

International Reminiscence and Life Review Conference 2011

Preconference Workshops

November 17, 2011

9:00 AM - Noon (\$75 US) Registration NOW open - space is very limited

Note: Registration cost to attend two sessions is \$120 US, a savings of \$30 US.

Reminiscence and Life Review 101: Where did it come from and where is it going?

Cheryl Svensson, PhD and James Birren, PhD

The technically efficient but increasingly impersonal age we are living in has spawned an ever-greater interest in writing, reading, and sharing our life stories. Our society has become more technologically advanced and efficient, but the need for personal contact, support, and connectedness with one another has increased. Reminiscence and life review have grown in significance ever since Robert Butler removed the stigma of 'disease' and pathology from life review in the 1960's. Recently, Narrative Gerontology has evolved to further advance the importance of life story and its impact on individuals and the culture. This workshop will examine the historical underpinnings of reminiscence, life review, and autobiographical studies. Understanding where we have come from makes it easier to see where we are going. While looking at new directions in this burgeoning field, we will examine both the research and practical applications of reminiscence and life review.

Retrieval of specific memories, creative expression and life-review

Ernst Bohlmeijer, PhD

Life-review has great potential for meaning making in people who suffer from feelings of meaninglessness and mild to moderate depression. However to be effective, life-review has to be implemented in a framework that specifies how factors related to depression are targeted. Building on the inspiring work by science-practitioners such as John Kunz, Barbara Haight, Juan Serrano, Philippe Cappeliez and Lisa Watt, some new approaches are presented in this workshop. In the morning session we will first focus on Searching for meaning, a creative reminiscence group intervention that also uses exercises from problem solving therapy. This intervention may be specifically effective for older adults who find it difficult to express their experiences into prosaic language. In the second part of this workshop Dear Memories is presented. This is an individual intervention for nursing home residents and based on the manual developed by Juan Serrano. Central is the focus on retrieving specific positive memories. Both interventions may be of interest for practitioners such as nurses, social workers, psychologists and creative therapists working in different settings. Experiential exercises, skill-training exercises, short presentations, case studies and Q&A's will alternate.

1:00 PM - 4:00 PM (\$75 US) Registration NOW open - space is very limited

Narrative psychology and life-review: a great combination

Ernst Bohlmeijer, PhD

Life-review has great potential for meaning making in people who suffer from feelings of meaninglessness and mild to moderate depression. However to be effective, life-review has to be implemented in a framework that specifies how factors related to depression are targeted. This second workshop will focus on the stories we live by. This small group intervention combines life-review with elements from narrative therapy. What questions and attitude are helpful in building alternative, agentic, meaningful stories about one's life? This intervention may be of interest for practitioners such as nurses, social workers, psychologists and creative therapists working in different settings. Experiential exercises, skill-training exercises, case studies and Q&A's will alternate. Short (10-minute) informative presentations about new instruments measuring narrative foreclosure and ego-integrity, about the results of in-depth interviews with participants about social aspects of life-review will be given. The last part of the workshop will focus on the effects of (guided) self-help life-review.

Visit our website at: www.reminiscenceandlifereview.org