introduced to others they don't know are often asked the question, what do you do? I would reply that I am a student, what would you reply to the question, 'what do you do?'
23. Older people, and even some not so old, often say that they don't ever wish to be a burden on others. What do you think this means?
24. Why do you think that we don't want to be cared for when we are older and yet have cared so much for others (e.g. children) throughout our lives?
25. Do you think that we have different worth at different ages? At what age are we worth most?
26. If you were writing a book about your life how would you divide it up into chapters?

Interview questions – Study 3

1. What was your work and how long were you in that work?
2. Was work important to you?
3. Did you retire as you'd planned to?
4. What was the adjustment to retirement like for you?
5. Thinking of all the adjustments to different things that you've had to make in your life, would you say that retirement was one of the smaller or one of the bigger adjustments you'd had to make in your life?
6. Looking back to when you first retired. Is there anything you did when you first retired that you don't do now?
7. Is there anything you now do that you didn't do when you first retired?
8. Has your general mood or confidence changed since you retired?
9. Again looking at you when you first retired, are you in any way different now than you were when you first retired? How? Is there any bit of you that is the same?
10. Are you very different now than you were when you were younger?
11. Do you feel that you still have the same choices now as you did when you were younger?
12. Do you consider yourself to be old? What makes a person old, is it just age?
13. How old do you feel?
14. What would you say the major issue in your life was at the moment?
15. Do you think that we have different worth at different ages? At what age are we worth most?
16. How do you see the future, have you made any plans or do you just live day to day?
17. If you were writing a book about your life how would you divide it up into chapters?

APPENDIX 14

Summaries and Themes of 'Who Am I?' Narrative Task Data – Study 1

Overview approach of 'Who am I?' Task

Jane

Jane starts with her age and the time of her retirement. She goes on to describe the disappointment at the way she retired, plans were thwarted because of an illness. Also Jane relates how retirement plans were thwarted because of her divorce, retirement had been carefully planned from early years as a time to share with her husband and time to look forward to whilst still working, neither of these plans worked out and Jane feels cheated by this. Jane describes how her divorce affects 'who am I', and goes on to describe a crisis of identity. Jane does however enjoy her new freedom but worries about potential failing health in later years and the possibility of having no-one around to care for her should she need it. Jane describes herself as having lots of friends and as not being a 'ladies coffee morning' person, she doesn't particularly enjoy the company of lots of other women, preferring to talk to men (more interesting). She says she's always worked with mainly men.

Jenny

Jenny starts by saying how old she is and then how old she feels (bodily aged 88 sometimes, her head still feels young). Jenny's family are important to her and she feels close to her children. Her own mother's protectiveness of her is seen by Jenny as the reason she brought her own children up with as much freedom as possible. Jenny's work has been important to her, working with children has been very special. The changes in education meant that retirement was a welcome relief. A week into her retirement Jenny's grandson was taken seriously ill and she took on the role of looking after her other grandchildren while her daughter stayed in the hospital with Joe. Jenny describes herself as non-confrontational, rarely losing her temper (and then only with her husband), as having been blessed with common sense and as having a real sense of

justice. Jenny describes her hobbies and says she'd like another dog. Though warm and loving she describes a strong sense of dislike for people who characterise lateness. If Jenny takes a dislike to someone then she lets them know about it "it's the look".

Molly

A lot of Molly's description of herself centres around age, the fact that she doesn't like looking older, that children see her as old, that inside she doesn't feel old. Opportunities and ambitions are seen to be in the past, some fulfilled, others not, or not to the extent she would have liked. At 55 she acknowledges that she could be looking for more challenges, but feels it's enough to cope with the supply teaching that she's taken on. She sees herself as retired but not retired (because of the supply work). This seems to be difficult because the things she had looked forward to in retirement, such as seeing more of wider family (something she says she like more time to do), are not able to be done because of supply work.

Molly's faith in God is important to her and she sees this as being strengthened as she's got older.

Molly feels that she's never really realised her potential in her work, taking time out to raise a family meant that this was difficult. Perhaps a reflection on the low status that raising a family had, and still has today. Molly recognises that she would have been good at being a Head Teacher and seems frustrated by this missed opportunity. In fact Molly feels that she 'should' have done everything in her life better when it would appear to have been physically impossible to do all that she has done on a grander scale. Molly feels that she's not done anything really well, even being a wife and mother, she describes herself as a "fairly morose sort of person" who doesn't really enjoy life very much at the moment.

Sarah

Sarah describes herself as a recently retired nurse, and as a wife and mother. She describes herself as a busy person who seems to fall into leadership roles very easily which she enjoys. Sarah likes people and enjoys talking about things that are important to her and the things that she does. Her Faith in God and Church membership are important to her. Despite being busy and always on the go Sue feels that sometimes she wishes she could be happy doing very little but feels she 'should be up and doing'.

Amy

Amy describes herself using a lot of personal characteristics, interests and roles. Family and family roles are important to her and she has many and varied hobbies and activities to fulfil her need for stimulation. Amy describes herself as an 'elderly woman who can't quite believe it', and a 'retiree, recycled teenager or senior citizen according to mood', she also says she is apprehensive about the future. She recognises the influence of past health on the course her life took but is contented with only a few regrets in that she feels there are things she should have fought harder for and been prepared to suffer for, she feels guilt about this and wonders whether she'll pay for it in some way. Amy feels she's been a lucky woman in that she's always been loved and in her job opportunities.

Flo

Flo's description of 'who am I' acknowledges past experiences as influential in who she is today and the course her life took, e.g. "strong Calvinist approach to life because of upbringing". Discharged after a long spell in hospital at about two years old Flo was greeted by the arrival of a younger brother. Flo felt rage that her parents couldn't wait for her to get home before they had another child. Flo was sent to live with her grandmother after her grandfather died which led to school changes, this influenced the fact that she had few friends. Sunday school provided some social contact and then nurse training. Flo married at aged 22 and her life changed dramatically. Flo doesn't really describe who she is, but more how she got to who she is! She does describe things she's done, jobs and roles she's had. She explains that she had 4 children, one of whom died at a young age. In answer to the question of who she is, Flo explains that she has a strong tendency to see herself as daughter, wife, mother but rarely sees herself as 'me'. She explains that she's unsettled at present because she has time for 'me' but doesn't know what to do with it.

Themes from 'Who am I?' data – Study 1

Amy

FAMILY
IDENTITY link with AGE
CHARACTER
REGRETS
LUCK
HEALTH WORRIES/ANXIETIES

Molly

LOSS and DISAPPOINTMENTS
AGE
FAMILY and REGRETS
IDENTITY
CHARACTER
FAITH
RETIREMENT

Jane

AGE
RETIREMENT
LOSS
IDENTITY
FREEDOM
HEALTH WORRIES
FAMILY/BEING ALONE

Sarah

IDENTITY link with ROLES
CHARACTER
FAITH
FAMILY
AGE
THE WORLD
FORTUNATE (being lucky?)

Flo

IDENTITY link with CHARACTER
PAST ROLES
RELATIONSHIPS
FAMILY
MOVES

Jenny

HOBBIES
CHARACTER
AGE
FAMILY (Fortunate in)
FRIENDS
WORK and RETIREMENT

Themes

FAMILY (in all)

IDENTITY (in all)

AGE (in all but Flo)

CHARACTER (in all but Jane)

RETIREMENT (Jane, Molly, Jenny)

LUCK AND FORTUNE (Amy, Sarah and Jenny)

REGRETS (Amy and Molly)

HEALTH WORRIES (Amy and Jane)

LOSS (Jane and Molly)

ROLES (Flo and Sarah)

RELATIONSHIPS/FRIENDS (Flo and Jenny)

FAITH (Molly and Sarah)

FREEDOM (Jane)

MOVES (Flo)

THE WORLD (Sarah)

HOBBIES (Jenny)

APPENDIX 15

Themes extracted from notebook/diary data – Study 1

Jane

Diary Themes - first visit

- Expectations of retirement (p.1)
- Impact of divorce on retirement (p.1, 2, 3)
- Attitude to work (p.1, 3)
- Keeping the brain active - compensatory activities (p.1)
- Things I miss about work (p.1)
- Finances and limitations (also linked to mobility) (p.2)
- Health fears for the future (linked to independence and mobility) (p.1, 2, 3)
- Time for friends (p.2)
- Independence (p.2)
- Old age (p.3)

Diary Themes - second visit

- Feelings about not working - Attitude towards work (p. 4)
- Settling into retirement (p. 4)
- Time for friends (p. 4)
- Retirement activities and age (p. 4)
- Age and social comparison (p. 4)
- Attitude towards early retirement (p.4, 5)
- Health (p. 5)
- Finances (p. 5)

Flo

Diary Themes - First visit

- Identity - the way others see her (p. 1)
- Feelings about not working, Guilt, social comparisons (p. 1, 2, 11, 14, 15, 16)
- Issues around OAP - social comparisons "finality" (p. 2, 3)
- Changed roles within the family (p. 2, 4)
- Age and the passage of time - social comparisons (p. 3, 4)
- The state of the world (p. 4)

Diary Themes Second visit

- Retirement and age (p. 5)
- Age and the passage of time (p. 6, 7, 12)
- Settling into retirement (p. 8, 11)
- What is life about (p. 8, 9, 11, 12)
- Keeping the little grey cells active (p. 9)
- Pleasure for me (p. 9, 10)
- Putting things in order (p. 10)
- Social comparisons (p. 10, 11)
- Moving on - relation to work (p. 11, 13, 15, 16, 17)
- Giving time to others (p. 15, 16)
- Giving up right to work, "No longer a nurse" (p. 17)

Molly

Diary Themes - first visit

- Place of work in retirement (p. 1)
- Attitude towards work - guilt about not working (p. 1)
- Organisation of time (p. 1)
- Health issues (p. 2)

- Identity (p. 2)
- Feeling/being retired (p.2)

Sarah

Diary Themes - first visit

- Busy, always lots to do (p. 1)
- Positive family times (p.1)

Diary Themes Second visit

- Attitude towards work (p. 2, 3)
- Expectations of retirement (p.2)
- Busy (p. 3)
- Positive family times (p.3)
- Assumptions about time and pace (p. 3)

Amy

Diary Themes - first visit

- Giving up right to work, "feels like giving up part of myself" (p. 1)
- Meanings of age and attitudes of old age (p.1, 2)
- Busy (p. 2)
- Perceptions of death (p. 1, 2

Jenny

No diary notes written

APPENDIX 16

Themes extracted from 'I Am' data – Study 1

Amy

FAMILY
IDENTITY link with AGE
CHARACTER
LACK OF USEFULNESS
LUCK link with physical fitness
THE FUTURE
HOUSEWORK

Molly

IDENTITY and CHARACTER link with AGE
FAITH
FAMILY
MY NEEDS/WANTS

Jane

SENSE OF SELF
CHARACTER
LOSS
IDENTITY
FREEDOM
HEALTH WORRIES

Sarah

FAMILY
CHARACTER/PERSONALITY
FUTURE link with AGE
FORTUNATE (being lucky?)
AGE
THE WORLD
HOUSEWORK

Flo

FAMILY
ROLES
IDENTITY/CHARACTER
INTERESTS
THE WORLD

Jenny

FAMILY
CHARACTER link with personality
LUCK
INTERESTS
HOUSEWORK

Themes

CHARACTER (all)

FAMILY (all but Jane)

HOUSEWORK (Amy, Sarah and Jenny)

LUCK (Amy, Sarah and Jenny)

IDENTITY (Amy and Jane)

INTERESTS (Flo and Jenny)

FUTURE (Amy and Sarah)

WORLD (Flo and Sarah)

AGE (Sarah and Molly)

LACK OF USEFULNESS (Amy)

SENSE OF SELF (Jane)

LOSS (Jane)

FREEDOM (Jane)

HEALTH (Jane)

ROLES (Flo)

FAITH (Molly)

NEEDS/WANTS (Molly)

APPENDIX 17

Study 1: Analysis of Interview 1, Diary and 'Who am I?' Data

OPEN CODING

Conceptual Labels

Interviews were read individually and labelling of phenomena took place on an interview-by-interview basis.

Jane

Conceptual Labels – Interview 1

1 Increase in confidence with life experience, work experience and age, also sense of sameness
2 Mental Stimulation, as something gained from work
3 Importance of Independence, freedom to please herself, freedom to be herself
4 Importance of friends and family
5 Unfulfilled aspect of Self in retirement which work fulfilled (analytic side)
6 Regrets, related to age, history, situation, circumstances, latterly health
7 Identity and the 'coming of age' (40)
8 'Getting the house in order', decorating, new furniture.
9 Retirement, unfulfilled plans, particularly in relation to ex-husband, reactions to this
10 Old age
11 Conscious absence of looking forward, no plans
12 World outlook

Conceptual labels - 'Who am I?'

AGE

RETIREMENT

LOSS

IDENTITY

FREEDOM

HEALTH WORRIES

FAMILY/BEING ALONE

Conceptual Labels – Diary - First Visit

1 Expectations of retirement (p.1)

2 Impact of divorce on retirement (p.1, 2, 3)

3 Attitude to work (p.1, 3)

4 Keeping the brain active - compensatory activities (p.1)

5 Things I miss about work (p.1)

6 Finances and limitations (also linked to mobility) (p.2)

7 Health fears for the future (linked to independence and mobility) (p.1, 2, 3)

8 Time for friends (p.2)

9 Independence (p.2)

10 Old age (p.3)

Summary Of Themes

These themes were identified initially for Study 1a, Individual Perspectives, from combined data of interview, diary and 'Who Am I' Task. They are included here because they formed part of the process of the group analysis.

Jane

First Interview

Adapting Self

Adaptations to be made included 'getting the house in order' by decorating and the buying of new furniture, this started prior to retirement but was a retirement plan. Also thinking about how practically the gaps left by work could be filled.

Adjusting Self

In the first interview with Jane it was evident that adjustments centred around a lack of fulfilled plans about retirement and the association of old age with retirement identity.

Maintenance of Self

Jane had identified certain needs within herself that she had made steps to fulfil. Jane felt that her independence and freedom to "please herself" was something she needed now, and also felt her friends were more important than ever. Jane also felt a need not to make any further plans about anything.

Past and Future Self

Jane felt that she had increased in confidence during her working life due to life experience, work experience and age, she felt however an underlying sense of sameness too. The future was worrying for Jane, especially regarding ill health.

Jenny

Conceptual Labels – Interview 1

1 Sense of consistency but not sameness
2 Influence of family on aspects of life, decisions, caring
3 Undervalued, unappreciated, undermined latterly in work
4 Value of own experience in teaching
5 Importance of social relationships
6 Meaning of work, positives and negatives
7 Expected decline in health, mentally and physically
8 History, situation and circumstances influencing decisions, i.e. work choice
9 Family regrets
10 'Getting the house in order', decorating
11 Freedom to please herself, take up hobbies, be herself
12 Conscious absence of looking forward, no plans
13 Old age
14 Physical appearance
15 Regrets the decline of her profession
16 Mental stimulation
17 World outlook

Conceptual Labels - 'Who Am I?'

HOBBIES
CHARACTER
AGE
FAMILY (Fortunate in)
FRIENDS
WORK and RETIREMENT

No diary notes written by Jenny

Summary Of Themes

These themes were identified initially for Study 1a, Individual Perspectives, from combined data of interview, diary and 'Who Am I' Task. They are included here because they formed part of the process of the group analysis.

Jenny

First Interview

Adapting Self
Adaptations to be made included fitting her life around the needs of the family. Jenny looked forward to starting some hobbies but chose not to get excited or make serious plans about anything because of the disappointment she would feel if things went wrong.

Adjusting Self
Jenny described work as 'horrendous' at the end. Having had a happy and successful working life there was sadness about the way it had ended. Keeping healthy was on Jenny's mind, there were fears about Alzheimer's and death and more preoccupation with physical appearance. Jenny regrets what she sees as the decline of a much loved profession. She has a continuing regret about her life that she didn't have more than two children.

Adjusted Self
Jenny was enjoying very much her new freedom in retirement.

Maintenance of Self
Jenny sees the need for mental stimulation and her social relationships are even more important now. She also feels a need at present not to make any plans for the future to prevent disappointment.

Past And Future Self
Jenny has a sense of consistency about herself in her life but acknowledges change, even very recent because of family situations. History and family influences are

acknowledged as important in life decisions such as choice of career. Jenny describes herself as a fatalist, which she feels helps her to cope.

Molly

Conceptual Labels – Interview 1

1 Self change over the years, mainly caused by children

2 Identity and the 'coming of age' (18)

3 Different selves, at home and at work, but sameness too

4 Losses in retirement e.g. status, independence, social relationships, mental stimulation. None adequately compensated for.

5 Undervalued, work not worthwhile, unappreciated latterly

6 Husband's retirement, plans not worked out

7 Retirement plans not worked out

8 'Getting the house in order' decorating

9 Role confusion/confrontation = adjustment difficulty, guilt

10 Denial of self

11 Regrets about career path

12 Supply teaching ambivalence

13 Influence of family on aspects of life, decisions, feelings of isolation and guilt

14 Decrease in mood since retirement

15 Lack of routine since retirement

16 Worthlessness, lack of purpose

17 Makes no plans

18 Old age

19 World outlook

Conceptual Labels - 'Who Am I?'

LOSS and DISAPPOINTMENTS

AGE

FAMILY and REGRETS

IDENTITY

CHARACTER

FAITH

RETIREMENT

Conceptual Labels - Diary – First Visit

1 Place of work in retirement (p. 1)

2 Attitude towards work - guilt about not working (p. 1)

3 Organisation of time (p. 1)

4 Health issues (p. 2)

5 Identity (p. 2)

6 Feeling/being retired (p.2)

Summary Of Themes

These themes were identified initially for Study 1a, Individual Perspectives, from combined data of interview, diary and 'Who Am I' Task. They are included here because they formed part of the process of the group analysis.

Molly

First Interview

Adapting Self

Molly is attempting to deal with the lack of routine in her life but feels that she's less organised because of it and therefore gets less done. Molly's loss of social relationships is not easily compensated for because Molly is not one for socialising; she does miss people contact however and feels better if she has some.

Adjusting Self

Molly feels a great sense of loss in retirement, most particularly status loss. Her financial independence has gone and she feels a sense of loss of mental stimulation. Molly left work in not so pleasant circumstances and her work latterly she felt was unappreciated. She has some regrets about the way things turned out. Molly's role as housewife is not easily re-adjusted to and she feels some discomfort in that. Also because plans for her husband's retirement haven't worked out her own plans have been thrown off balance. Molly is very low in mood, has a sense of guilt about many things and intends to make no plans for the future. Molly has attempted some supply work as part of a vision to serve post retirement but even that is not working out as expected.

Maintenance of Self

Molly needs to be useful and to have challenges

Past and Future Self

Molly sees a change in herself from happy to morose over the years. This she feels is caused by worry over the children. She has a sense of sameness too and recognises how her upbringing and her own family have affected her decisions, isolation and guilt.

Florence

Conceptual Labels - Interview 1

1 Increase in self confidence and other changes with life experience, work experience, relationship with husband and age, also sense of sameness.

2 Expected decline in health, mentally and physically and contradictions to this.

3 Importance of Financial independence, constraints and loss and meaning i.e. freedom

4 Freedom for self, not 'having' to do anything.

5 Social relationships at work.

6 Compensatory activities e.g. for loss of Mental Stimulation, shifted from work to home

7 Change in marriage relationship, unexpected conflict

8 'Getting the house in order' Importance of living space, home and garden

9 Unstructured freedom, a conflict

10 Meaning of work: Tiredness, stifled self, a loss of freedom, done for the family not for self, gives legitimate free time i.e. Saturday 'play day', a physical and mental strain, dissatisfaction = reasons for retirement, Valued and undervalued at work

11 History, situation and circumstances influencing decisions and philosophy of life: acceptance of life as it is, Scottish Calvinist upbringing

12 Worthwhileness generally. Work not worthwhile, unappreciated latterly

13 Adjustments, time, pace

14 Concern about usefulness at work latterly and in the family

15 Lack of purpose when first retired compensatory activities = undiscovered interests e.g. crèche

16 Death anxiety

17 Old age, expectations of

18 Old age comparisons with mother, with stereotype

19 World outlook, changed world or changed self?

20 Physical attentiveness

21 Threatened confidence and coping (conflict when given a choice)

22 Meaning of retirement: choices, initial loss, initial tiredness, sudden decision required, plans for leisure

23 Personal growth through family life events, not through work

24 Responsibilities to mother

25 Self denial

26 Priority of family role

27 Self concept

28 Identity (in family role and in work role)

Conceptual Labels - 'Who Am I?'

IDENTITY link with CHARACTER

PAST ROLES

RELATIONSHIPS

FAMILY

MOVES

Conceptual Labels - Diary – First Visit

1 Identity - the way others see her (p. 1)

2 Feelings about not working - Guilt - social comparisons(p. 1, 2, 11, 14, 15, 16)

3 Issues around OAP - social comparisons "finality" (p. 2, 3)

4 Changed roles within the family (p. 2, 4)

5 Age and the passage of time - social comparisons (p. 3, 4)

6 The state of the world (p. 4)

Summary Of Themes

These themes were identified initially for Study 1a, Individual Perspectives, from combined data of interview, diary and 'Who Am I' Task. They are included here because they formed part of the process of the group analysis.

Florence

First Interview

Adapting Self

Flo misses social contact a bit from work but not so it's a problem. She misses her own money, which gave her independence and the ability to express herself in a way which she perceives as being different from her husband i.e. extravagant. The routine of work is something Flo valued and she is missing slightly. The house looking nice and being manageable is important now too. Flo's responsibilities towards her mother restrict her choices and although this is not mentioned as regrettable it is nevertheless something Flo has to work around in her plans for the future.

Adapted Self

Flo has made some adaptations such as replacement mental stimulation in conversation with her husband and in wider reading. She also reads avidly for enjoyment and stimulation. Life is at a slower pace and Flo's chores are done at this new pace, which she enjoys and values.

Adjusting Self

On retirement Flo expected to go downhill fast both mentally and physically. This amounted to a fear of health problems. This didn't happen and she feels better than before but she does have some anxieties about old age evidenced in comparisons and questions about the same. Flo is adjusting to the change in her marriage relationship, which occurred on retirement, there are both positive and negative aspects to this. Adjustments also include thoughts and feelings around usefulness and purpose and whether work as opposed to retirement provided a sense of these things. Certainly there is frustration to be dealt with in the feeling of futility around the work Flo was doing immediately before retiring. Flo however feels that she has become mellower as a person.

Adjusted Self

At first Flo experienced a loss at leaving work, which she now feels was her tiredness and lack of adjustment to unstructured freedom. She feels no sense of loss about work at this interview.

Maintenance of Self

Financial independence and mental stimulation are important to Flo but she mainly wants the priority of the family role to be hers. This has links with her identity and concept of self.

Past and Future Self

Flo has experienced increased confidence and personal growth through life changes and circumstances. She has a good sense of how history has influenced decisions and her own philosophy of life. Comparing herself to her mother is something Flo does to 'measure' her likeness to her mother as her mother gets older Flo seems to need to see what she might expect.

Sarah

Conceptual Labels – Interview 1

1 Increase in confidence with life and work experience, also sense of sameness
2 Meaning of work
3 Importance of social relationships at work
4 Sense of worthwhileness, shifted successfully into other directions
5 Mental stimulation important
6 Losses in retirement, e.g. structure
7 Expected (and already assumed) decline in health, mentally and physically
8 Importance of independence
9 Time
10 History , situation and circumstances influencing decisions, e.g. about education
11 Freedom to be herself, please herself
12 'Getting the house in order' decorating
13 Adjustments, time, pace
14 Old age
15 Identity and the 'coming of age' (40)
16 Influence of family on how self is seen
17 Husband's retirement

Conceptual labels - 'Who Am I?'

IDENTITY link with ROLES
CHARACTER
FAITH
FAMILY
AGE
THE WORLD
FORTUNATE (being lucky?)

Conceptual labels - Diary – First visit

1 Busy, always lots to do (p. 1)

2 Positive family times (p.1)

Summary Of Themes

These themes were identified initially for Study 1a, Individual Perspectives, from combined data of interview, diary and 'Who Am I' Task. They are included here because they formed part of the process of the group analysis.

Sarah

First Interview

Adapting Self
Sarah finds the loss of structure in leaving work something she misses and needs to put back in life. Time and pace seem different and things are not getting done as quickly. Sarah looks forward to her husband's retirement and to getting the house decorated and organised.

Adapted Self
The caring and social aspect of Sarah's work has largely been replaced by voluntary activity and Sarah finds she has more time for her self to read.

Adjusting Self
Sarah slightly feels the loss of particular social relationships from work, those she has shared with for many years. Sarah expects life to be 'all down hill from here'. She is adjusting to old age and the fact that her mother died at the age she is now is part of her adjustment. There is the conflict with age and identity as Sarah feels no older than 40. Sarah's husband is about to retire which will change things for Sarah too. There is surprise at herself for not being organised and getting planned things done, Sarah puts this down to her slowing down.

Adjusted Self
Sarah's sense of usefulness has been shifted in other directions and she seems to feel no loss of purpose at all.

Maintenance of Self
Mental stimulation, physical fitness and financial independence are all important to Sarah. Her family are important and being of service to people is important to her.

Past And Future Self

Sarah feels she has increased in confidence over the years through life experience and work experience. She has an underlying sense of sameness however, and a real sense of history and circumstances influencing her life choices and directions.

Amy

Conceptual labels – Interview 1

1 The beginnings at work quite different – nursing a 2nd choice

2 Unappreciated in work before nursing

3 Family responsibilities limiting work

4 Who I am – assertive in demands about working conditions

5 Much responsibility given at first

6 Ambitious

7 Family responsibilities acknowledged and appreciated at work in early years

8 Career moved on

9 Year before retirement – dissatisfied with job, a series of meetings

10 Pensionable years increased with salary – reason for changed work

11 Part time work after retirement – gave shape to life

12 Usefulness – when working

13 Husband and Retirement – time to think of husband, and time for change at work

14 Career success and achievement

15 Luck in career

16 Tired on leaving work – time of recovery

17 Husband's attitude to my work

18 Anger at nurses not being appreciated

19 Significance

20 Style of management – about who I am

21 People liked me

22 Who I am – a controlled person

23 Motivation to work – included money

24 Things work gave – Significance, identity, personal growth, fulfilment of an interest, satisfaction, social contact, stimulation, status

25 Missed from work – people contact, personal chats about work, likemindedness

26 Problems in compensating for – people contact and stimulation, feeling needed these needs not met
27 Regrets not being near family
28 Intends to study
29 Busy doing necessary and maybe unnecessary things
30 Preparing house for potential health decline
31 Interests of travel and gardening
32 Loss at leaving work – felt like my baby, feelings not shown to husband
33 A lot of self put into work, and lots of sacrifice
34 Who I am – not allowing myself feelings of loss, need to be 'doing'
35 Loss of identity – becoming Mrs ---, need personal identity, to be 'own' person
36 Ignored as a significant person – a woman
37 Past self – a delicate child
38 Regrets – not working full time after marriage
39 Family responsibilities – no regrets
40 Old age – not old, old about physical
41 Fears of old age – loss of independence, illness, boredom, dying
42 Support in old age
43 Health worries and husband's illness
44 Responsibility in the world – lucky in my life
45 Slight loss of confidence on retirement – re-gained
46 Life around the children, because they change things so much
47 Meanings around retirement, settling down (waiting for that to happen), benign everyday activities take over
48 Released from some family responsibility when children got married
49 Plans for the future, for pleasure, no ambitions or goals
50 Anticipating decline of dependence (family decisions made)

Conceptual labels - 'Who Am I?'

FAMILY

IDENTITY link with AGE

CHARACTER

REGRETS

LUCK

HEALTH WORRIES/ANXIETIES

Conceptual labels - Diary – First Visit

1 Giving up right to work, "feels like giving up part of myself" (p. 1)

2 Meanings of age and attitudes of old age (p.1, 2)

3 Busy (p. 2)

4 Perceptions of death (p. 1, 2

Summary Of Themes

These themes were identified initially for Study 1a, Individual Perspectives, from combined data of interview, diary and 'Who Am I' Task. They are included here because they formed part of the process of the group analysis.

Amy

First Interview

Adapting Self
Amy is looking for some sort of course of study for mental stimulation. She has a problem filling time with things she feels are worthwhile. Amy, together with her husband has been making adjustments to the house and getting decorated in case the future brings a decline in health for either one of them.

Adapted Self
Gardening hobby takes up positive time in the summer.

Adjusting Self
Amy gained significance, identity, status and responsibility from work. She misses these things. Since leaving part time work much of this is gone. She misses people contact, stimulation and feeling useful. The sense of loss is still there in that she hangs on to her nurse identity. Amy regrets not being able to be a more involved grandparent as this would give her greater stimulation and usefulness. She worries about old age and ill health and death.

Adjusted Self
Amy is getting used to the lack of work conversation and colleague contact now.

Maintenance of Self
Amy needs to be busy doing something. She needs to feel useful and needs a lot of stimulation.

Past And Future Self

Amy is aware that family responsibilities, culture and history affected decisions she made about work in the past. She has been quite ambitious despite putting her family first and future plans are for health and happiness.

Final Conceptual Labels of Combined Data Identified From Interview 1

1	Continuity and/or change in Self.
2	Importance of mental stimulation
3	Freedom, self-fulfilment
4	Social relationships at work
5	Regrets and unfulfilled desires/potential (self)
6	Submerged self, denial of self, self giving, guilt, identity, life roles, work role, role link to confidence, role link to expression of self, duty in role, responsibilities, family expectations, characteristics of self as worker
7	Interest in living space
8	Retirement plans or not
9	Old age and physical appearance
10	World outlook
11	Purposefulness, worthwhileness, personal importance, respect as a person, value as a person, undermining of work experience, being appreciated, or not, meaninglessness.
12	Perception of retirement, perceived effects of retirement, isolation, mood, meaning of work, time/pace, expectations and unfulfilled expectations about retirement, defences and coping, goals 13 Importance of history, circumstances and family
13	Relationship with husband, effect on defining retirement role and self
14	Reasons for leaving work
15	Loss, e.g. routine and structure, status
16	Independence, Personal interests/time for Self

AXIAL CODING

Categorising Data Interview 1

Classification of conceptual labels into categories began. Concepts were compared with each other and when appearing to pertain to a similar phenomenon the concepts were grouped together.

Identified Categories - Interview 1 Combined Data

Significance

This is about worthwhileness, meaningfulness, importance, respect, value, status, purpose, and experiences of their opposites through the experience of home, work or change.

Situation, Circumstance And History

As they influence decisions, and self expression (or self definition?)
This relates to the relative importance given by participant's to their place in space, time, history to the people they are and the decisions they made/make. Also linked is 'perceived importance of influence of family/friends on development', all participants attributed some influence on their life/work to be family/friend oriented.

Changing/Unchanging Self

This relates to references made by participants about how they see themselves in terms of age and ageing, and perceived changes or continuities in themselves.

Who Am I?

Part of this is about references that locate an experience or decision directly to the perceived personality or uniqueness of the individual. This question appears to be being asked or the statement 'I am', given around various examples of talk about family life,

work and retirement. Regrets and unfulfilled desires/potential submerged self, denial of self, self giving, guilt, and questions of identity arise. Roles are important here in the idea that self may expressed through a series of roles. Work role in the characteristics of self as worker, role at home, duty in role and this role link to confidence, responsibilities, and family expectations, particularly the relationship with the husband and its effect on defining the retirement role and self. Also linked is 'freedom', time for self, even discovery of self (or re-discovery).

Changes in Perceptions or/and Realities of Work over Time

The way work used to be and the way work was before retirement show interesting patterns in comparison and seems important in relation to the ageing self and is linked to the reasons for leaving work.

Self in the World

The wider world and perceptions of change identified by participants.

Adjustment And Coping

This category covers adjustment perceived by participants, positive e.g. time for personal interests/time for Self and negative e.g. isolation, mood change, status, and independence. Defences, coping mechanisms/strategies adopted. Also 'meaning of work', what work means to the individual affects and influences what it is there is to be adapted to, commonalties of meaning seem to emerge from the data, e.g. mental stimulation. Also linked is 'retirement', that perceived by the participants as being 'the nature of retirement'. Perceived effects of retirement, time/pace adaptations, plans, (or not), expectations and unfulfilled expectations about retirement, goals, loss, e.g. routine and structure.

Importance of House Decorating

Could be an adjustment, coping response.

SELECTIVE CODING

Identification of Core Category

Categories were then Selectively Coded for a Core Category. The Core Category integrates all the previously identified categories. Provisional labels for the Core Category were given first and as the process of analysis progressed the final identified Core Category emerged. To show the process evolving the provisional identification of the Core Category is shown in full, preceding the final identification of the Core Category and its components.

Provisionally Identified Core Category - Interview 1;

'Aspects of a Past Self in Circumstances of Change'

Unchanging self (inc. known self)

References are made to incidents in the data where participants locate an experience or decision directly to the perceived personality or uniqueness of the individual. Also the statement 'I am', is given around various examples of talk about family life, work and retirement.

Unfulfilled self (inc. lost self)

The question of 'who am I?' appears to be being asked around various examples of talk about family life, work and retirement. Regrets and unfulfilled desires/potential submerged self, denial of self, self giving, guilt, and questions of identity arise. There is talk relating to significance, about worthwhileness, meaningfulness, importance, respect, value, status, purpose, and experiences of their opposites through the experience of home, work or change.

Defined self (inc. roles)

Roles are important here in the idea that self may be expressed through a series of roles. Work role in the characteristics of self as worker, role at home, duty in role and this role link to confidence, responsibilities, and family expectations, particularly the relationship with the husband and its effect on defining the retirement role and self.

Discovered (or re-discovered) self

Here 'freedom' and time for self, even discovery (or re-discovery) of self is discussed.

Community/relational Self

Here the relative importance given by participant's to their place in space, time, history and it's influence on the people they are and the decisions they made/make, will be discussed. Also linked is 'perceived importance of influence of family/friends on development', all participants attributed some influence on their life/work to be family/friend oriented.

The ageing Self

This relates to references made by participants about how they see themselves in terms of age and ageing, and perceived changes or continuities in themselves. Also the way work used to be and the way work was before retirement show interesting patterns in comparison and seems important in relation to the ageing self and is linked to the reasons for leaving work.

Subsidiary Category - 'Adapting and Adjusting Self'

This category covers adjustment perceived by participants but it easily fits under the Core variable umbrella and will be incorporated into discussion on all the aforementioned aspects of self. Adjustment and coping may be positive e.g. a time for personal interests/time for self and/or negative e.g. a time of isolation, mood change, status, and independence. The 'meaning of work', as what work means to the individual

seems to affect and influence what it is there is to be adapted to, commonalties of meaning seem to emerge from the data, e.g. mental stimulation. The meaning of 'retirement', that perceived by the participants as being 'the nature of retirement' also affects methods of coping and perceptions of what potentially there is to be coped with. Linked to this are already experienced effects of retirement, time/pace adaptations, plans, (or not), expectations and unfulfilled expectations about retirement, goals, loss, e.g. routine and structure, and how these are adapted to/coped with.
The wider world and perceptions of change in it identified by participants is a small but acknowledged area of life that involves some adaptation.

Final Core Category Interview 1

'SELF EVALUATION'

Components of Core Category:

Known Self
Adjusting Self
Defining Self
Discovered
Ageing Self
Adapting Self
Community Self

These components of the Core categories form the basis of the group participant analysis, which can be found in chapter 6.

APPENDIX 18

Study 1: Analysis of Interview 2 and Diary Data

OPEN CODING

Conceptual Labels

Interviews were read individually and labelling of phenomena took place on an interview-by-interview basis

Jane

Conceptual Labels – Interview 2

1 Age, identity and comparison with others
2 Pension and finances and the effects of divorce on these
3 Friendships and who I am in them (e.g. not bothered about being fussed over)
4 Friends and support
5 Adjustment and feeling more 'settled', (mental adjustment)
6 Routine, structure, filling the day and the benefits of this
7 Leisure turned to routine
8 Adjustment to freedom
9 Routine, who I am and adjustment
10 Social adjustments (joined a group), who I am in that (not one for groups), coping (does me good)
11 Adaptation, change and meeting needs (need to be with people, forced to join a group, actually enjoyed it)
12 Health
13 Changes in me, link to adjustment to retirement by herself, and to divorce

14 Adjustment and bereavement of past plans

15 Adjustment to being on her own and loss (of work conversation and someone else around and male company)

16 Who I am linked to easier adjustment (I always liked being at home)

17 Thankful not to be in changing work environment

Conceptual Labels – Diary - Second Visit

1 Feelings about not working - Attitude towards work (p. 4)

2 Settling into retirement (p. 4)

3 Time for friends (p. 4)

4 Retirement activities and age (p. 4)

5 Age and social comparison (p. 4)

6 Attitude towards early retirement (p.4, 5)

7 Health (p. 5)

8 Finances (p. 5)

Summary Of Themes

These themes were identified initially for Study 1a, Individual Perspectives, from combined interview and diary data. They are included here because they formed part of the process of the group analysis.

Jane

Second interview

Adapting Self
Practical adaptations focus on pension and finances and managing these.

Adapted Self
Jane has formed a routine that is comfortable but not restrictive and has found things to fill gaps in her day (i.e. T.V.). Jane has joined a women's group to gain more social contact.

Adjusting Self
Soon to be aged sixty Jane's thoughts and anxieties are about her age. The questions of identity are addressed by comparison with others. Finances are a particular concern as Jane goes on to retirement pension as a divorcee. Past retirement plans included leaving work as a married woman aged sixty, these plans seem difficult for Jane to let go of.

Adjusted Self
Jane feels more settled, enjoys the freedom retirement brings and appreciates not being in a changing work environment. As she has always enjoyed being at home this has helped in her adjustment to spending more time in the home.

Maintenance of Self
Friendships are much more important to Jane now, she enjoys the new freedom in this.

Past and Future Self
Past events have made a big difference to the Jane of the present and future. Health and finances are only a worry because she may be called upon to deal with them alone.

Jenny

Conceptual Labels – Interview 2

1 Family health trauma (disappointment about ruined holiday)
2 Perceived need to change life perspective (to one day at a time) Conflict here with own needs (to look forward)
3 Strong need to look forward (stronger as got older), Christmas now fits this, but it's something for self as well
4 Caring for husband
5 Family times
6 Not missing work
7 Structure and husband's influence on her day structure
8 Angry with God (hurt and disappointment over husband's health and perceived run of bad things happening to them)
9 Coping and defending (with husband's heart attack), looks on bright side and then says I could have been interviewing a widow
10 Positive about perceptions of retirement in society, time to enjoy one's self
11 Freedom
12 Slower pace, nice
13 Grateful to be able to help family
14 Needed by family (usefulness)
15 The importance of friends
16 Time for self
17 Family ties
18 Being appreciated (and cared for back), being liked
19 Time (use it)
20 Replacement of work
21 Retirement (honeymoon, sharing with husband)
22 Finding a purpose (looking after everybody else)

Conceptual Labels - Diary – Second Visit

No diary data

Summary Of Themes

These themes were identified initially for Study 1a, Individual Perspectives, from combined interview and diary data. They are included here because they formed part of the process of the group analysis.

Jenny

Second Interview

Adapting Self

Adaptations involved a perceived change in perspective, needed since husband's heart attack. Time for self is difficult to work out, as Jenny needs to care for her husband and take one day at a time.

Adapted Self

Jenny has formed more of a structure to her week, her husband has helped with that because he's very structured and is also retired.

Adjusting Self

Jenny is trying to adjust mentally to the shock of her husband's heart attack and the disappointment of a ruined holiday that was so much looked forward to. She is angry about all the family illness and now feels she needs to take one day at a time when she needs for herself, to have things to look forward to.

Adjusted Self

Jenny is not missing work and is enjoying the lower pace of life and the freedom of retirement. Jenny's perception of society's positive view on early retirement helps her to feel positive too. Jenny feels as though she's experienced a sense of purpose and usefulness in the looking after her family through the illnesses.

Maintenance of Self

As Jenny has got older she has felt more of a need to have something to look forward to, something for her self. Family are very important to her and she has been grateful to have been able to help them as it has fulfilled a need in her to be needed. Friends are very important to Jenny, as is the need to be appreciated. Jenny also feels a bit of structure in her life has helped a lot in retirement.

Past and Future Self

Jenny has always put her family first and continues to do so.

Molly

Conceptual Labels – Interview 2

1 Loss of status and credibility (about feeling better, having a complete year)
2 Meeting needs (being useful)
3 Worthwhileness (service)
4 Challenges
5 Personal abilities
6 Family (being needed, ties, contact, changes)
7 Coping (growing, moving on, in a better position)
8 Justified time for self or time off work, takes guilt away, now made unavailable
9 Who I am (good teacher, contented)
10 Health (counselling, not depressed)
11 Adaptation
12 Husband at home more
13 Bereavement
14 Freedom
15 Early retirement (guilt, responsibility, but have righted the wrong in new work)
16 Capabilities
17 Regrets
18 Appreciated, valued, doing a good job where she is, wanted, needed
19 Support of friends (prayer)
20 Changes in me (gone beyond past achievements, superior teacher, less intense, less narrow, more relaxed)
21 Time for self (adaptation, social)
22 Marital adjustment
23 Replacement work (roles, purpose)
24 Identity (not as a retired person, label not important)
25 Adjustment and coping (retired label, on the scrap heap, also slowing down, adjusting is painful)

26 Pace of life (slowed, changed, needed to adjust, opening up new time)

27 Stereotypes of old

28 Work (ethic, reason for being, everything)

Conceptual Labels – Diary - Second Visit

No diary data

Summary Of Themes

These themes were identified initially for Study 1a, Individual Perspectives, from combined interview and diary data. They are included here because they formed part of the process of the group analysis.

Molly

Second Interview

Adapting Self
Molly is continuing to do supply teaching but feels more in control of it. The pace of life has slowed and this is difficult for Molly to adapt to, as she feels guilty about it.

Adapted Self
Family have been put first and Molly feels good about that. She has created a small structure and routine but of course this changes with the work that she does.

Adjusting Self
Molly feels a bit better about the loss of status now. She saw a counsellor about her depression but then felt it wasn't right to continue with it. Molly finds it difficult to see herself as retired and is afraid of getting lazy because she's not old enough to 'slow down' just yet.

Adjusted Self
Molly's husband has been at home more and so that has given them both more freedom. Molly has justified more time for herself, and less of a need to be in when her husband is in. She feels supported by friends and feels less guilty about early retirement. Molly likes the changes within herself that she feels have come with the new work she's done post retirement.

Maintenance of Self
Molly seems to have a need to be appreciated, valued and needed and this is supplied by work. Her identity as a good teacher needs to remain intact.

Florence

Conceptual Labels – Interview 2

1 Identity (loss of registration, something my own, changes - mellower)
2 Worthwhileness
3 Purpose (things I do, time for putting things straight, about who I am)
4 Loss (identity, status, knowledge)
5 Who I am (still have capabilities, was good at my job)
6 Giving up registration
7 Don't want to return to work
8 Adjustment to this loss of nursing
9 Worthwhileness, usefulness, plenty to do (nursing abilities used in family)
10 Coping (making light of it)
11 Know more people (positive to retirement)
12 Structure
13 Family ties (first)
14 No time for self (difficulty with time for self but has some creative time cooking)
15 Getting the house manageable
16 Spending money on self
17 Challenges (work, cooking)
18 Usefulness
19 Identity (don't feel retired, don't identify with this role)
20 Health (keeping brain active)
21 Changes (shopping habits, leisurely breakfasts)
22 Finances (meanings, like independence)

Conceptual Labels - Diary – Second Visit

1 Retirement and age (p. 5)
2 Age and the passage of time (p. 6, 7, 12)
3 Settling into retirement (p. 8, 11)
4 What is life about (p. 8, 9, 11, 12)

5 Keeping the little grey cells active (p. 9)

6 Pleasure for me (p. 9, 10)

7 Putting things in order (p. 10)

8 Social comparisons (p. 10, 11)

9 Moving on - relation to work (p. 11, 13, 15, 16, 17)

10 Giving time to others (p. 15, 16)

11 Giving up right to work, "No longer a nurse" (p. 17)

Summary Of Themes

These themes were identified initially for Study 1a, Individual Perspectives, from combined interview and diary data. They are included here because they formed part of the process of the group analysis.

Florence

Second Interview

Adapting Self
Flo is still attempting to get the house more manageable. As her husband is now retired she has to adjust to his new lifestyle alongside her own and also to the financial changes that this brings to them.

Adapted Self
Flo is quite positive in the fact that she has got to know more people and feels as though she really knows people rather than in a colleague relationship as at work. She has also formed a structure that seems to help her get chores done and feels organised. Flo always does the crossword, a new pastime, done for mental stimulation.

Adjusting Self
Flo feels no sense of identity as a pensioner and is struggling with the loss of identity as a nurse. She feels stripped of a profession that she has worked hard for and still has skills in. This has raised questions of purpose, confidence and worthwhileness. Flo has difficulty organising time for her self but feels she would like it and should have it. Flo is slightly concerned about the potential decline in mental faculties if she doesn't keep the 'grey cells active'. Flo feels that she should be making time to put things right so that she can look back with some satisfaction on her life.

Adjusted Self
Flo feels mellower and feels that she has no desire to return to work and in that way feels more settled. She has managed a bit of time for creative cooking but feels she needs to work on the time for self.

Maintenance of Self

Family come first and Flo gives a lot to her family, this is important to her. Flo needs challenges, mental stimulation to maintain mental health and needs some financial independence.

Sarah

Conceptual Labels – Interview 2

1 Husband's retirement (plans around his interests, his being at home more)
2 Days to fill
3 Routine and structure (with spontaneity)
4 Lists and plans (particularly plans unfulfilled)
5 Family (daughter's expecting a baby) Past expectations and plans about involvement. Time for family
6 Service to others (apart from family)
7 Views of the old
8 Purpose
9 Importance, value (being busy)
10 Who I am (busy, keeping fit, I am what I do?)
11 Time (slowing down. Time for self)
12 Money
13 Work (not missed but replaced, look at purpose)
14 Health (death anxiety, body failing)

Conceptual Labels - Diary - Second Visit

1 Attitude towards work (p. 2, 3)
2 Expectations of retirement (p.2)
3 Busy (p. 3)
4 Positive family times (p.3)
5 Assumptions about time and pace (p. 3)

Summary Of Themes

These themes were identified initially for Study 1a, Individual Perspectives, from combined interview and diary data. They are included here because they formed part of the process of the group analysis.

Sarah

Second Interview

Adapting Self
The difference in time and pace is still slightly unsettling for Sarah as things aren't getting done in the time she'd hoped.

Adapted Self
With Sarah's husband now semi-retired Sarah tends to organise her week around his time at home and this has given some structure and routine to her week which she has found helpful. Although financially Sarah is less well off she hasn't found it much of a problem to adjust to this difference. Sarah is busy and does a lot of voluntary work.

Adjusting Self
Sarah is still adjusting to the fact that she's not as organised as she thought she would have been on retirement and this means she's not done as much as she'd have liked to. Also she had a health scare, which brought anxiety about death to the fore. Sarah's daughter is expecting a baby and Sarah wants to help out as her daughter needs to finish a course she's on, although Sarah doesn't want long term commitments to child care. Sarah notices through physical symptoms signs of ageing.

Adjusted Self
Sarah is enjoying the slower pace of life and takes time to relax. Sarah has plans for the future and has made a decision to come off hormone replacement therapy, this was a big decision for her but she feels it's the right one.

Amy

Conceptual Labels – Interview 2

1 Family ties (relationships motivating and stimulating, sadnesses, part of a big family)
2 Changing environment (for increased time and potential health decline in one or other, but mainly time)
3 Views on the future
4 Time for self (aromatherapy course, time to follow up things you're interested in, not feeling guilty about reading, allowed to care for self, should feel this is my time now)
5 Busy (hectic life)
6 Fulfilled lots of plans
7 Caring for husband (protecting, decorating)
8 Getting older (death in group, views of people in the past, reminiscence)
9 Death (first to 'drop off the perch', too close)
10 Coping (with thoughts of own death)
11 Adjusting (enjoying retirement as time goes on)
12 Loss (work conversation, purposeful conversation)
13 Identity (still as a nurse)
14 Usefulness and purpose (caring and community, what attracted her to job, being useful)
15 Needing to be needed (service, worthwhileness)
16 Christmas past (remembering family times, sadness now)
17 Who I am (caring, nurturing, mothering, serving, about being useful)
18 Identity, keeping old self image, categorising self at different stages (not as a retired person, family perceives as OAP, not old but mature)
19 Time going fast (but maybe no faster)
20 Structure (not really one)
21 Preoccupation with doing something (using time usefully, guilt about doing nothing, take every opportunity)
22 Health (feel better retired, but never know how long it's going to last)

23 Work (dissatisfied at the end, usefulness questioned)

24 Status (it's loss and the replacement of it, value and worth as older people)

Conceptual Labels Diary – Second Visit

No diary data

Summary Of Themes

These themes were identified initially for Study 1a, Individual Perspectives, from combined interview and diary data. They are included here because they formed part of the process of the group analysis.

Amy

Second Interview

Adapting Self
Amy is changing the house and garden so that she isn't committed to spending so much time on the upkeep and also in case of health decline in either herself or her husband.

Adapted Self
Amy has arranged a course of study. She has fulfilled lots of plans and is keeping very busy. She feels no need for a structure at this point.

Adjusting Self
Amy has to consider her husband in her plans, as his health has not been so good, she feels slightly anxious about old age and ill health following the death of a friend of a younger age. Amy still misses work conversation and misses the legitimate interference in people's lives that the nursing role gives one. She is preoccupied with doing something useful and feels she needs to sort that out.

Adjusted Self
Amy no longer feels any guilt about having time for her self. She feels physically and mentally better since leaving work and feels that retirement is an opportunity for doing things for herself. She feels she has more freedom to speak out and give advice because of her maturity and experience.

Maintenance of Self
Amy needs to be useful and needs to be needed.

Final Conceptual Labels of Combined Data Identified From Interview 2

1 Identity, positive assertions about who I am, continuity and/or change in self, thoughts on ageing self, comparisons with others, loss of aspects of self (status, identification with job, knowledge)

2 Finances, pensions and looking to the future, spending money on self, independence

3 Support, friendships, also from husband

4 Adjustment and coping, psychological (how I feel), and how I meet identified needs (link to adaptation), dealing with loss (of past plans, identity as a nurse, death of friends etc.), Identifying what needs to be adjusted to e.g. to change life perspective, freedom, slower pace, finding a purpose, replacing work, identity as retired, regrets

5 Adaptation, making a structure, routine, filling the day, social (joining groups), changing home/garden to make it more manageable (and free up time)

6 Purpose, usefulness, how worthwhile am I (linked to status loss), being appreciated for what I do/did, replacement of work, service to others, being needed/wanted, reason for being

7 Challenges and capabilities, link with identity, importance, being busy,loss of status and credibility, purposeful conversation (work conversation)

8 Family, ties, responsibilities, loss (thru' divorce), caring for, helping, time for family, husband's retirement, contact, changes (marriage, babies)

9 Health, shocks, fears, avoiding poor health, death anxiety, failing body, link to age, planning for potential ill health, improvements (mentally, (link to adjustment) and since retirement)

10 Views on being old, the old and pensioners, perceptions of retirement, link with identity (don't feel retired), link to health, the 'retired label', on the scap heap, stereotypes, family perceptions, value and worth as older people

AXIAL CODING

Categorising Data Interview 2

Classification of conceptual labels into categories began. Concepts were compared with each other and when appearing to pertain to a similar phenomenon the concepts were grouped together.

Identified Categories - Interview 2 Combined Data

Changing/Unchanging Self

This relates to the identification by participants of aspects of themselves that have not changed and therefore affect their experience of retirement (e.g. "Never been one for women's groups", "Always liked to be busy"). Also thoughts on the ageing self and particularly health, fears, death anxiety, avoidance of poor health, anxieties about a failing body, planning for potential ill health, but also positively feeling mentally better since retirement (link to adjustment here also).

Who I am and Who am I

This is about identity and knowing who I am but being aware of stereotypes and the views of others. Here comparisons with others are made, and fears about losing aspects of self are expressed (particularly skills and capabilities used at work). Also expressed is the loss of status, credibility, importance, knowledge, and identification with the job (e.g. nurse). Views on being old, the old, pensioners, perceptions of retirement, not feeling retired, and meanings around the 'retired label' e.g. on the scrap heap, stereotypes, perceptions of family and value and worth as older people.

Significance

This is about purpose, usefulness, about how worthwhile I am (linked to status loss), and being appreciated for what I do/did. It's about having challenges and being busy,

being needed or wanted, giving service to others (purpose), about replacing work with something acceptable and about having a reason for being.

Adjustment and coping

Psychological adjustment, how I feel compared to when I first retired, identifying needs and meeting them, link to adaptation, dealing with loss (e.g. of past plans, identity as a nurse, death of friends, purposeful conversation work conversation etc.). Identify what needs to be adjusted to e.g. to change life perspective, freedom, slower pace, finding a purpose, replacing work, identity as retired, regrets etc. This is also about support from friendships and/or husband.

Finances

Pensions, looking to the future, spending money on self and financial independence come into this.

Adaptation

Making a structure, routine, filling the day, social (joining groups), changing home/garden to make it more manageable and to free up time. Adapting to having time for self and to pursue interests comes here too.

Family

Ties and responsibilities from husband to children and further. Caring for, helping, giving time to, changes within (marriages, babies), loss (through divorce). Also husband's retirement and how that affects participants.

SELECTIVE CODING

Identification of Core Category

Categories were then Selectively Coded for a Core Category. The Core Category integrates all the previously identified categories. Provisional labels for the Core Category were given first and as the process of analysis progressed the final identified Core Category emerged. To show the process evolving the provisional identification of the Core Category is shown in full, preceding the final identification of the Core Category and its components.

Provisionally Identified Core Category - Interview 2;

'Self in Adaptation to New Circumstances'

Unchanging Self (inc. known self)

This is about identity and knowing who I am but being aware of stereotypes and the views of others. Related to this is the identification by participants of aspects of themselves that have not changed and therefore affect their experience of retirement (e.g. "Never been one for women's groups", "Always liked to be busy"). It can be seen how the 'known self' is continued in choices made about activities in retirement.

Identifying Self

Related to this is the issue around purpose, usefulness, and about how worthwhile I am now (linked to status loss), and being appreciated for what I do/did. It's about having challenges and being busy, being needed or wanted, giving service to others, about replacing work with something acceptable and about having a reason for being. Also there's the aspect of positively feeling mentally better since retirement, (link to adjustment).

Adjusting Self

This is about psychological adjustment (how I feel compared to when I first retired), and identifying needs and meeting them (link to adaptation), dealing with loss (e.g. of past plans, identity as a nurse, death of friends, purposeful conversation (work conversation) etc. Also identifying what needs to be adjusted to e.g. freedom, to change life perspective, slower pace, finding a purpose, replacing work, identity as retired, regrets etc. This is also about support from friendships and/or husband, but also ties and responsibilities from husband to children and further e.g. caring for, helping, giving time to, changes within (marriages, babies), loss (through divorce). Also husband's retirement and how that affects participants.

Threatened Self

Here views on being old, the old, pensioners, perceptions of retirement, not feeling retired, perceptions of family and stereotypes, value and worth as older people and meanings around the 'retired label' e.g. on the scrap heap, appear to serve to provoke participants to consider changes occurring that are about ageing although most link these changes to lifestyle too. Thoughts on the ageing self, particularly health, fears, death anxiety, avoidance of poor health, anxieties about a failing body, planning for potential ill health all seem to pose a challenge to the 'known self'. Comparisons with others are made, and fears about losing aspects of self are expressed (particularly skills and capabilities used at work). Also expressed is the loss of status, credibility, importance, knowledge, and identification with the job (e.g. nurse).

Adapting Self

Pensions, looking to the future, spending money on self and financial independence come into this. Also creating a structure, routine, filling the day, social (joining groups), changing home/garden to make it more manageable and to free up time. Adapting to having time for self and to pursue interests comes here too.

Final Core Category Interview 2

'SELF MOVING ON'

Components of Core Category:

Known Self
Adjusting Self
Defining Self
Threatened Self
Adapting Self

These components of the Core categories form the basis of the group participant analysis, which can be found in chapter 6.

APPENDIX 19

Study 1: Analysis of Interview 3 and 'I Am' Task Data

No diary data was received on the final visit to participants.

OPEN CODING

Conceptual Labels

Interviews were read individually and labelling of phenomena took place on an interview-by-interview basis

Jane

Conceptual Labels - Interview 3

1 Age, behaviour and identity
2 Adjustment to retirement (completed!)
3 Freedom to please myself
4 Meaning of work and retirement (glad to be retired)
5 Roles – I am who I am, but family role missing, identity lost and found following divorce, status loss with work role (who I am, changed self following divorce)
6 No plans or ambitions (because of bad experiences)
7 Keeping mentally active (crosswords and puzzle books)
8 Keeping house (a satisfaction, work gave more)
9 Motivation (anger) link to having to manage alone
10 Time for self (time to put myself first) link to living alone
11 My needs fulfilled- Importance of friendships and support
12 Mental well-being – feeling better
13 Health and dying

14 Interviewer's part in retirement adjustment

15 What I miss from work (mental stimulation, status)

Conceptual Labels - 'I Am' Task

SENSE OF SELF

CHARACTER

LOSS

IDENTITY

FREEDOM

HEALTH WORRIES

Summary Of Themes

These themes were identified initially for Study 1a, Individual Perspectives, from combined interview and 'I Am' task data. They are included here because they formed part of the process of the group analysis.

Jane

Third interview

Adapted Self

Jane has adapted to retirement by addressing at least some of her perceived needs by a change in activities. Crosswords and word puzzles are enjoyed to keep mentally active, satisfaction is gained in keeping a nice house (although it is acknowledged that it is nothing like the satisfaction of work). Jane makes no plans, this appears to be her practical adaptation to protect herself from further hurt of unfulfilled plans.

Adjusting Self

There are still questions being asked around age appropriate behaviour and identity in older age. It appears Jane may have a continued difficulty with being forced to manage alone since her divorce. Potential poor health and dying are still concerns and there are some aspects of work that are still missed.

Adjusted Self

It seems that divorce and retirement adjustments have come together in Jane's experience and she feels happier and more settled about both. Jane is enjoying retirement, enjoying freedom and has decided to put herself above all other things.

Past and Future Self

Jane has no ambitions for the future and has decided to make no plans.

Jenny

Conceptual Labels - Interview 3

1 Family events, responsibilities and difficulties– my role in them and their effect on me (who I am, changed self)
2 Retirement adjustment (obscured by family events)
3 My needs fulfilled – To care for others, a continuing need (would like a dog)
4 Time for self and Freedom
5 What I miss from work (contact with the children)
6 Roles – The centre of the family, --'s wife (a preferred role)
7 Ambition (To be settled, because of bad experiences)
8 Keeping mentally active (just the crossword)
9 Keeping house (a satisfaction, relates to simple satisfactions at work)
10 Mental well-being – feeling good about suntan
11 Who I am (liking people to be pleased with what I've done, self worth and security)
12 Age, behaviour and identity
13 Health and dying
14 Who I am (changed self)
15 Awareness of time passing by
16 Glad to be retired
17 Interviewer's part in retirement adjustment

Conceptual Labels - 'I Am' Task

FAMILY
CHARACTER (link with personality)
LUCK
INTERESTS
HOUSEWORK

Summary Of Themes

These themes were identified initially for Study 1a, Individual Perspectives, from combined interview and 'I Am' task data. They are included here because they formed part of the process of the group analysis.

Jenny

Third Interview

Adapting Self

Jenny has made many physical adaptations to fulfil needs, the need to care has been intermittently fulfilled but many because of unpleasant circumstances. Now Jenny would like a dog, this would meet her self acknowledged need to care for something in a nice way.

Adapted Self

Jenny has a key role in family events and because of freedom in retirement can continue to have this role. Satisfaction is found in small things, which is not a change from the past, things like keeping the house tidy. Time for self has now been made possible and Jenny has organised swimming and gym with a friend. Plenty of social contact and the crossword for mental stimulation have all been successfully made adaptations.

Adjusting Self

Jenny is at a point to know really what being retired is about. The family crises are hopefully over and now she looks back and feels she may have been bored with retirement had she not been so involved with the family. Now she is missing contact with the children from school, missing being needed by them. She'd like to go in to school for a day. Health, dying, the passage of time and old age are still difficulties.

Adjusted Self

Despite many adjustments still being made Jenny feels good mentally and is glad to be retired. Jenny feels fulfilled in her role as carer of her family and prefers the role of homemaker, even 'matriarch'. She is enjoying freedom and time for herself. Jenny feels she has become more mellow with age.

Maintenance of Self

Jenny feels no great need to be mentally active but she does need recognition from others and needs to be needed.

Past and Future Self

Jenny has no plans for the future and only wishes to be settled.

Molly

Conceptual Labels – Interview 3

1 Mental well-being (feeling better)
2 Family (adjusting to changes)
3 Adjustment to husband's retirement
4 Retirement adjustment (difficult but getting better)
5 Meanings of retirement (guilt over early retirement, too early to render abilities useless)
6 Changing self (less tense)
7 Ambition (was never ambitious enough, regrets that)
8 Role "a getter of food", supporter of husband and server of the family, this is limiting (links around satisfaction and worthwhileness)
9 Meaning of work (appreciated in role, and satisfied with self)
10 Ambition (none)
11 What I miss from work (colleague contact, friendship, self worth)
12 Time for self (would like it but feels guilty about leaving husband)
13 No satisfaction in life generally, small satisfaction at work
14 Who I am (motivation is duty fuelled by guilt)
15 Past affecting behaviour
16 Identity (always –'s wife, except at school an identity of my own!)
17 Adjustment to retirement (not complete, still in working mode)
18 Age and identity (not old)
19 Meanings of retirement (going out to lunch and all that business)
20 Interviewer's part in retirement adjustment

Conceptual Labels - 'I Am' Task

IDENTITY and CHARACTER link with age
FAITH
FAMILY
MY NEEDS/WANTS

Summary Of Themes

These themes were identified initially for Study 1a, Individual Perspectives, from combined interview and 'I Am' task data. They are included here because they formed part of the process of the group analysis.

Molly

Third Interview

Adapting Self
Molly tends to work when her husband is off at the moment so that is difficult in that they would like days off together.

Adjusting Self
Molly's daughter has married and left home within the last 4 months so that is another adjustment to make. Her husband's retirement has not quite worked out yet and that has disappointed Molly. Molly feels that she is only truly herself at work and is dissatisfied with the housewife and supporter of husband role. She feels regrets about the past and her work decisions, loss of colleague contact and loss of self worth, both things full time work gave her. The guilt about time for herself has re-emerged.

Adjusted Self
Molly generally says she feels better mentally and is less tense. She has made a decision about continuing work and is happy with that.

Maintenance of Self
Molly needs to work at the moment

Past and Future Self
Molly has no plans or ambitions for the future. She realises how much her past history affects her thoughts and feelings about work and service and duty and that this has a knock on affect on her self.

Florence

Conceptual Labels - Interview 3

1 Voluntary work

2 Letting go of work, delaying retirement (managing finances part of this)

3 Family responsibilities (fulfilling)

4 Adjustment to retirement (completed!, but acknowledged grief at leaving)

5 Time for self and Freedom (freedom to please myself, and give time to others, inc. husband, and having choices)

6 Keeping mentally active (crosswords, challenge and excitement at stocks and shares)

7 What I miss from work (colleagues) but compensated for (friendships, actually deeper than colleague relationships)

8 Role (Unchanged, always a mother first)

9 Needs fulfilled (caring, of service, having time full, avoiding guilt, belonging (Church))

10 Glad to be retired

11 Age, Identity and who I am (good at my job, influenced a lot by mother, self worth, the nurse, still a part of me, never ambitious, unchanged aspects, e.g. a helper, not a pensioner!)

Conceptual Labels - 'I Am' Task

FAMILY

ROLES

IDENTITY/CHARACTER

INTERESTS

THE WORLD

Summary Of Themes

These themes were identified initially for Study 1a, Individual Perspectives, from combined interview and 'I Am' task data. They are included here because they formed part of the process of the group analysis.

Florence

Third Interview

Adapted Self

Flo does a lot of voluntary work and is happy with what she does. She receives mental stimulation and challenge through crosswords and stocks and shares, and has made lots of new friends.

Adjusted Self

Interestingly Flo has let go of work and has no desire to go back, she made this choice for herself after paying her nurse registration, which would have entitled her to work for another three years. Flo finds much fulfilment in family responsibilities and her family seem to need her more now than in past years, which she's enjoying. Although Flo doesn't 'feel' a pensioner she acknowledges she's now retired and is enjoying the freedom and choices that brings for her. Her needs appear to be fulfilled by compensatory activities and her identity seems more secure in that she acknowledges her nurse identity even without the job.

Sarah

Conceptual Labels – Interview 3

1. Family responsibilities.
2. Adjustment to retirement (completed, no problem)
3. Retirement and work meanings (a continuation of interests already established with compensatory status, interest, stimulation etc.)
4. Who I am and identity (busy, service, a magistrate and a Christian)
5. Role (Unchanged, continued home responsibility, more voluntary roles)
6. Ambition (still left to fulfil)
7. What was missing from work (originally social, but compensated for)
8. Age and freedom (to be outspoken)
9. Age, behaviour and identity (unchanging self)
10. Awareness of time passing by
11. Dying
12. Interviewer's part in retirement adjustment

Conceptual Labels - 'I am' Task

FAMILY

CHARACTER/PERSONALITY

FUTURE link with age

FORTUNATE (being lucky?)

AGE

THE WORLD

Summary Of Themes

These themes were identified initially for Study 1a, Individual Perspectives, from combined interview and 'I Am' task data. They are included here because they formed part of the process of the group analysis.

Sarah

Third Interview

Adapted Self
Sarah does many activities giving mental stimulation and interest. Interest in nursing is sustained by reading. Her voluntary work seems to compensate for all she might have missed from work.

Adjusting Self
Sarah has a sense of time passing quickly and not much time in which to do everything. This might be because she has plans for so much!

Adjusted Self
Sarah enjoys the continuation of her home responsibilities and thus the continuation of her self in this role. She enjoys the freedom her age gives whilst being aware of some changes she's had to make (e.g. clothes). She still feels young inside and the sense of sameness is still with her. She remains ambitious and seems to be happiest in her busy life.

Maintenance of Self
Sarah needs to be busy to be happy.

Past and Future Self
Sarah has a particular ambition yet to fulfil.

Amy

Conceptual Labels - Interview 3

1. Time for self (in a class, something that is mine when work went – compensatory)
2. Health, age and vulnerability
3. Letting go of work (regrets relinquishing choice to work by not paying UKCC)
4. Retirement adjustment (settled into it)
5. Meaning of work (dominated my life, guilt about early retirement – about owing the world something)
6. Role of wife and gardener!
7. Family would like more involvement
8. Who I am (Importance of independence)
9. What I miss from work (specific social experience, and serving paying my debt to society)
10. Death and loss (friend)
11. Meaning of retirement (doing things you want to, not things you must do!, link to time passing by, making room for the young)
12. Identity (reduced by being retired, status loss, responsibilities diminished, but being a nurse is still part of you)
13. Age, behaviour and responsibility
14. Age and freedom (to be stroppy)

Conceptual Labels - 'I Am' Task

FAMILY IDENTITY (link with AGE)

CHARACTER

LACK OF USEFULNESS

LUCK (link with physical fitness)

THE FUTURE

HOUSEWORK

Summary Of Themes

These themes were identified initially for Study 1a, Individual Perspectives, from combined interview and 'I Am' task data. They are included here because they formed part of the process of the group analysis.

Amy

Third Interview

Adapted Self
Amy enjoyed her course and hopes to plan more. She also gets mental stimulation through reading and going to the cinema.

Adjusting Self
Amy has felt slightly vulnerable in situations with her grandchildren mainly in relation to a health problem that caused pain. This however made her think about age and vulnerability and health, as did plans for a holiday abroad. Amy would like more involvement with her grandchildren especially as she feels her identity is slightly reduced being retired as her role is gone, although she still holds on to the nursing identity inside. She feels slightly guilty about retiring from her full time job early.

Adjusted Self
Amy feels much more settled into retirement, she feels a freedom in her age to speak out but the responsibility also as a more mature citizen. She is enjoying time for her self.

Maintenance of Self
Amy needs a bit of independence and mental stimulation.

Final Conceptual Labels of Combined Data Identified From Interview 3

1. Age, behaviour, and freedom to please myself, age and freedom (to be outspoken - stroppy)

2. Adjustment and adaptation to retirement (obscured by family events), Letting go of work, (e.g. regrets relinquishing choice to work by not paying UKCC), delaying retirement (managing finances part of this), (difficult but getting better), Adjustment to retirement (not complete, still in working mode), importance of keeping mentally active (crosswords and puzzle books), Meaning of work and retirement (appreciated in role, and satisfied with self), (a continuation of interests already established with compensatory status, interest, stimulation etc.), (guilt over early retirement, too early to render abilities useless), (dominated my life, guilt about early retirement – about owing the world something), (doing things you want to, not things you must do!, link to time passing by, making room for the young), Glad to be retired, Adjustment to retirement (completed!, but acknowledged grief at leaving), Interviewer's part in retirement adjustment, What I miss from work (e.g. mental stimulation, status, contact with children), missing from work (colleagues) but compensated for (friendships, actually deeper than colleague relationships), missing (colleague contact, friendship, self worth), What I miss from work (specific social experience, and serving paying my debt to society), Adjustment to husband's retirement

3. Roles and Identity – I am who I am, roles missing (e.g.family), identity lost and found following divorce, status loss with work role (who I am, changed self following divorce), The centre of the family, --'s wife (a preferred role), Who I am (liking people to be pleased with what I've done, self worth and security), Who I am (changed self), Role (Unchanged, always a mother first) Role (Unchanged, continued home responsibility, more voluntary roles), Role "a getter of food", supporter of husband and server of the family, this is limiting

(links around satisfaction and worthwhileness), Identity (always –'s wife, except at school an identity of my own!), Role wife and gardener!

4. Plans and ambitions, some or none (because of bad experiences) or ambition still left to fulfil or never ambitious enough, (regrets)

5. Fulfilling needs - Importance of friendships and support, satisfaction (found in keeping house), time for self, (putting self first? link to living alone?), Time for self (would like it but feels guilty about leaving husband), (in a class, something that is mine when work went – compensatory), Freedom (freedom to please myself, and give time to others, inc. husband, and having choices), Motivation, (caring for others), Voluntary work, Keeping mentally active (crosswords, challenge and excitement at stocks and shares), Needs fulfilled (caring, of service, having time full, avoiding guilt, belonging (Church))

6. Mental well-being – feeling better, feeling good about e.g. suntan, (less tense)

7. Health and dying, age, vulnerability and loss (friend)

8. Awareness of time passing by

9. Family (events, responsibilities and difficulties, roles in them and their effect (e.g. who I am, changed self), (adjusting to changes) disappointments (would like more involvement – link to role - grandparent)

10. Age, Identity and who I am (good at my job, influenced a lot by mother, self worth, the nurse,still a part of me, never ambitious, unchanged aspects, e.g. a helper, not a pensioner!), (busy, service, a magistrate and a Christian) Who I am (motivation is duty fuelled by guilt), Past affecting behaviour, No satisfaction in life generally, small satisfaction at work (not old), Who I am (Importance of independence), Identity (reduced by being retired, status loss, responsibilities diminished, but being a nurse is still part of you)

AXIAL CODING

Categorising Data Interview 3

Classification of conceptual labels into categories began. Concepts were compared with each other and when appearing to pertain to a similar phenomenon the concepts were grouped together.

Identified Categories - Interview 3 Combined Data

Adjustment and adaptation

This is about the adjustment to retirement, how it felt for participants, whether they feel adjusted, what was missed from work and whether adjustment was interrupted, delayed or avoided at any point. Adaptation is about compensatory activities that fill gaps left by work. Also adjustment to husband's retirement.

Who I am and Who am I?

Involved here are assertions about who participants feel they are and how that has continued through life, work and retirement. Roles are important here, especially changes to unsatisfying roles or more satisfying roles, and the link with self esteem and identity. Needs are identified, especially the importance of friendships and support. Freedom and time for self seem to be important but are not without inner conflict (except in one case). Plans and ambitions are part of 'who I am' and involve regrets, future plans or a very determined decision to make no plans and have no ambitions (coping strategy).

Family

Part of this category does come into the previous two in that adjustment to retirement has meant changed or new roles in the family and the effect of these changes as well as family events in some instances has had effects on the self. However alongside this

there is a large area of felt responsibility around the family, which is a continuation of the past but nevertheless has changed. This may be to do with fitting oneself into a new role with responsibilities and significance.

Age, Behaviour and Identity

This is about a part of the self that is seen to be developed and formed through life (by influence of other people, career, past affecting behaviour etc.), and the link to the experience and attitude of getting older. No participant feels old or identifies themselves easily with the term 'pensioner'. Nevertheless identity is perceived as being "reduced" by being retired by some participants (comes with status loss and diminishing responsibilities) but not by others. Freedom to be outspoken and to please oneself come with old age but there are limits too (e.g. as in the case of what one is allowed to wear).

Health and Mental well-being

Health and dying are concerns for all participants, together with this comes an awareness of decline which makes one vulnerable and an awareness of loss (through friends dying). Having said this most participants feel mentally much better than before retirement.

Time

This category is simply about a growing awareness in all participants of time passing by and the preciousness of time left.

SELECTIVE CODING

Identification of Core Category

Categories were then Selectively Coded for a Core Category. The Core Category integrates all the previously identified categories. Provisional labels for the Core Category were given first and as the process of analysis progressed the final identified Core Category emerged. To show the process evolving the provisional identification of the Core Category is shown in full, preceding the final identification of the Core Category and its components.

Provisionally Identified Core Category - Interview 3;

'Continuing Self in a Season of Changes'

Threatened Self

Here the threat of retirement and all that it potentially means is evident. What work meant to an individual is important as retirement takes this away. It can be seen how some participants may have resisted or delayed the finality of retirement by going back to work, and being upset by decisions which would mean there was no going back (e.g. in the case of the nurses payment (or not) of their registration which meant they could or could not practice). The self is threatened because work appeared to be an expression of who participants are, does the absence of work take away a piece of the self?

Maintaining, Developing and Fulfilling Self in Changed Roles

Adaptation to retirement means knowing yourself and your needs and continuing that person in changed roles. Where family is around it plays a big part in determining new roles. This has been very positive for some participants like Jenny who prefers and feels more comfortable in her housewife and mother role than she did in her head teacher role. Molly on the other hand, has assumed this same role out of duty, which she neither enjoys or finds any fulfilment in. Balancing freedom and the seeming necessity to have

a role whilst maintaining a sense of who you are seems to be quite a challenge here. The 'nurturing, supporting, caring for', role seems to be taken on by all participants whether it is towards family, others or the self.

Maintaining, Developing and Fulfilling Self in a new Season of Older Age

Participants have a part of themselves that is known and perceived to be continuous. They are also facing old age and their ideas of 'old' do not fit with who they feel themselves to be. Changes are anticipated in behaviour and health, and the inevitability of dying is acknowledged. However there is a strong sense that the self they know will continue. All but one participant sees development and growth as important and all see maintenance of the person they are now, mentally and emotionally and as far as possible physically as very important. The irrelevance of chronological age is evident.

Self in Limited Time

All participants had a growing awareness of time passing by and how precious time was. This alarmed all participants and was a source of discomfort to most.

Final Core Category Interview 3

'SELF DISCOVERY'

Components of Core Category:

Known Self
Threatened Self
Self in Limited Time

These components of the Core categories form the basis of the group participant analysis, which can be found in chapter 6.

APPENDIX 20

Study 2: Analysis of Interview and 'Who Am I?' Task Data

OPEN CODING

Participants in this group were interviewed only once and these interviews were thematically analysed. It was thought however that labelling phenomena and identification of final concepts and categories, in the manner in which all previous interviews had been analysed, was a useful adjunct to the thematic analysis as it ensured that all the data was looked at closely.
The 'Who Am I?' Task was analysed using the 'overview approach' (Strauss1987), which gives an impressionistic cluster of categories. This approach is not recommended for use by itself, but, with a small amount of data, such as these four interviews, labels and concepts new and/or different from those identified in the interview data can easily be noted.

Conceptual Labels

Interviews were read individually and labelling of phenomena took place on an interview-by-interview basis.

Interview Analysis

May

Labelled phenomena

1 Retirement (pre-suppositions, what it means and expectations, e.g. getting into own peer group)

2 Who I am (knowing myself and my responses)
3 Usefulness (the meaning of work)
4 Contact with younger people (work gave that)
5 Volunteer work
6 Work before leaving (a sad finish, retired early)
7 Adjustment (quite smooth)
8 Husbands retirement (adjustment to that a difficulty)
9 Busy (jobs not done)
10 Retirement stress! (a full diary)
11 Creating a structure
12 Pace slowing down
13 Adjustments (fewer things to do)
14 Guilt (use/waste of time and slow pace)
15 Value of time
16 Time for self and interests
17 Worthwhileness and purpose (being needed, what value have I?)
18 Classes and education
19 Who I am, (accepting more of who you are, being realistic about yourself, strength to be yourself "comes with age", but less confident)
20 Family (loss of involvement)
21 Meeting my needs (for belonging, friendship, support etc.)
22 Loss of status (affects confidence)
23 Age (feelings, expectations, comparisons, attitude)
24 Keeping fit and healthy
25 Expectations of decline in old age (plans)

Overview of 'Who Am I?' Task - May

May separates her description of 'who am I' into biological, psychological, emotional, spiritual, sex and family and gifts and talents. She is very open and reflective about herself and describes herself as a depressive who lacks confidence, is highly sensitive to criticism and quite anxious particularly when meeting people. She describes a great concern for and love of people however and says she's "probably happiest and most

fulfilled when doing something with people". May describes herself as never being very good at anything but would have loved to have been good at art, music and sport. May has guilt feelings about her confusion and difficulties with organised religion although she believes in God. She puts her guilt down to her upbringing by strict parents (parson's daughter). Sex with love and understanding is very important to her and helps her cope with life. May describes her relationship with her husband as "forming a good team". Her daughters and grandchildren are "highly valuable" and she finds it difficult to accept they have their own lives to lead and she can't see more of them. Structuring time is very important to May, otherwise she quickly becomes aimless which leads to depression. May says it's easy to become selfish with time but feels it's important for people of her generation to give something back to society. May feels it's not a good idea to look back on life, she sees all the negatives. May tries now to get a balance between engaging in good things and finding worthwhile interests which might help others. Meeting new people and learning new skills and knowledge are also her aims.

Ivy

Labelled Phenomena

1 Retirement (meanings, financial aspects)
2 Work dissatisfaction pre-retirement (retired early)
3 Adjustment (no difficulties, but missing the company of colleagues and work interest, possible mental stimulation)
4 Hobbies and interests (continued and new, is social life too and where friends are)
5 Who am I (past and now 'unemployed')
6 Plans for retirement (unfulfilled mostly)
7 Age (don't feel a pensioner, feel twenty or thirty, presuppositions of 'old', old is physical)
8 Pace of life unchanged
9 Family responsibilities and expectations (father a dependant, a duty to care for him "life not my own")

10 Adjustment to caring for father
11 Keeping fit and healthy
12 Who am I (identifies strongly with father, always refers to 'we')
13 Unchanged Self ("no big changes to alter me")
14 Finances
15 Health problems
16 Roles (at work needed to be confident, don't need that now)
17 Being single and provision for the future (expected decline)
18 Adjustment (to having a cleaner and a gardener)
19 Usefulness and experience, worthwhileness (especially in passing on experience)

Overview of 'Who Am I?' Task - Ivy

Ivy uses the 'who am I' to give a potted life history focusing on childhood and school days. Ivy stayed in one job all her working life, she attributes this to laziness and the fact that her job was so interesting. Ivy's hobbies have been there throughout her life and she inherited most from her parents, in retirement therefore she does more of the same. She retired six years before being entitled to pension but doesn't regret it at all. Ivy wishes she was more organised and had more time to catch up on things, she actually feels too busy.

Betty

Labelled phenomena

1 Work dissatisfaction pre retirement (retired early)
2 Work (meanings, ie relationships with a loyal staff)
3 Retirement (not planned to finish this way, pupil's perceptions of retirement)
4 Who am I (without children)
5 Retirement meanings (new opportunities, especially in her faith, and desire to serve)
6 Family responsibilities (caring for a sick aunt)

7 Sense of being needed (asked to join a catering team at Church)

8 Adjustment and adaptation (quietness, used to hearing many voices, go to town to hear them)

9 Role and status loss (not identified as a problem but obvious adjustment)

10 Past influencing present behaviour

11 Satisfaction and Who I am (give a lot of self to others, meets own needs)

12 Loss (missed children and parents)

13 Social life and support (meets up with retired staff from work now)

14 Valued as a head teacher by parents

15 Challenges and stimulation outside of work

16 Interests

17 Adjustment (had observed others retiring, knew there could be difficulties)

18 Family responsibilities (caring for relative, emotionally and physically draining)

19 Problems of being single (support, someone to offload on to)

20 Pace of life (consciously slowed down)

21 Adaptation (changes to do with protecting physically e.g. not running for the bus, feels life more enjoyable, pressure of work gone)

22 Who I am (organised and work well under pressure)

23 Not as much time given to self these days

24 Physical health decline, physical injuries

25 Fears for the future (being single and ill)

26 Who I am (guilt about sleeps in the afternoon and putting feet up, but less tense)

27 Changes (a gardener)

28 Freedom

29 Past influences in present interests

30 Who am I (not the wisdom I would like to have, enjoy simple things of life)

31 Sadness about the world

32 Finances (limits choices but adapted)

33 Friendships

34 Who am I (a lot of denial of self)

35 Changes in me (more reflective, not rushing into things, because alone and have the time)

36 Age (of no interest, depersonalises, don't feel elderly, compare with others)

37 Health

38 Who am I (laugh a lot, have fun, be with the young)

39 Family (brother away, misses having family)

40 Identity (as retired, makes you different from, need to belong)

41 Expected decline and concern about being alone, no family to call upon

42 Trusting in God (death not a worry but dying is)

43 Modesty about job

44 Interests and hobbies

45 Difficulty asking for help because doesn't want to intrude on families, and wants to be independent

46 Family responsibility dominating life

47 Worth and beauty in old age (about courage)

48 Acceptance of lot and the way things have turned out

Overview of 'Who Am I?' Task -Betty

In Betty's description of 'who am I?' there is a great sense of her past family life influencing her future interests and values. Interests of sport and music and values of caring, helping, sharing, friendships, and fighting for justice. Her commitment to education is shown in thirty nine years of infant teaching which she says she wanted to do from an early age. She now spends a lot of time with the over seventies and finds they have a lot in common with her younger charges! (Betty's dry sense of humour is something she cherishes). Betty is single and has a brother living in Canada, she emphasises how much she appreciates her "special group of caring Christian friends" for support and encouragement. Betty describes herself as a leader but not through choice, she values working in team situations though. Meaning in life comes from Betty's Christian faith.

Meg

Labelled phenomena

1 Dissatisfaction with job prompted early retirement

2 Adaptation to financial change

3 Meaning of work (financial)
4 Positives about work (meeting a range of people)
5 Who I am (knowing myself and limitations)
6 Routine (means a bit of stability)
7 Adaptation (compensatory activities)
8 Meeting people (classes and enjoyment of being taught and keep brain ticking over)
9 Time for self at first
10 Voluntary work (to get out)
11 Memoirs (recording of life)
12 Retirement (meanings, the beginning of the end)
13 Initial freedom (came after feeling low about it being the final stage)
14 Visiting friends at first, feeling free
15 Got busy later
16 Pace slowed
17 Old (realisation of limitations)
18 Coping with a lack of structure
19 Who I am (not a housework person)
20 Decorating done on retirement
21 Changing self (Shy child, felt unequal, now feel equal to anybody, death of husband increased her confidence)
22 Who I am (don't mix easily)
23 Who I am (more content and accepting of what I've got and who I am in retirement, but still striving for things, more confident than ever been.)
24 Anticipating decline
25 Worry about needing to be cared for
26 Hoping to be cared about
27 Health worry
28 Fear of suffering
29 Growing old
30 Who I am (increased confidence because now do things I'm good at)
31 'Old' depersonalises, about physical things
32 Time (more precious, don't put off doing things)

33 Worthwhileness (need to do something worthwhile to me)

34 Identity (in work linked to being a teacher)

35 Value (being a teacher was of value)

36 Family responsibility (cares for father, feels own life is taken away)

Overview of 'Who Am I?' Task - Meg

Meg opens her life to me in her 'who am I'. I feel very honoured to have these things shared with me, a researcher in and out of her life and giving her nothing in return. Meg is an only child who describes herself as painfully shy, her childhood was difficult, much was expected of her and she knew only of chastisement from her mother and father, for saying the wrong things or nothing at all. Meg described herself as young for her age at school and of being lonely, without a special friend. Her great love then was the organ, she would practice for hours a day, alone and happy. She met a man 15 years her senior and married him within a year, again she was put on a pedestal and caused sadness when she fell off. Her marriage was happy however and they shared many interests. They had three children, the last of which was stillborn. Meg's husband died following an operation and she describes her life as shattered. Meg came home to mum, from abroad, set up house with her children and "scraped along", Meg went back to teaching, "sent" her son off to be a chorister and "found" Physiotherapy as a career for her daughter. Through all this she says she had a few "skirmishes of the heart" but all with men who were safe and didn't "threaten her citadel". Meg has a lover of 20 years standing, "ageing like myself" who is a good support but she says she's never found another real companion. Meg is busy with many interests and enjoys all that she does. Her Church group gives her peace and inner calm but from the music and ritual rather than Christian doctrine. Meg says her true religion is in her garden, hills, valleys and stars. Meg says she rages against her father who, before becoming too old, constantly accused her of thoughts and actions that would never have entered her head. Her daughter is like that too she says. Meg feels guilt at her reactions to her father. When Meg's son comes home (not often), she relaxes completely and can talk to him, "we can talk without me being shouted down" she says.

Final Concepts Identified from Data

1. Presuppositions of retirement (expectations and meanings, e.g. new opportunities, the beginning of the end)
2. Unchanging self (what I know about myself and my responses)
3. Work (Meanings both pre and post retirement)
4. Social contact with people of all ages
5. Volunteer work (to get out and meet people)
6. Adjustment to retirement (role loss)
7. Adjustment to husband's retirement
8. Being busy (retirement stress!)
9. Structure and routine (creating one or not having one and coping with a lack of one)
10. Pace of life slowed down
11. Adjustments
12. Time (not wasting it, preciousness of time, good use of time, guilt about time, value of time)
13. Time for self
14. Interests and hobbies (meanings, keep brain ticking over etc.)
15. Worthwhileness and purpose (being needed, what value have I?) NOTE: Participants who didn't talk so much about this were caring for elderly relatives
16. Classes and education (meanings and purpose)
17. Contentment with self (accepting of self being realistic about yourself, strength to be yourself, accepting the way life has turned out, writing memoirs?)
18. Changing self (confidence especially up or down and the causes of this)
19. Family (responsibilities for caring or not being involved or in contact, each has a cost)
20. Meeting own needs (for belonging, friendship, support, even for care)
21. Old age (feelings, expectations, comparisons attitudes, expected decline, plans, fears, age depersonalises, wanting to remain independent, worth in old age, old about physical things)
22. Health (keeping fit etc.)
23. Finances

24. Identity (as retired, makes you different from)
25. Adaptation (e.g. having a gardener, cleaner or whoever to help, also compensatory activities)
26. Freedom
27. Who I am (things I'm not so happy about and how the past influences who I am)

Categorising Data

Concepts were compared with each other and when appearing to pertain to a similar phenomenon the concepts were grouped together.

Identified Categories – Combined Data

Use of Time

Freedom, Classes and education (meanings and purpose), Time (not wasting it, preciousness of time, good use of time, guilt about time, value of time), Time for self, Interests and hobbies (meanings, keep brain ticking over etc.), Volunteer work (to get out and meet people), Pace of life slowed down. Being busy (retirement stress!)

Who I Am

Who I am (things I'm not so happy about and how the past influences who I am), Contentment with self (accepting of self being realistic about yourself, strength to be yourself, accepting the way life has turned out, writing memoirs?), Changing self (confidence especially up or down and the causes of this), Unchanging self (what I know about myself and my responses)

Adjustment and Coping

Finances, adaptation, e.g. having a gardener, cleaner or whoever to help, also compensatory activities. Meeting own needs, for belonging, friendship, support, even

for care. Adjustment to role loss on retirement. Adjustment to husband's retirement. Structure and routine, creating one or not having one and coping with a lack of one.

Work and Retirement

Presuppositions of retirement (expectations and meanings, e.g. new opportunities, the beginning of the end), Work (Meanings both pre and post retirement e.g. Social contact with people of all ages), Identity (as retired, makes you different from)

Worthwhileness and Purpose

(being needed, what value have I?) NOTE: Participants who didn't talk so much about this as a problem were caring for elderly relatives

Family

Responsibilities for caring or not being involved or in contact, each has a cost.

Old Age

Feelings, expectations, comparisons attitudes, expected decline, plans, fears, age depersonalises, wanting to remain independent, worth in old age, old about physical things, health (keeping fit etc.).

Final Themes Identified in Study 2 Data

Known Self

Use of Time
Issues around use of time were resolved according to what participants knew about themselves and their needs.

Who I Am
An acceptance of self came from participants knowing who they were. This resulted in a sense of contentment with themselves, and a strength to be themselves. Sense of an unchanging self aspect of themselves gave stability.

Adjustment and Coping
Compensatory activities, and the meeting of needs, for belonging, friendship, support, even for care, all centres around what participants know of themselves, their needs and their interests.

Threatened Self

Who I Am
A sense of parts of themselves that might be changing produced discomfort.

Adjustment and Coping
Finances, and adaptations that acknowledged a reduction in independence or coping, e.g. having a gardener, cleaner or whoever to help, served to threaten the known self. Role loss at retirement was a threat to valued aspects of the self that might not feel valued when not used or appreciated by others.

Self in a Limited Time

Use of Time
The preciousness of time and sense of not wanting to waste time came from the knowledge and sense of living in a limited time frame.

Adjustment and Coping

Adjustments to husband's retirement, to attempting to structure time and create routine, or cope without one, all centred around the value of time and needing to feel that time is used well.

APPENDIX 21

Study 3: Analysis of Interview and 'Who Am I?' Task Data

Labelled Phenomena Combined Data

Bella

1 Life mostly working except for looking after son
2 Change of job after caring for son
3 Satisfaction in work and good results
4 Getting out of home important
5 Work in your nature
6 loss of independence when work stops – lose own money
7 Hard to work with young children
8 'withdrew' from work at 65
9 Work gave responsibility
10 Not being a nuisance was a priority on retirement
11 House and Garden took over
12 Took on some reading classes for a literacy programme
13 Kept in touch with lots of people from work
14 Retirement, a time to 'get on with it'
15 Not much money after husband died
16 Life a series of hurdles
17 Looking forward was important
18 Shock of finding her husband dead in bed
19 Protecting her son
20 Death of her mother
21 Sits about a lot now
22 Feels confined because of difficulties travelling and vastness of City
23 Limited physically

24 Lonely, few to talk to

25 Family busy

26 Still very interested in everyone and everything

27 'Lost' granddaughters because they don't often visit now

28 Wiser person now but still same

29 More accepting of self and more content

30 Limited in clothing choice

31 Feels 'old' in negative sense, not considered worth anything

32 Health

33 No plans

34 Time very precious

Glenda

1 Physical Frustration, losing strength

2 New challenges

3 Christian Faith, works to help other people through this

4 Unchanged Self

5 Death and arrangements

6 Reminiscences – Family, Work, Life in the past, past losses

7 Life not generally as good

8 Things given up

9 Who I am (cool head in a crisis)

10 Very much a patriot

11 Not old mentally, just physically

12 Vulnerability (dislike of dark nights)

13 Importance and enjoyment of work

Final Concepts Identified From Data

1 Importance of work for satisfaction, challenges, friendships and responsibility to next generation

2 Unchanged self, parts of self, i.e. personality, continued through life, work and retirement
3 Maintenance of self in retirement, new challenges, being worthwhile
4 Loss suffered in life, many deaths
5 Limitations (physical leading to other losses)
6 Vulnerability (mainly with an associated physical cause)
7 Retirement a transition – 'time to get on with it', or for different challenges
8 Plans for the future (for decline or death arrangements)
9 Time precious
10 Feeling 'old'

Categorising Data

Concepts were compared with each other and when appearing to pertain to a similar phenomenon the concepts were grouped together.

Identified Categories – Combined Data

Who I am – Work gave lots of satisfaction, challenges, friendships, and responsibility to the next generation, these things reflected the self. They were a challenge, demonstrated worth and competence. Important but difficult to maintain these things. Still mentally active. For Glenda Christian faith important.

Reminiscences – Positive and negative. Living in the past was better. Families important in past memories. Lots of good times with people, mainly at work.

Limitations – Mainly physical but this leads to other limitations i.e. enforced social withdrawal

Time – Time is precious, future uncertain. No plans for life, some plans for death.

Old Age – Feelings, expected decline, worth in old age, health. The way others view you. Vulnerability

Family – 'Lost' or abandoned. Important to remember

The rest of the analysis, i.e. Identified Core Variable, can be found following the analysis in chapter 8.

APPENDIX 22

An example of the analysis of interview 1, diary, 'Who am I?' task, depression and self-esteem measures for one participant; Flo

This example of analysis is part of the commitment to reliability mentioned in chapter 4 of the thesis. Glaser and Strauss (1967) report,

> *Another way to convey credibility of the theory is to use a codified procedure for analyzing data which allows readers to understand how the analyst obtained his theory from the data."* (Glaser and Strauss, 1967, p.229)

It is necessary to include all the data obtained around the time of the first interview as all data is combined early on as part of the analytic process. However, to reproduce the 'Who am I?' task data and the diary data in its raw form would breach the confidentiality of the participant involved. It has been decided therefore to include this data from the point at which labelling was made of this data. An overview of the 'Who am I?' task data can be found in the individual participant analysis chapter 5. The raw data is available from the author should this be necessary.

Within this text page numbers of the interview data are referred to. This means the page numbers at the top left hand side of the interview transcript. These numbers are different from the page numbers for whole thesis. Using these numbers enables ease of identification when the interview data is discussed.

The Process of Analysis

Flo

Before interview 1 took place measures of self-esteem and depression were taken. Flo scored 'Low' on the self-esteem measure (16). Her social self-esteem was particularly low (3). Scoring tables for the self-esteem measure can be found in appendix 6. On the

depression measure Flo scored 5, which was within the normal range. Scoring tables for the depression measure can be found in appendix 9. This data was used to compare with verbal data from interview 1. Flo neither described nor demonstrated any depression at interview 1. Flo described a lack of social contact and no real desire for more social contact at this particular time (page 6 and 7 of interview data). She also felt a "tremendous futility" with work in the latter stages (p. 17 interview data). Both the social isolation (changed later in the study), and the sense of latter work not being worth very much could be contributory factors to a low self-esteem The data from the measures appeared to verify the interview data.

At the time of the first interview Flo had already made notes in her diary. The diary was read through twice. This was to familiarise myself with the data. This data was then labelled separately from the interview data. The following themes were identified; these themes served as labels for this data;

Diary Themes - First visit

- Identity - the way others see her (p. 1)
- Feelings about not working, Guilt, social comparisons (p. 1, 2, 11, 14, 15, 16)
- Issues around OAP - social comparisons "finality" (p. 2, 3)
- Changed roles within the family (p. 2, 4)
- Age and the passage of time - social comparisons (p. 3, 4)
- The state of the world (p. 4)

The 'Who am I?' task had been completed by Flo by the time of the first interview. This was read through twice to familiarise myself with the data. Then an overview was written (see chapter 5). The following labels were then given to phenomena identified in the 'Who am I?' task.

Conceptual Labels - 'Who Am I?'

Identity, link with Character

Past Roles

Relationships

Family

Moves

Interview 1

The interview took place and was audio taped. The interview was then transcribed verbatim.

Open Coding

The interview was read through twice to familiarise myself with the transcript. At the third reading notes were made in the margin, in black pen, as provisional labels. At the fourth reading further notes were added, in red pen, or past notes reinforced as potential labels. Memos were made at the fourth and fifth reading of the transcript. Below is a copy of the interview transcript together with the notes mentioned. A copy of the memos follows the interview transcript. The relevance of the symbols on the interview transcript will be discussed later.

TRANSCRIPT OF FIRST INTERVIEW WITH (FLORENCE)

Janice I'd like to take you back to your beginnings of work, your first job, was that a nursing job actually?

Long pause

Janice Can't remember!

Flo Erm, d, you mean after I'd trained? My first job was a staff nurse in a different hospital

Janice Right

orange cross

Flo So I did that, and I did that for six months, then I had my time in Africa married, when I was the DC's wife. Erm, so is that, what do you want to know about it?

change to 'foreign country'

IDENTITY S.CONCEPT ROLE

A job

Janice That first, if you can remember back to yourself as that first staff nurse if you like or during the period of your training, erm, what, if you had to describe yourself then, as you were.

Flo Very quiet.

Quiet and insecure person

yellow cross

Janice Were you?

Flo Very very quiet. Erm, tried very hard to play it all by the book, you know, in nursing terms, in doing injections or medicines, or anything like that, exactly as we'd been trained. Very insecure really.

S.CONCEPT

orange cross

Janice Were you an anxious sort of person?

Anxious about nursing - played it by the book

Flo Anxious about, yes, I'm not sure perhaps whether nursing was the best career, choice of career for me because I always worried that I would do something wrong, that would make someone's life less comfortable.

-ve S.CONCEPT

Pink spot

Janice Right

Flo Like you know, the wrong injection or the wrong dose of pills, or not understand adequately how something was to be done so that's why I played it *so* by the book. In case anything went wrong.

-ve S.CONCEPT

Janice (laugh) Right. Okay, and coming back to the last job that you were in, you were a nursing sister weren't you?

Flo I was a senior nurse, yes.

Janice Senior nurse, so in what ways were you different, or were you different when you were in that last job that you had?

Flo Probably, well one I didn't feel there was any patients life hung in the balance because of anything I did so that, from that point of view it was easy. I was still as conscientious as I'd always been, erm, probably more so really. Erm, certainly didn't have any, I didn't mind going and talking to people or standing up for what I believed was right.

Janice Yea.

Flo You know when I was younger I might have said, 'oh well if the sister says it that must be', by the time I was in a more senior position and I thought someone either junior or senior to me was getting it wrong I would say. I wouldn't make a fuss about it but I'd say.

Janice Yea.

Flo And I, I think I told you last time about the AIDS patient which they weren't going to, which some, there was a row over the porters weren't going to take the patient back to the ward. And you know somebody was going to be disciplined and all that and I just went and said I felt everybody was to blame in the situation and I wouldn't support them sacking anyone over it.

Janice Mm

Flo Which in the end turned it all round.

Janice laugh

Flo And nobody after I had stood up, you know they withdrew their statements and all the rest of it.

Janice Right. So that was quite different from the quiet. ...

Flo Oh yes very.

Janice What do you think caused that change?

Flo I think I had all, well, (husband's) faith in me really. I think up till erm, quite a long time after I was married I think I felt a bit, I think I was quite insecure as a child at home.

Janice Mmm

Flo And I think that once I was married and (husband) believed I was the bees knees type of approach (laugh)

Janice (Laugh)

Flo Erm that gave me a lot more confidence.

3

Janice Yea.

Flo Oh I had a lot of things erm, where our children were very bad, really seriously ill, and you know we were getting the brush off.

Janice Right

Flo And I, whereas I mightn't have done it for myself, there was no way I wasn't going to stand up and be counted for them.

Janice Right

Flo You know one of our erm children obstructed and erm, you know, unless I had gone and, the first two or three times, they said no, there's nothing wrong there's nothing wrong. And then I went in one day and I you know I just stood my ground and the next thing she was admitted and the next day, and that same day they had to do a major operation.

Janice Gosh

Flo And then, later on she was ill several times after that, and one time you know she was lying in hospital and she said, 'mummy I am dying and even *you* are letting me, even *you* are letting them let me die.'

Janice Gosh

Flo And and I thought, and I thought well they aren't doing anything and I actually had her moved from the hospital she was in to one of the big London hospitals.

Janice Did you.

Flo Yes that was a brave thing to do, the consultant was not nice about it.

(both laughing)

Janice I bet he wasn't.

Flo But he did it.

Janice yes, gosh. So being a mother actually, and being responsible for ...

Flo Other people, yes

Janice ... other people, really yea, affected a change, right.

Flo Mm

Janice Okay, now that you're not working and you've made that firm decision not to go back to work (mentioned in the pre-interview chat), do you see yourself differently, er, from you know, you've just described you as in the last place of work really.

Flo No, not yet. I should

Janice Not yet?

Flo No, I think it must happen, but it certainly not yet. I, I think that I don't think that the little grey cells have got any less yet, you know I think there must come a time, probably quite soon that perhaps they will. fall off the edge a bit but.

Janice D, you think so?

Flo Erm, probably.

Janice Mm

Flo But I don't see myself much different.

Janice No

Flo And I certainly would, you know, on things big or little, stand up now and, like I would've done in my last job.

Janice Yea, yea. So, erm, leaving your job, has that not affected your mood or your confidence or anything?

Flo No, slightly mellower I suppose I am, or if anything (laugh)

Janice Are you?

Flo I mean it is, I'll tell you I sleep, I sleep much better.

Janice Do you?

Flo I sleep much better and I sleep much longer. By longer I mean like quite often I used to stay up until about midnight or one o'clock to get work finished. Now I, I usually go to bed between half past ten eleven ish.

Janice Yea.

Flo And, don't usually get up much before about eight ish.

Janice Mm.

Flo I always had to be up before half past six before.

Janice Yea.

Flo So it's made, and because I sleep better I get less irritable.

Janice Yes, yea, I'm not surprised. Yea, right, okay. What then where the positive things that you gained from work, from your last work?

Flo Horrible to say but I loved having my own money.

Janice yes

Flo And I didn't therefore feel guilty if I was lavish with my children, erm, I come from a much more extravagant type of background than (husband) does. Whereas I would have, as a child, quite large Christmas presents (husband) came from the sort of background where it was a book or a toy, and therefore he sees that that is what we should give our children the equivalent of.

Janice Right

Flo And, I, I see that as mean.

Janice Right

(Both laugh)

Janice Sounds like me and Paul this does

Flo (laughs), well, and so therefore you know, and I like the grand gestures. For instance my birthday's coming up in a month or so, and I'm taking the family to Paris.

Janice Oh wow.

Flo Where you see now I think (husband) sees that as a really extravagance, but it is my money.

Janice Right

Flo But it's really lovely about him, I mean he hasn't said don't do it, but then he says to me very very carefully, you can see the questions being. ...

Janice (laughs)

Flo ... twirling round in his head 'do you, or how do you envisage us paying for the time actually in Paris?, I mean do you think we'll be paying for all the meals or the entrances to museums?'

Janice (laughs)

Flo These sort of things.

Janice Yea, yea.

Flo Erm, and I mean, 'how much money do you think we should be putting aside for the actual time we're there?' I mean the actual holiday's all, the ordinary part of the holiday's all paid for you know.

Janice Yea.

Flo Erm, and you know, 'how much do you ...

(Both laugh)

Flo ... so it hasn't quite been solved how much we're we think we need to take with us really

Janice Right

Flo I mean it might be that it would be quite nice if the children thought that they could afford to do one little bit, because there's seven of us going.

Janice Right, so they could do ...

Flo Either all five of them could perhaps buy something I don't know. Like I mean one meal or something, but that hasn't really been worked out yet.

Janice No. (laugh)

Flo That, that, though, so what was the question?

Janice positive things from work, so that's you're own money and which gave you a lot more ...

Flo Yes, I like to have my own money. I felt it was good for me to get out. I liked meeting other people. Erm, and because I was there made an effort to talk to people, see people, whereas now ninety five percent of the time I'm probably about the house and garden.

Janice Uh huh

Flo And I haven't, I really haven't made as much effort as I should have.

Janice Right. You feel that you should have?

Flo Oh I think so. I think I, I mean the telephone works two ways really you know. Alright if some of my friends ring me and say pop in for a coffee, I do. But sometimes I probably leave a longer gap than I should before I ring back and say, why don't you come over for Lunch or come for a coffee. ...

Social obligations
Conflict % freedom

orange

Janice Yea.

Flo ... or whatever, and, and sometimes that is just because I'm content, you know, that is not 'I can't be bothered' it's just, I want to do this, I want to do that. And the mere fact that several days of the week anyway you know, I do things, I'm out on Tuesdays and Thursday mornings. I usually take my mother out for Lunch one day. And so soon the week actually goes ...

Conflict about use of time content & want time to please self

yellow

Janice Yea

Others already take quite a lot of her week.

yellow

Flo ... And (husband) does so many things on a Sunday, and if he's not in (name of place) I mean if he's (here) I do go with him but like yesterday it was (name of place) and you know, next Sunday it's (name of place), so I always go these places with him.

Janice Yea.

Flo Erm, so.

orange

Janice So, the positive things from work are like the people contact, erm, those sorts of things d, you, what ..

Enjoyed routine of work and Saturday 'play day'

Flo And I think I quite liked the routine, and therefore I think I quite liked the routine and I quite liked the 'my goodness Saturday was play day' or ...

legitimate freedom

red

Janice Yes

Flo ... you know, or Saturday and Sunday you know you could have friends and things. And I didn't need to feel guilty if I didn't do too much of that during the week.

Social obligations

Strong sense of duty about entertaining

orange

Janice Mmm, mm

yellow

Flo Now I often think, you know, I really should sometimes make more effort. But I have, for instance just say the people in before the home group or things like like, or, should always bake for the home group and I think well can I be bothered?

Social obligations

Janice Yea.

(both laugh)

Flo (laughing) So I don't, I buy a packet of biscuits.

Janice Right. Other people have mentioned things like erm, the mental stimulation, and particularly talking with people with a common purpose, like nursing, is anything like that ...

Flo I don't miss that but, it is *definite* that (husband) and I talk about things on television, or the news, much more. You know much more in depth. For instance, I mean we had this huge long discussions about cloning or you know ...

Janice Oh yes

Flo ... and erm a lot of the things about the collapse or the loss of moneys to banks or, much more in depth. I mean the other day we were talking about the EMU and we were both very bad at it. but we probably wouldn't even have thought of discussing something like that a year ago.

Janice Right, right, that's interesting.

Flo So, it's, we've moved it over probably.

Janice Yea.

Flo Also I, I suppose in my job, although I made quite a lot of effort with the social contacts with the others a lot of it was done in my own office, just me and the computer.

Janice Right

Flo Or me and the clerk and the computer.

Janice Yes.

Flo You know, so it's, so it's probably a bit different.

Janice Yea, yea. Okay. Right. So, so really you've answered my question. I was going to ask is there anything else now that gives you the same thing? And you've just described to me how ...

Flo I like it better actually too.

Janice Do you?

Flo Yes, and I can see that I would try to be more widely read now.

Janice Mm.

Flo You know, I think that, I mean as I say (husband) and I discuss it more, erm, and I read the paper much better. You know before, it's often just flicking through.

Janice Yea.

Work - a mental + physical strain

red

Flo That sort of thing, whereas, by the time you came home and had made the meal, sat down, probably watched something pretty trivial on television, and then erm, we didn't really, I didn't talk a lot, often fell asleep actually (laugh).

Work took up a lot of energy—a lot of self.

Janice Yea, I'm not surprised the hours you worked. It sounds like things, you do things in much more depth now, you're looking much more ...

orange

Flo Yes, and I'm much more interested in erm, thinking in terms of the garden looking better, you know, like, seasons following on, we're just waiting to have things done to the back garden at the present you know, with actually new slabs and things to put down which are cracked. But I mean, no I look out much more and I say, we've got these two heather's that follow on from each other.

Home + garden becomes more important more interesting

Janice Right

Work - stifling Self or comp activity

Flo Now a lot of these things we inherited or we got from friends who said, 'this is a summer or an autumn, or whatever', but now I'm actually registering, okay we don't want to lose that when new walls are put up and you know, and these sort of things the things that I wasn't interested in before, I just left to (husband), I'm much more interested in now.

OR Home + garden more important

More energy

orange

Janice Yes, you've probably got more energy to ...

Work a physical strain

Flo Oh I've definitely got more energy

Janice ... to look at those sorts of things, work does take up a lot of life doesn't it. Is there anything that you feel that you must erm, continue, that you must hold on to erm, some say 'I must keep physically active' or, now you did talk about the grey cells didn't you (laugh)

black

Flo Yes, well I mean I've tried yes, but for instance I've taken, developed a passion for detective stories.

Developed new interest ie a challenge. attracted.

Compensatory activity

Janice Have you?

Flo And it's no good unless I can solve it.

Janice (laugh)

Flo No it's got to be that I've got to, it's got to be somebody who I can follow through and think that now I'm at page eleven and that looks as if it could be an important point.

Janice Mm.

black

Flo And you know, when (husband), sometimes (husband) reads them after me and I say, 'have you solved it?' (laugh) You know, I have to have solved it very early on.

Sets Self a challenge

Compensatory activity
Mental challenge

Janice (Laughs)

Flo And then prove if I'm following it up as I go through.

Janice Mm

Flo Now, I suppose I've always quite enjoyed detective stories, but I've never read them more than other things. Also, if it's something like the (unclear) on the television, or Ivanhoe, straight out, buy the book, to see if the book and the television are the same.

Janice Oh do you. Why do you think that's going on then?

Flo Just interest, I didn't do that before.

Janice No.

Flo Or very rarely, no I don't think I did it before.

Janice So it's that depth of interest again.

Flo Yes and for instance I thought now, you know, when I looked at the (unclear) which is by Conrad, I was quite interested, in reading the full book, how much more depth it had to it, and once you saw it, having read it in the book, you realised why they were doing it this way.

Janice Right

Flo But I hadn't finished the book until after the, because of when I actually bought it. Hadn't quite finished it, but I found it, there was much more depth.

Janice Yes

Flo You know because you get into the thought processes, which makes some of the stuff on the television less silly.

Janice Yes

Flo Although I have to (unclear), they did it very accurately.

Janice Oh right

Flo But these sort of things I've started doing that I didn't do before.

Janice yea, great, sounds good (laugh). Erm, do you regard leaving your job as a loss in any way? or the ...

Flo Not at all.

Janice Not at all, not anything that you feel, there's a loss?

Flo No, I think I was probably ready for a change.

Janice Right

Flo And I you know, I wouldn't have expected, if you had, had this interview with me the very first day we met, the answers would not be the same.

Janice No.

Flo But from whatever it is, six or eight months or whatever it is, May, or June, what's that nine months?

Janice Yea.

Flo Feels very differently.

Janice D, you, did you feel a sense of loss at the beginning then?

Flo Oh yes, because I had, I had, for *years* I'd done nothing but work.

Janice Yea

Flo And I'd had to put the family around work and that sort of thing.

Janice So was it a sort of loss that erm, you didn't know what to put in it's place sort of thing and now you've discovered what to put in its place?

Flo No I think it was that I was very tired. I think, I think I worked very hard right up, I mean I only decided to go certainly six weeks before, you know, it was a very short space of time. The offer came round in, I don't know, March, the offer came round sometime in March, and you had to give your notice by the end of March, well I hadn't had any thoughts of retiring.

Janice Right, until that came.

Flo And then, and then anyway when I had put in for it and they said no way you cannot go. And they needed fifteen people, and they only got nine people who were willing to go, and of those nine they wanted to keep myself and one of the people, But because they hadn't got the whole fifteen they not only had to let us go but they had to get up to fifteen.

Janice Gosh

Flo So another six were told, whether they wanted to go or not.

Janice Right, right.

Flo So, you know, I was, it was very sudden.

Janice Yes, so you hadn't time to adjust really.

Flo No, I was really in quite a fidget about it really.

Janice Yea.

Flo But I do, I think it was rea' but the offer was reasonable, and if I, it made such a difference to my pension, because they had to make the assumption that I would have gone on to sixty five.

Janice Oh right

Flo So, my enhanced pension made the difference between a hundred and something a month and just short of four hundred a month.

Janice Gosh

Flo So I, from the point of view of the financial thing it would have been mad not to do it. And supposing I hadn't done it, I'd rejected that and then I'd taken ill in July or something.

Janice Yea, yea

Flo So, from my point of view it was very much a one off offer.

Janice Right, nevertheless you felt, at the beginning, a sense of loss and ...

Flo Well it was just you'd suddenly all this freedom.

Janice Yes, yea, and what do you do with it.

Flo And what do you do with it, and I mean we had a, (husband) and I had agreed that he would *not* give up anything ...

Janice Yes

Flo ... he would do *exactly* what he was doing. So, we'd come in one, the first Monday that I'm off, and he's out all week.

Janice Yea, right

Flo All day, all everything. And you're thinking, and at the end of about three weeks I really got quite irritable, and I said, 'you're never here', but he said 'but I'm giving you your own space.'

Janice Yes (laugh)

Flo Which was very reasonable.

Janice Yes, yes

Flo And it's what we really had agreed. (laugh)

Janice (laugh) But you didn't quite know what to do with your space at the time?

Flo No. And I mean I also was very aware that, that, you know, I might not have the money to do anything. Suddenly your money is cut by more than two thirds, alright you may have the lump sum, and to be fair they paid all these things very fast.

Janice Mm

Flo So, so you may have that but you don't want to eat into that.

Janice no, no, because you don't know ...

Flo And, and you can't just suddenly think okay I'll have gone out and spent a couple of hundred pounds today or a couple of hundred pounds this month. But I daren't do it because, I haven't really got that sort of money anymore.

Janice Yea, right

Flo But then you find you will spend your money differently anyway.

Janice Yes

Flo You know. So I think, I, and also I want to see the house nice whereas maybe, otherwise I'd have been rushing off to have a lot of holiday's so it would have seemed different.

Janice Right

Flo But erm, I don't know, I don't think we had any holiday after I retired, we had a lot of weekends away and a lot of (husband) walking weekends. But now we've got three holidays lined up for this year, so it's all quite sort of ...

Janice Yes, yea

Flo I know why we hadn't a holiday lined up for last year because of erm, we knew (daughter) was getting married.

Janice Oh right

Flo And you know, I thought oh no we can't afford to have expensive holiday and the wedding.

Janice And the wedding, Mm, yes, expensive aren't they.

Flo Mm.

Janice Okay, have you felt, about things that you might have done differently, in your job, in your life, or just aspects of your life really? Have you sort of you know, sat down and thought about your past at all?

Flo I suspect I have nearly always, virtually always ran my life to fit into somebody else's. Except for the short period when I was in training, I have *always* felt that I should do, something for, in someone else, for instance if (husband) wanted to work in Africa then I had to live in Africa, if (husband) wants to live in (name of town) we live in (name of town), if he wants to work in (name of town) we live there, we moved to Sheffield, I mean we moved fourteen times in our early married life, so I've always felt that. I've always felt to, that I really ought to do things like be a wife, a daughter, a mother. Erm, and therefore, a career was very, very second.

Self denial
Decisions not own
Nursing - own choice.
Role
Self denial
Identity in relation to other

Janice Uh huh

Flo Secondary, and I mean I only went *back* to work so that we could pay the rates to live in Sheffield.

Back to Nursing but not for Self

Janice Right

Flo You know so, it wasn't something, this is something we are doing for Florence.

Meaning of work
For the family

Janice Yea

Flo This was something we're doing for the family. And I've always tried to, or nearly always tried to work my life so that if the children had taken to University or brought back, I was there to do it.

Self denial
Role
Family priority

Janice Mmm

Flo And with shift work you often can, because you knew when the beginning and end of terms were well ahead and you could fit it in so you're okay. I can take you to Nottingham today (son's name) provided we leave here by nine o'clock in the morning so that I'm back for half past one or whatever it was.

Family first
Work fitted

Janice Gosh, right.

Flo So, you know.

Janice So did you feel that that was, that was your, that was right for, ...

Flo Yes.

Janice ... I mean obviously you felt that was right for you to do.

Flo Yes.

Janice But erm, now do you look back with regret on that, ...

Flo No.

Janice ... or do you just er.

Flo No.

Janice It's just the way it was and it was right?

Flo No, I think it was fine, and I think the one thing I do feel quite sad about is that quite, after I was working shifts later on erm, the children, erm were alone between about half past four and half past five, and I mean I (son's name) was in his late teens, but (son) used to always talk to me when he first came in to school. If he didn't tell me it then, he never told me it.

Janice Right

Flo And I think that that, I think that is when you get your sort of (unclear) points of contact, and and he, I think I would rather have been a mother totally for him really.

Janice Yea, yea

Flo Although I'd have probably got very depressed when they suddenly all left home.

Janice Yes

Flo I'd probably have gone into one of these declines that people go into. (laugh)

Janice (laugh)

Flo You know when they suddenly feel there's nothing to do. I've never felt that because I was busier when they left home than I always, than I had been. because I'd changed my job by that time, so you know. No, I don't have any regrets about these sort of things.

Janice Right, right, okay. So, what, if you had to list the adjustments that you've made since you've retired what list would you ...

Flo Oh I don't know.

Janice Or doesn't it feel as though you've adjusted, does it feel as though you're sort of ...

Flo Well I'm much more, I'm much more casual and laid back and oh I have time to do everything, and you know, I don't feel it's all a big race round life now, you know. I don't feel I've got to think, my goodness erm I'm going to be working Monday to Friday and there's three birthday presents to have got, and the birthday cards to get oh, 'cause you know you can go down and just get them in the post or whatever. So, life's at an easier pace. I have made that adjustment. I have made the kind of adjustments that I don't have to do all the house, while (husband) was very good at doing the house work actually but I don't have to do all the washing and the ironing and these things in the evening,

Janice Mmm

Flo Which I found so horrible because they all come into my day time, and that's rather nice. Erm, but I don't think I would, I've made as many adjustments, certainly personally as most of your people have made.

Janice What do you mean?

Flo Well, my life is pretty much the same really except I don't go to work.

Janice Right (laugh)

Flo (laugh), well you know I used to race home and race to see my mother, I just go and see her ...

Janice Yes

Flo ... an hour and a half earlier and that sort of thing.

Janice Right, I suppose it depends what work meant to you really.

Flo I think the most worthwhile work I did was when I did the pre-op visiting thing. Went and saw the patients before

Janice Oh yea.

Flo Now that was probably quite worthwhile work, can't honestly say that my last job was the least bit worthwhile.

Janice Right

(both laugh)

Flo No, it paid, it paid me quite well, and I mean it, had the potential to do a lot for the trust as a whole, but nobody, they made you collect all this information,

you told what you could with it, but they never did it, they just went on in the same way.

Janice Right

Flo For instance one very good example is that in the (certain department) they have forty two (of certain staff). Four of whom do nothing every day of the week. So they could manage on thirty eight (of these staff). If they stopped doing a lot of practices. Now what we are talking there is what ninety thousand between ninety thousand and a hundred thousand a year. Now, with information like that you could do so much, it doesn't mean it's the same I mean you can look at erm some of the other departments where they say okay if only they had two more nurses they could do that or if they had one more physiotherapist they could do all that or why don't we move the physiotherapist from there to there, or, I mean in any field, I mean there are just so many examples of how we could have saved them a huge amount of money there.

Frustration Work at Undervalued or not used

Worthwhileness of work

Janice Yea.

Flo Now, they employed me to do that, but they then didn't use the information. Now every single trust in the land is more or less the same. They may or may not employ people to do it, but, I mean there is huge changes we could have saved a huge amount of money we could have saved in the theatres. There's, every theatre light burns twenty four hours a day, why on earth are we not turning these lights off except in the two emergency theatres, at half past five?

Frustration at work undervalued

Janice Mmm

Identification of Self with work role remains

Flo Why are we hanging the drugs up for tomorrow morning on the, over the, ready, when the stuff will not be suitable to be used. Why, just, there's loads of things.

Janice Yea, yea.

Flo Now, there was a tremendous futility knowing that you'd collected good information, reliable information and nobody's bothering to use it.

Futility of work.

Janice Bothering to use it, no, no.

Flo Although one of my last reports I was *really* pretty vitriolic and (laugh), I think they did make a few changes but, but ...

Assertiveness

Confidence Valued opinion

Janice (laugh)

Flo ... but basically they say we hear what you say but the system just kind of rolls on, people don't do things.

Janice Yea, yea. That's quite frustrating

Flo I mean the one bit of success I had was when they were having to say how many (of certain staff) should be left at (name of the hospital) in the (certain department), remember this is confidential.

Janice Right

Flo (laugh), erm how many (of these staff) should be left in the (hospital) (department), when the staff leave. Once when they only had a (smaller) unit. And the (other hospital) said that there should be (certain figure), and I did proper sums that proved that they needed (certain figure), and the (other hospital agreed). Now I mean I did say this should be reviewed again at the end of the year ...

Janice Mm, mm

Flo ... or you know, I think it was (unclear), and the (other hospital), said well we can't argue, she's backed up everything that she's said.

Janice Right

Flo And, and, but, on the whole it really was frustrating.

Janice Yea, yea.

Flo So I think I was quite glad to go, I actually feel quite (sharp intake of breath) heated about it just thinking about it (laugh).

Janice Do you?

Flo So, you know it just, it was irritating.

Janice Yes, yea, I can imagine. Must have been hard work too.

Flo (person's name and position held) she, in about (year), said there was to be a post like mine, and so I mean, that's when it went back to, but then having got the information, too many nurses dug their heels in and didn't do anything about it.

Janice Mmm

Flo And, you know, I mean I also one time with (name of consultant) managed to get him to upgrade some of the nurses, erm, I also got the money, No I mean the, I think they probably in the (certain department) needs some changes. As of what I said.

Janice Yea.

Flo But I mean the information exists, and it's just collecting it really and putting it to better use really. So I suppose that's probably why I was quite, not too sad in some ways, once I actually I stopped working.

Janice Yes, yes.

Flo And once I'd got over, I also expected and this sounds silly but I also, always expected the minute I erm retired, just to go down hill like that.

Janice Oh did you?

Flo Yes, the cells to stop working and you know, not to have any interests.

Janice really

Flo Yes

Janice That's interesting

Flo Weird

Janice Yes, yea, was that er a preconception about retired people or ..?

Flo Yes, and I think I also did not really want to do things like the things I'm now doing.

Janice Oh right

Flo I really did not think I wanted to be helping in crèches and things.

Janice Yea.

Flo But, I have met very pleasant people through it, both the mums with the little ones and also the older people who do it.

Janice Right

Flo So, you know.

Janice D, you think you were really really exhausted when you finished work?

Flo Oh yes, *terrible*, yes.

Janice I mean it sounds like that doesn't it?

Flo Yes, I was very tired and I was, I'd been really very bouncy until about three weeks ago when, my clothes wouldn't fit at all I'd already bought something that was a size bigger, or two something's, of a size bigger, and so I've gone on a diet and I feel really feel so washed out.

Janice Oh do you (laugh), oh Florence

so
(both laugh)

Flo I went on Rosemary Connely three weeks ago

Janice Oh my goodness

(both laugh)

Janice Okay, erm, lets have a look at this then. Does retirement cause you to think more about getting old?

Flo No, I don't, yes, I suppose so, a bit, I suppose a bit really. But I, yea, I was quite interested, one of my, all my insurance policies and things, are coming to an end about now.

Janice Mm

Flo And about just a couple of weeks ago, or three weeks ago, I had erm, one of them said they were paying out the first of March and there was also a box, do you want to continue?

Janice Mm

Flo So, I said I did want to continue but they said I would, of course I would have to have a medical, and *my goodness* did I feel panicky and uptight and what would they find. ...

Janice Did you?

Flo ... now that I'm older and my goodness if this, if I have this it would go on till I was seventy this insurance thing ...

Janice Yes

Flo ... and (sharp intake of breath), my goodness. Anyway I filled in the box, and they, they wrote back and said thank you for saying we can get in touch with your doctor, now whether they did or didn't, I don't know, but certainly I didn't have to go to the doctor and certainly they accepted me. So whether ...

Janice Oh right

Flo ... so whether they wrote to the doctor and he said I haven't seen her since, erm, the last thing she came for was injections to go to Singapore in about '90 or '92 ...

Janice (Laughs)

Flo ... or something, erm

Janice So she must be alright

Flo Or, or whether they just said oh well she's had two previous policies with us we'll just carry on, I don't know. But I really got, I really felt quite (Long intake of breath) what are they going to find, and you know I did feel a, my goodness, oh, very much I did feel this will finish when I'm seventy will I be alive to get it?

Janice Right

Flo And so I suppose I did really a bit

Janice Yes

Flo But I haven't felt my goodness, I haven't started thinking, I soon won't be able to drive the car or it's an effort to walk down to my mothers or walk back up the hill or anything like that.

Janice No.

Flo So, not yet. It will be interesting to see if another year makes a difference to that sort of thing.

Janice Mm, yea, I remember when I came er, in January, you er related an incident where I think you felt, it had snowed and you didn't feel confident in going out in the car, that particular day, do you remember that?

Flo Oh yes that's right, No, no, yea that's right, I didn't, and I would've if I'd been going to work wouldn't I?

Janice Yes, yes, was that, d' you think that was just about the way you were at the time, just thou ...

Flo Well, I think that, I think that if you asked me that in the snow next year I'd probably say the same thing.

(both laugh)

Flo But, erm, after I'd got back in from taking the car out again, erm I was just back to normal.

Janice It was just a question you asked yourself because you'd got the choice?

Flo Yes, yes.

Janice Rather than, just going because you had to for work.

Flo Yes, yes, and had I bought really sturdy by then that really feel that grip the ground, or was it ...

Janice I can't remember

Flo I bought a pair of sturdy shoes that grip the ground, so that makes me feel better about going out.

(both laugh)

Janice Good move.

Flo And I've also, we've also started going out for walks most days.

Janice Oh have you.

Flo So I'm back into some of these things.

Janice yea, yea. Okay, erm, do you see yourself as old then, you don't seem to see yourself as old?

Flo No, no, I mean I was, I've been trying to compare myself to, erm, how my mother was when she came here. Erm, we've been here seventeen years, she's been nearly sixteen, we've been here eighteen, and I tried, and she was about five years older than I am now. And I have begun to, begin thinking a bit, things a bit like that.

Janice Have you. Yea.

Flo Erm, once or twice thought, now was my mother in-law doing these sort of things, for instance I had an aunt who died in '96, beginning of, two years now. Two years this April. Now she in her eighties was doing a tremendous lot of things that people in their sixties weren't.

Janice Yea.

Flo You know, in her eighties she was still going holidays abroad and that sort of thing.

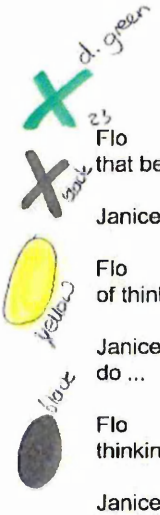
Janice Right

Flo And I mean walking from the flats up here and that sort of thing, so. I don't feel actually, probably I feel better really. I don't feel such as so, I think I have arthritis, but I don't feel so (unclear) arthriticky.

Janice Yea

Flo You know I, I do feel better. probably that doesn't make me feel as old.

Janice Right, okay. Have you, have you become more thoughtful about yourself?



Flo I went through a phase of that but I haven't, I did go through a phase of that because you remember when I wrote quite a lot in the note book?

Janice Yes.

Flo Well I was going through a phase, nothing to do with the notebook, off of thinking about myself, but I haven't been going through, erm, not so much.

Janice No. D' you think that that, phase was a bit of a readjustment time, or, do ...

Flo Probably, probably. And I think when I was thinking about it I was also thinking I ought to really do something really worthwhile.

Janice Mm

Flo But I don't think I feel all that's so important now.

Janice No, right.

Flo You know I felt it, you know, I should be out saving the world or something.

Janice Right

Flo And I think I've gone through that phase a bit.

(both laugh)

Flo D' you know I think all life's a bit of, a bit like that.

Janice Yes, yea, yea.

Flo I mean I think probably, in a perfect world, I'd have done something like VSO, or something that (husband) and I would have enjoyed doing together.

Janice Yes.

Flo But he, he didn't, he used to select people for VSO.

Janice Oh did he.

Flo Er, for a long time. And we'd probably have liked to go back to —— or somewhere, and I probably could have, er, I mean (husband) says the type of information I collected in a hospital, would have done, we really could have done something quite worthwhile.

Janice Yea.

Flo 24 But I've got my mother.

Janice Yea

Flo And, er, there'd be nobody else to look after her, it would not be a wise move would it?

Janice No, no

Flo So, it's all, I think I have become more contented and I just accept it. Doing things at this side, a local level.

Janice Mm.

Flo I suppose if I have any regrets that we never did, neither (husband) or myself, ever did things like become a magistrate or any of these things.

Janice Oh yea.

Flo I never thought about that until quite recently now that I'm too old to do these things.

Janice Right. D' you, do you erm, do you think you're a more settled person now, as you are now, than you were sort of, what twenty years ago?

Flo I'm not sure, when, when, the sort of life we lived, erm, led, when (husband) was erm, a college lecturer, or vice principle and things like that. That was very much sort of life I liked.

Janice Mm

Flo I mean, I liked having freedom to go and do all the things with the children, but still be able to do masses with the students.

Janice Right

Flo And I, the feeling was worth while in that you could be there, we were hostel warden, so you there for the students, and, and that was nice.

Janice Yea

Flo So, if you're comparing that with now, I that, I think I was more settled then.

Janice Mm. In that sort of role, that's a very ...

Flo In that sort of role and that sort of life...

Janice ... looking after role isn't it?

Flo Yes

Janice Nurturing

Flo Yes.

Janice yea.

Flo And, and, and, when we lived in places like (name of city) you have things that are attached to the Church, are things that are attached to the college and (name of college) where we were, and things that were attached to (another college), we knew people in the prison service, erm, so, it was a big circle. And erm, it was good. Halcyon days those, so were they.

(both laugh)

Flo So I don't know that I'm any more settled than then.

Janice It's a different, a different phase. Right, okay then.

Flo But I do live in the present.

Janice Yea. yea.

Flo So. I'm probably not going to have as many tremendous highs and lows as a lot of people have.

Janice Mm, right. What then have been the frustrations in your life then, or have there been any major frustrations that you can identify?

Flo Give me an example of what you would see as a frustration.

Janice Erm, something that you never did, and you really, really always wanted to do, erm, pursue a certain.

Flo I wish I swam better really, I always think it would be nicer to swim better than I do.

Janice Really

Flo I mean I can swim but not as well as other people, and maybe even now I'll do something about it. Erm. no, I, I think I don't feel like that because I think I've just always taken life as it's come.

Janice Yes, you sound, sound, sort of, accepted your ...

Flo Yes, right from very early on I think I would just accepted life as it is. And so no, I don't think there is major frustrations really.

Acceptance of life

Janice So, what have been the successes of your life?

Flo Oh

Janice I've already heard some of them.

Flo (laugh) I don't know, I don't know really. I don't know. I think that I have not felt. What I really would like to have been was tremendously successful as a family person.

Importance of role in the family

Janice Mm.

Flo Little families or wider families. And I don't think, since that's, I've been as successful as that, as I would have liked.

Janice In what way?

Flo I don't know I mean you know I, I worked so hard to bring my children up to be independent and they're all very independent and now when everybody else's children are crying on the phone every day, mine always cope!

Importance Worthwhileness

No longer needed in family - Usefulness questioned

Janice (laugh)

Flo And, and I think, and you know, and when I said that to one of them one day, and she said 'well mum, you worked so hard to make us independent.'

(Both laugh)

Flo You should be grateful. So I you know. Erm.

Janice And er, don't you see that as a success?

Life on an even keel = no ↑↓

Flo Ermm, no, 'cause I probably would have done it anyway wouldn't I? They probably had it inside them. Ermm, no I, but you see I don't even see, and the same perhaps I see life too much on an even keel. Or too much on a plain, but I haven't got the tremendous feeling of failures or successes.

Janice Mm.

Flo The whole thing is, just much more level than perhaps for a lot of people.

More on a level.

Comparisons with others

Tape Turned Over

Flo ... and I used to say to him when I was erm, I mean it's very interesting, I was twenty two when I came out. And very early on in the first few months of

marriage, something, I can't remember what happened but something very major happened and I said, 'oh it isn't fair,' and (husband) looked at me and he said 'Florence, what made you think life was ever fair.'

Janice Yea.

Flo And, and I'll always remember that.

Janice Right, yea.

Flo So, that when erm (husband) was so ill when the dog died of rabies, and you know it was touch and go whether (husband) would live. I never said, 'that isn't fair,' and I never said, when (daughter) got cancer in the thyroid, 'it isn't fair,' or why us. Because that is how life is. Now whether, if (husband) hadn't made that remark way back, I would be different.

Janice You'd have not thought ...

Flo Whether I'd have thought differently, I always will remember that. I also think Scottish Calvinism a bit, you know ...

Janice Yes, in the soul!

(both laugh)

Flo Yes, it's all about just being, you know, accepting. And no use having regrets do the things you want to do and get on with it. You know.

Janice Okay. So, d' you see the world differently now, than you did when you were working in any way? I mean on a superficial basis maybe, or maybe more in depth, I mean I, you did say something about erm, at the very beginning you felt like you should be doing something worth while, and other people have mentioned that, they should be up there waving banners about with the terrible things that are going on in the world or whatever. Other people have said things like they feel, they see the world, erm, brighter, I mean you mentioned the garden, that you see it that in a different sense.

Flo I don't know I find this very difficult because I think the worlds going through a very bad phase.

Janice Huh huh

Flo I mean you know, I, I really feel for all this thing, I feel that a lot of politicians world wide, have got awfully silly. I mean we've got all these problems with nuclear waste and, and, and the trouble with the nuclear submarines rotting away in Russia, and erm, people doing things like cloning and things without giving it enough thought before hand. erm, I mean all this trouble they're having with water, now Britain should not be having infected water! And to have somewhere up in our

region last week, and this place down in the south this week, I mean this doesn't seem right.

Janice Mmm

Flo And, I worry more about these things than I did.

Janice Do you?

Flo Yes, because I think about them more now, I, you know. I, you, things like, they say male fertility's dropping down, erm, not only in actual males but through crocodiles and all these other things.

Janice Yea

Flo And I think, what are we letting the world come to. Is this the sort of place, I mean we, I don't have any grandchildren yet, and, I'm quite glad really.

Janice Yea.

Flo Now if I said that to my children they'd be appalled (laugh)

Janice Yes, yes

Flo But then perhaps at this sort of age, perhaps my mothers generation felt the world was becoming Sodom and Gomorra, or whatever.

Janice Yea, yes, it would be interesting wouldn't it ...

Flo I mean you know, we seem to see much more about, erm, I mean I can't think it's right really, for things like erm gays or lesbians to be bringing up a, two of the one sex bringing up a child. Now I think a child's entitled to a father and mother figure.

Janice Mm

Flo And I just think there's a lot of things that seem to be far more than at any other time in my life.

Janice Yes right

Flo But, I don't know if, whether, if I was say sixty, sixty years ago if ever I'd feel the same.

Janice Yea, yea, okay. If you were writing a book about your life, that's something you could do, (laugh) ...

Flo Mmmm, be boring as anything.

Janice ... Not from where I'm sitting

(both laugh)

Janice Erm, if you were writing a book and you were dividing it into chapters what, what would be, would be the chapter headings?

Flo You mean like 'my youth'?

Janice Yep

Flo Mmm.

Janice Would you do it in sort of phases of life or...?

Flo I think I'd do it place related mainly.

Janice Would you.

Flo Because each time we have moved, done a major move, it'd been to a *totally* different type of life. Alright you would have, I mean I had several schools as a child and I moved to live with my grandmother and a whole lot of things like that, so we had, I had that sort of stage in my life. Then I had a nice solid little patch nursing. And then, straight out to Africa, we'd been back to Africa it was no longer that type of career at all, we then had two or three things where (husband) erm, two schools (husband) taught in I think, three. So we had that.

Life influenced by moves.

Solid patch

Work - a loss of freedom

Janice Mm

Flo Then we went to (name of city), which was college life, and that was nice. Then we went to (name of place) a different college still fine. So I suppose colleges we stayed. But then we came to Sheffield, and that was back to nursing, back to work, loss of freedom really. Because up till then you've got a lot of time to do your own things.

Work = loss of freedom

Janice Mm

Flo Erm, I think the things that have, I, so I suppose it would have to be place related, but I think some of the things that have developed me most have been the serious illnesses in the family.

Personal development

Janice Right

Personal growth thro' family not work

Flo I mean the time when ...

Florence then goes on to give a long history of family illness, some very serious life threatening illness. I suspect that few families have been through similar circumstances and for reasons of confidentiality I have decided to give my thoughts

in response to what Florence says about her family and herself during these times, rather than transcribe verbatim what is said.

Florence describes how she needed to cope alone because her husband and daughter were ill at the same time. Her daughter battled through a life threatening illness and is just home when Florence gives birth to her fourth child who is very ill. She describes during this time, her children going through a series of childhood illnesses in a period of a few weeks. She makes a comment after describing all this "and so it's called growing up!" She talks of her battles with medical staff over the illness of the child that died. She describes the time when her GP, who had been through all these illnesses with the family, lets her down very badly by not referring her ill son to a hospital. She describes this as "this is really probably the thing that made me grow up most, than anything", she comments "any GP, who had been through this, with a family, because I'd always seen, after the, after the horror of what had gone on and having got it wrong, they were not going to get it wrong again, so I nearly, I wanted to *bang* the door as I went out, and I you know I just, okay, and I went out, I bought a new dress, I bought a new pair of shoes, I had my hair done and I went up to the hospital and I would not have left until I had seen that consultant. And I knew exactly what I was going to say and I lowered the voice, so that he had to listen, and he said to me, well, he said, you're very determined, I'm interested why you've chosen so and so, because I said then I'm told he's the very best for this condition. And he said, well, he said, all I can say Mrs ... chose your Tuesday or your Thursday, or whatever, carefully, because I stand in for him on alternate weeks! (laugh), and I thought, blummin eck that's game set and match to you. Anyway, to be fair to him, I got my appointment ... and as I went in to the actual department he came walking towards me and he said, 'I hope you won't feel offended I've spoken to Mr ... when you've seen him alone, may I come in and us talk together?' Now that was nice.
On sticking up for herself to the doctors she says,

"I also found I had to do it myself, erm (husband) is too nice, and I didn't know I had such hardness in me."

Reflexive Account

I felt that Florence had a lot that she had wanted to tell me about her life and she told her story around my questions. I felt that she very much defined herself in relation to her family and husband. She describes her time of 'growing up' as one where she had to find strength and assertiveness when inside she didn't know this as part of herself. Pushed by the seriousness of the illnesses of her children and husband she 'survived', each event confirming to her her own strength. I find Florence a fascinating woman in many ways.

Florence - 1st interview Memos

Page No.

19 Questions about Flo's increasing confidence and assertiveness. Husband's support was important in increasing her self confidence.

23 Saturday, when working, was a legitimate 'play day', it was okay to please herself on this day. Now every day is potentially thus, but, guilt attached, the balance is hard to find.

26 Interests have taken on a new character, become more important, almost passionate. Is this about purpose? Or about compensatory mental stimulation?

27 'Ready for a change' - an interesting comment about Flo's perception of retirement. As a change rather than cessation of paid work. Interestingly she had only just decided that she'd never work again, after 8 months of retirement. Also was the change to the compensatory activities mentioned above.

30 Career is put 'very secondary' It contributed to the family, paying the bills etc. However, this is the one thing she chose for herself and was mentioned in her 'chapters of life' as being 'a nice solid little patch nursing'. Something done for self became something done for the family.

37 Here I sensed a defence in talking about old age. Looking later at Flo's journal writings, done two months before, they were full of tussles about old age and adjustment. Maybe something she'd rather leave. Flo mentions many contradictions to her expectations of decline (mental and physical), almost trying to convince herself she's still okay. How long does this last under the pressures of society/family/stereotypes?

40 Worthwhileness seems a major theme. Seems that certain things have values attached to them, e.g. helping in a crèche first seen as not as worthwhile (or perhaps fulfilling) as VSO. Seeking the feeling of a worthwhile contribution may have come from an unfulfillment of this within herself in last job. Maybe need to feel important again now retired. Helping in a crèche now an 'okay' thing to do, didn't expect she'd be interested. Worthwhileness reduced to a micro level.

42 Also interesting how worthwhileness as a mother is not recognised anymore, was valued at the time. Perhaps 'value' a better word than 'worthwhileness'. All Flo's talk about not being successful as a family person seems to be brought together in the statement about her children's independence. Does this touch on the not being important or useful to them anymore? Her daughter was married last year, the 'last to go', is it that they don't seem to need her anymore?

34 Flo gets quite heated relaying her work to me and the way she'd carried it out painstakingly and then it was not acted upon. The futility and irritation she felt is quite obvious. This is important in how she felt pre + post retirement.

PTO

P 35 Flo expected immediate decline on retirement and didn't expect she'd enjoy doing the things she's now doing ie helping at Creche's. It must have taken great courage for her to have stepped out in doing those things instead & staying at home.

P36 Flo immediately says 'no' to the Q & whether retirement causes her to think about old age - Quite a defence reaction - next info' confirms this, about medicals.

P38 Feeling physically better means doesn't 'feel' so old

P.40 41/42 Flo is crying out to be useful, to do something worthwhile, or to have done something worthwhile (like college days) although I feel she needs it now. Maybe she has a strong need to be needed.

Questions were then asked of the provisional labels written on the interview transcript, for example, "does this label relate to another label by a different name?" and "do all instances of this relate to each other?" By looking at number 1 of the labelled phenomena an example of the combining of labels that refer to the same, or similar phenomena can be seen. Some origins of this label were found on pages 1,2 and 3 of the interview data, provisionally labelled on the interview transcript in red as 'self confidence', 'increased confidence' 'change in self confidence'. Labels were therefore reduced to a word or two on the transcript (self confidence) but then expanded upon on the list of labelled phenomena to enable more certainty of what the label was about when comparisons were made with interview data from other participants. A list of 28 labels was eventually made in this way. Below is a copy of this list, together with labels identified from the diary and 'Who am I?' task to enable later explanation of the way data was combined. The relevance of the notes on the list of labelled phenomena will be discussed later.

Conceptual Labels

(PS) Past Self

(MS) Maintenance & contained Self

(Ad) Adapting Self

(AS) Adapted Self

(FS) Future Self

(AS) Adjusted Self

Physical attentiveness

Adjusting

(ASF) Self

Labelled phenomena from First Interview with Florence

PS 1 Increase in self confidence and other changes with life experience, work experience, relationship with husband and age, also sense of sameness

ASFFS 2 Expected decline in health, mentally and physically and contradictions to this

MS 3 Importance of Financial independence, constraints and loss and meaning i.e. freedom

AS 4 Freedom for self, not 'having' to do anything

Ad 5 Social relationships at work

MS 6 Compensatory activities e.g. for loss of Mental Stimulation, shifted from work to home

ASF Ad 7 Change in marriage relationship, unexpected conflict

Ad 8 'Getting the house in order' Importance of living space, home and garden

ASF Ad 9 Unstructured freedom, a conflict

BAd 10 Meaning of work: Tiredness, stifled self, a loss of freedom, done for the family not for self, gives legitimate free time i.e. Saturday 'play day', a physical and mental strain, dissatisfaction = reasons for retirement, Valued and undervalued at work

PS 11 History, situation and circumstances influencing decisions and philosophy of life: acceptance of life as it is, Scottish Calvinist upbringing

ASF 12 Worthwhileness generally. Work not worthwhile, unappreciated latterly

Ad 13 Adjustments, time, pace

ASF 14 Concern about usefulness at work latterly and in the family

MS 15 Lack of purpose when first retired compensatory activities = undiscovered interests e.g. crèche

ASF 16 Death anxiety

FS 17 Old age, expectations of

FS 18 Old age comparisons with mother, with stereotype

ASF MS 19 World outlook, changed world or changed self?

ASF 20 Physical attentiveness

ASF 21 Threatened confidence and coping (conflict when given a choice)

ASF Ad 22 Meaning of retirement: choices, initial loss, initial tiredness, sudden decision required, plans for leisure

PS 23 Personal growth through family life events, not through work

Ad 24 Responsibilities to mother

ASF MS 25 Self denial

MS 26 Priority of family role

MS 27 Self concept

ASF MS 28 Identity (in family role and in work role)

Diary themes - (Flo)

Themes - First visit

MS 1 Identity - the way others see her (p. 1)

ASF 2 Feelings about not working - Guilt - social comparisons(p. 1, 2, 11, 14, 15, 16)

ASF MS 3 Issues around OAP - social comparisons "finality" (p. 2, 3)

Ad 4 Changed roles within the family (p. 2, 4)

ASF MS 5 Age and the passage of time - social comparisons (p. 3, 4)

6 The state of the world (p. 4)

Note:- Adjustment & adaptation - different. Adapted by eg. compensatory activities but Psicol adjustment may come later. Seem to be more Psicol adjustments than physical adaptation.

Conceptual Labels - 'Who Am I?'

1. Identity, link with character (ad, ms, asf, ps) 2. Past roles (ms, ps) 3. Relationships (asf, ms, ad) 4. Family (ms, fs) 5. Moves (ms, ps).

Labelled phenomena from interview 1 was then combined with labelled phenomena from the diary and 'Who am I?' data. The following is a summary of the themes which emerged from this combined data. As can be seen from the list of labelled phenomena above, the diary themes and 'Who am I?' labels (reproduced in type because they were on the original 'Who am I?' raw data) were put with the interview labels and then provisional labels or themes were identified for all data.

Summary Of Themes

These themes were identified initially for Study 1a, Individual Perspectives (chapter 5), from the combined data of interview 1, diary and 'Who Am I' Task. On the list of labelled phenomena previously mentioned, at the top right hand corner, the 'key' to the themes can be seen.

Adapting Self

Flo misses social contact a bit from work but not so it's a problem. She misses her own money, which gave her independence and the ability to express herself in a way which she perceives as being different from her husband i.e. extravagant. The routine of work is something Flo valued and she is missing slightly. The house looking nice and being manageable is important now too. Flo's responsibilities towards her mother restrict her choices and although this is not mentioned as regrettable it is nevertheless something Flo has to work around in her plans for the future.

Adapted Self

Flo has made some adaptations such as replacement mental stimulation in conversation with her husband and in wider reading. She also reads avidly for enjoyment and stimulation. Life is at a slower pace and Flo's chores are done at this new pace, which she enjoys and values.

Adjusting Self

On retirement Flo expected to go downhill fast both mentally and physically. This amounted to a fear of health problems. This didn't happen and she feels better than before but she does have some anxieties about old age evidenced in comparisons and questions about the same. Flo is adjusting to the change in her marriage relationship, which occurred on retirement, there are both positive and negative aspects to this. Adjustments also include thoughts and feelings around usefulness and purpose and whether work as opposed to retirement provided a sense of these things. Certainly there is frustration to be dealt with in the feeling of futility around the work Flo was doing immediately before retiring. Flo however feels that she has become mellower as a person.

Adjusted Self

At first Flo experienced a loss at leaving work, which she now feels was her tiredness and lack of adjustment to unstructured freedom. She feels no sense of loss about work at this interview.

Maintenance of Self

Financial independence and mental stimulation are important to Flo but she mainly wants the priority of the family role to be hers. This has links with her identity and concept of self.

Past and Future Self

Flo has experienced increased confidence and personal growth through life changes and circumstances. She has a good sense of how history has influenced decisions and her own philosophy of life. Comparing herself to her mother is something Flo does to 'measure' her likeness to her mother as her mother gets older Flo seems to need to see what she might expect.

Data from each of the other core group participants was treated in the same way as this. A table was produced for each participant showing a summary of the themes identified for each of the interviews. These tables can be found with the individual analysis of each participant in chapter 5.

Following this individual analysis the original conceptual labels were returned to. Each identified label in each interview/narrative data was compared with the labels in all other interviews/narrative data. Questions were asked about whether any relationship between labels in all interviews was evident, or whether there were any differences. This proved very time consuming but eventually final conceptual labels were identified from the combined data of all participants.

Final conceptual labels of combined data identified from all participant interview/narrative data for interview 1

1 Continuity and/or change in Self.
2 Importance of mental stimulation
3 Freedom, self-fulfilment
4 Social relationships at work
5 Regrets and unfulfilled desires/potential (self)
6 Submerged self, denial of self, self giving, guilt, identity, life roles, work role, role link to confidence, role link to expression of self, duty in role, responsibilities, family expectations, characteristics of self as worker
7 Interest in living space
8 Retirement plans or not
9 Old age and physical appearance
10 World outlook
11 Purposefulness, worthwhileness, personal importance, respect as a person, value as a person, undermining of work experience, being appreciated, or not, meaninglessness.
12 Perception of retirement, perceived effects of retirement, isolation, mood, meaning of work, time/pace, expectations and unfulfilled expectations about

retirement, defences and coping, goals 13 Importance of history, circumstances and family

13 Relationship with husband, effect on defining retirement role and self

14 Reasons for leaving work

15 Loss, e.g. routine and structure, status

16 Independence, Personal interests/time for Self

Following the identification of these final conceptual labels each individual transcript and narrative data was returned to in order to make sure these labels were relevant to the original data. This prompted Axial Coding where classification of conceptual labels into categories began. Eventually relevant groupings emerged. The classification of concepts into categories is shown below.

Axial Coding

Categorising Data

Classification of concepts into categories began. Concepts were compared with each other and when appearing to pertain to a similar phenomena the concepts were grouped together. Following the identification of these categories from the final conceptual labels each individual transcript and narrative data was returned to in order to make sure these categories were relevant to the original data. Coloured spots or crosses were used as symbols relating to each category. Using these symbols on the raw interview data enabled verification of the relevance of the categories identified to each participant's raw interview data. The categories and the symbols that relate to them can be seen below.

Categories found in core group interview 1 data

SIGNIFICANCE - This is about worthwhileness, meaningfulness, importance, respect, value, status, purpose, and experiences of their opposites through the experience of home, work or change. (identified by blue or black spot)

SITUATION, CIRCUMSTANCE AND HISTORY - **Influencing decisions, and self expression (or self definition?)** - This relates to the relative importance given by participant's to their place in space, time, history to the people they are and the decisions they made/make. (identified by pink spot). Also linked is 'perceived importance of influence of family/friends on development', all participants attributed some influence on their life/work to be family/friend oriented. (identified by a dark green spot)

CHANGING/UNCHANGING SELF - This relates to references made by participants about how they see themselves in terms of age and ageing, and perceived changes or continuities in themselves. (identified by yellow or light green cross)

WHO AM I? - Part of this are references that locate an experience or decision directly to the perceived personality or uniqueness of the individual. This question appears to be being asked or the statement 'I am', given around various examples of talk about family life, work and retirement. Regrets and unfulfilled desires/potential submerged self, denial of self, self giving, guilt, and questions of identity arise. Roles are important here in the idea that self may expressed through a series of roles. work role in the characteristics of self as worker, role at home, duty in role and this role link to confidence, responsibilities, and family expectations, particularly the relationship with the husband and its effect on defining the retirement role and self (identified by a yellow or light green spot). Also linked is 'freedom', time for self, even discovery of self (or re-discovery). (identified by an orange cross).

CHANGES IN PERCEPTIONS OR/AND REALITIES OF WORK OVER TIME- The way work used to be and the way work was before retirement show interesting patterns in comparison and seems important in relation to the ageing self and is linked to the reasons for leaving work (identified as red spot (early work), and orange spot (later work)).

SELF IN THE WORLD- The wider world and perceptions of change identified by participants. (identified by a red circle)

ADJUSTMENT AND COPING- This category covers adjustment perceived by participants, positive e.g. time for personal interests/time for Self and negative e.g. isolation, mood change, status, and independence. Defences, coping mechanisms/strategies adopted. (identified by a purple or black cross). Also 'meaning of work', what work means to the individual affects and influences what it is there is to be adapted to, commonalties of meaning seem to emerge from the data, e.g. mental stimulation (identified by a red cross). Also linked is 'retirement', that perceived by the participants as being 'the nature of retirement'. Perceived effects of retirement, time/pace adaptations, plans, (or not), expectations and unfulfilled expectations about retirement, goals, loss, e.g. routine and structure, (identified by a dark green cross).

IMPORTANCE OF HOUSE DECORATING - (identified under freedom - orange cross) Could be an adjustment, coping response.

Selective Coding

Following Axial Coding, Selective Coding began. This involved Selectively Coding the Categories in order to identify a Core Category. The Core Category integrates all the previously identified Categories. Selective Coding began by writing on to flip charts each interview analysis (from the point of labelled phenomena up to Axial Coding). The flip charts were pasted around a room and this enabled the whole process of analysis so far to be seen clearly. Provisional labels for the Core Category were given first and these labels were compared against all the data to see if they fitted. When it was clear that the labels fitted, the accompanying descriptions of the 'properties' of these labels was made to make sure that it was clear what the labels were about. The descriptions of these properties served to "explicate the story line" (Strauss and Corbin, 1990, p.119). In other words the descriptions of the properties helped give a general descriptive overview of what the 'story' from these participants, was about. The provisionally identified Core Category and associated labels with their properties are shown below.

Provisionally Identified Core Category - Interview 1;

'Aspects of a Past Self in Circumstances of Change'

Unchanging self (inc. known self)

References are made to incidents in the data where participants locate an experience or decision directly to the perceived personality or uniqueness of the individual. Also the statement 'I am', is given around various examples of talk about family life, work and retirement.

Unfulfilled self (inc. lost self)

The question of 'who am I?' appears to be being asked around various examples of talk about family life, work and retirement. Regrets and unfulfilled desires/potential submerged self, denial of self, self giving, guilt, and questions of identity arise. There is talk relating to significance, about worthwhileness, meaningfulness, importance, respect, value, status, purpose, and experiences of their opposites through the experience of home, work or change.

Defined self (inc. roles)

Roles are important here in the idea that self may be expressed through a series of roles. Work role in the characteristics of self as worker, role at home, duty in role and this role link to confidence, responsibilities, and family expectations, particularly the relationship with the husband and its effect on defining the retirement role and self.

Discovered (or re-discovered) Self

Here 'freedom' and time for self, even discovery (or re-discovery) of self is discussed.

Community/relational Self

Here the relative importance given by participant's to their place in space, time, history and it's influence on the people they are and the decisions they made/make, will be discussed. Also linked is 'perceived importance of influence of family/friends on development', all participants attributed some influence on their life/work to be family/friend oriented.

The ageing Self

This relates to references made by participants about how they see themselves in terms of age and ageing, and perceived changes or continuities in themselves. Also the way work used to be and the way work was before retirement show interesting patterns in comparison and seems important in relation to the ageing self and is linked to the reasons for leaving work.

Subsidiary Category - 'Adapting and Adjusting Self'

This category covers adjustment perceived by participants but it easily fits under the Core variable umbrella and will be incorporated into discussion on all the aforementioned aspects of self. Adjustment and coping may be positive e.g. a time for personal interests/time for self and/or negative e.g. a time of isolation, mood change, status, and independence. The 'meaning of work', as what work means to the individual seems to affect and influence what it is there is to be adapted to, commonalties of meaning seem to emerge from the data, e.g. mental stimulation. The meaning of 'retirement', that perceived by the participants as being 'the nature of retirement' also affects methods of coping and perceptions of what potentially there is to be coped with. Linked to this are already experienced effects of retirement, time/pace adaptations, plans, (or not), expectations and unfulfilled expectations about retirement, goals, loss, e.g. routine and structure, and how these are adapted to/coped with.

The wider world and perceptions of change in it identified by participants is a small but necessarily acknowledged area of life that involves some adaptation.

Selective Coding continued

The properties were examined further and central to all the descriptions seemed to be a process of self evaluation. This was the chosen title for the final Core Category for this interview. The descriptions of the properties were then be tightened up into components which would best fit all the previous property descriptions, leaving nothing out and encompassing the subsidiary category which originally had felt like a potential 'other' Core Category. The final Core category and components are listed below.

Final Core Category Interview 1

'SELF EVALUATION'

Components of Core Category:

Known Self
Adjusting Self
Defining Self
Discovered Self
Ageing Self
Adapting Self
Community Self

These components of the Core categories form the basis of the group participant analysis, which can be found in chapter 6.

APPENDIX 23

Identification of a Process Model of the Transition of the Self in Retirement

The Core Categories and their components from each of the three interviews were then identified as a process model of the transition of the Self in retirement for the women interviewed.

Interview 1

Stages involved:

1. **Known Self**
2. **Adjusting Self**
3. **Defining Self**
4. **Discovered Self**
5. **Ageing self**
6. **Adapting Self**
7. **Community Self**

Interview 2

Stages involved:

1. **Known Self**
2. **Adjusting Self** (Including aspects of Defining Self, Discovered Self, Ageing Self, Adapting Self)
3. **Defining Self** (Including aspects of Discovered Self)
4. **Threatened Self** (Including aspects of Ageing Self)
5. **Adapting Self** (Including aspects of Community Self)

Interview 3

Stages involved:

1. **Known Self** (Including aspects of Adjusting Self and Defining Self)
2. **Threatened Self**
3. **Self in a Limited Time**