

**Classification System and Scoring Manual
for Self-defining Autobiographical Memories**

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Developing the System

Pilot study

The development of the current Self-Defining Memory Scoring System began as an attempt to locate Pillemer's (1998) types of personal event memories within the existing scoring system for the specificity of self-defining memory narratives by Singer and Moffitt (1991-1992). In the summer of 1999, four raters (one psychologist and three undergraduate students) tried to sort over 200 archival self-defining memories into categories based on the specificity (i.e., single-events, episodes, and generic memories; Singer & Moffitt, 1991-1992) an implied function (e.g., originating event, turning point, memorable message, and symbolic message; Pillemer, 1998). It turned out to be difficult for the raters to agree upon the defining characteristics of the different functional types, and the following conclusions were reached:

- (1) The specificity categories are largely independent from the implied function of the memories or the lessons contained in them. For example, both specific and generalized narratives could contain messages about learned lessons about the self.
- (2) More often than not, it was not possible to differentiate between originating events and turning points, even though a number of criteria based on the use of language by participants had been created.
- (3) Instead of trying to distinguish between messages communicated by others (memorable messages) or implied lessons (symbolic messages) it would be more practical to distinguish between memories that contain explicit lessons about the self, others, or the world and memories that do not contain such lessons.

Participants

The sample ($N = 104$) consisted of 80 women and 24 men (ages 17 - 22) from a small U.S. liberal arts college who volunteered for credit toward an undergraduate psychology course. All participants wrote down 10 self-defining memories using the Self-defining Memory Task (page 30) and completed a personality inventory as part of a larger study.

Refinement

Based on the failed attempt to validate Pillemer's (1998) personal event memory types, Singer and Blagov (2000) proposed a scoring system with two separate dimensions. The dimension of structure corresponds to the specificity and temporal organization of the narratives, and meaning is the degree to which participants derive lessons from the memories and integrate them into the self-system. This initial system was tested on undergraduate raters who were trained and scored 500 memories over a 4-month period in 2000-2001. Only fair reliabilities (Cohen's $\kappa = .4 - .5$; Cohen, 1960) were attained, and subsequent clarification and revision of the manual took place, based on these raters' suggestions and the authors' observations.

Establishing reliability

The revised manual was then tested in the summer of 2001 by recruiting a new graduate student rater, blind to hypotheses, who was trained by the authors of the scoring system. The independent rater was trained using self-defining memories from the current sample, selected to

represent both clear and difficult examples of all categories. The criteria were explained and examples from each category were presented to the trainee in initial training sessions. He was asked to rate 50 memories overnight, and differences with the other two raters were discussed, followed by rating 50 new memories. Training and reliability rating were done separately for structure and meaning. For establishing interrater reliability, all three raters scored 200 memories for structure. One of the authors of the system and the independent rater scored 245 memories for meaning. Self-defining memories that had not been used for training were selected randomly from the sample pool. Percent agreement and Cohen's κ (Cohen, 1960) were calculated (see Table 1 on p. 33). Cohen's κ ranged from 0.54 - 0.98. Highest reliability was found when scoring for two levels of structure (specific events vs. episodic & generic, $\kappa = 0.80 - 0.98$) and two levels of meaning (integrative vs. non-integrative, $\kappa = 0.70$). Out of 200 memories, 83.5 % were specific and 16.5 % were non-specific; out of 245 memories, 23.7 % were integrative (Blagov, Singer, & Vergnani, 2001). The percentages for structure were quite comparable to the original percentages of 78% specific and 22% summary, found by Singer and Moffitt (1991-92), providing some validation for the current scoring criteria.

Further Support

The entire sample of 1040 self-defining memories from the current sample was scored for structure and meaning in parallel by the two authors of the system, using its updated version. After scoring the memories from every 20 participants, interrater reliability was calculated and disagreements were discussed and settled between the two raters. Agreed-upon scorings were used in later analyses. In order to reduce biases in scoring that could ensue from the raters' recognizing the styles of different participants, the transcripts were mixed so that the each participant's memories were maximally dispersed in each pool of 200. The overall Cohen's κ were .828 for two levels of structure and .718 for meaning as shown in Table 2 (p. 33).

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Level 1: Structure and Specificity of the Memory Narrative

Specific memory narratives

A specific memory narrative has at least one single-event statement. A single-event statement is a sentence in which the attention of the rememberer is clearly focused upon a happening that meets the following criteria:

1. It is a unique occurrence;
2. It has brief duration of less than one day.

Criterion 1: Unique occurrence.

This means that the rememberer's attention is focused on something that happened on a particular day that could possibly be identified by its date and time.

Criterion 2: Brief duration.

It is clear from the narrative that the single-event statement concerns the happenings of less than one day, or, in some cases, a night and the following morning (i.e., the action of the single-event statement is encapsulated within a 24 hour period). The brevity of the happening also means that it is perceived as an uninterrupted unity.

Note on Speech in the Narrative:

The quoting or paraphrasing of speech or dialogue is always considered a single-event statement when it is clear from the narrative that the focus is on a particular instance of speaking. This should not be confused with memories in which the person remembers, without focusing his or her attention on a particular instance, hearing somebody say the same thing over and over again on different occasions.

Note on Ambiguous Language:

Sometimes the rememberer's use of language makes it difficult for the rater to decide whether a particular sentence is a single-event statement or part of non-specific narrative that does not meet the above criteria. Consider the following sentences: 1. "I remember learning how to bike." 2. "Completing a life-guard course was a significant step for me." 3. "I remember breaking up with my boyfriend." 4. "I will never forget the death of my grandmother." 5. "When my mother remarried, I was totally surprised and confused." 6. "I was happy to be elected captain of the team." In all of these statements, the rememberer might be referring to a specific event that took place in one day, to events that took course over several days or weeks, or to both. For example, sentence 1 might be equivalent to, "I remember the instance when, for the first time, I rode the bike without my sister's help: she remained behind in the street, cheering and congratulating me." It could also mean, "It took me weeks, day after day, trying to learn how to bike. My sister always came to help me, but I was never able to ride without her aid. I persevered and eventually succeeded, but learning how to bike was a difficult process for me." Similarly, sentence 2 might refer to the day when the certificate for completion of the course was awarded to the rememberer, but it could also refer to the process of taking and completing the course. Reading

the rest of the six examples carefully will reveal that memories with different kinds of temporal and narrative structure may be hidden behind the ambiguous use of language by the rememberer. In such cases, the single sentence taken out of context is not specific enough to be called a single-event statement. The rater has to consider the entire transcript of the memory in order to decide whether, for example, the rememberer is talking about the death of the grandmother in terms of a specific event on the day of the funeral or about connected happenings over the course of many days as the family mourned the loss. Looking back at the example of learning how to ride the bicycle, it is important to observe that in some cases “to learn” may only refer to an instance as opposed to a process. By convention, to learn a piece of information through a specific communication (“Learning that I was accepted to college...”) is a single-event statement. Contrary to that, mentions of birth, death, marriage, divorce, an election, etc., must not be taken for single-event statements unless Criterion 2 is met, as these labels could designate unique but lengthy periods of time. In summary, the above discussion concerns kinds of statements that could be parts of single-event statements in certain contexts but aren’t necessarily. Identifying single-event statements is important to the classification of specific memory narratives, whereas narratives that lack such statements are either episodic or generic and will be discussed later.

Discussion of Specific Memories:

Specific memories have at least one single-event statement as described above. Usually, specific memories are made up of several related single-event statements that retell an uninterrupted sequence of perceptions and actions that is unique in time and brief. The time and place are often specified. Often, much detail is provided, making it possible to imagine the setting and the actors of that particular incident. Participants are identified by names or other labels and described through their dialogue, emotional responses, actions, appearance, physical location, and other attributes. The specificity of detail varies from purely descriptive to reflective memories in which the rememberer “steps out” of the narrative to provide contextual information and to make inferences about the significance of the event or the memory itself. Broader contextual information can present the event as embedded in a more general narrative beyond the time and location of the particular incident.

Types of specific narratives:

Type 1 specific narrative (The pure specific memory):

The memory narrative is composed entirely of related single-event statements pertaining to the happenings of one day, or, in some cases, two consecutive days (e.g., a night and the following morning). The rememberer’s attention does not diverge from the incident, and there is no general narrative outside of its timeframe.

Note:

We identified empirically two kinds of statements in specific memory narratives that could arguably be taken as divergences of the rememberer’s attention from the specific instance of the Type 1 specific memory. These two kinds of statements are described below, and the point is made that the presence of one or the other should not disqualify a memory narrative that is

otherwise clearly Type 1 from being classified as such. The first reason is coding reliability, which we found to be higher after adding this condition. The second reason is a sort of verbal convention or linguistic necessity that leads to the insertion of these statements in the narratives of otherwise purely specific memories. The first kind of statement is a simple “time-tag” that indicates approximately when the event took place and validates Criteria 1 or 2 for single-event statements. A “time-tag” is a phrase such as “Some time in eighth grade” which makes a mention of a period (eighth grade) that is not brief and stands outside the specific narrative that follows. This phrase is clearly important only as an assertion that the event happened at a particular time, but it is not an account of any events itself. In other words, it does not significantly reduce the specificity of the narrative. The second kind of statement that usually appears in the beginning or at the end of a specific memory narrative (but might be encountered in the middle) is a statement such as: “This was the first time I rode a bicycle,” or “I remember my last soccer game in high school,” or “I had never done anything like this before.” In both cases, there is an implied link to other events that are outside the rest of the narrative, which satisfies the Type 1 specific memory conditions. The rater of the memory realizes, that the rememberer probably can recall other cases of riding the bicycle or playing soccer in high school. As long as this arguable distraction from the immediate event is limited to a short phrase such as the above, we assume that the importance of this phrase is to better characterize the specific event and that it does not imply that the rememberer actually is thinking of other events besides the Type 1 specific memory.

Type 2 specific narratives (The specific memory with generalization):

There is one single-event statement or several related single-event statements that pertain to the same incident on one particular day. In addition, a general narrative about other events and the autobiographical context of the memory is provided, but it does not involve single-event statements. Clearly, there is a unique point in time upon which the person’s attention focuses in the single-event portion of the memory. An important indicator is the presence of any of the following (a) a statement about the uniqueness of the time; (b) an expression of strong emotion; (c) a declaration of the importance of the single-event portion of the memory; (d) imagistic detail; (e) speech or dialogue.

Type 3 specific narratives (The specific memory with multiple single events):

Both Type 1 and Type 2 specific memories have single-event statements that refer to the happenings of a single 24-hour period. Type 3 specific memories have a different format. A Type 3 memory could be thought of as composed of (a) two or more memories of either Type 1, Type 2 or both, or (b) of at least two specific memories of Type 1 or 2 and one episodic or generic memory. It is organized around a sequential story that extends beyond a single 24-hour period, and there is more than one “cluster” of single-event statements. There is at least one such statement regarding one single event, and at least one more such statement about another single event that does not fall in the same 24 hour period. The series of single events may be assembled into an overall story with an identifiable theme (e.g., “my team’s underdog victory at a tournament” or “my first days of college”). Because the timeframe of the memory is more than a day and because the memory relates a sequence of related single occurrences, it resembles an

episodic memory, a kind of memories that is discussed next. What differentiates this specific memory from an episodic memory are the single-event statements, which contain details that locate these events in unique moments of time. The single events in the narrative contain any of the following – quoted dialogue, precise details of actions, mention of specific moments in time by hour or date. Further, at least some, if not all, of the single events mentioned in the story sequence are unique occurrences; they are not blended or depicted as repeated in the course of the narrative.

Final Note on the Specificity of Detail:

The specific memory narrative has at least one statement in which the attention of the rememberer is clearly focused upon happenings from a particular day and time. If there is only one such statement and it does not provide any statement of time, emotion, importance, detail, or dialogue about the specific instance, then the memory is not specific. Specific memory narratives must have single-event statements that allow the reader to locate the event in a unique and clear moment of the past. If a one-day single event is mentioned only in passing and the remainder of the narrative takes as its focus extended events that range over days, weeks, or months, the memory cannot be classified as specific.

Non-specific (generalized) narratives (Episodic and Generic):

Episodic narratives:

These memory narratives lack any single-event statements of the kind that was described previously. If they do mention something happening on a particular day, then it is only as a part of a developing narrative beyond itself, and it is also deprived of imagistic detail, speech, or a statement about strong emotion, importance, or a singling-out statement about the time. The narrative as a whole may have such statements, but they would pertain to a general event with a length of over a day or with unclear duration. The event may be a unity (such as a vacation trip) or it may be composed of several related general events that develop into a story line. Overall, the episodic memory narrative is a generalized narrative of sequential events that fit into a single lengthy timeframe. Narrative of perceptions and actions is generalized, and it merges with the narrative of the context. The span is more than a day, often much longer, for example: junior year in high school, last summer's vacation, a period of unemployment.

Note on Ambiguous Language:

In the discussion of Type 1 memories, it was necessary to discuss some kinds of statements that might appear non-specific but do not disqualify the memories as Type 1. The first kind of such statements, the "time-tag," can be expected to appear in episodic memories to serve the same function as in Type 1 memories. The second kind of statements, the "first time, last time, never before" phrases, can also appear in episodic memories without giving them specific quality. These phrases obviously do not make single-event statements in themselves, as they can refer to long periods of time, but they could be parts of single-event statements in specific memories. In the preliminary discussion of specific memories, six examples of phrases were given, that could refer to either specific events or episodic narratives, depending on the context. It is important to be continually aware of these potential ambiguities. It was said that, for the most part, those statements would be considered non-specific narrative, unless there is additional "proof" that the attention of the rememberer is fixed upon a unique and brief occurrence. Therefore, these statements may occur in episodic memories only if not accompanied by such "proof" (statement of time, emotion, importance, detail, or dialogue about the specific and unique occurrence). In addition, there is a group of very important statements that have been observed to occur in episodic narratives that could cause some confusion. These are statements such as: "By the time I was hospitalized, my condition had gone worse," and "We continued to prepare until the very last day." The point is that, when part of an overall episodic narrative, these phrases are part of it, and do not qualify as single-event statements. They could do so, only if the rememberer went on to tell more about the specific instance of hospitalization or about the specific and unique events on the last day. As long as these moments are mentioned in passing and without additional detail, they remain non-specific in the context of the timeframe of the episodic narrative.

Generic narratives:

The memory is composed of equivalent events that kept occurring over time intervals that are not themselves part of the memory. These separating intervals of time may be of equal duration, especially when they depend on natural cycles. The remembered events themselves blend or fuse together, and they contain the same characters, settings, happenings, and emotions. The narrative may contain an event that stands out as a good example of what all other events in the blend were like, yet the focus remains on the abstraction of repeated experience.

Note:

The generic blend of events that comprises the generic memory narrative may consist of events that would otherwise meet the criteria for either specific or episodic events. For example, the memory could be one of “all summer vacations throughout high school” or “every time I saw the movie ‘101 Dalmatians.’” A narrative is classified as generic only when it consists entirely of the generic narrative. One exception is when a specific vacation or one particular time of seeing the movie may be mentioned by the rememberer as an example of how all the other similar events happened. A complex memory narrative may contain a generic portion but also a portion in which some specific or episodic event is told that is not in itself part of the generic blend of events. In this case, the memory is classified according to this other portion’s characteristics as Type 2 or Type 3 specific or episodic. Memory narratives are classified as generic only if they are “pure” and consist entirely of a generic narrative and possibly an exemplary event that serves to convey that narrative.

Level 2: Memory Integration

This coding system divides memory narratives into two categories of integrative and non-integrative memories. Integrative memories contain statements that ascribe meaning to the memory described. This meaning is usually expressed in statements about what the memory has taught the individual (e.g., “the lesson learned” or “from that point on I realized...”); these insights may be expressed about life in general or specifically about the individual’s own life and sense of identity.

Non-integrative memories may be filled with emotion and may contain generalizations about the individual’s personality, the impact of the memory, or the activities of the individual, but these generalizations do not explain what the memory means to the individual or how the memory has conveyed meaning in the individual’s life. In other words, a memory that contains the generalization, “I was a shy child,” is not an integrative memory unless the individual were to add a statement about how this memory caused this shyness to develop or revealed this attribute to the individual in a new light. Memories that contain no generalizations about the individual or events, and simply have a time-stamp (e.g., “It was my junior year in high school” or “I was eight years old when this event took place”) are clearly non-integrative memories.

Within both the Integrative and Non-Integrative categories, we include subtypes that will help to locate memories within each category. These subtypes are meant as aids and do not need to be scored in their own right. When scoring, one should always score toward the highest level of integration. For example, a memory may contain a time-stamp and a generalization, but if it also contains a meaning statement, it should be coded as integrative.

Non-Integrative Memories

Two Subtypes

1. Pure Narrative of Events, with or without Time-Stamp
2. Categorization by Emotion, Impact or Attribute (Including Personality Attribute)

Non-integrative narratives of Type 1 (Pure Events. Time Stamps):

The narrative describes the events within the timeframe of the specific event, episode, or blended series of events. There is no discussion of any broader context, category of experience, or importance of the events in the memory. If the emotions, thoughts, or attributes of the participants in the memory are discussed, these statements are located in the timeframe of the memory. For example, “When I fell from the tree, I was so scared that I had broken my leg. I thought what would happen if I could never walk or run again.”

Time Stamp - The only statement(s) apart from the description of the events may be a phrase or two that indicates when they happened in the person’s life, without giving additional information about the individual’s life or a meaning drawn from these events.

Non-integrative narratives of Type 2 (Categorization by Emotion, Impact, Context or Attribute):

The narrative goes beyond the location of the memory in a particular time period to include information about the category of emotion, impact, context, or attribute of the remembered experience. These statements identify the memory as being an exemplar of a type of emotion (“This is one of my happiest memories”), type of impact (“This is one of my most important memories”), type of context (“I was part of the debate team my junior year of high school”) or type of attribute (“I was always an angry child”). Beyond locating the memory in this particular memory bin, the narrative makes no interpretative statement about the larger significance or meaning of the memory in general or in the person’s life. That is, the narrative does not include any statements about what the individual has learned from the experience described, nor does the individual specify in what particular ways the experience has influenced his or her life.

Individuals may also make generalizations about time in the memory, such as, “This was my first experience with death” or “I recall my first day of school.” Though these generalizations or categorizations of the events are not simple time stamps, they are also not integrative unless they contain additional meaning statements that express a meaning or lesson learned from these “First” events. Without such statements, these “First” memories should still be scored as Non-Integrative.

Integrative Memories

Integrative memories step back from narrative events and generalizations described in the memory to make an additional statement about the specific significance or meaning of the memory to the individual. A meaningful statement must extend beyond simple pronouncements that the memory is “important” or “the most painful” or “one that I will never forget,” but also include an indication of why the memory holds this quality of importance, emotion or vividness for the individual. There are two subtypes of integrative memories.

The first, “Meaning Not Tied to the Self” encompasses memories that include statements about “lessons learned” or new understandings, but these memories do not link these lessons specifically to the self or the individual’s own growth or change. These lessons may be statements about life in general or lessons learned about a particular person, group or institution.

The second, “Meaning Tied to the Self,” encompasses memories that include statements about lessons or understandings that are explicitly connected to the individual self and sense of identity.

Two Subtypes

1. Meaning Not Tied to Self
2. Meaning Tied to the Self

Integrative narratives of Type 1 (Meaning Not Tied to Self):

A narrative at this level has at least one statement that contains an insight or lesson about life in general or some important person from the rememberer’s life. Statements such as “I believe” or “I think” are permissible at this level, as long as the belief or thought (insight or lesson) does not immediately discuss one’s own personality, life, or relationship. Instead, it concerns life in more abstract terms or the personality of an important other.

In offering the meaning found in the memory, the individual may describe how the events serve to reinforce the particular lesson or message stated. On the other hand, the individual may present events that help to explain the termination, reversal or reduction of the individual’s belief in a particular viewpoint or perspective.

In every case, the narrative contains (a) explicit meaning phrases (“It was a turning point,” “I came to realize,” “I learned that...” etc.), (b) explicit or implied connections between the message and the memory. That is, it is clear that the individual is expressing a link between the events in the memory and the meaning statement that is expressed.

Integrative narratives of Type 2 (Meaning Tied to the Self):

The critical characteristic of this subtype is that the memory narrative includes a statement that ties the events of the memory to an important theme or lesson learned about the self. It is not enough that the narrative includes statements about characteristics of the self (e.g., “I am funny,” or “I get sad at sunsets”). The memory narrative must include a statement about what this attribute means to the individual or how the memory exemplifies a change in this attribute. For

example, “Ever since I broke up with my girlfriend, I get sad at sunsets. We were watching one when she told me it was over. Now when I think of a sunset, I realize that I can’t always be sure of another person.”

Relationship Meaning

The memory narrative may also include a statement about the importance and significance of a relationship in the individual’s life. This statement would again need to expand beyond a mere statement of the importance of the relationship (e.g., “She was my first love” or “She is my favorite aunt”), but also explain the meaning or ongoing significance of the relationship in the person’s life (e.g., “I always turn to her when I am down,” or “She continues to serve as a role model to me years later”).

Functional Meaning

One other Self-Meaning statement is the individual’s indication that the memory is used in a functional way. For example, “When I am sad, I think of this memory to cheer me up,” or “I always recall this memory when I want to remind myself why I keep fighting for social change,” or “This memory is a symbol of the relationship my best friend and I have. We share it with each other whenever either of us feels low or isolated.”

Examples by Major Category

(Specific. Episodic. Generic. Non-integrative. Integrative.)

Specific:

It was one of those hot and incredibly heavy summer days when you can hardly breathe, and every movement is a pain. Then it suddenly became dark; the air was moist. The whole city came back to life. I remember putting on my swimming suit and a light dress and going outside. I had no shoes on, I was running in the rain, dancing madly in the streets with hundreds of other people who went out to experience this salvation from the heat. I called my boyfriend, and we ran together to the beach and then swam with our clothes on, and there was water everywhere - above and beneath. I felt a moment of unification with Nature.

I remember a night when I canoed out to the middle of a lake at summer camp where I worked with a couple of friends, and we were is such awe of the beauty of the night sky in the middle of the woods on a lake that we sat in our canoes for at least twenty minutes of voluntary silence. This was a very powerful moment.

I remember Halloween Junior year in high school. A group of friends and I went to a graveyard behind my friend's apartment complex. It wasn't a scary night, but it was a terrible one. My friends and I were in a huge fight and all I remember is walking behind my group of friends into the graveyard, and one of the girls gave me a look that set me off. I spent most of the night with my two best friends, crying with them. I felt lonely and betrayed, like I had just lost a whole group of friends. I had to go to therapy soon afterwards, in December.

I remember this camp I would go to in the summer. It was my fourth year there, and I was seeing al of my old friends again. I remember the activities and the events. I remember the dinners, the crushes, and the late night talks. Most of all, I remember hearing the Earl Brooks song "Unanswered Prayers" as a response to a questions someone had in Bible Study class. It was some of the best memories from that camp that some of my fondest summer memories come from; the friendships, the weather, the people, and the experiences.

My sister and I were picking corn, not too far from our house. The way we did it was unusual. We'd twist it and pull. Then we would clean the leaves off the corn cob and put it in our bags. As we were doing it, I suddenly heard by sister scream. I glanced at her and noticed her palm covered with blood. Apparently as she was pulling corn cobs, one of the leaves sliced the area between her thumb and the index finger. Blood was pouring from the wound. I dropped my bag, and with one swing of an arm picked up my little sister and rushed home.

Episodic:

When I was a sophomore in high school, I was in a French class that was notoriously difficult. We had a huge test in the class on the French Revolution, and I completely thought I was going to fail it. I studied so hard, and I aced it. I got 100%.

I remember the relationship I had with my dog, Jack. My parents bought Jack when I was in the seventh grade. He was an adorable black fuzzi-ball who was very easy to love. The two of us quickly bonded and became nearly inseparable. He helped me get through my awkward “coming of age” years. It was very hard for me when he died of cancer last summer. I still miss him even though it has been almost a year since he died. I will always cherish the good times we had together.

One of my favorite memories is second semester high school senior year. I worked relatively extremely hard to finish off my career, a boost I should have begun two years earlier. Classes were a breeze, I was getting straight As, I had so much free time, and once the warm weather came, I bonded with other classmates in a loose/social way, and had the best time with my boys just fucking around, getting cocked, twisting rules, owning our situation. I miss it.

I remember going to Turkey with my best friend and her family the summer after my junior year in high school. I remember going to a beach resort on the Mediterranean sea and lying in the sun. I didn't have any schoolwork to worry about, and my real life was 11 hours away by plane. The phone service wasn't very reliable, and I didn't have a computer, so there were absolutely no interruptions from home. It was so wonderful to just be relaxed for a month. I haven't experienced anything like it before or since, but at least I know it's possible.

I'll never forget the wonderful time I had in Florida with my family and friends. We made friendships while we were down there that would last a lifetime. The memories of the things we did together and the time spent will never be forgotten. It's a time I'll always remember, right before I left home for the first time. It was our last family vacation probably for a long time.

When I was in second grade, my mom had to go to the hospital for two months, because she had my brother, Adam, prematurely. While my mom was in the hospital, I had to help my dad by helping clean, cook, do laundry, and take care of my brother, Josh. Although I was just helping my dad, it was still a lot of responsibility to take care and help with the house.

Freshman year of high school I wanted to play basketball for the team. However, the team was almost full and I didn't feel like they were going to take many players. There were also many people trying out. I have always been a person that never gives up and is always confident, so I practiced and tried out for the team. I was one of the few players that made the team.

Generic:

When I was three or four I had to go to an all-day kindergarten. I was always afraid that my grandfather would never show up to pick me up and that I would be abandoned there all alone. I was a very shy child, so I didn't have any friends there, and I used to spend the whole seven or eight hours just clinging to the green bars of the kindergarten's fence waiting for my grandfather to show up. I used to cry all the time.

I remember, when I was little, going to pick pumpkins with my mother. Every Halloween, we would drive a long way to go to a friend's farm where they grew pumpkins. I loved searching around with her to try and find the perfect pumpkin. It never really mattered how good they were the next day, but it was the fun we had searching for them that I appreciate.

When I was little, I thought I was a princess. When my grandmother used to come and visit, we used to play "Cinderella," and she was the prince and I was Cinderella, and we danced around my basement for hours pretending we were at the ball.

Non-integrative:

I recall playing with my friend outside our building. It was a sunny spring day, and we were wearing bright colors, the air was filled with joy and freedom (at least that is how I always remember it). We were four years old.

I got home from the beach one day and I went into my outdoor shower, which is kind of in the woods. A huge black and orange snake was hanging from the showerhead. I screamed and ran out naked and never took a shower out there again.

Playing with my cousin in my grandfather's study. Then going with my grandma and cousin for a walk in a park. It was wonderful, because the air became cooler and the smell of trees had a very soothing effect. Then we would stand by the water fountain and watch people pass by. We always ended our walks by sitting down for an ice cream at the open cafe in the same park. I still remember the taste of that ice cream. Then we would go back home and play cards or read.

I remember calling my mom to find out my SAT II scores. I had taken Math and Writing several times and not done as well as I had hoped, so I went to a tutor for both once a week for a month. I called my mom from school to see how I had done, and she told me my scores and I was so excited and so relieved that they finally had improved and I wouldn't have to take them again.

In the school play my senior year in high school, I was given a very large and demanding role. On the very last performance of the show, we were dancing in the big finale (I was in the very front and center) when suddenly my knee gave out and I fell on my ass in front of 700 people. I yelled "Whatever!" and got up very quickly and kept dancing.

I remember the first time my boyfriend (now my best friend) told me that he loved me. We were arriving home from a snowboarding trip. We had always asked each other at the beginning of our relationship where we stood in each other's minds, but hadn't done that for awhile. Suddenly, he asked where he stood with me. I remember giving him a funny look. He then continued, "Because I have fallen in love with you." The tears wheeled up in my eyes as he took my hand and kissed it. Things have never been the same.

Integrative:

When I was seventeen, my best friend attempted suicide. She barely made it through, and I went to visit her in the psychiatric hospital every day, even though we hadn't even been talking on a daily basis for over a year. I was the only one who went to visit, and it made us stronger friends today. This influenced the way I am today, because I am now more eager to help and be there for people. During that time, I experienced how good it felt to step in and be a true friend. It was lifted my spirits and made me a much better person.

When I was a sophomore in high school, I was confirmed. This event marked the culmination of my elementary Jewish studies and it helped my Jewish identity. Going through the rigorous classes and training of that year provided me with a newfound respect for my Jewish identity and an interest in the history of my people. My family was very proud of me too, which added to my increasing feeling that I was "a Jew." Today, the Jewish identity I acquired from my confirmation still exists.

When my father died, my sister sold some antiques of his that she had been holding for me without even telling me. These were of sentimental value to me, and it hurt me badly. This influenced the way I am today, because I am now more cautious of people and in judging whom I can trust, especially my sister.

When I was eight my family went on vacation to Cape Cod. My brother was three at the time and obviously could not swim. We were walking along a dock, and he tripped and fell in the water. My mother dove in after him but lost her glasses and couldn't see him. I stood there frozen. Thankfully, a nearby fisherman came to the rescue and grabbed my brother out of the water. This is when I learned how precious life is and how important strangers can be.

I remember when my friend Brian left to the Navy. He is older, so he was the first one to leave, and he became my first long distance friend. I realized what an effort it takes and how much someone can really mean to you. He could have faded away, but we have kept in touch. It made me realize how important the past can be, and how precious memories like these can be. It was good practice for my going away to school.

Cross-category Examples

Specific Non-integrative:

- When I got into college. I was at a friend's house and called home to check in. My dad told me that there was a letter from Conn. I asked him to open it, and he told me that I got in. He cried because he was so proud of me, and I almost did too. I felt very proud of myself.

Specific, Type 1. Non-integrative. Time-stamp. Positive.

- In April of my junior year in high school, I had my driver's test. When I passed, I was so excited. I dropped off my mother and picked up a bunch of my friends. It was a warm, sunny day, and I felt older and free.

Specific, Type 1. Non-integrative. Time-stamp. Positive.

- This was on St. Valentine's Day. I went out with my best friend because we wanted to celebrate the wine holiday in Bulgaria. We went to a nice bar, had some wine, and then, suddenly, he told me that he was in love with me. I was shocked and had no idea how to react, because I considered him to be like a brother to me, so I just took SAT flashcards out of my purse and started flipping them over. That was a big mistake. He was very offended, of course. I just didn't know what to do with myself.

Specific, Type 1. Non-integrative. Time-stamp. Negative.

- I remember being about eight years old. I went to a friend's house after school. I remember being so jealous of her things, because her parents had a lot of money and she had a canopy bed and all these toys. What I wanted the most were the crystal animals. These animals were in a glass case, and they rotated around. When she went out of the room, I took three of them and brought them home. A few hours later, I felt so guilty of taking them, that I flushed them down our toilet. I remember feeling really guilty but also really glad that I had taken them from her.

Specific, Type 1. Non-integrative. Time-stamp. Negative.

- It was one of those hot and incredibly heavy summer days when you can hardly breathe, and every movement is a pain. Then it suddenly became dark; the air was moist. The whole city came back to life. I remember putting on my swimming suit and a light dress and going outside. I had no shoes on, I was running in the rain, dancing madly in the streets with hundreds of other people who went out to experience this salvation from the heat. I called my boyfriend, and we ran together to the beach and then swam with our clothes on, and there was water everywhere - above and beneath. I felt a moment of unification with Nature.

Specific, Type 1. Non-integrative. Categorization. Positive.

- The first day of orientation at my new high school, I was feeling really nervous, and I didn't know anyone. After an assembly, I was walking up the hallway to the next activity and I noticed another girl walking next to me. We started talking and decided to skip the next event together. She was the first friend I made there.

Specific, Type 1. Non-integrative. Categorization. Positive.

- I remember one of the few times that my father went to watch one of my high school tennis matches. He was so critical of my playing. He would swear and shake his head when I missed a shot. It made me feel terrible. I wondered why he had even bothered to come if it was upsetting him so much. I really wanted him to leave. I felt as if I had disappointed him so much that I was embarrassed. I felt like I was letting him down, letting myself down, letting my team and coach down every time I made a mistake.

Specific, Type 1. Non-integrative. Categorization. Negative.

- In eleventh grade, I was giving an oral presentation in my Spanish class, and I had somewhat of a panic attack. I've never been good at public speaking, and doing it in another language only made things worse. My throat clenched up and my heart was beating very fast. I managed to pull through but I knew everyone in the class knew how insecure I felt in front of them.

Specific, Type 1. Non-integrative. Categorization. Negative.

- In my ninth grade math class, I had a teacher who was a big fan of ping-pong. At the end of the semester, it looked like I was going to get a B. So when it was time to give out grades, I jokingly proposed a bet to my teacher to play against each other; if I win he gives me an "A," but if I lose, a "C." To my surprise, he agreed with no hesitation. And so that day, after school, we opened the gym and played best out of three. I lost the first one but won the second one. And so the third one was decisive. It was incredibly intense, but I pulled off a victory by two points and... got an "A" in that class.

Specific, Type 2. Non-integrative. Time-stamp. Positive.

- I remember going backpacking on a school trip. It was a lot of fun but also hard work; we fudged through the sand in an area of South Utah called "The Maze," and everyone was so hot and worn out that we thought we were going to die. I remember really clearly the last day of the trip when we all ran up this little mountain area to the head of the trail - we felt like we had conquered "The Maze."

Specific, Type 2. Non-integrative. Time-stamp. Positive.

- I remember going to my senior prom with my boyfriend of a year and a half, who was in college and the time. He didn't bring me a corsage, we didn't go out to dinner, and I had a terrible time with him at the dance itself. I think I realized that night that I didn't love him anymore, or maybe that I had never really loved him at all. I ended up staying with him for a few more months, tough, because I was in denial - I didn't want to have to deal with breaking up and hurting him, and everything else, but the whole time we were together after that, I really felt resentful toward him.

Specific, Type 2. Non-integrative. Time-stamp. Negative.

- When I was sixteen, my younger sister and I were out bike-riding in my street. I took both of my hands off the handle-bars to wave to someone, and my younger sister (who was four) tried to

do the same. Well, she biked straight into our neighbors' mailbox with her face and needed stitches in her lip. To this day, she won't admit she was trying to copy me.

Specific, Type 2. Non-integrative. Time-stamp. Negative.

- The first time I kissed a girl, I mean really kissed a girl, was my 8th grade summer. I was 14 and growing up. I had met this girl I liked at a friend's and invited her to my house to hang out. Sitting on the downstairs couch we kissed. It was my first time ever really kissing a girl. It was a great feeling, and since then I have always wanted to.

Specific, Type 2. Non-integrative. Categorization. Positive.

- This memory is very simple. After I had broken up with the boy that I was with for two years, I became very depressed. It took me six months to actually function normally. But, I had had such a hard time with it, that in the spring I remember driving around in my car and in a split second realizing that I was happy again. That was one of the best feelings I've ever had.

Specific, Type 2. Non-integrative. Categorization. Positive.

- After my parents got divorced, I lived with my dad. He did not take the divorce well, and I am the oldest child. So one night in the living room of my dad's house, I found him crying. I had seen my dad cry before that, but when I came in the room he didn't stop. He started talking to me about my mom and the divorce. He literally cried on my shoulder.

Specific, Type 2. Non-integrative. Categorization. Negative.

- I went bowling when I was about 10 for my birthday party with a group of kids from school. I still remember this story because it was one of the most embarrassing events in my life. I started bowling and somehow the ball slipped out of my hand and it landed on the man's foot in the next lane and he had to go to the hospital because his toe was fractured. My friends were not able to let me forget forever, and I still see his hurt, pained face (and mad) whenever I think about it.

Specific, Type 2. Non-integrative. Categorization. Negative.

- Getting my dog. It was a beautiful spring day and that morning there was a knock on our door. It was my neighbors Allee and Jessee with a golden retriever puppy in their arms. At first I thought it was a stuffed animal, but then it moved. It was so cute! They had got her that morning. Of course, my sister and I were very jealous and went off to my mom and dad about how much we wanted a puppy too. My parents were looking into getting a dog, and my mom said she would never live it down with that puppy growing up next door if she didn't get one. So we went to the breeder (the same one) where there were seven puppies running around. We got to choose the one we wanted, which was hard because they all were so cute.

Specific, Type 3. Non-integrative. Time-stamp. Positive.

- My sophomore year in high school, my class went to Six Flags Great Adventure Theme Park. On the bus ride home, I was sitting with some friends, who were considered the cool people. They decided that it would be funny to throw these little wax balls at some people who were considered the uncool group. Well of course the people who were getting the balls thrown at

them were quite upset and after the trip told the dean of students. So everyone who was at that section of the bus was asked to come to a meeting with the dean. I was asked after that meeting to meet with the dean personally. When I did, he told me that he knew that I didn't throw anything but that the reason I was in trouble was because I didn't stop it from happening, and the kinds who were picked on had through of me as their friend.

Specific, Type 3. Non-integrative. Time-stamp. Negative.

- We had a bird that was very well trained. We left its cage open all the time, and it would fly around the house at will. It would sit on your shoulder and eat your food. But one day it was on my shoulder as I walked out of the house, and it flew away. I put up lost bird posters in the neighborhood as an attempt to get the bird back. Because it was so well trained, eventually it actually flew down to eat the sandwich of a man who was sitting outside. When he called us, we ran over and got our bird back.

Specific, Type 3. Non-integrative. Time-stamp. Negative.

- I recall being a freshman in high school. The baseball season was just beginning, and we were practicing outside for the second time. I vividly remember an accident occurring that I will always remember. While chasing after a fly ball, I collided with a teammate. The result was a terribly injured knee. I would be unable to participate for the rest of the season. It was quite a disappointment, as I was quite optimistic about the upcoming season. Anyway, I rehabilitated, actually making it back to play in the last game. Yes, I did terrible, and usually I would have been very upset at that, but on this occasion, I was proud of myself.

Specific, Type 3. Non-integrative. Categorization. Positive.

- I remember right after I moved to Illinois, I was so scared of going to school. I knew one girl who was on vacation. She said there was another girl who also knew me from when I lived there before. I didn't remember her but she was supposed to call me. I was so nervous when the phone rang. I was sitting on the edge of the bed. She made me feel so welcome. She met me outside school and stayed with me the whole way through. I just remember sitting there thinking, "This isn't going to be that bad, after all." I like good outcomes.

Specific, Type 3. Non-integrative. Categorization. Positive.

- At the end of tenth grade, I finally got enough nerve to call this girl who I really liked. I was extremely awkward in the conversation and, shortly, she said she had to go to a party or something. I called again about a week later, and, again, after like a minute she said she had to go. I left her my number, but she never called me back. It hurt me a lot. I've never called a girl since then.

Specific, Type 3. Non-integrative. Categorization. Negative.

- In seventh grade, I wanted to make the softball team worse than anything. So every day, after school, for about four months I practiced with my dad. I became really good. On the day of the tryouts, I made a great effort, and I did pretty well. I actually thought I made the team. When the

list went up with the names for the first round, I wasn't up there. I was cut just like that. I've hated sports teams since then.

Specific, Type 3. Non-integrative. Categorization. Negative.

Specific Integrative:

- I remember my first day of school after I moved from NJ to MA in fourth grade. We moved midyear, so the whole class already knew each other. When I walked into the room, I was nervous, but I was greeted well. I immediately noticed that there were some big differences between my old school and this one. Tight pants with matching skirts or skirt outfits were the style in NJ, and those were the clothes I had. I walked to a room of jeans and cotton jerseys. I remember going home that day and informing my mom that we had to go clothes shopping - NOW! That was my first experience with peer differences and fitting in, which is an important lesson in life, and applicable when coming to college. It's important to stay true to yourself, but it may be necessary to make some changes.

Specific, Type 2. Integrative. General lesson. Positive.

- The summer before I entered freshman year of high school, I attended a Van Helen concert. It was not just your average concert, though. Eddie Van Helen was my rock idol and a chance to see him live was incredible. He put on a mesmerizing performance, and I remember coming home and trying to learn every Van Helen song I possibly could on guitar. Seeing your idol in person inspires you to work harder towards accomplishing your dreams.

Specific, Type 2. Integrative. General lesson. Positive.

- I remember when one of my close friend's sister died in a car accident. That day my friends and I just sat around in silence and all of a sudden my friend Molly stood up and hugged everyone, saying how much she loved them. We all did the same, and I went home and did this to my family too. It makes you realize how precious life is and how important and "I love you" can be.

Specific, Type 2. Integrative. General lesson. Negative.

- I had been trying to gain the friendship of someone I thought I liked at the time. We had been talking for over a month, and my feelings were becoming increasingly ambivalent, as his crankiness was beginning to get on my nerves. One Sunday afternoon, I saw him online and asked, "Did you go to church with your family this morning," as I knew the family went regularly but he sometimes missed church. He wrote, "Whether I went to church or not is my own business." This was an eye opening experience, because on that day I came up with a simple truth I've been relying on since then. Don't waste a minute of your time on people who don't treat you well.

Specific, Type 2. Integrative. General lesson. Negative.

- About two years ago, I was at my friend's house with about five other friends. The kid's parents were gone for the weekend. My very good friend had taken a mind altering substance and started to become extremely paranoid. He was ranting about his parents tricking him and how they would come home any second. I spent at least two hours talking to my friend trying to calm him down and talk some sense into him. It was extremely frustrating and taxing on me. Afterward, I realized that I feel most comfortable when I am helping people. I almost help myself by helping others.

Specific, Type 2. Integrative. Self-reference. Positive.

- In sixth grade, I went on my first field trip to an aquarium. The tanks looked huge to me, especially compared to the little fish tank that I had in my house. I was also amazed by the size of the fish. I had never really known that fish could get that big. I learned a lot about all of the different fish that day and it is one of the reasons why I became so interested in fish and want to become a marine biologist.

Specific, Type 2. Integrative. Self-reference. Positive.

- My mother died of cancer when I was ten. As a result of the death, I was forced to grow up and mature much quicker and earlier than most children. I was doing laundry, dishes, cleaning, and cooking all by age ten. My mother was my best friend at the time and, since she didn't work, she was my constant companion. I knew she was sick for one-and-a-half years, but I was in complete denial about it until she got really sick. I remember everything about that day. My sister had taken me to BurgerKing, and I got a crown at the restaurant. It was kind of an escape from my mother's sickness to go out, and when I got home I was so sad. I became angry and, right in front of my mother, who was bedridden and would only say "I love you," I yelled about how I couldn't take the situation anymore. I ran upstairs, and she died about five minutes later. I remember my father telling me to give her a kiss. He was a complete wreck. I was too. I regret what I said that day and always will. This event made me cherish life much more and began my pattern of resentment towards other kids who had mothers.

Specific, Type 2. Integrative. Self-reference. Negative.

- Some time in elementary school (probably in fifth or sixth grade), I asked my Mom to read a paper I wrote for school (I think it was about Benjamin Franklin). When my Mom read the paper, she laughed at something I wrote and I felt horrible. I think I went to my room and cried. Consequently, I rarely let my parents read things I wrote. I think this experience and others similar to it account for some degree of my lack of self-confidence.

Specific, Type 2. Integrative. Self-reference. Negative.

Episodic Non-integrative:

- When I was in seventh grade, I went to California with my family. We rented a van and were driving around in it. I remember how beautiful the scenery in the mountains was and what music was playing. I felt close to my family, because of the shared experience.

Episodic. Non-integrative. Time-stamp. Positive.

- I worked at a summer camp this past year and fell for a girl. We worked very closely all eight weeks, sharing classes and spending free time together. We drove to and fro together and shared music. I saw her perform in a summer arts festival, and we went on a road trip with three other friends, including her boyfriend, my buddy. At the end of the summer, they broke up, as planned, and went off to separate schools. Since then, she and I have found each other intimately, although still remaining causal and very close friends. I have not seen my buddy, her ex, since things started with us.

Episodic. Non-integrative. Time-stamp. Positive.

- I remember being a sophomore in high school and finding out that a guy I was in a relationship with at the time had been cheating on me for two weeks, and all of my friends knew this was going on, but none of them told me about it because they were afraid of hurting me. I felt very naive and used. I wondered what was wrong with me that he liked someone else better and didn't even respect me enough to tell me so.

Episodic. Non-integrative. Time-stamp. Negative.

- I remember coming to college as a freshman and being scared out of my mind. I was incredibly homesick and really wanted to leave. I was afraid of meeting all of the new people I was supposed to be getting to know because I was afraid that they wouldn't like me or would think that I was unintelligent. I was even afraid to talk in classes for the same reason. It was paralyzing. I was depressed because I felt so lonely, but I couldn't bring myself to try to make friends because I thought that being rejected would be even worse than being lonely. It was a terrifying and depressing first semester.

Episodic. Non-integrative. Time-stamp. Negative.

- I remember the relationship I had with my dog, Jack. My parents bought Jack when I was in the seventh grade. He was an adorable black fuzzleball who was very easy to love. The two of us quickly bonded and became nearly inseparable. He helped me get through my awkward "coming of age" years. It was very hard for me when he died of cancer last summer. I still miss him even though it has been almost a year since he died. I will always cherish the good times we had together.

Episodic. Non-integrative. Categorization. Positive.

- Sophomore year in high school, my best friend went away to prep school. I had wanted to go with him, but my family couldn't afford it. Anyway, I was back in high school with hardly any friends. I had to make new friends, even eventually a new best friend. Well, I did, successfully,

and I remain friends with everyone today. It wasn't as hard as I thought it would be. I saw other kids with trouble making friends. I felt lucky I was able to succeed.

Episodic. Non-integrative. Categorization. Positive.

- When I was thirteen years old, I went to Junior High, and I started partying and hanging out with older guys. I had always been a straight A student, but I started to really neglect my work, and I got a D- in one of my classes. My parents were extremely disappointed in me, and it changed my relationship with them.

Episodic. Non-integrative. Categorization. Negative.

- When I was about six or seven, our parents sent me and a friend of mine to a YMCA summer camp. We both hated every minute of it and begged our parents not to make us go back. It was boring, very hot outside, and there were mosquitoes everywhere. We still joke about what an awful time we had there.

Episodic. Non-integrative. Categorization. Negative.

Episodic Integrative:

- Throughout my life (since second grade, my brother, Adam, has greatly influenced my life. He was born with Down's syndrome, a spinal condition, and scarred eyes. I never realized how important difference is, until Adam was born. He taught me that difference doesn't matter, that everyone's special and can contribute to the quality of life. He's an amazing person! He taught me to persevere despite what pitfalls should come in the way.

Episodic. Integrative. General lesson. Positive.

- After I graduated from high school, I was sent to a boarding school for one year. As I arrived, I knew few if any people and was very apprehensive to meet more. The school was a place of many rules. It was consuming and budgeting my time for the whole day. I had no time to think - always stressed and on the go. I hated the place, which gave me so much anxiety, and the people, who had different interests from mine. I am much happier now in college, but because of that one year I think it is so important for a young person who is still growing up to have a stimulating and welcoming environment.

Episodic. Integrative. General lesson. Negative.

- The first time I came home from college, my parents began to give me the freedom I had always wanted from them. No curfews, no questions. I came and went at my leisure, but I always gave them respect and made sure I did not abuse my newfound freedom. I'm finally respected and trusted as an adult in their eyes.

Episodic. Integrative. Self-reference. Positive.

- When I was in third grade, I went with my elder brother Nathan to Florida with my aunt and uncle. They took us with them because we are sort of like their kids too (they didn't have any). This made me feel so special, because I knew that they loved and cared about me very much. While we were there, we did a lot of community service for a shelter. I loved helping the other kids there and giving them food. It taught me to want to give to others the way my aunt and uncle had given to me and Nathan.

Episodic. Integrative. Self-reference. Positive.

- The brother whom I looked up to my whole life left our home when I was fifteen. He was only seventeen at the time and left the house on bad terms with my parents. My dad disowned him, and my mom was hurt and depressed. I was shocked. The most prominent thing I took from the experience, hand in hand with my dad's deployments, was a fear of abandonment. It my family members, who are supposed to provide me with love and be available, are capable of leaving on me, what's to stop anyone else from doing the same thing?

Episodic. Integrative. Self-reference. Negative.

- When I was a freshman in high school, I was cut from my basketball team. This marked the conclusion of my days playing organized basketball and a chapter in my life. For years, spent three to four nights a week playing basketball and the sport was one of my few passions. After

being rejected, I was devastated and became burned out with playing basketball. Today, I only play the sport occasionally, and it feels like I have lost a small part of myself.

Episodic. Integrative. Self-reference. Negative.

Generic Non-integrative:

- I remember when I was taking a walk with my brother and we would just talk for very long periods of time. I love walking with my brother, because of everything that we may teach each other long the way. Usually, we would just talk about ideas we had or issues that we cared about. Nothing major ever happened, but we would always have a good time.

Generic. Non-integrative. Time-stamp. Positive.

- I remember, when I was little, going to pick pumpkins with my mother. Every Halloween, we would drive a long way to go to a friend's farm where they grew pumpkins. I loved searching around with her to try and find the perfect pumpkin. It never really mattered how good they were the next day, but it was the fun we had searching for them that I appreciate.

Generic. Non-integrative. Time-stamp. Positive.

- When I was younger my neighbors and I would play flashlight tag at night in the summer in our neighbor's yard. We thought it was great as little kids to be out late at night and it was fun and a little scary to be running around in the dark. I love remembering the games of childhood.

Generic. Non-integrative. Categorization. Positive.

- I remember when I was really young all I would draw in art class was abstract pictures of our basement door. I remember being really intrigued by the basement door because you could open one half of it while the other half remained closed, but I don't exactly know why I drew all of these pictures. I guess I was easily amused.

Generic. Non-integrative. Categorization. Positive.

- When I was three or four I had to go to an all-day kindergarten. I was always afraid that my grandfather would never show up to pick me up and that I would be abandoned there all alone. I was a very shy child, so I didn't have any friends there, and I used to spend the whole seven or eight hours just clinging to the green bars of the kindergarten's fence waiting for my grandfather to show up. I used to cry all the time.

Generic. Non-integrative. Categorization. Negative.

- Around elementary school and occasionally afterward, I would have delusions and hallucinations late at night whenever I had a very high fever. I remember little about these experiences. I know that when they are occurring, I am extremely terrified, and whatever is terrifying is clear to me. I always forget what it is that was so frightening the next morning. I don't know the significance of these memories, but recalling them brings back some of that overwhelming terror.

Generic. Non-integrative. Categorization. Negative.

Generic Integrative:

- I remember on Sunday mornings when I was little I would have “Sunday morning dances” with my father before we would have breakfast/brunch. My brother and mother would often laugh or take pictures of us ballroom dancing around the kitchen on Sundays. This memory is important to me because I have always had a passion for dance, and I have always been encouraged to dance by my family.

Generic. Integrative. Self-reference. Positive.

- I had a boyfriend throughout most of my high school years. I was in love with him. He made me feel wonderful and beautiful. He was my best friend. My relationship with him taught me many things. It taught me that I am independent, and a loner; that I need time for myself, and that I love with a steadiness, not a hot intensity.

Generic. Integrative. Self-reference. Positive.

- I grew up in Texas where the social system at school was based on a pecking order in which I figured at the very bottom. I remember many times over the years when the so called popular kids, girls especially, and the clones who wanted to be like the popular ones made fun of me and tortured me in various ways in front of everyone. On several occasions, I complained to my parents, and every time they said it was up to me to be tough and deal. Because of all of this, I had a very disturbed childhood, and even now I still avoid the favorites and the conformists.

Generic. Integrative. Self-reference. Negative.

Self-Defining Memory Task

This part of the experiment concerns the recall of a special kind of personal memory called a self-defining memory. A self-defining memory has the following attributes:

1. It is at least one year old.
2. It is a memory from your life that you remembered very clearly and that still feels important to you even as you think about it.
3. 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 that person to understand you in a profound way.
4. It is a memory linked to other similar memories that share the same theme or concern.
5. 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.
6. It is a memory that you have thought about many times. It should be familiar to you like a picture you have studied or a song (happy or sad) you have learned by heart.

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. In the course of the conversation, you describe a memory that you feel conveys powerfully 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.

On the following pages you will be asked to recall and write ten self-defining memories.

Memory Rating Sheet – Memory 1

Please go back and recall your first self-defining memory. Using the rating scale below, please indicate how you felt today in recalling and thinking about your memory. Please also indicate the vividness and importance of the memory and the approximate number of years ago the memory took place (to the nearest whole number). Please note that you should not put your age when the memory took place, but instead how many years ago it took place.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Not at all			Moderately			Extremely

- 1. Happy _____
- 2. Sad _____
- 3. Angry _____
- 4. Fearful _____
- 5. Surprised _____
- 6. Ashamed _____
- 7. Disgusted _____
- 8. Guilty _____
- 9. Interested _____
- 10. Embarrassed _____
- 11. Contemptful _____
- 12. Proud _____

Using the same 0 – 6 scale, please rate how vividly you recalled the memory and how important the memory is to you.

- 13. Vivid _____
- 14. Important _____

How many years ago did the memory take place?

- 15. Years Ago _____ (to the nearest whole number)

PLEASE MAKE SURE YOU HAVE NOT LEFT ANY ANSWERS BLANK. THANK YOU!

The Self-defining Memory (SDM) Scoring System: Memory Types and Key Criteria

Structure

(Captures the duration of the remembered events and their temporal organization as revealed by the SDM narrative.)

SDM Type	Subtype	Key Criteria
Specific Event		1. At least one event that is unique in time
		2. That event has a duration of less than a day
	Type 1	Specific narrative only
	Type 2	Specific narrative with some generalization
Episodic & Generic	Type 3	Specific narrative about more than one event is embedded in a generalized narrative
	Episodic	Lack specific narrative about unique brief events
	Generic	Narrative develops over the course of days
		A blend of repeated similar events

Integration of Meaning

(Captures the extent to which the participants choose to state what the remembered events and the memory mean to them.)

SDM Type	Subtype	Key Criteria
Integrative		1. Semantic appraisal of importance and meaning beyond the immediate events from the memory
		2. Connects the meaning of the past experiences or the memory to the present
	Meaning Tied to Self	Contains a lesson or revelation about the self
	Meaning Not Tied to Self	Contains a lesson or revelation about others and life in general
Non-Integrative		Does not meet the criteria for Integrative SDM
	Pure Event; Time Stamp	Narrates happenings only
	Categorization	Categorizes the memory by importance, emotion, or attribute, but does not elaborate higher meaning.

Table 1

Interrater Agreement between Three Raters after Refinement

			Cohen's κ	% Agreement
Structure	Five Categories	Raters 1 & 2	0.676	82
		Raters 1 & 3	0.574	76
		Raters 2 & 3	0.537	75
		Range	0.54 - 0.68	75 - 82
	Two Categories	Raters 1 & 2	0.982	99.5
		Raters 1 & 3	0.799	95
		Raters 2 & 3	0.816	96
		Range	0.80 - 0.98	95 - 99.5
Meaning	Raters 2 & 3	0.700	89 %	

$N = 104$; 200 memories were scored for Structure and 245 for Meaning.

Table 2

Interrater Agreement between Two Raters for a Large Memory Sample

Variable		% Agreement	Cohen's κ	Number of cases
Structure	Five categories	78.7	.638	940
	Two categories	93.9	.828	1040
Meaning		88.4	.718	1040

$N = 104$; 1040 memories were scored for Structure and Meaning.