

THE MILLENNIAL GENERATION: COMMON EXPERIENCE GUIDING THEM INTO
ADULTHOOD

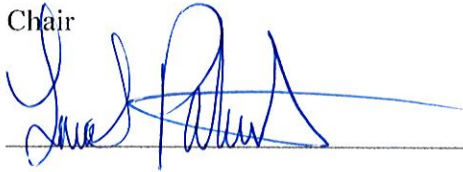
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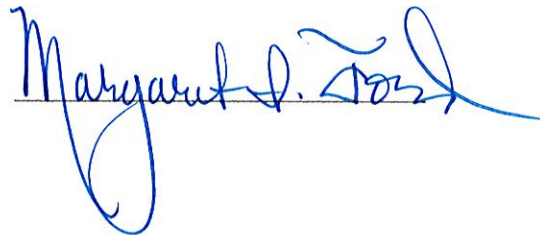
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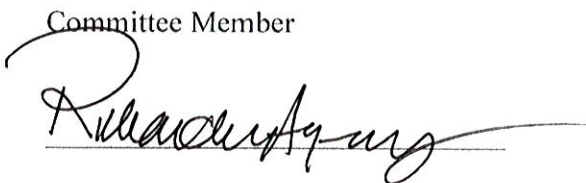
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Abstract

The Millennial Generation, those born from 1980-2000, see the world from a different viewpoint. This distinctive cohort has structured their lives in a different manner than preceding generations. The introduction and influence of social, political, and technological changes over the past few decades have structured Millennials' unique and sometimes unclear characteristics and behaviors.

Dividing and defining people by their birth years can seem like a subjective generalization. However, Howe and Strauss (2000) argue that shared experiences during formative years within a cohort result in a distinctive generational bond resulting in common attitudes and behaviors. Millennials have been labeled as one of the most overprotected and enabled generations in history, and mentors are uncertain how to beneficially nurture this generation as they transition into adulthood (Lykins & Pace, 2013; Twenge et al.).

Generations are shaped by the dynamic interplay of history and popular culture, which can form a lens for understanding a generation's collective nature (Mannheim, 1928). To determine what the future holds for the Millennial Generation as they transition into adulthood, one should closely examine their formative experiences and construct a socio-psychological portrait (Ng, Schweitzer, & Lyons, 2010). By clarifying the process that formed their adulthood, we gain a clearer understanding of what it means to them to be an emerging adult in the Millennial generation.

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore the Millennial Generation's perceptions of how their formative experiences have affected their transition into adulthood. It was my intention through this phenomenological study to view the Millennial Generation's

common formative experiences through the lens of the Theory of Generations, Theory of the Emergent Adult, and the Gestalt Theory and link their unresolved familiarities to their current behaviors and mindset as they emerge into adulthood. The researcher investigated the following questions: How do the Millennials describe the experiences which have guided their transition into adulthood? What common formative experiences are predominant within the Millennial Generation? How does the Theory of Generations, Gestalt Theory, and Emergent Adulthood Theory aid in understanding the mindset of the emergent Millennial adult?

Due to the nature of this study's qualitative inquiry a phenomenological methodology was pursued. This methodological design was steeped in the idea that the researcher would explore the cultural phenomenon of society from the point of view of the subject of the analysis.

In Phase One of this emergent design, a preliminary survey was employed to select the final three subjects. The data collected from these three selected participants during Phase Two followed the semi-structured, in-depth interviews of Seidman's (2013) Protocol. Combined with the interviews participants were asked to use artifacts to aid in eliciting personal information necessary for the development of a story. Collecting data from three sources – interviews, artifact elicitation, and surveys – aided in revealing richer data concerning the topic of the Millennial Generation.

The researcher chose five lenses through which to proceed with this study: belief, influence, growth, values, and self-values. These lenses emerged and developed during value coding.

The researcher expanded and further defined Miles et al.'s, (2013) three main attributes: values, attitudes, and beliefs in order to fully isolate and describe the experiences the participants

were sharing. These five lenses were grouped into meaningful categories to capture and describe the Millennial's common experiences in regards to belief, influence, growth, values, and self-value. The Millennials through these five lenses described themselves and how their experiences were different or unique from the generations that preceded them.

Overall, the data findings suggest that the mind set of Millennials is based on a desire for educational growth through experiences, a belief that family is the nucleus of life and a support system for reasoning, values which align with their ideals on living an authentic existence, growth through their personal journeys, and focusing on self-values through a desire to serve in the best interest of all humanity.

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Chapter One

Introduction

As societies evolve each new generation brings forward distinctive beliefs, ideas, and attitudes. These adaptations are facilitated by new generational members who introduce their views because they perceive the world through a different lens. Major societal events such as school violence and social media of the past few decades have exerted a major influence over our evolving generation's conduct and demeanor (Paul, 2001). These formative experiences can be significant enough that they can influence an entire birth cohort. Preferences, beliefs, values, and psychological tendencies have become a vital source of background information as we begin to explore our emerging adult generation, the Millennials, in an attempt to understand their mindset.

The Millennial Generation, those born from 1980-2000, see the world from a different perspective (Twenge, 2006). The ebb and flow of social, political and technological changes over the past few decades have left researchers asking if the Millennial Generation is prepared to transition into successful adulthood (Lykins & Pace, 2013; Twenge et al., 2012). To better understand the Millennial Generation, a closer examination of their formative experiences will build a psychological portrait and suggest what the future may hold for this cohort. Only through developing an accurate and compelling study of this generation's mindset will educational institutions construct new ways of preparing this cohort as they transition into adulthood.

Statement of the Problem

The demographic group comprised of those born between 1980 and 2000 are known as the Millennial Generation. Current literature suggests that their distinguishing characteristics contrast with the psychological dispositions of both the previous Generation X (1965-1980), and the Baby Boomers (1946-1964) (Twenge, 2006). As they transition into adulthood, this change in adolescent disposition is, in fact, critical if one is to explain how emerging adults perceive their futures (Ng, Schweitzer, & Lyons, 2010).

While a great deal has been written about the Millennial Generation's characteristics, much has yet to be discovered about the Millennial Generation's perceptions and their stance in regards to their own maturity (Paul, 2001). Global and technological trends, economic changes, and constantly fluctuating social movements have impacted social and emotional development in humans, especially young adults (Friedman, 2005). Currently, little information exists connecting the Millennial Generation's current beliefs to their perceived realities and thus their thoughts and actions. Sweeney's (2005) focus group research on the Millennial Generation established that this cohort is significantly dissimilar to the Baby-Boomers at the same age and that the following behavioral characteristics are "embedded in their personalities" (p. 172). In general, the Millennials were found to be more extroverted, abstract rather than concrete, compliant, socially bold, sensitive, apprehensive, open to experimentation, and individualistic. This study will focus on examining the Millennial Generation's perception of their formative experiences in an effort to develop a deeper understanding of the Millennial Generation's behaviors as they transition into adulthood.

According to Howe and Strauss (2000) the public has been obsessed with narratives describing scandalous teenagers and “spoiled brats” (p. 3). Howe and Strauss’s (2000) national survey revealed adults’ pessimism of the Millennials’ potential. Only one adult in three thought that today’s Millennial Generation, once grown, would make the world a better place. Regardless of the survey results, Howe and Strauss (2000) state that a new and superior generation is rising. They argue that as a cohort they are more focused on teamwork, achievement, and simplicity. After a decade of empirical research Twenge (2006, 2009) warns us to remove our “rose colored glasses.” She surmises that the Millennial Generation has been taught to “believe that everything is within reach, self-belief is essential for success, and other people’s opinions are rarely important,” which is causing a backlash of increased levels of self-esteem and even narcissism (2009, p. 399). Twenge and Campbell (2009) add that impulsivity is also on the rise, causing Millennials to “favor short term pleasures at the expense of long term gains” (p. 135).

However, Arnett (2000) has proposed a different theory concerning the Millennial Generation’s development. He coined the phrase *emerging adult*, and offers evidence supporting the theory that “emerging adulthood (18-25) is a distinct period demographically, subjectively, and in terms of identity explorations” (p. 469). Arnett’s (2000) theory is steeped in the idea that because of cultural shifts, marriage and parenthood have been delayed within the Millennial Generation into the late twenties. It is no longer the norm to see teenagers preparing to enter adulthood; instead, they are using this time to explore and to embrace the resultant change (Arnett, 2000, 2007).

There are diverse opinions about who the Millennials are and what they represent in terms of their mindsets and values (Schweitzer & Lyons, S. T., 2010; Howe & Strauss, 2009).

Empirical findings published on the Millennial Generation's perceived realities are limited and often produce conflicting results. The purpose of this study is to clarify the scholarly research on how the Millennial Generation's current mindset influences their transition into adulthood.

Conceptual Model and Theoretical Framework

Theoretical Framework for Examining the Millennial Generation

The purpose of this study was to clarify the Millennial Generation's self-perceptions and their stance in regards to their formative experiences as they relate to their own maturity. In addition a theoretical framework was used to determine how generational experiences have shaped their disposition as they transition into adulthood. The conceptual and theoretical structure presented in this study allows us to view the Millennial Generation's mindset as an all-encompassing unit without getting subjugated by the complexity of its intermingled ingredients.

Society

As social creatures, the survival of Homo sapiens has been rooted in belonging to a community or tribe. Being part of a clan or community has allowed its' members to secure and share shelter, food, safety, and allowed for more orderly procreation; otherwise, the species would not have endured. Community-building and sharing knowledge became the backbone of large-scale and increasingly complex societies (Codrington, 2011). Maffesoli's (1996) modern tribal concept deems that while the old contributions of forming one's identity, such as class, have faded, new tribal elements have emerged. What are these elements? The ethos of these contemporary communities are composed of a multiplicity of experiences, portrayals, and everyday passions leading to the formation of social organizations called generations.

These generational cohorts are derived from culture and are powerful. One must understand the character and mindset of a group's culture in order to better understand ourselves and those we interact with. Culture is a formidable force because it is predicated upon our mindfulness. "Culture is constantly reenacted and created by our interactions with others and shaped by our own behavior" (Schein, 2010, p. 3). Consequently, groups are developed by individuals with a shared cultural identity, which includes common experiences and learning encounters. Without a group there can be no culture and without culture groups cannot exist. Indeed, group and culture materializations are both the result of shared experiences (2010). Part of this study's purpose is to examine the elemental components of Millennial culture in order to comprehend the formational process that produced millennial culture.

The sources used for this theoretical framework were the Theory of Generations, Emergent Adult Theory, and Gestalt Theory, all of which have roots in both psychology and sociology. The framework that this study presented draws on these disciplines as well as research on formative experiences and their implications. The theories used to formulate this framework are grounded in the knowledge that an interdisciplinary approach will critically analyze the differences and similarities between the Millennial Generation and those that preceded them.

Cultural Changes and the Emergent Adult Theory

Ontologically speaking, different cultures have varying definitions of reality. If there are competing understandings of reality, then these realities must be understood through divergent perspectives. Social reality, in particular, is difficult to define because it refers to a group's intrinsic beliefs, which flow from their shared experiences. These attitudes and feelings are difficult to test empirically because they are a matter of subjective perceptions and assumptions

generated by formative experiences. No matter how empirically determinable a matter is, “if people believe in something and define it as real, it becomes real for that group” (Rhodes, 2013; Schein, 2010, p. 117).

Global and technological trends, economic changes, and constantly fluctuating social movements have influenced social and emotional development in humans. Research has shown that these rapidly changing advances have played a critical role in a person’s developmental years (Arnett, 2000, 2007). “Essentially we have learned that human nature is innately nurtured: without the social world and its animating culture, we cannot become human” (Worthman, Plotsky, Schechter, & Cummings, eds., 2010, p. 2). Furthermore, successful development means becoming competent in the world as it stands. While there is no ideal situation from which one can mature, the process must “balance plasticity with resilience to suit the person for the context with which s/he needs to function across the life course” (p. 3).

Arnett (2000, 2007) concurs, and adds that a distinct period of life course has opened up in American society which extends from the late teens to the late twenties (Arnett, Ramos, & Jensen, 2001). The delay of leaving the confines of home, finishing education, marriage, and parenthood has created a new norm for the emerging adult. This distinct period, coined the Emergent Adulthood Theory by Arnett (2000), affords the Millennial Generation an opportunity to experiment and explore as part of establishing their ideological values.

Theory of Generations

In Mannheim’s (1952) seminal work on the Theory of Generations, he connects the concept of tribes and generation with an analogy of constellations. This theory encourages the imagination of numerous stars growing into a constellation. Those stars represent the many

tribes that exist within society and how those groups connect organically and spiritually into one living organism because they are comprised of the same energy. This comparison depicts the momentum, strength, and similar ideologies needed for the formulation of a new generation. Mannheim (1952) also reminds us that “chronologically contemporaneous individuals are stratified by the tendency for the formative experiences and early impressions of youth to coalesce into a natural view of the world” (p. 298). Simply stated, Mannheim outlined the idea that younger tribes are incorrectly socialized because of a disconnect between the values they have adopted from their guardians or older generations and the actualities they have experienced. He also emphasized that the era in which an individual is born has more influence on a generation’s mindset than does their geographical location or social class.

Mannheim (1928) concluded through his many years of research that generations are formed by three major elements. The first is a self-conscious awareness of one’s place in history, which is cemented by a collective response to traumatic events or catastrophes that unite a generation through endurance and fortitude. The second is the idea that youth are apt to incite social change and actively deliver life-changing options to the existing state of affairs. The generation then becomes defined by these activities and initiatives. Third, Mannheim (1928) suggested that youth often assemble and band together as they encourage social change. This sense of belonging is imperative to a generation’s development.

Margaret Mead, an American anthropologist whose work emphasized the relationship between culture and personality formation, suggests that young people set the trends and are expected to differ from their elders. Her astounding conclusion to her many years developing her theory through phenomenological research was that:

“Nowhere in the world are there elders who know what the children know, no matter how remote and simple the societies are in which the children live. In the past there were always some elders who knew more than any children, in terms of their experience of having grown up within a cultural system. Today there are none.” (Codrington & Grant-Marshall, 2011, p. 18)

Due to rapid advances in technology and media combined with communal principles, it is unrealistic to believe that our youth will be younger versions of ourselves. “Tumultuous life changing events are impacting so strongly on a particular generation that it becomes labeled or branded for having lived in that era” (Codrington & Grant-Marshall, 2011, p. 11). For example, the whole world knew almost immediately after Neil Armstrong landed on the moon, however it took months or even years to hear of discoveries from earlier explorers such as Columbus. As the tempo of life’s events becomes more accelerated, the concept of generational identity becomes more important to effectively define, recognize, and appreciate each new cohort (2011).

Theory of Generations is grounded on two principle assumptions. First, the socialization hypothesis suggests that adult values are formed during one’s adolescence by shared experiences with family and companions (Codrington et al., 2011). Significant events and tragedies also play a role in developing one’s principles and beliefs. Biologists and psychologists have attributed this to the fact that our frontal cortex does not fully mature until our mid-twenties. In other words, one’s intrinsic values are shaped by the environment of one’s youth. (Worthman, Plotsky, Schechter, & Cummings, eds., 2010). This notion has prompted psycho-biologists to continue their developmental research because “the plasticity of the brain and the fact that it develops throughout a lifetime” contributes greatly toward our understanding of one’s mindset and formative experiences (Worthman, Plotsky, Schechter, & Cummings, eds., 2010, forward xxiv).

Second, Social Constructivist's Theory suggest that reality is collectively developed by groups engaging in shared collaborations. Dewey (1966) states that

“Social efficiency as an educational purpose should mean cultivation of power to join freely and fully in shared or common activities. This is impossible without culture, while it brings a reward in culture, because one cannot share in intercourse with others without learning, without getting a broader point of view and perceiving things of which one would be ignorant.” (p. 123)

This Sociological Theory of awareness applies the general idea of social learning into social settings. Groups build information through interacting with one another. This allows for collaboratively generating a culture of shared data with shared meanings. When one is absorbed within a culture of this sort, one is continuously learning how to harmonize the self with the collective. Social Constructivists also highlight that culture plays a central role in the cognitive development of a person (Codrington & Grant-Marshall, 2011).

Codrington and Grant-Marshall (2011) define a generation as a circle of individuals with an array of shared experiences that present a collective worldview that is demonstrated throughout their lives. In addition, Strauss and Howe (1991) characterize a generation as extending up to twenty years, which denotes the lifetime of a person from birth to the point when they begin having children.

Theories of Awareness

Social awareness is defined as the study of how we form impressions of and make inferences about other people and their lives. Perceptions of an individual, or in this case a group, is crucial when one is researching generational issues. What is the collective awareness and opinions of a generation being studied? One of the conceptual shortcuts that we use in person or group perception is known as social categorization. In this process, we mentally

catalogue individuals into different groups based on shared qualities. Sometimes this process occurs consciously, but for the most part social categorizations happen automatically and unconsciously. Some of the most common classifications people incorporate are age, gender, occupation, race, and generation (Cherry, n.d.; Rhodes, 2013).

Perception is a process through which individuals collect and construe knowledge from their surroundings (Schermerhorn, 2010). The Gestalt Theory is a perception model which supports the ideas of understanding one's awareness and is used to explain individual behaviors. Through perception, knowledge is accrued in particular when focusing on the process of "evaluating one's environment and the stimuli that affects actions" (Ehiobuche, 2012, p. 15). A crucial component of the Gestalt Theory is the Law of Pragnanz. This principle maintains that we have an "inherent human tendency to complete incomplete or confused perceptions" (Nevis, 2005, p. 9). Within a human mind a closed figure is considered superior to open, incomplete figures, and can be regarded as "unfinished situations" (2005, p. 9). In short, psychological organization moves in a stable "good" direction marked by properties of simplicity and closure (p.9).

Critical application of the Theory of Generations and the Perception Theory results in deeper understandings of collective formative experiences (Michalek & Long, 2013). "It is the interaction of the individual and environment in the sense of a dynamic field which determines experience and behavior" (Wollants, 2012, p. 15). When the additional lens of the Emergent Adult Theory is applied, then common formative experiences can be viewed within the context of a developmental stage.

Lewin, as stated in Nevis, (2005) was the first to discover motivational issues in regards to perception in 1960. He took the Theory of Perception from extrinsic values and applied the

same theory to intrinsic ideals. Lewin viewed behavior as a function of a person and their “environmental interaction as it existed at any given moment... with the emphasis on the here and now” (Nevis, 2005, p. 12). Lewin also suggested that “what has an effect in any given moment is not a past event but rather the nature of present awareness of that event” (2005, p.12).

If we link the Gestalt Theory to Lewin’s insight then partial figures or incomplete experiences lead to the need for closure. Ovsiankina, as cited in Handler and Acklin, (1995) discovered in a number of experiments that a person’s memory for incomplete familiarities was three times greater than memories that were complete. Nevis (2005) concludes that “feelings that are aroused but that cannot be expressed” become unresolved and disruptive to one’s existence. Because these incomplete experiences and their meanings “elude us” we continue to recall them time and time again” looking for a resolution or completion (p. 13).

Closure of unresolved experiences is one of the key concepts in Gestalt Theory. The Gestaltist idea that closure induces a wholeness of a person’s existence with their environment. Change is only possible when one’s experiences can be considered concluded, so that the individual may move on to fresh opportunities.

Qualitative research allows for descriptions of lived experiences; more specifically, phenomenological research describes how one remembers their lived experiences. It was my intention through this phenomenological study to view the Millennial Generation’s common formative experiences through the lens of the Theory of Generations, Theory of the Emergent Adult, and the Gestalt Theory and link their unresolved familiarities to their current behaviors and mindset as they emerge into adulthood.

Generational Theory

Individuals born within a certain time frame become part of a group and share the same formative experiences

**Gestalt Theory**

Is considered a perception model which supports the idea of awareness and is used to explain group behaviors

**The Pragnanz Theory**

Maintains that we have a human tendency to complete incomplete perceptions and focus on “unfinished situations” which contributes to our behaviors

**Emergent Adulthood Theory**

Deems that it is no longer normative to prepare for adult roles during the late teens early twenties

Conceptual Model

Research Questions

Below is the study's main question and sub questions that was used to guide this phenomenological study.

How do Millennials describe their experiences which have guided their transition into adulthood?

Sub questions:

1. What common formative experiences are predominant within the Millennial Generation?
2. How does the Theory of Generations, Gestalt Theory, and Emergent Adulthood Theory aid in understanding the mindset of the emergent Millennial adult?

Definitions

Emerging Adulthood - Arnett (2013), a research professor in the psychology department at Clark University in Massachusetts believes that Millennials have a confidence that the earlier generations wished they had. He studies emerging adulthood, a term that he coined to describe the period from age 18 to 29 when many young adults are discovering their potential. Arnett (2013) dedicates his time to combating negative stereotypes and asserts that within the last decade Millennial achievements are overshadowed by the negative trends attributed to young people.

Boomer Generation – population born between 1946-1964

Generations - communities composed of multiplicity of experiences, portrayals, and everyday passions lead us to the formation of social organizations called generations.

Generation X – population born between 1965-1980

Millennial Generation - population born between 1980-2000

Significance of the Study

Where do the Millennial Generation's common formative experiences leave them at this point in time? In terms of demographics, Millennials have surpassed Baby Boomers as the nation's largest living generation, according to population estimates released by the U.S. Census Bureau. Millennials now number 75.4 million, surpassing the 74.9 million Baby Boomers ("Population Estimates," n.d.). The vast majority of current Americans believe that moral values in this country have changed in the past 50 years. However, the generations differ over whether this has been a change for the better or a change for the worse. Among Millennials, only 54% say the change in moral values has been for the worse. This compares with 70% of Gen Xers, and 77% of Boomers. Millennials are twice as likely as Xers to say the change in moral values has been for the better (19% vs. 9%), and they are more than three times as likely as Boomers to view this change positively (Gewurz, 2011).

However, many teachers and social researchers say that these changes in values have left our youth deprived of the ability to be critiqued and receive constructive criticism (Miller & Slocombe 2012; Twenge, 2006). As a result employers are allegedly dealing with emotionally weak and unstable millennial employees. This, according to Miller and Slocombe, (2012) has proven to be problematic. For emerging adult Millennials to succeed in their environment they will need to be skilled in “understanding complex problems, oral persuasive communication and

in writing and use mathematics and information systems” (Miller & Slocombe, 2012, p. 19). Millennials seem to be unaware of this potential dilemma. Have they increased their efforts preparing for adulthood? According to studies by Irvine (2011) and Twenge (2006) they feel that their credentials are beyond average and are entitled to the benefits of the many demanding professional positions which lie ahead of them. Twenge et al., (2012) concur, and found that a growing percentage of incoming college freshmen rated themselves as above average in several categories, compared with college freshmen who were surveyed in the 1960s.

Mark Bauerlein (2009) has declared the Millennial cohort as “the dumbest generation.” He proclaims the Millennials to be “latter-day Rip Van Winkles, sleeping through the movements of culture and the events of history, preferring the company of peers to great books and powerful ideas and momentous happenings” (p. 234). He also contends that among Millennials, “intellectual life cannot compete with their social life and if social life has no intellectual content, traditions wither and die” (2009, p. 234).

Generational divides and generational changes in values and attitudes have existed for centuries. However, Shaw (2013) observes that four generations converging together culturally has not transpired until now. The complications of these four generations uniting and working together as adults are as follows. To begin, life expectancies are lengthened. The once honored mentality of “waiting your turn” is no longer a viable option for the Millennial Generation who are impatient to succeed their predecessors. Second, there has been an enormous change in the speed of attaining information, resulting in earlier generations contributing significantly at earlier ages. “The world used to be more orderly when the people who had power had access to the information and the rest of us had to ask” (Shaw, 2013, p. 15). The playing field is now more level, and everybody can be challenged by anyone. Third, generational values have changed.

Shaw (2013) indicates that a sociological study done in 1924 surveyed parents' aspirations for their children, and the top results were, to be "good church members and obedience" (p.15). In 1999 the same survey revealed parental objectives had changed to "tolerance and independent thinking" (p.15). It is clear that more research is required to discover how to overcome the generational divides and embrace change without impairing scholarship or commerce (2013).

Due to globalization, Arnett (2012) has deemed that developing a cultural identity as one transitions into adulthood has become more complex. The traditional paradigm of young adults entering marriages and stable full-time work at the age of 20 has shifted, and no longer fits the life course of current young adults. This new transition into adulthood is now long enough that it requires its own definition. What happens during this new transitional phase into adulthood and what common experiences have the millennials endured during this emerging adult time period?

General Procedures

This phenomenological study was designed to identify how Millennials perceive their formative experiences in an attempt to improve our knowledge of the how their current mindset influences their transition into adulthood. This emergent study collected data through multiple sources, including self-report surveys and in-depth interviews to acquire the data necessary to address the research questions. Upon approval from Southern New Hampshire University's Institutional Review Board, the researcher initiated a preliminary survey of a sample of the Millennial Generation's emerging adults. This phase one data collection and analysis provided foundational information pertaining to how Millennials describe their formative experiences. This then aided in selecting the participants for phase two to further address the research questions of this study.

The researcher analyzed the survey response data obtained from the targeted Millennial cohort and then selected archetype respondents to interview in an attempt to identify how their formative experiences have contributed to their transition into adulthood. The data reduction used the lenses of the Theory of Generations and the Gestalt Theory to analyze the Millennials' experiences and behaviors to answer the research questions.

In phase two the researcher conducted in-depth interviews using Seidman's (2013) Three-Interview Structure. These interviews were the cornerstone of the study as the researcher retold the stories of the participants (Creswell, 2013). "Phenomenologists focus on describing what all participants have in common as they experience a phenomenon" and "build a composite description of the essence of these experiences" (p. 76). Seidman (2013) concurs and adds "if the researcher's goal is to understand the meaning people involved make of their experiences, then interviewing provides a necessary, if not always completely sufficient, avenue of inquiry" (p.10). Seidman's (2013) in-depth three-step interview structure includes: interview one, focused life history; interview two, the details of the experience; and interview three, reflection on the meaning.

Overview

The current information pertaining to the Millennial Generation's formative experiences and how they relate to their transition into adulthood is limited. However, even fewer studies exist connecting the Theory of Generations and the Gestalt Theory of perception to their mindset. This study focused on expanding scholarly understanding of how the Millennial Generation's current mindset influences their transition into adulthood.

Determining the Millennial Generation's stimuli and describing how their formative experiences have shaped their generational attitudes has proven to be difficult (Arnett, 2013; Twenge, 2006). To capture those results statistically, more specific research was needed in regards to understanding the social and psychological mindset of the emergent Millennial adult.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Introduction

The empirical studies used for this literature review were obtained from online databases and electronic resources such as EBSCO host, SAGE, and Google Scholar. The research process began by searching for keywords such as “millennial generation,” “adolescent self-esteem,” “narcissism,” and “generation me.” This process uncovered noteworthy secondary research that was conducted by Twenge (2006), Howe and Staruss (2000), Arnett (2007). Once the foundations of the articles were determined, their references secured additional information on the main topic. The concepts and data were then integrated throughout the literature review, The primary sources, as they related to adolescent transition into adulthood, were also explored as subject titles during scholarly searches -- which yielded additional articles for consideration.

This chapter provides a review of the literature on the Millennial Generation with an emphasis on what constitutes their defining characteristics as a whole. It was also beneficial to the researcher to develop a historical perspective on how their current stereotyped depiction emerged. Millennials, like any other young generation, desire to be treated as mature adults. In their particular case, this may be hindered due to the circumstances of their upbringing. Millennials have been labeled as one of the most overprotected and enabled generations in history, and educators are uncertain how to beneficially nurture this generation as they transition into adulthood.

Twenge (2006, 2014) has a PhD in psychology and is a widely published associate professor of psychology at San Diego State University. She authored the book, *Generation Me*, (2006, 2014) which argues that unlike the Boomer cohort “Generation Me is doing exactly what they have been taught to do by parents, teachers and the media, to focus on entitlement and loving themselves” (p. 404). This stereotypical representation of Millennials conducting themselves as elitists has been condemned by researchers Arnett, (2013); Howe & Strauss, (2000); Trzesniewski, Donnellan, & Robins (2008); and supported by others such as Balaji and Indradevi (2015); Hershatter and Epstein (2010); and Twenge, Campbell, and Freeman (2012). However, statistics have shown that current adolescent generational behavior is different from that of older generations. How does this differential affect Millennials’ transition into adulthood?

Past, Present, and Future

Howe and Strauss (2000), both historians and demographers who write and speak frequently on generational changes in American history, observe that when individuals tell their life stories their answers are usually divided into three parts: their past, their present, and their future: “each tense helps illuminate the whole picture”(Howe & Strauss, 2000, p. 28). What does it mean to be in a generation? According to Howe and Strauss (2000), birth rates and demographics locate a generation, while boundaries are developed within the cohort by a persona. Like any social category, a generational persona embodies the values, culture, lifestyle, and the future of a group. As a new generation emerges and develops, a generational persona materializes: “Not every member of the cohort will share it, but every member will have to deal with it, willingly or not, over a lifetime” (Howe & Strauss, 2000, p. 41). Martin Heidegger

stated in Howe & Strauss (2000) that “The fateful act of living in and with one’s generation completes the drama of human existence” (p. 41).

Howe and Strauss (2000) have identified three attributes that help describe the persona of a generation: perceived membership, common beliefs and behaviors, and a common location in history.

- Perceived membership: The self-perception of inclusion within a generation that begins during adolescence and coalesces during young adulthood.
- Common beliefs and behaviors: The attitudes (toward family, career, personal life, politics, religion) and behaviors (choices made in regard to jobs, marriage, children, health, crime, sex, drugs) that characterize a generation.
- Common location in history: The shared turning points in historical trends (e.g., from liberal to conservative politics) and significant events (e.g., the Vietnam Conflict) that occur during a generation’s formative years (adolescence and young adulthood).

Perceived Membership

In order to analyze young adults, one must first use a historical perspective on how they self-perceive their lives (Howe & Strauss, 2000). The decade of the seventies brought many new and interesting ideas in education. However, it is believed by many psychologists such as Baumeister, Campbell, Krueger, and Vohs, (2005) that none were as unsubstantiated and invalidated as the movement initiated by John Vasconcellos, a state congressman from California (Baumeister et al., 2005; Trzesniewski et al., 2008). Vaconcellos embarked on a personal mission to invent social and educational programs designed to increase self-esteem, “which lacked precise implementation and grounding in research” (Trzesniewski et al., 2008, p.181). According to these researchers, Vasconcello’s plan omitted the due diligence of inquiry, and instead focused on “emphasizing feeling good, giving awards and escalating grades” to students without “true merit.” This laid the groundwork for widespread concern that schools and extra

curricula organizations were producing a generation of self-centered and poorly adjusted individuals (Trzesniewski et al., 2008, p.181; Twenge, 2009).

The young people who were coached as part of Vasconello's blueprint for heightening self-esteem have matured into young adults and been dubbed the Millennial Generation by Howe and Strauss (2000). These adolescents, sometimes referred to as "Generation Me," were born between 1980 and 2000 and raised by the Baby Boomer Generation. This younger cohort has been studied and compared to other generations through empirical evidence, thereby revealing a significant shift in psychological behavior resulting in heightened levels of self-esteem which include amplified degrees of assertiveness, narcissism, and expectations (Twenge, 2009; Twenge et al., 2012).

Common Beliefs and Behaviors

Sheltered

Beginning in early 1980, the Millennial Generation became the focus of one of the most intense, comprehensive youth safety movements in American history (Howe & Strauss, 2000; Twenge, 2006, 2014). Evidence of this has been clearly demonstrated with "Baby on Board" signs, post-Columbine safety rules, child safety paraphernalia, and the registry of neighborhood sexual predators, all in an effort by older generations to protect Millennials from unpleasant experiences (DeBard, 2004).

According to Howe and Strauss (2000), "during the past decade, in sharp contrast to America's indifference to kids during the Gen-X childhood era, child issues have risen to the top of the nation's political agenda." During the early 1980s, America's focus shifted to children,

because the media, the government, and Boomer parents brought children to the forefront of national attention. This led to the Millennials becoming the most watched-over generation in history, especially by their parents (p.13). Howe and Strauss's (2000) report exposed that Millennials have a high regard for adults, especially their elders: 79% of Millennials said that they looked up to their parents, while 13% revered athletes. The American family became a focus of national life, such that parents of Millennials were taking part in every aspect of their children's futures (2000). Students in Montag, Campo, Weissman, Walmsley, and Snell's (2012) sample depicted themselves as depending on their parents, and often describing their parents as sounding boards and as being their primary support system. This protected upbringing may have left the Millennials, in some cases, searching for ways to advocate for themselves. Furthermore, given how their daily existence has been so externally structured, Millennials may tend to have difficulty dealing with responsibility and accountability (Wilson, 2004).

Kuh (2012) concurs with Wilson (2004) and adds through his findings that there is a breakdown of joint accountability of learning where collegiate faculty do not expect students' best efforts, and students do not take full advantage of available resources. Borges, Manuel, Elam, and Jones (2010) examined students using the Thematic Appreciation Test (TAT) and found that the Millennial Generation had lower self-reliance skills than previous generations. This study provides empirical support for the suggestion that the Millennials' carefully supervised upbringing has undermined their agency.

As a result of this sub-culture wherein safety is paramount, millennial college students look for faculty to continue protecting and nurturing them, as well as assisting them in resolving their conflicts. Their struggles with problem solving and identifying gray areas that need resolutions, especially in uncertain or new environments, have proven to be a challenge due to

their inexperience with these matters as children (Hershatter & Epstein, 2010). Wilson (2004) and Howe and Strauss (2000) also remind us that the Millennial Generation has been fostered with a connection between teaching and testing. Consequently, being “taught to the test” may have left emerging college students with little ability to think critically about complex issues (p. 63).

Over-Indulged

Because the Millennials have come to trust and rely upon older generations to facilitate and organize their paths toward achievement, they may have inhibited their ability to be creative (DeBard, 2004). According to a study by Hershatter and Epstein (2010) “the millennials are so over-indulged that they are incapable of handling the most mundane tasks without hand holding or guidance” (p.211).

Twenge (2006, 2014) suggests that Millennial passivity has been a central weakness of the generation. Some members of this cohort have shown that they are so open and responsive to suggestions that they can be easily persuaded or controlled, causing them complications when they attempt intellectual improvisation (Howe & Strauss, 2000). Because older generations have stifled Millennials’ self-determination, they are ill prepared to manage stress and to problem solve (Montag et al., 2012). That is, however, until they advance to college. The pressure then begins, because they are unaccompanied and vulnerable and “given how structured their lives have been they struggle with the transition to college or work as they face ambiguity and a greater call for self-responsibility” (Wilson, 2004, p. 65).

Civic Obligations

According to DeBard (2004) and Hershatter and Epstein (2010) one of the most important issues facing the Millennial Generation is how they deal with acceptance. These adolescents have had the distinct pleasure of witnessing great advances in social justice. Acceptance of culturally diverse nationalities and enhanced equality for LGBT Americans have entrenched their commitment to civic obligation. As an aspirational generation, they have a “desire to save the world” (Ng, Schweitzer, & Lyons, 2010, p. 283). Millennials are volunteering in record numbers. This altruistic impulse is being inspired by their families and by social media, thereby causing organizations to rethink their cultures and how they interact with consumers (Mcglone, Spain, & Mcglone, 2011).

The 2006 Cone Millennial Cause Study, the first in-depth study of its kind, indicated that 61% of Millennials felt personally responsible for making a global difference. This high-minded generation believes it is their responsibility to make the world a better place; they also believe that companies have an obligation to join them in this effort. "Technology has given the millennial generation complete access to what is happening around the globe. They are attuned to natural and social world changing events and they have the knowledge and ability to support the causes they believe in" (The 2006 Cone Millennial Cause Study, n.d., para.4). Socially and environmentally irresponsible businesses have been taking note, because the Cone report has determined that 83% of Millennials will trust a company more if it is socially or environmentally responsible, and 74% are more likely to pay attention to a company's message when they see that the company has a deep commitment to a cause (2006).

Arnett (2015), in his book *Emerging Adulthood*, confronts the stereo-typical attributes bestowed upon the Millennials, and prompts adults to view this generation as remarkable and

insightful. His studies have determined that their emerging adulthood (18-29 years old) is distinguished by their willingness to explore their identity through a process of self-focused inquiry. According to Arnett (2015), this burdensome period of fluidic development is inherently complex and unstable. Consequently, he cautions his fellow researchers not to be so quick to stereotype.

Csikszentmihalyi, (1993) Emeritus Psychology Professor at Claremont University and a legendary pioneer of positive psychology, concurs with Arnett's (2015) Emerging Adult theory when he states that "if we wish to have a society in which freedom coexists with responsibility, we must ensure that the environment in which young people grow up in provides complex experiences" (p. 273). Csikszentmihalyi (1993) and Arnett (2015) give credence to the Millennial "discovery period" because it empowers the individual to discover inner peace, and thereby embrace transcendent knowledge of self. In contrast to the Millennial stereotype, Csikszentmihalyi (1993) and Arnett (2015) suggest that the ability to learn and mature while participating in socially productive activities is not just doing; it is fundamental to finding purpose through growth.

Entitled

According to Twenge's (2006, 2014) studies done in the 1980s and Borges et al.'s (2010) empirical work, philosophies of enhanced individual accomplishments and persuasive personalities have increased by 75% among both college-aged men and women, as compared to the Boomer generation. Her study traced these increased individual focuses back to parents allowing their children to make their own choices at young ages. Twenge (2006, 2014) proposes that these formative experiences have emphasized and activated a powerful sense of individuality and self-importance among the Millennial Generation. A recent study by Balaji and Indradevi

(2015) looked for the current presence of narcissistic tendencies among the Millennials, and confirmed Twenge's (2006, 2014) findings: they are a highly confident cohort. However, Balaji and Indradevi (2015) warn us that their results do not necessarily mean that Millennials were going to transform into an all-encompassing narcissistic generation. They noticed that their results needed more study and suggest that "having high levels of narcissistic traits could be handy in certain scenarios such as for those in organization setups wanting to climb up the ladder fast" (p. 6). Their study also revealed that Millennials long for external positive feedback in order to possess more open views about their circumstances. Balaji and Indradevi (2015) suggest further exploration into how the Millennials form and cultivate their social relationships for a better understanding of their personality traits.

The Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) has reported that over the past three decades the inconsistency in exiting college graduate preparedness has grown. Students are recording a higher level of achievement, but exhibit a declining commitment to homework and studying. How are these contrasting trends possible? Grade inflation is on the rise because students have learned how to manipulate the system with short cuts, cram and dump methods, and aggressively contesting grades. However, it is important to note that according to McMinn and Bell (2012) this rising tendency may not be a negative. Their research showed that new college graduates value labor favorably and "enter the work force with unbridled enthusiasm, lots of ideas and plenty of energy...they are perfect at multi-tasking and have been referred to as Gen X on steroids" (p. 102).

Arnett (2013), a research professor in the psychology department at Clark University in Massachusetts, believes that Millennials have a confidence that the earlier generations wished they had. He studies emerging adulthood, a term that he coined to describe the period from age

18 to 29 when many young adults are discovering their potential. Arnett (2007) prefers the description emerging adult because it is a “new term for a new phenomenon” within the twenty-first century (p. 70). Arnett (2013) dedicates his time to combating negative stereotypes and asserts that within the last decade, Millennial achievements have been erroneously overshadowed by the negative trends attributed to young people.

Borges, Manuel, Elam, and Jones, (2010) add to Arnett’s ideas. Their study was comprised of assessing the motivational differences between Generation X and Millennials. Borges et al., (2010) explored the generational differences in college students regarding motivation using the Thematic Apperception Test (TAT). Students were scored for different aspects of motivation such as: achievement, affiliation, and power. Results showed that Millennials scored higher than Generation X on needs for affiliation and achievement, indicating that Millennials have a greater desire to belong to social groups and to share with others. They also scored higher in areas of sensitivity, perfection, and rule consciousness. This study suggested that Millennials possess stronger peer bonding skills and learn by doing, but are not interested in dominance or status. They enjoy relationship building and opportunities that contribute to collaboration and teamwork. Csikszentmihalyi, (1993) concurs with this finding by adding that developing one’s own unique potential is a fundamental part of growth. His studies have found that individuals move beyond the “boundaries of our personal limitations by integrating individual goals with larger ones, such as the welfare of the family, the community, humanity, the planet, or the cosmos” (p.219). Integration is also a strong component of one’s self, as we are all linked by a common humanity (1993).

Academic Performance

If Millennials do possess an increased self-esteem as some research suggests, where does this leave them? Many teachers and social researchers say that it has left them deprived of the ability to be critiqued and receive constructive criticism (Twenge, 2006, 2014). As a result employers are dealing with emotionally weak and unstable Millennial employees. To the contrary, Arnett (2007) sees the Millennials as a generation that thrives on freedom, although some find themselves adrift and may experience mental health difficulties or appear fragile.

This variance of feelings according to Miller and Slocombe (2012) has proven to be problematic. They have defined part of the new reality for current college students as dealing with “hyper-competition in the global marketplace” (p. 18). Thomas Friedman (2005) has identified the current business world as being flat. He believes that all new global business competitors are working from ground zero and on an even playing field. Surviving in this environment is quite an achievement because everyone has the same access to resources and technology. Unfortunately, Friedman (2005) and Miller and Slocombe (2012) assert that this leaves collegiate students of the United States at a disadvantage.

The potential declining academic performance among Millennial college students remains a concern. According to research by the National Center for Educational Statistics, only 31% of college graduates could read “a complex book and extrapolate from it” (McMinn & Bell, 2012, p. 20). Their study also uncovered that millennial students with an average GPA of 3.16 spent five or fewer hours a week studying, with one-third of them demonstrating no increase in critical thinking or complex reasoning upon graduation.

Deborah Tippet, a professor at Meredith College in North Carolina, agrees that these statistics will burden the Millennial Generation with some grueling lessons to acquire, especially because “they really do believe they can do it all.” And then reality strikes: “I see it now when I tell students that they aren't doing work that's above average or even average. It's really hard for them to take” (Irvine, 2011, para 21).

In regards to learning, Csikszentmihalyi (1993) states that “nowadays learning is generally mediated by abstract information: no appreciable risk is involved, no direct experience of effects is possible, except through a failing grade” (p. 275). Shaw (2013) agrees; a bad grade conveys to the teacher that you have not studied, but it does not give any evidence as to what you have learned. Only a few generations ago information was concrete, familiar, and relevant. Knowledge was integrated around survival tasks such as planting crops or building barns. The usefulness of this information was obvious. Now, however, a young person can sometimes struggle to be involved in responsible activities outside of school. Today, if an undergraduate learns enough about his or her discipline, almost no one knows how to connect those ideas to other disciplines. “Yet any meaningful understanding requires bringing together the insights we have gathered from the various representations of reality” (Csikszentmihalyi, 1993, p.275).

However, sometimes Millennials’ unrealistic expectations do not equal what it takes to succeed academically or, more importantly, professionally (DeBard, 2004). The Cone Report (2006) revealed that as Millennials begin to enter the workforce, they not only have high expectations for themselves, but also for their employers. Nearly eight out of ten want to work for a company that cares about how it contributes to society, while more than half would refuse to work for an irresponsible corporation.

Common Location in History

Generational transformations are established by modifications of a culture and should be seen as echoes of changes in society. As cultures change, the newest members are born with new values and see the world through different lenses (Howe & Strauss, 2006; Twenge Campbell & Freeman, 2012). According to a study and the literature established by Twenge et al., (2012) fluctuations and major societal events of the past few decades have played a major role in influencing today's adolescent conduct and demeanor. Indeed, formative experiences are significant enough that they can influence an entire birth cohort. Preferences, beliefs, and psychological tendencies have become a vital source of background information when helping us understand this generation (Paul, 2001). *American Demographics* "interviewed a dozen demographers, sociologists, and marketing experts about the cultural and historical events that have taken place so far" in the Millennial's lifetime, and concluded that the following are a sampling of occurrences that have had a major impact on their lives: the horrific events of September 11, 2001, MTV, celebrity scandals, diversity, and reality TV (2001, p. 44). These factors have also influenced the Millennials' perspectives and philosophies and become part of their formative experiences (2001).

The Consumer Age

Juliet Schor (1998), Professor of Sociology at Boston College and author of *The Overspent American*, maintains in her book that during the period between 1980 and 1990 the American social system peaked and began a new stage in consumer culture and niches. People seeking to demonstrate the same image were grouped together and called clusters by marketers and named the groups such as: yuppies, twenty-somethings and, more recently, metro-sexual or Millennial. She also maintains that during this time, children were substituting for and making

decisions on behalf of their working parents. It began simply as deciding where to order the families' take-out dinner and escalated into researching and deciding on home appliances and other major purchases. Children not only were encouraged to have a voice and an opinion, but they became the families' chief operating officer, as well (Bucic, Harris, & Arli, 2012; Schor, 1998).

While Millennials strongly influence household purchases, today's youth also turn to their parents for shopping advice (Miller & Washington, 2011). According to Howe and Strauss (2000) unlike prior generations, Millennials want feedback from their parents about almost every purchase they make. Millennials are important to retailers because they influence their parents spending, as well as their own. Miller and Washington, (2011) report that 13-to-21 year-olds influence 81% of their families' apparel purchases and 52% of car purchases. In Schor's recent book *Born to Buy* (2005), she depicts a correlation between involvement in adolescent consumer culture and emotional and psychological problems. Drawing on her significant body of research, which included interviews with advertising executives and children, Schor exposes what she believes to be increased enthusiasm toward materialism and consumerism that could be leading to a generation of adolescents with no concept of what is truly necessary and important in life.

The Cone Report (2006) contradicts this notion and presents an empirical study that demonstrates that 74% of the Millennials they surveyed indicated that they are more likely to pay attention to a company's overall message when they see that the company has a deep commitment to a worthy cause. Nearly nine out of ten Millennials surveyed in the same report stated that they are likely or very likely to switch from one brand to another if the second brand is associated with a good cause.

Faw (2012), a writer for Forbes Magazine, points out that, in actuality, when it comes to material items Millennials are not just trying to “keep up with the Joneses” anymore; they are trying to keep up with the Kardashians. “The influx of just like us reality TV personalities conveys to millennials that these lifestyles are achievable,” especially to a generation that has been raised believing they can do anything (2012, para.4). “It took one year for “The Jersey Shore’s” Mike ‘The Situation’ Sorrentino to go from living in his mom’s basement to owning a Lamborghini” (2012, para. 4). Faw (2012) also states that Millennials “grew up in a time of insecurity, with 9/11 and banks cheating people.” She argues that Millennials have developed a “who knows what tomorrow will bring?” and “why not treat myself?” attitude (2012, para.4).

Technology

Millennials are the most diverse generation of students in U.S. history (Howe and Strauss 2000), and they believe that everyone’s voices should be heard and valued (Twenge 2006). Blogging, the act of writing one’s thoughts, opinions, and daily activities and posting them in cyberspace for all to read, was popularized by this generation and is a stark example of this belief in action. Millennials are the first generation to grow up digitally (Roehling, Kooi, Dykema, Quisenberry, & Vandlen, 2011). Roehling, et al.’s (2011) focus group found that Millennial students value discussions that are active and current. They promote thinking and reflection, give students a forum for voicing their own opinions and hearing the opinions of others, and help students come to their own conclusions.

According to Shaw’s (2013) studies, Millennials spend more than fifty-three hours a week on some type of media device. Miller and Washington (2011) add to those findings by reporting that 91% of Millennials used the Internet in 2010, an increase from 89% who did so

two years prior. In comparison, older generation had to learn how to use computers, especially at work, to be successful. The Millennials did not have to ascertain how technology would enhance their lives because it was built directly into their toys and entertainment (Howe & Strauss, 2000). For Millennials, a smartphone is a “bodily appendage” (Shaw, 2013, p. 101). Shaw’s (2013) research exposed that 83% of Millennials sleep with their smartphones by their bedsides, while only 50% of the Boomer generation felt the need to be constantly connected.

Shaw (2013) maintains and Miller and Washington (2011) concur that Millennials are obsessed with technology. Miller and Washington’s (2011) report depicts that texting is a more popular activity among Millennials than communicating either by email or social networks, with text exchanges of 18-to-25 year olds exceeding more than 200 messages a day. Shaw (2013) concludes that technology is important to Millennials for four main reasons: it makes them seem indispensable to older generations, it gives them more freedom from parental control, it allows them to easily assemble their group, and it makes their reach global.

Modern Era Terrorism

According to Shaw, (2013) a researcher on generational changes, the Millennial Generation has grown up with the “enemy living among them” (p. 100). Before 9/11, the closest war had come to continental America was the Pearl Harbor attack in 1941. Modern wars had always been across the oceans and never in our own back yards, however that is not the case anymore. Millennials have grown up with metal detectors, school lock down drills, SWAT teams, and bomb-sniffing dogs helping to provide protection from terrorism within their daily environments (Howe & Strauss, 2000). According to Shaw, (2013) due to terrorism Millennials have the attitude that tomorrow may never come. One bomb or spray of bullets could change

their lives in seconds. This is a major shift in thinking as compared to the Baby Boomer Generation, who believed in delayed gratification; they worked hard for the rewards that would follow (2013).

Because terrorism has reached the American mainland, Millennial culture has been impacted in at least two major ways. First, Millennials have chosen not to wait but rather act immediately in making important decisions or instituting any key life changes. This approach has enabled them to adapt and adjust on the fly, a skill that far exceeds any previous generation (Shaw, 2013). According to Shaw's (2013) study this attitude has manifested itself in the Millennials dedicating themselves more than previous generations to volunteering and engaging in civic duties. Secondly, Millennials have developed a stronger commitment to balancing work and home life. "They see no reason to sacrifice everything today for a future reward that may never come" (Shaw, 2013, p. 100). Strauss and Howe (1991) also deem that this generation is "possessed of rational minds, with a positive attitude, and selfless team virtue," partly because of their formative experiences -- which include the Columbine shootings (p.342).

Millennials Rising

"There are a lot of opinions about who the millennials are, what they think and value, and how they will behave as they grow older and gain more experience in the workforce" (Deal, Altman, Rogelberg, 2010, p. 191). Unfortunately, the reasonably scant empirical findings published on the Millennial Generation are perplexing, as they are inconsistent and conflicting (2010). In retrospect, what do we need to distinguish and identify about the Millennial Generation, and how should we educate them in terms of adult preparedness?

Arnett (2007) asserts that although it is true that many emerging adults are hesitant about taking on adult duties, he believes that that view tends to be an exaggeration. He presents the case that as the Millennials move toward self-sufficiency, they fear that daily, mundane adult tasks will prove to be “dull and stagnant, the end of spontaneity, the end of a sense that anything is possible” (p. 71). In addition, Arnett (2007) maintains that few emerging adults fail to “grow up” and take on the responsibilities of adulthood (p. 71). By the age of 30, three-fourths of Americans are married, three-fourths have a child, and nearly all have entered into stable employment and live without the financial assistance of their parents. These statistical results contradict the claim that the Millennials resist the transition into adulthood.

Inevitably, the Millennial Generation is growing up. They are moving beyond the Baby on Board signs, child safety zones, and standardized tests. According to Howe and Strauss (2000), these young people are on the “brink of becoming a highly effective social force given the right leadership and moment” (p. 365). Every generation has a “shadow side” and the Millennials would do well to try to move beyond those shadows and, instead, focus on the passions and enthusiasm that make them a remarkable generation (Howe & Strauss, 2000, p. 365).

Chapter 3

Methodology

Introduction and Overview

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore the Millennial Generation's perceptions of how their formative experiences have affected their transition into adulthood. Current literature suggests that there is a change in their psychological dispositions as compared to past generations as they transitioned into adulthood. This possible deviation in adolescent disposition may be critical if one is to explain how current young adults perceive their futures (Paul, 2001; Twenge, 2006). In seeking to examine this phenomenon this study addressed one overarching research question and two sub-questions:

- How do the Millennials describe the experiences which have guided their transition into adulthood?
- What common formative experiences are predominant within the Millennial Generation?
- How do the Theory of Generations, Gestalt Theory, and Emergent Adulthood Theory aid in understanding the mindset of the emergent Millennial adult?

This chapter describes the study's research methodology and includes considerations in the following areas (a) rationale for research approach, (b) overview (c) researcher's identity (d) bracketing (e) research sample (f) overview of information needed (g) research design (h) data collection methods (i) data analysis and synthesis (j) reliability and trustworthiness (k) limitations and ethical considerations then this chapter will culminate with a brief concluding summary (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012).

Rational for Qualitative Research Design

Qualitative research is a social science inquiry that maps experiences and frameworks in a particular context and within a certain timeframe (Creswell, 2013). As stated in Chapter One, this research entered the world of the Millennial Generation in order to identify and document their social experiences and how those occurrences have shaped their identities. This research was a comprehensive approach to understanding and capturing the phenomenon of the Millennial Generation's common mindsets as they proceed into adulthood.

The rich data necessary to comprehend the social phenomena occurring within the individuals of the Millennial Generation as they transition into adulthood would not be sufficiently collected through quantitative data (Creswell, 2013). This research took a metaphysical approach that the underlying layers of our social world are influenced by our perceptions. The knowledge collected painted a sharper picture for a richer appreciation of the Millennial generation as a whole (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012; Creswell, 2013).

Qualitative research begins with philosophical assumptions as seen through interpretive lenses, and culminates by highlighting the study of social beings and their perceptions. This line of qualitative research development aligns with the researcher's intent to better understand the Millennial Generation and its perceptions of self.

Rationale for a Phenomenological Methodology

Due to the nature of this study's qualitative inquiry, it is underpinned by a phenomenological methodology – thereby allowing for a combination of the social science of inquiry with the art of storytelling. Phenomenologists pursue the idea that the ultimate goal is to “reduce individual experiences with a phenomenon to a description of the universal essence”

(Creswell, 2013, p. 76). The researcher built a level of knowledge about their participants by observing the group's social behaviors and then described what and how they experienced the phenomenon (2013). This methodological design was steeped in the idea that the researcher would explore a cultural phenomenon of society from the point of view of the subject of the analysis (Creswell 2013). Van Manen (2007) argues that "practice, in its social constructionist version, is not only meant to mean something, practice is supposed to make it possible to explain, interpret or understand the nature of the phenomena within its scope" (p.18).

Researcher's Identity

Prior to my decision to use this phenomenological method I spent significant time considering my identity as a researcher. By delving into my ontological assumptions about the nature of reality, I have come to rely on a social constructivist framework as my approach to this phenomenological study. "Different researchers embrace different realities, as do the individuals being studied and the readers of a qualitative study" (Creswell, 2013, p. 20).

My epistemological assumptions about what constitutes knowledge are grounded in my experiences in the field as a higher education instructor, advisor, and mentor for over fifteen years. Creswell (2013) argues that "the longer researchers stay in the field or get to know their participants the more they know what they know from firsthand information" (p. 20). During these years I have come to realize the importance and meaning of social constructivism within the classroom and beyond. Students problem-solving through their everyday experiences, a variety of resources, and social interaction has become an important process for helping them flourish. Dewey (1966) expands on this philosophy when he states,

"While the living thing may easily be crushed by superior force, it none the less tries to turn the energies which act upon it into means of its own further existence. If it cannot do so, it does not just split into smaller pieces (at least in the higher forms of life), but loses its identity as a living thing... as long as it is growing, the

energy it expends in thus turning the environment to account is more than compensated for by the return it gets: it grows.” (p. 1)

My pedagogical expectation is that my students embrace more accountability for their educational maturation and intellectual development. I have witnessed that the Millennial Generation has become too dependent on their mentors and parents for academic and daily advice. With this in mind, I encourage classroom autonomy, which will hopefully help facilitate their independence and enlightenment. Society is undergoing profound changes that require us as educators to reevaluate how we prepare our students as they enter adulthood (Arnett, 2007). This awareness, along with my own professional experiences as an instructor and mentor, has provided the driving inspiration behind my doctoral research.

A phenomenological study blends well with this researcher’s personality and disposition. The researcher’s background in art and design brought a richness of creativity in a profound manner, as the common experiences of the participants were extracted and the stories were crafted (Creswell, 2013). Not unlike an artist, “the phenomenologist directs the gaze toward the regions where meaning originates, wells up, percolates through the porous membranes of past sedimentations—and then infuses us, permeates us, infects us, touches us, stirs us, exercises a formative affect” (Van Manen, 2007, p. 12). The researcher also realized the possibility of becoming a catalyst for social awareness of the Millennial Generation for fellow colleagues, which was a rewarding experience.

The researcher was originally inspired by Sara Lawrence-Lightfoot (1997) to conduct a portraiture study. Lawrence-Lightfoot’s (1997) descriptive explanation of the “details of actions that manifest behavior” and how those actions are “experienced, perceived, and negotiated by the people in the setting” was the catalyst that sparked the researcher’s initial intent (Lawrence-Lightfoot, 1997, p. 15). The possibility of describing the Millennial Generation through

“documentation, interpretation, analysis, and narrative, as we raise the mirror, hoping-with accuracy and discipline-to capture the mystery and artistry that turn image into essence” seemed to be a perfect fit between researcher and methodology (Sara Lawrence-Lightfoot, 1997, p. xvii). However, after this researcher’s further inquiry into understanding the precise differences between a portraiture and phenomenological study, a phenomenological study was chosen. Phenomenology was the chosen method for this qualitative study because the researcher wanted to focus on the “development of descriptions of the essences of these experiences and not the explanations or analysis” (Creswell, 2013, p. 77).

This methodology paired well with the researcher’s intended research questions because the primary interest was to develop a descriptive story of the Millennial Generation’s common, shared experiences. These personal accounts helped highlight the generation’s common formative experiences and how those memories have influenced their lives as they mature into their adult lives.

Bracketing

Bracketing, or epoche, asks the researcher to identify their assumptions so that an unveiling of a true phenomenon may occur. The researcher steadily peels away and discards their own experiences like layers of an onion so that only the true common phenomenon of the participants’ experiences remains (Van Manen, 2007). Creswell (2013) asks researchers to “suspend their understandings in a reflective move that cultivates curiosity” for more clarity and a fresh eye on the phenomenon being studied (Creswell, 2013, p. 83).

My role as an advisor and teacher for the past fifteen years in higher education has certainly left me with many experiences with the Millennial Generation that might lead to

assumptions. In addition, being a mother and raising a Millennial child has positioned the researcher with feelings and personal understandings that will have to be constantly held in check throughout the study. The researcher attempted to bracket her opinions and judgments by researching and focusing on the “goodness” of the phenomenon as Lawrence-Lightfoot (1997) alludes to when describing the researcher’s role in keeping biases and cynicism in line. Biases cannot be eliminated but by being aware of one’s own understandings every attempt was made not to prejudice the study.

Research Sample

In Phase One of this emergent design, a preliminary survey was employed to select the final three to six subjects for Phase Two. Creswell (2013) recommends three to ten participants who have experienced the phenomenon but has seen as many as 325 as part of a phenomenological study. The researcher selected a purposeful sample of 20-30 respondents from a northeast college, and administer an electronic questionnaire to them via Survey Monkey. These participants were members of the Millennial Generation, born between 1980 and 1990, with an age range between 25-35. This ensured that all the participants had experiences within the phenomenon being studied (Creswell, 2013). The electronic questionnaire contained a combination of Likert Scale choices as well as open-ended questions to collect profile data. The intent of the survey was to ask the millennial cohort to describe what formative experiences were predominant in their lives and how those experiences have guided their transition into adulthood (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012).

This selected age group represented the first ten-year section of the Millennial Generation, with no limitations or requirements on gender. These individuals born within the designated time frame were believed to have intellects which have developed enough to be

scientifically considered emerging adults and fall within the parameters of Arnett's (2007) emerging adult theory (Worthman, Plotsky, Schechter, & Cummings, eds., 2010).

Information Needed to Conduct the Study

This qualitative phenomenological study was an emergent design. In Phase One of this emergent design, a preliminary study consisted of an electronic survey which was sent to 20-30 respondents from a northeast college in the form of Survey Monkey. The information obtained from Phase One of this study in turn influenced Phase Two and aided in the selection of the three to six participants for Phase Two.

Phase Two focused on three to six individuals born between the years 1980-1990, which includes them as part of the earlier Millennial Generation. The researcher sought to understand what common formative experiences have guided their transition into adulthood. According to empirical evidence shared by Worthman et.al (2010), this age range is commonly considered to have already entered into adulthood by the scientific world. Arnett (2007) also considers this age range to be appropriate because it falls within the parameters of the emerging adult theory time period.

In seeking what formative experiences the Millennial Generation consider to be influential as they transition into adulthood, one overarching research question was asked along with two sub questions. How do the Millennials describe the experiences that have guided their transition into adulthood? What common formative experiences are predominant within the Millennial Generation? How do Generational Theory, Gestalt Theory, and Emergent Adulthood Theory aid in understanding the mindset of the emergent millennial adult?

The material needed to answer this inquiry was designated by theoretical framework of the study and is categorized into two classifications. First, the perception of how the Millennial Generation sees their transition into adulthood and how their common formative experiences have influenced that development. The researcher used the lenses of the Generational Theory and the Pragnanz Theory, as they were the foundation for understanding the common lived experiences of the participants. Second, applying the participants' descriptions of their experiences by applying the Gestalt Theory of completion and Emergent Adult Theory allowed the researcher to analyze their perceptions which resulted in the conclusion of the research.

Overview of Research Design

- 1) Through Phase One of this study participants were contacted by email and those responding to the inquiry were asked to participate in an electronic survey. This survey was designed to narrow down the participants selected for the phenomenological study to three to six individuals.
- 2) Semi-structured, in-depth interviews following Seidman's (2013) Protocol were conducted with the selected participants.
- 3) Combined with the interviews participants were asked to use artifacts to aid in eliciting personal information necessary for the development of a story.
- 4) Interview data was transcribed and the participants' responses to the presented artifacts were recorded. The interviews and emotional responses to the artifacts were analyzed to begin building the participants' profile data.

Data Collection Method

The researcher used an emergent design methodology and employed three forms of data collection for this study: survey, interviews, and artifact elicitation to provide corroborating evidence through triangulation. Using different sources to support and shed light on a particular phenomenon provides legitimacy and strength to the study (Creswell, 2013).

Phase I Survey

Surveys collect data from a targeted group of participants about their beliefs, behaviors or familiarities. The survey was conducted through Survey Monkey containing question with Likert Scale options as well as open-ended questions. This survey was regarded as Phase One of the study which began the process of this emergent design. The responses from the survey were collated and determined the next steps.

Phase II Interviews

Interview were selected because they elicited the rich personal data that was required for a phenomenological study. According to Seidman (2013) “if the researcher’s goal is to understand the meaning people involved in education make of their experience, then interviewing provides a necessary, if not always completely sufficient, avenue of inquiry” (p.10).

Making meaning of an individual’s experiences is a human process that relies heavily on the spoken word. Seidman (2013) reminds us that as researchers studying phenomenology we need to rely on the “descriptive study of the lived experiences, is an attempt to enrich lived experience by mining its meaning” to answer our questions (p. 18). Asking participants to recreate their formative experiences exposed rich, meaningful thoughts from which the meaning of a lived experience was better understood.

Interview Process

The researcher followed Seidman's (1997) interviewing model, which encompassed three 90 minute interviews per participant. Context is an instrumental element to the phenomenological study because it allows for full exploration of the participants' experiences through the context of their lives. Without context there is little possibility of fully comprehending the participants' experiences. The three-part interview series allowed the researcher to explore the participants' familiarities, place them in the correct framework, and reflect on the messages and meanings that emerge.

Three-Interview Series:

1) Interview One: Focus on life history.

The first interview relies on the participant's discussion of the topic up to the present time. Having the participants reconstruct their experiences with family, friends, and neighborhoods allows the researcher to identify and recognize possible causes and effects of the experiences presented.

2) Interview Two: The details of the Experience.

The purpose of the second interview is to allow the researcher to focus on the details of the lived experiences, specifically focusing on relationships, mentors, parents, and communities within which the experiences took place. In this second interview the researcher asked the participant to produce an artifact that had a particular meaning to them in regards to their experiences.

3) Interview Three: Reflection on Meaning.

The third interview focused on the participants reflecting on the meanings of their experiences. It addressed the "intellectual and emotional" connections

made by the participants and their lives (Seidman, 1997, p. 22). When individuals are asked to recall events they are inclined to give their story a beginning, middle, and end. This helps individuals invent significance within their lives and allows them the ability to share their reflections and grow.

Phase III Artifacts

Other formats of data collection for qualitative research include visual materials or artifacts. When participants share artifacts it can help provide a deeper understanding of the sensitive issues being studied and can provide participants an avenue to help elicit better responses to interview question that are challenging Creswell (1013). Creswell (2013) deems that researchers should be encouraged “to include new and creative data collection methods” for a deeper understanding of their topics (p. 161). He further recommends the usage of artifacts such as: pictures, clothing, documents, or personal items because they provide a holistic perspective of an individual’s history and environment.

Artifacts can aid in the phenomenologist’s understanding of a participant’s context, especially for those individuals struggling with or naïve about the meaning of their experiences. Stoller (2008) states that when a person looks deep into who they are they may find answers that can be fearful and become the link between knowing and doing. To conquer the fear of examining and reveling truths, participants must give up something of themselves and take risks so that the researcher can better understand the foundation of their principles and the contours of the human condition; with the aid of artifacts this may be possible (Stoller, 2008).

It is believed that young adults may be more responsive to a visual-based research inquiry, rather than traditional research methods (Lyon & Carabelli, 2015). Therefore, each

participant was asked to take with them to their second interview an artifact that represents one of their strongest past experiences. The interview focused on the participant describing the artifact and how it represents and elicits their experiences. “Accessing young adults processes of sense-making and taken-for-granted habitual stances towards” a particular time of their lives is a difficult task (Lyon & Carabelli, 2015, p.2). These artifacts were a stimulation to help the participants realize their sense of the world and reveal past, present, and potential future thoughts with non-verbal cues (2015). The participants interacting with a familiar object “rich in memories, cues, and experiences, become the authority...more perceptive and expressive...free to be themselves” (Lawrence-Lightfoot, 1997, p. 42)

Methods for Data Analysis and Synthesis

Data from the surveys were coded and the interviews were audio recorded. Each interviewee were not named, however their interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed verbatim. The information was transcribed with the assistance of *Dragon Naturally Speaking*. It should be noted that all interviews were not completed prior to coding. Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña, (2013) argue that delaying the coding process is a “big mistake” (p. 70), as it rules out the possibility of finding new data to fill in gaps or to test new ideas as they surface through the researcher’s work (2013). “It helps the fieldwork cycle back and forth between thinking about the existing data and generating strategies for collecting new, often better, data” (2013, p. 70). Interweaving data collection and analysis from the start paired well with the researcher’s emergent design method.

The same Phenomenological reduction coding methods were used for the survey and the interviews. The researcher began with bracketing. “The focus of the research is placed in

brackets, everything else is set aside so that the entire research process is rooted solely on the topic” (Moustakas, 1994, p. 97). Horizontalization was the next stage of the phenomenological reduction and attributed the same significance on all statements recorded from the participants while identifying meaningful clusters and themes.

Horizons are indefinite; we can never really deplete all of our experiences because they come and go like an ebbing tide – leaving the never-ending possibility for exposing fresh ideas (1994). The researcher identified from the transcripts these horizons, or non-repetitive invariants, that directly described their common formative experiences. After chronicling all relevant accounts, the researcher listed the invariant horizons, or meaningful units of the participant’s common experiences, and clustered those into themes. Those themes then facilitated the construction of a universal description of the common experiences that the cohort has encountered as a whole, or a coherent textural description of the phenomenon (1994).

Three Phases of Phenomenology Research Design

- Phase I - Context
 - Identify Setting
 - Identify Participant Sample
- Phase II - Data Collection
 - Electronic Survey
 - In-Depth Interviews/Artifacts
- Phase III - Phenomenological Reduction
 - Horizontalization
 - Clusters of Meaning
 - Textural – Structural Descriptions

Ethical Considerations

Ethical issues were addressed at each phase of this study. Individuals who participated in this study were treated in compliance with the Southern New Hampshire Institutional Review Board (IRB). This study did not have any apparent risks. Anonymity and confidentiality were important considerations as the researcher proceeded. Participants were assigned pseudonyms to protect their identities. Participants were provided written informed consent documents and were informed that they were free to withdraw from the research at any time without penalty. Participants were informed that the summary data would be disseminated to the professional community, however, their responses would not be traceable to them.

Issues of Trustworthiness

Creswell (2013) declares that “validation in qualitative research is an attempt to assess the accuracy of the findings” (p.249). Building trustworthy relationships with the participants is a critical element of any phenomenological study. Spending time in the field with the participants building trust, seeking their values, all the while scrutinizing for misrepresentation, will encourage and ensure validation of the study. Furthermore, Creswell (2013) asserts that by “incorporating the balance of views, raising levels of awareness, and advancing the levels of inquiry,” the researcher will be assured that trustworthiness and authenticity will be upheld and become an important tool or “validation strategy” within the examination process (p. 249-250). In a social science study Lawrence-Lightfoot (2007) confirms that,

“There is a constant process of collaboration between the researcher’s conceptual framework, her developing hypotheses, and the collection of ground data. Working in context the researcher, then, has to be alert to surprises and inconsistencies and improvise conceptual and methodological responses that match the reality she is observing.” (p. 43)

Credibility/Reliability

Just as we assemble a garment or create a meal each element studied must come together to represent the whole, which, in a phenomenological study, is referred to as the aesthetic whole (Creswell, 2013). In developing the aesthetic whole we are “blending art and science, analysis and narrative, description and interpretation, structure and texture” (Lawrence-Light-foot, 1997, p. 243). Lecompte and Goetz, (1982) describe this assemblage as building a puzzle, or putting all the pieces together until no holes remain – thus creating not only a credible, but believable story. While Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, (2014) agree, they also remind the researcher to remain vigilant and not to impose a superficial veil of uniformity. The researcher followed Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña’s, (2014) recommendations to resist the pitfalls of plausibility and focus on (a) interpreting a deeper meanings of all events, (b) relying on data only from elite sources or participants, and (c) losing your perspective as you “go native.”

Triangulation, or drawing in converging themes among all three sources of data supported the validation of this study. Collecting data from three sources – interviews, artifact elicitation, and surveys – aided in revealing richer data concerning the topic of the Millennial Generation. To enhance the interpretive portion of the data the researcher listened to a variety of voices or stories being explained and “heard the harmony” of the common lived experiences (Creswell, 2013; Lawrence-Lightfoot, 1997, p. 209). The researcher made sense of the scattered stories and looked for the forest through the trees so that the dissonance could be explained and brought some meaning to the chaos.

Limitations of the Study

The qualitative quality of a phenomenological study presents limitations to other individuals outside of the researcher and principal participants. Biases can be seen in the data collection and interpretation of emergent themes, as they may hold diverse clarifications or descriptions by other researchers. Researcher biases may also have an impact on the analysis and interpretations of the themes, experiences, or recounting of interviews. “Phenomenologists need to reflect on their personal contextual framework and become clear about the assumptions and expectations that they bring to the work at hand” (Lawrence-Lightfoot, 1997, p. 67).

Understanding researcher biases includes realizing the researcher’s role in a phenomenological study, because, ultimately, the voice of the phenomenologist resides within the rendered authentic story of the participants. The phenomenologist had the ability to shape what knowledge was being portrayed and how the participant’s story was articulated and conveyed. The responsibility of the researcher was to capture the essence and experiences as perceived by the participants. It was approached holistically in order to portray the phenomena as the story is developed (Creswell, 2013).

Summary

This chapter provided an in-depth summary of the methodology this qualitative study pursued. This phenomenological methodology examined the Millennial Generation and specifically focused on participants describing their common formative experiences and how those happenings have guided them into adulthood. The participant sample of three to six individuals born between 1980-1990 were selected from the Phase One survey. They were interviewed using Seidman’s (2013) three-interview model approach and asked to share an

artifact to elicit strong, rich, informative data about their past experiences. Ethical considerations as well as credibility and dependability were accounted for through autonomy, confidentiality, and triangulation. The intent was that this study would provide rich knowledge in regards to the Millennial Generation's past experiences and how those experiences have impacted their transition into adulthood.

Chapter 4

Findings

Introduction

This phenomenological study, as described in Chapter 3, was designed to elicit data which illustrates how Millennials perceive their formative experiences. The purpose of this research is to expand scholarly understanding of how the Millennial Generation's current mindset influences their transition into adulthood. This chapter describes the data collection in both phase I (electronic survey) and phase II (in-depth interviews), the steps used in the data reduction, and finally the significant findings related to the research questions. The research questions were:

- How do the Millennials describe the experiences which have guided their transition into adulthood?
 - What common formative experiences are predominant within the Millennial Generation?
 - How does the Theory of Generations, Gestalt Theory, and Emergent Adulthood Theory aid in understanding the mindset of the emergent Millennial adult?

Phase One

In phase I, an electronic survey was developed using SurveyMonkey™ which is an online survey software and questionnaire tool. A survey consisting of 24 questions was sent electronically to 325 college students in the targeted age group of 25-35 years. Insufficient participant response rates from the first group of targeted college students prompted the

researcher to add to the sample pool using the college's on-line student population. This second request yielded 18 useable returned surveys. The on-line survey served two purposes: to begin the data collection process as well as to aid in selecting three participants for the in-depth interviews. The electronic survey elicited responses in the following nine categories: decision making, circle of influence, independence, current self, values, vision of success, future aspirations, formative experiences, and media portrayals.

Table 1

The Millennial Generation's Common Experiences E –Survey

Questions
* 1. By checking of each of the following safeguards I electronically attest to the following:
2. How old are you?
3. Name an important decision that you have recently made.
4. Do you consider yourself to be independent?
5. Describe ways in which you are independent.
6. Do you consider yourself to be resourceful?
7. Describe ways in which you are resourceful.
8. Is your family supportive of your career choices? Please give an example of how they support or do not support you
9. In order of importance, in your opinion, who are the five most important people in your life?
10. In order of importance, in your opinion, who are the three most important public figures in your life?
11. How happy or unhappy are you with your current life status? Explain Why?
12. Describe the three most important factors that have contributed to your current situation in life.
13. Name three social issues that are important to you.
14. Name three material items/possessions you cannot live without besides food and clothing.
15. Name three values that are extremely important to you and why.
16. Name three people you believe to be successful.
17. What makes these people seem successful to you?
18. How do you describe success?
19. What are your aspirations or plans for the future?
20. [Video clip] How does this 3 minute video make you feel?
21. [Video clip] What is your response to this video?

Data Reduction Phase One Electronic Survey

Data that addressed the first research sub-question, common formative experiences predominant within the Millennial Generation, emerged from questions relating to decision making, independence, circle of influence, current self, values, formative experiences, vision of success, media portrayal, and future aspirations. These answers to the questions provided insight into the mindset of the Millennials as they discussed how they made decisions, described their current self and their values, and what they anticipated in the future.

The responses to the survey questions were analyzed and coded using the following protocol. To answer the overarching research question, data descriptions of how Millennials' experiences guided them into adulthood went through a first cycle of In Vivo, and Descriptive coding followed by Emotion and Value coding (Miles et.al, 2014). A data map was created to link responses to the two sub-questions.

The data from the electronic survey was insufficient to determine if the Theory of Generations, Gestalt Theory, and Emergent Adulthood Theory aid in understanding the mindset of the emergent Millennial adult. Participant responses did not develop into any substantial findings and therefore the research proceeded to the in-depth interviews to determine any significant answers.

Phase Two

Phase two of this study collected qualitative data through in-depth interviews. These interviews were conducted with three participants chosen from the survey results. Participants were chosen based on age and willingness to openly share their experiences in the e-survey.

Pseudonyms were assigned to the selected interviewees. Male 1, James was 25 years old, female 1T, Beth was 26 years old and female 2A, Sarah was 25 years old.

Seidman's (2013) in-depth three-step 90 minute interview structure was followed and included: interview one, description of life history; interview two, elaboration of their formative experiences; and interview three, reflection on the meaning of those experiences. During the second interview an additional form of data were collected via the format of audiovisual materials. According to Creswell (2013), when participants share artifacts it can help provide a deeper understanding of the sensitive issues being studied and can also provide participants with an avenue to help elicit better responses to interview question which are challenging. Each participant was asked to present two audiovisual materials: one connected to a positive formative experience and one connected to a negative formative experience. The qualitative data collected during the three-step interview process, combined with the audiovisual materials, were analyzed and separated into key factors and experiences related to the Millennial Generation's perception of their formative experiences. Questions were grouped into nine categories: decision making, independence, circle of influence, current self, formative experiences, values, vision of success, your future, and media portrayals.

Table 2

In-Depth interview questions.

First Interview Questions
Decision Making <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is your thought process as you make major or critical decisions? • If a family member disagrees with a decision you intend to make do you change your mind? Independence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In what ways do you think outside the box when you are deciding how to accomplish your goals?

- How have your college experiences taught you to be independent?

Circle of Influences

- In what ways have celebrities influenced your career choices?
- Can you explain why celebrities are so important to Millennials?

Current Self

- List some reasons why you are proud of who you are today.

Formative Experiences

- How have your past personal experiences made you into who you are today?
- Any past personal experiences in particular stand out?

Values

- What values would you like to pass along to the next generation? Why?
- When you get toward the end of your life and look back, how would you like people to describe you?

Success

- How important is passion in relation to success?
- What obstacles have you encountered as you strive for success?

Future

- If you were to draw a timeline of your life from beginning to end, where do you see yourself right now? (Beginning? Middle?)

Media Portrayals

- What has your generation experienced that is unique/different than others?
- How do you think the generation older than you sees you?
- How do you think the generation younger than you sees you?

Second Interview Questions

Decision Making

- Why do you trust your family members when making decisions?
- If you change your mind because of their input and they are wrong, how do you feel? How do you handle it?
- Do you feel like you collaborate with family members when making decisions?

Circle of Influence

- Family traditions seem to be important to Millennials. Do you ever want to break tradition? When would you do that and why?
- Describe your family culture and why it is so important.

Current Self

- What motivates you?
- How important is it to be accepted?
- Have you learned to voice your opinion? How?
- In what areas of your life are you confident?
- Choose three words to describe who you are.
- Are you comfortable with who you are?

- In what ways are you unique?
- Do you believe that it is important to be civic minded? Why?
- Besides your career, what are you passionate about?

Values

- Do you believe that it is important to be civic minded? Why?

Formative Experiences

- Take an item that reminds you of a positive experience that has had a major impact on your life.
- Take an item that reminds you of a negative experience that has had a major impact on your life.

Future

- Do you day dream about your future?
- Do you often reflect on the past? Does it help with your daily life?

Third Interview Questions

Decision Making

- Public opinion is generally split on most important issues. For instance, there are strong pro and con arguments about abortion, about the right to bear arms, about U.S. intervention in foreign wars—even about evolution. In deciding which side of an argument to endorse, are you most influenced by: (a) fundamental moral principles, (b) empirical evidence (studies done), (c) rational logic, (d) trusting the source of information?

Circle of Influences

- Do you think that the family in which you grew up was a complex one? Did it give you freedom and stimulate your growth?

Current Self

- What personal qualities do you have that might help to improve society?
- What are the major sources of unhappiness in your life? What makes you most sad, irritated, or depressed? Whose fault is it?
- Under what conditions do you feel the greatest serenity and happiness? Are these occasions frequent?
- What is your central unifying belief? Is it fame or fortune, is it the desire to be loved or to be feared, to be envied or to be thanked?
- What is it that you could not possibly lose without losing your sense of self?
- If you were to represent yourself by drawing a series of five concentric circles, like a bullseye, with the circle in the center signifying “you,” and the expanding circles represent decreasing importance, how would you label the circles? What would you write in each circle—a value? A belief? A relationship? An experience?

Formative Experiences

- What have your experiences taught you? (Specifically, think about the experience you shared with the items you took in). What was the significance of each experience?
- When do you know that you are an adult?

- Do you think you are moving toward adulthood?

Values

- Selfish individuals who ignore other people's needs generally benefit by advancing their own interests at others' expense. What are some examples of irresponsibility that bother you most, and what can be done about them?
- What rules do you follow now that you would never break under any condition? Do these rules make you feel constrained, or freer?

Future

- If the task of education were to become your responsibility, what would you teach young people that would help better them?
- What do you think is the most important advance in morality (goodness) that humanity has made in the last thousand years? What is the most important advance to be made in the next thousand? How can you help bring it about?

Passion

- Passion, for all its upside, can be a selfish experience. Therefore, it is helpful to think about your passion as a purpose. Think of 10 massive world problems you would like to see solved. These problems would be ones that everyone has to deal with. Where do your passions and global problems intersect? Where do they come together and make sense? Do you think that is where your purpose (drive/perseverance) may lie?

Data Reduction Phase II Interviews

The responses from each of the interviews were transcribed and then reduced using memo coding, in vivo coding, and value coding. All responses were compared to the overarching question and proposed conceptual framework. Codes were developed from these memos and themes emerged. In vivo analysis: integrity, celebrities, perseverance, personal fulfillment, travel, tolerance, unique, accepted, educational growth, trust and family traditions lead to the following value codes: belief (spiritual or metaphysical self), influence, (learned ideals which direct physical activities), growth (how you engage the world), values, significant meaning attributed to person or idea, and self-values (a personal value system). The following are the five major values topics with definitions: Each value topic has coding words associated to them:

- Belief: family traditions, reflect/relate, decision making
- Influence: experiences, relationships, future, celebrities/idols
- Growth: educational growth, enthusiasm/passion, perseverance/hard work, travel, professional/financial/job security
- Values: civic duty, compassion, tolerance, trust/loyalty, kindness, authenticity
- Self-Values: inner peace, reputation, unique, personal fulfillment, altruism

Findings

The purpose of this study was to elicit a better understanding of the Millennial Generation's viewpoints in regard to perceptions of self and society. Through the examination of the Millennials' own perception of their formative experiences and viewpoints they are telling their own story. In addition, the researcher has used a theoretical framework to determine how generational experiences have shaped their disposition as they transition into adulthood.

During the final stages of value coding, the qualitative data were interpreted and the following five major findings emerged. The researcher practiced bracketing (*epoché*) in order to ensure that the findings are free from interpretations and are as accurate and objective as possible. Selected quotations taken from the interview transcripts capture the essence of the Millennials' experiences and aid in the support of these findings. The researcher identified from the transcripts horizons, or non-repetitive invariants, that directly describe the Millennial Generation's common formative experiences. This provided the reader an opportunity to enter into the minds of the Millennial cohort for a better understanding of their reality as it pertains to transitioning into adulthood.

Overarching Research Question: How do the Millennials describe the experiences which have guided their transition into adulthood?

Phenomenology's main objective is to study the universal lived experiences of a specific group from the perspective of the individuals while setting aside the researcher's assumptions (bracketing) and usual ways of perceiving the phenomenon. Empirical, transcendental, phenomenological research seeks to describe rather than explain and to start from an intentionality of consciousness: a perspective free from preconceptions (Moustakas, 1994). This is where the researcher began the journey into finding the commonalities of the Millennial Generation, how they describe themselves, and how their experiences are different or unique from the generations that preceded them.

The researcher chose five lenses through which to proceed with this study. These lenses emerged and developed during value coding. Miles, et al., (2013) describe value coding as "qualitative data that reflects a participant's values, attitudes, and beliefs, representing his or her perspectives or worldviews" (p.75). Value coding is further described by Miles, et al., (2013) as appropriate for studies that explore cultural values, identity, participant experiences, and their actions. The researcher expanded and further defined Miles, et al.'s, (2013) three main attributes: values, attitudes, and beliefs in order to fully isolate and describe the experiences the participants were sharing. These five lenses have been grouped into meaningful categories to capture and describe the Millennial's common experiences: belief, influence, growth, values, and self-values.

Finding One: The Millennial Generation's common experiences with social media have established a sociocultural perspective that embraces nonconformity and individuality.

This perception has directed them to develop social connections which have prompted their self-seeking behaviors.

The lens of influence was employed to aid the researcher in determining the Millennial Generation's stimuli and helped develop questions to guide the participants in describing how they have been shaped into their generation. The researcher defines influence as learned ideals which guide or direct physical activities. All generations have established sociocultural perspectives which have prompted their behaviors, however the Millennial Generation describes the unique experiences which have had a major and distinctive impact on their lives. The following data shows how the participants describe themselves in regard to distinctiveness.

During the first round of interviews all three participants, under the context of media portrayals, responded to the following question. What has your generation experienced that is unique or different than other generations? Both Beth and Sarah's responses suggest that Millennials may not be concerned with conformity and as a generation, "we are not afraid to be different" and "there are not that many that are like me". The data further reveals that Millennials may also savor the idea of being distinctive and enjoy flaunting their distinguishing characteristics. James alluded to this idea when he said, "parents see us as unique and know that we are not afraid to show it".

These responses prompted the researcher to further investigate why Millennials felt exceptional. Beth was asked to continue to articulate why she as a Millennial felt unique. Her answers focused on the influence of technology and how it has helped shaped the Millennials. "Technology has impacted our mannerisms, our attention spans, and has become the way we communicate one on one".

According to Shaw (2013) Millennials are the first generation to think and learn primarily with and through technology. Shaw (2013) deems that technology is important to Millennials because it makes them seem indispensable to older generations. It also has become a preferred pathway to interact globally with their peers. James solidifies this notion when he stated, “we are the next generation and we've taken what the older generation has done and built upon it”.

As compared to older generations Millennials are discovering and obtaining their news through less traditional platforms on a daily basis. Prior generations did not have everyday access to information. Because social media is a new phenomenon among a growing generation it has had an impactful and unique effect on the Millennials via behaviors such as impulsivity and immediacy. Beth confirms this idea when she said, “so I think millennials are definitely moving toward that (being more connected)...and that’s why we are glued to our phones because we’re so bored with what happened yesterday ...we want to know what’s next, what’s next, what’s next”. Sarah’s response coincided when she stated, “that’s why Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter are so popular because you want to be the first to share your opinion, it’s all about what’s new and what is going on”.

This socio-cultural nuance has inspired and shaped their attitudes and actions and therefore is a major influence in their development. Their common experiences regarding technology and its effect on their learned ideals may be guiding or directing their physical activities. The following quotes by James provides some insight that supports the idea that social media influences who they are as a generation:

“What I’ve had at my disposal is greater than the previous generations and that the next generation will be greater than what we had at our disposal. These things at our disposal have shaped us. They have created us and could be good because... technology is phenomenal! Technology is an amazing thing. It can solve so many problems and you

can get access to so many different things, to so many different people. It's great and it's allowed us to be what some say is the smartest generation”.

The second round of interviews focused on Millennials current self, passions, and why the participants thought Millennials were unique. The following response from Sarah revealed that through exploration and investigation she was able to discover how and why she was distinctive, “I always try to get involved and try so many new things. In case one thing fails, I can say, this failed, but I still have 47 more things I can share my uniqueness and be successful at”. James responded in a similar manner, “I try everything so I feel like I’m unique in that sense”.

When the researcher asked the participants to name the influences which have guided their daily actions, celebrities emerged as a theme. The following data was collected during the first round of interviews and all three participants were eager to speak about their opinions of celebrities and how their icons influence them daily. James described why celebrities are so important to Millennials “I think that it represents a fantasy version of our realistic aspirations”. Beth response was similar, “I do admire their (celebrities) work ethic if anything, that kind of like dedication and creativity to push yourself... I admire those particular qualities, the majority of celebrities have worked hard to get where they are and I can too”.

A distinctive connection to and admiration of celebrities emerged. However, the downside of being a celebrity also surfaced. James and Sarah both responded in the following way when asked why celebrities were so important to millennials and if that influence was always positive. James said, “Celebrities show me that you cannot seek true happiness through money”, and Sarah agreed when she stated, “Celebrities showed me what not to do and that money can’t buy happiness”.

All three of the participants also described how important experiences are to them. The value and influence of an experience over a materialistic item was a continuing and emerging theme within this study. The Millennial's personal journey of connecting to one person at a time both globally and locally through experiences far outreached their desire for acquiring personal possessions. Beth states, "I always try to think about what I have, not materialistic items but things you can't touch. It is what keeps you humble and it is good for the soul". It became evident to the researcher that Millennials seemed to be influenced and felt inspired by the idea of living a meaningful life. It seems to be a life which Millennials have affirmed through their common experiences and experiential learning. James confirmed this idea when he stated,

"I feel like I have had a lifetime of experiences that have resulted in me having a very unique mechanism of rational and of logic and it makes me who I am. If I lost that, or any piece of that in any way, I just would not be myself. I wouldn't make the decisions that I do. I wouldn't have the values that I do".

Beth seemed to agree with this statement and expanded on the concept of how her experiences have played a role in her personal development,

"Don't be selfish and not look out for anyone else. I don't like the idea of putting anyone down to put yourself ahead. I would say my greatest serenity is....what makes sense to me, when I'm at internal peace it is seeing others happy and the lack of hectic bustling in this chaotic world".

Finding Two: The Millennial Generation's transcendent belief that family is the nucleus of life that aids in how they reason and come to conclusions. They are carrying these beliefs into adulthood.

The lens of belief was employed to aid the researcher in determining the Millennial Generation's metaphysical self. The broad concept of the metaphysical self was developed to help define the Millennials' common realities, and thus help us to see the world through their eyes. Transcendent belief – defined and applied herein as associated meaning that connects you

to the larger world - was utilized to facilitate looking beyond the ordinary to try to find the exceptionality of the Millennials' belief system. All three participants expressed an intense connection to their family's guidance. They describe the family unit as the foundation that has set them on the path toward adulthood.

In the following quote Sarah describes access to parental advice in relation to her decision making as having a significant impact on her perceptions, choices, and resolutions. "Family will always look out for my best interest. Their decisions are valuable...they know what's right for me".

The participants were then asked if they collaborate with family members when making decisions. The following quote by Beth provides data that supports the notion that family is a vital part of the millennial life and has been an integral part of developing their values. They are a close union and millennials rely on that foundation when looking toward the future. "I ultimately decided what they (parents) suggest because I know that all they have ever wanted was to offer was insight. I value their judgment".

Participant Beth further described what the nucleus of the family has provided for her and how it has shaped her development and progress toward adulthood. The following two questions, why is family culture so important to you and how did it stimulate your growth yielded the following response from Beth,

"Family makes you who you are like it's the foundation of your morals. I think that's why it's important to me. It's something to be proud of. All my values are wrapped in my family. I'm confident in my circle of family and no matter what I need I can always count on them".

Furthermore, the strong and unique transcendental belief of the Millennial Generation was conveyed when the participants were asked to describe the significance and importance of family, and how they view their relationship in the future. The following response from Sarah solidifies the idea that millennial values are rooted in the nucleus of the family. These values are being carried with them into adulthood.

“Being adopted solidified that my family loves me, more than they love themselves. They were willing to do something so selfless so I am just making sure my family stays together. Doing family dinners, like all that, like I’m keeping that. That’s never disappearing. Family is huge. I can have nothing. I can be poor and have family and I’ll be the happiest woman”.

Beth’s response further supports the above statement when she stated,

“When I am with my closest family members, just having a conversation or just joking around I truly feel at peace and it’s like 110% happy without like a care in the world...I can never lose that”.

The preceding data suggests that the family unit is the core of the Millennial life. The data also proposes that Millennials collaborate with their family on a regular basis and rely heavily on their support and guidance as they mature and move into adulthood.

Finding Three: The Millennial Generation is “living” their individual ideals. They have specifically aligned their life with their values, which supports them in living an authentic and happy existence.

The lens of value was employed to aid the researcher in encouraging the participants to describe their principles or standards of behavior and their judgment of what is important in their lives. The following quotes describe a unique and authentic energy when the participants revealed their lived experiences as they aligned with their highest values. They designated their common experiences as an inner peace, or, to paraphrase their words, a natural consequence of living their ideals of loyalty, responsibility, and respect.

The participants were asked about their passions in the final series of interviews. The word passionate had emerged frequently throughout the first two rounds of interviews and was further explored by asking the participants to think about their passions as a purpose. Beth's following response was evidence of how she connected passion, purpose, and experiential learning.

"Educate people as you move along. Let your purpose educate them".

Csikszentmihalyi, (1993) and Arnett (2015) suggest that the ability to learn while participating in socially productive activities is inherent to finding one's purpose, and this leads to growth and maturity. The following response from James reveals a strong sense of responsibility towards Millennials connecting their participation with moralistic outcomes. "Be respectful, what we do can affects others, Learn to trust people". Beth further expanded on that idea by offering the following: "traditional values are traditions for a reason, they stay strong and have an impact on everyone."

Finding Four: The Millennial Generation's personal growth and development are a direct result of their transformational journeys.

The lens of growth was employed to aid the researcher in examining the Millennial Generation's transition into the unique world of globalization. The following data is a representation of how the Millennials use experiential learning as they transition toward adulthood. Sarah's describes her interconnectedness as a period of growth and maturity as follows. "All my life's learning experiences are based on adventures that I've gone on. My growth would kind of stop if I stopped traveling".

Millennials may believe that the education received along their personally linked journeys is invaluable. The data also suggests that millennials consider that not all knowledge can be learned through books and must be experienced. This is evident in the following response

from Sarah, “I am adventurous. I feel like I want to try everything in the world. Traveling! It’s a beautiful thing being able to see the world for yourself and not looking at it in a book”.

The three participants asserted that through their travels they are able to construct networks, social relations, and connect globally. This results in their participation in the worldwide circulation of ideologies. James suggested that “it’s important learning who people are and connecting with them on a personal level because when you live your life in a small bubble you never get to experience, learn, or connect with people on important levels and things like that”.

When the participants were asked to list five reasons as to why they were proud of who they are, the idea of being adventurous or an entrepreneur was a common response. They saw themselves as an emerging and integral part of the universe. This realization is extremely important as we seek to understand millennials. It solidifies the idea that they consider themselves to be connected and that they are learning together through their common experiences as they progress into adulthood. Sarah responded by connecting her travels with what she has learned, “I have learned through traveling you are not the only person in the world”. James spoke for the entire Millennial cohort when he said “there are a lot of entrepreneurs and travelers in my generation”. Beth replied by relating her family to experiential learning,

“My parents recently told me...’we can tell you are in a good place’. It was rewarding to hear that. They know that out of everyone in the family I’m the most outgoing and adventurous and I learn by doing”.

Dewey (1966) argued that learning cannot transpire by words alone. Dewey (1966) suggests that one should experience the spirit of life by immersing oneself in the various ways of living, thus

influencing their growth and maturity. All three participants' responses connect growth and development to experiential learning which echoes Dewey's (1966) teachings. The data also suggests strongly that Millennials use their transformational journeys as lessons which will help guide them more favorably into adulthood.

Finding Five: Millennials manifest concern not only for themselves but have a genuine desire to serve in the best interest of all humanity.

The lens of self-value was employed to aid the researcher in identifying the Millennial Generation's needs, desires, and what they care about most in life. The participants described their own identities which gave the researcher an opportunity to develop a deeper understanding of the Millennial world. As the participants defined their values, a strong and unique internal compass emerged; they are unselfish and have a deep concern for the welfare of others because they possess an altruistic set of values. James believes that "we should as humans be responsible to uphold very easy charitable actions that in no way expels us. We should automatically perform them...It's no big deal".

The data also suggests that Millennials believe collaborations form a bond between the learner and the environment. The first and fundamental goal of the Gestalt Theory is to define what is missing in one's environment and then secondly to determine how you can resolve it because the whole is greater than the sum of its parts (Wollants, 2013). Arnett's (2007) Emerging Adult Theory contends that the developmental years are when many young adults are answering these questions. Millennials believe that they are on a journey that includes building relationships and learning through them so that they may find an inner peace. James describes his quest for inner peace,

"My ultimate goal is to help somebody else come to a conclusion. It always comes back to giving assistance. I'm confident that certain choices will ultimately bring me to inner

peace. That true comprehensive happiness. I tend to put others before myself very frequently”.

The participants were asked the following question: if the task of education were your responsibility what would you teach young people that would help better them? James answered confidently and immediately,

“Doing things for the betterment of others makes me truly happy. You spend most of your life with your own happiness in the forefront. Occasionally, you can move it to the backburner and have a positive effect on others”.

Sarah’s response further supported his statement when she stated, “do unto others what you believe would help them reach their supreme happiness”.

Beth responded in a more philosophical way, “Gandhi’s message do good and do good for yourself. Temporarily put your happiness aside.”

The five previous findings were the commonalities the Millennial Generation presented during the researcher’s three tiered interview method. The Millennials described themselves and how their experiences were different or unique from the generations that preceded them. Through the examination of the Millennials’ own perception of their formative experiences and viewpoints they were able to tell their own story. In addition, the researcher had the opportunity to analysis how generational experiences shape a cohorts disposition as they transition into adulthood.

Chapter Five

Findings and Recommendations

The purpose of this phenomenological study is to explore via a sample group of Millennials their common experiences as they transition into adulthood. The intent of this chapter is to provide insight into the following findings by combining literature that focuses on the Millennials as well as using the lens of the theories that were stated in chapter one. This research used naturalistic inquiry to collect qualitative data by conducting an e-survey and in-depth interviews. This chapter includes data and analysis which tells the story of the Millennials in order to reconstruct a more holistic understanding of them as they transition into adulthood. The discussion that follows lists the five findings stated in chapter four and will analyze and synthesize the data collected, discuss literature on Millennials, as well as consider the overarching questions through the lenses of the theories to augment the understanding of the Millennials' common experiences as they transition into adulthood.

Overall, the data findings suggest that the mind set of Millennials is based on a desire for educational growth through experiences, a belief that family is the nucleus of life and a support system for reasoning, values which align with their ideals on living an authentic existence, growth through their personal journeys, and focusing on self-values through a desire to serve in the best interest of all humanity.

Finding One: Influence

The Millennial Generation's common experiences have established their socio-cultural perspective. This perception has directed them into developing connections which have prompted their behaviors. Thus, the first findings are interpreted through the lens of influence.

Current literature acknowledges that individuals are influenced by and learn values from their parents and communities, and often share common core ideals throughout their lives. However, as these emerging adults become aware of the world around them they experience culture differently than preceding generations. This phenomenon exemplifies what Mannheim (1923) describes as a “visible and striking transformation of the consciousness of the individual in question takes place: a change, not merely in the content of experience, but in the individual’s mental and spiritual adjustment to it” (p. 171). The Generational Theory which Mannheim (1923) refers to purports that individuals born during the same time frame share similar formative experiences, which in turn facilitates their group membership. This definition became evident as this phenomenological study searched to answer the following question:

- *What common formative experiences are predominant within the Millennial Generation?*

Uniqueness

Most of the 18 participants of the electronic survey, as well as the three participants of the in-depth interviews, described themselves as distinctive and their behaviors as diverse and unique. Female participant Beth described her individuality as “you really can’t place me under a specific category. I can adjust easily. I can be put anywhere and adapt.” The difference between the Millennial cohort and preceding generations is crystallized by Millennials’ tendencies to explore their distinctiveness in ways that other generations did not. Past generations were restricted by timelines, expectations, and preconceived notions of how adults should live their lives and approach their futures. Millennials in this study seem to embrace the idea of being free to explore and discover their futures rather than having it dictated to them.

Their behaviors seem to be driven and influenced by the ideal that they are an exclusive, confident group. Female participant Sarah explains,

“I am unique because I try everything. I feel like a lot of people aren’t willing to do that anymore. People say we have to do this or we have to do that to fit into a mold. They are like, you should do these 10 things because that is what society deems okay for me to do. And I feel like I’m not gonna be put into a particular category. Like I’m gonna try it.”

Most of the participants also described themselves as not being fearful to be different. They expressed a desire to stand out and be recognized for their distinctive and exceptional qualities. It seemed to be an attribute they savor. Beth advocates this sentiment when she states, “even though we seems like we are partying all the time we are also getting our goals accomplished.” Participant James also suggested this point of view when he identified his generation’s ability to be bold and unique when he testified that “there are a lot of entrepreneurs in my generation. We are not afraid to explore new things.”

Technology

Millennials are at the heart of the digital age. They are the first generation to think and learn with and through technology. As compared to older generations they are discovering and obtaining their news through less traditional platforms. Couple this new trend with the continuous expansion of social media and the results are significant regarding Millennial behavior. The findings suggested that Millennials regularly read or watch news stories or headlines posted through technology. Millennials are frequently pursuing social media’s latest and greatest trends and it appears that the Millennial Generation has found its own personal freedom via the internet, thus influencing their behavior. Past generations did not have constant access to information, and news traveled more slowly. Millennials, due to the constant flow of

information, feel connected personally, which has encouraged them to believe that they are or could be just as prominent as those portrayed in the media. Millennials, due to social media, have also become exposed to a wide variety of global opinions. The ability to freely express their thoughts for all to see through social media has opened up a venue for Millennials to communicate.

“Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter are so amazing because you want to express yourself and say, I knew about this, or did you hear about this....It’s all about knowing what’s new and what’s going on. That’s why we are glued to our phones because we’re so bored with what happened yesterday. We want to know what’s next, what’s next, what’s next.”

Millennials have also embraced celebrities as their champions. When all three in-depth interviewees were asked if celebrities influenced them, the answers suggested that social media in conjunction with celebrities have had a major impact on how Millennials envision themselves. James proposed that celebrities “represent what we wish to be. It represents the money, extravagant lifestyles, and widespread notoriety that is kind of like a mystic version of what people my age want to be.” Beth concurred:

“We want to connect to someone that personifies us. It’s not just singers and actors anymore, Bloggers and You Tubers/ Social Media celebrities feel like that could be me gaining all that admiration. It gives us motivation to be liked or drive to be accepted. That’s a human quality to want to be accepted, I can respect that.”

Past generations needed to read magazines or travel to movie theaters to attain that type of celebrity connection. The instantaneous connection through Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and blogs have laid the path for Millennials to imaginatively connect, which has allowed them to feel and behave like celebrities themselves.

Experiences and the Emerging Adult Theory

Dewey's (1966) educational philosophy recognized that the most important method of human learning is language. Language is itself a social mechanism which is learned through experiences. He (1966) believed that the language of each society influences a generation's ideals, values, beliefs, and accumulated knowledge. Dewey (1966) further argued that learning a way of life cannot be transmitted by words alone. It is crucial for one to experience the spirit of life which can be acquired by immersing oneself in the various ways of living, thus influencing their growth.

Current educational philosophy has centered on Arnett's (2007) emerging adulthood timeframe. Arnett (2007) has argued that this timeframe has become a distinct period of the life course for young people, which has influenced their behaviors. It is a period characterized by change and exploration as they examine life's possibilities. It is the period of one's existence that offers the most opportunity for identity exploration in the areas of love, work, and worldviews. It is no longer normative for someone in their late teens and early twenties to prepare for entry into adult roles. Experimentation and exploration are a key part of this development.

By combining Arnett's (2000) emerging adult theory with Dewey's (1966) philosophical ways of learning, we can better understand and describe how the Millennials are influenced by their experiences and have learned the ideals which have directed their activities. Millennials have been using this extended period of time to discover and form their distinctiveness, which has resulted in them becoming experiential learners. Past generations had opportunities to learn in a similar manner but not as freely, because their time to explore was drastically condensed

into their college years. Millennials have now been afforded the capability to delve into a much longer journey into adulthood. By globally observing first-hand phenomena, learning life-long lessons, and developing complex relationships, Millennials have been allowed to embrace life's offerings and, moreover, share the results. Sarah best described her endeavors when she stated, "educate people as you move and travel along. Let your purpose teach them."

When the three participants were asked to describe either a positive or negative experience which had a major impact on their lives, all three had strikingly similar encounters. All three positive experiences were based on travel and the three negative experiences were rooted in the participants extending themselves for betterment of someone else. Sarah describes a positive learning experience in the following terms:

"I have learned so much through my travels. I realized that you are not the only person in the world and you need to learn how to adapt and plan appropriately. Also, don't be embarrassed of your mistakes, ask for help, and figure it out, so that you are prepared for the future. Learn how to always be prepared."

James also learned through his positive travel experiences:

"The most positive experience I had in my life was when I lived in Italy for 3 months. It was my first time traveling out of the country and I was on my own. I felt like I grew up so much. I spent most of my life, like in a bubble. The experience opened my eyes to the fact that there is so much in this world so much beyond yourself that exists. I was able to prove to myself that I could do it and I did it. It was just a huge milestone for me."

As for Beth, her negative experience was rooted in the betterment of someone else. She explained it in the following way:

"I was in a long-term emotionally abusive relationship where it kind of like tore down who I was and affected my self-esteem. I did do my best to try enrich this person's life and lost myself in the process. I held on to his apology letter to remind myself that you are worthy, you do have value."

Perception is a process through which individuals collect and apply the knowledge they have acquired from their experiences (Schermerhorn, 2010). The Gestalt Theory is a perception model used to explain the reasons behind an individual's behavior. Through experiences, knowledge is accrued and the stimuli affect one's conduct (Ehiobuche, 2012). Dewey (1966) alleged that an educative experience is one in which we make a connection between what we do and what happens to us in consequence. In essence, the value of an experience lies in the perception of relationships or relations among happenings:

“I reflect on the past. I'm very good at taking a negative experience and spinning something positive from it. That motivates me to a certain extent to just keep my eye on the prize. A lot of people say don't dwell on the past but I feel like dwelling on the past has helped me learn from my experiences and is what makes me, me.”

A second theory linked to the Gestalt Theory is the Law of Pragnanz. This theory maintains that we have a human psychological need to complete our incomplete or open-ended experiences (Nevis, 2005). Within a human mind, a closed situation is considered superior to open incomplete situations and can be regarded as being unfinished. Psychological peace tends to move in an established direction where it can rest and be settled. Closure is one of the key concepts in Gestalt Theory. Change is only possible when one's experiences can be considered as concluded, so that the individual may move on to fresh opportunities (2005).

The link between the Theory of Generations and the Gestalt Theory is that if one approaches both theories in the specific context of examining formative experiences, then a greater understanding of behaviors can be achieved (Michalek & Long, 2013). Beth's description of her negative experience reflects the Law of Pragnanz:

“It helped me really understand and show outwardly who I am inside. This negative experience taught me self-respect and self-value. I think I'm there. I think I'm able to

admit fault when I'm wrong and make my own decisions comfortably. I learned to kind of let go of things."

These findings imply that Millennials need experiences to help them learn, as suggested by the study by Borges, Manuel, Elam, and Jones (2010). The Borges et al., (2010) study also demonstrated that Millennials have a need to belong to social groups and to share with others. They are also sensitive perfectionists in that they enjoy following rules, and learn by doing – but they are not interested in dominance or gaining a powerful status. They enjoy relationship building and opportunities that contribute to collaboration and teamwork. Csikszentmihalyi, (1993) concurs with this finding and adds that developing and establishing our own unique potential is a fundamental part of development and influences growth

The following quotes from all three of the interviewees indicate that their experiences have influenced their thinking, and that those experiences have fueled personal growth. Sarah stated that "it's a beautiful thing when your studies are able to be used in real world experiences. It's also important to learn who people are and connect with them on a personal level." Beth concurs with Sarah and states that learning through experiences is vital and implies that it should be done not in a domineering manner: "I'm a perfectionist and adventurous. I feel like I want to try everything in the world. It's good for your soul." James believes that his experiences have influenced his character development, which in turn help him function logically.

Finding Two: Belief

The Millennial Generation's transcendent belief that family is the nucleus of life aids in how they reason and come to conclusions. They are carrying these beliefs into adulthood. The lens of belief was employed to better understand their metaphysical self. The broad concept of

metaphysical self was developed to help define the Millennials' common realities and thus help us to see the world through their eyes.

The researcher's definition of transcendent belief is articulated as associated meaning that connects an individual with the larger world. Its utilization is to facilitate a vision beyond the ordinary to try to find the exceptionality of the Millennial belief system. All three participants expressed an intense connection to their family's guidance. They describe the family unit as the foundation that has set them on the path toward adulthood. All three participants described parental advice in regard to their decision making as having a significant impact on their perceptions, choices, and decision making.

The Theory of Generations is grounded on the principle assumption that adult values are formed during one's adolescence by shared experiences with family and companions (Codrington et al., 2011). Experiencing significant events and tragedies also contribute in the development of one's principles and beliefs. The part of our brain that governs our intrinsic values is shaped by our environment and may be compared to a sponge which absorbs the regularities of our surrounding physical and social environment. These experiences in turn impact how one interacts with and shapes their world (Worthman, Plotsky, Schechter, & Cummings, eds., 2010). Using the lens of the Theory of Generations this phenomenological study sought to answer the following question:

- *What common formative experiences are predominant within the Millennial Generation?*

Family Support

Family has had a meaningful impact on Millennials' ability to reason and make decisions, and thus what they believe. Family guidance is not a new phenomenon and is common to prior generations. However, parents taking a larger role and being highly involved in nearly every aspect of their Millennial children's future is a relatively new occurrence (Howe & Strauss, 2000). Montag, Campo, Weissman, Walmsley, and Snell's (2012) research examined this idea. Participants in their focus group depicted themselves as depending on their parents, and often described their parents as sounding boards and being their primary support system. Participants of this study's electronic survey, as well as the three the in-depth interviewees, asserted that "family will always look out for my best interest... they know what's right for me."

Howe and Strauss (2000) concluded that because Millennials are being protected both by their parents and society, they are driven to improve the world around them. This generation is "possessed of rational minds, a positive attitude, and self-less team virtue" (Strauss & Howe, 1991, p. 342). James describes his parent's involvement in his life:

"My parents are very sound rational people and helped me develop into a pro and con person. They offer rationale that I hadn't thought of before and help me to look at the bigger picture and to keep my eye on the prize."

James infers a belief shared by the rest of the participants in that the nucleus of the family is the foundation upon which Millennials rely.

However, according to Twenge's (2006, 2014) studies and Borges, Manuel, Elam, and Jones's (2010) empirical work, Millennials are 75% more likely than older generations to assert that they have achieved superior individual accomplishment. Twenge's (2006, 2014) study traced these increased levels back to parents allowing their children to make their own choices at

young ages. Twenge (2006, 2014) proposes that these formative experiences have emphasized and activated a real sense of individuality and self-importance among the Millennial Generation. James's following description of his parents influence on his decision making may support this speculation: "my parents have never given me a path to follow, therefore when I succeed it will be because of the decisions I have made."

Responsibility and Decision Making

Wilson (2004) asserts that the Millennials' protected upbringing may have left them searching for ways to advocate for themselves, and, given how their existence has been externally structured for them, they may have difficulties dealing with responsibility and accountability. The findings and following statements from participants of this study contradict that statement: "I should be able to take the little bit of freedom I have and learn some responsibility"; "Parents gave me the freedom to try many new things. But with that there was also this kind of freedom to be anything...they wanted me to be well-rounded and responsible"; "I have learned how to take responsibility for my actions because you can't blame other people all the time, be assertive, say what you want and go for it."

Millennials are more open to having conversations with their parents regarding decision making as compared to older generations. Older generations were often not encouraged to speak when they were young unless they were spoken to first. Millennials are collaborating and resourcing with their parents before they render major decisions. Most Millennials in this study agree with the following statement: "I don't worry about making mistakes. I want to be engaged with my parents and have a conversation." James explains how "conversations with my parents have helped me reflect and make decisions. My choices are based on how their decisions affected them and if my situation would mold in the same way." Beth concurs, and adds that

“my parents gave me a platform that was, not so much telling me what to do, but giving me the advice of what I should do, and what I shouldn’t do, and discussing the pros and cons. They allowed me to make my own decisions and then learn from my own decisions.”

The findings of this study suggest that Millennials are guided by their family’s involvement and suggestions. Millennials tend to rely and accept family counsel to help them reason and come to conclusions. Their faith and trust in their family’s advice has developed into a transcendent belief that current family contributions have surpassed the ordinary guidance of past generations. It is unique, exceptional, and embraced.

Finding Three: Values

The Millennial Generation seems to be living their individual ideals. They have specifically aligned their lives with their values, which support them in living an authentic and happy existence. The lens of values was employed in order to encourage the participants to describe their principles or standards of behavior and their judgment of what is important in their lives. The participants articulated a feeling of a unique and authentic energy as they described their lived experiences when aligned with their highest values. They asserted that when their common experiences aligned with their values, an inner peace surfaced. They further expressed that this was a natural consequence of living their ideals of loyalty, responsibility, and respect.

This research used the lens of values to answer the following question:

- *What common formative experiences are predominant within the Millennial Generation?*

Tolerance and Diversity

According to DeBard (2004) and Hershatter and Epstein (2010) one of the most intriguing behaviors of the Millennial Generation as compared to older generations is how they

approach being accepted. Ng, Schweitzer, and Lyons (2010) offer the possible explanation that Millennials have had the distinct pleasure of witnessing great advances in social justice in their young lives. This study suggested that cultural tolerance and improved equality among nationalities and pertaining to sexual identity has deepened the Millennials' commitment to civic obligation and social responsibility. The Millennials have an imbedded desire for their generation to enforce compliance, indeed they have a "desire to save the world" (2010, p. 283). Ng et al.'s (2010) findings concur with this research. Beth described her view on being different due to her nationality in the following manner:

"It helped me embrace how different I am but to also accept others for who they are. I always want to live life by the golden rule, do unto others as you would want them to do unto you. I think it's only my generation who really lives this idea."

She was then asked to expand on that idea:

"As we go on, I feel like we are becoming more open-minded about accepting people for who they are. That's why I feel like Instagram, Facebook and Twitter are so popular among millennials because you want to be the first to share your opinion and passions for making the world a better place to live."

This ideal supports the Gestalt Theory. Lewin took the Theory of Perception from extrinsic values and applied the same theory to intrinsic ideals. Lewin viewed behavior as a function of a person and their "environmental interaction as it existed at any given moment... with the emphasis on the here and now" (Nevis, 2005, p. 12). Lewin also suggested that "what has an effect in any given moment is not a past event but rather the nature of present awareness of that event" (2005, p.12).

Making a Difference

Millennials are not quiet bystanders or observers. They want to be part of the action, because their participation lends weight to their views. Furthermore, because of this generation's

love of diversity they invite everyone to participate. Labels or stereotypes are unimportant to Millennials, as everybody is welcome on their harmonious team.

The Gestalt Theory explains how important the person is to the social environment and how important that environment is to a person's development. Humanity's capability for self-reflection enables us to reach outside of ourselves and to potentially be in touch with the world, and thereby establish a peaceful existence (Wollants, 2012). "One is able to look at himself and the world from a different point of view and to intervene in the course of development of his relationship to the world" (p.6). This theory aligns with the Millennials' common perspective of uniting their ideals with a happy and peaceful presence.

Howe and Strauss (2000) and Twenge (2006) reported that Millennials are in many aspects the most diverse generation of students in U.S. history, and they believe that everyone's voice should be heard and valued. The following statements made by all three interviewees confirm this suggestion and associate their acceptance of diversity with the Gestalt Theory: "My daily passion is helping to make people feel accepted and cared for. I always try to think in that way because it keeps you humble and it's just good for your soul"; "I feel like you can't be blind to color I'm going to recognize and embrace you for what and who you are"; "I think my best quality is being compassionate, I always try to see things from another person's perspective. Listen to your enemy they have a lot to say and you could learn something."

The 2006 Cone Millennial Case Study findings from an online survey concurred with McGlone et al., (2011) which indicated that Millennials felt personally responsible for making a difference in the world. This civic-minded generation not only believes that it is their responsibility to make the world a better place, but they also believe that companies have an obligation to join them in this effort. Millennials will trust a company more if it is socially or

environmentally responsible and are more likely to pay attention to a company's message when they see that the company has a deep commitment to a cause (2006).

James stated, “I want to live in a world where all living beings live in harmony and we aren’t disrespecting our worldly neighbors...things like that are easy to do like respect animals... That’s so simple.” He continued to describe his disappointment when others do not follow suit:

“Something that definitely has a very negative effect on my happiness is when individuals don’t possess basic charitable instincts...not going out of their way to be kind, passionate, or understanding is something that really makes me mad. I think it is important that could be you one day, wouldn’t you like the support? I’m confident that my choices will ultimately bring me to inner peace.”

Finding Four: Growth

The Millennial Generation’s personal growth and development are a direct result of their transformational journeys. The lens of growth was employed in order to examine their transition into the unique context of globalization. The following phenomena is an ever-present representation of the Millennials’ transition toward adulthood. They describe their world-wide interconnectedness as a period of growth and maturity. They believe that the education received along these journeys is invaluable because not all knowledge can be learned through books and must be experienced. These three participants have all connected globally, constructed networks, social relations, and identified their participation in the worldwide circulation of ideologies.

The lens of growth was used to answer the following question:

- *How does the Gestalt Theory, Law of Pragnanz, and Emergent Adulthood Theory aid in understanding the mindset of the emergent Millennial adult?*

Csikszentmihalyi, (1993) and Arnett (2015) contend that society should make it possible for each person to discover an inner peace by developing individualized skills over time, and this may give credence to the Millennial “discovery period” – which is also known as the Emerging

Adult Theory. In contrast to the entitled Millennial stereo-type, Twenge (2006, 2014) has depicted Csikszentmihalyi, (1993) and Arnett (2015) suggest that the ability to learn while participating in socially productive activities is inherent to finding one's purpose, and this leads to growth and maturity. The Gestalt Theory expands on this notion: "behavior is not blindly discharged into the world...a person is able to perceive, to explore, to recognize, to select, to imagine, and to plan" as they mature (Wollants, 2012, p. 7). The Law of Pragnanz takes this concept one step further and explains that as a person explores, grows, and plans, they tend to construct or reconstruct their learned situations or formative experiences in an organized and understandable manner.

Formative Experiences

The Gestalt Theory, which is phenomenological in nature, is an investigation which explores situations or phenomena in order to help those experiencing them to become aware of its elements and aspects. "One should return to what one can perceive and can describe each time that one is tempted to look at things from the perspective of what one already knows" (Wollants, 2012, p. 96). In contrast to Twenge's (2006, 2014) ideas that Millennials are lost and misguided individuals, this research has found that they are focusing on and learning from their formative experiences. As James confirms in the following quote, Millennials believe that one's finances should be directed toward engaging in experiences and not in the acquisition of materialistic goods:

"I hate when people put so much value into materialistic goods. Its people caring more about a shirt more than someone they know, that's horrible. College taught me what contributes to human greatness, it's not a salary and not in materialistic goods and things."

This research found that Millennials would rather travel and experience the world than sit in a classroom and learn from a book. Their common experiences were explained in the following ways. Sarah describes her thoughts on travel experiences:

“I have reached my goal of new destinations every year and surpassed it. I’ve done things people told me I won’t be able to do. I want to learn from experiences through my travels. You learn to adapt and plan appropriately. All my life experiences are based on adventures that I’ve gone on. My growth would kind of stop if I stopped traveling.”

She expanded on that idea and stated:

“I think traveling helps motivate you to see and think about the possibilities of being somewhere else than where you are. My mind kind of like goes based off of what I might see. And I’m like Oh, I wonder if I could do that.”

James also articulated similar thoughts on travel experiences:

“I feel like I have had a lifetime of experiences that have culminated into a person with a very unique sense of rationale and logic, it makes me who I am. And if I lost that, or any pieces of that in any way, I just would not be myself. I wouldn’t make the decisions that I do. I wouldn’t have the values that I do.”

Relationships

According to Twenge’s (2006, 2014) and Borges, Manuel, Elam, and Jones’s (2010) empirical work, philosophies of enhanced individual accomplishments and persuasive personalities have increased over the Boomer Generation. Twenge’s (2006, 2014) study traced these increased individual focuses back to parents allowing their children to make their own choices at young ages. Twenge (2006, 2014) proposes that these formative experiences have emphasized and activated a real sense of individuality and self-importance among the Millennials. Conversely, Arnett (2013) views this generation much differently. He asserts that Millennials have a confidence that the earlier generations wished they had.

Borges et al., (2010) concur and add their results, which showed that Millennials possess stronger peer bonding skills than older generations and learn by doing. However they are not interested in dominance or gaining power. Millennials enjoy relationship building and opportunities that contribute to and result in collaboration and teamwork. James and Beth coincide with Borges et al.'s, (2010) findings: "value and secure your personal relationships so that they grow and flourish throughout your life"; "it's important to learn who people are and connect with them on a personal level," because, as Sarah states, "once you have developed those relationships a level of respect happens and you will have a better future. You would want some type of respect associated with your name to open doors for you."

Adulthood

Arnett's (2007) study builds an awareness that the Millennial mindset falls somewhere in between adolescence and adulthood. His participants knew that they were starting to feel responsible for themselves, but still remained closely tied to their parents and family. They also reported searching for a personal identity, a concept which Arnett (2007) believed would have been settled during adolescence. Working from his study, Arnett (2007) proposed a new period of life-span development called Emerging Adulthood Theory. Sarah mirrored Arnett's findings: "I think I'm going towards adulthood. I just don't know if there's necessarily a bridge you cross. I haven't reached that point yet. I'm feel like I'm getting close to it." James similarly identified his development as an ongoing process:

"I've been moving towards it for a long time, but I feel like I had that realization not too long ago which allowed me to transition from being a pre-adult, or whatever you would call it. It was coming to a realization and more so employing a certain lifestyle that I feel like made me an adult."

As Sarah thought more about her response toward adulthood, she became concerned because “I am trying to do so many things. I am having trouble fitting them in. Maybe it’s taking me too long to find out who I am, and I feel like I’m behind.”

Wollant (2012) summarizes the connection between the Emerging Adult Theory, Gestalt Theory and Law of Pragnanz:

“People who are particularly open to inspiration, may break through to a life of rich adventure, entailing excitement, and *joie de vivre* and a penchant for actions of great import. These individuals no longer accept confinement within the pettiness of everyday life. And many other outcomes are possible.” (p.25)

Finding Five: Self-Values

The Millennials show concern not only for themselves but also embody a genuine desire to serve in the best interest of all humanity. The lens of self-value was employed in order to identify the Millennials’ needs, desires, and what they care about most in life. The participants described their identities, which revealed a deeper understanding of their world. As they defined their values, a strong and unique internal compass was unveiled. The idea emerged that they are unselfish, have a deep concern for the welfare of others, and possess an altruistic set of values. The Millennials contend that they are inspired by collaboration and believe that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. The concept of being greater than the sum of one’s parts is the basis of the Gestalt Theory.

Using the lens of self-values the following findings answers this study’s questions,

- *How does the Gestalt Theory and Law of Pragnanz aid in understanding the mindset of the emergent Millennial adult?*
- *What common formative experiences are predominant within the Millennial Generation?*

Inner Peace

The Gestalt Theory can be conceptualized as dichotomous paradigms. On one side, we see the unpredictable, the complex, and the chaotic, on the other side, we find simplified order. Individuals usually begin their journey on the complex side of the paradigm and seek to cross to the ordered side by looking for peace and harmony. Thus they are unknowingly pursuing the Law of Pragnanz. The function of this journey is to organize one's self-world interactions and to ensure that their dynamics are aligned with their environment. Two of the fundamental endeavors of the Gestalt Theory is to determine what is missing in one's environment, and where and how one can bring about what is missing (Wollants, 2013). Arnett's (2007) Emerging Adult Theory contends that the developmental years of 18 to 29 are when many young adults are answering these questions and discovering their potential. They are on a journey organizing their self-world interactions and are seeking an inner peace. James confirms this notion, "I would say my greatest serenity is....what makes sense to me...when I'm at an internal peace it is seeing others happy and the lack of hectic bustling in this chaotic world."

Millennials are volunteering in record numbers. Their altruistic nature is being inspired by their families and social media – which is, in turn, causing organizations and corporations to rethink their cultures (Mcglone, Spain, & Mcglone, 2011, Shaw, 2013). Because of their quick paced lifestyles, Millennials are also able to adapt and adjust on the fly. This is a skill that far exceeds that of any previous generation (Shaw, 2013). However, Twenge (2006, 2014) sees no evidence that today's young people feel much attachment to duty or to group cohesion. He (2006, 2014) argues that young people have been constantly taught to put their own needs first and to focus on feeling good about themselves. Howe and Strauss (2000) contend that Millennials are optimistic. However, Twenge (2006, 2014) observes that this optimism fades

once the Millennials transition into adulthood; she coined this evolution as “adult shock,” and deems that they are a narcissistic cohort (p. 7).

Altruistic

The current research found that during their transition into adulthood Millennials discover the intrinsic value of serving others, and how to implement their ideas so that they may change the world. These findings demonstrate that in contrast to Twenge’s (2006, 2014) interpretation, they are a generation that offers care and empathy for everyone. Millennials are much less likely to let traditional boundaries of race, gender, or economics keep them from serving or collaborating with others. They seem to be a true altruistic cohort. The following common experiences depict these findings. Beth describes her humanitarian nature: “I’m a super empathetic person. I try to do my best for anyone that I can because you never know what another person’s story is or what they are going through.” Sarah concurs: “what we do can affect others first, but don’t forget to be kind to others.” James concludes with saying that

“It’s one of my ultimate goals to help somebody else come to a decision or conclusion. It’s always about giving assistance. I’m confident that my choice to help others will ultimately bring me to inner peace. That true comprehensive happiness. I tend to put others before myself very frequently, doing things for the betterment of others makes me truly happy. I don’t like the idea of putting anyone down to put yourself ahead that’s just selfish and you’re not looking out for anyone else.”

However, this study also found a darker side to the Millennial Generation. They are altruistic to the point of losing themselves in their journeys. All three participants describe being consumed by their generous nature. James states that

“This was my first serious relationship. When you live your life in a small bubble, you never experience things like that. I got lost in her culture had to leave mine behind. So when that relationship ended it was so difficult to...to get back to what I had because I

had given up so much in terms of home life, home culture, own interests for the betterment of us as a whole.”

Sarah had a similar experience with a friend:

“I put all of myself into our friendship and he died. It’s been three years and I am still suffering. You have to be careful because you kind of lose a little bit of yourself when you’re trying to make other people happy.”

Millennials’ years of reflection and search for meaning as part of Arnett’s (2007)

Emerging Adult Theory has led to Twenge (2006, 2014) deeming them entitled. This study supports the idea that Millennials are taking the time to transition into adulthood and that they do not feel entitled. To the contrary, Millennials are learning through their experiences:

“The fact that I am always willing to learn and willing to stay committed to something and to try as much as I can says a lot. How bad do you want it? I feel like I have overcome a lot of things. So now when I deal with certain situations...I am like oh my God this is so horrible...actually, I’ve had it worse before...I need to relax....I need to take a step back and be like...Okay, I can breathe.”

Millennials’ impatience often undermines their willingness to prove themselves to older generations. Millennials patiently trust in their values over the long and difficult journey of their lives, and therefore do not demand immediate results – yet they recognize the consequences of this tendency. “I am trying to do so many things. How do I fit it all in? It took me too long to find out who I am, and I feel like I’m behind.”

Recommendations for Further Research

This study offers several important insights concerning the Millennial Generation’s transition into adulthood, however continued study is suggested to validate these findings. Recommendations for future study include longitudinal scale studies over decades focusing on generational changes in regards to behavior and attitudes as these cohorts transition into

adulthood. These additional studies should include large and diverse generational samples to accurately reflect the birth cohort for which they represent. Data will need to be collected intermittently over decades to identify fluctuations and whether they are a result of generational changes, life changes, or cultural shifts as the generation transitions into adulthood.

Another area for further research would be to determine if there is an accurate way to measure similarities and changes between the generations. Many studies, including the current one, suggest that there are generational changes. However, there needs to be a common and equivalent way to measure those changes. If fundamental differences between generations are due to a variance in cultures it would be prudent for researchers to construct a form of measuring those fluctuations. To assume that survey questionnaires construe the same meaning to all respondents as the study spans across the decades can result in insignificant or weak results.

It would be in all researchers' best interest to consider that stereotyping should be carefully supported by evidence before assumption of accuracy. Misinformed public opinion can result in an abundance of negativity, thereby causing tension between the generations. Over reliance on opinion rather than empirical evidence as a result of research inaccuracies can impair and exacerbate generational divides.

The Millennials have the opportunity to construct the future. As such, they have the motivation to compose and contribute something of true value to the world; they are, as Howe and Strauss (2000) advocate, Millennials Rising. That possibility is theirs to pursue and attain as they mature and transition into adulthood. This study suggests that their transformational journeys have resulted in common experiences. This implies that their perseverance and altruistic nature has resulted in an ethos of group loyalty and, consequently, the building of stronger communities. James stated it succinctly: "whatever you choose to do, do it 110%. You

can make a difference. I'm passionate about what I'm doing because I am impacting people on a daily basis. You have to have that passion."

Appendix A: Consent Form



Department of Education

How do the millennials describe their experiences which have guided their transition into adulthood?

CONSENT FORM FOR RESEARCH

Introduction:

I am Donna-Marie Cecere, a doctoral candidate at Southern New Hampshire University. I am doing research on the millennial generation. I am inviting you to be part of this research.

Before you decide, you can talk to anyone you feel comfortable with about the research.

This consent form may contain words that you do not understand. Please ask me to stop as we go through the information and I will take time to explain. If you have questions later, you can contact Donna-Marie Cecere at 617-529-0698 or donna-marie.cecere@snhu.edu.

Purpose of the Project:

The purpose of this study is to investigate the common lived experiences of the Millennial Generation as they transition into adulthood.

Type of Research Intervention:

This research will involve your participation in three interviews that will take about 60 minutes each.

Participant Selection:

You are being invited to take part in this research because I feel that your experiences as part of the Millennial Generation can contribute to my understanding and knowledge of your generation's common lived experiences as you transition into adulthood.

Voluntary Participation:

While I would greatly appreciate your assistance and participation in this study, your participation in this research is entirely voluntary.

Procedures:

I am asking you to help me learn more about the common lived experiences of the Millennial Generation by taking part in this research project. If you accept, you will be asked to participating in three interviews lasting approximately 60 minutes each. If you do not wish to answer any of the questions in the interview please indicate that you are uncomfortable and I will move on. The information recorded from you, the participant, will be shared but not in a way that will link to you personally. The interview will be recorded and transcribed. The results will be stored on a password-protected computer.

Duration:

The researcher will need approximately 60 minutes of time on a three occasions to ask you a series of questions concerning your thoughts on your experiences as a millennial.

Risks or Discomforts:

There is a risk that you may share some personal or confidential information by chance, or that you may feel uncomfortable talking about some of the topics. However, I do not wish for this to happen. You do not have to answer any question or take part in the interview if you feel the question(s) are too personal or if talking about them makes you uncomfortable.

Benefits of the study:

There will be no direct benefit to you. However, the researcher hope that this research will contribute to knowledge concerning the Millennial Generation's common lived experiences.

Compensation:

You will not be provided any incentive to take part in the research.

Confidentiality:

Your part in this research is confidential. None of the information will identify you by name. All information will be given a code number or pseudonym. Only the primary researcher will have the code that links names to the data. All data will be held in a secure place only accessible by the researcher.

Sharing the Results:

Nothing that you tell me today will be shared with anybody outside the research team, and nothing will be attributed to you by name. The knowledge from this research will be shared with you before it is made widely available to the public.

Right to Refuse or Withdraw:

Participation in this study is voluntary. You do not have to participate. If you decide to take part in the study, you may quit at any time with no penalty.

Who to contact:

If you have questions about the study, please contact Donna-Marie Cecere, the person mainly responsible for this study, at 617-529-0698 or donna-marie.cecere@snhu.edu.

This proposal has been reviewed and approved by the SNHU IRB, which is a committee whose task it is to make sure that research participants are protected from harm. If you wish to find out more about the IRB, contact Thomas Beraldi at t.beraldi@snhu.edu or (603) 645-9695.

I have read the foregoing information, or it has been read to me. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about it and any questions I have been asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I consent voluntarily to be a participant in this study.

Print Name of Participant _____

Signature of Participant _____

Date _____

Day/month/year

Appendix B: Data Map ESurvey Results

Data Map for: *How do the millennials describe their experiences which have guided their transition into adulthood?*

Subquestion	Survey question results	Implications for next steps
<i>What common formative experiences are predominant within the Millennial Generation?</i>	Seidman suggests an opening question to get to better know the interviewee	Use 3 words to describe yourself.
Decision-making: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Do you need the help of family members to make important decisions? 2) Name an important decision that you have recently made. 3) What were the two most important factors that helped you make that decision? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) 40% sometimes 30% yes, 30% no 2) Education 6, moving 3, finance 2, health 2, job 1 3) Better pay 7, Better job 5, better self 3, meet goals 1, be more independent 1 	<p>What is your thought process as you make big decisions?</p> <p>What do you think about before you make a big decision?</p> <p>Use 3 words to describe how you make decisions?</p> <p>What influences your decision making process?</p> <p>If a family member disagrees with a decision you make do you change it?</p>
Independent/resourceful: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Do you consider yourself to be independent? 2) Describe ways in which you are independent. 3) Do you consider yourself to be resourceful? 4) Describe ways in which you are resourceful. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) 70% yes, 30% sometimes, zero no 2) Financially independent 8, take care of self 5 3) 12 yes, 4 sometimes, 1 no 4) Find ways to accomplish goals (think outside the box) 7, help others 2, find ways to assist myself financially 2 	<p>In what ways do you think outside the box when you are deciding how to accomplish your goals?</p> <p>How have your college experiences taught you to be independent?</p>
Circle of Influence: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Is your family supportive of your career choices? 2) In order of importance, in your opinion, who are the five most important people in your life? 3) In order of importance, in your opinion, who are the three most important 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) 70% yes 30% sometimes 2) Mother, father, sister, brother, boyfriend/girlfriend, best friend 3) celebrities 8, Religious 3, political 3 	<p>In what ways have celebrities influenced your career choices?</p> <p>How does your family influence your decision making?</p> <p>Can you explain why celebrities are so important to millennials?</p>

public figures in your life?		
Current “self” 1) How happy or unhappy are you with your current life status? 2) Describe the three most important factors that have contributed to your current situation in life.	1) Very happy, 2 somewhat happy 11, neither happy or unhappy 2 2) Determination/pride 4, how raised 3, college 3, military 2	List some reasons why you proud of who you are today? What would you need to be content and happy?
Formative experiences: 1) List three current events that have had a significant impact on your life.	1) Personal issue 6, job/economy 4, political 4, terrorism 3	How have your personal issues impacted your life? How have your past personal experiences made you into who you are today? Any past personal experiences in particular stand out?
Values: 1) Name three social issues that are important to you. 2) Name three material items/possessions you cannot live without besides food and clothing. 3) Name three values that are extremely important to you and why.	1) Social justice 14, terrorism 3 2) Shelter 4, books/bible 3, pictures 2, phone 2, soap 2, family 1, meds 1 3) Togetherness 8, reputation 5, integrity/loyalty 6, honesty/trust 4, respect 2, knowledge 2	Why social justice important to you? What values would you like to pass along to the next generation? Why? When you get toward the end of your life and look back how would you like people to describe you?
Vision of success: 1) Name three people you believe to be successful. 2) What makes these people seem successful to you? 3) How do you describe success?	1) Celebrities 7, relative 7, company founder 7, friend 4, professor 4, political 3 2) Passion/beat the odds/accomplishments 17, best at what does 11, started own company 6, educated 2 3) Achieve goals 7, financial freedom 4, have passion what you do 3	How important is passion in relation to success? What are the elements of success which indicate being an adult? What are the obstacles you have encountered as you strive for success?
Future aspirations: 1) What are your aspirations or plans for the future?	1) Finish school 7, live comfortably 4, start own company 3, be famous 1	Once you finish school what do you think your future plans will include?

		If you were to draw a timeline of your life from beginning to end where do you see yourself right now? (beginning, middle?)
Response to media portrayal 1) Millennials: We suck and we're sorry response. 2) Millennials: The Lazy, Narcissistic Generation? Response.	1) Reinforces that the gen is lazy 3, millennials make too many excuses 2, disagree 2, millennials doing best they can 2, overblown 2 2) Not all millennials fall into this category 5, Stein is correct 3, generation gap problem 3, slightly true and not true 3	What has your generation experienced that is unique/different than others? How do you think the generation older than you sees you? How do you think the generation younger than you sees you?
<i>How does the Theory of Generations, Gestalt Theory, Law of Pragnanz and Emergent Adulthood Theory aid in understanding the mindset of the emergent millennial adult?</i>		
Do millennials share the same formative experiences?	35% cite personal issues as a common formative experience the other 65% cite the economy/politics/terrorism as influences	How have your past personal experiences made you into who you are today?
How does the perception of millennials explain group behaviors?	To be determined with in depth interview questions	Can you explain why celebrities are so important to millennials?
Do millennials describe "unfinished situations" which contribute to their behaviors?	To be determined with in depth interview questions	Any past personal experiences in particular stand out? Are they resolved? Do you need to resolve them to move on?
How do millennials view their adult roles?	To be determined with in depth interview questions	What advice do you have for the next generation as they prepare to think about their futures?

Appendix C: Value Coding

Belief/Influence <i>Action: Knowledge and experience</i>	Attitude/Growth <i>Reaction: How you engage the world</i>	Values <i>Significant meaning attributed to person, thing, or idea</i>	Self-Values <i>Importance attributed to self</i>
Balance work/leisure Celebrities Challenged Decision making Experience (positive/negative) Family traditions Future Hard times Location Politics Reflect/Relate Relationships Research Symbolize (Icons) Technology Terrorism	Annoying Confidence Educational Growth Engaged Enthusiasm/Passion Excel/Accomplish/Achieve Immature Independence Indulge/Addicted Lazy Logical lonely Materialistic Opinionated/Uninhibited Perseverance/Hard Work/Sacrifice Positive/Resolve Professional/Financial/Job Stability Sarcasm Security Sensitive Underachieve	Accepted Admiration Asset Civic duty Compassionate Cultural acceptance Environmental ethics Honesty Integrity Jealous Kindness Religion Responsibility Tolerance Trust	Creative Dream Health Inner peace Intuitive Personal Fulfillment Reputation Unique Self-esteem

Appendix D: Second Level Coding

Belief/Influence		Attitude/Growth	Values	Self-Values
<i>Action: Knowledge and experience</i>		<i>Reaction: How you engage the world</i>	<i>Significant meaning attributed to person, thing, or idea</i>	<i>Importance attributed to self</i>
Balance work/leisure Celebrities Challenged Decision making Experience (positive/negative) Family traditions Future Hard times Location Politics Reflect/Relate Relationships Research Symbolize (Icons) Technology Terrorism		Annoying Confidence Educational Growth Engaged Enthusiasm/Passion Excel/Accomplish/Achieve Immature Independence Indulge/Addicted Lazy Logical Lonely Materialistic Opinionated/Uninhibited Perseverance/Hard Work/Sacrifice Positive/Resolve Professional/Financial/Job Stability Sarcasm Security Sensitive Travel Underachieve	Accepted Admiration Asset Civic duty Compassionate Cultural acceptance Environmental ethics Honesty Integrity Jealous Kindness Religion Responsibility Tolerance Trust/Loyalty	Creative Dream Health Inner peace Intuitive Personal Fulfillment Reputation Unique Self-esteem
Belief	Influence	Attitude/Growth	Values	Self-Values
<i>Spiritual/Metaphysical self</i>		<i>Reaction: How you engage the world</i>	<i>Significant meaning attributed to self</i>	<i>Importance attributed to self</i>

	<i>Learned ideals which direct physical activities</i>		<i>attributed to person, thing, or idea</i>	
Belief: <i>Spiritual/Metaphysical Self</i>	Influence: <i>Learned ideals which direct physical activities</i>	Growth: <i>How you engage the world</i>	Values: <i>Significant meaning attributed to a person or idea</i>	Self-Values: <i>A personal value system</i>
Family Traditions Reflect/Relate Decision Making	Experiences Relationships Future Celebrities/Idols/symbols	Educational Growth Enthusiasm/Passion Logical Perseverance/Hard work Professional/Financial/Job Travel	Civic duty Compassionate Tolerance Trust/Loyalty Kindness Authentic Integrity Responsibility	Inner Peace Reputation Unique Personal fulfillment Altruistic Accepted
Major Finding: The transcendent belief that family is the nucleus of life and aids in how they reason and come to conclusions.	Major Finding: Their common experiences have established their sociocultural perspective. This perception has directed them in developing connections which have prompted their behaviors.	Major Finding: Their personal growth and development are a direct result of their transformational journeys.	Major Finding: They are “living” their individual ideals. They have specifically aligned their life with their values which supports them in living an authentic happy existence.	Major Finding: They manifest concern not only for themselves but have a genuine desire to serve in the best interest of all humanity.
Answers the question: <i>How does the Gestalt Theory aid in understanding the mindset of the emergent millennial adult? What common formative experiences are</i>	Answers the question: <i>How do the millennials describe their experiences which have guided their transition into adulthood?</i>	Answers the question: <i>How does the Gestalt Theory aid in understanding the mindset of the emergent millennial adult?</i>	Answers the question: <i>How does the Emergent Adulthood Theory aid in understanding the mindset of the emergent millennial adult?</i>	Answers the question: <i>How does the Gestalt Theory aid in understanding the mindset of the emergent millennial adult?</i>

<i>predominant within the Millennial Generation?</i>	<i>What common formative experiences are predominant within the Millennial Generation?</i>		<i>What common formative experiences are predominant within the Millennial Generation?</i>	<i>What common formative experiences are predominant within the Millennial Generation?</i>
Theory: <u>Gestalt Theory</u> is considered a perception model which supports the idea of awareness and is used to explain group behaviors	Theory: <u>Generational Theory</u> Individuals born within a certain time frame become part of a group and share the same formative experiences Theory: <u>The Pragnanz Theory</u> maintains that we have a human tendency to complete incomplete perceptions and focus on “unfinished situations” which contributes to our behaviors	Theory: <u>Gestalt Theory</u> is considered a perception model which supports the idea of awareness and is used to explain group behaviors	Theory: <u>Emergent Adulthood Theory</u> deems that it is no longer normative to prepare for adult roles during the late teens early twenties	Theory: <u>Gestalt Theory</u> is considered a perception model which supports the idea of awareness and is used to explain group behaviors

Appendix E: Chapter Four Chart

Belief: <i>Spiritual/Metaphysical Self</i>	Influence: <i>Learned ideals which direct physical activities</i>	Growth: <i>How you engage the world</i>	Values: <i>Significant meaning attributed to a person or idea</i>	Self-Values: <i>A personal value system</i>
Family Traditions Reflect/Relate Decision Making	Experiences Relationships Future Celebrities/Idols/symbols	Educational Growth Enthusiasm/Passion Logical Perseverance/Hard work Professional/Financial/Job Travel	Civic duty Compassionate Tolerance Trust/Loyalty Kindness Authentic Integrity Responsibility	Inner Peace Reputation Unique Personal fulfillment Altruistic Accepted
Major Finding: The transcendent belief that family is the nucleus of life and aids in how they reason and come to conclusions.	Major Finding: Their common experiences have established their sociocultural perspective. This perception has directed them in developing connections which have prompted their behaviors.	Major Finding: Their personal growth and development are a direct result of their transformational journeys.	Major Finding: They are “living” their individual ideals. They have specifically aligned their life with their values which supports them in living an authentic and happy existence.	Major Finding: They manifest concern not only for themselves but have a genuine desire to serve in the best interest of all humanity.
Answers the question: <i>What common formative experiences are predominant within the Millennial Generation?</i>	Answers the question: <i>How do the millennials describe their experiences which have guided their transition into adulthood?</i>	Answers the question: <i>How does the Gestalt Theory aid in understanding the mindset of the emergent millennial adult?</i>	Answers the question: <i>What common formative experiences are predominant within the Millennial Generation?</i>	Answers the question: <i>How does the Gestalt Theory aid in understanding the mindset of the emergent millennial adult?</i>
Theory: <u>Gestalt Theory</u>	Theory: <u>Generational Theory</u>	Theory: <u>Gestalt Theory</u>	Theory: <u>Emergent Adulthood Theory</u>	Theory: <u>Gestalt Theory</u>

is considered a perception model which supports the idea of awareness and is used to explain group behaviors	<p>Individuals born within a certain time frame become part of a group and share the same formative experiences</p> <p>Theory:</p> <p><u>The Pragnanz Theory</u> maintains that we have a human tendency to complete incomplete perceptions and focus on “unfinished situations” which contributes to our behaviors</p>	is considered a perception model which supports the idea of awareness and is used to explain group behaviors	deems that it is no longer normative to prepare for adult roles during the late teens early twenties	is considered a perception model which supports the idea of awareness and is used to explain group behaviors
<p>Interview one circle of influence</p> <p>¹“celebrities showed me what not to do”</p> <p>³“that you cannot seek true happiness through money”</p> <p>²Bloggers and You tubers/ Social Media celebrities feels like that could be me gaining all that admiration</p> <p>²“I never wanted to be in the spotlight”</p> <p>³“My celebrity view are skewed”</p> <p>⁴“I think people among us are celebrities rather than people on TV”</p>	<p>Interview One circle of influence</p> <p>2) ¹They (celebrities) represent what we wish to be”</p> <p>²“Its represents the money, extravagant lifestyles, and widespread notoriety that is kind of like a mystic version of what people my age want to be”</p> <p>³“I do think that it represents a fantasy version of our realistic aspirations”</p> <p>²I do admire their work ethic if anything</p> <p>¹they want to connect to someone that personifies them</p>	<p>Interview One circle of influence</p> <p>³The majority of them have worked hard to get where they are</p> <p>⁴A lot of people could not do what is on their daily itinerary</p> <p>⁸that kind of like dedication and creativity to push yourself I admire those particular qualities</p> <p>²“We see the lavish lifestyle”</p> <p>³“You can have all of the celebrity lifestyle without having to give your life and privacy”</p>	<p>Interview One circle of influence</p> <p>²“showed me that money can’t buy happiness”</p> <p>⁴“If you spend money because you have a really large amount of money, then that’s not that bad”</p> <p>⁵“It’s putting value into materialistic goods”</p> <p>⁶“Its people caring more about a shirt more than someone they know”</p> <p>⁷she constantly re-watches her work every performance and she always feels like it's not good enough</p>	<p>Interview One circle of influence</p> <p>⁹celebrities that like will never stop even when they are at the top.</p> <p>³It gives them motivation to be liked or driven to be accepted</p> <p>⁴That’s a human quality to want to be accepted.</p>

4 th "I don't want to be a celebrity"				
Interview One Current Self	Interview One Current Self 2 nd "I was 1 of 3 Asian kids from grades k-8 th it kind of molded me"	Interview One Current Self 1 st "I am rational person" 3 rd "don't really get distracted by nonsense stuff" 1 st "I graduated" 1 st "I've done things people told me I won't be able to do" 4 th "I have reached my goal and destination ever year and surpassed it"	Interview One Current Self 2 nd "stay grounded keep my eyes on the prize" 4 th "enjoy things that we have to our disposal, technology" 4 th "I was bullied but I would not retaliate" 5 th "I was always very compassionate and would understand other people and their circumstances" 6 th "I'm a super empathetic person" 8 th "I try to do my best for anyone that I can"	Interview One Current Self 3 rd "helped me embrace how different I am but also accept others for who they are" 7 th "I always want to live life by the golden rule" 2 nd "I think it's only my generation."
Interview One Decision Making	Interview One Decision Making	Interview One Decision Making	Interview One Decision Making	Interview One Decision Making
2 nd "close relationship with my parents" 2 nd "I know that all they have ever wanted was to offer insight" 7 th "I ultimately decided what they suggested" 1) 1 st "involves how it impact myself but my family first" 2 nd "my culture we are very family orientated" 3 rd "how is it going to benefit or hurt me"	4 th "big decisions I seek their (parents) advice so as to not go in blindly without an idea of what I am facing" 2) 1 st "lot of the issues I come across are things that they (parents) in some manner have crossed in their earlier life" 2 nd "I would rather enjoy my happy moments now then to dwell on the bad ones"	1) 1 st "I'm big pro and con person" 3 rd "they (parent) are very sound rational people" 5 th "They offer rationale that I hadn't thought of before or considered" 7 th "I want to learn from experiences through my travels"	5 th "somebody else to kind of validate" 4 th "I trust their judgment" 6 th "I really took that to heart"	3 rd "I'm not perfect. I'm not going to make every decision perfectly" 5 th "They see the person that I am different for them"

<p>2) ¹"I might change based on who it is my father, my mother, or my older sisters"</p> <p>²"they have a huge impact"</p> <p>"Is this something worth doing"</p> <p>²"I would hear them out"</p> <p>³"might adjust my outlook"</p> <p>⁶"They think I should be married with kids and a nurse"</p>	<p>³"doesn't work out I'll think of how to handle it in the future"</p>			
Interview One Formative Exp	Interview One Formative Exp	Interview One Formative Exp	Interview One Formative Exp	Interview One Formative Exp
<p>³"I was always told what to do"</p> <p>"but it also had to be something that my parents approved of"</p> <p>⁹"I had to compromise so that they wouldn't send me to school to become a doctor which I definitely didn't want to do"</p> <p>¹⁰"I was so excited when they realized this is what I wanted"</p> <p>"But my parents were not ready to let me go"</p> <p>³"They made me stay in Florida at a college 2 hours away from them"</p> <p>⁷"Looking back now I am glad I didn't go straight to</p>	<p>³"Nobody likes to fail at anything and I don't as well. It affects my emotions negatively"</p> <p>¹"I would say I tend to be pretty good at learning from failure"</p> <p>²"I am very diligent about the fact that I can take something from it"</p> <p>²"I always have very good awareness that the past is the past"</p> <p>¹"I'm a strong believer that everything you go to happens for a reason"</p>	<p>²"I went to all the struggles with school and my family has only made me stronger"</p> <p>³"learned traveling you are not the only person in the world"</p> <p>⁴"You learn to adapt and plan appropriately"</p> <p>³"Don't be embarrassed of your mistakes and figure it out for the future and learn how to be better prepared"</p>	<p>¹"learn to trust people"</p> <p>²"learn to trust myself more to take on larger problems"</p> <p>²"I was alone</p> <p>I had to suck it up"</p>	<p>⁴"I always try to bring something positive out of the situation"</p> <p>I just know that either you don't pull positive from something which is a failure or you try to pull something positive from everything to succeed"</p> <p>⁴"I learned how to voice my own opinion"</p> <p>⁵"I was different but By middle school my friends would like to come over and eat Korean barbecue"</p> <p>⁵"My generation is all about the texting and email"</p>

New York – I’m unsure what would have happened”				
Interview One Independence 5” Having conviction in new decisions” 3” reflect and decide based on how their decisions affected them and if my situation would mold in the same way” ”I had to figure out what was most important to me”	Interview One Independence 2) 1” College taught me what contributes to human greatness It’s not a salary and Not in materialistic goods and things”	Interview One Independence 1” I tend to immediately see black and white” 1” School is a great example” 2” due to all my traveling I looked into hybrid classes” ” Teachers are here to teach me”	Interview One Independence 2) 1” Taking classes and working at the same time there’s no one else you can blame anymore for anything that goes on except for yourself” 3” taking on line classes was fairly uncommon and was looked as an easier route” 4” you have to be much more disciplined to be an online student” 2” I don’t feel it’s their responsibility (teachers) to advise when work needs to be completed” 3” I should be able to take the little bit of freedom I have and learn some responsibility”	Interview One Independence
Interview One Media Portrayal 4” We don’t have a path to follow” 5” When I succeed it will be because of the decisions made”	Interview One Media Portrayal 7” So in a way it’s almost like as the next generation we’ve taken what the older generation has done and building upon it”	Interview One Media Portrayal 4” it’s allowed us to be what some say is the smartest generation” 4” But at our age they kept going” 1” It’s not being famous, it’s about the money”	Interview One Media Portrayal 3” We make excuses for everything” 3” The youth is looking for someone else’s wealth to cling onto”	Interview One Media Portrayal 1” they see us in a peculiar way” 2” impacted our mannerisms, our attention spans, and the way we communicate one on one” 3” parents see us as unique and not afraid to show it”

				4" We are not afraid to be different"
<p>Interview One Success</p> <p>1" my father would always say: don't take your eye off the prize"</p> <p>4" I didn't want to feel stupid in front of my peers"</p> <p>5" I don't worry about that anymore"</p> <p>6" I want to be engaged and have a conversation"</p>	<p>Interview One Success</p> <p>2" It's a beautiful thing when your studies are able to be used in real world experiences"</p>	<p>Interview One Success</p> <p>2" then whatever you choose to do, you do it 110%"</p> <p>2" success is why I like going to work every day"</p> <p>3" I'm passionate in what I'm doing I am impacting everyone"</p> <p>1" I can make a difference"</p> <p>3" You have to have that passion"</p> <p>6" There are a lot of entrepreneurs in my generation"</p>	<p>Interview One Success</p> <p>5" Even though we seem like we are partying we are also getting our goals accomplished"</p>	<p>Interview One Success</p> <p>1" true success when you get one life to live and you do it to the best of your ability"</p> <p>"You want to be happy healthy and provide for yourself"</p> <p>3" I have personally grown from not wanting to speak out just in case I was incorrect"</p> <p>4" Success is being happy in my job, being able to do what I want to do within an umbrella"</p> <p>5" being able to be me and not lose me"</p> <p>1" I was the only girl in ROTC in high school"</p> <p>2" I was in the top four with three other guys so I was the only girl"</p>
<p>Interview One Values</p> <p>2" my culture Spanish we offer a blessing When addressing an adult with respect"</p>	<p>Interview One Values</p> <p>1) 1" value your personal relationships"</p> <p>2" secure close personal relationships so that they grow and flourish throughout your life"</p>	<p>Interview One Values</p>	<p>Interview One Values</p> <p>Uniqueness"</p> <p>2" Honesty"</p> <p>3" Traditional values are traditions for a reason"</p>	<p>Interview One Values</p> <p>2) 1" somebody who was always was happy"</p> <p>2" but more so wanted others to be happy"</p> <p>3" I have good sense of when somebody's down"</p>

	<p>³ "It is something that you can only find deep within yourself"</p> <p>⁴ "Which I was slow to realize"</p> <p>⁵ "You have to think about it and reflect on it. It takes time"</p>		<p>⁴ "they have stayed strong and made impacts on everyone"</p> <p>⁵ "Kindness"</p> <p>⁶ "understanding"</p> <p>⁷ "you never know what another person's story is or what they are going through"</p> <p>⁸ "What we do can affect others"</p> <p>⁹ "you first, but don't forget to be kind to others"</p>	<p>⁴ "I have an okay sense of what to say to them to bring them up"</p> <p>¹ "happy girl"</p> <p>² "embraced everyone"</p> <p>³ "she wanted to do good and lived a good life"</p> <p>⁴ "Once you have respect you will have a good life"</p> <p>⁵ "Do unto others as you would like done unto you"</p> <p>2)</p> <p>¹ "You would want some type of respect associated with your name to open doors for you"</p>
Interview Two Influence	<p>1) ¹ "just being with family. Like family dinners, like all that, like I'm keeping that. That's never disappearing"</p>	<p>Interview Two Influence</p> <p>1) ¹ "I personally like new experiences"</p> <p>² "I think it keeps things fresh and it keeps experiences less than dull"</p> <p>2) ¹ "or just making sure family stays together"</p>	Interview Two Influence	<p>Interview Two Influence</p> <p>1) ¹ "there is always like an itch occasionally that makes me want to like kind of break out from the family"</p> <p>2) ¹ "I think it makes you who you are like the foundation of like your morals"</p> <p>² "I think that's why it's important to me. It's something to be proud of"</p> <p>2) ¹ "I embrace the culture because it is so different from the US"</p>
Interview Two Current Self	Interview Two Current Self	Interview Two Current Self	Interview Two Current Self	Interview Two Current Self
			¹ "I'm very loyal"	

<p>²"I'm confident in my circle of family and friends no matter what I need I can always count on them"</p> <p>¹"I can be put anywhere and can adapt"</p> <p>¹"My parents They succeeded on their own"</p> <p>¹"Family is the only thing That's like my rock"</p> <p>²"Family is huge. I can have nothing. I can be poor and have family and I'll be the happiest woman"</p> <p>³"family they kept me humble"</p> <p>⁴"I am dedicated to making sure my dad lives as comfortable as he can for as long as he can with his disease"</p>	<p>¹"trying to do so many things to fit in that it took me too long to find out who I am, and I feel like I'm behind"</p>	<p>¹"overtime I just became more comfortable with myself and pushed myself to step outside of that comfort zone"</p> <p>²"I'm a perfectionist"</p> <p>¹"I am passionate about art"</p> <p>¹"Adventurous I feel like, I want to try everything in the world"</p> <p>¹"Traveling! It's a beautiful thing Being able to see the world for yourself and not looking at a book"</p>	<p>⁴"Loyal"</p> <p>⁵"I'm always there for anyone"</p> <p>¹"Growing up I did it all"</p> <p>²"Loyal and dedicated"</p>	<p>¹"Something that is always motivated me throughout my life is happiness what's going to put me in the happiest mindset and that means like a true happiness"</p> <p>²"That's not just like having a good time it's more in tune with my inner peace"</p> <p>¹"I used to be reserved"</p> <p>²"I've come to really value my gut instinct"</p> <p>³"it's also an ultimate goal to help somebody else come to a conclusion"</p> <p>⁴"It always comes back to giving assistance"</p> <p>¹"I'm confident that certain choices will ultimately bring me to inner peace"</p> <p>²"that true comprehensive happiness"</p> <p>"I tend to put others before myself very frequently"</p> <p>³"I am happy that word just describes who I am so well"</p> <p>¹"doing things for the betterment of others makes me truly happy"</p> <p>8)</p> <p>¹"my music It's a means of expression"</p> <p>²"it's unique"</p>
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				<p>¹"I think just overall happiness is what the goal is"</p> <p>²"Cause its simple life is about happiness"</p> <p>2)</p> <p>¹"You need to be accepted to a certain extent to succeed"</p> <p>¹"I always try to present myself the best way when it comes to work"</p> <p>¹"cheerful is one of them. I always try to be in a good mood and spread that"</p> <p>²"I just wanted to make sure everyone liked me"</p> <p>³"Now as long as I'm happy with where I am then I'm okay"</p> <p>²"I remember that day I first spoke up to defend a friend I felt so respected"</p> <p>¹"I try everything so I feel like I'm unique in that sense"</p> <p>²"there are not that many that are like me"</p>
<p>Interview Two Decision Making</p> <p>¹"I value their judgment"</p> <p>¹"family will always look out for my best interest"</p> <p>¹"Their decisions are valuable...they know what's right for me"</p>	<p>Interview Two Decision Making</p> <p>²"They know me the best of out any external person"</p>	<p>Interview Two Decision Making</p> <p>¹"I'll never get angry they just don't know the situation fully like I do"</p>	<p>Interview Two Decision Making</p>	<p>Interview Two Decision Making</p> <p>¹"They know that out of everyone I'm the most outgoing and adventurous"</p> <p>²"recently told me we can tell you are in a good place...rewarding to hear that"</p>

<p>2) ¹“I can’t even think of a situation where I’ve gotten like angry”</p>				
<p>Interview Two Formative Exp ¹ “I felt like that was a turning point in my life where I had a newfound respect for my whole family, for my parents...for everybody around me” ² “I found this string when I found out my very good friend passed away” ⁴ “This string is all I have left”</p>	<p>Interview Two Formative Exp ⁵ “it’s important learning who people are and connecting with them on a personal level” ² “this was my first serious relationship” ³ “When you live your life in a small bubble, you never experience things like that” ⁴ “I had to leave my culture behind and adopt her culture” ⁷ “So when that relationship ended it was so difficult to...to get back to what I had” ³ “My family has gotten so much better” ⁴ “My siblings talk more” “nobody feels that sense of...we can’t say certain things because she doesn’t know</p>	<p>Interview Two Formative Exp ¹ “the most positive experience I had in my life was when I lived in Italy for 3 months” ² “was my first time traveling out of the country I was on my own” ³ “I felt like I grew up so much spent most of my life, like in a bubble” ⁴ “opened my eyes to the fact that there is so much in this world so much beyond yourself that exists” ³ “I was able to prove to myself that I could do it” ⁴ “And I did it... just a huge milestone”</p>	<p>Interview Two Formative Exp ¹ “I am just emotionally attached to this string”</p>	<p>Interview Two Formative Exp ¹ “I tend to put others before myself” ⁵ “I was getting lost in her life and her culture” ⁶ “I had given up so much in terms of home life, home culture, own interests for the betterment of us as a whole” ¹ “this will always remind me of just overall, I really enjoyed my time at college” ¹ “this was a long term emotionally abusive relationship where it kind of like torn down who I was and my self-esteem” ² “he finally realized how much I had put myself into all of it” ³ “I did do my best to try enrich this person’s life” ⁴ “I held onto this note to remind myself that you are worthy, you do have value” ² “they never ruined my childhood for their own selfish reasons”</p>

				⁵ "I always say it was like my second birthday" ³ "I put all of myself into our friendship and he died"
Interview Two Future ¹ "where my decisions that I make now will ultimately lead me" 2) ¹ "I'm a firm believer in where you come from is how you got to where you are now"	Interview Two Future	Interview Two Future ¹ "I do. I think it helps motivate you to see and think about the possibilities of being somewhere else than where you are" ¹ "Yes My mind kind of like goes based off of what I might see. And I'm like Oh, I wonder if I could do that" ¹ "I feel like I have overcome a lot of things. So now when I deal with certain situations...I like oh my God this is so horrible...Actually, I've had it worse before...I need to relax....I need to take a step back And be like...Okay, I can breathe"	Interview Two Future	Interview Two Future 2) ¹ "I do reflect on the past I'm very good at taking a negative experience and spinning something positive from it" ² "motivates me to a certain extent to just keep my eye on the prize" ² "a lot of people say don't dwell on the past...But I feel like...Dwelling on the past is what's made me, me"
Interview Two Values ¹ "that's why I always try to get involved in so many things. In case one thing fails, I can say, this failed, but I still have 47 more things I can be successful at"	Interview Two Values	Interview Two Values ¹ "Perseverance to me is when you choose to do something, you do it to the best of your ability and you do it to the truest of your ability because if you want the ultimate goal" 1)	Interview Two Values ¹ "Yeah, I do theoretically" ² "I don't always act out on it I take an approach of like I'm just one person I know I can't physically do that" ³ "so that tends to kind of keep me away from getting involved physically"	Interview Two Values ³ "I always try to think about what I have it keeps you humble" ⁴ "It's just good for your soul"

		¹ "I think perseverance is just continuing to go no matter how hard it gets" ² "Being driven and committed to whatever goal you have no matter what happens because something will always get in the way" ³ "How bad do you want it"	¹ "I think it is important That could be you one day" ² "Wouldn't you like the support?" ¹ "Caring about the environment...This may sound horrible but, we got stuck with what we have now and we are working on it and we are figuring it out"	
Interview Three Influence ¹ "I was raised very traditionally" ² "everything was always revolved around our studies"	Interview Three Influence ¹ "We lived at school I never left the gated street we lived on" ² "We were all in the same kind of little umbrella" ³ "That's all we knew Our worlds were all the same. Our parents all did the same thing"	Interview Three Influence ¹ "They gave me a platform that was...It's not so much telling me what to do, but giving me the advice of what I should do, and what I shouldn't do, and letting me make my own decisions and learn from my own decisions" ⁴ "But anything we put any interest in, they would try to grant that for us. But in doing so, we had to repay them by being the best at it" ⁴ "I got to explore once I came to the States"	Interview Three Influence	Interview Three Influence ³ "But with that there was also the kind of freedom to be like...they wanted us to be well rounded"
Interview Three Decision Making ¹ "I definitely look at the source and I think with that	Interview Three Decision Making	Interview Three Decision Making ¹ "I always resort to rational logic when it comes to dilemmas or things that	Interview Three Decision Making	Interview Three Decision Making

<p>what studies have been done to make that factual"</p> <p>¹ "Research that has already been done. I feel if someone took the time to study something, look at it...look into it"</p>		<p>really don't have a complete right or wrong answer"</p> <p>² "And then also combine that with my own rational opinion and morals."</p>		
<p>Interview Three Formative Exp</p> <p>¹ "I've been moving towards it for a long time, but I feel like I had that realization not too long ago which allowed me to transition from being a pre-adult, or whatever you would call it"</p> <p>² "it was having that realization and more so employing that lifestyle afterwards that I feel like made me an adult"</p> <p>2)</p> <p>¹ "I think when you make your own choices and you have to live with the consequences and there is no one else that can kind of save you or guard you from what you've done"</p> <p>² "You cannot have everything under control"</p> <p>³ "being adopted solidified that my family loves me,</p>	<p>Interview Three Formative Exp</p> <p>¹ "I've taken something positive from them...Its easy to take something positive from a positive experience. But it's not so easy to take something positive from a negative experience. And even furthermore, it's not easy to take something and continue to employ it, regardless of how far you are removed from that experience"</p> <p>⁵ "You get to that point, where you hit rock bottom and your like...I'll never make it out of here...but you pull yourself together and pick yourself back up and pick back up....and then your like...I made it through that....I'm strong...I look back now and I think...I did it...How did I do this?"</p>	<p>Interview Three Formative Exp</p> <p>2)</p> <p>¹ "being an adult is being independent to approach things or all matters of your life on your own"</p> <p>² "Throughout school, I was able to learn how to apply my opinion and my thoughts and would be almost unafraid to do so"</p>	<p>Interview Three Formative Exp</p>	<p>Interview Three Formative Exp</p> <p>¹ "helped me really understand and show outwardly who I am inside"</p> <p>³ "The relationship I went through taught me self-respect and self-value"</p> <p>¹ "I think I'm there"</p> <p>² "I think I'm able to admit fault when I'm wrong"</p> <p>³ "I'm able to make my own decisions comfortably"</p> <p>1)</p> <p>¹ "I learned to kind of let go of things"</p>

<p>more than they love themselves”</p> <p>⁴ “They were willing to do something so selfless”</p> <p>2)</p> <p>¹ “I don’t know”</p> <p>² “I haven’t reached that point yet. I’m feel like I’m getting close to it”</p> <p>³ “I’m going toward adulthood. I just don’t know if there’s necessarily a bridge you cross”</p>				
Interview Three Future	Interview Three Future	<p>Interview Three Future</p> <p>1)</p> <p>¹ “to be unafraid to go for what they want” ² “That’s a big thing. I was always unafraid to ask for what I always wanted”</p>	<p>Interview Three Future</p> <p>³ “To be assertive. To say what you want and go for it”</p> <p>⁴ “To learn how to take responsibility for your actions because you can’t blame other people all the time”</p> <p>¹ time management And now as I’m older, my agenda is meticulously timed</p>	<p>Interview Three Future</p> <p>1)</p> <p>¹ “Do onto others what you believe would help them reach their supreme happiness”</p> <p>² “do onto others what you would want done to you”</p> <p>³ “Temporarily put your happiness aside”</p> <p>⁴ “You spend most of your life with your own happiness in the forefront”</p> <p>⁵ “Occasionally, you can move it to the backburner and have a positive effect on others”</p> <p>2)</p> <p>¹ “Gandhi and his message Do good and do good for yourself”</p>

				<p>2)</p> <p>¹"Well as we go on, I feel like we are becoming more open-minded about accepting people for who they are"</p> <p>²"That's why I feel like Instagram and Facebook and Twitter are so popular because you want to be the first to share your opinion and say, I knew about this, or did you hear about this....Its all about what knowing what's new and what's going on"</p> <p>³"So I think Millennials are definitely moving toward that...and that's why we are glued to our phones because were so bored with what happened yesterday"</p> <p>⁴"We want to know what's next, what's next, what's next"</p>
Interview Three Passion	Interview Three Passion	<p>Interview Three Passion</p> <p>² "Educate people as you move along. Let your purpose teach them"</p>	<p>Interview Three Passion</p> <p>¹ "the illegal trade of extinct animals"</p> <p>² "I want to live in a world where all living beings live in harmony and we aren't disrespecting our worldly neighbors"</p> <p>⁴ "things that are"</p>	<p>Interview Three Passion</p> <p>1) ¹ "My passion is ultimately to help others solve the immigration issues"</p> <p>² "and then my passion of making people feel accepted and caring about them"</p>

			<p>easy to do like respect animals... That's so simple"</p> <p>³ "we also have a responsibility to be good and to perform good actions, good charitable actions"</p>	<p>1)</p> <p>¹ "I feel like you can't be blind to color I'm going to recognize you for what you are"</p>
<p>Interview Three Values</p> <p>2)</p> <p>¹ "I'm a rule follower... I think for the most part, my entire life, I've followed everything that my parents wanted me to do"</p> <p>3)</p> <p>¹ "if it was something that I was interested in, like with school, or something that I wanted to learn, they they were all about being able to provide access to that for me and expected me to excel at it"</p>	<p>Interview Three Values</p> <p>2)</p> <p>¹ "I feel like I do almost everything that I want to do, I experience anything that I'm interested in doing"</p>	<p>Interview Three Values</p> <p>⁵ "I think it's just educating people at a young age of values and constantly reinforcing those at a young age"</p> <p>2)</p> <p>¹ "I really like my rational logic approach to things and that is a rule that I would never choose to break"</p> <p>3)</p> <p>¹ "It's more so, I want to follow that rule. I want to keep that 100% success rate, of being logical that sort of thing"</p> <p>² "Because I feel like that is something that makes me more of me"</p>	<p>Interview Three Values</p> <p>1)</p> <p>¹ "something simple like not holding the door for somebody just so they don't have to expel that one second more of energy to help somebody"</p> <p>² "to have a small but beneficial effect on somebody and not do it is a perfect example of irresponsibility"</p> <p>1)</p> <p>¹ "It bothers me when people are inconsiderate I think that's one of my biggest pet peeves"</p> <p>1)</p> <p>¹ "I'll help you with this and they don't follow through They're taking the time out and asking you because they think you're a reliable person. I feel like you owe them that same kind of</p>	<p>Interview Three Values</p> <p>³ "we should as humans be responsible to uphold very easy charitable actions that in no way expels us" ⁴ "we should automatically perform them...It's no big deal"</p> <p>² "When you're just selfish and you're not looking out for anyone else I don't like the idea of putting anyone down to put yourself ahead"</p>

			respect. I lose respect for people that way"	
<p>Interview Three Self</p> <p>3)</p> <p>¹ "When I am with my closest family members, just having a conversation or just joking around, or even like my closest friends I truly feel at peace and its like 110% happy without like a care in the world"</p> <p>6)</p> <p>¹ "Family comes first within that circle. I feel that makes me who I am and how I came to be. Beyond that it would be my like morals and beliefs and Compassion. The third layer would just be what I'm going to contribute to the world"</p> <p>6)</p> <p>¹ "Family is like the center of it all. School would be surrounding family. Work because if I have a job, I will be able to pay my bills...So finances would be outside of that. So family, school, work, finances and then social life. All my values are wrapped in family"</p>	<p>Interview Three Self</p> <p>6)</p> <p>¹ "I would label my bullseye based on my relationships. So the internal one being my inner self...because I trust my inner self over anybody else. And the next one would be my close family. And then outside after that, my close friends. So the value of just approaching those personal relationships so that I am having a positive influence on their life"</p> <p>² "Because all my life experiences are based on adventures that I've gone on. My growth would kind of stop"</p>	<p>Interview Three Self</p> <p>1)</p> <p>¹ "So I would definitely say the patience and the level headedness that could have a positive effect on people who maybe lack that certain ability, or have that ability but just don't necessarily resort to it immediately"</p> <p>5)</p> <p>¹ "rationale I feel like I have had a lifetime of experiences that have culminated to have a very unique mechanisms of rational and of logic and it makes me who I am" ² "And if I lost that, or any pieces of that in any way, I just would not be myself. I wouldn't make the decisions that I do. I wouldn't have the values that I do"</p> <p>2)</p> <p>¹ "my professional growth. Like I always want to do something unique and then it is hard to start"</p> <p>1)</p> <p>¹ "the fact that I am always willing to learn and willing to</p>	<p>Interview Three Self</p> <p>2)</p> <p>¹ "something that definitely has a very negative effect on my happiness is when other individuals don't possess basic charitable instinct...not going out of their way to be charitable, or to be kind, passionate"</p> <p>1)</p> <p>¹ "I think my biggest quality is compassion and I think also I always try to see things from a different person's perspective. listen to your enemy"</p> <p>4)</p> <p>¹ "I want to leave an impression to be loved is a good one cause they love you for reasons, because you've done something for them or by contributing in some way to help another"</p> <p>4)</p> <p>¹ "I don't want people to be disappointed in me. So I want people to kind of feel that way towards me. Not be scared of me, but feared as</p>	<p>Interview Three Self</p> <p>3)</p> <p>¹ "I would say my greatest serenity is....what makes sense to me, when I'm at an internal peace it is seeing others happy and the lack of hectic bustling in this chaotic world"</p> <p>4)</p> <p>¹ "Something that I hold very true to myself...the ability to have a positive effect on others"</p> <p>5)</p> <p>¹ "my sense of humor Its just a little easier if you can just put a smile on someone's face and get through it that way"</p> <p>3)</p> <p>¹ "When my parents are happy. When they are happy and relaxed, I can lay back and relax"</p> <p>² "but you have to be careful because you kind of lose a little bit of yourself when you're trying to make other people happy"</p>

		<p>stay committed to something and to try as much as I can”</p> <p>2)</p> <p>¹“Money. It’s horrendous to say that...but money”</p> <p>5)</p> <p>¹“My sense of adventure. If I lost that, I feel like you would lose me completely”</p>	<p>in, I have to do right, I don’t want to disappoint her”</p>	

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