IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT IN MEN AND ITS RELATION TO

PSYCHOSOCIAL DISTRESS AND SELF-CONCEPT

by

Ray Zukanovic

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ABSTRACT

The major hypothesis addressed in this research was that the experience of stress is attributable to the quality or clarity of one's identity rather than to age grouping. Two hundred and seventy-five men of three age groups (early-adulthood, n = 100; middle-adulthood, n = 100; late-adulthood, n = 75) completed self-report measures of identity (Identity Style Inventory Sixth Grade), distress (Life Distress Inventory), perceived stress of middle age (Mid-life Crisis Scale), and self-concept (global subscale of the Adult Self-Concept Questionnaire). Based on scores on the identity questionnaire, participants were assigned to one of three identity styles (information, normative, diffused/avoidant). Results indicated that middle age is not particularly salient as a period of heightened psychosocial distress. Specifically, young adults had higher levels of distress compared to middle age and older adults, and middle-age adults had more distress than did late adults. Those men with an information or diffused/avoidant identity style had higher levels of distress than those with a normative identity style (irrespective of age grouping), and those with a diffused/avoidant identity style had greater perceived stress of middle age scores than did those with a normative identity style. Additionally, older adults had the lowest levels of self-worth of any age group, whereas middle-age adults had the highest levels of self-worth, and young adults fell in-between. Those with a normative identity style had the highest levels of self-worth, those with a diffused identity style had the lowest self-worth, and those with the information identity style fell in-between. These results are discussed in terms of a lifespan perspective on identity development.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Tables

List of Figures

Acknowledgments

Identity Development in Men and its Relation to

Psychosocial Distress and Self-Concept

Introduction

Developmental psychologists generally accept that an individual's sense
of self or identity develops gradually throughout childhood culminating in a period
of intensified self-exploration during adolescence (e.g., Erikson, 1963). Several
researchers have further proposed that because of various negative emotional
and social experiences, many individuals do not develop a clear sense of
identity, and this identity "diffusion" may have implications for later psychological
adjustment during early and middle adulthood (e.g., Marcia, 1980). The work of
Levinson (1978) focused on the identity exploration of men during mid-life (ages
40-60). He proposed that all men experienced an unavoidable "mid-life crisis"
during which they re-examined their sense of self. Other researchers dismiss
this period of increased stress in men as a modern myth (see Chiriboga, 1989;
McCrae & Costa, 1990; Tamir, 1989). Although the concept of increasing stress
levels during middle age has become popular, only a few researchers have
examined the nature of this phenomenon in men (Farrell & Rosenberg, 1981;
Josselson, 1996; Julian, McKenry, & Arnold, 1990; Levinson, 1978). The studies
that have been done have focused primarily on measuring men's experience of
psychological stress during middle age (e.g., Farrell & Rosenberg, 1981). In
those studies, the researchers found that some men experienced increased
psychological stress during middle age, whereas others did not. It is possible
that the experience of stress varies as a function of the quality or clarity of one's

identity, irrespective of age grouping. The purpose of this thesis was to explore the relationship between identity status and the experience of psychosocial stress by men of various ages (i.e., early adulthood, middle adulthood, and late adulthood).

Background Literature

Development of Identity

The process of developing a sense of self or identity occurs from birth and continues throughout a person's life. Identity is defined as "a self-structure – an internal, self-constructed, dynamic organization of drives, abilities, beliefs, and individual history" (Marcia, 1980, p. 159). Josselson (1996) described it as knowing who one is and experiencing purpose in life. However, identity is not solely an individualistic process due to the fact that social environments (e.g., family relationships, social class, ethnic background) exert influence on the individual (Markstrom-Adams, 1992; Farrell & Rosenberg, 1981). At birth, infants are introduced to aspects of an identity- "He looks like his mother" or "He's good with his hands just like his carpenter father" (Erikson, 1959, 1963; Josselson, 1996). Each individual "begins with different experiences and realities" in constructing an identity within the framework of natural talents, social expectations, and the immediate culture (Josselson, 1996, p. 29). Identity is a dynamic structure that continually changes; individuals shed, add, and alter parts of their identities over time. During identity formation, some individuals develop a clear sense of identity, whereas others show signs of identity confusion (Erikson, 1968). According to Markstrom-Adams (1992), those individuals who had

healthy identity understood continuity to their lives and experiences, had a purpose for their life via goals, had a sense of completeness, and were recognized by significant others. In contrast, those individuals who were uncertain of who they were and insecure about who they would become appeared to possess a less developed and less healthy identity structure (Kroger, 1993; Marcia, 1980).

Erikson. The pioneering work of Erik Erikson (1959, 1963, 1966) on lifespan development stimulated all subsequent research on identity development. Erikson (1959) proposed eight universal, hierarchical psychosocial stages experienced by individuals throughout their entire lifespan. During each stage, the individual faces a heightened state of vulnerability combined with an opportunity for increased personal growth. Each stage has a crisis period or turning point during which the individual's inner instincts and drives interact with the outer demands of his or her cultural and social environment (Erikson, 1959). Specifically, the individual has the potential for either growth or for stagnation at the climax of that stage. The individual's primary goal during each stage is to find a balance between the two opposing possibilities (i.e., adaptive or maladaptive). This process culminates in a synthesis between the two possibilities (Erikson, 1966). Erikson (1959) stated emphatically that individuals do not remain at a particular stage until the demands of that stage are completed; rather, maturation and social pressures move individuals through the psychosocial stages whether they are ready or not. Finally, an individual's successful resolution of each crisis is dependent on how well the individual resolved previous psychosocial stages (Erikson, 1959).

The goal of the first four stages (trust versus mistrust, autonomy versus shame and doubt, initiative versus guilt, industry versus inferiority), which occur during infancy and childhood, is to develop a healthy trust in the world in order to develop self-initiative (Erikson, 1959). Once individuals maintain a healthy resolution of these four crises, they are confronted with four new crises, which occur in adolescence and adulthood, beginning with Erikson's fifth stage, Identity versus Role Confusion (Erikson, 1959). Specifically, this stage marks the end of childhood and the beginning of adulthood, as the individual explores occupational, ideological, and sexual values (Erikson, 1966). Erikson described adolescence and young adulthood as a socially acceptable period in which youth are encouraged to explore new possibilities, ("a range of possible selves;" Josselson, 1996, p. 34). However, at the end of this phase, society demands that an individual define himself or herself or commit to an identity (Erikson, 1959). Erikson stated that "those committing to an identity have an accrued confidence that the inner sameness and continuity prepared in the past were matched by the sameness and continuity of one's meaning for others, as evidenced in the tangible promise of a career" (p. 262). In other words, those who obtain an identity know who they are and who they would attempt to be in the future. The individual who does not successfully resolve this identity crisis was believed to experience "role confusion" or "identity diffusion" in which the individual is confused, suffered from a sense of not knowing who or what he or she was, and was, therefore, unable to decide on an occupational role (Erikson, 1959).

Those who successfully resolve Erikson's fifth stage enter adulthood with an assured sense of identity and are better able to resolve future crises occurring throughout the rest of the lifespan (i.e., Intimacy/Isolation, Generativity/ Stagnation, Integrity/Despair). Intimacy versus Isolation is the stage in which the individual faces the possibility of losing aspects of identity while engaging in close relationships with other people (romantic relationships and friendships) (Erikson, 1966). According to Erikson, if one does not have a clear sense of identity, it is difficult to engage in healthy intimate relationships. Unhealthy or dissatisfying relationships could lead to feelings of loneliness and isolation.

In the next stage, Generativity versus Stagnation, the middle-aged adult discovers a sense of contributing to the world through family and work. Specifically, "man needs to be needed," and this period offers the opportunity to guide the next generation (Erikson, 1966). In other words, one needs to develop interdependence with the youth of the next generation, community, and world. However, those who fail to enrich the next generation will tend to feel a lack of purpose and "personal impoverishment," which Erikson described as stagnation.

Finally, in old age, the individual re-evaluates his or her life and feels either integrity or despair. Erikson described the final stage in the life cycle as a spiritual one: "an acceptance of one's one and only life cycle as something that had to be and that, by necessity, permitted no substitutions" (p. 268). Erikson argued that ego integration is only obtained by building upon the healthy resolution of the seven crises experienced during one's life. In contrast, those lacking ego integration tend to experience remorse over opportunities missed and the fear of death (Erikson, 1966).

Although Erikson's psychosocial theory of development has driven developmental psychology for over forty years (Kroger, 1993; McCrae & Costa, 1990), his theory has not been without its modifications. Using Erikson's theory of development as a theoretical basis, Vaillant (1977) added an additional stage-career consolidation, between Erikson's stages of intimacy versus isolation and generativity versus stagnation. It is during this stage that adults acquire competence, status, or "master" their chosen career. Vaillant's theory focuses on how men's adaptive and defensive styles influence their development and how these styles change over a lifespan. Specifically, people adapt psychologically to the challenges in their lives by use of defense mechanisms (Vaillant, 1977). Defense mechanisms were described by Freud, as a set of unconscious strategies to deny and distort disappointments in one's life. According to Vaillant (1977), there are four levels of defense mechanisms (i.e., psychotic, immature, neurotic, mature) that individuals use to deal with the "anxiety" in their lives. All individuals use a combination of mechanisms from different levels during their lives; however, one must ultimately utilize mature defense mechanisms to successfully cope with life challenges (Vaillant, 1977).

Marcia. Erikson's and later on Vaillant's theories of identity development were extended by Marcia (1966, 1967, 1976, 1980) in an attempt to develop a methodological device to measure changes in identity achievement. Marcia's goal was to examine identity development during adolescence and early adulthood more closely. Based on his research on the social, emotional, and psychological characteristics of his participants, he developed a classification of various identity states depending on the quality of the participants' identity

achievement. Specifically, Marcia's Identity Status Paradigm (1980) used participants' responses to semi-structured questions, in the form of incomplete sentences, to classify participants into one of four identity states: achievement, foreclosure, moratorium, and diffusion. Individuals classified into one of the four identity states were defined "in terms of the presence or absence of a decision-making period (crisis) and the extent of personal investment (commitment)" applied to occupational choice, religion, and political ideology (Marcia, 1980, p. 161).

Marcia (1966) described an "identity achieved" individual as one who had invested time exploring his or her identity and was committed to his or her current identity. This identity was achieved through an identity crisis period and by pursuing self-chosen occupational and ideological goals (Marcia, 1980). These individuals also showed the highest levels of ego development, moral reasoning, internal locus of control, self-worth, and intimacy in interpersonal relationships (Berzonsky & Neimeyer, 1988; Marcia, 1966, 1967; Podd, 1972).

In contrast, an individual who experienced foreclosure did not search for an identity and experienced no identity crisis. However, this individual is highly conformed to social norms and parental wishes and has a firm commitment to his or her "imposed" occupational and ideological position. These individuals showed the highest levels of authoritarianism, obedience to authority, external locus of control, dependent relationships with significant others, and the lowest levels of anxiety (Marcia, 1966, 1967; Matteson, 1974).

Those individuals who were exploring their identity and experiencing an identity crisis were in the "moratorium" state. Marcia (1966) described

moratoriums as experiencing an internal preoccupation with adolescent issues, as well as high anxiety and fear of success. However, these individuals were likely to attain identity achievement and high levels of ego development and self-worth (Larkin, 1987; Marcia, 1980). Finally, individuals experiencing identity diffusion later in development had no occupational or ideological direction, and therefore, were unable to commit to an identity and may or may not have experienced an identity crisis period (Marcia, 1966). They demonstrated low levels of ego development, cognitive complexity, self-certainty, and poor cooperative abilities in social situations (Adams & Shea, 1979; Berzonsky & Neimeyer, 1988; Marcia, 1980).

Kroger (1993) reviewed research using Marcia's Identity Status Paradigm and found that most of the literature focused on the relationship between the various identity states and family interaction styles, personality characteristics associated with the identity states, and the stability of the identity states. Much of the work on family interaction styles began in the early 1980s and relied on correlational methods (Kroger, 1993). According to Kroger's review, the literature consistently indicated that parents of adolescents who were high in identity exploration encouraged autonomy and connectedness, whereas those adolescents who were low in identity exploration were part of families who were low in the expression of differences. Achievement adolescents were described as being able to reason with their parents, whereas moratorium adolescents were seen as struggling with parental authority. Parents of foreclosed adolescents were seen as overprotective and overly involved with their children,

whereas parents of diffused adolescents were described as permissive and unavailable.

Research on the stability of identity states has revealed mixed findings. For example, Meilman (1979) and Archer's (1982) cross-sectional studies revealed an increase in the numbers of identity achieved and moratorium state participants through middle and late adolescence. Longitudinal studies of identity state change in late adolescence to young or middle adulthood were conducted by Josselson (1987), Kroger (1988), and Marcia (1976). The authors found that, with age, the numbers of participants experiencing a moratorium state and identity achievement increased; however, a large percentage of youths remained in a state of foreclosure or diffusion throughout late adolescence and early adulthood.

Men at Middle Age

Levinson. The work of Levinson (1978) further expanded on Erikson's and Marcia's work by focusing on systematic changes in men's identities during middle age. Levinson was the first researcher to take a lifespan developmental approach to the study of the experience of adulthood for men. According to Levinson (1978), there was reluctance on the part of scientists to study male adulthood, particularly the period of mid-life, perhaps due to the fear that research would reveal that "no life" existed after age 30. In other words, based on Erikson's seventh psychosocial stage of development, life for the middle age man consisted only of routine work. The underlying premise of Levinson's work was derived from the work of Sigmund Freud, Carl Jung, and Eric Erikson.

Specifically, according to Freud, the development of one's personality was based on the resolution of unconscious conflicts in the psyche. The successful resolution of the unconscious conflicts depends on the nature of early childhood experiences. These early childhood experiences can continue to influence a person's adjustment throughout adulthood. Freud portrayed adulthood as a time to re-enact unconscious childhood conflicts, rather than as a time of more advanced development. Alternatively, in Jung's view, young adults in their twenties are still caught up in the emotional turmoil and conflicts of childhood coupled with the immediate demands of their family, work, and community. The personality continues to develop beyond childhood, according to Jung, with the next major shift in development beginning at age 40 or "the noon of life."

Levinson (1978) further investigated personality development during middle age by interviewing men (ages 35 to 45) at their homes, work places or at his office. Participants were recruited via two companies in the northeastern United States, which comprised four occupations representing diverse sectors in society (in Levinson's opinion) at the time of the study (i.e., hourly workers in industry, business executives, university biologists, novelists). The participating men were given a personality assessment using the Thematic Apperception Test (tell a story for each of five pictures) and a biographical interview that occurred once to twice per week over a five-week period. In addition, to gain further insight into the men's lives, the men's occupations and work worlds were observed, and interviews with the participants' wives were conducted.

Based on his interview data, Levinson (1978) proposed a stage theory to describe the universal path through which all men developed during adulthood.

He conceptualized lifespan development occurring in four eras or "seasons": pre-adulthood (birth to age 22), early adulthood (22 to 40), middle adulthood (40 to 60), and late adulthood (60 until death). Within each era, men passed through a sequence of alternating periods of change and stability, during which the individual modified and then committed to his "life structure" or dreams and goals. This process of modification of the life structure occurred as the individual encountered various life tasks associated with adult development. Most of these life tasks had to do with the frequently changing roles of worker, husband, and father (see illustration in Figure 1).

According to Levinson, there were major transitional periods between eras: the Early Adult Transition (age 17-22), the Mid-life Transition (age 40-45), and the Late Adult Transition (age 60-65). These era-transitional periods were seen to be the most crucial turning points in a man's life (Levinson, 1978). Specifically, during these transitions, men reflected on the era that was ending and began to develop a new life structure to meet with the new tasks of the approaching era (Levinson, 1978). In addition, Levinson stated that these transitional periods were the sources of renewal or of stagnation that shaped the character of the individual. Research by Levinson (1978) suggested that all men choose how they react and respond to the psychosocial change of their environment, during adolescence and mid-life, with some men experiencing a less stressful crisis period compared to other men.

Levinson studied a distinct period of change called the mid-life transition period which occurred in the transition from early adulthood to middle adulthood (approximately age 40) and lasted about four to five years. Overall, Levinson

found that there were no concrete markers or single events that triggered the mid-life transition period in men. Rather, it was a universal developmental stage that all men passed through during their lifespan. Levinson described the mid-life period as a "painful" growth period that no middle-aged man could escape. For some males, stress during the mid-life transition could be mild; in contrast, when it involved considerable turmoil and disruption, Levinson spoke of a voluminous mid-life crisis. He suggested that if conditions for a man's development were reasonably favourable, and impairments from the past were not too severe, middle adulthood could be an era of personal fulfillment. During the mid-life transition, the neglected parts of a man's self more urgently sought expression and stimulated the modification of his existing internal blueprint (subculture). In other words, during the course of a transitional period, a man might have embraced or repudiated his marriage, family, chosen profession, and social networks or "established different relationships and lived out different aspects of the self" (Levinson, 1978, p. 318).

Farrell and Rosenberg. Although Levinson (1978) acknowledged that there might be individual differences in the quality of men's life structures, he did not fully explore the possible individual differences in the experience of mid-life stress. In one of the few studies that examined the notion of male stress during mid-life more closely, Farrell and Rosenberg (1981) found that men had a variety of experiences during mid-life. They had 200 young adult men (age 25 to 30) and 300 middle-aged men (age 38 to 48) participate in their study, which represented an urban and rural population of the northeastern United States. All male participants were interviewed and completed various identity scales,

including the Mid-Life Crisis Scale. Each interview lasted roughly ninety minutes to two hours. The authors conducted follow-up interviews for 20 of the original 500 participants to explore their family interaction and developmental history. Having examined the entire quantitative and qualitative data from their research, Farrell and Rosenberg concluded that men's experiences during mid-life were really what they termed "masks" (or types). The authors found four types (masks) of response to the experiences of mid-life stress and characterized them as follows: the Anti-Hero, the Transcendent-Generative, the Pseudo-Developed, and the Punitive-Disenchanted. Specifically, the patterns of responses to mid-life stress were classified on two dimensions: (1) denial of stress or open confrontation with stress, and (2) satisfaction with life or dissatisfaction with life (see illustration in Figure 2). In their words:

> ...men's experience emphasize the subjective experience of men and
> their presentations of self. Underlying the typology is that personal
> disorientation, distress, and fears associated with entering middle age are
> often denied under direct questioning. Nonetheless, these emotional
> responses have a greater degree of emotional saliency than is overtly
> admitted. Many men entering mid-life work to deny any weakness or
> distress they may be experiencing (Farrell and Rosenberg, 1981, p. 31-
> 32).

Farrell and Rosenberg (1981) describe the Anti-Hero or Dissenter as being self-reflective and "overtly dissatisfied with life and work" (p. 32) and comprised 12 percent of their sample. These individuals reflected identity diffused men who were closest to experiencing a mid-life crisis. The authors

described these men as highly ego-oriented, resulting in little involvement with their children, community, and popular culture. Twenty-five percent of these men reported that their children were defiant towards them. The Anti-Hero type scored the lowest on work satisfaction, and they reported that there was little or no future opportunity in work advancement. The authors suggested that these men were more egalitarian in the home as 50% of their wives work compared to 30% of the wives of the other three types of men. Compared to the other three types of men, the Anti-Hero group was the least likely to "present a socially desirable façade and openly admit to everyday faults" (p. 81) and was the most overtly anxious. Farrell and Rosenberg described these men as reporting the highest occurrence of headaches (nearly two-thirds of the group) of all the four types, being extremely dissatisfied with what they achieved in their work life, and as the heaviest consumers of alcohol compared to the other types.

The Transcendent-Generative type of middle-aged man comprised roughly one-third (32%) of the men in Farrell and Rosenberg's sample. The authors described these men as "able to assess their past and present and match them to inner feelings with a positive sense of satisfaction" (p. 33). The Transcendent-Generative type was found to have few symptoms of psychological distress, positive thoughts on their marriage and children, and a positive, accepting sense of identity. In other words, they did not experience a mid-life crisis. Over 90% of these men found middle age fulfilling, suggesting that these men still found life challenging and rewarding with age. In addition, the authors found that these men reported that they felt "in control" of their lives, and they were the least prejudiced and authoritarian towards others. The authors

concluded that the Transcendent-Generative type was "…open and accepting of their own feelings" and was successfully able to cope with challenges in life "with relative ease and a growing sense of self-assurance" (p. 82).

The Pseudo-Developed type comprised 26% of the men in the sample. On the outside, these men appeared to have "mastered all the basic problems in life" (p. 33), and they reported high satisfaction with their marriages, children, and occupations, while scoring low on stress measures. However, this type of man scored highest in social desirability, was least likely to tolerate ambiguity, and was most likely to be authoritarian in his child-rearing practices. The Pseudo-Developed type was found to have a highly controlled and structured life and engaged in constant "avoidance of new situations, people, or ideas" (p. 34). Farrell and Rosenberg suggested that these men dealt with their mid-life stress through religion, alcoholism, and hypochondriasis. The authors concluded that these men continued to deny their feelings of a changing self during mid-life through the use of "psychological defenses [such as denial] to avoid confronting the stress of mid-life" (p. 84).

Finally, the fourth type of man was the Punitive-Disenchanted type which comprised 30% of the authors' sample. These men were described by Farrell and Rosenberg as the most "symptomatic and unhappy group of our typology scoring highest on the mid-life crisis scale as well as on other measures of alienation and identity diffusion" (p. 85). Over half of these men reported being unhappy with their lives (53%), and 80% reported reflecting on their lives with the "wish to start over" (p. 85). The authors reported that these men were the most depressed of all the four types, and they scored high in authoritarianism and

bigotry. These men ascribed their lack of happiness and fulfillment in their lives to external circumstances, and tended to cope "unsuccessfully" by use of repression, projection, and denial defense strategies "in the situation of increasing loss of esteem and diminishing hope" (p. 86). Farrell and Rosenberg concluded that these men experienced a chronic sense of alienation, identity diffusion, and depression rather than a mid-life crisis.

Although Farrell and Rosenberg's work was the most exhaustive examination of male stress during mid-life, few researchers have used their questionnaire measuring the experience of stress during mid-life. In fact, library searches revealed only one research team who used Farrell and Rosenberg's questionnaire to measure stress during mid-life (Julian, McKenry, & Arnold, 1990). In an attempt to understand the effects of role adjustment (i.e., marital satisfaction, quality of parent-adolescent relationship, intrinsic job orientation) on the psychological stress associated with the male mid-life transition, Julian et al. (1990) asked 36 middle-aged men to complete various questionnaires. Their goal was to determine whether role adjustment variables could predict the stress associated with middle age. Participants completed various questionnaire instruments, including Farrell and Rosenberg's (1981) Mid-life Crisis Scale, which was described as a scale of "perceived stress" of middle age. Julian et al. found that the best predictors of stress associated with the mid-life transition were the quality of the parent-adolescent relationship and marital satisfaction. The participants who reported more conflict and lower marital satisfaction experienced greater stress during mid-life.

Measures of Identity

The study of identity, in the past thirty years, has developed primarily from Erikson's theoretical writings on identity (Kroger, 1993; McCrae & Costa, 1990). Marcia's (1966, 1967, 1980) research, and subsequent development of a measurement instrument on the psychosocial aspects of identity, has created a large body of research in the area. Although Marcia's Identity Status Paradigm (1980) was one of the first comprehensive instruments to assess ego identity and has been utilized in over 300 studies to date (Kroger, 1993; Waterman, 1992), alternative measures were also developed (e.g., Tan, 1977; Grotevant & Adams, 1984; Berzonsky 1989, 1992).

Tan (1977) created a 12-item Ego Identity Scale based on Erikson's (1959) concept of ego identity. His goal was to develop a measure that was short, objective, and free from response set contamination. Participants were asked to choose between two statements that reflected the qualities of either ego identity achieved or identity diffused individuals. Although the psychometric properties of the Ego Identity Scale are acceptable, the simplicity of the instrument provides only limited information on identity.

The Extended Objective Measure of Ego Identity Status (EOM-EIS) developed by Adams, Shea, & Fitch (1979) and Grotevant & Adams (1984) was one of the first self-report paper and pencil instruments to assess Marcia's identity statuses. The questionnaire has "undergone extensive psychometric work" (Kroger, 1993, p. 7) since its inception over 20 years ago. Participants are presented with 64 statements reflecting characteristics of Marcia's four identity statuses. Each item is rated on a 5-point Likert scale, from 1 indicating "strongly

agree" to 5 indicating "strongly disagree," in eight areas that relate to identity: occupation, religion, politics, philosophy, friendship, dating, sex roles, and recreation. The EOM-EIS is scored by computing the means for each of the four identity scales and converting each into z-scores. An individual is classified if their z-score is greater than +1 standard deviation (SD) from the mean on only one of the four identity scales (Grotevant & Adams, 1984), which leaves 60% to 70% of the sample without a single identity status and consequently unclassifiable (Jones, Akers, & White, 1994). The instrument is highly reliable and valid; however, it classifies few participants into one of the four identity statuses.

More recently, Berzonsky (1989, 1992) focused on developing a questionnaire for measuring identity that classified all participants. The Identity Style Inventory (ISI) is an easily administered, self-report paper and pencil objective instrument that classifies individuals into one of three identity styles: Information, Normative, and Diffuse/Avoidant (Berzonsky, 1992). According to Berzonsky (1989, 1992), the ISI is similar to the EOM-EIS in that the ISI identity style classifications are correlated with the EOM-EIS identity statuses (refer to illustration in Figure 3). Berzonsky indicated that those individuals categorized as having a Diffuse/Avoidant identity style tended to procrastinate and were reluctant to deal with personal problems and decisions. This style was similar to the diffusion identity status of the EOM-EIS. Individuals categorized as having a normative identity style tended to be conformers, closed minded, and focused on the expectations of other people, which was similar to the foreclosure identity status. Finally, those individuals categorized with an Information identity style

tended to be introspective and explorers with either high or low commitment (Berzonsky, 1989, 1992). Thus, they would be described as being similar to an achievement or moratorium identity status. White, Wampler, & Winn (1998) elucidated Berzonsky's decision to combine both the Achievement and Moratorium identity statuses into one Information identity style. In their words:

> Some people with an Information style have committed to certain values, goals, and beliefs, whereas others continue to search. However, both groups share a unique and active openness to options. In contrast, individuals in both the Diffuse/Avoidant and Normative groups have no such interest in exploration. Recognition of the distinct characteristics of each style can help specify the nature of personality and behavioral differences found within the individual (White et al., 1998, p. 241).

The ISI instrument consists of 40 statements concerning an individual's identity. Eleven items are used to assess the information scale, nine items for the normative scale, 10 items for the diffuse/avoidant scale, and 10 items are used for the commitment scale in a secondary analysis. Participants indicate their responses on a 5-point Likert scale, where a score of 1 indicates "strongly disagree" and a score of 5 indicates "strongly agree." Scoring requires the computing of means for each scale, transformation to z-scores, and then assigning an identity style (i.e., I, N, D) based on the highest z-score. This scoring procedure classifies virtually all participants into one of the three identity styles created by Berzonsky (1989, 1992). In addition, the z-score transformation adjusts for any potential problem of social desirability that may be present from participants (Berzonsky & Sullivan, 1992; White, Wampler, & Winn, 1998).

However, a major flaw of this instrument is the high reading level (grade 9.2) required to complete it (as reported by White et al., 1998).

White et al. (1998) updated the ISI instrument for use with a population with a sixth grade reading level. The Identity Style Inventory Sixth Grade (ISI-6G) was created in an attempt to retain the conceptual structure of the ISI (i.e., three identity styles, 5-point Likert Scale) with simplified grammar and sentence structure. In other words, only the items were rewritten, to facilitate a sixth grade reading level of the instrument. In the end, there was "good [loading] agreement between the factor structures of both measures" combined with high criterion validity between the ISI-6G with behaviour and personality measures (White et al., 1998, p. 234). In other words, the ISI-6G is a modified version of the ISI for use with a sixth grade reading level population and retains the original psychometric properties of the ISI.

Rationale and Goals of the Present Study

The purpose of this exploratory study was to investigate the period of middle age by examining the relation between identity style, self-worth and the experience of psychological stress in early, middle, and late adulthood men. In particular, it was expected that the experience of stress during middle age would not be unique to this life period compared to early and late adulthood, but rather a function of an individual's identity style. There is currently no literature in this area that links identity style with psychological age-related stress. Therefore, based on the previously cited literature on the relation between identity status and psychological adjustment during adulthood, it was expected that, irrespective

of age grouping, (a) a Normative identity style would be related to low levels of stress; (b) a Diffuse/Avoidant identity style would be related to high levels of stress; and, (c) an Information identity style would be related to low to moderate levels of stress.

The present study will contribute to the existing literature in many ways. For example, no previous studies have considered that the possible experience of men's stress may vary as a function of the clarity of one's identity, irrespective of age grouping. Other studies on men's stress levels have focused, primarily, on measuring men's experience of psychological stress during middle age only. Thus, this study will compare the stress levels of middle-aged men with those of young and older men, a focus which has been absent from the literature. Specifically, this study will explore if there is anything unique about middle age for men in regards to stress and self-worth. Furthermore, research on the identity, distress, and self-worth of older men (age 65 to 87) typically has been overlooked.

METHOD

Participants

The participants included 275 men who lived in the Central-Interior of British Columbia (B.C.). Three specific age groups were targeted using Erikson's (1959, 1963, 1966) theory of development as a general guideline. The age range of the younger group was chosen to represent men who had completed adolescence and began early adulthood, the middle-aged group was chosen to represent men who were broadly in the period of middle age, and the older group was chosen to represent men who were well into their senior years and retired. The excluded age groups (e.g., 26-34, 56-64 years) were not the focus of this thesis and were not recruited.

Age Group 1. The participants for group 1 included 100 men ranging in age from 19 to 25 years (M= 23.17, SD= 1.54). Twenty-four percent of the men had a high school diploma or less, 14% had either a college diploma or trade school certificate, 52% had some university, and 10% of the men had a university degree. The majority of men indicated that they were Caucasian (85%), followed by Asian (10%), and Other (5%). Eighty-nine percent of the men indicated that their mother tongue was English, followed by an Asian language (e.g., Cantonese) (4%), and Other (7%). Eighty-nine percent of the men were single, 9% were married or common law, and 1% were separated. Forty-seven percent of men indicated that they worked full-time, 31% indicated that they worked part-time, and 20% of the men in this age group were unemployed. Overall, then, this

group of men could be characterized as young English-speaking, well educated, Caucasian, single, and employed.

Age Group 2. The participants for group 2 included 100 men who ranged in age from 35 to 55 years ($\underline{M}$= 45.72, $\underline{SD}$= 5.97). Seventeen percent of the men had a high school diploma or less, 25% had completed a trade or technical school, 11% had completed some college, 8% obtained a college diploma, 11% had completed some university, 22% had obtained a university degree, and 6% of the men had a post-graduate degree. The majority of men indicated that they were Caucasian (88%), followed by Aboriginal (8%), Asian (3%), and Other (1%). Eighty-nine percent of the men indicated that their mother tongue was English, followed by a European language (e.g., German) (5%), and Other (6%). Eighty-two percent of the men were married or living with a common-law spouse, 9% were single, 6% were divorced, and 3% were separated. Eighty-three percent of those men indicated that they worked full-time, 2% indicated that they worked part-time, and 13% of the men were unemployed. Overall, then, this group of men could be characterized as middle-aged English-speaking, Caucasian, well-educated, married, and employed.

Age Group 3. The participants for group 3 included 75 men who ranged in age from 65 to 87 years ($\underline{M}$= 73.75, $\underline{SD}$= 6.52). Twenty percent of the men had an elementary school education, 25% had completed a secondary school education (i.e., grade 11), 16% had a high school diploma, 16% obtained a college diploma, 16% had completed a trade or technical school, 7% had completed some college, 1% obtained a college diploma, 8% had completed

some university, 5% obtained a university degree, and 2% of the men had obtained a post-graduate degree. The majority of these men indicated that they were Caucasian (93%), followed by Other (7%). Eighty-seven percent of the men indicated that their mother tongue was English, followed by a European language (5%) and French (5%), and Other (3%). Sixty-one percent of the men were married or living with a common-law spouse, 11% were single, 15% were divorced, and 13% were widowed. Sixty-nine percent of men indicated they were retired, 15% worked full-time, and 4% of the men worked part-time. Overall, then, this group of men could be characterized as aged, English-speaking, Caucasian, moderately-educated, married or divorced/widowed, and retired.

Procedure

Participant Recruitment. Men were recruited in six ways, throughout the Interior of British Columbia, during the months of February and March 1999. First, the researcher maintained a display table at a large Prince George, B.C. shopping mall during the first two weekends in February. Behind the table, an easel board was set up with the following eight by eleven laser printed posters: (a) Men Wanted; (b) Questionnaire for men; (c) We are not selling anything; and (d) University of Northern B.C. Research Study. The researcher would approach men who were walking by and ask them if they had a few minutes to complete a questionnaire. If the researcher was not rejected outright, the men were given an information sheet about the study (refer to Appendix A for a description). Second, the researcher approached student clubs at the University of Northern British Columbia and the College of New Caledonia in Prince George. Information sheets about the study were handed out to male club

members to read and consider. Third, the researcher visited four Toastmaster International Clubs in the Prince George region. Men at the clubs were approached and handed the information sheet for their consideration. Fourth, information on the study was sent to Senior Centre management for consideration and subsequent approval. A display table was set up at four Senior Centres in Prince George, two in Quesnel, and three in Penticton. Similarly to the shopping mall recruitment, an easel board was set up with information to garner the attention of senior men. Those men who were interested were handed an information sheet. Fifth, four Senior Care homes were approached and subsequently, with the approval of management, the researcher had their Wellness Coordinators distribute the information sheets and questionnaire packages to male seniors who had no documented dementia. Finally, the researcher met with people individually from referrals and a local newspaper article to hand out the information sheet.

After the researcher answered any individual questions or concerns regarding the study, questionnaire packages and a stamped, self-addressed return envelope were distributed to those consenting males. Although not formally assessed, participants declining to take part in the study gave reasons ranging from "I don't have the time" to one man indicating that he was unable to read.

Testing. Participants who had read the information sheet and agreed to the conditions and limitations contained within it were deemed as having given informed consent to this study. These men then were given a questionnaire package to complete, which included the Identity Style Inventory: Sixth-Grade

Reading Level (ISI-6G; Appendix B), the Mid-life Crisis Scale (MCS; Appendix

C), the global subscale of the Adult Self-Concept Questionnaire (GS-ASCQ;

Appendix D), the Life Distress Inventory (LDI; Appendix E), and a demographic

questionnaire (Appendix F). Participating men had the choice of completing the

questionnaire package upon receipt or at their convenience and mail it back to

the researcher. Questionnaires were expected to take approximately 20 to 30

minutes to complete. The participants were assured that all information would

remain confidential.

Measures. The ISI-6G questionnaire, created by White, Wampler, and

Winn (1998), consisted of 40 statements concerning the individuals' identity.

These 40 statements "reflected the cognitive processes involved in coping and

problem solving among individuals at various stages of the identity crisis" (White

et al., 1998, p. 225). Eleven items were used to assess the information style,

nine items for the normative style, 10 items for the diffuse/avoidant style, and 10

items were used for the commitment scale in a secondary analysis (used only

when two identity styles are tied for the highest mean score). The men were

asked to indicate their disagreement/agreement with each statement by rating

each on a 5-point Likert scale, where a score of 1 indicated, "strongly disagree"

and a score of 5 indicated "strongly agree." The ISI-6G categorized all

participants into one of three identity styles: Information, Normative, and

Diffuse/Avoidant (see Table 1). Scoring required the computing of the mean

ratings for each scale, converting the raw scores into z-scores, and then

assigning an identity style (i.e., I, N, D) based on the individual's highest z-score.

As reported by White et al. (1998), the scales demonstrated reliability

(Cronbach's alphas were Information = .59, Normative = .64, Diffuse/Avoidant = .78), whereas evidence for convergent construct validity between the original ISI and the ISI-6G were significant (Information, r = .81, p = <.001; Normative, r = .85, p < .001; Diffused/Avoidant, r = .85, p <.001).

Farrell and Rosenberg's (1981) Mid-life Crisis Scale consisted of 12 statements concerning the individuals' stress during mid-life and four open-ended physical health questions that are believed to contribute to the stress of men during mid-life. Farrell and Rosenberg's conceptualization of stress during mid-life involved the importance of a man's sense of isolation and denial during middle age. Therefore, the MCS was developed as a measure of the degree to which a man "experienced difficulty in coping with the stress of middle age" in the areas of work, career, family system, and health (Farrell & Rosenberg, 1981, p. 7). Julian, McKenry, & McKelvey (1990) describe the MCS as a scale reflecting men's perceived stress of middle age. The men were asked to indicate their agreement/disagreement with the first eleven statements by rating each on a 6-point Likert scale, where a score of 1 indicated "strongly agree" and a score of 6 indicated "strongly disagree." The remaining statement, pertaining to the participant's relationship with his wife, was rated on a 5-point Likert scale, where a score of 1 indicated "very close" and a score of 5 indicated "far apart." Items 1, 4, 5, and 12 on the MCS were modified to allow for an additional choice, "not applicable," for those participants with no occupation, wife, and/or children. Higher scores reflect greater perceived stress of middle age. Those items selected as not applicable were given a score of 3.5 points (midpoint between 1 and 6), recognizing that this was an arbitrary score, due to the nature of Likert

Table 1

Number of participants in each Age Group categorized according to the 3 Identity Styles

| | IDENTITY STYLE | | | |
AGE GROUP	Information	Normative	Diffused	Total
Young	36	29	35	100
Middle	31	30	39	100
Old	27	21	27	75
Total	94	80	101	275

scales. The MCS was a measure of men's overall perceived stress of middle age. Farrell and Rosenberg (1981) did not report any reliability and validity information for the MCS.

As an additional measure of self-development, Messer and Harter's (1986) Adult Self-Concept Questionnaire (ASCQ) was used. The ASCQ consists of 50 forced-choice statements rated on a 4-point scale. Twelve subscales comprise the ASCQ. Only the global subscale of the ASCQ (GS-ASCQ) was administered in this study. The remaining 11 subscales were not considered due to the lack of applicability to this thesis and the additional burden it placed on participants (e.g., additional time, complexity). The GS-ASCQ consisted of six forced-choice statements rated on a 4-point scale. These six statements measured an individual's overall perception of worth (i.e., how much one likes oneself as a person). The men were asked to select one of two statements per item and indicated either that the statement was "sort of true for me" or "really true for me." Each item was scored from 1 to 4, where a score of 1 indicated "low perceived adequacy" and a score of 4 reflected "high perceived adequacy" for the participant. Higher scores reflect greater perception of one's worth. Global self-worth scores were obtained for each participant by summing their ratings on those six items. As reported by Messer and Harter (1986), the scale demonstrated reliability (Cronbach's alpha was global self-worth = .87), whereas evidence for validity was not reported.

The Life Distress Inventory (Thomas, Yoshioka, & Ager, 1993) was a measure of current general distress in 18 areas of the individual's life: marriage, sex, relationship to children, relationship to other relatives, household

management, financial situation, employment, education, recreation/leisure, social life, religion, management of time, physical health, personal independence, role of alcohol in home, satisfaction with life, and expectations for the future. The men were asked to assess their level of distress for each item using a 7-point Likert scale, where a score of 1 indicated "no distress" and a score of 7 indicates, "the most distress I've ever felt." Higher scores reflect greater life distress. The LDI provides a global measure of overall current life distress by summing an individual's ratings on all 18 items. Thomas et al. (1993) did not report any reliability and validity information for the LDI.

Finally, the men completed a demographic questionnaire in which they indicated their date of birth, mother tongue, ethnicity, marital status, education, occupation, number of children, ages of their children, and health. Certain demographics (e.g., mother tongue, education, occupation) and the health items were not the focus of this thesis and were not included in the analysis.

RESULTS

Overview of Analyses

Before conducting inferential statistics, the data for all three dependent variables (LDI, GS-ASCQ, MCS) were examined for missing data, outliers, and normality. No missing data were present on the items that comprised the LDI, resulting in 275 completed life distress inventories. However, the GS-ASCQ had 11 missing cases (distributed evenly among each age group) that were subsequently replaced by the mean value on that case for the relevant age group.[1] The group mean replacement method was used as it assumes the group mean best represents the missing data.

With regard to the MCS, there were 69 missing items, evenly distributed among the 17 questions that comprised the MCS. These missing items were subsequently replaced with the age group mean for the same reasons as above. As discussed in the Method section, items 1, 4, 5, and 12 had an option of not applicable, which was scored as 3.5[2] (midpoint between 1 and 6). For item 1, 36% ($\underline{n}$=99) of all 275 participants chose not applicable as their response, item 4=17% ($\underline{n}$=47), item 5=53% ($\underline{n}$=145), and for item 12=46% ($\underline{n}$=126). Because of the high number of not applicable selections in these items, it was decided that an additional analysis in this thesis would examine the data for the MCS for those participants who were married and had children and had completed items 1, 5, and 12 without indicating not applicable. This data reduction resulted in a

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[1] A mean replacement (irrespective of age group) of missing data was also tried for all dependent variables with essentially the same outcome.

[2] No method proved ideal to deal with data on the Mid-life Crisis Scale labeled as not applicable. Different methods were attempted (e.g., deletion of items 1, 5 and 12 for all participants, mean replacement) and the results were essentially the same.

sample of 56 out of the total 100 middle-aged men and only 18 of the total 75 older men (none of the men in the young adult group completed all of items 1, 5, and 12 on the scale without indicating not applicable at least twice). As a result, a decision was made to analyze data for the MCS only for the 56 men who were middle-aged married fathers and had completed all items on the scale without indicating not applicable.

Examination of the data for normality revealed three outliers for the dependent variable LDI and two outliers for the dependent variable MCS. However, the data for both of those variables were not significantly skewed, and a Levene test revealed that the assumption of homogeneous variances was met for the data for the MCS (p = .92, for the total sample; p = .76, for the reduced sample of middle-aged married fathers). Similarly, the data for the dependent variable GS-ASCQ were distributed normally and met the assumption of homogeneous variances according to the Levene's test (p = .41, for the total sample). In contrast, though, the Levene test was significant for the LDI data (p < .001, for the total sample). Attempts to normalize the data by dropping outliers or transforming data (using square root or logarithm methods) were not successful in making the variances more homogeneous. Nevertheless, as suggested by Harris (1975; cited in Tabachnick & Fidell, 1996), the ratio of largest to smallest sample sizes for groups was not larger than 4:1, and the ratio of largest to smallest variance was not greater than 20:1; therefore, results of subsequent analyses of variance were still considered robust.

Two sets of analyses were conducted. The first set included data for the LDI, GS-ASCQ and MCS measures for the total sample of all participants. The

data for the total sample were analyzed by conducting separate 3 (age) by 3 (identity style) analyses of variance (ANOVAs) with age (early, middle, and late adulthood) and identity style (information, normative, diffusion) as between-subjects variables. Rather than conduct a MANOVA, a decision was made on the suggestion of Huberty and Morris (1989) to conduct multiple ANOVAs, because there was "no interest in seeking any linear composite of the outcome [response] variables" and "the research being conducted was exploratory in nature" (p. 303). If significant two-way interactions were present, I would conduct multiple comparisons, one-way ANOVAs, to examine differences among means.

By using multiple ANOVAs, I set out to answer these three questions:

1)   Does age (young, middle, and older) make a difference for men in their levels of distress, self-worth, and perceived middle age stress levels, overall?

2)   Does identity style (information, normative, and diffused) make a difference for men in their levels of distress, self-worth, and perceived middle age stress, overall?

3)   Whatever the difference in distress, self-worth, and perceived middle age stress of young, middle, and older aged men, is this difference the same for an information, normative or diffused identity style?

A significant interaction means that the effect of identity style on one or more of the DVs (LDI, GS-ASCQ, MCS) is different for the three age groups. If no two-way interactions were present for the three DVs, the effect of identity style for the DVs would be the same for all three age groups, which is consistent with

Hypothesis 3. A main effect of age would mean that age makes a difference in distress, self-worth, and perceived middle age stress levels, overall, which is consistent with Hypothesis 1. A main effect of identity style would mean that identity style makes a difference in distress, self-worth, and perceived middle age stress levels, overall, which is consistent with Hypothesis 2. The ANOVAs will be supplemented by effect sizes (using eta-squared), which allows one to "judge the size of the statistical effect" between the independent and dependent variables in terms of a small, moderate, or large interpretation (Zumbo, 1997, p. 48). Kirk's (1996) criteria of omega-squared was used for interpretation of all effect sizes in this thesis. [3] In addition, the effect size will provide the size of difference between ANOVA A and ANOVA B. For a review of effect size, see Cohen (1992).

The second analysis included the MCS data for the sample of middle-aged married fathers. Data were analyzed by conducting a separate one-way ANOVA with identity style (information, normative, diffusion) as the between-subjects independent variable. A significant F ratio would be followed by Tukey's HSD test for differences among means. A main effect of identity style would mean that identity style makes a difference in perceived middle age stress levels, overall. An alpha level of .05 was used for all statistical tests.

Results for the Total Sample

Means and standard deviations are presented in Tables 2-4. There were no significant two-way age x identity style interactions for any of the three

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[3] Kirk (1996) refers to omega-squared; Zumbo (1997) states that you can interpret eta-squared the same way as omega-squared.

dependent variables: LDI, F(4, 266) = .224, p = .925, η^2 (eta-squared) = .003,

which is a trivial effect size (Kirk, 1996); GS-ASCQ, F(4, 266) = 1.35, p = .252, η^2

= .020, which is a small effect size (Kirk, 1996); MCS, F(4, 266) = 1.69, p = .154,

η^2 = .029, which is a small effect size (Kirk, 1996).

The ANOVA results revealed a significant main effect of age for the LDI,

F(2, 266) = 21.51, p < .001, η^2 = .139, which is a large effect size (Kirk, 1996)

and for the GS-ASCQ, F(2, 266) = 5.65, p = .004, η^2 = .041, which is a small

effect size (Kirk, 1996). Specifically, 13% of the variance in the LDI can be

accounted for by the main effect of age and four percent of the variance in the

GS-ASCQ can be accounted for by the main effect of age. There was no

significant main effect of age for the MCS, F(2, 266) = 2.66, p = .072, η^2 = .019,

which is a small effect size (Kirk, 1996). Examination of the relevant means for

the main effect of age for the LDI, using Tukey's HSD, indicated that all three age

groups were significantly different from each other. Specifically, the young adults

(M = 40.33, SD = 10.54) reported significantly greater distress than either the

middle adult or late adult groups (M = 35.88, SD = 8.54; M = 31.02, SD = 9.77,

respectively), and the middle-aged adults reported significantly more distress

than the older adults.

Tukey's HSD post-hoc test, examining the relevant means for the main

effect of age for the GS-ASCQ, indicated that the older age group (M = 2.98, SD

= .52) had significantly lower ratings of self-worth than either the young adult or

middle adult age groups (M = 3.17, SD = .51; M = 3.24, SD = .50, respectively),

and there was no significant difference in the self-worth ratings of the young adult and middle adult groups.

The ANOVA results revealed a significant main effect of identity style for each of the three dependent variables: LDI, $F(2, 266) = 13.68$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .093$, which is a moderate effect size (Kirk, 1996); GS-ASCQ, $F(2, 266) = 9.01$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .063$, which is a moderate effect size (Kirk, 1996); and MCS, $F(2, 266) = 7.02$, $p = .001$, $\eta^2 = .043$, which is a small effect size (Kirk, 1996). Specifically, nine percent of the variance in the LDI can be accounted for by the main effect of identity style, six percent of the variance in the GS-ASCQ can be accounted for by the main effect of identity style, and four percent of the variance in the MCS can be accounted for by the main effect of identity style. Examination of the relevant means for the main effect of identity style for the LDI, using Tukey's HSD, indicated that there was no significant difference between ratings of distress for individuals with an information style ($M = 37.01$, $SD = 10.87$) and those with a diffusion style ($M = 38.91$, $SD = 10.95$); however, individuals with the normative style reported significantly lower distress ($M = 31.74$, $SD = 6.81$) than individuals with the other two identity styles.

Tukey's HSD post-hoc test, examining the means for the main effect of identity style for the GS-ASCQ indicated that individuals with the normative style ($M = 3.31$, $SD = .49$) reported significantly higher levels of self-worth than the individuals with a diffusion style ($M = 3.01$, $SD = .55$), and there were no significant differences between either the normative style or the diffusion style and the information style ($M = 3.14$, $SD = .47$). In addition, examination of the relevant means for the main effect of identity style for the MCS indicated that

there was no significant difference between perceived stress of middle age scores for individuals with an information style ($\underline{M}$ = 40.39, $\underline{SD}$ = 6.16) and those with a diffusion style ($\underline{M}$ = 41.05, $\underline{SD}$ = 7.70); however, individuals with the normative style reported significantly lower perceived stress of middle age ($\underline{M}$ = 38.06, $\underline{SD}$ = 6.45) than individuals with the other two identity styles.

The eta-squared values of age and identity style for the three dependent variables (LDI, GS-ASCQ, MCS) were compared. For the LDI, age had a meaningfully larger eta-squared value (η^2 = .139) compared to identity style (η^2 = .093). In other words, age plays more of a role in distress than does identity style. Conversely, for the GS-ASCQ, identity style had a slightly larger eta-squared value (η^2 = .063) compared to age (η^2 = .041). In other words, identity style plays slightly more of a role in self-worth than does age. Similarly, for the MCS, identity style had a larger eta-squared value (η^2 = .043) compared to age (η^2 = .019). In other words, identity style plays more of a role of one's perceived stress of middle age than does age.

Analysis for the Sample of Middle-Aged Married Fathers

Means and standard deviations for the MCS are presented in Table 5. ANOVA results for the analysis of the MCS scores for middle-aged married fathers indicated that there was no significant effect of identity style, $\underline{F}$(2, 53) = .906, $\underline{p}$ = .410, η^2 = .033, which is a small effect size (Kirk, 1996).

Table 2

Means (and standard deviations) of the LDI as a function of age and identity style
for the total sample of all participants

| | IDENTITY STYLE | | | | |
AGE	Information	Normative	Diffusion	Total	n
19-25 years	40.78 (11.24)	35.28 (7.44)	44.06 (10.58)	40.33 (10.54)	100
35-55 years	37.16 (9.17)	31.54 (4.98)	38.21 (9.10)	35.88 (8.54)	100
65-87 years	31.81 (10.38)	27.14 (5.39)	33.23 (11.12)	31.02 (9.77)	75
Total	37.01 (10.87)	31.74 (6.81)	38.91 (10.95)		275
n	94	80	101	275	

Table 3

Means (and standard deviations) of the GS-ASCQ as a function of age and identity style for the total sample of all participants

AGE	IDENTITY STYLE				
	Information	Normative	Diffusion	Total	n
19-25 years	3.12 (.52)	3.29 (.41)	3.10 (.57)	3.17 (.51)	100
35-55 years	3.22 (.48)	3.39 (.48)	3.14 (.50)	3.24 (.50)	100
65-87 years	3.08 (.39)	3.22 (.60)	2.70 (.46)	2.98 (.52)	75
Total	3.14 (.47)	3.31 (.49)	3.01 (.55)		275
n	94	80	101	275	

Table 4

Means (and standard deviations) of the MCS as a function of age and identity
style for the total sample of all participants

| | IDENTITY STYLE | | | | |
AGE	Information	Normative	Diffusion	Total	$\underline{n}$
19-25 years	41.34 (5.29)	40.57 (4.87)	41.48 (8.05)	41.16 (6.25)	100
35-55 years	39.55 (6.94)	37.08 (6.66)	40.11 (7.17)	39.03 (7.00)	100
65-87 years	40.10 (6.36)	36.01 (7.21)	43.54 (7.78)	40.19 (7.65)	75
Total	40.39 (6.16)	38.06 (6.45)	41.50 (7.69)		275
$\underline{n}$	94	80	101	275	

Table 5

Means (and standard deviations) of the MCS as a function of age and identity
style for middle-aged married fathers

| | IDENTITY STYLE | | | |
VARIABLE	Information	Normative	Diffusion	n
MCS	38.27 (5.80)	36.48 (6.59)	39.36 (7.22)	56
n	15	16	25	

DISCUSSION

In this study, the roles of identity style and age on general distress and self-worth in young, middle-aged, and older men were investigated. The ultimate goal was to gain a better understanding of men's identity development across the lifespan and men's experience of stress in various age groupings. Current level of distress, self-worth, and perceived stress of middle age were measured for adult men at three different age periods (early, middle, and late adulthood). It was hypothesized that the experience of stress during middle age would not be unique to this life period compared to early and late adulthood, but rather a function of an individual's identity style. In addition, it was hypothesized, irrespective of age grouping, that: (a) a normative identity style would be related to low levels of stress; (b) a diffuse/avoidant (diffusion) identity style would be related to high levels of stress; and, (c) an information identity style would be related to low to moderate levels of stress.

These hypotheses were confirmed. There was nothing unique about the period of middle age for men, in regards to distress or the perceived stress of middle age, compared to young and older men. Although middle-aged men experienced more distress than older men, young adults experienced the highest levels of distress. In contrast, though, older men experienced lower levels of self-worth than either young or middle-aged men. In addition, as predicted, men with a diffusion identity style reported higher levels of overall distress and lower levels of general self-worth than men with a normative identity style, irrespective of age grouping. In other words, the normative identity style had the lowest distress levels, those with a diffusion identity style had the highest distress levels,

and those with the information identity style fell in-between. However, this same picture did not emerge for the sample of the 56 middle-aged married fathers, perhaps due to the small sample size. In other words, for the sample of middle-aged married fathers using the MCS, there was no difference in their levels of perceived stress of middle age for an information, normative or diffused identity style.

Stress, Self-Worth and Age

As discussed in the Introduction, Erikson was instrumental in providing a framework for psychologists to study adult development with his psychosocial stage theory. Erikson suggested that individuals confront eight specific issues throughout their lifespan, building upon the experiences of previously resolved stages. With increasing age, there are new dilemmas that individuals are propelled to face by virtue of biological maturation (Erikson, 1959). Erikson's sequential stage of dilemmas for individuals over their lifespan suggests continuous development. Specifically, the older the man, the better he is able to unravel life's challenges due to his exposure and resolution of earlier psychosocial dilemmas. For example, the middle-aged man is expected to have more experience and success with relationships after having resolved Erikson's sixth psychosocial dilemma of "intimacy." Thus, the present study showed support for Erikson's theory. Specifically, as a man becomes older, he experiences less overall life stress or distress, perhaps as a result of maturity developed from coping with the sequence of Erikson's psychosocial dilemmas.

In addition, this study demonstrated a unique experience for older men, a phenomenon which Erikson discussed in his psychosocial theory of development. That is, the older men in the study reported lower ratings of self-worth than the other age groups. Erikson (1959, 1966) stressed the importance of ego integration for men during their old age. Toward the end of their lifespan, individuals reach the eighth and final psychosocial stage of development, ego integrity versus despair. In Erikson's words: "Only he who in some way has taken care of things and people and has adapted himself to the triumphs and disappointments of being, by necessity, the originator of others and the generator of things and ideas- only he may gradually grow the fruit of the seven stages" (Erikson, 1959, p. 104). It is during this stage that man reviews the life that he has lived and either accepts his failures and disappointments, combined with the contributions he has made to the world, or chooses to hold on to the guilt, distrust, and hopelessness of the past, thus feeling a sense of despair. Erikson (1959) described those individuals having a sense of integrity as accepting their mortality; whereas, those individuals lacking ego integration fear death. Similarly, Sheehy (1998) described those men who feel a sense of despair as "feeling worthless... having worked their whole life and having nothing to show for it... emotionally bankrupt, alone inside" (p. 228).

Other research has focused on the stress during mid-life or the mid-life crisis period for men. The present study found nothing unique about the period of middle age for men, in regards to distress or perceived stress of middle age, compared to younger and older men. Previous research, focusing on the period of young adulthood and middle age, has also found no universal peaking of

stress during middle age in men (Farrell & Rosenberg, 1981; Sheehy, 1998) and in research on middle-aged women (Josselson, 1996). Farrell and Rosenberg (1981) examined the period of middle age for men and found that rather than all middle-aged men experiencing stress during mid-life; men have a variety of experiences. From the current study, it is also clear that men's experiences of stress during mid-life are influenced by one's identity style. Farrell and Rosenberg's (1981) Mid-life Crisis Scale (MCS) was included in this study as an additional measure of the perceived stress that men face during the middle age period. The presence of missing data and the high utilization of the choice "not applicable" on the MCS, in this study, suggested that this scale is only applicable to a specific group of men. That is, men who are middle-aged, married, have children, and who are currently employed. Particularly, it is interesting to note that at least a third of the participants (mostly young adults) in this study complained to the researcher that the MCS was not applicable to their present circumstances. What becomes evident is that the MCS is a scale that was designed for a very specific group of middle-aged men. Using the MCS outside of a middle-aged population was a challenge, particularly given the lack of applicability to a younger and older male population.

The current findings are contradictory to those reported by Levinson (1978). Levinson (1978) studied the mid-life transition period in men, and found that all men experienced a universal heightened period of stress or crisis, which was inescapable, during middle age. Levinson's highly educated and specific sample may explain the contradictory finding. Three quarters of his sample consisted of highly educated university professors, writers, and business

executives. These people would have been exposed to a wide range of personal and academic experiences and opportunities to think about their lives in detail. Tamir (1989) suggests that the life course of the working class and the upper-middle-class are different inherently. Particularly, social forces "influence daily routine, economic stability, interpersonal relations, and philosophy of life" based on which social class a man resides (p. 158).

Stress, Self-Worth and Identity Style

The process of developing a sense of self or identity occurs from birth and continues throughout a person's life. Identity is defined as "a self-structure – an internal, self-constructed, dynamic organization of drives, abilities, beliefs, and individual history" (Marcia, 1980, p. 159). Josselson (1996) described it as knowing who one is and experiencing purpose in life. However, identity is not solely an individualistic process due to the fact that social environments (e.g., family relationships, social class, ethnic background) exert influence on the individual (Markstrom-Adams, 1992; Farrell & Rosenberg, 1981). Identity is a dynamic structure that continually changes; individuals shed, add, and alter parts of their identities over time. During identity formation, some individuals develop a clear sense of identity, whereas others show signs of a diffused identity style (Erikson, 1968).

In the present study, men with a normative identity style were found to be more "protected" from stress and low self-worth compared to those with a diffused identity style who were more "threatened" with stress and low self-worth. Additionally, those with an information identity style experienced stress and self-

worth at a level between that found for a normative and diffused identity style. These results are consistent with those found in previous research on identity style. Marcia (1967) reported that those with a normative identity style had the lowest levels of anxiety and the highest levels of authoritarianism, whereas those with a diffused identity style possessed the lowest self-confidence and were found to be difficult to deal with socially, compared with the other identities.

Josselson (1996) examined identity in women over a 25-year period and found significant differences in the behaviour and personality between those with a normative and diffusion identity style. She found that normatives grew up in homes that had provided rigid structure, had overly involved authoritarian parents, and were expected to silence any inner thoughts that deviated from that of the family. Josselson (1996) noted that normatives think in terms or "right" or "wrong" rather than contemplating their own decisions and consequently, "feel secure and certain of themselves" (p. 46). In her words:

> The Guardians [normatives] idealized their families and experienced them as warm havens, places filled with love and appreciation of their goodness. Their self-worth was high and their anxiety was low. Secure in knowing what was right and certain of their family's approval of them, they could press forward on their path, undistracted by temptation or inner crisis (Josselson, 1996, p. 46-47).

Perhaps normatives have the security and luxury of not having to expend the mental energy to contemplate decisions before them, as they have the inner security and knowledge of what is the "right" choice to make, based on their parent's or authority figure's good perceptions or positive regard for them. This

auto-response type system, allows normatives to respond confidently to immediate tasks and pressures with the knowledge that they have made the right decision and have the support of authority figures. Thus, those with a normative identity style have the advantage of lower stress by knowing the appropriate choices to make, and knowing that they have approval of their parents and society. This results in the increased self-worth and confidence for these individuals.

With regard to those with a diffused identity style, previous research has shown that these individuals grew up in homes with parents who were permissive and unavailable, with little stability in the environment (Marcia, 1980). Specifically, as diffused individuals aged, Josselson (1996) found they live only in the present, in a "lost" state, without any linkage to their past or future. She described these individuals as having no stability and direction in their lives, which results in this group having the "most learning and the most adjusting to do" of all the identities (p. 143). However, Josselson (1996) described diffused women as the most creative of her sample; unequivocally, these women had inner dreams and wishes, but "the voices of their inner selves were unintelligible and hard to translate into the language of plans, beliefs, or goals" (p. 146). Nevertheless, the constant bombardment of instability combined with little or no real or perceived social support from their parents' or authority figures, may explain why diffused individuals exhibit behaviour that is reactive at a crisis level rather than responsive.

Cialdini (1993), who studied human behaviour, found that society values personal consistency over inconsistency in individuals. Those individuals with

high internal consistency are respected by society and seen as honest and rational, whereas those individuals with inconsistency are not highly regarded in society and are even seen, in some cases, as mentally unstable (Cialdini, 1993). Perhaps, this may help explain how the lack of commitment and foresight into the future that diffused individuals possess, combined with little or no approval of their actions from their parents and society in general, contribute to their low self-worth and high level of stress.

The Psychosocial Development of Men

With regard to distress at a particular period in a man's life, this study found that younger men experienced the highest levels of overall distress in their lives compared to middle-aged and older men. This finding is not surprising in the society in which we live. Pollack (1998) suggested that mixed messages exist about what it is to be a man in today's society. Specifically, adolescence has changed dramatically over the course of a couple of generations; adolescence is no longer a safe place for a boy to discover himself. Rather, today adolescence is a period of intense identity confusion and peril that Pollack suggests is due to two underlying psychological factors. First, today's society places contradictory expectations on young men. That is, society wants boys to be macho, confident, and assertive, while at the same time sharing their feelings, being sensitive, and egalitarian towards women. "In short, we want our boys to be sensitive New Age guys and still be cool dudes" (Pollack, p. xxiii). Second, boys are unsure that becoming a man in the adult world will be fulfilling. Pollack suggested that no appealing, attainable male role model might be seen to exist.

As an informal follow-up to this study, I asked 20 young adult men between the ages of 20 and 24, "Do you personally know of an appealing male role model?" Unequivocally, all but one of the 20 males replied "no." One male taking part in this interview offered the words: "The role models of my father's era are no longer acceptable in today's society. Society dictates what men need, when, in reality, we need something else."

Similarly, Erikson (1959, 1966) found that young adulthood is the beginning of occupational, ideological, and sexual exploration during which time a man confronts his identity- who he is today and who he will become in the future. Those men who do not discover who they are and what occupational role to pursue are at risk of experiencing great turmoil in their lives (Erikson, 1966). Others such as Sheehy (1998) suggested that, with the changing priorities of businesses during the 1990s and the collapse of the traditional work hierarchy, young men do not have a clear understanding of where they stand as an employee. On a similar note, Jung (1971) postulated that men in their early twenties faced the emotional challenge of negotiating their adolescence coupled with their new and immediate demands of work and family. These theoretical treatises, together with the present study, strongly suggest that young adulthood is a period of heightened stress in a man's life. This finding suggests the need for society to develop an understanding of the challenges all young men face on their journey to becoming "real" men in the future.

Although the present study found that the experience of stress in men during middle age was not unique to this life period compared to early and late adulthood, there is support that suggests middle-aged men re-evaluate their

"authenticity." For example, Sheehy (1998) described young men in their twenties as "generally preoccupied with crafting a false self- a front tailored to please or pass- that is useful in earning approval, rewards, and recognition from the external world" (p. 34). Thus, young men are actors in the movie of life with a non-negotiable script that society expects these men to follow while pursuing their chosen identity. During middle age, Sheehy describes a dissonance that develops between "the made to order self and his more authentic self" (p. 34). In other words, the tightly developed false self that man has developed through young adulthood is questioned in middle age. Jung (1971) called middle age the noon of life in which men begin to focus on individualization of the self. Perhaps men grow tired of living by the unwritten rules that society has placed on them and develop the confidence to shed the tiring, false self. Similarly, middle-aged women also reported experiencing a re-evaluation of their selves rather than a period of heightened stress in their lives (Josselson, 1996).

With regard to the experiences of older men, those 65 years and older, little research exists. Perhaps this is due to the difficulty in obtaining participants for scientific research. In this study, the researcher found it challenging to have senior men participate in this research. One male senior stated on his refusal, "I've reached a certain age where I don't have to do things that I don't feel like anymore." Sheehy (1998) describes those men who are over 65 years of age as having the worst behind them, surviving a critical period of high risk of heart attacks, strokes, or illness. Clearly, future research on identity and stress must attempt to include, an often-overlooked segment of our population, senior men.

Limitations of the Current Study and Suggestions for Future Research

It is important to note the possible limitations in the current study. First, an unusually high number of diffused individuals may have avoided taking part in this study, as they tend to have some difficulty with making commitments (e.g., completing the questionnaires) and in some cases, are uncooperative in social situations. Conversely, an unusually high number of normative identity styled men, compared to the other two identity styles, may have participated in this study due to their highly conforming nature and obedience to authority. In addition, it is likely that the social desirability level of the participants affected their self-report questionnaire responses to some extent.

As this study was not longitudinal in design, another potential challenge was the impact of cohort effects. Older men in this study, who once faced a world war, a depression, and political instability around the world, no longer face these challenges in their lives. Therefore, these older men, today, may be kinder in constructing the experiences of their lives and what constitutes distress to them. For example, some of the older and middle-aged men may have been part of the Vietnam War in their late teens to 20's, whereas the young men in this study were likely far removed from war participation. Alternatively, today's young men face increased challenges finding meaningful or steady employment. Presently, educators tell young men that they will have three to five different careers over their lifetime and a university degree no longer guarantees employment in today's market, which may reduce the certainty in men's lives. Therefore, longitudinal research of men would be valuable in better

understanding the complex links between identity style and stress for men at various developmental stages.

Generalization of the study's findings is also limited by the particular method of data collection used. Specifically, because the study was not a true random sample of the population, it is possible that a certain portion of the population was not represented in the study (i.e., Asian-Canadian, Indo-Canadian, individuals from a lower socio-economic class). In addition, as the Central-Interior of British Columbia generally has a high Caucasian population compared to that of other large urban Canadian cities, generalization of the results would have to be made with caution. Overall, the sample obtained in this study is representative of male Caucasian, middle-class families. Future research is needed to compare the identity styles and stress levels of young, middle, and older men from a variety of social classes using a longitudinal design.

Conclusions

Results of the present study demonstrated that men of different ages and identity styles experience significant differences in their stress levels. Middle-aged and older men experienced less overall stress than do young men. Regardless of age, those men with a normative identity style experienced less overall stress than do those with a diffusion identity style. Men with an information identity style are found to experience stress at a level between that found for normative and diffusion identity styles.

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Figure 1 – Levinson
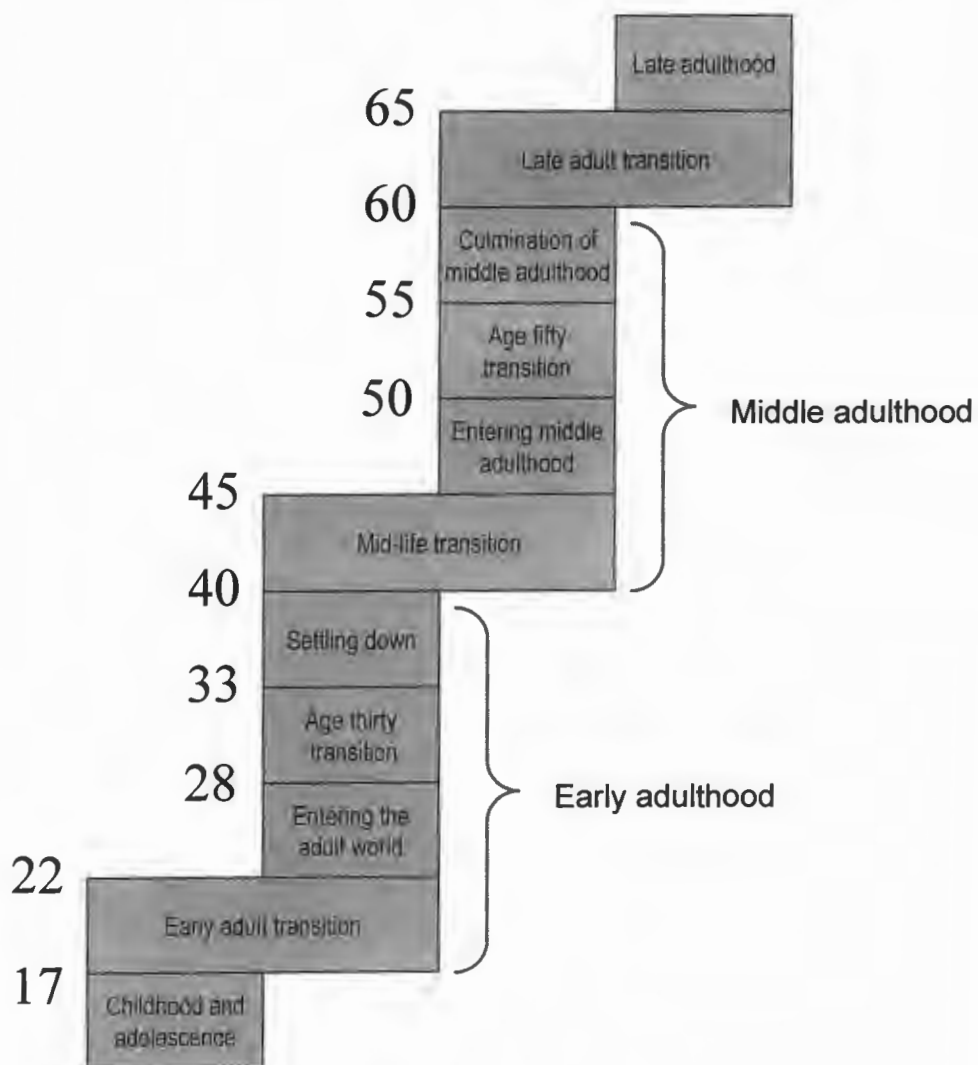
Source: Levinson, 1978

Figure 2 – Farrell and Rosenberg

	Denial of Stress	Open Confrontation with Stress
Dissatisfied with Life	Punitive-Disenchanted	Anti-Hero
Satisfied with Life	Pseudo-Developed	Transcendent-Generative

Source: Farrell & Rosenberg, 1981

Figure 3 – Identity Status versus Identity Style

Identity Status

LEVEL OF EXPLORATION

High — Moratorium | Achievement

Low — Diffusion | Foreclosure

Low   High

LEVEL OF COMMITMENT

Identity Style

Grotevant & Adams (1984) Extended Objective Measure of Ego Identity
Berzonsky (1989, 1992) Identity Style Inventory
White et al. (1998) Identity Style Inventory Sixth Grade

LEVEL OF EXPLORATION

High — Information

Low — Diffuse/Avoidant | Normative

Low   High

LEVEL OF COMMITMENT

Appendix A – Information Sheet

[Printed on UNBC letter head paper]

Dear Sir:

We are conducting a very exciting research project involving men over the age of 19 in the Prince George area. The goal of this project is to learn about the feelings of normal men in the areas of family life, health, and work. This is one of the first studies to be done in Prince George that focuses solely on men, and it is being fully supported by the University of Northern British Columbia Office of Research. This study is extremely valuable to both men and to psychologists because little is known about how men feel about their families, health, and work. The purpose of this letter is to ensure that you understand the purpose of this exercise, the nature of your involvement, and your rights as a participant. This information sheet should provide sufficient information for you to determine whether or not you wish to participate in the study.

Your participation, which is strictly voluntary, would involve completing 5 short questionnaires, at your convenience, in your home, at work, or at a public venue (e.g., library) and will take about 15 minutes to complete. The questionnaires are not a test; we are simply interested in each person's own feelings. Please be assured that completed questionnaires will be kept in a locked and secure place at the university. Your name will NOT appear on any questionnaires. Completed questionnaires will remain in a locked and secure place at the university after the study is completed.

Although we cannot give you individual feedback about your individual performance on the questionnaires, if you would like more information about the study, a summary of the results, or have any questions, please contact Ray Zukanovic at (250) 960-6062.

Sincerely,

Ray Zukanovic,   Sherry Beaumont,
M.Sc. candidate   Professor of Psychology

YOU MAY KEEP THIS SHEET FOR YOUR OWN RECORDS.

Appendix B – Identity Style Inventory Sixth Grade

Please circle a number between 1 and 5 that best reflects how much you disagree or agree with the sentence. There are no right or wrong answers.

YOUR FIRST REACTION TO EACH QUESTION SHOULD BE YOUR ANSWER.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	somewhat disagree	unsure	somewhat agree	Strongly Agree

1. I know what I believe about religion. 1 2 3 4 5

2. I've spent a lot of time thinking about what I should do with my life. 1 2 3 4 5

3. I'm not sure what I'm doing in life. 1 2 3 4 5

4. I act the way I do because of the values I was brought up with. 1 2 3 4 5

5. I've spent a lot of time reading and/or talking to others about religious ideas. 1 2 3 4 5

6. When I talk to someone about a problem, I try and see their point of view. 1 2 3 4 5

7. I know what I want to do with my future. 1 2 3 4 5

8. I don't worry about values ahead of time; I decide things as they happen. 1 2 3 4 5

9. I'm not really sure what I believe about religion. 1 2 3 4 5

10. I was brought up to know what to work for. 1 2 3 4 5

11. I'm not sure which values I really hold. 1 2 3 4 5

12. I know where the government and country should be going. 1 2 3 4 5

13. If I don't worry about my problems they usually work themselves out. 1 2 3 4 5

14. I'm not sure what I want to do in the future. 1 2 3 4 5

15. I feel like the work I do (or have done in the past) is right for me. 1 2 3 4 5

16. I've spent a lot of time reading about and/or trying to understand political issues. 1 2 3 4 5

17. I'm not thinking about my future now- it's still a long way off. 1 2 3 4 5

18. I've spent a lot of time talking to people to find a set of beliefs that works for me. 1 2 3 4 5

19. I've never had any serious doubts about my religious beliefs. 1 2 3 4 5

	1 Strongly Disagree	2 somewhat disagree	3 unsure	4 somewhat agree	5 Strongly Agree

20. I'm not sure what job is right for me. 1 2 3 4 5

21. I've known since I was young what I wanted to be. 1 2 3 4 5

22. I have a strong set of beliefs that I use when I make a decision. 1 2 3 4 5

23. It's better to have a firm set of beliefs than to be open to different ideas. 1 2 3 4 5

24. When I have to make a decision, I wait as long as I can to see what will happen. 1 2 3 4 5

25. When I have a problem, I do a lot of thinking to understand it. 1 2 3 4 5

26. It's best to get advice from experts (preachers, doctors, lawyers, teachers) when I have a problem. 1 2 3 4 5

27. I don't take life too serious. I just try to enjoy it. 1 2 3 4 5

28. It's better to have one set of values than to consider other value options. 1 2 3 4 5

29. I try not to think about or deal with problems as long as I can. 1 2 3 4 5

30. My problems can be interesting challenges. 1 2 3 4 5

31. I try to avoid problems that make me think. 1 2 3 4 5

32. Once I know how to solve a problem, I like to stick with it. 1 2 3 4 5

33. When I make decisions, I take a lot of time to think about my choices. 1 2 3 4 5

34. I like to deal with things the way my parents said I should. 1 2 3 4 5

35. I like to think through my problems and deal with them on my own. 1 2 3 4 5

36. When I ignore a potential problem, things usually work out. 1 2 3 4 5

37. When I have to make a big decision, I like to know as much as I can about it. 1 2 3 4 5

38. When I know a problem will cause me stress, I try to avoid it. 1 2 3 4 5

39. People need to be committed to a set of values to live a full life. 1 2 3 4 5

40. It's best to get advice from friends or family when I have a problem. 1 2 3 4 5

Appendix C – Mid-Life Stress Scale

Unless otherwise noted, circle the number that indicates the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement, according the following scale:

| 1. Strongly Agree | 2. Agree | 3. Slightly Agree |
| 4. Slightly Disagree | 5. Disagree | 6. Strongly Disagree |

N/A = not applicable

1. Marriage is as rewarding and enjoyable after 15 or 20 years as it is in the earlier years. 1 2 3 4 5 6 N/A

2. Many men I know are undergoing what you would call a change of life or a middle-age identity crisis. 1 2 3 4 5 6

3. Almost any job or occupation becomes routine and dull if you keep at it for many years. 1 2 3 4 5 6

4. I am still finding new challenges and interest in my work. 1 2 3 4 5 6 N/A

5. In some ways, I wish my children were young again. 1 2 3 4 5 6 N/A

6. When your child grows up, he is almost bound to disappoint you. 1 2 3 4 5 6

7. Many people claim that middle age is one of the most difficult time of life. Has it been (or do you think it will be) that way for you? 1 2 3 4 5 6

8. I wish I had the opportunity to start afresh and do things over, knowing what I do now. 1 2 3 4 5 6

9. Many of the things you seek when you are young don't bring true happiness. 1 2 3 4 5 6

10. I find myself thinking about what kind of person I am and what I really want out of life. 1 2 3 4 5 6

11. A person must remain loyal to his commitments if they do not turn out the way he expected. 1 2 3 4 5 6

12. How would you characterize your relationship to your wife now? 1 2 3 4 5 N/A
(1. Very Close; 2. Close; 3. Neither Close Nor Distant; 4. Distant; 5. Far Apart)

Physical Health Questions

1. Do you have any particular physical or health trouble?

   If yes, what is it? _____

2. Have you ever had the following diseases?

   Asthma
   If yes, when was that? _____

   Hay fever
   If yes, when was that? _____

   Skin trouble
   If yes, when was that? _____

   Stomach ulcer
   If yes, when was that? _____

3. Do you feel you are bothered by all sorts of pains and ailments in different parts of your body?

4. Have you ever felt you were going to have a nervous breakdown?

Appendix D – Global Subscale - Adult Self-Concept Questionnaire

These are statements that allow people to describe themselves. There are no right or wrong answers since people differ markedly. Please read the entire sentence across. First decide which one of the two parts of each statement best describes you; then go to that side of the statement and check whether that is just sort of true for you or really true for you. You will just check **ONE** of the four boxes for each statement.

	Really True for Me	Sort of True for Me					Sort of True for Me	Really True for Me
Example:								
A.	□	☒	Some adults can really laugh at themselves	BUT	Other adults have a hard time laughing at themselves.		□	□
1.	□	□	Some adults like the way they are leading their lives	BUT	Other adults don't like the way they are leading their lives.		□	□
2.	□	□	Some adults are very happy being the way they are	BUT	Other adults would like to be different.		□	□
3.	□	□	Some adults sometimes question whether they are a worthwhile person	BUT	Other adults feel that they are a worthwhile person.		□	□
4.	□	□	Some adults are disappointed with themselves	BUT	Other adults are quite pleased with themselves.		□	□
5.	□	□	Some adults are dissatisfied with themselves	BUT	Other adults are satisfied with themselves.		□	□
6.	□	□	Some adults like the kind of person they are	BUT	Other adults would like to be someone else.		□	□

Appendix E – Life Distress Inventory

This scale is intended to estimate your **current** level of distress with each of the eighteen areas of your life listed below. Please circle one of the numbers (1-7) beside each area.

Please answer **ALL** questions even if they don't immediately seem applicable.
(E.g., if NOT married, how distressed does that make you feel?)

	The most distress I've ever felt	Extremely distressed	Very distressed	Moderately distressed	Somewhat distressed	Very little distress	No distress
Marriage	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Sex	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Relationship to children	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Relationship to other relatives	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Household management	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Financial situation	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Employment	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Education	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Recreation/leisure	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Social life	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Religion	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Management of time	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Physical health	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Personal independence	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Role of alcohol in home	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Satisfaction with life	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Expectations for future	7	6	5	4	3	2	1

Appendix F – Demographic Questionnaire

Demographic Questionnaire

The following demographic information is collected to help describe the sample.

1.   Date of birth: _____

2.   Mother tongue: _____

3.   Ethnicity: ____ Aboriginal   ____ African-Canadian
                    ____ Asian   ____ Black
                    ____ Caucasian   ____ Other: _____

4.   Marital Status: ___ married / common law   ___ single   ___ widowed
                      ___ divorced   ___ separated

5.   Check your **highest** education level completed:
      ____ elementary school (please specify grade completed) ____
      ____ secondary school (please specify grade completed) ____
      ____ high school diploma
      ____ trade/technical school (please specify: _____)
      ____ some college
      ____ college diploma (please specify: _____)
      ____ some university
      ____ university degree
      ____ Other: (please specify: _____)

6.   Your occupation or previous occupation: _____

      Full-time   Part-time
      ___ F/T   ___ P/T   ___ retired   ___ currently unemployed

7.   Number of children you have: _____

8.   Ages of your children: _____

9.   In general, how would you rate your health?

      ____ Excellent
      ____ Very good
      ____ Good
      ____ Fair
      ____ Poor

10.   Compared to others your age, how would you rate your health?

      ____ Excellent
      ____ Very good
      ____ Good
      ____ Fair
      ____ Poor