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Enhancing the Well-being of Older Adults and Young Adults with Developmental Disabilities
through Participation in an Intergenerational Community Garden: Participatory Action Research

By

Diane Keen, MSN, RN, CNE

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Nursing Science

WellStar School of Nursing

College of Health and Human Service

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Abstract

The purpose of this Participatory Action Research (PAR) study was to discover ways to enhance well-being in young adults with DD and older adults in the Oak Grove community. This dissertation details how PAR was used in the Oak Grove community to identify ways to enhance purpose and meaningful activity for older adults while developing positive relationships with younger adults with DD through qualitative methods.

Ryff and Keyes (1995) discovered that although some elements of well-being remain stable as a person ages, purpose-in-life drops significantly in older adults. In addition, young adults with developmental disabilities (DD) lack meaningful relationships, which negatively impacts their well-being (Mazurek, 2014). The data echoes the reported loneliness in young adults with DD in Oak Grove (the location of this study). Several older adults have purposefully tried to address this loneliness in young adults through inclusion in volunteer work; however, this has been on an intermittent basis and the need for meaningful relationships remains.

Analyses of the data revealed ways to enlist the wisdom and knowledge of older adults to enhance the well-being of young adults with DD and consequently enhance the well-being of the older adult as well. Themes that were discovered in the data include the five elements of the Well-being Theory as they relate to the people of Oak Grove, specifically: engagement, positive relationships, positive emotion, purpose and meaning, and accomplishment (Seligman, 2011). In addition, multiple aspects of the unique nature of young adults with DD were revealed; the term exceptional people was used to identify this theme. Other important findings include the need for policy development for transportation for people with disabilities, the need for development of intergenerational activities, and the importance for further research.

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Enhancing the Well-being of Older Adults and Young Adults with Developmental Disabilities
Using an Intergenerational Community Garden: Participatory Action Research

Chapter 1: Introduction

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this dissertation was to conduct a Participatory Action Research (PAR) study undertaken as a pragmatic approach to discover ways to enhance well-being in young adults with developmental disabilities (DD) and older adults. The initial literature review on well-being in older adults revealed that although some elements of well-being (which will be discussed in detail) remain stable as a person ages, purpose-in-life drops significantly in older adults (Ryff & Keyes, 1995). In addition, researchers have revealed that young adults with DD lack meaningful relationships, which negatively impact their well-being (Mazurek, 2014). Research results regarding young adults echoes the reported loneliness in young adults with DD in Oak Grove (the location of this study). Several older adults have purposefully tried to address this loneliness in young adults through inclusion in volunteer work; however, this has been on an intermittent basis and the need for meaningful relationships remains. As a nurse, researcher, and active community member, I felt called to respond to this problem. PAR was an ideal approach to discover ways to enhance well-being in older adults and young adults with DD. This paper will detail how PAR was used in the Oak Grove community to identify ways to enhance purpose and meaningful activity for older adults while developing positive relationships with younger adults with DD.

Background

Personal experience as the mother of a child with DD and professional nursing interest in gerontology has often overlapped. Taking my son, Dan, to an assisted living facility (ALF) and

watching the ease in which he communicated with the older adults, who prior to our visit had been either sitting in silence, or begging someone to listen to them, inspired the idea for development of a program that would foster intentional relationships between individuals from these two groups. One Sunday afternoon, when visiting a friend who lived in an ALF, Dan met Dale, a pilot who served in World War II. Dale was a decorated war veteran who had flown many successful missions and longed to talk about his experience in the war. Others would roll their eyes as Dale once again began describing one of his missions, but not Dan. Dan would sit and listen intently, obviously very interested. Dale and Dan both enjoyed their visit and could have talked for hours. Dan, with a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), one of the diagnoses under the umbrella of DD, had a fascination with World War II history.

Consequently, many of the missions Dale spoke about Dan had either read about or seen in a television documentary. What a thrill it was for Dan to hear history spoken from one of the heroes he had admired from afar. Additionally, it was impressive the ease with which Dan and Dale formed a friendship. Dan-with ASD-had difficulty with social interactions, and Dale mumbled to himself most of the time with no one to listen to him. They both seemed to understand one another as others had not taken the time to do. It appeared that during that interaction Dan and Dale both benefited from the presence of the other.

As Dan grew older, he continued to benefit from intergenerational relationships. With a diagnosis on the autism spectrum, social interaction has been particularly difficult for Dan. In school, Dan thrived under the inclusion model, where he could observe appropriate peer behavior in hopes that he would assimilate similar behavior in his own life. To make this possible, Dan always had an adult paraprofessional educator (educational/instructional assistant) assigned to him to help navigate the social nuances that he did not recognize. After high school,

options for young adults with DD were scarce. Due to budget cuts to Vocational Rehabilitation, a federal grant funded program, at the time of Dan's graduation some of the supportive services that had once been offered to young adults in transition to adulthood were withdrawn, and Dan was stranded.

Once stimulated by interaction with their peers and teachers through coursework and social interaction, after high school young adults with DD are often left at home, sitting on the couch, alone for hours (Harris, 2008). Of the almost 36 million Americans between the ages of 22 and 30, 1.4 million have a cognitive disability. Of those with a cognitive disability, only 34% were employed as compared to 75% of young adults without any disability (Butterworth & Migliore, 2015; United States Department of Commerce, 2013). In fact, it is estimated that 500,000 young adults with ASD will enter the adult world in the next 10 years and that 90% of those young adults will remain unemployed (Autism Speaks, 2013). This drastic increase in adults who may need support in the transition to adulthood and in adult life requires not only an interdisciplinary response, but a response from the community as well.

Response

Participatory Action Research is particularly appropriate to address issues or problems in the community because this research process provides the foundation for a rigorous inquiry approach to examine an issue in partnership with the community. The process should result in action by the community to address the issue being examined. The purpose of the Oak Grove PAR was to explore and identify ways to enhance the well-being of older adults and young adults with DD through participation in development and maintenance of a community garden.

Older adults in the community, who once were active with work and families, may lack purpose and meaningful activity in their lives. Ryff and Keyes (1995) noted that although other

aspects of well-being increased or remained stable with age, purpose-in-life and personal growth both dropped significantly after midlife. This may be in part due to social isolation and loneliness (Skingley, 2013). Older adults who age-in-place may find it difficult to participate in community activities and may feel they do not have value to contribute to society. Older adults living in ALFs routinely spend their days participating in fun activities like bingo, but these activities lack meaning and purpose, as Louise who lives in an ALF and is an expert Bingo player said, “I just take up space.”

Researchers have shown that the wisdom and knowledge of the older generation could have a positive impact on the younger generation if older adults were given the opportunity to share their skills (Carlson et al., 2009). Strotmann (2012) developed a program for retirees in Germany to mentor high school students to develop vocational skills. The program was not only successful in teaching students the vocational skills they lacked, but the additional benefit of volunteerism for the older adults called out of retirement provided meaning and purpose to their lives as well. As a former farming community in transition, the older members of the Oak Grove community are particularly qualified to share their wisdom with the younger generation in a community garden. Thus, the idea for a PAR project with intergenerational interaction in a community garden was conceived.

Community Engagement

Community leaders in Oak Grove have been troubled by the lack of supportive services available for young adults with DD and older adults in the community. Community members have discussed plans to develop a program or service that would use the skills and talents of the older adults and young adults with DD to enhance the well-being of both groups. PAR was uniquely suited to address this problem as it is an approach that involves the community to solve

a problem (Breda, 2015). Use of this research approach empowered community leaders with the tools to gather data from participants. Data were used to aid in initial development of a plan of action to provide interaction intended to enhance the well-being of all involved in the activity (Adelman, 1993). PAR aligns with Kennesaw State University's (KSU) Community Engagement initiative where the University is committed to creating a culture of community engagement to connect with the community (KSU Office of Engagement, 2015). Furthermore, van der Meulen (2011) reported that use of PAR in graduate studies, notably dissertation research, offers inclusion in the community that combats the isolation graduate students at the dissertation phase often experience. The benefits of using the PAR approach were twofold. First, PAR requires community engagement which in itself was beneficial to the community. And second, that engagement led to knowledge that will direct action that may enhance the well-being of participants and the community as a whole.

Theoretical Support

Seligman's (2008) Well-being Theory is a holistic approach to positive health and consequently is an ideal theory to support the development of a community health nursing PAR project aimed at enhancing the lives of older adults and young adults with DD. Seligman, who also authored the Authentic Happiness Theory, later acknowledged that the Authentic Happiness Theory was incomplete. Life satisfaction was the goal of authentic happiness, and on its own, life satisfaction does not achieve well-being. After further discovery and research, Seligman proposed that the goal in life should be flourishing, rather than life satisfaction. Increasing positive emotion, engagement, meaning and purpose, positive relationships, and accomplishment, lead to the state Seligman defined as flourishing, and thus are the elements of the Well-being Theory (2011). Consistent application of the Well-being Theory during the

research process aligns with Bradbury-Jones, Taylor, and Herber's (2014) recommendation for use of theory to enhance rigor in qualitative research.

Community health nursing seeks to improve the health and well-being of groups of people (Allendar, Rector, & Warner, 2014). Seligman's concept of well-being is congruent with the holistic care sought in community health nursing, which provides further support for the use of the Well-being Theory in this community health nursing research project. In his discussion on positive health, Seligman (2008) referred to the World Health Organization's (WHO) definition of health, which is more than the absence of disease, but rather "a state of complete positive physical, mental, and social well-being" (WHO, 1946, p. 100).

The goal of the Oak Grove PAR project was to examine and discover ways to enhance well-being in older adults and young adults with DD by providing an opportunity for the two groups to work together in a community garden. Although the garden was chosen as the activity to provide interaction opportunity, the findings may be translated to other activities or opportunities for interaction in the community as well. The well-being of both groups may be enhanced by interaction with one another. Interdisciplinary use of the holistic Well-being Theory in nursing was an appropriate fit for this research project as nursing, particularly community health nursing, incorporates holistic care of patients and communities and aims to enhance the health and well-being of communities.

Elements

The five elements of the Well-being Theory are positive emotion, engagement, meaning and purpose, positive relationships, and accomplishment. Elements must possess three properties: first, the element must contribute to well-being; next, the element is often pursued due to the element's importance; and third, each element stands on its own and can be measured

independently (Seligman, 2011). Seligman referred to the essence of well-being as flourishing. Flourishing can be defined as the (positive) presence of these five elements in a person's life contributes to a positive experience that moves beyond happiness and toward a much more holistic idea of wellness. The elements, as building blocks for well-being, are discussed below.

Positive emotion. The element of positive emotion is the feeling of a good life (Seligman, 2011). Positive emotions can be past, present and/or future emotions. Examples of positive emotion include present emotions such as joy and excitement, past emotions such as accomplishment and pride, and future emotions such as faith, hope, and optimism (Scorsolini-Comin, Fontaine, Koller, & Santos, 2013). Happiness and life satisfaction both fall under the element of positive emotion. Happiness was the focus of Seligman's Authentic Happiness Theory and can be measured subjectively using the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) (Diener, Emmons, Larson, & Griffith, 1985). The SWLS has been used with adults with ASD to assess the life satisfaction or positive emotion element of well-being (Mazurek, 2014).

Engagement. Seligman (2011) described engagement as being absorbed in an activity, so much so that a person recognizes the engagement in retrospect saying such things as "that was fun" or "that was wonderful" (p. 17). This state of engagement is referred to by Seligman as the "flow state." Using one's skills and talents in a productive way leads to engagement, or the flow state. Older adults may lack this type of activity as they transition from the workplace to retirement.

Meaning and purpose. Meaning and purpose can be defined as serving a greater purpose than self and is often referred to as meaning and purpose-in-life (Bondevik & Skogstad, 2000; Haugan, 2013; Seligman, 2011). When individuals use their skills and talents to help others they are participating in meaningful activity that contributes to well-being (Greenfield & Marks,

2004; Strotmann, 2012). Meaning and purpose-in-life are often measured using the Purpose-in-life (PIL) Test, or Purpose-in-life Short Form (Schulenberg, Schnetzer, & Buchanan, 2011).

Haugan (2013) used the PIL to examine meaning-in-life and well-being in nursing home residents and discussed the positive relationship between meaning-in-life and well-being, and stated that positive meaning-in-life has the potential to enhance well-being and physical health.

Haugan (2013) recommended that nursing should explore ways to increase meaningful activity for residents in facilities thereby improving the well-being of the residents. Breda (2015) recommended use of PAR as an approach to advance meaningful change.

Positive relationships. Relationships are instinctual, spiritual, natural, and often mutually beneficial. The profession of nursing at its core is about caring relationships (Watson, 2008). Positive relationships have been shown to improve well-being in older adults (Street, Burge, Quadagno, & Barrett, 2007) and young adults with ASD (Mazurek, 2014). Seligman (2011) identified positive relationships as one element of well-being, and an important aspect of life. Benefits of intergenerational relationships have been studied in both social work and nursing (Custers, Westerhof, Kuin, & Riksen-Walraven, 2010; Powell, Griffin, & Crawford, 2011; Skingley, 2013; Strotmann, 2012). The Oak Grove PAR project strives to provide an opportunity for members of the community to develop positive intergenerational relationships and thereby improve the well-being of participants. Further, it is hoped that dissemination of the research findings may provide knowledge to enhance the well-being of others as well. It is hoped that the exploration of ways to enhance well-being through purposeful intergenerational interaction while gardening will contribute to nursing knowledge and provide evidence for practice.

Accomplishment. Seligman (2011) described accomplishment as something that people do for “their own sake.” In other words, people choose to work toward something for the purpose of achievement. The Oak Grove PAR project will provide an opportunity for individuals to work together in a community garden as an opportunity to share wisdom, knowledge and relationships. The harvest itself will provide a sense of accomplishment; however, the sense of accomplishment will be much greater than the harvest. Participants will feel a great sense of accomplishment in working together, seeing each other grow, and cultivating unity in the community.

Well-being Theory and Community Health Nursing

As a holistic discipline, nurses seek to enhance the lives of their clients; in community health nursing the community is considered the client (Allendar et al., 2014). Two vulnerable groups in the Oak Grove area are older adults and young adults with DD. Of course, these groups exist across the nation, but in the Oak Grove area, an urban fringe community north of a major city in the southeastern United States, services and supports for these two groups are lacking. Because supports are minimal, a response from the community is necessary. Nursing research in conjunction with action via PAR can have a positive impact on this community.

Assumptions

This PAR involved input from the community through work in the garden and selected participants through interviews. An assumption was made that the community would be willing to support a community garden through volunteering time, supplies, money, and skills. It was also assumed that participants would be willing to share their experience by being interviewed and responding to the questions. Further, it was assumed that participants would tell the truth as they have experienced it.

Definitions

Older Adults

For the purpose of this project, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) definition of an older adult was used, which is a person 50 and older (CDC, 2015b).

Young Adults with Developmental Disabilities

Developmental disabilities are defined by the CDC (2015a) as “a group of conditions due to an impairment in physical, learning, language, or behavior areas” (p. 1) which include attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder, autism spectrum disorders, cerebral palsy, fetal alcohol spectrum disorders, fragile X syndrome, hearing loss, intellectual disability, kernicterus, muscular dystrophy, Tourette syndrome and vision impairment (CDC, 2015a). For the purpose of this research project young adults were people 18 to 30 years old.

Intergenerational Relationships

Intergenerational involves individuals at least 20 years apart in age, or from different generations (Gibson, 2009). Relationship is a more complex term to define. Relationships can be intimate or simply a friendship. A relationship can also be either familial or non-familial. Synonyms for relationship include association, affiliation, connection, and rapport, but none of these describe relationship in the fullest sense. Combining the two words, intergenerational and relationships, forms a friendship between individuals from two different generations. An underlying assumption for this project was that intergenerational relationships are positive. The essence of intergenerational relationships involves people coming together from different generations who foster their relationship and subsequently develop lasting friendships that enhance the well-being of both individuals.

Flourishing

As discussed above, flourishing involves the positive presence of the five elements of the Well-being Theory (positive emotion, engagement, positive relationships, meaning and purpose, and accomplishment) and contributes to a positive experience that moves beyond happiness and toward a much more holistic idea of wellness.

Limitations

The purpose of this research was to examine the concept of enhancing well-being of older adults and young adults with DD in the community of Oak Grove. Oak Grove is a small community within a growing rural county. Due to the unique nature of this study, and the limited number of people available as participants, the transferability of the results may be challenging. Further, participants sought for this study were unique and consequently the sample size was restricted due to the limited number of potential participants. Personal experience as the mother of a child with DD was both a benefit as well as a limitation. Emic knowledge of the community and population provided a strong entrée into the community; however, diligence was required in limiting personal bias, which will be discussed in more detail below.

Significance of the Study**Population Growth**

The United States Census Bureau anticipates the population of individuals 65 and over to double by 2060, accounting for over 20 percent of the overall population in the United States. Individuals over 85 are expected to make up 4.3 percent of the population (United States Department of Commerce, 2013). Ortman, Velkoff, and Hogan (2014) estimated that the dependency ratio (DR) (which is the population less than 18 plus the population over 65 divided

by the population between 18 and 64) will increase drastically by 2050 due to the increase in older adults. In 1960 the total DR was 82; this was largely attributable to the baby boom as the under 18 population DR was 65, and over age 65 population DR was 17. As the under 18 population DR decreased, the over 65 age population DR increased. Currently the under 18 DR is 38 while the over 65 DR is 21, for a total DR of 59, significantly lower than the 1960 DR. However, the next few decades look very different with the DR being almost equal between under 18 and over 65 in 2050 at 37 and 36, respectively, for a total DR of 74. The increasing DR combined with the projected increase in young adults with DD transitioning to adulthood intensifies the pressure on the 18 to 64 age group, as they are typically the caregivers for all three groups. With the older adult group living longer (United States Department of Commerce, 2013) and their care needs increasing, and young adults with DD living longer with limited assistance, a great deal of pressure falls on their families and communities.

Similarly, the population of young adults with DD is increasing as well. Prevalence of individuals with DD increased 17.1% over the past decade, with the greatest increase in those diagnosed with ASD, which had an increase of 289.5% over the same time period (CDC, 2012). In the United States, it is predicted that an additional 500,000 individuals will enter young adulthood with ASD in the next 10 years (Autism Speaks, 2013). The Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring (ADDM) Network monitors the prevalence of ASD in 8-year-olds in 11 sites in the United States. Key findings reported by the ADDM network remain the same in 2012 as in 2010; 1 in 68 children has ASD (CDC, 2016a). Further research has been called for in both groups (CDC, 2016a; United States Department of Commerce, 2013). Clearly, the well-being of older adults and young adults with DD warrant attention.

Paradigm Shift

Older adults and young adults with DD have unique gifts and talents that often go unrecognized and under used. The wisdom and talents of a great generation of older adults are being overlooked. Thomas (2007) and the Pioneer Network (2015) have been actively working toward culture change in the elder care community because they can see the potential contribution to society that elders might have. Culture change is a paradigm shift from elders being cared for as society determines, to the elder directing his or her own care, society respecting his or her wisdom, and encouraging purposeful living (Pioneer Network, 2015; Thomas, 2007). Research can identify ways to use the wisdom of older adults in volunteer activities in response to the need for relationships in young adults with DD, thereby enriching both their lives.

I have seen this enrichment emerge on a mission trip to a Native American reservation in the western United States. As roommates on the cross-country mission trip, Neal and Travis was an unlikely pair. Neal, a semi-retired Vietnam veteran, and Travis, a 20-something country music enthusiast with the developmental age of about 10, became good friends on the journey. Neal had never had the opportunity to work with a young adult with DD before the trip and questioned what Travis would be able to contribute to the work the group was setting out to do. After a short time, Neal recognized Travis' worth, and was grateful for his presence on the trip. After a particularly long day on the road, and a short night in a hotel, Neal was interested to see what Travis was writing at the desk in their hotel room. Once Travis left for breakfast, Neal read Travis' note, it was a response to the customary note left by the housekeeper, which read, Dear Guest, This room has been specially prepared for you. I hope you find it meets your needs. If there is anything you need please call the front desk, Signed, Kathy. Travis' response was

similar in style, he penned, Dear Kathy, Thank you for preparing the room for us. It was very clean. We slept well and thank you for making it so nice. I hope you have a wonderful day. Signed, your friend, Travis, BFF (best friends forever) accented with his trademark smiley face. This was the beginning of an illuminating journey for these two men. Neal saw the value in Travis' simplicity, and Travis was thrilled to be Neal's shadow for the week. I believe both men experienced enhanced well-being during the expedition. Travis was able to participate with his peers for a 10-day mission trip and Neal was able to share his gifts and talents with a young man eager for relationships.

Rather than a pleasure trip to the sandy beaches of Florida, this trip involved a three-day drive in a sweltering bus to work on construction projects at a Native American Reservation across the country in South Dakota. One might wonder how a miserably hot ride in an old smelly bus for the purpose of landscaping, building wheelchair ramps for older adults, picnic tables for elementary school children, and painting houses in the village, could enhance Neal and Travis' well-being, but this short story would indicate that it did. Three years later, the mission team was still talking about the trip. A trip to the beach would most likely produce positive emotion and potentially increase happiness, but happiness is temporary, and in this case, would be situational. Well-being incorporates happiness, but is much more than simply happiness. I believe Seligman's (2011) Well-being Theory frames the fullness of the relationship described between Neal and Travis, and provides a suitable foundation for what the PAR project would like to formally cultivate in the community.

Intergenerational relationships have been studied and encouraged between older adults and foster children (Generation of Hope, 2013) and older adults and middle school age children (Carson, Kobayashi, & Kuehne, 2012). St. Ann Center for Intergenerational Care provides an

environment for older adults, adults with DD, and preschool age children to interact. The Center provides purposeful multigenerational activities (St. Ann, 2017). Positive intergenerational relationships between older adults and young adults with DD is not only possible, but incredibly important as both groups are growing in numbers and lack sufficient supportive services.

Community involvement in the development of a sustainable project which allows older adults to mentor young adults with DD should provide benefits far beyond the expectations of this project.

This paradigm shift is particularly relevant for the community health nurse. Health promotion and disease prevention are the foundations of community health nursing. Discovering and developing programs to enhance well-being of older adults and young adults with DD are appropriate roles for community health nursing specialties, such as gerontological, DD, and nursing educators. Program development is a role of the Certified Developmental Disabilities Nurse (CDDN), and the goal of the Developmental Disabilities Nursing Association (DDNA) is to “foster the growth of nursing knowledge and expertise about optimal care of persons with IDD (intellectual and developmental disabilities), thereby improving their care, services, and quality of life” (DDNA, 2017, paragraph 1). The gerontological nurse is charged with person-centered care which should promote health and well-being. The American Nurses Association (ANA) describes the scope of a gerontological nurse as, “Gerontological nurses collaborate with older adults and their significant others to promote autonomy, wellness, optimal functioning, comfort, and quality of life from healthy aging to end of life” (2010, p. 9). The community health nurse educator has the potential to have a significant impact on culture change by exposing nursing students to the importance of this paradigm shift for both populations.

Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to discuss how the community might identify ways to enhance the well-being of participants and the greater community in the Oak Grove PAR. The Oak Grove PAR project examined ways to enhance meaning and purpose in older adults in the community with the intention that this information could be translated to other residential living arrangements, such as assisted living facilities (ALF) or skilled nursing facilities (SNF). Young adults with DD are often isolated and lack relationships. As discussed, I believe providing an opportunity for older adults to mentor younger adults with DD is one way to enhance well-being for both groups by encouraging meaningful activity and an opportunity to develop relationships. Use of PAR provided an approach for the researcher and the Community Advisory Board (CAB) to develop a deeper understanding of both groups and discover ways to enhance the well-being of older adults and young adults with DD.

Chapter 2: Review of Research Literature

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss a review of the research literature on two vulnerable populations, older adults and young adults with DD. The two groups have been identified as participants in a community health nursing PAR project that sought to enhance the well-being of both groups through promotion of intergenerational relationships. Consequently, literature related to well-being, and specific elements of well-being identified as elements in the Well-being Theory (Seligman, 2011), namely meaning and purpose, and loneliness will also be discussed. In addition to the literature review on older adults and young adults with DD, a discussion on intergenerational relationships will follow. Finally, although the literature has been reviewed from an interdisciplinary viewpoint, there will be a discussion of the current nursing role in enhancing the well-being of older adults and young adults with DD.

For the purpose of this literature review, and as discussed in Chapter 1, Seligman's (2011) definition of the concept of well-being was used. Well-being incorporates five different elements, which include positive emotion, engagement, positive relationships, meaning and purpose, and accomplishment. Well-being is more than happiness; it also incorporates relationships, meaning and purpose. Purpose-in-life is one element that declines in mid-life and will be examined in the older adult group (Ryff & Keyes, 1995). Relationships is an element that is often lacking in young adults with DD and will be included in that literature review (Mazurek, 2014). Seligman (2011) identified the concept of flourishing as being the state one reaches when all the elements of well-being are achieved. Flourishing is an optimal state of well-being and cannot be fully achieved when purpose-in-life or the presence of positive relationships is lacking.

Older Adults

A review of the literature was conducted using several search terms to discover relevant literature related to older adults and well-being. The search was conducted initially using nursing and allied health as the discipline, however the results were minimal, and the search was expanded to include other disciplines. Search terms included older adults, well-being, purpose and meaning. Because volunteerism has been identified in the literature as being a protective factor against loss of purpose-in-life, volunteerism was also used as a search term. Articles were reviewed for relevance and those chosen are described below.

Several concepts about well-being were remarkable from the literature. Ryff and Keyes (1995) and Skingley (2013) found that after midlife, purpose-in-life and personal growth decline. Although Battersby and Phillips' (2016) findings did not agree with Ryff and Keyes (1995), Battersby and Phillips suggested that meaning-in-life is unique to each person and identifying that person's definition of meaning-in-life may allow for better identification of his or her perceived meaning as well as meaningful action. Next, well-being is enhanced through volunteerism (Greenfield & Marks, 2004; Myers, Wolfer, & Sherr, 2013). Volunteerism has a positive impact on purpose-in-life for the volunteer as well as a positive effect on the receiver of care (Greenfield & Marks, 2004; Merriam & Kee, 2014; Mui, Glajchen, Chen, & Sun 2013). Volunteerism also has a positive impact on physical health (Carson et al., 2009; Sneed & Cohen, 2013). Finally, well-being for older adults is enhanced by relationships (Carson, Kobayashi, & Kuehne, 2012; Heaven et al., 2013; Mano, 2007; Skingley, 2013; Street, Burge, Quadango, & Barrett, 2007).

Purpose-in-Life

In a notable study, Ryff and Keyes (1995) analyzed a national dataset with a sample of 1,108 adults aged 25 and older and identified six dimensions of well-being: self-acceptance, positive relationships with other people, autonomy, environmental mastery, purpose-in-life, and personal growth. The objectives of the study included testing their proposed well-being model, examination of the well-being dimensions by age and sex, and comparison of the dimensions mentioned previously to the prominent indicators of well-being. Participants included non-institutionalized English speaking adults living in the United States. Participants were selected by random digit dialing and were interviewed by phone. The six dimensions of well-being were assessed by shortened forms of existing scales. Findings indicated that although self-acceptance, positive relations, autonomy, and environmental mastery increased with age, personal growth and purpose-in-life decreased, with a significant decrease in purpose-in-life between the midlife and older age groups.

In a more recent study, Battersby and Phillips (2016) examined meaning-in-life in young and older adults. Their findings on meaning-in-life in the older adult group differed from those of Ryff and Keyes (1995) in that meaning-in-life did not decrease in the older adult participants. Battersby and Phillips (2016) attributed this to use of the Meaning-in-Life Questionnaire (MLQ), in which the participants identified what was meaningful to them, as opposed to the Purpose-in-Life test (PIL) used by Ryff and Keyes, which did not allow that self-identification of meaningful activity. Battersby and Phillips (2016) recommended discovering a person's definition of meaning-in-life and his or her strengths to help that person seek meaningful action. Battersby and Phillips (2016) agree with Seligman (2011) and Ryff and Keyes (1995) that meaning-in-life is important to well-being.

Purpose-in-Life and Volunteerism

In a secondary data analysis Greenfield and Marks (2004) performed a multivariate regression to analyze purpose-in-life after role identity absences, such as retirement or death of a spouse. The researchers found that as role-identity absences went up, purpose-in-life went down for non-volunteers. Volunteers did not experience the same decrease in purpose-in-life as they experienced role-identity absences; in fact, volunteers had a slight increase in purpose-in-life. Formal volunteering has been found to improve purpose-in-life in older adults as a result of the role-identity derived from the volunteer work (Greenfield & Marks, 2004). Volunteerism has the potential to fill the void from role-identity absences, such as retirement, no longer caring for children, or loss of spouse, that leads to potential decreased purpose-in-life that occurs as people age.

Myers et al. (2013) surveyed close to 1,000 older adults who were members in Protestant churches on their volunteering experience and the impact on faith development. In addition to positively impacting faith development, researchers found that volunteering also positively impacted life satisfaction of the participants who volunteered. One manner of volunteerism discussed was by developing relationships "with persons in radically different life circumstances" (Myers et al., 2013, p. 387). This relationship building may expand the older adult's understanding of others and allow him or her to grow. Findings included significantly higher levels of motivation to serve and life satisfaction among older adults who volunteered than those who did not. In addition, older adults who were active in community engagement scored significantly higher on both faith maturity and faith practice. Myers et al. (2013) recommended a service learning model to incorporate older adults in community engagement as a way of transforming both the volunteer as well as the community.

Mui et al. (2013) developed a pilot project for older Chinese immigrants living in New York City to volunteer in a health promotion program known as The Phone Angel Program. The Phone Angel Program was developed by an interdisciplinary team of social workers and hospital workers that were concerned with the high levels of depression among older Chinese immigrants. The authors cited overwhelming evidence in support of volunteer programs. Older adults were trained in telephonic health promotion for caregivers and made phone calls weekly to assess and provide support for caregivers in their native language. After six months, the researcher held focus groups with the volunteers as well as used a questionnaire to assess the impact of the program. In addition, caregivers were also contacted and asked to complete a brief survey. Both groups provided positive feedback on the program and the researchers concluded that the volunteer program was beneficial for both the volunteer as well as the recipient of care (Mui et al., 2013). These findings agree with the overwhelming evidence in support of volunteerism being beneficial for older adults and contribute to the evidence of the benefits for the recipient.

An interdisciplinary team examined the benefit of Experience Corps (EC), a volunteerism program on executive function (memory, problem-solving skills, and cognitive ability) of the older adult volunteer (Carlson et al., 2009). Researchers came from mental health, advanced science and technology, psychiatry, medicine, and public health, but nursing was not represented on the team. Functional magnetic resonance imaging was employed pre- and post-intervention. The experimental group (volunteers) experienced increased brain activity compared to individuals from the control group (non-volunteers). Carlson et al. (2009) stated that incorporating cognitive activities in social settings may enhance the benefits of the social event and provide enhanced meaning and purpose for the individual.

Relationships

Loneliness and isolation have been reported in older adults throughout the literature. Skingley (2013) conducted a thorough analysis on the current literature on loneliness and isolation in older adults from the perspective of community health nursing. Skingley recommended several evidence-based interventions to improve social interaction. Interventions were divided into one-to-one, group, and community engagement. Skingley (2013) determined that group interventions were more effective than one-to-one interventions, one of those group interventions being gardening. One idea identified by Skingley as community engagement was volunteer programs. Skingley concluded that ultimately, the community health nurse is responsible for knowing the community and possesses "local intelligence" that should be considered when developing interventions to alleviate loneliness (Skingley, 2013, p. 89).

In a systematic review, Heaven et al. (2013) examined 11 interventional studies that targeted older adults in transition from work to retirement. The research team identified studies that examined social roles in retirement and the impact of those roles on the older adult's well-being. Researchers concluded that well-being may be enhanced by social roles for older adults in transition to retirement and that policy should support development of enhanced social roles for older adults in this transition period. Further, Heaven et al. (2013) described social roles as the "empirical link between meaningful roles and beneficial health and well-being outcomes" (p. 278).

The Meadows Project is an intergenerational immersion program that provided an environment for older adults living in a community setting to interact with middle-school children for extended periods of time as the children participated in school activities at The Meadows, which is a small school house on the property of a senior living community. Carson

et al. (2012) conducted a case study on the program and reported overall improved well-being for the individuals living in the senior living facility, as well as a decrease of ‘aimless wandering.’ Researchers reported an increased sense of purpose for the residents as they interacted with the middle school students. Conversely, the middle school students developed a better understanding of older adults and the aging process (Carson et al., 2012). Replication of aspects of this program has the potential to improve the well-being of participants in newly developed intergenerational immersion programs.

In a secondary data analysis that examined the well-being of older adults living in an ALF, Street et al. (2007) found that several factors affected residents’ well-being in an ALF. Factors included size, cost, privacy, private room, and food quality. However, the most important finding reported by the researchers is that of the benefit of developing relationships in the facility. Researchers found that developing relationships for older adults in their new home had the largest positive impact on their well-being.

Mano (2007) took an in-depth look into the benefits of intergenerational relationships between older individuals and at-risk youth in the Across Ages program in the United States. Mano (2007) found that relationship development benefited both groups of individuals. The youth benefited from the wisdom and time of the older individual while the older individual felt a sense of being needed which enhanced his or her self-fulfillment. Mentoring is the essence of the Across Ages program and Mano commended the organization of the program which has contributed to the successful development of beneficial relationships.

Young Adults with DD

A review of the literature was conducted to identify literature related to young adults with DD and well-being. Search terms used included developmental disabilities, young adults, and

well-being. In addition, a review of references of selected articles led to other articles that were not identified in the initial search. Articles were reviewed for relevance and those chosen are described below.

Several themes emerged in the literature review on young adults. First, there is a desperate need for support in the community for young adults with DD (Dyke et al., 2013; Mill, Mayes, & McConnell, 2010; Smith et al., 2010; Taylor & Seltzer, 2010). Second, young adults with DD often have trouble making friends and this lack of friends has a negative impact on their well-being (Carter, Asmus, & Moss, 2013; Carter, Harvey, Taylor, & Gotham, 2013; Dyke et al., 2013; Johnson, Hobson, Gardia & Matthews, 2011; Mazurek, 2014; Orsmond, Shattuck, Cooper, Sterzing, & Anderson, 2013). Finally, families of young adults with DD experience greater stress (Dyke et al., 2013; Smith et al., 2010) and experience difficulty during the transition to adulthood (Mill et al., 2010).

Need for Community Support

Young adults with DD are vulnerable (Havencamp & Scott, 2015). Havencamp and Scott recommended that health care providers should receive training specifically related to people with disabilities in order to demonstrate “disability competency” (p. 170). In a concept analysis, Ruof (2002) reviewed several articles related to vulnerability and provided clarification on the concept of vulnerability. Ruof (2002) discussed a few sources of vulnerability, such as racism and socioeconomic status; conditions that were created by injustice, misfortune, and potentially self-inflicted circumstances; one being that these individuals can be fragile or susceptible to maltreatment, and described as open to harm. Ruof (2002) discussed determining vulnerability in nursing and indicated that factors include not only age and gender, but also ideas such as education and social support. Vulnerability puts one at risk for lack of health care due to

the inability to obtain services. Young adults with DD fit this concept of vulnerability. Lack of social relationships was identified by Fisher, Moskowitz, and Hodapp (2012) as the number one predictor of vulnerability among young adults with DD. Intentional development of social networks could potentially reduce vulnerability and reduce victimization of this population.

Dyke et al. (2013) examined the experience of mothers of young adults with DD, specifically young adults with Down and Rett syndromes. The researchers utilized qualitative methods to gain a better understanding from the mothers' perspectives. Mothers overwhelmingly felt that the process for transition to adulthood for their children was inadequate and that policy change was necessary to improve the transition of young adults with Rett or Down syndromes. The limited availability of day programs or employment options and ineffective dissemination of information were problematic. Ultimately, the lack of activities contributed to a continued lack of friends and subsequent loneliness. Mothers were so concerned about their children's futures that they spoke of the wish that they would outlive their sons or daughters. For those mothers of young adults living in supported living arrangements, they expressed that they expended an extraordinary effort to achieve this placement. Ultimately, the mothers interviewed hoped for a good life for their sons or daughters, which included friendships, enhanced well-being for the family through assistance for the young adult, and available transportation. An urgent need for qualitative research and advocacy in policy development was discussed to enable young adults to establish full employment. Young adults with Rett and Downs syndromes struggle with relationships. Consequently, the lack of friendships and social activity has a negative impact on the well-being of these young adults.

Families play an important role in young adults with intellectual disabilities (ID), also referred to as young adults with DD, in establishing independence. Mill et al. (2009) believed

that research from the perspective of the young adult on transition to adulthood was lacking in the literature. Use of semi-structured interviews to gain the life stories of participants with DD provided insight into the transition stage for the six participants. Researchers identified several concepts that may enhance future research. First, the young adults in transition desired to be contributors in their families; this may be translated to communities as well. Next, young adults with DD are able to express their views and feelings and should be included in research. And, finally, the findings provide some direction for families and communities planning supportive services to aid in the transition stage. This information contributes to the knowledge necessary to develop an intergenerational project aimed at enhancing the well-being of older adults and young adults with DD by exposing different ways young adults with DD experience transition.

Smith et al. (2010) examined the experience of mothers of young adults with an ASD. Mothers of young adults with ASD wrote daily reflective journals and researchers analyzed the journals for common themes. Researchers concluded that mothering young adults with an ASD was stressful, much more stressful than a typically developing young adult, and that stress had a negative impact on the well-being of the family. Smith et al. (2010) concluded that there is a need for supportive services for mothers and families. Supportive services for the families of young adults with DD would not only enhance the well-being of the young adult, but would have a positive impact on the well-being of the entire family as well.

In a study on the transition to adulthood for young adults with ASD, Taylor and Seltzer (2010) found that the transition for adults with ASD without ID was exceptionally difficult and that adequate support for this group is lacking. Adults with ASD and comorbid ID are three times more likely to have daytime activities than adults with an ASD without ID. Daytime activities include post-secondary education, competitive and supported employment, and adult

day services. Findings reveal the deficiency of services for young adults with ASD without ID, and researchers suggested that these young adults may be 'falling through the cracks' for available services. Further, Taylor and Seltzer (2010) recommended future research to develop supportive services for this mid-level functioning group of young adults.

Social Relationships and Well-being

Mazurek (2014) used quantitative research methods to measure symptoms of loneliness, friendship status, and well-being in participants with ASD. Mazurek (2014) found that loneliness correlated with decreased life satisfaction and that presence of friendships reduced loneliness in adults with ASD. Because social relationships can be difficult for this group, assistance in establishing friendships would be beneficial. In his conclusion, Mazurek (2014) recommended research on strategies to reduce loneliness.

In another study to examine relationships, an interdisciplinary research team examined the impact social interaction has on quality of life (Orsmond et al., 2013). The research team compared social interaction in young adults with ASD with young adults with other DD, such as intellectual, emotional, or learning disabilities. Researchers chose to work with young adults because of the importance of the transition stage. Young adults with ASD were significantly more likely to experience social isolation than young adults with other DD. Researchers support and make the recommendation for development of social opportunities for young adults to participate in community life (Orsmond et al., 2013).

Carter et al. (2013) conducted a literature review on young adults with ASD and connections to community life. The review focused on youth in transition to young adulthood, and identified available supportive measures, and provided ideas for potential additional support. Referring to relationships, Carter et al. (2013) said "relationships are what make the difference

between being in the community and being part of a community" (p. 889). The researchers stated that fostering relationships in the community was a necessary part of young adults' thriving.

Johnson, Hobson, Gardia and Matthews (2011) discussed the poor nutrition of adults with DD. Specifically, the researchers addressed poor eating habits, lack of cooking skills, knowledge, and physical activity as areas that needed improvement. One of the support workers described the eating habits of many of his/her clients as high in carbohydrates, sodas, sweets, and prepared foods. Socialization was also identified as a problem for these young adults as they lack friends and opportunities to socialize. Several needs were identified, such as education on healthy foods, ways to prepare healthy meals, and enhanced social relationships.

Carter, Asmus, and Moss (2013) discussed the difficulty adolescents with DD have in making and maintaining friendships with peers. The authors proposed that meaningful relationships should be intentionally created as spontaneous relationship development is difficult for individuals with DD. Adults can help with the development of such friendships as facilitators rather than sole supporters. The interdisciplinary team of authors suggested that adolescents with DD would benefit from meaningful relationships, but that adults need to facilitate such relationships rather than being the exclusive support for the adolescent.

Family Stress

Mothers of young adults with Down syndrome reported stress in the transition process. Specifically, organizing activities for the young adults to participate in during the week was stressful to all involved. In addition, one mother reported that her experience with employment options for her young adult was taxing. In addition, transportation was a source of great stress for

families. The additional parental role of chauffeur exacerbates the already elevated family stress level (Dyke et al., 2013).

Smith et al. (2010) described parenting a young adult with ASD as “a profoundly stressful experience.” (p. 167). In a study designed to compare the experience of mothers of young adults with ASD to mothers of young adults without ASD, 96 mothers and young adults with ASD maintained a daily journal for 8 days. The journals measured several different concepts, one being stressful events. Not surprisingly, mothers of young adults with ASD reported arguments with their young adult on more than twice the number of days as mothers of young adults without ASD. Stress was reported significantly more by the mothers of young adults than the control group. In fact, the odds ratio for increased stress for mothers of young adults with ASD compared to the control group was almost three times higher. This level of stress not only impacted the well-being of the young adult with ASD, but it impacted the well-being of the entire family. Smith et al. (2010) recommended supportive services for families of young adults with ASD to help reduce stress.

Several study participants reported stress during the transition period. Families are an integral part of the transition team for young adults with DD and their support is necessary in the transition process. Mill et al. (2010) discussed the need for supportive services to improve the transition period for young adults with DD. Further research was recommended with young adults with DD in the transition stage.

Intergenerational Relationships

Strotmann (2012) reported benefits of an intergenerational program in Germany that involved retirees and high school seniors. High school students were graduating without the necessary skills to go to work. In response, skilled laborers were called out of retirement to

voluntarily work with the students. Benefits that Strotmann (2012) reported include satisfaction on the part of the retiree, job skills gained by the students, and positive relationships between the two groups.

Hwang et al. (2012) created and tested an intergenerational service learning project (ISL) that involved nursing students and older adults at long-term care facilities. The experimental design included a pre-test/post-test design with the ISL as the intervention. Instruments used included the Well-being Picture Scale, developed to measure well-being through use of pictures for individuals who may not be able to respond in other ways; and the Elderly Resident-Perceived Caring Scale (EPCS), to measure perception of comforting and caring. Older adults and younger nursing students in the experimental group who participated in the ISL project both reported perceived caring significantly higher than the control groups. The researchers concluded that intergenerational interactions can be enriched by using an ISL and thereby enhance the lives of both individuals involved.

Merriam and Kee (2014) discussed the benefits to the community when older adults share their wisdom. Merriam and Kee suggested that through lifelong learning, the older adult was not only learning, but more importantly was able to contribute his or her knowledge to the community. Researchers called this social capital, and referred to programs developed for older adults to work with the community as social innovation. Merriam and Kee (2014) recommended the development of intergenerational programs to enhance the well-being of communities.

Areas of Agreement

Areas of agreement in the literature on older adults and young adults with DD include the commonalities in findings on well-being, volunteerism, loneliness, and relationships. Literature was reviewed from multiple disciplines; including social work, psychology, education,

sociology, and nursing. Well-being in older adults is negatively impacted by the loss of roles and reduced purpose-in-life. Volunteerism has been identified frequently in the literature as a way to increase purpose-in-life for older adults. Young adults with DD struggle with relationships and as a result experience loneliness. Positive relationships enhance the well-being of young adults with DD and relieve loneliness. Intergenerational relationships have been examined among older adults and younger people and have shown to be positive for both groups. Additionally, the transition for young adults is reported as stressful on both the young adult and his or her family. Transition to retirement, or loss of roles, has a negative impact on purpose-in-life for older adults, and like young adults in transition, creates stress for the older adult.

Areas of Disagreement

Areas of disagreement in the literature are limited. Because this literature review focused on older adults and young adults with DD there are differences between the two groups and those differences will be considered in future planning for these two different groups. Different elements of well-being are negatively impacted in older adults and young adults with DD. Older adults experience a loss in roles which can result in decreased purpose-in-life. Conversely, young adults with DD report loneliness as they transition to adulthood.

State of the Art

The literature is clear on several points. Without the ability to progress in their independence, young adults are at risk for social isolation which was identified as a strong predictor of vulnerability for individuals with DD. Well-being in older adults and young adults with DD has been studied independently, with both quantitative and qualitative methods. Research discussed in this literature review provides evidence that reports the lack of purpose-in-life in older adults and the need for relationships for young adults with DD. One program in

Milwaukee has been identified that provides a day program for older adults, adults with DD, and preschool age children (St. Ann, 2017). However, any description of intergenerational relationships between older adults and young adults with DD is void in the literature. In addition, there is little research on the transition stage for young adults with DD.

Evidence of a vigorous response from nursing is absent in the literature. Nursing is concerned with the whole patient. Holistic care involves total well-being: mind, body and spirit. However, input from nursing was lacking in the interdisciplinary groups that examined the well-being of older adults or young adults with DD. This limited presence of the discipline of nursing in this literature review was disheartening. Nursing has an obligation to care for vulnerable populations. Older adults and young adults with DD are both vulnerable groups. It is possible that the well-being of both groups could be positively impacted by the holistic approach of nursing.

Gaps

This PAR project is the first study to examine the possible benefits of relationships between older adults and young adults with DD. In addition, it will reduce the gap in research with older adults and young adults with DD related to well-being from a nursing perspective. This focused examination of ways to enhance the well-being of older adults and young adults with DD will bring attention to the needs and talents that both groups possess and encourage further research on intergenerational relationships between both groups. Dissemination of the results of this research on enhancing the well-being of older adults and young adults with DD opens a discussion on well-being for both groups and encourage communities to develop programs or activities to provide an opportunity for meaningful relationships to develop.

Summary

This chapter revealed several important ideas that support development of purposeful intergenerational relationships. First, older adults have wisdom and knowledge that can be shared with others, and volunteerism enhances their well-being. Next, young adults with DD struggle with the transition to adulthood and experience loneliness. Purposeful relationships have been identified as beneficial in the lives of older adults and young adults with DD. Finally, intergenerational relationships are supported in the literature, however, programs are lacking and input from nursing is needed. Despite being concerned with holistic care, the contribution from nursing related to research on improving the well-being of older adults and young adults with DD has been scarce. Input from nursing, as a holistic caring discipline, is important in this interdisciplinary team working toward enhancing the well-being of both vulnerable groups. Consequently, nursing, along with other disciplines, should heed the overwhelming evidence in support of increased well-being by developing opportunities for positive relationships to develop across generations and work to create programs that promote relationships to enhance well-being.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Participatory Action Research was the foundational approach for this dissertation research. Use of PAR allowed a deeper understanding of older adults and young adults with DD and how intergenerational relationships in the community could enhance the well-being of people in both groups. This chapter will describe PAR and why this approach was chosen for the Oak Grove study. Methods that were used to examine the richness of intergenerational relationships and how those relationships enhance well-being will be discussed. Further, Oak Grove, the people that were invited to participate in the study and the garden, techniques that were used for data collection and analysis, and rigorous processes used will be described. This chapter will provide a clear description of the study and rationale for choosing PAR as the best approach for this intergenerational study.

Design

Qualitative research methods work well to understand a phenomenon more fully, allowing the researcher to think holistically, thereby understanding the whole person and consequently was appropriate for this nursing research (Munhall, 2012; Venzon, Cruz, & Higginbotham, 2013). After considering other research methods, PAR was the most appropriate approach for the study aimed at discovering ways to enhance well-being in older adults and young adults with DD in the Oak Grove community. PAR is an ideal way for the community health nurse researcher to involve the community in research that will result in action in an effort to solve a problem (Savage et al., 2006).

Participatory Action Research was used in the Oak Grove community to discover ideas that can aid in development of a sustainable program to encourage intergenerational relationships in an effort to enhance the well-being of older adults and young adults with DD. This process of

PAR often includes vulnerable groups in an effort to solve a problem in the community (Bongiorno, 2015; Savage et al., 2006). Researchers have shown that older adults have a decrease in purpose-in-life and meaning (Ryff & Keyes, 1995) and that young adults with DD may benefit from meaningful relationships (Mazurek, 2014). Is it possible that by helping others one might actually enhance his or her own well-being? How can this be accomplished? As a researcher alone it would be impossible for me to determine the best way for two groups to interact to enhance the well-being of members in both groups. These questions are best answered by the community members themselves, thus PAR utilizing multiple methods to gain insight was chosen to work toward enhanced well-being for members of the Oak Grove community and beyond.

This research provided valuable knowledge that will be used in organization and creation of an intergenerational garden or other intergenerational activity. In-depth semi-structured interviews, participant observation, and field notes were used as methods to identify ways that the older adults and young adults worked together on a common project to enhance their well-being. Use of in-depth semi-structured interviews provided a better understanding of how intergenerational interaction has impacted participants in previous experiences and if/how that informal interaction can be assimilated in the creation of a community program aimed at cultivating meaningful activity and improving the well-being of the community. Participant observation provided a better understanding of the participant experience and was used throughout the study (Polit & Beck, 2008). Observation was limited due to the minimal time in the newly established intergenerational garden. Field notes provided an outlet to reflect on any potential bias as a researcher, community member, mother of a young adult with DD; and ultimately a method for self-supervision and provision of an audit trail (Berger, 2013). Using

multiple methods and field notes enhanced the rigor of the study and provided a means for recognition of researcher bias. In conjunction with the CAB, the emergent ideas identified through this research will be used to develop an intergenerational program to enhance the well-being of older adults and young adults with DD. Phase II research will continue with the implementation of intergenerational activities discovered during Phase I; details are discussed below.

Background of PAR

Kurt Lewin is known as the founder of northern PAR, action in conjunction with science which attempts to improve well-being (Breda, 2015). Adelman (1993) stated that “action research for Lewin was exemplified by the discussion of problems followed by group decisions on how to proceed” (p. 9). Participatory Action Research is a pragmatic approach to solving problems in the community with the involvement of community members. Breda (2015) recommended use of PAR with vulnerable groups, when groups are able to sustain the action in the community, and when the researcher is willing to partner with the community in research, planning, and action. Lewin understood that the development of relationships between groups helped create sustainability through continued communication (Adelman, 1993). The outcome of PAR is research based action that has an impact on the community. Creation of a partnership in the community using community members as experts is an ideal way for research to impact practice and produce community solutions for vulnerable groups. In the Oak Grove PAR the desired outcome was discovery of ways to create an environment that will inspire intergenerational relationships that will have a positive impact on the well-being of older adults and the young adults with DD in the community.

Other Research Methods

Other research methods have been used to explore well-being in both older adults and young adults with DD. In a quantitative study, Ryff and Keyes (1995) reported that although other aspects of well-being remain stable, or increase with age, personal growth and purpose-in-life both decrease with age, with a significant decrease in purpose-in-life between the midlife and older age groups. As people age and their roles decline, this loss of roles can have a negative impact on their purpose-in-life and thus their overall well-being. Although Battersby and Phillips' (2016) findings differ from Ryff and Keyes (1995), they all agree that meaning-in-life is essential to the well-being of older adults. Mazurek (2014) found that loneliness negatively impacted well-being in young adults with ASD and suggested that increasing the social network for individuals with an ASD may improve their well-being. Greenfield and Marks (2004) found that formal volunteering was a protective factor against decreased purpose-in-life. Researchers found that as a person's active roles decreased, his or her purpose-in-life followed, but formal volunteering was found to be a protective factor for older adults who experienced a role loss.

Although other qualitative research methods would provide a deeper understanding of the people and the community, they lack the necessary element of action. For example, nurses have used ethnography as an approach to understand people and cultures and then used that evidence to develop nursing knowledge (Keen & de Chesnay, 2015). The knowledge gained through ethnographic research by nurses may have led to solutions to problems that were discovered, but the solution was not part of the research. Thus, although ethnography may provide a deeper understanding of the people and the culture in the Oak Grove community, it lacks the essential component that is needed at this time, which is action.

Certainly, a quantitative research design would be appropriate to assess the benefits of a program to enhance relationships between two populations. Chen and Walsh (2009) conducted a quasi-experimental project with a pretest-posttest design to compare the effect of a creative-bonding intervention (CBI) on the attitudes of nursing students toward older adults. The CBI was developed by nursing faculty. The experimental group participated in the CBI while the control group participated in a friendly visit (FV). This was an excellent method to examine the benefits that participating in a CBI had on nursing students. However, this type of design is inadequate for the study discussed in this paper because it lacks community involvement and consequently lacks sustainability.

As the mother of, and advocate for, a young adult with ASD, I have witnessed the loneliness experienced by young adults with DD. As a Registered Nurse (RN) Case Manager I have also witnessed the harm that the lack of purposeful activity has on older adults in the community. What was needed most at this time was research that explores solutions in the community for both groups to live better, more purposeful lives. Is it possible to fulfill the needs of older adults for meaning and purpose by providing an opportunity for them to share their skills and talents with young adults with DD? Other research methods have identified the problems discussed but have not addressed the problem. Consequently, PAR was the most appropriate approach to respond to the research question designed to explore and identify ways to enhance the well-being of older adults and young adults with DD through participation in development and maintenance of a community garden.

Community Advisory Board

Collaboration with the community is what differentiates PAR from other approaches as it involves a democratic process involving the community in research, planning, and action. In fact, collaboration is the first step in PAR (Bowie & Lawson, 2015). The researcher partners with members of the community to form a CAB to examine an important issue in the community. In collaboration with the researcher, community members identify an issue and work together toward a solution. Identification of key people in the community is essential in establishing a CAB; Burns and Grove (2009) recommended inclusion of stakeholders and key informants in participatory research. Stakeholders are individuals who are affected by the research topic, which often include vulnerable populations. Key informants include individuals from the community who may be able to contribute to development of a solution, such as leaders in the community, clinical providers, advocates and individuals who may provide access to important resources.

The CAB in Oak Grove was made up of members of the community who are concerned about the well-being of older adults and young adults with DD. In fact, several of the CAB members had been meeting on an intermittent basis and attempted a fragmented approach to creating meaningful activities for the young adults with the help of older adults, but routine and sustainability were lacking. Consequently, the need for a more formal approach to solving this problem was apparent and the loose group of concerned community members joined together to discover a sustainable response to enhancing the well-being of members of the community. The CAB held its first meeting December, 2014, in preparation for the PAR study. Members of the CAB included an older adult who is a retired public health nurse, a young adult with DD, the youth pastor of the church who works with the young adults with DD as they outgrow the youth

group, the associate pastor of Oak Grove Church, a nursing student who is co-owner of a local nursery and expert gardener, and a civically active mother of a young adult with DD. The CAB met and discussed different ideas to encourage intentional intergenerational relationships to develop and grow. Several ideas were considered and the idea of a community garden appealed to all members. A unanimous decision was made in support of developing a community garden to provide a venue to encourage intergenerational relationships through teaching, working together, and activities.

Ongoing meetings were held monthly on the first Monday of the month to plan for the community garden. In an effort to involve the wider community and coordinate volunteer efforts, a member of the CAB who worked with several Boy Scouts who were working on ideas for their Eagle Scout projects recommended projects that contributed to the infrastructure of the garden. It was suggested that the young men select an aspect of the garden design, such as running the irrigation system, building picnic tables or a shelter, or building raised beds, as their project. Members of the CAB acknowledge that the community garden will need community involvement beyond Phase I of the study and will continue to work to create community involvement and sustainability.

Sample

Collaboration with the community is important in PAR. As a member of the community this type of relationship exists with people in both groups: older adults and young adults with DD. Because specific knowledge from two unique populations was required, a purposive sampling approach was used (Polit & Beck, 2008). Refer to the Procedures for Data Collection and Analysis section for specific details regarding how individuals were invited to participate.

Older adults. In conjunction with the CAB, older adults, previously defined as individuals 50 years old or older, who had experience in gardening, construction, grading, or other skills that would be beneficial in development of a garden and who had experience working with young adults with DDs were identified to be interviewed. People who have experience working with young adults with DD in a community setting have specialized information based on that experience, and that knowledge is what was being sought in the interview process. This experience was necessary to produce credible results (Bergold & Thomas, 2012). A greater understanding of the dynamics of such relationships is important in developing an effective plan for the two groups to work together in a garden or other community activity. In summary, participants from the older adult group (1) were 50 years old or older, (2) possessed skills needed in the garden project, and (3) had prior experience working with young adults with DD in the community.

Young adults. Next, young adults with DD, as defined in Chapter 1, were identified by myself and the CAB based on their known need for special education services in the school system, and/or a self-identified developmental disability. Four young adults with DD known to members of the CAB were invited to participate in a semi-structured interview. Similar to the older adults, these young adults had experience working with older adults either through volunteer activities or recent school enrollment. Essentially, this included all young adults that have been in a learning environment such as school or other vocational rehabilitation type program as they would have previously been mentored by adults. Participants from the young adult group (1) had a developmental disability, (2) were between the ages of 18 and 30, and (3) had experience working with/learning from older adults.

Saturation is difficult to predict in qualitative research. Guest, Bunce, and Johnson (2006) completed an exhaustive review of research texts and databases and concluded that “very little headway has been made” (p. 60) with regard to pre-determination of data saturation. Following a thorough review of the literature, Guest et al. (2006) concluded that over 80% of the themes were identified in the first six interviews and 92% after only 12 interviews. Guest et al. (2006) findings agree with Morse (as cited in Guest et al., 2006) and Nielsen and Landauer (as cited in Guest et al., 2006) that 6 interviews produce about 80% of useable data. For the Oak Grove PAR 6 to 20 total interviews were proposed. Based on the criteria discussed above, the anticipated number of participants from the older adult group exceeded the number of available participants from the young adult with DD group. This proved to be true as only four young adults who met the criteria for a participant agreed to be interviewed. Consequently, although there were more older adults that met the criteria, participants from this group were limited to five participants to have a similar number from each group. Thus, the total number of participants was nine (four young adults and five older adults). In spite of the small number of participants, as will be discussed in the following chapter, all themes of well-being were identified and repeated in multiple interviews, saturation was met.

Setting

This project was conducted in the Oak Grove community, a growing community considered the urban fringe of a major city in the southeast United States. As discussed previously, Oak Grove is a former farming community in transition. The Oak Grove Church building was used for interviews and for the CAB meetings. Members of the church leadership were involved in the CAB and were supportive of the project. Individual interviews took place in convenient places in the community for the interviewee that allowed for privacy. These spaces

included homes, a local coffee shop, and the church building. The church property was the site for the garden and thus observation took place at the church property; see Appendix A for a preliminary design. The proposed design will be completed in phases. An Eagle Scout built several raised beds that were incorporated into the community garden and those beds were prepared for planting by a group of intergenerational community members.

Instruments and Data Analysis

Data were gathered using in-depth interviews and demographic questionnaires (see Appendix B). An in-depth semi-structured interview served as the instrument; a topic guide for the interview can be found in the Procedures section of this chapter. Methodological analysis using thematic analysis procedures were used to produce credible results. Braun and Clark (2006) detailed six phases in thematic analysis. Phase one is becoming familiar with the data. This was accomplished by conducting the interviews myself, personal transcription of the audio record of the interview within a few days of the actual interview, reading and rereading the data, and notating initial ideas in the process column. The transcription was completed in a four column document: column one was the actual transcription; column two was a process column to record thoughts, ideas, emerging concepts, and quotes; column three was used to identify themes; and line numbers were recorded in column four which made for easy reference to specific themes and quotes. Personal transcription of each interview afforded the opportunity to become familiar with the spoken word and verbal inflection of the participant. This was particularly useful for a deeper understanding of the emotion behind some of the words. For example, when a participant became emotional and began crying when trying to describe her lack of friends, that moment and the emotion was notated in the transcription. This provided an insightful understanding of the data.

Phase two involved generating the initial codes. This was completed in the process column. After transcription and several readings, ideas that were relevant were notated, with the addition of specific quotes; text highlighter and boldface were used to emphasize important data items. Phase three is searching for themes. After all the interviews had been conducted, transcribed, and initial codes generated, themes began to emerge. A deductive process was used to identify participants' ideas on well-being and how their well-being may have been affected by intergenerational relationships. The initial process of reviewing themes revealed over 50 potential themes. Phase four provided an opportunity to review themes in the entire dataset. Each initial theme was listed with the interview and line number the theme occurred, and specific quotes of interest were highlighted or bolded. During phase five, defining and naming themes, the initial 50 potential themes were reduced to six themes with subthemes. Many of the subthemes clearly contributed to the five elements of well-being as described by Seligman (2011) (Chapter 1), which were all identified as themes. One additional theme that became clear during analysis was exceptional people. This will be discussed further in the results section. Final analysis of the data, phase six, is reported in the following chapter.

In addition to the interviews, field notes were maintained after each interview. Those notes provided a method for recalling emotions revealed during the process. Field notes and participant observation from the garden, which was recorded in the field notes, were analyzed for common themes and meaning. According to Munhall (2012), reflection and interpretation of the data leads to crystallization, the point when a deeper understanding occurs. Ongoing analysis, which took place over several months, was devoted to identify the themes and sub-themes of ways to enhance well-being through intergenerational relationships. Demographic data, which

was limited to age, gender, race, living arrangement, employment, status of school, and education level, were analyzed and a summary is provided in the results section.

Data and interpretation were organized using Microsoft Office applications on a password protected computer. These methods allowed for secure, organized storage as well as ease in searching for specific data. Microsoft Office was also used to facilitate the analysis process. In an effort to become familiar with the data, transcription was completed without use of special software. This process enhanced the identification of possible themes.

Rigor: Accuracy and Replicability

Polit and Beck (2008) referred to Lincoln and Guba's criteria for establishing trustworthiness of qualitative data as the "gold standard" (p. 430) for researchers. Thus, the following standards were used to establish trustworthiness of the data: credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. In addition, special attention was paid to limit researcher bias as described below.

Credibility. First, credibility of the data can be established by incorporating multiple techniques in the process. Techniques that were employed in this study include persistent observation, methods triangulation, and peer debriefing. Persistent observation provided the opportunity for me to observe the complexity of the phenomenon under investigation and understand that phenomenon in a deeper way. This was accomplished in the Oak Grove PAR by being present in the garden while intergenerational interaction took place and observation of that interaction. Methods triangulation involves the use of multiple data collection methods and also enhances the researcher's understanding. Methods used included in-depth interviews, participant observation, and field notes. In addition, investigator triangulation, or two or more researchers involved in the analysis process also adds to the credibility of the data. In this case, the honors

nursing student, who was a member of the CAB, was asked to review one of the transcripts for accuracy. The student provided written feedback which confirmed identification of several themes, and added emphasis of one theme, relationships. Peer debriefing was accomplished by discussion of the data analysis with Drs. de Chesnay and Bongiorno, the PAR and qualitative methods experts on this dissertation committee. Transcripts, the typology of themes and sub-themes were reviewed and the analysis process discussed with Dr. de Chesnay. Dr. Myers, (dissertation committee member with expertise in young adults with DD) was consulted to discuss the exceptional people theme. Dr. Bongiorno (dissertation committee member with expertise in PAR) reviewed selected transcripts for accuracy. This process of peer review enabled confirmation of emergent themes and ideas with disinterested experts and helped minimize researcher bias.

Transferability. Transferability is accomplished by both a comprehensive description of the data as well as research design (Polit & Beck, 2008). A detailed and in-depth discussion of the data analysis is described above and the findings are reported in the following chapters. I plan to publish the findings in a peer reviewed research journal as well as delivering a podium presentation to an appropriate audience. The research design includes a purposive sample, older adults and young adults with DD. It is hoped that the findings will transfer to similar populations in other communities as well as different living arrangements, such as congregate living. Rigorous dissemination of the findings of this research will provide the opportunity for others to create similar programs to enhance the well-being of their community members.

Dependability. Although an external audit was not used in this study, an audit trail that encompasses the raw data (transcripts, journal notes), analysis notes, process (member check)

notes, field notes, interview questions, and drafts of reports (Polit & Beck, 2008), have been maintained. Feedback from the dissertation committee has also been maintained.

Confirmability. Triangulation and reflexivity were used to establish confirmability. Confirmability is a degree of objectivity or neutrality (Polit & Beck, 2008; Robert Wood Johnson Foundation [RWJF], 2008). Methods triangulation, discussed above as a technique to enhance credibility, will also enhance confirmability. Reflexivity is particularly important in qualitative research to minimize researcher bias when the researcher is working with the community and may be, or become, a member of the community. Potential for overshadowing the responses of the participants with personal experience was recognized. It was important to remain neutral so the results could be shaped by the participants. Membership in the community provided access that may not have been achieved by an outsider. Open access provided for a fuller understanding of the participants. Reflexivity is discussed in more detail in the next section.

Researcher bias. Several methods were used to identify ways in which personal experience and connection to the research population could create unwanted bias, and also how this position might have a positive impact on the study. Use of self in this study was important as PAR builds a bridge between the researcher and the participants and community. Reflexivity is defined by Berger (2015) as “self-appraisal in research . . . turning of the researcher lens back onto oneself to recognize and take responsibility for one’s own situatedness within the research and the effect that it may have on the setting and people being studied” (p. 220). Reflexivity is a way for the researcher to recognize his or her own viewpoint and how that viewpoint may impact the participants, data gathering, data analysis, and outcome of the study. Berger (2015) provided several strategies for reflexivity in qualitative research (discussed above) as methods to establish

trustworthiness; they include prolonged engagement, member checking, triangulation, peer review, reflexivity, and an audit trail. In addition to establishing trustworthiness, these same approaches were used to check researcher bias.

As anticipated, prior connection with the community had a positive impact on the research process in several ways. Being a member of the community and mother of a young adult with DD provided access to participants. Participants were open to be interviewed and to participate in garden activities as a result of existing relationships or their awareness of connections to the community. Having the viewpoint of an insider enabled observation of the intergenerational interactions that may not have been possible without a connection. Berger (2015) recommended reflexivity as a way for the researcher to balance his or her relationship with the participants thereby enhancing rigor. As discussed above, reflexivity was employed to monitor for potential bias, and a connection with the community provided access and a deeper understanding of the people.

Procedures detailed in this section strengthened the study. As described by Munhall (2012), rapport and trust are essential in qualitative research. In PAR, collaboration with the community is essential for building trust (Bongiorno, 2015). Collaboration with the community and other professionals is an ideal approach to work together to discover ways to enhance the lives of people in the community. Further, in-depth exploration of the data, which as discussed previously, was conducted with an honors nursing student and with input from the CAB, enhanced rigor. Feedback from dissertation committee members helped strengthen the accuracy of the data. A detailed trail of decision making added to the replicability of the study. Although a nursing perspective was employed, the holistic nature of nursing, the purpose of this study, and

the detailed description planned for the data analysis and dissemination adds to the transferability to other disciplines.

While exact reproduction of this study might be impossible, a detailed trail of decision making adds to the replicability of the study. It is the hope of the CAB that the intergenerational interaction in the garden will be replicable in other areas, such as supported living environments for both groups.

Procedures for Data Collection and Analysis

Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval was granted from KSU as an Exempt Review - Category 2: Educational tests, surveys, interviews, public observation. Following IRB approval, personal invitations for interviews were made to individuals identified by the author and the CAB.

Participants were selected for an interview based on the criteria presented in the sample section. Participants were invited to be interviewed either by telephone or in person. Once a potential participant agreed to an interview, an appointment was scheduled at a time and place that was convenient for the participant, either at his or her home or in the church and confirmed by phone the day before the interview.

The purpose of the study and the CAB's plans for a community garden were described. Once the participant had an idea of what the interview would entail, a copy of the informed consent was provided and described; the participant and advocate had an opportunity to ask questions. None of the young adults with DD had a legal guardian; however, the study was explained to the parent or advocate, when present, who all provided verbal approval to proceed with the interview. All of the participants agreed to be interviewed and signed the informed consent document. Demographic data were obtained by participant completion of the

demographic questionnaire (see Appendix B). A photographic release was also obtained (Appendix C). With verbal permission of the participants, digital portable recording equipment was used to record the interviews for later transcription. Qualitative data were obtained by use of an in-depth semi-structured interview format. Polit and Beck (2008) recommend participant observation when a research objective is to understand how participants interact and make meaning. Thus, participant observation was a secondary method used to understand the intergenerational interaction on a deeper level. Finally, field notes were maintained to record thoughts, feelings, and perceptions of the significance of the interviews, which are described in more detail below. Because the intergenerational aspect of the garden was new, and the interviews were taking place as work in the garden was being completed, participant observation was limited.

Semi-structured interviews. In-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted with 5 older adults and 4 young adults with DD. Open ended questions were asked of the participants to allow for expanded dialogue. It was anticipated that other questions would arise from the interview and be incorporated into the dialogue (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Sample interview questions are below; there were instances when the participant needed encouragement to respond and/or further questions to clarify a response. Questions were worded to encourage the participant to elaborate and provide more depth, inspire vivid descriptions, discover nuance or deeper meaning, and allow the participant to give enough detail to provide rich responses (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). The following questions were used to get the conversation started, which allowed the participant to expand on what he or she felt he or she would like to share.

Older adult interview questions.

- What has your experience been working with young adults with DD?

- What were your thoughts before you had the opportunity to mentor these young adults?
- How has that experience impacted your impression about people with DD?
- How do you think older adults could mentor young adults with DD?
- What are your thoughts on how older adults could help young adults working in a garden?
- What benefits do you anticipate the older adults might experience?
- What benefits do you anticipate the young adult with DD might experience?
- What are your suggestions on how to implement a program for the two groups to work together in a garden?
- Is there anything else that you would like to share with me?

Young adult with DD interview questions.

- What have you been doing since high school?
- Can you tell me about your friends, do you get to see them often?
- Can you tell me a little about a mission trip you went on with the Disaster Recovery Team (Or other activity the young adult participated in with older adults)? What kinds of things did you do on the mission trip?
- Who did you work with on the job site during the mission trip? Can you tell me about him/her?
- How did working with the team make you feel?
- What did you learn from others on the team?
- What other things would you have liked to learn?
- Is there anything else that you would like to share with me?

Participant observation. Participant observation is ideal when the researcher is learning about how groups interact and develop relationships (Polit & Beck, 2008). Indeed, this was an excellent method to understand the interaction between older adults and young adults with DD while working in the garden. Data included observation of the physical setting, the participants, activities, timing of events, organization of interactions, and disruptions as recommended by Polit and Beck (2008). Observational notes were recorded as soon as possible in a log entry and field notes. Both descriptive and reflective notes were maintained in an effort to gain a richer understanding of the interaction in the garden.

The awareness of an insider in the community and as the mother of a young adult with DD provided a foundation of knowledge about the struggles young adults with DD have in social settings and enriched observation. Log entries included date and time of interaction, and a description of what transpired during the interaction. Field notes included a more detailed description of the interaction under the following sections: observational, theoretical, methodological, and personal (Polit & Beck, 2008).

Field notes. Introspection can reveal bias that the researcher may have about the problem (Burns & Grove, 2009). Membership in the community and experience as a mother of a young adult with DD provided unique insight into the problem, but also was a potentially confounding variable. Field notes were maintained to record thoughts and feelings about the interview process in an effort to raise self-consciousness and capitalize on emic knowledge of the community and the population. Conversely, as a nurse researcher, field notes were used as a method to reduce bias and enhance an etic perspective of the people and culture of Oak Grove. Employing both an emic and etic view enhanced overall understanding and provided a rich view of the problem.

Application of the Well-being Theory was consistent throughout the research process. The aim of this PAR was to discover and develop ways to enhance the well-being of intergenerational community members. This was only possible by identification of what well-being was in the Oak Grove community, and after reviewing the data multiple times and searching for themes in the codes it was evident that the elements of well-being specific to the Oak Grove community were being revealed in the data. Elements of well-being as themes will be discussed in the next chapter, which will provide a rich description of the five elements of well-being for the Oak Grove community.

Timeline

See Appendix D for the initial proposed timeline. Due to unforeseen circumstances, the research did not follow the proposed timeline as hoped.

Summary

The PAR presented in this chapter was aimed at discovering ways to enhance the well-being of older adults and young adults with DD in the Oak Grove community through interaction in a community garden. This research was important in that both groups, older adults and young adults with DD, are growing and they have the potential to help one another. It is hoped that by conducting this research and community planning for intergenerational relationships, a sustainable method for continued interaction between the two groups can and will continue. Use of in-depth interviews, participant observation, and field notes with rigorous standards described in this chapter, can provide a deeper understanding of the phenomenon that exists between older adults and young adults who have had a positive experience in an intergenerational relationship. The findings will be discussed with the CAB and knowledge gained will help in planning for

future programs. It is hoped that the well-being of both groups and the broader community will be enhanced by the ideas discovered and implemented in this project.

Chapter 4: Analysis

The purpose of this chapter is to report the results of this study. A brief description of the participants will be reported, followed by a discussion of the analysis. As described in the methods section, a thorough thematic analysis was conducted on the data, and findings will be discussed in detail below. Finally, a summary of the research will provide a recap of the findings.

Description of Participants

A total of nine individuals were interviewed, five older adults and four young adults with DD. The small number of participants is a potential limitation of the study; however, the nine participants provided rich data. Guest et al. (2006) reported that 80% of themes were identified in the first six interviews. The 4 young adults age range was 19 to 25, with a mean age of 22. The 5 older adults mean age was 60.6 with a range of 51 to 72. Five participants were female and 4 were male, all participants were white. Commonalities among the participants included their community affiliation, a Christian perspective, openness to helping others, and willingness to share their experience. Education ranged from high school graduate or special needs certificate of attendance to graduate degree. Interestingly, all the young adults reported living with their parents. A description of each participant follows.

Cathy is 51, she is a former elementary school teacher and referenced her experience teaching often during the interview. Cathy also has experience working with young adults with DD as a tutor and mentor. I know Cathy through participation in a study together and have seen her interact often with several of the young adults with DD. I interviewed Cathy at her home.

Donna is a 72-year-old female and is a master gardener. I interviewed Donna at her home in a rural area where she tends her vegetable, fruit, and flower gardens. Donna proudly gave me

a tour of her gardens and her expertise was evident in her casual conversation about the different plants and the best ways to care for them. In the interview, Donna revealed that when she was going to college she had hopes of teaching children with disabilities, but she was talked out of it by her counselor. Donna went on to become a home economics teacher.

Kate was the first young woman interviewed. She is 19 years old and has been a member of the CAB. Kate was clearly honored by the invitation to be interviewed and was excited to share her story. As expected, the interview with Kate was very informative. Kate is a sweet young woman who craves relationships. Since high school she has had little opportunity to “hang-out” with friends, and her tears during the interview revealed how this lack of meaningful friendships negatively impacted her. I shared her sadness and reflected on researcher bias after the interview. Kate exposed emotion that she may have held back if I were unknown to her.

Lisa is a 24-year-old female with a developmental disability. With her mother’s permission, I picked Lisa up at her home and we went to the garden area for the interview. Lisa’s interview was emotion-filled at times and exposed her loneliness and need for positive relationships. Once again, the raw emotion that was displayed saddened me, and provided evidence for the need for activities to provide an opportunity to develop positive relationships in our community. Lisa was attending a community college and lived with her parents at the time of the interview.

Neal is a 70-year-old male with a graduate degree who lives with his spouse. Neal participated in several mission trips where he emerged as a leader and had the opportunity to get to know some young adults with DD. During our interview, it was revealed that prior to one of the mission trips, Neal had a negative view of people with disabilities, but after interacting with one young adult with a diagnosis on the autism spectrum, Neal’s view was changed dramatically.

His interview provided a terrific perspective on the naiveté of an educated older adult in relation to people with disabilities. Once Neal had the opportunity to get to know someone who had a developmental disability he became somewhat of a champion for people with disabilities.

Patricia is a 58-year-old female, married and working. I met and interviewed Patricia at the local ice cream/coffee shop. Patricia was engaged in the lives of several young adults through the drama team at the church. Patricia also has a grandson with cerebral palsy, a developmental disability.

Peter is 52, married, a college graduate, and male. He is the youth pastor at the church and provided an introspective view of his ideas regarding young adults and how to incorporate them in the life of the community. Peter's work toward including the young adults in the activities of the church inspired this PAR project and he was a member of the CAB. Peter is dedicated to all people, and his interview revealed a heart for the vulnerable people in the Oak Grove community.

Travis is a 25-year-old young man with ASD. Travis reported being a high school graduate and he lives at home with his parents and siblings. With Travis' mother's permission, I picked him up from home and we went to the local ice cream shop for the interview. Travis enjoyed being invited to participate in an interview, and he especially enjoyed the visit and ice cream.

Marshall is 24 years old and also has a diagnosis of ASD. After gaining permission from his father and his grandmother (by marriage), who is his primary advocate, I met Marshall at the church for the interview. We met before vacation bible school (VBS), where he was to serve as a volunteer. Marshall's interview was rather short and I had to reword questions several times to encourage a response from him. His responses revealed a literal interpretation of the world.

Although none of the young adults had an official guardian, I discussed the study with their parent or advocate prior to inviting the young adult to be interviewed. All the young adults interviewed depended on their parents/caregivers for daily support. None of the young adults interviewed drove and consequently I either interviewed the young adults at their home or picked them up to take them someplace in the community for the interview.

Findings

As described in detail in Chapter 3, following personal transcription of the audio recorded interviews, multiple reads, processing the data and recording process notes, I began to identify concepts using a deductive process of analysis (Elo & Kyngas, 2008). Concepts were reviewed multiple times, and as I contemplated the over 50 concepts I recognized several common sub-themes that were all positive emotions; they included joy, trust, and love. As I contemplated further, I realized most of the concepts identified were sub-themes of the five elements of the Well-being Theory, which was used in the design of the study. Although the overall purpose of the study was discussed with the participants, the elements themselves were not. Questions asked during the interviews did not specifically relate to well-being (see Chapter 3), but upon analysis of the data, the themes clearly aligned with the elements of Seligman's Well-being Theory (2009). The participants identified sub-themes of the elements of well-being that are essential to their well-being. It will be important to incorporate this knowledge into any program designed to allow older adults and young adults with DD interaction to enhance well-being. This phenomenon will be discussed in detail below. In addition to the elements of well-being, exceptional people was also identified as a theme. A typology was completed to assist with organization of the data, labeling each sub-theme with the participant and line number for easy reference; see Appendix E. The typology includes each theme, sub-themes, participant and

number of times the theme occurred among the young adults and older adults. Each theme will be discussed in detail below.

Engagement

The definition of engagement can be found in Chapter 1. Seligman (2009) referred to engagement as the ‘flow state.’ I described engagement as “using one’s skills and talents in a productive way.” Engagement and its sub-themes occurred most often, and was the predominant element of well-being that occurred in both groups. Overall, engagement was identified 77 times during the interviews; 55 times by the older adult participants and 22 by the young adult participants. I also observed engagement multiple times during participant observation. Sub-themes include community, discovery, inclusion, knowledge, learning, persistence, planning, experience and teaching. In the Oak Grove community, engagement, or the flow state, in an intergenerational group involved the sub-themes listed and described below.

Community. The importance of community engagement occurred in six of the nine interviews, among four older adults and two younger adults. Neal and Peter both identified the need to get the community to ‘buy-in’ to the idea. Neal said

I think the biggest thing would be trying to get these adults (older adults) into it. Buying into it. You may have to have some kind of meeting, a group meeting talk about it, so they start buying into the project in the beginning they will stay. They now have a piece of the project. And, if you have a piece of the project you are kind of tied to it and want to see it to fruition. (Keen, 2016a, Neal 36)

Peter said:

I would love to bring him (a community member) over here and just show him what it is we are wanting to do and get more and more people out there to buy-in to what it is we

are doing. And get it moving. I know that it is a process but I'm not a patient person.

(Keen, 2016a, Peter 18)

Involvement of the intergenerational community is the ultimate goal of this PAR, and Neal and Peter recognized the importance of acceptance of the idea and commitment to the project.

After Patricia related her bias of not giving young adults with DD “enough credit for being able to do as much as they can do” (Keen, 2016a, Patricia 6), I asked Patricia about how her experience working with young adults impacted her impression about people with DD, and she said, “they are capable of a whole lot more given the opportunity to do more” (Keen, 2016a, Patricia 6). Patricia mentioned community engagement as that opportunity. In an effort to describe the benefits for an older adult working with a young adult, Patricia said:

But it's like when you can do those things together, I just think it is a good experience. I think it helps both because it helps you, an older person, to feel a part of something also. Because you know like your kids may be grown and they don't have much to do with you anymore. And your grandkids may be at the age when they forget to call, but then you have somebody that appreciates being there with you. And then you hope it's the same way that they are really enjoying and learning something about just playing in the dirt.

(Keen, 2016a, Patricia 14)

In this statement, Patricia identified several elements of well-being; engagement, meaning and purpose, and positive relationships.

Engagement moves beyond the local community for Peter, after his description of some positive aspects of interaction with young adults with DD, he said “I think it has kind of opened my eyes to the Kingdom of God and the ability to love people where they are at” (Keen, 2016a, Peter 8).

Kate described the help she had from the community when she worked on a fund raiser at church, she said:

Everybody that was at that dinner helped me. They impacted my life amazingly because without them I wouldn't have, it was not just passing my senior project, its saying that they care. John (pastor) impacts my life big time. Mary (assistant pastor), my parents are the most people that impact my life. But in the church, it's, I can't give you a list, I can't give you who it is, it is everybody. (Keen, 2016a, Kate 107)

Kate went on to discuss others at church as part of her family, multiple times over the course of our interview Kate referred to peers and older adults as part of her family, one time Kate said "I was with my family, felt like. Like that." I asked, "your family as in . . .", and Kate responded "No, not my dad, my family as in that church. Because my church is my family. I count that as my extended family (Keen, 2016a, Kate 99)." Engagement with the community felt like extended family to Kate, an essential component of her well-being.

Lisa discussed a time she worked with older adults to assemble sack lunches for delivery to people who were homeless. Lisa felt welcomed and supported by the older adults she worked with and expressed her thoughts that the older adults were different, possibly more willing to accept others, because their efforts were on behalf of the church. Lisa said,

When preparing the meals, when working with older adults I can think of this one person. They were very open minded. You know, they weren't, any idea that you put out, now granted the idea is that you are packing lunches, come on now there can't be very many ideas that you are putting out there. You know, but just like different ways, like how about you do this and I'll do that. You know whatever, it's like how about you do this and I'll do what you are doing. They weren't in a denial mode; they were very open, very

willing to help out. Now, granted now that I say that part of me says, they are a church member, they are following Christ, they are doing this for God they are not going to be in denial mode, but another part of me says yeah, but that could just be them, who they are, you know, they could just be 'I'm here to make these lunches, I'm not going to sit here and argue with you about who does what and who, you do this, no I want to do that. You know, I'm not going to argue back and forth let's just get it done. So, they were very open, very kind, I know there were a couple times where I skipped a bag and they were like 'Hey, can you put something in the bag' not like I'm going to nail you on the head, you forgot to put this in there you know. (Keen, 2016a, Lisa 47)

Lisa expressed satisfaction with a group that encouraged and mentored her without judgement. This may have been in part due to the intergenerational nature of the team. From this discussion, it appears that the older adults mentored Lisa with positive feedback, which allowed her to become fully engaged.

Discovery. Discovery of one's talents is essential to engagement and the flow state. I recognized discovery multiple times in the interviews with one older adult and one young adult. Peter referred to the opportunity for older adults to discover their ability to relate to people with special needs, he said:

I think a lot of our seniors though struggle with that same fear that so many people do with kids with special needs, how am I going to handle it. What do I really have to offer to them? Um, and so it's a matter of creating that opportunity where they can discover that for themselves. Because I think everybody is gifted very differently. (Keen, 2016a, Peter 8)

Kate discovered strength she did not know she had through her work with older adults on a mission trip, she said, “We were building a church out of cement blocks and me with my tiny little arms, it was very difficult (laughing) so I’m a very petite girl so it was very hard” (Keen, 2016a, Kate 12). Again, she said:

It was very life changing because a girl with mild cerebral palsy to be in a country like that, because if you cough on me I could get sick. I could get, I get sick so easily. So, going to that was definitely life changing and it was, it just realizes how blessed you are. (Keen, 2016a, Kate 12)

Finally, Kate talked about how she felt special for having the opportunity to serve those who did not have the material things she has, but that those people had love. Kate was discovering who she was through serving others.

Inclusion. Inclusion was recognized six times in only one interview. Although inclusion is widely known among the school-age generation and their parents, older adults may not be familiar with the inclusion model. Alternatively, inclusion is normal and expected with the young adults and consequently was not mentioned by the young adults. Inclusion was observed in Peter’s interview it appears to be an essential sub-theme of engagement and therefore was included in this analysis.

When asked about his thoughts before he had the opportunity to mentor young adults with DD, Peter responded:

I didn’t know if we could actually do it. The concern about, obviously because some of them are on, they are all different, having the ability to function in a classroom environment either be it attention or the ability to understand or comprehend what we were talking about, so being able to reach them on their level and let them still be

involved in the conversations and not be ostracized or looked down upon. But, most of the kids are really good to incorporate them, and if something is said out of context they always seem to find a way, like Jacob always has a way with Ely to bring him back around, or to try to help him pull out what he's trying to communicate and has trouble finding the right words or something. But, obviously on mission trips, because you have a little bit higher responsibility sometimes it's a matter of it is the first time they have ever been away from home. Um, getting the parents to let go and to earn their trust, but also to get the kids that freedom to experience what their peers are experiencing. Obviously recognizing that they probably won't interact at the same level as far as some of the, like when we were doing mission work building sometimes they don't have the same capacity, but most of the time they have. Most of the time most of our kids have done well with that. And Travis always loves being in charge and wearing an orange hat and a vest and putting him in that role, and pushing them to do new things that they didn't think they could do. Um, I guess just the biggest, every one of them is different, and every one of them I always have that little bit of apprehensiveness until I get to know them of what they are capable of doing and um, having, that the Lord would give me the patience sometimes when they get out of hand, I guess. That's always the biggest challenge.

(Keen, 2016a, Peter 4).

Later in the interview, Peter said:

And so, I think we all have to be mindful of that, to not overlook them (people with disabilities) for the sake of convenience, or whatever, that they are God's children too and in need of our love. And they have so much love to give and they just need to be given an opportunity to participate. (Keen, 2016a, Peter 6)

As revealed through the data, inclusion incorporates trust, freedom, mindfulness, support from others, patience, willingness and acceptance. Peter's statement "they just need to be given an opportunity to participate" summarizes inclusion.

Knowledge. In the dataset, the engagement sub-theme of knowledge was discovered multiple times in three different interviews, all with older adults. This mirrors the literature discussed in Chapter 2 on older adults using their skills and talents, and lends support for intergenerational relationships with young adults with DD. For a person to go into the flow state he or she must possess knowledge about the skill or activity being conducted. In my interview with Donna, she was describing a garden an intergenerational mission team planted for a restaurant that had a training program for vulnerable people reentering the workforce. Donna commented:

It would be nice to go back and see if it really is functioning. Because I think I remember a tree that was in that area and I thought, oh it won't be long, that may take it over, but maybe the location, you know if they have six hours of sun that will work. I don't recall that either. (Keen, 2016a, Donna 33)

Donna's experience as a master gardener and knowledge were evident in the interview and would have been helpful in planning for the restaurant garden.

Neal's interview also revealed the importance of knowledge. When asked about his thoughts on how older adults could help young adults in a garden, Neal said:

Older adults probably can't do the heavy work. But they sure can tell a kid you are digging too deep, or you don't want to cut it that way, it has to be planted so deep. And I can show you how to do one but I can't bend over for 20 of them. Okay, so you show them and watch them and may have to do it one more time but then you can teach that

person how that's done, if you have the knowledge. And there you can take someone like my wife, she has some problems with memory, but she sure knows her plants. She's a master gardener, she can physically do a little bit, but she could tell that person exactly the name of the plant, how deep to plant it, and how you harvest it. (Keen, 2016a, Neal 36)

And, Neal revealed how his personal knowledge of a child with autism was important to understand how to interact with him, he said:

I have this one kid that has autism that is on my bus, I can't tell him that this is where the bus is, he knows where the bus is going to stop, but he won't stand there and wait for it, he is pacing back and forth. And then once I stop the bus he could be 30 feet away and then he comes to the bus and gets on. And he sits in the same spot, but he talks to the kids and the kids talk to him. (Keen, 2016a, Neal 52)

In response to the question how do you think older adults could mentor young adults with DD, Peter also revealed the importance of knowledge to be engaged. Peter said:

Oh wow, that's easy. I think it's easy to say, a lot harder to do. I think now, probably more than ever in the history of our society we've got a very, very well educated adult population, senior adult population. By that I mean many of them have primary and secondary education. Many of them have, they've retired young, and they've got the means, the financial means, they've got the time, they've still got the energy, they've got their health, and so I think, so from those logistical standpoint they have the time, they have the money, many of them have the heart, but also at the same time I think that coincides with what used to be the nuclear family is very fragmented now. And, like I look at my own family and I'm one of eight kids and we are scattered all over the United

States. So, we don't have a nuclear family, in fact this last summer my own father lived in Florida and we weren't able to be there because he refused to come here and it wasn't logistical, didn't make sense for us to move down there, but uh, he certainly still had a lot to give. He had a lot of life experience, a lot of wisdom and a lot of knowledge, and very gifted in many different areas. And that's what I love to see in the life of the church, particularly here, um, is to connect those two because they still have a need for that nuclear family, and a need to belong when so many times in our society we look at older people and say, 'uh, they're old, put them out to pasture, we don't have a need for them anymore' when in reality, um, they might be old chronologically but they are still very young at heart. And they still need that connection, they still need a place to give, a place to love, a place to be loved, and I think to pair them up with disabled children or young adults it is perfect because they both have a need and they are both very loving and caring and one has a need to learn and one has a lot to teach. And to transfer that knowledge, I think it's just a perfect match. (Keen, 2016a, Peter 8)

Learning. Learning was identified as a sub-theme of engagement in data collected in both groups. Learning leads to knowledge, which as discussed above is important to engagement. In our discussion on the potential benefits to young adults engaged with older adults, Neal said:

They could learn something different. Something they don't know. Sometimes the young adults are having troubles in areas, whatever it is, but if they can find something that they know how to do, it kind of lifts them up. Like 'wow, I can do something, I'm not as bad as everybody says I am.' And now I can do this, and now it's fun. And then they get to meet older people. (Keen, 2016a, Neal 44)

The opportunity to learn leads to a sense of accomplishment and involves positive relationships, two other elements that have been identified as sub-themes in this data extract.

In a comment about helping young adults in the community, Peter said, “But helping them emotionally through the connections, helping them mentally by learning new skills and realizing that they can do something” (Keen, 2016a, Peter 20). Positive relationships and engagement are both present in this statement. In a quote cited above regarding knowledge, learning was also revealed as a sub-theme of engagement when Peter said:

I think to pair them up (referring to older adults) with disabled children or young adults it is perfect because they both have a need and they are both very loving and caring and one has a need to learn and one has a lot to teach. And to transfer that knowledge, I think it’s just a perfect match. (Keen, 2016a, Peter 8)

When asked, what benefits do you anticipate the young adults might experience, Donna responded:

Probably they would have an opportunity to learn something they didn’t know, which would be very good for them and they are also going to have the same experience just in their own self-worth could be magnified and benefit from it. It’s a two-way street. (Keen, 2016a, Donna 59)

Donna indicated both groups would experience improved self-worth when she said, “it’s a two-way street.”

Travis, one of the young adults, revealed his love for learning twice. When asked about what he learned at a retreat he went on with older adults, Travis responded, “Oh, yeah, um study with the bible. And also, I like to use my notebook” (Keen, 2016a, Travis 45). And, once again when prompted with a question about what he learned, Travis responded:

I learned from my bible book, I got a bible, and I learned about some things for Jesus like doing fun things together like friends and family, like spending the night, like going to the beach and the theme parks, and sleeping inside the cabin. (Keen, 2016a, Travis 53)

Again, this data extract falls under several elements of well-being including engagement and positive relationships.

Persistence. The sub-theme of persistence only occurred twice, and both times in the same interview. However, it was such a powerful concept I determined that it should be included despite the low frequency. When asked if there was anything else that she learned when working with a team of older adults who prepared lunches for people who were homeless, Lisa said

When things don't go right, or when things mess up or when you do something wrong, how do you, what's a good way to phrase this, so like often time I break down and I'm like, I'm a failure, I'm done, I'm out, how do you tell yourself, no that's fine, you messed up one time let's try it again. What are some techniques that you use to learn to cope with those - oh man, I did it wrong, I'm done, I'm out? No, I can go back in and let's try it again. You know, what are ways that you tell yourself that it's not all failure all said and done once you've done it wrong once. You know, what do you do to tell yourself let's try again. If that makes any sense at all. (Keen, 2016a, Lisa 55)

And, Lisa's next comment was:

Because I know a lot of times and I mean I'll try once, twice, three times, and I've got that mentality three times, one strike, two strikes, three strikes, if you can't get it done in three times forget it, it's not worth it. If you've got that mentality, I don't know, sometimes you're not going to get anywhere. (Keen, 2016a, Lisa 57)

In this dialogue, Lisa recognized the need for persistence, and she specifically said she would like to know how older adults handle defeat. Young adults with DD may need to be more persistent than others as life can be challenging for them. Lisa's articulation of the desire to learn about persistence from older adults was astute.

Planning/organization. Several participants expressed the importance of planning and organization for the garden or other activity to bring people together. Neal discussed the importance of getting involvement from the community through a group meeting; he said:

I think the biggest thing would be trying to get these adults into it, buying into it. You may have to have some kind of meeting, a group meeting, talk about it, so they start buying into the project in the beginning, they will stay. They now have a piece of the project. And if you have a piece of the project you are kind of tied to it and want to see it to fruition. (Keen, 2016a, Neal 36)

And, a short time later in the interview, Neal said:

I like the idea. It's getting the older adults, how you get this working. How do you get these kids that want to come and do this? And, how do you get the adults, now you've got to get them out of their chair and actually coming and doing this. Those I think you have to sit down with a group, with a core group, say how are you going to get this thing going, what is the best way to get it going? You just can't just put it out there and say let's do it, I think it is going to take a lot of thought, how you recruit the kids and how you recruit the adults. And how do you deal with the different needs. Like take a Preston vs. Travis vs. Dan (all young adults with DD), they are all at different stages, that's interesting, all the same diagnosis but each kid (pause) it is such a big spectrum. (Keen, 2016a, Neal 50)

Neal articulated the need for planning for different needs among both the young adults as well as the older adults. Planning is an essential piece of engagement.

Peter was concerned with planning for accessibility for people with disabilities. Peter said:

To create an environment that's safe for, particularly for the older demographic, and accessible for both demographics as far as if there is, um, special concerns we have to take in, accessibility, from you know being able to get a wheelchair in there, or being able to move about freely and not causing fall and trip hazards, but, planning the garden so they both will have a place where they can work and own an individual spot so they have something to look at that is theirs, all their own. (Keen, 2016a, Peter 16)

Lisa, one of the young adults talked about the logistics of planning when she said:

You know, I'm working with another adult to get things packed together. And, I've got to decide are you going to put the stuff in the bag or am I going to put the stuff in the bag. And are you going to tie the knot or am I going to tie the knot. You know, who's going to do what, we can't all just be, or are we just going to be you stand here and I'll stand here and we just each do the same thing just on separate sides of the table. You know, or are we going to do it, how are we going to do it and what's you know, but um, you know so you have to find a way to work it out. (Keen, 2016a, Lisa 34)

Planning and organization was also important to Kate. When talking about a mission trip she went on, Kate said:

He is the type of person like he wants everything organized and planned out and I have to know this and that and they didn't really tell us a lot. But they gave us a list of stuff to bring but, I mean, they didn't tell us like what time we are going to the airport, what time

we are doing this, what time we are doing that. I wish we had been more prepared cause we didn't really know what we were going to do. But I felt like we were not prepared because I feel like we could have finished the church. (Keen, 2016a, Kate 71)

Kate was frustrated with the lack of planning on this trip.

As a former Marine and experienced planner, the organization of the project was critical to Neal. His comments follow, and will be important items to consider when planning the intergenerational activities. Neal said:

Well, I think you got to get a group of adults together and have a couple of meetings and talk to them about what your goals are, what you want to do. And get them to buy into this. And then I think you are going to have a little discussion about how you deal with special needs people. You know, and then, I'm not sure how you get the kids involved, do you get them as a group or do you bring them into the, do you have to educate them on what's going to happen? Or are you just going to kind of mold them into . . . now that you have this group that's going to run the garden or do that, do you just mold them into the garden or do you have to have . . . you might have some get together with those younger people and say hey, these are the old people, these are the problems old people may have. You know, it's good for them that they have something to do so maybe the young adults or the special needs adults say hey, I'm helping them too. And if they buy into maybe that I'm helping then they feel they are doing something rather than just going to work they are doing some help with these people. So, that might be the buy-in. And I think you'd have to, if you were the kid, I think you are going to have to pair up that kid with the same person to begin with. You can't have the kid come one time with this person and that kid comes with another person next time and they don't understand

that we are now starting to build a relationship for this kid/person and the adult. (Keen, 2016a, Neal 46)

Experience and teaching. Although initially identified as separate sub-themes, upon deeper analysis, experience and teaching occurred together most often, and consequently I decided to include the two together in the analysis. The sub-theme of experience, which includes specific skills, occurred in five of the nine interviews, among both older and young adults, but primarily in the older adult interviews. Teaching occurred in all five of the older adult interviews, and did not occur in the young adult interviews.

When asked about her thoughts on how older adults could help young adults working in a garden together, Donna said:

You would have the opportunity to teach them. Hmm, I think that would be the good part about it. It would be very similar to what we did at Epworth (a mission trip with an intergenerational team). You could teach them about the plants and conditions they like and what it takes to make the veggies grow to their very best, to be the best plant that they can be, starting even with the soil, soil conditioning, the whole nine yards. (Keen, 2016a, Donna 37)

Teaching would be possible because of her experience, when I mentioned that a lot of people do not have gardening experience Donna said, “Well, the reason I like it so is because I’ve always been interested in plants and how they grow and why they grow and all of that. Even as a little kid. I loved flowers and plants.” And when asked if she had any vegetables growing in her garden, Donna responded:

Not yet because it’s too early. The only thing that I do have is an asparagus bed and they usually start coming up in April. But, after no frost, after no danger of frost, which is

normally the 15th of April then you can plant all the tender, you know the things that colder weather would destroy. I could have had cold crops out there, like lettuce, radishes, um, I can't think right now. (Keen, 2016a, Donna 48)

It is interesting that Donna ended her response with "I can't think right now" when her response was filled with experiential knowledge that was easily remembered and shared. It appears that Donna, and possibly other older adults, do not recognize the enormity and value of their experience.

On another occasion, Donna's experience working with a child with special needs alerted her to the importance of detailed instructions when teaching how to perform a skill, Donna said:

But he had to have a lot of extra instruction. Like we told him, we were at a house and we wanted to, there was extra, you know when they put in the (window) pane they put in extra sealer? We asked him to take that extra out; well he must have not gotten that 'extra' thing because he took every little tiny bit of that sealer out (laughing). Oh yeah, I distinctly remember that and that was a while ago. (Keen, 2016a, Donna 2)

This statement is valuable in planning for interaction in any activity. It is important for the experienced person to teach the learner in a way that he or she can understand. In this case, when the task was assigned if the experienced person had confirmed what the younger person understood about the instructions, it would have been evident that further teaching was necessary and could have occurred before the window was scraped clean of all sealer.

Neal referred to his experience working with children with autism multiple times, this experience helped him understanding people with special needs and thus he feels he can work with them better. Neal was talking about a middle school boy who rides his bus and how Neal's

experience working with the young adults at church gave him the experience he needed to work with this younger boy on his bus. Neal said:

It is a boy and he is in 7th grade. There was concern in the beginning whether he could do it or not, his mother was very cautious. Well I knew, luckily, I had had experience with people like that at our church, and I knew about autism, and I knew how to handle him because he does not stand at the bus stop, he maybe 50 feet away when the bus stops then he comes on the bus. And he will pace back and forth so it is where he is standing, so I had to learn how to work with the people, how on the bus to watch him, how he interacts with the people and what goes on, so that's, I still have experience with people with (stumbled a little over how to describe people) with problems like that. (Keen, 2016a, Neal 4)

In a statement cited previously under knowledge Neal discussed the potential older adults have for sharing their wisdom, in this case, teaching younger people how to plant. Experience empowered Neal and he felt he had the ability to include this middle schooler on his bus.

Lisa, one of the young adults, said:

But with an adult, an older adult, you know, I just think they have more experience or they know what the outcome if they don't do it, they are just all things said and done their brain is just more mature. (Keen, 2016a, Lisa 34)

When asked how older adults might help young adults in a garden, Peter said:

Wow, well everybody likes to play in the dirt, or at least I do. You know we've got, in this church, probably four master gardeners, meaning people who have really honed their craft, and then we've got a bunch of other wannabe farmers who have always had gardens and have you know they have gardens in their own back yard, and they love to

teach and love to trade their secrets about how to plant a garden or what keeps deer away, you know whatever the case may be but um, and then we've got some because of where we live that that is what they have done their entire lives, they are farmers. And, farmers by the very nature of who they are, are always eager to play in the dirt and teach somebody. (Keen, 2016a, Peter 10)

Cathy, who has experience working with children and adults with special needs, said this about experience and teaching:

Once again I think processing, sometimes processing, getting from A to B is difficult in special needs children that learn differently, so I think explaining the whole time you are working in a garden, we as 50 somethings tend to want to speak and teach all people.

People by the time they are 50 know how to do something, I think that speaking and talking while you are doing is something we would be able to help with a garden. (Keen, 2016a, Cathy 16)

Positive Relationships

Positive relationships is an element of well-being identified by Seligman (2011) and defined in Chapter 1. Enhancing well-being through intergenerational relationships was the goal of this PAR. Not surprisingly, positive relationships were identified in all nine interviews, and was the second most prominent theme. Positive relationships and the sub-themes occurred 32 times in the older adult interviews, just over 6 times per participant; and 25 times in the young adult interviews, a rate of slightly over 6 times per participant as well. Sub-themes identified include acceptance, connection, encouragement, friendship, intergenerational, mentoring, and family.

Acceptance. When asked if he thought he developed skills to work with one of the young adults with DD on a recent mission trip, Neal said:

Yea, I learned how to work with him. For instance, when we finished working we were all dirty. Okay and we had to have showers before we went to eat. Travis had a certain way that he needed to be first, he had this, and he may have spent a half hour in that bathroom locked up, and everyone else needed a shower. Trying to change that pattern was impossible really. So you just knew that that was the way it was going to be, go do something else while you wait because Travis's got the whole thing locked up (laughing). You learn that they have a certain way of doing things and if you learn to deal with that it is really pretty easy, you just learn how, what his points are and how you work with that. So, that was my big changing experience for me working with someone with a handicap, but through that learning there I've learned to deal with people with autism. (Keen, 2016a, Neal 8)

Neal felt strongly about acceptance, when faced with a situation in the youth group where one young adult with a diagnosis on the autism spectrum displayed inappropriate social behavior, Neal defended the young man and made accommodations so he could participate in the activities. In the interview, when asked how he responded to a person who felt the young adult should be excluded, Neal said:

You know he is part of the church that is what our job is. I'm sorry you feel that way, but it is our job to handle this person. It isn't, you just don't say you can't come to your (church) and you go find someplace else to go. And in our church, we accept those types of people. Well, they didn't want to hear it. (Keen, 2016a, Neal 12)

Neal expressed a responsibility to care for people with special needs in the church and defended his position.

Neal has been able to translate his knowledge working with young adults with DD to his work as a bus driver. He expressed the importance of acceptance on the bus when he said:

So I've had interesting experience with different disabilities and how to handle them. So really, being a bus driver I really understand as best I can, you know because this kid who has autism is doing fine on the bus. You know, I work with him where he is picked up, and that is the kid who left today to go home and I ran in the mud (laughing). (Keen, 2016a, Neal 22)

When asked how his experience working with young adults with DD impacted his impression about people with DD, Neal said:

It kind of opened up a whole other world that, it's now I can accept, I know how to deal with, I'm comfortable around these people. And I think that is hard for a lot of people, to be comfortable around these people with issues because they don't know how to handle it, or don't want to be part of it or don't want to know, or I don't need to be around it, and that's what I have learned. How to be comfortable around these people and how you can help them in their world and in your world. (Keen, 2016a, Neal 24)

The following data extract from Peter's interview revealed multiple sub-themes of positive relationships, namely connection, intergenerational relationships, and acceptance. When asked, what benefits do you anticipate the young adults with DD might experience, Peter responded:

Oh, just getting out of the house and not being stuck in a basement in front of a TV. I think it is very much the same thing as with the (older) adults is knowing that they can do

something. That they can be outdoors and they can be interacting with people and developing relationships and learning new things. Whatever they are capable of doing, just having that sense of community and a sense of a place to belong. An anticipation of getting up and going to meet people and getting outside and interacting and developing real lasting relationships that go beyond just pulling weeds. Knowing that they are loved and cared for, and it's like being part of the family. Beyond your own family, and we all need that because there's times when our own family has had enough of us (laughing). Knowing that there is somebody else out there that is going to pick you up when your own parents are ready to throw you out. Which is what we all have growing up, but it is kind of heart breaking when you, the lady that I talked to recently, her story was so typical in that she's got a 17 year old son that is locked away in the basement because he's scared of the world, he has his own issues, but he's not interacting with people and it just causes him to further regress into himself, and he wants to interact it's just the people around him don't know how to interact with him, the neighbors, the schools, whatever, and she's just grown tired. And, I think a program like this would be perfect for him, small, you know, you don't have to worry about sensory overload, it's just one on one or one on two, and he could be outdoors where he loves it, I think just having that place to feel like they have a purpose. (Keen, 2016a, Peter 14)

Peter also pointed out character traits of the young adults that may enhance intergenerational relationships when he said:

And we just have different needs, and we have different levels of ability to interact with the world around us in different ways. Um, certainly I think for many of our kids anyhow, they have a bigger heart than most of us do. They are quicker to forgive, all

those principles that we teach in church, and we have trouble executing it where they are so freely to forgive, and ask for forgiveness, you know, pretty much across the board, and those are things that we struggle with because we've got all these walls up, and we've got all these filters and our guards up, they don't have those. And so they're much more open. (Keen, 2016a, Peter 6)

Connection. Peter discussed the importance of connections, he said:

Obviously we are going to have to do things differently to help facilitate them as far as having access to the garden so they are safe, um, and that's where we all can work to make that happen. Um, but they you know to share their secrets and to share their favorite tomato and how to eat it and so I think it's going to go beyond the planting and the picking, I think it's going to go to making tomato sandwiches and eating those too. We've done it, sporadically over the years, and I think it has really created a lot of fellowship and what a better way to be intentional and to use the resources that we have to bring those two communities together. I think they are very eager we just have to give them an opportunity and help facilitate it. I think it will be a natural fit. (Keen, 2016a, Peter 10)

Cathy commented on the importance of connection with family and community, she said:

The siblings I think is a key to that, I think the siblings are going to end up wanting to be involved and I think that is another avenue that needs to be possibly thought about. Younger and older siblings, almost wanting to see if they can find that connection with their special sibling, because there will be connections formed. So, I think that siblings eventually might need to be into a program, brought in as well, or maybe there could be a special sibling day, or week, or something. (Keen, 2016a, Cathy 29)

Encouragement. Cathy identified the importance of encouragement in positive relationships when she said, “Helping them focus and stay on task in a positive way using a lot of ‘way to goes’ and ‘hip hip hoorays,’ things that parents may have forgotten to use because they are adults” (Keen, 2016a, Cathy 2).

When describing working with her father, Kate revealed the importance of encouragement when she said, “Working with my dad is so much fun because he is like, you can do it, you can do it, but I was like no I can’t Dad, you see these noodle arms, these aren’t big enough (laughing)” (Keen, 2016a, Kate 57). I asked Kate if she did it, Kate responded, “Yes, I did. Sometimes he pushes me and like that is what a parent is supposed to do, is like push you toward your goal” (Keen, 2016a, Kate 59). Kate described a formal way of inspiring positive relationships through encouraging acts, she said:

We had this thing in the beginning of the week, you had a name and I think mine was Brittney, I think it was her, and she, like you would have to watch someone throughout the whole week. No one knew who else’s was, you couldn’t tell anyone else who it was, and at the end of the week you would tell them your observation. And my dad had me, I’m like, my dad having me, that was like so special because (wiping tears), sorry, he told me how strong I am (crying), and just like that trip just opened my heart, even before I had a boyfriend I had never been treated so right. And now, I’m just so blessed to have the life I have. (Keen, 2016a, Kate 61)

Friendship. Kate discussed the idea of friends at church when she said:

Because most of those kids around my age that are in high school, I went to school with them. I know who they are, I know how they are raised, I know their family. Like I’d rather meet friends at church rather than at school because people at school you don’t

stay friends after high school. People at church, you stay, like I'm still friends with people that I went to school with, do you know (mentioned a girl). (Keen, 2016a, Kate 107)

Kate identified friends as family, she said:

We don't talk like every day, but every holiday we will say like 'Merry Christmas,' we went to a football game together, like we are very good friends. So like, she is part of my family. Ashley, part of my family, Jamie, people I sit with at church, Hannah's part of my family. People that I am not really close with, family, like Veronica, family. Dan, even though he grinds my gears, (laughing) family. Let's see, who else. Sorry I had to say that (laughing again). Bethany, family, people that I dislike, family. (Keen, 2016a, Kate 109)

During Marshall's interview he shared about a special friend and how he felt bad about being unaware of the death in his family, Marshall said:

We are all good friends. Martin, as I mentioned before, he's a good friend; he's a friend of mine from high school. When he mentioned the story about his niece, we have been like brothers to each other. Although I did ask him why he wasn't at school one day and he told me the story about his niece. I didn't even know he had a funeral to go to. (silence) I didn't even know he had. I didn't even know he had to go to a funeral and I felt like a bad friend. (Keen, 2016a, Marshall 39)

Travis revealed how he felt about friends when he said:

I learned from my bible book, I got a bible, and I learned about some things for Jesus like doing fun things together like friends and family, like spending the night, like going to the beach and the theme parks, and sleeping inside the cabin. (Keen, 2016a, Travis 53)

And, when asked about what he did during the day now, Travis said,

Yea, when I went to eat lunch in the cafeteria, and I said hi to my best friend, John Sanders, his name is John (pause) J O H N, and his last name is Sanders, S A N D E R S (pseudonym used). He's nice and he's my number one best friend and he's funny too. (Keen, 2016a, Travis 117)

Intergenerational. Peter revealed the importance of connections between older and younger people when he said:

That's what I love to see in the life of the church, particularly here, is to connect those two (older adults and young adults with DD) because they still have a need for that nuclear family, and a need to belong when so many times in our society we look at older people and say, 'they're old, put them out to pasture, we don't have a need for them anymore' when in reality, um, they might be old chronologically but they are still very young at heart. And they still need that connection, they still need a place to give, a place to love, a place to be loved, and I think to pair them up with disabled children or young adults it is perfect because they both have a need and they are both very loving and caring and one has a need to learn and one has a lot to teach. And to transfer that knowledge, I think it's just a perfect match. (Keen, 2016a, Peter 8)

When asked how she thought older adults could mentor young adults with DD, Patricia, the drama team leader said:

I don't know about specific, specific, specific, other than just let them hang out with you. I don't know how else to put it, just hang out with you. And, honestly, like in Dan's case (one of the young adults with DD from church), Zan and I have talked about it a few times, and if I just slow down long enough I would call his mom and talk to her, that we

would love to have Dan just come and spend an afternoon with us, even if we were just playing video games or if we were actually going somewhere but just spending time with them outside of, out in the real world somewhere. You know, so they just, I don't know, you would hope you would be a good influence, but at least they would know that you care about them more than just giving them a part in the skit. (Keen, 2016a, Patricia 12)

When asked how the interaction might benefit the young adults, Patricia said:

I just think it is a good experience. I think it helps both because it helps you, an older person, to feel a part of something also. Because you know like your kids may be grown and they don't have much to do with you anymore. And your grandkids may be at the age when they forget to call, but then you have somebody that appreciates being there with you. And then you hope it's the same way that they are really enjoying and learning something about just playing in the dirt. (Keen, 2016a, Patricia 14)

Kate described the work she did on the Nicaragua mission trip by saying:

I worked with my youth pastor, which him and his wife are basically my other parents, because they were at my adoption court, they were, they have known me, they basically raised me as well. They have watched me grow up; they watched me become the young beautiful girl I am today. (Keen, 2016a, Kate 32)

Kate described how her efforts to raise money for the mission trip were supported by the older adults at church, Kate said:

I had like a cooking crew, like Donna and Ed, and he went back to get noodles because we had ran out, and if you know my mom, she never runs out of food. She makes extra, she makes extra extra and we ran out because there was 140 people that came. (Keen, 2016a, Kate 41)

When asked about her friends, Kate said:

Most of my friends are from church, ever since high school I don't keep in touch, I lost a lot of my friends. So, I talk to them rarely, like we are more of acquaintances now because I don't see them as often. So, most of my friends are like from church and they are like parents, so like my mom's friends are like my friends so I don't really have a lot but I'll eventually . . . I have some friends from work. (Keen, 2016a, Kate 8)

Lisa described working with older adults packing lunches to take downtown to people who were homeless:

I find that if you are able to, you know, most adults just about all adults you are able to work with a lot easier than people that are your age, much easier (laughing) much, much easier. You know, okay you might find an adult that is a little cranky but you know usually you are able to say alright sure, how do you want to do it? But if you are working with someone your age when they are cranky and don't want to do it they don't want to do it. Shut up, sit down, and get away from me. You know, I'm out, I'm not doing this so it's like hmmm, that's not going to work so what else do you want to do? But with an adult, an older adult, you know, I just think they have more experience or they know what the outcome if they don't do it, they are just all things said and done their brain is just more mature. (Keen, 2016a, Lisa 34)

Neal is a bus driver and works hard to remember all the children's names, in his interview Neal described how he greets the children entering the bus:

I mean trying to remember 100 kids every morning as they get on the bus, and 10 of them come on at one time and trying to zip through the 10 names, and if you miss a name, the kids says, 'that's not my name' (laughing). (Keen, 2016a, Neal 26)

I said, “You know all the kids’ names?” Neal replied, “Oh yea, boom boom boom. I say goodbye and hello with their name; elementary, middle and high school. So, I have over 100 and something kids that I have to know the names of” (Keen, 2016a, Neal 28). It was clear that knowing each child by name was important to Neal; he wanted to call the children by name each day to let them know that they were valued.

Mentoring. Cathy expressed the importance of older adults passing on important social behaviors to the young adults, Cathy said:

I think we know the manners of what is expected in our society, what is right or wrong with manners and mannerisms and rules, I don’t even know if that is the right word, um, what is appropriate and what is not appropriate to say, to do, to act. (Keen, 2016a, Cathy 14)

Neal shared a difficult situation he had been in with a young adult who had a DD who had expressed inappropriate social behavior when he was around girls. Neal’s approach to the behavior was to try to understand why the young man exhibited the inappropriate behaviors and then to create a plan so the young man could participate in activities and learn appropriate behaviors, Neal said:

Eventually I ended up talking to the mother and the mother said are you having a problem with ‘John,’ and I said yes, I hate to tell you this, and she said, I forgot the word, but she said you can say that this is done in private, if you say that to him when he is starting this activity with the girls, whatever it is, he stops. All we needed to know from her was how to handle him. Nobody went to the mother to find out, she knew this might be happening, but nobody would approach her. But I was forced to approach her because I

had to take on the situation. And she said alright, this is how you handle it. (Keen, 2016a, Neal 16)

Neal worked to put other young adults in place to model appropriate behavior for John so he could continue to participate in the activities.

Neal identified the importance of creating stability between young and older adult relationships:

I would guess they need to stay together for a little while before you switch them around but somehow you've got to get the stability part into it, then you can switch around.

Because I think you bring one adult that gets to know, like Travis, and they make friends, and then you bring them back and Travis's with another person the next time, that could be a problem because Travis knows that person, knows what to do. I say that but I have to back up, I've noticed with Travis, he will work with anybody. (Keen, 2016a, Neal 46)

Neal discussed the need to plan for differences between older and younger adults:

And older people think a little different than the younger people (laughing) in fact, a lot different. And that is an interesting aspect of the whole thing is how the younger people deal, and their expectations, their total dependence on a phone. Trying to get them to turn a phone off to do some work, what do you do with that in a garden? You don't want the phone going, and they are texting all the time. Those are the conflicts that you run in to in dealing with the younger generation. (Keen, 2016a, Neal 44)

The issues identified by Neal in these data extracts will be used in the planning process for future interaction in the garden.

Family. As was revealed in the literature review, Peter also identified the need for families of young adults with DD for support from the community when he said:

And also give the families a break. I think these families are tired, they've run out of resources and ideas and they are looking for a new something, something different, something that is holistic, something that is going to help their children in different ways. (Keen, 2016a, Peter 20)

Positive family relationships and extended church family was identified eight times in Kate's interview. Kate talked about going on the mission trip with her father and how she wouldn't have been able to go out of the country without him, she mentioned her mother and without her mom's help Kate wouldn't have been able to hold the dinner fundraiser, and how family made her feel safe. Cathy identified the challenge that siblings of young adults with DD may have when she said, "Because we know that siblings of those that learn differently, I don't know, they have a hard road too sometimes" (Keen, 2016a, Cathy 29).

Accomplishment

Seligman (2011) identified accomplishment as one of the elements of well-being, and the Oak Grove CAB agreed that a sense of accomplishment was important in any activity undertaken by the intergenerational group. Accomplishment, as described in Chapter 1, involves effort and the subsequent sense of achievement. Several participants identified accomplishment as an important concept; sub-concepts revealed in this research include self-respect, satisfaction, and work.

Self-respect. Self-respect was identified seven times among three participants, all young adults. Lisa was proud of her accomplishment in school, when I asked how she felt about her upcoming graduation with an associate's degree, she said:

Accomplished, I mean some people might look at it like it's just an associate's degree, but I'm like yeah, okay, but just the fact that it has the word degree on it I'm like yeah

buddy, I have a degree and now when I fill out applications I can put that on there and it's not like oh I've been to high school, I've been to high school, okay great, you've been to high school we don't care about that, do you have something more than a high school education? Yes, I have an associate's degree. (Keen, 2016a, Lisa 6)

In a similar fashion, Travis was proud of his graduation from high school. When asked the first question, what have you been doing since you graduated from high school, Travis responded:

Okay, umm, when I graduated from Lakeview High School in 2012 I got a diploma and I got money from my teachers and friends. And, also my favorite thing to do at Lakeview High School is doing the talent show. Which I love talent shows all the time. (Keen, 2016, Travis 6)

Travis was also proud of his role in the talent show.

Education was also a source of self-respect for Kate, when asked the same question, what have you been doing since high school, Kate responded:

I went to Toccoa Tech for a semester and I studied early childhood education, which is a certificate and it is only for one semester and what I can do with that is I can be an after-school program teacher, I can be a teacher assistant, I can work at a daycare. (Keen, 2016a, Kate 6)

The comments, expressions on their faces, and tone of the young adults' voices all indicated pride in their accomplishments in school.

In addition to education, in the quote above Travis respected his accomplishment in the talent show. Similarly, Kate revealed self-respect for her role in a skit she was involved in while on a mission trip in Central America. Kate said:

It was my first skit ever because I don't do plays, I've never done them, so it was very, like you have to be in character, I felt like I was being an actress too because it is, that is a big role (smiling) and that was just so much fun because everybody like all my friends were there and we were all just like laughing and like (laughing) trying to get into the role of it, and it was just so much fun, like I felt like I was just like on a cast. (Keen, 2016a, Kate 18)

Kate also showed self-respect for her ability to raise money for a senior mission trip to Nicaragua when she said:

So, they were like I was going to be a senior and they were like I want to see if you are responsible enough that you can raise this money and I did . . . so I saved every bit of money and I did. I tried. (Keen, 2016a, Kate 89)

Satisfaction. Satisfaction was identified in all interviews and almost evenly between the groups, eight times in the older adults and six times in the young adults. Interestingly, the older adults referred to the satisfaction of vicarious accomplishment for the younger adults. Neal referred to the importance of a sense of accomplishment for young adults with DD when he said, "Like 'wow, I can do something, I'm not as bad as everybody says I am.' And now I can do this, and now it's fun" (Keen, 2016a, Neal 44). Patricia indicated that the young adults could have a sense of satisfaction when she said:

If they have never done gardening, then here is something new, something different for me and that I can be successful here also. Hopefully they will see that they can have some success in anything that they really decided to do. (Keen, 2016a, Patricia 18)

And, again when she said:

I love to see Dan learn lines (on the drama team) or when he gets to the end that he's successful at that – I just love to see that (exuberance heard in her voice). Because I think it helps any of them, even us, even those of us who are much older that haven't been doing this for very long. It gives all of us a sense of accomplishment when we get to the end of it. It's like see, you can do that. (Keen, 2016a, Patricia 26)

Peter referred to the satisfaction of self-awareness when young and old alike recognize their abilities when he said:

Oh, just getting out of the house and not being stuck in a basement in front of a TV. I think it is very much the same thing as with the (older) adults is knowing that they can do something. That they can be outdoors and they can be interacting with people and developing relationships and learning new things. Whatever they are capable of doing. (Keen, 2016a, Peter 14)

Peter also identified the satisfaction of accomplishment in helping others when he said:

But then also a place where maybe they can give away and give back to the community whatever it is they grow and let them see that the fruit of what they are doing is actually helping other people they don't actually even know. (Keen, 2016a, Peter 16)

Satisfaction was also revealed in Kate's interview about her effort toward earning money for the mission in Nicaragua. Kate said:

And so, when I went, it was just, it opened my eyes and I didn't know what I was going to do for my senior project so I had just gone to Nicaragua so I figured, oh, like I went the day after I turned 18 so I was like, that's a great way for a senior project, like raise money

so they can build their church. So, all that money went towards money for VBS supplies for Mexico, \$1400 I made. Yea, I raised that much money. (Keen, 2016a, Kate 34)

When talking about that trip, Kate was pleased with all that the team had accomplished, although she reported hard work and sacrifice, her final comment revealed her satisfaction with the work of the team. Kate said:

I'm like this job is impossible. But, we managed it because some of Pastor Freddy, he is the man from the church; he had a bunch of his workers to help us. And like we had to like undo wires, we had like my fingers were like hurting so much afterwards. It was so worth it. (Keen, 2016a, Kate 59)

When recounting her work with a team, Lisa also reported the satisfaction of accomplishment when she said:

Working with team (the group that was making the lunches) yea, well, okay it made me feel like I was doing something for the good. You know, a lot of times I'm, I'm doing something, but the fact that I was working with a team and we were getting something done and there was a production line, an assembly line, and there was a line of production and it was like yea, look at all we've done, that made me feel good. (Keen, 2016a, Lisa 49)

Donna was excited to report her satisfaction with the accomplishment of the intergenerational mission team that worked on a garden behind a restaurant that trained and employed people who were transitioning back to the work force after a time in prison. Donna said:

We did (excitement in her voice), we got that started, built up beds, yep we did, the kids did that, they did that, they actually did the physical labor for those raised beds right

behind there (the restaurant) because he wanted, the chef wanted his fresh veggies.

(Keen, 2016a, Donna 31)

Marshall, the young adult of few words, worked with the intergenerational garden team building cages for the tomato plants. When I asked Marshall about his experience working on the cages, he said, “If there was nothing else, then okay, the job’s done, the job’s done” (Keen, 2016a, Marshall 81). In my notes, I recorded hearing satisfaction in his voice over finishing the job.

Cathy predicted the satisfaction of accomplishment one might feel for work in a garden when she said:

So, with a garden you have to schedule things. Things have to be done at a certain time.

And there is a reward, you reap a reward of, a physical reward of a plant, of food, or otherwise, but also the reward of accomplishment and purpose. (Keen, 2016a, Cathy 16)

And, when asked what benefits the older adults might experience, Cathy said:

I think they would experience probably more than the child, I mean in my opinion, what I have found, is I feel just helping little ones with school work quite accomplished with things I still know how to do, remember (laughing) how to do from um, and accomplishment and just a purpose all the way around. (Keen, 2016a, Cathy 18)

Travis reported satisfaction in his accomplishment when he discussed his experience with a vocational training program at the local hospital when he said, “Oh yea, I did graduate from (local hospital)” (Keen, 2016a, Travis 119). Although his words were few, I recorded that his voice and body language revealed satisfaction.

Work. The final sub-theme of accomplishment is work. Work was observed in four of the interviews, and three times in one interview. Both older and young adults revealed a sense of

accomplishment through work. Peter reported how Travis responded when included in work that required a uniform, simply wearing the clothing provided a sense of accomplishment for Travis, Peter said, “And Travis always loves being in charge and wearing an orange hat and a vest” (Keen, 2016a, Peter 4).

During Kate’s interview, the first time she discussed the concept of work was about the efforts of others on the mission trip to Nicaragua. Kate said:

I learned their true colors. When you are working versus when you are socializing with someone you know their true colors, whether they want to work or not, whether they are good working together, their level on patience, because a girl I worked with, she was just very bossy, and I just tried to stay away from her as much as I can but when Shelia told me to go work with her you know I just kept my mouth shut. It is just I don’t have a lot of patience and sometimes I can’t control what I say, like I don’t filter it, and I don’t mean to but it just comes out. So, it just, I just try to keep it in and try to be quite and try to do my job. (Keen, 2016a, Kate 49)

Work was clearly important to Kate, and she was offended by the girl who did not value work.

Work was identified as a concept three times in my interview with Travis. First, in response to a question about the vocational training program he participated in at the local hospital, Travis said:

Yes, when I went to the (local hospital) in 2015, that was last year, it was in March, and first I went to the radiology such as cleaning, and my second rotation is rehab such as cleaning and sweeping, and the last rotation is linens such as stocking, which I’m good at stocking, and folding towels and delivery. And delivery in the departments. (Keen, 2016a, Travis 105)

It was important for Travis to ‘be good’ at something. Again, when he discussed his work in linens, Travis said “Well, I was at the linens for a third rotation and like to do stocking, which I’m good at stocking.” Travis reported enjoyment of his daily chores when he said:

Oh, yeah yeah yeah, today, um, I took out the trash, and cleaned chores such as sweeping and swiftng and take out the trash. Hanging my empty hangers, and I also liked doing break time such as watching my DVDs downstairs, I got a TV and I like to watch my DVDs. (Keen, 2016a, Travis 124)

Donna reported the sense of self-worth, or accomplishment, related to work when she said:

I think maybe a feeling of self-worth may be a little higher, and it would give them the opportunity to do something that really made a difference other than sitting at home on their thumbs and doing nothing. You know, they can benefit themselves too. Because you know you get out there and you work and you see other folks and interact, it’s good for ya. (Keen, 2016a, Donna 55)

For this intergenerational group, accomplishment was revealed through self-respect, satisfaction, and work. The success of accomplishment led to self-respect for several participants.

Meaning and Purpose

Meaning and purpose is serving a greater purpose than self (Bondevik & Skogstaag, 2000; Haaugan, 2013; Seligman, 2011) and is one of the elements of the Well-being Theory (Seligman, 2011). Meaning and purpose was identified in several sub-themes, primarily among the older adults as purpose and service, but was also identified in two interviews with young adults. A description of the sub-themes of meaning and purpose follows.

Purpose. When the potential benefits for older adults working with young adults were discussed, Cathy said, “if there was something you were doing as a community effort or as a group effort I think you would feel quite accomplished, purposeful” (Keen, 2016a, Cathy 18). Purposeful activity was important to Neal, and he thinks it would be important to others. Neal talked about the importance of knowing the children’s names on his bus, and related that experience to intergenerational activity between older adults and young adults with DD. Neal said:

Oh gosh, those kids are big on that. So, I think it is a good idea, if you can get that going, because you don’t feel like you are sitting and getting old. You know, what’s next year, it is not like we are dead. We are sitting to die – that’s not going to happen to me and I think if you get adults to be interested, if you get them, I don’t know whether or how you get them adapted to handicapped people or that type without some experience. It’s going to be hard to take an older adult that’s willing to be open and move. How you do that I’m not sure, but I think it will be very good. It’s a really good, it’s good, it makes you feel better. (Keen, 2016a, Neal 34)

Later in the interview, Neal said:

It could give them a purpose for the next (inaudible). A purpose of what am I going to do, why am I alive, you know, what has my life been and I retired, I have nothing to do, I’m playing golf and I’m tired of playing golf. You know, what do I do next? You know, and then they sit in their home and then things can turn down you know, and when you sit at home and watch TV and drink, or whatever it is, I mean, and older people tend to not move, it can go downhill. So, I think getting them out and giving them a purpose in their life when they are older is critical for extending their life, and their attitude. So, I

think it has a lot of merit as far as where it can lead to once you get the thing going.

(Keen, 2016a, Neal 42)

About older adults working with young adults, Patricia said:

I just think it is a good experience. I think it helps both because it helps you, an older person, to feel a part of something also. Because you know like your kids may be grown and they don't have much to do with you anymore. And your grandkids may be at the age when they forget to call, but then you have somebody that appreciates being there with you. And then you hope it's the same way that they are really enjoying and learning something about just playing in the dirt. (Keen, 2016a, Patricia 14)

In response to a question on the potential benefits for older adults, Patricia said, "Again, to be part of something. To feel like they are needed somewhere also. To feel that they still can do good for somebody else" (Keen, 2016, Patricia 16).

Peter described the need for purpose for one of the older adults in the community who had been active with the youth group in the past when he said:

Because I think everybody is gifted very differently. Um, kind of like Gramps, you know, as he gets older he doesn't think he's as effective as he used to be, and I think that's more of a mental thing for him, than a reality. Um, certainly because he was willing to just continue to just be an influence in the lives of young people he has touched many, many kids, to and including Daniel (a young adult with DD in the church), and probably more now than ever he really needs that now. Because he's going through a tough spot, and I think a lot of that is because he feels like he is older now, and he doesn't feel like he has a place to serve, a place to belong. And, we all know very differently. And I think many of our young people could fill that role. (Keen, 2016a, Peter 8)

Peter also discussed the purpose of the land when he said:

I think one of our biggest assets here is that we've got land. We've got a lot of land.

And so, the question is what do we do with it? Do we just keep mowing it? Do we let it just sit idle or do we somehow use it to do ministry, and that's to bring community, to create community, to create fellowship and just even at what level we've talked about it we've seen many times where our seniors have just come out of the woodwork either to come up and pick. (Keen, 2016a, Peter 10)

When asked what the benefits might be for the older adults, Peter said:

Good tomatoes, (laughing) lots of tomatoes, um, I think just from the adults it's just getting a sense of still having worth. That they still have a place to serve, that they are not forgotten, that they are not pushed aside. That they can still contribute to the life of the church, and contribute to young people I think inherently people want to help each other, particularly in a church community, or in this community as a whole. Oak Grove has always had that DNA. We're not, you know our family is not from here, we are still transplants after 20 something years, but this has always had a very small close knit community feel and they really do take care of one another, and I think that is also an asset to this church is they have this sense of community. And, once you kind of break into that they will come alongside and share and create that. So, I think just having a sense of still serving. You know, and not pushed out to pasture. (Keen, 2016a, Peter 12)

Finally, Peter described a sense of urgency for purposeful activity when he said:

You know also, it's almost like you see as people are getting older and our kids are still sitting, you know you have that kind of sense of urgency to bring the two communities together so we are not wasting their time. Because that is precious time, you can't get

that back and the quicker we can bring this up online the quicker we can help push into some of that. (Keen, 2016a, Peter 20)

Cathy discussed the need for young adults to “have ownership” of the project when she said:

I don't know if responsibility is the right word, but it is their project, they have ownership, and I don't know if mom is there telling him how to do (pause), we don't know all the moms, let me put it that way. Some moms are going to tell them how to do it and some moms are going to allow them to experience it. So, you would hate to take the joy and accomplishment away by having moms there. And I'm not saying moms per se, it could be an uncle or a grandparent or whoever brought them. But I think that the first, my experience with younger children, is that you always want them to have ownership of something if it is truly going to be their work. (Keen, 2016a, Cathy 37)

Neal was emphatic in his description of purposeful living when he said:

I think the older adult has to have a mindset that they want to get out and do something. Until that mindset says I'm not sitting in my rocker for the rest of time, they have to say I want something to do; I want to continue to work. I mean I'm retired, but I'm still working and I'm not going to quit. I'm active with that and I like that because that gives me something to do. I feel like I am doing something. You know especially if you are a Christian and what God wants you to do, you don't retire. You work until you die for Him. So, and I like that part of it, so I'm active. And I could easily get into this. I'm not sure how you kind of rattle the cage of those that aren't interested in taking a step and continuing to be happy. (Keen, 2016a, Neal 26)

Productivity. For Lisa, productivity provided meaning and purpose. When Lisa discussed her experience making lunches for the homeless mission team to take downtown to provide food for people who were homeless, Lisa said, “But, working as a team I like that because you know we are working together to get to an end product that will eventually go out to help someone. That was my big thing” (Keen, 2016a, Lisa 49). And, in response to the next question Lisa said:

I learned being productive but doing it right, okay that’s good, but doing it right doesn’t mean being perfect. You know. I find a lot of times I think I’ve got to do this right but if it’s not doggon perfect then forget it, well, maybe that might be for very few things in life but with this it doesn’t have to be like that. I mean these people we are giving this food to they don’t care what the bag looks like when they get the food, they are glad they got the food, they are glad that we took our time to do it for them. (Keen, 2016a, Lisa 51)

Productivity at work provided meaning and purpose for Kate. Throughout Kate’s interview she eluded to the importance of work, and her comment “but I don’t like to make friends at work because I’m not there to make friends I’m there to work” (Keen, 2016a, Kate 8) highlighted her need to be productive at work.

Service. Peter’s interview included several responses that contributed to the theme meaning and purpose. Several times Peter discussed the concept of service, he talked about having a place to serve, in this case, service is a type of volunteerism with a purpose. When asked how his experience mentoring young adults with DD impacted his impression of young adults, Peter said:

I think it just kind of really opens your eyes to (pause) for me the bigger picture is it's part of the Kingdom of God, and they are God's children too. And I have a philosophy, we are all special needs. (Keen, 2016a, Peter 6)

Then Peter suggested service to this unique population when he said, "I guess have a place to serve in a different capacity to a demographic that is often overlooked and pushed aside by our fast-paced culture" (Keen, 2016a, Peter 6).

Positive Emotion

As discussed in Chapter 1, Seligman (2011) described positive emotion as the feeling of a good life. Examples cited in Chapter 1 include joy, excitement, accomplishment, faith, hope, and optimism. Positive emotion as an element of well-being in the Oak Grove community involved joy, forgiveness, kindness, love, respect, trust, being valued, and some felt a calling. These sub-themes of positive emotion occurred in both older adult and young adult interviews.

Calling. Neal referred to a calling as a motivation to act when he said:

I mean I'm retired, but I'm still working and I'm not going to quit. I'm active with that and I like that because that gives me something to do. I feel like I am doing something. You know especially if you are a Christian and what God wants you to do, you don't retire. (Keen, 2016a, Neal 26)

Patricia described something more than a desire, more than a casual encounter with another, she described something that tugs at her heart, an emotion that 'calls' her to do something when she said:

We would love to have Dan just come and spend an afternoon with us, even if we were just playing video games or if we were actually going somewhere but just spending time with him outside of, out in the real world somewhere. You know, so they just, I don't

know, you would hope you would be a good influence, but at least they would know that you care about them more than just giving them a part in the skit. (Keen, 2016a, Patricia 12)

Forgiveness. Peter spoke of the positive traits of young adults with DD, and one of those traits was their ability to forgive. Peter said:

And we just have different needs, and we have different levels of ability to interact with the world around us in different ways. Um, certainly I think for many of our kids anyhow, they have a bigger heart than most of us do. They are quicker to forgive, all those principles that we teach in church, and we have trouble executing it where they are so freely to forgive, and ask for forgiveness, you know, pretty much across the board, and those are things that we struggle with because we've got all these walls up, and we've got all these filters and our guards up, they don't have those. And so they're much more open. (Keen, 2016a, Peter 6)

Joy. Cathy pointed out that joyful children with special needs often continue as joyful adults when she said:

I know there is a void, but I also understand that there is a joy in most of these kids that we as adults forget, so they offer a lot of that to us. Sometimes these children or young adults, they were joyful children and they tend to stay that way. Whereas we become a little more cynical and hard. (Keen, 2016a, Cathy 8)

When Kate described her work in Nicaragua, she was visibly joyful:

Yes, it was winter because they are on the opposite side (showed where they would be on imaginary globe) it was just so beautiful and I can't, like you have to go, it was just so beautiful there, and I can't describe how much fun that was. Like if you even look at the

pictures from my senior project that I did on Nicaragua that was like half of it. Just looking back at those pictures like I can remember what I was doing that moment. And like, I think we like ate mangos, and we ate like a bunch of fruit and stuff, it was vacation to me, honestly. (Keen, 2016a, Kate 24)

And, about the possibility of returning for another mission trip, Kate said, “I just want to go back. If I could go back tomorrow I would spend as much money as I can to go back” (Keen, 2016a, Kate 30).

Kindness. When asked about her experience working with older adults, Lisa shared how she felt the older adults she worked with were kind:

So, they were very open, very kind, I know there were a couple times where I skipped a bag and they were like ‘Hey, can you put something in the bag’ not like I’m going to nail you on the head, you forgot to put this in there you know. (Keen, 2016a, Lisa 47)

Love. Peter said this about young adults with DD, “And they have so much love to give and they just need to be given an opportunity to participate” (Keen, 2016a, Peter 6).

Respect. When asked about how her experience working with young adults with DD impacted her impression about people with DD, Patricia said:

I don’t know if it is a gift, I’d like to think of it as a gift, not necessarily with folks with disabilities, but I’ve learned that it applies in the same way. But I can get along and work with everybody because I understand how to see the cultural differences and once you understand that there is a cultural difference then anything they may say or do that you thought was insulting maybe really isn’t anymore because you understand that that is not what they meant by that, that it’s just a difference in the culture. (Keen, 2016a, Patricia 8)

In this response, Patricia related DD to a culture. She implied that you need to accept people where they are, whether culturally or developmentally, and have respect for the person and that person's culture or developmental level. Peter also demonstrated respect for young adults with DD when he said, "Being able to reach them on their level and let them still be involved in the conversations and not be ostracized or looked down upon" (Keen, 2016a, Peter 4).

Trust. When asked about her suggestions on how to implement a program for the two groups to work together in a garden, Cathy responded, "First I think you would have to develop trust, the parents of the young adults would need to trust whoever has the young adults in a gardening environment, or in an environment anywhere probably" (Keen, 2016a, Cathy 20). Cathy translated her knowledge working with third grade students and identified how important trust is when she said:

Well, children in a classroom, I know my six year olds if they trust you they do take risks more in their academics, they will provide you more. They will do more, they will do, they will go beyond their abilities, you know they will work, if they trust you. (Keen, 2016a, Cathy 22)

Cathy warned about the importance of earning trust by being prepared when she said:

If you don't plan they don't trust. And, I think that is where, what you see in a classroom when there is a substitute teacher everyone misbehaves, well they are misbehaving because there is no trust, and the schedule is off. (Keen, 2016a, Cathy 33)

Peter expressed the importance of building trust with the parents of young adults with DD when he said:

Obviously on mission trips, because you have a little bit higher responsibility sometimes it's a matter of it is the first time they have ever been away from home. Um, getting the

parents to let go and to earn their trust, but also to get the kids that freedom to experience what their peers are experiencing. (Keen, 2016a, Peter 4)

Travis was emphatic about being understood, about working with older adults he said:

Oh yeah, first is Peter, he is nice and kindness and understand me when I feel scared about the weather like tornado and struck by lightning. And funny. And Mike, um, he has got a gray beard and a mustache and he's nice, he understands me when I feel scared outside like tornado and struck by lightning. And he is so nice to me and funny. (Keen, 2016a, Travis 33)

Travis felt these adults understood him and they helped him when he was scared - he trusted them.

Valued. Donna recognized the importance of valuing people, she said, "Because everybody has something special to offer, no matter where they are educationally, health, or whatever, everybody has a contribution" (Keen, 2016a, Donna 11). Peter described one of the benefits for the older adults as feeling valued when he said:

They still have a place to serve, that they are not forgotten, that they are not pushed aside. That they can still contribute to the life of the church, and contribute to young people I think inherently people want to help each other, particularly in a church community, or in this community as a whole. (Keen, 2016a, Peter 12)

Exceptional People

The data revealed several sub-themes related to the unique nature of young adults with DD, the theme was identified as exceptional people. Exceptional as in unique, not better or worse, rather a way of describing people who are diverse. Sub-themes of exceptional people include both positive and negative concepts; they are exclusion, culture gap, words matter,

unique nature, and loneliness. These are only five sub-themes identified in this limited research, I am confident there are many more ways this group is exceptional, but it would be impossible to identify all those ways.

Exclusion. Exclusion only occurred in one interview with an older adult, but it was so relevant it was included in this analysis. Neal revealed exclusion twice in his interview, the first-time Neal discussed an incident mentioned earlier where a young adult with DD displayed inappropriate social behavior. Neal researched the problem and decided the best way to allow the young man to participate would be to invite another young adult to serve as a mentor. Unfortunately, when this young man informed his parents about the inappropriate behavior, his parents were upset as evident in Neal's interview when Neal said:

Yes, he was able to stay, people, close people knew what was going on and how we handled that. And what happened was I asked one of the youth to work with him and I told him the problem and he went and told his mother and that's when it went through the roof. (Keen, 2016a, Neal 18)

I asked, "So they were not accepting of the situation?" And Neal responded, "No, they were not accepting of her son helping this kid. And, they should not be in our church, should not be around" (Keen, 2016a, Neal 20). In spite of this opposition Neal refused to exclude this young adult as described in other themes.

Culture gap. This sub-theme occurred in several interviews with older adults. Culture gap is similar to a generation gap, but is not age-related. Rather, several older adults expressed how their lack of experience with people with DD impacted their opinion of anyone with a disability. When asked how he felt about young adults with DD before he had the opportunity to mentor them, Neal, who is in his 70s, said:

Very good question, I didn't want to be near them (said very emphatically), I stayed away from them. And it wasn't until we went on the mission trip to South Dakota and I had to bunk, four of us, with Glenn and with Travis. We were together, the four of us, and what an experience, that changed my whole perspective on how I felt about these types of people, people with special needs. (Keen, 2016a, Neal 4)

Later in the interview, Neal expressed concern about picking the right people to work with the young adults with special needs, he said:

I think you have to, how you pick these people who can work with special needs people (pause) I don't know the answer because there are some people who couldn't do it, or wouldn't know how to do it. How do I work with this person? (Keen, 2016a, Neal 36)

I said, "Well, weren't you in that position?" and Neal responded, "I was in that position, but again, I got where I was forced into something I wouldn't have done on my own" (Keen, 2016a, Neal 38). I commented, "Sometimes the exposure to somebody is different," and Neal responded:

Exposure, yes (pause), I knew Travis and here he is and I'm trying to stay away from because I don't understand him and now I'm forced into that, it worked. You know, and I think sometimes we might have to do that with people. We may have to force them into it, say hey; here is the guy you are working with. (Keen, 2016a, Neal 40)

Neal's perspective on people with special needs was very different and I wanted to understand what his background was. I asked Neal, "This is totally off script, but thinking back to when you were young do you remember having friends who had issues or people in the community or even when you were say in your 20s and 30s?" And, Neal responded:

Wow, when I was young I can just remember somebody in a wheel chair, but not many I know, not close. All my friends, except my neighbor when I was a little kid, he would get in trouble, and he may have had a problem because he would get in trouble fast, and he would lie, and so he had problems with that and his parents, so he must have more problems than I thought when I was growing up. But I played with him. (Keen, 2016a, Neal 54)

Patricia is 58 years old. As a young older adult, Patricia's experience was different than Neal's. When I asked Patricia about her thoughts about young adults with DD before she had the opportunity to mentor them, she said, "Probably didn't give them enough credit for being able to do as much as they can do. Until, because you just have this conception that's really not a good picture of what the reality is with these kids" (Keen, 2016a, Patricia 4).

When asked about her experience with young adults with DD, Donna, who is 72 years old, responded:

I'll tell you one thing that I have a cousin, who is umm, she is a second cousin. Unfortunately, she is not with us now, but she was, I don't remember how she was impaired, but I think it was mostly mental, but she didn't, she might have been 25 when she died. But, because of her I got interested in the handicapped, mentally handicapped. And I also worked with one of my classes in high school, we would go to a school where they were (referring to young adults with DD) and actually I thought what I wanted to do when I went down to Georgia College to enroll, I told my counselor that I wanted to get into that program, that I wanted to teach them. I wanted to be in that, that, and she talked me out of it. She said they, you are too caring a person. You have to be a little more stern with them, you know. Your personality needs to be a little bit heavier. And she

didn't think I would be successful so I didn't do it. So, I went into the home economics.
(Keen, 2016a, Donna 13)

The culture gap was most prominent in the older adults over 70. Inclusion was foreign to the older adults when they were young, in fact Neal could only remember maybe one person from his childhood who may have had a disability and that was because this child got in trouble often. His lack of exposure to people with disabilities produced a lack of acceptance, this was evident when Neal said, "I didn't want to be around them" (Keen, 2016a, Neal 6). Donna was advised against special education with children with disabilities. However, this gap was easily bridged for both Neal and Donna by exposure to people with disabilities and interaction produced understanding and affection.

Words matter. I recognized a language deficit in several interviews. The older adults did not have the vocabulary to describe young adults with DD. Consequently, the older adults fumbled to find words and used outdated terms to refer to people with disabilities. Donna's quote in the culture gap section includes several instances that revealed the lack of language, for example, when Donna said, "I don't remember how she was impaired, but I think it was mostly mental" (Keen, 2016a, Donna 13). And, "Because of her I got interested in the handicapped, mentally handicapped" (Keen, 2016a, Donna 13). Again, "I thought what I wanted to do when I went down to Georgia College to enroll, I told my counselor that I wanted to get into that program, that I wanted to teach them" (Keen, 2016a, Donna 13). I followed up with a question "So how has that experience impacted your impression about people with different abilities, or DD?" Donna responded, "Yeah, developmentally disabled, well, it has, I learned to appreciate them and learned to really just want to help them. Really." (Keen, 2016a, Donna 17). Finally, at the end of the interview Donna was still struggling with terminology, "Oh wow (laughing) I do

like the idea though to have the garden at the church, then it would be a place where we could both be. The developmentally (pause) um (pause) younger person and then the older person” (Keen, 2016a, Donna 61).

Neal also struggled with words. When I asked him about his experience working with young adults with DD, Neal responded:

My main experience has been through church activities, on mission trips, mission trips, mainly mission trips, but also I drive a school bus and deal with handicaps that some can come on my bus, some cannot. On a regular bus, versus a short bus, so I can have someone with autism on my bus, which I have right now. (Keen, 2016a, Neal 2)

And, when Neal referred to this young boy he said, “Well I knew, luckily I had had experience with people like that at our church, and I knew about autism, and I knew how to handle him” (Keen, 2016a, Neal 4). Again, Neal revealed that he was unsure of how to address people with disabilities when he called them “people with problems like that” (Keen, 2016a, Neal 4). I asked Neal about how his experience working with young adults with DD impacted his impression about people with disabilities, he said:

It kind of opened up a whole other world that, it’s now I can accept, I know how to deal with, I’m comfortable around these people. And I think that is hard for a lot of people, to be comfortable around these people with issues because they don’t know how to handle it, or don’t want to be part of it or don’t want know, oh I don’t want to be around it, and that what I have learned. How to be comfortable around these people and how you can help them in their world and in your world. (Keen, 2016a, Neal 24).

The analysis process revealed the difficulty older participants had with terminology related to people with disabilities. Neal addressed people with disabilities as ‘handicaps’ and

‘these people,’ and he referred to a special education bus as a ‘short bus.’ When Neal was talking about how to get the two groups together, he said, “I don’t know whether or how you get them adapted to handicapped people or that type without some experience” (Keen, 2016a, Neal 34). Donna expressed her desire to pursue a career in special education, but she was discouraged by her admission counselor because her personality was not stern enough. Although the younger-older adults had more exposure to people with disabilities, and appeared to understand inclusion, some still struggled with terminology. I realized that words matter and how important it is to use appropriate language that addressed the person first. Consequently, I chose to use the term young adults with DD rather than young adults with different abilities. Although the term young adults with different abilities has been used as an attempt to highlight positive attributes of a group of people, use of this term only confused older adults who did not have a base language to reference. Clearly words do matter, and if society is to develop an understanding and inclusive attitude toward young adults with DD I believe these data show that a common language is important.

Unique nature. Young adults with DD revealed several characteristics; they include literal interpretation, diverse needs, and the need for routine. Marshall made several comments that highlighted his literal interpretation of the world. When I asked him if he learned anything when he worked with several older men making cages for the tomatoes, he responded, “I just learned how to make cages” (Keen, 2016a, Marshall 79). When the interview was finished, I asked Marshall what he was going to do. Marshall said, “I’m going to dump out the ice in this cup then throw the cup away” (Keen, 2016a, Marshall 85), as he shook his large cup from McDonalds. At this point someone tried to get in the door from the outside which was locked; Marshall opened the door for the lady to enter, and then stepped outside to dump his ice out. The

door closed behind Marshall, and he was locked outside. I opened the door for Marshall and he walked on to his assigned activity.

Travis was involved with the music team at vacation bible school (VBS). He helped with the hand motions for a song, *There is Power in the Blood*. I asked him to tell me about how he helped with VBS, Travis responded, “Yes, um, the power in the blood is coming from inside my body (pause) where I do love Jesus, so much, it make me feel happiness” (Keen, 2016a, Travis 91). Peter said this about the nature of people with disabilities or special needs:

And I have a philosophy, we are all special needs. Each and every one of us is. And we just have different needs, and we have different levels of ability to interact with the world around us in different ways . . . I think it has kind of opened my eyes to the Kingdom of God and the ability to love people where they are at. Um, and also just to really, I guess have a place to serve in a different capacity to a demographic that is often overlooked and pushed aside by our fast-paced culture. But, they um, as scripture says, they are people of sacred worth. (Keen, 2016a, Peter 6)

Neal said, “And how do you deal with the different needs. Like take a Preston vs. Travis vs. Dan, they are all at different stages, that’s interesting, all the same diagnosis but each kid (pause) it is such a big spectrum” (Keen, 2016a, Neal 50). Travis revealed the importance of routine for him. Travis said:

Oh yeah, yeah, yeah, today, um, I took out the trash, and cleaned chores such as sweeping and swifiting and take out the trash. Hanging my empty hangers, and I also liked doing break time such as watching my DVDs downstairs, I got a TV and I like to watch my DVDs. And I also like to sing Brand New Man by Brooks and Dunn with my acoustic guitar. And I also like to dress up for Halloween, and I also liked doing the talent show,

and I'm going to be Woody for clogging dancing, that's what Suzanna told me. (Keen, 2016a, Travis 124)

About his time in the vocational program, Travis said:

Yes, when I went to the (local hospital) in 2015, that was last year, it was in March, and first I went to the radiology such as cleaning, and my second rotation is rehab such as cleaning and sweeping, and the last rotation is linens such as stocking, which I'm good at stocking, and folding towels and delivery. And delivery in the departments. (Keen, 2016a, Travis 105)

And, Travis talked about his chores at home, he said, "Helping with my mom checking the mail by the mail box, and also creating chores such as sweeping, and swiftling, and take out the trash, and take out the trash (smiling)" (Keen, 2016a, Travis 124). Neal recognized the importance of Travis' routine when he said:

Yeah, I learned how to work with him. For instance, when we finished working we were all dirty. Okay and we had to have showers before we went to eat. Travis had a certain way that he needed to be first, he had this, and he may have spent a half hour in that bathroom locked up, and everyone else needed a shower. Trying to change that pattern was (pause) impossible really. So, you just knew that that was the way it was going to be, go do something else while you wait because Travis' got the whole thing locked up (laughing). You learn that they have a certain way of doing things and if you learn to deal with that it is really pretty easy. (Keen, 2016a, Neal 8)

The need for routine among the young adults with DD was evident in several interviews, and the importance for others to understand this need was clearly articulated by Neal. It will be important in any activity that seeks to allow an opportunity for inclusion into the community for

people in the community to be aware of the need for routine for many young adults with DD. This acceptance by Neal was a pivotal moment in his relationship with Travis and others with DD. Overall acceptance and an attempt to understand one another enhanced relationships described by the participants.

Loneliness. Peter shared his impression of the experience of a mother and an adolescent with a DD beginning the transition to adulthood, Peter said:

Knowing that there is somebody else out there that is going to pick you up when your own parents are ready to throw you out. Which is what we all have growing up, but it is kind of heart breaking when you, the lady that I talked to recently, her story was so typical in that she's got a 17-year-old son that is locked away in the basement because he's scared of the world, he has his own issues, but he's not interacting with people and it just causes him to further regress into himself, and he wants to interact it's just the people around him don't know how to interact with him, the neighbors, the schools, whatever, and she's just grown tired. (Keen, 2016a, Peter 14)

With sadness in her voice, Kate shared her loss of friendships after graduating high school:

Ever since high school I don't keep in touch, I lost a lot of my friends. So, I talk to them rarely, like we are more of acquaintances now because I don't see them as often. So, most of my friends are like from church and they are like parents, so like my mom's friends are like my friends so I don't really have a lot but I'll eventually (pause) I have some friends from work. (Keen, 2016a, Kate 8)

Later in the interview, after Kate shared about her mission trip to Nicaragua, she said, “So it was just a fun trip overall, the people were so sweet, they were so nice, and I just wish I could have that group back” (Keen, 2016a, Kate 32)

In response to a question about friends, Lisa said:

Friends, um, (long pause), well, do I get to see them often? Um, no, not really. And um, I don't know, friends for me that's a hard definition. That's a hard, so, I have friends from Camp Sunshine, I don't get to see them very often, but, and that's only because, part of me says they've all grown up, they've all gone on and done their thing. Like you can't hold on to everything forever and ever, but, then I'm like then well who is your friend (crying) I don't know. I don't know why I'm getting upset about this. (Keen, 2016a, Lisa 9)

The topic of friendship was a very difficult subject for Lisa; I did not realize the emotion this question would bring up. Lisa tried the best she could to articulate her response, but ultimately the question made her think about the loss of, and lack of friendships that she has had since high school and summer camp. Lisa thought for a few moments, and added:

I mean I just, I think about people like Diana, I think about my friends from Camp Sunshine who I haven't seen in forever, and then I think about well, if I haven't seen them, and Diana, she's gone on to college. A lot of them have gone on to college so it's like okay they've moved on in life, they will soon be married and have children and we can't hold on to them forever, so then I'm like, well, who is your friend, who do you have? But then I'm like okay, so, Diane Keen, sure, but then I go like yeah, she's much older, you're 24, I don't know. Can a person be a friend if they're decades older or years

older? I'm 24 and you're much older than me. That just seems, I don't know, can you still define that as a friend, I don't know (long pause). (Keen, 2016a, Lisa 18)

Interesting question, can a person who is decades older be considered a friend?

Marshall's response to a question about friends:

Travis I see plenty here (at church) I see plenty of my other friends here but some old buddies of mine from high school, um, not as much as I used to, as I used to. We usually bump into each other in a few places. I saw a friend, I worked with a friend of mine named Martin, and Martin is an old buddy of mine from high school. We worked together. He told me a story about his niece, that she died (oh, that's sad). In a way, we've been like brothers to each other, in a way. (Keen, 2016a, Marshall 4)

Marshall expressed sadness when he mentioned his friend Martin who he rarely sees.

Travis recounted a trip he went on with men from the community, Travis said, "Oh yeah, make me feel happy, without being lonely, which I don't like to be lonely" (Keen, 2016a, Travis 43).

Loneliness was discovered multiple times in each interview with young adults with DD. Travis clearly stated that he does not like to be lonely. Lisa's raw emotion when asked about her friends was troubling, as was Kate's comment that "I lost a lot of my friends." Peter's description of the young man with special needs in the transition to adulthood was one of loneliness and isolation, sitting in his parent's basement alone on the couch. This sub-theme mirrors findings in the literature; loneliness and isolation have been identified as a concern for young adults with DD (Dyke et al., 2013; Mazurek, 2014).

Garden Notes

In this section I will describe the first season of garden activity and lessons learned. In addition, I will discuss important discoveries for future intergenerational activities. Success and challenges experienced during the first year will help the CAB plan for future activities. It is important to note that the interviews took place during the same period of time that the garden needed to be planted. Much of what was learned during the interviews was not applied to the first-year garden experience. However, knowledge gained during the interviews and first year garden experience will be used to plan for future intergenerational activities.

Preparation

For the first year, members of the CAB decided to utilize eight raised beds that were built by a Boy Scout as his Eagle Scout project. The beds had not been utilized for several seasons and were in need of repair. In addition, there was no water source near the garden area which had been an obstacle in previous years. It was determined by the CAB that repair of the beds and irrigation needed to be completed prior to planting.

Irrigation was a messy job, much of this happened in my absence, but was reported to me by the participants. A contractor was hired to tunnel under a driveway, then several older men worked with Dan, a young adult with DD, to trench over 1000 feet to carry water to the orchard, garden, and back to the rear of the property to provide water for the soccer fields. Once the trench was complete and the water line was in place and buried, Peter worked with three young adults with DD to connect the main water line to the irrigation lines. I delivered lunch to this group and shared a meal on a blanket near the main road where the group was working. The following are thoughts I recorded in my field notes:

Travis loves his routine and Peter often calls him out of that routine lovingly. Travis does not like the sun, so he carried his open umbrella over his head, while wearing his shorts with long skinny legs and his cowboy boots. Travis politely, but strongly refused to do any shoveling because he would have to put his umbrella down. Dan was very willing to shovel dirt, and little Kate even gave it a shot. Peter included all, even when one of the young adults wasn't able (or willing) to help, he or she was still included. Lunch was fun on the blanket. The work is a way to get these young adults out of the house and doing something productive while socializing. This is what Peter is a master at. He is a gift to the community! (Keen, 2016b, p. 1)

Later Dan commented with pride that he was the reason we were able to water the garden and orchard with hoses. This was a terrific improvement over the previous year where we filled a large 55-gallon container with water, drove the container to the orchard in the back of a Jeep, and carried water to the apple trees in buckets. The work of this small group not only benefited the garden but also provided water to the area of the soccer fields which are open to the entire Oak Grove community through organized soccer teams.

After a team worked on making repairs to the raised beds and amending the soil, a small group went to the local nursery to purchase the plants. I recorded the following in my field notes:

Kate, Travis, and I went to a local nursery looking for tomatoes, cucumbers, peppers, squash, and zucchini. As we went around with our wagon, Travis and Kate would pick out their favorite plants and ask questions of the staff when we needed help finding something. At one point, Kate went ahead of me to another greenhouse where she met an older man. He began talking to her. As I approached I heard the man ask Kate if she

‘was born like that,’ referring to her obvious limp. Kate explained that she had cerebral palsy, and went on to describe the conditions of her early childhood. Kate told the man that she had to eat out of a garbage can when she was a toddler because her mother was addicted to drugs. The older man got more than he asked for in Kate’s response. By the time she was done explaining why she limped, she told him about our community garden. When Kate, Travis, and I went to check out the man appeared near the cashier and said there was no charge for the plants, the nursery was happy to donate the plants to the community garden. We had no idea that this older man that asked the question of Kate was the owner of the nursery. (Keen, 2016b, pp. 1-2)

I was proud of Kate’s response to the older man’s seemingly rude question. Kate obviously did not take offense at his question, and I didn’t feel he meant any offense. I think he was genuinely curious. Kate was able to give a clear response as to why she had a disability and then follow-up by sharing about the intergenerational community garden plan. This experience opened the garden up to the greater community and allowed the nursery to support the endeavor by donating the plants.

Planting

On May 19, 2016, the intergenerational group was ready to plant. Dan and Kate, both young adults with DD, Donna, an older adult who is also a master gardener, and I gathered at the garden site to begin planting. I recorded the following thoughts in my field notes:

We gathered at the garden to begin planting. Donna showed Dan and Kate how to measure between the plants, how far to space the tomato plants, how deep to dig, how to amend the soil, and finally how to place the plant. Dan and Kate took turns planting the

tomato plants until we finished the bed. Donna was an excellent teacher and it appeared that she enjoyed teaching Dan and Kate about planting. (Keen, 2016b, p. 2)

The following day Dan, Kate and I worked together to finish planting the beds. Next are thoughts I recorded in my field notes after the work:

Donna was unable to join us (Dan, Kate, and myself) this day, leaving us novices to work in the garden alone. Thankfully, Donna taught us much the day before so we had a good idea of what to do. In addition, the man from the nursery where we bought the plants had given us advice on planting when we selected the plants so the three of us finished planting the beds. Dan and Kate both complained about the cold, it was May 20th and it was cold – this was very unusual for Georgia. Dan and Kate both wanted to leave, and let it be known that they were not comfortable; I strongly encouraged them to continue working until we got the plants in the ground so the plants wouldn't die. Reluctantly, Dan and Kate worked alongside me until we were finished planting the remaining beds. If I am going to be honest, this day was a bit monotonous because Dan and Kate didn't want to be there. I found myself questioning the decision to work in a garden to improve well-being. The young adults did not seem to like the work this day and freely expressed their displeasure. I hoped the next day would be much better. (Keen, 2016b, p. 2)

After reflection on the day's activities, I recognized that persistence was important to finish the work of the day, and persistence was identified as a sub-concept of engagement.

Community Involvement

A notice was placed in the Oak Grove church bulletin to invite people to a meeting to discuss the intergenerational garden. Several young adults who had been working with me in the garden agreed to help explain the garden plans at the meeting. The intergenerational aspect of

the garden was explained and the older adults all had excellent input on the logistics of the garden. By the end of the meeting several older adults took the lead on building cages for the tomato plants. The group went outside to tour the garden area and assess the needs; I recorded the following in my field notes:

After the meeting, everyone walked up to the garden to see the progress. Jim was unable to walk up the hill and had to drive up in his car. When walking around the garden he said that he wouldn't be much use anymore because he had trouble walking. I reminded him that it was his ideas for the cages that everyone was going to use to build cages the following week, and that his knowledge will be extremely useful. (Keen, 2016b, p. 3)

The following week a group gathered to assemble the cages after vacation bible school. A community member donated the wire fence and Jim provided the instructions to the young adults to build the cages. Peter worked with the young adults to construct and place the cages around the tomato plants.

One Sunday after church several older adults and young adults with DD took a walk to see the progress in the garden. The following are my notes from that day:

The apple and fig trees are both producing fruit. Dan and I counted 54 apples that are growing on the 25 apple trees, considering this is only the second summer for the trees this is pretty impressive. Dan was pleased with the trees, especially since he planted the trees the previous year with the help of Warren, an older adult with Alzheimer's disease. Warren instructed Dan on how deep to dig the holes based on his knowledge from working in a nursery years ago. Dan also proudly commented that we could water the apple trees much easier this year because he ran the irrigation pipe to the orchard, and now we have a water spigot and hose rather than the old way of placing a large tub in the

back of the Jeep, filling it with the hose near the church, and driving the Jeep to the trees, carrying buckets of water to each tree, and repeating the process several times to complete the watering. This was a very cumbersome process. The new irrigation lines to the different areas of the property will make watering much easier. Although Dan complains about working in the garden, he was clearly proud of his accomplishment in running irrigation to the different areas of the church property. Dan was also very pleased with the progress of the apple trees. (Keen, 2016b, p. 3)

The theme of accomplishment was clear in this note.

Harvest

Sunday mornings after church provided an excellent opportunity for older adults and young adults with DD to meet in the garden and harvest the vegetables. Other days were difficult as none of the young adults with DD drove. Transportation was a barrier to community participation for the young adults. Comments from my field notes about the harvest included the following:

I texted the young adults an invitation to harvest and water after the 9:00 am service, Lisa eagerly responded that she would like to help. Sunday after church seems to be a good time to meet informally in the garden as people are at the church already. In addition, once we picked the vegetables we were able to fill a basket with yellow squash, zucchini, heirloom tomatoes and hot peppers, for members to enjoy. Lisa, Glenn and I had conversation while picking and discussed taking fresh vegetables to some of our older adults who are not able to come to the garden. Lisa said she would be happy to do that and commented that may be a good way to get older adults involved with the garden. Lisa was happy with the harvest and seemed proud of our accomplishment in the garden.

She took some vegetables home to her mom for lunch. Several people have been at the garden during the week harvesting and watering. We have a community white board for people to record their activities in the garden. It is nice to see independent involvement and the produce being used by community members. (Keen, 2016b, pp. 4-5)

I used Lisa's idea of delivering vegetables to older adults in the community who were unable to come to the garden; the following is from my note:

I called Kate to see if she would like to water, harvest, and deliver vegetables to older church members who have not been at church in some time. Kate quickly said yes (she had been hesitant to work in the garden, but the prospect of delivering some of the produce sounded exciting to her). I picked Kate up and we ran some errands before going to the garden to water and harvest.

The heirloom tomato plants were exploding with colorful tomatoes, the other tomato plants had plenty of green tomatoes but no ripe tomatoes yet. We picked a few cucumbers, hot peppers, and yellow squash, but there was no zucchini. Kate and I decided to drive around to the orchard and see if there were any apples – we picked about 6 apples, the trees looked beautiful. There were also many figs on the fig trees but they were not ready for harvest yet. Kate was proud of the apples, she went to the nursery the year before to purchase the apple trees, and has been involved in the garden planning from the beginning, so it gave her great satisfaction to see the apples.

Kate and I went to an older couple's house to deliver tomatoes, cucumbers, and squash. The husband and wife were very happy to see us and invited us in for a visit. The husband has Alzheimer's disease, and asked Kate what she does, several times. Kate looked perplexed after he repeated himself for the third time, I stepped in and told Kate it

was okay to answer him again. The visit was a delight for all, the wife was grateful for the company and the veggies from the church, the husband was thrilled to see an old friend and new friend, and Kate was proud of her accomplishment in the garden and the ability to share the produce with older adults.

This was not in the original plan, but we have not had routine input from older adults working in the garden so we decided to take the garden to older adults. (Keen, 2016b, p. 5)

Challenges

Transportation was the biggest challenge. As mentioned above, the young adults with DD in the community do not drive. And, most of their parents work during the week. Consequently, I had to drive the young adults to the garden and back home most days. Oak Grove is in a developing county that once was primarily farming and is in transition to a suburb. The services have not kept pace with the population growth and public transportation is minimal in the county and nonexistent in the Oak Grove area. This is a barrier not only for participation in the garden, but also for any community involvement. The inability to get to community activities leads to isolation for many of the young adults and stress on their families in the Oak Grove community and was noted by Dyke et al. (2013) in their research with young adults with Down syndrome in the transition to adulthood.

Unfortunately, much of what I learned from the interviews was not implemented in the planning process for the garden. The interviews were taking place while the garden was being planted and the analysis process had not yet begun. Ideas identified during the interviews would have been very helpful in preparation for interaction in the garden. For example, Neal discussed getting 'buy-in' from the community by holding informational meetings. Although we had one

meeting with the community in June, 2016, this was not completed adequately. Other ideas identified in the interviews, such as words matter will be helpful in planning for future events. I plan to incorporate what I learned in the analysis in preparation for future intergenerational activity, such as discussing the unique abilities of the young adults with DD with the older adults, explaining the concept of inclusion, and expressing appropriate terms to use.

Peter noted the urgency of the project. Peter works with the youth group and consequently follows the youth as they transition to adulthood. In Peter's interview, he shared his experience with one young man who was isolated in his mother's basement with no effective plan for his future. This is a problem that has been reported across the nation (Mill et al., 2010; Smith et al., 2010). There is urgency as Peter identified, but unfortunately there is also a lack of ideas and resources for young adults with DD.

Finally, after analyzing the data, I am not convinced that a garden is the best or only option for intergenerational activity in Oak Grove. A second idea that was discussed by the CAB, but not implemented, may actually be more feasible than a garden. The CAB discussed the possibility of creating a coffee shop in the church that would operate on Sunday mornings. The CAB chose the garden over the coffee shop for several reasons. First, the church had the property and the community members had the expertise and resources for a garden. In addition, the CAB was interested in an activity that could provide for frequent interaction because members of the CAB recognized the need for ongoing activity for people in both groups. And, the idea of a coffee shop would involve extensive construction work and expense in the church building itself. The CAB was concerned about gaining approval and funding for such a project.

The idea of a coffee shop could respond to some of the challenges identified here. The problem of transportation could be addressed because the young adults with DD typically ride to

church on Sunday with their parents. A coffee shop would provide more exposure for both groups to the greater community as the young adults and older adults worked together making coffee drinks. Coffee is a year-round beverage whereas the garden is currently seasonal. And, a coffee shop may appeal more to the younger generation while still appealing to the older adults, and the rest of the community. The research findings will be shared with the CAB and the CAB will discuss plans for integrating the findings from this research in future intergenerational activities.

Summary of Findings

Well-being in Oak Grove mirrors Seligman's (2011) Well-being Theory. This research confirmed the elements in the Well-being Theory and provided an expanded view of the elements of well-being specific to the Oak Grove community. This expanded knowledge will enable the CAB to plan for future intergenerational activities to enhance the well-being of older adults and young adults with DD. Engagement in activities in the Oak Grove community for young adults with DD and older adults involves inclusion, or openly welcoming others who may be different than oneself and making the necessary accommodations for participation. This has been accomplished in Oak Grove through acceptance, awareness, and love. It can be enhanced by bringing awareness of inclusion to the community, namely the older adults who may not be familiar with the concept of inclusion. Positive intergenerational relationships were observed in Oak Grove between older adults and young adults with DD through mentoring. Acceptance and encouragement were revealed to be essential for connections that lead to positive relationships. Accomplishment led to self-respect and satisfaction for the participants. Self-respect was specifically important for the young adults with DD as they may have fewer opportunities to be proud of accomplishments than others. The satisfaction of accomplishment was a shared theme

in both groups and was important to all participants. Meaning and purpose was discovered primarily among the older adult participants. The older adults expressed that they value serving others, having a reason for their work, and being productive. Many positive emotions were identified in the data; namely having a calling, forgiveness, joy, kindness, love, respect, trust, and being valued. These positive emotions led to the feeling of happiness Seligman (2011) discussed as one of the elements of well-being.

In addition to confirming and expanding on the five elements of well-being, the data revealed several significant sub-themes related to exceptional people, or the young adults with DD. Similar to the rest of the nation, young adults with DD in Oak Grove are isolated and lonely. Loneliness was identified in each of the young adult interviews. A culture gap was recognized between older adults and young adults with DD. An overall lack of appropriate language was a surprising finding and was identified as a sub-theme called words matter. The data revealed a unique nature of each of the young adults with DD that requires awareness and acceptance by others in the community. Finally, exclusion of people with disabilities was replaced by caring.

Chapter 5: Conclusions and Recommendations

Participatory action research seemed to be the ideal approach to provide the CAB with important information that could be used in development of a program to encourage intergenerational relationships between older adults and young adults with DD to enhance well-being. Seligman's (2011) Well-being Theory provided the foundation for a holistic view of well-being of the people and community of Oak Grove. Qualitative methods were used to discover ways to enhance well-being in older adults and young adults with DD in the community of Oak Grove. Data were gathered via in-depth interviews with older adults and young adults with DD, participant observation, and field notes. Analysis of the data clearly revealed sub-themes of the five elements of the Well-being Theory, accomplishment, engagement, meaning and purpose, positive emotion, and positive relationships, specific to the Oak Grove community. In addition to the five elements of well-being, the theme exceptional people was identified. This theme, identified as exceptional people provided a glimpse into the unique nature of young adults with DD. The following discussion of information gathered in the interviews and field work, and identified in the analysis, will be shared with the CAB and used in development of future intergenerational activities in the community.

Discussion

Engagement

Engagement was the most prominent theme discovered in this research. Because this study was aimed at enhancing well-being by fostering intergenerational relationships through purposeful intergenerational activity in a garden, this was somewhat surprising. There are several factors that contributed to engagement being the primary element that was discovered in the data. First, the relationships that were explored in the interviews were between older adults and young

adults with DD, relationships that developed primarily in volunteer activities that involved service to others. In each interview with young adults, the young adult discussed how older adults were instrumental in his or her life. Similarly, the older adults reported satisfaction in being able to empower young adults with DD to participate in volunteer work or other activity that they may not have been able to participate in without a mentor or friend. These relationships are certainly positive relationships which contribute to well-being; additionally they allow both parties to engage in the community, thereby entering the 'flow state.' In addition to the synergistic relationship, use of the PAR approach also contributed to the emergence of engagement as a primary theme. Seligman (2011) considered engagement as the flow state, when all elements of well-being work in unison to enable a person to perform at his or her best ability. In this PAR project, both the individuals as well as the community must enter the flow state to enhance the well-being of older adults and young adults with DD. Participants revealed several sub-themes that contributed to engagement in Oak Grove which expanded on the definition of engagement and provided greater meaning for this element in Oak Grove.

For this intergenerational project engagement requires buy-in from community members; the community needs to feel a part of the project. The process of discovery adds to one being engaged; it enables a person to understand him or herself and his or her environment better. Because this intergenerational project involved people with disabilities, inclusion was found to be essential to engagement. Inclusion provides support for and acceptance of people who may be different, so they can be involved in the experience. Knowledge and learning go together; individuals from both groups have knowledge to share. The experience of the older generation is of great value; use of that experience to teach skills to young adults makes use of this great resource and allows individuals from both groups to be engaged fully. Persistence is vital for

individuals from both groups to be engaged, but especially for young adults with DD, as success may be more difficult for individuals in this group. The data revealed a high level of engagement for participants from both groups when they were working on intergenerational projects. Engagement may be increased by working with others, and in this study specifically in intergenerational relationships.

Positive Relationships

Positive relationships are essential to well-being (Mazurek, 2014; Seligman, 2011) and are central to this research. As expected, the element of positive relationships, which has been identified as a vital element of well-being in the literature (Custers, Westerhof, Kuin, & Riksen-Walraven, 2010; Mazurek, 2014; Powell, Griffin, & Crawford, 2011; Skingley, 2013; Street, Burge, Quadagno, & Barrett, 2007; Strotmann, 2012), was also discussed by all participants as essential in their lives. Loss of positive relationships was particularly troubling for several of the young adult participants. This research added to Seligman's description of positive relationships by providing specific aspects essential in the Oak Grove community for older adults and young adults with DD. Those sub-themes include acceptance, connection, encouragement, friendship, intergenerational, mentoring, and family.

Positive relationships are complex. Neal's interview revealed that acceptance is not automatic; as Neal began to understand Travis, his acceptance of Travis and other people with disabilities grew. Peter suggested that people need to be open to relationships; as discovered in several interviews, young adults with DD are particularly open. Participants felt that the development of connections between older adults, young adults with DD, siblings, and parents, through a purposeful activity would foster positive relationships and have a positive impact on the greater community. Intergenerational relationships create a 'good combination' as several

participants stated. Lisa felt older adults were more patient. Patricia stated that as roles are reduced for older adults, having a younger person to befriend felt good. And Kate articulated how she does not have many friends her age because they have moved on; rather her friends were her mom's age. Peter felt that relationships between older adults and young adults with DD would benefit the families of the young adults as they often have run out of resources and ideas.

Use of the PAR approach for this project provides the CAB the evidence to create an environment that encourages the development of positive relationships. This fills a gap in the literature related to well-being among older adults and young adults with DD specifically, and promotion of intergenerational relationships between the two groups.

Accomplishment

Accomplishment, the sense of achievement is an essential element of well-being and a person's ultimate flourishing (Seligman, 2011). With regard to accomplishment as an element of well-being, there is a gap in the literature related to both older adults and young adults with DD. Accomplishment as a theme was recognized in each interview, with identification of accomplishment among the young adults at a rate of almost 2 to 1 compared to older adults. This may be due to the fact that these young adults have not had the same sense of accomplishment as many of their peers and consequently they were eager to discuss their successes.

All the young adult participants continued to live at home with their parents when their siblings or friends were transitioning to independence at college or on their own. Only one of the four young adults was enrolled in a community college, and only one discussed a current job. This correlates with the reported 34% of young adults with a DD being employed (Butterworth

& Migliore, 2015) and the reported lack of activity after graduation from high school (Harris, 2008).

Three sub-elements of accomplishment were identified in the data; they include self-respect, satisfaction, and work. Young adults with DD reported respect for themselves for their accomplishments. For example, Kate was proud of her lead role in a skit, Lisa respected herself for her ability to work toward an associate's degree in college, and Travis was proud of his graduation from high school. Satisfaction was identified as a sub-theme of accomplishment, interestingly the older adults who expressed satisfaction did so in regard to being happy for the young adults who had a sense of satisfaction. It was clearly important to the older adults to see the young adults satisfied with their accomplishments. The young adults also showed satisfaction with their accomplishments. Kate even commented that all the hard work and pain from working with wire was 'so worth it.' Participants reported satisfaction in finishing a job and completing a training program. Work was another sub-theme of accomplishment. Older adults felt that the young adults would feel a sense of self-worth through work. Young adults all spoke positively about work, whether it was at a job training site, on a mission trip or at home doing chores, work provided a sense of accomplishment for the young adults.

It is clear that any program aimed at enhancing well-being for both groups, but especially young adults with DD needs to incorporate something that provides a sense of accomplishment. This could be a harvest in a garden, delivering produce to members of the community who are homebound, or providing goods or services to the community. The garden is an area that will provide a sense of accomplishment for the young adults, but a coffee shop would provide the same sense and possibly would be more relevant to the younger generation.

Meaning and Purpose

The initial literature review on meaning and purpose produced evidence that purpose in life declines for many older adults, possibly due to the loss of roles (Ryff & Keyes, 1995). In a more recent study on meaning-in-life across the lifespan, Battersby and Phillips (2016) suggested that meaning-in-life may be more complex than the Purpose-in-Life (PIL) scale was able to measure (which was used in the Ryff and Keyes study). Battersby and Phillips used the Meaning-in-Life Questionnaire (MLQ) which allowed the respondent to determine what he or she found meaningful and the results in this study disagreed with the work of Ryff and Keyes (1995). One reason suggested for this disparity was the more detailed analysis by the MLQ as to what is considered meaningful in a person's life. However, Battersby and Phillips (2016) suggested that meaning-in-life is complex for each individual and is yet to be fully understood.

Personally observed and previously reported decline in purpose in life (Ryff & Keys, 1995) was considered in the plans for this research project. As discussed throughout this manuscript, the failure to capitalize on the wealth of skills and knowledge of older adults is a tremendous loss to communities. The initial thought was that older adults may benefit from having purposeful activity to participate in. Battersby and Phillips (2016) reported that meaning is what the person says it is, and that engagement in something that a person finds meaningful is important as one ages; observations in this PAR project agree. Analysis of the data gathered in this PAR on meaning and purpose revealed multiple sub-themes – purpose, productivity, and service. For this group of participants, purpose was particularly important. One older adult indicated that although he was retired, he resolved that he would never quit, he chose purposeful living. This purposive sample of older adults were chosen for their previous activity working with young adults with DD. All the older adults interviewed actively seek out volunteer

activities and find purpose in their lives. The interviews revealed many benefits in purpose for older adults and suggest that service or volunteer mentorship may provide purpose that many other older adults may be missing due to their reduced roles.

Positive Emotion

Clearly happiness is important to well-being, but as Seligman (2011) reported, happiness alone is not the equivalent of well-being. This research supports that idea. Rather, happiness is a sub-element of positive emotion, which is one of the five elements of well-being. Happiness was not identified as a sub-theme of positive emotion in the data; however, other positive emotions identified as sub-themes may lead to happiness. The data revealed calling, forgiveness, joy, kindness, love, respect, trust, and being valued as sub-themes of positive emotion.

Interestingly, respect as identified in this dataset was from the older adults toward the young adults with DD. One participant compared the difference between older adults and young adults with DD as cultural differences and described respecting others by bearing in mind their viewpoint. Rather than taking offense at a statement or action that may appear an insult, Patricia suggested that it may actually be a cultural difference. This is relevant for the CAB to incorporate in the planning process for intergenerational interaction. The importance of respect was also identified in the literature (Cheng, 2009; Tabuchi, Nakagawa, Miura, & Gondo, 2013). However, Cheng (2009) and Tabuchi et al. (2013) discussed the importance of respect from the younger person toward the older person as a positive step toward well-being in Erickson's (1963) generativity vs. stagnation stage. Erickson's (1963) generativity vs. stagnation stage is when middle to older adults give back to society through interaction with the community. Cheng (2009) found that being respected encouraged older adults (60 years old and older) to remain engaged and consequently experience enhanced well-being. Cheng's (2009) findings are

congruent with the findings of Tabuchi et al. (2013) and will be considered by the CAB in planning for interaction.

A literature search for other sub-themes identified revealed Niemiec, Shogren, and Wehmeyer's (2017) work on identifying and using character strengths for individuals with DD to provide information on how to use a person's strengths to enhance their quality of life (which could be synonymous with well-being). Interestingly, the participants revealed love, kindness, forgiveness, and spirituality (calling) which are all considered character strengths and values under the VIA classification system (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). VIA, initially an acronym for Values in Action, is now considered to be an independent term meaning the way or path (VIA Institute on Character, 2017) Use of the Character Strength Survey could provide community members with some insight into their personal strengths and help them understand how to set goals for themselves. Niemiec et al. (2017) recommend this tool for support persons working with people with IDD. It may be possible to incorporate use of the tool in in the planning stage to identify participants' strengths to enhance their experience by focusing on their strengths.

Well-being Summary

This project began as a way to enhance well-being for older adults and young adults with DD by providing an opportunity for both groups to develop relationships. It was the hope of the CAB that intergenerational relationships would reduce loneliness for the young adults and provide purposeful activity for the older adults. This study, along with current literature, suggests that engagement is also essential in the Oak Grove community to enhance overall well-being (Battersby & Phillips, 2016). The data support the five elements of Seligman's (2011) Well-being Theory and provides an expanded view for the people of the Oak Grove community and specifically older adults and young adults with DD.

Exceptional People

Exceptional people are complex, they are not better or worse than others, they are simply different. Several ways the young adults with DD were different were identified in this research; these findings may be useful in planning for intergenerational interaction in the community.

Historically, people with disabilities have been excluded from society and this was clear in the interviews with the older adults who did not have experience with people with disabilities until they were older. In fact, Neal said he tried to stay away from ‘those people.’ Interestingly, after Neal had the opportunity to work with people with disabilities, he became an advocate for inclusion both in church activities and on his school bus. Because many older adults grew up when people with disabilities were sent to institutions or to a separate wing of the school for ‘special ed’ rather than the current inclusion model, there appears to be a culture gap. The Oak Grove community, and other communities, can bridge this gap with knowledge and acceptance. However, the gap needs to be recognized first in order to build those relationships. The lack of appropriate language intensifies this culture gap. Older adults may lack the appropriate words to reference people with disabilities. This research revealed the importance of using appropriate words, which can only happen if those words are known.

All of the young adults with DD interviewed displayed a unique personality or nature. Acceptance of others is always important, but most needed when someone is different. Neal described this well when he told of his experience with Travis and his need to use the shower first. Neal was clear, there was no way to get around Travis’ routine, rather Neal learned to respect this about Travis and quickly consented to take a later shower.

Consistent with the literature (Dyke et al., 2013; Mazurek, 2014), the young adults with DD expressed loneliness. The Oak Grove community has been concerned with this problem, and

this is one of the primary reasons the CAB convened. Kate and Lisa both revealed their loneliness after graduation and loss of school friends. Both young women expressed sadness and tears when asked about their friends. Lisa had a poignant statement when she said, “Can a person be a friend if they’re decades older or years older? I’m 24 and you’re much older than me. That just seems, I don’t know, can you still define that as a friend, I don’t know (long pause)” (Keen, 2016a, Lisa 18). This statement will be considered in the planning for activities and relationships.

Interestingly, none of the older adults mentioned loneliness in regard to themselves. Peter reflected on the teenager locked away in his mother’s basement and his mother’s weariness with being unable to help him. Both young men, Marshall and Travis, expressed the loss of friends since graduation as well. Marshall expressed his sadness about a friend who he considered as a brother but rarely sees. Travis’ statement about an intergenerational mission trip summed up what the other young adults tried to say, Travis said, “Oh yeah, make me feel happy, without being lonely, which I don’t like to be lonely” (Keen, 2016a, Travis 43). People do not like to be lonely, and yet many young adults with disabilities are lonely. Young adults with DD often sit at home while there may be older adults willing to mentor them and create friendships in the process. This is an urgent need with a potential solution in sight; it would be a colossal waste to overlook this valuable social resource.

Contribution to Nursing Knowledge

Nursing has been slow to bring its contribution of ideas to enhance well-being. As part of an interdisciplinary team it is important that nursing has a voice. Nurses come from a unique standpoint, one that incorporates holistic care with the patient, family, and community in mind. Although this topic involves enhancing relationships between people from different generations,

the implications could extend to their families and communities. Examination of ways to enhance well-being in older adults and young adults with DD by a nurse in a community setting gave the intergenerational community members a voice. That shared voice can inform nursing, and other disciplines, on what well-being is to older adults and young adults with DD and how they feel their well-being can be enhanced. Dissemination of the findings will respond to the lack of a nursing viewpoint in the current literature.

This topic of well-being is both timely and important for nursing. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid's statement on Quality of Care, Section 483.24, reads, "We are requiring that each resident receive and the facility provide the necessary care and services to attain or maintain the highest practicable physical, mental, and psychosocial well-being, consistent with the resident's comprehensive assessment and plan of care" (National Archives and Records Administration [NARA], 2016). Haugan (2013) recommended that enhancing meaning-in-life for older adults living in skilled nursing facilities could enhance their health. Introduction of purposeful intergenerational activity may enhance well-being, thereby improving health.

As a holistic discipline, nursing is uniquely equipped to develop a plan that enhances the resident's physical, mental, and psychosocial well-being, and this study could provide new ideas to incorporate intergenerational activities that provide meaningful input from the older adult to enhance well-being of the intergenerational friends, their families, and the greater community.

Implications

A unique aspect of this study is that it engages social capital to improve well-being through synergistic relationships. This study is the first known to explore enhancing well-being of older adults and young adults with DD through intergenerational interaction. Creation of an environment that welcomes older adults and young adults with DD to share their talents with one

another could enhance the well-being of both individuals involved. Nursing could take the lead in program development to encourage intergenerational interaction to enhance well-being. This could be accomplished in different ways. For example, a community health nurse could work with a local community to create an intergenerational garden or coffee shop in a church. On a larger scale, an intergenerational adult day program could provide an opportunity for people to gather for the day and work together on purposeful activities. Further, the ideas could be added to supportive living environments. A supportive living community, such as an assisted living facility friendly to employing young adults with DD or inviting young adults with DD to participate in day activities could address several areas of well-being that are diminished in both groups. Older adults may find meaning and purpose through mentorship and relationships and young adults with DD may be less isolated and lonely.

This study provided guidance for the Oak Grove CAB to develop a sustainable activity for furthering mutually beneficial intergenerational relationships between older adults and young adults with DD in the Oak Grove area. The Oak Grove intergenerational community garden will be continued with ideas discovered in this research implemented. In addition, a suggestion will be made to the CAB that a coffee shop in the church welcome center may be more feasible for the young adults due to multiple issues, one being transportation. The community will continue to seek ways to enhance the well-being of vulnerable groups, especially older adults and young adults with DD.

In addition to creating an environment for intergenerational interaction, education will be provided to inform the community of appropriate language. Although not unique to the Oak Grove community, it was identified in this research that words matter. Bringing attention to the issues of loneliness, lack of supportive services, and the need for purposeful activity for young

adults with DD and older adults may encourage others to work toward program development and policy change.

Recommendations for Future Research

Future research is proposed to examine the benefits of the intergenerational activity following work in the garden, or other activity to evaluate the benefits of intergenerational interaction. Bongiorno (2015) described PAR stages as reflection, action, reflection, and Munhall (2012) described the stages in PAR as planning, action, reflect. Both patterns are considered cyclical and as a result PAR often involves several phases. During the first phase, community members and the author reflected on ways to enhance well-being. Subsequent action and reflection are planned as future research. Following conclusion of the Oak Grove PAR discussed in this dissertation, the researcher and CAB will implement ideas that emerge from the data. Reflection, or evaluation of the intergenerational activity is planned as future research. Focus groups and photovoice are planned to evaluate the impact the action had on participants.

Focus Groups

Participants will be invited to attend a focus group with their peers to discuss the benefits and challenges of the intergenerational activity. The design will involve focus groups with older adults and young adults with DD. Depending on how many participants are involved in the activity there may be one or two focus groups per population. Organizational procedures will be similar to those discussed in the current research and the questions for the focus group will be developed with an intent to identify the impact gardening with one another has had on the participants' well-being. Krueger and Casey (2009) recommend the question format to include opening, introductory, transition, key, and ending questions. Possible questions may include:

Opening. Tell us your name and how long you have been active in the community garden.

Introductory. How did you learn about the garden?

Transition. Think back to when you first became involved in the garden, what were your initial thoughts?

Key Questions. What was meaningful to you during your experience in the garden? What was frustrating about your experience? Are you any different because of the time you spent working with people different than you? How do you think your community is different because of the intergenerational garden experience?

Ending Question. If you had a chance to give advice to others considering adopting an intergenerational program, what would it be?

Photovoice

Use of photography could be employed to capture the expressions of the participants interacting together and of the garden or other activity. If the garden is continued, photography is particularly appropriate to record the garden itself, produce from the garden, and most importantly the expressions on the faces of the people involved in the garden (Marieno, 2015).

The intergenerational community planted an orchard with apple and pear trees that line the main road and driveway to the back of the property. Last year the raised beds were filled with vegetables and there are plans to plant a cutting flower garden. The project is anticipated to bring life to an empty field and enhance the well-being of the participants and the greater community. Photovoice is an ideal method for capturing the essence of the garden relationships and can be used in articles or presentations. Photographs can create awareness of the project to

advocate for enhanced well-being in other communities (Wang, 2006; Work Group for Community Health and Development, 2014).

Summary

This chapter provided an overview of the entire study. Elements of the Well-being Theory were clearly identified in the interviews and expanded upon for the Oak Grove community specifically. Exceptional people are unique and would benefit from inclusion, acceptance, and support from the community. Although nursing has not had a prominent role in creation of activities or programs aimed at enhancing well-being for older adults and young adults with DD, input from nursing is appropriate and needed. Implications from this study could lead to important advances in holistic care for older adults and young adults with DD. Further research is needed to validate enhanced well-being through intergenerational relationships to encourage further program development. Much work is left to be done.

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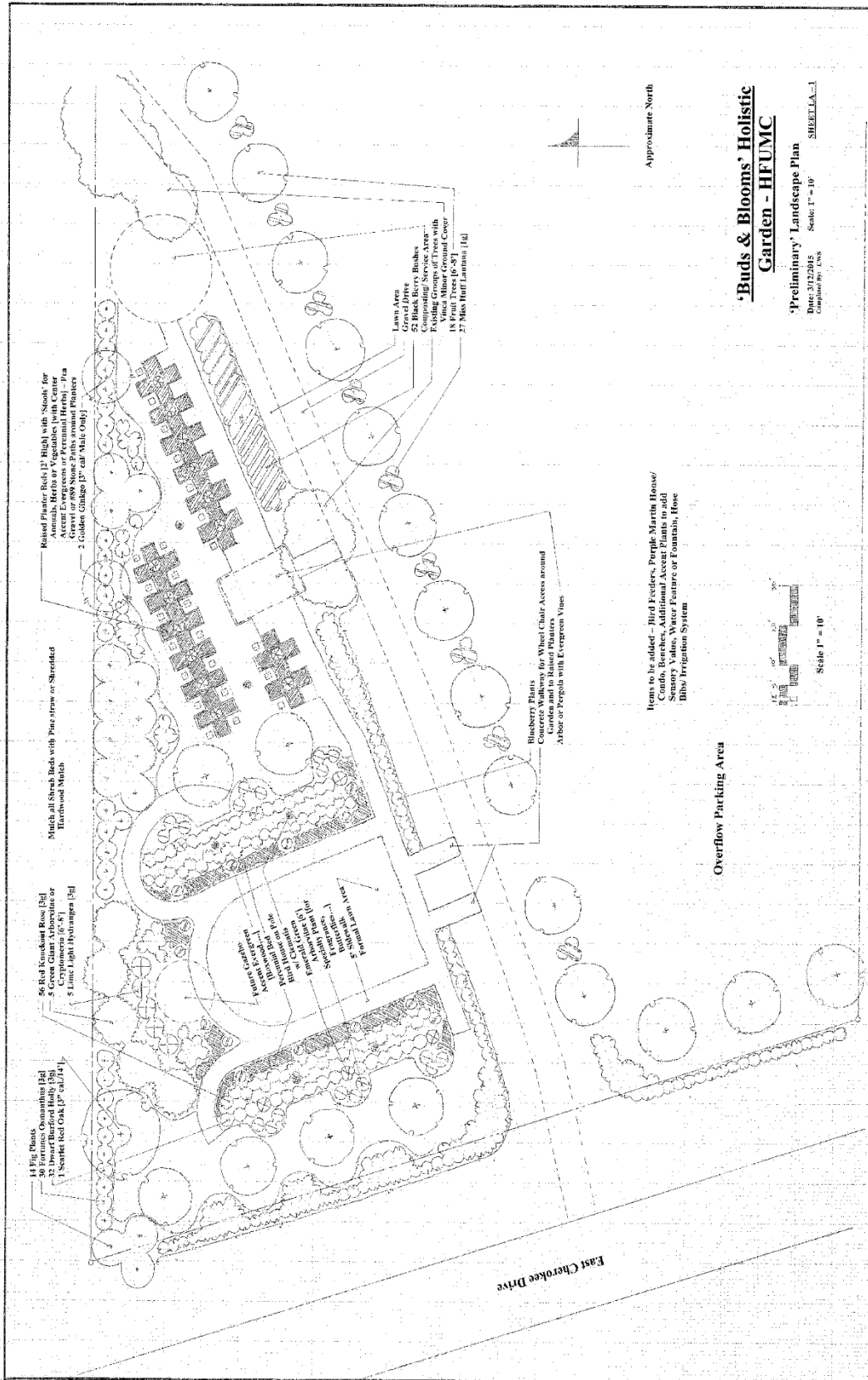
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Appendix A: Future Garden Design



Appendix B: Demographic**Demographics****Age**

How old are you: _____

Gender

Male Female

Education

Less than high school degree

High school degree

Some college

Associate or bachelor degree

Graduate degree

Race

White Black Hispanic Asian

American Indian/Alaska Native Other

Are you in school?

Yes No

Do you currently work?

Yes No

Who do you live with?

Parent(s) Spouse Children Alone

Appendix C: Photographic Release



Photographic Consent and Release Form

I hereby grant Kennesaw State University the following irrevocable rights:

- 1. The right to use my name, photograph, portrait and likeness (hereinafter collectively known as "image") in connection with its educational and promotional materials or for any other legitimate purpose;
2. The right to create composite or computer-manipulated materials from my image.
3. The right to use, reproduce, publish, exhibit, distribute and transmit my image individually or in conjunction with other images or printed matter in any and all media, including printed material, television, film, CD-ROM, and video
4. The right to copyright my image.
5. The right to assign the above rights to third party.

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I certify that I am 18 years of age and that I have read and understood the above.

Printed Name: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____

Address: _____

Phone #: _____ Email Address: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature (required for students under 18):

Date: _____

Appendix E: Typology

Theme	Sub-theme	Transcript and line	# of times appeared Older Adult	# of times appeared Young Adult with DD
Accomplishment	Self-respect	Lisa 4 Lisa 6 Travis 6 Kate 6 Kate 18 Kate 89 Kate 91		7
Accomplishment	Satisfaction	Neal 44 Patricia 18 Patricia 26 Peter 14 Peter 16 Kate 12 Kate 34 Kate 59 Lisa 49 Donna 31 Marshall 81 Cathy 16 Cathy 18 Travis 119 Travis 89	8	6
Accomplishment	Work	Peter 4 Kate 49 Travis 105 Travis 107 Travis 124 Donna 55	2	4
Accomplishment	Total		10	17

Theme	Sub-theme	Transcript and line	# of times appeared Older Adult	# of times appeared Young Adult with DD
Engagement	Community	Neal 36 Neal 46 Peter 18 Peter 6 Peter 8 Peter 10 Donna 4 Donna 6 Donna 9 Patricia 6 Patricia 14 Kate 107 Kate 109 Kate 20 Kate 59 Kate 99 Lisa 47 Lisa 65	11	7
Engagement	Discovery (engagement through relationships)	Peter 8 Kate 12 Kate 12 Kate 12 Kate 12 Kate 34	1	5
Engagement	Experience (and skills)	Donna 33 Donna 37 Donna 45 Donna 52 Donna 48 Neal 24 Neal 22 Neal 4 Patricia 14 Peter 8 Lisa 34 Peter 8 Peter 8 Peter 10	13	1
Engagement	Inclusion	Peter 2 Peter 4 Peter 4 Peter 4 Peter 6 Peter 16	6	

Theme	Sub-theme	Transcript and line	# of times appeared Older Adult	# of times appeared Young Adult with DD
Engagement	Knowledge	Donna 33 Neal 36 Neal 36 Neal 52 Peter 8 Peter 8	6	
Engagement	Learning	Peter 20 Peter 8 Donna 59 Neal 44 Neal 44 Travis 45 Travis 53	5	2
Engagement	Persistence	Lisa 55 Lisa 57		2
Engagement	Planning/organization	Neal 36 Neal 46 Neal 50 Peter 16 Lisa 34 Kate 71 Kate 81 Kate 79 Kate 83	4	5
Engagement	Teaching	Peter 10 Peter 10 Cathy 16 Cathy 16 Cathy 22 Donna 2 Donna 37 Neal 36 Patricia 6	9	
Engagement	Total		55	22
Meaning and Purpose	Productivity	Lisa 51 Lisa 49 Lisa 51 Kate 8		4

Theme	Sub-theme	Transcript and line	# of times appeared Older Adult	# of times appeared Young Adult with DD
Meaning and Purpose	Purpose	Cathy 16 Cathy 18 Cathy 37 Neal 34 Neal 42 Neal 26 Patricia 14 Patricia 16 Peter 8 Peter 10 Peter 12 Peter 12 Peter 14 Peter 14 Peter 20 Kate 12 Kate 81	15	2
Meaning and Purpose	Service	Peter 6 Peter 6 Peter 12	3	
Meaning and Purpose	Total		18	6
Positive emotion	Calling	Neal 26 Neal 26 Patricia 12	3	
Positive Emotion	Forgiveness	Peter 6	1	
Positive Emotion	Joy	Cathy 18 Cathy 8 Kate 24 Kate 30	2	2
Positive emotion	Kind	Lisa 47 Lisa 47		2
Positive Emotion	Love	Peter 6	1	
Positive Emotion	Respect	Patricia 8 Peter 4	2	
Positive emotion	Trust	Cathy 20 Cathy 22 Cathy 33 Peter 4 Travis 33	4	1
Positive Emotion	Valued	Donna 11 Peter 12 Peter 16	3	
Positive Emotion	Total		16	5

Theme	Sub-theme	Transcript and line	# of times appeared Older Adult	# of times appeared Young Adult with DD
Positive relationships	Acceptance	Neal 8 Neal 12 Neal 22 Neal 24 Peter 4 Peter 6 Peter 7 Peter 14 Peter 14 Kate 18	9	1
Positive relationships	Connection	Peter 8 Peter 10 Peter 14 Peter 20 Cathy 29 Peter 8	6	
Positive relationships	Encouragement	Cathy 2 Peter 4 Kate 57 Kate 59 Kate 61 Kate 61	2	4
Positive Relationships	Friend/Friendship	Kate 107 Kate 109 Marshall 39 Travis 53 Travis 117	0	5
Positive relationships	Intergenerational	Peter 8 Peter 14 Patricia 12 Patricia 14 Donna 11 Neal 6 Neal 26 Kate 26 Kate 32 Kate 39 Kate 41 Lisa 34 Lisa 34 Kate 8	7	7

Theme	Sub-theme	Transcript and line	# of times appeared Older Adult	# of times appeared Young Adult with DD
Positive relationships	Mentoring	Cathy 14 Neal 16 Neal 24 Neal 44 Neal 46 Donna 35	6	
Positive Relationships	Family	Peter 20 Kate 109 Kate 12 Kate 12 Kate 39 Kate 57 Kate 51 Kate 51 Kate 97 Cathy 29	2	8
Positive Relationships	Total		32	25
Exceptional people	Exclusion (Response: caring)	Neal 18 Neal 20	2	
Exceptional people	Culture gap	Donna 13 Neal 6 Neal 36 Neal 38 Neal 40	5	
Exceptional people	Words matter	Donna 13 Donna 13 Donna 13 Donna 17 Donna 61 Neal 2 Neal 24 Neal 34 Neal 4 Neal 40 Neal 6 Neal 38	12	

Theme	Sub-theme	Transcript and line	# of times appeared Older Adult	# of times appeared Young Adult with DD
Exceptional people	Unique Nature	Marshall 79 Marshall 85 Travis 91 Travis 105 Travis 124 Travis 16 Travis 8 Peter 6 Peter 6 Donna 13 Neal 6 Neal 50 Neal 54 Neal 8 Patricia 4	8	7
Exceptional People	Loneliness	Peter 14 Kate 8 Lisa 18 Lisa 9 Travis 43 Kate 8 Kate 32 Lisa 18 Lisa 9 Marshall 4 Travis 43	1	10
Exceptional People	Total		28	17