

## Importance of Life Review

Summary 1: Life Review- Therapeutic Opportunity by: J. Scott Janssen, MSW, LCSW

[https://www.socialworktoday.com/archive/exc\\_1217.shtml](https://www.socialworktoday.com/archive/exc_1217.shtml)

This article focuses on the unique opportunity social workers in palliative and hospice settings have to utilize Life Review. Life review is already a normal part of the aging process, as people often spend time remembering events from their life. However, benefits of social workers encouraging these conversations include improved mood, enhanced sense of meaning, strengthening relationships, and a sense of dignity about what they accomplished in life. This article highlights best practices for life review. The first is creating a safe space where patients feel comfortable to open as there may be uncomfortable or traumatic life events that would be meaningful to talk through. The second is to have trauma-informed approach. This is especially important for those with PTSD. It can be healing to discuss these events, and social workers can assist in processing and could result in some healing.

Summary 2: Life Review with the Terminally Ill by: Mimi Jenko, Leah Ginzalas, and Mary jane

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[file:///C:/Users/kaitl/Downloads/LifeReviewwithTerminally\\_Ill.pdf](file:///C:/Users/kaitl/Downloads/LifeReviewwithTerminally_Ill.pdf)

The writers highlight the way that life review can be used systematically to assist hospice patients to find resolution to their life. They thoroughly review the origins and theory of life review citing theories from Erikson, explaining that throughout our development behaviors and thoughts change. Life review is a natural progression of this process. Those involved with Hospice care can harness this way of thinking to promote healing and connection. This article then outlines several ways that Hospice can incorporate life review through biological interviews, music therapy, and developing relationships that lead to sharing life stories.

Summary 3: The efficacy of Life Review Therapy combined with Memory Specificity Training (LRT-MST) targeting cancer patients in palliative care: A randomized controlled trial by: Gitta Klejin and others.

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5953483/>

This research study evaluated the impact of life review therapy, alongside of Memory Specificity training. For this study, terminally ill cancer patients received 4- home based sessions focusing on Life Review Therapy. The goal of life review was to retrieve positive memories, process major life events, and reconstruct the story of a patient's life. The study found that life review was helpful in improving one's ego-identity. While other studies have found more benefits to Life Review Therapy, this study did not find that it improved quality of life and psychological distress. Further research should be conducted.

Summary 4: Effect of Life Review on Quality of Life in Terminal Patients: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis by: Mei-Hua Huang et.al.

[https://journals.lww.com/jnr-twna/fulltext/2020/04000/effect\\_of\\_life\\_review\\_on\\_quality\\_of\\_life\\_in.12.aspx](https://journals.lww.com/jnr-twna/fulltext/2020/04000/effect_of_life_review_on_quality_of_life_in.12.aspx)

This Meta analysis focused on gathering a total of six studies that included 296 participants. Studies selected all evaluated the impact of life review as a therapeutic intervention for terminally ill patients.

This article highlights that there has been lots of research done on the impact of life review on older adults where it was found to help patients appreciate accomplishments and work through conflicts. However, not all those that are terminally ill are older adults, therefore this meta-analysis focused on terminally ill individuals. The study found that life review improved quality of life measured by the McGill Quality of Life scale. More studies are needed.

Summary 5: memory, Reminiscence, & Life Review in Hospice Care by: The Connecticut Hospice  
<https://www.hospice.com/memory-reminiscence-life-review-in-hospice-care/>

The Connecticut Hospice Company has an article on their website that focuses on life review and memory. Life Review is a practice incorporated into this agency's care. They describe this process as honoring everyone's life story. The agency offers an Arts program for patients and their families. They incorporate elements such as scent to bring up memories. They site benefits of Life Review as improved emotional state, distraction from present struggles, and allowing for a patient to die with dignity after being able to voice their own legacy. In their life review practices, this hospice team focuses on individual memories, as well as connected memories and involves loved ones to share. For some patients this happens through casual conversation, while others may opt for more structured Life Review Therapy where they may document their legacy for their family to have after they pass. This article provides great insight as to how a hospice agency can incorporate life review.