
APPENDIX 5.1: Example Narrative Prompt 1—The College Transition

The entry to college is a major transition for many individuals, involving changes in people's obligations, roles, and time demands. Below, we will ask you to write about your college transition experience, detailing what aspects of that transition stood out (or continue to stand out) to you.

Please reflect on how the college transition has been for you (or how the transition was if you feel as if it is more distant now).

Describe your experience in a few sentences. What are the first things that come to mind about your college transition experience? What are your thoughts and feelings about the college transition? How do you understand your college transition, reflecting on it now? Is there any lesson or bottom line you take away from your college transition experience now?

APPENDIX 5.2: Example Narrative Prompt 2—The Self-Defining Memory

I'd like you to recall a special kind of personal memory called a self-defining memory. A self-defining memory has the following attributes:

- It is at least 1 year old.
- It is a memory from your life that you remember very clearly and that still feels important to you even as you think about it.
- It is a memory about an important enduring theme, issue, or conflict from your life. It is a memory that helps explain who you are as an individual and might be the memory you would tell someone else if you wanted them to understand you in a profound way.
- It is a memory linked to other similar memories that share the same theme or concern.
- It may be a memory that is positive or negative, or both, in how it makes you feel. The only important aspect is that it leads to strong feelings.

To understand best what a self-defining memory is, imagine you have just met someone you like very much and are going for a walk together. Each of you is very committed to helping the other get to know the “real you.” You are not trying to play a role or to strike a pose. While, inevitably, we say things that present a picture of ourselves that might not be completely accurate, imagine that you are making every effort to be honest. During the conversation, you describe a memory that you feel powerfully conveys how you have come to be the person you currently are. It is precisely this memory, which you tell the other person and simultaneously repeat to yourself, that constitutes a self-defining memory.

APPENDIX 5.3: Example Narrative Prompt 3—High-Point Memory

Please describe a scene, episode, or moment in your life that stands out as an especially positive experience. This might be the high-point scene of your entire life or else an especially happy, joyous, exciting, or wonderful moment in the story.

Please describe this high-point scene in detail. What happened, when and where, who was involved, and what were you thinking and feeling? Also, please say a word or two about why you think this moment was so good and what the scene may say about who you are as a person.

APPENDIX 5.4: Possible Precursor Activity—Autobiographical Storytelling Self-Efficacy Scale

CONFIDENCE IN STORYTELLING

For many people, sharing stories about their lives is a routine experience. This goes for both the mundane events (e.g., “How was your day?”) and the larger, important events we recall (e.g., “What is an event that helps explain who you are today?”). However, there can be differences in how confident people are in being able to share life stories.

The following items ask you about your confidence in organizing, framing, and finding meaning in life stories. Please indicate how confident you are with each of the following types of storytelling. There are no right or wrong answers.

0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
<i>Cannot do at all</i>					<i>Moderately can do</i>				<i>Highly certain can do</i>	

SHARING PERSONALLY MEANINGFUL STORIES OF YOUR LIFE

1. Share a meaningful life story that includes much detail about what happened and what you were thinking and feeling. _____
2. Share a meaningful life story that has clear organization, with details going from beginning to middle to end, without needing to make side notes or getting offtrack. _____
3. Share a meaningful life story that establishes connections between what happened in that past event and who you are as an individual today. _____
4. Share a meaningful life story that showcases your personal goals, assertiveness, and control over the situation. _____
5. Share a meaningful life story that showcases goals for connecting with others, being emotionally close with others, and being supported by close others. _____
6. Share a meaningful life story that shows ways you have grown as an individual following that experience. _____
7. Share a meaningful life story that shows new insights or values because of your experience with that event. _____
8. Share a meaningful life story that could be ended with positive closure and resolution. _____
9. Share a meaningful life story with a loved one or someone close to you. _____
10. Share a meaningful life story with a stranger or acquaintance you do not know well. _____

APPENDIX 5.5: Rating Stories for Agency and Communion

Narrative researchers, and particularly researchers interested in how people express life stories as an aspect of personality—or what is called narrative identity—tend to rate life stories for broad characteristics or dimensions. These include ways of structuring life stories with organization and rich details, ways of framing stories that mention emotions and goals, and ways people make connections between their life events and who they are as individuals—they integrate reasoning and meaning.

Existing approaches for rating expressions of motivation and broad human needs in life stories is by capturing aspects of *agency*—goals for getting ahead in life—and *communion*—goals for getting along with others. These are two of the broadest fundamental needs in the human experience (McAdams et al., 1996). One approach for rating life stories for expressions of agency and communion is to use a checklist of certain themes that might be mentioned that fit with how we define these goals. Researchers have used criteria that fit with broader definitions of agency and communion to determine how people emphasize these different motives in their life stories. There are four broad categories for each type of motive and goal. A scoring approach is to rate whether each theme is absent (0) or present (1) within a story and then sum the total of agentic themes (max score of 4) and the total of communion themes (max score of 4).

Agentic themes, centered on power, control, independence, and achievement:

- *Self-mastery*—working toward personal improvement and autonomy.
- *Status*—mentions of status and position, particularly an accomplished status.
- *Achievement/responsibility*—meeting challenges and goals for oneself, being competent.
- *Empowerment*—receiving support for power and decisions from the surrounding environment.

Communal themes, centered on love, intimacy, sharing, belonging, and care:

- *Love/friendship*—recognizing positive relationship bonds and feelings toward close others.
- *Dialogue*—focus on engaging in reciprocal discussions with others, particularly (but not limited to) when sharing intimate or important details.
- *Care/help*—focus on warmth, altruism, and support toward others in need and/or receiving care from others.
- *Community*—feeling belonging to a group that is greater than oneself or one's immediate interactions (e.g., feeling community with a neighborhood or a larger social group).

Agency score = the tally of present agentic themes (0–4).

Communion score = the tally of present communal themes (0–4).