



Meaning Making, Uncertainty Reduction, and Autobiographical Memory: A Replication and Reinterpretation of the TALE Questionnaire

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ABSTRACT

The present research was guided by two primary goals: 1) replicate the empirical structure of the Thinking about Life Experiences (TALE) questionnaire (Bluck, Alea, Habermas, & Rubin, 2005); and 2) explore how the functions of autobiographical memory may interact and support one another. Toward the second goal, it is suggested that the potential functions of autobiographical memory may be understood from an existential framework that is grounded by two principles: humans are driven by a need for meaning and meaning is found in relation to others and other things in the world. In this pursuit of meaning making, and a desire to know what to expect from the world, humans seek to create a coherent set of relations among the various existential elements in their lives (Heine, Proulx, & Vohs, 2006); accordingly, humans strive to reduce uncertainty about the world and their place in it. As such, the TALE was reinterpreted using a relational framework and a 28-item self-report measure was developed. Participants completed the TALE and the reinterpreted TALE (RTALE). The results provide some support for the 3-factor structure of the TALE. The proposed 4-factor structure of the RTALE was supported.

KEYWORDS

Autobiographical Memory; Meaning Making; Uncertainty Reduction

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