
Case Study

A Case Study of a Quinquagenarian's Psyche through Personality & Color Tests

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Abstract

This is a case study that focuses on understanding the psyche, i.e., the totality of human mind, both conscious and unconscious, of a male quinquagenarian, (a person ages between 50 and 59 years), especially how he perceives life at this age. Two tests – the Lüscher Color Personality Test and the Big Five Inventory – were administered. From the test results, this paper aims to better understand how the conscious and unconscious states of mind (psyche) interact with each other in a quinquagenarian in order to establish if he is in the process of becoming an “optimally developed person” – a term used by Viktor Frankl (b.1905-d.1997). As there are no two quinquagenarians alike, each possesses his/her unique individuality and they vary in their developmental stage of becoming an optimally developed person. The author hopes to provide readers an alternative way of understanding a quinquagenarian's psyche so that better community services and/or appropriate activities can be provided, especially for those who have retired or are no longer working due to medical ailments or other personal reasons.

Keywords: archetypes, color, personality, optimally developed person, psyche, quinquagenarian

1. Introduction

An adult (male or female) between the ages of 50 and 59 years is known as a quinquagenarian. According to Alexander (2018), “[T]he fifties are supposed to be an acme of professional success ... or the opposite. If the retirement age is 65, this is the last gloriously productive time for some people and in some fields” (para. 7). It is during this phase of life that a quinquagenarian should become a much-sought-after expert or consultant in the field that s/he has been working for decades, or “the bitter elder complaining about how much better things were done in their time” (Alexander, 2018, para. 7). In other words, this is when a quinquagenarian can get elevated to power or shunted aside.

Hitting the fifties naturally makes a quinquagenarian quiver, think of or worry about his/her health issues (especially memory loss or cognitive impairment resulting from dementia, for example), and also concern if the savings accumulated over the years while s/he was still working would be sufficient to cover any future medical bills and daily expenses. All these issues will affect a quinquagenarian's psyche, which is the totality of the human mind consisting of three levels, i.e., conscious, subconscious and unconscious (see Journal Psyche, 2018a, for detail) as proposed by Dr Sigmund Freud (b.1856-d.1939), an Austrian neurologist. The term “psyche” is sometimes referred to the emotional life of a person. Carl Jung (b.1875-d.1961), a Swiss psychiatrist, defined psyche as a self-regulating system, rather like the body, that seeks to maintain a balance between opposing qualities to establish the totality of all psychic processes, conscious as well as unconscious.

As the world witnesses a growing aging population at an unprecedented rate, the present quinquagenarians should be concerned about preparing themselves for that moment when it is their turn to join the rank. The big question is: “Are they ready?”

According to the National Institute on Aging (2016), “[T]oday, 8.5 percent of people worldwide (617 million) are aged 65 and over” (para. 1). According to He, Goodkind and Kowal (2016), in their report on “An Aging World: 2015”, this percentage has been projected to ascend to almost 17% of the world's population by 2050 (or 1.6 billion people). The report was commissioned by the National Institute on

Aging (NIA), part of the National Institutes of Health, and produced by the U.S. Census Bureau. It examined three key factors, i.e., (i) the demographic, (ii) health, and (iii) socioeconomic trends, accompanying the growth of the aging population. The three key highlights of the report are as follows:

- By 2050, the global life expectancy at birth has been projected to increase by almost eight years, i.e., moving up from 68.6 years in 2015 to 76.2 years in 2050.
- Between 2015 and 2050, the global population of what is termed as the “oldest old”, i.e., people aged 80-89 (octogenarian), 90-99 (nonagenarian), 100-109 (centenarian), and over 110 years of age (supercentenarian), is expected to increase by triple, i.e., growing from 126.5 million to 446.6 million. In fact, the “oldest old” population is predicted to quadruple in some Asian and Latin American countries.
- Among the older population worldwide, non-communicable diseases (e.g., cardiovascular disease, cancer, chronic respiratory disease, and diabetes) will become the main health concern. Currently, the Covid-19 pandemic has taken the lives of almost 3 million people worldwide (see Global Change Data Lab, 2021, for latest updates). In low-income countries, especially in Africa, the older population encounters a big challenging burden from both non-communicable and communicable diseases.

What are the quinquagenarians’ expectations and their plans?

According to Gitlin (2021), SurveyMonkey teamed up with Axios to conduct a survey involving more than 3,000 American adults how long they want to live and how they plan to get there. There are some interesting findings from the survey and they are as follows:

- Most of the respondents in the survey wanted to live beyond their average life expectancy, i.e., almost two out of every three adults (63%) in the study indicated that “they want to live longer than their average expected life span (which is 81 and 77 years for women and men in North America, respectively)” (Gitlin, 2021, para. 4).
- 71% of the respondents, aged 65 years and older, wanted to live longer versus 61% of the respondents, aged 18-34 years old. To them, “getting older does not just mean having more time on earth; it also means losing their independence or sanity” (Gitlin, 2021, para. 8).
- While older respondents were more likely to want to live beyond the average lifespan, most of them were unwilling to push the limit too far.
- The Black respondents were more enthusiastic than other races about living through old age.

In regards to how the quinquagenarians plan to live longer, three findings with the highest percentages from the survey have suggested the following:

- 69% of the respondents indicated that they would get out of their comfort zone and exercise;
- 67% of them indicated that they were committed to eating healthier; and
- 41% of them indicated they should save money to meet future needs.

It is interesting to take note that the quinquagenarians still have their aspirations to pursue despite their age, and to realize their dreams that have not been attained earlier before it is too late. Another important goal for them is to live wholeheartedly and eat healthily. With sufficient savings, they can live comfortably without worries.

Life-long learning for quinquagenarians as a healthy lifestyle in Singapore

In Singapore, quinquagenarians and other “oldest old” have been encouraged by the government to stay an active healthy lifestyle as well as to adopt a life-long learning (3Ls) habit to keep their mind active. This is in fact a good approach to help them to view life positively and, more importantly, meaningfully, too. For example, the People’s Association (PA) launched the PA Senior Academy on 17 February 2015 (People’s Association, 2020). Its key mission is to encourage more seniors, 50 years old and above, to pursue 3Ls aspirations and lead an active lifestyle by providing accessible and affordable senior-friendly curriculum/program.

The question to ask at this juncture is: “Why 3Ls for quinquagenarians?” and/or “Does 3Ls help the quinquagenarians to lead a better life?” The question preceding these two questions is: “What is 3Ls?”

Knapper and Cropley (1985) have defined 3Ls as “the truly lifelong process of continuous learning and adaptation” (p. 18). This definition has been further extended by Ironside (1989) to include “the habits of continuously learning through life, a mode of behavior” (p. 15). Aspin et al. (2012) have provided an updated definition of 3 Ls referring it to “the idea that learning does not end at the completion formal education. Instead, we continually learn through our daily experiences throughout our lives” (cited in Drew, 2013, para. 3). The 3Ls should be seen as a strategic approach to help the quinquagenarians adapt to the challenging societal and/or sociocultural dynamics at this phase of their life. It “encourage(s) the acquisition of skills that will allow each individual to exercise their role in society, and to actively participate at various times in the various contexts of their personal growth and social development” (Luppi, 2009, p. 245).

According to the report on *Lifelong Learning Among Older Adults in Singapore* (see Thang, Lim, & Tan, 2019, for detail) presented by Fei Yue Community Services (2012), commissioned by the Council for Third Age (C3A) to (i) examine older adults’ motivations to engage in learning and how their well-being was impacted (based on the Wellness Model); and (ii) understand the non-learners’ perceptions of 3Ls and barriers to participation, the report’s findings suggested that 3Ls “enables older adults to cope better with the transitions experienced in the ageing process” (Fei Yue Community Services, 2012, p. 3). However, it was found that not many older adults in Singapore actively participated in 3Ls activities. There remained the majority who chose to remain passive and non-participatory (due to low awareness and low participation in 3Ls activities) and also those who were ambivalent due to high awareness but low participation in 3Ls activities (Thang, Lim, & Tan, 2019).

According to the Wellness Model (see Kang & Russ, 2008; Montague & Frank, 2007; Self & Wilkinson, 1990), 3Ls can impact older adults’ well-being in the following ways as listed by Fei Yue Community Services (2012, p. 5) in its report as shown in Table 1 below:

Table 1. The Impact of 3Ls on Older Adults’ Well-Being*

Dimension of Wellness	Ways of Wellness
(a) Intellectual wellness	Older adults felt that learning kept their minds alert and active.
(b) Social wellness	Older adults were able to meet other people and make new friends through these courses; these relationships were important in helping them buffer the losses experienced in old age.
(c) Physical wellness	In courses specifically about health (e.g., Traditional Chinese Medicine), older adults learnt how to take care of their health better.
(d) Emotional wellness	Courses that were humanistic in nature helped older adults understand themselves and others better. Older adults also felt validated when they learnt and applied new things.
(e) Spiritual wellness	Older adults felt that courses helped them in finding meaning and purpose in life. Faith-based courses also helped religious older adults grow spiritually, which motivated them in their life.
(f) Occupational wellness	Learning helped older adults to find employment or new social roles where they could contribute in.

*Source: Fei Yue Community Services (2012)

In the report’s concluding remark, for the quinquagenarians and other older adults to benefit from 3Ls courses specially designed to cater to their needs, it is crucial to take note of the different traits and

needs among these senior adults in order “to derive at the right fit in learning opportunities which will in turn enhance the well-being of older learners” (Fei Yue Community Services, 2012, p. 62).

Personally, this author feels that to know if a quinquagenarian is benefiting from 3Ls to make a difference in his/her life, s/he must progress to become an optimally developed person along the 3Ls journey. This brings us to the next section on what is to be an optimally developed person.

Attributes of an Optimally Developed Person

An optimal development of a person, or optimally developed person (ODP for short) refers to that ideal, desirable or highest level of development one can hope to attain. The traits of an ODP include the following: (i) ability to perceive the reality of the social environment around him/her; (ii) the acceptance of one’s own weaknesses or shortcomings; (iii) the capacity to stay on-task with focused concentration and not to become obsessed with personal problems; (iv) a good social relationship with others (at least with a few close ones); (v) living or leading a full life with interest in events happening around him/her and also to experience these events or activities intensely; and (vi) a reasonably systematic and well-considered perspective of one’s life, not necessarily based on one’s religious belief or faith, value system that directs one’s life, not being dogmatic but can accept other’s viewpoints without having to be agreeable all the time.

There are several essential factors that can lead an individual to the optimal development of oneself (and in this case, a quinquagenarian) because of favorable conditions vs in-spite-of: (i) According to Maslow (1965), when deficiency needs are satisfied, an individual operates at growth needs level (i.e., at optimal level of development); (ii) Rogers (2007) has called this optimal development of a person an unconditional acceptance during childhood; (iii) Both Allport (1937) & Frankl (1970/2014) focus on the growth of a person to attain optimal development of oneself in spite of lack of need-satisfaction; to Allport (1937), a person’s functional autonomy of motives formulates its own goals and strives for perfection, i.e., one’s optimal development, and “to account for the uniqueness of a personal conduct” (p.155), while to Frankl (1970/2014), man’s search for meaning in life involves identifying one’s purpose in life to feel positive about, and then immersively imagining that outcome, with the goal of becoming an ODP; and (iv) according to Ochse (1993), an ODP shows a high regard for learning & achievement, achieves rapid growth of some skill, and manages stress fairly well.

There are nine attributes to describe an optimally developed person (ODP for short) and these are proposed by Viktor Frankl (b.1905-d.1997) (cited in Wong, 2007). They are briefly described below (also see Xie & Chua, 2020, p. 7-8):

- (1) Self-determining action: That means one should not attribute his/her fate to implicit factors (e.g., drives and needs) or explicit factors (i.e., environment). An ODP is clear about him/herself and the surrounding circumstances that affect him/her and freely decides what s/he chooses to do or how to act.
- (2) Realistic perception: This refers to one’s ability to perceived issues of concern objectively and critically in the context of oneself and the circumstances/situations s/he is in. An ODP is able to distance him/herself from what is happening to him/her.
- (3) Humor: This concerns one’s ability to laugh at oneself for the silly mistakes one has made and hence, an ODP is able to distance him/herself from his/her weaknesses and/or problems encountered daily.
- (4) Self-transcendence: This refers to being outward-looking, giving one’s life meaning in whatever one does in order to dedicate oneself to values and ideals that one holds dear to heart. An ODP’s primary goals in life are not so much about attaining own satisfaction and/or happiness but moving forward to find or give meaning to his/her life.
- (5) Future directedness: This is one’s ability to make each day a special opportunity in life and one’s past a trove of fulfilled possibilities. To an ODP, death is never seen as a threat as it carries a special meaningful conclusion to his/her life, i.e., a future-directed goal or vision for betterment of life.

- (6) Work as a vocation: Words such as job, vocation and career are often taken to mean the same thing when in fact, they are not. They conjure up images of a profession that most, if not all, people tend to use them interchangeably. The term 'vocation' refers to the calling that comes from within a person in the choice of profession. "Generally speaking, the choice of vocation depends on one's education that is supposed to enable one to earn and stand on own feet and start a family and make important decision in life" (Xie & Chua, 2020, p. 8). The other term "career" refers to all the jobs a person engages in throughout his lifetime taken together. Unlike vocation, career is not considered a job, but a series of jobs that one may have done or intends to do in life. An ODP regards work or profession as a vocation (i.e., a calling) – an opportunity to make a worthwhile or responsible contribution to life.
- (7) Appreciation of goodness, beauty and truth: This concerns one's experiences of what is good, beautiful and genuine that life offers. An ODP is receptive to these attributes of life and s/he is open to new experiences encountered daily.
- (8) Respect and appreciation for the uniqueness of others: This concerns one's attitude characterized by respect and appreciation, and also being free from prejudice and discrimination in one's attitude toward others. An ODP will not make others as objects for his/her own gains in life or to achieve own selfish ends. The ODP wants to have meaningful relationships with others.
- (9) Meaning in suffering: This is the toughest attribute among all to be attained. Meaning can be found in suffering, guilt and death (Frankl, 1946, 1970/2014). An ODP is someone who has discovered meaning in suffering and has reached the highest of ultimate point of development. S/He has accepted tragic factuality (or actualities) of life and his/her meaning of life is actually deepened as a result.

For anyone to attain the level of optimal development, the person must completely exercise his/her freedom of will to fulfil his/her basic human intent/motive, i.e., to seek and eventually find meaning in life in the midst of helplessness and hopelessness (Xie & Chua, 2020). In other words, an optimally developed person is someone or any individual, who has overcome the restrictions of his/her environment and can meet his/her deficiency and needs regularly, s/he has also accepted the responsibility of self-actualization and to become the best he can be (Maslow, 1965).

A Case Study

MJ (see Note 1) aged 58 is a private piano teacher and has taught children, adolescents and adults over 20 years. He is married with a teenage son. His wife is a secondary school teacher of English language and literature. His bed-ridden mother is also staying with his family. MJ has employed two stay-in helpers to assist in preparing daily meals and taking care of his paralyzed mother due to stroke.

The first five years of marriage were going smoothly for MJ, except they were childless. Home was a quiet place without a child. His wife decided to go for In-Vitro Fertilization (IVF) program, which is an assisted reproductive technology involving "the process of fertilization by extracting eggs, retrieving a sperm sample, and then manually combining an egg and sperm in a laboratory dish. The embryo is then transferred to the uterus" (American Pregnancy Association, 2019, para. 1). It was a success and both MJ and his wife eagerly looked forward to the day when they could hug their long-awaited child. When the newborn was one year old, the parents had him baptized by sprinkling in a Methodist church, where they worship as a family.

Everything was going on well for MJ except there were occasional quarrels with his wife over their respective parenting styles. Soon the quarrel became more frequent and abusive; there was a lot of shouting and cursing, banging furniture and throwing of things at each other. As MJ's wife was earning more than him and still is, she has become more assertive and demanding. She expects MJ to comply with her decisions and whatever she instructed him (as well as their stay-in helpers), such as chauffeuring her and their child to their respective schools every morning, preparing home-cooked meals every day except weekends when the family goes out to eat at a restaurant, and going on an overseas tour during school vacation. All these tasks have taken a toll on MJ as he is already suffering from stress, anxiety and hypertension.

Moreover, their only child is not doing well in school. MJ is constantly blamed by his wife for not supervising or tutoring their child in his academic studies. However, the child has never been cooperative with his parents and often tries to find reasons or give excuses for his poor academic performance. Initially, at the lower primary level, the school counsellor and psychologist suspected that the child might be dyslexic. He was tested but the assessment results could not confirm his condition as having dyslexia. The child was weak in his phonics skills and he was sent to a remedial learning center for students with dyslexia. His progress was rather slow. A year later, his class teachers complained that he was day-dreaming during lesson and suspected that he might have attention deficit-hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). He was once again referred to the school psychologist for assessment. The results were negative. When he was 11 years old, his teacher and a family doctor told the parents that the child could be autistic. It was a shock to both MJ and his wife, who wailed loudly in front of the doctor during a consultation session at that time. Later, the child was referred to a psychologist at a university hospital for a further assessment. By the time another assessment was done, the child was already 12 years old. The assessment results came back negative.

MJ is coming to the point in life when he has begun questioning the meaning of life and what he actually likes to do. As a devoted Methodist, he professes his love for his family in the sense of an *Imitatio Christi* (see Xie, 2020, for detail). However, things continue not going on as smoothly as he hopes. He ponders if this is the life God has put him in so that he can learn from it to become the person God wants him to be. In Franklian terms, that is progressing toward becoming an optimally developed man (ODP). In other words, MJ is reflecting and making a self-examination. MJ feels that his failure to understand himself has created a hollow in his life. Though tormented by challenging family issues at home, he strives to become a better person through this suffering. To some people, this can lead to a feeling of meaninglessness in life and questioning of one's existence. However, MJ refuses to give in. At times, in fact, MJ goes into fantasizing and uses fantasy to escape from his tedious and stressful life.

As a result, one day, MJ made a self-referral to seek the professional help of a registered therapist or counsellor, who has been working with quinquagenarians and "oldest old" for a number of years. After an initial consultation with the therapist, MJ returned two times for two tests to be administered on him. Two tests were selected for administration with the client's signed agreement: (i) Big Five Inventory; and (ii) Lüscher Color Personality Test (Lüscher, 1971). The results of the two tests are discussed below.

- **Big Five Inventory (BFI)**

The Big Five Inventory (BFI; John, Donahue, & Kentle, 1991) is a self-report multi-dimensional personality inventory with 44 items in all designed to measure the big five dimensions of personality: (i) openness to experience; (ii) conscientiousness; (iii) extraversion; (iv) agreeableness; and (v) neuroticism. These five dimensions are measured on a continuum ranging from low through moderate to high (Goldberg, 1992):

- (1) Openness to experience (i.e., inventive/curious vs. consistent/cautious): According to Costa and McCrae (1992), this dimension involves the five facets: (i) active imagination (fantasy); (ii) aesthetic sensitivity; (iii) attentiveness to inner feelings; (iv) preference for variety, and (v) intellectual curiosity.
- (2) Conscientiousness (i.e., efficient/organized vs. extravagant/careless): This is a personality trait of being careful, or diligent, more of planned than spontaneous behavior. It implies a desire to do a task well, and to take obligations to others seriously. A person with conscientiousness tends to be efficient and organized as opposed to being easy-going and disorderly. Such a person also tends to be self-disciplined, acts dutifully, and achievement-oriented. Hence, a conscientious person is generally dependable. According to Thompson (2008), conscientiousness is manifested in characteristic behaviors such as being neat, and systematic; also including such elements as carefulness, thoroughness, and deliberation (the tendency to think carefully before acting).
- (3) Extraversion (i.e., outgoing/energetic vs. solitary/reserved): The traits of this dimension include both extraversion (or extroversion) and introversion which constitute a central dimension in some

human personality theories. The two terms introversion and extraversion were introduced by Jung (1921) into psychology. Extraversion tends to be manifested in outgoing, talkative, energetic behavior, whereas introversion is manifested in more reflective and reserved behavior (Thompson, 2008). Jung (1921) defined introversion as an "attitude-type characterized by orientation in life through subjective psychic contents" (cited in Kavirayani, 2018, p. 184) and extraversion as "an attitude-type characterized by concentration of interest on the external object" (cited in Kavirayani, 2018, p. 184).

- (4) Agreeableness (i.e., friendly/compassionate vs. critical/rational): Agreeableness is a trait of personality that manifests itself in individual behavioral characteristics perceived as kind, sympathetic, cooperative, warm, and considerate (Thompson, 2008).
- (5) Neuroticism (i.e., sensitive/nervous vs. resilient/confident): According to Roccas et al. (2002), there is a lot of disagreement on its definition of neuroticism. Some define it as a tendency for quick arousal when stimulated and slow relaxation from arousal, especially in concern to negative emotional arousal. Then there are others who define it as emotional instability and negativity or maladjustment, in contrast to emotional stability and positivity, or good adjustment. There are also many others who define it as lack of self-control, poor ability to manage psychological stress, and a tendency to complain (Ormel, Riese, & Rosmalen, 2012). An individual who scores high on neuroticism is more likely than average to be moody and to experience such feelings, e.g., anxiety, worry, fear, anger, frustration, envy, jealousy, guilt, depressed mood, and loneliness (Thompson, 2008). People who are neurotic react worse to stressors. They are more likely to interpret ordinary situations as threatening and minor frustrations as hopelessly difficult. They are often self-conscious and shy, and they may have trouble controlling urges and delaying gratification.

Each of the factors is then further divided into personality facets. The Big Five Factors are (chart recreated from John & Srivastava, 1999) as shown in Figure 1:

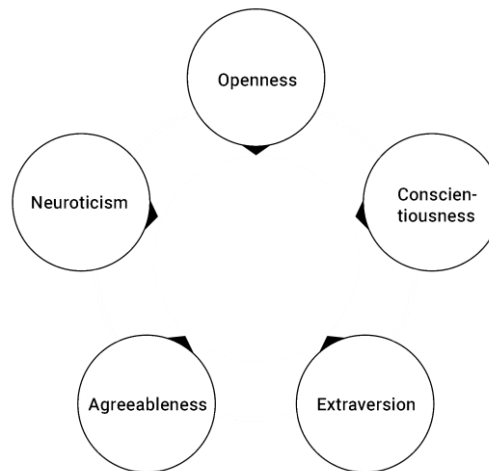


Figure 1. The Big 5 Factors of Personality

Table 2 below shows MJ's scores for each of the five factors of personality.

Table 2. BFI Factor Scores

BFI Factors	Factor Scores	Difference between Factor Score & Mean Score	Higher or Lower than Mean Score
• Openness to experience (OE)	41	+13.2	Higher
• Conscientiousness (C)	23	-4.8	Lower
• Extraversion (E)	18	-9.8	Lower
• Agreeableness (A)	27	-0.8	Lower
• Neuroticism (N)	30	+2.2	Higher
Total Score	139	±30.8	
Mean Score	27.8	±6.16	

In Table 2 above, MJ's mean score of ± 6.16 shows that three BFI factor scores fell below the mean score: (i) Agreeableness/A, (ii) Conscientiousness/C, and (iii) Extraversion/E, with E having the worst score. Two BFI factor scores are above the mean score: (i) Neuroticism/N and (ii) Openness to experience/OE, with O having the best score. Whether the factor score is higher or lower than the mean score does not mean it is good or bad score, but being strong or weak for that particular dimension of personality.

MJ scored highest on OE, which is normally distributed with a small number of individuals scoring extremely high or low on the trait, and most people scoring moderately (McCrae & John, 1992). Scoring high in OE indicates that MJ is highly motivated to seek new experiences and to engage in self-examination (McCrae & Sutin, 2009). Structurally speaking, he has a fluid style of consciousness that allows him to make novel associations between remotely connected ideas. In other words, OE also correlates well with another psychological trait known as absorption, i.e., the ability to become immersed in imagination or fantasy, and it may also be associated with hypnotic susceptibility (Zhang et al., 2017).

MJ's next highest score is on N. McCrae and Costa (1987) described how a person with a high neuroticism level copes with such stress: "They may more frequently use inappropriate coping responses like hostile reactions and wishful thinking because they must deal more often with disruptive emotions. They may adopt irrational beliefs like self-blame because these beliefs are cognitively consistent with the negative feelings they experience. Neuroticism (not the same or be mistaken for neurosis; see Note 2) appears to include not only negative affect, but also the disturbed thoughts and behaviors that accompany emotional distress" (p.87). According to Thompson (2008), people with high scores for N are more likely than average to be moody and to experience feelings such as anger, anxiety, depressed mood, envy, fear, frustration, guilt, jealousy, loneliness and worry. In other words, MJ has a strong negative N. Several studies (e.g., Jeronimus et al., 2016; Kamarulzaman & Nordin, 2012; Ormel et al., 2013) have shown that people with high N scores are often at risk of developing common mental disorders (e.g., anxiety and mood disorders) and neuroses (Note 2) (i.e., a class of functional mental disorders involving chronic distress, without delusions or hallucinations).

MJ's score on A is slightly below the mean score. According to Thompson (2008), this personality dimension of A manifests itself in individual behavioral traits that are perceived as kind, sympathetic, cooperative, warm, and considerate. Anyone who scores high on A is seen as empathetic and altruistic. Those with low score on A are often associated with selfish behavior and/or a lack of empathy (Bamford & Davidson, 2017; Song, 2017), and those with very low A score are indicative of dark triad behavioral traits (e.g., manipulation and competing with others than cooperating or collaborating) (Kaufman et al., 2019).

MJ's two lowest scores are on E and C. The former, being the lowest score among the five personality dimensions, consists of extraversion (E) and introversion (I), and both are generally seen as a single continuum, which means that being high in one necessitates being low in the other. According to

Thompson (2008), E is often manifested in sociable behavior (e.g., outgoing, talkative, energetic), while I is manifested in more reflective and reserved behavior. MJ is very much an introvert, being predominantly interested in his own mental self. According to Kamarulzaman and Nordin (2012), a person with low E score is indicative of one's personality to be loner, sober and passive.

MJ's low score on C suggests that he tends to be laid back, less goal-oriented, and less driven by success. According to Thompson (2008), those with very low score on C are more likely to engage in anti-social as well as criminal behavior. Zhang (2002) also reported that people who score low on C are usually disorganized, lazy, negligent and aimless. However, low score on C could also be due to lack of motivation or loss of direction in life – a sense of meaninglessness.

When comparing different dimensions of personality with each other, the BFI results offer another perspective in understanding MJ's psyche. The first comparison is between N and C. The second one is between OE and E. The third one is between N and E. The fourth and last one is between A and E.

In the first comparison between N and C, MJ has scored high N but low C with a significant difference of 7 points (slightly more than the cut-off difference score of ± 6.16) between the two personality dimensions, i.e., $N > C$. According to Sutin et al. (2010), high N and low C are frequently implicated in health-risk behaviors (e.g., smoking and over-eating) as well as health outcomes (e.g., depression and mortality). High N/Low C or $N > C$ pattern is found to associate with higher levels of interleukin-6 (IL-6) – a peripheral marker of chronic inflammatory diseases that increases with age and is implicated in a wide range of health outcomes (Maggio et al., 2006) as in anemia (Lang et al., 2002), anxiety and stress (O'Donovan et al., 2010), depression (Hodes, Menard, & Russo, 2016), osteoporosis (Heyman & Rousselle, 2000), physical frailty (Cesari et al., 2004), and sarcopenia (Ferrucci et al., 1999).

In the second comparison between OE and E, there is a significant difference of 23 points between MJ's scores on personality traits OE and E, where $OE > E$, with OE score of 41 above and E score of 18 below the mean score of 27.8. Having extremely high OE but extremely low E is indicative that MJ is motivated to seek new experiences as well as to engage in self-examination (McCrae & Sutin, 2009) with low E score suggesting he is more on I (Introversion), being more reflective and reserved in disposition. In this way, MJ would rather choose to engage in fantasy to escape from the harsh reality of life. Such a condition of psycho-emotional experience has been termed as Walter Mitty Complex (also known as Walter Mitty Syndrome) (Petty, 2006). In Jungian sense, a complex is themed organization "in the unconscious mind centering around patterns of memories, emotions, perceptions, and wishes, patterns that are formed by experience and by an individual's reactions to that experience" (Journal Psyche, 2018b, para. 12). "Complexes often behave in a rather automatic manner, which can lead to a person feeling like the behavior that arises from them is out of his or her control" (Journal Psyche, 2018b, para. 13).

In the third comparison between E and N, the two personality traits E and N have been found to be linked theoretically and empirically to the fundamental states of positive and negative affect respectively (Matzler et al., 2005). MJ has scored high N but low E with a significant difference of 12 points (almost 50% more than the cut-off difference score of ± 6.16) between the two personality dimensions, i.e., $N > E$, with E score of 18 below and N score of 30 above the mean score of 27.8. Having high N score suggests that MJ's tendency to experience distress, nervous tension, depression, guilt, low self-esteem, poor control of impulses and somatic complaints. Having low E score suggests that MJ is very much a loner, sober and passive introvert. Costa and McCrae (1980) found that N traits strongly correlate with negative affect, while E traits correlate strongly with positive affect.

According to Johnston, OstMed, and Brown (2013), the E and N traits are predictive of health outcomes through biological, psychological and social mechanisms. They are not opposites but rather orthogonal dimensions. Personality genetics has provided evidence to show that the personality pattern with high $N > E$ (especially in women) from 16 years to 26 years (late adolescence through early adulthood) may change to high $E > N$ pattern through maturation. This is related to monoamine oxidase-A (MAO-A) gene (also known as the warrior gene). The MAO-A deficiency is linked to impulsivity and aggressiveness, anti-social behavior, anger expressiveness, and violent outburst (Matzler et al., 2005; Xu et al., 2017), and it is also known as the "psycho gene" (Hunter, 2010). MAO-A is an essential regulator of brain function and is highly expressed in the cells of the brain and heart. It mainly assists in the breakdown of

the following neurotransmitters: (i) Dopamine involves in mood, motivation and reward, arousal, memory, learning, focus, and movement control; (ii) Serotonin involves in impulse control, affects regulation, appetite, and sleep; and (iii) Epinephrine involves in triggering the body's response to stress and anxiety, including fight-or-flight response. Since MAO-A regulates the level of these behavioral-hormones, having too much or too little of this enzyme plays an important role in a number of psychiatric and neurological disorders (e.g., schizophrenia and ADHD). In fact, a class of drugs that inhibit this enzyme (MAO-A inhibitors) is often prescribed to treat depression.

In MJ's case, his E score is significantly lower than his OE and N scores. He is more likely to seek escapism into his own fantasy (or Walter Mitty Complex) and may at times vent out his frustration (or anger expressiveness) and emotional distress on his child whom he is supervising and helping in his academic studies.

In the fourth and last comparison between A and E, there is a significant difference of 9 points (more than the cut-off difference score of ± 6.16) between the two personality dimensions, where $A > E$, with A score of 27 above and E score of 18 below the mean score of 27.8). A person who scores high in A is more likely to control negative emotions (e.g., anger) in a conflict situation. That is to say that anyone who is has high A score is more likely to adopt conflict-avoidant tactics during a confrontation with others. Such a person is also more willing to give ground to his/her adversary and may lose arguments with someone who is less agreeable. From the perspective of the person with high A score, s/he does not see that as having lost an argument but is more than glad to have actually maintained a congenial relationship with another person (Graziano, Jensen-Campbell, & Hair, 1996). However, for those who have low A score, they are more likely than not to use coercive tactics to win an argument (Jensen-Campbell & Graziano, 2001).

• **Lüscher Color Personality Test (LCPT)**

Lüscher Color Personality Test (LCPT) is a tool used for identifying emotional, characterological personality basis and the subtle nuances of its current state. The test is based on the assumption the unconscious colors' choice often reflects an individual's focus on a certain activity, mood, the most stable personality traits, and the functional human state. In other words, the test records the individual's color preferences to uncover life's stressors and associated personality traits. It is basically based on the psychological and physiological responses of the individual to colors. Developed by Dr. Max Lüscher (b.1923-d.2017) in Switzerland, the test is based on the fact that sensory perception of color is objective and universally shared by all. It can help to determine the following factors: (i) An actual psycho-physiological condition of a person; (ii) A level of stress resistance; and (iii) An activity; and (iv) The presence or absence of communication skills.

All these factors can be explained using color diagnostics. This test has been administered to understand MJ's personality profile so that the therapist/counsellor working with him can have a better understanding of how he is coping with his daily affective (socio-emotional) challenges. Table 3 below shows MJ's two selections of colors in order of preference beginning with the color he likes best and down to the one he least likes.

Table 3. LCPT Results

Selection	Color Number	Sequence of Colors (in order of preference)
1st Selection	3, 5, 4, 1, 2, 6, 0, 7	(red, violet, yellow, blue, green, brown, grey, black)
2nd Selection	3, 5, 4, 2, 1, 6, 0, 7	(red, violet, yellow, green, blue, brown, grey, black)

Each of the eight numbers (from 0 to 7) represents its respective color: 0 is grey; 1 is blue; 2 is green; 3 is red; 4 is yellow; 5 is violet; 6 is brown; and 7 is black.

“The second selection usually occurs more spontaneously and is more valid than the first selection, especially in doubtful cases. It is therefore the grouping and marking of the second selection which

should be used for entry into the *Lüscher Tables*” (Lüscher, 1971, p. 32).

Using only the second selection of colors, referring to the first two preferred colors (+3, +5; red, violet), this color pair is represented by the symbols [+ +], whose goal is to strive, achieve a goal. This color pair suggests that MJ is preoccupied with things of an intensely exciting nature, whether erotically stimulating or otherwise. He wants to be regarded as an exciting and interesting personality with an altogether charming and impressive influence on others. He uses tactics skillfully so as to avoid endangering his chances of success or undermining others’ confidence in himself. When relating the Lüscher [+ +] color pair to the Jungian archetypes, it refers to the Self archetype (or Ideal Self), which is the sum total of a person’s psyche with all its potential included. This is the part of the psyche that is forward-looking, containing the drive toward fulfilment and wholeness of oneself. In this, the Self can be said to drive the process of individuation that is the individual’s quest to reach his/her fullest potential.

For the next preferred color pair (x4, x2; yellow, green), it is represented by the symbols [x x], whose goal is to state MJ’s current condition. The color pair suggests that MJ hopes to obtain an improved position and greater prestige, so that he can procure for himself more of the things he has had to do without. When relating the Lüscher [x x] color pair to the Jungian archetypes, it refers to the Persona (or Social Self), which is how one presents oneself to the world. The Persona archetype represents all of the different social masks that a person puts on among various groups and situations. It acts to shield the person’s ego from negative images.

For the next preferred color pair (=1, =6; blue, brown), it is represented by the symbols [= =], whose goal is to hide or suppress MJ’s desires, needs and/or feelings. The color pair suggests that MJ is hiding or suppressing his need to obtain physical satisfaction from sexual activity. He is inclined to be emotionally withdrawn, which prevents him from becoming deeply involved. When relating the Lüscher [= =] color pair to the Jungian archetypes, it refers to the Anima and/or Animus (or True Self which is suppressed or hidden away), which are the contra-sexual archetypes of the psyche, with the anima being in a man and animus in a woman. “These are built from feminine and masculine archetypes the individual experiences, as well as experience with members of the opposite sex (beginning with a parent), and seek to balance out one’s otherwise possible one-sided experience of gender” (Journal Psyche, 2018b, para. 28).

Finally, for the least preferred color pair (–0, –7; grey, black), it is represented by the symbols [– –], whose goal is to reject whatever MJ deems as unacceptable. This color pair offers two interpretations: (i) Physiological interpretation: MJ has pronounced susceptibility to outside stimuli (in 7th & 8th positions, and especially when classed as an “anxiety”); and (ii) Psychological interpretation: MJ wants to overcome a feeling of emptiness and to bridge the gap which he feels separates him from others. He is anxious to experience life in all its aspects, to explore all its possibilities and to live it to the full. He therefore resents any restriction or limitation being imposed on him and insists on being free and unhampered. When relating the Lüscher [– –] color pair to the Jungian archetypes, it refers to the Shadow (or Rejected Self), i.e., those traits that one dislikes, or would rather ignore. The Shadow is composed of repressed ideas, weaknesses, desires, instincts, and shortcomings and it exists as part of the unconscious mind.

In brief, MJ displays an expectant self-determinism. Self-determination refers to one’s ability to choose and manage own life. This ability plays an important role in psychological health and well-being. “Self-determination allows people to feel that they have control over their choices and lives. It also has an impact on motivation – people feel more motivated to take action when they feel that what they do will have an effect on the outcome” (Cherry, 2021, para. 1).

In terms of actual problems, the first preferred color and the last color to be chosen constitute this last color pair (+3, –7; red, black) represented by the symbols [+ –]. According to Lüscher (1971), this color pair indicates MJ’s attempt to fight against restriction or limitation, and insists on developing freely as a result of his own efforts. (For additional details, see Lüscher, 1971, pp. 60-62 & 69-70). The Lüscher [+ –] color pair can relate to a complex, which behaves in a rather automatic manner which can make a person feel like the behavior arising from it is out of his/her control. It is not within the scope of this paper to delve further into this topic. Figure 2 below shows how the Jungian archetypes are related to the four Lüscher color pairs.

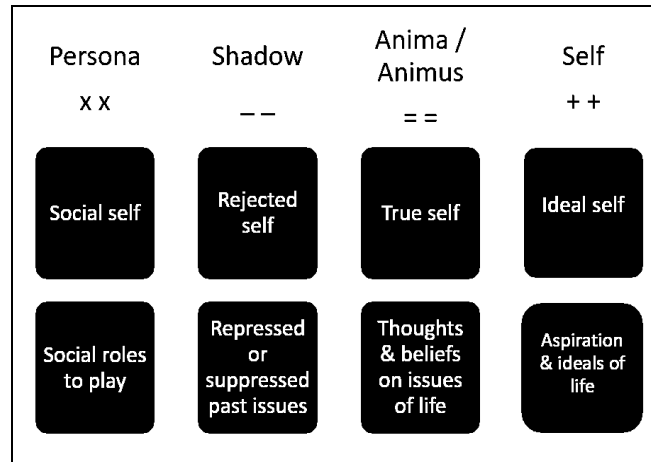


Figure 2. Relationship between Jungian Archetypes and Lüscher Color Pairs

In summary, the LCPT results suggest that MJ is preoccupied with things of an intensely exciting nature, whether erotically stimulating or otherwise. He wants to be regarded as an exciting and interesting personality with an altogether charming and impressive influence on others. He uses tactics skillfully so as to avoid endangering his chances of success or undermining others' confidence in himself. He hopes to obtain an improved position and greater prestige, so that he can procure for himself more of the things he has had to do without. He is able to obtain physical satisfaction from sexual activity but is inclined to be emotionally withdrawn, which prevents him from becoming deeply involved.

2. Conclusion

MJ is a struggling quinquagenarian, who tried to cope with his problems at home, by juggling his time between his work and his family (i.e., his wife, his son and his bed-ridden mother). He has employed one stay-in helper to look after his mother's need and another to attend to the needs of his wife and son. In order to provide his family healthy meals, he signed up an online specialist diploma program on nutrition, successfully completed it, and even taught his two helpers how to prepare a healthy meal. This is a good example of 3Ls for MJ as he knows that he cares for his family and is doing for their own good. It has provided MJ a sense of well-being, especially intellectual as well as occupational wellness.

MJ is still three steps away from becoming an ODP. The three ODP attributes that have not been observed in MJ are: (i) Humor: Problems and struggles in his everyday life has taken away much of his joy and peace; (ii) Respect and appreciation for the uniqueness of others: MJ is selective in befriending people too quickly as he was once deeply hurt before by people whom he thought were genuine friends; and (iii) Future directedness as an ODP attribute is not observed in MJ. He has no future-directed goal or vision for betterment of his own life. As seen in the [= =] color pair results, MJ is hiding or suppressing his own needs. He is inclined to be emotionally withdrawn, which prevents him from becoming deeply involved. Perhaps MJ is still waiting for the right moment to reveal his True Self to the world beginning with his own family first.

The six ODP attributes that MJ has managed to attain are: (i) Self-determining action: MJ's LCPT results show that he has expectant self-determinism. It means he does not attribute his fate to implicit or explicit factors. He is aware of his current situation and continues to freely decide what he chooses to do or how to act; (ii) Realistic perception: MJ is quite aware of his current issues of concern or actual problems as indicated in the LCPT results. He distances himself from what is happening to him or his family and chooses to perceive these challenging issues objectively and critically in two ways: (a) the context of what he is able to do; and (b) the current situation he is in (see [x x] color pair results as reported in his LCPT); (iii) Self-transcendence: This refers to MJ's outward-looking nature as reflected in his high OE score in his BFI results. He wants to be someone who is exciting and interesting as well

as being charming and impressive to others. His current goals in life are to care for his family and also to pursue something that will give him meaning to his life; (iv) Work as a vocation: MJ enjoys his job as a music teacher. To him, music is an opportunity for him to make a worthwhile contribution to life. In fact, he got his son interested in music to play piano as a hobby. MJ has been studying music and playing piano since young. Later, he furthered his music education in the United States before returning home to work as a music lecturer at a Christian music academy; (v) Appreciation of goodness, beauty and truth: For example, MJ is open to new experiences with the highest BFI score for OE, which also concerns his experiences of what is good, beautiful and genuine that life has to offer. MJ is receptive to these attributes of life and he is open to new experiences encountered daily; (vi) Meaning found in suffering, guilt and death (Frankl, 1946, 1970/2014): MJ is well aware of it in the sense of *Imitatio Christi* that he “must bear the cross” and be prepared to accept tragic factuality (or actualities) of life and his meaning of life is actually deepened as a result. This last attribute is most important of all. It tells us of his “will to meaning” (Frankl, 1970/2014) through his spiritual resilience that he is not going to give up his struggle in life to become a full ODP one day.

In conclusion, there is still room for MJ to improve the quality his life as a quinquagenarian, especially in his continuous quest for a sense of coherence in his life by moving toward wellness despite hardship. Whatever that happens around him, good or bad, MJ takes it in stride, riding the waves of life with courageous faith, anchored in his Christian belief, that everything contributes to forming a part of his life's rich tapestry.

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Notes

Note 1. The actual name of MJ has been kept anonymous to ensure full confidentiality in adherence to the Personal Data Protection Act (PDPA) enacted in Singapore in 2014.

Note 2. Today, the term “neurosis” or “neuroses” are no longer used in the psychiatric community.