Life Review

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Every person has certain memories and unresolved conflicts in their life. Sometimes these memories are pleasant, the other times, not so pleasing. These memories and unresolved conflicts haunt us for the rest of our life and become a cause of mental disturbance, especially in old age. At this stage of life, a person consciously returns to their past life and revisits the memories he or she once created in their life. These memories include both pleasant and unpleasant ones with the addition of unresolved conflicts (Moral et al., 2015). This is a natural process and happens for the purpose of reevaluation and resolution. It has also been given a specific name “Life Review”.

The process of life review is universal and takes place in almost every individual, usually in the final years of their life, irrespective of gender, nationality, religion, caste, color, creed, financial status or academic background. Sometimes the person experiencing it is not completely aware of it and tends to defend themselves against its presence but it is there.

The concept of life review helps a lot in shaping up the perceptions and understanding of various things in life. There exists a treatment or therapy in the area of healthcare and nursing known as “Life Review Therapy”. The treatment, devised by well-known psychiatrist Dr. Robert Butler, has been in practice for a long time, has proven to be extremely beneficial for patients, especially in the case of relatively older patients and near-to-death individuals (Serrano, Latorre, Gatz, & Montanes, 2004). It helps them relax and come to peace with their past experiences and issues.

The process of life review may sound similar to ordinary remembering or reminiscence, but both of them are very different. Many people, even the experts and therapists, confuse both these terms and use them interchangeably but there lies a huge difference between both of them. Reminiscence is a process that is more informal and spontaneous, it can take place with any person without the limitation of time and place. It happens mostly for remembering the happy phases of one’s life (Haber, 2006). One the other hand, Life Review is more of a formal and structured process. It is much more comprehensive in nature than simple reminiscence and involves remembrance from the very early stages of life, i.e., childhood till the old age (or the current age).

**References**

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