

# Bringing Self-Growth Theory to Practice Using the Self-Growth Methodology

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## Abstract

*The focus of process educators, over the past 25 years, has been on learning-to-learn and the generalized growth of the large set of learning skills now updated and represented in the 2019 Classification of Learning Skills. Insights from earlier Process Education articles on self-growth converged around ten substantive components associated with values and identity. Utilizing data collected from the analysis of the responses and written outcomes from hundreds of Learning-to-Learn Camp participants and college recovery course students, indicated that self-growth is a developmental process that must be aligned with values and identity by describing intent or purpose, life factors and goals, and performance criteria that support individual customizing of assessment and tracking of progress. Thus, the need for the Self-Growth Methodology emerged. This article describes the theory of self-growth, provides scholarly background, and expands understanding of the new Self-Growth Methodology by examining its six stages and the steps within each stage. Self-Growth Methodology discussion provides both a holistic sense of self-growth as well as a resource to guide others in changing their life by expanding and improving quality of self-growth.*

## Introduction

*“To lament that we shall not be alive a hundred years hence, is the same folly as to be sorry we were not alive a hundred years ago.”*

— French philosopher Michel de Montaigne (1991/1580)

Although he lived over 400 years ago, French philosopher Michel de Montaigne’s essays (1991/1580) provide a contemplative study for capturing the creative potential of individuals to understand self in terms of their human nature. Covering wide-ranging themes that include thought, education, freedom, motivation, happiness, love, fear, experience, and human action, Montaigne helped shape the process of reflection on the self and society in terms of “how to live” — an enduring legacy that remains timeless.

The philosophy of self-growth thus has been of great interest for hundreds of years and can be studied through reflective analysis of many literary works such as Montaigne’s Essays (1991/1580). However, these cultural resources do not make clear what needs to be done, in a practical way, to increase personal capability for self-growth for everyone; not just those gifted enough to achieve it for themselves. Life’s quality is self-determined (Sartre 1946/2005), even though social contexts and relationships have substantial influence on priorities and opportunities. Personal growth, however, is an active and intentional involvement of the individual in their personal growth process (De Freitas et al., 2016; Robitschek, 1998).

Several important advances in Process Education (PE) research are the basis for an empirically defined hypothesis for generalizing achievement of self-growth as a holistic process, that is, self-growth occurs by strengthening a specific set of learning skills called the mentoring skills. The PE philosophy posits that an individual’s life can be most gratifying as a self-grower. To this end, a newly created Self-Growth Methodology provides guidance and insights for implementing the self-growth approach to life.

The remainder of this article first discusses the literature on the history of self-growth as well as its determinants to lay the foundation for the theoretical underpinnings for the need for the development of the tool. Next, we discuss the holistic nature and inter-relatedness of the process used to create the Self-Growth Methodology. Then we discuss each stage of the methodology including how the literature drives how an individual should carry out each step within that stage. Finally, we discuss the face validity of the Self-Growth Methodology and future research.

## What is Self-Growth?

*Self-Growth* is engagement in an independent, self-conscious endeavor to become a better version of oneself through planned actions (Jain et al., 2015). It is an ideal of human development (Maslow, 1971) that involves transformation of challenge into opportunities. Self-growers take control of their own destiny by creating and regulating their own challenges, serving as leaders and mentors,

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and ultimately becoming capable of skillfully using self-mentoring to facilitate and self-assess their own growth.

Thus, self-growth can be viewed as a lifelong process to improve not only one's performance capability through formal and informal approaches, but also to expand one's sense of identity because of what one has chosen to undertake. Influential thinkers and innovators throughout history including Confucius' (551-479 BCE) theory of self-cultivation (Tu, 1979; "Confucius" n.d.) and Maslow's theory of self-actualization (1970) have described and analyzed self-growth based on life experiences and belief in the possibility of self-growth for themselves. Maslow's (1943) integration of self-actualization and transcendence merges spiritual, aesthetic, and emotional states in which one feels intense joy, peace, well-being, and an awareness of the ultimate truth and unity among all things. Positive psychology theorists' (e.g., Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000) focus on "the good life" incorporates fulfillment and living well. Seligman (2011) identified five traits of *flourishing*: 1. Positive Emotions, 2. Engagement, 3. Relationships, 4. Meaning, 5. Purpose and Accomplishments.

It is relatively easier to gain knowledge, improve learning-to-learn, and increase performance growth, when these are contrasted with self-growth. Csikszentmihalyi (1996), noting that gaining true expertise in any performance area takes many years, argues that optimal experiences occur when a person is totally immersed in a performance. He identifies the characteristics of "flow," but assumes that such experiences occur because of personal motivation that results in persistence over time to engage in many learning challenges related to attaining expertise. Self-Growth requires much greater advances in a person's current self-concept such as openness to innovative ways to move toward one's ideal self. Wirtz et al. (2016) found that most of their research participants rated self-esteem as more important for a high-quality life than self-control habits. Self-regulation may be undervalued however, because better quality of life occurs through habits of self-control (e.g., Galla & Duckworth, 2015). It appears that most people fail to see the connection of their own agency to control of their life prospects and instead use descriptive traits to explain quality of life without asking how it occurs. The implication of these discoveries is that self-growth is characterized by distinctive criteria and different kinds of awareness and states of consciousness.

When an individual discovers that a growth mindset opens up an unlimited potential, they can emotionally commit to working on a better version of themselves (Dweck, 2006; Kuszewski 2011; Sternberg, 2008). Based on her

groundbreaking theory of constructed emotion, Barrett (2017) explains, "When it comes to your experiences and perceptions you are much more in the driver's seat than you might think. You predict, construct, and act. You are an architect of your experience." (p. 152) Testing their theory of psychological well-being, Ryff and Keyes (1995) found that a self-growth initiative is one of the key dimensions of positive psychological functioning. Other key dimensions include self-acceptance, positive relations with others, autonomy, environmental mastery, purpose in life, and personal growth. Many educators are passionate about helping their students to attain a growth mindset (Dweck, 2012) and to take control of the direction of their lives. Thus, self-growth is a lifelong pursuit of actions and choices to improve one's awareness and capability to achieve life goals and life quality (Apple, Ellis & Leasure, 2018).

Process Educators have been researching topics related to self-growth such as learning performance, growth capability, self-growth capability, components of self-growth, performance mentoring, and life coaching (e.g., Jain et al., 2015; Murray, 2019; Ellis et al., 2019; Wenner et al., 2019). Additionally, their research has provided empirical support for the distinctive nature of self-growth as a set of challenging learning skills that require far more support than the growth skills clearly demonstrated by Learning-to-Learn Camp and Recovery Course artifacts and observations. To support the building of realistic pathways toward the behaviors and mindsets that are required for improvement of quality of life, the Self-Growth Methodology was developed.

## Development of the Self-Growth Methodology

The development of the Self-Growth Methodology began with a synthesis of 25 years of PE scholarship in which defining characteristics and criteria are integrated into its multiple facets in a step-by-step process to help develop meaning in one's unique life. Using this data, researchers created a benchmark to distinguish between growth and self-growth. *Growth* is the capability to improve one's quality of life through performance development while *self-growth* is the ability to strengthen one's growth capability independently. This synthesis of research was complemented by an analysis of extensive observational and outcomes data from hundreds of Learning-to-Learn Camp participants and a series of college recovery courses utilizing the 40 growth skills identified from the 2019 Classification of Learning Skills (2019 CLS) that most Learning to Learn camp participants achieved during their experience (Apple, Ellis & Ulbrich, 2019). Additionally, despite the intent of the Learning to Learn facilitators, it was discovered that participants did not attain 36 much more

challenging learning skills. These 36 skills comprise the skills necessary for mentoring and are the foundational to achieving self-growth (See Appendix C). The Self Growth Methodology focuses on helping an individual improve these mentoring skills and assist with their development to help with self-growth.

The Self-Growth Methodology is designed with a diverse set of elements and processes to fit each individual's need to direct attention to overcoming life risks that are barriers even to learning. The positive changes of self-growth are most likely to occur through strengthening the set of 36 mentoring learning skills. The most important aim for the methodology is to provide a framework that will help individuals, regardless of past and present life issues, to consciously choose a more positive future. Many situations provide opportunities for self-growth but a person must own the experiences and independently move ahead by establishing positive habits based on authentic values. Deciding to become a self-grower is not a simple matter; it requires new knowledge, growth of multiple performance capabilities, and reflective self-awareness that is tested in many life situations.

The Self-Growth Methodology has six stages as depicted in Figure 1. Central to the methodology is the SII Assessment (Utschig & Apple, 2009). Examining one's *Strengths*,

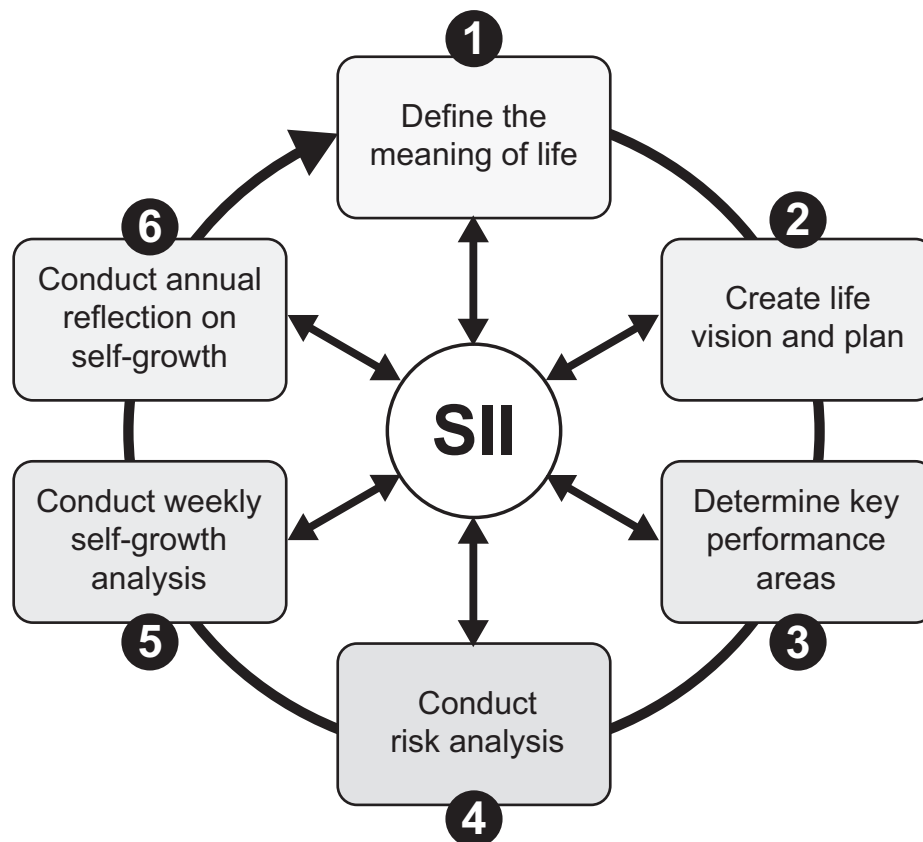
*Improvements*, and *Insights* in each stage of the methodology offers a systematic, holistic process to improve the next performance.

### Components of the Self-Growth Methodology

(Note that Process Education terms specific to the Self-Growth Methodology (SGM) appear in bold italics from this point forward. While defined within the work, Appendix B: Glossary of Terms provides a full delineation of terms as a reference.)

A person's *quality of life* is the overall meaning that life brought to the individual and the meaning the individual had on the impact of the collective quality of life for other people. The journey of a self-grower begins with envisioning life as a performance. Analyzing performance and quality of life, Pruijt (2000) observes that most successful examples demonstrate performance and quality to be highly connected. Robitschek (1998) argues that personal growth skills are transferable to different growth opportunities and life stages. Higgins (1989) explores experiences of discrepancy among three kinds of self-images: the actual self, the ideal self (who one would like to become), and the ought to be self (the self that one assumes that others think they should be). In the PE perspective, these three facets influence the various roles that need to

**Figure 1** The Conceptual Stages of PE Self-Growth Methodology



be developed for one's sense of identity. A person's **identity** includes their personal values, life vision, ways of being, passion, and drive that lead to their own interpretation of experiences, relationships, deep rooted cultural histories and how others see them to form their self-image and personal narratives.

As an individual's life performance unfolds, the individual as the performer remains as they currently are, or they can consciously grow into the person, that is their ideal self that they want to become. As the director of one's life, an individual can organize their life-plan to ensure that they grow into their ideal self and live the life they want to live. To do this, it will be important to analyze past, current and projected life performances. Expanding and growing the personally important roles and associated areas of performance in life—spouse, parent, professional, world adventurer—is the key to an actuated and meaningful sense of identity in how an individual's life unfolds. An individual can prioritize and balance these identities to optimize the important personal qualities of who they are and how they live day to day.

As stated previously, the Self-Growth Methodology has six stages: 1. Defining the meaning of your life, 2. Create life vision and plan, 3. Determine your key performance areas, 4. Conduct risk analysis, 5. Conduct a systematic weekly self-growth analysis, 6. Conduct annual reflection on self-growth. In what follows, a discussion of each of these stages with the corresponding steps is presented, as depicted in Table 1. This discussion includes prior research enhancing the meaning of each stage and of how each step is integrated.

**Stage 1: Define the Meaning of Your Life**

Finding the meaning of life is a challenging endeavor for every person and an enduring question of philosophers and spiritual leaders since Socrates and Buddha. Although a precise definition remains elusive, a spectrum of thoughts is available. In his book *Man's Search for Meaning* (1946/1984), holocaust survivor Viktor Frankl discovers meaning of life in every moment. He never ceased even in suffering and facing death at any time. He credits positive thoughts and images, e.g., of his beloved wife, for his survival.

In Stage 1, the goal is to broadly describe what makes life meaningful beyond meeting basic needs. Many life experiences result in memories (things that infuse meaning to an experience; a fundamental form of knowledge) that remain important for recognition of quality characteristics and criteria not just for a satisfying life but one that will develop life far beyond current expectations. As self-

growth occurs, values will correspondingly increase in variety and complexity to reflect quality improvements that become consciously enduring sources of satisfaction and meaning.

**Table 1** Self-Growth Methodology Stages and Steps

Stages and Steps
<b>1. Define the meaning of your life</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Conduct values and needs analysis</li> <li>b. Raise expectations</li> <li>c. Determine life's quality characteristics</li> <li>d. Develop broad criteria for success</li> </ul>
<b>2. Create life vision and plan</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Develop your life history</li> <li>b. Create a vision of your future self</li> <li>c. Create life goals</li> <li>d. Create milestone goals</li> <li>e. Develop strategy</li> </ul>
<b>3. Determine your key performance areas</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Identify your crucial performance areas</li> <li>b. Conduct performance analyses</li> <li>c. Develop performance descriptions</li> <li>d. Set performance criteria</li> <li>e. Determine performance measures</li> <li>f. Systematically assess</li> </ul>
<b>4. Conduct risk analysis</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Identify key risk factors</li> <li>b. Determine learning skills</li> <li>c. Identify professional characteristics</li> </ul>
<b>5. Conduct a systematic weekly self-growth analysis</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Self-assess</li> <li>b. Develop a weekly action plan</li> <li>c. Perform</li> <li>d. Reflect</li> <li>e. Memorialize</li> </ul>
<b>6. Conduct annual reflection on self-growth</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Conduct annual reflection</li> <li>b. Conduct annual assessment</li> <li>c. Produce the annual growth plan</li> </ul>

Haidt (2006) distinguishes between purpose *for* life and purpose *within* life and examines the concepts of virtue, happiness, fulfillment, values, and meaning. In his 2012

book, *The Righteous Mind* (2006), he provides evidence for these six foundation values on which all other values are based: Care/harm, Fairness/cheating, Loyalty/betrayal, Authority/subversion, and Sanctity/degradation. Much like the Chinese yin and yang, Haidt suggests that finding balance across the six foundational values is the key. This balance is important even though these values often conflict in practice when situations present incongruities like two low-quality choices or when one choice obstructs another that is equally desirable.

Maslow's (1970) humanistic psychological perspective emphasizes that growth of an individual increases their potential to find meaning in life, i.e., self-actualization. Differentiating lower- and higher-purpose needs, he enumerates ten distinctions. Notably, growth-values is indicated as important for survival but also, "to grow toward full humanness, toward actualization of potentialities, toward greater happiness, serenity, peak experiences, toward transcendence, toward richer and more accurate cognition of reality, etc." (p. 104)

Theological scholars Martela and Steger (2016) describe meaning in life as a trichotomy encapsulating coherence, purpose and significance. They define *coherence* as a sense of comprehensibility that one's life makes sense; *purpose* as a sense of the core goals, aims, and direction in life; and *significance* as a "sense of life's inherent value and that life is worth living" (p. 531). They conclude that for humans to comprehend the world around them, "they need to find direction for their actions, and they need to find worth in their lives." (p. 541)

Collectively, the empirical studies and theoretical analyses of many thoughtful scholars and practitioners argue for a life-philosophy that includes taking stock of values that have importance to meeting the needs associated with being human and with being an individual. For example, journalist David Brooks (2015) differentiates between resume virtue and eulogy virtues. In his book *The Second Mountain* (Brooks, 2019), he emphasizes even more strongly the differences between living comfortably by adjusting to conventions of family, church, and society contrasted with learning that true meaning in life often requires one to climb a second mountain, beyond achievement and status. Within the Affective Domain of the 2019 CLS, the Extending Beyond Self cluster of process five provides some essential performance skills for moving into deeper meaning and contributions with one's life. Clarity about the life's meaning is better achieved by imagining how one would like to be remembered at the end of their life rather than by only thinking about a list of achievements. Life needs to be considered holistically in order to bring meaning to the multitude of routine activities neces-

sary to meet needs and to build conditions that make important outcomes possible.

### a. Conduct a values and needs analysis

The first step asks an individual to start exploring self-growth by identifying and differentiating ten personal values that are especially meaningful in their life and to consider why each is important to address. An examination of values is important for defining who the individual is and who they desire to become. A clear sense of the top values the individual believes in is essential to their self-growth path because these are most likely to be truly motivating. Beaudoin (2008) describes values as motivators that compare the current situation to the ideal and motivate if the gap is too large. Similarly, alarms and wants are defined as gap-based motivators. These motivators are why new values are learned and old values refined or eliminated. Well-developed values influence present and future choices and actions toward the intended direction of self-growth. It is important to have a clear idea of why each of the ten values selected for step one is important to pursue.

Among the challenges in doing a values analysis are ambiguities and outright contradictions among all the choices humans have evolved to face. Cultural assumptions and a richly varied language about human characteristics, capabilities, values, and motives add complexity to the analysis of values. Philosopher Mary Midgley (2005), using her careful study of animal ethology and evolution, asserted that humans need to be considered, like other species, as having their own particular nature. Two important human characteristics are a large variation in motives and the ability to consciously reflect on choices and their costs and benefits for meeting needs or fulfilling moral values. An additional factor is that humans naturally need to live in groups, which creates many cultural variations that affect values development (for specifics, see Haidt, 2012).

Maslow's (1943) widely publicized hierarchy of needs (modified in Maslow, 1996) is a model with an initial five tiers: physiological, safety, love and belonging, esteem, and self-actualization, climaxed to the sixth and final level of transcendence. From his humanistic psychology perspective, it was assumed that as lower-level needs are met, it becomes more likely that an individual can move up the hierarchy. Ultimately leading to self-actualization and transcendence.

Conducting an analysis of values is important for self-growth, but there are multiple perspectives to consider.

Maslow (1970) identified higher values including beauty, truth, excellence, completion, justice, order, consistency and harmony. Maslow hierarchy of needs, however, creates some ambiguity about the differences between needs and values. The *needs* in Maslow's model can be interpreted as motives or values consistent with human nature, much as Midgley (2005) argues. On the other hand, it is hard to argue against the existence of basic needs that must be addressed if lacking since they are related to survival. Maslow purposely used the concept of *needs* in his model to keep the focus on his argument that all of the levels in his model are natural for human beings to pursue even though barriers often occur when basic needs are unmet.

With due awareness of the informed perspective, an individual should begin their values and needs analysis by taking stock of their intrinsic, strongly held personal values. This values list may include everyday values, which serve as the individual's moral compass. However, it should also include an individual's greatest motivators from the highs and lows of their life experiences. Values are associated with how an individual takes responsibility for others, achieves successes, and deals with tragedies and failures.

There are many activities to assist an individual in identifying their top values. The individual can use the brainstorming technique to develop a list of what matters most in their life. The individual can utilize the 2019 CLS and select 15 to 20 learning skills from Process 3 of the Affective Domain. Finally, the individual can use books and websites that suggest values to consider. After the individual creates their list, they should validate that these are the most important. To validate the list, the individual can talk to a trusted person or mentor about their initial list. Additionally, they could write a brief blog about each value to help clarify why it is important or after settling on their ten values, set the list aside for some time and come back to it to gain additional insights.

### **b. Raise expectations**

An expectation is a belief that something can be achieved. Most people rely upon past performances to determine prospects for themselves or others. Psychologist Jonathan Fader (2014) suggests using the power of positive self-expectancy to push oneself to the next level because self-expectancy and its accompanying real-world output are completely up to the individual. The military and competitive sports set expectations at the highest capability. President Kennedy raised the nation's expectations in his speech, "We choose to go to the Moon in this decade and do the other things,

not because they are easy, but because they are hard." (1962) Transformational life coach Stutz (2014) suggests five specific ways to raise expectations: do difficult things; expand your comfort zone; challenge yourself; take a survival course; and learn new things. The PE philosophy emphasizes using the learning skills of self-challenge, taking risks, persistence, and continually raise self-expectations by leveraging failure. Since an individual defines and plans their life's outcomes, they should take control and be outrageous! By doing so, an individual can prevent a self-limiting mindset that holds one back. That is, the individual is the only one who can truly limit them self. An important strategy is to visualize a 20-year ideal self and then from this future self's perspective, determine the expectations that should be set.

### **c. Determine life's quality characteristics**

As subjective constructs that arise from, but are not always connected to, objective reality, life's quality characteristics are inherently personal. They are multidimensional constructs that describe how one defines emotional, physical, material and social well-being. Camus (1957/1960) offers a revealing insight on life's quality by asking, *If life is not worth living, why doesn't everyone kill themselves?* Philosopher Thagard (2012) argues that in spite of challenges, human beings act morally because doing so is the most relevant and harmonious path to a meaningfully enriched life in all spheres of existence. Shermer (2015) identifies ten provisional moral principles that begin with the Golden Rule of treating others the way you wish to be treated. Schwartz and Strack (1991) distinguish **life quality** as a balance between positive and negative feelings. Life quality encompasses the self-determined things that produce exceptional value and meaning in the individual's life. Diener and Suh (1997) note three alternative approaches as sources for life's quality characteristics: normative ideals (religion, philosophy), satisfaction of preferences (resource-based), and desired personal experiences (joy, pleasure and contentment). Books, plays, movies, songs, poems, oral stories, paintings, traditions, etc., all help to identify which of these characteristics are the most important to an individual and their life. Synthesizing these viewpoints, PE's *Professional Guide to Self-Growth* (Apple, Ellis & Leasure, 2018) identifies 50 quality characteristics that help to formulate a person's elevated self-expectations, that is the outcome of one's self-analysis. A **self-analysis** allows an individual to become self-aware of values, needs, interests, goals and passions. They also help identify those characteristics that produce exceptional value in one's life. Experiences that become precious,

favorite memories will drive motivation to perform in ways that make each future day of life special.

#### d. Develop broad criteria for success

**Broad criteria** for an individual are the set of critical rules that guide their life's success, meaning and quality by being true to their values, vision, and to the person they want to become. Primarily a subjective and multi-dimensional construct, success is a conventional measurement of the fulfillment of one's own and others' expectations of them. Development of general, broad criteria that define personal success requires researching and identifying what makes life successful for the individual. A cross-cultural phenomenon, the virtue of goodness remains a borderless, universal ideal that helps people improve themselves. Some may find spirituality the best approach by revisiting the Bible's Ten Commandments. Or, the enduring ethical teachings of Confucius from 500 BC regarding love, benevolence, humanity, perfect virtue, and true manhood may signify the ideal relationship. Among a select few other inspirations are the young Ben Franklin's (1793/1996) unique chart of 13 virtues as a system for developing character, or Andy Andrews' (2008) seven decisions of success. Each of these seminal works provides timeless principles of honesty, integrity, fairness and human dignity. The PE process of self-growth and its relationship to life success requires development of criteria that continually guide an individual's level of performance from its current level to an elevated level (Myrvaagnes et al., 1999). In this stage, an individual gets to identify their own critical rules of the game for their life. They determine the rules that matter and bring meaning and quality to their life as well as those rules that help guide them to be true to them self, their vision, and their values.

### Stage 2: Create Life-Vision and Plan

One of Aristotle's memorable quotes is, "the soul never thinks without a picture." (350 B.C.E./1994) Simply stated, a **life vision** is what the individual imagine their future to be including the development of a personal life history, a vision of who the individual wants to become, life goals and milestones. Beginning with childhood, humans are conditioned to think about what they want to be when they grow-up. Creation of a life vision involves five key elements: 1. development and review of one's life history, 2. a vision of who the individual wants to become, 3. life goals, 4. milestones, and 5. a well-thought-out strategy to create the plan. Rooted in the theory of self-determination of motivation and behavioral functioning, intrinsic motivations are not necessarily externally rewarded or supported, but

they clearly can still sustain passions, creativity, and efforts (Ryan & Deci, 2017). A life vision serves as a beacon to keep an individual focused during life's routine distractions, as well as a roadmap for where the person wants to go and how they want to get there. A personal life vision should consider three key essentials: the individual's core values; what the individual is passionate about; and how the individual achieves life balance. Stephen Covey (1989) suggests beginning with the end in mind. Ryan & Deci's (2017) self-determination theory offers numerous important reflection points. PE's life vision model incorporates core values, interests, capabilities, skills, goals, and experiences followed by a strategic plan. The life-vision model involves an individual's reflective determination of who they are; their personal behavioral patterns and self-organization; self-visioning; their level of autonomy and social relatedness; as well as their personal needs including growth, integrity and competence. **Personal needs** are those needs that keep a person whole, not as a personal accommodation, but to keep one's vitality in peak capability on a daily, weekly, and monthly basis. The key is to remember that the individual is the exclusive owner of their personal life vision.

#### a. Develop your life history

Individuals are primarily shaped by their personal history. Therefore, an individual must first understand how they became the person they are before they can become the person they desire to be. Lilgendahl and McAdams (2011) investigated two patterns of self-growth-related narration: positive and differentiated processing. They found that the extent to which people weave their life events into a narrative of self-growth creates a predominantly positive story and an open exploration of the transformative possibilities of negative events. Developing a life story entails analyzing their family history, friends, intricate relationships, community involvement, accomplishments, failures, and any other events important to the individual. Having this conscious knowledge allows the individual to know exactly how they became who they are. Simply stated, a positive narrative helps the person to shape their well-being towards what Fredrickson (2009) calls "the upward spiral" in becoming the best version of themselves.

#### b. Create vision of your future self

Self-Growth is about an individual becoming the person they want to be. Brennan and Piechowski (1991) found that self-actualizing individuals share a number of common characteristics. These include intensity, energy, and the persistence to work toward high ideals and a capacity to inspire others toward similar ideals.

The vision for the future-self requires the individual to envision what they want to be like, capabilities to develop, values to assume, and how they want to represent themselves in this world. They are developing a profile that describes their ideal future self and used as a tool to gauge progress in achieving their goal. Canfield and Switzer (2015) offer 67 strategies to help create a life vision that includes sources of confidence, ways of handling challenges, and causes of passion and purpose.

### **c. Create life goals**

One way to give meaning to one's life is by setting personal goals that include self-growth goals and life goals. Scholer et al., (2018) advise that one of the challenges of effective goal pursuit is being able to flexibly adapt to changing situations and demands. Analyzing the meaning of personal goals through empirical evidence, Koestner and Hope (2014) conclude that goals are "most successful and adaptive when they are based in autonomous motivation; when they are aligned with intrinsic, need-satisfying aspiration, and when they are supported by empathic rather than directive others" (p. 400). The key is to have autonomous goals free of any counterproductive internal or external pressures. Doran (1981) advocates creating goals that are specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and timely (SMART). Nash and Stevenson (2004) compare life-vision to a kaleidoscope with four chambers: happiness, achievement, significance, and legacy. They propose using one's goals as brilliant glass pieces over a lifetime that play a role in "making your unique life richer and richer" (p. 1). Motivational Coach Simon Ash (2013) suggests the creation of challenging goals that take an individual outside of their comfort zone and force them to learn and grow especially towards their ideal future self. In other words, there should be a reasonable chance that the individual will fail along the way to success.

Integrating these various perspectives, the PE philosophy promotes goals that best reflect a person's personal values and interests by making the most of the one life you have to live. Be aware that goals are dynamic, diverse (e.g., relationship goals; value goals which are also called "make-a-difference" or "eulogy goals;" growth goals) and are constantly evolving. The personal goals an individual sets should take into account who they are, who they want to become (self-growth goals), and what they wish to accomplish (life goals). Personal goals that target self-growth help an individual to become a stronger version of their current self while life goals will become a clear target for accomplishment. Both sets of goals become the direction for how an individual will live their daily future life.

### **d. Create milestone goals**

A milestone is a point in time that indicates important stage of progression (Ash, 2013). Milestone goals also serve as a motivation and a method to measure the individual's specific achievements within an established timeframe. Empirical evidence suggests a direct correlation between goal achievement and emotional health (Pekrun et al., 2009; Ranellucci & Hall, 2015). This step of the methodology suggests setting up five-year markers to measure progress. Taking stock after five years will help to make sense of how much an individual has accomplished. A person should reflect on their self-growth by writing a progress report documenting their growth and accomplishments within those five years. At this time, the individual should update their life goals, raise their expectations again (at a better and faster pace) and modify their milestone goals as needed. It is always valuable, of course, to reset milestone goals whenever it is clear they have changed in significant ways.

### **e. Develop strategy**

A strategy is a well-thought-out plan to achieve goals despite uncertainty about the stability of conditions in which they must be pursued and the challenges that are presently unknown. The purpose of a strategy is to chart out and implement specific tactics to achieve goals recognizing that there will continue to be challenges. McKeown (2016) combines two ideas about strategy: "strategy is about shaping the future" to achieve "desirable ends with available means" (p. 1-2). Noting that a strategy generally involves setting goals, Freedman (2015) suggests first determining what actions are likely to result in achievement of goals and then mobilizing resources needed to execute the targeted actions. Strategies are useful because they allow optimum use of limited resources including time, money and effort. A strategy is comprised of three specific stages: formulation, implementation and ongoing SII assessment for continual improvement. The formulation stage involves asking these basic questions: what, why, how, when, where, whom, and at what cost (emotional, material, social, and psychological). These questions will determine a person's challenges, resources, and options in determining a feasible approach for success. The next step is writing down answers to each of the specific questions for monitoring and modification. An example of a life strategy includes approaches to secure a college education over a specific timeframe within given resources, living arrangements, and career pursuits. With the aid of SII assessment, implementing corrective action can be achieved in a timely manner to optimize resources and increase results.



### Stage 3: Determine Your Key Performance Areas

A *performance* is the execution of actions to achieve pre-determined expectations that may lead to an accomplishment with external stakeholders. The Theory of Performance (Elger, 2007) defines the intrinsic influencers of a performance as identity, learning skills, knowledge, context, personal factors, and fixed factors. Of these, all but the fixed factors are malleable. Ten Brummelhuis and Bakker (2012) also found personality, culture, gender and developmental psychology as influential factors on performance. Leise (2010) justifies reflection as a key component of performance as it is “a process that helps a person to make better use of assessment feedback.” (p. 73) The achievement of a life vision and its goals involve six distinct facets of life performance: 1. identification of the key performance areas (for example, a mother who is also a Chief Executive Officer has two critical and distinct performance areas, being a mother to her children and a CEO to her shareholders and employees); 2. analysis of each performance area; 3. development of performance descriptions; 4. identification of the corresponding performance criteria; 5. identification of performance measures; and 6. ongoing assessment of each performance area (Apple, Ellis, & Hintze, 2016). Apple and Ellis (2015) detail 13 aspects of learning performance to target for improvement and what a self-grower should do for each performance area. The demands of competing domains of performance may obligate a sensitive regulation to ensure balance and minimization of conflicts involving elements such as time, degree of commitment, and fiscal resources. The performance-based philosophy of PE (Apple, Ellis, & Hintze, 2016), advocates self-nurturing and self-development as the central focuses to mitigate the challenge of any performance. Leise et al., (2019) also suggest being knowledgeable of the learning skills in these four domains: cognitive, social, affective, and assessment and evaluation of quality to help improve any performance.

#### a. Identify your requisite performance areas

A *performance area* is a consensus label for representing sets of actions that different performers in different contexts use to produce consistent accomplishments. Life is all about performance. A person’s daily routine involves a set of performances from the time they wake until the time they retire. Depending upon the role and context, the performances may vary greatly and each of these performances can contribute to life’s quality. The performances that contribute the most and are used frequently are the areas we want to improve daily. The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines a high performance

as better, faster, or more efficient than others. Growth in identification of key performance areas can also be useful in multiple ways. This identification helps with navigating changes in life, recognizing fundamental changes to behavior, as well as handling of major setbacks. It is important for an individual to delineate their top-ranking performance areas in order of importance on an annual basis.

#### b. Conduct performance analysis

A *performance analysis*, conducted by an analyst when viewing a performance, uses the Theory of Performance to determine the impact each component of the theory has on the overall performance’s quality. The purpose of a performance analysis is to gain insight and foresight into both what contributes to performance quality and what the performer does to produce that quality. The analysis of a specific performance allows an individual to determine how and why the quality was produced. By analyzing key life contexts in each performance area, an individual can clarify what produces qualities that align to their life’s broad criteria. Elger (2007) offers a comprehensive framework of performance, making it possible to analyze and appreciate that the measured level of performance is the result of the interaction of the components of that performance. Multiple performance analyses will provide the basis for generalizing and producing a performance description.

#### c. Develop performance descriptions

A *performance description* is the detailed actions and behaviors a person exhibits when carrying out their public challenge to exceed the given performance criteria. As the understanding of a performance area increases, an individual can improve and enhance their performance by creating a performance description. This description of a performance incorporates meaningful contexts, the identity of the performer, what makes a quality performance, critical learning skills, foundational knowledge, and the key underlying processes the performer uses. The description is concise but does encompass the entire performance area. The development of a description starts with its key process. Next, visualize its use by an expert, analyze characteristics of quality, describe the flow, increase the richness by expanding aspects of the performance, and assess with an actual performance. These performance descriptions can be used to guide and develop performances aligned with the individual’s broad criteria, personal values and desired quality characteristics. They also provide the means to develop the performance criteria (Nelson et al., 2020).

#### d. Set performance criteria

One of the critical aspects of any performance is the indicators of achievement of the targeted quality and outcomes that is having specific performance criteria. PE defines performance criteria as the “clear and specific description of a performance which allows all involved (performer, assessor, evaluator, etc.) to have a mutually understood set of expectations by which performance may be measured, assessed and/or evaluated” (Apple, Ellis & Leasure, 2018, p. 349). The technique to improve a performance area, with focus on producing the intended quality, is to identify and write down a set of *specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and timely* (Doran, 1981) performance criteria, also known as SMART performance criteria. There are many examples of rubric-based measures of student success that incorporate performance criteria. For example, Myrvaagnes et al., (1999) describe five levels of performance that serve a useful basis for developing performance criteria and setting increasingly higher performance expectations. The purpose is to determine the individual’s current level of performance and improve it to achieve an elevated level of performance.

#### e. Determine Performance Measures

Noting the value of setting high expectations, Smith (2007) observes that expectations create a credible and relevant gap between the present and future performance. PE’s continuum of performance levels (Beyerlein et al., 2007) delineates a five-level holistic rubric containing constructs of knowledge, social interactions, attitude and abilities. In her recent work on what really propels successful performance, Duckworth (2016) articulates grit as a unique combination of passion and long-term perseverance as the key. Burke and Bargainier (2007) note nine principles of measurement which can be developed by identifying these key triggers: what, the basis, focus, tools (techniques), triangulation, data (evidence), reliability, validity, and cost. Myrvaagnes (2007) offer a five-level rubric designed to help self-growers visualize and assess progress toward higher levels of self-growth. Using this collective knowledge as a basis, an individual should analyze their life’s key performance areas and clarify what produces quality that aligns with their life’s broad criteria.

#### f. Assess systematically

Assessment is one of the most productive practices for triggering and maintaining growth in one’s self or in others. The Assessment Methodology (Utschig and Apple, 2009) is a structured process of designing and implementing assessment. The purpose, whether aca-

demically or personally, is to determine what level of performance has been delivered. Utschig and Apple (2009) conclude that an assessment based on careful and structured analysis arising from well-developed measures articulating high-performance expectations, can improve performance dramatically. Further, they indicate that it is important to distinguish assessment from evaluation when discussing the relationship between assessment and evaluation, when examining assessment practice, and determining the impact of assessment. Additionally, they delineate ten corresponding methods for improvement and self-growth. Using measurement and assessment tools, a person can identify how and by what means their performance should be assessed, which should include the assessment of their own self-assessment performance by a mentor.

The 2019 CLS (Leise et al., 2019) provides skills in all domains that are necessary for growth. However, it also can be used as a framework for selecting what specific skills needed to produce quality assessments using the Assessment and Evaluation of Quality domain (presented in Appendix A: Assessment and Evaluation of Quality Domain for ease of access). This resource offers a useful means to increase the potential for improved quality of reflection in related performance contexts as well as serving as a guide for improving assessment and self-assessment skills.

#### Stage 4: Conduct Risk Analysis

Risks are an inherent and dynamic aspect of existence and critical to address for self-growth. The purpose of a risk analysis is to minimize and manage vulnerability through rational and judicious approaches for achievement of targeted outcomes. Nakaš, (2017) offers three caveats about risks: not all risks are equal; risks cannot be managed without information; and, sometimes risks are opportunities in disguise.

A general methodology of analyzing context-oriented risks can be synthesized in five steps: 1. identification and characterization of the risk; 2. determination of the degree of risk; 3. an assessment of vulnerability to threats (or, depending upon the perspective, opportunities); 4. determination of the methods for reduction of the risk, and 5. implementation of the strategies to reduce the risk. A risk analysis involves becoming self-aware of values, needs, interests, goals, and passions. Depending upon one’s need, *The Professional’s Guide to Self-Growth* (Apple, Ellis, & Leasure, 2018) serves as a good source for understanding the concept of risk analysis at length. It encourages self-growth by stepping outside of one’s comfort zone by taking risks and challenges. It also offers step-by-step methods to

mitigate the risk-factors by focusing on developing specific learning skills and key professional characteristics.

### **a. Identify key risk factors**

A risk factor is a key impediment to performance and when mitigated will permit performance to improve. Human actions are vulnerable to multiple subjective risk factors in personal, ideological, social, environmental, psychological, and religious arenas. However, discussion of risk factors in the context of self-growth centers on behavioral change theories that are more process-oriented and generally aimed at changing a negative behavior. Bandura (1977) defines self-efficacy, a personal ability of an individual to predict performance quality, as a key to behavioral change. Since personal risk factors impede performance and self-growth, a continuous and timely identification helps address those risks. *The Professional's Guide to Self-Growth* (Apple, Ellis, & Leasure, 2018) lists 35 common risk factors with a method to rank which of these risk factors impede performance the most. Examples of personal risks factors include procrastination, lack of self-efficacy, lack of motivation, poor self-discipline, limited critical thinking, fear of failure and being disorganized. Different performance areas will have different risk factors that affect performance and vary by individual circumstances. To learn to mitigate these risk factors, individuals should create a list of their own specific risk factors for their key performance areas and determine mitigation strategies.

### **b. Determine learning skills**

Beginning with Bloom's suggestion of three taxonomies for the cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains of learning (Bloom et al., 1956), a large body of educational literature has addressed this organizing concept and the learning skills that make up each hierarchical domain (e.g., Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001; Felder & Brent, 2004; Felder & Silverman, 1988; and Krathwohl, 2002). PE defines learning skills as those employed in the process of learning that are embedded in a learner's behavioral repertoire, are transferable across disciplines and contexts, and empower one to improve mastery of subject matter. Learning skills are essential for constructing knowledge because they modulate or influence what learners can achieve at any level. These skills, once recognized, can be consciously improved and refined to increase the rate and effectiveness of learning.

As discussed previously, the 2019 CLS is a resource to help identify learning skills essential to each selected performance areas. Leise et al., (2019) delineate 478 learning skills in the 2019 CLS within the domains of learning addressed by Bloom as well as two additional

domains, the social domain and the assessment and evaluation of quality domain. An individual should select five key learning skills that are most relevant to their development. Then, focusing on these skills, an individual should determine how to lessen the impact of the risk factors for each performance area.

### **c. Identify professional characteristics**

Professional characteristics are abilities that all outstanding professionals possess that reflect their capabilities in producing self-growth. To strengthen these professional characteristics, requires focus, high motivation, responsibility and taking ownership of their own learning and self-growth processes. Self-growers are committed to their success and life vision through hard work, persistence, and self-efficacy. Studies suggest emotional self-trust (Zagzebski, 2014) and self-confidence (Gough et al., 1952) are coveted and useful social influencers that help in generally accomplishing what one sets out to do. Garvin (1987) lists eight quality characteristics most sought by potential employers stating that the two most desired standards are performance and reliability. Covey (1989) suggests seven habits of highly effective people. Wagner (2008) recommends mastering seven skills: the ability to think critically, problem-solving, teamwork, agility and adaptability, clear and concise communication, effective analysis of information, and curiosity and imagination.

Individuals need to develop their own list of professional characteristics. This list could include a wide range of time-honored quality characteristics such as honesty, work-ethic, flexibility, persistence, problem-solving, and wit. *The Professional Guide to Self-Growth* (Apple, Ellis, & Leasure, 2018) describes 50 characteristics useful for professional development, but most are broadly relevant in many contexts. Examples include thinking critically, self-assessment, self-challenge and prioritizing. These characteristics are important because they drive an individual's motivation and performance to make each future day even more special.

For the top risk factors of the selected performance areas, the individual should identify which of their identified professional characteristics to focus and mitigate. The individual should rotate through these professional characteristics weekly to improve the selected performance areas. There is an implied causality between skill development and risk mitigation, empowerment, self-concept, rate of knowledge building, and rate of accomplishment via performance. Motivational author Newport (2012) indicates that the individual develops skills valuable to both the individual and others to buy the things that really matter to their life. These

things may include more time, more autonomy, more wages/wealth, or more accomplishment. The goal is to strengthen the professional characteristics and reduce the negative impact a risk factor has on these performance areas.

### **Stage 5: Conduct a Systematic Weekly Self-Growth Analysis**

The process of personal growth requires active, continuous and intentional engagement of cognitive and behavioral elements. The cognitive construct involves a belief in self-efficacy toward self-growth that is, knowing how to change the self-function to achieve and value the growth (e.g., De Freitas et al., 2016; Robitschek, 1998). A productive person has a functioning annual, quarterly, monthly, weekly, daily self-assessment and priority/goal management routine. Thus, weekly and daily assessments of growth are special cases of the overall personal goal achievement system. Further, self-growth should be analyzed as part of existing accomplishment goals to help increase an individual's motivation. The purpose of conducting a systematic weekly self-growth initiative is to streamline the process for continual achievement of the targeted goals and increase personal capacity. It is important for an individual to tie their growth to their most important goals, as it will help to enable growth.

#### **a. Self-assess**

Self-assessment involves assessing one's own progress and performance by thinking critically about it for the purpose of self-growth. The aim of self-assessment is to facilitate improvement using a process that is multi-dimensional and integrated (Jensen, 2007). For an individual to perform a self-assessment, they need to have a focus and a mindset of continuously improving their own performance by seeking and accepting feedback from their mentors on how to improve their self-assessment. Being receptive to the perspectives and analyses of how others view their performance helps the individual build their self-mentoring skills. Additionally, it is important for the individual to be honest with themselves by reducing self-biases and by not excluding non-desirable observations.

In order to conduct a self-assessment for self-growth, the utilization of specifics from setting performance criteria (see Stage 3 d) is required. Additionally, the six learning skills (focusing on self-improvement, seeking feedback, accepting feedback, self-monitoring, being self-honest and self-mentoring) from Process 7 Self-Assessing within the Assessment and Evaluation of Quality domain of the 2019 CLS (see Appendix A) need

to be utilized in an effective practice of self-assessment. An effective practice involves focus and a mindset of continuously improving one's performance by seeking and accepting feedback from mentors. By adopting a weekly practice of self-assessment, an individual can pick a key risk factor weekly from their list and focus on two or three performance areas impacted by this risk factor. Then, the individual should identify a key characteristic and three relevant learning skills to mitigate the risk factor. Finally, the individual should self-assess their latest performances in these areas using the chosen professional characteristic (and learning skills) for the risk factor (Apple, Ellis & Leasure, 2018).

#### **b. Develop a weekly action plan**

An action plan is a planning tool that provides a sequence of steps or activities to execute a strategy for success. A thoughtful action plan helps resolve what can become a conflict between the rational mind and the emotional mind (Heath & Heath, 2010). For example, the rational mind wants change at work, whereas the emotional mind likes a comfortable routine. After completing their self-assessment, an individual should develop a self-growth action plan for the week. The individual should utilize their mentor to ensure their action-plan is strong enough to obtain the intended growth. Finally, the individual should plan at least five opportunities to implement the action plan during the week. This incremental approach helps maintain a balanced perspective and control.

#### **c. Perform using your action plan**

It is essential to begin executing the action plan once it is developed. Thinking through the week and determining where and when to take advantage of the weekly action plan is critical to making growth happen. By analyzing the current schedule of activities and determining where the key performances are set, an individual can integrate their action plan into these performances. If during the week an action plan does not work effectively, the individual can seek outside help by consulting with their mentor to help make necessary modifications before the next performance. When the individual has applied the action plan in a performance, they should assess the performance using the SII methodology to capture their new strengths, new areas for improvement and continual new understanding.

#### **d. Reflect**

Reflection is a conscious effort of introspection that inspired the 17<sup>th</sup> Century German philosopher Im-

manuel Kant (1781-1787/1997) to declare, "Man is distinguished above all animals by his self-consciousness, by which he is a 'rational animal.'" Reflection is tied to metacognition, or thinking about one's own process of thinking. French philosopher Rene Descartes (1596-1650/1998) famously stated: "I think, therefore I exist." This internal focus has created the problem of dualism in Western philosophy that is the internal focus that the mind and body are not unified. Scientists now recognize (e.g., Barrett, 2017) that internal and external experiences may seem very distinctive but are fundamentally integrated in real time.

Recognizing the power of reflection to enhance insights, Leise (2010) emphasizes it as a critical and intrinsic aspect of assessment. His synthesis integrates two important features of reflection: a preceding assessment of a performance and the process of reflecting on performance to gain deeper insights. The PE philosophy perceives reflection as a combination of introspection and thinking and suggests reflection at the end of each week before planning for the next week. The purpose of the reflection is to capture what the individual has learned about their risk factors, the development of their professional characteristics, as well as their performance area(s) and determine how they are all related and interact. This reflection will provide a new foundation for mitigating the risk factor leading to improved performance in these performance areas.

#### e. Memorialize

The positive psychology movement of the 1990s celebrates virtues such as hope, gratitude, wisdom and resilience (Seligman, 2011). The focus is to use the individual's emotional intelligence (Goleman, 1995) to better understand what motivates them and to memorialize experiences that inspire renewal (e.g., Kansteiner, 2002). The process of **memorializing** an experience is the conscious internalization of performance improvement through metacognition by being mindful of actions used and then letting their subconscious continue to work on additional challenges. This means that even a negative experience can be a forbearer of opportunity. A critical aspect of memorializing is acknowledgment of the individual actions and walking away from blaming one's self or others. An individual can memorialize a negative experience to create a beloved legacy; e.g., the story of their grandparents walking in 8-inches of snow to school, uphill both ways! The steps for memorializing involve measuring the change in an individual's performance in key areas, what contributed to it, the action plans used, and becoming mindful of what is needed for the coming weeks. After memorializing, an individual

should let the negative experience go and let their subconscious take over in order to move on to the next professional characteristic and associated learning skills.

### Stage 6: Conduct Annual Reflection on Self-Growth

The concept of *reflection*, as discussed earlier can be a useful tool in looking back to the past year's quest to self-grow. Several aspects are critical while conducting an annual reflection including: a holistic overview, accuracy, and quality. Montaigne's (1991) how to live focus captures the creative potential of the human individual through what the individual learned by reflecting on life's various aspects. An especially important consideration is the accuracy of the reflection and self-assessment for self-growth. Barrett (2017) illustrates how her scientific analysis of emotion is 180-degrees different from what most people believe. She notes that each emotion instance is uniquely attuned to its situation, but there are no standard emotion states. Leise (2010) notes that unlike forms of reflection that are philosophical or mindful, reflection on performance is a process that helps a person make better use of assessment feedback. He highlights factors that are incorporated into a hierarchy of five levels: 1. Unfocused Observer, 2. Descriptive Reflector, 3. Applied Reflector, 4. Mindful Reflector, and 5. Integrated Reflector. The purpose is to recognize the potential power of reflection for self-growth by enhancing insights gained from the assessment of any performance as well as the expected potential to self-grow by attaining higher levels identified with the rubric.

#### a. Conduct annual reflection

Conducting an annual reflection helps develop a confirmation statement that incorporates the individual's updated values, needs, quality statements, broad criteria, and an analysis of what is limiting their future and why. In alignment with a goal accomplishment system, annual reflection would be completed as a whole on everything that has happened, with a special emphasis on growth. Utilizing the perspective from Argyris and Schon (1974), single loop learning would adjust the learning plan, double loop learning would adjust the goals, and triple loop learning would adjust the life strategy or the vision that drives the goals. An individual should update their strategy documenting any changes in their life goals or life milestones. The individual should reconsider their overall strategy and lay out a plan for the year. The individual should reanalyze identities and performance focus to determine what they have learned about and how this change their identities. Finally, the individual should determine if the previous steps result in any changes in the ranking of their performance areas.

## b. Conduct annual assessment

At the end of the year, an individual should conduct a full assessment report of their performance areas affected during the year using the SII model. For each performance area, structure a one-page report that includes a list of the risk factors addressed, professional characteristics developed, and learning skills that were improved during that year. The individual should document their top four accomplishments in the given performance area and the importance of each. Then indicate four significant improvements made while providing evidence of the improvements. Additionally, list four areas the individual would like to strengthen that during the next year and why these areas need to be strengthened. Next, in one page, the individual should assess their top ten performance areas and describe what happened to reduce the associated risk factors. Then the individual should identify four professional characteristics that increased the most and describe how that occurred during the year. Finally, the individual should focus on their five most improved learning skills and how these relate to and support the use of the Methodology for Self-Growth.

## c. Produce the annual growth plan

*Quality of life* is defined as the overall meaning that life brought to an individual and the meaning the individual had on the impact of the collective quality of life of others. A growth plan is a systematic planned use of time during the year to improve the quality of life focused on different life goals, broad criteria, certain risk factors, professional characteristics and performance areas (200 to 300 total hours of effort in execution). After the annual reflection and assessment, the individual should develop their growth plan for the next year. Their risk analysis should be updated to determine the newly ranked list of top 12 risk factors. Again, the individual should prioritize the performance areas and their importance. Utilizing the experience of the prior year, the individual is ready to implement the professional growth plan cycle.

## Validation of the Self-Growth Methodology and Future Research

The intent of this article is to present the Self-Growth Methodology, with its phases and steps, so others can utilize this holistic tool for research as well as for their own self-growth. Scientific standards for holistic methods and measures must be evaluated differently than those in experiments intended to demonstrate which of two or more contrasting conditions is statistically most significant. The

most important, and logically first, perspective on validity for a tool such as the Self-Growth Methodology is to demonstrate its external validity, e.g., Does it include the key elements? and Does it work in practice settings? The answer is that the Self-Growth Methodology meets initial criteria in this regard but needs to undergo continual review as outcomes from more users become available.

Several lines of evidence indicate why this new methodology has strong face validity which is the usual first step in the spectrum of scientific validation. The Self-Growth Methodology provides guidance regarding the systematic use of the various PE tools, techniques, processes, and the practices of self-reflection and assessment of self-growers (Apple, Ellis, & Hintze, 2016). Establishment of an authentic life-vision plan with personal and professional growth goals provides the basis for a self-cohesive perspective. By positioning these components of self-growth as a practice into phases and steps, the new methodology holds promise for improvements in how individuals approach and manage growth and self-growth. As a sustained mindset focused on self-improvement, self-growth necessitates incorporation of specific and decisive actions as well as processes toward desired growth outcomes (Jain, Apple, & Ellis, 2015). The first line of evidence for validity is that it is constructed on the basis of the already established elements and processes of PE itself. In addition, the set of 36 mentoring skills that enhance self-growth capability, from the perspective of PE practice, align with the phases and steps of the methodology and thereby support its validity. Appendix C delineates the mentoring skills necessary to facilitate self-growth within each of the steps in the methodology.

Mårtensson et al. (2019) examined the face validity of a comprehensive quality model that incorporated 32 indicators. Some were considered less important but all 42 experts agreed that all of the descriptors of quality were valid. Users of the Self-Growth Methodology are asked to use some quality criteria to guide their exploration of self-growth and some steps ask them to set their own unique criteria and standards. The Assessment and Evaluation of Quality Domain in the 2019 CLS is an important resource because it incorporates similar descriptions and indicators of quality. Connell et al. (2018) tested the content and face validity of a clinical measure used for quality of life with people having mental health difficulties. From the perspective of these users they found key themes that were important. The measure must be relevant and meaningful, unambiguous, easy to answer particularly when distressed, not cause further upset, and be non-judgmental.

Most of the criteria used in the studies of face validity match the intent of the Self-Growth Methodology, but clearly the level of detail and the challenge of some steps in the Self-

Growth Methodology are the reason a life coach is recommended until an individual succeeds in fully understanding and implementing the steps. For many people, mentors or life coaches (with the relevant skillset) are not available to provide the sensitive listening and collaboration skills needed for the changes essential for succeeding with self-growth. The observations and outcomes from Learning to Learn Camps and Recovery Courses indicated that most individuals do not initiate self-growth on their own. It is known by developmental scientists (e.g., Boyce, 2019), that early life experiences such as poverty, neglect, stress, nutrition, and early educational quality can have long-term effects on physical and mental well-being throughout life. Although the Self-Growth Methodology is not intended to directly resolve such issues, its design provides a diverse set of elements and processes to fit each individual's need to direct attention to overcoming life risks that are barriers even to learning. The positive changes of self-growth are most likely to occur through strengthening the set of 36 mentoring learning skills as previously noted. The most important aim for the methodology is to provide a framework that will help individuals, regardless of past and present life issues, to consciously choose a more positive future.

Some of the language within the Self-Growth Methodology is new even to those familiar with PE theory and practice. Therefore, this new holistic tool is offered with the expectation that future users will contribute substantially to its improvement. Additionally, with the focus on the development of the 36 mentoring skills necessary for achieving self-growth (see Appendix C), future researchers will focus

on the degree to which an individual needs assistance on these mentoring skills. Is the development of some skills more difficult for individuals than others? Future analysis of the use of this holistic tool in different contexts and practices will contribute significantly to its improvement and to an understanding of the nuances of self-growth.

## Conclusion

Self-Growth is the process of making one's life as rich and meaningful as possible. As a practice, it brings meaning to all other endeavors by making quality standards the norm a person lives by. The Self-Growth Methodology described in this article is a new resource based on more than 25 years of practice and scholarship within the Process Education community. In addition to the articulation of the face validity of the Self-Growth Methodology, numerous PE research undertakings are currently investigating the scientific evidence that bridges theoretical advancements with applied aspects of the self-growth methodology. Having specific stages and steps clarifies the actual details that individuals need to manage their self-growth successfully. After analysis of values, goals, and expectations, it becomes possible to set personally meaningful performance criteria that guide self-growth activities, assessment and reflection. Each step in the methodology is supported by scholarship both within Process Education and from philosophy, psychology, literature, and self-help resources that clarify why each step is important. Taking time to thoughtfully work through the Self-Growth Methodology will assist any individual to become a high-quality performer in all areas of life.

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## Appendix A Assessment and Evaluation of Quality Domain

### Process 1 Defining Quality (identifying what impacts the consumer's affective satisfaction)

#### Cluster 1 Defining receiver needs (identifying quality from a user or client perspective)

**Analyzing needs** — finding the qualities a receiver desires

**Defining characteristics** — determining the key factors that impact a receiver's affective reaction

**Raising expectations** — influencing receiver's mindset towards wants, desires or anticipation

**Forecasting needs** — determining the new or adapted future desires

**Writing measurable outcomes** — documenting a project or process set of expectations for quality

#### Cluster 2 Defining quality of results (identifying desired characteristics in a product or experience)

**Defining product characteristics** — identifying key features of an entity

**Defining experience characteristics** — identifying key features of a happening or an event

**Setting criteria** — choosing the important characteristics that represent quality

#### Cluster 3 Defining quality in performance (identifying key characteristics of processes/actions)

**Describing performance** — preparing a picture of expected actions or steps in process(es)

**Defining performance characteristics** — recognizing key features of actions/nuances in the process(es)

**Valuing performance** — acknowledging excellence in performances

**Writing performance criteria** — documenting descriptive expectations of desired quality

#### Cluster 4 Determining the quality of match (alignment of desired quality to actual quality)

**Determining unmet needs** — identifying desired characteristics lacking for receiver

**Realizing the excess quality** — identifying actual characteristics not desired by receiver

**Determining future match** — identifying actual characteristics that cover future needs

### Process 2 Measuring Quality (selecting and using scales for determining excellence)

**Selecting measures** — establishing a minimal working set of scales for a purpose (what matters)

**Ensuring completeness** — validating that measures include key sources of variability in quality

**Ensuring robustness** — verifying that measure captures full range of quality variability for the context

**Ensuring reliability** — consistency in measuring level of quality by different measurers

**Ensuring validity** — verifying that selected measures produce intended results for its purpose

### Process 3 Assessing Quality (producing meaningful feedback to make future improvements)

#### Cluster 1 Preparing for Improvement (setting the foundation for effective implementation)

**Having assessment mindset** — focusing on improvement without judging quality

**Being proactive** — seeing opportunities for initiating improvement

**Pre-assessing** — analyzing preparation of a performance to improve readiness

**Designing an assessment** — collaborating with assessee to structure the specific process

#### Cluster 2 Implementing assessment (producing meaningful improvement feedback)

**Applying criteria** — aligning observations (evidence), analyses and feedback to focus areas

**Identifying SII opportunities** — picking the most valuable areas for analyzing and including in feedback

**Developing action plans** — creating short and long-term strategies for improvement

**Using summative assessment** — analyzing a process or project quality for future benefit

### Process 4 Evaluating Quality (judging the level of quality using a standard)

**Establishing standards** — specifying the level of quality for each measurement scale

**Benchmarking** — creating standards from existing external comparable entities

**Critiquing** — analyzing and determining quality using established standards and conventions

**Being fair** — being objective and not letting biases, values and petitions influence judgement

**Maintaining standards** — refraining from subjectively changing evaluation criteria/standards after a performance

**Process 5 Providing Feedback on Quality (positively influencing a performer's future quality)**

**Maintaining objectivity** — focusing on reporting the evaluation, not responding to personal reactions

**Being non-judgmental** — withholding or avoiding using one's personal standards or opinions

**Providing growth feedback** — supplying key observations, meaningful analysis, and implications

**Giving consulting feedback** — causing action in assessee through timely, valuable, expert analysis

**Highlighting sub-standard performance** — providing evidence justifying judgment with consequences

**Process 6 Enhancing Quality (determining what produces greater value to specific audiences)**

**Interpreting feedback** — figuring out why and what the assessor/evaluator is trying to say

**Transforming strategies** — developing ownership of action plans for gaining the improved quality

**Fine-tuning characteristics** — incorporating receiver feedback to increase satisfaction

**Identifying new qualities** — finding new dimensions that enhance value for an audience

**Positioning quality** — placing a specific thing with an audience who will value it

**Promoting quality** — highlighting how something impacts the needs of an audience

**Process 7 Self-Assessing (measuring and analyzing one's own performance for improvement)**

**Focusing on self-improvement** — taking on the mindset of continuously improving one's own performance

**Seeking feedback** — asking for assessment/evaluation to adjust and strengthen self-assessment

**Accepting feedback** — being receptive to the perspectives and analysis of others on your performance

**Self-monitoring** — having a continuous camera on every performance so it can be replayed and assessed

**Being self-honest** — recognizing when one's own filters and assumptions reflect known/new biases

**Self-mentoring** — engaging in intentional self-assessment leading to analysis of self for improvement

**Process 8 Reflecting (having mindfulness of your learning skills and states of being)**

**Being self-aware** — appreciating opportunities for engaging in reflection

**Self-evaluating** — being honest about who you are and where you are with respect to your life vision

**Seeing prompts** — knowing when reflection is needed and will produce significant value

**Being metacognitive** — stepping back to better understand one's thinking, affective, and social learning skills

**Practicing reflection** — increasing apprehension of new truths about identities, values, feelings and actions

**Introspecting** — using systematic analytical and assessment tools to produce greater meaning about self

## Appendix B Self-Growth Methodology Glossary of Terms

**Annual Assessment Report** Assessment of a Person's Life for one year based upon the Broad Criteria, progress towards life goals and milestones, focused performance areas, growth plan and self-growth plan

**Broad Criteria** The set of your life's critical rules that guide your life's success, its meaning and quality, by being true to your values, vision, and to the person you want to become

**Growth Plan** The systematic planned use of time during the year to improve the quality of life focused on different life goals, broad criteria, certain risk factors, professional characteristics and performance areas (200 to 300 total hours of effort in execution)

**Identity** The personal values, life vision, ways of being, passion, and drive that lead to their own interpretation of experiences, relationships, deep rooted cultural histories, and how others see them to form their self-image and personal narratives

**Life Plan** The holistic strategy developed to live one's life to reach one's life vision and become their designed future self

**Life Quality** Self-determined things that produce exceptional value and meaning in your life.

**Life Vision** What you imagine your future to be including the development of a personal life history, a vision of who you want to become, life goals, and milestones

**Memorialize** The conscious internalization of performance improvement through metacognition by being the mindful of actions used and then letting your subconscious continue to work on additional challenges

**Personal Needs** Those needs that keep a person whole on a daily, weekly, and monthly basis not as a personal accommodation but to keep one's vitality in peak capability

**Performance** The execution of actions, a script, to achieve pre-determined expectations that may lead to an accomplishment with external stakeholders

**Performance Analysis** When viewing a performance, the analyst uses the theory of performance to determine the impact each component of the theory has on the overall performance's quality

**Performance Area** A consensus label for representing sets of actions that different performers in different contexts use to produce consistent accomplishments

**Performance Description** The detailed actions and behaviors a person exhibits when carrying out their public challenge to exceed the given performance criteria

**Professional Characteristic** Abilities that all outstanding professionals possessed that reflect their capabilities in producing self-growth

**Quality of Life** The overall meaning that life brought to an individual and the meaning the individual had on the impact of the collective quality of life for other people

**Risk Factors** The key impediments of performance and if mitigated performance improves

**Self-Analysis** Becoming self-aware of values, needs, interests, goals, and passions

## Appendix C Self-Growth Methodology: Stages, Steps, and Mentoring Skills Defined

Stage	1. Define the Meaning of Your Life
Step	a. Conduct values and needs analysis
How?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perform a thorough self-analysis of the person you currently are and who you desire to become</li> <li>• Identify and differentiate your top ten personal values and the meaning they play in your life</li> <li>• Determine what you want including needs, to make your life special and keep you whole</li> </ul> <p><b>Mentoring Skills</b></p> <p><i><b>Encouraging ownership:</b> engaging others to accept a stake in the vision (Note: “minimize needs; maximize wholeness”)</i></p> <p><i><b>Analyzing needs:</b> finding the qualities a receiver desires</i></p>
	b. Raise expectations
How?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Once you take ownership, be outrageous by projecting future capability and what you want to do with this extensive expanded capability and prevent a self-limiting mindset that will hold you back</li> </ul> <p><b>Mentoring Skills</b></p> <p><i><b>Raising expectations:</b> influencing receiver’s mindset towards wants, desires or anticipation</i></p> <p><i><b>Establishing standards:</b> specifying the level of quality for each measurement scale</i></p> <p><i><b>Self-challenging:</b> getting out of your comfort zone to increase growth opportunities</i></p>
	c. Determine life’s quality characteristics
How?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• From needs analysis and new expectations, identify those things that produce exceptional value in your life</li> <li>• Recall your precious favorite memories to drive your motivation and performance</li> <li>• Also identify the role shared memories play in your life’s quality</li> </ul> <p><b>Mentoring Skills</b></p> <p><i><b>Defining characteristics:</b> determining the key factors that impact a receiver’s affective reaction</i></p> <p><i><b>Being philosophical:</b> gaining deeper understanding of the nature of life and its meaning</i></p>
	d. Develop broad criteria for success
How?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set-up the broad criteria of what will make your life successful</li> <li>• Identify your own critical rules of your game of life</li> <li>• Identify those criteria that bring meaning and quality to your life to help guide you to be true to yourself, your vision, and your values</li> </ul> <p><b>Mentoring Skills</b></p> <p><i><b>Setting criteria:</b> choosing the important characteristics that represent quality</i></p> <p><i><b>Being Independent:</b> seeking an appropriate level of autonomy in each role identity</i></p>

<b>Stage</b>	<b>2. Create life vision and plan</b>
<b>Step</b>	<b>a. Develop your life history</b>
<b>How?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand, analyze, and develop your personal narrative: how you became the person you are including your family history, friends, intricate relationships, community, accomplishments, failures, and any other important events so you know exactly what you personally contributed to the individual standing before you in the mirror</li> </ul> <p><b>Mentoring Skills</b></p> <p><i><b>Being self-honest:</b> recognizing when one's own filters and assumptions reflect known/new biases (Note: also used in 4a: Identify key risk factors)</i></p>
<b>Step</b>	<b>b. Create vision of your future-self</b>
<b>How?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Envision your future-self</li> <li>• Identify what capabilities you would need to develop to be that person</li> <li>• Determine and adopt the values to represent yourself in your envisioned role</li> </ul> <p><b>Mentoring Skills</b></p> <p><i><b>Forecasting needs:</b> determining the new or adapted future desires</i></p>
	<b>c. Create life goals</b>
<b>How?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set the goals to make the most of the one life you have to live, who you want to become and what you want to accomplish</li> <li>• Use your goals as targets and direction to live your daily life</li> </ul> <p><b>Mentoring Skills</b></p> <p><i><b>Writing measurable outcomes:</b> documenting a project or process set of expectations for quality (Note: perspective is visualized results)</i></p>
	<b>d. Create milestone goals</b>
<b>How?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish five-year markers to measure your progress</li> <li>• Use these to take stock and appreciate how much you have accomplished</li> <li>• Reflect on the degree of self-growth by writing a five-year progress report documenting your accomplishments and growth</li> <li>• Update your life goals at five years, raise your expectations again (better and more expedient) and modify your milestone goals as needed</li> </ul> <p><b>Mentoring Skills</b></p> <p><i><b>Determining future match:</b> identifying actual characteristics that cover future needs</i></p>
	<b>e. Develop strategy</b>
<b>How?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include learning/educational goals for the five years, your location and living arrangements</li> <li>• Incorporate your family and special friends, career/life pursuits, existing and future challenges, financial management updates, and set targeted self-growth goals to become a stronger version of your future self</li> <li>• Identify accomplishments you want that will impact your community, nation and the world</li> </ul> <p><b>Mentoring Skills</b></p> <p><i><b>Transforming strategies:</b> developing ownership of action plans for gaining the improved quality</i></p>



<b>Stage</b>	<b>3. Determine your key performance</b>
<b>Step</b>	<b>a. Identify your requisite performance areas</b>
<b>How?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognize which key performance areas that can be improved daily because they are most frequently used and contribute the most to life performance</li> <li>• Update, on an annual basis, rank-order your top 20 performance areas by importance</li> </ul> <p><b>Mentoring Skills</b> <i>Validating personal impact: recognizing the effect you have</i></p>
<b>b. Conduct performance analyses</b>	
<b>How?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analyze your key life contexts in each performance area to clarify what impacts qualities that align to your life's broad criteria</li> <li>• Use these characteristics and qualities to help write each of your performance descriptions</li> </ul> <p><b>Mentoring Skills</b> <i>Self-evaluating: being honest about who you are and where you are with respect to your life vision</i></p>
<b>c. Develop performance descriptions</b>	
<b>How?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Write a comprehensive description in concise manner to describe what a quality performance looks like</li> <li>• Incorporate identity, actions, underlying process, context and working expertise</li> <li>• Use these descriptions to help elevate your next, higher-performance criteria (use Theory of Performance, Elger 2007)</li> </ul> <p><b>Mentoring Skills</b> <i>Describing performance: preparing a picture of expected actions or steps in process(es)</i></p>
<b>d. Set performance criteria</b>	
<b>How?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Write a set of three performance criteria for each performance area</li> <li>• Make sure each set accounts for at least 75% of total quality</li> </ul> <p><b>Mentoring Skills</b> <i>Writing performance criteria: documenting descriptive expectations of desired quality</i></p>
<b>e. Determine Performance Measures</b>	
<b>How?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify the measures for each key performance area</li> <li>• Make sure measures are comprehensive</li> </ul> <p><b>Mentoring Skills</b> <i>Selecting measures: establishing a minimal working set of scales for a purpose (what matters)</i> <i>Ensuring reliability: consistency in measuring level of quality by different measurers</i></p>
<b>f. Assess systematically</b>	
<b>How?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify how and by what means your performance is assessed, including your mentor's assessment of your own self-assessment of performance</li> </ul> <p><b>Mentoring Skills</b> <i>Designing an assessment: collaborating with assessee to structure the specific process</i></p>

<b>Stage</b>	<b>4. Conduct risk analysis</b>
<b>Step</b>	<b>a. Identify key risk factors</b>
<b>How?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify specific risk factors for your key areas of performance (with external help if needed) so you can learn to mitigate them</li> </ul> <p><b>Mentoring Skills</b>  <i><b>Being fair:</b> being objective and not letting biases, values and petitions influence judgement</i></p>
	<b>b. Determine learning skills</b>
<b>How?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use the Classification of Learning Skills (including the Assessing and Evaluating Quality Domain) to locate essential skills in each performance area</li> <li>Focus on five key learning skills to develop further to lessen the impact of these risk factors in a specific performance area</li> </ul> <p><b>Mentoring Skills</b>  <i>Pre-assessing: analyzing preparation of a performance to improve readiness</i></p>
	<b>c. Identify professional characteristics</b>
<b>How?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For your top risk factors of the selected performance areas, identify, the professional characteristics to mitigate those risk factors</li> <li>Proactively identify additional professional characteristics that you know will increase your performance areas</li> <li>Rotate through these professional characteristics weekly to improve selected performance areas to strengthen the professional characteristic and to reduce the risk factors' negative impact on the performance area(s)</li> </ul> <p><b>Mentoring Skills</b>  <i>Getting unstuck: recognizing the lack of movement towards life's goals and updates strategies (way of moving past risk factors)</i></p>
<b>Stage</b>	<b>5. Conduct a systematic weekly self-growth analysis</b>
<b>Step</b>	<b>a. Self-asses</b>
<b>How?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At the beginning of each month, pick a key risk factor from your list</li> <li>Weekly, pick one key characteristic and three relevant learning skills to mitigate this risk factor from what you produced during Stage 4</li> <li>For the week, focus on the 2-3 performance areas that are impacted the most by this risk factor</li> <li>Self-assess your latest performances in these areas using the chosen professional characteristic (and learning skills) as the focus with respect to the risk factor during the self-assessment</li> </ul> <p><b>Mentoring Skills</b>  <i><b>Being nonjudgmental:</b> withholding or avoiding using one's personal standards or opinions</i>  <i><b>Highlighting sub-standard performance:</b> providing evidence justifying judgment with consequences</i></p>
	<b>b. Develop a weekly action plan</b>
<b>How?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a self-growth action plan for the week based upon this self-assessment</li> <li>Seek external help if your action plan is not strong enough to obtain the intended growth</li> <li>Plan at least five opportunities in the coming week to implement the action plan</li> </ul> <p><b>Mentoring Skills</b>  <i><b>Developing action plans:</b> creating short and long-term strategies for improvement</i>  <i><b>Giving Consulting feedback:</b> causing action in assessee through timely, valuable, expert analysis</i></p>

<b>Stage</b>	<b>5. Conduct a systematic weekly self-growth analysis</b>	<i>(continued)</i>
<b>Step</b>	<b>c. Perform for the week</b>	
<b>How?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Execute the self-growth action plan for the week</li> <li>• Consult with your mentor if your action plan is not working the way you intended</li> <li>• Do at least five SII Assessments during the week</li> </ul> <p><b>Mentoring Skills</b></p> <p><b>Self-monitoring:</b> <i>having a continuous camera on every performance so it can be replayed and assessed</i></p> <p><b>Self-mentoring:</b> <i>engaging in intentional self-assessment leading to analysis of self for improvement (Note: challenging action plan)</i></p>	
	<b>d. Reflect</b>	
<b>How?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Before moving onto the next week's effort, do a reflection at the end of the week to capture what you learned about the risk factor, the professional characteristic being developed, the performance area(s), and how they are related and interact</li> <li>• Use the knowledge as a new foundation for mitigating the risk factor leading to improved performance in these performance areas</li> </ul> <p><b>Mentoring Skills</b></p> <p><b>Maintaining objectivity:</b> <i>focusing on reporting the evaluation, not responding to personal reactions</i></p>	
	<b>e. Memorialize</b>	
<b>How?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Measure the change in your performance in these performance areas, what contributed to it, and the action plans used</li> <li>• Become mindful of what is needed for the coming weeks</li> <li>• After memorializing, let it go and let your subconscious take over and move on to the next professional characteristic and associated learning skills</li> </ul> <p><b>Mentoring Skills</b></p> <p><b>Being patient:</b> <i>waiting with equanimity when timing, conditions, and readiness are not right (Note: always/ still working on self-growth initiatives)</i></p>	
<b>Stage</b>	<b>6. Conduct annual reflection on self-growth</b>	
<b>Step</b>	<b>a. Conduct annual reflection</b>	
<b>How?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarify "Who am I?" and develop a confirmation statement incorporating updated values, needs, quality statements, broad criteria, and an analysis of what is limiting your future and why</li> <li>• Update your strategy documenting any changes in life goals or life milestones</li> <li>• Reconsider the overall strategy and lay out a plan for the year with the above in mind</li> <li>• Reanalyze identities and performance focus to determine what have you learned about yourself and how it changes your identities</li> <li>• Note if the steps above result in any changes in the ranking of your performance areas</li> </ul> <p><b>Mentoring Skills</b></p> <p><b>Determining unmet needs:</b> <i>identifying desired characteristics lacking for receiver</i></p> <p><b>Validating added value:</b> <i>recognizing the worth you have contributed</i></p>	

<b>Stage</b>	<b>6. Conduct annual reflection on self-growth</b>	<i>(continued)</i>
<b>Step</b>	<b>b. Conduct annual assessment</b>	
<b>How?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At the end of the year, conduct a full annual assessment report of your performance areas impacted during the year using the Strengths, Improvements and Insights (SII) model</li> <li>• For each Performance Area, structure a one-page report that includes: list of risk factors addressed, professional characteristics developed, and learning skills that were improved</li> <li>• Identify and document on this page, the top four accomplishments in this performance area and their importance; four significant improvements made with evidence, and four areas you want to strengthen during the next year and why</li> <li>• After assessing your top ten performance areas, describe what happened to reduce the risk factors – one page. Identify four professional characteristics that increased the most and describe how it happened this year</li> <li>• Focus on your top five most improved learning skills and how these relate and support the use of the Methodology for Self-Growth</li> </ul> <p><b>Mentoring Skills</b></p> <p><i><b>Identifying new qualities:</b> finding new dimensions that enhance value for an audience because for self-growth the audience is oneself.</i></p>	
	<b>c. Produce the annual growth plan</b>	
<b>How?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• After the annual assessment, produce your growth plan for the year.</li> <li>• Update the risk factors to determine the new ranked list of top 12 risk factors</li> <li>• Prioritize the performance areas and their importance. With the experience of the past year, implement the professional growth plan</li> <li>• Determine who you can mentor in self-growth this year -- it is time to learn more about self-growth by mentoring others self-growth</li> </ul> <p><b>Mentoring Skills</b></p> <p><i><b>Providing growth feedback:</b> supplying key observations, meaningful analysis, and implications</i></p>	