Developing a Quality of Life (QoL) Framework for Self-Growth

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Abstract

*People have been searching for the good life or **quality of life (QoL)** for several millennia. The concept of QoL is described in the Oxford dictionary as the standard of health, comfort, and happiness experienced by an individual or group. The things that are needed for a good quality of life. Self-growers would benefit from a QoL Framework that would help them improve their self-growth capability. Such a QoL framework would enable individuals to measure the progress they make toward increasing their self-growth capability and provide an ideal to measure the effectiveness of Process Education. This article presents a QoL Framework for Self-Growth that describes different aspects of life that researchers refer to as domains or dimensions and for which they develop appropriate subjective or objective indicator scales. The QoL Framework for Self-Growth is essential for individuals who want to clarify, define, measure, and develop their capabilities to improve their QoL.*

Introduction

People have been searching for "the good life" or quality of life (QoL) for several millennia. The pursuit of quality of life provides individuals with significant motivation for increasing their growth and self-growth capabilities. However, only during the past four decades have researchers designed and implemented objective and subjective tools for measuring QoL.

In parallel development over the last 30 years, Process Educators have advanced their practices in knowing, learning, learning to learn, growth and self-growth (Leise, 2020). During the 1990s, the focus of Process Education (PE) was on increasing the teachable moments in the curricula developed by process educators. Teachable moments are the typical contextual experiences that stimulate learning. The cognitive dissonance leads to the production of new or changed knowledge by a learner. Process Educators accomplished this by setting up challenging assessment cultures with active learning (Apple et al., 2016). They used the Learning Process Methodology to create and facilitate activities (Watts, 2016). Process Educators linked a set of learning skills (Leise et al., 2019) to specific courses and address selected learning skills from that set for each activity. Facilitation plans were designed to help facilitators identify learning issues that would support learner intervention, thus helping struggling learners improve a specific learning skill. Consequently, the facilitator could take advantage of each growable moment (Minderhout, 2007).

During the early 2000s, the idea that learning is more than process began to germinate; learning is also performance with unlimited growth potential (Elger, 2007). Process Educators expanded learning by developing supporting processes like reading, writing, communicating, and problem solving (Krumsieg & Baehr, 2000). With the increasing number, size, and impact of Learning to Learn Camps (Apple et al., 2015), a philosophical change occurred wherein learning skills shifted from a knowledge-producing focus to the development of learning skills usable across all life performance areas. It is during these learning experiences that learners with a growth mindset also realize that if their learning performance had been stronger, they would not have required teachable moments. Instead, they would have created their own learning moments. Facilitators, to the extent that they become aware of learner readiness through accurate assessment, use learners' readiness to elevate growable moments to growable experiences (Smith & Apple, 2007). Growable experiences occur when a person or group experience a complex set of conditions and circumstances that cannot be fully addressed merely with new knowledge because life issue(s) have triggered a need to respond with a higher level of capability than previously. In other words, the person or group require a growth in learning skills that leads to transformation and greater empowerment for the learner. Knowing where growth opportunities are likely to arise, facilitators can intervene constructively, so that learners become more aware and involved in the development of learning skills (Smith & Leise, 2007).

Recently, the PE community discovered that the facilitators were able to increase student success (Wenner et al., 2019; Murray, 2019; Watts & Perkins, 2019) when they mentored performance development, that is, facilitating the effective development of students into better learners and performers (Van Slyke & Utschig, 2020). Thus, growth was more readily realized if individuals became more skilled at facilitating their own growth. In the book, *Learning to Learn: Becoming a Self-Grower*, Apple et al. (2013) describe the

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relationship between learning and self-growth and how the two have become integrated. Tunstall's workshop (2016), *Comparing PE Philosophy to Existentialism*, during the 2016 Process Education Conference, stimulated conversation on how PE provides educators with a greater quality of life. The PE community has expanded its focus on the relationship between self-growth development and improved quality of life by putting the focus on performance mentoring and self-growth coaching. Process Educators are trying to help turn *growable experiences* into *self-growth experiences* by drawing upon higher motives that drive personal development, performance growth, and self-growth (Leasure et al., 2020) and, in turn, improve their QoL.

QoL has been recognized as a critical part of the self-growth process (Jain et al., 2020) and was identified as a primary benefit from increased growth capability. PE's objective of self-growth development is to improve the overall QoL by increasing one's growth capability in areas of meaning and value toward one's chosen life. Jain et al. (2020) developed the Self-Growth Methodology designed to improve growth capability and one's QoL. This methodology includes many parts such as defining the meaning of life, developing a life vision and a life plan, identifying important performance areas, clarifying impediments and risks associated with these performances, developing weekly growth and self-growth plans, and assessing and reflecting weekly and annually on these performances. The foundation of the self-growth process is based upon a personal framework for creating life meaning and developing capabilities to live a quality life.

This research begins the development of a personalized QoL measurement system through the development of a QoL Framework for Self-Growth. In what follows, the literature on quality of life and life's characteristics is discussed leading to the development of the QoL Framework for Self-Growth. Next, the use of this framework as a personal tool for growth and self-growth is outlined. Finally, future research utilizing the QoL Framework for Self-Growth and conclusions are presented.

Literature on Quality of Life and its Characteristics

QoL research is extensive and spans many disciplines, segments of the private sector, levels of government, and academia (Constanza et al., 2008). The research includes areas such as subjective well-being (McMahan & Estes, 2011; Strack, 1996), life satisfaction (Pavot & Diener, 2008), and happiness (Kammann et al., 1984). QoL research uses objective indicators, data that can be measured and quantified (e.g., income, standard of living, education), and subjective indicators of QoL such as satisfaction with health, family, living conditions, etc. (Sirgy et al., 2006). To capture

the breadth of this literature, Sirgy (2006), Constanza et al. (2008), and Haraldstad et al. (2019) each conducted meta-analysis research projects that span the history of QoL research.

The first meta-analysis (Sirgy et al., 2006) looked at QoL measurement from multiple perspectives by first laying out the conceptual structure of its research, then from perspectives of the disciplines of economics, health orientation, well-being, marketing, and organizational psychology and management. An interesting part of this article is their perspective on forecasting the future research of QoL, which the authors compared to the actual research that resulted from 2006 to 2020. The last 15 years has led to the incorporation of QoL in many areas. Health and Medicine research and practice expanding their use QoL. Higher education incorporating QoL as a critical learning outcome in numerous programs, developing QoL courses, expanding the number of QoL research centers, as well as providing research opportunities for students like Nova Southeastern University QoL program. The development of numerous private-sector jobs in marketing, advertising, pharmacology, and health fields with respect to QoL. Governments incorporating QoL into policy making, decision making and funding. Finally, organizations and human resource departments incorporating QoL in managing their workplace.

In the second meta-analysis, Constanza et al. (2008) provided a vast background of the research that led to their development of an integrative multi-disciplinary perspective definition of QoL. This QoL definition was the basis of a multi-scale, multi-dimensional concept based on the interaction of objective and subjective indicators. A major context for this effort is to expand opportunities for increasing QoL. Costanza et al. summarize their work as follows:

> . . . quality of life (QOL) is the extent to which objective human needs are fulfilled in relation to personal or group perceptions of subjective well-being …. Human needs are basic needs for subsistence, reproduction, security, affection, etc. … [subjective well-being] is assessed by individuals' or groups' responses to questions about happiness, life satisfaction, utility, or welfare. The relation between specific human needs and perceived satisfaction with each of them can be affected by mental capacity, cultural context, information, education, temperament, and the like, often in quite complex ways. Moreover, the relation between the fulfillment of human needs and overall subjective wellbeing is affected by the (time-varying) weights individuals, groups, and cultures give to fulfilling each of the human needs relative to the others.

They further clarify the measurement of QoL as: "Overall QOL at any point in time is a function of (a) the degree to which each identified human need is met, which we will call 'fulfillment' and (b) the importance of the need to the respondent or to the group in terms of its relative contribution to their subjective well-being."

Finally, in the third meta-analysis, Haraldstad et al. (2019) focuses on health fields but tries to connect to the broader QoL research. Haraldstad et al. compare and contrast QoL measures through a systematic review to identify instruments, design and conceptual issues. Their conclusion is that QoL research methods can be strengthened and standardized so that improved quality instruments will produce more meaningful research. While most studies did not adequately define the QoL concept or distinguish QoL from Health-Related QoL, the studies did indicate the domains of QoL to be measured, give a reason for choosing the instruments used, and aggregate the results from multiple items.

These three meta-analyses delineate critical QoL research and measuring system approaches which provide the theoretical context for the QoL Framework for Self-Growth. Further, three major life characteristics underlie the QoL Framework for Self-Growth: subjective well-being, life satisfaction, and happiness. Life's quality characteristics are inherently personal. They are subjective constructs that arise from life but are not always connected to objective reality. They are multidimensional constructs that describe how one defines emotional, physical, material, and social well-being. Camus (1955) offers a revealing insight on life's quality by asking, if life is not worth living, why doesn't everyone kill themselves? Philosopher Thagard argues that despite 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 (Lucas, 2010). Shermer (2015) identifies ten "provisional moral principles" that begin with the "golden rule" of treating others the way you wish to be treated. Schwarz and Strack (1991) distinguish life quality as a balance between positive and negative feelings. 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, sports, relationships, personal experiences, etc., all help to identify which of these characteristics are the most important to you and bring exceptional value to your life. Experiences that have become your precious favorite memories drive motivation to perform in ways that make each day of your life special to create even more of these memories. Synthesizing these viewpoints, *The Professional's Guide to Self-Growth* (Apple et al., 2018) identifies 50 professional characteristics for success that help to elevate self-expectations for QoL.

Subjective Well Being

Most researchers credit Diener (1984) with articulating subjective well-being as a self-reported measure typically obtained by questionnaire. Diener describes subjective well-being as "people's cognitive and affective evaluations of their lives," that is, how people experience the quality of their lives. Busseri and Sadava (2010) separated this construct into three synergistic components (Tripartite Model): frequency of positive affect, infrequency of negative affect, and cognitive evaluation of a person's life satisfaction. These affective determinations are influenced by the degree to which hedonic and eudaimonic dimensions are emphasized as important aspects of the experience of well-being. Subjective well-being informs key QoL dimensions that likely matter to most individuals. Seligman (2002) suggests there are three orientations to consider: the pleasant life (hedonic orientation of positive affective experiences), the meaningful life (eudaimonic orientation of working towards a higher purpose), and the engaged life (activities that promote psychological well-being and flow).

Life Satisfaction

Veenhoven (2015) maintains that "Life satisfaction is the degree to which a person positively evaluates the overall quality of his/her life as a whole" which is essentially how much a person likes their life. The Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) has been used by Diener frequently as a measure of the life satisfaction component of subjective well-being. Scores on the SWLS have been shown to correlate with measures of mental health and to be predictive of future behaviors such as suicide attempts. Psychometricians describe key characteristics of the SWLS as a 7-point Likert style response, with a score range of 5 to 35. A score of 20 represents a neutral point, a score between 5 to 9 indicates extreme dissatisfaction with life, and a 31 to 35 score indicates extreme satisfaction.

Happiness

In reviewing the literature on happiness, many general findings were revealed. Being happy and finding life meaningful overlap, but there are important differences. A large survey revealed multiple differing predictors of happiness (controlling for meaning) and meaningfulness (controlling for happiness). Satisfying one's needs and wants increased happiness but was largely irrelevant to meaningfulness (Kammann et al., 1984). Happiness was largely present-oriented, whereas meaningfulness involves integrating past, present, and future. For example, thinking about future and past was associated with high meaningfulness but low happiness.

Happiness was linked to being a taker rather than a giver, whereas meaningfulness was linked to being a giver rather than a taker. Higher levels of worry, stress, and anxiety were linked to higher meaningfulness but lower happiness. Concerns with personal identity and expressing the self both contributed to meaning but not happiness.

The QoL Framework for Self-Growth

A review of the research and frameworks for QoL that would support self-growth, revealed critical QoL research across 15 different disciplines (Appendix A), QoL research centers (Appendix B), websites and journals focusing on publishing QoL research (Appendix C), and studies that ultimately formed the basis for the QoL Framework for Self-Growth (Appendix D). The QoL Framework for Self-Growth was developed by identifying a subset of these studies that pertain to subjective measures. Then selecting 15 of the most appropriate disciplinary and interdisciplinary QoL frameworks along with their domains and dimensions. Further review reduced and synthesized the total domains into 14 relevant domains for self-growers along with corresponding dimensions from the 15 frameworks and supplemented these dimensions with additional dimensions from the Self-Growth community. The resulting framework, *QoL Framework for Self-Growth*, is a versatile structure consisting of 14 domains and 68 dimensions. When clarifying the QoL Framework for Self-Growth, the domains are shared by many people and this shared commonality often extends to dimensions. To ensure completeness, a perception check of the QoL Framework for Self-Growth was conducted with the Self-Growth Community. After incorporating their input, the final framework is presented in Table 1.

Table 1 Domains and Dimensions of the QoL Framework for Self-Growth

Life Domains	Dimensions with Descriptions
Domain 1: Social Well-being (Enjoying the relationships within life that add so much special meaning)	

Life Partner: The individual a person chooses to share life's journey, love, experiences and quality

Friendships: Meaningful relationships that contribute to who a person is, what they do, and that help them to become the person they want to be

Family: All members: children, grandchildren, parents, siblings, grandparents, uncles, aunts, cousins, nieces, nephews, and very close family friends who are part of the family

Community: Groups of people a person values belonging to, such as a neighborhood, church, professional learning community, association, etc.

Personal Support System: Strength of friends, family, community members, mentors, and co-workers, especially during tough times

Social Status: How an individual is perceived within various communities in with they engage

Pets: Animals who bring love, warmth, and compassion

Domain 2: Work Well-being (Doing work that adds value and quality to life)

Valued for work: Work an individual produces is valued by the organization, clients, supervisors, and individual

Job/profession status: How a person recognized in their professional career by society

Professional network: Quantity and quality of influential individuals who are invested in an individual's future, want to see them succeed, build their reputation, and are willing to help them progress in their career

Valuing one's impact: Understand and enjoy the contributions one makes to all stakeholders

Domain 3: Spiritual Well-being (Moving beyond self to obtain a greater meaning of life)

Volunteering/Gifting: Provide time, energy and personal resources to help others better their lives and its quality

Positive civic action: Through individual and collective action, help increase justice, freedom, and equity

Being positive: Use each day to treat others with respect, kindness, and compassion to better everyone's life quality

Practicing Faith: Use of prayer, traditions, and beliefs to help make greater meaning of life regarding a greater being or spirit

Being in nature: Enjoy bonding with nature's beauty, resources and wonder for renewal

Being connected to something greater: Understanding, believing and experiencing significance beyond self

Domain 4: Emotional Well-being (Feeling good about oneself)

Taking care of self (needs): Fulfill primary needs each day to keep whole

Being productive: Use each hour effectively to produce experiences and results that exceed expectations

Reason to live: A driving life force which encompasses purpose, passion, goals, direction, and people for relishing the experience of living

Self-worth: A sense that one's importance to the world is as good as anyone else's

Efficacy: Belief that one is capable to do anything they set their mind and being towards doing

Being Happy: Waking up positive, constantly smiling and bringing joy to oneself and for others

Domain 5: Intellectual/Mental Well-being (Creating meaning)

Sense of Purpose: Build a philosophical meaning of life that centers one and produces a personal compass to guide one's actions

Freedom: Opportunity to make one's own choices and own their consequences with minimal social constraints by others

Learning: An understanding of self and the world that allows a person to process life in the ways they choose

Domain 6: Personal Development (Strengthening personal capabilities)

Learning to Learn: Increasing learning performance and the ability to learn

Self-improvement (assessment): the use of every experience and performance to increase future situations

Life Plan: Thoughtful development of a life vision, life goals, broad criteria and strategies to direct life efforts with a productive growth mindset

Growth (Personal Growth Rate): Use of life moments to see how to improve and move along the path towards an ideal self, i.e., systematically improving self, situations, and performances, and their positive impact on QoL

Self-growth: Expenditure of energy and time on increasing growth capability by increasing the power of its components

Domain 7: Joyful Experiences (Enriching life experiences)

Meaningful pastime: Taking joy of doing what one wants to do because of the personal value it renders

Leisure: Enjoy taking time to explore aspects of life, including travel, that are outside of routine for the experiences they might provide

Attending performances/events: Enjoy the quality produced by others in all dimensions of life performances

Spending time with loved ones: Joy sharing holidays, events, life happenings with people who are close and meaningful

Domain 8: Physical Well-being: (Being in peak condition for enjoying the body and its role in a holistic life)

Exercise: Workouts that keep a person feeling fit

Sport: Enjoy the physical competition of giving it your all, trying to excel and continually improve

Outdoor recreation: Physical activities to commune with the environment and tap into the vast resources

Safety: Protecting oneself from obvious harm by being situationally aware and taking normal precautions

Domain 9: Good Health Maintaining a body that feels good)

Maintenance: Keeping the body in functioning order by getting routine checkups

Nutrition: Balancing the body's physical needs through eating, sleeping and dietary choices thus maintaining a healthy weight and alertness

Wellness: Making sure to take care of self physically to minimize sick days

Domain 10: Environmental Well-being (Enjoying quality surroundings in which to work, live and play)

Local environment: The quality of the Parks, Green Space, museums commercial establishments, upkeep, transportation, etc.

Living conditions: Quality of housing, personal living space, cleanliness, autonomy, and things to make daily living viable

Mobility: Being able to make choices to do things because one can relocate to achieve access

Environmental quality: Having a quality environment including such things as water, air, vegetation, industrial plants, restoration, repairs, and general maintenance

Domain 11: Economic Well-being (Having access to healthy economic support)

Perceived standard of living: How one feels about the level of comfort experiencing against expectations

Cost of living: How expensive is it to maintain one's standard of living

Net-worth (retirement plan): The number of resources accumulated for the future so retirement is well funded and future work will not be a requirement

Domain 12: Self-Expression (Engaging in creative pursuits)

Orating/Writing: Communicating ideas that impact other ideas and views on how to live one's life

Producing art: The creation of new works

Creating Music: Producing pleasant sounds and meaning for appreciation

Acting/Storytelling: Sharing representations of life experiences via many forms of medium

Crafting: The production of substances and products that bring value and appreciation

Playing: Intentionally creating experiences that others and one's self can enjoy (e.g., parties)

Gardening: Cultivating new vegetation for beauty and bounty

Cooking: Preparing dining experiences of tasty delights

Domain 13: Legacy

People impacted: Children, Family, Friends, Mentees, Associates, Employees, Students, and other people one has helped to craft their own futures

Intellectual properties: Contributions that produce copyrighted material designed to improve the conditions of others

Arts/Crafts Artifacts: Tangible items that represent some aspect of who a person is that others value and appreciate their quality

Organizations/Community: Building something that continues to bring people together with common purpose and unity that increases quality to those involved

Systems/Processes: Building new structures that are so stable the outlast own involvement in their creation

Philanthropy: Setting up a foundation that provides means for ongoing support that increases the opportunities and conditions for others to have a better quality of life

Inheritance: Providing resources for others to have a greater QoL after one is gone

Domain 14: Life's Major Interventions

Potential Dimensions:

Life challenges: The number of major life crises that has set back one's progress toward one's ideal self

Illness: The long-term status of health characterized by a continuing health problem (e.g., diabetes)

Major health issue: A serious health issue that needs to be addressed (e.g., heart operation)

Response to adversity: Life's quality is influenced by how one addresses these negative issues in a positive manner to effectively move forward to turn negatives into positives (i.e., make lemonade from lemons)

Customizing a Personalized
QoL Framework for Self-Growth

The framework presented in Table 1 provides the structure an individual can use to create a personalized framework for their own self-growth. When selecting and defining one's own dimensions, two principles are in play. First, the only person that matters is the person themselves. It is their QoL. Second, the individual is the only one who can limit themselves.

The first part of the Self-Growth Methodology (Jain et al., 2020) involves clarifying values, needs, expectations, and criteria which can be personalized for an individual's self-growth. Developing a personalized framework is a prerequisite to future growth and self-growth development efforts. Developing a personalized index or measure of QoL that is useful in one's journey of self-growth. Effective use of the *QoL Framework Self-Growth* requires an individual to take the following four steps: examine the purpose of life, analyze one's values and needs, raise one's expectations for life, develop broad criteria for a quality life. Each of these steps are discussed in detail with suggestions on how to implement them.

Step 1: Examine the Purpose of Life

Collectively, the empirical studies and theoretical analyses of many thoughtful scholars and practitioners argue for a life-philosophy that includes taking stock of one's own values that have importance for choices related to meeting needs associated with being human and being an individual. Journalist David Brooks, for example, differentiates between "resume virtues" and "eulogy virtues." In his book, *The Second Mountain* (2019), Brooks emphasizes even more strongly the differences between living comfortably by adjusting to conventions of family, church, and society and learning that true meaning in life often requires one to climb a "second mountain," beyond achievement and status. In his book *Man's Search for Meaning*, holocaust survivor Viktor Frankl (1962) 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, such as of his beloved wife, for his survival.

Theological scholars, Martela and Steger (2016), describe the 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." 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." Haidt (2012) distinguishes between the purpose of life and the purpose within life and examines the concepts of virtue, happiness, fulfillment, values, and meaning. In his 2012 book, *The Righteous Mind*, Haidt provides evidence for these five "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 foundation values is important because values often conflict when situations present incongruities like two low-quality choices, two high-quality choices, or when one choice obstructs another that is equally desirable. Maslow's (1943) humanistic psychological perspective emphasizes that growth of an individual increases potential to find greater meaning in life, i.e., self-actualization. Differentiating lower-purpose and higher-purpose needs, he enumerates ten distinctions. Of these, the last—"growth-values"—is not only 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."

The Classification of Learning Skills (CLS), a framework that captures 509 learning skills, impacts a person's ability to live life in the way one chooses. The highest level in the CLS's affective domain, *Extending Beyond Self*, provides some essential performance skills for moving into deeper meaning and contributions with one's life (Leise et al., 2019). Clarity about the meaning of one's life is more effectively achieved by imagining how one would like to be remembered at the end of life than by thinking only about a list of achievements. Life needs to be considered holistically to bring meaning to the multitude of routine activities necessary to meet needs and to build conditions that make important outcomes possible. Many life experiences result in memories (meaning infused experiences—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.

Step 2: Analyze One's Values and Needs

The self-growth journey starts by identifying and differentiating ten personal values that are especially meaningful in life and why. An examination of values

is important for defining who one is and who one desires to become. A clear sense of the top values they believe in is essential to their self-growth path because these are most likely to be truly motivating. Beaudoin and Sloman (1993) describe values as motivators when the gap between current self and ideal self is too large. Similarly, alarms and wants can be defined as gap-based motivators. Therefore, new values can be learned, and old values refined or done away with. Well-developed values influence present and future choices and actions toward the intended direction of self-growth.

A clear idea of an individual's top ten values and why each was selected is important to clarify when understanding their QoL. Values are associated with how one takes responsibility for others, achieves successes, and deals with tragedies and failures. The CLS affective domain's level 3, Clarifying, Building, and Refining Values, identifies 46 learning skills that strengthen all aspects of valuing life, such as Trusting Self. Valuing can be learned and improved through experiences and assessment. Many valuing skills, such as empathizing, being tolerant, accepting, or forgiving, are used to take care of the needs of others rather than oneself.

Needs are those things that, if left unfulfilled on a routine basis, leave a person functioning at a fraction of their capability. Needs can be viewed from three perspectives, First, the renewal of the body, mind, emotions, social connections, and spirit. Second the keeping up one's vitality. Third, providing time for appreciating life (e.g., smelling the roses). Many websites share practices and insights about renewal techniques. Renewal of the body includes sound sleeping, power napping, yoga, and hydrating. Renewing your mind includes learning, meditating, reading, and reflecting. Emotional renewal includes being positive, letting things go, affirming self, and visioning a better self. Renewing social connections includes enhancing relationships, playing sports, volunteering, and meeting a new person. Finally, renewal of spirit includes being in nature, praying, engaging in new experiences, and expressing oneself.

Vitality is the strengthening of oneself so one can stay whole, even in the toughest of life situations. Vitality also involves supporting all five domains. For example, exercising, growing, being mindful, networking, and seeking new spiritual truths. As important as the first two areas are, providing time for appreciating life is probably as, if not more, important. These activities include things like visiting gardens, exploring a new environment, going to a concert, or taking personal time. Analyzing how a person renews, maintains vitality, or does appreciation activities, can lead to many

new insights about how to recognize needs. Some specific suggestions that may help to identify top values and needs are presented in Table 2.

Table 2 Suggestions on How to Identify Top Values and Needs

- Brainstorm a list of what personally matters most
- Select 15–20 learning skills from Process 3 of the Affective Domain
- Search for applicable books and websites using the terms *values clarification, renewal, maintaining vitality,* and *QoL*
- Talk to a trusted person or mentor about one's initial list
- Write a brief blog about each value to clarify why it is important
- Settle on ten values—and set the list aside to allow time for additional insights
- Find the most critical needs and justify why they are not accommodations

When exploring needs, a person must not err by excessively expanding self-accommodation, wherein their standards begin to consume their waking moments. Instead of increasing growth and self-growth, excessive self-accommodation becomes an impediment and a self-imposed limit on growth and self-growth.

Step 3: Raise One's Expectations for Life

An expectation is a belief 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 to a higher capability. President Kennedy raised the nation's expectations by saying, "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" (Kennedy, 1962, 22:59). Transformational life coach Stutz (Stutz & Michels, 2012) suggests five specific ways people can raise their expectations: do difficult things; expand their comfort zone; challenge themselves; take a survival course; and learn new things. The challenge is to raise self-expectations continually; this can be aided by improving self-challenge learning skills such as taking risks, being persistent, and leveraging failure. An individual takes control and is outrageous when they define and plan their life's outcomes so they can

prevent a self-limiting mindset that holds them back. The only person who can truly limit an individual is the individual themselves. An important strategy is to visualize one's ideal self in 20 years and to determine one's expectations based on the future self's perspectives rather than the current self's perspective.

Step 4: Develop Broad Criteria for a Quality Life

Primarily a subjective and multidimensional construct, successful life is a conventional measurement of the fulfillment of one's own and others' expectations. Society often guides one's thinking about what defines success—material possessions, social status, or physical and emotional well-being. The purpose of a QoL Framework for Self-Growth is not to help define success but to increase one's QoL. Since "success" in self-growth is the quality of life journey toward one's ideal self, broad criteria are developed to guide this journey. Development of general, broad criteria that guide one's self-growth journey requires researching and identifying what creates the quality of one's life. 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 (Ex. 34:28). Or the enduring ethical teachings of Confucius from 500 BC regarding love, benevolence, humanity, perfect virtue, and true manhood may signify the ideal relationship (Ng, 2009). Among a select few other inspirations are the young Ben Franklin's unique chart of 13 virtues as a system for developing character (Franklin & Davidow, 1936) or Andy Andrews' (2014) 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 the development of criteria that continually guide the level of life performance (Myrvaagnes et al., 1999) from the current to an elevated level. One gets to identify their own critical rules of the game of life—those that matter the most and bring meaning and quality to one's own life; those that help guide them to be true to themselves, their vision, and their values.

Future Research

Using *QoL Framework for Self-Growth* an individual can create a QoL Index. Using the *Framework for Self-Growth*, and individual would identify and select important dimensions to be included in their customized QoL framework. Once finished with this selection, the individual would explore which dimension(s) of their QoL are missing and need to be added. From the set of original and added dimensions, the individual should choose the most important and valuable dimension that outranks all the other dimensions. In analyzing each additional dimensional contribution to QoL, determine the relative valuing of each dimension as a fraction of the chosen most important dimension. For instance, determine if it is one-half, one-third, or one-fourth of the most important dimension. This relationship among the dimensions should be reviewed every five years, if not annually, because these ratios will change. These ranked dimensions will provide guidance to elevate one's QoL in the critical dimensions as one designs their growth plan. An important consideration is the interplay of the QoL of self and the QoL of others. The growth and self-growth plans integrate QoL pursuit into one's life journey, not just its destination. Future research will explore how this way of thinking is used daily to support improved QoL decision making.

The next stage of the research is to create a tool and embedded process. A QoL Artificial Intelligence Coach would walk an individual through this process of creating an individualized QoL Index. This tool would allow individuals and researchers to develop and track QoL to measure the impact that PE self-growth practices have on increasing QoL. Major issues associated with the development of this tool would likely include creating objective and subjective ordinal scales capable of measuring improvement of QoL for each dimension, formalizing the weightings among the dimensions, defining methods to adjust the content and structure of the index when there are changes in one's ideal self, life plan, etc. leading to changes in their QoL, and using the tool in research to generalize across self-growth populations.

Conclusion

Quality of life has been explored, analyzed, and modeled by some of the greatest minds over time and more recently by hundreds of QoL researchers. QoL frameworks have been created to clarify important domains of life. As researchers have described their domains, their frameworks have identified unique characteristics which are defined as dimensions. Fifteen of the most appropriate QoL Frameworks, that support the goals of PE's self-growth approach, were synthesized into the *QoL Framework for Self-Growth* to support the self-growth journey of individuals toward their ideal self. The *Framework* has 14 domains with 68 dimensions that contribute to a self-grower's QoL. The descriptions of each domain and its dimensions help an individual to ascertain the weightings needed to produce a qualitative determination of a personalized QoL measurement. Consequently, building QoL Indices using the *QoL Framework for Self-Growth* will help advance the scholarship and tools necessary for quantifying the subjective measurement of QoL.

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Windle, G., Joling, K. J., Howson-Griffiths, T., Woods, B., Jones, C. H., van de Ven, P. M., Newman, A., & Parkinson, C. (2018). The impact of a visual arts program on quality of life, communication, and well-being of people living with dementia: A mixed-methods longitudinal investigation. *International Psychogeriatrics, 30*(3), 409-423. doi:10.1017/s1041610217002162

Appendix A Sample of QoL Research in Different Disciplines

(Discipline / Abbreviated Reference)

Archaeology	Smith (2019). Quality of Life and Prosperity in Ancient Households and Communities.
Computer Science	QoL: Quality of Life. (n.d.).
Economics	Lambiri et al. (2006). Quality of Life in the Economic and Urban Economic Literature.
Environment Science	Lercher (2003). Which Health Outcomes Should be Measured in Health-Related Environmental Quality of Life Studies?
Ergonomics	Hancock & Drury (2011). Do Human Factors/Ergonomics Contribute to the Quality of Life?
Humanities	Ryff (2019, January 09). Linking Education in the Arts and Humanities to Life-Long Well-Being and Health.
Military	Hindelang et al. (2004). Quality of Life (QOL) in the U.S. Marine Corps: The Validation of a QOL Model For Predicting Reenlistment Intentions.
Psychology	Efklides & Moraitou (2013). Introduction: Looking at QoL and Well-Being from a Positive Psychology Perspective. A Positive Psychology Perspective on Quality of Life Social Indicators Research Series.
Sociology	Ferriss (2004). The Quality of Life Concept in Sociology.
Technology	Wac et al. (2017). Quality-of-Life Technologies.
Visual Arts	Windle et al. (2018). The Impact of a Visual Arts Program on Quality of Life, Communication, and Well-Being of People Living with Dementia: A Mixed-Methods Longitudinal Investigation.
Health Sciences	Haraldstad et al. (2019). A Systematic Review of Quality of Life Research in Medicine and Health Sciences.
Geography	Pacione (1982). The Use of Objective and Subjective Measures of Life Quality in Human Geography.
Leisure	Uysal et al. (2016). Quality of life (QOL) and Well-Being Research in Tourism.
Philosophy	Ventegodt et al. (2003). Quality of Life Philosophy I. Quality of Life, Happiness, and Meaning in Life.
Public Policy	Mulligan et al. (2004). Urban Quality of Life and Public Policy: A Survey

Appendix B Examples of QoL Research Centers

(Name of Center / Host and Location / Reference / URL)

Centre for Welfare and Labour Research [Oslo Metropolitan University (Oslo, Norway)]

Storby universitetet, O. (n.d.). Centre for Welfare and Labour Research.

Available at: https://www.oslomet.no/en/about/sva

Deaf Health Communication and Quality of Life Center [Gallaudet University, Deaf Health Communication and Quality of Life Center (Washington D.C., USA)]

Deaf Health Communication and Quality of Life Center. (2020, August 27).

Available at: https://www.deafhealthqol.com/

Enhancement of QoL [Gunze (Kyoto, Japan)]

Research & Development: GUNZE LIMITED. (n.d.).

Available at: https://www.gunze.co.jp/english/technology/qol/

HRQOL Program [Center Disease Control and Prevention (Atlanta, USA)]

About CDC's HRQOL Program. (2018, October 31).

Available at: https://www.cdc.gov/hrqol/about.htm

Morris Stroud III. Center for Study of Quality of Life in Health and Aging [Columbia University Department of Psychiatry (New York, USA)]

Available at: https://www.columbiapsychiatry.org/research/research-centers/morris-stroud-iii-center-study-quality-life-health-and-aging

Professional Quality of Life Measure [Non-profit (Idaho, USA)]

ProQOL Team. (n.d.).

Available at: https://www.proqol.org/About_us.html

QoL Research Center [Business]

QoL Research

Available at: https://www.qol-research.com/

QoL Research Center [Claremont Graduate School (Claremont, California, USA)]

Quality of Life Research Center ·Claremont Graduate University. (n.d.).

Available at: https://www.cgu.edu/center/quality-of-life-research-center/

QoL Research Center OUH [Odense University Hospital (Svendborg, Denmark)]

Quality of Life Research Center OUH. (2019, February 07).

Available at: http://en.ouh.dk/research/quality-of-life-research-center-ouh/

QoL Research Unit [University of Toronto (Toronto, Canada)]

QoL Research Center, University of Toronto. (n.d.).

Available at: http://sites.utoronto.ca/qol/

QoL Technologies [University of Geneva, Center for Informatics (Geneva, Switzerland)]

Quality of Life Technologies, Geneva Switzerland. (n.d.).

Available at: https://www.qualityoflifetechnologies.com/qol-lab/research/

Quality of Life Plus [Non-profit]

Quality of Life Plus. (n.d.).

Available at: https://qlplus.org/

Quality of Life Research Center (QOLRC) [University Copenhagen Medical School (Copenhagen, Denmark)]

The Quality of Life Research Center. (n.d.).

Available at: https://qualityoflife.dk/the-quality-of-life-research-center/

Sydney Quality of Life Office [University of Sydney (Sydney Australia)]

Sydney Quality of Life Office. (n.d.).

Available at: https://www.sydney.edu.au/science/our-research/research-areas/psychology/sydney-quality-of-life-office. html

Appendix C Sources for Qualify of Life Research

Websites

Addition Research Center

Retrieved November 28, 2020, from https://arc.psych.wisc.edu/self-report/

Center for Survey Research and Methodology/Social Indicators Department at University of Mannheim, Germany

Retrieved November 28, 2020, from http://www.zumamannheim.de/data/social-indicators

Institute for Social Research, York University, Canada

Retrieved November 28, 2020, from http://www.math.yorku.ca/ISR/menu.htm

Institute for Social Research and Evaluation, University of Northern British Columbia, Canada

Retrieved November 28, 2020, from http://www.unbc.ca/isre

International Society for Quality-of-Life Studies

Retrieved November 28, 2020, from https://isqols.org/Bibliographic-Resources

Subjective Well-Being Laboratory, University of Illinois-Urbana, USA

Retrieved November 28, 2020, from http://www.psych.uiuc.edu/~ediener

The Australian Center on Quality of Life, Deakin University, Australia

Retrieved November 28, 2020, from http://acqol.deakin.edu.au/index.html

The Center for Survey Research at Virginia Tech, USA

Retrieved November 28, 2020, from www.vt.edu:10021/centers/survey/index.html

The Global Development and Environment Institute, Tufts University, USA

Retrieved November 28, 2020, from http://ase.tufts.edu/gdoe

The Happiness Research Institute

Retrieved November 28, 2020, from https://www.happinessresearchinstitute.com/happinessresearch Stand alone

The QOL Research Institute, University of Girona, Spain Girona

Retrieved November 28, 2020, from http://www.udg.es/irvq

The World Database of Happiness, Erasmus University, The Netherlands

Retrieved November 28, 2020, from, http://www.eur.nl/fsw/research/happiness

Journals

ISQOLS JOURNAL: Applied Research in Quality-of-Life (ARQOL)

Retrieved November 28, 2020, from https://isqols.org/ARQOL

Journal of Patient-Reported Outcomes

Retrieved November 29, 2020, from https://www.isoqol.org/journals/

Quality of Life Research

Retrieved November 28, from https://www.springer.com/journal/11136

Quality of Life Research Journal

Retrieved November 29, 2020, from https://www.isoqol.org/journals/

Appendix D Studies that are the Basis for the QoL Framework for Self-Growth

(Framework Title, [Author/Source] / Purpose / Domains/Dimensions / URL)

A Survey of the Public's Judgements to Inform Scales of Health-Related Quality of Life [Bowling A. (1995)]

National British Survey to determine what people value in quality of life. (Comparison to standard domains people value domains outside of standard models provided.)

https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/8560313/

Assessing Quality of Life: Current Approaches [Ivana et al. (2010)]

Comparison of five frameworks

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/49604059_ASSESSING_QUALITY_OF_LIFE_CURRENT_APPROACHES/figures?lo=1

Cross-Cultural Study of Quality of Life Indicators [Schalock et al.(2005)]

Model for use in intellectual disabilities (8 domains 24 dimensions)

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/7801771_Cross-Cultural_Study_of_Quality_of_Life_Indicators

Domains of Quality of Life: Results of a Three-Stage Delphi Consensus [Pietersma et al. (2014)]

Survey analysis and procedure among patients, family of patients, clinicians, scientists and the general public (64 domains/dimensions)

https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4031380/

Final Report of the Expert Group on Quality of Life Indicators [Expert Group on Quality of Life Indicators, European Union (2017)]

2017 edition (8 Domains, 1 Overall)

https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/7870049/7960327/KS-FT-17-004-EN-N.pdf/f29171db-e1a9-4af6-9e96-730e7e11e02f

Important Aspects of Life [Longitudinal Aging Study Amsterdam: LASA]

To determine what people value in life, especially when aging (9 Domains)

https://lasa-vu.nl/topics/important-aspects-of-life/

Integrative Model of QOL [Constanza et al. (2008)]

Overall model of QoL (11 Domains)

https://journals.openedition.org/sapiens/169

Principles of Support Areas for Well-Being [Center for Health and Wellbeing]

Have programming to support increase in wellbeing (7 domains)

https://yourhealthandwellbeing.org/

QoL Conceptual Framework [University of Toronto/QoL]

Provides Generalized QoL framework (9 Domains, 35 Dimensions)

http://sites.utoronto.ca/qol/qol_model.htm

Quality of Life Domains [Community Living British Columbia]

Social Services; Govt (8 domains)

https://www.communitylivingbc.ca//

Quality of Life Measures for Nursing Home Residents [Kane (2003)]

Provide a QoL framework for Nursing home residents (11 domains)

https://academic.oup.com/biomedgerontology/article/58/3/M240/684127

Quality of Life Technologies [Wac et al. (2017)]

To highlight technologies that improve quality of life (4 Domains, 24 Dimensions)

https://doi.org/10.1109/MIC.2015.52

Synthesis of Positive Psychology for the Most Important Things in Life [Analyzed ten sites to accumulate the union of most important things in life]

Different perspectives in what makes life valuable (Top 10 Domains: family, friends, purpose, positive, health, gratitude/giving, education, love, passion, productivity)

Variety of web sites with search "most important aspects of life"

Ten Basic Capabilities [Nussbaum (1988)]

What are the key capabilities for every person (10 domains)

https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/capability-approach/