

The Self-Perception Profile for Older Adults

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2014

Funding for this research was provided by the National Institute for Child Health and Human Development.

Abstract

This article reports on the construction of a developmentally-sensitive domain-specific Self-Perception Profile for Older Adults. Self-reported perceptions of competence or adequacy are presented for eleven specific domains: Social Relationships, Family Relationships, Nurturance, Adequacy as a Provider, Job Competence, Cognitive Abilities, Household Management, Leisure Activities, Health Status, Physical Appearance, and Morality. Three more global dimensions were also assessed: Global Self-Esteem, Overall Life Satisfaction, and Reminiscence. Psychometric indices for this Caucasian, middle-class sample (59% female, 41% male) were excellent. Findings revealed that only the three highest-scoring domain scores, Household management, Leisure Activities, and Morality, were significantly different from the two lowest domain scores, Health Status and Physical Appearance. Interpretation focused on perceptions of control, more for the highest domains and less for lowest-scoring domains. All domains contributed to Life Satisfaction. Gender differences were observed in which domains most contributed to Global Self-Esteem, among the oldest participants. Retirement issues, namely, choice of retiring and desire to retire, were highly predictive of Life Satisfaction. Discussion focused on many new directions for future research, now that the scale has demonstrated excellent psychometric properties.

Introduction

The study of self-evaluations has burgeoned in recent years as social scientists have documented how perceptions of the self are powerfully implicated in individuals' normative behavior as well as in their pathology (see Harter, 1999, 2012, 2014). However, much of this research has been devoted to the implications of self-evaluations among children, adolescents, college students, and adults in mid-life. There has been much less interest, until recently, in the role of self-evaluations among older adults. Increasingly, theory and research does exist, however, there has been much less attention to psychometrically-sound instruments to examine the various parameters impacting older adults (see Byrne, 1996), continuing into the current decade.

The increasing interest in the psychological dimensions of late adulthood is welcome, however, it has outweighed measurement development. One impetus for attention to our older citizens is that their numbers are increasing. American life expectancy has increased by 12 years just since the beginning of the Baby Boomer era beginning in 1946 (O'Rourke, 2014). As of 1995, one of every eight people in the United States, or 13% of the population, has been above the age of 65 (Gatz, 1995). Older adults are not only living longer than they have in modern history, but are constituting the fastest growing segment of the U. S. population; they are expected to comprise 20% of the U. S. population by the year 2030. As Richmond and Guidon (2010) observe, in citing these data from the U.S. Center for Disease Control, the issue is more than one of demographics. This older group can exert a tremendous influence on our collective future. One has only to observe the impact of the American Association of Retired People (AARP) on the political and cultural scene in this country, speaking for and with many older adults who are not even close to retired.

Longevity, itself, does not necessarily translate into well-being, life satisfaction, or mental health. Baby Boomers are not automatically bestowed with psychological blessings. Thus, it behooves us to understand how older citizens are evaluating or re-evaluating themselves, given changes in age and related life experiences. This was the impetus for constructing the Self-Perception Profile for Older Adults, an instrument that would be sensitive to the concerns of those in the later stages of life.

We were particularly committed to designing an instrument that was sensitive to developmental issues. This took three forms. First, are there domains that capture issues unique to those in this developmental stage? Here, we initially address specific domains of self-evaluation. In our existing life-span battery, we have delineated and assessed domains that are relevant to several developmental periods, namely, early childhood, middle-to-late childhood, adolescence, the college years, and middle adulthood for those in the world of work and family (see Harter, 1999, 2012). In addition, we devised age-appropriate modifications for the current Self-perception Profile for Older Adults. New domains can emerge in older adulthood, for example, health concerns and the use of leisure time, which this instrument taps. As with our previous questionnaires, we also include a subscale tapping overall self-esteem, how much one values oneself as a person. It is of interest just which specific domains contribute most to global self-esteem.

Specific Domains

- a. Relationships with friends
- b. Family relationships
- c. Nurturance
- d. Adequacy as a provider

- e. Job competence
- f. Cognitive abilities
- g. Household management
- h. Leisure activities
- i. Health status
- j. Physical appearance
- k. Morality

Second, although there is overlap in the content of some of these domains with our Self-Perception Profile for Adults (Messer & Harter, 1986), there is a difference in the wording of items. In this instrument for older adults, the language often refers to one's past experiences, as well as contemporary life; that is, *has* one felt good about social relationships, job competence, nurturance, etc., across one's life time? As such, the items make reference to a life-span perspective in evaluating the different domains of one's life.

Global Dimensions

Third, on this instrument, we add two more global dimensions (in addition to Global Self-Esteem) that may be unique to this age period, namely, overall Life Satisfaction. Life Satisfaction items refer to being satisfied with how one has lived one's life, pleased or not, with meeting one's life goals, a sense that one has made meaning of one's life, the perception that one has had some sense of purpose. The Life Satisfaction subscale is more *evaluative*, it requires that one make a positive or negative evaluation of one's life. The Reminiscence subscale has a somewhat different flavor, it asks how much one engages in *thinking* back on one's life, be it positive recollections or negative memories. In addition to positive recollections. We may reflect on ill-fated relationships, missed job opportunities, etc., but accept these as part of our identity

and go forward. Alternatively, we may continue to view these memories as aversive. As Magee (2011) observes, ideally people may adopt a new vision of their personal history, accepting themselves with compassion and wisdom. This should be reflected in greater life satisfaction for some. However, others may experience dissatisfaction.

These new global subscales can be related to Erikson's (1968) final life-span stage of development in late adulthood, Ego-Integrity versus Despair. According to Erikson, older adults achieve *ego integrity* if they can look back on their life, viewing it as productive and satisfying. If they consider their life to have been a disappointment, the result is *despair*. In contrast, the more domain-specific subscales (e.g., nurturance, job competence, social relationships, etc.) have more in common with Erikson's previous stage of adult development, Generativity versus Stagnation. In Erikson's theory, Generativity includes such responsibilities as raising and caring for children as well as the sense that one has been productive at one's choice of work, be it an occupation or profession or one's work as a homemaker. The development of social relationships also requires efforts and commitment. Adults who feel that they have not performed these activities successfully additional domain-specific self-evaluations, for example, household management, adequacy as a provider, as well as family relationships which are responsibilities that demand continued attention across the life span.

Measurement Issues

In reviewing the literature on older adults, it becomes clear that instrument development has not kept pace with these issues. Certain studies employ their own single items or a subscale to address the investigators' particular topic of interest. Others use existing measures that do not specifically address the life concerns of older adults. Rosenberg's (1979) popular measure of global self-esteem has been widely used in the gerontology literature. While not necessarily

irrelevant to this population, this instrument was designed for adolescents. It taps only one self-evaluative dimension, global self-esteem, given the author's laudable intent. However, it was not designed to examine developmental issues, nor does it contain specific domains that may be relevant in the lives of older adults.

Subsequent investigators have developed instruments that are domain-specific, with adults as the target population (e.g., Butler & Gasson, 2006; Messer & Harter, 1986). Our own instrument was designed for adults in the world of work and family, most appropriate for those through middle age. In addition to normative data, we present findings that have clinical implications. However, this earlier instrument was not designed to be relevant to the special concerns of late adulthood.

The Butler & Gasson (2006) instrument, the Self-Image Profile for Adults, is commendable in that it employs a domain-specific approach. However, it has numerous weaknesses. To begin with, the ages of the sample range from 17 to 65, an extremely broad spectrum that spans many developmental levels. Yet the six subscales derived from factor analysis were not designed to address developmental concerns, nor were the data even analyzed to address developmental concerns. No *a priori*, theoretically-based subscales were designed. As a result, the number of items for the six empirically-derived factors ranges from three to eight. No reliability data are presented by subscale, only overall reliability indices. The sample is 71% female. All items are positively worded, introducing concerns about socially-desirable response biases. Finally, no substantive questions are addressed, nor is there any sensitivity to the self-evaluations of those in late adulthood, particularly since the "oldest" adults in their sample are only 65. It is claimed that the instrument might be especially useful for professionals

in clinical practice, though no clinical data are presented. Thus, its appropriateness for illuminating self-evaluative processes in older adulthood is questionable.

The need for a developmentally-sensitive measure for older adults. True, there has been increasing interest in the mental health of older adults, particularly given the growing numbers in this age group, as people in our society are living longer and many continue to enjoy productive lives. How older people evaluate themselves may be instructive, in terms of individual differences in how adults navigate new challenges that later adulthood presents. However, do we really need a new instrument?

It is my own evolving perspective that we should only develop new measures if they address substantive questions that are interesting and relevant, particularly from a developmental perspective. Thus, what might be some important questions that this new instrument could answer, once we have first established the adequacy of its psychometric properties (e.g., subscale reliabilities, factor pattern, etc.)? Our sample ranged in age from 65 to 89, in a primarily middle-class, Caucasian sample.

Domain differences. Do older adults, across the age range we sampled, evaluate themselves differently across the specific domains included, is there a *profile*? Are there gender differences among our sample of older adults? Given our own life-span battery of instruments, do scores on comparable subscales differ for this sample, compared to younger age groups?

Existing data suggest that global self-esteem declines among older adults. Orth and Widaman (2012), employing a longitudinal design, have reported that self-esteem reached a peak at about age 50, and then decreased in old age. Robins, Trzesniewski, Tracy, Goslin, and Potter (2002), employing a cross-sectional design with an Internet sample, present data indicating that self-esteem rises throughout adulthood but declines sharply in old age. However, they

acknowledge that the literature also reveals inconsistencies, and that further research is necessary. (Neither of these studies examined specific domains.)

An interesting approach has been presented by Trzesniewski, Donnellan and Robins (2003) who have examined the *stability* of self-esteem across the life span. They report that stability is low in childhood, increases during adolescence and young adulthood, but declines in later adulthood and old age. These findings are interesting because they invite the study of individual differences in levels of self-esteem, rather than making generalizations about age, per se. We will pursue this thinking, particularly with regard to specific domains, because prior studies have not employed domain-specific developmental instruments.

In the current study, we made only two domain-specific predictions, with regard to the level of self-evaluations across domains. We anticipated that the two physically-relevant subscales, Health Status and Physical Appearance, would yield lower scores, because they may be less under one's control, vitamin supplements and cosmetic surgery, notwithstanding. However, given the importance of physical appearance to women in our society (see Harter, 2012), we were particularly interested in potential gender differences in the magnitude of the correlation between physical appearance and global self-esteem, among this sample of older adults.

In our previous studies with older children, adolescents, college students, and adults in the world of work and family, a consistent pattern has emerged. Perceptions of physical appearance or attractiveness consistently head the list in terms of being the strongest predictor of self-esteem (Harter, 1999, 2012). Correlations range from .50 to .70. We have devoted considerable attention to the explanation of such a robust finding, including the media and cultural emphasis on appearance and its criteria in this society. However, would this correlation

continue into later adulthood? Might other domains be equally predictive of global self-esteem, and are there gender differences?

Perceptions of job competence. We have singled out job competence as another domain that may warrant particular attention in our society. We were interested specifically interested in the impact of *retirement* within this sample of older adults, especially at it might affect *life satisfaction*. Certain findings (see Teuscher, 2010) reveal that one's occupational identity continues to be important to one's self-evaluation, even after retirement. We addressed this issue by asking our participants two questions: (a) Did they retire or will they retire by *choice* or not, and (b) how much did they or do they look forward to retirement? We predicted that *life satisfaction* would be highest for those who retired (or will retire) by *choice*, combined with a *desire* to retire, compared to those with no choice and no desire. We anticipated that the other two combinations would fall in between.

The role of educational level. As part of our demographic inquiry, we assessed educational level. We predicted that this variable would be correlated with perceptions of cognitive competence among our sample of older adults. That is, we predicted that those with only a high school diploma (or equivalent) would report the lowest level of cognitive competence, those with a college degree would feel more cognitively competent, and those with graduate school years or degrees would feel the most competent about their cognitive abilities. The basis for this prediction is, in part, predicated on the nature of our domain-specific items. As described earlier, items imply a life-span perspective on competence or adequacy. Thus, those who have attained a higher level of educational attainment may carry with them a more positive evaluation of their cognitive competence through their lifetime.

Method

Sample Demographics

The sample consisted of 203 older adults, 41% were male and 59% were female. With regard to age, 50.7% were between the ages of 65 and 74; 49.3% were between the ages of 75 and 89. (Mean age was 74.5, SD =5.69). The sample was primarily Caucasian (i.e., European-American), namely, 98.5 %. There was a range in terms of *educational level*. Twenty percent had completed high school, had an equivalent degree, or some high school. Forty-five percent had completed college or had at least two years of college. Thirty-five percent had engaged in some graduate work or had obtained a graduate degree. We inquired about highest total family income in the past (given that the majority was now retired). These demographic statistics revealed that 10% reported a highest annual income between \$10,000 and \$30,000, 30% were in the range of \$30,000 and \$ 50,000, 35% reported income between \$50,000 and \$80,000 and the remainder of the sample, and 25% had made over \$80,000.

We also asked about current or previous occupational status. Fifteen percent identified themselves as *Professionals* (doctors, lawyers, college faculty), Twenty-percent cited occupations involving managerial, administrative, or business positions. Twenty-five percent reported occupations such teachers, counselors, social workers, nurses. Fifteen percent described jobs involving sales, clerical or secretarial work. Five percent described themselves as technicians or skilled worker in construction. Ten percent had been in more service-oriented jobs, such as wait-service in restaurants or in the fast food industry, house-cleaning, janitorial services, etc. Another ten percent identified themselves as primarily homemakers.

Given these various socio-economic indices, our participants were primarily middle-class, given their educational, financial, and occupational status. Seventy-eight percent reported that they were retired, however, another 20% indicated that they were in a category of employed

full-time, employed part-time or semi-retired. Moreover, 83% were still living in their own home or condominium, with another 10% renting. The remaining 7 % were living in a retirement community. Thus, looking across all of these variables, it is apparent that we are dealing with a relatively high-functioning group of older adults, which should be taken into account, in interpreting the results.

Participants were recruited from senior centers and community centers serving older adults, as well as from newspaper ads in the Denver area. One member of our team had access to an Arizona newspaper that specifically targets older Arizona residents. Participation was entirely voluntary and participants were not requested to supply any identifying information such as names and addresses, in order to maintain the confidentiality of their responses and hopefully invite honest responding.

Instrument Development, Psychometric Properties

As described in the Introduction, there were 11 specific domains and 3 more global indices. A brief description of each subscale, examples of item content, followed by the Cronbach's alpha value to assess internal consistency, is next reported. As observed in the Introduction, the 11 domain-specific subscales ask that participants to not just refer to present self-perceptions but ask for some reflection on their sense of adequacy or competence during their lifetime.

Specific Domains

- a. *Relationships with friends.* This subscale refers to people's perceptions that they are satisfied with the friendships they have made, that they have been able to maintain such relationships, that they have been able to make as many friends as they desired, versus

the opposite, disappointment with their relationships with friendships, including forming and maintaining connections with friends (Alpha: .78).

- b. *Family relationships*. This subscale is specific to one's self-evaluation of how satisfied one is with close ties within one's family, how one has treated family members, satisfaction with family relationships versus disappointment and lack of pride and respect, with regard to their connections within the family (Alpha: .75).
- c. *Nurturance*. Nurturance has been more broadly defined, in keeping with Erikson's perspective. While it may refer to nurturing one's own children, it can also refer to more general efforts to guide and nurture others, be it personally or occupationally. The essence of this subscale is to ask participants about their own efforts to contribute to the personal development of those, often younger than themselves, to foster their growth. Negative self-evaluations would include wishing that one had been more nurturing toward others and done more to support the growth of our young people (Alpha: .79).
- d. *Adequacy as a provider*. Providing for the necessities of life as well as certain excesses, can weigh on the minds of seniors. Did I do enough for my family and others important in my life? Thus, this subscale has financial overtones or undercurrents. Items ask about how satisfied seniors are with meeting the needs of others, how well they have succeeded in providing for others versus their concern and disappointment at not being able to provide for the needs of others whom they care about (Alpha: .83).
- e. *Job competence*. Given the importance of this domain across the life span in American society, items ask how satisfied participants are with how they have performed at their occupation or profession, how proud they are of their accomplishments, how productive

and responsible they have been, versus concern, disappointment, and lack of satisfaction, in terms of how they have performed on the job (Alpha: .86).

- f. *Cognitive abilities.* We live in a society in which self-evaluations extend to whether one is “smart” in terms of achieving one’s goals. This subscale is *not* about educational level, per se. Rather, it pertains to one’s self-perceptions that whatever one’s life path, one is mentally alert, can figure out things they need to understand, can solve problems that confront them and can still think quickly and productively. Disappointments that they cannot achieve these goals, and feel that cognitively they are declining, represent concerns that define the opposite, as various forms of normal decreases in cognitive functioning (e.g., short term memory losses) or more serious issues involving dementia are clearly on the radar screen of older adults (Alpha: .81).
- g. *Household management.* The vast majority of older adults in our sample (82%) were still living in their home. Yet do they feel able to cope with the demands that are needed to attend to household chores and demands? Can they handle what needs to be done at home to keep a smoothly-running household? How capable do they feel? This subscale taps these issues and provides both positive and negative choices as to how well one can achieve these tasks (Alpha: .81).
- h. *Leisure activities.* The baby-boomer generation put forth certain expectations about how their era should include pleasure as well as work (O’Rourke, 2014), including contemporary accoutrements (the latest golf clubs, tennis rackets, accompanying gear and sportswear). Plus, participating in leisure activities is, in the mind of many seniors, loosely linked to mental and physical health, as media pundits argue. Thus, we wrote items that tap whether people can engage in fulfilling leisure activities, have hobbies that

provide self-satisfaction, find interesting leisure challenges that are rewarding and may lead to an active life style (Alpha: .79).

- i. *Health status.* Societal health reports give mixed reports. True, Americans are living longer, but the risks and incidences of heart disease, obesity, diabetes, high blood pressure, osteoporosis, etc. are on the rise, as the number of prescription drugs skyrockets. So just how healthy do Americans feel, what are their self-perceptions of their own health status? Thus, we included a new subscale to address this domain. As with all specific domains, we ask participants to take a broader perspective. That is, our items ask them to reflect on the extent to which they have attended to health concerns, kept in good shape, feel that they have lived a healthy life style (in contrast to neglect of their health; Alpha: .85).
- j. *Physical Appearance.* It is important to make the distinction between health status and physical appearance, where the latter refers to perceptions of attractiveness, typically defined by cultural standards. Items make reference to meeting these standards, feeling as attractive as they can be, being happy with the way they look versus feeling negative or disappointed with maintaining their physical appearance and meeting standards of attractiveness (Alpha: .81).
- k. *Morality.* This subscale taps perceptions of whether one has lived up to ethical standards or values, demonstrated moral behaviors and integrity versus not meeting these standards, questioning the morality of their conduct (Alpha: .86).

Global dimensions

1. *Self-Esteem.* This subscale, which has appeared on our previous instruments (see Harter, 1999), refers to the perception that one values one's global worth as a person, accepts

himself/herself as one is, and is satisfied with the kind of person one has become.

Negative perceptions involve dissatisfaction with one's overall worth as a person (Alpha: .82).

m. *Life Satisfaction*. This subscale assesses how much one is satisfied with how one has lived one's life, with the choices one has made, with the life paths one has selected.

Negative evaluations include the sense that one's life has not displayed a sense of purpose, that one is unhappy with the way one has lived one's life (Alpha: .82).

n. *Reminiscence*. This subscale makes reference to enjoyment in looking back on one's life, welcoming the chance to review memories and past experiences. The negative aspects include not wanting to review one's earlier life experiences, avoiding recollections of one's past (Alpha: .86).

Question Format

As with our previous instruments, we have employed our "structured alternative format" which, as our research has demonstrated (Harter, 1999), reduces socially-desirable responding. Item pit a positive self-evaluation against a more negative self-evaluation, and asks which orientation is a better descriptor of one's own personal situation. The implication is that there is no "true-false" decision, which most existing measures require. The question format we have devised normalizes descriptions, given that items describe how some people feel positively about their competence/adequacy whereas others may feel more negatively. Either choice may reflect an honest appraisal of one's personal experience (see Appendix for scale and scoring).

Here are two examples of the items. The first is for Nurturance, a specific domain, the second is for Life Satisfaction, a more general domain.

Really True Sort of True
for Me for Me

Sort of True Really True
for Me for Me

_____	_____	Some adults feel they have contributed by nurturing children or younger people	BUT	Other adults do not feel that have contributed to nurturing children or younger people	_____	_____
_____	_____	Some adults are unhappy with how they have lived their life	BUT	Other adults are very happy with how they have lived their life	_____	_____

Participants are asked to first decide which of the two statements best describe them, and then, secondly, to indicate whether this descriptor is Really True for them or Sort of True for them. Items are scored on a four-point scale, where, *for the first example*, the most positive choice (*Really True for Me*) is scored a 4, a positive Sort of True description is scored a 3, the more negative choice of the statement on the right, of Sort of True for Me, is scored a 2, and the most negative choice of Really True for Me is scored a 1. Items are counterbalanced so that half of the items present the positive description on the left, as in the first example above, but the remaining half have the negative statement presented first, on the left, as in the second example. Scores are averaged across each subscale of six items. It is important to appreciate that there is *no* total score for the entire instrument. The rationale for multidimensional measures is that total scores mask the domain-specific discriminations that individuals make, in their self-evaluations across subscales.

Scale Structure

As described earlier, there are 11 domain-specific subscales, each with six items. Three more general or global subscales, self-worth, life-satisfaction, and reminiscence, also each contain six items. There is no short-form of this instrument. For purposes of reliability, it is important to retain a sufficient number of items per subscale, which on this instrument is six. Although there is no short form, per se, if investigators are only interested in particular subscales, given their own research questions, individual subscales can be lifted, as long as they are kept intact.

Factor pattern. One form of validity can be detected by factor-analyzing a multi-dimensional instrument. Toward this goal, we have performed an *oblique* factor rotation, given that the domains we have selected are likely to be correlated, to some degree. We have only factored the 11 specific domains, consistent with our previous work. The three more general subscales, global-self worth, life satisfaction, and reminiscence, were not considered to be discrete domains. Rather, they are of interest in terms of how specific domains might be predictive of these more global self-evaluations. Table 1 presents the results for an oblique rotation of the 11 specific domains.

Insert Table 1 about here

As can be observed, loadings are high for items on their designated factor, supporting the factorial validity of this instrument for older adults. The average *number* of cross-loadings ranged from only 2 to 3, and, as Table 1 indicates, the magnitude of these few cross-loadings was quite low. Thus, we can conclude that the domains we have identified for older adults are discrete, in that participants make distinctions between their self-evaluations in these different arenas. This, in turn, paves the way for a further analysis of the role of specific domain-specific research questions, and how these specific domains may relate to the three more global dimensions.

Results

Mean Scores for each Domain by Gender, in Order of Magnitude

Table 2 presents the mean self-evaluation scores, by domain and gender. The first finding to be noted is that the mean scores are all above 3.0, revealing that this particular middle class sample feels relatively good about themselves. While we do *not* recommend averaging scores

across domains, to make the point about this particular sample, the mean subscale score for men was 3.33 and for women, 3.31, far above the midpoint of the instrument which is 2.5.

Insert Table 2 about here

However, what is remarkable is the consistency in the rank order of scores across domains, for both males and females. The order of first seven domains for males and females was parallel. Moreover, as predicted, the two domains in which both genders felt least adequate were health status and physical appearance, at the bottom of the list. For each gender, within-subject analyses of variance, followed by multiple comparisons, revealed that only differences of .35 or greater were significant at $p < .01$ or greater. To summarize the within-domain analyses, only the top three domains, Household Management, Morality, and Leisure Activities were significantly different from Health Status and Physical Appearance, for both genders.

The only two domains that disrupted what would have been a perfect rank ordering for both genders were the two *relationship* subscales, family relationships and relationships with friends, where scores were higher for females. However, although these affected the rank ordering to some extent in the middle block of scores, the gender differences for these two subscales were not significantly different from one another. Thus, overall, we have a picture of quite positive self-perceptions for this particular sample as a whole, no significant gender differences, and a surprising convergence in terms of the rank ordering of self-evaluations within each gender.

Global Domains

This particular sample also reported relatively high scores for the three general subscales, Self-worth ($M = 3.33$), Life Satisfaction ($M = 3.34$), and Reminiscence ($M = 3.28$), with no significant gender differences. In addition, these subscales were highly correlated with one

another: Self-esteem and Life Satisfaction ($r = .73$), Life Satisfaction and Reminiscence ($r = .60$), and Self-esteem and Reminiscence ($r = .58$). All correlations were highly significant ($p < .0001$). In the discussion, we will raise issues about the directionality of these relationships and how each subscale may be useful in future research. For example, why is it that those who do not enjoy reminiscing about their past are also dissatisfied with their life?

Domain Differences in Self-Evaluations as a Function of High versus Low Life Satisfaction

To further evaluate the role of domain-specific self-evaluations, we turned to one of our global measures, namely, *life satisfaction*. We asked do those who experience higher overall life satisfaction report more positive self-evaluations in particular domains, compared to those who report relatively low overall life satisfaction? We divided the sample into High and Low Life Satisfaction groups at the mean, collapsed across gender given that there was no overall difference in life satisfaction for males and females. High Satisfaction participants' mean score was 3.52 compared to an average score of 2.51, for Low Satisfaction participants, a highly significant difference ($p < .0001$), as expected because participants were selected on that variable. The results, presented in Table 3, are given in the same order as for Table 2, for purposes of comparison, for the eleven specific domains, only.

Insert Table 3 about here

A Life Satisfaction (2) X Specific Domains (11) ANOVA was performed. A highly significant main effect was obtained for Life Satisfaction ($F, 1, 202) = 10.58, p < .001$) as was the main effect for domain, ($F, 10, 202) = 8.23, p < .001$). First, it should be observed that the order of self-evaluation scores for both life satisfaction groups is comparable to that for the entire sample in that Household Management, Morality, and Leisure Activities head the list. The two lowest domains were Health Status and Physical Appearance, for both satisfaction groups.

Simple effects tests revealed that all domain differences, between the High and Low Satisfaction groups, were significant ($p < .01$ to $.001$). The differences between domain scores ranged from .40 to .59, revealing that each of the eleven domains contributed to life satisfaction. However, for those in both groups, there seems to be a profile with Household Management, Morality, and Leisure Activities representing the domains associated with higher self-perceptions, whereas Health Status and Physical Appearance are at the bottom of the list in terms of perceptions of personal adequacy.

The Relationship between Global Self-Esteem and Self-Evaluations in Specific Domains

Another approach to evaluating the contribution of domain-specific self-evaluations is to examine their relation to global self-esteem, through correlational procedures. Thus, we examined the correlations between domain-specific self-perceptions and global self-esteem, separately by gender and age group (65-74 vs. 75-89). For the “younger” subgroup of older participants, the correlations were quite consistent, across genders, and by domain. Correlations ranged between .45 and .64 with no significant differences in correlations between domains.

However, the picture changed for the older group, aged 75 to 89, in terms of gender differences in the correlations of domain-specific self-perceptions and global self-esteem. There were no significant gender differences for the domains of Friendship, Family, Nurturance, Household Management, Leisure, Morality, and Health. For three other domains, the correlation was significant higher (p of .01 or greater) for men compared to women, in this older age group (see Table 4). For one domain, physical appearance, the correlation was significantly higher ($p < .001$) for females compared to males.

Insert Table 4 about here

As can be seen in Table 4, Self-esteem is highly correlated, among this group of older men, aged 75-89, with three domains, adequacy as a provider, job competence, and cognitive abilities. The average correlation is .74, an extremely high relationship, suggesting that financial, occupational, and cognitive domains still highly define the self-esteem of men at this age. This is in contrast to most other domains where the correlation is more modest. However, it reveals that older men are making noticeable discriminations among these domains.

The one gender difference among this older age group was obtained among females who manifested a higher correlation between self-esteem and the domain score for perceived physical appearance. As Table 4 indicates, this correlation was .61, compared to the correlation for men, .28. What is of interest in that for the earlier age period, 65 –74, the correlation between physical appearance and global self-esteem for each gender was comparable, .57 for men, and .54 for women, still reasonable correlations suggesting the importance of perceptions of attractiveness to one's overall evaluation of worth. However, the pattern in Table 4 suggests that correlates of self-esteem diverge in later adulthood, interestingly, according to gender stereotypes.

Life Satisfaction and Retirement

We are in an era in which issues such as retirement have loomed large, given a boomer population who is facing this reality. How might this affect contemporary senior citizens' Life Satisfaction? The majority of our sample reported that they were retired or semi-retired. Thus, we asked, in the demographic survey, two questions given the importance of this developmental life transition. These two questions were: (a) Did they retire (or will they) by *choice* or not, and (b) How much did (or do they) look forward to or desire retirement? We identified four groups: Choice plus Desire, Choice with No Desire, No Choice but Desire, and No Choice, No Desire.

We predicted that those with a combination of *choice* about retirement and also a *desire* to retire would report the greatest life satisfaction. Those who had neither choice nor desire were expected to report the lowest life satisfaction. We anticipated that the other two groups would fall in between. This is precisely what the findings revealed. A Retirement Choice (2) X Desire to Retire (2) ANOVA of Self Satisfaction Scores revealed a significant main effect for Retirement Choice, $F(1, 186) = 5.4$ ($p < .02$) as well as for Desire to Retire, $F(1, 186) = 8.50$, $p < .04$). The interaction did not approach significance. Those with both choice and desire to retire reported a Life Satisfaction Score of 3.41. Those, at the opposite end (No Choice, No Desire) of the spectrum reported a Life Satisfaction Score of 2.85, a highly significant difference ($p < .001$). The other two groups, (a) No Choice, coupled with Desire, $M = 3.26$ and (b) Choice but No Desire, $M = 3.20$, fell in between. Thus, circumstances and attitudes toward retirement are a critical dimension in predicting the life satisfaction of the older adults in our sample. In the discussion to follow, we suggest possible reasons for this pattern of findings.

Educational Level and Perceived Cognitive Ability

Our sample ranged in educational background across three levels, high school, college, and graduate school. The findings supported the prediction that those with the highest level of educational attainment would report the most positive perceptions of cognitive competence ($M = 3.53$). Those with college experience reported the next most positive cognitive skills ($M = 3.22$), and those at the high school level reported the least positive perceptions of cognitive competence ($M = 3.01$). An ANOVA of Perceived Cognitive Ability scores (Educational Level X Gender) revealed only a significant effect for Educational Level, $F(2, 175) = 7.57$, $p < .01$. Given that certain items require a reflection on cognitive abilities across one's life span, those with higher

levels of educational achievement may carry with them, through their lives, a more positive evaluation of their cognitive competence as a function of educational attainment.

Discussion

Adults in the United States are living longer and, as a result, they constitute one of the fastest growing segments of our population. Thus, it behooves us to understand how they are adapting to this longer life span, and how it impacts their mental health. Their own self-reported perceptions represent one index. The past two decades have witnessed increasing interest in older adults in the fields of gerontology, psychology, and sociology. However, measurement development has not kept pace with this interest. The goal of this study, therefore, was to construct a developmentally-sensitive Self-Perception Profile for Older Adults, ages 65 to 89.

Several features contributed to the developmental appropriateness of this self-report instrument. First, we included domains that capture issues central to the period of late adulthood. Eleven specific domains were included: Relationships with Friends, Nurturance, Adequacy as a Provider, Job Competence, Cognitive Abilities, Household Management, Physical Appearance, Morality, Family Relationships, Leisure Activities, and Health Status. The first eight of these eleven domains previously appeared on our Adult Self-Perception Profile (Messer & Harter, 1986) designed for adults in the world of work and family, during mid-life. The remaining three, namely Family Relationships, Leisure Activities, and Health Status, were added to the this new instrument, since they represent new concerns during later adulthood.

Second, although there is overlap in the content of some of these domains with our previous Self-Perception Profile for Adults (Messer & Harter, 1986), there is a difference in the wording of many items. In this instrument for older adults, the language often refers to one's past, that is, how positive does one feel about their competence or adequacy in these domains,

across one's life time? Thus, we asked participants to take a life-span perspective in evaluating their self-perceptions.

Third, we added three more general domains, one of which, Global Self-Esteem, an overall perception of one's worth as a person, is a subscale that has been included on our existing life-span battery. However, two new global subscales were added, given that they represent unique issues or concerns in later adulthood. The first, *Life Satisfaction*, tapped an evaluation of how satisfied one is with how he/she has lived one's life, in meeting personal goals. The second, *Reminiscence*, assessed how much one engages in *thinking* about one's life, be it positive recollections or negative memories. The two new subscales were theoretically linked to Erikson's (1968) final life stage of *ego integrity*, looking back on one's life as productive and satisfying *vs. despair*, considering one's life to be a disappointment, if not worse. We will return to the issue of how best, in future research, to operationally define ego integrity, since this was not directly addressed in the present study.

Findings for Specific Domains

The examination of the psychometric properties revealed excellent results. Cronbach's alphas ranged from .75 to .86. The mean alpha across the eleven specific domains was .81. Factor analyses of the eleven specific domains revealed a very clear factor pattern with few cross-loadings and those few were low in magnitude.

The mean scores for the eleven specific domains were all 3.0 or above, on the four-point scale, indicating that self-perceptions were quite positive for this middle-class sample of older Caucasian adults. We made a particular prediction about two domains, namely that Physical Appearance and Health Status would be the lowest in the rank order of scores, a prediction that was supported. Moreover, the rank ordering was virtually identical for males and females. In

terms of these two lowest scores, and the three highest scores, Household Management, Morality, and Leisure Activities. It was our interpretation that the domains of Physical Appearance and Health Status in late adulthood may be less under people's control, leading to lower self-evaluations in the face of goals that can no longer be met.

Moreover, one's physical attributes are observable by others, constantly on display. Perceived physical imperfections are hard to conceal. In contrast, the three significantly different scores at the top of the hierarchy, Household Management, Morality, and Leisure Activities may be more under the control of older adults and limitations are less on display. Success in these domains is not necessarily related to skills that may be declining, and thus, perceptions of adequacy can be maintained.

In analyzing domain-specific self-perceptions as a function of Life Satisfaction, High versus Low, the findings were telling. All domain scores were significantly different, revealing that the domains we have selected for this instrument are highly relevant to older adults' satisfaction with their life. Of further interest was the finding that the rank ordering of self-evaluations for both genders was comparable. That is, Household Management, Morality, and Leisure head the list for both the High and Low Life Satisfaction groups, whereas scores for Health Status and Physical Appearance were the lowest for both groups, bolstering the interpretation of the rank ordering.

It makes intuitive sense that health issues would loom large in importance, as statistics and the nightly news bombard us with the fact that among older adults, diabetes, obesity, heart disease, strokes, and some forms of cancer are on the rise. Health-related television ads target the problems of our aging population, offering numerous prescription drugs to treat these ailments. At first glance, it may seem contradictory that adults are living longer, given these

health statistics. However, medical advances and multiple prescription drugs designed to prolong life do not necessarily lead to happiness, mental health, positive self-evaluations or a related sense of control over one's infirmities.

Yet what about physical appearance, why are scores so low for this domain? Clearly, findings reveal its importance at all stages before late adulthood (see review in Harter, 2012). Studies reveal that physical appearance or attractiveness continues to be important in late adulthood, particularly for women (Baker, 2009; Green & Pritchard, 2003). Our findings clearly document dissatisfaction with appearance among older adults. Media influences may well impact these negative self-evaluations. However, doesn't the dramatic increase in cosmetic surgery, for both men and women (see review in Harter, 2012), provide both genders with options to improve their appearance to meet the punishing standards that continue throughout the life span? According to one recent study, apparently not. Eriksen (2012) reports findings indicating that females who were cosmetic surgery recipients evidenced more investment in their appearance, understandably, but *less* body satisfaction, compared to an age cohort who did not undergo cosmetic surgery. We return to this issue, in examining the correlation between self-esteem and perceived physical appearance.

A comparison of mean levels of perceived physical appearance among older women in the present study with scores from our earlier sample of adults in the world of work and family, in mid-life, are comparable. More specifically, mean scores are similar to those of middle class women in mid-life who reported that they were working either full time or part time. In the mid-life sample, perceived appearance was lower for full-time *homemakers*, who may have had less opportunity or desire to invest in their appearance. In the present sample of older women, there

were not sufficient numbers to make this comparison. Thus, this represents an area for future research.

The Relationship between Specific Domain Scores and Global Self-Esteem

Another value of separating domain-specific self-evaluations from global self-esteem is that one can examine the relationship between the two types of self-evaluations. Are some domains more highly predictive of self-esteem than others? To examine these correlations, we divided the sample into two age groups: 65-74 and 75-89, since an examination of the scores revealed certain age differences, unlike for the other findings that have already been described. The correlations between domain-specific self-perceptions and global self-esteem were all significant, at $p < .01$ or higher. However, there were also certain significant gender differences at the two age periods.

For males, significant increases with age occurred in the magnitude of the correlations with self-esteem for *cognitive competence*, *job competence*, and *adequacy as a provider*. In the older of the two male age groups, these correlations ranged from .70 to .80. Recall that items tap self-perceptions across one's life span. This realization is critical to the interpretation of these findings. It is unlikely that *actual* competence or adequacy in these three domains has increased as one moves into the age period of 75-89. Rather, what these findings suggest is that, for males, one's life-long identity is strongly defined by these three domains which in turn have an impact on global self-esteem. Gender stereotypes would appear to remain strong, if not increase, during the later years for adults. As Teuscher (2010) has demonstrated, one's occupational or professional identity remains important to one's self-description, even after retirement.

The pattern is quite different for females. The correlation between self-perceptions in the domains of adequacy as a provider, as well as job competence and global self-esteem, decline

between these two age groups. However, the correlation between perceptions of physical appearance and global self-esteem actually increase to .61 for the older group of women, whereas they decrease dramatically for males to a low of .28. Although there is agreement in the literature that body satisfaction continues to be important to self-esteem in older adults (see Baker, 2009; Webster & Tiggemann, 2003; Green & Pritchard, 2003), the relationship to age within later adulthood requires further study. The findings of the present study from a middle class sample, suggest the persistence of the role of gender stereotyping. Women continue to base their self-esteem on perceptions of attractiveness, it continues to be important, although, as argued earlier, women may feel less control over their appearance, resulting in lower self-perceptions.

A critical issue, with regard to these correlations, is that of directionality. Which comes first? For males, do perceptions of cognitive competence, job competence, and adequacy as a provider precede or determine one's level of self-esteem? As one reflects on these competencies, do they provide the basis for self-esteem in later adulthood? That is a plausible interpretation. However, might self-esteem be an antecedent to domain-specific perceptions of past competence? If the latter is the case, then we need further studies to determine alternative causes of self-esteem in older adults.

For females, the literature cited suggests that the importance of physical appearance remains high in older adulthood, in large part because the media continues to put forth high standards of attractiveness even for older women. This population is the target of advertisements for cosmetic surgery, to encourage a look of youthfulness, rather than the philosophy of "aging gracefully." Here again, we face the issue of directionality. Is the correlation between perceived appearance and global self-esteem due to the fact that women are basing their self-esteem on

their ability to meet cultural standards of attractiveness? This seems to be a reasonable conclusion. However, one must entertain the possibility that global self-esteem has different antecedents and that it is self-esteem, in turn, that provokes one's evaluation of appearance.

How might one address this issue of directionality? Despite increasingly sophisticated statistical techniques, coupled with longitudinal methodology, issues of causality continue to remain challenging. With younger populations, we have adopted a different approach. We directly ask participants which comes first. For example, we ask them "Is it that how you think you look influences how much you like yourself as a person, or, is it the opposite, how much you like yourself as a person determines how you think you look?" Among adolescents, perhaps not surprisingly, the majority report that their evaluation of their appearance precedes or determines their self-esteem. Given that adults in our society, of all ages, are bombarded with media messages about the importance of attaining and maintaining cultural standards of attractiveness, might this same directionality continue to exist across the life-span? Further research, using our methodology, could illuminate this issue.

Life Satisfaction and Reminiscence

A novel feature of this instrument was the construction of two new global dimensions, Life Satisfaction and Reminiscence. Life Satisfaction assesses one's overall evaluation of how one has led one's life whereas Reminiscence refers to the extent to which one chooses to reflect on the life one has led. Although we intuitively felt that these might be important dimensions to include for older adults, we also felt that they had themes in common with Erikson's (1968) final life stage, targeting the distinction between *ego integrity* versus *despair*. Life Satisfaction and Reminiscence, although separate constructs, were highly correlated. Here again, the issue of *directionality* becomes relevant. Does one's satisfaction with one's life lead to greater

reminiscence? Conversely, if one is led to reflect on one's life, does that lead to a greater need to evaluate how one has led one's life? Although low scores on both subscales could well be linked to *despair*, as conceptualized by Erikson, the combination of high scores does not necessarily reflect *integrity*, per se, namely, whether self-perceptions are truly integrated.

Our previous research with younger populations has addressed the issue of whether perceptions of one's multiple selves are considered to be integrated or not, including a methodology to assess such integration (see Harter, 2012). However, future research needs to address these perceptions among older adults. Do those in late adulthood possess multiple selves in different life roles (job, family, social relationships, etc.)? If so, do they feel that their role-related self are multiple selves? Alternatively, are they distressed if they continue to possess multiple selves across roles? We have documented these different orientations among younger populations. However, we do not know if they exist or are important or predictive of mental health and life satisfaction in later adulthood. It would be important to address this issue in future research.

Retirement and Life Satisfaction

Developmentally, *transitions* represent important considerations, from a life-span perspective. One of the most studied transitions involves the educational domain, for example, the transition to adolescence, often co-occurring with school transitions such as the shift to junior high school. Transitions can bring new opportunities but they can also represent *losses*, such as friendships, relationships with teachers and how school has defined one's identity, whether through scholarship, sports, extracurricular activities, or family, if one moves out of the home as a young adult (see Arnett, 2010; Harter, 2012).

Retirement can represent a major life transition for many older adults who have been active in the work place, in a job, occupation, or profession, or have primarily raised children and is now “retired” from that preoccupation, the “empty nest” syndrome. Thus, we addressed whether two dimensions of retirement, (a) the choice to retire and (b) the desire to retire, affected the global dimension of *life satisfaction*. We found that both of these dimensions, in combination, strongly affected older adults’ satisfaction with their life. Those who acknowledged both the choice and desire to retire reported significantly higher levels of satisfaction with their lives compared to those who reported no choice and no desire to retire.

Thus, we need to conceptualize late adulthood as a developmental stage in which there are transitions, when retirement represents a major transition that can bring about many life changes. Retirement may lead to more leisure time, as our own findings have revealed. However, consider those who are not inclined to value leisure, whose work productivity and the recognition or status derived from professional achievements has been the primary source of their *identity*. Financial loss can be another potential concern. Moreover, the sense that one is no longer valued, consulted, or recognized, or the feeling that one has also lost friendships and social relationships, may be other causes. The disruption of one’s daily routine, going to work, can also be destabilizing. Our findings reveal that not having the choice or desire to retire contribute to life dissatisfaction. These dynamics need further study in terms of their causes.

Future Research

In discussing the findings of this study, there have been several suggestions for further research. For example, we have speculated that the most positive domain-specific self-perceptions, Household Management, Morality, and Leisure Time, may result from a greater sense of *control* in these areas, as contrasted to health and attractiveness, the lowest scores,

domains in which one may feel less control. However, this post hoc hypothesis has yet to be examined empirically.

We have suggested that the two new global subscales, Life Satisfaction and Reminiscence, may be related to Erikson's (1968) final life stage, Integrity versus Despair. Although life dissatisfaction may well be a harbinger of despair, one cannot necessarily assume that positive satisfaction and reminiscence reflects integrity, nor that dissatisfaction signals lack of integrity. In our own work with younger populations we have documented that there are positive alternatives to the sense that the self, played out in multiple roles, is necessarily integrated. In fact, a more common perception is that the multiplicity of the self represents what we have labeled "healthy differentiation" (see Harter, 2012). This possibility needs to be examined among populations of older adults.

We described our findings on retirement and life satisfaction, demonstrating that people who report a combination of no choice but to retire with no desire to retire, report the lowest level of life satisfaction. We speculated, earlier in the discussion, on a number of possible reasons for why those in this group might be dissatisfied by their retirement, for example, loss of a sense of productivity, loss of status or professional recognition, loss of the social relationships experienced at work, disruption of one's daily routine. However, these possibilities require empirical investigation.

The results of this study replicate many earlier findings documenting a strong relationship between perceived physical appearance and global self-esteem (see Harter, 2012). Our own findings with younger populations not only demonstrate this inevitable link but reveal that those who report the combination of dissatisfaction with their appearance and low self-esteem also strongly express feelings of *depression* (see Harter, 2012). Orth, Trzesniewski, Maes, and

Schmitt (2009) report significant relationships between low self-esteem and depression among adults, continuing into late adulthood. It would be of interest to add perceptions of physical appearance to this predictive equation in future research.

Reminiscence may also be related to the dimension of depression in older adults. That is, one's affect may depend upon the particular *focus* of one's reminiscences. That is, does one concentrate on positive life recollections, for example, pleasurable experiences, successes or accomplishments, gratifying relationships? Alternatively, does one *ruminate* on negative life events, for example, disappointing life experiences, missed opportunities, professional or social failures, etc. Nolen-Hoeksema (2000) has presented considerable research demonstrating the link between rumination and depression, in both normative and clinical populations. Thus, the very nature of one reminiscences would be a fertile ground for future research.

In addition to these new research directions on the new global dimensions we have included on this instrument, might there be additional *specific* domains that should be considered? One that comes to mind is an evaluation of one's sense of *independence*. Age-related and health concerns may limit one's ability to function independently. The issue of whether one can continue to drive represents a prime example. Losing this privilege can represent a major blow for those whose life activities have required such mobility. Similarly, those whose personality style eschews dependence on others for care can be negatively affected by the loss of independence. Thus, a new subscale designed to tap this dimension may be meaningful and therefore welcome.

Finally, we need to give thought to cross-cultural considerations. Literature addressing issues of aging now contains numerous publications from investigators in other countries. However, for the most part, these studies have not been cited in this article, paradoxically

because they do not represent true cross-cultural investigations. That is, they employ cultural samples of United States has also employed samples of convenience! However, we should not simply employ findings from American populations as the implicit norm. From a cross-cultural perspective, it should be a potential comparison sample, where similarities as well as differences will undoubtedly be revealed, and should thoughtfully and sensitively be interpreted.. Yet such comparisons are rarely examined. Westerhof, Whitbourne, & Freeman (2012) make a compelling argument for why the aging self should be studied in cultural context.

In so doing, it will be important for investigators to provide a compelling framework, revealing that they are sensitive to potential cross-cultural sensitivities that lead to thoughtful hypotheses. For example, there have been many theoretical analyses, comparing *individualistic* to *collectivist* cultures, with implications for whether self-construals are more *independent* or *interdependent* (see review in Harter, 2012). Markus and Kitayama (1991) have conducted seminal studies on this topic, a review of which is beyond the scope of this article. However, the relevance of such considerations for potential cross-cultural differences in the domains included on the instrument described in this article cannot be ignored. In addition to predicted differences in domain-specific self-perceptions, which should require a clear and culturally-sensitive rationale, there may be more general cultural differences to consider. For example, Asian cultures have been described as giving more respect to their elderly, valued for their wisdom, than do western countries such as the United States. This observation may well determine self-perceptions among older adults.

Moreover, in conducting cross-cultural investigations, attention should be given to assessing not only the dependent variables, self-perceptions, but to an assessment of the *independent* variables predicted to impact such perceptions. That is, we cannot merely assume

that cultures may differ on dimensions such as respect for the elderly or that given cultures are truly individualistic or collectivistic. We must develop equally sensitive measures of our predictor variables. Only in this manner can the contemporary fervor for cross cultural research yield truly meaningful findings that bear on the mental health of the world's citizens.

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Table 1

Factor pattern based on oblique rotation of the eleven specific domains.

Domain Subscale	Average loading for items defining subscale	Average cross-loading on other factors
Friend relationships	.52	.24
Family relationships	.42	.22
Nurturance	.43	.21
Adequacy as provider	.62	.23
Job competence	.74	.23
Cognitive abilities	.61	.21
Household management	.66	.24
Leisure activities	.45	.22
Health status	.68	.22
Physical Appearance	.57	.23
Morality	.72	.21

Table 2

Mean Scores for each domain, by gender, in order of magnitude for males

Domain Description	Males	Females
Household Management	3.55	3.56
Morality	3.51	3.55
Leisure Activities	3.48	3.50
Adequacy as a Provider	3.46	3.42
Job Competence	3.46	3.30
Life Satisfaction	3.34	3.28
Self-Worth	3.33	3.27
Cognitive Abilities	3.30	3.19
Family Relationships	3.32	3.44
Nurturance	3.29	3.19
Reminiscence	3.28	3.18
Relationships with Friends	3.16	3.26
Health Status	3.14	3.14
Physical Appearance	3.13	3.02

Note: Within each gender, only differences of .35 are significant at .01

Table 3

Domain Description	High Satisfaction	Low Satisfaction
Household Management	3.64	3.24
Morality	3.60	3.20
Leisure Activities	3.60	3.15
Adequacy as a Provider	3.49	2.90
Job Competence	3.49	2.90
Cognitive Abilities	3.40	2.94
Family Relationships	3.52	3.00
Nurturance	3.35	2.84
Relationships with Friends	3.32	2.79
Health Status	3.27	2.68
Physical Appearance	3.15	2.71

Table 4

Gender Differences in Correlations between Global Self-Esteem and Four Specific Domains, among men and women ages 75-89.

Domain	Correlation with Self-Esteem	
	Males	Females
Adequacy as Provider	.71	.39
Job Competence	.70	.40
Cognitive Skills	.80	.53
Appearance	.28	.61

Appendix to the Self Perception Profile for Older Adults

- Master List of Items by Subscale
- Survey Instrument: Self-Perception Profile for Older Adults
- Item Scoring Key
- Data Coding Sheet
- List of Harter and Colleagues' Self-Report Manuals Available Online

Master List of Items Grouped According to Subscale

Item # refers to the position on the survey instrument. Items keyed *positively* (+) present the *more* competent or adequate self-description in the first part of the statement, whereas items keyed *negatively* (-) present the *less* competent or adequate self-description first.

Item #	Keyed	Relationships with friends
1	+	Some adults are very satisfied with the friendships they have formed BUT Other adults are somewhat disappointed that they have not formed friendships that are more rewarding
15	-	Some adults have not been able to stay in touch with friends who were close to them although they have wanted to BUT Other adults have made a point of staying in contact with close friends who mean a lot to them
28	-	Some adults wish that they could have been better friends to others that have been important to them BUT Other adults feel that they have been good friends to others that are important to them
42	+	Some adults have been able to make as many friends as they would like to have BUT Other adults have found it difficult to make as many friends as they would like
56	+	Some adults feel that they have the time and energy to form as many friendships as they would like BUT For other adults, it is difficult to find the time and energy to form as many friendships as they'd like
70	-	Some adults have found that they have not been able to maintain relationships with friends who are important to them BUT Other adults have been able to keep up friendships with people that are important

Item #	Keyed	Job competence
2	-	Some adults are somewhat disappointed about their job performance BUT Other adults are very satisfied with how they have performed at their job(s)
16	-	Some adults wish they had performed more successfully at the work they have chosen to do BUT Other adults feel that they have performed successfully at their chosen work
29	+	Some adults feel that they have been able to achieve their goals at their occupations BUT Other adults have not been satisfied with their achievements
43	+	Some adults are proud of their past or present accomplishments on the job BUT Other adults are disappointed with their accomplishments on the job
57	-	Some adults wish they had been more productive at the work they have chosen to do BUT Other adults feel that they have been productive at the work they have chosen to do
71	+	Some adults are very satisfied with what they have done on the job BUT Other adults are disappointed with what they have done on the job

Item #	Keyed	Health status
3	+	Some adults feel that they have kept in good physical shape for their age BUT Other adults feel that they have not kept in the best physical shape
17	+	Some adults have worked hard to maintain their good health and physical well-being BUT Other adults wish they would have worked harder to maintain their health and well-being
30	-	Some adults have a hard time finding the energy to do what they want to do BUT Other adults can find the energy to do what they want to do
44	-	Some adults wish that they would have taken better care of themselves physically BUT Other adults feel that they have taken good care of themselves physically
58	+	Some adults can control their aches and pains so that they don't interfere with their activities BUT Other adults find it very difficult to control interfering aches and pains
72	-	Some adults wish they were living a healthier lifestyle BUT Other adults feel that they are living a very healthy lifestyle

Item #	Keyed	Family relationships
4	-	Some adults wish they could have contributed more to their family BUT Other adults feel good about how they have contributed to the family they have formed
31	+	Some adults feel they have earned the respect of their family members BUT Other adults wish they had done more to earn the respect of their family
45	+	Some adults are very pleased with how they have treated family members BUT Other adults are not that pleased with how they have treated family members
59	-	Some adults have not worked that hard to maintain close ties with family members BUT Other adults have worked hard to maintain close ties with their family
73	-	Some adults are not that proud of the relationships they have developed with family members BUT Other adults are quite proud of the relationships they have developed with members of their family
84	-	Some adults are disappointed with the family relationships they have developed BUT Other adults are very satisfied with how they have developed relationships with their family

Item #	Keyed	Adequacy as a provider
5	+	Some adults feel that they have provided those things that are important to those they care about BUT Other adults are concerned that they have not been able to provide things for those they care about
18	-	Some adults are not satisfied with how they have provided for important people in their life BUT Other adults are satisfied with how they have provided for important people in their life
32	+	Some adults feel they have been successful in making sure that those who have been dependent upon them enjoyed the comforts of life BUT Other adults wish that they had been more successful in supplying these comforts
46	+	Some adults have been able to provide the necessities of life for those who have been dependent upon them BUT Other adults have not been able to provide such necessities
60	-	Some adults have had difficulty giving those they care about the things they wanted or needed BUT Other adults have been able to give those they care about what they have wanted or needed
74	-	Some adults have not been able to provide for the needs of those who are important to them BUT Other adults have been able to provide for the needs of others who are important to them

Item #	Keyed	Physical appearance
6	+	Some adults are satisfied with what they have done to maintain their physical appearance BUT Other adults are dissatisfied with what they have done to maintain their physical appearance
19	-	Some adults are not happy with the way they look BUT Other adults are happy with the way they look
33	+	Some adults have been able to maintain the weight they would like to be BUT Other adults have not been able to maintain their ideal weight
47	-	Some adults are not as attractive as they feel they could be BUT Other adults feel that they are as attractive as they can be
61	+	Some adults feel that they have done things to make themselves look the way they want to look BUT Other adults feel that they have not done things to make them look the way they want to look
76	-	Some adults have not been able to meet the standards of physical appearance that are important to them BUT Other adults feel that they have met their standards of physical appearance

Item #	Keyed	Morality
7	+	Some adults feel that they have lived up to high moral standards BUT Other adults question whether they have lived up to high moral standards
20	-	Some adults question whether they have really been a person of integrity BUT Other adults feel that they have demonstrated integrity in their dealings with others
34	+	Some adults feel that they have lived their life as a very moral person BUT Other adults wish that their lives were characterized by greater morality
48	+	Some adults feel that they have lived up to their ethical principles BUT Other adults wish that they had lived their lives more ethically
62	-	Some adults have questioned the morality of their behavior BUT Other adults feel that their behavior has been very moral
79	-	Some adults have found it difficult to uphold their ethical values BUT Other adults have found that they have upheld strong ethical values

Item #	Keyed	Cognitive abilities
8	-	Some adults are not as mentally alert as they would like to be BUT Other adults feel that they do have enough mental alertness
21	+	Some adults are able to figure out the things they need to understand BUT Other adults have difficulty figuring out what they need to understand
35	-	Some adults have difficulty remembering what they need to remember BUT Other adults find that they can remember what they need to
49	+	Some adults feel that they have the mental abilities necessary to learn new things BUT Other adults question whether they still have the needed mental abilities
64	-	Some adults feel stupid because they can't figure out how to solve certain problems BUT Other adults feel that they still have the skills needed to solve problems that confront them
75	+	Some adults are pleased that they can still think as quickly as ever BUT Other adults find it difficult to accept that their thinking has slowed down

Item #	Keyed	Life satisfaction
9	+	Some adults are very happy with how they have lived their life BUT Other adults are unhappy with how they have lived their life
22	-	Some adults question important decisions that they have made in their life BUT Other adults feel that they have made very good life decisions
36	+	Some adults feel that the choices they have made have given them a genuine sense of the meaning of their life BUT Other adults feel that their choices have caused them to question the meaning of their life
51	-	Some adults are uncomfortable with the life paths they selected BUT Other adults feel very comfortable about the life paths they have chosen
65	-	Some adults experience turmoil about how they have led their lives BUT Other adults have derived a sense of inner peace from how they have chosen to live their lives
78	+	Some adults feel that there has been a sense of purpose to how they have led their lives BUT Other adults are concerned that their life seems to lack purpose

Item #	Keyed	Leisure activities
10	-	Some adults are not able to engage in fulfilling leisure activities BUT Other adults engage in leisure activities that they find fulfilling
23	+	Some adults have developed hobbies that give them a lot of satisfaction BUT Other adults do not have satisfying hobbies that they can engage in
38	-	Some adults do not have activities that contribute to their sense of well-being BUT Other adults do engage in activities that contribute to their sense of well-being
52	+	Some adults keep themselves busy at things they enjoy doing BUT Other adults are unable to find activities they enjoy that would keep them busy
66	-	Some adults are bored or unhappy because they can't engage in interesting activities BUT Other adults are able to find and participate in activities they find interesting
80	-	Some adults do not lead a very active life, even though they would like to BUT Other adults are able to enjoy a very active life

Item #	Keyed	Reminiscence
11	+	Some adults find it satisfying to think back on their earlier life BUT Other adults do not find it satisfying to look back on their earlier life
26	-	Some adults wish they could avoid thinking about their past BUT Other adults welcome the chance to think about their past
37	+	Some adults enjoy reviewing memories of their earlier life BUT Other adults dislike reviewing memories of their earlier life
50	-	Some adults prefer not to reminisce or recall earlier life events BUT Other adults enjoy reminiscing or recalling earlier life events
63	+	Some adults fondly look back on their past experiences BUT Other adults do not fondly look back on past experiences
77	-	Some adults do not feel that what they share about earlier life experiences is that valuable BUT Other adults feel that what they have to share about earlier life experiences is valuable

Item #	Keyed	Nurturance
12	+	Some adults feel that they have been nurturant toward others who are important to them BUT Other adults feel that they have not been nurturant enough
24	-	Some adults wish that they had been more caring toward significant others BUT Other adults feel that they have been very caring toward significant others
39	+	Some adults feel that they have made a contribution to the future by nurturing others BUT Other adults do not feel that they have made such a contribution
53	-	Some adults are disappointed in themselves for not contributing more to the personal development of those younger than they are BUT Other adults feel that they have contributed greatly to the personal development of others who are younger
67	-	Some adults do not feel that they are very nurturing of others BUT Other adults feel that they are good at nurturing others
81	+	Some adults feel that they have done a great deal to foster the growth of others BUT Other adults wish they had done much more to foster others' growth

Item #	Keyed	Household management
13	-	Some adults have difficulty taking care of their needs around the household BUT Other adults are able to take care of their household needs
25	-	Some adults find that they cannot keep their household running smoothly BUT Other adults are able to keep a smoothly running household
40	+	Some adults are able to manage their various activities at home BUT Other adults have a hard time managing needed home activities
54	+	Some adults can handle what needs to be done at home BUT Other adults have difficulty handling what needs to be done at home
68	-	Some adults find it difficult to make the arrangements necessary to manage their household activities BUT Other adults feel that they are quite capable of making the necessary arrangements
82	+	Some adults are able to perform the household tasks that they need to do BUT Other adults have difficulty performing these tasks

Item #	Keyed	Self-esteem
14	+	Some adults are generally happy being the way they are BUT Other adults would like to be different
27	+	Some adults accept themselves for who they are BUT Other adults find it hard to accept themselves as they are
41	-	Some adults question whether they are a worthwhile person BUT Other adults feel they are a worthwhile person
55	-	Some adults are dissatisfied with themselves BUT Other adults are satisfied with themselves
69	+	Some adults like the kind of person they are BUT Other adults wish they were very different
83	-	Some adults wish they could feel better about their worth as a person BUT Other adults feel that they are very worthwhile as a person

What I Am Like

These are statements that allow people to describe themselves. There are no right or wrong answers since people differ greatly from each other. For each item, read the entire sentence across. **FIRST** decide which one of the two parts of each statement—the one on the left or the one on the right—best describe **you**. **THEN** go to that side of the statement and check whether that is just *sort of* true for you or *really* true for you. You will just check **ONE** of the four boxes for each statement. Sometimes you will check on the left and sometimes you will check on the right. **DO NOT** check both sides for a given item.

	Really True for me	Sort of True for me		BUT		Sort of True for me	Really True for me
1.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults are very satisfied with the friendships they have formed	BUT	Other adults are somewhat disappointed that they have not formed friendships that are more rewarding	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults are somewhat disappointed about their job performance	BUT	Other adults are very satisfied with how they have performed at their job(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults feel that they have kept in good physical shape for their age	BUT	Other adults feel that they have not kept in the best physical shape	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults wish they could have contributed more to their family	BUT	Other adults feel good about how they have contributed to the family they have formed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults feel that they have provided those things that are important to those they care about	BUT	Other adults are concerned that they have not been able to provide things for those they care about	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults are satisfied with what they have done to maintain their physical appearance	BUT	Other adults are dissatisfied with what they have done to maintain their physical appearance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults feel that they have lived up to high moral standards	BUT	Other adults question whether they have lived up to high moral standards	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Really True for me	Sort of True for me			Sort of True for me	Really True for me	
8.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults are not as mentally alert as they would like to be	BUT	Other adults feel that they do have enough mental alertness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults are very happy with how they have lived their life	BUT	Other adults are unhappy with how they have lived their life	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults are not able to engage in fulfilling leisure activities	BUT	Other adults engage in leisure activities that they find fulfilling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults find it satisfying to think back on their earlier life	BUT	Other adults do not find it satisfying to look back on their earlier life	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults feel that they have been nurturant toward others who are important to them	BUT	Other adults feel that they have not been nurturant enough	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults have difficulty taking care of their needs around the household	BUT	Other adults are able to take care of their household needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults are generally happy being the way they are	BUT	Other adults would like to be different	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults have not been able to stay in touch with friends who were close to them although they have wanted to	BUT	Other adults have made a point of staying in contact with close friends who mean a lot to them	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults wish they had performed more successfully at the work they have chosen to do	BUT	Other adults feel that they have performed successfully at their chosen work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults have worked hard to maintain their good health and physical well-being	BUT	Other adults wish they would have worked harder to maintain their health and well-being	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults are not satisfied with how they have provided for important people in their life	BUT	Other adults are satisfied with how they have provided for important people in their life	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Really True for me	Sort of True for me				Sort of True for me	Really True for me
19.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults are not happy with the way they look	BUT	Other adults are happy with the way they look	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults question whether they have really been a person of integrity	BUT	Other adults feel that they have demonstrated integrity in their dealings with others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults are able to figure out the things they need to understand	BUT	Other adults have difficulty figuring out what they need to understand	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults question important decisions that they have made in their life	BUT	Other adults feel that they have made very good life decisions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
23.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults have developed hobbies that give them a lot of satisfaction	BUT	Other adults do not have satisfying hobbies that they can engage in	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
24.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults wish that they had been more caring toward significant others	BUT	Other adults feel that they have been very caring toward significant others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
25.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults find that they cannot keep their household running smoothly	BUT	Other adults are able to keep a smoothly running household	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
26.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults wish they could avoid thinking about their past	BUT	Other adults welcome the chance to think about their past	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
27.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults accept themselves for who they are	BUT	Other adults find it hard to accept themselves as they are	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
28.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults wish that they could have been better friends to others that have been important to them	BUT	Other adults feel that they have been good friends to others that are important to them	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
29.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults feel that they have been able to achieve their goals at their occupations	BUT	Other adults have not been satisfied with their achievements	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Really True for me	Sort of True for me				Sort of True for me	Really True for me
30.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults have a hard time finding the energy to do what they want to do	BUT	Other adults can find the energy to do what they want to do	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
31.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults feel they have earned the respect of their family members	BUT	Other adults wish they had done more to earn the respect of their family	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
32.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults feel they have been successful in making sure that those who have been dependent upon them enjoyed the comforts of life	BUT	Other adults wish that they had been more successful in supplying these comforts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
33.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults have been able to maintain the weight they would like to be	BUT	Other adults have not been able to maintain their ideal weight	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
34.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults feel that they have lived their life as a very moral person	BUT	Other adults wish that their lives were characterized by greater morality	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
35.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults have difficulty remembering what they need to remember	BUT	Other adults find that they can remember what they need to	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
36.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults feel that the choices they have made have given them a genuine sense of the meaning of their life	BUT	Other adults feel that their choices have caused them to question the meaning of their life	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
37.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults enjoy reviewing memories of their earlier life	BUT	Other adults dislike reviewing memories of their earlier life	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
38.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults do not have activities that contribute to their sense of well-being	BUT	Other adults do engage in activities that contribute to their sense of well-being	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
39.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults feel that they have made a contribution to the future by nurturing others	BUT	Other adults do not feel that they have made such a contribution	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Really True for me	Sort of True for me			Sort of True for me	Really True for me	
40.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults are able to manage their various activities at home	BUT	Other adults have a hard time managing needed home activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
41.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults question whether they are a worthwhile person	BUT	Other adults feel they are a worthwhile person	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
42.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults have been able to make as many friends as they would like to have	BUT	Other adults have found it difficult to make as many friends as they would like	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
43.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults are proud of their past or present accomplishments on the job	BUT	Other adults are disappointed with their accomplishments on the job	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
44.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults wish that they would have taken better care of themselves physically	BUT	Other adults feel that they have taken good care of themselves physically	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
45.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults are very pleased with how they have treated family members	BUT	Other adults are not that pleased with how they have treated family members	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
46.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults have been able to provide the necessities of life for those who have been dependent upon them	BUT	Other adults have not been able to provide such necessities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
47.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults are not as attractive as they feel they could be	BUT	Other adults feel that they are as attractive as they can be	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
48.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults feel that they have lived up to their ethical principles	BUT	Other adults wish that they had lived their lives more ethically	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
49.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults feel that they have the mental abilities necessary to learn new things	BUT	Other adults question whether they still have the needed mental abilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
50.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults prefer not to reminisce or recall earlier life events	BUT	Other adults enjoy reminiscing or recalling earlier life events	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Really True for me	Sort of True for me			Sort of True for me	Really True for me	
51.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults are uncomfortable with the life paths they selected	BUT	Other adults feel very comfortable about the life paths they have chosen	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
52.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults keep themselves busy at things they enjoy doing	BUT	Other adults are unable to find activities they enjoy that would keep them busy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
53.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults are disappointed in themselves for not contributing more to the personal development of those younger than they are	BUT	Other adults feel that they have contributed greatly to the personal development of others who are younger	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
54.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults can handle what needs to be done at home	BUT	Other adults have difficulty handling what needs to be done at home	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
55.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults are dissatisfied with themselves	BUT	Other adults are satisfied with themselves	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
56.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults feel that they have the time and energy to form as many friendships as they would like	BUT	For other adults, it is difficult to find the time and energy to form as many friendships as they'd like	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
57.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults wish they had been more productive at the work they have chosen to do	BUT	Other adults feel that they have been productive at the work they have chosen to do	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
58.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults can control their aches and pains so that they don't interfere with their activities	BUT	Other adults find it very difficult to control interfering aches and pains	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
59.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults have not worked that hard to maintain close ties with family members	BUT	Other adults have worked hard to maintain close ties with their family	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
60.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults have had difficulty giving those they care about the things they wanted or needed	BUT	Other adults have been able to give those they care about what they have wanted or needed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Really True for me	Sort of True for me			Sort of True for me	Really True for me
61.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults feel that they have done things to make themselves look the way they want to look	BUT	Other adults feel that they have not done things to make them look the way they want to look	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
62.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults have questioned the morality of their behavior	BUT	Other adults feel that their behavior has been very moral	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
63.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults fondly look back on their past experiences	BUT	Other adults do not fondly look back on past experiences	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
64.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults feel stupid because they can't figure out how to solve certain problems	BUT	Other adults feel that they still have the skills needed to solve problems that confront them	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
65.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults experience turmoil about how they have led their lives	BUT	Other adults have derived a sense of inner peace from how they have chosen to live their lives	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
66.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults are bored or unhappy because they can't engage in interesting activities	BUT	Other adults are able to find and participate in activities they find interesting	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
67.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults do not feel that they are very nurturing of others	BUT	Other adults feel that they are good at nurturing others	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
68.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults find it difficult to make the arrangements necessary to manage their household activities	BUT	Other adults feel that they are quite capable of making the necessary arrangements	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
69.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults like the kind of person they are	BUT	Other adults wish they were very different	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
70.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults have found that they have not been able to maintain relationships with friends who are important to them	BUT	Other adults have been able to keep up friendships with people that are important	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
71.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults are very satisfied with what they have done on the job	BUT	Other adults are disappointed with what they have done on the job	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

	Really True for me	Sort of True for me			Sort of True for me	Really True for me	
72.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults wish they were living a healthier lifestyle	BUT	Other adults feel that they are living a very healthy lifestyle	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
73.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults are not that proud of the relationships they have developed with family members	BUT	Other adults are quite proud of the relationships they have developed with members of their family	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
74.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults have not been able to provide for the needs of those who are important to them	BUT	Other adults have been able to provide for the needs of others who are important to them	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
75.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults are pleased that they can still think as quickly as ever	BUT	Other adults find it difficult to accept that their thinking has slowed down	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
76.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults have not been able to meet the standards of physical appearance that are important to them	BUT	Other adults feel that they have met their standards of physical appearance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
77.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults do not feel that what they share about earlier life experiences is that valuable	BUT	Other adults feel that what they have to share about earlier life experiences is valuable	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
78.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults feel that there has been a sense of purpose to how they have led their lives	BUT	Other adults are concerned that their life seems to lack purpose	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
79.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults have found it difficult to uphold their ethical values	BUT	Other adults have found that they have upheld strong ethical values	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
80.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults do not lead a very active life, even though they would like to	BUT	Other adults are able to enjoy a very active life	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
81.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults feel that they have done a great deal to foster the growth of others	BUT	Other adults wish they had done much more to foster others' growth	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
82.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults are able to perform the household tasks that they need to do	BUT	Other adults have difficulty performing these tasks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Really True for me	Sort of True for me			Sort of True for me	Really True for me	
83.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults wish they could feel better about their worth as a person	BUT	Other adults feel that they are very worthwhile as a person	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
84.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Some adults are disappointed with the family relationships they have developed	BUT	Other adults are very satisfied with how they have developed relationships with their family	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Susan Harter, Ph.D., University of Denver, 2014

Abbreviations of Domains

Domains	Abbreviation	Item Numbers
Relationship with Friends	Frnd	1, 15, 28, 42, 56, 70
Family Relationships	Fam	4, 31, 45, 59, 73, 84
Nurturance	Nur	12, 24, 39, 53, 67, 81
Adequacy as Provider	Prov	5, 18, 32, 46, 60, 74
Job Competence	Job	2, 16, 29, 43, 57, 71
Cognitive Abilities	Cog	8, 21, 35, 49, 64, 75
Household Management	House	13, 25, 40, 54, 68, 82
Leisure Activities	Leis	10, 23, 38, 52, 66, 80
Health Status	Hlth	3, 17, 30, 44, 58, 72
Physical Appearance	P-App	6, 19, 33, 47, 61, 76
Morality	Mor	7, 20, 34, 48, 62, 79
Life Satisfaction	L-Sat	9, 22, 36, 51, 65, 78
Reminiscence	Rem	11, 26, 37, 50, 63, 77
Global Self-Esteem	SE	14, 27, 41, 55, 69, 83

The Self-Perception Profile for Older Adults

Harter, 2014

SCORING KEY

Transfer scores to master coding sheets

What I Am Like

	Really True for me	Sort of True for me		BUT		Sort of True for me	Really True for me
1. <i>Frnd</i>	4	3	Some adults are very satisfied with the friendships they have formed	BUT	Other adults are somewhat disappointed that they have not formed friendships that are more rewarding	2	1
2. <i>Job</i>	1	2	Some adults are somewhat disappointed about their job performance	BUT	Other adults are very satisfied with how they have performed at their job(s)	3	4
3. <i>Hlth</i>	4	3	Some adults feel that they have kept in good physical shape for their age	BUT	Other adults feel that they have not kept in the best physical shape	2	1
4. <i>Fam</i>	1	2	Some adults wish they could have contributed more to their family	BUT	Other adults feel good about how they have contributed to the family they have formed	3	4
5. <i>Prov</i>	4	3	Some adults feel that they have provided those things that are important to those they care about	BUT	Other adults are concerned that they have not been able to provide things for those they care about	2	1
6. <i>P-App</i>	4	3	Some adults are satisfied with what they have done to maintain their physical appearance	BUT	Other adults are dissatisfied with what they have done to maintain their physical appearance	2	1
7. <i>Mor</i>	4	3	Some adults feel that they have lived up to high moral standards	BUT	Other adults question whether they have lived up to high moral standards	2	1

	Really True for me	Sort of True for me			Sort of True for me	Really True for me
8. Cog	1	2	Some adults are not as mentally alert as they would like to be	BUT	Other adults feel that they do have enough mental alertness	3 4
9. L-Sat	4	3	Some adults are very happy with how they have lived their life	BUT	Other adults are unhappy with how they have lived their life	2 1
10. Leis	1	2	Some adults are not able to engage in fulfilling leisure activities	BUT	Other adults engage in leisure activities that they find fulfilling	3 4
11. Rem	4	3	Some adults find it satisfying to think back on their earlier life	BUT	Other adults do <i>not</i> find it satisfying to look back on their earlier life	2 1
12. Nur	4	3	Some adults feel that they have been nurturant toward others who are important to them	BUT	Other adults feel that they have not been nurturant enough	2 1
13. House	1	2	Some adults have difficulty taking care of their needs around the household	BUT	Other adults are able to take care of their household needs	3 4
14. SE	4	3	Some adults are generally happy being the way they are	BUT	Other adults would like to be different	2 1
15. Frnd	1	2	Some adults have not been able to stay in touch with friends who were close to them although they have wanted to	BUT	Other adults have made a point of staying in contact with close friends who mean a lot to them	3 4
16. Job	1	2	Some adults wish they had performed more successfully at the work they have chosen to do	BUT	Other adults feel that they have performed successfully at their chosen work	3 4
17. Hlth	4	3	Some adults have worked hard to maintain their good health and physical well-being	BUT	Other adults wish they would have worked harder to maintain their health and well-being	2 1
18. Prov	1	2	Some adults are not satisfied with how they have provided for important people in their life	BUT	Other adults are satisfied with how they have provided for important people in their life	3 4

	Really True for me	Sort of True for me			Sort of True for me	Really True for me
19. P-App	1	2	Some adults are not happy with the way they look	BUT	Other adults are happy with the way they look	3 4
20. Mor	1	2	Some adults question whether they have really been a person of integrity	BUT	Other adults feel that they have demonstrated integrity in their dealings with others	3 4
21. Cog	4	3	Some adults are able to figure out the things they need to understand	BUT	Other adults have difficulty figuring out what they need to understand	2 1
22. L-Sat	1	2	Some adults question important decisions that they have made in their life	BUT	Other adults feel that they have made very good life decisions	3 4
23. Leis	4	3	Some adults have developed hobbies that give them a lot of satisfaction	BUT	Other adults do <i>not</i> have satisfying hobbies that they can engage in	2 1
24. Nur	1	2	Some adults wish that they had been more caring toward significant others	BUT	Other adults feel that they have been very caring toward significant others	3 4
25. House	1	2	Some adults find that they cannot keep their household running smoothly	BUT	Other adults are able to keep a smoothly running household	3 4
26. Rem	1	2	Some adults wish they could avoid thinking about their past	BUT	Other adults welcome the chance to think about their past	3 4
27. SE	4	3	Some adults accept themselves for who they are	BUT	Other adults find it hard to accept themselves as they are	2 1
28. Frnd	1	2	Some adults wish that they could have been better friends to others that have been important to them	BUT	Other adults feel that they have been good friends to others that are important to them	3 4
29. Job	4	3	Some adults feel that they have been able to achieve their goals at their occupations	BUT	Other adults have <i>not</i> been satisfied with their achievements	2 1

	Really True for me	Sort of True for me			Sort of True for me	Really True for me
30. Hlth	1	2	Some adults have a hard time finding the energy to do what they want to do	BUT	Other adults can find the energy to do what they want to do	3 4
31. Fam	4	3	Some adults feel they have earned the respect of their family members	BUT	Other adults wish they had done more to earn the respect of their family	2 1
32. Prov	4	3	Some adults feel they have been successful in making sure that those who have been dependent upon them enjoyed the comforts of life	BUT	Other adults wish that they had been more successful in supplying these comforts	2 1
33. P-App	4	3	Some adults have been able to maintain the weight they would like to be	BUT	Other adults have <i>not</i> been able to maintain their ideal weight	2 1
34. Mor	4	3	Some adults feel that they have lived their life as a very moral person	BUT	Other adults wish that their lives were characterized by greater morality	2 1
35. Cog	1	2	Some adults have difficulty remembering what they need to remember	BUT	Other adults find that they can remember what they need to	3 4
36. L-Sat	4	3	Some adults feel that the choices they have made have given them a genuine sense of the meaning of their life	BUT	Other adults feel that their choices have caused them to question the meaning of their life	2 1
37. Rem	4	3	Some adults enjoy reviewing memories of their earlier life	BUT	Other adults dislike reviewing memories of their earlier life	2 1
38. Leis	1	2	Some adults do <i>not</i> have activities that contribute to their sense of well-being	BUT	Other adults do engage in activities that contribute to their sense of well-being	3 4
39. Nur	4	3	Some adults feel that they have made a contribution to the future by nurturing others	BUT	Other adults do <i>not</i> feel that they have made such a contribution	2 1

	Really True for me	Sort of True for me			Sort of True for me	Really True for me
40. House	4	3	Some adults are able to manage their various activities at home	BUT	Other adults have a hard time managing needed home activities	2 1
41. SE	1	2	Some adults question whether they are a worthwhile person	BUT	Other adults feel they are a worthwhile person	3 4
42. Frnd	4	3	Some adults have been able to make as many friends as they would like to have	BUT	Other adults have found it difficult to make as many friends as they would like	2 1
43. Job	4	3	Some adults are proud of their past or present accomplishments on the job	BUT	Other adults are disappointed with their accomplishments on the job	2 1
44. Hlth	1	2	Some adults wish that they would have taken better care of themselves physically	BUT	Other adults feel that they have taken good care of themselves physically	3 4
45. Fam	4	3	Some adults are very pleased with how they have treated family members	BUT	Other adults are <i>not</i> that pleased with how they have treated family members	2 1
46. Prov	4	3	Some adults have been able to provide the necessities of life for those who have been dependent upon them	BUT	Other adults have <i>not</i> been able to provide such necessities	2 1
47. P-App	1	2	Some adults are not as attractive as they feel they could be	BUT	Other adults feel that they are as attractive as they can be	3 4
48. Mor	4	3	Some adults feel that they have lived up to their ethical principles	BUT	Other adults wish that they had lived their lives more ethically	2 1
49. Cog	4	3	Some adults feel that they have the mental abilities necessary to learn new things	BUT	Other adults question whether they still have the needed mental abilities	2 1
50. Rem	1	2	Some adults prefer not to reminisce or recall earlier life events	BUT	Other adults enjoy reminiscing or recalling earlier life events	3 4

	Really True for me	Sort of True for me			Sort of True for me	Really True for me
51. L-Sat	1	2	Some adults are uncomfortable with the life paths they selected	BUT	Other adults feel very comfortable about the life paths they have chosen	3 4
52. Leis	4	3	Some adults keep themselves busy at things they enjoy doing	BUT	Other adults are unable to find activities they enjoy that would keep them busy	2 1
53. Nur	1	2	Some adults are disappointed in themselves for not contributing more to the personal development of those younger than they are	BUT	Other adults feel that they have contributed greatly to the personal development of others who are younger	3 4
54. House	4	3	Some adults can handle what needs to be done at home	BUT	Other adults have difficulty handling what needs to be done at home	2 1
55. SE	1	2	Some adults are dissatisfied with themselves	BUT	Other adults are satisfied with themselves	3 4
56. Frnd	4	3	Some adults feel that they have the time and energy to form as many friendships as they would like	BUT	For other adults, it is difficult to find the time and energy to form as many friendships as they'd like	2 1
57. Job	1	2	Some adults wish they had been more productive at the work they have chosen to do	BUT	Other adults feel that they have been productive at the work they have chosen to do	3 4
58. Hlth	4	3	Some adults can control their aches and pains so that they don't interfere with their activities	BUT	Other adults find it very difficult to control interfering aches and pains	2 1
59. Fam	1	2	Some adults have not worked that hard to maintain close ties with family members	BUT	Other adults have worked hard to maintain close ties with their family	3 4
60. Prov	1	2	Some adults have had difficulty giving those they care about the things they wanted or needed	BUT	Other adults have been able to give those they care about what they have wanted or needed	3 4

	Really True for me	Sort of True for me			Sort of True for me	Really True for me
61. P-App	4	3	Some adults feel that they have done things to make themselves look the way they want to look	BUT	Other adults feel that they have not done things to make them look the way they want to look	2 1
62. Mor	1	2	Some adults have questioned the morality of their behavior	BUT	Other adults feel that their behavior has been very moral	3 4
63. Rem	4	3	Some adults fondly look back on their past experiences	BUT	Other adults do not fondly look back on past experiences	2 1
64. Cog	1	2	Some adults feel stupid because they can't figure out how to solve certain problems	BUT	Other adults feel that they still have the skills needed to solve problems that confront them	3 4
65. L-Sat	1	2	Some adults experience turmoil about how they have led their lives	BUT	Other adults have derived a sense of inner peace from how they have chosen to live their lives	3 4
66. Leis	1	2	Some adults are bored or unhappy because they can't engage in interesting activities	BUT	Other adults are able to find and participate in activities they find interesting	3 4
67. Nur	1	2	Some adults do not feel that they are very nurturing of others	BUT	Other adults feel that they are good at nurturing others	3 4
68. House	1	2	Some adults find it difficult to make the arrangements necessary to manage their household activities	BUT	Other adults feel that they are quite capable of making the necessary arrangements	3 4
69. SE	4	3	Some adults like the kind of person they are	BUT	Other adults wish they were very different	2 1
70. Frnd	1	2	Some adults have found that they have not been able to maintain relationships with friends who are important to them	BUT	Other adults have been able to keep up friendships with people that are important	3 4
71. Job	4	3	Some adults are very satisfied with what they have done on the job	BUT	Other adults are disappointed with what they have done on the job	2 1

	Really True for me	Sort of True for me			Sort of True for me	Really True for me
72. Hlth	1	2	Some adults wish they were living a healthier lifestyle	BUT	Other adults feel that they are living a very healthy lifestyle	3 4
73. Fam	1	2	Some adults are not that proud of the relationships they have developed with family members	BUT	Other adults are quite proud of the relationships they have developed with members of their family	3 4
74. Prov	1	2	Some adults have not been able to provide for the needs of those who are important to them	BUT	Other adults have been able to provide for the needs of others who are important to them	3 4
75. Cog	4	3	Some adults are pleased that they can still think as quickly as ever	BUT	Other adults find it difficult to accept that their thinking has slowed down	2 1
76. P-App	1	2	Some adults have not been able to meet the standards of physical appearance that are important to them	BUT	Other adults feel that they have met their standards of physical appearance	3 4
77. Rem	1	2	Some adults do not feel that what they share about earlier life experiences is that valuable	BUT	Other adults feel that what they have to share about earlier life experiences is valuable	3 4
78. L-Sat	4	3	Some adults feel that there has been a sense of purpose to how they have led their lives	BUT	Other adults are concerned that their life seems to lack purpose	2 1
79. Mor	1	2	Some adults have found it difficult to uphold their ethical values	BUT	Other adults have found that they have upheld strong ethical values	3 4
80. Leis	1	2	Some adults do not lead a very active life, even though they would like to	BUT	Other adults are able to enjoy a very active life	3 4
81. Nur	4	3	Some adults feel that they have done a great deal to foster the growth of others	BUT	Other adults wish they had done much more to foster others' growth	2 1
82. House	4	3	Some adults are able to perform the household tasks that they need to do	BUT	Other adults have difficulty performing these tasks	2 1

	Really True for me	Sort of True for me			Sort of True for me	Really True for me
83. SE	1	2	Some adults wish they could feel better about their worth as a person	BUT	Other adults feel that they are very worthwhile as a person	3 4
84. Fam	1	2	Some adults are disappointed with the family relationships they have developed	BUT	Other adults are very satisfied with how they have developed relationships with their family	3 4

Domains Tapped by our Instruments at each Period of the Lifespan
(Harter, 2012; *Construction of the Self*)

<i>Early childhood</i>	<i>Middle to late childhood</i>	<i>Adolescence</i>	<i>College years</i>	<i>Early through middle adulthood</i>	<i>Late Adulthood</i>
Cognitive competence	Scholastic competence	Scholastic competence	Scholastic competence Intellectual ability Creativity	Intelligence	Cognitive abilities
Physical competence	Athletic competence	Job competence Athletic competence	Job competence Athletic competence	Job competence Athletic competence	Job competence
Physical appearance	Physical appearance	Physical appearance	Physical appearance	Physical appearance	Physical appearance
Social competence	Social competence	Social competence	Peer acceptance	Sociability	
		Close friendship Romantic relationships	Close friendship Romantic relationships Relationships with parents	Close friendship Intimate relationships	Relationships with friends Family relationships
Behavioral conduct	Behavioral conduct	Conduct/morality	Morality Sense of humor	Morality Sense of humor Nurturance Household management Adequacy as a provider	Morality Nurturance Household management Adequacy as a provider Leisure activities Health status Life satisfaction Reminiscence
	Global self-worth	Global self-worth	Global self-worth	Global self-worth	Global self-worth

Harter and Colleagues' Self-Report Manuals Available Online

- (a) The Pictorial Scale of Perceived Competence and Social Acceptance for Young Children

Manual for all four versions:

Picture Plates for preschool-kindergarten BOYS

Picture Plates for preschool-kindergarten GIRLS

Picture Plates for first-second grade BOYS

Picture Plates for first-second grade GIRLS

- (b) The Self-Perception Profile for Children: Manual and Questionnaires

- (c) The Self-Perception Profile for Adolescents: Manual and Questionnaires

- (d) The Self-Perception Profile for Learning Disabled Students: Manual and Questionnaires

- (e) The Self-Perception Profile for College Students: Manual and Questionnaires

- (f) The Self-Perception Profile for Adults: Manual and Questionnaires

- (g) The Self-Perception Profile for Older Adults: Questionnaire

- (h) The Social Support Scale for Children and Adolescents: Manual and Questionnaire

- (i) The Dimensions of Depression Scale for Children and Adolescents: Manual and Questionnaire

- (j) Intrinsic versus Extrinsic Motivation in the Classroom for Children and Adolescents: Manual and Questionnaire