The Life Design ThemeMapping Guide

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This guide is intended to help assist practitioners with developing skills in hearing, understanding, and constructing narratives with clients. The processes and materials in this manual are suggestions and should not be considered a recipe or formula for success. The processes are to help practitioners develop skills in deconstructing and constructing narratives. Eventually, practitioners will develop the skills necessary and will no longer need to rely on the training materials in this manual.

PURPOSE
The purpose of this booklet is to provide a guide for life design professionals and practitioners as they aid clients in co-constructing, deconstructing, and re-authoring a career and designing a life. This guide contains coding categories and coding cues to assist practitioners in deconstructing and constructing themes uncovered in the narrative of clients. This guide provides a method by which practitioners can facilitate – and clients can build – readiness to re-author their narrative and design a life.

The assumption is that practitioners will be well acquainted with the theory of life design (Savickas et al., 2009), career construction theory (Savickas, 2011, 2013), the dimensions of career adaptability, and the career construction interview (Savickas, 2011). Being familiar with additional constructs referenced in this guide is important. For more through discussions of coding categories and cues (Hermans & Hermans-Konopka, 2010; Manaster & Perryman, 1974, 1979; Meier, Bolvin, & Meier, 2008; Singer & Bonalume, 2010; Thorne & McLean, 2001; Winters, Meijers, Harlaar, Strik, Baert, & Kuijpers, 2013) and coding by using innovative moments and proto-narratives (Ribeiro, Bento, Salgado, Stiles, & Gonçalves. 2011), we refer users of this guide to the respective referenced authors.

USES
Practitioners will find this guide helpful anytime they are working with clients from a narrative perspective, especially using the career construction interview (CCI). This guide is useful with emerging adults (18-25), adults, career transitioners, and others struggling with gaining meaning and movement in their careers and lives. The process described within this guide is useful with individuals, groups, such as the Life Design Group (Barclay, Stoltz, & Wolff, 2011; Barclay & Stoltz, 2016a, 2016b), or as a classroom writing assignment, such the *Career Narrative Project* (Barclay, 2009; Barclay & Wolff, 2012).

GENERAL DIRECTIONS
This guide contains several elements important to life design counseling.

Coding Categories/Coding Cues:
Coding categories and cues represent elements of identity and adaptability. As clients narrate their story, they will provide clues into aspects of identity and assessment across the adaptability dimensions of *concern*, *control*, *curiosity*, and *confidence*.

Use the coding categories and cues to capture and organize the clients' narrative. You might not hear all of the categories, but record those you do verbatim. Although the categories provided in this guide might be present across the narrative, the categories cannot represent all aspects. Practitioners will consider and add additional categories, as needed, when working with clients.

Proto-narratives
Proto-narratives represent client experiences that they organize within their narrative. Typically, these contain recurrent content or themes across the narrative (Ribeiro, et al., 2011). Clients will discuss these proto-narratives from one or several positions (frames of reference or worldview), and practitioners will record and summarize these in the space provided at the end of each CCI question coding section. We provide users of this guide with a description of each of the three proto-narrative positions at the beginning of each CCI question coding section.

The Career Construction Interview (CCI)

1. How can I be useful to you as you construct your career?

2. Keeping in mind that the person might be real or fictional, whom do you admire when you were growing up? Tell me about him or her.

   Follow-up questions/prompts:
   > How are you like this person?
   > How are you unlike this person?

3. What magazine, television shows, or websites do you read, watch, or visit on a regular basis?

   Follow-up questions/prompts:
   > What do you like about these?
   > What is it that attracts you to these?

4. Tell me about your favorite book or movie.

5. Tell me a favorite saying or motto.

   Follow-up questions/prompts:
   > Tell me about the significance of this saying for you

6. I am interested in three early recollections about things you recall happening to you when you were approximately six years old or younger.

   Follow-up questions/prompts:
   > What is the most salient moment in this memory?
   > Describe the emotion you are experiencing in this memory
   > If I were going to publish this memory in tomorrow's newspaper, what would be the title, and please include a verb?

GOAL: Developing and applying the new proto-narrative to the client's problem or task.

Reference: Savickas, M. L. (2011; 2013)

ThemeMapping Reference Pages
Coding Cues and Proto-narrative Positions

The following few pages contain general coding cue category and proto-narrative position charts for use across the career construction interview (CCI). When listening for themes across the client's narrative, use the following coding cues as a guide in both understanding the client's narrative and deconstructing the story. The coding cue categories are not exhaustive. Practitioners might identify additional coding categories as the client narrates.

In addition to the following general coding category and proto-narrative position charts, users of this guide will locate coding category and proto-narrative charts specific to each CCI question on the appropriate pages.

ThemeMapping Reference Page – Coding Cues

Coding Cue	
Causal links	Relation between cause and effect
Climax	Crescendo; apex
Completeness	How thoroughly does the client relate the story of challenge?
Conflict	Client's cognitive and/or behavioral reaction
Context	Describes the events within the social milieu
Emotions	Emotionality of the client
Meaning-Making	Client's way(s) of making sense of his/her world
Mode of Interaction	Specificity of client interaction in scene. Is client alone/with others? Is client fully involved, partially involved, or uninvolved?
Morals	Ethical rules of proper conduct
Movement	The striving force for compensation or toward a goal
Outlook	Denotes whether client is optimistic or pessimistic; (hopeful/encouraged/expectant vs. cynical/doubtful/anticipating doom)
People/Things; Ideas/Data	Prediger's work task dimensions
Perception of Event	Client's interpretation of event; mental impression
Personal Style	Disposition; character, attitudes, habits
Reward(s)	The "pay off" for the client. Might be intrinsic or extrinsic
Relationships	References important people in the client's life
RIASEC	Holland's typology of personality and work types
Self-Concept	Client's view, evaluation, and perception of self
Self-Expression	Ways in which client engages and experiences "flow"
Sensory Detail	Refers to client details regarding sights, sounds, smells, touch, and taste
Specificity	The details the client narrates and how specific the details are
Strategies	Steps the client takes to address preoccupation(s); method(s) of action for achieving a major or overall goal; ways of addressing life problems
Tension	Level and type of tension and how client is coping with the tension
Themes	Patterns of dominant ideas within the client's narrative
Timeline	Includes aspects of length of time for this concern
Values	Important or useful principles or standards
Ying-Yang Struggle	The client's narrative struggle

References: Manaster & Perryman (1974, 1979; Meier, Boivin, & Meier (2008); Singer & Bonalume (2010); Stiles & Conçalves (2011); Thorne & McLean (2001), and Winters, Meijers, Harlaar, Strik, Baert, & Kuijpers (2013).

ThemeMapping Reference Page – Proto-narrative Positions

Proto-narrative Position	
I-position	Problem is described from client's perspective only (Client considers events from one personal perspective)
Meta-position	Problem is described using multiple perspectives (Client begins to consider alternate constructions of events)
Promoter-position	Problem description has elements of self-encouragement and self-efficacy (Client shows signs of self-encouragement, optimism, and confidence toward constructing alternatives)

Excerpted from: Hermans, H. J., & Hermans-Konopka, A. (2010) & Winters, A., Meijers, F., Harlaar, M., Strik, A., Baert, H., & Kuijpers, M. (2013).

Life Design ThemeMapping Guide
CCI Question 1 – Coding Guide for STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

To begin the session, ask the client, *How can I be useful to you today in constructing your career?* Listen to responses that answer the following questions:

- What is the difficulty for the client?
- How does this difficulty fit into the developmental and temporal context for the client?
- Are there emotional reactions to the problem?
- What are the tensional states concerning the problem?

GOAL: Defining the problem or task

CODING CATEGORIES

Coding Cue	
Completeness	How thoroughly does the client relate the story of challenge?
Context	Describes the events within the social milieu
Relationships	References important people in the client's life
Tension	Level and type of tension and how client is coping with the tension
Timeline	Includes aspects of length of time for this concern
Ying-Yang Struggle	The client's narrative struggle

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM
CCI Question 1 – Client Responses

How can I be useful to you today in constructing your career?

Client Problem Statement (record verbatim): _____

_____

_____

_____

Follow-up Question and Notes: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Deconstructing the Narrative. Record client's narrative to each coding cue verbatim.

Life Design Coding Notes	
Coding Cue	
Completeness	
Context	
Relationships	
Tension	
Timeline	
Ying-Yang Struggle	

Life Design ThemeMapping Guide
CCI Question 2 – Coding Guide for ROLE MODELS

CCI question #2 concerns the client's role models, those individuals or fictional characters the client admired when growing up. Focus on the *characteristics* of role models rather than *whom* the client admired. Listen to responses that answer the following questions:

- What personality traits, attitudes, and values did the role model possess?
- What are challenges for the role model and what are the role model's problem-solving strategies?
- What are the client's idealized problem-solving strategies?

GOAL: Identifying aspects of the client's self-concept

CODING CATEGORIES

Coding Cue	
Morals	Ethical rules of proper conduct
Movement	The striving force for compensation or toward a goal
Strategies	Ways of addressing life problems
Values	Important or useful principles or standards
Ying-Yang Struggle	The client's narrative struggle

ROLE MODELS
CCI Question 2 – Client Responses

Name three individuals/characters (real or fictional) you admired when you were growing up.

(record verbatim): _____

_____

_____

ROLE MODEL #1

What did you admire about this role model? _____

_____

Tell me in what ways you are like this role model. _____

_____

How are you different from this role model? _____

_____

ROLE MODEL #2

What did you admire about this role model? _____

_____

Tell me in what ways you are like this role model? _____

_____

How are you different from this role model? _____

_____

ROLE MODEL #3

What did you admire about this role model? _____

_____

Tell me in what ways you are like this role model? _____

_____

How are you different from this role model? _____

_____

Deconstructing the Narrative. Record client narrative to each coding cue verbatim.

Life Design Coding Notes	
Coding Cue	
Morals	
Movement	
Strategies	
Values	
Ying-Yang Struggle	

Proto-narrative Position (Summarize the client's I-position and possible Meta-positions: What characteristics can be taken from role models and applied to the client's views to expand worldview?)

Life Design Thememapping Guide
CCI Question 3 – Coding Guide for PREFERRED ENVIRONMENTS

This question refers to the client's favorite magazines, television shows, and websites. Listen for vocational interests and preferred environments (RIASEC), self-expression needs, and the client's understanding of how the world is organized (e.g., how the client taking interests to the world of work), and the purpose of work to fill client values

GOAL: Identifying major interests

CODING CATEGORIES

Coding Cue	
Realistic	Mechanical/athletic abilities; outdoors; tools/objects; things
Investigative	Math/science abilities; working alone; solving complex problems; ideas
Artistic	Artistic ability; imagination/creating original work; ideas
Social	Social relationships/helping others; solving problems; people
Enterprising	Leadership/speaking abilities; influential; politics/economics; people/ideas
Conventional	Clerical/math abilities; indoors; organizing; words/numbers; data
People/Things	Interpersonal tasks vs. non-personal tasks (machines/tools)
Ideas/Data	Intrapersonal tasks vs. impersonal tasks
Personal Style	Disposition; character, attitudes, habits
Reward(s)	The "pay off" for the client. Might be intrinsic or extrinsic
Self-concept	Client's view, evaluation, and perception of self
Self-expression	Ways in which client engages and experiences "flow"
Tension	Level and type of tension and how client is actualizing interests/opportunities
Values	Important or useful principles or standards

PREFERRED ENVIRONMENTS
CCI Question 3 - Client Responses

What three magazines, media, television shows, and/or websites do you read/visit regularly?

(record verbatim): _____

_____

_____

Tell me what you enjoy about that magazine: _____

_____

Tell me what you enjoy about that television show: _____

_____

Tell me what you enjoy about that website: _____

_____

Deconstructing the Narrative. Record client narrative to each coding cue verbatim.

Life Design Coding Notes	
Coding Cue	
Realistic	
Investigative	
Artistic	
Social	
Enterprising	
Conventional	
People/Things	
Personal Style	
Reward(s)	
Self-concept	
Self-expression	
Tension	
Values	

Life Design Thememapping Guide
CCI Question 4 – Coding Guide for LIFE PLOT

Instruct the client to tell about a current favorite book or story. Listen for resemblance to client's dilemma, character identification, efficacy, coping, character's view of the world, major problem-solving strategy, climax, challenge, values, life plot, strategy for action and movement; tension.

GOAL: Identifying how the client brings self and identity to the projects and settings housed in client interests

CODING CATEGORIES

Coding Cue	
Climax	The crescendo or apex
Completeness	How thoroughly does the client relate the story of challenge?
Conflict	What is the conflict in the story? What meaning does this type of conflict have for the client? How does the character cope with the conflict?
Context	Describes the events within the social milieu
Relationships	References important people in the client's life
Tension	Level and type of tension and how client navigates conflict or climax
Values	Important or useful principles or standards
Ying-Yang Struggle	The client's narrative struggle

LIFE PLOT
CCI Question 4 - Client Responses

Tell me about your current favorite story. (record verbatim): _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Deconstructing the Narrative. Record client narrative to each coding cue verbatim.

Life Design Coding Notes	
Coding Cue	
Climax	
Completeness	
Conflict	
Context	
Relationships	
Tension	
Ying-Yang Struggle	

Life Design Thememapping Guide
CCI Question 5 – Coding Guide for SELF-ADVICE

Ask the client to share a favorite motto or saying. The motto will reveal the client's perception of the world, the client's self-advice, and steps the client takes to address preoccupation(s). The favored motto or saying represents strivings for satisfying life.

GOAL: Identifying the advice the client uses to face life challenges

CODING CATEGORIES

Coding Cue	
Strategies	Steps the client takes to address preoccupation(s)
Outlook	Denotes the client's primary view of life; (hopeful/encouraged/expectant vs. cynical/doubtful/anticipating doom)
Ying-Yang Struggle	The client's narrative struggle

SELF-ADVICE
CCI Question 5 – Client Responses

What is your favorite saying or motto? (record verbatim): _____

_____

_____

_____

Deconstructing the Narrative. Record client narrative to each coding cue verbatim.

Life Design Coding Notes	
Coding Cue	
Strategies	
Outlook	
Ying-Yang Struggle	

Life Design Thememapping Guide
CCI Question 6 – Coding Guide for SELF-CONCEPT and PREOCCUPATION

Collect three early recollections from the client along with having the client establish a headline for each memory. Listen for type of event, tension, outlook on life as a guide in decision-making, descriptive themes for deconstructing, and how the client resolves a core suffering or challenge.

Who are the characters? What are the relationships, the setting, the mode of interaction, and the client's perception of the event? Listen for values, private logic, script, strategy, and emotions.

GOAL: Uncovering the preoccupation in the client's life story

CODING CATEGORIES

Coding Cue	
Causal links	Relation between cause and effect
Completeness	How thoroughly does the client relate the story of challenge?
Context	Describes the events within the social milieu
Emotions	Emotionality of the client
Meaning-making	Client's way(s) of making sense of his/her world
Mode of Interaction	Specificity of client interaction in scene. Is client alone/with others? Is client fully involved, partially involved, or uninvolved?
Perception of Event	Client's interpretation of event; mental impression
Relationships	References important people in the client's life (e.g., Conflictors, Supporters)
Sensory Detail	Refers to client details regarding sights, sounds, smells, touch, and taste
Specificity	The details the client narrates and how specific the details are
Strategies	Client's method of action for achieving a major or overall goal
Tension	Level and type of tension and how client coped with the tension. How client attaches meaning to the event (insight).
Themes	Patterns of dominant ideas within the client's narrative
Ying-Yang Struggle	The client's narrative struggle

SELF-CONCEPT and PREOCCUPATION
CCI Question 6 – Client Responses

Tell me three of your earliest recollections; what is the "snapshot" moment? How would you title this memory (include a verb)?

ER #1

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

ER #2

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

ER #3

_____

_____

_____

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_____

Deconstructing the Narrative. Record client narrative to each coding cue verbatim.

Life Design Coding Notes	
Coding Cue	
Causal links	
Completeness	
Context	
Emotions	
Meaning-making	
Mode of Interaction	
Perception of Event	
Relationships	
Sensory Detail	
Ying-Yang Struggle	

SUCCESS FORMULA CATEGORIES

Promoter Position Coding Guide

Using all of the coding cue and proto-narrative position information from the client career construction interview responses, the practitioner will begin to collaborate with the client to build a success formula (Savickas, 2011). The success formula is a statement of identity by the client. The success formula represents a "formula for success or their personal mission statement "(Savickas, 2011, p. 132). The success formula is the new Promoter-Position that the client will use to face challenges and setbacks. Practitioners and clients will want to use coding cues to identify *self-concept or identity, adaptabilities, environments,* and client *self-actualization*.

Clients can use the success formula/identity statement in the present and future to provide intent to movement and decision-making in their life and career. In addition, clients use the success formula/identity statement to author new choices (Meta-Position) that will provide movement (Promoter-Position) from the status-quo to new ways of viewing, engaging, and coping with the world. The client might choose to remain in an existing job or career; however, use of the success formula will aid the client in coping more effectively in that job or career. Finally, the practitioner and client can use the success formula/identity statement to address the problem articulated at the beginning of the career construction interview process.

GOAL: Transitioning pain into achievement; making-meaning; preoccupation to occupation

Adaptabilities _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Environments _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Self-actualization _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Authoring the Narrative.

Coding Cue	
Causal links	
Climax	
Completeness	
Conflict	
Context	
Emotions	
Meaning-Making	
Mode of Interaction	
Morals	
Movement	
Outlook	
People/Things; Ideas/Data	
Perception of Event	
Personal Style	
Reward(s)	
Relationships	
RIASEC	
Self-Concept	
Self-Expression	
Sensory Detail	
Specificity	
Strategies	
Tension	
Themes	
Timeline	
Values	
Ying-Yang Struggle	

Proto-narrative Position (Summarize the client's I-position, Meta-positions, and Promotor-position)

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NOTES

Career Adaptability Continuum

Adaptability Dimension	Underuse of Competence	Competence	Overuse of Competence
Concern – future orientation	Indifference Apathy Pessimism Planlessness	Planful Optimistic Prepared	Anxiety Obsessiveness Uber-zealousness
Control – self regulation; intrapersonal self-discipline	Indecision Confusion Procrastination Immobility Helplessness	Balanced use of emotion and cognition in decision-making Conscientiousness Deliberate Organized Decisive	Impulsivity Aggressiveness Excessive busyness Disorganized
Curiosity –fit between oneself and the work world	Unrealism Naivety Inaccurate images of self	Systematic Exploration Inquisitive and reflective Information seeking Understanding of self to situation	Overstimulated Uber-curious (to distraction) Fantastical images of self
Confidence – self-efficacy concerning ability to execute a course of action successfully	Inhibition Thwarting of actualizing roles and achieving goals	Self-efficacy Skilled problem-solving Appropriate self-confidence Self-acceptance	Overinflated sense of self Overweening Supercilious Assuming too many roles