Introduction—Who I am and How I came about an interest in Life Review

Goals of the Workshop—Will provide information, refer to resources, and leave time for questions.

Do the humorous piece as people settle in. This is why we need to think of “structure”
Slide 2

What is Structured Life Review?
Guiding a person in the natural process that occurs nearing the end of one’s life in which one integrates the whole of life to more clearly see the significance of one’s life. Not necessarily old age, but nearing the end of life due to illness or injury also brings out this natural process of review.

It is a structured process that involves some effort on both the part of the reviewer and the listener. It is work. It is not reminiscing, but a guided process, following a structure, leading to a goal. ....

Through structured life review, a person comes to accept that his or her life was what it was meant to be. (GAINS INSIGHT, PROMOTES WISDOM)

This leads to an ability to HEAL EMOTIONALLY AND SPIRITUALLY, creating changes in the way that the remainder of life is lived.

This falls well within the functions of ministry of reconciling, healing, guiding
1. Why do a Structured Life Review?
   First, we look to psychology:

   Psychologist, Erik Erikson, studied how the development of our personal lives follows a pattern of stages that each includes a challenge or goal and the consequences of not meeting that challenge successfully.

   Erikson refers to the challenge of late life as “Integrity vs. Despair and Disgust”

   The attribute of this phase is “the acceptance of one’s own and only life cycle and of the people who have become significant to it as something that had to be and that, by necessity permitted of no substitutions.”

   **Read Erikson, pg 104, discuss, put in easier words, inspire the value of the uniqueness of each life.**

   This accepting of one’s life involves understanding the wholeness and meaning of it. If this challenge is not met, then a person may despair, become afraid of death, believing that the time is too short for the attempt to start another life. This despair may be found in a person’s usually being in contempt of persons or institutions, a lack of cooperation with others, a lack of the ability to be either a good follower or leader and a general disgust with one’s self, leading possibly to depression and despondency.

2. Through guiding a person in not just remembering, but emotionally reliving the stages of life in terms of not only failed challenges, but ways in which challenges were overcome, the person is able to find wholeness and peace.
Slide 4

The benefits of Structured Life Review

- Optimism
- New energy by getting rid of old baggage
- Ability to make new plans
- Excitement for living
- Experience a good death
- Feelings of contentment
- Self acceptance as one is
- Discovering meaning—identifying a reason for being
- Reconnection with people and places
- Shared experience—doing this with someone else
- Establishing a relationship
- Cleansing one’s self of a lifetime of burdens
- Pride in one’s accomplishments
- Looking ahead with expectations and Peace

4. The drawbacks or pitfalls or negative outcomes that might occur

This is not the result for everyone. Some people experience an intense and intolerable level of anxiety, guilt, depression, panic, obsessions. Persons who have a pattern of avoiding the reality of the present and look forward to a better future are especially susceptible to these reactions. Also, persons who have consciously injured others. These people are coming to the realization that the time for fulfilled dreams or for reparation is too short. They do not see hope, but futility ahead. Neither followers nor leaders, they are unable to be part of, or to initiate action that will bring about integration.

For them, Structured Life Review should be discontinued. However, as a chaplain, you may exercise your skills to follow up with them in providing more traditional pastoral care interventions. (What are some—for those of you who experience these outcomes?)
Slide 5

Who does Structured Life Review?
You and the reviewer. It is best not to involve family most of the time because the reviewer may have things to say that he hasn’t shared with family. Also, it is not uncommon for family members to answer and talk for the reviewer. But, at times, a family member can recall information that the reviewer might be struggling to remember.
(You may have a challenge in getting cooperation if you ask for time to spend with the reviewer only. Ideas for making this happen.)
Slide 6
Read as is

Slide 7-8-9
Read as is, will return

For 9, Epigenetic principle
Add:
All parts systematically related to others
Proper development in proper sequence
Each item exists in some form before its decisive and critical time normally arises.
The whole ensemble depends on the proper development in the proper sequence of each item
2b. Butler:

Recognized the significance of what others where identifying as merely reminiscing—that it was not just “living in the past” or a sign of senility, but in many cases was much more—a reorganization and integration of the personality, and often resolution of past conflicts. He identified that the process occurs naturally and may take many forms. It may be silent or oral, conscious or unconscious. It may be experienced through dreams.

“I began to distinguish the process of life review from the act of reminiscence, and to understand that life reviews are extremely complex, nuanced, emotional often inchoate and contradictory, and are frequently filled with irony, comedy and tragedy. I was struck by the extent to which individuals need to synthesize and integrate the life they have lived. …. He also noted….Individuals who share their experiences are more likely to feel increased self-esteem and be spared feelings of depression and isolation.

Butler comments often on the complexity of people and their life stories and the need for further study of “life span developmental psychology.”
2 c. Nursing: Barbara K. Haight, Dr.P.H.
Emeritus professor of nursing at the College of Nursing, Medical University of South Carolina. Widely known speaker and teacher.

Developed concrete structure in which the emphasis is on *guiding and sharing life review through a “listener.”* She has built on the theories of Erikson and Butler to make a practical format that persons who are not psychologists can use.

We will return to her method later.
Slide 12
 Trust vs. Mistrust
Not especially conscious
“It seems worthwhile to speculate on the fact that religion through the centuries has served to restore a sense of trust at regular intervals in the form of faith while giving tangible form to a sense of evil it promises to ban

Slide 13
 Autonomy vs. Shame and Doubt
Development of the Will
Shaming comes in here. “Too much shaming does not result in a sense of propriety but in a secret determination to try to get away with things when unseen, if, indeed, it does not result in deliberate shamelessness.
Or—in compulsion neurosis
Again, Just as the sense of trust is a reflection of the parents’ sturdy and realistic faith, so is the sense of autonomy a reflection of the parents’ dignity as individuals.

Slide 14
 Initiative vs. Guilt
Develop a sense of Purpose
“Being firmly convinced that he is a person, the child must find out what kind of person he is going to be.”

Slide 15
 Industry vs. Inferiority
Develop competence
Learn to complete a task well and be useful
Important to develop a sense of industry and of a positive identification with those who know things and know how to do things
As core pathology inferiority is apt to encompass much fateful conflict; it can drive the child to excessive competition or induce it to regress, which can only mean a renewal of infantile-genital conflict, and thus a preoccupation in fantasy with conflictual personages rather than an actual encounter with the helpful ones right at hand.

Slide 16
 Identity vs. Identity diffusion
Develop Fidelity
“In a culture once pervaded with the value of the self-made man, a special danger ensues from the idea of a synthetic personality: as if you are what you appear to be, or as if you are what you can buy.” !!!!!!!
Slide 17

Intimacy vs. Isolation

Develop Love
Love in the sense of “Expressive Generosity”
Emphasis is on friendship/combat/leadership/romance/inspiration
   Antithesis is distancing, the readiness to repudiate and to isolate,
And, if necessary, to destroy those forces and people whose essence seems dangerous to
one’s own.
Contrast the young adults of the 40’s and 50’s with the 60’s and 70’s
The concept of becoming more intimate with one’s own inner resources is intriguing to
me. Perhaps looking at it as becoming less willing to repudiate or be prejudiced against
one’s own inner resources is another way of looking at it. The person who was an
outsider in high school, but who finds their strengths and their place in the world is an
example, I think. In life review, helping people to

No research on this that I know of, but it would be interesting to see what
stage is least well ascended for people in certain generations.---Any speculations?
If we only have a certain amount of time with a patient, we might want to keep this in
mind.

Slide 18

Generativity vs. Stagnation
There is a new kind of intimacy at stake here: The capacity to commit oneself to concrete
affiliations which may call for significant sacrifices and compromises.
Regression from generativity to an obsessive need for pseudo-intimacy takes place often
with a pervading sense of stagnation and interpersonal impoverishment.

Slide 19

Integrity vs. Despair
We have talked about already. “Gradually, then, and with every new strength, a new
time sense appears along with a sense of irreversible identity: gradually becoming
what one has caused to be, one eventually will become what one has been.” Erikson.

Slide 20

“Another quote”
How is Structured Life Review done?
Now we get to the nitty gritty

Explain what your intention is.
Set up scheduled times and place to meet
Comfortable setting

Depends on your setting—there will be a difference if you are in hospice, long term care, prisons, corporations or hospitals.

Persons who are keeping vigil when death is imminent also can be assisted by life review questions. Reviewing the life of the loved one helps them to put their loved one’s death in a greater context of a meaningful life story.
your job is LISTENING
Life review has to be about the reviewer, it is not your opportunity to tell your life story. It has to be about the reviewer’s personal life, too, not just the events that took place, but:

BE INTERESTED!

Control over the content.
Listeners must remember that REVIEWERS ARE IN CONTROL OF THE LIFE REVIEW. IF THE REVIEWER DOES NOT RAISE A TOPIC, OR RESPOND TO ONE THAT IS RAISED, THEN IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE LISTENER TO IGNORE IT. The reviewer is promised control. Use the questions only as prompts.

The reviewer’s life is being relived in memory, not just recalled. We are stressing reliving these things—not recalling. WHAT IS SIMILAR IN OUR CATHOLIC TRADITION? The benefit occurs when we go beyond the superficial. Not a travel journal of where we stayed and what we ate. Involves the true SELF.

ASK FOR EXAMPLES OF RESPONSES

How the reviewer was involved,
From Industry vs. Inferiority Whenever I have ginger snaps, I think about the time that my 3rd grade class walked down the street to our teacher’s house and made ginger bread as a group.

How it felt,
From Identity vs. Identity Diffusion When I was a sophomore, my good friend, Alex, talked me into trying out for the baseball team. I thought that I was a good player, but there must have been 20 guys try out, and I didn’t make the cut.

How they acted,
From Generativity vs. Stagnation I hadn’t been at my church for very long, I was the new comer, but they were looking for someone to organize the Mother’s Day dinner and I volunteered. The women’s group said they would get back to me, then gave me the cold shoulder.

What were the consequences,
From Intimacy vs. Isolation When I was in college, I had to work to help pay my way, then I was in class and studying. I never took the time to get to know people because I was always busy.
What was the inspiration,
From Identity vs. Identity Diffusion
From the time I was 12 years old, I wanted to be an architect

What were successes and failures,
Gen vs Stagnation
I will always remember when I made the decision to go back to college when I was 42.

What beliefs and hopes were played out,
Integrity vs. Despair
I’ve preplanned my funeral so it will be the way I think it should be.

What heartache was felt,
Intimacy vs Isolation
My first wife died of breast cancer just 3 months after our son was born.

Or great joy?
The day I married Paul was the happiest of my life.
   a. Stress covering a little from each stage of life.
   b. Try for sequential recall, but don’t stop something that comes in out of sequence. It is important for the reviewer to tell at that point or they wouldn’t have brought it up.
   c. Questions can be direct, or just to provide guidance in some areas or topics to bring up. The reviewer shouldn’t feel he is with Face the Press, but just with someone who cares and wants to witness his or her life.
4. PRESERVING LIFE REVIEW:
   a. First—it has to be established with whom the Reviewer would like to share any audio or video tapes, scrapbooks, journals or memoirs. This rule of confidentiality extends past their life time, not dissolving with their death. Tell about the Dove candy wrapper scrap book.

Hospice—scheduled times with one developmental stage covered each time.
Long Term Care—similar, but may occur unscheduled as you are invited by “chance encounters,” or when residents seek you out.
Prisons—Any suggestions
Hospitals—shorter stays and often just one visit. During one visit, however, I see a benefit in increased sense of well-being if a person is guided in a brief life review. Ask about childhood, marriage and work. I think that you will find that most people benefit from reliving something familiar to them when they are in the new environment of the hospital. You will get a lot of information for spiritual assessment in this way, also.

Questions