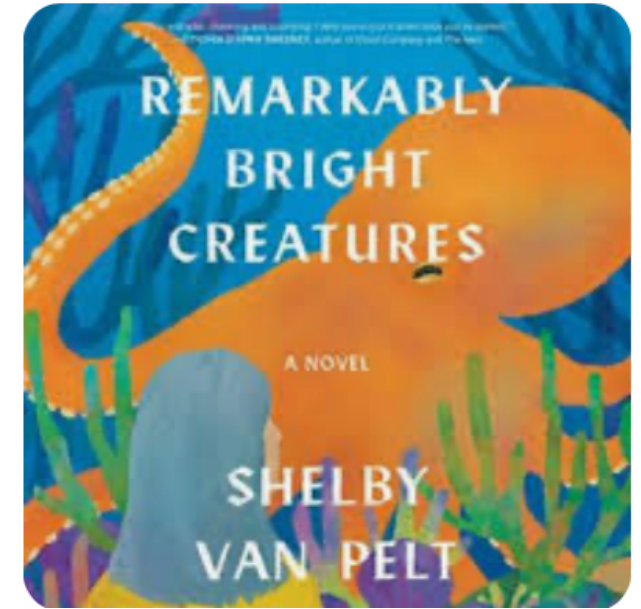


# The Process of Life Review As We Age

## How Reminiscence Can be Used to Re-Tell Our Story

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**Senior  
Concerns**  
*Serving Seniors & Their Family Caregivers*



# Life Review Therapy

Used as part of a comprehensive therapy plan for increasing the quality of life of the elderly

Helps them to resolve their past conflicts, reconstruct their life stories, and accept their present conditions

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# Reminiscence

- Implies a casual often nostalgic recalling of experiences long past and gone
- Reminiscence therapy (RT) is also known as life review therapy. It is often used to treat dementia. RT works by encouraging people to revisit moments from their past.
- RT may use props or sensory stimulation to spark memories. Smells and sounds from a person's past are some examples.
- Studies have shown the positive effects of reminiscence therapy. RT helps with conditions that impact memory and brain function

# Erik Erickson's 8 Stages of Psychosocial Development

Stage	Psychosocial Crisis	Basic Virtue	Age
1.	<u>Trust vs. Mistrust</u>	Hope	0 – 1½
2.	<u>Autonomy vs. Shame</u>	Will	1½ – 3
3.	<u>Initiative vs. Guilt</u>	Purpose	3 – 5
4.	<u>Industry vs. Inferiority</u>	Competency	5 – 12
5.	<u>Identity vs. Role Confusion</u>	Fidelity	12 – 18
6.	<u>Intimacy vs. Isolation</u>	Love	18 – 40
7.	<u>Generativity vs. Stagnation</u>	Care	40 – 65
8.	<u>Ego Integrity vs. Despair</u>	Wisdom	65+

# Ego Integrity vs. Despair

- It is during this time that we contemplate our accomplishments and can develop integrity if we see ourselves as leading a successful life.
- Erik Erikson believed if we see our lives as unproductive, feel guilt about our past, or feel that we did not accomplish our life goals, we become dissatisfied with life and develop despair, often leading to depression and hopelessness.
- Success in this stage will lead to the virtue of wisdom. Wisdom enables a person to look back on their life with a sense of closure and completeness, and also accept death without fear.

Wise people are not characterized by a continuous state of ego integrity, but they experience both ego integrity and despair.

Thus, late life is characterized by both integrity and despair as alternating states that need to be balanced.

*“At 80, we look at other 80-year-olds to see who got wise and who did not. Lots of old people don't get wise, but you don't get wise unless you age.”*

A life review, according to Erikson, can help create an acceptance of one's one and only life cycle with few or no regrets.

It does this by helping individuals integrate memories into a meaningful whole, and to provide a harmonious view of past, present, and future

# Tova's Story

- She remembers a time when her son Erik used pen on the sofa and she was so upset
- Looking back that memory made the sofa more valuable in her memories – even though it was a “bad memory”. She had to hide when they took it away because it reminded of her beloved son. (p108)





# What Makes People Happy

## Harvard Study of Adult Development

- One of the world's longest studies of adult life
  - Followed men for 80 years, expanded to include their offspring
  - Close relationships, more than money or fame, are what keep people happy throughout their lives, the study revealed.
  - Those ties protect people from life's discontents, help to delay mental and physical decline, and are better predictors of long and happy lives than social class, IQ, or even genes.
  - Relationships as a form of self care
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# A look back

- What did we value then versus now?
- Did we satisfy our goals?
- Were we happy?
- Do we wish things had been different?
- Do we wish we had made different choices?

# Our Legacy

- Deciphering our legacy
- Is it different to different people?
- Are we in control of our legacy?
- Is it too late to change it?

# A look forward

- What is our next chapter?
- Who will care for us?
  - Tova cared for her husband and now fears how her end of life will be spent
  - She considers a retirement community as a safe way to ensure she will have care around her and not have to feel like a “burden” to friends

# Revaluing our STUFF

- Tova cleans out her home
- Who will want her precious mother's bone china? Considers all her friends and decides no one will want it. Younger people now do not value or want this type of china. It goes to the donation pile.

What are  
your top 2  
most  
important  
things to you  
TODAY

- Philanthropy
- Financial stability
- Family
- Friendship
- Having a nice home (clean)
- Career success
- Love life
- Daily purpose
- Independence

- Volunteer work
- Throwing nice parties
- Social Status
- Good health
- Private time
- Happiness
- Faith
- Security

What were  
your top 2  
values:  
10 years ago?  
20 years ago?  
30 years ago?

- Philanthropy
- Financial stability
- Family
- Friendship
- Having a nice home (clean)
- Career success
- Love life
- Daily purpose
- Independence

- Volunteer work
- Throwing nice parties
- Social Status
- Good health
- Private time
- Happiness
- Faith
- Security

# Senior Concerns Programs



- Meals On Wheels
- Caregiver Support Center
- Adult Day Care Program
- In Home Geriatric Assessment Program
- Legal & Financial Services
- Senior Advocates
- Support Groups
- Community Education



