

## EXAMPLE Annotated Bibliography Form

This is an actual example of an annotated bibliography that a student wrote. This is the standard I go by:

Citation	Bar-Tur, L., Levy-Shiff, R., & Burns, A. (1998). Well-being in aging: mental engagements in elderly men as a moderator of losses. <i>Journal of Aging Studies</i> , 12(1), 1-17. Retrieved January 23, 2007 from Ebscohost database.
What is the article about?	This article discusses a study of sixty elderly men aged 63 to 83 in Sydney, Australia. A development and phenomenological approach was used in subjective and objective assessments. An audio taped pretest was first conducted and consisted of lengthy open interviews with participants relating to activities, interests, reminisces, relationships, and thoughts. It was noted that participants helped to rephrase some questions which was used in the development of the interview schedule. The final interview consisted of 5 sections which were used to assess background information, mental engagements (activities, hobbies, interests, etc), emotional engagements with significant others, losses in aging (work, health, financial, social), and subjective well-being.
Why was the research performed?	The purpose of this study was to examine the intra-psycho components of adjustment in aging. It was designed to determine whether present and past mental and emotional engagements had positive effects on the well-being of elderly men.
Findings	Higher degrees of perceived mental engagement were found to be indicators of well-being and a moderator of losses associated with work, health, and finance. Common forms of mental engagement listed by participants were hobbies, studies, community affairs, reading, and writing, listening to radio, and watching television. In this sample, retirement was perceived as a significant loss, or crisis, even though it was voluntary in the majority of cases. The authors believe that mental engagement fills the void of lost work or health. Emotional engagements had a positive association with well-being, but did not moderate losses. The latter was attributed to the gender of the sample, as men tend to place less importance on relationships and emotional support.
Strengths	As in similar studies, the authors used a multi-dimensional approach to measure well-being in this sample. The article also demonstrated the positive effects of mental engagement, which supports the findings of previous studies cited by the authors.
Weaknesses	The purpose of the study was to examine losses, particularly those related to retirement. In Australia, women are traditionally homemakers; therefore the sample was limited to men. While the results appear to have some validity, they cannot be used to make generalizations about retired

	older men.
Implications for Practice	Gender differences should be considered when working with clients. Men and women have different perceptions and different needs. That men attach so much importance to work is no surprise. Services should be designed to meet the needs of individuals to support continued engagement in activities considered to be meaningful by the client.
Key words	Well-being, retirement, mental engagement, emotional engagement.

Citation	Barefoot, J. C., Maynard, K. E., Beckham, J.C., Brummett, B. H., Hooker, K., & Siegler, I.C. (1998). Trust, health, and longevity. <i>Journal of Behavioral Medicine</i> , 21(6), 517-526. Retrieved January 19, 2007 from PsychARTICLES database.
What is the article about?	This article details a study conducted from 1978-1992 to determine the potential value of positive attitudes and interpersonal relations based on trust. The authors cite Erik Erikson, who believed the capacity to trust others is critical to the development of a healthy personality and necessary for successful social adjustment. Using the Rotter Interpersonal Trust Scale (ITS), researchers measured 19 different items at baseline. Also measured at baseline were psychological well-being, life satisfaction, and functional health. These items were measured again in 1984 and 1986 follow-ups.
Why was the research performed?	In a review of the literature, the authors noted that few studies in trust had explicitly addressed trust as an individual variable related to personal health and even fewer had examined this variable in an older population. This study was an evaluation of the relationship between trust and health and was used to predict psychological well-being, functional health and longevity in a sample of 50 men and 50 women aged 55 to 80 over a period of almost 14 years.
Findings	A correlation was found in trust scores and life satisfaction through cross-sectional evaluation however, prospective analysis failed to show a relationship between baseline ITS scores in the 1984 and 1986 follow-ups. High levels of trust was associated with several indicators of good health and survival over a 14 year period. The authors believed this was illustrative of the “protective value” of positive interpersonal attitude.
Strengths	Researchers had good intentions in examining trust as a critical component of healthy aging, but the design of the study did not seem well thought out.
Weaknesses	Weaknesses in this study include sample size (only 100 participants), the wide range of participants’ age (49 of 100 participants were deceased in 1992 at conclusion of the study), the authors relied heavily on complementary studies on cynical mistrust to support results of this study.
Implications for Practice	Interactions based on trust are central to social work practice. This article provided some useful, yet inconclusive information. The authors noted that suspiciousness increases with age, which workers should keep in mind when working with older clients. Clearly, more research is needed

	in this area.
Key words	Older people, trust, relationships, life satisfaction.

Citation	Crosnoe, R. & Elder, G. H. (2002). Successful adaptation in the later years: a life course approach to aging. <i>Social Psychology Quarterly</i> , 65 (4), 309-328. Retrieved January 25, 2007 from JSTOR database.
What is the article about?	This article examines the life course process as a fundamental aspect in successful aging. The study was based on data from the Stanford-Terman study which began in 1922. The original study was conducted to determine what kind of adults bright children would become. Using a gender specific subgroup of data, the authors focused on a sample of men born between 1905 and 1914 (about 80 percent of the original sample). The final sample was composed of 424 men who were still living in the 1970's. The results of the study are based on a cluster analysis of data obtained in 1972 and 1977 that examined such things as social pathways (family and work), physical and mental health (including health behavior such as alcoholism), and social networks (which include marriage, friendship and religion). The authors also examined turning points (World War II and family death), seeing these as events that could limit enjoyment or engagement later in life. From this sample group, the authors established 4 profiles of aging; those less adjusted, those who were career focused but socially disengaged, those who were family-focused, and those who were well-rounded (successful in all subjective life domains). The findings were used to determine levels of adjustment, activity and engagement within the sample.
Why was the research performed?	The intent of the study was to identify more and less successful aging styles using a holistic approach. They also examined role activities, life satisfaction and vitality in combination to better understand how people view their circumstances and cope with setbacks. "Studying the aging process as multifaceted and embedded in the life course" required that they draw on a long-term longitudinal data set. The Stanford-Terman study of gifted children covered a six decade period and despite certain limitations was found suitable for this study due to the "breadth, scope, and integration of quantitative with qualitative information". By examining lifelong experiences, the authors hoped to determine why some individuals experience this time of life as one of renewal and activity and others experience frustration and decline.
Findings	The well-rounded men were considered the most successful at aging because they had "excelled in multiple domains", at work, home and in the community throughout the life course and into later life. They had more stable marriages, healthier lifestyles, and managed to avoid

	<p>traumatic experiences. This was partially attributed to a higher socioeconomic status that allowed them to participate more fully in various domains and alleviated worry and stress.</p> <p>The less adjusted men lagged behind the other groups on most factors and did not excel in any domain. Their physical and emotional health during later years was worse compared to other groups. They had also been less successful in their careers and had lacked stable marriages throughout adulthood. These factors were considered potential explanations for a lack of activity, fewer social ties, and less engagement in later life. Also, traumatic events such as combat experience during WWII and the death of a spouse or child seemed to “disrupt development earlier in life in ways that persisted into their later years”. Researchers saw this as an impediment to overall adjustment.</p> <p>The family-focused men were about average in most domains, but more “strongly engaged” in family life. They were more similar to the well-rounded men than other groups, but the main differences were related to their current lives. They were less highly educated and experienced poorer physical health, which was related to current lower vitality and activity. The researchers noted the stable marital quality experienced in this group and the well-rounded group, seeing it as a “base of psychological support that allows for the exploration of new experiences and effective coping with setbacks” and providing overall stability to the life course.</p> <p>The career-focused but socially disengaged men, were found to have the least family and civic involvement, and scored somewhat lower on psychological factors. They were high on perceived occupational success, second only to the well-rounded group. Their orientation toward work at the expense of other domains resulted in negative experiences leading up and into later years. The group reported the greatest and most persistent difficulties such as marital instability and alcoholism, and also experienced turning-points that had long-term negative consequences. This group was more closely related to the less adjusted group although there were significant differences in perceptions of career experiences.</p>
Strengths	The strengths of this study are the vast time span covered by the research, the multi-method collection of data, and the magnitude of factors under consideration.
Weaknesses	This was a highly specialized sample of men who were highly intelligent, came from primarily white middle-class families, and generally attained high levels of education. While these characteristics cannot be generalized, the researchers felt the study was “unmitigated” because comparisons with the general populations demonstrated few differences in “marriage, divorce and family experiences”. A similar study of women involved in the original Stanford-Terman study seems to be in order.

Implications for Practice	The authors wrote “knowledge of the journey supplements knowledge about the destination in explaining patterns of adjustment in the later years”. This is why we take a social history in social work practice focusing on developmental data, socioeconomic status, and family and personal relationships. It is important to understand patterns of adjustment (or maladjustment) when planning interventions.
Key words	Older men, levels of adjustment, family involvement, disengagement.

Citation	Feldman, P. H. & Oberlink, M. R. (2003). Developing community indicators to promote the health and well-being of older people. <i>Family and Community Health</i> , 26(4), 268-274. Retrieved January 26, 2007 from EBSCOHOST database.
What is the article about?	A study conducted by the Center for Home Care Policy and Research and called the AdvantAge Initiative is detailed in this article. This was a qualitative research project designed to establish a set of objective measures of elder-friendliness to be used in the development of an elder-friendly community. 14 focus groups were conducted in 4 U.S. cities to ensure the data collected would reflect the perspectives of a people living in a variety of areas. The cities included Chicago, IL, Allentown, PA, Asheville, NC, and Long Beach, CA. Focus groups consisted of 3-4 specific population groups: Age 75+, age 60-74, age 35-39, and community leaders. The age specific groups had to meet certain criteria including income, ethnicity, and health status to be representative of a variety of demographics. The focus groups were conducted by a professional survey research company and were attended by the team involved in the project. Participants had been told the purpose of the project in advance and had been encouraged to create collages to depict their opinions.
Why was the research performed?	The study was conducted to establish a set of indicators to be used to promote and facilitate community action for the benefit of older people. Such action is anticipated to allow this population to remain independent, stay active in the community, and to reduce the risk of isolation.
Findings	A total of 33 indicators were developed in 4 categories: Basic needs, physiological, mental health and well-being, maximization of independence, and social and civic engagement. Two significant findings came from the focus groups: Comments from participants were very similar at all locations and factors considered necessary for successful living were similar, regardless of age. Financial security and health and healthcare were top concerns of the participants, although these may not be considered community issues. Social connections were the next priority which included educational, cultural, and meaningful work activities. Respondents believed that friends and family members living nearby help keep them active in the community and preferred receiving assistance from them rather than a service agency. Religious services were also noted for social benefits rather than spiritual dimensions. Most said they wanted to remain in their homes, seeing it as a measure of

	<p>independence, but had unrealistic expectations about how this could be managed. Few were aware of housing options or support services. Many said they would move to assisted-living facilities if they could no longer live independently as they did not want to be burdensome to children. Transportation and safety were also important factors. To feel safe from crime and not fear leaving home were safety issues. Transportation was related to independence and it was noted that public transportation was insufficient in meeting needs.</p>
Strengths	<p>Focus groups provide data and give insight into a specific subject because respondents can vocalize their opinions. Such studies may also provide information on unanticipated issues. In this case, the concerns of older adults were the primary issue.</p>
Weaknesses	<p>The authors admitted the limitation of the focus group process in that there is potential bias toward healthy participants. Participants were required to go to facilities where discussions were being held. This sample may not be representative of the general population due to possible exclusion of disabled or less healthy respondents,</p>
Implications for Practice	<p>The community approach to aging is encouraging due to a growing aging population, it should not be only a personal or family concern. Communities working together with social service providers can effectively enhance the quality of life for older community dwellers.</p>
Key words	<p>Older people, well-being, needs, social connections, community, safety.</p>

Citation	Hardy, S.E., Concato, J., & Gill, T.M. (2004). Resilience of community-dwelling older persons. <i>Journal of the American Geriatrics Society</i> , 52(2), 257-261. Retrieved January 21, 2007 from EBSCOHOST database.
What is the article about?	This article details a cross-sectional study examining patterns of resilience in older people. The sample consisted of 546 non-disabled participants aged 70 and older who had experienced a stressful life event within the last 5 years, but not within the last month. In an open-ended manner, participants were asked to identify the most stressful life event they had experienced in the last 5 years. Events were grouped into 4 categories: personal illness, death of a family member or friend, illness of a family member or friend, and non-medical event. Those who identified an event were asked to rate the stressfulness on a scale of 0 to 10.
Why was the research performed?	The authors of this study implemented a new scale to measure resilience based on response to a stressful event. Other measures were taken to assess demographic, clinical, functional, and psychosocial factors connected with high resilience. For the purposes of this study, resilience response was defined as “a small initial decremental effect of the event, a rapid recovery, minimal negative long term consequences, and positive long-term consequences of the event.”
Findings	Results of this study indicate older persons have a wide range of resilience in response to a negative life event. A negative correlation between resilience and stressfulness were found; the more stressful the event, the more negative the consequences. It was found that independence in instrumental activities of daily living (IADL), good to excellent self-rated health, and few depressive symptoms were associated with high resilience. Multivariate analysis did not indicate clinical or demographic factors to be related to higher levels of resilience. Functional and psychosocial factors appeared to be more closely related to resilience in this sample.
Strengths	Examining resilience in response to a stressful event was an innovative approach however, limitations of the study indicate some refinement in the methodology is in order.
Weaknesses	Ninety percent of the participants were white and the remainder was primarily African American. This does not seem representative of the general population. It was noted that scores could not be calculated for almost one quarter of participants, limiting generalizability. Reliability of the scale, while suitable for group comparisons, proved inadequate for

	individual comparisons.
Implications for Practice	Stressful events are common presenting problems in social work practice. Understanding patterns of resilience could be instrumental in interventions with an older population. More research is necessary in this area to determine specific factors that contributes to resilience.
Key words	Older people, activities of daily living, resilience.

Citation	Lawton, M.P., Moss, M.S., Winter, L., & Hoffman, C. (2002). Motivation in later life: personal projects and well-being. <i>Psychology and Aging</i> , 17(4), 539-547. Retrieved January 21, 2007 from PsychARTICLES database.
What is the article about?	This article examines motivation in older adults in terms of well-being associated with “personal projects”. A personal project is a planned action intended to maintain or attain a particular state. Such projects can be a long-term goal or short term, such as the planning and preparation of a meal. They may be specific or abstract, and many involve some form of social activity. This study included 600 participants of varying health aged 70 or older. 60 percent were female, with half of these being white, and half were African American. All of the participants were interviewed in their homes by appointment. A single, mostly quantitative interview lasting approximately 90 minutes was used to assess health conditions, abstraction abilities, positive affect and depression, and valuation of life. Near the end of each interview, participants were asked 4 open-ended questions to assess the area of personal goals. These questions were related to the future, planning, meaning in life, and activities and goals.
Why was the research performed?	The purpose of this study was two-fold: first, the authors wanted to develop a typology of personal projects by identifying the structure of such projects as defined by participants, and to identify demographic and psychosocial correlates of personal project factors. The second purpose was to examine associations of health and well-being with personal projects.
Findings	Researchers identified and coded 24 different categories of personal projects. The focus of most personal projects was related to family (66%) and friends (46%). Trips and vacations were rated 42 percent, religious references 30 percent, home maintenance 24 percent, and helping others 22 percent. Advanced age was associated with fewer projects, especially physical and intellectual activities, but not with spiritual and other-directed activities. Women were more likely to name activities of daily living (such as personal care, meal preparation, or shopping) as personal projects. White participants mentioned more projects, especially intellectual activities, but had fewer spiritual/moral activities than African American participants. Positive affect and valuation of life were associated with a greater number of personal projects. The authors identified the motivational process as an open system, dependent on

	interactions and reciprocal feedback. They stressed that social inequalities often exist in this type of system, and that “those who are more advantaged are also more socially engaged, and more free to differentiate and act on multiple projects.”
Strengths	Researchers were able to identify 24 different items considered personal projects as defined by participants. This may help in the development of standardized questionnaires for future research in this area.
Weaknesses	Questions regarding personal projects were asked near the end of the 90 minute interview. Researchers noted that participants had difficulty naming planned activities and goals. This was attributed to the nature of the preceding sections of the interview which required brief responses. Fatigue was also considered a factor due to the length of the interview. Additionally, examples were not provided to because pretests had shown that examples might cause bias and potentially limit responses.
Implications for Practice	More research is needed to further assess the benefits of motivation in later life. Involvement in life is one measure of well-being and personal projects seem to give some individuals a sense of purpose and provide meaning in life. Support services, interventions, and activity programs should utilize personal projects to enhance clients’ well-being. As the authors emphasized, “while mental health may be the goal of such interventions, we cannot ignore interim goals such as enjoyment of a single day or a feeling of personal fulfillment that comes from the completion of a single personal project.”
Key words	Older people, meaning, social activities, activities of daily living, reciprocal feedback, goals.

Citation	Linn, M.W., Hunter, K.I., & Perry, P.R. (1979). Differences by sex and ethnicity in the psychosocial adjustment of the elderly. <i>Journal of Health and Social Behavior</i> , 20, 273-281. Retrieved January 14, 2007 from JSTOR database.
What is the article about?	The article details a study conducted in Miami, Florida from 1976-1978 to examine the differences by gender and ethnicity in the psychosocial adjustment of older adults. The sample was chosen from a group of low income people receiving outpatient clinic services from a large university county hospital. 283 black, Cuban and white men and women age 65 or older participated in the study which was designed to measure social participation, depression, social functioning, life satisfaction, and self-esteem respectively. Variables such as age, social class, level of disability, and marital status were assessed in terms of their effect on adjustment in relation to gender and culture
Why was the research performed?	The authors cited previous ethnic group studies, primarily comparing black and white elders or elderly Mexican-Americans and Chinese-Americans with whites and noted the limited knowledge in terms of the psychosocial functioning of other minorities. They observed that minorities represent a significant segment of the population in certain areas of this country, and used Miami as an example due to its large Cuban population. This was a comparative study of the psychosocial functioning of elderly black, white and Cuban males and females who presented themselves for outpatient medical treatment. The study was conducted to determine the extent of gender and cultural influences on the psychosocial adjustment of the elderly in relation to social participation, depression, social functioning, life satisfaction, and self-esteem.
Findings	Significant differences in social adjustment according to ethnicity were indicated in this study; however gender was not a determinant. A high level of self-esteem comparable to male participants was noted and attributed to a higher level of social participation by female participants and media coverage of the feminist movement that was prevalent during this time. This finding contrasts previous studies which reported lower self-concepts in women than in men and was the only gender difference of significance. Ethnic differences were more conclusive; black participants showed the best level of adjustment, Cuban participants were the most dysfunctional and white participants' functionality not quite as

	<p>low as the Cuban participants. These are some of the results: Blacks had significantly low levels of depression and better self-concepts than the other participants. The authors believed this fact was substantiated by comparing suicide rates for white and black males and females aged 70-74. It is interesting to note that black participants in the study measured lower in social class and were more physically disabled than the other groups yet were less depressed and expressed greater self-esteem. Some positive influences such as psychosocial support from an extended family, the likelihood that there are fewer age-related negative stereotypes in minority groups and long term residency in the community were seen as indicators for better overall adjustment.</p> <p>The white participants had significantly low levels of self-esteem compared to the other groups, which was associated with “the way the white core culture values youth”. It was also suggested that since 58 percent of the white participants had relocated to the area late in life, a change in environment could contribute to depression and low self-concept.</p> <p>The Cuban participants had the lowest level of adjustment. 96 percent of the Cubans in the sample had immigrated to Miami from Cuba, most after age 60. This was related to a lack of social participation, despite the frequent socializing within the Cuban subculture. The authors listed this “uprootedness” as being strongest in Cuban immigrants and whites who had recently relocated to the area and as the most significant determinant of social adjustment.</p>
Strengths	<p>The focus on lower class individuals using clinic care limited the variance in social class among the groups. The authors referred to previous research and found some evidence to support or refute previous findings. The authors were diligent in their efforts to explain discrepancies in the results and presented numerous explanations for variances, setting the stage for future research projects.</p>
Weaknesses	<p>The size of the sample and manner in which participants were recruited cannot be generalized to make broad assessments of elderly individuals. The authors state that it is only “representative of three ethnic groups who used who used ambulatory care in a large medical center in a highly mobile community”. One might also wonder if the study is outdated, considering the overall growth in the elderly population and increased levels of immigration during the last thirty years.</p>
Implications for Practice	<p>Information gleaned from this article could be useful in developing culturally competent social work practice skills and in service provision. Articles of this type lead to greater understanding of the ethnic and cultural variables associated with aging, yet the authors were correct in stressing the results should not be used to make generalizations. Clearly, there is still a great need for research related to ethnicity and aging,</p>
Key words	<p>Older people, ethnicity, self- esteem, adjustment, social participation.</p>

Citation	Majercsik, E. (2005). Hierarchy of needs of geriatric patients. <i>Gerontology</i> , 51, 170-173. Retrieved January 25, 2007 from EBSCOHOST database.
What is the article about?	This is a study of 303 randomly selected geriatrics patients at a hospital in Budapest, Hungary. Participants were all over age 60 and consisted of 83 men and 220 women. Using Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory, researchers developed a questionnaire of 10 paired comparisons related to human needs. The questionnaire was then administered to participants who were proven to have consistent thinking and had surpassed a pre-established threshold in the Mini Mental State Examination.
Why was the research performed?	The purpose of this study was to determine the hierarchy of needs of geriatric patients in clinical settings to improve quality of care. Researchers believed that using a psychometric technique based on a motivational approach was the best form of assessment.
Findings	Maslow's theory was not proven to be valid in this sample. The needs of this group were, in essence, the reverse of Maslow's model. Self-actualization was the first fundamental need, followed by safety, esteem, love, and last, physiological. Only the safety need remained at the original position. The author attributed this difference to the characteristics of the sample being tested and noted that in the civilized world, subsistence needs are generally met. It is feasible that self-actualization has become a prime motive as this group has recognized their limitations and lack of opportunities. The increased need for esteem can be related to the social feedback that comes from self-actualization. It becomes even more important in the case of limited lifespan (terminal). The author believed the safety need remained stable, noting declining family relations or loss of a partner contributes to the process of isolation.
Strengths	This was an interesting approach to needs assessment in older people. The study seems to have some validity and should be tested on other samples to test reliability.
Weaknesses	Of the 303 participants in the original sample, only the responses of 95 were used to determine the generalized hierarchy. The remainder had been eliminated from consideration due to a low consistency quotient and/or low scores on the Mini Mental State Examination.
Implications for Practice	While this study was conducted to be used in nursing practice, the implications could be useful in the provision of other services to older people. Similar studies in different samples could yield different results.

	A major portion of social work practice involves the assessment of a client's needs. This study confirms that practitioners should never make assumptions based on a theoretical perspective. Such determinations are made through in-depth interviews with clients.
Key words	Older people, needs, motivation, social feedback, safety, self-esteem, self-actualization.

Citation	Sarvmaki, A. & Stenbock-Hult, B. (2000). Quality of life in old age. <i>Journal of Advanced Nursing</i> , 32(4), 1025-1033. Retrieved January 22, 2007 from EBSCOHOST database.
What is the article about?	This article elaborates on a cross-sectional survey study of an age-stratified sample of 300 older people in Finland. The age groups were 75 to 79 years old, 80 to 85 years old, and those older than 85. The authors propose there are three aspects to quality of life: a sense of well-being, meaning in life, and value (self-worth). They also note health and socioeconomic factors can have positive or negative impact on quality of life, good health or high socioeconomic status are no guarantee of a good quality life. The authors see well-being as a hedonistic aspect of life that includes some measure of pleasure, joy, and satisfaction. It was noted that Viktor Frankl's concept of humans as meaning-seeking, meaning-creating beings can be associated with quality of life. Sense of value or self-worth was also considered to be essential, mostly in terms of involvement worthwhile activities. Using these three criteria, researchers examined the effects of external and intra-individual conditions related to quality of life.
Why was the research performed?	The purpose of this study was to describe quality of life among elderly people using a structured interview related to various aspects of life. Additionally, preliminary testing of a model measuring external conditions (biophysical and sociocultural) and intra-individual conditions (functional capacity, coping mechanisms, and personality) was done.
Findings	The participants indicated high levels of satisfaction with their living area, economic situation, and health. There were no differences in these areas with respect to age, gender, or marital status. Almost one-third of the sample had a clear sense of purpose in life, but almost one-fifth expressed no purpose. Significant differences in sense of purpose were identified within the 3 age groups. With advanced age came increasingly negative responses. Most participants scored high in activities of daily living. 82 percent were classified as independent, 15 percent partly dependent and 3 percent totally dependent. 62 percent lived alone and 38 percent were living with someone else (spouse, family, or friend). Self-esteem was found to be higher in the youngest age group (75-79) than in the older participants. Social networks were dominated by children. 55 percent of the participants met with children at least once a week and about one-third met with friends, neighbors, or grandchildren weekly.

	Purpose in life was related primarily to family networks, while self-esteem was associated more with other networks.
Strengths	The multi-dimensional approach used in this study is consistent with a holistic approach. Quality of life is influenced by internal and external factors, regardless of age. This study was moderately successful in determining specific factors related to quality of life for older individuals.
Weaknesses	The study was restricted to community-dwelling people in a medium sized city in Finland, a possible explanation for the relatively high level of quality of life. The authors also stated that the instruments used to measure well-being had not been specifically developed for use with this population.
Implications for Practice	This does seem to support other research related to quality of life, but there are many reasons this study cannot be used to generalize quality of life for older people, mostly related to demographics. Similar studies are necessary in various locations to support these findings.
Key words	Older people, meaning, self-worth, social networks, purpose in life, quality of life, self esteem.

Citation	Siebert, D.C., Mutran, E.J., & Reitzes, D.C. (1999). Friendship and social support: the importance of role identity to aging adults. <i>Social Work</i> , 44(6), 522-533. Retrieved January 13, 2007 from EBSCOHOST database.
What is the article about?	This article details a 5 year longitudinal study conducted in the Raleigh-Durham-Chapel Hill area of North Carolina. The baseline sample consisted of 826 men and women aged 58 to 64 who were working a minimum of 35 hours a week. Participants were contacted at 6 month intervals by telephone to check for employment status and to promote continued participation in the study. At the end of the study, data was collected from the 747 who had not been lost through attrition and of these, 438 were still working full-time. Life satisfaction was used as the measure of well-being. Respondents were asked to rate seven items on a 4 point scale ranging from 1 (very dissatisfied) to 4 (very satisfied). The seven items rated were: satisfaction with where they lived, leisure activities, marital or dating relationships, friendships, relationships with children, health and work. Also measured were the respondent's identity meanings as friend. Using 10 pairs of adjectives organized in a semantic differential five-point format, were asked to rate themselves according to such phrases as "As a friend, I am....." The pairs included social-solitary, confident-anxious, happy-sad, open-closed, warm-cold, competent-not competent, relaxed-tense, successful-unsuccessful, active-inactive, and interested in others-interested in self. Levels of commitment to the friendship role were measured in a similar manner. Also measured were density of social networks and frequency of contact with network members. Control variables included income, education attainment, and occupation.
Why was the research performed?	The purpose of this study was to examine role identity theory as means of predicting the impact of friendship on the well-being of older adults. Drawing on previous empirical findings that noted differences by gender and in support by relatives and friends, the authors decided to focus on the friendship role specifically to determine gender differences in the social support process. A major goal of the study was to track the transition from work to retirement over a five year period.
Findings	The study began with <i>t</i> tests for differences by gender and most variables were relatively normally distributed. The same tests indicated that

	<p>women in the sample were less educated, had lower income, less occupational prestige, and tended to be unmarried. This supported previous research that aging women have fewer resources. The results also demonstrated that women were more committed to the role of friend and had stronger identity meanings as a friend. Education, income, and occupational prestige were positively related and people who scored high in these variables appeared to interact with their social network less frequently. Respondents who relied on friends for support had less dense networks and called on their supporters less frequently than those who relied on relatives for support. Frequency of contact and composition of social networks were unrelated to life satisfaction. The authors acknowledged that family and friends are part of a dynamic support system over time, citing an individual's ability to provide as well receive support in the spirit of reciprocity. In later years, increased dependence on family members leads to feelings of obligation and incompetence and change the role identity to that of needy dependent. Despite being frequently named key supporters, family members do not contribute to feelings of well-being in older adults. Friends, particularly long-term friends, contribute greatly to well-being for numerous reasons. Shared historical context and exchange of positive emotional support over time, or reciprocal affective support was shown as one of the few variables "uniquely contributing to well-being". Aging adults seek friends who can reduce discrepancies between self-perception and negative identity meanings they might receive from family and others, With friends, they can "shift from a less positive identity to the reassuring identity of friend, exchanging meaningful feedback and having their positive self-perceptions legitimized" Even though the aged may not have frequent or close contact with friends, they still contribute to "identities of competent peers" regardless of current circumstances. This and other studies have demonstrated that perceived <u>quality</u> of social support is more important than quantity, therefore older adults become more selective and retain those friends who make positive contributions to identity.</p>
Strengths	<p>Strengths of the study include the number of variables examined, the single focus on role identity of friendship, the inclusion of male and female participants, and the significant number of tests designed to examine numerous variables.</p>
Weaknesses	<p>The main weaknesses of the study were an under-representation of African Americans, people with no college education, skilled workers and laborers, and people with incomes under \$25,000. Also, this was a study of full-time workers transitioning into retirement and the authors noted that this group was not representative of social work clients seen in the public sector. Still, as more baby boomers move into retirement, social workers will frequently be working with older adults in all practice settings.</p>
Implications for Practice	<p>The study demonstrated the friendship role is a significant predictor of life satisfaction, more than income or marital status. It was suggested that</p>

	interventions focus on enhancement of friendship identities. Future research on interventions with older adults should focus on “identifying meaningful activities that strengthen existing positive role identities before creating new ones”.
Key words	Older people, meaning, relationships, identity, friendship, social support.