

Phase III Data Collection and Analysis

The third data-gathering instrument was a structured interview questionnaire that was constructed based on analysis of Phase I and Phase II data. Data collection in Phase III occurred only after all Phase I data had been scored and Phase II data analyzed in their entirety. Phase III interviews took place between August 8 and November 24, 2008. From the sample of 122 coupled participants who provided Self and Partner narratives for the ORI¹ (Phase I data collection) and who completed the online questionnaire (Phase II data collection), two criteria were used to support researcher's intent to select approximately 25% of the sample (approximately 30 individual participants, 15 couples) for Phase III data collection. The first criterion for selection was a strong ability for the participant to articulate the concept of longevity as demonstrated by the content of his ORI Self and Partner narratives. The second criterion for selection was a high score corresponding to the ORI Factors. High scores were those in the 80th and 90th percentiles of the range established by the minimum and maximum scores for each ORI factor for the entire 122 participant sample. The selection criteria yielded 44 participants or 22 couples, all of whom were contacted by email and invited to be interviewed. The resulting interviews were administered to 28 participants, 14 couples.

The semi-structured, Phase III interviews, which were the result of aggregate patterns and/or categories that emerged in the Phase II online questionnaire data, lasted 30 to 40 minutes and were digitally audio recorded, then transcribed. Narratives generated from the Phase III interviews were subjected to content analysis² Although general categories based on Phase I and Phase II data were used to generate questions asked in Phase III, the interviews themselves revealed new sub-categories and themes. Accordingly, the Phase III narratives generated additional findings, and although not necessarily attributable to the entire sample of 122 participants, they were *representative* of certain findings that applied generally to the sample.

¹ For a quick overview of the Object Relations Inventory, please click on the “About the ORI” link.

² Lieblich, A., Tuval-Mashiach, R., & Zilber, T. (1998). *Narrative research: Reading, analysis, and interpretation*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.