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The Conscience of Becoming the Self
– Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis

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Dziękuję za wsparcie moim rodzicom, szczególnie w opiece nad moimi dziećmi. Bez tego, ta praca by nie powstała. Mojemu bratu i przyjaciółom. Pracę dedykuję moim dzieciom, bo są najważniejsze.

Zmiany wprowadzone w aktualnej wersji rozprawy

Część teoretyczną rozszerzono o refleksje wypływającą ze współczesnych badań psychologicznych dotyczących wzrostu postraumatycznego, terapii skoncentrowanej na sensie, ale również funkcjonowania moralności na gruncie neuropsychologicznym. Ta część rozprawy uwzględnia też współczesne teorie motywacji jak SDT oraz odnosi się do krytyki teorii motywacji Masłowa, podejmując również wątek kreatywności i spontaniczności. Z kolei wgląd w treści filozoficzne został rozszerzony o perspektywę psychologiczną.

Rozprawa w obecnej formie uwzględnia dwa badania. Pierwsze, obecne w oryginalnej wersji pracy, przeanalizowane za pomocą analizy tematycznej (thematic analysis), dające szerszą perspektywę badanego zjawiska Sumienia Stawania się Sobą, ze względu na stosunkową dużą i różnorodną próbę badawczą. Drugie, przeprowadzone zgodnie z metodologią Interpretacyjnej Analizy Fenomenologicznej, na grupie artystów, przybliżające doświadczanie badanego zjawiska z perspektywy indywidualnej. W części metodologicznej przedstawione są obie wykorzystywane metody. Zaś w aneksie dodana została tabela prezentująca proces wyodrębniania kategorii w toku analizy tematycznej.

Całe badanie drugie, jest częścią dodaną do pracy, podobnie jak porównanie jej wyników ze strukturą Sumienia Stawania się Sobą, ujętą w badaniu pierwszym.

Dyskusja jest rozszerzona o refleksje wynikające z wniosków z badania drugiego, uwzględniając specyfikę funkcjonowania artystów. Podjęta jest też również próba redefiniowania Sumienia Stawania się Sobą, uwzględniając *stawanie się* jako główny podmiot rzeczzonego fenomenu, co wynika z lektury literatury wschodniej i rozumienia jaźni na gruncie tejże.

Obecna wersja pracy jest bardziej uporządkowana względem swojego oryginału.

Introduction

This research explores whether self-development can be subject to conscience, as each decision not only influences the individual's self-development but also contributes to shaping their overall persona. Hence, the principal objective of this study is to investigate the psychological impact on individuals when they perceive self-development as a moral duty to oneself. This is an initial and general idea of the area of research. It needed to be narrowed to allow making precise research goals that can be subjected to research procedures of psychology. For the sake of this study, the phenomenon in question is named Conscience of Becoming the Self. While no precisely similar phenomenon has been empirically researched in the existing literature, there are theoretical issues that can be associated with it.

Existential philosophy delves into the experience of one's existence, where individuals are acutely conscious of their current state, perpetually comparing it to an internally desired way of being (Kierkegaard, 1849/2008). This state is often identified as authenticity or the true self. However, the journey to attain authenticity is fraught with the experience of negative emotions, including anxiety, depression, despair, or loneliness (Nietzsche, 1873-1876/2003b; Tillich, 1952). Several reasons contribute to the association of these specific emotional states with exploring one's being. Firstly, recognizing what the true being represents for an individual is inherently challenging. Secondly, pursuing authenticity is difficult and comes hand in hand with negative emotions. Thirdly, actively avoiding the call of one's inner self also results in negative emotions (Heidegger, 2010). Nonetheless, a genuinely authentic existence should ultimately lead to self-fulfillment and happiness (Nietzsche, 1901/2003b; Tillich, 1952). The existential interpretation of the human condition notably highlights the burden of choice and the responsibility accompanying it (Sartre, 2001a).

The ideas of viewing an individual holistically and acknowledging the subjectivity of experience are central themes in existential psychology, as expounded by figures like Rollo May (R. May, 1981, 1993, 1995), Victor Frankl (Frankl, 2009, 2010, 2012), and Irwin Yalom (Yalom, 2008, 2023). Concurrently, humanistic psychology places significant emphasis on self-development, advocating for the realization of one's potential within a supportive environment, as well as the pursuit of authenticity through spontaneous behavior (Maslow, 1954; Rogers, 2014). The concepts of responsibility, the existential burden of existence, and the journey of self-progress appear to intricately interweave within the realms of humanistic and existential psychology. These interconnected themes find a resonant expression in Erich Fromm's (Fromm, 1996) concept of the humanistic conscience—a guiding internal voice that speaks to the completeness of self-development.

This leads to virtue-based ethics, where resolving the question of who I should become, and the proper conduct of the answer is an ethical duty (Żylicz, 2010). The exemplification of such an approach is personalism, where creating self through one's development and within relations with others is an ethical issue (Mounier, 1960).

Positive psychology takes issues discussed on humanistic psychology grounds and tries to measure them in a statistically conclusive way (Trzebińska, 2012). Therefore, the connection between behavior and experience of happiness is more apparent in this approach.

The concept of Conscience of Becoming the Self is rooted in the theoretical issues outlined above. Existential reflection underscores the intensity of self-experience, accentuated by the weight of responsibility for one's choices, serving as the foundation for 'conscience-like' experiences within Conscience of Becoming the Self.

Simultaneously, the humanistic approach posits self-realization and authenticity as focal points within the questioned conscience.

The main objective of this study is to delve into the individual experience of the Conscience of Becoming the Self. To achieve this, a qualitative approach was employed, utilizing thematic analysis and Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) as the main methods of data analysis. Two studies were planned. The first study aimed to investigate a larger group of people with diverse experiences and demographic characteristics to explore the wide range of ways in which the Conscience of Becoming the Self might manifest. To accommodate this broader scope, thematic analysis was employed, as it allows for the examination of large-scale data while maintaining a focus on individual experience and personal perspectives—an emphasis supported by the adaptation of selected elements from Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). This study involved 61 participants from Poland and 11 from other countries, all of whom participated via written interviews distributed through social media.

The second study applied Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) and was conducted with four Polish participants from a relatively homogeneous group: four artists working in the field of visual arts. The aim was to explore the experience of the *Conscience of Becoming the Self* within a group that might be particularly attuned to this phenomenon, given the creative nature of their professional paths.

This thesis is organized into three main chapters, each contributing to the study's primary goal. The first chapter introduces the theoretical foundations of the *Conscience of Becoming the Self*. The second chapter focuses on the two conducted studies, outlining their methodological strategies and presenting the results of each. The final chapter offers a discussion formed through the combined analysis of the results, providing insights and conclusions drawn from the studies.

Chapter I Theoretical background

Where do conscience and self-progress lie in the intellectual space of definitions and terms? The content and understanding of the two are not convergent. Simplifying, conscience is the subject of ethics, while self-progress is the subject of psychology. However, the conceptual areas of the discussed terms are broad. The primary assumption of this thesis is that there is a connection between ethics and self-progress. The relationship between conscience and self-progress, on both the theoretical and empirical sides, is valid and reliable enough to create a new realm of interpretation and research. Although conscience and self-progress have their definitions, there are underlying fundamental processes that guide and establish these concepts.

The structure of theoretical reflection is as follows. *Gaining self-awareness of oneself and own potentialities* starts with conceptualizing being, thus describing how it can be experienced, expressed, or defined. Therefore, it is shown how *being* is related to awareness, freedom of choice, and responsibility. This section draws a strong influence from existential philosophy, followed by a presentation of reflection through a psychological lens. Subsequently, the significance of meaning, discovering, and developing own potentialities is presented. Throughout the whole review, individual perspectives and social contexts are considered. Subchapter *Gaining self-awareness of oneself and own potentialities* leads to the conclusion that the process of becoming the self is a personal obligation, described on the background of philosophy and operationalized in psychological research.

Subchapter *Transgression from Awareness to Commitment to Oneself*, describes the conceptual area of conscience on a philosophical background and psychological research, leading to the final topic of this research, the Conscience of Becoming the Self.

This way, the Conscience of Becoming the Self is contrasted with a standard understating of the term conscience.

The theoretical introduction draws upon philosophical sources and incorporates references to psychology. The philosophical approach to phenomena such as being, becoming, conscience, and awareness has been a significant source of inspiration for this research. As a result, the theoretical part of this work can be considered interdisciplinary.

Gaining self-awareness of the own self and own potentialities

Human biological functioning is extended into an individual's psychological sphere of functioning. The psychological construction of a person can be identified based on behaviour. One of the subjects of psychology is examining and researching those behaviours to make theories and concepts about people's psychological functioning. However, before this search, there was a philosophical reflection on the qualities of human nature.

Questioning oneself is one of the significant features that differentiate humans from animals. This type of question might be a primary fuel for human science. The perception of time for people is extended from constant present to historical past and potential future. This is the time perspective a person finds himself in. How a person refers to the creations of civilization, both physical and intellectual, is another necessity. People also find themselves in relations with other people and groups of people. Lastly, people are also considered a physical part of the world or nature. Therefore, a person is formed within all spheres (mentioned above) and takes a stand.

In the experience of others, a person can initially be identified as an object, precisely as a body that can be seen (Ricoeur, 2018). Later on, with better acquaintance, some psychological qualities are added to an initial physical representation of the person. However, the question is what constitutes the person. What indicators do people use to

recognize other people as already known? What qualities must the perception of self possess in order to support the development of an integrated and unified identity?

In this context, understanding the term “being” is significant for this dissertation. It is widely explored in the background of existential philosophy. Therefore, I will try to outline the most essential and adequate for the subject of this study, area of consideration.

Being is self-given and belongs to a person (Heidegger, 2010). As such cannot be taken away as existence is a reflection of being (Sartre, 2001b). It is thrown into the world and exists within three quality levels. First, through a material, physical world of nature and objects (*umwelt*); second, through a world of relationship networks (*mitwelt*); third, through own body and any inner experiences of a person (*eigenwelt*) (Binswanger, 1963). Being is a possibility, changeable identity (Galarowicz, 2014), and complete synthesis (Toeplitz, 1980) that manifests itself through actions (Crosby, 1996; Kierkegaard, 1849/2008). Through experiences, a person discovers what elements of being are essential (Ingarden, 1987). The essence, the authentic being, is searched by a person through their being in life (Heidegger, 2010; Kierkegaard, 1849/2008). Being perceives oneself and can contemplate the actual state of own being, therefore should be able to recognize that true being. What does the true essence of a person want? That authentic being demands from existence (Jaspers, 2004), creating a self accordingly to an individual plan, adequate to the true essence of a person (Szyszkowska, 1998). However, this calling is not always heard or understood. Therefore, experience and perception of being can differ.

Despair (Kierkegaard, 1849/2008), anxiety, and loneliness (Sartre, 2001a; Szyszkowska, 1998; Tillich, 1952), depression (Nietzsche, 1901/2003b) are negative emotions accompanying fulfilling being. Despair is a complex reaction to an issue of pursuing the true being. At first, the despair is treated as a gift of awareness (Kierkegaard,

1849/2008). It is the sign that a person realizes own being and is aware of the difference between the actual being and the being that should have been. Such a gift – a state of awareness - allows one to follow the path that will lead to despair. A person can try to avoid this inner calling, reject pursuing an authentic being, or vice versa, can take a challenge and try to achieve a true being. Any of these decisions will lead to negative experiences. The despair of rejecting the true self and anxiety of leading an unpurposeful life (Kierkegaard, 1849/2008; Tillich, 1952). Following calling brings the despair of being lonely, alienated in society, and anxiety about breaking through own barriers instead of fitting in (Kierkegaard, 2008; Szyszkowska, 1998). The person must also face that decision-making leads to losing some possibilities of a person's nature (Heidegger, 2010). Fighting for own self is a curse and a gift simultaneously (Kierkegaard, 1849/2008). The person should aim to live according to own nature and make subsequent spontaneous, meaningful decisions (Tillich, 1952). The peace of self-affirmation must be genuine (Tillich, 1952), as subordination and conformity may also bring a feeling of safety and balance (Kierkegaard, 1849/2008).

A human individual's life force is embodied in the will to power. The position taken in the context of own being might take a turn of strength, resistance, courage (Tillich, 1952), or concentrated will to pursue and act (Nietzsche, 1901/2003b). Purposeful, striving, conquering orientation gives emotions of pleasure or pain depending on how a person fulfills own being (Nietzsche, 1901/2003b). Achieving individual goals of progress gives pleasure, while otherwise, unpleasant feeling. However, struggling and facing new challenges might also be associated with unpleasant feelings, which fuels the will to power (Nietzsche, 1901/2003b). The courage to take a challenge of aware being is a necessity (Tillich, 1952).

Therefore, through existential philosophy, the concept of true being costs a person the neurotic emotion of despair, anxiety, loneliness, and alienation and is achieved through the firm, oriented, and courageous will to pursue.

Actions fulfill two functions in the context of being. On the one hand, actions are means of expression for being. On the other, own behavior can also be an identifier of the quality of own being. As ideal states, the behavior should be consistent with true being and lead to it. However, a person might mislead his or her behavior to not engage in significant acts. It is the case of a sort of fragmentation. When engagement in pointless duties of everyday life takes space for aware reflection about self and meaningful actions (Kierkegaard, 1849/2008). It can also take the form of entanglement in commonness. In social relations, it is revealed through pointless conversations, where a choice of words misleads the truth, and through dishonest relationships with others, curiosity that focuses on sensations of life also misleads a person from true self-being reflection (Szyszkowska, 1998). Therefore, it is challenging to learn what a true being is and follow its calling. However, learning own self, honest personal needs, and listening to the inner voice of conscience is the way not to get lost in a crowd of social networks and complex terms of science (Nietzsche, 1873-1876/2003a).

Being cannot be described without a concept of will, freedom, and freedom of choice, which act as a background for decision-making in the context of being. Initially, freedom might be considered from a physical perspective as being limited by no physical obstacles, which is significant for intellectual and moral freedom (Schopenhauer, 2016). A person's external circumstances do matter, as it was also already mentioned. A person is permanently submerged in a sort of influence (e.g., social, environmental, intellectual). Therefore, comes the question of how much a person's will can express itself through actions and to what extent freedom of choice exists. Those concepts are significant

categories considered while reflecting on human existence beyond its biological functioning and contrasted with determination (Liberkowski, 2007). In existential interpretation, choice and responsibility for them lay entirely on the person's side (Sartre, 2001a). Therefore, again, emotional states accompanying the process of being have their foundation in the perception of free will. Pursuing self is a gift and curse simultaneously, while freedom is a gift and sentence for a person (Sartre, 2001a). Free will and creating being do cooperate in the perception of human existence. One would not be possible without another.

The discussed issues float on the edge of philosophy and psychology. Many concepts presented earlier might repeat themselves on psychological backgrounds. The acknowledgment of existential dilemmas that people have to face when engaging in their being (R. May, 1989) or ambiguous state of will (Frankl, 2010; Fromm, 1998; Obuchowski, 1993) are rediscussed in the psychological field. However, the accent is shifted more on the positive side. Experience of will by people, rather than its source, is what interests psychology. Psychological research suggests that belief in free will is associated with various positive psychological aspects, including improved job performance, perseverance, gratitude, helpfulness, relationship commitment, life satisfaction, and a greater sense of meaning in life. Additionally, it has been linked to a reduction in negative experiences such as life stress and feelings of alienation (Bayram & Artan, 2024; Crescioni et al., 2016; Ekşi et al., 2023; St Quinton, 2024). These findings highlight the positive influence of free will, as it provides a psychological foundation for individual growth. However, this perspective contrasts with existential philosophical views, which often portray free will as a burden—an overwhelming realm of possibilities accompanied by high responsibility and the risk of making mistakes.

From the previous analysis, pursuing an individual self-program is difficult from two perspectives. First, a quality of awareness about one's own being is needed to set the right path for behavior. However, gaining this specific knowledge is quite a tricky, existential task. Secondly, engaging in meaningful acts costs experiencing negative emotional states. With such emotional baggage and high, overwhelming responsibility, the perspective of being self might be a source of fear (R. May, 1995). As Kierkegaard claims, despair is experienced whether a person tries to pursue a true being or not (Kierkegaard, 2008).

Identifying inner states with a sense of oneself is a key aspect of self-consciousness, while self-focused attention and self-knowledge represent self-awareness(Yilmaz, 2022). Research distinguishes between two types of self-consciousness based on whether the focus is on inner experiences (private) or external circumstances (public). Private self-consciousness involves an individual's emotions, values, goals, and thoughts(Bayram & Artan, 2024). Defined in this way, it provides a more adequate and coherent framework for exploring philosophical and psychological dilemmas about the self. In contrast, public self-consciousness shifts attention to how one presents oneself in a social context, encompassing behavior, social roles, and attitudes(Bayram & Artan, 2024).

Studies reveal a paradoxical effect of self-consciousness. On the one hand, it is associated (especially the private one) with positive psychological resources such as self-esteem, self-actualization, the satisfaction of psychological needs, and experiences of happiness while also contributing to reduced life stress and lower susceptibility to physical illness. On the other hand, an excessive or maladaptive focus on oneself is a factor in various psychopathologies, including depression, schizophrenia, social anxiety, and substance abuse (Lee et al., 2024). This suggests that maintaining a balanced level of

self-awareness is essential for mental well-being, enabling reflection rather than falling into ruminative thoughts. However, achieving the right balance in self-consciousness and following an individually chosen life path, while promising, can still bring psychological burdens along the way. This raises the question: might it be easier to avoid self-awareness altogether—whether intentionally or unintentionally—to escape the difficulties that come with freedom?

One way of escape is conformism – a complete adaptation of norms and cultural patterns to own personality so that an individual essence is dominated completely (Fromm, 1998). As a result, anxiety and alienation are under control at the cost of own individuality (Fromm, 1998). More subtly, being might be less genuine when shifted to “having” (Fromm, 1999). It can be seen in language first, when instead of giving a self-description of “what I am,” people describe “what they have.” It is an interesting issue but challenging to explain. Being driven by the need for possession, desire, and attachment is not genuinely free (Fromm, 2020). In a consumption society, building an identity on products is an issue (Bauman, 1996). However, the modus of “having” is a broader concept. The motivation in modus of “having” results in focusing awareness on achieving and consuming material and intellectual possessions. However, even if a person might gain knowledge, it is not accompanied by reflection. Life experiences and gained knowledge should be absorbed, leading to higher awareness. This is not the case in modus “having.” Furthermore, the modus of “having” represents a strong attachment to self, which, on the one hand, restricts openness to the genuine synthesis of intellectual information and social response. Therefore, a person does not have the Socratic courage to challenge own beliefs, knowledge, or even self-image (Kozielecki, 1996). On the other, strong self-attachment enables person to commit to significant social relations such as friendship, parenthood, and love (Fromm, 1999, 2020). It is a crucial limitation as being

can be redefined and transformed in genuine relations, as Heidegger experienced it in his relationship with Hannah Ardent (Galarowicz, 2014). Modus “being” is the opposite of modus “having, and is the right way to achieve a genuinely satisfactory being (Fromm, 1999).

In psychological terms, disturbance in being, blocked possibility to be the self, and inability to manifest own will might cause depression (Nietzsche, 1901/2003b, May, 1993) or result in neuroticism as the last attempt to save self (R. May, 1993; Obuchowski, 1993).

Taking everything into account, being, freedom, and will carry the heavy burden of existence, though self-reflection and free will also hold the promise of a positive psychological impact. Additionally, the external influences of the spheres in which a person is immersed (e.g., social, intellectual) often seem limiting and unsupportive of individual development.

However, freedom can also have a positive meaning, as it allows a being to manifest itself and its will through spontaneous acts (Fromm, 1998). It creates an environment in which one's own being can intentionally transcend material, social, cognitive, and symbolic boundaries (Kozielecki, 1997). Furthermore, spontaneity plays a crucial role in creativity, serving as a rich, unstructured foundation that enables the formation of unexpected connections between ideas (Baird et al., 2012; Runco, 2004). Research suggests that engagement in art, whether through active participation (creating it) or passive observation (viewing it), has a positive impact on well-being (Cullen et al., 2024). Moreover, pursuing creative goals may also provide a sense of immortality by reducing thoughts of death, as demonstrated in various studies (Perach & Wisman, 2019).

The society and environment people live in could be supportive if adequately educated about psychology and understanding of own emotions (Fromm, 2020). The

freedom of an individual is associated with the freedom of others. They do coexist and form each other (Obuchowski, 1993). The idea is to create a society where individual goals and the common good cooperate harmoniously (Fromm, 2008).

Indirectly, it was already mentioned how being is searching for purpose. The purpose of own being and the purpose of own life both fulfill each other and seem to lead to the same – a sense of accomplishment and meaning. Intentionality and will structure experiences and give meaning to people's acts (Kozielecki, 1997; R. May, 1993). At some point of awareness, a person is able to choose the goal and recognize the motivations behind own behaviors (Obuchowski, 1983). The decisions are bringing to life initially, mental concepts. It is a subject of logotherapy to help people find their meaning in life, as lack of it might be a source of existential frustration that leads to noogenic neurosis or psychological distress (Frankl, 2010). Therefore, such therapy makes people capable of finding meaning in their actions and, consequently, in life (Frankl, 2009).

A similar approach is found in meaning-centered therapies, which are widely used in the field of psychological support. Research on these therapies has demonstrated their effectiveness in reducing anxiety, depression, and demoralization while enhancing spiritual well-being and sense of meaning (Marco et al., 2024; Quílez-Bielsa et al., 2022; Rosenfeld et al., 2018). Studies have verified these benefits across diverse client groups, including patients with chronic illnesses, cancer, and depression, as well as individuals without physical illnesses (Marco et al., 2024; Rosenfeld et al., 2018).

This suggests that meaning in life may be a significant psychological variable, as therapies centred on meaning have been shown to enhance well-being profoundly. Research indicates that a strong sense of meaning is associated with various positive outcomes, including greater academic and work performance, life satisfaction, self-efficacy, self-control, achievement motivation, originality, psychological well-being,

positive relationships, and belief in free will. Furthermore, it is negatively correlated with anxiety and depression (Bayram & Artan, 2024; Ekşi et al., 2023; Katzir & Genschow, 2022).

Meaning in life can be distinguished based on objective and subjective criteria. The first refers to the quality of subjects a person engages in with his or her behavior. Those subjects should be worthy of engagement and love, e.g., raising children is perceived objectively as a descend goal (Wolf, 2018). Setting goals beyond own being (Fromm, 2008), transcending own self in selfless actions (Frankl, 2010), and love affirmation (Heidegger, 2010) are examples of goals, meaningful from an objective point of view.

The second focuses on a person's subjective experiences when engaging in some activities. Then, activities that a person is intensely involved in and that are a source of positive emotions of satisfaction are meaningful from a subjective point of view, e.g., passion for the sport (Wolf, 2018). Hence, creative work and passions (Frankl, 2010) are subjectively meaningful, as those activities are significant from an individual perspective.

Most sensible would be when both criteria are met in a goal (Wolf, 2018). Possible areas that fulfill both these criteria are engaging own cognitive and emotional potential in activities that are aimed at: expanding knowledge and search for truth (cognitive orientation), self-expression through any art (expressive orientation), creation of new concepts concerning general functioning of society, e.g., ideologies, political systems (political orientation), lastly, taking care of others (caring orientation) (Kozielecki, 1996).

It is not a goal of this thesis to discuss if there are criteria that allow us to assess what acts or subjects are enough to be called meaningful. Here, it is assumed that a person who tries to pursue an authentic being can engage in a meaningful behavior process, even if a single action might not be perceived as purposeful for others. The most important is a

person's awareness, assessment, and emotional intuition of meaning. Unmeaningful from an objective point of view behaviors might be significant for self-regulation, e.g., proper rest, which is essential for the long run. Alternatively, meaning might not be understood yet by the majority of society or authorities. Therefore, it is assumed that fulfilling a unique individual calling is a mission to accomplish (Frankl, 2009), a significant goal of the process of becoming the self. However, to reach it does not necessarily mean to be egocentrically focused on self-development, as being is created best when not anchored to own self. Furthermore, this process can be occupied with struggle and unpleasant emotions, but searching for existential goals motivates people, not simply wanting pleasant emotions and avoiding unpleasant ones (Frankl, 2009).

At this point role of suffering and will do come as subjects to reevaluate. Earlier in this chapter, the discussion considers existential struggles within areas of influence (e.g., society) in everyday situations where freedom of choice is respected. Unpleasant emotions and experiences are treated as the cost or burden of existential struggles that coexist with being. What can happen when physical freedom and freedom of choice are limited entirely? What is the status of suffering and unpleasant feelings in the process of being? The situation of being completely oppressed underlines the significance of meaning and will in life — as the creation of being is a constant process that happens under any given circumstances. It also helps better understand the role that suffering plays in a person's being. Based on logotherapy, suffering is treated as an inevitable part of human existence, simultaneously as another significant sphere where a person can find meaning (Frankl, 1984, 2010). Experience of suffering may be an impulse to reevaluate own being or a trigger for human creativity (Kozielecki, 1996). Therefore, that existential burden that is part of everyday being is accepted as natural. The suffering resulting from an unusual chain of events, where a person experiences negative emotions beyond normal

functioning, can be seen as meaningful. How a person handles suffering on behavioral and conceptual levels makes a difference in creating a being.

The reflection of former extermination camp prisoners gives spectacular insight into these subjects. The psychological condition of prisoners was a result of conscious decisions. Directing oneself to a chosen meaningful goal was the only way to survive (Frankl, 2009). The being could be secure in the enriching inner world of imagination, reflection, and memories of the past (Frankl, 2009; R. May, 1981). Therefore, the catastrophic circumstances of abuse in the death camps did not reach the true essence of a person, as this essence was rooted in the inner being and transcended the external suffering by orienting itself toward meaningful goals.

Traumatic experiences can arise from two primary sources: first, a significant deterioration in one's own condition or that of loved ones, and second, unexpected and highly distressing external circumstances. The psychological growth that may follow such events is known as post-traumatic growth. However, certain conditions must be met for this growth to occur. The experience must be profound and impactful enough to shake a person's psychological and material foundations (Henson et al., 2021). While the period of bereavement, decreased well-being, and significant subjective distress is undoubtedly unwanted, studies suggest that it is an inevitable part of post-traumatic growth. This distress triggers cognitive reconstruction, prompting individuals to question why the event happened and how it has changed them, ultimately leading to a reassessment—and possibly a transformation—of core beliefs (Galea, 2014; Henson et al., 2021). Research on this subject suggests that this reflective yet painful process is the key pathway to growth after significant trauma.

Throughout the discussion, I focused more on being as a process experienced by a person and is the subject of self-assessment. Less attention was put on a description of a

person as a subject. However, at the beginning of this chapter there was a question of identity and qualities essential for recognizing one person by others and by oneself.

Therefore, I want to get back to these issues.

Personal nature, defined through stable qualifiers that capture whole personhood (Ingarden, 1987), or character, defined as a group of personal dispositions that help to distinguish and identify a person (Ricoeur, 2018), are just examples of answers to given questions. The unique configuration of relatively stable dispositions, unifying aspirations (Allport, 1988), patterns in behavior in changeable, dynamic inner structure, lastly, awareness of a latter (Allport, 1961; Pervin & Cervone, 2012), are aspects that are repeated in the context of the description of human nature. Those conceptualizations are operationalized in psychology with the concepts of personality (wider perspective) and identity (self-qualities that are recognized by a person as crucial). Regardless of the theory that defines them, they can be used to describe the person. Personality as a concept allows one to objectively measure aspects such as relatively stable dispositions, specific patterns of adaptations, and a framework of personal meaning. At the same time, identity features a subjective understanding of what is the essence of the self (Batory et al., 2016; McAdams & McLean, 2013). Identity, whether discovered or formed, is a task a person is born with (Bauman, 2007). This implies that identity cannot be formed automatically nor as a result of genetic program of development; rather, individuals must actively engage in the deliberate process of determining their own sense of identity.

The person builds up self-knowledge through specific mental processes: the aspect of psychological perception concerning knowledge about inner functioning (Pacholik-Żuromska, 2011). It might be associated with what Carl Rogers calls a phenomenological field of experience, a subjective sphere of a person's widely understood inner processes and subjective perspective (Pervin & Cervone, 2012). Those processes serve two

purposes: allowing the personal experience of being and considering oneself. Self is the aspect of phenomenological experiences that captures an integrated insights framework. It is relatively stable and under constant change simultaneously (Pervin & Cervone, 2012). There are two aspects of self, what a person expect from himself or herself as an ideal outcome (ideal self) and what is the actual, exhibited self (real self) (Pervin & Cervone, 2012). Then, self-regulation (Baumeister & D.Vohs, 2004) is a process that serves controlling functions over the process present in the phenomenological field, for example promoting actualization of the self or helping to a achieve the ideal self.

In humanistic psychology, the issue of becoming the self and creating a being is reflected in the concept of self-actualization(Maslow, 1954, 2014), or actualization of the self (inner potential)(Maslow, 1954, 2014; Rogers, 1980). Self-actualization is the need and embodiment of the tendency that functions as an essential human goal, value, and duty, as self-actualization in this approach is set as the primary fuel for people (Pervin & Cervone, 2012). As the highest need in the hierarchy of needs, it is aimed at personal self-growth, fulfillment, and maximization of self-potential (Maslow, 1954), or tendency that functions as a goal(Maslow, 1954, 2014; Rogers, 1980). Through motivation of growth, an authentic, spontaneous, and creative being can be achieved (Maslow, 2014).

In the humanistic approach, self-affirmation and living according to own nature is considered a realistic, approachable opportunity and at the same time as a pattern of human development. According to psychology – not only existential philosophy – to reach ideal self is almost impossible for human development considered from existential (but not positive) perspective follows the metaphor of the distant horizon. Nevertheless, people who can be described as self-actualizing ones express specific types of behaviors: they express authentic, integrated being, capable of empathy, honesty, and accurate perception of social reality, making them feel an inner bond with other people and

creating in-depth relationships (Maslow, 1954; Rogers, 1980). They have a specific perception that allows easy detection of ambiguities in any intellectual domain, and the gift of a fresh perspective on reality (Maslow, 1954). Self-acceptance of one's whole nature (positive and negative), autonomy, and humor help self-actualized people to achieve a healthy distance from oneself and resistance to social and cultural impact (Maslow, 1954). Therefore, their behavior is consistent, spontaneous, and creative in their daily duties (Maslow, 1954), their self-concepts are flexible and inspired by current experience and they can be described as spontaneous and authentic (Rogers, 1980).

This reflection leads to the primary goal of humanistic psychology, which is answering the question of what a good life is and how to achieve it. Positive psychology is founded on almost the same assumptions; however, while humanistic psychology takes a rather phenomenological, qualitative approach that focuses on an individual's experiences, positive psychology looks for quantitative measures (Trzebińska, 2012).

Both theoretical and empirical research, using a variety of methodologies, seek to answer the question of what constitutes a good life. The humanistic approach discussed above is primarily based on Maslow's hierarchy of needs, a theory debated over time, with certain shortcomings identified. To establish the most suitable theoretical framework for understanding human functioning and happiness, a critical evaluation of Maslow's theory is essential.

Maslow's theory faces criticism, starting with its questionable methodology—particularly the selection of America's top 1% of scientists as the research sample to develop a theory meant to explain human motivation universally (Ghaleb, 2024; Hanley & Abell, 2002). This raises concerns about elitism, lack of representativeness, favouritism toward Western ideology, and the failure to account for cultural differences, leading to a

skewed and incomplete depiction of reality(Bland, 2024; Danovitch & Keil, 2008; Henry, 2024; Heylighen, 1992).

One major issue is the rigid, hierarchical structure of needs, which does not account for individual or cultural variations in priorities, life paths that may alter the order of need fulfillment, or the impact of age on shifting needs(Ghaleb, 2024). The theory proves especially inadequate in extreme situations, where self-actualization and social fulfillment can occur even when basic physiological needs remain unmet(Heylighen, 1992).

As a result, Maslow's portrayal of the ideal person, society, and the self-growth path is superficial, shaped predominantly by individualistic cultural values that prioritize personal satisfaction(Ghaleb, 2024). Additionally, his description of self-actualization leans toward a traditionally masculine model of development, undervaluing the role of social relationships in personal growth(Hanley & Abell, 2002). Maslow places social needs as secondary to self-actualization despite the fact that humans are inherently social beings, and meaningful social interactions serve as a powerful avenue for growth(Papaleontiou–Louca et al., 2022).This oversight particularly diminishes the recognition of women's self-actualization pathways, which often involve caregiving and acts of self-sacrifice(Hanley & Abell, 2002).

Moreover, Maslow's theory suggests that certain individuals possess a greater capacity for full self-development than others—an idea reinforced by his controversial claim that homosexuals are less capable of achieving self-actualization(Bland, 2024).Such biases further weaken the universality and inclusivity of his framework.

Despite the recognized flaws in Maslow's theory, it is essential to acknowledge that his novel perspective on psychological health shifted the focus from mental illness to eudaimonia and well-being (Bland, 2024). As a result, his framework remains a

foundational part of psychological discourse and continues to influence scientific debates and research, where self-actualization is still studied as a key variable. Various scholars have proposed potential refinements and reinterpretations of Maslow's model to address its limitations.

One area of improvement involves expanding the model to incorporate a broader spectrum of social needs, community values, cultural differences, and economic influences (Ghaleb, 2024). Relationships—particularly those between parent and child or within marriage—should be considered as opportunities for mutual flourishing rather than merely as stepping stones for individual self-growth (Hanley & Abell, 2002). This perspective aligns with the shift from **I-it** relationships to **I-thou**, emphasizing deeper, more reciprocal human connections. In fact, the entire concept of self-growth requires rethinking—not as an isolated process detached from external conditions but as a dynamic interplay between the individual and their environment (Hanley & Abell, 2002).

Another suggested refinement concerns the rigid hierarchical structure of needs, advocating for a more flexible and individualized framework in which people can prioritize their needs based on personal values and circumstances (Hanley & Abell, 2002). Furthermore, an alternative interpretation of self-actualization emphasizes it as a continuous and dynamic process rather than a fixed state. Some researchers suggest that self-actualization should be understood as an evolving journey shaped by life experiences, social interactions, and personal development rather than a final growth stage. This process has been compared to an autonomous system responsible for continuous self-regulation between the self and the environment, ensuring that personality adapts in a way that supports unique personal growth (Ghaleb, 2024; Heylighen, 1992).

Finally, a more inclusive approach to sampling and experimental validation could strengthen the empirical foundation of the theory and enhance its applicability across diverse populations. Some research suggests that the needs outlined by Maslow are indeed universal and that fulfilling basic needs correlates with greater happiness (Papaleontiou–Louca et al., 2022).

Current literature offers a new perspective on Maslow’s theory by integrating novel theoretical approaches. One proposal is to use the Cybernetic Big Five Theory’s meta-traits of stability and plasticity (DeYoung, 2015) as a comparative framework for understanding self-actualization. A specific balance between these two traits is suggested to facilitate fluency in the self-actualization process. Stability supports goal achievement in a controlled and consistent manner, reducing impulsivity and enhancing resilience, while plasticity drives the exploration of new experiences, goals, and strategies, fostering high motivation (Kaufman, 2023). Low stability may hinder self-actualization by impairing adaptability and effective coping strategies. Conversely, while high plasticity is linked to characteristics of self-actualizing individuals—such as creativity, curiosity, personal growth, and expressiveness—it may also lead to externalized behaviors (Kaufman, 2023). Importantly, both meta-traits have been found to correlate with psychological well-being, further emphasizing their role in fostering a balanced and thriving personality. In summary, an optimal balance between stability and plasticity appears to be crucial for developing an integrated personality that aligns with the qualities of a self-actualizing individual.

Therefore, the functioning of self-actualizing individuals, as described in humanistic psychology, can be compared with Carol Ryff’s concept of psychological well-being, which has been found to correlate with the fulfillment of basic needs (Papaleontiou–Louca et al., 2022). This multidimensional phenomenon verifies aspects of

functioning that build up an overall sense of fulfillment (Ryff, 2018). Six elements constitute this phenomenon: autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations with others, purpose in life, and self-acceptance (Ryff, 2014).

While going through life, a person may have a sense of main purpose, to which she or he adjusts behavior—purpose in life, or there might be a lack of such a purpose. A person's decisions may be self-guided and independent – autonomy – or made according to other people's expectations. Environmental mastery and positive relations with others concern attitude toward external context. A person can feel competent to manage and effectively use resources of the environment (environmental mastery) and create satisfactory, beneficial relations with others (positive relations with others). In contrast, a person may feel lost in the environment. Therefore, everyday duties or improvement of current situations may feel impossible. Creating meaningful relations might seem too difficult task, and thus person gets isolated and frustrated. A sense of fulfilling own potentialities and having constant, adequate self-growth (personal growth) may be present in a person's life. Otherwise, the person experiences a feeling of stagnation in personal self-realization. Finally, self-assessment may have a positive result, giving a person satisfaction (self-acceptance) or otherwise (Ryff, 2014).

The concept of a good life can also be linked to the existential dimension of human existence. Existential struggles for true, authentic being are embodied in the theoretical concept of authenticity, which is explored in both philosophy and psychology. Authenticity can be understood from different perspectives: as a trait—an enduring quality of an individual's personal condition—or as a state, representing a particular moment or period in life that feels most aligned with a person's inner self (Bayram & Artan, 2024). Closely correlated with meaning in life, self-consciousness, and belief in free will, authenticity has been associated with positive psychological effects, such as

reduced depression and anxiety, as well as increased well-being and job satisfaction (Bayram & Artan, 2024).

One empirical approach to authenticity is its multicomponent operationalization. The corresponding questionnaire assesses different aspects of authenticity, including self-awareness (knowledge of one's emotions, motivations, and identity), the degree of unbiased self-processing, behavioral coherence (whether one's actions align with personal values and remain resilient to external pressures), and relational orientation (honesty and openness in expressing one's authentic self in relationships) (Kernis & Goldman, 2006).

Another theoretical framework that addresses existential dimensions of human existence and psychological growth is Self-Determination Theory (SDT), which explores fundamental human needs and motivation. SDT distinguishes between two types of motivation: intrinsic and extrinsic, and identifies three equally important and universal psychological needs—autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Vansteenkiste et al., 2010). The key distinction between the two motivations lies in their source: intrinsic motivation arises from internal engagement and curiosity, while extrinsic motivation is driven by a sense of responsibility or duty stimulated by external influences.

Intrinsic motivation is strengthened by positive feedback, meaningful and engaging choices, and a sense of autonomy—factors contributing to stable eudaimonia. In this context, autonomy is associated with volition, psychological freedom, reflective self-endorsement, and an internal locus of control (Vansteenkiste et al., 2010). Extrinsic motivation is not solely determined by external forces; it also includes internally imposed regulations. For instance, individuals may act under internal pressure from the ego or social expectations. SDT identifies four types of extrinsic motivation, arranged along a continuum from externally controlled to more self-regulated forms. These are: (1) external regulation—behaviour driven by rewards or punishments; (2) introjected

regulation—actions motivated by internalized pressures such as guilt, pride, or self-esteem concerns; (3) identified regulation—behaviour guided by personally endorsed values; and (4) integrated regulation—the most autonomous form, in which actions are aligned with one's self-concept and self-awareness (Vansteenkiste et al., 2010). This continuum illustrates how extrinsic motivation can evolve into more self-determined forms, gradually reflecting a stronger sense of inner agency.

The three basic needs proposed in SDT correspond closely with these motivational types. The need for autonomy aligns with the autonomy inherent in intrinsic motivation and is conceptually related to free will, authenticity, and the search for meaning (Vansteenkiste et al., 2010). The need for competence—the desire to feel effective and capable in one's actions—parallels themes of self-growth present in the work of Maslow, Rogers, and Ryff. Most distinctively, SDT emphasizes the need for relatedness, affirming that meaningful social connections and a sense of belonging are essential for psychological health (Vansteenkiste et al., 2010). This emphasis diverges from Maslow's original hierarchy, which subordinated social needs to individual self-actualization.

Fulfilling these three needs has been empirically linked to increased intrinsic motivation, psychological well-being, life satisfaction, and even greater success in psychotherapy (Güleç, 2024). SDT posits that these needs are universal across cultures and, when satisfied over time, foster optimal functioning and personal growth (Lynch, 2010). Conversely, unmet needs may lead individuals to seek psychological compensations, such as overachievement or perfectionism, in an attempt to affirm self-worth (Güleç, 2024; Lynch, 2010).

To summarize, the experience of being and self-realization do coexist within intellectual discussion. Their meaning and importance are bonded with the experience of

the good life. Therefore, the question arises as to how self-realization is connected to these issues.

At first, I want to clarify what picture of being I gained throughout this whole reflection. To simplify, I understand being in four significant ways. First, as a subject, it is a noun of human existence that can be described and defined, giving a picture of a person. Therefore, when the person gives a self-description, he or she refers to being as a noun. Secondly, being is a process, an adjective, the way a person experiences life as the person he or she is. Thirdly, being is an attitude a person takes to own being as a noun and adjective. Finally, being expresses itself through actions.

Some psychological variables and theories can be seen as descriptive or explanatory when it comes to the concept of being. This is my understanding of the intersection between philosophy and psychology in this context. Refocusing on the question of being and self-realization, I propose a shift towards a more psychological perspective. What is the role of self-actualization within the personal framework of meaning? If a fulfilled existence is connected to leading a good life, can the pursuit of self-growth or self-actualization be considered an obligation towards oneself?

Transgression from awareness to commitment to oneself

The question of conscience

The Cambridge Dictionary defines the conscience as “the part of you that judges how moral your actions are and makes you feel guilty about bad things that you have done or things you feel responsible for” (*Conscience*, n.d.). Dwelling on this short definition will reveal the interpretation area needed for this dissertation.

Firstly, in this chapter, the *act* is extended with omission. An omission is an act of neglecting or failing to do something necessary (e.g., not helping victims of a car crash that we cause). The actions and omissions are subjects of conscience. However, to be

considered moral, they must meet some criteria (Keen, 2015). The act must be initiated by a person and impact the external environment and inner psychological condition of the person (Trzópek, 2009). The type of motivation and level of awareness of possible consequences are significant determinants, alongside the freedom of choice a person had at the moment of the act (Ricken, 2001). Those are initial conditions considered while assessing an act in moral terms. The other question is how conscience might be experienced.

Kant gives feelings of obligation and duty prior role and makes them both as only reasonable causes of morality (Kant, 1785/2002). The conscience then is the tool of a reason. In contrast Schopenhauer claims that a strong need to avoid hurting others is an essential motivation for ethics, as others are treated as part of my own self (Schopenhauer, 1840/2019). With such an attitude, morality is emotional and passion-driven, as Hume claims in his works (Hume, 1748/2001). It is consistent with naturalism, the approach that explanations for philosophical issues searches in the natural properties of the issue (Tulibacki, 1998). Emotions such as guilt, regret, relief, remorse, satisfaction, or joy can be considered self-evaluative sentiments (Vujošević, 2014). Thus, the emotional state has an informative function, simply making a person feel bad or good, depending on the evaluation of their actions in moral terms. Therefore, is morality a function of emotions and passions? Do people behave morally to feel good about themselves or to fulfill laws that are essential for the functioning of society?

Considering, reflections from previous subchapter, it is essential, now to find thread that connects self-realization and conscience. Spinoza, in his ethics, underlines the importance of flourishing an individual potential in harmony with nature as a path to well-being (Spinoza, 1677/2006). Therefore, being ethical is consistent with maximizing own potentials. Similarly, in personalism, an ethical approach, an individual is put in the

center of reflection (Burgos, 2010). However, it differs from individualism by the underlying value of coexistence, importance of self-creation through communication with others, as this creates a new reality of being (Mounier, 1960). The person is a unity, capable of self-awareness; self-identifies its being within its being and beings of others and, through action, achieves dynamic self-perfection (Gacka, 1996). The emphasis on social aspects of self-fulfillment in this context can be likened to Spinoza's idea of realizing one's own potential in harmony with nature. However, in this case, nature is confined to social relationships. In summary, it is an ethical objective to fulfill one's own potential in relation to others.

On the grounds of neuroscience, morality is a product of brain functioning and hormonally induced attachment and empathy transferred into social relations, in the form of extended attachment sustained by appropriate values and norms (Churchland, 2011; Moll et al., 2008).

Apart from the emotional aspect, unique human decision-making is involved in the process of conscience (Gazzaniga, 2008). Therefore, the intellectual capability for reasoning and concluding is considered essential. It allows a person to verify consistency between actions and moral values.

Therefore, ethical behaviors have a sort of hedonistic motivation (avoiding negative emotions and striving for positive ones in the context of moral decisions) and motivation of obligation (respect for higher values essential for the proper functioning of society). Thus, conscience has both cognitive and emotional sides.

In the literature, several elements are identified as components of the conscience experience, including intuition, resulting in three primary ways conscience may manifest: intuition, emotion, and rationalization (Greene, 2003; Schleim & Schirmann, 2011). A set of moral emotions—such as guilt, shame, embarrassment, pride, and fear of negative

evaluation—is thought to function as a universal moral compass that regulates behavior (Mendez, 2009). On the personal level, emotional regulation renders certain immoral acts emotionally aversive, discouraging engagement. On the social level, emotions like social discomfort and empathy heighten sensitivity to others' perspectives and well-being. This includes not only avoiding harm to others but also helping them; in fact, research shows that specific brain regions become more active during altruistic acts (Hu et al., 2021). These mechanisms facilitate social cooperation and may offer insights into the evolutionary origins of morality and conscience (Hu et al., 2021; Mendez, 2009).

Supporting this idea is the hypothesis that conscience may play a role in regulating dopamine levels, which are associated with pleasure and motivation (De Silva, 2023). In this context, conscience helps mediate the balance between selfishness and altruism, between pursuing personal desires and concern for the well-being of others (Volland, 2014). Emotional responses are often aligned with, or even serve as, intuitive judgments about right and wrong—responses that tend to precede rationalization in moral decision-making (J. May et al., 2022; Mendez, 2009). It has been proposed that the intuitive-emotional mode of moral judgment evolved earlier, while deontological, rule-based reasoning developed later (Athota et al., 2020).

Further evidence of the pivotal role of emotion and intuition in moral behavior comes from studies of individuals with brain damage in areas linked to empathy and social behavior. Such individuals often display impaired understanding of social norms and may exhibit sociopathic tendencies despite previously having been well-adjusted (J. May et al., 2022; Mendez, 2009). These findings underscore the close connection between morality and socialization.

In summary, contemporary literature portrays conscience as a multifaceted phenomenon comprising emotional aversion to social discomfort, strengthened by

empathetic attachment and supplemented by rational moral reasoning. In the longstanding philosophical debate about whether morality arises primarily from concern for others or obedience to abstract norms, current research appears to favour the former. However, it is not this paper's role to prioritize each of these elements. The question is whether psychology concerns conscience in a way to relate it with being and self-realization.

In psychology, the concept of conscience is examined across several domains. Developmental psychology explores its origins, particularly how conscience emerges in early childhood (Danovitch & Keil, 2008; Kochanska & Murray, 2000). Neuroscience investigates the neural and functional basis of conscience, seeking to understand the brain mechanisms that underlie moral awareness (Churchland, 2011; Kastner, 2010). Cognitive psychology contributes by analyzing the mental processes involved in ethical decision-making (Kastner, 2010; Wallach, 2010). Conceptual frameworks, such as Freud's theory of the superego or Fromm's notion of the authoritarian conscience, provide theoretical insights into the internalization of moral values and their psychological roots (Freud, 1993; Fromm, 1996). Another important area of research focuses on how individuals confront moral dilemmas and the psychological consequences of doing so—especially in the context of the 'stress of conscience,' which has been studied among professionals facing ethical conflicts (Åhlin et al., 2013; Alkrisat, 2016; Piquette et al., 2023; Tuvevsson et al., 2012). Altogether, these approaches reflect psychology's broad interest in the genesis, perception, functioning, and conceptualization of conscience.

Conscience, by Allport, was treated as a key tool in creating a person, as it harmonizes impulses to achieve future goals consistent with self-concept (Buksik, 2003). Existential and humanistic psychology discuss and connects qualities of human nature to strive for self-growth with the burden of responsibility for own decisions. Existential guilt is the reaction to the situation a person is in, because of awareness of freedom and

responsibility for own choices (R. May, 1995). A healthy individual with satisfied basic needs begins to function at a higher level. They become more self-aware, recognize their potential (Rogers, 2014), and strive for self-actualization (Maslow, 1954). However, they are confronted with the impossibility of fully realizing their potential (Boss, za: Oleś, 2011), due to inevitable mistakes and the fact that choosing one path closes off other possibilities. Each choice presents opportunities in one direction while limiting them in others. Consequently, individuals find themselves immersed in an awareness of their potentialities for which they bear responsibility. This is the notion of virtue-based ethics, where who a person becomes and what qualities the person develops is a moral issue (Żylicz, 2010).

Those considerations are best reflected in Fromm's humanistic conscience. The subject of this conscience is the subjectively perceived adequacy of own development. It is an inner voice that verifies the functioning of a person as a whole and implements adequate generalized reactions of a personality (e.g., feelings and thoughts) (Fromm, 1996). When development internally is assessed as a right or wrong, internal feeling of approval or disapproval is the reaction of the humanistic conscience (Fromm, 1996).

Conscience of Becoming the Self

A healthy person is aware of personal potential (Rogers, 1980), tends to actualization of the self (Maslow, 2014), and is able to evaluate its effects. Taking all this together, there can be this kind of 'humanistic' conscience that deals with the process of becoming a person (Fromm, 1998) or has much to do with existential guilt (Boss, za: Oleś, 2011). The question is in what form a psychologically grounded conscience that concerns the level of self-growth and adequacy of development exists. Subsequently, what are the manifestations of this phenomenon? How do people experience this kind of conscience in their life? Therefore, in my master's thesis, I conducted preliminary research on this

subject (Dubas, 2016). A qualitative approach was chosen to extract manifestations of the phenomenon from people's individual experiences. 30 Polish participants took part in the interview. Based on this qualitative material, the definition and manifestations of this phenomenon were formed. The concept of self-actualization strongly inspired this study; therefore, initially, searched phenomenon was named *conscience of self-actualization*¹. However, data analysis revealed a broader spectrum of functioning and more complex relations that the conscience would consider. Therefore, *self-actualization* might limit understanding of the concept, as the sphere concerned by it touches the whole functioning of being. For this reason, the final name is the *conscience of becoming the self*, defined below.

Conscience of becoming the self (COBS) recognizes the experience of an ongoing process of shaping/developing personality as moral/existential duty towards the self. Therefore, through self-observation and self-monitoring, the person controls the degree of adequacy between how and what has been pursued and what is sensed (intuitively and reasonably) as the optimal realization of individual potential in respect to personal values and adjustable to external circumstances person's lives and emerged in life span.

In the definition of Conscience of Becoming the Self, reference to values is underlined. A person should not only maximize potential but also be able to find higher meaning and adjust their behavior to it (Opoczyńska, 2002). The higher meaning is not necessarily, associated with God or any spiritual matter. In this context, it is the ability to recognize significant values and follow them in the process of becoming (Frankl, 2009). Values are not only guidelines in this process (Popielski & Mamcarz, 2015); values are

¹All names related to the Conscience of Becoming the Self or the categories identified through data analysis are italicized to enhance readability.

what a person needs for self-growth and healthy development (Popielski, 2008). Reflection on the hierarchy of values might not be a common and aware practice. However, this intellectual dimension of human existence seems necessary for self-actualization (Oleś & Bartnicka-Michalska, 2022).

Coming back to the result, of primarily research, the categories captured based on qualitative analysis were divergent; however, in further investigation, two significant dimensions were included in the conscience of becoming the self: behavioral and inner (Dubas, 2016). Both dimensions have their positive and negative form. The whole structure of the Conscience of Becoming the Self is presented in Table 1.

As the name suggests, the behavioral dimension is how the Conscience of Becoming the Self manifests itself through actions. Those actions vary from progressive to non-progressive in the context of the productivity of own behavior in creating a being. Each category refers to a specific aspect of development, such as the level of engagement and effort put into development, attitude towards external circumstances, the tendency to create and pursue goals, and how a person evaluates their being.

Subsequently, *progressive* behavior describes a person who puts much effort and engagement in their own development (*dynamics*) when difficult, inconvenient circumstances appear, takes the approach of overcoming challenges, and taking advantage of opportunities (*supple adaptation*); their own behaviors try to form into plans and goals to achieve (*sensible adaptation*) and finally, when evaluating own being, concludes it as an overly optimistic result (*positive self-being evaluation*). The *non-progressive* behavior is just the opposite and, in detail, is described through categories like *stagnation* (low engagement and effort, motivation), *passive adaptation* (struggling with difficulties, being easily driven by circumstances, conformism), *non-purposive*

activity (inconsequence in goals achieving, reckless choices, making no plans), *negative self-being evaluation* (low feeling of self-accomplishment, unsatisfactory life spheres).

Table 1

Structure of Conscience of becoming the self based on preliminary studies (Dubas, 2016).

| Dimension | Positive | Negative |
|-------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| | <i>Progressive</i> | <i>Non-progressive</i> |
| <i>Behavioral</i> | dynamics | Stagnation |
| | supple adaptation | passive adaptation |
| | sensible adaptation | non-purposive activity |
| | positive self-being evaluation | negative self-being evaluation |
| | | |
| | <i>Motivational force</i> | <i>Remorse</i> |
| <i>Inner</i> | Cognitive | cognitive |
| | psychological | psychological |
| | emotional | Emotional |
| | | somatic |

The inner dimension is most similar to the experience of conscience. It is the reaction to own quality of development that happens on three levels of experience: *cognitive, psychological, and emotional*. All these experiences have a positive function of motivation, which is why they are called *a motivational force*, and negative, experienced as *remorse*. In *motivational force*, the Conscience of Becoming the Self manifests through productive analysis of own behavior to plan own development and to not make mistakes in the future (*cognitive*), intuition, sort of feeling of need to make one decision over another in order to achieve fulfilment (*psychological*), positive, rewarding emotions when remembering the success of own development (*emotional*).

Remorse is the opposite. *Cognitive* manifestations are thoughts and analyses that become overwhelming and may even take the form of self-blame. *Psychological* manifestations are experienced as feelings of unsure, frustration, and discomfort in the

context of reflection about self-growth. Subsequently, the emotions experienced are negative, mostly anger, sadness, and fear (*emotional*). Lastly, *somatic* manifestations are present only in the remorse dimension of Conscience of Becoming the Self. That is physical experiences of pain in the chest or stomach or difficulty in breathing when thinking about lost chances or when self-growth is assessed as not sufficient (Dubas, 2016).

However, what are the consequences of not following the path that Rogers, Maslow, or Frankl outlined? While being aware of one's potential and understanding what is important and valuable is one thing, actively engaging in behavior aimed to proceed the rightful path of development is another. Existential guilt, described in previous chapters, might be a reaction to decisions that do not fit an inner sense of development (R. May, 1989). Psychologically, meta-pathologies such as depression and neurosis might result from not following the rightful path (Maslow, 2006; Oleś, 2011). The essential notion is to be in contact with oneself and stay consistent with it (Oleś, 2016).

The Conscience of Becoming the Self can be seen as a psychological tool that guides the process of personal growth, optimizing the fulfillment of one's potential and aligning it with a sense of inner meaning. Following this path designed by the Conscience of Becoming the Self should lead to a sense of fulfillment and happiness in life.

Chapter II Qualitative study: A deeper exploration of the Conscience of Becoming the Self

The theoretical approach of humanistic and existential psychology focuses on the phenomenological experience of an individual. Therefore, to fulfill the aim of this study, recognition of the personal framework of meanings and understandings was needed. This would allow extracting experience of the Conscience of Becoming the Self in people's lives. Therefore, a qualitative approach was chosen, as its methodology is designed to describe and understand an individual's subjective perspective (Stemplewska-Żakowicz, 2011), allowing exploration of new areas of research, while on the contrary, the nomothetic approach aims for an explanation of already known problems and phenomenon with use of psychometric or statistical analysis (Straś-Romanowska, 2008).

The significant shift from generalization to individualization is embodied in hermeneutics, which can be explained as the art of understanding (Trzópek, 2006). Intentionality and reflection, those aspects of human nature, are essential for hermeneutic search for meanings (Dilthey, 1987). People's narrations in spoken word and written documents are materials, sources where meanings can be found (Ricoeur, 2003). The interview is a tool that extracts content searched in a qualitative paradigm. The respondent is the creator and author of the narration; however, the questions prepared by the researcher guide this narration in a certain direction. Therefore, provoked by the questions, the participant simultaneously discovers areas of their own functioning in question and constructs meanings and senses interconnected with those areas. In this way, the interview's final narration result is in some way constructed by the researcher and participant (Stemplewska-Żakowicz, 2008). In traditional interviews (semi-structured, open-structured), where the participant and researcher are in direct contact, the influence that the researcher may make is even more visible (Stemplewska-Żakowicz, 2011). The

significant assumption in qualitative studies is the belief that the participants can express truth about themselves (Dębska, 2004).

However, a person is never an isolated entity, as humans are inherently social beings. Consequently, individuals construct their own beings within a broader social, cultural, and historical context (Żurko, 2008). This perspective of social constructionism generally views phenomena as being shaped by their social and historical contexts, in contrast to positivist assertions, where phenomena are considered objective, independent, and subject to mathematical estimation (Straś-Romanowska, 2004). In fact, social constructivism, denies the existence of an objective truth sought in the positivist approach. “Discovering the truth” is replaced by the idea that each person constructs their own truth and reality individually. This is why the nationality of the respondents is considered in this study.

When conducting qualitative research, one can employ methods or methodological strategies rooted in phenomenology. This is a philosophical approach where the subject of inquiry is experience—specifically, the subjective experience of one’s human condition, the perception of external phenomena (Husserl, 1974), and the individual’s relationship to themselves and the world (Heidegger, 2010). In this approach, participants are assumed to possess consciousness and rationality, at least to the extent that each person can access their own experiences, perceive themselves as the subject of these experiences, and share them with the researcher. According to phenomenological assumptions, by analysing data that serves as a carrier of these experiences (e.g., interviews or personal writings), one should arrive at the essence of the experiences, which then form part of the structure of the given phenomenon (Hess-Wiktor & Opoczyńska, 1987). To better understand and immerse oneself in another person’s perception, the concept of *epoché* is recommended—that is, the suspension of one’s own

judgments, awareness, nature, and acquired knowledge (Husserl, 1974). This postulate can be fulfilled in scientific research by including the so-called researcher reflection (positioning) in the work. In this section, the researcher can outline their relationship to the research subject, relevant personal experiences, theoretical inspirations that directed their attention to the problem, and the methodological choices made to creatively control the influence of their own subjectivity on the course of the study. It is important to note that reflexivity and subjectivity on the part of the researcher should not be viewed as negative but rather as valuable resources to be consciously employed in the research process (Palaganas et al., 2017).

These preliminary and general assumptions serve as a reference point for methodological strategies and methods aligned with the phenomenological approach, designed to uncover the essence of experiences forming various phenomena. One such method is Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), developed by Jonathan Smith, along with thematic analysis, template analysis, and Michael Murray's narrative method.

In Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), there are certain preliminary assumptions regarding the research group to maintain homogeneity in demographic or psychological traits. This allows for a deep and rich insight into individuals' experiences in the context of the phenomenon being studied (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2014). A consequence of this approach is a relatively small sample size, typically ranging from a minimum of 3 to 6–10 participants. However, the authors do not impose a strict upper limit, suggesting IPA can also be used in studies with more participants (J. Smith et al., 2022). Research questions in IPA are open-ended, exploratory, and relate to the participants' individual experiences—how they experience, understand, and assign meaning to a given phenomenon. An example question might be: *How do older adults experience the loss of loved ones, and what does this mean to them?*

The most common data source is the semi-structured interview, consisting of 6 to 10 open-ended questions that allow participants to express themselves freely, providing rich insights into their experiences. Interviews can be conducted in person or via online platforms. The method's author also allows for asynchronous text-based interviews, where participants respond in writing (J. Smith et al., 2022).

Before analysis, transcription of interviews (excluding written interviews) is a necessary step. IPA focuses on *what* is said rather than *how* it is said, so it is not essential to record pauses or nonverbal behavior in transcripts (Hess-Wiktor & Opoczyńska, 1987). IPA involves seven steps:

1. Initial immersion in the content through repeated reading.
2. Re-reading with descriptive note-taking, focusing on specific elements of the interview.
3. Condensation of data by generating “experiential statements,” which are a synthesis of participant responses and researcher interpretations.
4. Searching for connections among experiential statements and grouping them into preliminary thematic clusters.
5. Development of Personal Experiential Themes (PETs)—higher-order meta-themes derived from the experiential statements. PETs are organized into tables for clarity.
6. Repeat the process for each new interview from steps 1 to 5, treating each case individually to respect the uniqueness of experiences.
7. Group-level analysis, where PETs from all interviews are compared and clustered into broader *Group Experiential Themes* (GETs) (J. Smith et al., 2022).

The final outcome of the analysis should present a structured hierarchy: Group Experiential Themes encompassing Personal Experiential Themes, which in turn include the experiential statements.

Thematic Analysis, in contrast to IPA, is more theoretically independent, as it does not stem from specific theoretical frameworks like IPA or grounded theory. As such, it is accessible to researchers without extensive theoretical background (Squires, 2023). However, it is also applied in phenomenological research. Thematic analysis can be applied to a wide range of qualitative materials, from in-depth interviews to short open-ended survey responses, images, or graphics, with no restrictions on group size or homogeneity.

Thematic analysis can be conducted inductively, with the researcher "bracketing" prior knowledge and analysing the data as follows:

1. Familiarization with the data through repeated reading and note-taking.
2. Generating initial codes that capture segments of qualitative material.
3. Identifying themes by grouping related codes into higher-level categories.
4. Reviewing and refining themes, comparing them against the data.
5. Defining and naming themes (Squires, 2023).

A variation of thematic analysis is Template Analysis, which serves as an alternative to IPA. It is a deductive form of thematic analysis where an initial set of codes is prepared before analysing the qualitative data. This differs from IPA and inductive thematic analysis, where codes emerge directly from the data.

The first step in template analysis is to prepare a template of preliminary codes based on theoretical knowledge from previous research (Langdrige, 2007). The researcher then repeatedly reads the qualitative material, identifies content matching the predefined codes, and expands or adjusts the template as needed. The qualitative material

used is similar to that in IPA. The result is a hierarchical structure of codes that reflects the analysed data.

Michael Murray adapted narrative analysis from literary studies to qualitative research. In this method, narratives are seen as forms through which individuals construct their reality based on the assumption that everyone builds their personal story from their own experiences (Hess-Wiktor & Opoczyńska, 1987). The research process serves as a prompt for participants to recall experiences and express them naturally through storytelling. Thus, interviews are designed to elicit stories—open-ended, rich questions, or prompts encourage participants to narrate their experiences. The researcher maintains a passive stance, refraining from interrupting and using active listening techniques to support the participant's flow (Hess-Wiktor & Opoczyńska, 1987). Data sources may include interviews but also biographies, letters, or diaries.

Steps in narrative analysis:

1. Collecting narratives, including participant responses, researcher notes, and story structure elements.
2. Narrative analysis, identifying plot elements and key moments.
3. Contextual interpretation, incorporating social, historical contexts and theoretical frameworks (Hess-Wiktor & Opoczyńska, 1987).

Unlike other analyses, narrative analysis does not break data into smaller units such as codes or themes. Instead, it takes a holistic view of the participant's story structure.

All of these approaches aim to access the essence of participants' experiences. The first three methods—IPA, thematic analysis, and template analysis—begin by analysing the entirety of the data (e.g., interviews), then break it down into smaller elements (codes, notes), and finally reconstruct broader thematic and meta-thematic structures that holistically reflect participant experiences. This reflects the hermeneutic circle, where

parts relate to the whole—just as codes and themes relate to the full content and structure of the interview.

In contrast, narrative analysis does not dissect content into codes or themes but seeks to identify the structure of participant's stories, including characters, tone, and episodes (Hess-Wiktor & Opoczyńska, 1987).

Using the first three methods, the researcher asks: *How does a person experience a given phenomenon? What meaning do they assign to it?* Narrative analysis, on the other hand, asks: *How do people build narratives, and how does this relate to meaning-making of lived experiences?* The narrative form reflects natural expression and can be an appealing research method. However, not all experiences are easily “told,” and not all participants have equal storytelling abilities. These are the limitations of narrative research.

IPA, thematic analysis, and narrative methods derive meanings inductively from the source material. In contrast, template analysis uses a deductive approach, preparing a code template based on theoretical knowledge before engaging with empirical data. IPA and thematic analysis are methodologically similar, and some sources even treat interpretative phenomenological analysis as a form of thematic analysis (Langdridge, 2007). The key differences include assumptions of group homogeneity and small sample sizes in IPA, as well as the requirement for rich source material. In contrast, thematic analysis offers greater flexibility regarding the selection of participants and data sources.

While gathering candidates for the first study, one premise was crucial: searching for a wide variety of experiences obtained from diverse individuals capable of reflection about self-development in lifespan. This assumption of a wide variety of experiences serves as both a response to and a foundational premise for addressing the flaw of elitism in Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Therefore, attendance to study was restricted by only two

regulations. Firstly, the minimum age to be considered in the study was 18. Secondly, the interview quality had to be sufficient to conduct the phenomenological analysis procedure. In the context of this study, “sufficient” means that the answers to the open questions from the interview should be expanded beyond one-word answers. The major clue was the integrity of the interviews, enough to allow the creation of reasonable themes. Consequently, thematic analysis was employed in the first study to identify and interpret key patterns within the participant’s narratives.

The second study focuses on a group that, due to the specific nature of their career paths, may be particularly predisposed to experiencing the phenomenon of *Conscience of Becoming the Self*. Artists were selected as participants, given that their professional engagement often demands creativity, originality, and a high degree of personal commitment. The creative process itself may foster an enhanced sensitivity to inner guidance and support individual development choices that diverge from conventional social expectations. This notion aligns with Maslow’s (1968) concept of self-actualizing individuals, who demonstrate creativity not only in art but across everyday experiences. To enable a nuanced and idiographic understanding of such experiences, Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) was employed. The study included four participants, allowing for the depth and detail required by this qualitative approach.

Summarizing, considering research purposes and strengths of each presented method, Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) and thematic analysis were chosen as the most appropriate for this research. Thematic analysis offers the flexibility to extract meaning from a wide range of source materials, making it suitable for analysing larger and more diverse datasets. In contrast, IPA, with its focus on in-depth exploration of individual experiences, particularly through interviews, ensures that the research delves into the depth of the subject matter. Together, these methods complement each other and

align with the theoretical framework of *Conscience of Becoming the Self*, which is rooted in phenomenology and concerned with personal meaning-making.

Expanding concept: Research problem and questions

Considering the broad understating of being based on theory and initial results about the conscience of becoming the self, the following problem appears. What range of experience may the Conscience of Becoming the Self have if verified in a larger population group? Can nationality affect the way Conscience of Becoming the Self is experienced? It is a significant question as the theory and concepts the Conscience of Becoming the Self is inspired by are entirely rooted in Western philosophy and culture.

Therefore, the first aim of this research is:

An exploration of how individuals perceive and experience the conscience of becoming the self.

Subsequently, the research questions are:

- 1. How do people experience the process of becoming and self-growth, and what significance does it hold for them?**
- 2. How do people experience the Conscience of Becoming the Self, and what meaning do they assign to these experiences?**

Being consistent with theoretical approach and methodology of humanistic psychology, the question of how the Conscience of Becoming the Self is experienced is answered with use of qualitative methodology, to underline importance of individual experiences. Method chosen for this study is an interview with open questions. Inspecting phenomenological existence of the Conscience of Becoming the Self, is the task, therefore Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis - a method created based on existential philosophy - was chosen as the fittest for extracting manifestation of the

researched phenomenon. Thematic analysis was utilized to effectively manage and interpret data from a large group.

Researcher's Role: Examining the Potential Influence of the Researcher's

Perspective on the Study

From the standpoint of a qualitative approach, the researcher becomes an integral part of the social reality under investigation (Urbaniak-Zajac & Piekarski, 2022). In dealing with qualitative data, a researcher's involvement is inevitable, both in conducting procedures and in the analysis process. Acknowledging this reality, it is considered good practice to incorporate the researcher's personal perspective, especially when it may impact the study's conduct (Żylicz, 2010). This practice serves as a means to maintain the study's objectivity. On one hand, it provides readers with insight into the researcher's subjective viewpoint on the study's subject. On the other hand, it enables the researcher to better identify and control any potential biases within themselves (Soroko, 2009). Hence, I have chosen to position myself as a researcher within the context of the central issue of this study, which revolves around the experience of adequate self-growth as a moral duty towards oneself.

The stimulus to engage in this particular topic originates from my personal experience and observation of inspirational examples from my family. At the beginning of my educational adventure, I was diagnosed with severe dyslexia, which made the learning process a tragic experience. My mother's confession best describes the situation: at that time, her primary hope was for me to graduate from primary school. This is quite an accurate illustration of the heavy burden parents carry when having children with difficulties. Moreover, it also gives a glimpse of how a child might feel about her capability to achieve anything if every skill is challenging to master.

In addition to my personal experiences, the narrative of my father has been a source of inspiration and guidance. He came from a working-class family, where the need to supply six children made living conditions barely tolerable. The struggle to meet basic needs significantly influenced him and his siblings, limiting their perspective on development. The innate sense or intuition for development was present within him, but he became fully aware of it when he encountered my mother—an educated and ambitious woman. Through her example, he consciously directed his actions. Consequently, he successfully passed the mature exam as an adult. Then, at 30, he started his first year of law and administration studies; simultaneously, his seven-year-old son started attending primary school. Determination and consistency were crucial in completing his studies while fulfilling the responsibilities of his own family. A similar narrative unfolds with two other siblings of my father, who achieved higher education at an unconventional age, such as 50.

Finally, I would like to recount the story of my grandmother, who was acknowledged as a skilled and intelligent pupil. Unfortunately, due to environmental circumstances, she could not cultivate her intellectual abilities, resulting in her having only a primary education. Nevertheless, as a single mother working as a dressmaker, she remarkably provided for and supported her three daughters, enabling them to pursue and attain a university education.

Those were the most influential for me histories to start to wonder what place self-growth has in people's priorities. What impact (positive or negative) does the perception of insufficient self-progress have on people? Overall, I became pretty attentive to issues of troubled self-growth.

My biographical motivation to engage with these subjects reflected my 'regular person' perception of the issue. Based on my life experiences, I pursued specific

theoretical directions to find answers to my questions. Humanistic and existential psychology seemed most suitable and aligned with my intuition, as these approaches emphasize individual perception and the significance of personal choices. In particular, humanistic and positive psychology place self-development and well-being at the center of discussion. As I delved into psychological literature, I encountered related philosophical concepts. Consequently, I sought to familiarize myself with a philosophical perspective enriched by descriptions of psychological and emotional states regarding awareness of one's own being. These theoretical explorations further influenced my perception of the problem and the participants.

The problem centered around self-progress and was naturally connected to the quality of life. What was missing was a construct that could measure an individual's experiences regarding the level and adequacy of their self-progress and the process of becoming. The existential approach emphasizes the importance and versatility of taking responsibility for one's current state. Considering this and the fact that the prominent role of the construct would involve judging and assessing arising from personal experience, *conscience* emerged as the key element. Hence, 'Conscience of Becoming the Self' was chosen as the name for the construct that, on a theoretical level, would define the problem I was occupied with.

Recognizing that the Conscience of Becoming the Self might primarily focus on self-actualization, defined as the mastery of skills and abilities, I designed my interviews to explore this concept. I also acknowledged the potential for other areas of development to emerge. Therefore, I crafted questions that would foster open reflection, such as describing the self or the process of creating the self, alongside more specific questions that would ask directly about, for example, unfinished plans.

Relying heavily on humanistic, positive, and existential approaches had several implications. I assumed a relatively positive, attentive, and aware human nature when contemplating oneself or dealing with difficulties and adjusting to them. Therefore, in reading and analyzing the interviews, I expected that I would tend to focus on positive elements that might show participants as those who keep trying, even if sometimes failing, while potentially overlooking signs of real neglect and lack of awareness stemming from a lack of interest in their self-progress.

Furthermore, the phenomenological approach, which emphasizes the individuality and uniqueness of personal experiences, seemed more suitable as the foundation for the Conscience of Becoming the Self than statistical analysis. However, this approach also introduces some difficulties to the study. The essence of the concept is to make it flexible and easily adaptable to an individual's experiences. On the other hand, this approach does not allow for the specification and description of an optimal and universal process of becoming the self, as this process will depend on each individual case. Thus, what would be considered a central subject and how an individual's experiences are prioritized in the context of the Conscience of Becoming the Self are dependent on the individual's perspective.

It was necessary to respect the subjectivity of experiences and refrain from imposing on participants what should be central to their experiences, what was important, functional, or essential. Consequently, suitable and developmental actions for one person might be perceived as insufficient or even wrong for another. While I had my own ideas about what an adequate process of becoming should be, I had to remember that this was my viewpoint. This awareness helped me avoid making unintentional evaluations while analyzing the interview material.

A similar approach was taken regarding the understanding of some psychological concepts present in the interview. I chose not to define these concepts to avoid biasing participant's interpretations. Consequently, I was prepared to encounter participant's definitions that might contradict my own or even commonly accepted ones. For example, I view authenticity as a state where actions align with motivations, resulting in feelings of peace and fulfillment. However, to my surprise, some participants highlighted negative and even dangerous aspects of this state. One participant even inverted the definition by asserting that wearing masks and acting contrary to one's nature is an expression of authenticity if it aligns with one's will. In such situations, I accept the participant's perspective without deeming it incorrect. While I might consider that some responses could be rationalizations, I ultimately aimed to include all participant reflections as genuine.

The practical approach I took led to certain assumptions about the participants, which are as follows: Firstly, I assumed that participants are familiar with concepts such as personality, authenticity, conscience, awareness, self-development, morality, and self-growth, as these terms are commonly used in public discourse. Therefore, it is likely that each person has encountered these words and developed a personal understanding of them. Secondly, drawing from existential philosophy and psychology, I believe that a fundamental aspect of human existence is the experience of self-reflection and introspection. Consequently, the responses given in the interviews represent the participant's current awareness of the process of becoming their true selves and the Conscience of Becoming the Self, sharing reflections that are accessible to them at that moment.

This approach places significant trust in the participants and their ability to reflect. It allows them to follow their instincts in understanding the questions and deciding how

much to share. However, it also risks engaging with individuals who, at the time of the study, may not have been ready for this level of reflection without guidance from the interviewer. As a researcher, I needed to encounter a wide range of reflection and awareness levels to obtain realistic and genuine data about the actual presence of the issues examined in this study in the participant's lives.

Interacting closely with participants can alter the entire interview experience, shifting it from what a person knows at the moment to what they learn during the interview process. This can make the interaction less informative and more therapeutic. Reflecting on my psychological practice with patients and my master's degree research, where face-to-face interviews were conducted, I realized my ability to engage with people and operate within their set of meanings could guide each participant's mental work. Ultimately, the answers provided might reflect a distorted version of the participant's awareness and experiences, skewed in a favourable direction (e.g., showing higher awareness). Therefore, I prioritized the independent work of participants over potentially richer yet guided co-narratives between the participant and researcher.

Considering this, I anticipated that individuals might not be deeply engaged in reflecting on self-growth and their own decisions, even if they have encountered the Conscience of Becoming the Self in their lives. Moreover, I aimed to avoid inadvertently influencing their thoughts. I sought unbiased responses, recognizing that participants might misunderstand or grapple with the question's intentions.

This is the second study on the Conscience of Becoming the Self. The first study underscored the importance of accepting individual perspectives, alerting me as a researcher to avoid imposing my own views while analysing the data. Another crucial insight from the first study was the need to revise the interview questions. The original questions were heavily skewed towards exploring the negative outcomes of an inadequate

process of becoming. The first study suggested that the phenomenon in question may also have a positive side. Therefore, it is crucial to explore both the positive and negative outcomes of the phenomenon to ensure a comprehensive understanding.

Furthermore, during the interviews in the first study, it was crucial to provide participants with the opportunity to share information about themselves beyond the context of the Conscience of Becoming the Self. The initial question of the original study, "Do you feel that you have achieved what you intended in life? What are your greatest successes?" served as a catalyst for participants to open up about their lives. As a researcher, I followed up with specific questions designed to guide participants and prepare them for more challenging inquiries. That is why, in the current interview, the first four questions focus on the process of self-creation and self-description, allowing participants to reflect on themselves independently.

The disadvantage of written interviews was the possibility that participant's reflections might not have naturally gravitated toward the concept of the Conscience of Becoming the Self, as this notion—interlinking the process of becoming with conscience—is not widely recognized in common knowledge. In fact, such a term does not yet exist within the scientific literature. To address this issue, I took a proactive approach. Knowing that I would not be present to explore participant's narratives with them, I implemented more direct questions to elicit their experiences related to the Conscience of Becoming the Self. Specifically, I included the question "What do you think: who we become can be subject of sort of special conscious?" at the end of the interview.

To minimize the potential suggestive effect of the questions, I structured the interview to begin with more general experiences of the participants. Toward the end of the interview, the questions gradually became more specific, addressing the problem of

the Conscience of Becoming the Self. However, I remained aware of the possibility that participants might still be influenced by the questions. Therefore, during data analysis, I carefully examined whether the answers contained logical, coherent narratives within the context of each interview. I assessed whether the participants' explanations were genuinely drawn from their experiences or if they were merely paraphrasing the questions.

During the analysis, I was mindful to respect participant's unique experiences and ensure that the manifestations of the Conscience of Becoming the Self, derived from my master's research, did not overshadow these individual experiences. This led to a conscious decision to avoid creating codes with labels directly associated with the phenomenon in question, especially at the individual analysis level. However, the transition from the individual to the meta-level required the reuse of some manifestations, as they seemed to align with the broader understanding of the data. In these cases, I constantly questioned whether this strategy was the best fit at the moment.

Similarly, I obeyed the requirement to treat each interview as independent. Therefore, while analysing another interview, I made a conscious effort to avoid the temptation to reuse some categories or themes that seemed suitable but were created for a different interview. This deliberate approach, using other words, phrases, or even longer descriptions, instilled confidence in the integrity of my research.

Finally, in the research process, I encountered two main challenges. First was the overwhelming amount of data compared to what was expected from the required size of the study group. The second challenge was the unfulfilled requirement for group homogeneity. While planning the study, I realized that the concept of the Conscience of Becoming the Self was only in its initial stages of development. As a result, it was difficult to determine the criteria participants should meet to be included in the study.

Ensuring group homogeneity risked that the experiences—and thus manifestations of Conscience of Becoming the Self—would be too specific and characteristic of the designed group study, making them less applicable to a broader audience. Therefore, hypothetical definitions and the overall understanding of the phenomena based on such results might have steered further research about the Conscience of Becoming the Self in the wrong direction. In this context, I intentionally sought to avoid repeating Maslow's mistake of drawing conclusions from an unrepresentative and exclusive group. Another critical concern was whether results from a small group of 12 participants would be sufficient to introduce a new phenomenon. Additionally, this intuition was influenced by habits formed during my training in conducting quantitative research, which proved to be misleading for this study.

Initially, I approached the data using the Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis strategy. This strategy was effective for analysing individual interviews. By focusing in-depth on one interview at a time, reading and rereading while taking notes, I was able to thoroughly understand each participant's experiences. Although the process was time-consuming, I found the results worthwhile. However, to enable meta-analysis and address the challenge of heterogeneity, I employed thematic analysis, which is well-suited for large participant groups and accommodates various types of qualitative data.

Still, the challenge arose when the study shifted focus to interconnecting themes from all interviews, aiming to identify meta-themes that would synthesize the data. This approach presented practical difficulties, such as managing the sheer volume of paper sheets and the cognitive load required to process the data. Additionally, at this stage of working on "Conscience of Becoming the Self," I did not feel confident enough to discern which data was essential and which could be left uninterpreted. Making such decisions meant imposing my own viewpoint while analysing individual interviews, such as

determining which definitions of authenticity were correct and which participants had misunderstood the concept. To address this issue, thematic analysis was chosen as the most appropriate method, as it enables the effective management and interpretation of large and diverse data sets. I realized that a narrative format for reporting results would make the thesis excessively long and difficult to understand. Consequently, I used tables to synthesize data efficiently. This is why the results sections of primarily comprise tables, which condense data for economic purposes and improve readability. However, this approach is less consistent with qualitative methodology, as tables require compressing data into small sections, potentially obscuring the origins of some categories without initial narration. To address this, I included examples of individual analyses to demonstrate the process. Additionally, models were created to help visualize the data, ensuring clarity and understanding of the research.

This data provided a broader picture of the Conscience of Becoming the Self (COBS) within a larger, more diverse group. However, there remained a need to explore how COBS is experienced in a group where the phenomenon is likely to be particularly pronounced. Following a suggestion by Professor Piotr Oleś, a second study was conducted. This time, a homogeneous group of visual artists was selected and examined using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), allowing for a more in-depth and individually focused exploration of the experience.

Study-1: Exploring a Broad Spectrum of Experiences Using Thematic Analysis

The purpose of this study is to collect qualitative material from a diverse and sizable group of participants, with the aim of analysing it to uncover a broader understanding of how they experience the process of becoming, self-growth, and the Conscience of Becoming the Self.

Methodology

Measure: Online Written Interview (OWI)

The tool of this study is a structured interview, with only open questions. In his book, Earl Babbie (Babbie, 2008) explains broad forms of conducting interviews, such as a phone interview or interview using a discs, where the participant filled in an interview in digital format. Nowadays, discs are not in use anymore. However, the possibility of interviewing in a nontraditional way is still present in form of online interviews e.g., video calls, emails, blogs (Salmons, 2012). Email Interviews are examples of technological usage in qualitative studies, where the answers have written form (Burns, 2010; Hawkins, 2018). The interview is then based on the email exchange between the participant and the researcher.

In this study, the interviews had written form but were not conducted by email. Using google docs features, the interview text had a digital form. Thus, it was possible to open it on the participant's personal computer. That is why the measure's name is an online written interview to distinguish it from an Email Interview or Online interview (where the interview is conducted using Skype or other visual tools). I decided to use this interview form as it is convenient for participants. A participant could fill in the interview at any moment, for how long he or she wanted to. The interview was easy to access. However, crucial was that reflection of the participant was not biased by the interviewer.

The interview of this study is a modified version of the interview I used for my master thesis, where research on the Conscience of Becoming the Self was initialized. At first original version (see Appendix 1) was studied to extract the most helpful question but also to find aspects the original interview did not cover. Therefore, a modified interview of 10 questions has been created in parallel Polish and English versions. The Polish version has been read by three judges (native Polish speakers with higher

education major in social science) to assess the understandability and clarity of the questions. In the following step pilot study with five participants was conducted, allowing further slight modifications. The author first translated an English version, then put it into verification by a native English speaker (American, with higher education) and a non-English and non-Polish user (Italian, with higher education). The help of non-English, non-Polish native speakers was essential to test the usefulness of an interview for non-English speaking groups planned to be part of the research.

The interview is designed to open and guide the respondent's reflection on self-realization and the possible appearance of the Conscience of Becoming the Self manifestations in their life. Questions revolve around the subject of how a person perceives and describes oneself, encouraging respondents to think through their path of self-realization, success, downfalls, and the biographical circumstances of this process. The critical point was to not ask directly about the Conscience of Becoming the Self or its manifestations but to give respondents free space to contemplate their own process of creating self unbiasedly. A few questions initialize a more specific reference to the Conscience of Becoming the Self. Those questions draw respondents' attention to the consistency (or discrepancy) between their actions and their personality or personal values, as well as lost chances in life and experiences associated with those moments. Finally, there are direct questions about respondent's understanding of the inner standard of being, the vision of self, and "special conscience concerning self-development". Table 2 explains the types of reflection each question may trigger in a participant.

Table 2

Interview questions and adequate areas of reflection

| Questions | Area of reflection |
|--|--------------------|
| 1. <u>How would you describe yourself?</u> | Who Am I? |

| | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Begin with general characteristics.</i> - <i>Which are the most essential characteristics of your personality?</i> - <i>List characteristics and achievements you are most proud of.</i> - <i>Name a characteristic you are not satisfied with.</i> - <i>List characteristics you would like to change.</i> | <p>This set of questions provides participants with the opportunity to describe themselves openly. It begins with a free reflection, followed by guided narration through follow-up questions.</p> |
| <p>2. <u>Do you feel good with who you are?</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>What (if any) changes would you do to feel more like yourself?</i> - <i>Does feeling more “you” a source of comfort or otherwise (explain why)</i> | <p>How do I feel about myself?</p> <p>This set of questions makes participants reflect on how they experience themselves.</p> |
| <p>3. <u>How did you manage to be at this point in your life?</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>What did you consider important?</i> - <i>What were your costs (sacrifices) to get to this point?</i> - <i>What difficult choices did you have to make?</i> - <i>What were your achievements?</i> - <i>What did you find easy to do?</i> - <i>What would you do differently?</i> | <p>What has been my life path up to this day?</p> <p>This set of questions aims to make participants reflect on their past and how they created their life path.</p> <p>Furthermore, these questions make it possible to extract manifestations of the Conscience of Becoming the Self in people’s behavior.</p> |
| <p>4. <u>How has the process of creating “you” as a person changed over time?</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>How were your priorities formed?</i> - <i>How would you describe this process during the various stages of your life?</i> - <i>Can you point out and describe the most crucial circumstances that led to this?</i> | <p>What has shaped me into the person I am today?</p> <p>These questions prompt participants to reflect on the process of shaping them as a certain person.</p> <p>Furthermore, these questions make it possible to extract manifestations of the Conscience of Becoming the Self in people’s behavior.</p> |
| <p>5. <u>Have you ever experienced a situation where you did something significant and was suitable for your personality?</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Describe that situation</i> - <i>How often do you recollect those moments?</i> - <i>What pushed you to do it that way?</i> - <i>How did you feel before and after that experience?</i> | <p>Positive achievements of my development</p> <p>These questions explore potential positive manifestations of the Conscience of Becoming the Self through personal experiences of success and achievements in self-development.</p> |
| <p>6. <u>Do you remember unfinished plans, dreams, or situations where you could have done something significant for your personal development, but hesitated and felt bad afterward?</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>How frequently do you recall these memories?</i> - <i>Describe what you experience when recalling these moments? (Do you feel guilty about those situations)</i> - <i>Do you think those situations could have changed who you are now? (if yes, explain how)</i> - <i>Can you give example of such a (memorable) unfinished plans, dreams or wasted occasions *</i> | <p>Failures and losses in my development</p> <p>These questions explore potential negative manifestations of the Conscience of Becoming the Self through personal experiences of losses and failures in self-development.</p> |
| <p>7. <u>Can you recall situations where decisions were</u></p> | <p>Me, being inconsistent with myself.</p> |

| | |
|--|--|
| <p><u>made that were unsuitable for your personality? What are your experiences in a situation of making not suitable for your character decisions?</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How frequently do you think about these moments? - What impact does retrospective reflection of those moments have on you? - What do you feel when there is lack of authenticity in your life? | <p>These questions explore potential negative manifestations of the Conscience of Becoming the Self through personal experiences of inconsistency between personality and made decisions.</p> <p>The other aspect considered is the experience of inauthenticity.</p> |
| <p><u>8. Have you ever experienced a feeling of inconsistency between who you are and who you ought to be?</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How would you describe these feelings? - In what kind of situation, it appears? | <p>How do I experience the difference between who I am and who I desire to be?</p> <p>These questions investigate possible manifestations of the Conscience of Becoming the Self by delving into personal experiences of the gap between one's current self and one's desired self.</p> |
| <p><u>9. Have you ever experienced sort of "vision of yourself" according to which you would make your decisions?</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How would you describe this experience? - Describe circumstances of its' appearance - How would you understand and define such a term as "inner standard of being"? | <p>What accompanies me while making decisions concerning self-development?</p> <p>These questions prompt participants to recall if they envision themselves when making decisions or how they define their 'inner standard of being.</p> |
| <p><u>10. What do you think: who we become can be subject of sort of special conscious?</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Imagine what function this phenomenon would take /what difference would it make in people's life - What forms could it take - Have you ever experienced such a phenomenon | <p>What importance does self-development have for me?</p> <p>Does self-development have a universal importance?</p> <p>These questions indirectly acquaint participants with the core concept of the Conscience of Becoming the Self. On one hand, participants are encouraged to share their experiences with this phenomenon. On the other hand, they are asked to elucidate how this phenomenon would manifest and what its purpose would be.</p> |

Both language versions of the interview are presented in Table 3.

Table 3

Interview: Polish and English versions

| Polish version | English version |
|---|--|
| <p>1. W jaki sposób opisałbyś (opisałabyś) siebie?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Zacznij od ogólnej charakterystyki. - Jakie cechy/ właściwości są najbardziej | <p>1. How would you describe yourself?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Begin with general characteristics. - Which are the most essential |

- kluczowe dla Twojej osobowości?
- Z jakich własnych cech/właściwości oraz osiągnięć jesteś najbardziej dumny(a)?
- Z jakich własnych cech jesteś niezadowolony(a)?
- Co w sobie chciałbyś(aś) poprawić?

2. *Czy dobrze czujesz się z tym jaki/jaka jesteś?*

- Jakie zmiany (jeżeli jakiekolwiek) wprowadziłbyś(aś) żeby poczuć się bardziej sobą?
- Czy bycie bardziej sobą jest źródłem komfortu, czy przeciwnie? Wyjaśnij, dlaczego

3. *W jaki sposób udało Ci się dotrzeć do tego momentu w życiu?*

- Co byłoby ważne?
- Jakie były Twoje koszty (np. Wyrzeczenia)?
- Co nastręczało najwięcej trudności?
- Jakie były Twoje zyski?
- Co było stosunkowo łatwe?
- Co zrobiłbyś(aś) inaczej? Opisz

4. *W jaki sposób przebiegał proces kształtowania Ciebie jako osoby?*

- W jaki sposób formowały się Twoje priorytety?
- Jak opisałbyś(opisałabyś) proces stawiania się osobą taką jaką jesteś w różnych okresach życia?
- Czy możesz wskazać najbardziej kluczowe okoliczności oraz je krótko opisać?

5. *Czy przypominasz sobie sytuację, w której zrobiłeś(aś) coś bardzo znaczącego i (w Twoim odczuciu) adekwatnego dla własnej osobowości?*

- Opisz tę sytuację.
- Jak często przypominasz sobie takie momenty?
- Co popchnęło Cię (było motywatorem) żeby postąpić w taki a nie inny sposób w tej sytuacji?
- Jak się czuleś(aś) przed i po tej sytuacji?

6. *Czy przypominasz sobie nie zrealizowane możliwości, plany, marzenia lub takie sytuacje w życiu, w których można było coś osiągnąć lub zrobić coś ważnego dla rozwoju własnej osobowości, a jednak zaniechałeś(aś) tego, a potem było szkoda?*

- Jak często przypominasz sobie takie momenty?
- Opisz czego doświadczasz, kiedy przypominasz sobie takie momenty (czy

characteristics of your personality?

- List characteristics and achievements you are most proud of.
- Name a characteristic you are not satisfied with.
- List characteristics you would like to change.

2. *Do you feel good with who you are?*

- What (if any) changes would you do to feel more like yourself?
- Does feeling more "you" a source of comfort or otherwise (explain why)

3. *How did you manage to be at this point in your life?*

- What did you consider important?
- What were your costs (sacrifices) to get to this point?
- What difficult choices did you have to make?
- What were your achievements?
- What did you find easy to do?
- What would you do differently?
Describe

4. *How has the process of creating "you" as a person changed over time?*

- How were your priorities formed?
- How would you describe this process during the various stages of your life?
- Can you point out and describe the most crucial circumstances that led to this?

5. *Have you ever experienced a situation where you did something significant and was suitable for your personality?*

- describe that situation
- how often do you recollect those moments?
- what pushed you to do it that way?
- how did you feel before and after that experience?

6. *Do you remember unfinished plans, dreams, or situations where you could have done something significant for your personal development, but hesitated and felt bad afterward?*

- How frequently do you recall these memories?
- Describe what you experience when recalling these moments? (Do you

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>czujesz wyrzuty sumienia).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Czy myślisz, że te sytuacje mogłyby zmienić to kim jesteś teraz (jeśli tak opisz w jaki sposób)? - Możesz podać przykład takich niezrealizowanych planów, marzeń, czy niewykorzystanych okazji (takich które zapadły Ci najbardziej w pamięć)? * <p>7. Czy możesz przypomnieć sobie w jaki sposób doświadczasz sytuacji w których podejmujesz decyzje niezgodne z własną osobowością?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Jak często pojawiają się wspomnienia takich sytuacji? - Jaki wpływ te sytuacje oraz refleksje na ten temat mają na Ciebie? - Jak się czujesz w chwilach braku autentyczności w swoim życiu? <p>8. Czy kiedykolwiek doświadczyłeś(aś) poczucia niespójności między tym kim jesteś a kim powinieneś(powinnaś) być?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Jak opisał(a) byś to poczucie? - W jakich sytuacjach się ono pojawia? <p>9. Czy kiedykolwiek odczuwałeś(aś) "wizję siebie", zgodnie z którą podejmowałeś własne decyzje?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Jak opisał(a) byś to doświadczenie? - Opisz warunki w jakich pojawia się to doświadczenie. - Gdyby istniało pojęcie "wewnętrzny standard stawiania się", jak rozumiał(a) byś to pojęcie? <p>10. Jak myślisz: czy to jacy się stajemy w toku naszego życia może podlegać swego rodzaju sumieniu?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Jakie pełniłoby funkcje/jakie miałoby znaczenie takie sumienie? - Jak mogłoby się przejawiać takie sumienie? - Czy doświadczałeś(aś) działania takiego sumienia (jeśli tak, opisz w jaki sposób)? <p>Czy doświadczyłeś/doświadczyłaś jakiegoś traumatycznego wydarzenia w niedawnym czasie?</p> <p>Tak</p> <p>Nie</p> | <p>feel guilty about those situations)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Do you think those situations could have changed who you are now? (if yes, explain how) - Can you give example of such a (memorable) unfinished plans, dreams or wasted occasions * <p>7. Can you recall situations where decisions were made that were unsuitable for your personality? What are your experiences in a situation of making not suitable for your character decisions?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How frequently do you think about these moments? - What impact does retrospective reflection of those moments have on you? - What do you feel when there is lack of authenticity in your life? <p>8. Have you ever experienced a feeling of inconsistency between who you are and who you ought to be?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How would you describe these feelings? - In what kind of situation, it appears? <p>9. Have you ever experienced sort of "vision of yourself" according to which you would made your decisions?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How would you describe this experience? - Describe circumstances of its' appearance - How would you understand and define such a term as "inner standard of being"? <p>10. What do you think: who we become can be subject of sort of special conscious?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Imagine what function this phenomenon would take /what difference would it make in people's life - What forms could it take - Have you ever experienced such a phenomenon <p>Did you experience serious traumatic events in recent times?</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>No</p> |
|---|---|

Important to note is that the study started within the Polish group. Therefore, based on the initial results of the Polish group, an additional question was added to the

English version of the interview. This question is marked with an asterisk (*) in Table 3. It is the last sub-question in question 6. The Polish version of the interview remained unchanged as it is presented in Table 3.

The last question serves as a controlling question based on insights from preliminary interviews conducted prior to my master's degree studies. Its purpose is to verify whether the participant has recently experienced traumatic events that might influence the course of their reflections during the interview. This question has become particularly important during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Procedure

Data collection

The study was conducted entirely online. Participants had to answer the questions by writing. Using Google Workspace features, two separate forms were created for Polish and non-Polish participants. The link to the study was spread via social media websites such as Facebook and free websites aimed to help collect data, such as Survey Circle, and distributed with the help of students. Interviews were gathered from 5th May 2020 to 8th October 2021.

Qualitative data analysis: phenomenological thematic analysis

Thematic analysis was chosen for this study as it best suited the nature of the qualitative data collected. The analysis followed five key stages of implementation:

1. Immersing in the data through multiple readings and reflective note-taking.
2. Developing preliminary codes to label meaningful portions of the content.
3. Clustering similar codes together to form broader conceptual themes.
4. Evaluating and adjusting themes in light of the overall data set.
5. Clarifying and naming each theme to capture its core essence (Squires, 2023).

However, to emphasize individual experience, this study incorporated the IPA principle of giving full attention to one interview at a time within the thematic analysis framework.

First step. I started with a simple reading of the interview. The second reading was more intentional and required free notes. The third reading was not only reading the text but also reading notes and improving them. This process could be repetitive, e.g., repeated three or five times (reading, rereading, and changing notes). The more complex and diverse answers, the more repetitions in this step. The notes could be made directly in WORD using comments or on a separate sheet of paper.

Second step. In the previous step, the goal was to understand the narration. In this step, I tried to find significance within participant's responses. For example, answering on the following question:

4. How has the process of creating you as a person changed over time? How were your priorities formed?

Kasia (26 years), wrote: *Na początku bardzo ważna była nauka, gdyż zawsze chciałam się dalej rozwijać. Później kariera, jednak w jej trakcie uświadomiłam sobie że warto pielęgnować znajomości czy to z pracy czy z innych etapów życia i teraz staram się otaczać ciekawymi ludźmi. Staram się aby w swoim życiu jak najbardziej pomagać i być wsparciem dla innych.*

The text of the interviews was analyzed line by line in search for meaningful phrases. In this example, the underlined parts are assessed as significant in this person's development. Therefore, codes are: *nauka* (education), *dalej się rozwijać* (constant development), *kariera* (career), *pielęgnować znajomości* (taking care of friendships), *pomagać i być wsparciem dla innych* (being helpful and supportive for others). As it can be seen, codes emerge from data and are not arbitrarily made. In some cases, the

language used by participants was precise enough to name code using the exact phrase from the interview². In other cases, I had to give the name for the code. Analogically, codes were made for the whole interview.

Third step. After that, I analyzed all created codes in the context of similarities and grouped them adequately. This allows to make themes that capture a sense of each group of codes. Therefore, the theme from the codes above could be *significant areas for the process of becoming the self*.

Fourth step. When themes were created for the whole interview, I analyzed their associations, verified their adequacy, and made changes if necessary. This analysis led to the creation of categories and subcategories as in example below:

The foundation of self-development

- constant aspects of self-development: need of constant development, need of planned development, constant work on character
- personal recipe for success: assiduity, self-confidence, reasonable planning, faith in set goal, humility
- meaning of carrier: goal, success, source of development, stabilization, source of confidence
- utility: being useful/helpful for others

The foundation of self-development is a superior category for themes such as *constant aspects of self-development*. The elements after the colon are subthemes for the former theme.

² Similar code-extracting procedure in grounded theory: *in vivo codes* (Charmaz, 2009)

Sometimes I used code – a phrase from the interview - as the name for the theme. That were cases when the participant's choice of wording was very accurate.

This whole procedure, from steps 1-4, can be nonlinear. For example, rereading might be repeated throughout all steps for a better understanding of themes. It was already mentioned that the complexity of the interview required more intellectual effort from the researcher. An interview where participants answered questions with simple, few-word statements would take around two hours of interpretation. Thus, analyzing the interviews with average complexity would take around 6-20 hours. There were cases, however, when narrations gave a unique perspective or were incoherent. Therefore, creating synthesized themes took much work. This kind of interview could take even one week to analyse.

These analyses were made directly in WORD file from the interview, below the text of the interview. On sheet of paper, manual analysis were made, as it is easier for example to visualize, move elements from themes, or giving self-notes. In the WORD file, the final result was written, in a form as in an example of *the foundation of self-development*.

This 1-4 steps procedure was repeated with every interview, with special attention to not search for already made themes (in previous interviews). This state of fresh mind I hoped to maintain focus on individuality in thematic analysis.

Therefore, when all interviews went through a 1-4 step procedure, step five was conducted.

Step five: To ensure a comprehensive understanding of the emerging themes and to clearly define each of them, a detailed table was created. An example of its content is presented below. Initially, only the first four columns were completed for each

participant. The full version of this table spans approximately 100 pages; therefore, it has been placed in the appendices (Appendix 2) rather than included in the main text.

| Interview data | Content from interview(notes) | Themes | Definition | Meta category |
|--|---|--|--|--|
| Int 1: Men, 22 years old, Polish, Bachelor's degree, Polish | - appearance of characteristics described as most important is consistent throughout whole interview - self-awareness of own authentic being | Self-awareness of one's own being | A coherent understanding of one's qualities, interconnected with biographical knowledge, that helps recognize the position of one's self | FOUNDATION FOR AUTHENTIC SELF |

At this stage, the fifth column remained empty; however, the table already included concise information about the participants, the identified themes, relevant interview excerpts, and definitions of each theme. In the following step, the goal was to develop meta-categories that would group the established themes into broader conceptual clusters. To achieve that, all subcategories and themes (just names, no definitions) were printed.

In smaller samples, probably, it is possible to reflect on the material by reading page after page. However, with 61 participants, it was impossible to memorize and thus analyze categories by reading traditionally, e.g., like a book. Finally, all the material took 82 pages.

The data appeared to be enormously rich in content and potential for interpretation. To allow crossover analysis, themes and categories printed on paper were put on the floor, so it could be possible to see them all at once by walking and glancing above them and making notes. This way, ideas for meta-categories were initially made. Furthermore, I started grouping pages that have similar content. After that, I focused on

analysing categories on each page. Those which would not fit were cut out and moved to groups more convergent with the content.

Initial meta-categories created on that stage of analysis were:

- actualization of the past
- basic needs
- Conscience of Becoming the Self
- foundation for authentic self
- position to emotions
- position to social context
- quality of the interview
- significant factors of development
- strategy and patterns of development

Having established these nine meta-categories, I proceeded to complete the remaining fifth column by selecting the most fitting meta-category for each defined theme. In this way, I established nine meta-categories, each encompassing a set of related themes.

At this point, although nine meta-categories had already been created and relevant themes assigned to each of them, I felt the need to revisit Step Four — evaluating and adjusting the product of my analysis. To support this process, I created separate document files for each meta-category. In each file, I copied all themes and subthemes associated with that category. Each document began with the name of the meta-category (bolded and underlined), followed by the corresponding themes (also bolded and underlined), and their respective subthemes (in regular font). An example is provided below. In total, nine files were created, ranging from 2 to 18 pages in length.

In files, I was searching if, in one meta category, might be content that also fits into other meta categories. I did it by marking content with adequate colours. Each colour represented a specific meta-category.

- actualization of the past: blue
- basic needs: green
- quality of the interview: grey
- significant factors of self-development: orange (letters)
- position to social context: pink
- Conscience of Becoming the Self: purple
- strategy and pattern of development: dark yellow
- the foundation for authentic self: red
- position to emotions: bordeaux

Therefore, each colour would symbolize a particular meta-category. Below I pasted an example of this work.

Significant factors of self-development

Progress pushers

- curiosity
- stubbornness
- dreams
- goals
- discovered passion: music
- consequence
- always being authentic

- vision of self(vision of self and goal to achieve) present when making decisions

Positive resources

- faith in future
- faith in the kindness of people
- finances resource
- independency
- job as source of stabilization
- set goals: studies and job (though difficulty in deciding priorities)
- + importance of material goods and leisure time

This procedure helped to visualize the data and reveal the interconnections within the content. It also demonstrated that simply defining the nine meta-categories would not be sufficient to capture the full meaning that emerges between and within individual themes and categories.

Therefore, the final step was rearranging all data into tables and models to capture the meaning of extracted processes and their connections. These models and tables are a form of theoretical coding and, simultaneously, the final result of the thematic analysis conducted in the Study-1. All 15 tables and four figures are presented in the Result section, divided into three subchapters: *Quality of the interviews*, *Constructing of being, perceiving being*, *Structure of Conscience of Becoming the Self*.

In subchapter *Quality of the interviews*, technical aspects of interviews are gathered, mainly based on content from the “quality of the interviews” meta-category, including consistent issues from the other eight meta-categories (Table 12).

Subchapter *Construction of being, perceiving being*, grasps complex processes concerning being. Those issues reappear in all meta-categories through different lenses, thus giving different perspectives. However, the content of five of them is taken into main consideration. Those meta-categories are actualization of the past, basic needs, the foundation for the authentic self, position to emotions, and position to social context. The content of the last two meta-categories is self-explanatory by their title. However, the first three need some words of explanation. Actualization of the past meta-category captures content that relates to comparisons people make between current and past actualization in their narrations. Basic needs meta-category refers to aspects of neglected needs that were present in narrations. Lastly, Foundation for authentic being meta-category, reflects significant elements that people included while reflecting on their authenticity, personality, identity.

Content from these meta-categories was broad and finally was divided into two main theoretical perspectives: construction of being (what and how content described in meta-categories is involved in this process) and perceiving being (what is the phenomenological perception of being based on emerged meta-categories). That is why this subchapter is named as it is. Elements that could be assigned to constructing being are split into two slightly different but complementary paths: distinguishing self and personality (Table 13) and gaining awareness (Table 14, Table 15, Table 16). While for perceiving being, attention was focused on the phenomenological experience of authenticity and inauthenticity (Table 17,

Table 18, Table 19, Table 20).

Subchapter *Structure of Conscience of Becoming the Self* presents models (Figure 2, Figure 3, Figure 4) and tables (Table 21, Table 22, Table 23, Table 24, Table 25, Table 26) with content from meta-categories mainly related to the subject. Primary sources of data for this issue are meta-categories: Conscience of Becoming the Self, significant factors of development, strategy and pattern of development. However, as explained before, content from other meta-categories was also considered if relevant.

I initially conducted a thematic analysis of the Polish interviews, following steps one through six. During the subsequent analysis of British groups and individual cases from other countries, I observed that the data largely aligned with the models developed from the Polish material. Therefore, I expanded and enriched the original Polish models by integrating relevant data from these additional sources.

The size of the participant group in this study is relatively large, even by thematic analysis standards, which made the process particularly demanding. From March 2021 to August 2022, the thematic analysis procedure was systematically carried out on the collected data.

Participants

Polish group. From the initial 66 participants ($N_F = 31$), five were excluded from the study because they did not fit criteria of minimum age, except for one participant who was not Pole. Therefore, this interview was analyzed within the foreign group.

Finally, 61 ($N_F = 28$) participants were considered for further analysis. The average age of the Polish group was $M = 28.34$ ($M_F = 23.14$, $M_M = 32.76$), and the standard deviation was $SD = 9.453$ ($SD_F = 3.62$, $SD_M = 10.62$), with a minimum age of 19 and a maximum age equaled 72. A demographic description of the group is presented in Table 4.

Table 4*Demographical structure of the Polish group: a qualitative study*

| Demographic variable | <i>N</i> | % |
|--|----------|-----|
| <i>Gender</i> | 61 | 100 |
| Female | 28 | 46 |
| Male | 33 | 54 |
| Total | 61 | 100 |
| <i>Marital status</i> | | |
| Single | 24 | 39 |
| Informal relationship | 18 | 30 |
| Married | 18 | 26 |
| Divorced | 1 | 2 |
| Widowed | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 61 | 100 |
| <i>Employment status</i> | | |
| Employed | 29 | 48 |
| self-employed | 5 | 8 |
| student, employed | 9 | 15 |
| Student | 15 | 25 |
| Retired | 1 | 2 |
| Unemployed | 2 | 3 |
| Total | 61 | 100 |
| <i>Education</i> | | |
| less than a high degree school diploma | 1 | 2 |
| high school degree or equivalent | 20 | 33 |
| bachelor's degree | 16 | 26 |
| master's degree | 23 | 38 |
| Doctorate | 1 | 2 |
| Total | 61 | 100 |
| <i>Religious status</i> | | |
| practicing believer | 20 | 33 |
| non-practicing believer | 21 | 34 |
| atheist | 20 | 33 |
| Total | 61 | 100 |

The distribution of marital and religious statuses is well-balanced. Approximately 30% of participants fall into one of three categories: single, in an informal relationship, or married. This distribution is mirrored in the three categories of religious status. Furthermore, a majority of the participants were employed and held higher education degrees. Finally, less than half of them were students at the time of the study.

British group and individual cases from other countries. From 18 gathered interviews, two that did not meet the criteria of this study were excluded from further analysis. Therefore, in this section there were 16 participants. This section considered interviews with participants from various countries. Most of the respondents were native English speakers (10 participants) from countries like the United Kingdom (5 participants), Australia (3), the USA (2), and Canada (1). The rest of participants consist of a single case from Hungary, Italy, Romania, Thailand, and Vietnam. As the group sample is small, demographical data was calculated for all 16 ($N_F=14$) participants together. The average age of the whole group was $M = 30$, $SD = 10.63$ with minimum and maximum ages respectively 21 and 53 years old. Detailed demographic data can be verified in Table 5.

Table 5

Demographical structure of the foreign group: a qualitative study

| Demographic variable | N | % |
|--------------------------|-----|-----|
| Female | 14 | 88 |
| Male | 2 | 13 |
| Total | 16 | 100 |
| <i>Marital status</i> | | |
| Single | 9 | 56 |
| in informal relationship | 2 | 13 |
| Married | 5 | 31 |
| Divorced | 0 | 0 |

| | | |
|--|----|-----|
| Widowed | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 16 | 100 |
| <i>Employment status</i> | | |
| Employed | 6 | 38 |
| self-employed | 1 | 6 |
| student, employed | 3 | 19 |
| Student | 6 | 38 |
| Retired | 0 | 0 |
| Unemployed | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 16 | 100 |
| <i>Education</i> | | |
| less than a high degree school diploma | 0 | 0 |
| high school degree or equivalent | 3 | 19 |
| bachelor's degree | 6 | 38 |
| master's degree | 6 | 38 |
| Doctorate | 1 | 6 |
| Total | 16 | 100 |
| <i>Religious status</i> | | |
| practicing believer | 4 | 25 |
| non-practicing believer | 5 | 31 |
| atheist | 7 | 44 |
| Total | 16 | 100 |

The majority of participants were female. Approximately half of the participants were single, while the other half were in relationships, with a significant portion being married. A similar distribution was observed regarding religious status: half identified as believers, while the other half were atheists. The majority of participants were actively employed, and there were no cases of unemployment. Additionally, most participants held higher education degrees.

Results

The structure of the results section needs to account for the substantial sample size in this study. Therefore, to maintain efficiency and conciseness, three interviews will be selected as representative examples to illustrate how meaning was derived from the qualitative material. Analysing all 61 interviews in detail would lead to an impractical length for this dissertation.

That is why, the first subchapter, takes a bottom-up approach, offering an insight into the qualitative analysis process from the perspective of individual interviews.

The subchapter *Thematic Analysis: Synthesized Findings* explores the abstract meta-categories that emerged from the completed thematic analysis, offering a comprehensive presentation of the final outcomes of Study 1.

Finally, in subchapter *Reverse analysis*, the reverse analysis will showcase how the categories developed in subchapter *Thematic Analysis: Synthesized Findings* align with the content of the interviews.

Analysis bottom-up

In this section, I will recreate the process of thematic analysis I conducted in this study. However, it is difficult to provide the exact substitute for each step. For example, for the first step, it is impossible to recreate reading and rereading. Therefore, I had to use an adjustable approach for the reader and, in a reasonable way, provide insight into my methodological workshop.

Therefore, in the first step, I reconstruct how the thematic analysis was conducted by illustrating the process of becoming familiar with the qualitative material — presenting participant responses narratively and noting recurring topics to capture the overall meaning of the data.

During the second step, I aim to elevate the level of abstraction. I summarize what I have learned about the participant in the first step. In this stage, providing a detailed description becomes less crucial. The primary focus is on highlighting recurring motifs and themes, as well as indicating the corresponding interview content that supports these findings. Additionally, I may incorporate any overall impressions conveyed by the interview.

In this dissertation, I combined Step Three (grouping codes into themes) and Step Four (verifying associations and refining themes for individual interview) in order to present the findings more effectively. During these stages, the proposed themes are introduced more explicitly, though still conveyed in a narrative form.

At the final stage, I simulated a second round of verification (Step 4), conducted after the creation of the nine meta-categories. In this phase, I reassigned each theme—originally derived from individual interviews—to one of the nine meta-categories, while also examining whether a given theme could be relevant to more than one meta-category.

As outlined in the methodology, I will now provide a reminder of the meta-categories that were created:

- Actualization of the past
- Basic needs
- Quality of the interview
- Significant factors of self-development
- Position to social context
- Conscience of Becoming the Self
- Strategy and pattern of development
- The foundation for authentic self
- Position to emotions

I have employed a color-coding system. For instance, a specific element may belong to the *Actualization of the past* meta-category even if the entire category is primarily assigned to *Strategy and pattern of development*. The colours used are described below:

- Actualization of the past: blue
- Basic needs: green
- Quality of the interview: grey
- Significant factors of self-development: orange (letters)
- Position to social context: pink
- Conscience of Becoming the Self: purple
- Strategy and pattern of development: dark yellow
- The foundation for authentic self: red
- Position to emotions: bordeaux

As the analysis progresses, there is a gradual increase in abstraction. I transition from the specific, raw data to categories, which, while less specific, offer a broader contextual understanding. This progression allows for a more comprehensive perspective on the data.

Wojtek³, Polish, men, 33 years old

Step 1: Familiarization with the data-capturing the overall meaning

Wojtek is a 33-year-old man with a master's degree in economics. At the time of the interview, he was married and employed. He identified himself as a non-practicing Catholic. Prior to the interview, he had not undergone any traumatic experiences.

³All participants in interviews have fictional names.

In the first question, Wojtek describes himself as self-confident, brave, and reliable, with the ability to overcome obstacles in new situations. He expresses a desire to enhance his self-organizing skills, but he is also aware of his difficulty in finding rest. This paints a picture of a strong, hard-working individual. However, as the narrative unfolds, Wojtek emphasizes the significance of empathy and his family. For him, achieving a good position at work is equally important as the happiness of his own family and being a positive role model for his children.

When confronted with the question, How do I feel about myself? Wojtek responds succinctly and directly, stating that he feels comfortable with himself and does not need to change anything. Furthermore, for Wojtek, authenticity is a source of comfort, as it allows him to make decisions without limitations and without the need to pretend in front of anyone.

Reflection on the life experiences that have brought Wojtek to this moment leads to the following conclusions. Once again, characteristics associated with strength in decision-making, such as determination, hard work, and wise life management through careful planning, emerged as significant. Furthermore, Wojtek highlights a mindset that has aided him in overcoming difficulties – the ability to accept challenges while simultaneously striving to improve his life conditions. This aligns with what Wojtek had previously described about how he manages difficulties. Additionally, Wojtek notes that he was able to identify a suitable career path easily.

Question four triggers reflection on what has shaped me into the person I am today. In Wojtek's response, two primary elements emerge: family and personal independence. On one hand, his family has significantly influenced his priorities. On the other hand, family situations in the past (family of origin) and the present (immediate

family) are considered crucial circumstances. Simultaneously, Wojtek describes the process of self-realization as self-directed, driven by his own goals.

What was Wojtek's perception of his development: positive (achievements and success) and negative (failures and losses) aspects? He depicted a successful project at his work as a significant achievement in this matter. It allowed him to gain self-confidence in his knowledge and abilities regarding his career. Again, the motif of taking the future into consideration appeared. This time, as a motivator for positive developmental changes. Wojtek declared that he rarely reminds himself of such positive self-achievements. It is significant to mention that Wojtek, wrote that it is a pity that memories of positive developmental success are not more frequent. This contrasts with failures and losses, which Wojtek recalls often. However, he thinks that those lost chances have a small, if any, impact on his life.

In the interview, Wojtek declared that he always tries to ensure he makes consistent decisions with himself. As acting against himself would have a terrible effect on him. Consistently to previous answers, Wojtek states that inauthenticity is a source of discomfort for him. Thus, he tries to avoid inauthenticity in his life. Furthermore, Wojtek declared that he has not experienced feelings of inconsistency between who he is and who he desires to be. Wojtek agreed that he experiences a vision of self while making decisions. In his narration, this concept is connected with making independent decisions. Therefore, the motif of unlimited decision-making reappears.

When introduced to questions about the "inner standard of being" and the Conscience of Becoming the Self, Wojtek expressed uncertainty, stating that he might not fully grasp these concepts yet. Consequently, his responses regarding the role and manifestations of the Conscience of Becoming the Self were not concrete. Nevertheless, he acknowledged that this type of conscience could have significant implications.

Step 2: Initial coding: identification of significant elements of the participant's answer that capture the essence of his/her experience.

Some motifs and themes recur throughout the interview. In Wojtek's case, family and carrier are two significant elements of his framework of interpretation. What does it mean? It means that Wojtek's answers about matters presented in the interview were made regarding these two elements. The other aspect of Wojtek's narration was focused on his way of approaching tasks, thus, self-determination, making independent decisions, and being consistent. When reflecting on self-development, he underscored the more significant impact of negative events compared to positive ones. Notably, Wojtek found it challenging to respond to questions about the Conscience of Becoming the Self, acknowledging the potential significance of this concept but admitting his lack of awareness about it. Overall, Wojtek adopted a concise yet concrete style when answering questions.

Step 3: Identifying themes by grouping related codes, & Step 4: Evaluating and adjusting themes for individual interview

Analysis of Wojtek's interview shows that family would deserve to be a category. On the one hand, he considers it as a significant element in his process of creating self (forming priorities, crucial circumstance). On the other, he mentioned family in the self-description (Wojtek said he is proud of his family and wants to be an excellent example for his kids). Therefore, a family takes an essential space in Wojtek's mind.

Carrer appears less frequently; however, it also seems essential. For example, it appeared in the context of self-development.

In nearly all responses, there is an implicit revelation of an attitude or behavioral style. Wojtek's behavioral style can be described as resolute, self-directed, and

unwavering. Therefore, it is necessary to consolidate these elements into a single category.

Finally, Wojtek's contemplation on matters related to the Conscience of Becoming the Self was uncertain. It intrigues me, as he could either deny the existence of such a phenomenon or assert its insignificance. Nonetheless, Wojtek acknowledges the potential existence of this concept, though he lacks awareness of its actual existence or manifestations. This would necessitate the creation of a separate category to encompass the status of his awareness.

At this stage, the topics discussed in the previous steps have been organized into distinct categories and themes, detailed in Table 6. This table is a faithful representation of my working notes. For this participant, four main themes were created: family creation/ life breakthrough, career: significance in development, fate in own hands, not yet awareness. There are no subthemes in this example of analysis.

Table 6

Categories created for Wojtek's interview – working notes.

| Family creation/ stage of life brake trough | Career: significance in development | Fate in own hands | Not yet awareness |
|--|---|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - wish to be good role model for his children as significant in self-description - key characteristic: empathy - proud of happy family - cots: early adult life, need to support himself financially in young age, lost fun time during studies - would work harder before starting own family - priorities formed under influence of family of origin and his own, current family - key circumstances: situation in family of origin and own family | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - proud of job position, likes his job - need to improve even more organization and learn to relax - adequate for personality decisions: success in important project/ frequency: rare - unrealized plans: neglected language learning, it was difficult to get back to it and took much more time/ often reflection, little impact on who he is | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - self-confidence - motto: taking from life as much as possible - key characteristics: bravery - key characteristics: be precise (<i>dokładność</i>) - proud of ability to overcoming obstacles - proud of ability to adapt to new environments - feels himself, do not need to change anything - being self, source of comfort, no not need to pretend, does what he wants - important in life: determination, thinking about future - achievements: achieved what he had dreamed since childhood, life on good level - easy in finding what he wants to do in his life - process of becoming the self: leaving own life on own rules, guiding own goals, doesn't care about opinions of insignificant people - motivator for adequate for personality decisions: thinking about the future - gaining higher self-confidence after successful project (adequate decision) - vision of self: making own decisions, good feeling, allows to feel free, appear every day when he does what he wants - acceptance of troubles(difficulty in acceptance of problems, of fact that life is not perfect / he can try to make it better) - tries to always act in coherency with himself and to be authentic so doesn't experience inconsistent with personality decisions and reflection about it - lack of authenticity: feels uncomfortable - doesn't experience reflections about inconsistency between who he is and ought to be: declares he is happy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - rare frequency about adequate for personality decisions/ wish to have higher frequency of this reflection - inner standard of being- declares he does not understand this term yet - COBS as having possibly significant meaning, though difficult to describe it's manifestations - COBS: possibly he had experienced, however he is not aware of it yet - doesn't describes impact of reflection about unrealized plans - tries to always act in coherency with himself so doesn't experience inconsistent with personality decisions and reflection about it - doesn't experience reflections about inconsistency between who he is and ought to be: declares he is happy |

Step 4: Second verification after nine meta categories were created: Searching for connections

This step was possible to make after analysis of all interviews. Therefore, at this point, I will show how categories made for Wojtek's interview were submitted to the nine main meta-categories.

- Family creation/ stage of life brake trough → Position to social context
- Career: significance in development -> Strategy and patterns of development
- Fate in own hands -> Strategy and patterns of development
- Not yet awareness -> Basic needs

The primary objective here was to elevate the level of abstraction.

For cross-analysis (as I already explained in methodology), I was searching if some elements from one category are not suitable for another. Each colour represents each meta-category. Cross-analysis for categories of this interview is presented in a Table 7. *Family creation/ stage of life breakthrough*, in general, was classified as part of *Position to social context* category. However, elements such as being a good role model for children and empathy as a critical aspect of self-description are also suitable for *Significant factors of the development* category. On the other hand, Wojtek's wish that he had worked harder before having a family might be associated with *Conscience of Becoming the Self*. Two categories *career: significance in development* and *fate in own hands*, belong to *Strategy and patterns of development*. Nevertheless, information about frequencies of memories of positive and negative event in context of development, belong to *Conscience of Becoming the Self*. As well as Wojtek's understanding of this concept, caught in *not yet awareness* category.

Finally, in the *fate in own hands* category, there are significant elements for *The foundation for authentic self*, e.g., awareness concerning being consistent with self, authenticity, and inauthenticity. Also, elements that Wojtek used for self-description that appear in *fate in own hands* category can be assigned to *Significant factors of self-development*.

Table 7

Crossover analysisfor Wojtek's interview – working notes.

| Family creation/ stage of life brake trough | Career: significance in development | Fate in own hands | Not yet awareness |
|---|---|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - wish to be good role model for his children as significant in self-description - key characteristic: empathy - proud of happy family - cots: early adult life, need to support himself financially in young age, lost fun time during studies - would work harder before starting own family - priorities formed under influence of family of origin and his own, current family - key circumstances: situation in family of origin and own family | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - proud of job position, like his job - need to improve even more organization and learn to relax - adequate for personality decisions: success in important project/ frequency: rare - unrealized plans; neglected language learning, it was difficult to get back to it and took much more time/ often reflection, little impact on who he is | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - self-confidence - motto: taking from life as much as possible - key characteristics: bravery - key characteristics: be precise (dokładność) - proud of ability to overcoming obstacles - proud of ability to adapt to new environments - feels himself, do not need to change anything - being self source of comfort, no not need to pretend, does what he wants - import in life: determination, thinking about future - achievements: achieved what he had dreamed since childhood, life on good level - easy in finding what he wants to do in his life - process of becomingthe self: leaving own life on own rules, guiding own goals. - doesn't care about opinions of insignificant people - motivator for adequate for personality decisions: thinking about the future - gaining higher self-confidence after successful project (adequate decision) - vision of self: making own decisions, good feeling, allows to feel free, appear every day when he does what he wants - acceptance of troubles(difficulty in acceptance of problems, of fact that life is not perfect / he can try to make it better) - tries to always act in coherency with himself and to be authentic so doesn't experience inconsistent with personality decisions and reflection about it - lack of authenticity: feels uncomfortable - doesn't experience reflections about inconsistency between who he is and ought to be: declares he is happy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - rare frequency about adequate for personality decisions/ wish to have higher frequency of this reflection - inner standard of being- declares he does not understand this term yet - COBS as having possibly significant meaning, though difficult to describe it's manifestations - COBS: possibly he had had experienced, however he is not aware of it yet - doesn't describes impact of reflection about unrealized plans - tries to always act in coherency with himself so doesn't experience inconsistent with personality decisions and reflection about it - doesn't experience reflections about inconsistency between who he is and ought to be: declares he is happy |

Chris, Polish, men, 26 years old

Step 1: Familiarization with the data-capturing the overall meaning

Chris, a 26-year-old Pole, was single and employed at the time of the interview. He identified as having a belief in the Christian faith, though he also expressed that he was not actively practicing his religion and leaned towards atheism. As a result, his stance on religion was not firmly established. He holds a master's degree in aviation and cosmonautics.

Chris begins his self-description by acknowledging some personal challenges. He mentions having low self-confidence, being unassertive, and feeling shy in interactions with the opposite sex. These are areas he recognizes as areas for improvement. In social situations, he tends to label himself as a fool in order to set lower expectations. On the positive side, Chris acknowledges his strengths in learning, analytical thinking, and keen observation skills.

While confronted with questions concerning how well he feels about himself, Chris again underlines the need to improve assertiveness. He wrote that being self is not necessarily a source of comfort. The social context of the situation determines whether being self is a source of comfort or otherwise. For the questions where Chris needed to reflect on his life and what has shaped him, an ease in grasping knowledge reappeared. This skill was significant and made his life easier. He also described his past social conditions as fairly convenient, allowing him to navigate life without excessive sacrifices. However, for Chris, adapting to entirely new social groups and finding his own style of living was difficult. The ability to collaborate within social groups is something he highly values. Therefore, he expressed the wish that he had initiated the process of learning healthy adaptation earlier in life. Chris's priorities, as he outlined, are influenced by a blend of his personal desires and environmental expectations. In response to question

four, he depicted his personal growth trajectory as a flat line until a pivotal point during high school. While he did not provide precise details, he noted that his development experienced a rapid and smooth progression midway through high school. Once more, he attributed this to the influence of his environment, emphasizing the importance of openness and flexibility in facilitating his personal growth.

When reflecting on the fluctuations in his self-development journey, specific patterns emerge. Chris's recollections of negative events are not only more frequent but also more detailed compared to positive experiences. Consequently, it is easier to discern the impact of challenges on his self-development. As significant achievements, Chris highlighted his success in securing a suitable job and forming relationships during high school. It was difficult for Chris to say what motivates him in this kind of situation. However, when asked about his motivations in these situations, he had difficulty to answer. He wrote that the driving force might be subconscious.

When contemplating lost opportunities, Chris experiences regret. He believes that some of these missed chances could have potentially altered his current circumstances. Overall, Chris has a negative perception of inner inconsistency. To begin with, making decisions incongruent with his true personality is the other reason to blame himself for his low assertiveness. Furthermore, Chris's motivation for development is discouraged when he lacks authenticity. Finally, Chris feels lost when he experiences differences between who he is and who he ought to be. Chris had such a moment when he had difficulty making future decisions after graduation.

From the response, it is difficult to say whether the vision of self has a positive or negative impact on Chris. He experiences it in sleepless nights, giving him a feeling of grim satisfaction and anger.

Chris has his unique interpretation of concepts like the “inner standard of being⁴” and the “Conscience of becoming the self”. To him, the “inner standard of being” is closely tied to using social interactions to shape one's personality. As for the 'Conscience of Becoming the Self,' he sees it as a mechanism that draws upon self-development experiences to either encourage progress through positive memories or facilitate learning from mistakes using negative memories. For Chris, this form of Conscience plays a role as a guiding force in significant life decisions. It may manifest practically through the creation of lists outlining what to do or what to avoid. Chris openly acknowledges experiencing this type of Conscience in his life.

Step 2: Initial coding: identification of significant elements of the participant's answer that capture the essence of his/her experience.

Initially, the interview appears to carry a somewhat negative tone. Chris highlights his shortcomings during self-description, and in his reflection on self-development, the negative aspects are more detailed and well-thought-through. Notably, some recurring motifs emerge throughout the interview. On the one hand, Chris emphasizes his high learning ability and ease of knowledge acquisition, recognizing these skills as valuable assets in life. On the other hand, the influence of social factors is a consistent theme. Chris connects this influence to his lack of assertiveness, mentioned in the self-development context (inconsistency with one's personality), the process of creating self and self-description.

Moreover, the ability to adapt and cultivate healthy relationships is yet another facet of the social impact discussed. The practical application of the social environment in

⁴The term 'inner standard of being' is enclosed in quotes because it explicitly denotes a concept the participant was asked to reflect on. Therefore, at this point, 'inner standard of being' does not refer to a category or meta-category (which are written in italics).

shaping one's personality, what Chris refers to as the 'inner standard of being,' adds another dimension. Lastly, for Chris, social circumstances play a crucial role in the context of comfort in authenticity.

Some aspects of the interview are difficult to assess, for example, religious status, vision of self, and source of motivation for significant, positive actions in self-development, and experience of authenticity.

Although the interview seems to be shifted in a negative tone, the answer about the Conscience of Becoming the self is quite balanced, combining both positive and negative forms. Chris admits he did experience such a phenomenon.

Step 3: Identifying themes by grouping related codes, & Step 4: Evaluating and adjusting themes for individual interview

My objective was to create categories that efficiently encompass the data while maintaining balanced content. The aim was to avoid overloading a single category or having one with just a few elements. Therefore, I focused on highlighting the most enriched topics.

One such category was dedicated to Chris's most significant strengths, including his exceptional general learning skills and analytical thinking. These abilities had and have played a pivotal role in his life and have a notable impact on his behavior.

Another crucial and readily identifiable category centered on the role of social factors in Chris's life. However, this aspect could be approached from various angles, encompassing effective social engagement, its role as a modifier of personality, and its implications for self-development, particularly in relation to self-awareness. Consequently, these categories were structured to capture this broad spectrum of meanings.

Lastly, uncertainty in some answers should also be taken into consideration.

Finally, four main categories were created: analytical development, unclear point, finding own way of being, and awareness of the environment. For clarification, the latter category refers to Chris's awareness of the effect the environment has on him. There were no subcategories. The categories and their content are presented in Table 8.

Table 8

Categories created for Chris's interview – working notes.

| Analytical development | Unclear point | Finding own way of being | Awareness of environment |
|--|---|--|--|
| - good memory | - doesn't answer | - feeling of being lost | - easiness in making new social connections |
| - high learning abilities | question about being | - lack of self-confidence | - need to improve shyness in male-female relationships |
| - smart | self as source of | - make himself a fool to lower expectations towards him | - perfect observer |
| - declares analytical attitude towards life | comfort or not | - need to be more assertive and resistance to other opinions | - to be more self need for higher assertiveness |
| - self-control | - easy in making new relationships but | - relentless | - process of becoming the self: high school as significant moment of development (crucial moment, before no development, great jump, and balanced development) |
| - intellectual abilities allowed him to finish difficult studies without any sacrifices | difficulty with male-female relationships | - being self depends on the social circumstances person is at the moment | - university as important time |
| - COBS function: remembering about failures to not repeat them, remembering successes to be inspired by them , experienced | - sometimes no clear answers | - describes finding own characteristics style of life as difficult | - learning an important ability of healthy adaptation to new environments (learnt in high school, wish to had learnt in earlier in gymnasium) |
| - manifestation of COBS: in form of list <i>what to do</i> and <i>what not to do</i> , while making significant decisions | - cannot describe what was his motivator for significant for personality decisions – subconscious | - priorities formed dependently from his own desires and social expectations | - ability to make new friends |
| | | - significant for personality achievements: finding adequate job despite low self-belief, how often: average? | - crucial circumstance: opening himself for opinion of environment and learning to be good observer of environment in order to assess own expectations |
| | | - reflection about unrealized plans: very?, self-regret (żal do siebie), possibly would change who he is | - inner standard of being: using interaction with outside world to form own personality |
| | | - reflections about inconsistent with personality decisions appear very often | |
| | | - lack of authenticity brings unwillingness for development | |
| | | - feeling of inconsistency between who he is and ought to be: brings feeling of lost, example of the moment: after studies he didn't know what to do | |
| | | - vision of self described as anger and grim satisfaction, appear when he cannot fall asleep and nothing concerns him | |

Step 4: Second verification after nine meta categories were created: Searching for connections

The categories established in the previous steps were grouped under the following meta-categories:

- Analytical development -> Significant factors of development
- Unclear point-> Quality of the interview
- Finding own way of being -> Foundation for authentic self
- Awareness of the environment-> Position to social context

Similarly, to the first case (Wojtek's), I conducted cross-analysis to determine the compatibility of elements between categories. Table 9 displays this analysis.

I will begin with the meta-category *Strategy and patterns of development*. While none of the categories created for this interview were directly assigned to this meta-category, its elements are evident in both *analytical development* and *awareness of the environment*. Precisely, the analytical approach, practical usage of intellectual skills and social resources, and adaptive adjustment collectively form a pattern that Chris employs in his personal development.

Category *finding own way of being* has quite a few points that also fit to *Position to social context*, for example, issue of assertiveness or social impact in forming priorities.

Awareness of the environment belongs to the *Foundation for authentic self* meta category. Nevertheless, components of the *Foundation for authentic self* can be identified in all three categories. One such component is assertiveness, which is vital for Chris to express his true self, as evident in the "Awareness of the Environment" category. Another element involves the role Chris assigns to the "Conscience of Becoming the Self" in self-creation, specifically through adaptive learning and inspirational influence. Lastly, Chris's position in social relationships plays a significant role in his pursuit of authenticity.

The content related to the *Conscience of Becoming the Self* meta-category is evident in both *awareness of the environment* and *finding own way of being*. Within the *awareness of the environment*, manifestations of the Conscience of Becoming the Self are reflected through Chris's analytical style. Conversely, the journey to discover one's authentic self includes elements such as lost opportunities and the struggle with inconsistencies that are closely associated with the *Conscience of Becoming the Self* meta-category.

Lastly, in *finding own way of being* category, there is a single element from the *Position to emotions* meta-category category and a single element of *Significant factors*.

Table 9

Crossover analysis for Chris's interview – working notes.

| Analytical development | Unclear point | Finding own way of being | Awareness of the environment |
|--|--|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - good memory - high learning abilities - smart - declares analytical attitude towards life - self-control - intellectual abilities allowed him to finish difficult studies without any sacrifices - COBS function: remembering about failures to not repeat them, remembering successes to be inspired by them, experienced - manifestation of COBS: in form of list <i>what to do</i> and <i>what not to do</i>, while making significant decisions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - doesn't answer question about being self as source of comfort or not - easy in making new relationships but difficulty with male-female relationships - sometimes no clear answers - cannot describe what was his motivator for significant for personality decisions – subconscious - in time he learns significant achievement make him better | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - feeling of being lost - lack of self-confidence - make himself a fool to lower expectations towards him - need to be more assertive and resistance to other opinions - relentless - being self depends on the social circumstances person is at the moment - describes finding own characteristics style of life as difficult - priorities formed dependently from his own desires and social expectations - significant for personality achievements: finding adequate job despite low self-belief, how often: average? - reflection about unrealized plans: very?, self-regret (żal do siebie), possibly would change who he is - reflections about inconsistent with personality decisions appear very often - lack of authenticity brings unwillingness for development - feeling of inconsistency between who he is and ought to be: brings feeling of lost, example of the moment: after studies he didn't know what to do - vision of self described as anger and grim satisfaction, appear when he cannot fall asleep and nothing concerns him | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - easiness in making new social connections - need to improve shyness in male-female relationships - perfect observer - to be more self need for higher assertiveness - process of becoming the self: high school as significant moment of development (crucial moment, before no development, great jump, and balanced development) - university as important time - learning an important ability of healthy adaptation to new environments (learned in high school, wish to had learnt in earlier in gymnasium) - ability to make new friends - crucial circumstance: opening himself for opinion of environment and learning to be good observer of environment in order to assess own expectations - inner standard of being: using interaction with outside world to form own personality |

Kasia, Polish, woman, 25 years old

Step 1: Familiarization with the data-capturing the overall meaning

At the time of the interview, Kasia was a 25-year-old woman identified as single and employed. She noted her affiliation with the Catholic Church, although she mentioned that she was not actively practicing her faith. She holds a bachelor's degree in automation and robotics.

Kasia's self-description paints a picture of an optimistic, open, and curious woman. However, she also acknowledges a tendency towards disorganization and chaos in her behavior. While her career stands out as her most significant achievement, she expresses difficulties in pursuing her goals and feeling dissatisfied with being overly concerned about other people's opinions. Kasia aspires to become more self-organized and gain better control over her chaotic tendencies.

Contemplations on how she feels about herself start with Kasia's aspiration to become more assertive and resolute in her responses to societal opinions. Her thoughts about authenticity are multifaceted. Kasia draws a crucial distinction between situations where authenticity brings comfort, and it aligns with her will, precisely decision when it is appropriate to be authentic. In Kasia's opinion, sometimes it is necessary to follow social conventions as being self, regardless of any circumstances, may be a source of conflict. Kasia's answer focuses on the issue of appropriateness rather than comfort.

Kasia gives the following description of her life journey. On the one hand, Kasia wrote that being persistent and having faith in her abilities were the most significant and, at the same time, most challenging to maintain. On the other hand, her effectiveness and bravery in taking risks were other vital assets – easy for her to perform. Again, optimism reaper as crucial in her life. She admits she had struggled with health issues due to stress. The latter and the loss of some relationships were, for Kasia, noticeable sacrifices. Her current job, which fulfills both financial and self-growth needs, is recognized by Kasia as a significant achievement. However, given a second chance, she would

have made her career path more guided. Perhaps it might be connected with her desire to be more organized, expressed in her answer to the first question.

Question four triggers reflection: What has shaped me into the person I am now? It brings the most evaluated and detailed responses so far. The descriptions given by Kasia allow me to see how some processes have been changing over time. Regarding priorities, Kasia draws a path, depicting at what stage what elements were significant. In the beginning, learning was a driving element in her life, resembling her desire for self-development. With time, the career took the place of learning. This shows that at the beginning, self-development was high in her hierarchy. However, later, creating and cultivating relations became important for its own. Therefore, at this moment, Kasia declares that for her, it is essential to be helpful to others.

Kasia's self-description provides a rich account of her personal growth. Notably, themes of self-development and social relations reoccur throughout her narrative. In her school years, she grappled with the challenge of balancing self-confidence in her knowledge with the need for peer acceptance. This often resulted in a perceived contradiction between being knowledgeable and being accepted.

Her transition to university life allowed her to connect with like-minded individuals who shared her values. Here, she felt more at ease with her authentic self and learned the importance of humility and respecting others' perspectives. Simultaneously, she recognized the breadth of intellectual abilities in her peers, which tempered her initial high regard for her knowledge.

A turning point came when Kasia secured her first job in a highly stimulating and supportive environment. This experience restored her self-confidence. Ultimately, these events have shaped Kasia into the person she is today. Someone focused on self-improvement to better assist others, as she believes that personal growth enables her to provide more meaningful support to others. It is evident in her narrative that changes in her environment have been pivotal triggers in her ongoing process of self-development.

What are Kasia's perspectives on her self-development? What pivotal successes and setbacks have shaped her life? Question five elicits an unexpected response from Kasia. She identifies the decision to end a loving relationship as crucial in her self-development. Kasia provides thoughtful reasoning for the significance of this choice, explaining that even though she was emotionally content, the relationship held no long-term prospects and would eventually yield negative outcomes for both parties. Occasionally, she reflects on how she might have handled the situation with more consideration for her boyfriend's feelings. This scenario exemplifies how Kasia navigates the delicate balance between social relationships and her personal development.

Losses and incomplete plans have a significant impact on Kasia. Memories of these events often resurface, and during these moments of reflection, she feels ashamed for not having the strength to pursue those goals. This theme consistently recurs throughout the interview. Despite these moments revisiting her thoughts, Kasia does not believe her life would be substantially different if she had succeeded in her unfulfilled goals.

It seems that Kasia's answers are more detailed and descriptive when the questions concern the status of her 'self,' specifically addressing authenticity and inconsistencies in decision-making. Questions seven and eight reflect on these subjects. Kasia's answers show deep reflection and her reasoning on this matter. She replies that she rarely thinks about moments she made inconsistent with her personality decisions. Nevertheless, she has a pretty elaborate and rational answer on what effect those moments can have on her. On the one hand, she emphasizes that these moments can happen, and most of the time, she has a logical explanation for why they had to happen. For that matter, Kasia even uses the word "rationalization."

On the other hand, if there is no logical foundation to be inconsistent with her personality, she tries to push away these thoughts and accept that she made a mistake. That suggests that these reflections do appear in her head, even though she wrote that recalls of this sort are rare. Nevertheless, her answer shows that Kasia is aware and sensitive to these subjects. Otherwise, she may not be able to give such complex answers.

Reflection about inauthenticity has a similar tone. Kasia explains that there are situations where being inauthentic may be beneficial for others. Therefore, she will feel good (about being inauthentic) if inauthenticity can be justified that why. She admits that, at times, avoiding confrontation, even if it means sacrificing authenticity, is a path she prefers over embarking on a solitary mission of authenticity. In essence, Kasia is comfortable fulfilling the roles that society expects of her.

Kasia shares that she takes a rather practical and reserved approach when faced with inconsistency between who she is and ought to be. It can be summarized like this: if she has resources and feels capable of fulfilling such a vision, she proceeds. Otherwise, she resigns, knowing that she can fit in anyway. These feelings of inconsistency in that matter often appear in social contexts, e.g., group work and confrontations. So far, the consideration of social effect is quite present in Kasia's narration.

For Kasia, the "vision of self" plays a pivotal role in significant life decisions, shaping into a complex and challenging-to-grasp bigger picture that she aspires to attain. In defining the "inner standard of being," Kasia suggests that it could be viewed as an amalgamation or an average representation of self-development journey patterns for all individuals. Kasia acknowledges that she has encountered the "Conscience of Becoming the Self," and she envisions its role as the setter of ideals for people. This type of conscience would influence people's emotions, making them feel discomfort in response to failures and satisfaction when success draws them nearer to their ideals.

Step 2: Initial coding: identification of significant elements of the participant's answer that capture the essence of his/her experience.

Kasia's writing style generally seems rational, logical, and descriptive, yet to the point. As a reader, I can see her train of thought and feel guided by her narration. Therefore, I can see how processes concerning self-growth have been changing in her life.

In Kasia's narration, the motif of social impact emerges as a recurrent theme. Indeed, it is a pervasive element in most of her responses. In summary, it becomes evident that Kasia is deeply intertwined with society, striking a balance between her personal development and the influence she may wield on society, all the while recognizing the reciprocal impact of society on her. On the one hand, Kasia places great importance on serving and assisting others. Therefore, in her perspective, self-development is not only vital for her but also for the betterment of others. Conversely, she might occasionally compromise her authentic self to avert conflicts. Furthermore, she discovers comfort in fulfilling societal roles.

To sum up, her behavior can exemplify a conformist approach to life or a reasonable adjustment to society. Depending on which interpretation is chosen, Kasia's point of view on authenticity, inconsistencies regarding self, and her attitude and behavior in society may give very different stories. For the first interpretation, Kasia takes a conformist approach, as she prefers the comfort of social roles and submission at the cost of pursuing her authentic self and fears embracing her individuality. For the second interpretation, Kasia highly regards kindness, agreeableness, and peace. Thus, she tries to resolve social tensions. She may not be a person who likes to take part in confrontations. Therefore, suppressing her authenticity might be, in fact, adequate for her, as it embraces her need for balance and peace.

Indeed, only Kasia can determine which interpretation holds true. The key is to discern whether her rationale is authentic or, at some level, a form of "rationalization". If the latter is the case, Kasia might be less at ease suppressing her true self than her responses indicate or that she is aware of. In fact, in the interview, difficulty with assertiveness is present. This may be a sign that Kasia is cognizant, to some extent, of her inclination to yield to other's opinions.

The other prevalent theme in Kasia's narrative is her somewhat ambivalent stance on goal pursuit, which plays a pivotal role in her personal growth. However, she finds it challenging. There are moments when she feels ashamed for not exhibiting sufficient persistence in achieving her goals, particularly when memories of unfulfilled plans resurface. This struggle might be connected

to her self-described tendency to be disorganized and chaotic. On the flip side, Kasia's unpredictable yet spontaneous and courageous behaviors often enable her to confront challenges. Furthermore, optimism is a vital component to consider in forming a comprehensive understanding of Kasia's character. She frequently references this quality, which is an integral part of her personality, something she genuinely values.

Kasia's interpretations of the "vision of self" and the Conscience of Becoming the Self have one common element. Both refer to an ideal that a person should aim to achieve. For Kasia, the vision of self is, in fact, a presence of such a bigger picture in her mind. At the same time, the Conscience of Becoming the Self is a tool that, by emotional manipulation, helps achieve this inner ideal.

The last two concepts have relatively personalized meanings. In contrast, Kasia took a different approach regarding the "inner standard of being." Although the term "inner" might typically suggest personal connotations, Kasia defined this concept as a sort of summary of self-development journey patterns applicable to all individuals. Hence, she emphasized the universality or commonality of this concept rather than its individuality.

Step 3: Identifying themes by grouping related codes, & Step 4: Evaluating and adjusting themes for individual interview

The role of society in Kasia's life seems to be an essential issue and proper inspiration for the category name. However, this kind of theme would absorb most of the interview's content at this analysis stage, resulting in an overloaded category that would distinguish nothing. That is why I was trying to use different key to extract well-balanced categories.

Taking a different perspective, I began to notice other noteworthy themes. Among these was Kasia's perspective on authenticity and her thought process regarding this concept. Another significant theme was her contemplation of what holds importance for her and how she maintains a balance between self-development and its impact on society. It is essential to elucidate her strategies and identify her most significant guiding principles.

Lastly, I aimed to grasp her thought processes related to self-development, both in terms of setbacks and achievements, and her way of defining terms like 'Conscience of Becoming the Self' and 'inner standard of being.

Finally, to address essential interview issues, five categories were created: boundaries of authenticity and its meaning, foundation of self-development, regulation of own self-progress behavior, personal self-progress pattern, and understanding of Conscience of Becoming the Self. Table 10 shows these main five categories and adequate content from the interview.

Table 10

Categories created for Kasia's interview – working notes.

| Boundaries of authenticity and it's meaning | Foundation of self-development | Regulation of own self-progress behavior | Personal self-progress pattern | Understanding of COBS |
|---|---|--|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - attitude towards social context: conformism, being easily influenced, playing a role, social context as a source of inauthentic being - conditional being yourself - personalities compromise - being self only alone - awareness of authentic/inauthentic being - authenticity – subject, authenticity - object | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - constant aspects of self-development: need of constant development, need of planned development, constant work on character - personal recipe for success: assiduity, self-confidence, reasonable planning, faith in set goal, humility - meaning of carrier: goal, success, source of development, stabilization, source of confidence - utility: being useful/helpful for others | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - visualization as form of self-regulation: while madding important decisions, visualization of future self, visualization of goal - a shame when lack of assiduity - being self not always as source of comfort - rationalization of inauthentic behaviors | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - cots of self-progress: health, stress, relations - desire to learn as first impulse - re-evaluation of meaning of relationships (appreciation) - personal characteristics: optimism, chaotic, openness, luck of assertiveness - need of change as impulse - easy with making decisions and taking risk | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - an inner standard of being as general pattern off self-development (not unique) - COBS: determines ideals to achieve - positive/negative general sensation as sensor of distance between person and ideal to achieve |

Step 4: Second verification after nine meta categories were created: Searching for connections

In this step, five categories created for Kasia's interview were subjected to one of nine meta-categories.

- Boundaries of authenticity and its meaning-> Foundation for authentic self
- Foundation of self-development -> Strategy and patterns of development
- Regulation of own self-progress behavior ->Foundation for authentic self
- Personal self-progress pattern -> Strategy and patterns of development
- Understanding of COBS-> Conscience of Becoming the Self

Those five categories are, in fact, subjected to three meta-categories as *Foundation for authentic self* and *Strategy and patterns of development* reappear twice. At this point, I searched for interconnections using colors representing each meta-category.

It seems evident that the *Position to social context* meta-category appears within *boundaries of authenticity and its meaning*, as the content of the latter concerns authenticity. In Kasia's responses, those two aspects (society and authenticity) appear together. *Position to social context* meta-category also appears in the *foundation of self-development*, and this is consistent with Kasia's belief in the significance of interconnecting self-development with the well-being of others. This belief is also essential when Kasia contemplates her authenticity. Thus, the meta-category *Foundation for authentic self* can also be found in the *foundation of self-development* category.

Conscience of Becoming the Self meta-category is evident in both the *regulation of own self-progress behavior* and *personal self-progress pattern* categories. This presence is due to the content within these two categories, which encompasses self-regulation in the context of goal pursuit (such as the vision of self, visualizing during decision-making, and the need for change as a driving force for development) and the subsequent experiences of this process (including feelings of shame when Kasia is aware of not being persistent enough).

The *personal self-progress pattern* category includes significant characteristics from Kasia's self-description, such as optimism, openness, chaotic behavior, and lack of assertiveness. These elements can also be attributed to the *Significant factors of self-development'* meta-category.

Finally, the *Quality of the interview* meta-category is reflected in the *understanding of COBS* category, as the content of the latter provides insights into Kasia's response style and her reflective approach.

Table 11

Crossover analysis for Kasia's interview – working notes.

| Boundaries of authenticity and its meaning | Foundation of self-development | Regulation of own self-progress behavior | Personal self-progress pattern | Understanding of COBS |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - attitude towards social context: conformism, being easily influenced, playing a role, social context as a source of inauthentic being - conditional being yourself - personalities compromise - being self only alone - awareness of authentic/inauthentic being - authenticity – subject, authenticity - object | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - constant aspects of self-development: need of constant development, need of planned development, constant work on character - a personal recipe for success: assiduity, self-confidence, reasonable planning, faith in set goals, humility - meaning of carrier: goal, success, source of development, stabilization, source of confidence - utility: being useful/helpful for others | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - visualization as form of self-regulation: while madding important decisions, visualization of future self, visualization of goal - a shame when lack of assiduity - being self not always a source of comfort - rationalization of inauthentic behaviors | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - cots of self-progress: health, stress, relations - desire to learn as a first impulse - re-evaluation of the meaning of relationships (appreciation) - personal characteristics: optimism, chaotic, openness, lack of assertiveness - need for change as an impulse - easy with making decisions and taking risk | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - inner standard of being as general pattern off self-development (not unique) - COBS: determines ideals to achieve - positive/negative general sensation as a sensor of the distance between person and ideal to achieve |

Thematic Analysis: Synthesized Findings

As for an introduction to this chapter, I would like to present important guidelines that I followed while conducting thematic analysis.

Considering the enormous qualitative data and the fact that the concept of the Conscience of Becoming the Self has been only briefly investigated, I was trying to fully explore the given material and include in the analysis all the information I found.

In a synthesized way, reflection in the result section guides the reader through the qualitative material. Models visualize findings in this study, while tables show more detailed content of categories. Presented tables and models have a wide range of content. Perhaps, excluding some themes that did not fit would make the whole result part more transparent. However, at this stage of research about Conscience of Becoming the Self, it is difficult to make decisions about what is important or not. I did not want to overlook any possible significant data. What is more, I had to consider that even the definition or already described manifestations of the Conscience of Becoming the Self might still change. The same as names for manifestations or for processes, which I treat as draft versions, with a possible chance for improving them.

The main goal of qualitative analysis is to capture the phenomenon and describe it (Kvale, 2010). In contrast, to quantitative approach, where calculating occurrence is significant (Trzópek, 2006). The result section of this study focuses on the qualitative description of the phenomenon. However, I tried to add information about frequency if that was possible. The complexity of the answers or some categories were always taken into consideration. Therefore, any calculations in this paper are given very carefully with respect with the spirit of qualitative research.

Examples of statements given by participants are direct copies from the written-interviews. As such, they are presented in the original language of the answer with all mistakes, if there were any.

Lastly, the interview's construction allowed insight into how people perceive their development or how they create the self. Therefore, the process of becoming the self is also considered in the results because these processes are deeply connected with Conscience of Becoming the Self.

Quality of the interviews. Vast qualitative data gathered in this study gave an opportunity for in-depth and complex reflection and analysis of how the Conscience of Becoming the Self may function in people's lives. However, although this subchapter may not reflect the actual subject of this study directly, it is still important to mention.

While working on synthesizing substantive themes apparent in the data, I concluded that the way respondents write, or generally how they approach the questions, deserves a separate and unique investigation. The quality of the interviews varied much with sort of formal aspects of the interview, which may imply few conclusions.

The basic aspects, such as whether responses were short, neglected with many mistakes, or carefully written and thematically developed, demonstrate the reliability level of the answers. The length of the responses varied from one-word answers to even 171 words answers. The effort and involvement put in the interview show what kind of motivations participants had while filling in the interview, whether it was an open, eager to reflectively answer the questions approach or a forced, visibly neglecting type of writing.

On the more substantive level, there were also differences between people's narrations about creating self, self-development, and Conscience of Becoming the Self. The first refers to continuity and accuracy reflected in the responses. The second indicates differentiation within knowledge about self-growth.

In the context of self-growth and the process of creating self, specific knowledge and wisdom are created. People individually define a set of terms concerning their development. If these subjects are present in their everyday reflection, they referred to this knowledge in the interview. Therefore, in some cases, for example, the values, goals, and dreams of respondents were easily detected. However, some interviews had no such insightful narration, as questions seemed to be answered automatically, sometimes even rephrasing the text of the questions. In some cases, it seemed as if a person had not been thinking about these subjects before.

From another perspective, the whole interview might give the impression of an authentic narration, where some meta idea of development could be seen (as a point of reference for participants). While in contrast, there were interviews, which could be perceived as answers to the set of questions.

In some cases, it was possible to recognize the leading motif of narration. For example, being a mother or developing a carrier were such motives. However, the most frequent motives in narration could also have a negative character. Personal struggles were also leading motives in some interviews. For example, if the person was obese, she or he would refer to this problem in the whole interview. Therefore, I classified motives in narrations into three main categories: social, individual, complexes, and disorders.

Lastly, it gained my attention that some participants would make a description of themselves made of only negative or positive aspects while others combined the two.

To summarize, the quality of the interview may give some initial information assumption on how motivated participants were to take part in the study and what their possible level of reflection and awareness about development was. However, it is important to mention that people in speaking and writing have their specific styles. Therefore, short answers do not necessarily indicate low motivation or lack of reflection. Apart from style,

short or neglected answers may suggest that the interview touched the delicate sphere of a person's life. Thus, these participants actively neglected the interview, to not open up about these subjects.

All the aspects mentioned above should be carefully considered altogether. Most of the time, the quality of each interview differs.

A short description of these aspects of the analysis is presented in Table 12.

Table 12*Quality of the interview*

| Formal aspect | Length of the answers | |
|----------------------------------|---|---|
| | short | long |
| | Level of detail | |
| | general answers, laconic answers, tautologies, no answers at all | answers featuring details from own life story, detailed manner of expression |
| | Level of diligence | |
| | numerous grammar and syntax errors | occasional errors |
| Quality of the reflection | Level of understanding of concepts concerning self-development | |
| | answers that seem off-topic or focused on the current situation. No wider reflection concerning life events with some inner awareness of self-development. No references to the meta-level of understanding the concept of development. No answers to development questions. Completely unexpected interpretations of questions resulting from a lack of understanding of the concept of self-development | referring own life experiences to the developed understanding of the concept of self-development. |
| | The clarity of the answer and its consistency | |
| | difficult to understand the respondent's reasoning. There is no logical connection between themes in the narrative. Inconsistency and self-contradictions in the interview | ease to following the train of thought of a correspondent who is consistent in his statements |

| | Forced | Open |
|--|---|---|
| A possible motivation for the interview | short, evasive responses, inconsistent answers, blocking (avoiding specific questions), no answers to questions | a sincere attempt to answer questions to the best of the respondent's abilities |
| | The proportion of negative and positive aspects in the descriptions | |
| | Negative | Positive and negative |
| | Positive | |
| Specific aspects of self-description | describes himself mainly with negative aspects even when asked about strengths or achievements. | describes both positive and negative aspects of own personality |
| | Most important motives | |
| | individual, social, complexes and disorders or others | |

Constructing of being, perceiving being. The interview was designed to awaken and guide participant's reflection about their own path of self-development. Broad experiences described by people seem to constitute a process of creating the self. However, those experiences fall into two categories. First is *experiencing*, which I understand as engaging in actions and interactions that allow one to distinguish oneself and personality.

These interactions can function within a person on substantially different levels. A person must face and take an approach toward own physicality and psychological construction. These aspects are explored in actions, personal analysis, and social responses people receive.

Dużo obserwowałam, słuchałam i bardzo dużo czytałam. Lubiłam dyskutować na lekcjach polskiego i starać się rozumieć innych ludzi. I myśleć samodzielnie, ale nie odrzucać jakiejś idei tylko dlatego, że wszyscy tak uważają, po prostu myśleć i analizować.

(Women, age 23, Polish)

With emotions being a detecting tool and means of expression simultaneously, a person recognizes what brings satisfaction or pain. Furthermore, it is also decided which emotions constitute personality and which are just responses. Struggles help with self-rediscovering, while socialization gives a frame to which people can refer.

przeprowadzić się do innego kraju, bo wtedy musiałam sama jakoś poradzić. Nikt nie znalazł mnie, więc nikt nie osądzi jak mam się zachować. Problemem zawsze dla mnie był to, że zbyt dużo wątpiałam o swoje pomysły

(Woman, age 25, Italian, filled in an interview in Polish)

Radzenie sobie z problemami, przeżywanie kryzysów, wygrywanie z przeciwnościami
(Man, age 44, Polish)

Through daily reflection and dreams, a person may create more or less conscience guidelines for life.

All these actions are considered as *experiencing* (also presented in Table 13, which allows for distinguishing personality and self. Although the line is very thin, *experiencing* is more of acting and interactions than becoming aware of who we are and how it happened. Even though these processes might happen simultaneously, gaining awareness is one step behind. Therefore, a person can describe self when asked or even share what important values or goals are. However, explaining the reasoning and motivation behind own behavior might be very difficult if the awareness (of own development and being) still needs to be developed.

Nie wiem, nic nie osiągnęłam, mam wrażenie, że życie płynie bez mojego wpływu....

Chyba żadne, bo w zasadzie nic nie starałam się osiągnąć, na niczym mi nie zależało tak bardzo by coś poświęcić

(Woman, age 24, Polish, answering questions about what was considered as important, and as a struggle)

Table 13

Distinguishing self and personality

| Experiencing | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|---|--|--|
| Physical condition | Psychological Condition | Struggles | Socialization | Analysis | Dreams | Emotions |
| - attitude towards own physical condition | - attitude towards own psychological condition | - experiences | -discovering "me" through being different people | -searching for meaning in life | - often reflection about "who am I" | -being consistent with own temperament |
| | - experiencing own personality characters in action and in reflection | - will to change | | -setting priorities, values | | -discovering passion and love |
| | | | | - setting goals | | -expressing own emotions |
| - facing own physical limits and strengths | -being self as a source of comfort if a healthy personality | -to feel more self, she or he needs to go out of her or his comfort zone | - establishing oneself in relationships | -observation | - night reflection on own self | -emotional tension and/or stress making it difficult to be/search for self |
| | -psychiatric and psychological problems suppressing the natural ability to find own self, forcing biased thinking e.g., seeing own self mainly through own sickness or complexes | -coping with problems, experiencing crises, wining with obstacles | -seeking freedom through socialization and being spontaneous | -being faithful to own ideals | | -creating self through emotions |
| | -psychotherapy experienced as essential in the search for true self | | | -acts according to own system of values | - goals created through dreams | -emotions as an expression of an authentic being |
| | -getting self-awareness during therapy | -intensive way of experiencing | | -analysis of own mistakes and opinions of others about us and drawing conclusions | | -experienced the costs of being an emotional person |
| | -getting self-awareness through a fight with psychological problems e.g., social phobia | -experiencing failures and drawing conclusions | -exceeding personality through socialization and being spontaneous | -forming self through independence: observation, listening, reading, discussing, and being open to ideas | -forming worldview and priorities through achieving dreams and goals | -to be more self-need to control anger |
| | | | - social effect as modifier of own behavior | -a process of creating self as achieving a higher level of self-development, simultaneously revealing a new sphere of abilities | | -taking a position towards own emotions e.g. in the process of becoming the self-eliminating, suppress own emotions to "become no one" |
| | -need for psychological health may | | | - becoming self through extremes | | - being unable to be himself appear in the moment of sadness, lower mood |
| | | | | | | - overcoming difficult emotions e.g., anxiety |

block developmental reflection

and analysis

That is why *gaining awareness* (Table 14) is the second aspect, which constitutes the process of creating a being. If distinguishing the self and personality through *experiencing* is like building a constantly changeable structure. Then, *gaining awareness* can be compared to an architect with plans and projects for the building, so he or she knows why and what some building elements were built for. At the same time, while working on the construction, an architect upgrades his own qualifications. Therefore, he or she is the one who evaluates what needs to be improved and how to manage it. Subsequently, an architect has a knowledge of the history of construction and the ability to reform it (often to improve it).

There were found various shades of *gaining awareness* in the qualitative data. Through the analysis, it seemed to me that, this process can be explained through three functions it fulfills.

In some cases, multifaceted elements of self-development are combined with a subtle line of reasoning. Participants would recognize some life events as significant moments of realization when the existing state of being was challenged by a certain moment in life. Therefore, the whole development process became more aware as self-questioning started. There are many examples of events that may have such an impact. From particular moments such as the death of a relative or the birth of a child to longer periods of time when a person faces environmental change, e.g., moving abroad or studies.

Poczucie samotności i alienacji

(Man, age 24, Polish)

Śmierć rodziców, brak pieniędzy na studia, narodziny dziecka, wypadek żony

(Man, age 72, Polish)

Nagle zmiany środowiska, np. zmiana lub skończenie szkoły - wtedy weryfikowały się wszystkie przyjaźnie, a w nowej grupie można było zacząć od zera budować relacje, korzystając z doświadczeń.

(Man, age 30, Polish)

nie zdanie studiów i pierwsza wizyta u psychologa

(Man, age 26, Polish)

Stanie się ojcem zdecydowanie zmieniło mój pogląd na życie

(Man, age 38, Polish)

However, not only changes are forming reflections. As a type of upbringing or childhood, a person received can be identified as crucial for later self-awareness.

Liberalnarodzina

(Man, age 28, Polish)

Considering all, while analyzing interviews, it could be assumed what level of awareness a person had. To be precise, the level of awareness concerns not only the exact moment of the study (so the moment of answering the interview) but also the level of awareness a person had had in the past events described in the study. Therefore, some people would create narration, where it was possible to extract motivations or inspiration behind actions taken in the past, or a person was able to conclude what present guidelines in life are at this very moment. What is more, some participants were able to catch how their perspectives and awareness were changing over time. Additionally, in some cases, respondents were able to declare that their current level of awareness was not enough to completely answer the questions, hoping to improve it in the future.

For example women, age 21, Australian, shared such reflection:

very self-reflective and as I have gotten older the process has become more genuine and also informed. As I have grown up I have also become more aware of my own flaws and other's

and how they can actually be problematic. I am also aware of how my behaviour can impact the broader community and environment.

Na zasadzie eliminacji. Gdy nie odnajdywałem się w czymś - szukałem czegoś innego.
(Man, age 24, Polish, forming priorities)

Therefore, described above elements build up a *sphere of self-awareness* (Table 14) where all life elements can be connected thanks to a rising sense of self-development. Sphere – because it is not a moment when awareness of self-development starts. It is rather a space where reflection starts to become even more aware and self-guided.

As already mentioned, a *sphere of self-awareness* is about rediscovering and finding a unique line of reasoning about self-development. The second function of *gaining awareness* is recognizing a *workspace*. That means issues recognized by a person as necessary to deal with to make the process of becoming self-adequate.

Based on the results, the *workspace* (Table 14) is divided into two main groups: *spheres of learning* and *process of acceptance*. *Spheres of learning* is understood in the context of self-perception on the one hand. That is, finding ways for self-expression and reflecting on how to feel good about oneself. On the other hand, self-constitution in a social context is perceived as a learning need. Therefore, within a reflection setting, significant aspects of life. Also, learning to understand social impact and taking a position to it, e.g., creating distance.

Process of acceptance has similar content to the previous aspect. However, while analyzing data, issues considering acceptance seemed deserving to be separately considered. Accepting the self may be a struggle. This process refers to own psychological constitution (e.g., psychological traits) and physical features appearance, condition). It is also an attitude a

person takes to their own life journey, including personal features, gains and losses, or accepted and unaccepted personal features like for example self-esteem.

poczucie własnej beznadziejności i zagubienia w świecie, nadzieja na lepsze jutro, wiara w ludzi i ich dobro

niska samoocena

(Woman, age 20, Polish, self-description and difficulties)

What is accomplished in the process of *distinguishing self and personality* is the subject of the *acceptance process*. Whether there is acceptance or a need to improve, simultaneously and accordingly, personality is changed.

Nie poddawanie się, optymizm i wiara w swoje umiejętności

(Woman, age 25, Polish)

Akceptacja bądź zmiana na lepsze tego, co chciałam zmienić, pogodzenie się z nieszczęsnym losem

(Woman, age 22, Polish)

Therefore, *distinguishing self and personality* and *gaining awareness* do cooperate. In Table 14, content from the interview is synthesized in thematic categories, reflecting *gaining awareness*.

Table 14

Gaining awareness

| Workspace | | Sphere of self-awareness | | | Tools rising awareness | |
|---|--|---|--|--|---|--|
| <i>Spheres of learning</i> | <i>Process of acceptance</i> | <i>Circumstances</i> | <i>Breakthrough events</i> | <i>Now/then self-experience</i> | <i>Inner standard of being</i> | <i>Vision of self</i> |
| Comfort - need to learn to feel comfortable with oneself - need to learn to feel comfortable with self under different circumstances expressing - finding own way of expressing self - own way of living self-recognition - own values - own needs - own priorities distance - learning to create a healthy distance to social | - being in reasonable contact with own emotions - finding peace with myself - attitude towards own journey - acceptance of own physical appearances - physical health and acceptance of own physical appearance as important background for unbiased search for own self e.g., not describing oneself | - observation of other people and self-comparison - analysis of causes "what happened and why." - time e.g., aging - realization of the impact society has on her/his self | - drastic change of priorities, worldview, and life goals e.g., wanting to be a teacher since childhood, but having serious doubts now, burnout - dramatic, traumatic experiences as a moment of enlightenment e.g., suicide attempt, death of relative, war - recent foundations of self-falling apart e.g., lost faith, while it was a major life motive in the past | - less acting now in comparison to the past - the process of becoming the self with age becomes more genuine and informed - from some moment in time, more reflective being, reasonable progress - perceiving true self now (more than in the past) - pleasing, adjusting to | - a practical function of creating and pursuing goals - signaling level of accuracy between actions and own self, values, priorities - general interpretations, natural processes - self project | - circumstance of its appearance - faced with the thought " I am not what I could have been." - negative - function |

| | | | | | |
|--|---|--|---|---|---|
| <p>impact</p> <p>- recognition of "me, myself" from/in society and reality</p> <p>- healthy egoism e.g., putting myself first</p> <p>assessing influences</p> <p>- assessing what impact things can have on a person</p> <p>- learning to stand for own needs</p> <p>- learning to work, learning to rest</p> | <p>through complexes.</p> <p>-psychological health as an important background in searching for own self, helping in recognition of own self</p> <p>- accepting own personality traits</p> | <p>- therapy, psychotherapy</p> <p>- significant health issues</p> <p>- being in the wrong place e.g., the wrong job</p> | <p>- diagnosis</p> <p>- life change e.g., birth of a child, moving to another country</p> <p>- significant changes in relationships e.g., breaking the toxic relationship</p> <p>- a significant change of the social environment</p> | <p>social expectations in the past, experienced negatively e.g., feeling empty, isolated, and alone in a group of people</p> <p>- a rising reflection of what I don't understand yet, getting interested in the self-actualization concept in the context of my own development</p> | <p>- creating a healthy distance between self and society</p> |
|--|---|--|---|---|---|

However, a third element of *gaining awareness* still needs to be explained. It is called *tools raising awareness*. At this point, I want to refer to one question from the interview:

“Have you ever experienced sort of “vision of yourself” according to which you would made your decisions?”

- *How would you describe this experience?*
- *Describe circumstances of its’ appearance*
- *How would you understand and define such a term as “inner standard of being”?*

The answers to these questions were very divergent. Trying to understand them, I realized that the concepts in question serve mainly one goal: being a mental tool for *gaining awareness*. I captured meanings from the data into themes. However, the content of the inner standard of being and vision of self may coincide, as the difference between them is not very strong. Therefore in Table 15, the content of the inner standard of being is presented. While Table 16 reflects the participant’s understanding of the vision of self.

Shortly, the inner standard of being would help recognize and achieving goals, ideas, and priorities. Furthermore, it was adjusting a person's behavior to be consistent with the inner standards a person creates. The inner standard of being was also recognized as a sort of self-project. If it were a self-driven project, then inner standard would help to achieve individual, unique self-development. If it was understood as a social scheme, then the inner standard would work as a frame for creating an adjustable but not unique personality. The inner standard of being was also considered important in balancing the self within society.

Table 15

Inner standard of being

| Practical function of creating and pursuing goals | Signaling level of accuracy between actions and own self, values, priorities | General interpretations, natural processes | Self-project | | Creating a healthy distance between self and society |
|---|---|---|--|--|--|
| | | | Personal project - self-driven | Social self-scheme - socially -driven | |
| - way to achieve goals: setting goals high standard - closer to goal, low standard -further to goal, - contact with "future self"(one needs to know who he wants to be in a future, and behave as his "future self") - reflections thanks to which desires become reality - influencing who we become: deciding what action to undertake | - as conscience signaling that person is doing something against himself -truthfulness - doing things in accordance with himself - guidelines thanks to which we become ourselves - individual, very silent inner voice giving the right answers -coherency with own values, modification, and control of behavior adequately to own priorities -having ethical standards and following them, becoming a person who can bring | - self-actualization - growing up - a process of self-awareness started in childhood - maturity to some things, behaviors, etc. - in a life span our experiences form our standard -a creation of own self -inner development, emotional -being defined as space for the evolution of the psyche | - creating own person - my own expectations of self -frame which contains a perfect or better version of self to which everyone should (doesn't have to) aim for -cannot be defined before a person knows who she/he should become -fulfillment of minimum self-expectations -aiming for a better self, working on self-weaknesses -being a person, you are not ashamed to see in the mirror -creating character and personality based on deeply embodied ethical values and hierarchy of values - who I am at the core/ own values, morals, beliefs, feelings | - the way I am naturally and the way I would be if all other circumstances, people, or other was not taken into consideration -a general pattern of self-development (not unique) -construct created through cultural and social standards, not harming own personality -schema of each stage of psychological and mental development common for everyone/, | - fight between who you are and what people expect from us - fight for own opinion - using interactions with the outside world to form own personality -expectations from herself/himself |

| | | | | |
|---|---|--|---|--|
| -leaving comfort zone in order of self- development -being consequent -defined as a need for pursuing chosen ideal - self -developed standards, a person refers to while making a decision | something good to other people -defined as becoming one, we are, avoiding acts against our will -necessary values which are later base for creating own personality -who I am at the core/ own values, morals, beliefs, feelings | -possessing some characteristics but in some range - self-aware - true, inner personality | - an inner sense of what your expectations are for yourself, others and boundaries you have, an ethical stance on a situation which are driven by values - being your truest and most authentic self as possible -like an inner mantra that has the goal to remind me who I am, who I want to be, what are my values - who I am? | however, it is a small part of the process of creating a person's personality -a standard which helps to fit in, to become e certain type of person, which is a flat, extremely mediocre type of person that doesn't exist |
|---|---|--|---|--|

Table 16
Vision of self

| Circumstance of its appearance | Faced with the thought " I am not what I could have been" | Function | Negative |
|---|---|--|---------------------------|
| - goals, life goals | -somatic sensations | - life goal | - experienced |
| - future plans, reflections on where a person would like to be at certain points of life or when something in the present is inconvenient | -psychological manifestations: remorse, shame, insecurity, need to run away, frustration, a feeling of inside pain, fear, resignation | - way to achieve authenticity | as anger and grim |
| - dreams, in-depth reflections, night reflections | -lost sense of meaning | - self-confirmation in decisions requiring leaving the comfort zone, but important for the development | satisfaction |
| - decisions small, significant decisions | -thoughts: many thoughts in the mind (why, what for) | -giving inner peace, inner harmony | - brings anxiety |
| - inner dialogs | -inner conflict: a feeling of being lost, pain | - approval and excitement, energy for change and for plans realization | if a long time ago chosen |
| - satisfaction | -being suppressed by social impact | -faith, belief in herself, feeling of confidence | vision of self is now |
| - free actions | -lack control in life, uncertainty causing tenseness, stress | -feel self-fulfillment and a sense of purpose/ | questionable |
| - acting against own rules and own will | -experienced as lack of self-fulfilling, aversion to everything, experienced when reaching a goal is too difficult | -chosen role e.g., Being a traveler | - dreadful |
| - being consequent | -doing something consistent with personality (conformist) but against | -perfect version of self but not accepted by society | experience |
| - therapy sessions | | -giving positive emotions: feeling of warmth and happiness | |
| - experiences | | -doing things as he wants, pursuing more challenges, | |
| - being socially competent | | -positive motivator, powerful motivator | |
| - being suppressed by society | | -awareness | |
| - fear of the unknown and determination to prove something to herself and others | | -feeling of consistency | |
| -appear when stable self-esteem and empathy for others | | -allows feeling free | |
| | | -helps making decisions consistent with own values, reminds values, reminds values we want to follow | |

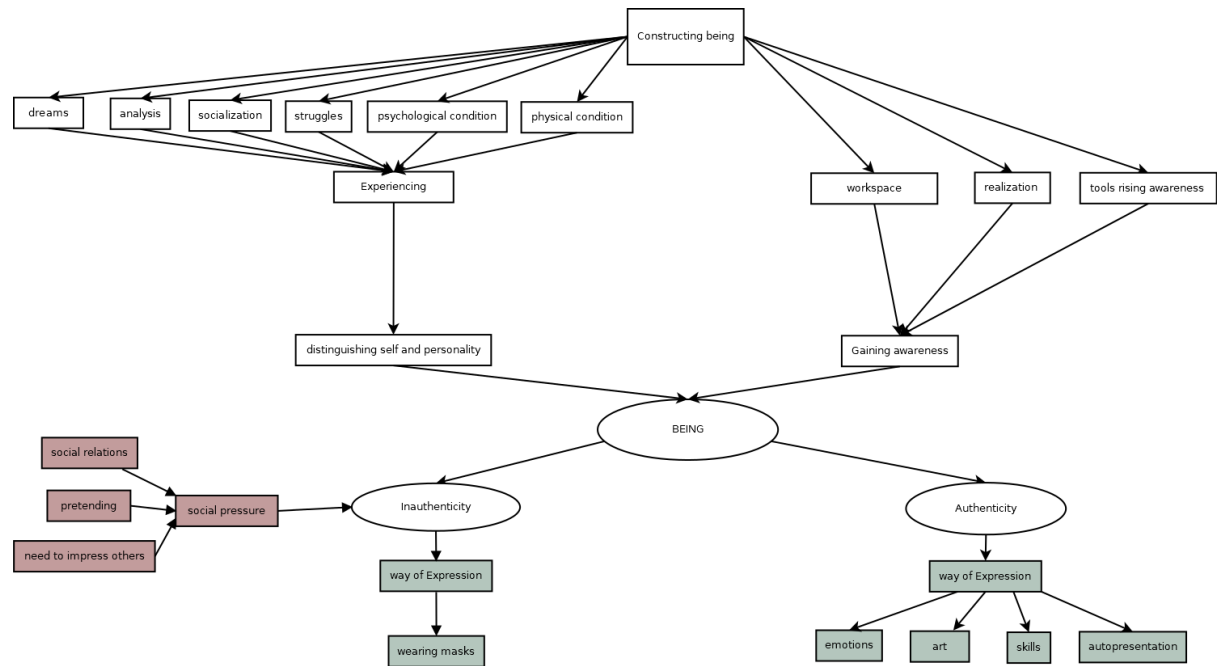
| | | |
|--|--|--|
| - while acting accordingly to own personality e.g., while being extrovert, loud, careless | own hierarchy of values -feeling as if she was a bad person | -experienced as a successful realization of the chosen idea -escape from reality |
| - appeared as a kid growing up, hiding my true self through fear | who tries to repress the truth -when comparing own achievement to | - experienced as positive, inspiring - no vision of self, more visualization of future scenarios during |
| - appear at a safe place e.g., at home | achievements of people of own age/ | decision making |
| - appears when a person sees someone she would want to be | also pressed by image spread by media | - "Ideal me", referring to the ideal self: what I would do? How would I look like (be like) |
| - appearing when new tasks and problems come | -the impulse to change | - positive, gives her drive to continue pursuing it |
| - appearing when she compares herself to others | -a motivating belief in oneself | - exciting time, love to dream and envision things, it makes goals - experienced as feeling confident - who I want to be |

There was a diverse understanding of the function vision of the self has. Some are coherent with what had been said about the inner standard of being, e.g., help to achieve goals. Other functions were focused on becoming more autonomous or sticking to chosen role. Circumstances, the vision of self appears varies from mental activities (e.g., inner dialogs, dreams) through decision-making and experiences. Finally, a vision of self appears as a reaction to social impact, e.g., social pressure.

An interesting category is a *vision of self* in a context of reflection that person is not what she or he is supposed to be. Within this theme, participants would describe inner, negative sensations as a response to this reflection. Lastly, a vision of self may be a source of negative sensation when goals to achieve are too high. Therefore, visualizations bring frustration and negative emotions.

Detailed examples from the study are presented in Table 16, as a vision of self has been only briefly presented.

Figure 1: Process of creating being



Summarizing, *distinguishing self*, and *gaining awareness* are similar, in some cases overlapping processes, both constituting Being. In Figure 1, it is visualized in what relationships these processes might be to each other. For example, *experiencing* is located higher than *gaining awareness* to visualize that *gaining awareness* is more advanced. It requires self-reflection, while experiencing is associated with action.

The way this subchapter is constructed is coherent with the relations shown in Figure 1. The description goes, from constructing being (top) to perceiving being (down: authenticity, inauthenticity). This subchapter started with constructing being, and now we move (as in Figure 1) to perceiving being.

Perceiving being is an oversimplified statement capturing an understanding and experience of authenticity and inauthenticity. Thus, the interview also explored how these issues were exhibited in the participant's life. Being can be perceived as a constantly morphing product of a self-development process. Therefore, it can be questioned whether the crystalizing being is authentic or not. The answer to this question was a wide and complex issue to reflect on. Apparently, not only the definition of authenticity is in question and varies on each person's experiences. The way people experience authenticity in life can be very different as well. Inner definitions people create are closely related to the experiences they had and have.

Through data analysis, necessary conditions emerged, allowing people to be authentic. It depends on them whether a person feels authentic or inauthentic. Therefore, conditions have inner and external differentiation.

To make it easier to follow, I will start first with the experiences people may have in a state of authenticity. No external conditions to be authentic are recognized. However, there is a set of inner conditions. Therefore, participants would declare that a specific

inner state must be acquired to feel authentic. It concerns psychological health and stability alongside widely understood self-acceptance and autonomy (details in Table 17).

Moim zdaniem komfortu po to jest życie żeby go przejść na własnych zasadach nie na cudzych każdy ma swoje i tylko jedno i trzeba to zrobić po swojemu

(Women, age 19, Polish, answering the question whether being self is a source of comfort or otherwise)

Acceptance concerns the self, therefore it implies acceptance of own psychological traits, flaws, advantages, and disadvantages, desires, and additionally – one's own choices, decisions, and paths one went through must be accepted to make it possible to feel authentic.

Jest źródłem komfortu. To trochę jak prysznic po treningu albo ściągnięcie szpilek albo jakiegoś "galowego" ubrania po całym dniu. Jeśli zgadzamy się z tym, kim jesteśmy, to bycie sobą jest źródłem komfortu; jeśli akceptujemy siebie. Nie potrafię inaczej wyjaśnić, dlaczego; po prostu.

(Women, age 23, Polish)

Significantly, there were cases when people who declared feeling authentic did not perceive this state as conditional. For them, authenticity is the state perceived regardless of any conditions. Therefore, the current state of being was described as it should be.

Nie miewam takich momentów.

(Woman, age 24, Polish, answering the question about moments of inauthenticity)

Nie mają, bo zawsze robię to, co jest zgodne ze mną i tym, co myślę

Zawsze czuję się autentyczna

(Woman, age 24, Polish, answering the question about moments of inauthenticity)

Zawsze staram się żyć w zgodzie ze sobą, tak by takich sytuacji nie doświadczyć, nie pamiętam ich

(Man, age 33, Polish)

Perception of authenticity is quite different if a person is in a state of inauthenticity. Therefore, what does being authentic mean for people who know they are not authentic?

As mentioned before, here are also recognized conditions to be authentic. However, they are of an external kind. External conditions generally refer to the environment as essential to make authenticity possible. Thus, a tolerant, accepting, and supportive society would create a safe space for authentic being. Therefore, in this context, acceptance takes the form of the necessity to be accepted or to have permission to be authentic. While authentic people require self-acceptance. Therefore, some reason for inauthenticity is fear and concern about being rejected (see

Table 19).

It is comforting knowing I can be myself especially under different circumstances and around different people without fearing judgement

(Women, age 21, Australian)

Therefore, it seems that authenticity by authentic people is perceived as an unconditional, smooth state or state requiring fulfilling psychological conditions of stability and self-acceptance. While for inauthentic people to be authentic, external conditions must be met, concerning mainly the perception of psychological safety within an environment.

Authenticity can also be contemplated, whether this state is a source of comfort or not. Based on data analysis, the comfort that authenticity gives is mostly concerned with a feeling of liberty, freedom, and a sense of an unforced, natural way of behavior (see

Table 18).

Tak. Kiedy nie trzeba udawać kogoś kim się nie jest nie trzeba uważać na każde słowo.

Wszystko jest swobodne

(Man, age 30, Polish)

Jest źródłem komfortu ponieważ nigsy nie zakładam że osiągnąłem szczyt lecz punkt z którego widzę dalszą drogę w górę

(Man, age 23, Polish, answering the questions about whether being self is comfortable or not)

Yes it is a source of comfort because there have been times when I have not. It is important to me to not have to act like someone else as this does not bring me joy, whereas being myself has brought be peace and comfort

(Woman, age 23, British, answering the question about whether being self is comfortable or not)

Yeah being true to yourself, personality-wise is comfortable because I think faking a personality is draining and confusing for yourself, like you don't even know how to act no more

(Woman, age 24, Ukrainian leaving in Britain for 20 years)

yes. it makes me feel aligned

(Woman, age 23, Vietnamese leaving 10 years in the USA, answering the question about whether being self is comfortable or not)

However, authenticity can also be a source of discomfort. It depends on the negative self-evaluation a person makes. The negative evaluation can differ in a few ways. One way is when a participant declares himself as a bad person or having a bad influence on others. Therefore, being authentic was seen as expressing harmful but essential parts of own personality, e.g., hurting other people through being self.

Przeciwnie, jestem złym człowiekiem

Bez problemu

(Man, age 25, Polish, answering questions about whether being self is comfortable or not, and how lack of authenticity is experienced)

The second way is if a person does not receive or predicts low acceptance from society. Then being self is expected to be painful.

Myślę że to zależy od tego jaki jesteś. Czasami lepiej jest nie być sobą.

(Man, age 24, Polish, answering the questions about whether being self is comfortable or not)

It is incredibly stressful and often unsafe.

(Woman, age 21, British, answering the question about whether being self is comfortable or not)

Thirdly, negative evaluation appears when a present way of being is unsatisfactory.

Therefore person's "authentic behavior" exhibits insufficient being. Lastly, authenticity

was described as a possibly dreadful experience if a person struggles with addiction. Therefore, authenticity was understood as a moment of self-awareness, a painful connection to reality.

Bardzo źle, ale czasem ciężko być naprawdę sobą kiedy czujesz to spięcie w sobie
(Man, age 19, Polish)

I think feeling more "me" (perhaps be being sober) is a scary prospect sometimes. I enjoy feeling "numb" and disconnected from myself sometimes because otherwise things feel a little too "real" and I start to get anxious. On the flip side, feeling disconnected from myself can also be quite distressing and I want to be in touch with the real me.
(Woman, age 27, Australian)

The subject of feeling discomfort with authenticity is still not fully developed in this thesis. The explanations above touch mainly on the problem of negative self-evaluation. Therefore, authenticity in those cases was perceived as an unpleasant expression of an insufficient personal state. Therefore, authenticity was, in fact, perceived negatively. However, by some participants, authenticity was also defined as a precious privilege, requiring constant fighting for oneself and overcoming obstacles and limitations. I decided that “fighting” is associated, in fact with an unpleasant emotional state, even if the cause to fight for is highly significant. Therefore, I considered statements about fighting for authenticity or being self as expressions of discomfort rather than comfort. Lastly, some participants would not directly decide whether being self is a source of comfort or not.

I think you mean “Is feeling more “you” a source of comfort...” Anyways, no, not particularly. There are things about myself I like and those are comforting but there are other things I don’t like. There are times when feeling more “me” is comforting, but there’s times where things I struggle with that are also “me” (very natural struggles for me...the way I am when I’m not trying to be better) are not a comfort, because that’s not how I would like to be.

(Woman, age 45, American, answering the question whether being self is comfortable or not)

Nie zawsze. W niektórych względach które dotyczą tylko mnie wole robić co chce i być sobą, natomiast zdaje sobie sprawę że nie zawsze jest to optymalne wyjście podczas życia w społeczeństwie, gdyż bezwzględne bycie sobą mogłoby doprowadzić do niepotrzebnych konfliktów. Dostosowywanie siebie do pewnych konwencji społecznych i przyjmowanie określonych ról jest moim zdaniem konieczne

(Woman, age 25, Polish)

To summarize, on the one hand, being self is a source of freedom, liberty, and self-directed behavior. While on the other, it can be understood as a privilege worth fighting for, a sphere of nearest development. Finally, if the current being or certain characteristics of a person are negatively evaluated or unaccepted (by a person or society), then being self is a source of discomfort (Table 17,

Table 18).

At this point, I want to move to the analogical contemplation of comfort and discomfort in the context of inauthenticity (Table 20).

Discomfort concerning inauthenticity was associated with unpleasant somatic sensations and a low emotional state. Various negative psychological variables, e.g., low self-esteem, were creating a basis for insecurity, a sense of being lost, alienated, and misunderstood by self and others. Pretending, playing, and wearing masks were experienced as absorbing energy, exhausting. Being entangled within the social web was also another means of discomfort. Ranging from social subordination to acting to impress others or to fit in, later resulting in remorse and stress due to the notion of cheating other people and self. Lastly, being deprived of own self, self-objectified with no will for self-growth.

Jakoś tak szaro, nijako, jakbym musiała robić coś na pozór by zadowolić innych
(Women, age 25, Polish)

Jakbym oszukiwała samą siebie - gram w teatrze. Dla kogoś nie dla siebie
(Women, age 23, Polish)

Czuję, że samą siebie oszukuję, ale czuję też, że tak muszę
(Women, age 25, Polish)

Nieszczęśliwa, zmęczona, bo muszę robić coś, czego nie chcę.
(Woman, age 22, Polish)

Ashamed of myself

(Women, age 30, British)

Exhaustion, anxiety

(Woman, age 21, British, answering a question about how inauthenticity is perceived)

Those are forms of discomfort people express due to inauthentic behavior. However, the same as in the case of authenticity, inauthenticity also was, in some cases, perceived as a source of comfort.

Being conformist or playing roles was also recognized as part of being. The way people wear masks can be accepted as part of their identity. Therefore, the interpretation goes, whatever I do, comes from me. Therefore, moments of inauthenticity are also part of me.

Ja tworzę ten brak autentyczności w którym czuję się jak ryba w wodzie

(Man, age 23, Polish)

Carefully estimating, most participants declared authenticity as a source of comfort, while 18 experienced it as discomfort. Analogically, more than half of the group declare inauthenticity to bring discomfort, and only four participants, seem to reason otherwise.

Following Figure 1 **Błąd! Nie można odnaleźć źródła odwołania.**, conditions for authenticity and inauthenticity were discussed alongside how these two states can be experienced. Therefore, I want to focus shortly on ways authenticity and inauthenticity can be expressed in people's behavior. Through data analysis, authenticity in people's behavior was expressed on personal and social levels. Personal is when a person declares to feel more authentic while being creative or mastering own skills and potential. At the

same time, social level refers to expressing authenticity within social interactions, e.g., fulfilling social roles, being socially useful.

Expressions of inauthenticity were limited to wearing masks or playing roles in social contexts.

All concepts and processes in the discussion are captured in Table 17 and

Table 18 for authenticity, while Table 19 and Table 20 for inauthenticity. In both tables, there is a section with *general interpretation*. It consists of analysis results for authenticity and inauthenticity that did not fit into any general categories but might be interesting to get familiar with.

There is also a category concerning social impact interpretation, present in both tables; however, in Figure 1, visualized only for inauthenticity. Shortly, I would like to explain how social impact is experienced from the perspective of discussed concepts. Some aspect will be repeated, as social element appears throughout the whole result analysis within this section.

In a state of authenticity, on the one hand, it is essential to create a healthy and safe distance between self and society. On the other, social relations and interactions are means of expression for authenticity, e.g., being authentic through fulfilling a significant for a person social roles.

For inauthenticity, social context works as background, which allows actual recognition of own inauthenticity. The social impact, however, has, from this perspective, mostly negative influences on a person's expression of being.

To summarize, the description of the whole process of creating being started with constructing being (Figure 1), which then splits into *distinguishing self and personality* and *gaining awareness*. As a self-updating product of both, *being* is created. *Being*, then, can be perceived as authentic or inauthentic. Depending on people's understanding and interpretations (e.g., conditional or unconditional, social impact), both states might bring feelings of comfort or discomfort and can be differently expressed.

Table 17*Authenticity – phenomenological structure: part I Ways of interpretation*

| | | Way of interpretation | |
|--|--|--|---|
| <i>Conditions to be authentic</i> | | <i>Social impact</i> | <i>General interpretation</i> |
| Unconditional | Conditional | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - always being authentic with self no matter what - being exactly the person, she/he wanted to be since childhood - no changes to feel more self | <p><u>Inner</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - need to be more resistant to social impact (higher assertiveness, care less about other people's opinions) - psychological stability - psychological health - acceptance of the world - high self-esteem - acceptance of own decision - acceptance of own self - acceptance of own personality - acceptance of own flaws - understanding of own desires - inner peace - healthy distance - reaching own way of leaving - autonomy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - being self as being resistible to social pressure and social influence - defending own opinion, defending own personality - an important part of own being: being useful for others, being kind - utility: being useful/helpful to others - sociable characteristics as significant for own self - the quality of social relations as an important part of self - an important part of being, fulfilling social roles e.g., Being a good parent - being self as a source of comfort, however a feeling of low acceptance of some own characteristic - being self as a source of comfort coz there is no need to pretend. Pretending may bring around people who do not truly accept us | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - searching for goals, values - being consistent with own temperament -being self as inner harmony, inner peace -being authentic self as a positive aspect of functioning, giving peace, balance, and happiness -getting your own way -living according to own rules -authenticity – subject, authenticity - object -need for personal transgression -being self as a natural part (flow) of life -acting vs. Being: self-reflection that being self is a source of comfort for people who need a sense of security, being self is being honest and it protects from being discovered of playing some else/the other way round is for people who like to "act" and "pretend." -honesty -privilege, demanding constant fighting. Not always a possible way of expressing own alterity. -constant pursuit to be a true self -being self as a constant state, being not self as effortful acting -being honest as being self -being self is good for psychological health -characteristics a person poses are no advantages or disadvantages prior. They are just qualities that can be used in a positive or negative way. -focus not on how to feel more self but how to be a better self -flexible authenticity to feel comfort |

Table 18

Authenticity – phenomenological structure: part 2. Experiencing

| Experiencing | | |
|---|--|---|
| | Level of comfort | Way of expression |
| Comfort | Discomfort | |
| -being self as a source of comfort coz he can behave as he feels, do what he wants -a source of liberty -a source of (if successful) pride, happiness, and satisfaction -being self as a source of comfort coz pretending is exhausting -being self as a source of comfort coz there is no need to prove anything to anyone -being self as a source of comfort coz he feels good in his skin (feels comfortable with himself -being self – less stress, more comfort in life -improves relations with others -being self makes a person happy -takes benefits from own abilities and own experiences | - dissatisfaction with the present way of being, wanting of <i>different</i> being - negative evaluation of own person e.g., discomfort when a person thinks he/she is a bad person - a source of fear before acting authentic - vision of authentic self as frustrating, impossible to achieve goals - being self may be toxic for other people, being self at any cots may give apparent comfort, with time bringing trouble - claims that her whole personality needs to be improved -authenticity as a privilege, demanding constant fight. Not always a possible way of expressing own alterity. -way to be self-perceived as very difficult -fighting for oneself and overcoming emotional crises -no self-acceptance brings frustration and auto-destruction - being self a scary prospect when a person is addicted: being sober experienced as being close to reality, disconnection with self (too close: burden of reality, too far: losing a sense of reality and own self completely) | - expressing self through auto presentation - being self is to express himself and using his own advantages in the presence of others - creativity as means of expressing self - expressing self through mastering own skills - expressing self through social relations, being socially useful |

Table 19

Inauthenticity –phenomenological structure: part 1 Ways of interpretation

| Way of interpretation | | |
|---|---|---|
| <i>conditions to be authentic</i> | <i>social impact</i> | <i>general interpretation</i> |
| Conditional | | |
| <u>External</u> - the necessity of getting permission to be authentic - need to be accepted - depends on the social circumstances person is in at the moment -being self, only when a person is alone - fear of being rejected when authentic -being split between being authentic and conformist -tolerant society - social acceptance -being self conditionally source of comfort, when some characteristics of a person may be badly interpreted by other people -need for more free time -being appreciated by others - being comfortable for self-situations | - feeling less authentic in a social context - awareness of being subordinated to society -social pressure as a source of inauthentic behavior - a creation of being strongly influenced by romantic relations (adjusting to the needs of the partner) -feeling of greyness, and blandness, as if she should create appearances for other people - awareness of own authentic and inauthentic being (mask, playing roles) -experienced as playing in theatre for someone, not for her/himself -being inauthentic: feels like a slave who sells own ideals and values | -rationalization of own inauthentic behavior -accepting inauthenticity behavior as part of own being - awareness of own authentic and inauthentic being (mask, playing roles) -personalities compromise -hopelessness due to lack of awareness of self (what I really want) -no point of preference, no clear self, therefore difficulty in making consistent with personality decisions -inconsistent with personality decisions treated as a lesson on what <i>not to do</i> -lack of authenticity treated as an accidental mistake -acting not according to own personality do not bring him a feeling of lack of authenticity |

Table 20

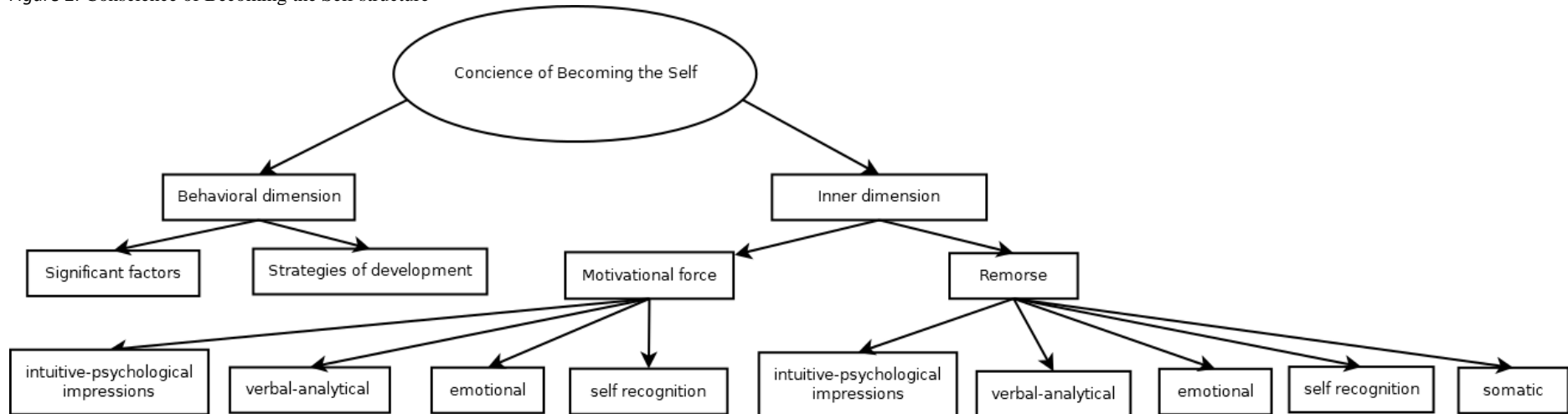
Inauthenticity – phenomenological structure: part 2. Experiencing

| Experiencing | | |
|--|--|---|
| | <i>level of comfort</i> | <i>way of expression</i> |
| Comfort | Discomfort | |
| -conformist, being easily influenced, playing a role -personalities compromises -taking masks as part of being | <p>-somatic sensations: a sense of smothering. stomachache, problems with breathing, chest tightness</p> <p>-psychological: a feeling of instability, a feeling of being lost, a feeling of insecurity, a feeling of misunderstanding, feeling remorse because (sort of) cheating “other”, feeling of uneasy, hopelessness due to lack of authenticity (with inner location of control of actions), anger, lower his self-esteem, frustration, a feeling of emptiness, a feeling of no energy, self-disappointment, a feeling of being limited and foggy, often reflection, gives her frustration, lack of assertiveness, pain, and remorse, makes a person vulnerable, low sense of control, she feels as timid</p> <p>- bad emotional state -unsure, tense, stressed, upset, feeling tired, unhappy because she is doing not what she wants, submissive with low self-confidence</p> <p>-social: a feeling of subordination to others, "acting" consumes energy, pretending is exhausting, a feeling of greyness, blandness, as if she should create appearances for other people, wearing various masks as a source of discomfort, pretending is exhausting, a feeling of insecurity, a feeling of misunderstanding, feeling remorse because (sort of) cheating “other”, brings stress cos she feels needs to impress others</p> <p>-feeling objectified, feeling bad, feeling deprived of own selfhood, feeling alienation</p> <p>-brings unwillingness to development</p> | <p>- wearing masks</p> <p>- playing, acting</p> |

Structure of Conscience of Becoming the Self. In this subchapter, I will introduce the structure of the Conscience of Becoming the Self that emerged from thematic analysis of data gathered in this study. The aim of this analysis was an exploration of the Conscience of Becoming the Self phenomenon with an unbiased approach, thus open coding was used.

First, I want to introduce a structure that seemed mostly adequate to the data I had received in this study. It is visualized in **Błąd! Nie można odnaleźć źródła odwołania.**and will be subsequently described in this chapter.

Figure 2: Conscience of Becoming the Self structure



I will start with the behavioral dimension, as its content is closely related to the process of becoming the self. In **Błąd! Nie można odnaleźć źródła odwołania.**, the behavioral dimension is divided between the *significant factors* and *strategies and patterns of development*. As such, the behavioral dimension is in-between the Conscience of Becoming the Self and the process of becoming the self, like a bridge.

Through the interview, participants were given an opportunity to describe themselves. In the beginning, they could give undirected descriptions. Later, the interview structure would guide them to reflect on what their characteristics are essential, positive, or negative. Self-descriptions and what characteristics people chose as important varied much among participants. The self-description in an interview is actually a description of the *being* person created—a self-updating product of the process of becoming the self captured in the interview. The Conscience of Becoming the Self concerns the quality of self-development and the process of creating self. That is why *significant factors* are part of the Conscience of Becoming the Self in the behavioral dimension.

Therefore, these characteristics can be divided into two major groups: *inner* and *physical*. *Inner* characteristics, as the name suggests, concerns characteristics that originate from a person. *Personal* and *social* refer to personality and character. However, *personal* ones capture characteristics correlated with individual qualities of a person, e.g., intelligence, ambition, creativity, and neuroticism. At the same time, *social* characteristics interact within a social context, e.g., kindness, extraversion, and shyness. Lastly, inner characteristics are those of a personal choice in the sphere of values, priorities, or beliefs. They function under the name of *own standards*. A good exemplification of this category is when a person strongly identifies with own faith and includes it in his/her self-description. Similarly, nationality can also be such an element. *Physical* type of characteristics are those of *personal* and *material* nature. In this case, *personal* considers the

physicality of own body, e.g., appearances, body type. While *material* covers up the belongings person possesses or wants to possess. All these characteristics are also presented in Table 21 and Table 22.

Apart from all characteristics – the sort of content that a person chooses as self-description- the true significance lies within understanding and perception of this content. From an objective point of view, any feature can be sorted as positive or negative. In some cases, neutral. However, it is a person who then expresses how she or he feels with some of the own characteristics.

Therefore, the right part of

Table 21 and

Table 22 includes a level of satisfaction that person can experience with each feature. Following intuition, objectively positive features should be associated with satisfaction, while negative ones should be with dissatisfaction. That seems like a general rule. However, an exception to it is when a positive characteristic is perceived as a burden, e.g., high intelligence, conscientiousness which may limit spontaneous behavior, or agreeableness, which may allow other people to invade personal space. For the perception of negative features, the situation is similar. In some cases, the negative feature is part of self-image; therefore is accepted and brings satisfaction, e.g., being mean as a behavior style.

With a physical constitution, the situation is similar. The delicate sphere of appearance is deeply connected with the way of interpretation. A neutral feature may be subject to various interpretations, e.g., the same high can be a problem or source of satisfaction.

Material belongings may be a source of pride, but lack of them might also be significant; therefore, dissatisfaction or satisfaction with this state might be included in the content of the self-description.

Apart from the type of characteristics a person can use for self-description, there are also other elements of *significant factors*. This matter concerns the process of becoming the self, particularly elements of it recognized and assessed by participants (Table 23). While sharing their own stories, participants differentiated whether some elements of their life were a resource or a struggle. This interpretation was dependent on experiences that a person had. It was also significant to depict crucial circumstances, any type of moments in life referred to as crucial for self-development. The questions concerning achievements did stress the context of the process of becoming the self and the adequacy to own personality. Therefore, achievements have a broad way of understanding. On the one hand, on the ground of personality, overcoming own flaws or embracing positive traits was recognized as an achievement alongside mastering own skills. On the other, the process of emancipation was also considered a significant achievement. In a social context, creating fulfilling and sportive relations and satisfaction from social roles were, in some cases, experienced as success. Lastly, material goods that person had acquired, could be associated with success and achievement. All these elements are also described in Table 23.

Summarizing, on the one hand, *significant factors* capture the content of self-description, with its evaluation in the context of satisfaction. On the other, it reflects how participants recognized elements present in their life history and whether each element belongs to categories such as crucial circumstances, resources, difficulties, or achievements. *Significant factors* category is visualized in **Błąd! Nie można odnaleźć źródła odwołania.**

Figure 3: Significant factors

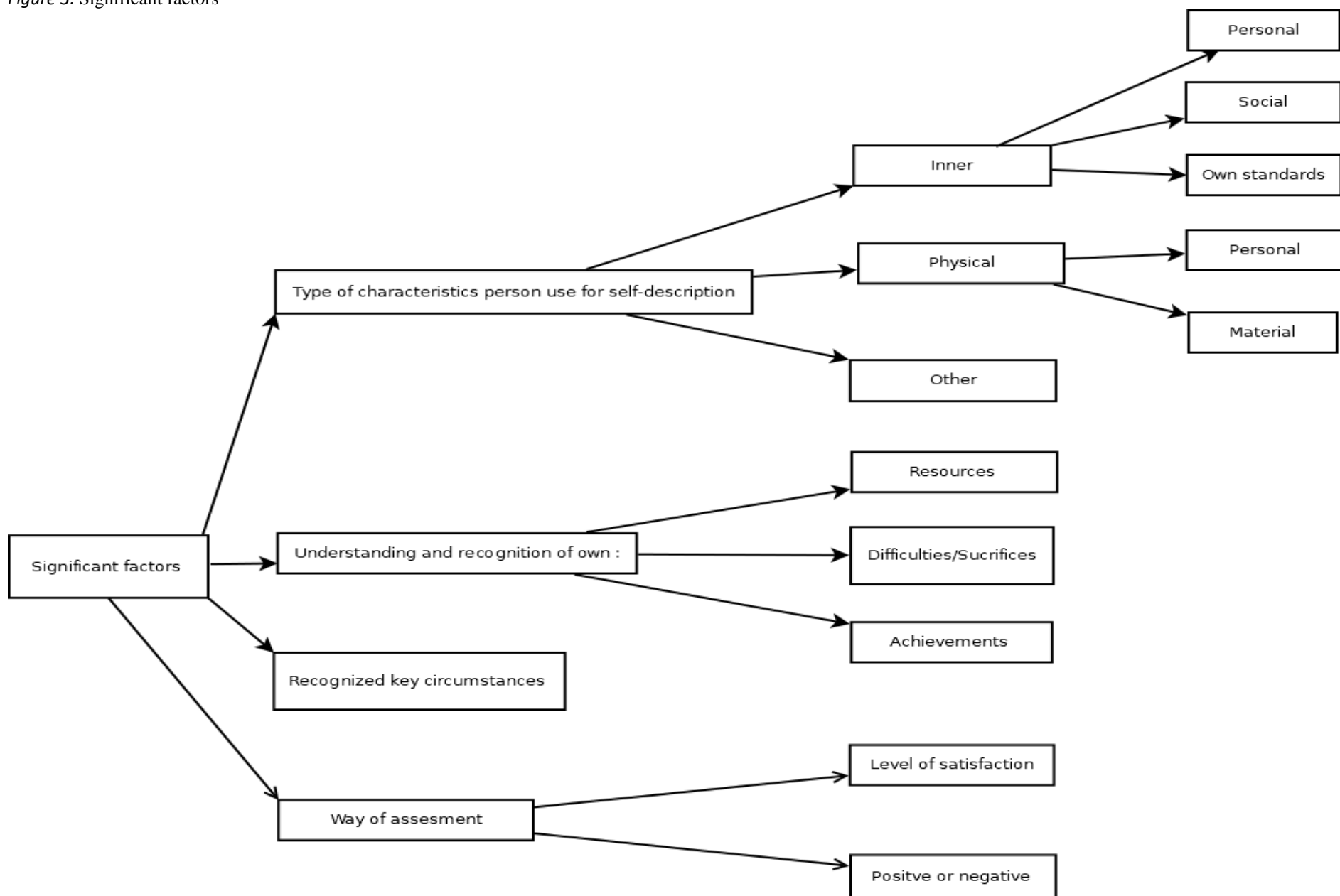


Table 21

Significant factors: type of characteristics a person uses for self-description. Part 1

| Assessment of positive or negative | | | Level of satisfaction and acceptance | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------|---|---|--|---|
| | Positive | Negative | Dissatisfaction/not accepting | Satisfaction/accepting | |
| Inner | Personal | usually, objectively assessed as positive or admirable personality characteristics e.g., ambition, intelligence, creativity, well-organized | personality characteristics most often considered as negative e.g., emotional, nervous, unreliability | mostly concerning characteristics considered negative but also positive characteristics a person struggles with e.g., an ambition which overwhelming or not accepted as a key for her/his personality e.g., being well-organized | most concerning positive characteristics but also negative once that person accepts or is proud of as part of her/his image e.g., being pessimistic |
| | Social | personality characteristics that are important in social context e.g., kindness, being socially active, being helpful | personality characteristics that make experiencing social relations difficult e.g., shyness, rudeness | characteristics that are negative in social relations but also those which are positive but may bring an experience of losing control in social relations e.g., being helpful but at the cost of own good | characteristics that are positive and those which are negative but perceived as a significant part of self-image e.g., being rude as part of behavior |
| | Own standards | standards that are perceived as self-created, adequate for current development, well-thought through | standards perceived as imposed on a person or perceived as inadequate to the current situation | - | - |

Table 22

Significant factors: type of characteristics a person uses for self-description. Part 2

| | | Assessment of positive or negative | | Level of satisfaction and acceptance | |
|----------|----------|---|---|---|--|
| | | Positive | Negative | Dissatisfaction/not accepting | Satisfaction/accepting |
| Physical | Personal | elements of physical appearance usually perceived as positive or neutral e.g., height, hair color | elements of physical appearance that person assesses as negative or have complexes about e.g., weight | negative elements of physical appearance, complexes or neutral/positive characteristics a person struggles with | positive elements a person is proud of |
| | Material | own belongings considered desirable e.g., house, car | belongings a person does not have and feels a strong desire to have | mostly lack of desired belongings or properties person has but considers not enough | belongings a person is proud to have |
| Other | | other elements a person includes in self-description that are considered positive | other elements a person includes in self-description that are considered negative | - | - |

Table 23*Significant factors: understanding and recognition.*

| Key circumstances | Resources and Difficulties/Sacrifices | Achievements |
|---|---|---|
| specific, social, and personal circumstances positive or negative that person named as significant social e.g., parent's help, personal e.g., health problems | depending on interpretation, anything can be perceived as a resource or difficulty e.g., family as significant support (resource) or family as a source of sacrifices | <p>personality: overcoming flaws of own character, bringing positive characteristics out.</p> <p>skills: mastering recognized own potentialities and talents e.g., getting a master degree, learning languages</p> <p>emancipation: independent acts, behaving accordingly to own will e.g., being financially independent, making independent decisions, living own life in own style.</p> <p>social: building satisfying, supportive relationships, achieving desired social status.</p> <p>material: belongings that a person achieved with significant effort</p> |

The next part of the behavioral dimension is *strategies and patterns of development* that are presented in Table 24 and Table 25. Manifestations of behavioral dimensions presented in the theoretical part were also found in this study, and Table 24, directly describes those. Behavior from a self-growth perspective can be assessed depending on five aspects, each having adaptive and maladaptive expression.

The approach to struggles may be a progressive way to adjust and interpret difficulties as challenges to overcome and learn from. Analogically the unprogressive approach in this study, called *passive adaptation*, is contrary to its adaptive form. The positive form of this manifestation was much more frequently declared among participants (50 participants) than negative form (six participants).

Z tego, jak umiem pokonywać przeszkody, jak odnajduję się w nowych sytuacjach, jestem dumny z mojego stanowiska w pracy oraz ze szczęśliwej rodziny

Zrozumienie, że problemy się zdarzają i muszę zaakceptować, że nie zawsze jest idealnie, ale mogę starać się żeby było lepiej

(Man, age 33, Polish)

Radzenie sobie z problemami, przeżywanie kryzysów, wygrywanie z przeciwnościami

(Man, age 28, Polish)

The level of hard work and determination in self-growth determine whether progress is classified as *dynamic* or *stagnation*. The vast majority of participants would refer to elements of the positive form of this manifestation, while only four would refer to its negative form.

Determinacja oraz myślenie o dalekiej przyszłości, a nie tylko o kolejnym dniu

(Man, age 33, Polish)

wytrwałością, bardzo pomagała rodzina, żona i dziecko

(Man, age 45, Polish)

Purposiveness in own actions refers to how much a person creates and depends on his own goals and how consistent with priorities and values a person is. This determines whether a behavior is purposive or no purposive. Furthermore, *purposiveness in action* with its content is close to *a sense of control* and *level of awareness*⁵. *Sense of control* refers to the perception of a person's position in life. A person may feel like the one in control of life or that life is in control of a person. *Level of awareness* concerns the quality of reflection about own self-growth. If the complexity of reflection is enough, a person mentally creates a meta-level of understanding of own development; therefore, development is well-thought-through. If not, behaviors are less sensible, for that matter. Considering the frequencies of all three manifestations, the progressive form was experienced by half of the participants, while the non-progressive form was less frequent (between 20-25 participants).

Raczej byłem pewien swoich celów już gdzieś w szkole podstawowej

(Man, age 28, Polish)

⁵ These two aspects were not part of the behavioral dimension, depicted in the theoretical background section.

Żyłem własnym życiem i kierowałem się zawsze swoimi celami, nie przejmowałem się co pomyślą osoby na których mi nie zależy

(Man, age 33, Polish)

Na początku bardzo ważna była nauka, gdyż zawsze chciałam się dalej rozwijać. Później kariera, jednak w jej trakcie uświadomiłam sobie że warto pielęgnować znajomości czy to z pracy czy z innych etapów życia i teraz staram się otaczać ciekawymi ludźmi. Staram się aby w swoim życiu jak najbardziej pomagać i być wsparciem dla innych.

(Woman, age 25, Polish)

uczenie się na błędach swoich ale i cudzych, w 70% życie dorosłego człowieka jest z determinowane przez pierwsze lata wychowania i duży w tym udział rodziców – ich zachowań, w późniejszym okresie życia duży wpływ mają rówieśnicy / osoby z którymi mamy częsty kontakt – ale to moim zdaniem wpływa na charakter i osobowość w mniejszym stopniu. Posiadanie mentora/ mentorów albo jego brak również jest bardzo istotne

(Man, age 32, Polish)

Apart from the five aspects described above useful in differing own development as progressive or not, some other indicators emerged from the data. They can be identified as elements of self-regulation in a self-growth context (Table 25).

Analysis of interviews revealed that people differ based on constructing and understanding the leading motif or motifs for self-development. There were two levels of differentiation detected. First, considers the type of motive, and second: the number of

motives. Therefore, a person can perceive as there is one leading motive of development or a few significant ones. Regardless of the number of motives, they can be implemented in a healthy and balanced way or otherwise.

The type of motives was divided into three main categories: *self-development*, *social relations*, and *basic needs*. The names of the first two are self-explanatory. However, shortly, the first considers the growth of strictly individual potentialities, while the second aims for fulfillment in a social context. Therefore, dedicating whole life to own carrier will be choosing a *self-development* motive. While being a good mother, or the importance of being useful and helpful for own society, will be an expression of *social relations* motive. *Basic needs*, however, is the motive that appears when some basic needs are not fulfilled; therefore, fulfilling them becomes a major motive for development. This category is strongly associated with health and psychological condition, thus diseases, disorders, etc. An excellent example of such a motive is when a person is obese and desperately wants to lose weight. The other example is when a person struggles with sex identification. Being faced with a medical or psychological struggle may result in absorbing developmental reflection completely. Therefore, in this study, in those cases, participants were not able to get on meta-level of reflection because all the questions were answered, completely biased by a current struggle that person had. Lastly, there were interviews where no motifs at all could be recognized.

Apart from motives-regulation, there were also other indicators of development. One was *leading ideology*, exhibited by some participants as a specific way of interpreting reality, that could be captured as a motto, e.g., being positive is always good. Some participants also would show the presence of an *analytical* style, a term describing developmental behaviors that strongly highlight analysis and reflection.

The other aspects that regulate development are *acceptance* and *stability*, and *balance*. The first one is acceptance of own path and self or not. The second refers to

balancing a person performs with own duties and pleasures. Whether a person can accomplish such harmony or not. Furthermore, *attitude towards society* was also noticed as a regulating aspect. Its effective form is the ability to use social resources practically, and create satisfactory relations and reasonable distance. While ineffective, it is expressed by being too much influenced by society or being too distant from society, therefore not effectively using its resources.

Table 24*Strategies and patterns of development*

| | Sense of control | Strategy towards obstacles | Level of engagement | Purposiveness in actions | Level of awareness |
|--------------------|--|---|-----------------------------------|---|---|
| Adaptive | Inner sense of control | Offensiveness | Dynamic | Purposive | High awareness |
| | taking actions in own hands, autonomous decisions | adapting to new environments, fighting obstacles, treating difficulties as new challenges not being afraid to the leave comfort zone, sacrificing free time, keeping moving forward, will power | hard-working, determination | pursuing goals, or/and being consistent with own ideals, acting in a sort of planned way, thoughtful planning, being consequent, systematic, making decisions coherently to own values or/and goals, self-discipline, strong task orientation | Meta-level of reflection, a person can abstract from single acts to build a meaningful explanation of own development |
| Maladaptive | External sense of control | Passivity | Stagnation | Non-purposive | Low awareness |
| | drifting through stages of development no sense of control | fear of new things, avoid leaving a comfort zone | low engagement, low determination | no planning, no major goals, difficulty in making goals or choosing a path, lack of consequence, uncertain priorities, and values | unreflective behavior, acting as it is, no reflection about own development |

Table 25*Strategies and patterns of development: self-regulation in a developmental context*

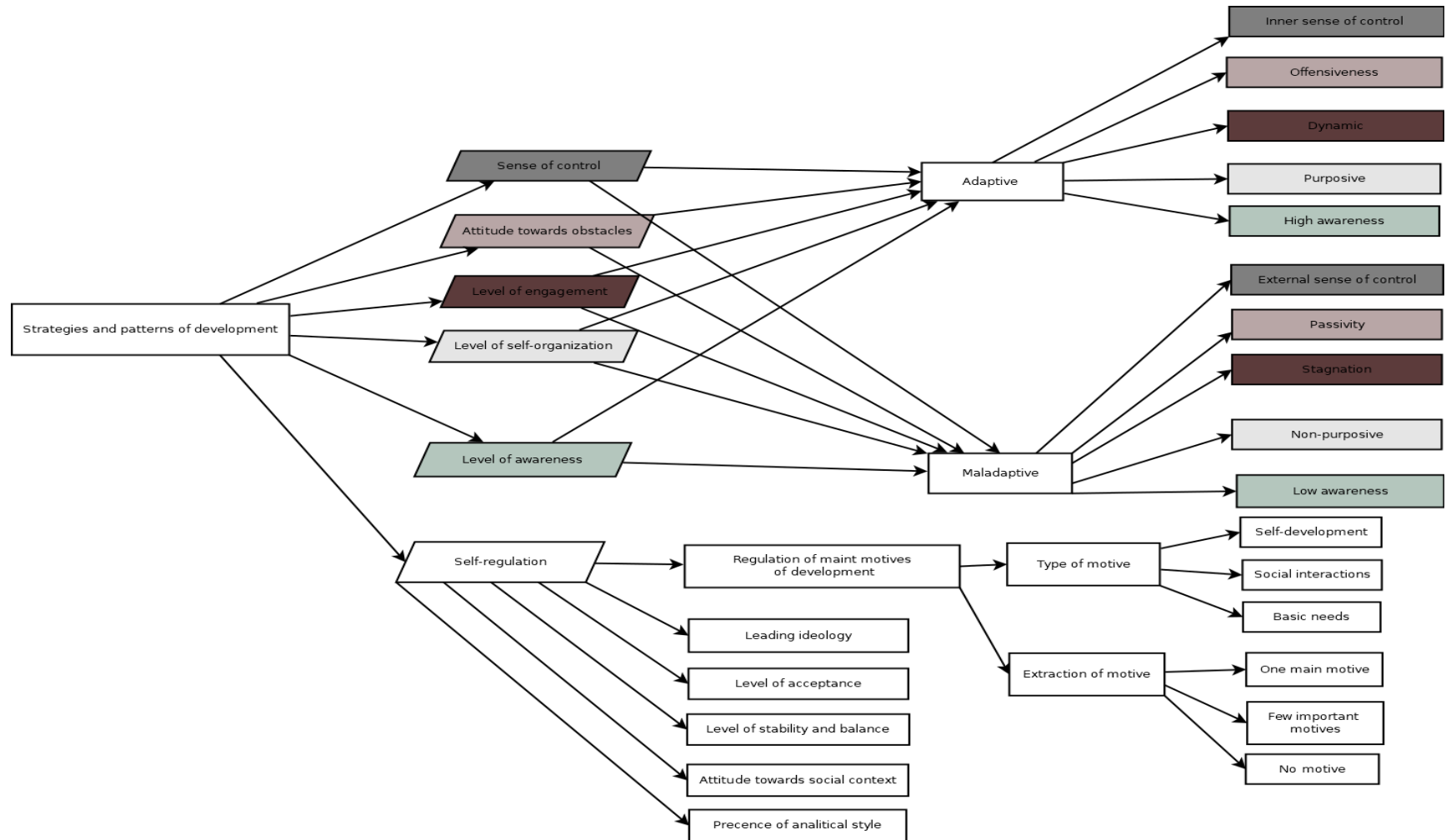
| | | | |
|--|----------------------|-----------------------|--|
| Regulation of motive of development | Type of motive | Self-development | e.g., career, independency, skills development, artistic path, hobbies, body strength |
| | | Social interactions | e.g., fulfilling social roles, utilitarianism (being useful for others), good attitude towards others (being kind) |
| | | Basic needs | focus on unfulfilled needs or psychological/physiological problems a person is facing at the moment e.g., social phobia, depression, poverty, complexes, disease |
| | Extraction of motive | One motive | one leading motive can be carried in a healthy way or absorbing whole life in an unhealthy way |
| | | Few important motives | differentiation of a few important motives which are harmoniously fulfilled. or unbalanced which can bring frustration. also, can be difficult in deciding the importance of each motive |
| | | None | a person is unable to name any motive |
| | | | |
| Leading ideology | | | individual for each person way of interpreting the world, events, development, life motto |
| Level of acceptance | | | accepting own life history and the fact that the world is not perfect. Healthy acceptance of own characteristics. |
| | | | difficulty in accepting some parts of own history, complexes, and dissatisfaction with own personality traits |
| | | | a stable and consistent way of acting, balancing duties and free time, balancing pursuing goals, regularity in life |
| Level of stability and balance | | | instability and being inconsistent in own actions, being overloaded with duties with little free time, focusing attention on one type of goal at the cost of other duties, irregular lifestyle |
| Attitude toward social context | | | practical use of social resources, ability to balance adequate distance between self and social impact, easy in recognition of own self at the same time creating supportive social relations. |
| | | | difficulty in recognition and use of social resources, the unbalanced distance toward social context |
| | | | ->too much distance, lack of relations, negative attitude towards society |
| | | | ->lost self in a social context, difficulty in abstracting own self from social context, adjusting to society in order to be accepted |

Presence of an analytical style

learning from own and other's mistakes, drawing conclusions from own decisions, forming priorities and goals through careful analysis and reflection

In conclusion, *strategies and patterns of development* capture aspects of development that can be ranged from progressive to non-progressive. However, it also includes elements that are not assessed in this way, as they have more of an individual quality, e.g., *leading ideology* or *analytical style*. In **Błąd! Nie można odnaleźć źródła odwołania.** 4, this category is visualized.

Figure 4: Strategies and patterns of development



Finally, we reach the part of the results, most specific for Conscience of Becoming the Self. The right part of **Błąd! Nie można odnaleźć źródła odwołania.** visualizes the *inner dimension* (in short: ID), while Table 26 shows its content. The inner dimension captures manifestations mostly related to what could be perceived as conscience.

Firstly, a clear distinction between positive and negative forms is made, as *motivational force* is positive, and *regret* is negative. Sub-manifestations within these two major groups are complementary except for *somatic* manifestations, which have only *remorse* form. I will start, with a description of this model, beginning with manifestations with the most explicit content. All the manifestations appear as a reaction to the current state of being within a self-growth context.

As mentioned, *somatic* manifestations are negative body sensations that participants described. Only the negative form was depicted. Those manifestations are also of minor frequency, as only five participants did mention them in the interview.

It's like a tightening of the chest, a gnawing.

(Woman, age 45, American)

Zamulony i ograniczony. Odczuwam wtedy ból żołądka. Mam problemu z oddechem i poczucie zapadnięcia klatki piersiowej

(Man, age 28, Polish)

Emotional manifestations range from positive in *motivational* form and negative in *regrets* form. More than half of respondents experienced negative emotions concerning self-development failure, while only 10 exhibited positive ones when having developmental success. Detailed examples are presented in Table 26.

Positively channelling justified rage

(Woman, age 30, British)

Czuje wyrzuty sumienia, złość, smutek i poczucie straconej szansy. Smutek, obejmujący mnie swoimi zimnymi ramionami.

(Man, age 22, Polish)

Wstyd ze nie zebrałam w sobie tyle siły żeby to popchnąć.

(Woman, age 25, Polish)

Jestem trochę smutna, ale no było minęło

(Woman, age 20, Polish)

straszny lęk, panika, uczucie że nie dam rady lub że nie jestem warta

(Woman, age 25, Italian)

Excited

(Woman, age 22, British)

Good about myself.

(Woman, age 27, Australia)

*Verbal-Analytical*⁶ refers to the cognitive reasoning process of analyzing the situation from a self-actualization perspective. In motivational form, it has a productive and informative role when through reflection and analysis person learns from mistakes, plans development, or expands self-growth reflection through, e.g., inner dialogs. It also has a motivating role when a person reminds himself/herself own success in the matter of self-development.

Zwykle jeśli takie sytuacje mają miejsce to istnieją logiczne argumenty na wytłumaczenie, więc staram sobie racjonalizować te decyzje. Jeśli nie widzę konstruktywnych wniosków z rozpamiętywania, wówczas staram się odpychać takie myśli i po prostu zaakceptować że mleko się rozlało.

(Woman, age 25, Polish)

myślę co by było gdybym postąpiłabym inaczej

(Woman, age 19, Polish)

Bardzo, bardzo często niestety zaprzatają moje myśli. Na pewno kilka razy w skali miesiąca

Bardzo irytujące, wywołujące ruminacje.

(Woman, age 34, Polish)

When analysis of situations (of, for example, lost chances) or reflections loses its productive

⁶ In the theoretical introduction, referred to as *cognitive*

impact and starts to be perceived as intoxicating and overwhelming for a person, then *verbal-analytical* manifestations take the negative form of *remorse*. Explanations (rationalizations) of own failures at the cost of finding a solution for a problem are also part of *remorse*. Half of the participants declared experiencing a motivational form of this manifestation, while less than half experienced the negative form.

*Intuitive-Psychological Impressions*⁷ in *motivational force* are exhibited as intuitive, less aware psychological sensations, concentrated, and perceived as guidance or hints of what is right or wrong for self-development. Nearly half of the respondents experienced those manifestations.

Instinct

(Woman, age 23, Vietnamese, lives 10 years in the USA)

On the contrary, *remorse* form is reflected through negative psychological states such as frustration, lack of motivation, and stress on one hand. On the other, the actual experiences of guilt, pangs of conscience, and remorse were depicted by participants as reactions to developmental failures.

Yeah I feel guilty and angry

(Woman, age 24, Ukrainian, lives 20 in the UK)

Regret most often

(Woman, age 21, Thai, lives two years in Netherlands)

⁷ In introduction referred to as *psychological*

Czuję wtedy ogromne wyrzuty sumienia, marzę o tym, żeby cofnąć się w czasie

(Woman, age 34, Polish)

Discomfort

(Woman, age 32, Canadian)

Another function of *intuitive-psychological impressions* in *remorse* form is avoiding reflections concerning developmental failure to lower any negative psychological impact. The vast majority of participants experienced this form of *remorse*.

Unsure, I don't like to think back like that

(Woman, age 22, British)

Analysis of the current study showed me that the original four manifestations did not capture the whole spectrum of the phenomenon of the inner dimension of Conscience of Becoming the Self. Therefore, *self-recognition* was created as the fifth manifestation. It refers to the state of *being* directly and through *motivational force* is expressed as a series of sensations that push for action for better self-development. Those actions mainly concern the need to change the current state by, e.g., leaving the comfort zone, gaining new experiences, and creating own autonomy. Here also, positive visualizations of future goals and self are included.

Mental contact with *being* may take a negative turn if, in any respect, its assessment is negative. Comparing self to others or the ideal self is one of the manifestations of *remorse* form of *self-realization*. Especially if the *being* is perceived as not enough or fake

oneself. Responding to this reflection, participants would experience a lack of sense in life, helplessness, inner conflict, insecurity, feeling deprived of oneself, etc. Half of the participants experienced a positive form of *self-realization*, while less than half experienced a negative form.

I'm relieved I've changed to know myself and take care of myself more

(Woman, age 53, Australian)

If we are talking about inconsistently between who I am and what people want, it causes hopelessness, depression, anxiety, and occasionally anger. If we are talking about who I am and who I want to be, it causes hopelessness and motivation to keep trying to get the treatment I need

(Woman, age 21, British)

Kiedy wybieram rzeczy, które finalnie mnie uszczęśliwią i pasują do mnie, nawet jeśli początkowo będą wymagać ode mnie wyjścia ze strefy komfortu.

(Woman, age 34, Polish)

Udręka, rozpacz, poczucie straconego czasu, że pomimo 28 lat moje życie się skończyło - dotarło do granicy. Zniechęcenie i brak motywacji do dalszych działań. A nawet frustrację i lekką nienawiść do samego siebie

(Man, age 28, Polish)

As this manifestation is new, Table 26 captures all content suitable for *self-recognition*. Therefore, elements that appeared in other parts of the result section are also

present here. I made it that way, with a thought of a possible chance for rearranging and reconstructing the structure of the Conscience of Becoming the Self in the future.

Summarizing, five major manifestations of *the inner dimension* of the Conscience of Becoming the Self were extracted. *Emotional, self-recognition, intuitive-psychological impressions*, and *verbal-analytical* each have positive (*motivational force*) and negative (*remorse*) forms complementary to each other except for *somatic* manifestation, having only a negative form.

Table 26*Conscience of Becoming the Self: inner dimensions*

| Motivational force | | Remorse |
|---|---|--|
| Intuitive-Psychological Impressions (in original: psychological) | hunch, inner voice, intuition, signaling when similar circumstances of earlier mistake occur now, awareness-impulse evoking rapid change in own behavior, sense of justice, guts, (increase self-esteem, increase self-confidence) | regrets, blockades, avoiding reflection about development, frustration, resignation, remorse, negative flashback, feeling subdued, feeling uneasy, need to avoid negative feelings, fear of new things, lack of motivation, pangs of conscience, powerlessness, feeling of sucking in quicksand, guilt, a feeling of injustice, stress decreasing self-esteem, decreasing self-confidence. |
| Emotional | positive: happiness, satisfaction, liberty | negative: sadness, anger, irritation, nervous, fear, panic, anxiety, shame, timid, torment, despair, sorrow, hopelessness, loss, jealousy, unfairness, embarrassment |
| Verbal-Analytical (in original: cognitive) | looking for better solutions, learning from mistakes, productive analysis, thought "what could have been", inner dialogs, list of "what to do" and "what not to do", thinking about the future, thinking about how to achieve goals, thinking about own success. | ruminations, thoughts concerning wrong decisions, self-blaming thoughts, rationalization, repetitive and overwhelming analysis of the situation, intrusive thoughts about own behavior |
| Self-recognition | need to change, need to leave the comfort zone in order to develop, need to experience new things, fight for own autonomy/need for own autonomy, a vision of self as a positive visualization of future self or goal a person wants to achieve, acceptance of self and past in order to move forward, need for breaking own limits, self-motivating with good memories, assessment of own behavior in the context of possibilities and rules, being proud of own achievements, need to maximize abilities, recognized certain motive for development e.g., artistic talents, recognition of a level of own actualization in life span, recognition of actualization of the past (positive evaluation) | no sense in life, self-cheating, inner conflict, uncertain life goal(no chosen goal, need to change goal), negative comparison to other people, feeling of subordination to others, acting to satisfy others, being excluded from life, disappointed of own behavior helplessness that person cannot be oneself, feeling deprived of own selfhood, lack of assertiveness, being submissive, insecurity, strong need to turn back, a feeling of lost time, self-hatred, lack of self-acceptance bringing self-destruction, a feeling of being on the wrong way of self, fear of having unhappy life, recognition of inadequate actualization level in life span, recognition of actualization of the past (negative evaluation), feeling of waste of time |
| Somatic | None | inside pain located in the chest or head, hot stomach, pain in the ass, somatic sensations, |

Summary. The results of the thematic analysis were divided into three main sections.

The *interview quality* concerns formal elements of the participant's responses, such as length or level of details that might give initial recognition of the participant's approach to taking part in the interview about self-development. The interview, as a whole, can be an insightful, reflective narration or just a set of answers.

Within the subchapter, *constructing being*, *perceiving being*, and the process of becoming the self are described. Based on the analysis of this study, a model for this process is presented in Figure 1. Although the involved processes are illustrated as subsequent, they coexist and update each other simultaneously. The *experiences* are exposed as the initial process of constructing being. Where through actions and interactions person *distinguishes self and personality*. *Gaining awareness*, one step more advanced, set established personality and self in the sphere of recognition in terms of self-development. This recognition concerns self-analysis of own life to identify meaningful circumstances that initialized, creating a sphere of self-realization, which allows more guided self-reflection. Subsequently, *a workspace* for improving and exploring being can be created. In it, a person can consider subjects such as healthy and productive distance, how to feel good about oneself, how to express self, and acceptance of the self. In the help for the process of *gaining self*, *tools rising awareness* were depicted, i.e., *a vision of self* and *standard of being*.

The result of constructing a being is the *being*, which is never stagnant, but rather a self-updating product. Which then can be the subject of self-perception from an authenticity perspective. Firstly, how much *being* is authentic, and what does it mean to be authentic? Secondly, whether being self is perceived as comfort or not. Perception of authenticity and inauthenticity is strictly a result of people's experiences. Both of them can bring comfort and discomfort.

The structure of the Conscience of Becoming the Self was presented as the last one. Thanks to this strategy, it is easier to make comparisons and reference the Conscience of Becoming the Self to the process of creating being. It is significant because COSB supposes to interfere with the process of creating self. The Conscience of Becoming the Self has two main dimensions: *behavioral dimension* and *inner dimension*.

The first one, with its content, overlaps with the process of creating the self and consists of two manifestations. *Significant factors* capture how participants describe themselves and some aspects of their development. *Strategies and patterns of development* presenting progressive and nonprogressive ways development can be described in some respects, e.g., whether development is sensible and goal-achieving or chaotic.

The *inner dimension* is most similar to conscience. Therefore, it is the most specific aspect within the whole structure of Conscience of Becoming the Self. It consists of five major manifestations with complementary negative (*motivational force*) and positive (*remorse*) forms. These are *emotional*, *self-recognition*, *intuitive-psychological impressions*, and *verbal-analytical*; the last one, *somatic*, has only a negative form.

Reverse analysis

In this section, I will perform a reverse analysis to demonstrate how the established themes and categories (as described in previous subchapters) can serve as a framework for understanding an interview. Essentially, I will use result from the *Thematic Analysis: Synthesized Findings* chapter as a structured framework or interpretive schema to apply to the interview.

I will do it following the sequence in which results have been shown in subchapter *Thematic Analysis: Synthesized Findings*. That is starting with *Quality of the interviews*, then *Constructing of being, perceiving being*, followed by *Structure of Conscience of Becoming the Self*.

Tom, Polish, man, 30 years old

Quality of the interview

Tom exhibits a relatively balanced approach in terms of answer length. Depending on the topic, he can provide concise responses with just a few words or deliver more elaborate, paragraph-length answers. His approach to the interview suggests an open and engaged individual who responds to questions thoughtfully and reflectively. Consequently, his answers are notably free from errors or oversights.

Tom's narrative incorporates personal details and exhibits an individualized reflection style. Through his responses, Tom shares his distinct perspective on self-development and related concepts. Moreover, his narration maintains a neutral tone, carefully considering positive and negative aspects without a noticeable bias.

Nonetheless, there are instances where his narrative might appear somewhat detached, resembling a third-person perspective rather than a first-person one. His responses tend to be quite broad, leaving room for various interpretations.

Constructing of being, perceiving being

Constructing being in this study is subdivided into two main components: *distinguishing self and personality* and *gaining awareness*. *Distinguishing self and personality* is fueled by *experiencing*, defined as discovering one's characteristics through action. While *gaining awareness* is taking a stand toward the outcome, the personality that person has created, it is also self-knowledge regarding the process of creating self.

While telling a story of what Tom went through to get to this point of his life and how he was shaping himself, it resembles more with *gaining awareness* meta-category. Tom identifies his motivations, significant circumstances, and the effects that those had and still have on him. Circumstances are part of the *sphere of self-awareness*. In Tom's case,

relationships and rapid environmental changes have played a predominant role in shaping his personality.

Nagle zmiany środowiska, np. zmiana lub skończenie szkoły - wtedy weryfikowały się wszystkie przyjaźnie, a w nowej grupie można było zacząć od zera budować relacje, korzystając z doświadczeń.

In the example above, Tom depicts rapid changes as significant in the process of creating him as a person. However, he also includes an explanation of how these changes affect him. Therefore, this element of explanation indicates reflection adequate for *gaining awareness* meta-category.

Moving on, Tom also emphasizes the necessity of the acceptance process. The latter was assigned as a *workspace* for *gaining awareness*.

Bardzo ważne, jeśli nie najważniejsze - stanąć w prawdzie ze samym sobą - pogodzić się z wadami, zrozumieć swoje pragnienia, przeanalizować popełnione błędy i opinie innych na swój temat i wyciągnąć z tego wnioski.

In fact, Tom identified gaining self-acceptance as one of the significant achievements he is most proud of.

Akceptacja siebie ze świadomością wad

Later on, self-acceptance will reappear as a necessity for authenticity.

Overall, Tom's responses often focus on why and how something happened rather than just what happened. The following response illustrates this distinction.

Na początku życia motałem się wśród otaczających mnie informacji, gdzie największy wpływ miało to, co pokazywali rodzice. Potem coraz większy wpływ mieli znajomi (zarówno przyjaciele i kumple, jak i wrogowie). Bardzo szybko zacząłem coraz bardziej poszukiwać własnej, indywidualnej drogi i coraz bardziej świadomie dobierać ludzi wokół siebie

This citation shows Tom's style of narration. He lists what was important, with a background explanation of what used to have a prime effect (parents) on him and how it shifted (social relations), finally leading to searching for his own path as his primary motivation.

Considering all, Tom's narrative primarily aligns with categories in the *gaining awareness* meta-category. However, aspects of the process of *distinguishing self and personality* can also be extracted from his responses.

Based on the given examples of responses, *experiencing* in Tom's case took mainly a form of *analysis, socialization, and struggles*. All of them are subthemes of *experiencing*. *Socialization* refers to the effect that society may have. On the one hand, it may be following examples of significant others.

na różnych etapach wpływ mieli: rodzice, ulubieni nauczyciele, znajomi, środowiska (harcerskie, szkolne, kościelne, muzyczne), czasami popkultura.

On the other, it is experiencing one's self while engaging in social relationships.

Na pewno ludzie, których spotkałem na swojej drodze. Oprócz tego książki, filmy i historie, które inspirowały i pokazywały, że "da się". Bardzo ważne, jeśli nie najważniejsze - stanąć w prawdzie ze samym sobą - pogodzić się z wadami, zrozumieć swoje pragnienia, przeanalizować popełnione błędy i opinie innych na swój temat i wyciągnąć z tego wnioski.

The second sentence of the citation refers to *analysis* – another subtheme of *experiencing*. It is the process of engagement with cultural artifacts that shapes worldview. In Tom's case, reading books and watching movies would provide inspiring stories that gave him psychological space of possibilities in his mind. The remaining citation was already assigned as part of the acceptance process. From a different point of view, however, it also contains *analysis*. Tom refers here to the process of understanding one's priorities and analysis of mistakes and opinions of others, overall resulting in self-improvement. Lastly, *experiencing* through *struggles* can also be seen as experiencing difficulties, and drawing conclusions from them.

Perceiving being is a complex theme encompassing authenticity and inauthenticity, and Tom's responses to these topics are detailed and explanatory, aligning with his writing style mentioned earlier. The question of whether being oneself is a source of comfort does not yield a simple yes or no answer for Tom. Instead, he makes crucial distinctions in his response. Tom begins by differentiating between being oneself and self-acceptance. He explains how these two concepts are interconnected.

Trzeba by rozdzielić bycie sobą i akceptację siebie. Idealna sytuacja to taka, w której jesteśmy sobą - czyli robimy to co lubimy i co sprawia nam przyjemność, i

akceptujemy to. Wtedy jest to źródło komfortu i poczucia harmonii wewnętrznej. Jeśli jedna z tych rzeczy nie jest spełniona, możemy dążyć do autodestrukcji lub się frustrować. Uważam, że każda cecha człowieka nie jest ani wadą, ani zaletą - tylko cechą, którą da się wykorzystać pozytywnie lub negatywnie. Ważne jest, żeby znaleźć kierunek w swoim życiu, który sprawia, że czujemy się dobrze na wszystkich płaszczyznach swojego życia, który akceptujemy i który zgodny jest z naszymi wewnętrznymi pragnieniami.

In simpler terms, self-acceptance is a prerequisite for Tom to feel comfortable with himself. Interestingly, in this response, Tom maintains a certain distance from the question. His approach gives the impression of offering a piece of personal wisdom lacking personal references. Towards the middle of the response, he finally adds, "In my opinion."

In essence, Tom's perspective revolves around the idea that characteristics are neutral, and individuals attribute value to them through self-acceptance and self-guidance. When this balance is achieved – and for Tom, it seems that he has achieved it as he sees no need for changes to feel more like himself – a lack of authenticity brings about feelings of energy depletion.

wypompowany z energii

In summary, Tom's viewpoint suggests that being authentic can provide comfort when specific internal conditions are met, such as self-acceptance and self-guidance. In this scenario, a lack of authenticity is associated with negative emotions, symbolized by energy depletion. Conversely, being oneself can be self-destructive without the foundation of self-acceptance.

Structure of Conscience of Becoming the Self

Two main structures build up the Conscience of Becoming the Self: the *behavioral dimension* and the *inner dimensions*. The analysis of the interview will start respectively.

The *behavioral dimension* falls into two categories: *significant factors* and *strategies and patterns of development*.

The first category helps to identify self-description and assessment of it by a participant, alongside meaning given to certain elements of self-development history. Tom's self-description consists only of *inner* type of characteristics.

Prosty człowiek z wadami i zaletami, wielkimi marzeniami i dobrym sercem.

This description is short and quite general. Although it shows focus on *inner* characteristics of *personal* and *social* type. This is more evident in the following responses when Tom points out more concrete characteristics.

Pozytywne myślenie i szukanie rozwiązań zamiast rozmyślania, jak zły jest świat.

brak systematyczności (czasem niekonsekwentność), oraz trudność w decydowaniu się na jedną drogą (trzymanie kilku srok za ogon, rozdrabnianie się)

Both citations cover *personal* characteristics. The first citation refers to Tom's positive approach to life. As a characteristic, it can be named positivity, and Tom sees it as an advantage.

The second citation alludes to qualities of disorganization and unpredictability, which Tom regards as negative traits he finds dissatisfying. These characteristics may be linked to Tom's challenge in prioritizing and determining where to direct his energy.

umiejętność skupienia się na jednej rzeczy

(What Tom desires to improve in himself)

decydowanie, z czego zrezygnować

(What Tom perceives as difficulty)

Niektóre decyzje podjąłbym szybciej. Skupiał się na jednej rzeczy i ją doprowadzał do końca, a inne zostawiał na później, zamiast robić wszystko na raz.

(What Tom would do differently)

Consequently, this approach is perceived as a *difficulty* on his journey of self-improvement.

Based on the entire interview, social impact is essential in many respects for Tom. Rapid environmental changes and engaging in relationships were already assigned as crucial *circumstances* in *gaining awareness*. At this point, they are pointed out again as crucial *circumstances* in the context of self-development. Furthermore, the citation below exemplifies a *social* characteristic: empathy, which Tom is proud of.

umiejętność (albo przynajmniej próby) zrozumienia potrzeb drugiego człowieka

At the same time, the following citation shows that the loss of relations is, for Tom, a significant *sacrifice* in his self-progress path.

mało czasu dla znajomych, porzucenie niektórych zainteresowań

Finally, a *significant factor* also concerns what a person perceives as a crucial achievement in the context of self-development. On the one hand, Tom directly refers to finding passion as an achievement that gives financial stability and self-fulfillment.

znalezienie swojej pasji, która jednocześnie pozwala zapewnić byt i daje poczucie spełnienia osobistego

Therefore, this achievement refers to *skills*, that is, improving one's own potentialities and to *emancipation*, seeing success in the capability to provide for oneself. On the other, gaining self-acceptance was important for Tom, but he does not refer to it as achievement directly. Instead, he declares self-acceptance as a characteristic he is most proud of. Thus, self-acceptance can also be considered as an achievement assigned to the *personality* category, that is, overcoming flaws and bringing positive characteristics out.

The *behavioral dimension* consists of several categories. I will begin by considering the six development strategies that emerge from Tom's interview. First and foremost, Tom exhibits a strategy of *offensiveness* when faced with obstacles. He tends to confront difficulties by seeking solutions rather than dwelling on the negativity of the situation. This exemplifies an adaptive approach:

Pozytywne myślenie i szukanie rozwiązań zamiast rozmyślania, jak zły jest świat.

pogodzenie się ze stratami, kiedy już podjęło się decyzję

Conversely, Tom faces challenges in organizing priorities and channeling his energy into well-structured plans or a chosen path. This difficulty represents a form of maladaptive behavior and fits the category of *non-purposive* behaviors.

Tom's well-articulated responses throughout the interview indicate a *high level* of *self-awareness* regarding his personal development. Additionally, two categories, *level of control* and *level of engagement*, are not explicitly addressed in the interview. However, a comprehensive analysis of the entire interview suggests that Tom is deeply engaged in his activities, implying a dynamic approach. He does face challenges in deciding which activities to pursue, falling under the *non-purposive* behavior category.

Assessing the *level of control* is somewhat intricate. While the interview frequently alludes to the social impact and its influence on Tom's life, it is evident from Tom's narrative that he maintains a strong sense of control over his life and personal development. Tom recognizes the significance of external circumstances, acknowledging that both controllable and uncontrollable factors play a role in his development.

Znowu momenty, które były ważnymi zwrotami akcji w życiu, są raczej połączeniem przypadku, ambicji i szczęścia. Przykładem takiej sytuacji jest zgoda na współpracę na polu, w którym wcześniej nie miałem doświadczenia.

The other shade of *strategies and patterns of development* concerns self-regulation in the context of self-development. In Tom's case, *social interactions* serve as a prominent driving force, although *self-development* also emerges, though less frequently.

Chęć zrobienia czegoś nowego, potrzeba przygody. Trochę też chęć pomocy drugiej osobie i podzielenia się swoim doświadczeniem czy szczęściem.

(a response that indicates what was a motivator for adequate personality decisions)

Based on this interview, it is challenging to determine whether *social interactions* take precedence in motivation or if Tom skillfully balances it with *self-development*. On the one hand, analysis of the interview suggests that Tom does have a problem with sensible prioritizing and energy management. However, this might pertain to lower-level objectives, simple tasks like what course to take or whether to participate in some volunteering actions or not. While considering more abstract motivations, such as social engagement and self-development on a broader scale, he appears to strike a suitable balance that aligns with his personal needs. It remains challenging to assert the adequacy of this interpretation conclusively.

In some interviews, it is possible to identify a *leading ideology*, and for Tom, a positive attitude when facing challenges serves as his guiding principle. Additionally, it is evident that he has achieved self-acceptance and acceptance of the path he has gone through and that he effectively uses social resources.

Finally, I will extract manifestations of the *inner dimension from the interview*. The most prevalent manifestations fall into the *Verbal-Analytical* category, characterized by productive analysis, drawing conclusions, and reevaluation to avoid future mistakes.

Czasami, w rozmowach lub podczas głębszych przemyśleń o przeszłości

ale z czasem po prostu chęć niepopelniania więcej takiego błędu i akceptację, że to już się stało. W miarę osiągania sukcesów w życiu coraz częściej staram się analizować i wyciągać wnioski przy podejmowaniu kolejnych decyzji, niż mieć żal do siebie

Kiedy po dłuższych przemyśleniach i gorszych dniach znajduję sposób, by wyjść z kłopotów (wewnętrznych lub zewnętrznych).

Raz częściej, raz rzadziej. Są okresy, kiedy często (nawet codziennie), ale potem przez dłuższy czas skupiam się na pozytywach.

I natłok myśli - co dlaczego i po co.

All the above are responses to questions about difficulties in self-development and what impact it has on Tom.

Although most of these responses are of a positive nature, aligning with the *Motivational force* category, the last two can be considered as *remorse*, that is, overwhelming thoughts.

Intuitive-psychological impressions primarily take the form of a *motivational force*, representing a sense of inner harmony and a self-guiding voice. However, *remorse* appears as inner anxiety, not in an emotional sense, but as a psychological disagreement with the choices made.

Poczucie wewnętrznej harmonii, zgody, połączonej z ekscytacją i energią do zmian lub realizacji pomysłu.

jako indywidualny, bardzo cichy wewnętrzny głos podpowiadający właściwe rozwiązanie.

Jako wewnętrzny niepokój, brak zgody na podjęte decyzje

Tom declares that the *emotional* manifestations of *remorse* are a thing of the past, making space for *Verbal-Analytical* manifestations of *motivational force*.

Kiedys żal do siebie, ale z czasem po prostu chęć niepopelniania więcej takiego błędu i akceptację, że to już się stało. W miarę osiągania sukcesów w życiu coraz częściej staram się analizować i wyciągać wnioski przy podejmowaniu kolejnych decyzji, niż mieć żal do siebie.

Tom experiences one of the rarest manifestations of the Conscience of Becoming the Self' – a *somatic* manifestation.

coś jakby ból wewnętrzny, nie fizyczny (choć można by go umieścić w klatce piersiowej lub głowie).

Finally, manifestations of *self-recognition* type can be found in both *motivational force* and *remorse* form.

mobilizują do zmiany, czasami dołują.

Kiedy zabrnąłem w życiu w ślepą uliczkę, oszukując się, że to jest dobre dla mnie, a okazało się, że popełniłem błąd.

That is the need to change, but also the feeling of being in the wrong place.

According to Tom's perspective, the Conscience of Becoming the Self plays a crucial role in compelling individuals to enhance themselves and rectify errors made in their interactions with others. As a result, the Conscience of Becoming the Self encompasses elements related to both social and self-development, with a more prominent emphasis on the former.

Study-2: An Interpretative Phenomenological Insight into Artists' Experiences

Methodology

Measure: Interview

The interview for the second study was developed based on the results of the first study while also taking into account all interviews conducted within the research on the Conscience of Becoming the Self. The objective was to maintain a clear focus on the process of self-development while simultaneously examining the presence and role of the Conscience of Becoming the Self in participants' lives. Study 1 served as the primary source of insight for adapting the interview process to create meaningful opportunities for psychological reflection.

The interview protocol was piloted with two participants (one female and one male), aged 65 and holding higher education degrees. Based on the insights gained from these pilot interviews, an additional question concerning "calling" was incorporated. Moreover, it was decided that the primary sample would consist of individuals younger than the typical retirement age. This decision was informed by the observation that retired participants tended to reflect on their experiences in a more distant and conclusive manner—offering summarizations rather than in-depth accounts of the lived experience (e.g., *What was happening? Why? How did it feel?*). In contrast, younger participants were more likely to articulate ongoing personal transformation processes, thus providing richer and more immediate insights into the phenomenon under investigation. The final version of the interview is presented in

Table 27, considering the area of reflection each set of questions touches.

Table 27

Final version of the interview

| Questions | Area of reflection and goals |
|--|--|
| <p>1. <u>Czym dla Ciebie jest rozwój osobisty?</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Jakie znaczenie ma dla Ciebie rozwój osobisty w życiu codziennym? - Kiedy po raz pierwszy zacząłeś/zaczęłaś zastanawiać się nad swoim rozwojem? | <p>Initial orientation toward the subject of the interview. Establishing familiarity with the topic. Aims to explore participants' understanding of self-development and the moment they began reflecting on it.</p> |
| <p>2. <u>Jak przebiegał Twój proces rozwoju osobistego?</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Jakie wartości lub przekonania kierowały Tobą w tym procesie? - Czy były osoby, które szczególnie wpłynęły na Twoją drogę rozwoju? - Czy możesz wskazać momenty przełomowe? - Jakie decyzje uważasz dziś za kluczowe? - Co uważasz za największy powód do dumy, a co za rozczarowanie? | <p>Deepening the inquiry into the process of self-development and identifying key elements and milestones. Also aims to recognize emotional evaluations of personal decisions.</p> |
| <p>3. <u>Jak rozpoznajesz, że jesteś „na właściwej ścieżce”?</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Co dzieje się z Twoim samopoczuciem, zachowaniem, motywacją? - Czy masz jakieś wewnętrzne sygnały, które Cię prowadzą? - Czy korzystasz z punktów odniesienia (np. wartości, cele, autorytety)? | <p>Shift from narrative to intentional reflection. These questions explore internal and external sources of guidance in the self-development process.</p> |
| <p>4. <u>Jak Twoje otoczenie reaguje na Twoją drogę rozwoju?</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Czy ktoś zauważył Twoje zmiany? Jakie były reakcje? Jak ludzie to przyjmują? - Jak Twoje relacje z innymi zmieniają się w zależności od Twojego etapu rozwoju? | <p>Continued exploration of guidance and self-awareness, but now focusing on social context, feedback, and interpersonal dynamics during self-growth.</p> |
| <p>5. <u>Czy są decyzje lub sytuacje, które dziś oceniasz inaczej?</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Jakie możliwości się pojawiły, których nie wykorzystałeś/aś? - Czy były cele, które chciałeś/aś osiągnąć, ale coś stanęło na przeszkodzie? - Co miało wpływ na te momenty: Ty sam/a, otoczenie, przypadek? | <p>Retrospective analysis of missed opportunities or regrets. Reflection on internal and external barriers to self-development.</p> |
| <p>6. <u>Jak wygląda u Ciebie refleksja nad samorozwojem?</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Kiedy najczęściej przychodzą Ci takie myśli? - Co je prowokuje? Czy są jakieś powtarzalne sytuacje? | <p>Direct reference to process <i>Conscience of Becoming the Self</i>. Exploration of internal reflection, its phenomenological qualities, emotional experience, and the impact of imagined</p> |

| | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Jak wygląda Twoje wewnętrzne doświadczenie takich chwil (emocje, obrazy, przemyślenia)? - Czy zdarza Ci się wyobrażać, jak wyglądałoby Twoje życie, gdybyś postąpił/a inaczej? | alternatives. |
| <p>7. <u>Jakie znaczenie mają te refleksje w Twoim życiu?</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Czy wpływają one na Twoje decyzje? - Czy pomagają Ci zrozumieć siebie lepiej? | Assessment of the meaning and influence that self-reflection has on everyday life and decision-making. |
| <p>8. <u>Czy czujesz, że miałeś/miałaś lub masz jakieś powołanie lub wewnętrzne wezwanie?</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Skąd wiesz, że to właśnie to? - Jakie miejsce ma powołanie w Twoim rozumieniu „stawaniu się sobą”? - Czy czujesz, że idziesz za tym powołaniem? | Exploration of inner callings or “vocational” urges, how they are recognized, and how they relate to the concept of becoming oneself. |
| <p>9. <u>Jak oceniasz swoje spełnienie jako człowieka?</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Czy masz poczucie, że realizujesz swój potencjał? - Co byłoby dla Ciebie miarą spełnienia? | Reflection on fulfillment and the realization of potential, both of which are important for understanding <i>Conscience of Becoming the Self</i> . |
| <p>10. <u>Jak rozumiesz pojęcie „sumienia stawania się sobą”?</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Czy masz poczucie wewnętrznego głosu, który Cię prowadzi lub osądza? - Jakie decyzje lub sytuacje najbardziej „uruchamiają” to sumienie? | Final conceptualization. Participants now directly define their understanding of <i>Conscience of Becoming the Self</i> after reflecting on their own developmental experiences. This is the only moment the term is explicitly mentioned. |
| <p>11. <u>Jaką radę dałbyś/dałabyś swojemu młodszemu „ja” w kontekście rozwoju osobistego?</u></p> | A reflective projection to elicit key insights, possible values, and hidden or surprising dimensions of their personal development story. |
| <p>12. <u>Czy chciał(a)byś coś dodać na koniec?</u></p> | An open space for spontaneous reflection or comments that may not have fit previous questions. |

Procedure

Data collection

The interviews were conducted between April 14, 2025, and April 28, 2025. Each interview lasted approximately one hour and a half. The interview locations were selected with special attention to the participants' comfort. At the beginning of each session, the aim of the study and the interview procedure were clearly explained. Participants were then asked to provide informed consent for voluntary participation. With their permission, the interviews were audio-recorded. Some participants expressed a desire to share additional reflections after the interview, suggesting that important insights might emerge later. In response to this need, an email address was provided so that participants could submit further thoughts if they felt it was important to do so.

Qualitative data analysis: Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis

Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (shortly IPA) is a qualitative method of interview analysis, designed to capture a person's individual perspective. It has its theoretical foundation on phenomenological and hermeneutic approaches where the major aim is to study the human experience within a world and the significance of interpretations (J. A. Smith et al., 2009). This method of analysis has a broad area of usage in psychology, where individual experience of a person is essential e.g., health care, psychotherapy, psychiatry (Biggerstaff & Thompson, 2008; Davidsen, 2013; Dima & Bucuță, 2016; Pańczak & Pietkiewicz, 2016; Papagiannaki & Shinebourne, 2016). The steps of the analysis are as follow:

- 1) capturing the overall meaning by reading, rereading, making notes;
- 2) initial noting identification of significant elements of participant's answer, that capture essence of his/her experience;
- 3) creating experiential themes: recognizing similar code and grouping them together;

- 4) searching for connections and patterns within created experiential themes;
- 5) developing Personal Experiential Themes that gather and organize experiential themes (J. Smith et al., 2022)
- 6) All steps from 1-5 are conducted individually in each interview. Special attention is put to analyze each interview with a fresh mind, not biased by interpretations from other interviews. When all interviews go through the procedure (steps 1-5), steps 6-7 were conducted:
- 7) crossover analysis: comparing PETs from every interview, rearranging, and creating new superior categories that are called *Group Experiential Themes* (GET) (J. Smith et al., 2022).
- 8) theoretical explanation of the results (J. Smith et al., 2022)

In this study manual approach was used. Further, I will describe how I approached the procedures of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis.

The transcript of each interview was produced using *Whisper*, an open-source speech recognition tool developed by OpenAI. This tool was operated via the command-line interface, using the “small” model variant (*whisper-small*), which provided sufficient accuracy and computational efficiency for the purposes of this study. Despite its effectiveness, the initial transcripts required additional manual correction, particularly in cases where recordings were made in noisy environments or included overlapping speech. Thus, the process began with a careful re-listening to the recordings and correcting any errors, which constituted the first phase of the analysis — familiarisation with the data through iterative reading and listening.

In the second stage, I imported the corrected transcript into a dedicated Microsoft Word document and began coding the material using the *Review* mode, primarily by inserting comments. These comments were initially descriptive, highlighting notable elements or possible meanings in the participants’ responses.

In the third stage, I gradually abstracted these notes into preliminary experiential themes. These were broader interpretations of the participants' lived experiences, reflecting patterns or emotional undercurrents observed in the interviews.

For the fourth stage, I developed a custom macro in Microsoft Word that automatically extracted all comments from the document, assigning a unique number to each and exporting both the number and the content into a structured list. This process allowed for systematic organisation of the data without manually copying each comment. The macro ensured consistency, traceability, and efficiency in managing the large volume of qualitative notes.

Subsequently, in a separate Word document, I created a table where I manually grouped the extracted comments. Each comment was pasted into a new row; if several comments conveyed similar meanings or related to the same experiential aspect, they were placed in the same row. This process resulted in clusters of conceptually related data — an essential step in identifying emerging experiential themes.

The fifth stage involved analysing each of these grouped rows and assigning a label representing a *Personal Experiential Theme* (PET), i.e., a meaningful interpretative summary of that particular cluster as experienced by a single participant. Below is a shortened version of this table, provided as an illustrative example. Firstly, rows two and four were completed with comments. Secondly, based on these comments, appropriate PETs were constructed in rows one and three.

Driven by Passion and Personal Interests

Komentarz 1:

Ciekawość jako istotny aspekt kształtujący rozwój osobisty

Komentarz 7:

Wykazywanie naturalnej chęci do nauki

Komentarz 8:

W nauce kierowanie się tym co interesujące

Komentarz 12:

Zainteresowanie i ciekawość obecne w formie znajdowania hobby - impulsy do zaciekawienia

Education as a Lens in Reflective Self-Awareness

Komentarz 17:

W historii edukacji zmiana profilu zainteresowań z technicznych na humanistyczne

Komentarz 37:

Bycie na rozstaju między zainteresowaniami technicznymi a artystycznymi, nie przygotowanie się do egzaminu d ASP, wybór trzeciej drogi, pedagogicznej

Komentarz 35:

Wybór szkoły jako istotna decyzja, rzutująca na życie

In the sixth stage, I repeated the entire procedure for every interview, adhering to IPA's emphasis on maintaining an idiographic stance. This meant approaching each interview with a fresh perspective, consciously bracketing previous interpretations to preserve the individuality of each participant's account.

In the seventh and final stage, I printed out all PETs — listed without their accompanying comment excerpts — and manually arranged them to identify thematic similarities across participants. PETs with overlapping content were physically grouped together. From this grouping, I reflected on deeper patterns and generated *General Experiential Themes* (GETs). These GETs represent higher-order interpretations shared across multiple individual accounts.

To facilitate the writing of results and ensure traceability, I created a summary table containing all GETs in a separate Word file. Thanks to the consistent numbering of comments throughout the process, I was able to efficiently retrieve and insert representative citations from the original transcripts, supporting each GET with direct evidence from the data.

Participants

Four participants—two men and two women—aged between 53 and 60, were all professionally active and employed. Each had an artistic educational background, with three having attended art high school and all holding degrees from an art academy. All participants are actively engaged in creating art; two also hold academic positions, and one is additionally involved in organizing initiatives aimed at expanding and popularizing art. Below, brief introductory profiles of each participant are presented.

Case 1: Marinna is a 57-year-old Polish artist. She holds a master's degree in design with a specialization in textile design. Since completing her studies, she has consistently created her own artwork and regularly holds successful exhibitions focusing on paintings and sculptures. Currently self-employed, she is able to support herself solely through her artistic work. Marinna is single and describes herself as spiritual, noting that her belief in a higher power goes beyond the definitions of any particular religion.

Case 2: Dawid is a 54-year-old Polish artist with a master's degree in graphic design from the Academy of Fine Arts. In addition to creating his own works, he actively promotes music and the arts in his role as a creative director. Dawid is currently employed, single, and does not engage in religious practices.

Case 3: Leon is a 53-year-old Polish artist who holds a PhD in the arts (Doctor of Arts). In addition to creating his own works, he teaches at a film school. He earned his degree from an art academy, specializing in visual education. Currently employed and single, Leon identifies as an atheist.

Case 4: Sandra is a 60-year-old Polish artist and lecturer at an art academy. She holds a PhD in painting and currently leads a composition studio. She lives with her partner in a long-term, informal relationship. She describes herself as a believer, though she does not actively engage in any particular religious practices.

Results

Based on the IPA analysis of four visual artists, a nuanced characterization of the process of becoming and self-growth emerged. Fourteen General Experiential Themes (GETs) were developed by IPA methodology. It is worth noting that participants' understanding of why and how certain self-development decisions were made often appeared to lie outside their immediate conscious awareness. Initial responses suggested that reflective engagement with one's own developmental trajectory was not a habitual practice. However, as the interviews progressed, participants were able to explore and articulate their experiences of becoming in greater depth. This results section first presents the 14 GETs, illustrating how the processes of becoming and self-growth were shaped within this group. Subsequently, the phenomenon of the Conscience of Becoming the Self is discussed in relation to the described developmental pathways. At the end of the chapter, all fourteen GETs are briefly summarized to provide a clear overview of the findings.

1. Creative empowerment

The act of creation and sustained dedication to art both emerged as integral elements of the process of becoming. While these dimensions were clearly present across the interviews, their influence manifested on three interrelated levels: as transformative forces in shaping one's life trajectory, as catalysts for personal development, and as enduring sources of motivation.

1.1. Art as a Foundational Anchor in One's Life

An artistic career is deeply intertwined with other domains of life and profoundly shapes one's understanding of personal development. This connection is clearly illustrated in Marina's case:

W ogóle moja praca ma bardzo duży wpływ na mój rozwój osobisty dla mnie to jest właściwie taka moja, własna praca twórcza jest taką drogą, rozwoju osobistego.

All skills, competencies, and personal resources tend to be organized around the pursuit of artistic work, as articulated by David:

... Ale uważam, że wszystkie moje umiejętności chęci predyspozycje staram się fokusować, katalizować tu, w tym miejscu właśnie, w pracy i wydaje mi się, że mi się to no, udaje

However, the influence of an artistic career extends beyond the psychological or identity-related sphere. It often significantly alters material and life circumstances. For example, the need to adapt domestic surroundings to provide adequate space for creative work is treated as a priority, as emphasized by Sandra:

No nie wiem, na pewno ważne jest to, żeby mieć pracownię. To od początku się wiąże z tym, że nie potrzebujesz tylko miejsca do mieszkania. Małej go w pokoju czy tam, takich, takich, takiej normalnej przestrzeni, tylko potrzebujesz dużo więcej, co się wiąże oczywiście. I z kosztami i tak dalej, no to to wszystko jest ważne, nie? ...Pracownia może być pracownia z aneksem mieszkalnym, ale nie mieszkanie bez pracowni (p. 6)

Moreover, the creation of a dedicated space for artistic practice is not only practical but also deeply symbolic, often becoming a long-held dream that shapes major life decisions, such as building a house—again, as described by Sandra:

Tak, tak, no to jeszcze wchodziła ta rzecz, ta pracownia, prawda bo normalny człowiek, jak buduje dom nie potrzebuje pracowni, a ja nie dość, że potrzebuję, to jeszcze potrzebuję mieć tak blisko takiego życiowego miejsca, to to wszystko było ważne, nie? Nie, żeby dylać do garażu, nie? No tak, że kłócili z moim partnerem o każdy metr kwadratowy, jeśli chodzi o salon i pracowni, bo salon jest obok pracowni i ja mówiłam, że mnie religia nie pozwala na to, żeby salon był większy od pracowni, nie?(p.16)

Chciałabym mieć taką, chciałabym mieć taką enklawę, takie miejsce, gdzie po prostu mogę sobie pracować na chwilę wyjść na zewnątrz do ogrodu, czego nigdy nie miałam, bo mieszkam w centrum miasta. No, że takie coś, to było moje marzenie. (p.14)

Despite the intrinsic rewards of pursuing an artistic vocation, all participants acknowledged its serious implications for their standard of living. These include limited structural support and frequently precarious financial conditions. Such challenges are anticipated and accepted by artists, but they nonetheless impose a significant burden:

Rozczarowań to może być dużo, dlatego, że w naszym kraju to jednak nie jest taka dziedzina, która na zachodzie na przykład czy w krajach rozwiniętych, to jest dziedzina, która jest normalnie wyznawana w taki sposób prawie, że jak przemysł. Nie, że to jest dziedzina, w której już jest dużo bardziej rozwinięta, gdzie jest więcej możliwości, gdzie ci artyści, którzy ledwie coś zaczynają robić, od razu są gdzieś tam zauważani i doceniani. U nas to wszystko jeszcze jest takie pobijakach. Artysta przez lata był u nas traktowany jako taki błękitny ptak, w sumie niepotrzebny....Chociaż chyba na całym świecie dla artystów to jest ciężki kawałek chleba, to nie jest coś, co możesz sobie zaplanować, nic nie możesz zaplanować, bo to nigdy nie wiadomo, taka jedna wielka nie wiadoma, dlatego to ludzie, którzy się tym zajmują tak na co dzień i przez lata to są pasjonaci po prostu. (Sandra, p. 6)

A po drugie to było strasznie, to było skazanie się na po prostu, nieekonomicznie.. bo początkujący malarz, to znaczy teraz to już zdarza się bardzo często, ale ja uważam, że zdarza się za szybko i niezasażenie. A w czasie gdy ja zaczynałam, to trzeba było kilkanaście lat pracować, o ile się nie wypowiadało w tym nurcie, którzy, obowiązującym, że tak powiem, a ja się nie wypowiadałam. I to się przykładało na życie, tak, gdy nie było zarobków, artyści do dzisiaj nie mają żadnej regulacji, ani zusów, ani tych wyróżników, ani ubezpieczenia zdrowotnego, ani stałej, wielu artystów pracuje na przykład w szkolnictwie. Ja nigdy nie pracowałam, ja zawsze pracowałam u siebie w pracowni więc to wszystko trzeba utrzymywać. A malarz, a żyłam od obrazu do obrazu. Na początku to ja sprzedawałam jeden w roku. To był dramat, nie tylko jeżeli chodzi o to, że ja mogę skromniej żyć. Tylko o to chodzi, że ja nie mam na rachunki, na jakieś podstawowe rzeczy, więc to są potworne stresy i obciążenia, to było ciężkie i tak, do pewnych momenty może i rozczarowujące. Bo jakby ten wkład, energii, pracy, nie przekładał się zupełnie na..(Marinna, s. 14)

Ale bardzo dużo ludzi się od niej odbija i rezygnuje i po prostu nie chce już do niej wracać, dlatego, że, no, praca w kulturze wiąże się z upokorzeniem, tak? Bo zarobki ludzi, którzy muszą mieć, no, wyższe wykształcenie i być specjalistami w różnych dziedzinach, tak? No, to tutaj są takie, że, no, ja nie mówię, że tylko tutaj, ja mówię ogólnie w kulturze, tak? No, może aktorzy dużo zarabiają, od nas, tak? Trzeba ich przytrzymać, bo są popularni. A tak, to jest tutaj po prostu bida, chuda, jak się nie ma męża, co ma drugą pensję i to dobrą, to się do kultury nie idzie, tak? Bo się inaczej głoduje. (David, s. 12)

1.2. Using the creative process as a means of shaping personal development and self-exploration

Self-discovery through the creative process was something Marinna explicitly highlighted, emphasizing that her profession inherently demands and facilitates a journey into the inner self:

Myślę, że tak, bo akurat moja praca ma taką specyfikę, że ma bardzo dużo wspólnego z odkrywaniem, analizowaniem, rozpoznawaniem siebie, ale też jednocześnie jakby wytycza mi taki główny nurt, ale jakby takie odnóżki zahaczają o różne dziedziny, więc głównie to ta praca.

For Marinna, this process goes beyond simple self-exploration—creative work becomes a form of **self-regulation**, shaping her identity and emotional balance. The act of creating not only facilitates introspection but also provides a structure for personal growth across various life domains.

Generalnie moja twórczość zawsze była takim narzędziem. No że by, ja zawsze mówiłam, że ja po prostu uprawiam terapię, czy autoterapię przez twórczość. Niektórzy nie lubią się tego przyznawać, ja się zawsze do tego śmiało przyznawałam (p. 3)

To było na zasadzie wtedy malarstwo robione, na zasadzie wyrzucania, właśnie młodzieńczych tych emocji, problemów, i to było na zasadzie, że to jest taki wentyl bezpieczeństwa. I to właściwie ja musiałam, bo ja chyba bym zwariowała jakbym tego, nie robiła. I przez 10 lat to było na zasadzie właśnie, że ja muszę. Bardziej muszę dać siebie upust, bo właśnie dla zdrowia i samorozwoju, niż to jest mój wybór, bardziej przymus. Żeby trzymać balans, tak, jakiś jeszcze. No później oczywiście to jakby inaczej, to już się zaczęło rozpuszczać, i dzisiaj to już zupełnie to dzisiaj to jest bardziej taki proces, bardziej medytacja, właśnie takie coś praktyka codzienna, kiedy pracuje, ...ekspresja, ale sposób podejścia, podejścia do pracy wewnętrznej. Wszystko się zmieniło ale to jest naturalny proces (p.22)

1.3. Intrinsic Motivation Rooted in the Creative Process

The experience of creative flow emerged as a recurring theme across participants, described not only as a source of deep satisfaction but also as a moment of disconnection

from everyday reality, offering a profound sense of inner freedom and joy. Sandra illustrates this state vividly:

No to jest wielka radość, to jest takie odcięcie się od rzeczywistości totalne. (...) Za każdym razem pamiętam, od lat, jak byłam jeszcze bardzo młoda, to czułam taką ogromną radość, jak zaczynałam tworzyć. (...) I to daje taką, naprawdę taką radość, że człowiek ma więcej energii, się lepiej rusza i w ogóle ma lepszy humor.(Sandra, p. 18)

This powerful emotional uplift serves as a motivating force, drawing the person back into the creative process. As Sandra explains, anticipation of that personal “creative time” pushes her to complete other responsibilities more quickly:

Wszystko układać, dopinguje się, (...) Tylko dlatego, że się nie mogę doczekać, kiedy będę miała ten swój czas... (Sandra, p. 13)

To mnie dopinguje, że zbliżam się coraz bardziej do tego momentu. (...) główne moje zajęcie to będzie ta twórczość moja własna.(Sandra, p. 14)

Similarly, Leon describes this process as a continuous journey of self-realization through making—whether in artistic or technical contexts. His passion lies in the act of creating something tangible and meaningful:

Miałem wielką pasję, żeby się czymś zajmować, takim, co wytwarzam coś (...) I to wszystko, co się wtedy uformowało elektronikom, to po prostu idealnie w sztuce tak samo, wszystko jest tak samo. (Leon, p. 5)

For Leon, the dialogue between the self and material reality, enabled through creation, becomes a core element of personality development and identity expression. Creative activity, therefore, not only offers joy but also becomes a central path to **self-actualization**, reflecting both inner drive and existential alignment.

Tak, to było bardzo podobne i ja nie wiem, czy ja w sobie to można powiedzieć, że to uformowałem, to po prostu odkryłem, że jakby taki proces kontaktu z cywilizacją, że coś oglądam, analizuję, coś mnie zachwyci, chcę zrobić coś podobnego, czy ja potrafię zrobić, że to jest taki mechanizm, który wtedy odkryłem, ja nie wiem, czy się go nauczyłem, ale po prostu go odkryłem, że to jest takie właściwe dla mnie. (Leon, s. 5)

Czyli w wieku właśnie tam 12-13 lat rozbudziłem w sobie taką potrzebę działania, bo ludzie mają tak ogólnie różne profile, w takiej osobowości, którzy są tak tylko i wyłącznie kontemplujący. Niemniej są jeszcze różne typy osobowości, a ja wtedy odkryłem i to do dzisiaj mi zostało, że realizuje się głównie przez działanie. Czyli muszę, lubię coś wytworzyć, coś też zrozumieć, oczywiście ta strona, taka ideowa, też mnie interesuje i to się właśnie składa na tą całość, ale realizuje się przez działanie. (Leon, s. 4).

2. Curiosity as a Motivational Drive

Curiosity emerges as a profound and consistent motivational factor among the artists in this study. For all participants, it functions as an internal compass, guiding decisions about which activities to engage in. The experience of something being 'interesting' functions not merely as a personal preference, but as a fundamental criterion guiding action and creative exploration—significantly shaping the process of becoming the self and personal development.

A ten element musi wystąpić u mnie przynajmniej. Jakies tajemnicy, zaciekawienia i tak dalej, tak? (Marinna, s. 7)

Myślę, że ciekawość, bo, zawsze jest dużo ciekawych rzeczy na świecie. Które by się chciało, że, tak powiem, zobaczyć, poznać lepiej, bliżej, głębiej poznać, tak. (Marinna, s. 20)

Patrzę, coś mi się zaczyna podobać, zaczynam się tym interesować. Potem zaczynam już o tym myśleć, kombinować, co jakby z tym zrobić, czy to się uda, czy to możliwe. Potem powstaje plan, potem powstaje plan szczegółowy, potem jak się uda, to się go wdraża i to się dzieje. (David, s. 11)

I to były takie impulsy. Jeśli chodzi o zainteresowania tego, co moglibyśmy nazwać hobby, no to raczej ja sam je wynajdowałem. To wynikało z ciekawości świata i dlatego tutaj jakaś filatelistyka, tutaj monety. Zawsze się czymś interesowałem i coś zbierałem (Leon, s. 4)

No to wewnętrzne sygnały to mówiłem właśnie ta zgodność do tego, żeby się interesujące, żeby naturalnie w chciało...tak to są absolutnie wewnętrzne sygnały to najważniejsze

(Leon, s. 11)

In some cases, the influence of curiosity becomes so dominant that it overrides rational deliberation. This was particularly evident in Leon's account, where the drive to explore and engage with what sparked his interest outweighed logical or strategic reasoning in decision-making.

Jest taka istotna rzecz, którą tak odkryłem ...tak, po czasie no to już poznałem w sobie że nie kierowałem się w swojej wyborach zdrowym rozsądkiem, bo tak raczej szedłem bym za pasją, bo to jest pewnie dzisiaj też to jest ale i wtedy było, że raz często rodzice namawiają na drogę życiową, rób to i tamto bo będzie się na lepszy zawód, będziesz miał tak czy siak, no to ja nigdy nie kierowałem się tym czy będę miał jakiś lepszy czy gorszy zawód, tylko co mnie interesuje no to jest chyba bardzo istotna teraz tak myślę, cecha w ogóle mojej osobowości że idę za pasją a nie za potencjalnie czymś, co ma przynieść sukces (...) myślę, że gdybym miał pasję do tego, to bym był lekarzem to jest przypadek trochę, że akurat nie interesowały inne rzeczy (...) Czasem w parze idzie z tym, że można mieć pieniądze ale najważniejsze to, żeby to było ciekawe (Leon, s. 9)

As a result, Leon does not perceive his professional activities as "work" in the conventional sense, as he derives genuine joy and fulfillment from them:

Nadal aktualne to, że kieruje się w tym sumie co mnie interesuje i pasją i tak dalej i to rozpoznanie. Ono jest takie powiedzenie nie wiem kto jest jej autorem ale w tym się zawiera chyba to, co pani pyta że jeśli masz zawód który jest twoją pasją, to tak jakbyś w ogóle nie pracował i tutaj właśnie pewnie, że czasem jest taka miarodajna sprawa którą jakoś czuje, że mimo, że jestem to bardzo zapracowany, to tak jakbym nie pracował i że to tak naprawdę napędza mnie jakoś (Leon, s. 10)

Similarly, David shares a comparable attitude, emphasizing autonomy and intrinsic motivation:

no, więc po prostu, tak jak mówię, no, robię tylko to, co mam ochotę (David, s. 3)

3. *Shaping Role of Relationships and Education*

Although most participants expressed a sense of internal independence from social circumstances—often reflecting an attitude of overcoming external difficulties—in Leon’s narrative, these circumstances emerged as a meaningful force that actively shaped his life path.

3.1. *Shaping the Self Through Inspirational Others*

The notion of following role models played a significant role in Leon’s process of self-growth. In his case, idols served as sources of inspiration and guidance, offering ideas that he would absorb selectively—integrating only those that resonated with his inner sense of coherence and authenticity.

Natomiast jeśli chodzi o elektronikę, to tutaj wpływ mojego kuzyna, mam takiego kuzyna, który jest takim trochę samorodnym geniuszem. Na wszystkim się znał, trzy lata starszy i po prostu ten jego autorytet. On z taką pasją opowiadał o wszystkich, o takich różnych ciekawych zjawiskach, że to było dla mnie też ciekawe, ja w to wchodziłem. To jest taki część takiego istotnego dla mnie, dla całokształtu. (Leon, s. 4)

no i, jak wspomnę, to zawsze taki miał, jakieś idoli od, od idoli muzycznych, od idoli takich niebezpośrednio znanych, to takich, które znałem, znanych, znanych mi muzyków, znanych mi, a artystów, znanych mi, jakichś mądrych ludzi, profesorów, którzy, którym lubilem sobie słuchać uważałem, tam, tak, tak, że ja zawsze miałam kogoś, albo bezpośrednio, albo pośrednio, na kim się wzorowałem. (Leon, s. 6)

3.2. *Discovering One’s Role and Place Through Social Interaction*

Engaging in social contexts with peers in childhood such as taking part in camps or in school, were present in Leon’s memory, and he was aware of significance of this experience, as they were practices where he found his social role:

ja wyjeżdżałem na, i to, to były różne konfrontacje, które były często trudne. (...) Kolonie, obozy. I to, jeśli chodzi o mój rozwój, jako ten rozwój społeczny, to, to miało dość dużo znaczenie, moim zdaniem, bo to są sytuacje trudne, sytuacje w grupach, i człowiek się dużo uczy w takich sytuacjach, na przykład też, tak, odkryłem przez te wszystkie wyjazdy też, jakąś swoją rolę, że nigdy nie byłem liderem, grup, ale zawsze byłem, prawie zawsze, gdzieś tak, w

tej grupie, która jakby ciągnie do przodu, prawda (...) Także umiejętności społeczne bardzo dużo tutaj no, nabyłem właśnie siłą rzeczy, przez to, że byłem daleko od rodziców, przez parę tygodni (Leon, s. 8)

3.3. The Role of Nurture in Shaping the Self

Leon, in addition to being an artist, is also engaged in teaching. This dual identity appears to deepen his sensitivity toward the role of education in shaping young individuals. However, he does not view education as a process of transmitting knowledge, but rather as an opportunity to support the emergence of students' inherent abilities:

jeśli np. chodzi o kształcenie artystów, to np. tak naturalnie myślę, że każdy ma jakieś zainteresowanie, jakieś preferencje w jakimś kierunku, nie wiem, interesuje się bardziej tym, a nie tamtym. I o tym to jest coś, że ja nie mogę nauczyć, tylko odkryć ten profil, tego kogoś, że on np. lubi, będzie robił filmy bardzo statyczne (Leon, s. 9)

For Leon, the educational journey itself is deeply entwined with his own personal transformation. A significant shift occurred in his life when his interests transitioned from technical to humanistic, marking a pivotal reorientation in his identity and life direction:

, znaczy, tak, że tak dosłownie zmieniło, że poszedłem do takiej szkoły, ją skończyłem, ale oczywiście, że później zmieniły mi się zainteresowania, czy profil zainteresowań, takich technicznych na bardzo humanistyczne, ale właśnie powiedziałem o tym tak szerzej, że zmieniło się, że to moje życie właśnie się zmieniło (Leon, s. 5)

He attributes this shift partially to influential relationships and personal fascinations, such as a cousin who inspired an early passion for electronics. However, as he matured, he discovered music and painting, which eventually led him to pursue early childhood education, where art was part of the curriculum:

szkoła techniczna, skończyłem technikum i tutaj ja dlatego poszedłem do technikum, bo ten mój kuzyn, czyli ta fascynacja pomógł mi odkryć ten świat elektroniki i ja się w to wciągnąłem a potem jak byłem w szkole w technikum to w ostatnich klasach odkryłem muzykę i malarstwo i czy to, że brakowało czasu, żeby się tak przygotować do takiej szkoły i na

początku się znalazłem tak że nie poszedłem do akademii sztuk pięknych, ani na studia techniczne, ale poszedłem do szkoły pedagogiczne i wychowanie początkowe, że tam była plastyka, czyli to były takie bardzo ważne wybory życiowe i no (Leon, s. 8)

A similar redirection is visible in Sandra's case, where she abandoned her original academic plans in favor of studying art. Her story also reveals the importance of a supportive upbringing that encouraged autonomy in decision-making:

Natomiast jak się zdecydowałam, że ja jednak będę zdawać na ASP i zawsze egzaminy były wcześniej, się nie dostałam ale jak moi rodzice zobaczyli, że ta moja siostra się uczy, żeby na te egzaminy na tą hungarystkę, a ja nie, no to tata mi mówi. Chodź na tutaj. Usiądź i mi powiedz. Czy ty chcesz na tę hungarystkę, czy ty chcesz rok poświęcić, żeby się dostać na drugi rok na to ASP? To ja właśnie chcę to poświęcić i na to ASP. No to dobra, bo widzę, że się kręcisz i powiedz, to ulży i nam i tobie. (Sandra, s. 17)

3.4. Interplay Between the Reception of One's Art and Self-Reflection

Creating is an inner process that also exists in dialogue with the external world, particularly through the reactions of others—namely, the viewers. While participants do not primarily seek external validation, responses from the audience may still play a meaningful role in their development. This was particularly evident in Leon's case, where reception by others appeared to influence his sense of artistic and personal growth.

No tak, no te punkty odniesienia to są reakcje innych ludzi To jest na pewno w tym konfrontacie które owocują jakąś zwrotną informacją to to są punkty odniesienia. I to wszędzie czy to studenci czy jak maluję to reakcja i myślę tak bardzo i tak nie to nie determinuję, tak że na przykład teraz to się robi po to, żeby się wszystkim podobało ale jeśli robię coś co mnie jakoś tam nakręca, napędza a widzę, że to rezonuje z rzeczywistością. że ludzie żywo reagują na to a nie na tamto to jakoś tam daje mi do myślenia i tak nadpływa . nie jest to najważniejsze, ale to właśnie takie punkty odniesienia (Leon, s. 11)

For Marinna, the positive reception of her work may serve as a source of satisfaction and pride; however, it is not the primary aim of her creative activity. Rather, she perceives it as an added value—an enriching outcome—when her art has the potential to shift someone's perspective or serve as a source of inspiration.

To znaczy, no otrzymywałam sygnały, choć były na przykład od malarek, które później przyszły, że byłam dla nich inspiracją. Myślę, że jestem dosyć.....dużo..sporą inspiracją dla... (...) No więc mam ten sygnał z zewnątrz, że to jest dla niektórych inspirujące, że właśnie pomaga w zrozumieniu siebie. To już nawet jak ja często poruszam takie trudne tematy w malarstwie, generalnie no to nie jest malarstwo dla każdego, tak? Ale też mam takie miłe sytuacje, że na przykład ktoś, kto się opiekował matką, a widział moje obrazy z fragmentami ciała, niektórzy się brzydzą na przykład, uciekają od tego, a ta osoba na przykład podeszła specjalnie do mnie i powiedziała, że bardzo mi za to dziękuję, bo ona teraz zupełnie inaczej myśli o matce (Marinna, s. 17)

Ultimately, exposure to the opinions and evaluations of others is an inherent and unavoidable aspect of any professional artistic career.

mają ale tutaj wszelkie zawody artystyczne mają to do siebie że po prostu człowiek się zestawia na ocene i no to po prostu to się samo dzieje i tutaj nie jestem wyjątkiem to po prostu wszyscy mają dość podobnie (Leon, s. 11)

4. Consistent Self-Direction

An analysis of the participants' life trajectories revealed a recurring pattern that significantly influenced their individual processes of becoming. The theme "Consistent Self-Direction" captures this overarching dynamic, which is marked by four core elements: a strong sense of determination and sustained commitment to pursuing personally meaningful goals; the alignment of self-development efforts with those goals; the assumption of personal responsibility for navigating and shaping this developmental path;

4.1.Determination and Commitment in Pursuing Chosen Goals

The strong desire to pursue a chosen life path—despite obstacles or sacrifices—emerged as a defining element in the narratives of several participants. This determination is most explicitly articulated by David:

Jestem w stanie podpisać cyrograf z diabłem. Ja nie mam żadnych zahamowań, dlatego, że ja samotnie i podejmuję cele, które często są karkołomne i kończą się też, no, niepowodzeniem, bo to nie jest tak, że mi się wszystko w życiu udaje, tak, ale ja nie obciążam tym, na przykład, jakieś tam mojej rodziny (David, s. 3)

For David, achieving one's goals is primarily a matter of perseverance and effort, rather than innate talent. In his view, talent often serves as a justification for those unwilling to commit to the hard work required to realize their aspirations:

predyspozycja już jest bardziej, tak, precyzyja, tak? No, tak. To już bądźmy precyzyjni. No, bo jednak to... Talent to jest wymówka. Talent to jest wymówka. Nie poszło mi w życiu, a Andrzejowi poszło, no, bo on ma talent, tak? Andrzejowi poszło, bo on ma talent. Został najlepszym pianistą na świecie, bo ma talent. To nic, że Andrzej, przez całe 20 lat przypalowany do fortepianu wygrał i trenował Chopina aż mu palce spuchły, tak? No, (...) miał talent i już jest sprawa jest załatwiona. (David, s. 11)

Marinna's story also reflects this perspective. She described a process of diligent self-improvement, especially in the early stages of her career, when she had to reapply to an art academy and enhance her skills to meet the required standards:

A później jeszcze jeden rok poświęciłam na przygotowania i zrobiłam taki skok, że miałam maksa, pierwsza na liście tak więc. Chcę w tym momencie też powiedzieć o tym, że własny wysiłek. To jest własny wysiłek. Nie tylko talent, bo ja znam bardzo wiele talentów, które się zmarnowały, bo się nie chciały pracować na przykład. Więc też własny wysiłek. Albo te osoby generalnie przeważnie spotkanie na drodze też jest najważniejszy własny wysiłek (Marinna, s. 5)

The aspiration to pursue an artistic career appears to be rooted in early childhood experiences across participants. In some cases, this aspiration emerged as an intuitive but not yet fully articulated sense of direction. For instance, Marinna recalled a vague but persistent inner feeling that pointed her toward creative expression from a young age:

(...) bo jestem strasznie przekorną osobą i nie poddaję się w ogóle tak naprawdę zawsze wiedziałam, ja mam taką dobrą intuicję. Ja zawsze miałam dobrą intuicję. Jak idę za tą intuicją, nawet jak byłam młoda, to chyba miałam silniejszą. Mnie po prostu prowadziło. Jak ja nie wiedziałam, to właśnie zawsze pojawiło się coś, co mi pokazywało, że mam iść tu, a nie tu, tak? (Marinna, s. 5)

In contrast, David made a deliberate and conscious decision about his future profession early in life, clearly articulating his intention to pursue an artistic career:

Od razu wiedziałem, że po prostu jest inaczej, w wielu przypadkach ze mną bardzo szybko, tak? Wiedziałem, że mam inne pomysły i chęci niż wszyscy dookoła. Bardzo szybko się zamknąłem, tak powiem, w swoim, no... w swojej głowie i wszystko już sobie tam od dawna wiedziałem, co będę robił. Miałem 7 lat, ja już nie miałam wątpliwości, jak będzie mój zawód, tak? (David, s. 7)

The necessity of determination in participants' personal development is reflected in the first General Experiential Theme (GET), *Creative Empowerment*, particularly in the subtheme *Art as a Foundational Anchor in One's Life*. This theme illustrates how the pursuit of an artistic career often entails significant economic sacrifices—challenges that participants not only acknowledged but actively navigated and overcame.

4.2. Self-Guidance Through a Chosen Path

The purposeful development of skills and knowledge in alignment with a major life goal played a significant role in shaping participants' processes of self-growth. Participants demonstrated a consistent effort to align their personal potential with their artistic goals. This alignment often involved intentional development of their own abilities, as seen in David's case:

Tak, skończyłem kursy marketingowe, skończyłem kursy w zakresie różnych tutaj wiedzy, której nie miałem, bo ja jestem po Akademii Sztuk Pięknych, więc musiałem to wszystko, co jest dalej, przynajmniej w jakiś tam podstawowych zakresach dowiedzieć się, tak, w zarządzaniu o takich sprawach, więc to mi dużo dało, bo jestem i doświadczony i wykształcony pod kątem takim artystycznym, ale też, no, radzę sobie w czynnościach zarządczych, prowadzę to już po prostu wszystko (David, s. 4)

Moreover, this adjustment was not limited to technical skills but also included the cultivation of interests that could later enrich their artistic practice, as exemplified by Marinna's experience:

Myślę, że tak, bo akurat moja praca ma taką specyfikę (...) jakby wytycza mi taki główny nurt ale jakby takie odnóżki zahaczają o różne dziedziny, więc głównie to ta praca (Marinna)

Early inclinations toward artistic expression often appear in childhood and are continuously nurtured throughout life, as exemplified by David's experience:

Miałem specjalne zeszyty, pod ławką, gdzie ja tylko to wszystko wypali na tych nauczycieli. Czasami mi to wyciągnęli, ale jakoś to się zawsze udało. Także ja po prostu wiedziałem, że to będę robił gdzieś tam po drodze. Jeszcze inne rzeczy musiałem zrobić w życiu. No po prostu też interesuje mnie tam sprawy organizacyjne, ale organizacyjne w zakresie właśnie tworzenia takich i imprez, poświęcanych komiksowi, muzyce. To był taki po prostu temat, który mnie zawsze interesowały (David, s. 2)

Sandra had a similar experience, as from an early age she intuitively sensed the criteria her future profession should meet, even though she did not yet know what that profession would be.

Nie wiem, czy ja w ogóle zaczęłam się zastanawiać nad rozwojem, natomiast zawsze wiedziałam, że nie chcę mieć nigdy takiej pracy, do której muszę chodzić codziennie na tę samą godzinę i na pewno nie chcę mieć nad sobą szefa. To jako dziecko już miałam takie przemyślenie. Wtedy jeszcze nie wiedziałam, co będę robić. Ale to pociągało jednak twórczość. Zaczęłam chodzić do ogniska plastycznego w liceum już. (Sandra, s. 2)

Leon emphasizes the notion of an inner core or center within each individual—an innate potential that must be uncovered rather than imposed. In his view, education should serve not as a prescriptive process, but rather as a facilitative one, guiding self-growth and helping individuals recognize and cultivate what already resides within them. His role as an art teacher is thus not to transmit knowledge in a traditional sense, but to accelerate processes of self-discovery that students would eventually reach on their own.

Znaczący wiele rzeczy uważam gdzieś, no, że można się nauczyć, nawet uwrażliwić, żeby jeszcze też ukształtować, ale pewien zasób jakichś, takich mocy, jakoś tam sprofilowanych człowiek w sobie ma i tylko to odkrywa. I mi się wydaje, że jakby tak przesakiwałem do swojego życia i do mojego zawodu, bo ja też jestem nauczycielem, plastyki, to właściwie też myślę, że nie to, że ja ich jakoś tak na... nauczam, ale właściwie to tylko pomagam przyspieszyć pewne

procesy, do których byli doszli, za ileś tam lat. czyli nie wiem, że ja tego nauczyłem, tak jak ja raczej nie mam takiego podejścia, tylko oni to mają w sobie, a im pomagam to odkryć. I to tak sobie myślę i tak do tych młodych ludziach, że jestem tak na drodze, tylko z znalazłem przypadkiem, czy nie przypadkiem, żeby może próbować im otworzyć oczy na to, co i tak by do tego doszli, a tak może jakoś szybciej. (Leon, s. 5)

The involvement in a cherished art form often transcends personal practice, as illustrated by Sandra and Leon, who actively contribute to its dissemination through teaching, while David channels his organizational talents and embraces certain sacrifices to advance his promotional art initiatives.

Ja jestem strasznym urzędasem, mam stemple, mam cały tam Wydział ludzi, którzy pracują, mam swoich zastępców, więc po prostu to wszystko się tak rozwinęło w tą stronę. Ale nie dlatego, że ja to uwielbiam być i mieć stempel, tylko dlatego, żeby jeszcze bardziej robić to, co chcę robić. I to jest generalne, największe, że tak powiem, największa motywacja w moim życiu. Jestem w stanie zrobić wszystko, żeby realizować swoje pomysły. Mogę nawet zostać urzędnikiem. Nie będę się tego bał. Będzie trzeba, będę kosmonautą, będzie trzeba, będę górnikiem. I wiele pomysłów takich w życiu zrealizowałem, które mi przyszły do głowy i właśnie dlatego, że jak chcę, to jestem tym, kim chcę być. I mam takie, potrafię być takim kameleonem, może to Pani sobie tak nazwać (David, s. 2)

No, ja wręczyłem tu na festiwalu pierwszy pakiet oprogramowania graficznego dla szkoły (...) bo szkoła tego nie miała jak kupić, no, myśmy to załatwili tu... I takie rzeczy po prostu robiłem, po prostu bardzo mnie to wtedy no, cieszyło, że to się dzieje i że mam wpływ i że mogę po prostu polepszać w jakimś tam zakresie, jakiś mały fragment tego, tam, mojego, prawda, tego, co jest wokół mnie, tak (David, s. 5)

4.3. Control and responsibility in own hands

This subtheme encompasses the notion of personal responsibility and resistance to social influence while also highlighting the critical role of self-confidence in the process of becoming.

For David, the sense of responsibility rests entirely on his own shoulders; as a result, he tends to reproach himself rather than others. This perspective is consistent with his broader attitude of valuing autonomy and preferring to approach tasks in his own unique way.

tak, bo też jestem już mądrzejszy i inaczej to wszystko układam, tak. I ja się brałem po prostu za swoje pomysły po swojemu i był taki moment w życiu, że kiedyś trzeba było tego wszystkiego nauczyć, dostać po dupie. (David, s. 4)

Jeśli muszę rozczarowania to też głównie tym, czego nie zrobiłem, albo tym, czego sobie nie zdaję sprawy, ale jeśli rozczarowania to ja jestem rozczarowany tylko i wyłącznie sobą. Nie rozczarowuję się ludźmi dookoła, (...) jak ja to zacząłem i to się nie udało, to znaczy, że albo źle dobrałem ludzi, albo źle to wymyśliłem, albo źle to skomponowałem w sensie i tak dalej, tak. Ktoś nie dał rady, to nie jest jego wina. To jest moja wina, że mu zleciłem tą robotę, powinienem się lepiej zastanowi (David, s. 9)

David also emphasizes the importance of acting in alignment with his inner self, warning that yielding to social expectations can lead to severe personal consequences.

trzeba być w zgodzie ze sobą, tak, że trzeba być chociaż po prostu no czasami kusi nas, żeby no poddać się, nazwijmy to, konwenansom, tak, czy jakimś społecznym oczekiwaniom dookoła, tak, to po prostu pokazać faka i powiedzieć nie. Jak mam po prostu patrzeć w lustro i po prostu wierzyć w siebie, to po prostu, po prostu trzeba być sobą, nie wolno zatracać siebie i tłumaczyć potem najczęściej to, bo musiałem zrobić, musiałem to zrobić, bo dla innych, bo dla rodziny, tak, tak dalej (David, s. 9)

This perspective aligns with Marinna's experience, as she stated that she never truly had an authority figure she felt compelled to follow.

Tak, i tak jak mówię, to były osoby po prostu nie jakieś wybitne i ja w ogóle. Jako młoda osoba strasznie cierpiałam na brak autorytetów (Marinna, s. 7)

Sandra also emphasizes that the artistic process is highly individualistic and necessitates independent decision-making.

Tak, to jest bardzo indywidualne i bardzo wyizolowane. Bo tutaj na studiach to jeszcze ktoś ci podpowiada, że tam ci uczą jakieś reguły, które też są takie płynne, bo tu nie ma tak jak w matematyce, czy w jakiejś ścisłych tam przedmiotach. Ale potem to już nikt z niczym nie pomoże, to już musisz decyzję podejmować na każdym roku sam. (Sandra, s. 3)

Finally, the theme of self-confidence emerged as a crucial element in participants' narratives, serving as a foundational resource that supports the independence and resilience previously described. This can be exemplified by the reflections of Sandra and David:

Jak mam po prostu patrzeć w lustro i po prostu wierzyć w siebie (David, s. 9)

Żeby bardziej wierzyła w siebie. Jeszcze bardziej. (Sandra, s. 22, answering the question what advice she would give for her younger self?)

5. Loneliness and Social Withdraw

The experience of being alone appeared across all narratives, suggesting that time spent apart from others played a notable role in the participants' processes of becoming. This recurring pattern of aloneness seemed to leave a lasting imprint, influencing both their personal and professional lives. In fact, two distinct forms of this experience emerged: one as a deliberate and necessary condition for introspection and creative engagement, and the other as an unintended consequence of the chosen artistic path, resulting in social disconnection.

5.1. Chosen solitude/self-sufficiency

In the participant's experience, solitude provides the mental and emotional space necessary for engaging in the artistic process. It functions not only as a condition for focused creativity but also as a facilitator of self-reflection, allowing for deeper access to personal meaning and internal guidance crucial to their work. This notion is carried out by Sandra's and Marinna's answers.

Nie wiem, może mogę sobie tak wyobrazić, że kiedyś chciałam porównać taką pracę artysty do kogoś i jedyne, co im przyszło do głowy, to jest taka praca jak takiego mnicha, które te książki tam piszę, rysuję i tak dalej. (...) Tak, to jest bardzo indywidualne i bardzo wyizolowane (Sandra, s. 3)

Bo ja wiem, zawsze byłem osobą bardzo nieufną, typem samotniczki, introwertyczka. Więc nie mam, a też moja praca jest taka, że ja jestem zamknięta po prostu za bardzo, tak (...) Jak całymi tygodniami to sobie możesz pogadać do obrazu. (Marinna, s. 18)

Ja akurat jestem nieustającej wersji tej refleksji, bo mam taką pracę. Która mi stwarza takie warunki, tak? Dla mnie refleksja jest czymś... Jakby naturalnym. Ponieważ ja się nie muszę zatrzymywać. Bo ja mam...mnóstwo czasu na refleksję. Bo kiedy ja pracuję, to są godziny spędzone, na przykład przed tym obiektem. To ja przez cały czas mam wiele refleksji, na różne tematy w tym czasie, nie? (Marinna, s.21)

For David, isolation was not only a social condition but also a deeply internalized experience.

From an early age, he perceived his way of thinking as fundamentally different from those around him, which led to a kind of psychological withdrawal:

Od razu wiedziałem, że po prostu jest inaczej, w wielu przypadkach ze mną bardzo szybko, tak? Wiedziałem, że mam inne pomysły i chęci niż wszyscy dookoła. Bardzo szybko się zamknąłem, tak powiem, w swoim, no... w swojej głowie (David, s. 2)

Lastly, withdrawal from social relationships may represent not only a strategy of psychological self-protection but also a manifestation of personal self-sufficiency, enabling deeper focus and dedication to artistic work. This dual aspect is particularly evident in David's case, where distancing from others seems both a shield and a condition for his creative autonomy.

ale ja nie obciążam tym, na przykład, jakieś tam mojej rodziny czy kogoś, kto by z tego powodu musiał ponieść konsekwencje no, moich tam, moich różnych rozmaitych porażek, tak, więc robię to na swoją własną odpowiedzialność i uważam, że tak jest uczciwie, tak, uważam, (David, s. 3)

wszystko w pewnym formacie, który jest dla mnie do przyjęcia, tak? Nie przekraczamy żadnej bariery tam towarzyskiej, ani już broń Boże, jakieś osobistej, czy coś takiego, tak? I tak mi jest dobrze, bo po prostu budzę się i mam święty spokój, idę spać, mam święty spokój, dużo, coś tam pewnie w życiu straciłem, ale jestem gotów stracić jeszcze więcej, bo za to mogę robić cudowne rzeczy, tak? Które mnie cieszą i przynoszą radość też innym, nie? (David, s. 13)

5.2. Social pain / unfulfilled relational needs

Although the beneficial aspects of creative solitude were previously discussed, participants also acknowledged the emotional costs associated with an artistic lifestyle—particularly the experience of social isolation. This tension is evident in Marina's account, where loneliness is described as a profound burden and arguably the most challenging dimension of the artistic experience.

Bo ja wiem, zawsze byłam osobą bardzo nieufną, typem samotniczki, introwertyczka. Więc nie mam, a też moja praca jest taka, że ja jestem zamknięta po prostu za bardzo, tak? Generalnie. No tak z perspektywy, jakby mnie ktoś zapytał, co jest w malarstwie, najtrudniejsze, to bym chyba powiedziała, a nawet na pewno, że samotność. I to jest taki element, który też wytrzymuje, bardzo dzielnie (Marinna, s. 18)

Despite the inner fulfillment that creativity can offer, the absence of sustained interpersonal relationships may negatively affect personal well-being. The immersive nature of artistic work often requires a withdrawal from social contexts, which, over time, may result in unfulfilled relational or familial aspirations. This tension is particularly visible in Leon's narrative, where the dedication to creative pursuits coincides with a sense of missed opportunities related to building a family. A similar sentiment, though to a lesser extent, can also be discerned in Marinna's account, where personal sacrifices for the sake of artistic development are acknowledged.

Ja po prostu wiedziałam, co mam do zrobienia(...). Nie mogę powiedzieć, że jestem rozczarowana. Ale myślę, że większość kobiet byłaby rozczarowana, o na tej zasadzie. Ale ja to uważam, że taka była ta cena. Czyli no jako kobieta, być może dla większości kobiet, jest ważne, żeby się w tym obszarze rozwijać, spełnić, czyli jakby zrealizować, tak? Ja tego obszaru nie miałam. Ale z kolei ja zawsze bardziej czułam się człowiekiem, niż kobietą (Marinna, s. 13)

jakby nie założyłem rodziny takiej jak taki typowy model rodziny że to, bo tak naprawdę zawsze chciałem nigdy nie uciekałem przed tym, tylko jakoś tak się to składało że nie udało, bo to myślę, że to jest to, to trochę szkoda
(Leon, s. 1)

6. Personal Growth as a Holistic and Ongoing Process

In their direct descriptions of personal development and narratives about self-growth, participants depicted the process as:

6.1. Multidimensional,

encompassing various spheres of life, including psychological, emotional, and self-developmental aspects:

Rozwój osobisty, on jest na kilku płaszczyznach, ale jest to rozwój zainteresowań światem i to dotyczy tego, co się pojawiły(...). (Leon, s. 1)

jakby rozwój też kariery osobowego... zawodowej, ale też wnoszenie jakby nowych rzeczy i lepszych do tego wszystkiego, co się robi. Takie czucie się coraz lepiej i przede wszystkim takie czucie, że wszyscy dookoła też się czują coraz lepiej w moim towarzystwie, tak, co to jakoś taka pewna dojrzałość, pewnie też. (David, s. 1)

This includes the fulfillment of fundamental needs.

No to wszystko się składa, no, w życiu człowiek, każdy musi żyć, każdy musi jeść, każdy musi odpoczywać czasami, każdy musi no, dam różne swoje preferencje i też chodzi do kina, czy oglądać filmy, czy tam jakieś, jakieś zestawy chodzi spotykać się z różnymi tak dalej, no to to wszystko pochłania czas. I no i, no to to jest bardzo sprzężone z, z, z życiem. To nie są takie oddzielne rzeczy (Sandra, s. 8)

6.2. Continuous and holistic, inseparable from life itself

understood as an ongoing, lifelong journey without a fixed endpoint:

Rozwój osobisty to chyba wszystko, co się w życiu robi. Wszystkie doświadczenia, które się zbiera, podróże, które się jeździ, ludzi, które się spotyka. Praca w moim przypadku jak najbardziej, bo to jest praca twórcza, to jest troszeczkę coś innego niż inny zawód. (Sandra, s. 1)

Procesem, przede wszystkim. W ogóle moja praca ma bardzo duży wpływ na mój rozwój osobisty dla mnie to jest właściwie taka moja, własna praca twórcza jest taką drogą, rozwoju osobistego. Więc ja nie wiem, pogłębianie, poszerzanie, odnajdywanie siebie właściwie w pierwszym rzędzie, tak, później móc zrozumieć to, co mnie otacza? (Marinna, s. 1)

No i co mamy po drodze? No rozwój osobisty, generalnie nie ma chyba taki działań, które nas w jakichś sposób nie rozwijają, zwłaszcza ja się tu zaangażujemy, tak? (Marinna, s. 1)

6.3. Marked by responsibility and commitment,

reflecting an active dedication to becoming a better person:

Jest to jakiś sens życia też, jeden sensu życia. I w... Tak, no taka możliwość dojścia do jakiejś formy, która jest lepsza niż była wcześniej. I to mówię, jeśli chodzi o twórczość, ale też o życiu, że to na tym też polega samodoskonalenie się, że jest lepiej niż było. (Leon, s. 1)

właśnie tą misją jest to nie tyle to samo poznanie to może tak nie jest żadna też misja ale próba doskonalenia swojego języka wizualnego to jest dla mnie wyzwanie i (...) tylko żebym ja, żebym był lepszy niż jestem w tym co robię. To raczej taka misja, moje jakieś jakby to powiedzieć, taka misja żeby nie być gorszy tylko żeby być lepszy (Leon, s. 15)

6.4. Artistic work is the centre

Although the above descriptions offer a holistic and multidimensional understanding of personal growth and development, participants consistently identified artistic engagement as central to this process. They acknowledged that their creative work is not merely a professional pursuit but a fundamental axis around which self-exploration, self-expression, and transformation revolve.

No i przez rozwój osobisty to uważam przede wszystkim zdobywanie nowych, osiągnięć w przestrzeni właśnie pracy, wymyślania, kreatywności, bo branie się za bary z różnymi tematami, nie tylko z tym jakimś jednym, tak, w tej działalności artystycznej i to jakby ciągle poszukiwanie nowego tematu czy sposobu i to jest dla mnie jakby taki rozwój osobisty, tak, najbardziej. (David, s. 1)

Procesem, przede wszystkim. W ogóle moja praca ma bardzo duży wpływ na mój rozwój osobisty dla mnie to jest właściwie taka moja, własna praca twórcza jest taką drogą, rozwoju osobistego. (Marinna, s. 1)

Myślę, że człowiek się jakoś rozwija w swoim kierunku, który sobie obrał, który uwielbia i lubi. Po prostu jeżeli mowa o sztuce, o takim rozwoju, to się chyba powinno rozwijać, bo do lata doświadczeń robią swoje, inne rzeczy się zaczyna zwracać uwagę też niż na początku. To jest powołanie. To jest coś w tym stylu. (Sandra, s. 1)

7. Drawing lessons from life struggles

Difficulties and struggles inevitably arise in life, yet with the right mindset, they can become catalysts for personal growth and deeper self-understanding. This was evident in Marinna's experience, where moments of hardship—even crises—functioned as pivotal opportunities for self-realization, enabling her to generate solutions and continue progressing. In fact, for Marinna, periods of pleasure and stability—though undoubtedly positive—are not perceived as contributing meaningfully to self-growth. Instead, it is the challenging experiences that carry developmental value and foster transformation.

No jako młoda osoba, to miałam takie problemy jak każdy raczej, słabo panujemy nad swoimi emocjami i tak dalej. Myślę, że chyba wtedy, kiedy po raz pierwszy, chciałam sobie świadomie poradzić z kryzysem, tak? No wtedy człowiek poszukuje różnych rozwiązań....Ogólnie to tak było bo jak jest dobrze, to człowiek korzysta z życia, ze słońeczka i tak dalej, a myślę, że te momenty kryzysowe, są takimi, gdzie się głębiej po prostu nad sobą samym zastanawia otaczającym światem (Marinna, s. 2)

Ale ja uważam, że to były bardzo trudne momenty, ale jednocześnie właśnie kluczowe dla mojego rozwoju. Duży wysiłek, ale ja mam taką jakąś naturę, nie wiem, czy każdy tak ma, że ja z każdego ze wszystkiego, co jest złe, potrafię wyciągnąć, przemieniam to w coś dobrego, w złoto, że tak powiem (Marinna, s. 3)

No oczywiście, że w tym momencie to jest kryzys tak, ale ja zawsze nie zdarzył się aż tak głęboki mieć, jak inni, że leżą, po prostu nic nie robią, albo nawet robią sobie krzywdę, ja nigdy, ja wtedy po prostu jeszcze zawsze zdołam wykrzesać taką siłę, żeby właśnie wszystkie te momenty sprawiły, żebym poszłam dalej, tak? I nawet nie raz w nieoczekiwanym kierunku. Żeby się ratować, zainteresowałam się jakimś obszarem, zaczęłam to zgłębiać na przykład, tak? Więc to zawsze dla mnie było inspirujące, nie tylko dla twórczości, ale w ogóle dla mnie, tylko dla osoby (Marinna, s. 3)

David takes a similar stance; however, rather than emphasizing self-realization or increased self-awareness, his approach is more pragmatic. He views personal failures not as existential turning points but as concrete opportunities for learning and skill improvement.

tak, bo też jestem już mądrzejszy i inaczej to wszystko układam, tak. I ja się brałem po prostu za swoje pomysły po swojemu i był taki moment w życiu, że kiedyś trzeba było tego wszystkiego nauczyć, dostać po dupie. (David, s. 4)

No, to jest to, trzeba brać baty na plecy, zmieniać bandażę i tak dalej, no co, w takie jest życie. Pomyliłem się mnóstwo razy, po prostu naprawdę. Po tym za każda pomyłka trochę boli, trochę piecze. Zależy, jak ona jest duża, to ja zależy, jak się długo ją pamięta i jak długo do doskwiera, tak? (David, s. 14)

8. Inner guidance

While reflecting on their life paths and the ways in which they engaged in the process of self-growth, a recurring theme emerged: the presence of an inner guidance. This internal compass appeared as a pivotal force shaping who they have become.

8.1. Perceiving Guidance Within Unpredictable Life Circumstances

Marinna experienced this sense of guidance through external circumstances that were initially beyond her control and appeared to be disadvantageous. Over time, however, she came to recognize these situations as essential for her personal growth. She also described how seemingly insignificant or unexpected events—initially perceived as irrelevant—gained meaning retrospectively, ultimately revealing themselves as fruitful and formative experiences.

W moim zawodzie, czyli jako projektantka, tkaniny, drukowanie, nie znalazłam pracy. Wtedy był ten, no zapomniałam, wszystko runęło w ogóle, cały przemysł tutaj, (...) to zostało zlikwidowane, tak? Akurat w takim momencie, może przypadek, ale w moim życiu jak się okazało, to zaawocowało tym, że nie znalazłam w moim zawodzie, więc znalazłam w pracowni konserwacji zabytków. Nie wiem, czy gdybym nie pracowała w tej pracowni i nie poznała tej receptury, ale tak jak mówię, to nie wydaje się, że tak powiem, nie... Nie wiem, czy bym kiedykolwiek wpadła na tekst, żeby poznać tą, no może jakbym rzeczywiście szukała, tak? (...) Może jakbym znalazła tą inną metodą, a jakbym bardzo szukała, ale ona się najpierw

pojawił się... Tak, później się przydało później, jakby... Więc no, i tak jak mówię, to było kluczowe, dla mojego malarstwa, no więc takie przypadki, nie przypadki, tak? (Marinna, s. 11)

Albo na przykład jeszcze podam jednym przykład. Jako dziecko miałam kontakt z taką moją przyszywaną ciocią babcią (...) I ona była hafciarką, znakomitą (...) No i ja nie wiem, że może byłam w trzeciej klasie kiedy ją poprosiłam, żeby mnie nauczyła. No widziałam jeszcze wtedy...ja miałam takie ciągoty do prac manualnych zawsze ale to raczej się nie zdarzy, żeby takie młode osoby zamiast iść na dyskotekę, siedziały na taborecie. A ja jednak zawsze miałam właśnie takie ciągoty w tym innym kierunku, no i ona mnie nauczyła. Nie wiedziałam wtedy, czy będę z tego korzystać (...) ale później to porzuciłam. Ale na ostatnim roku wróciłam do tego i wykorzystałam to w kolekcji ubrań. Haftu w szkole nie uczyli, wiadomo. Tylko, że ja to przełożyłam już sobie na swój język, na taki hard kolorowy i stworzyłam taką własną technikę (Marinna, s. 11)

Therefore, she does not believe in accidents; in her view, every event ultimately integrates into a larger pattern that supports her self-growth and artistic development.

To jest tak, że nie szukam, tylko to się pojawia przez tak zwany przypadek. Tak jak mówiłam, w przypadki nie wierzę. Myślę, że wszystko tak pokierowało z różnymi rzeczami, że się już się spotkało, tak?(...) to uważam, że to nie były przypadki. No, w tym momencie mogło się wydawać, bo w tym momencie się wie, tak? Ale później z perspektywy okazuje się, że jednak to coś takiego, co chyba miało się wydarzyć. (Marinna, s. 4, 6)

This is how Marinna experiences a sense of guidance that lies beyond her conscious control.

This intuitive sense of being led also manifests in her creative process, where she intentionally relinquishes deliberate control. Instead, she allows herself to follow the flow of creation, even when it takes her in unexpected or unplanned directions.

W momencie, gdy ja stawiam obraz, to wiadomo, że mam to przeważnie z głowy, ale w pewnym momencie już obraz zaczyna być na tyle silnym, takim samo istniejącym bytem, że trzeba wyczuć ten moment. Kiedyś walczyłam z obrazem, że jak koniecznie namaluję to, co ja miałam w pierwszej wizji, tak? Ja się nauczyłam, że trzeba iść. Więc to jest za tym, co tam jego obraz ciągnie, tak?. (...) To jest kwestia wyobraźni, tego, co zbieramy z otoczenia i przetwarzamy w sobie sny. No wszystko to się miesza, co jest w głowie, obraz, nie? Czyli u mnie to się odbywało w ten sposób właściwie niekontrolowany? I strasznie chciałam namalować to, co zobaczyłam w tej głowie, ale później właśnie się nauczyłam, że jest ten moment, kiedy trzeba iść za mną. (Marinna, s. 14)

8.2. Guided From Within: Intuition and Emotion as Inner Compasses

Participants also directly referenced intuition—a form of inner guidance or felt experience that operates beyond conscious reflection and control—as a significant force in shaping their paths. Marinna, in particular, described following this intuitive sense as a way of being led forward.

To jest właśnie ta umiejętność, no każdy mi się wydaje, ma jakieś przebłyski. Nie na zasadzie, że ja to wymyśliłam, wydedukowałam, wyprowadziłam, tak? Tylko pojawia się coś w głowie, jakaś myśl, impuls, jakbyś, no nie wiem, no nie wiem, czy inni też to mają, ale chyba mają, no. Ja to nazywam intuicją. Jak jakieś przeczucie, czy mam zrobić to, a nie to. Często jesteśmy w sytuacji, kiedy musimy bardzo szybko, nawet w drobnych sytuacjach dokonywać wyborów, tak? Często kierujemy się właśnie intuicją, jakimś czuciem. Ciągnie mnie w tym kierunku, tak? Nie wiem, dlaczego (Marinna, s. 14)

Nigdy nie miałam z tym, jak do tej pory problemu. A zwłaszcza jak byłam młodsza, to jest tak, że chyba im jestem starsza i mam większe doświadczenie, to się kieruję też tym doświadczeniem. A jak byłam młodsza i nie miałam tego doświadczenia, to czułam bardzo silne prowadzenie. To były te okoliczności, o których to wspominam. Że zawsze się pojawiał ktoś, albo wydarzało coś. To jest też kwestia. Wtedy, wydaje mi się, miałam nawet silniejszą intuicję, niż teraz. Albo teraz mam również doświadczenie co intuicje i mi się to tak jakby ta intuicja nie wybija. Natomiast wtedy ja...Ja zawsze czułam, że mam takie światło przed sobą, i widziałam dokąd mam iść. Ale kilka razy się zdarzyło, że czułam, że mam iść tam, zrobiłam inaczej i za każdym razem bardzo żałowałam. Więc coś takiego mogę powiedzieć. (Marinna, s. 14)

Inner guidance also manifests through a positive emotional flow—such as satisfaction, joy, or contentment—which signals what is worth pursuing, as expressed by Leon, Sandra, and David. In particular, Leon emphasizes that he does not rely on logical reasoning, but instead follows what feels interesting to him, describing it as an inner calling that directs his choices.

rodzaj ekscytacji jednym słowem, tak, że jeśli coś takiego rozpoznam to to mi się jakoś tam podoba, to jest nowe co się zgadza, to jest takie poczucie że ja coś wiem więcej, coś doświadczyłem, tak to jakiś środek takiej satysfakcji że że się że się coś nowego zadziało (Leon, s. 14)

prostu myślę, że ja się dobrze w tym czuję, czuję się w tym pewnie. Przynosi mi to radochę, przynosi mi to satysfakcję do jakiegoś tam momentu, gdzie już rozmawialiśmy. Naprawdę jestem zadowolony. Jestem człowiekiem zadowolonym. I cieszę się żyć, cieszę się tu przychodzić. Cieszę się wracać do domu, gdzie mam święty spokój i mogę dalej sobie pracować. No, wszystko jest dobrze, tak? (David, s. 17)

Nie wiem, skąd nie wiem, to po prostu jest. Za każdym razem pamiętam i to tak od lat, od lat, jak byłam jeszcze bardzo młoda, to czułam taką ogromną radość, jak zaczynałam tworzyć. (Sandra, s. 18)

Sandra emphasizes the necessity and value of following one's inner guidance, highlighting it as a vital compass for personal and creative decision-making.

Myślę, że najważniejsze. Bo to jest często tak, że jak człowiek jest młody to coś tam chce, idzie w jakąś stronę, ale nie jest pewny i nie wie, albo czasami jest nieśmiały, że tam da sobie wcisnąć coś, tam zboczenie, jest takie. A po jakimś czasie, jak już człowiek robi to, co robi i lubi to robić i się z tego cieszy to już się nie da go sprowadzić na manowce. (Sandra, s. 18)

Myślę, że wewnętrzny głos to jest to, co każe człowiekowi robić to, co właśnie robi, co chce. Iście swoją drogą wewnętrznego głosu. (Sandra, s. 20)

9. Disturbance Triggered by a Sense of an Unrealized Self

In participants' narratives on self-growth, a cognitive and emotional turmoil often emerges during reflections on difficult moments, especially those marked by low mood. This disturbance may manifest as uncontrolled, repetitive thoughts and reflections, which, in some cases—such as David's—are managed through rationalization or actively pushing these thoughts away.

No, ja myślę, że w jakichś trudnych momentach, gdzie człowiek przeżywa jakieś tam załamy, to może wtedy siedzi i myśli, kurde, właściwie Boże, jak ja jestem straszny temu, tak. I co można przypomnieć, po prostu ile rzeczy w życiu nie wyszło. I to jest taka refleksja.. Ja się staram, to wszystko pamiętam, ale staram sobie o tym nie przypominać, bo od tego można zwariować, tylko po prostu sobie racjonalizować nawet takie najgłupsze swoje działania, bo

inaczej człowiek nie jest w stanie żyć, tak. Człowiek musi po prostu wiedzieć, że nawet, jak zrobił coś głupiego to, że był ku temu powód. Tak, i ten powód musiał być słuszny, tak. Bo inaczej po prostu no bo inaczej no po prostu nie da się żyć, tak. (David, s. 15)

Czasami człowiek ma gorszy dzień, czy gorszy wieczór, czy gorszy poranek. Przypominają mu się to, musi z tym trochę, trochę pochodzić i potem to mija. Weźmie można się za coś wziąć za coś. (David, s. 16)

Kiedyś tak sobie dał wcześniej, jak byłem młodszy, to tak, wiele razy. I koło, a wtedy wtedy nie poszedł to i tylko teraz, już za późno na taką wyobraźnię. Teraz to już, tak powiem posprzątaane. (David, s. 15)

Czasami myślę, że za mało, bo ja nie umiem się tak pchać i nie umiem dbać o uwielbiam tworzyć, ale nie uwielbiam kompletnie zajmować tym, żeby ta twórczość gdzieś tam. To mam do siebie pretensję, że, że tak, że tak nie potrafię. (Sandra, s. 19)

This turmoil also manifests emotionally, as illustrated by the experiences shared by David and Sandra:

Ale no nie popadam tam w takie te, te depresje, przynajmniej na razie, nie chcę się tutaj odpychać, bo każdemu różne rzeczy pisane czy nie wiadomo, tak. Dzisiaj jestem chojrakiem, jutro będę wieszakiemNo co no, się człowiek smuci, siedzi, śni o tym i tyle, no pochodzi w kółko trochę, czy coś. (David, s. 15)

się robi wrzut, taki wiek pani na duszy, nie, zmusiłem się do czegoś, żeby robić, to jest bardzo ważne, tak, żeby co mieć, żeby mieć też odwagę odmówić tego, co ci proponują, żebyś robił, tak, żeby mieć sumienia, już mówię o ogólnym sumieniu, ale tym bardziej sumienia bycia sobą, (David, s. 20)

No to chyba żałuję się tego, co się nie zrobiło, skoro jak się nie zrobiła się mogło (...) ale ja mówię o takich rzeczy, o których się po prostu z jakiegoś powodu takiego, nie wiem, błahego czy niechęci, czy spóźnienia, czy z czegoś, co się nie podjęło, no to trochę szkoda. Ale też człowiek nie może przeskoczyć samego siebie. Takie rzeczy też wchodzi w grę. (Sandra, s. 10)

No raczej ja sama. Ja na przykład taką sytuację kiedyś z tego bardzo żałuję, że tego nie zrobiłam, że byłam zaproszona na taką wystawę do Pakistanu. Ale wystawa, to wystawa, ale tam jeszcze trzeba było przez trzy tygodnie jakieś wykłady dla studentów coś takiego, jakieś wykłady robić. Ja się nie mogłam zebrać (...) (Sandra, s. 11)

10. Life Optimization and Stability

Apart from the difficulties inherent in an artist's career—already discussed in the GET *Creative Empowerment*—participants also described elements in their lives that contribute to

a sense of stability. This stability emerges as a final outcome of their perseverance in overcoming life's challenges while remaining faithful to their individual, chosen paths. Achieving financial independence, particularly within volatile economic conditions, is perceived by all participants as a meaningful success. This experience is most explicitly articulated by David:

Duma to jest, że mogę robić, że utrzymałem się, że jestem w stanie żyć za to, co robię... że nie zbankrutowałem w tym świecie artystycznym... to jest powód do dumy (David, s. 9).

However, the sense of accomplishment extends beyond finances. The ability to freely engage in artistic work also fosters balance and satisfaction in other areas of life. As David further reflects:

Naprawdę jestem zadowolony... cieszę się tu przychodzić... wracać do domu, gdzie mam święty spokój i mogę dalej sobie pracować... Nie wyczuwam jakichś takich deficytów... może dlatego też, że nie zastanawiałem się (David, s. 19)

Similarly, Leon's narrative echoes this broader sense of contentment and coherence between his inner inclinations and life situation:

No, prawda więc jest nieźle dla mnie samego mężczyzny (...) taką sytuację jak jest i idę tam za swoimi umiejętnościami artystycznymi i zainteresowaniami (Leon, s. 13).

The sense of stability and life optimization also emerges from an acceptance of one's own achievements and a peaceful reconciliation with the experiences lived through. This attitude is reflected in Leon's reflections, where a calm acknowledgment of personal and professional accomplishments contributes to his overall sense of life satisfaction.

Mam, tak myślę że mam (...) a teraz sama pani widzi że chciałem coś robić żeby, żeby po prostu w tym czasie coś zrobili a to nie mam czasu w innych momentach ponieważ dość dużo pracuje dużo się realizuje to nie mam tego poczucia że się nie spełniłem bo zasnę, tylko tak trochę zrobię co mogę i więcej nie robię bo i tak robię dużo i nie przeskoczę (...) tylko na tyle mnie stać.. jest w porządku (Leon, s. 16)

11. The Immaterial and Unknown as a Realm of Exploration

This General Experiential Theme (GET) reflects a distinctive drive observed in participants' processes of becoming. It encapsulates an element deeply tied to the lived experience of being an artist — one that transcends the tangible and ventures into the realm of the immaterial. This theme refers not only to the pursuit of inspiration and the exploration of the unknown but also to a strong sense of connection with a non-material, sometimes spiritual, dimension. Participants' narratives evoke a psychological space marked by intuitive longing, a felt sense of something elusive yet guiding — a desire or vision of a more meaningful or elevated outcome. This inner pull, though not always consciously articulated, serves as a vital motivational force, shaping both the creative process and the broader life journey.

11.1. Dissatisfaction as a Driving Force Behind Endless Artistic Progress

It may seem surprising, but throughout the participants' life journeys, dissatisfaction emerged as a key motivational force, particularly evident in the narratives of David and Marinna. Both reflect on dissatisfaction as an inherent companion to artistic and personal development. They emphasize that this emotional state fuels a persistent longing for improvement, especially within the creative process. In their view, artistic work is never fully complete or flawless — and it is precisely this sense of “never enough” that keeps them striving, experimenting, and evolving. This inner restlessness, while uncomfortable, is ultimately productive, pushing them toward greater depth in both life and art.

Nie wiem, myślę, że nie jest to możliwe żeby być spełnionym. Nie wiem, co to jest nie wiem. W sztuce nigdy nie ma spełnienia to jest ciągle otwarty po prostu oddalający się punkt. Nie wiem, czy w innych dziedzinach życia jest tak samo, przypuszczam, że tak. Jeżeli zrealizujemy jakiś obszar jakieś zadanie, to zaraz mamy kolejne przed sobą (Marinna, s. 24)

Ja teraz muszę to robić zupełnie inaczej, żeby to było lepiej. I tak ciągle, i tak ciągle, i to jest postęp. To jest właśnie progres. Tam, gdzie jest zadowolenie i że to po prostu zębatki stają, wszyscy się przyglądają, się cieszą i mówią, boże, jak cudownie. To już po wszystkim jest wtedy. (David, s. 17)

11.2. The endless, intangible, spiritual realm within personal development and creativity

Sandra further explains the experience of endlessness, as she also senses a never-ending, unreachable expansion of her own imaginative possibilities.

daje mu to też takie doświadczenia, które mogą gdzieś wybiegać w jakiś inny świat, nie tylko w takim materialno-realistycznym. Ale też takie sprawdzanie siebie też, ile możliwe jest kreowanie na podstawie jakiejś wyobraźni, jak to się później spełnia w praktyce. I to jest coś takiego, oprócz takiego normalnego życia, które każdy musi dbać. To jednak zawsze się do tego wraca i to jest takie niekończące się (Sandra, s. 1)

Marinna declares that this experience is difficult to articulate, but for her, the intellectual and mental space of art should remain open; therefore, interpretation acts negatively in her experience, as it narrows the field of meaning.

Ja nie wiem, czy to się w ogóle da wyrazić słowami, nie wiem, czy też wszyscy mają, czy bardziej osoby, które się zajmują pracą twórczą, to mają. Ja nie wiem, ale myślę, że te osoby, które się zajmują pracą twórczą, to chyba wszystkie tak mają, bo to się inaczej nie da. Ja nie mogę powiedzieć, że ja wiem, co robię. Że to jest i dlatego, ja bardzo często odmawiam interpretacji i nie lubię, jak inni interpretują. Po pierwsze uważam, że zamykają przestrzeń jakoś, jak się coś powie, to już jest powiedziane, tak? A ja na przykład staram się tak malować, żeby wywoływać w każdym inne trochę. (Marinna, s. 93)

Even the act of materialization—bringing the immaterial realm into a tangible art object—was, for Marinna, an unpleasant and overwhelming experience.

dla mnie prawda zawsze była najważniejsza i to jest też bardzo trudne. A po prostu uzewnętrznianie tego, tego i znalezienie, dlatego to jest bardzo trudna praca, tak? ...dla mnie sam akty materializowania czegokolwiek, jest tak ciężki, że ja i w studiach też to miałam. Potrafiłam nieruchomo na krzeselku z godzinę siedzieć albo i dłużej, bo nie byłam w stanie wykonać nawet ruchu, bo ja wiedziałam, że za moment wejdę w coś mega trudnego. Nie miałam siły zacząć, po prostu, bałam się, nie wiem, to nie chodziło o kwestie umiejętności, tylko o tym wewnętrznym po prostu ja nadal uważam, że ja nie maluje je farbą, tylko energią i to po prostu strasznie ja bardzo dużo energii oddaje. Ja przemieniam po prostu swoją energię, w coś materialnego czyli w ten obiekt, to jest potwornie trudny proces dla mnie do dzisiaj i od zawsze tak było (Marinna, s. 22)

The way Marinna describes drawing inspiration or wisdom resembles a somewhat unreal, more spiritual process—an inner connection with the art of long-deceased painters.

żebym ja no, bym na przykład mam ulubionych mistrzów, tak, jeśli chodzi o malarstwo. Ale to generalnie już dawno zmarli. Stąd ja się umiem i potrafię od nich uczyć, bo uważam, że to jest połączenie, właśnie to jest ta fascynacja, tak? To jest połączenie, nie muszę mieć bezpośredniego do kontaktu z żywą osobą, tylko może być ślad po niej, i ja jakby wchodzę w to, i się uczę.....No, oczywiście, artyści zostawia ślad w postaci dzieła. To jest ten kontakt. Oni tam ładują, że tak powiem w to dzieło, a później ono wysyła. (Marinna, s. 7)

Furthermore, Marinna underlines the aspect of spirituality, which has been significant in her life since childhood. Today, she perceives her engagement in art as a form of artistic spirituality.

To mi się wydaje, że ja od początku miałam taki kierunek bardziej duchowy. Może się to przez całe życie przebija. Jako mała dziewczynka (...) ale już skoro opowiedziałam, że chciałam zostać zakonnicą. Sfery sacrum. Ale ja jako malarka to jestem w tej sferze. I to jest w ogóle coś bardzo podobnego, bo właściwie praktyka malarska to jest to pierwsze przebywanie izolacji. Bo mówi się na przykład o byciu w klasztorze o tej całej konstrukcji życia, o pewnym rodzaju takiej skromności i jednak tu ze z sferą duchową się odwracam, ponieważ to, co materializuje artysta, to oczywiście są różne możliwości w tym obszarze, właściwie nieskończone. Ale przeważnie jest to w sferze wyobraźni, sferze ducha i to dopiero później się to materializuje. Albo w sferze swojej własnej, właśnie tutaj struktury, gdzie my to mielimy, jakby przepuszczamy to, co z zewnątrz to nas dociera, mielimy poprzez siebie, jest się rodzajem kanału, może być coś takiego. To ma bardzo dużo wspólnego z pracą, z energią i materialnymi (Marinna, s. 6)

She even hoped to fill the gap left after breaking away from the Church:

Ale ja to właśnie jako młodość chodziła do kościoła. Później mi się ten kościół też roztrzaskali poczułam, że to jednak nie jest przestrzeń dla mnie. Ale to właśnie nie chodziło o to, że chodziło o samą instytucję, tak? Tak, że to jest tak że ja nie praktykuje, ale to nie znaczy, że mnie te sprawy nie interesują, tak?....Ja myślałam, że właśnie w sztuce znajdę to, czego nie znalazłam w kościele.(Marinna, s. 7)

11.3. Open Exploration of the Unknown as a Source of Excitement and Motivation

A further drive behind the artistic process and a determinant shaping life is the urge to touch the unknown and reach for something beyond grasp. For David, it is the exploration of the impossible that acts as a pivotal motivator—taking on challenges that others deem unachievable:

bardzo nie lubilem, nigdy nie słuchałem nic, niczyich rad (...) tak naprawdę gdzieś tam w duchu wiedziałem, że po prostu, szczególnie jak ktoś, tego się tak nie da. Albo nie, albo nie da rady, nie, albo to jest jak ja takie coś słyszę, to ja wiem, że właśnie da radę.....o znaczy, że na pewno to się uda. Tak, jak ja słyszę jeszcze od kogoś, kto się na tym słabo zna, albo liźnął tam tematu, że to jest nie do zrobienia, albo nie do tego, albo wiem, że ma po prostu średnie kompetencje w tym temacie, no to to ja już wtedy nabieram właśnie pewności, że to znaczy, że da się to zrobić. (David, s. 5)

He further nurtured this inner predisposition through teachers who resonated with this belief.

No ja coś tam może nauczyciele niektórzy, tak. Którzy mnie tam po prostu na kolejnych etapach. Ale oni byli właśnie, to byli ludzie, którzy pokazali, że niewykonalne jest możliwe, tak.(David, s. 6)

Leon, in turn, emphasizes freedom and excitement in open, unstructured self-exploration

i to jest ta trzecia forma, samo doskonalenia się daje się ponieść, żeby odkryć co tam w duszy gra czyli żeby to się stało, to muszę się trochę zapomnieć i nie kontrolować(Leon, s. 13)

Similarly, Sandra expands her mindset through openness to the unknown and the unplanned, valuing the element of unpredictability:

Przecież to nie jest tak, że człowiek zaplanuje. A jak się zaplanuje, że teraz będzie robił to, potem to, potem to, potem to, to też zawsze jest jakiś margines przypadku. To margines przypadku jest zawsze dobry też, bo to otwiera nową drogę i nowy sposób myślenia i nowy sposób radzenia sobie z czymś z czego się nie przewidywało, nie?(Sandra, s. 19)

Lastly, Sandra presents a slightly different view on materialization compared to Marinna.

While Marinna finds bringing the inner world into physical form overwhelming, Sandra actively desires to transform her internal imagination into material existence:

ile możliwe jest kreowanie na podstawie jakiejś wyobraźni, jak to się później spełnia w praktyce. I to jest coś takiego, oprócz takiego normalnego życia, które każdy musi dbać. To jednak zawsze się do tego wraca i to jest takie niekończące się(Sandra, s. 1)

12. Sensitivity and Awareness in Self-Growth

The sense of self-awareness in personal development was evident in the participants' lives. It takes the form of an attuned awareness of one's personal growth, serving as a mechanism for self-regulation in response to present needs. This awareness is also characterized by a heightened sensitivity to the multitude of possible life paths and choices. Finally, it is accompanied by a deep desire to leave personal imprints—unique traces of one's individuality.

This sense of alertness appears in response to possibilities or activities that could have been undertaken, or from a desire to deepen one's engagement, as Marinna describes:

To przeważnie, to jest taka lekka frustracja, że się nie może tyle ile by się chciało, tak? (Marinna, s. 20)

She also reflects on an awareness of her talents and potential—elements she feels remain partially unrealized due to the limitations of time:

Myślę, (...)że jest dużo elementów z których nie jestem zadowolona ale myślę, że po prostu, to co mam do zrobienia, to robię i czuję się okej, tak?....Myślę, że tak. Myślę, że mam większy, tak jak mówię, mogłabym też w innych dziedzinach bo mam trochę tych talentów

niewykorzystanych. Ale też wszystkie związane raczej z takimi normalnymi rzeczami no w tym obszarze. Natomiast myślę, że bo nie mogę powiedzieć, że do końca, że czuję się super spełniona tak, bo nikt tak o sobie nie może powiedzieć. Jestem pogodzona, w zgodzie z tym co robię i gdzie teraz jestem (Marinna, s. 24)

Furthermore, for Marinna, being naturally attuned to her own needs and responding to them is more important than engaging in deliberate rational reflection:

No, ale po prostu są. Pływają sobie, ja sobie pływam w nich. Czy wpływają... Myślę, że to są bardziej... Potrzeby wpływają bardziej na życie niż to, że poznaję, że w tym obszarze jestem zaniedbana. I przydałoby się to naprawić, to bardziej wpływają na moje decyzje. Niż te refleksje, bo refleksje to płyną po prostu z tego, co jest, tak? (Marinna, s. 21)

For Leon, self-growth is guided by intuition, which may emerge from either reason or emotional sensitivity. This intuition takes the form of an inner voice that one must allow to surface and be heard. Leon believes that all people have access to this inner voice, although not everyone chooses to follow it. For him, the creative process in art is a way to give this voice expression:

W takim życiu codziennym to są te intuicje, które... czasem jest to rozsądek, a czasem serce, prawda, tak jak u każdego człowieka. A w sztuce to jest właśnie ten głos taki, który każdy, kto tworzy, to go ma – i on jest często utajony. I cała rzecz polega na tym, żeby dać mu się wydobyć.

He draws inspiration from artists like Picasso, who sought in later life to return to a childlike state—uninhibited and open:

Picasso chciał być pod koniec życia jak dziecko – nieskrępowany. A ten głos wewnętrzny jest skrepowany przez dorosłość, nie jesteśmy tak otwarci jak dzieci.

Leon emphasizes that the issue lies not in the existence of the voice, but in whether we allow it to speak:

Nie chodzi o to, że ja tu mam taki głos wewnętrzny, tylko że wszyscy go mamy. Tylko jest problem z tym, czy dajemy mu przemówić. I dla mnie twórczość to jest próba poradzenia sobie z tym, żeby dać głosowi się wypowiedzieć. (Leon)

Sandra explains this issue broadly, claiming that the inner voice should guide a person in recognizing what is coherent with their self and in absorbing it, while rejecting what feels foreign.

Sumienie stawania się sobą. Mamy, że człowiek każdy powinien to robić. Nie używać absolutnie nie używać do tego sumienia. Tylko po prostu być sobą i odrzucać te rzeczy, które są w moim mniemaniu dla mnie obce, jako ja....Myślę, że wewnętrzny głos to jest to, co każe człowiekowi robić to, co właśnie robi, co chce. Iście swoją drogą wewnętrznego głosu.....A może sumienie w tym sensie, że to jest powinność jakaś bycia sobą i podążania w swoim kierunku, a że grzechem by było tego nie robić.....Myślę, że doświadczam to na każdym kroku, każdego dnia. (Sandra, s. 21)

For Leon, the act of creation is also a reflective process—a way of examining and questioning what this inner voice reveals.

To jest taki namysł nad tym, co się ujawniło, co to znaczy – to są pytania, które człowiek sobie zadaje. (Leon, s. 18)

Sandra highlights different aspects of this awareness of self-growth. She declares herself aware of the existence of various possible paths of personal development. She remains constantly open to possibilities and treats each one as potentially fruitful. That's why, for her, there is no single "right path." What feels right is to stay flexible and receptive to what life may bring, without getting overly attached to just one option. She applies this approach in her artistic progress:

No, ja mówię, ja nie widzę ścieżki, która jest właściwa, bo tych ścieżek właściwych może być wiele, ale czy jak nie zdążę wszystkiego zrobić, a mi się chętnie też zajęła innymi rzeczami, tylko że po prostu nie ma na to czasu, nie?....Także to nie powiem, że to jest tylko taka jedna

ta ścieżka, tego mojego malarstwa, też czasami robię inne rzeczy, muszę taką odskocznę też mieć, ale też w twórcze, nie? Natomiast to wymaga takiego, ten rozwój, to jest krok kroków, lata doświadczeń, przez każde doświadczenie to się idzie dalej w tym swoim kierunku, nie? No, bo też przecież rodzajów malarstwa jest tysiące, nie? Tu już też każdy się jakoś określa w swoim tym, mnie interesuje abstrakcja to takich no to ja w tym kierunku działam, ale tam też po prostu co jakiś czas, jakieś eksperymenty, jakiś inny sposób, czy inny rodzaj tego malarstwa. (Sandra, s. 7)

She applies the same mindset to personal development:

czy jest coś takiego, jak ścieżka właściwa. Wydaje mi się, że to jest dla tego interesujące, dlatego, że tu nie ma takiej odpowiedzi, że masz jakiś punkt, czy cel, do którego dążysz. Tylko tu jest zawsze ileś tam otwartych dróg, przy każdym kroku. I to jest ciekawe, że czasami zwracasz uwagę na coś, co wcześniej byś nie zwracał uwagi i idziesz inną stroną, niż zawsze myślałeś, że będzie. Chociaż no nigdy nikt nie zakłada takiego, z takich kłapek na oczy i taką tylko jedną ścieżkę. Bo to nie tylko w sztuce człowiek ma takie różne pomysły niestandardowe, bo w życiu też. (Sandra, s. 1)

Furthermore, she emphasizes how important it is for self-growth to be prepared and adaptable to unpredictable circumstances that may open the mind:

Przecież to nie jest tak, że człowiek zaplanuje. A jak się zaplanuje, że teraz będzie robił to, potem to (...) też zawsze jest jakiś margines przypadku. To margines przypadku jest zawsze dobry też, bo to otwiera nową drogę i nowy sposób myślenia i nowy sposób radzenia sobie z czymś z czego się nie przewidywało, nie? (Sandra, s. 19)

However, this openness to new directions sometimes brings moments of reflection on what her life could have been. Yet she pushes such thoughts aside, as the artistic journey remains the most fulfilling for her.

Zdarzało mi się tak czasami pomyśleć, jakby było, jak gdyby było inaczej, ale nie chciałam się w ogóle w tą w to myślenie jakoś zagłębiać, dlatego, że myślę, że i tak bym wybrała taką drogę związana ze sztuką z taką twórczością. Uważam, że to jest najfajniejsze, co może człowieka spotkać. Takiego, który ma inklinację w tą stronę, który ma dużo cierpliwości, nie? (Sandra, s. 16)

Lastly, being an artist aligns with the inner desire to leave personal imprints of one's individuality, which is most clearly expressed by participants when they speak about developing their own artistic style.

A w sensie sztuki no to jak mówię w naszym żargonie to się mówi o znalezieniu własnej formy i teraz no i po tym się tak poznaje artystę czy jest dobry czy nie. (Leon, s 16)

Dlatego, że ja, ja byłam na studiach i szukałam tej własnej... to z premedytacją nie chodziłam do biblioteki, bo ja właśnie intuicyjnie czułam, że ja nie mogę tego zasysać tych wszystkich informacji, tych wszystkich obrazów, bo to jest tak, że się czymś (...) zachłystnie, potem kogoś chce naśladować i wiele takich przypadków widziałam na własne oczy, a ja od początku chciałam zachować pewien rodzaj czystości, żeby odnaleźć siebie, tak? Tak naprawdę. I to się wydarzyło na studiach, odnalazłam tam, bo tam mi się otworzyła moja przestrzeń malarska. I po studiach już zaczęłam, bo ja uważam, że jestem bezpieczna, tak? Ale żeby wskoczyć w tą otchłań, ja nie chciałam sobie, to ja nie chciałam się, może tak powiem, faszzerować z zewnątrz (Marinna, s. 16)

However, this desire is present not only in art but also in everyday tasks—for example, in Sandra's case, building a house from scratch.

(...) ale udaje mi się, właśnie w tym kierunku iść, że jednak tutaj był taki ugór totalny. Zbudowanie coś na takim ugorze to jest naprawdę a zwłaszcza, że my nie jesteśmy jakimiś krezusami (...) Tylko wszystko człowiek musi to, stres jest też związany (...) ale w ogóle zbudowanie czegoś na takiej pustej ziemi, gdzie nie ma nic to rzeczywiście jest coś, to jest wielka radość, jak to się uda że człowiek zrobił to tak jak chce, dokładnie tak jak chce.

13. Turning to Action and Questioning Inner Wisdom

In the process referred to here as the process of becoming the self, or simply becoming, it was uncommon among participants to report having dedicated time for self-reflection. Instead, this reflection occurred spontaneously or was ongoing, as Marinna experienced it:

Nie, ja nie mam takich. że ja jestem zapędzona i siadam i w końcu mam jakąś refleksję, gdzie jest dla mnie już takim zwrotem, tak? Ja jestem chyba w nieustającej refleksji, o tak bym powiedziała. (Marinna, s. 21)

However, an active approach is more relevant for the participants—particularly in using reflection to identify practical steps that can be taken, as Sandra explains:

Generalnie się chyba nie zastanawiam. Ja się zastanawiam nad każdym kolejnym krokiem, który chce zrobić. Co najpierw to później. (Sandra, s. 13)

Rather than dwelling on past decisions that might have been misguided, David consciously pushes such thoughts away or rationalizes them, but most importantly, he tries to engage in action.

Ja się staram, to wszystko pamiętam, ale staram sobie o tym nie przypominać, bo od tego można zwariować, tylko po prostu sobie racjonalizować nawet takie najgłupsze swoje działania, bo inaczej człowiek nie jest w stanie żyć, tak. Człowiek musi po prostu wiedzieć, że nawet, jak zrobił coś głupiego to, że był ku temu powód. Tak, i ten powód musiał być słuszny, tak. Bo inaczej po prostu no bo inaczej no po prostu nie da się żyć, tak. Musiałem być codziennie od rana zmotywowanym do życia. Musimy być pewni swojego, tak. Po prostu, wiedzieć co i jak, to planowanie i działamy, tak. A jak będziemy ciągnę a w czterdziestym piątym to ja wtedy wypowiedziałem, tak i kurde, o Jezus (David, s. 15)

These two citations emphasize a higher value placed on reflection that ultimately has practical implications (for example, facilitating the planning of further steps in development) over self-reflection for its own sake or reminiscing.

Although Leon appreciates self-reflection and inner knowledge in his life, he doubts that they constitute the necessary foundations for well-being and happiness for all people.

takim wewnętrznym imperatywem czyli może sumienie, prawda czy wystarczająco uwagi i czasu poświęciłem na to, ale dopuszczam taką sytuację, że są ludzie, którzy nie muszą tego mieć i nie musi ich gryźć sumienie z tego powodu, że nie spełniają/słuchają siebie. Niektórzy w ogóle nie muszą się zastanawiać a mogą być szczęśliwi. Więc (...) że są ludzie to jakby to, ja do siebie stosuję natomiast nie wymagałbym od wszystkich że wydaje mi się, że można byłoby przeczyć życie mniej świadomie, a być dobrym człowiekiem szczęśliwym, może się, można być pijakiem też ale to no to jakby nie mnie to rozstrzygać (Leon, s. 17)

14. Making an Impact in the Social Sphere

Being immersed in the social sphere is a prevalent aspect of the experience of being an artist, as this issue has already been echoed in previous GETs. In this GET, the focus is on how being an artist may leave an impact on others while also underlining the importance of attuning to others' needs as a motivating factor in creating projects that popularize art.

14.1. Social acknowledgement of a talent

This aspect may be important, as apart from engaging in the creative process, it may also be necessary to present the work publicly. For Sandra, although she enjoys the act of creating, the social presentation of her work is not her strength. Nevertheless, she did not have to actively pursue recognition, as her talent was appreciated without much effort on her part.

Ale też miałam szczęście, bo byłam zapraszana na różne wystawy, byłam doceniana rzeczywiście. Bez mojego udziału, nie? (Sandra, s. 19)

Marinna and Leon declare that social appreciation of their art was never a reason to create; however, it is pleasant to receive such gratification, as Marina's art may also be inspiring for other painters:

tak bardzo nie interesowałam. Szczerze mówiąc...jak otoczenie. Myślę, że.....To znaczy, no otrzymywałam sygnały, choć były na przykład od malarek, które później przyszły, że byłam dla nich inspiracją. Myślę, że jestem dosyć.....dużo..sporą inspiracją dla innych... Nie wiem czy... zresztą na wernisażach od osób oglądających, a nie tworzących też dostawałam takie sygnały, tak? No więc mam ten sygnał z zewnątrz, że to jest dla niektórych inspirujące, że właśnie pomaga w zrozumieniu siebie. (Marinna, s. 17)

For Leon, it is satisfying that his artistic effort and engagement are in balance with social appreciation:

najbardziej dumny a myślę, że po prostu jestem dumny że robię to, co lubię i że no właśnie bo to jest jeszcze taka ważna rzecz moim zdaniem w tych zawodach artystycznych to niestety oprócz ilości pracy ogromne znaczenie ma talent jak on się składa, ilość pracy, to jeszcze jest ważna ale nie wiem, co jest ważniejsze jedno jest drugie i teraz nie wiem, co jest moim największym sukcesem ale samo to, że jakoś tak się okazało że poprzez pracowitość że tak że nie jest źle to jest moim talentem to znaczy, że ja bardzo dużo pracy w co robię ale że nie nastąpiła taka takie rozminięcie się z tym, że ja bardzo bym chciał a nic mi nie wychodzi i tutaj ten sukces to nawet nie chodzi o to, że gdzieś tam miałem wystawę (Leon, s. 9)

14.2. Attunement to the Needs of Others and the Value of Being Helpful

Sharing his passion with others in a way that makes them feel better and helps them enjoy their time is a significant drive in David's life:

No, satysfakcja taka ze zrobionych rzeczy. U szczęście tych ludzi dookoła, tak, bo jak robię festiwal, to widzę, jakby, chodzą tysiące ludzi szczęśliwych...I no, i tak jakby, mnie upewnia to znaczy, no, bardzo się cieszę z tym, bo to jest super pozytywna energia. (David, s. 10)

Beyond spreading positive energy and popularizing his passion, this drive is also meaningful as a way to increase others' comfort and redirect negative emotions—such as aggression—into creative pursuits.

Ja chcę po prostu tylko tak, żeby było wokół mnie lepiej. Ja chcę być w miejscu, gdzie siedzę, na przykład tu i tu dookoła są ludzie zadowoleni. Bo stworzyłem takie środowisko i miejsce, w którym ludzie przychodzą i się... Oczywiście to jest jakaś tu nisza, bo to jest jakieś tu, prawda, rysowanie, no śmieszne rzeczy, kredki, farby. Ale nie chodzi właśnie o to, żeby po prostu... No właśnie tak było. Żeby, że ja widzę, że wokół mnie siedzą ludzie i robią dobre rzeczy. Nie skracają karabinów, nie ostrzą dzidy, tak? Tylko robią po prostu, rozwijają w swoją kreatywność, swoją wyobraźnię, swoją fantazję. W moim życiu 90% tego wszystkiego, co się wydarzyło, to w mojej wyobraźni, tak? (David, s. 11)

Summary: Process of becoming and self-growth experience in participants' lives

The presented GETs (General Experiential Themes) engage with both the process of becoming and self-growth. For the participants, these concepts often overlap. While making a clear distinction between them might not have been essential from their perspective, for the

purposes of this study, each concept is defined to provide analytical clarity. Table 28 illustrates how each GET aligns with the process of becoming, self-growth, or both.

Process of Becoming

The process of becoming refers to the dynamic and ongoing transformation through which individuals gradually evolve into who they are. It emphasizes fluidity, change, and personal emergence across time. This process involves shifts in identity, direction, meaning, and one's presence in the world. It is not necessarily linear and may include contradictions, uncertainty, and moments of self-discovery, shaped by lived experiences, interactions with the world, and internal reflection.

Self-Growth

Self-growth refers more specifically to the conscious or semi-conscious development of one's capacities, understanding, and personal qualities. It includes an awareness of one's needs, talents, limitations, and goals, as well as efforts—either intentional or intuitive—to expand, refine, or deepen the self. While self-growth is part of the broader process of becoming, it more strongly implies agency, learning, and intentional progression in relation to internal or external values.

Table 28

Process of becoming a self and self-growth in light of GET's

| | Process of becoming | Self-growth |
|---|--|---|
| 1. Creative empowerment | Act of creation and art sustained | |
| 1.1. Art as a Foundational Anchor in One's Life | dedication to art as significant determinants for a person's life | 1.1. Creating a path of personal development with art as a main foundation and guidance mark |
| 1.2. Using the creative process as a means of shaping personal development and self-exploration | 1.1. Economic and material circumstances and standard of living dictated by the art career | 1.2. The process of creation as a psychological sphere for self-aware reflection and self-development |
| 1.3. Intrinsic Motivation Rooted in the Creative Process | 1.3. Presence of emotional, positive flow, emerging from the | |

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| | creative process, as a significant experience in life | 1.3. First, instinctively following the positive emotional flow of creation, then consciously choosing artistic activities to experience that flow again |
| <u>2. Curiosity as a Motivational Drive</u> | Intensive presence of curiosity as natural motivator for behaviours | Experience of curiosity as a necessary form of self-guidance in what activities engage and how one shapes self-growth |
| <u>3. Shaping Role of Relationships and Education</u> | Taking a stand towards social circumstances, such as overcoming difficulties or drawing from this sphere | 3.1. Inspiring self-growth by the example of a chosen idol |
| 3.1. Shaping the Self Through Inspirational Others | | 3.3. Process of education as empowering and improving the natural set of inner predispositions in an individual |
| 3.2. Discovering One's Role and Place Through Social Interaction | 3.2. Finding one's role in social relations and practising social skills | |
| 3.3. The Role of Nurture in Shaping the Self | 3.4. The issue of evaluating one's own work as a conscious aspect present in the artist's life | 3.4. Positive evaluation of own art as a possible additional source of satisfaction and information to guide self-growth |
| 3.4. Interplay Between the Reception of One's Art and Self-Reflection | | |
| <u>4. Consistent Self-Direction</u> | The process of becoming oriented towards a chosen goal, adapting one's life to its realization | Self-growth experienced, as focused on one, (often) chosen in childhood direction, marked by: |
| 4.1. Determination and Commitment in Pursuing Chosen Goals | | 4.1. Involvement and determination to pursue the goal and overcome difficulties |
| 4.2. Self-Guidance Through a Chosen Path | | 4.2. The process of recognizing one's core potentialities and intentionally cultivating them in alignment with a personally meaningful objective |
| 4.3. Control and responsibility in own hands | | 4.3. Experiencing a sense of responsibility for one's self-directed growth, grounded in inner confidence and personal agency |
| <u>5. Loneliness and Social Withdrawal</u> | Loneliness and unmet social needs as part of life | 5.1. The role of solitude in facilitating self-growth and safeguarding psychological well-being |
| 5.1. Chosen solitude/self-sufficiency | | |
| 5.2. Social pain / unfulfilled relational needs | | 5.2. The effort in favour of one sphere (artistic progress) brings dissatisfaction in another |
| <u>6. Personal Growth as a Holistic and Ongoing Process</u> | Recognizing self-growth as an inseparable part of life | 6.1., 6.2. Desire to holistically and continuously improve in various spheres of functioning |
| 6.1. Multidimensional | 6.4. Artistic career as a leading centre of all life activities | 6.3. The pursuit of self-growth through the desire for personal betterment |
| 6.2. Continuous and holistic, inseparable from life itself | | |
| 6.3. Marked by responsibility and | | 6.4. The artistic career as a central |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| commitment | | factor shaping self-growth and self-awareness |
| 6.4. Artistic work is the centre | | |
| <u>7. Drawing lessons from life struggles</u> | Difficult circumstances serve as triggers for heightened self-awareness and introspective insight | Developing skills and a mindset through reflective learning from mistakes Challenging experiences are understood as essential disruptions that foster a higher stage of self-awareness and personal development |
| <u>8. Inner guidance</u> | In the process of becoming, inner guidance is often experienced as a compass-like force, providing directional clarity and supporting alignment with a more integrated and coherent sense of self | 8.1. Practical and flexible adjustment to given circumstances, resulting in gaining knowledge and incorporating it into self-growth |
| 8.1. Perceiving Guidance Within Unpredictable Life Circumstances | | |
| 8.2. Guided From Within: Intuition and Emotion as Inner Compasses | 8.1. In the process of becoming, individuals may experience a subtle sense of destiny or inner guidance, particularly in response to unpredictable life circumstances | 8.2. In discerning which actions align with genuine self-growth, intuitive guidance—often beyond rational thought—plays a central role, typically accompanied by a sense of emotional affirmation when the chosen path feels right |
| <u>9. Disturbance Triggered by a Sense of an Unrealized Self</u> | Presence of negative evaluation of one's life decisions, either integrated as necessary and valuable experiences or acknowledged as failures, accompanied by a lingering sense of loss | In moments of lowered emotional state, overwhelming thoughts related to perceived self-developmental shortcomings may emerge, often followed by rationalization as a coping mechanism Lower emotional state about negative self-growth reflection Feeling of loss due to unrealized chances |
| <u>10. Life Optimization and Stability</u> | Experiencing a sense of stability developed over time through overcoming struggles and accepting one's own achievements | Stabilization and life optimization as two key elements that create a supportive environment for comfortable engagement and improvement in desired activities |
| <u>11. The Immaterial and Unknown as a Realm of Exploration</u> | In the process of becoming, one remains in touch with a sense of indefiniteness and the unknown—an immaterial sphere that feels distant or unreachable | 11.1. Dissatisfaction as a pivotal motivator for self-improvement |
| 11.1. Dissatisfaction as a Driving Force Behind Endless Artistic Progress | 11.1. Experiencing dissatisfaction as an essential drive for artistic progress | 11.2. The act of materializing the immaterial as a driving force for action—or, conversely, a tension that must be overcome in order to pursue creative expression |
| 11.2. The endless, intangible, spiritual realm within personal development and creativity | 11.2. Vividly experienced sense of an unreachable, ineffable mental space that accompanies the process of becoming | 11.3. Being motivated in one's self-growth by challenges that others perceive as impossible to overcome |
| 11.3. Open Exploration of the Unknown as a Source of Excitement and Motivation | 11.3. The process of becoming is | 11.3. Allowing oneself to let go of |

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| | marked by openness to the exploration of the unknown, the unpredictable, and even what initially seems impossible | rigid self-control, while maintaining an open mind toward the unknown and unplanned experiences, is seen as a meaningful aspect of self-development and personal wisdom |
| <u>12. Sensitivity and Awareness in Self-Growth</u> | <p>Being attuned to one's own needs while remaining aware of possible life paths and choices, with decisions and actions guided by intuition</p> <p>The desire to extend one's being into the world by leaving personal imprints on reality, reflecting a deep motivation to affirm one's individuality and existence through tangible or symbolic contributions</p> | <p>Negative experience in reference to self-potential that could have been achieved</p> <p>Contemplation of alternative life paths as a way to assess the alignment and accuracy of one's current trajectory of self-growth</p> <p>Presence of intuitive self-guidance, often experienced as an inner voice that signals alignment with one's authentic path that should be followed</p> <p>Desire to leave a personal imprint on reality, serving as a meaningful driver of engagement in self-growth and creative action</p> |
| <u>13. Turning to Action and Questioning Inner Wisdom</u> | <p>In the process of becoming, one may remain in a constant mode of self-reflection rooted in present experience, using conscious awareness to assess current positioning and plan intentional next steps</p> <p>While self-awareness and inner wisdom can enrich self-growth, they are not inherently necessary for achieving well-being or happiness, suggesting diverse ways individuals experience fulfillment</p> | <p>Self-reflection is embedded in everyday life, often occurring spontaneously in ordinary activities rather than through deliberate introspection.</p> <p>There is a conscious strategy to prioritize practical, productive actions over dwelling on unrealized or hypothetical aspects of self-growth.</p> |
| <u>14. Making an Impact in the Social Sphere</u> | Being aware that own creative efforts may affect recipients | 14.1. A perceived insufficiency in presenting one's artistic work may be seen as limiting the full potential for self-growth. |
| 14.1. Social acknowledgement of a talent | 14.1. Social appreciation of artistic work serves as a source of affirmation and gratification, even when not actively sought | 14.1. Self-growth may be experienced as an independent process, not necessarily reliant on social recognition or external validation of one's art. |
| 14.2. Attunement to the Needs of Others and the Value of Being Helpful | 14.2. Creative utilitarianism—the belief that art should serve others by enhancing their well-being and happiness—acts as a guiding principle in self-expression | 14.2. The drive to contribute to the well-being and happiness of others serves as a meaningful motivator in the pursuit of personal development and growth. |

As shown in the GET framework, both self-growth and the process of becoming are multidimensional, interconnected, and often experienced simultaneously. These themes reflect how participants navigate internal and external forces while shaping their identities and values. Building on this foundation, the following section explores a deeper layer: the Conscience of Becoming the Self (COBS)—an inner, often intuitive awareness that accompanies this developmental journey.

Conscience of becoming the self in artists

The presentation of the Conscience of Becoming the Self (COBS) aims to offer an integrative interpretation that builds upon, rather than merely repeats, the themes identified in the GETs. While some overlap may naturally occur—as also observed in Study 1—COBS represents a more abstract and cohesive layer of meaning emerging from participants' narratives. It draws on the GET-based descriptions of self-growth and the process of becoming, synthesizing them to illuminate a deeper, often intuitive awareness that guides individuals in shaping their evolving sense of self.

Encompassing various aspects of the previously analysed data, four key dimensions appear suitable for grouping the material in order to describe the *Conscience of Becoming the Self*. These dimensions are: anchor, motivation, mode of action, and regulation of self-growth.

Anchor: Art as the Cornerstone of Life

This dimension is most characteristic of the group of artists in relation to both the process of becoming and self-development. The *anchor* refers to a general, constitutive force that underlies and organizes participants' lives. For this group, art and the act of creation function as a *cornerstone*—a central and enduring reference point that gives coherence to life experience, choices, and identity.

This anchoring role of art is reflected in the following GETs, as referenced in Table 28:

- **Creative Empowerment:** The act of creation and sustained dedication to art are portrayed as significant determinants of a person's life direction and development.
- **Sub-GET from Personal Growth as a Holistic and Ongoing Process (6.4):** *The artistic career emerges as a central factor shaping both self-growth and self-awareness.*

Therefore, the Conscience of Becoming the Self, as it manifests in this group of artists, involves a lived recognition of art as a life anchor—an enduring internal compass that orients psychological and practical functioning.

Motivation: inner urge

This dimension captures the most prevalent motivational forces that drive participants' lives. It encompasses *inner urges* experienced as essential to fulfill in the process of becoming and self-growth. These motivations are not merely goal-oriented but stem from a deeper sense of existential necessity and alignment with one's core being.

The first identified motivation corresponds to the theme of *Creative Empowerment*. Here, participants express a desire to adjust their physical environment and refine their psychological capacities to create space for artistic development. Thus, the possibility of engaging in artistic work and evolving creatively becomes a central motivational factor guiding life choices (Table 28, 1.1. "Creating a path of personal development with art as a main foundation and guidance mark").

The second recurring inner urge is the *drive to materialize the immaterial*—a need to express abstract or ineffable inner experience through tangible creative output. This is articulated within the GET titled *The Immaterial and Unknown as a Realm of Exploration* (Table 28, 11.2. "The act of materializing the immaterial as a driving force for action—or, conversely, a tension that must be overcome in order to pursue creative expression").

A third motivational force is the *intrinsic desire to engage in stimulating and meaningful activities*, as captured in 2. *Curiosity as a Motivational Drive* (Table 28, 2. “Intensive presence of curiosity as a natural motivator for behaviours”). In this sense, curiosity acts not just as a momentary impulse but as a sustained, internal compass—becoming a significant constituent of the *Conscience of Becoming the Self*.

Fourth is still in the realm of creative activities, guiding one's own self-growth and becoming by desire to leave signs of personal world within reality, the theme that is captured in GET 12. *Sensitivity and Awareness in Self-Growth*(Table 28, 12. Desire to leave a personal imprint on reality, serving as a meaningful driver of engagement in self-growth and creative action).

Within *GET 11: The Immaterial and Unknown as a Realm of Exploration*, a fifth motivational force emerges—*the experience of dissatisfaction*, which serves as a powerful and persistent catalyst for self-improvement. This form of motivation is rooted in the sense that full fulfillment remains perpetually out of reach (Table 28, 11.1: Dissatisfaction as a pivotal motivator for self-improvement), thereby continuously urging the individual forward.

Closely aligned with this is a sixth motivational theme: *the desire to become better*, which manifests as a commitment to elevate one’s personal development and sense of self. This is reflected in *GET 6: Personal Growth as a Holistic and Ongoing Process* (Table 28, 6.3: The pursuit of self-growth through the desire for personal betterment), highlighting an aspirational drive central to the *Conscience of Becoming the Self*.

Ongoing and holistic, the desire to improve across various spheres aligns coherently with the previously mentioned motivations of dissatisfaction and the aspiration for betterment, serving as a significant driver within the Conscience of Becoming the Self (GET 6: *Personal Growth as a Holistic and Ongoing Process*, Table 28, 6. Desire to holistically and continuously improve in various spheres of functioning).

Furthermore, a similar notion aligns with the desire to overcome impossible challenges (Table 28, GET 11: *The Immaterial and Unknown as a Realm of Exploration*, 11.3. *Being motivated in one's self-growth by challenges that others perceive as impossible to overcome*) as a pivotal motivation within the *Conscience of Becoming the Self*.

Lastly, the awareness of others' well-being emerged as a significant factor in evaluating the meaning of one's own activities, thereby shaping the *Conscience of Becoming the Self*. This drive is reflected in GET 14: *Making an Impact in the Social* (Table 28, 14.2. The drive to contribute to the well-being and happiness of **others** serves as a meaningful motivator in the pursuit of personal development and growth), where the motivation to contribute to others' happiness and well-being acts as a meaningful catalyst for personal development and growth.

Together, these inner urges form a complex motivational foundation that continually drives and shapes the *Conscience of Becoming the Self*, fueling the ongoing journey of personal growth and artistic emergence.

Mode of action

Mode of Action refers to the strategies and patterns of behavior that participants adopt, particularly in the context of self-growth.

The first issue to consider is how participants adapt to external circumstances, especially when these circumstances challenge or disrupt their personal development. These adaptive responses reflect the way *Conscience of Becoming the Self* is enacted in everyday life—by engaging constructively with what arises, using reflection and experience as tools for growth. The GETs highlight how individuals engage with challenging or disruptive experiences not as obstacles, but as meaningful opportunities for learning and development. Specifically, participants describe a tendency to actively reflect on mistakes and extract valuable lessons from them (GET 7: *Drawing lessons from life struggles*, Table 28,

Developing skills and a mindset through reflective learning from mistakes). In parallel, they often perceive difficult experiences as necessary turning points that trigger deeper self-awareness and personal evolution (GET 7: Challenging experiences are understood as essential disruptions that foster a higher stage of self-awareness and personal development). This approach to adversity reveals an intentional and constructive way of acting, rooted in the Conscience of Becoming the Self. It shows that the participants' self-growth is not passive, but enacted through reflective, adaptive, and often courageous engagement with life's unpredictability.

A second pattern of action concerns the participants' deep involvement and persistent determination to pursue chosen life goals, even in the face of obstacles (GET 4. Consistent Self-Direction, Table 28, 4.1). This form of active engagement represents a strategy through which individuals maintain direction and coherence in their self-growth process. Such commitment reflects how the Conscience of Becoming the Self manifests as an inner compass, urging individuals to remain aligned with personally meaningful objectives despite challenges.

A third mode of action is visible in the way participants find and shape their social role through interactions and the conscious practice of relational skills (GET 3. Shaping Role of Relationships and Education, Table 28, 3.2). This process involves navigating social dynamics with awareness and intention, allowing individuals to refine their identity within a social context. Here, the Conscience of Becoming the Self is expressed in how one positions oneself in relation to others, developing socially grounded capacities that support broader self-development.

The fourth issue relates to the conscious evaluation of one's own artistic output (Table 28, 3.4). This reflective practice serves as both a feedback mechanism and a guiding principle for further development. Participants actively engage with their creations, using critical self-

assessment to make sense of their progress and direction. In this light, the Conscience of Becoming the Self incorporates an evaluative layer, where reflection on one's work informs ongoing growth.

Finally, many participants describe the pursuit of life stabilization and optimization as a way to create a supportive environment for personal development (Table 28, GET 10:Life Optimization and Stability). Establishing routines, managing responsibilities, and cultivating psychological balance emerge as practical strategies that enable consistent engagement with meaningful activities. This underscores how the Conscience of Becoming the Self includes not only visionary striving but also deliberate efforts to structure life in a way that sustains long-term growth.

Self-regulation of personal growth

This notion refers to how individuals internally experience the Conscience of Becoming the Self—what it feels like when self-regulation is actively taking place. It encompasses the inner strategies, emotional responses, and intuitive processes that guide a person's development. Rather than focusing solely on deliberate planning, this perspective highlights how self-growth unfolds from within, shaped by both conscious and spontaneous modes of inner engagement. In the following section, various forms of self-regulation that constitute the Conscience of Becoming the Self will be described.

Creative, Positive Emotional Flow: A prominent mode of self-regulation described by participants involves engaging in the creative process as a way to access psychological clarity and foster growth. The act of creating itself becomes a generative space, where individuals reflect and develop with heightened awareness (1.2). Initially, this process may occur instinctively, guided by the intrinsic joy and flow of making art. Over time, however, participants report a shift toward consciously seeking this state again, recognizing its role in sustaining growth (1.3). Positive self-evaluation of artistic output (3.4) can further enhance

this cycle, offering both emotional satisfaction and meaningful direction in one's developmental path. In this mode, the Conscience of Becoming the Self feels like an energizing flow—something one can trust, return to, and be shaped by.

Curiosity Drive: For many participants, curiosity operates as an inner compass in the regulation of personal growth. It determines where attention goes, what projects feel vital, and how one chooses their next step (2). This mode of self-regulation involves a natural and often joyful engagement with the unknown, where curiosity is not just a feeling but a guiding force. Through this lens, the Conscience of Becoming the Self is experienced as an openness to explore, fueled by the intrinsic drive to know and create more deeply.

Nurtured Self-Growth: Self-regulation also manifests in participants' experiences of growth inspired or nurtured by others. Some describe modeling their development on admired figures or mentors (3.1), while others see structured learning—particularly through education—as a space that strengthens and refines their inherent capabilities (3.3). This mode emphasizes growth through supportive influence and intentional effort. The Conscience of Becoming the Self here is shaped through external input that resonates internally, helping the person unfold in alignment with their potential.

Solitude of Self-Growth: Participants often express the need for solitude—not as isolation, but as a vital space for psychological integration and reflection (5.1). In solitude, self-growth is protected from excessive external influence and retains its authenticity. Several artists describe this growth as independent of recognition, suggesting that meaningful development can occur regardless of whether their work is publicly affirmed (14.1). Still, some note that when this recognition is lacking, it may feel like a barrier to fully actualizing one's growth. In this mode, the Conscience of Becoming the Self is experienced inwardly and quietly, deeply personal and sometimes invisible to others.

Guidance Within – Forms of Intuition: Intuition emerges as a powerful guide in participants' accounts of self-regulation. Recognizing and cultivating one's inner potential is often an intentional act guided by deep personal meaning (4.2). This path involves assuming responsibility for one's growth, based on confidence and agency (4.3). Intuitive insight is frequently described as an emotional signal that affirms alignment with one's truth (8.2, 12). Whether felt as an "inner voice" or quiet knowing, this mode allows the Conscience of Becoming the Self to be felt as a steady internal compass, leading toward authenticity.

Negative Feedback and Emotional Disruption: Not all self-regulation arises from positive emotion—some participants regulate through confronting negative feelings. Periods of lowered mood often bring intense reflections on missed opportunities or personal limitations (9). Feelings of regret, loss, and inadequacy are processed through mental strategies such as rationalization or self-reframing. These experiences, while painful, provide moments of reckoning and realignment within the process of becoming the self (12).

Openness to the Unknown: A distinctive self-regulatory strategy involves releasing tight control in favour of embracing the unknown. Participants describe moments of letting go—inviting unplanned, even unpredictable experiences—as not only tolerable but enriching for self-growth (11.3). This openness fosters a deeper kind of wisdom and adaptability. Contemplating alternative life paths further supports this orientation, allowing individuals to evaluate whether their current developmental direction remains aligned with their authentic sense of self (12).

Spontaneous Self-Reflection: Another subtle but recurring form of self-regulation involves reflection that arises spontaneously. Rather than being a planned or structured activity, self-reflection is often described as embedded in the fabric of daily life (13). In these ordinary moments, insights and realizations about personal growth surface naturally, guiding the individual quietly yet meaningfully in their becoming process.

Action-Oriented Regulation: Some participants regulate their development by emphasizing practical engagement. This strategy involves consciously choosing to act—rather than ruminate—especially when facing doubts or perceived gaps in personal growth. Prioritizing action over hypothetical reflection helps to sustain psychological movement and agency, turning attention from what is lacking to what can be actively shaped (13).

Summary: Emerged picture of the Conscience of becoming the Self in artists

The emerged picture of the Conscience of Becoming the Self (COBS) in artists reveals a complex, multidimensional inner structure through which individuals experience and shape their personal development. At its core lies the anchor—art as the foundational force that orients life decisions, imbues meaning, and sustains long-term commitment. This centrality of art activates a set of inner urges that function as key motivational forces, such as the drive to create, transform the immaterial into tangible form, improve oneself, and make a meaningful impact through one’s work. These motivations fuel a distinctive mode of action, marked by persistent engagement, strategic adaptation to challenges, social attunement, and a reflective relationship with one’s own artistic output. The process is further deepened through self-regulation of personal growth, in which individuals navigate their development through emotional flow states, curiosity, solitude, intuitive guidance, and even through confronting dissatisfaction and uncertainty. These elements collectively show that COBS is not a static awareness but a living, dynamic orientation—an ongoing, self-reflective navigation of becoming that is shaped by both inner impulses and the external world, grounded in art as a personal and existential compass.

Table 29

Conscience of Becoming the Self

| | |
|--|---|
| Anchor: Art as the Cornerstone of Life | Art and the creative process serve as a general, constitutive force that underlies and organizes participants' lives. |
|--|---|

| | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| Motivation: inner urge | <p>Inner urges experienced as essential to fulfill in the process of becoming and self-growth:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement in artistic work and the creative process • Materializing the immaterial • Pursuit of enjoyable and stimulating activities • Leaving personal imprints in reality • Dissatisfaction as an impulse to improve • Aspiration toward a better version of oneself • Holistic, continuous self-improvement • Conquering challenges perceived as impossible • Artistic utilitarianism: contributing to the well-being of others through one's work |
| Mode of action | <p>Patterns of behavior and strategies applied in self-growth:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constructive adaptation to life circumstances (gaining wisdom, learning from mistakes) • Persistent involvement and determination in pursuing chosen life goals • Active engagement in social contexts and roles • Evaluation of one's own art as a compass for further development • Creating stability and an optimized environment for personal growth |
| Self-regulation of personal growth | <p>Inner experience of self-guided development, including emotional, intuitive, and strategic dimensions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creative, Positive Emotional Flow • Curiosity Drive • Nurtured Self-Growth • Solitude of Self-Growth • Guidance Within (Intuition and inner direction) • Negative Feedback and Emotional Disruption • Openness to the Unknown • Spontaneous Self Reflection • Action-Oriented Regulation |

Comparative Overview of COBS in Study 1 and Study 2

In the first study, the data were broader in scope, which allowed for the development of more comprehensive models. In contrast, the second study focused more narrowly on 14

GETs rooted in the processes of becoming and self-growth, leading to the emergence and detailed description of the Conscience of Becoming the Self.

However, the data presented in the second study are easier to follow than those in the first. Notably, the second study could serve to expand upon the model of the creative process introduced in the first study (Figure 1). In that figure, the emphasis is placed on the process of *creating being*, with a particular focus on *being* as a final outcome and how it is experienced by the individual—for instance, through the lens of authenticity or inauthenticity. In contrast, the second study shifts attention more distinctly toward *becoming*—that is, the ongoing process itself—rather than on the state of being or its subjective perception.

Turning to the subject of the *Conscience of Becoming the Self*, the model presented in the first study—illustrated in Figure 2—appears to align more closely with the findings of the second study; however, important distinctions remain. Notably, Table30 demonstrates how the content of the second study corresponds with elements from the first. In particular, it highlights how the category *Mode of Action* and *Motivation: inner urge* (Study 2) could be integrated into the COBS model developed in Study 1, especially within the *Behavioral Dimension* under *Strategies of Development*(Table 24).Some aspects of *Self-regulation of Personal Growth* (Study 2) also align with the *Inner Dimension* outlined in Study 1.

Table30

The subjects that cover each other and are coherent in both studies

| Study 1 | Study 2 |
|---|--|
| Strategies and patterns of development | Mode of action |
| Level of engagement: Dynamics | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Persistent involvement and determination in pursuing chosen life goals |
| Strategy towards obstacles: Offensiveness | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constructive adaptation to life circumstances (gaining wisdom, learning from mistakes) • Active engagement in social contexts and roles |
| Strategies and patterns of development: self-regulation in a developmental context | Anchor: Art as the Cornerstone of Life |
| Regulation of motive of development | Art and the creative process serve as a general, |

| | |
|--|--|
| | constitutive force that underlies and organizes participants' lives. |
| Strategies and patterns of development: self-regulation in a developmental context: | Motivation: inner urge |
| <i>Type of motive</i> | |
| | Engagement in artistic work and the creative process |
| Self-development | Aspiration toward a better version of oneself |
| Social interactions | Artistic utilitarianism: contributing to the well-being of others through one's work |
| <i>Extraction of motive:</i> | |
| Few important motives | Holistic, continuous self-improvement |
| Inner dimension | Self-regulation of personal growth |
| Remorse, emotional | Negative Feedback and Emotional Disruption |
| Motivational force, emotional | Creative, Positive Emotional Flow |
| Motivational force, intuitive-psychological impressions | Guidance Within (Intuition and inner direction) |
| Motivational force, self-recognition | Openness to the Unknown Solitude of Self-Growth |

The possible extensions to the COBS model are presented in Table 31. Starting with *Strategies and patterns of development* (Table 24), this could be expanded to include, for example, *Level of stability and optimization in life environment*, which would describe the extent to which individuals create a peaceful and supportive environment for themselves. A similar category already exists in the first study (Table 25) under “*Level of stability and balance*”; however, that one pertains specifically to balance in self-growth. In contrast, *Level of stability and optimization in life* focuses more on the external environment—on whether a person seeks and maintains a stable life setting.

The category *Evaluation of one's own art as a compass for further development* might be broadened to apply beyond the domain of art, for example, *Evaluation of one's own work as a compass*. However, this broader concept may not align well with the style or categorization logic used in Table 24.

With regard to *Strategies and patterns of development: self-regulation in a developmental context*, *Type of motive* (Table 25), all aspects of *Motivation: inner urge*(Table31) could potentially expand the three main motive types previously presented in the model. As part of this extension, a new category—*Transgression*—may be proposed to capture motivations related to engaging with the unknown or seemingly impossible. Additionally, the *Pursuit of enjoyable and stimulating activities* could be framed as a motive of *hedonism*. Finally, *Dissatisfaction* could remain unchanged, as new motive in model from first study.

Lastly, extensions to the *Inner dimension* (Table 26) remain under consideration, as it is not yet clear how new categories might be formulated. For instance, *Nurtured Self-growth* might reflect how individuals perceive the influence of education and upbringing on their development—whether as a source of flourishing or limitation. However, this notion doesn’t fully align with the main structure of the *Inner dimension* and may belong elsewhere. *Curiosity* might be viewed as a component of *Intuitive-psychological impressions*, although its fit is still uncertain. For the remaining inner urges, their place within the model is also not clearly determined at this stage.

Table31

Possible extension of the model of the Conscience of becoming the self from study 1, with content from study 2

| Study 1 | Study 2 |
|--|---|
| | Mode of action |
| Strategies and patterns of development | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation of one’s own art as a compass for further development • Creating stability and an optimized environment for personal growth |
| Strategies and patterns of development: self-regulation in a developmental context: | Motivation: inner urge |
| Type of motive | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Materializing the immaterial • Pursuit of enjoyable and stimulating activities • Leaving personal imprints in reality • Dissatisfaction as an impulse to improve |

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conquering challenges perceived as impossible |
| Inner dimension | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curiosity Drive • Nurtured Self-Growth • Spontaneous Self-Reflection • Action-Oriented Regulation |

In summary, the reflections presented above illustrate how insights from the second study can meaningfully extend and enrich the original COBS model. While some elements fit seamlessly into the existing framework, others invite reconsideration or suggest new directions—such as the proposed category of *Transgression*. This evolving conceptualization reflects the complexity and diversity of the artistic process of becoming, reinforcing the need for a flexible and responsive model of self-growth.

Chapter III Discussion and critical reflection

Reflection on Conscience of Becoming the Self

The primary aim of this research was to examine participants' lived experiences to understand how the Conscience of Becoming the Self might be perceived and expressed. To expand the scope of inquiry, the processes of becoming and self-growth were also examined, as they offer important context for this phenomenon's emergence. However, the main focus will be on the Conscience of Becoming the Self.

Study 1 provided a broad, overall view through thematic analysis, while the second, using the IPA method, acted like a magnifying glass—allowing a more focused, detailed look at the individual experience.

The Conscience of Becoming the Self emerged through the participants' narratives. Although they did not refer to this term directly, their experiences revealed the presence of this phenomenon. The term itself is not yet established in scientific discourse or common usage. Still, when asked whether such a conscience related to self-development exists, some participants responded: 'Yes, this is exactly what I have been experiencing.'

This discussion will include the model from Study 1 as a revised version of the Conscience of Becoming the Self, compared to the structure proposed in earlier studies. The updated model will be analyzed alongside the main changes made to previous ideas. Afterwards, insights from Study 2 will be considered as possible additions or improvements to the existing the Conscience of Becoming the Self model.

The Model of the Conscience of Becoming the Self, which emerged from thematic analysis, consists of two dimensions: *behavioral dimension* and *inner dimension*. *Behavioral dimension* refers to actions in context of self-actualization. *Inner dimension* describes inner processes that arise in relation to issues of self-realization.

This fundamental distinction remains consistent in the preliminary model (Figure 5) and the model from Study 1 (**Błąd! Nie można odnaleźć źródła odwołania.**). However, the *behavioral dimension* has been expanded in the current model of the Conscience of Becoming the Self (**Błąd! Nie można odnaleźć źródła odwołania.**). It now includes two elements: *significant factors* (Figure 2

Table 21,

Table 22, Table 23) and *strategies and patterns of development* (Figure 4). The latter partially incorporates manifestations described in the preliminary model (Figure , left part), utilizing a positive-negative continuum (Table 24). Furthermore, the *strategies and patterns of development* have been broadened to include content related to self-regulation within the context of self-realization (Table 25).

Figure 5: Conscience of Becoming the Self: preliminary study

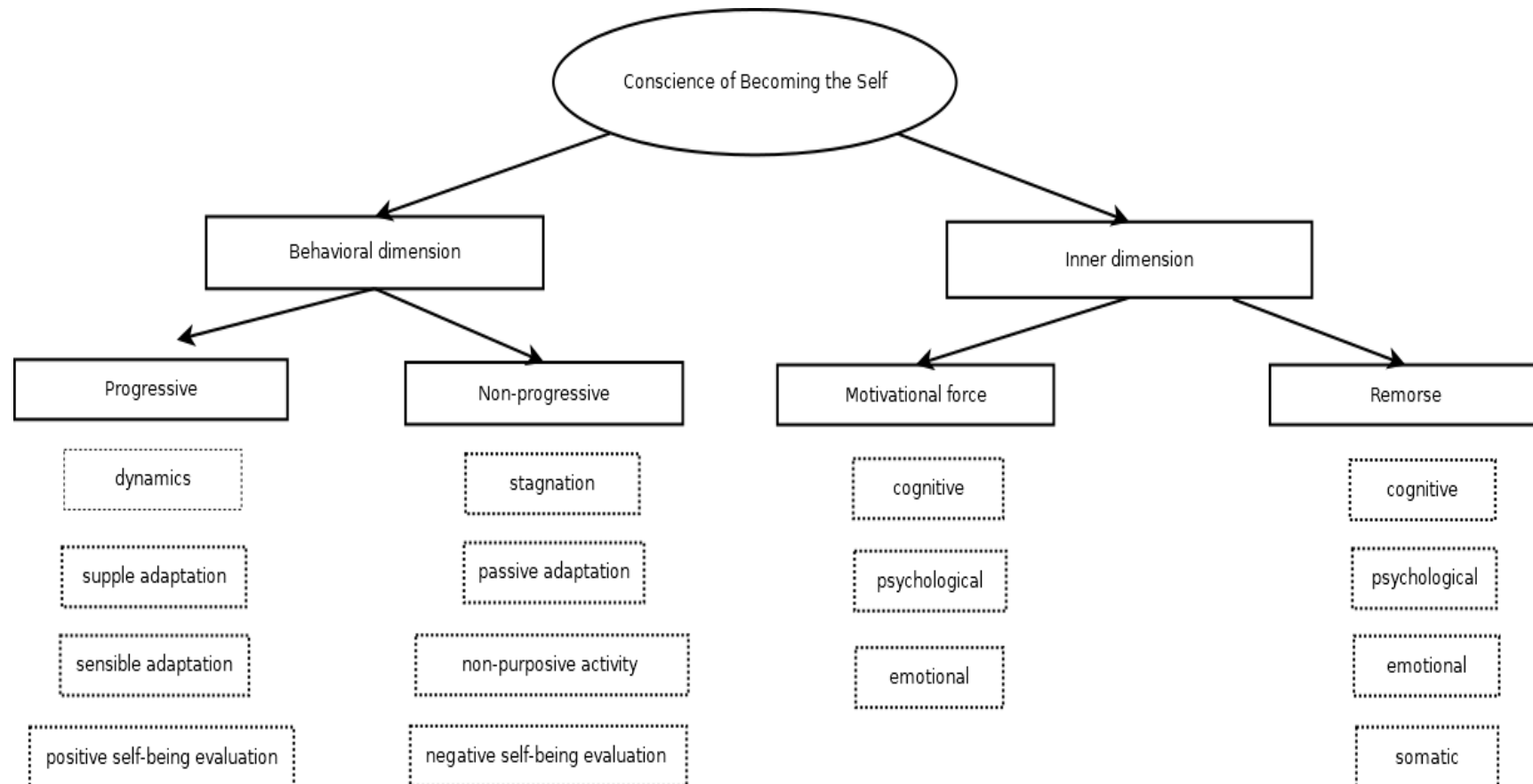
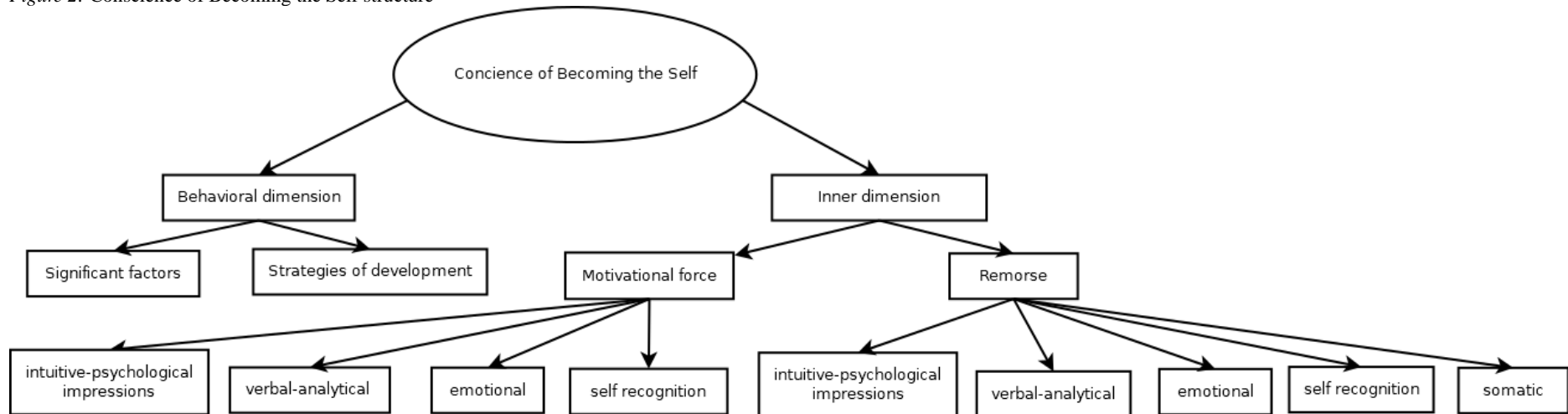


Figure 2: Conscience of Becoming the Self structure



In the Study-1 model, manifestations within the inner dimension have been expanded to include an additional category, self-recognition, and the same labels have been revised for greater clarity.

For more details, the behavioral dimension has a descriptive nature as it provides categories and terms to describe the process of becoming. It considers whether a person invests significant effort in their self-realization or not, and how sensible and self-directed their decisions are. This dimension is enriched with categories that help understand how motives for self-realization can be regulated. Thematic analysis was very useful in extracting this content from participants' narrations, allowing for the creation of a coherent model.

A *significant factor* within this dimension is the reflection of the actual outcome of the process of creating a being, whether it results in a self-updating, dynamic sense of self, or whether the person is treated as an object. This category outlines the framework of possible qualities a person can describe as being. The characteristics depicted as *inner* embody some part of personality definition: relatively stable dispositions: *inner* and *social*; framework of personal meaning: *own values*. However, the *significant factors* category also includes the possibility of identification through physical qualities in two-fold ways. One is the physicality of own body; the second is identification through possessions. Those aspects were conceptualized with Fromm's modus of "having" (Fromm, 1999) or Belk's extended self (Belk, 1988). Both these concepts assume quite a wide range types of possessions that a person can include in their own self, e.g., knowledge, products, places, brands, body parts, or even other people. However, in this study, the *physical* element of *significant factors* is limited to the body, e.g., weight, height, hair color, and possessions that seem to be requirements of adulthood, e.g., a car, a flat, and a house.

Significant factors also capture a self-questioning aspect of self-knowledge in the following respects: attitude towards being in the context of satisfaction and acceptance of own

characteristics; understanding and recognition of biographical elements concerning being. Those elements are essential because they directly refer to the personal framework of interpretation. The person is the one who creates inner definitions of objective terms. Defining might not start as an aware process. However, it makes anchors to which a person adjusts ones behavior and personality. With time, this process might become more conscience, with the help of education and self-reflection. Therefore, the initially intuitive process is expanded with cognitive reasoning. The overall picture, drawn with *significant factors*, can be subjected to an authenticity experience. The in-depth analysis then can capture the sense between the being as an object and its perception of authenticity.

While *significant factors* still revolve around matters of being, *strategies and patterns of development* are a step closer to achieving self-growth, which consists partly of behavioral dimension elements presented in the theoretical section of this study, except for self-being evaluation. However, the latter is absorbed by *significant factors*. Therefore, aspects such as *level of engagement (dynamics, stagnation)*, *strategies towards development (supple adaptation, passive adaptation)*, and *purposiveness in action (sensible adaptation, non-purposive)* did repeat themselves in this study. New to the model are categories concerning *the level of awareness* and *sense of control*. *Sense of control* can be explained with the concept of the locus of control, similarly to conditions for authenticity (that will be explained in the subchapter concerning the process of becoming). The *level of awareness* refers to narrative integrity concerning biographical elements of history about own self-development. The *level of awareness* from this study might be treated as specific, limited to the self-development part of narrative identity, which by McAdams refers to the whole life story (McAdams & McLean, 2013), while the *level of acceptance* couches attitude a person takes towards history and leading ideology is the interpretation of the world.

The other part of the *behavioral dimension* describes how the motive for self-growth might be regulated. This element is an improvement to the Conscience of Becoming the Self model. Social fulfillment is an equally valid motive as the development of individual potential. Therefore, both are considered major motivators for development. However, a third primary motive directly references Maslow's concept of basic needs. It is a situation where an issue of an unfulfilled sphere entirely takes self-development. Maslow's intuition is reflected here quite well, as people who struggle with psychological or physical problems were not able to conduct a reflective narrative about self-growth.

An element in the *behavioral dimension* is effectiveness in using social resources. Therefore, the latter and attitude towards obstacles could be associated with psychological well-being (Ryff, 2018): environmental mastery and positive relations with others. The quality of relations, that is, being authentic within relationships with others and the positive use of social resources, can also correspond with the *relational orientation* of a multicomponent operationalization of authenticity (Kernis & Goldman, 2006).

The *inner dimension* of the Conscience of Becoming the Self is the last to discuss. It is frequently mentioned throughout this paper that it is the most similar to the conscience part of the Conscience of Becoming the Self structure. It is divided into two major parts: motivational force and remorse, in line with the preliminary model (**Błąd! Nie można odnaleźć źródła odwołania.**, Figure). However, the original names of manifestations, such as psychological and cognitive, were changed, as they had too broad a meaning. That is why psychological manifestations are changed for *Intuitive-Psychological Impressions*, and cognitive for *Verbal-Analytical*.

In the context of missed opportunities or neglected areas of development, the *inner dimension* became particularly evident in the participants' narratives. As mentioned earlier, these dimensions can take both positive (*motivational force*) and negative (*remorse*) forms.

The positive manifestations provide a sense of direction, enabling individuals to identify their self-development goals and assess their progress along the way. They serve as signals indicating the necessary steps to be taken in the future. On a practical level, these steps translate into specific plans or tasks to be accomplished. In a broader sense, these signals act as catalysts, motivating individuals to make changes in their environment, explore new opportunities, or venture outside their comfort zone if it holds the potential for personal growth and self-realization. Through cognitive analysis, they can practically approach these goals, determining what has been achieved and what still needs to be done. Furthermore, the experience of positive emotions related to success in self-realization serves as a motivator for further growth and self-comforting.

Participants positively experienced *motivational force*. Through the lens of a positive *inner dimension*, even lost chances or developmental losses can be identified as valuable if a person draws proper conclusions for the future. However, the line to the negative form of *inner dimension* is very thin and lies deeply in consistency with self and the framework of interpretation. Mistakes are inevitable, alongside difficulties that a person has no control over. Being aware of one's own core, constant transfiguration of goals, and being flexible allows one to pursue the chosen path. However, a lack of those may shift *motivational force* into *remorse*.

The remembrance of lost chances loses its practical value and begins to serve only the purpose of self-blame or blaming others. This effect is particularly strong when accompanied by negative emotions, such as unfavorable self-realization, which occurs when a person feels inferior compared to others. Being in the wrong place in the context of self-development can even lead to somatic manifestations.

The remorse form of the inner dimension is overwhelming and non-productive for participants. In this study, psychological problems such as depression, low motivation, low

self-esteem, frustration, and feeling lost were depicted by participants as a result of acting against oneself. This is consistent with the notion that not following the path of progress can be harmful also in a psychological sense, e.g., meta-pathologies (Maslow, 2006; R. May, 1989; Oleś, 2011). Introducing the concept of the Conscience of Becoming the Self to individuals can help them recognize and neutralize the impact of *remorse*. This approach could prove beneficial in the context of psychotherapy.

The negative manifestation of the *inner dimension* of the Conscience of Becoming the Self can be likened to existential guilt. However, in Boss's understanding, existential guilt pertains to the inability to fulfil all potential (Oleś, 2011), whereas *remorse* in the context of the Conscience of Becoming the Self relates to not fulfilling a path that a person has already chosen. In simpler terms, the process of becoming oneself is a task where an individual senses and chooses a goal but experiences failure along the way. It is in these instances that *remorse* arises.

Consciousness of Becoming the Self, therefore, might be related to Ryff's psychological well-being (Ryff, 2014). *Motivational force* of *inner dimension* should improve psychological well-being, while *remorse* would give an opposite effect. The assumption is that the goal of human existence is to achieve self-affirmation and happiness. Thus, the Conscience of Becoming the Self would seem to serve this purpose by helping a person create oneself and control the process of becoming. Building on the general understanding of the inner dimension, I aim to explore each manifestation in greater depth and clarify how they function.

The *emotional* and *verbal-analytical* manifestations seem to reflect, respectively, the passion-driven conscience of Hume(1748/2001) and, in some respect, Kantian (1785/2002) view on conscience. Therefore, emotional manifestations occur as result of own actions, that concern self-growth decisions (positive, when success, negative when otherwise). *Verbal-*

analytical manifestations are based on cognitive process of thinking and reasoning, that anticipate the action, to draw conclusions and regulate own behavior and relations with environment (Falkowski et al., 2020). However, in case of the Conscience of Becoming the Self, *verbal-analytical* manifestations regulate the process of self-development using analogical process as described above. Therefore, analysis and planning in terms of self-development do fit category of cognitive process.

The process of creating self and self-development is associated with the burden of choice (Heidegger, 2010; Sartre, 2001a). This issue could be analyzed on the grounds of dialogical self-theory. It assumes the existence of multiple selves in the inner domain; taking positions and repositioning by these selves constitutes a sense of one unified identity for a person (Hermans & Hermans-Konopka, 2010). Self-conflict is the term capturing tension between selves. The subjects of self-growth and authenticity may create a specific sphere of psychological activity.

Self-conflict on this ground may reflect an issue that Heidegger raised: with a choice, we lose some potentialities, some beings that will never be (Heidegger, 2010). Those are moments of making significant life decisions that will shape people's future. Therefore, self-conflict on the grounds of the Conscience of Becoming the Self is a battle of potential selves. The *intuitive-psychological impressions* may reflect this conflict in the form of voices, guidance, and frustrations, which are not precisely aware processes. Explanation of blocking or rationalizations on the ground of an unfavorable self-growth process (remorse form of intuitive-psychological impressions) might be explained with self-deception: an unaware or intentional pursuit of false self-beliefs (Piłat, 2013). Perhaps facing the uncomfortable truth might be anticipated as a source of psychological burden. Thus, self-deception protects well-being. In Kierkegaard's reasoning, this might be where false self-affirmation appears.

Self-recognition in the Conscience of Becoming the Self might capture the difference between the ideal and actual selves in Carl Roger's understanding (Pervin & Cervone, 2012). Concerning dialogical self theory, *self-recognition* refers to selves engaging in self-criticism, where acts are contrasted with personal standards (Hermans & Hermans-Konopka, 2010). Personal standards might directly refer to a hierarchy of values and goals. Thus, the Conscience of Becoming the Self induces a need to change, to leave the comfort zone, or to experience being less submissive, dependent, and less worthy.

Somatic manifestations, are challenging to explain as they are rare and only have *remorse* form. Perhaps it can also have an evolutionary explanation, where losing life chances is perceived as a threat to survival.

An essential issue to consider is the fact that *the remorse* part of the Conscience of Becoming the Self is relatively more frequent than *the motivational force*. In human development in general, there is a negative emotional bias, possibly due to evolutionary adaptive function (Vaish et al., 2008). Analogically, when self-development goes smoothly, less aware activities are required. In contrast, difficulties in this process trigger higher awareness of own actions. Thus, in interviews, people will have a better memory of negative manifestations. Eventually, negative manifestations will appear more frequently in narrations. Learning from negative experiences may be more adaptive than engaging in in-depth reflection on self-affirmation and the process of becoming.

Study 2, in some cases, overlaps with the model from Study 1 (hereafter called Model 1), while in others, it provides possible extensions to the existing framework. The IPA-based exploration of artists' experiences offered a more detailed and enriched perspective of certain elements that were present but only briefly mentioned in the lives of Study 1 participants. Within the artist group, however, these elements became more noticeable—sometimes even dominant.

This is particularly evident in the role of intuition as a guiding force in life, as reflected in Model 1 under the *inner dimension: Motivational Force—Intuitive Psychological Impressions* (see Table 26). While in Study 1 intuition was acknowledged through terms like “hunch” or “gut feeling” as one manifestation of the Conscience of Becoming the Self (COBS), among artists it emerged as a central and recurring theme—one that significantly influenced decision-making and self-perception.

A similar pattern is visible in the theme *Art as the Cornerstone of Life*, which exemplifies how a single motive can shape and regulate the entire process of becoming. This concept aligns with the Study 1 category *Strategies and Patterns of Development: Self-regulation in a Developmental Context*, but with a notable difference in tone and emphasis. While Study 1 included some instances where one domain, for example, professional work, strongly influenced self-growth, among artists, art acts not just as a dominant theme but as an integrating lens. For many, self-development is perceived as an ongoing, holistic process, with every life domain interpreted and navigated through the prism of artistic engagement.

The *solitude of self-growth* and *openness to the unknown* fit within the *inner dimension of motivational force, self-recognition*, as they reflect a drive to transcend personal boundaries and move forward, even at the cost of potential discomfort. In this study, solitude—though it involves withdrawal from others—emerges as a fertile space for artists. The idea that time spent alone, particularly when consciously chosen and self-dedicated, can be beneficial is supported by previous research (Long & Averill, 2003). However, solitude is a double-edged sword: it can easily turn into loneliness, which has been shown to impact well-being negatively (Lam et al., 2021), making time spent alone both a source of growth and a potential psychological risk.

Some results from Study 2 appear entirely new and may be valuable additions to Model 1. In particular, the domain of *Strategies and Patterns of Development* seems open to

refinement. One notable addition could be *Creating Stability and an Optimized Environment for Personal Growth*, which would align well with the existing strategies in **Table 24**. This General Experiential Theme (GET) could reflect an adaptive strategy such as *Organizing One's Own Environment*.

Furthermore, within the subdomain *Self-Regulation in a Developmental Context*, the GETs associated with *Motivation: Inner Urge* (Study 2) could extend the range of motives presented under the *Type of Motive* category in Table 25. A proposed addition is the motive of *Transgression*, which represents a drive to pursue the unknown or seemingly impossible. It remains an open question whether this motive—strongly evident among artists—will also appear among more general populations.

Two seemingly contradictory motives from Study 2—*Pursuit of Enjoyable and Stimulating Activities* and *Dissatisfaction*—could also serve as valuable extensions of the self-regulation motives. The first, however, appears to be confined to engaging in intellectually enriching experiences, rather than seeking general pleasure. Therefore, this motive might be more accurately labelled *Intellectual Hedonism*. However, pure pleasure seeking in self-regulation might also be a fact; thus, *hedonism*, as a label, might also serve well for Model 1.

Dissatisfaction warrants deeper reflection, as its role as a motivational driver initially seems counterintuitive. Nonetheless, this idea is not novel in scientific literature (Zhou et al., 2023) and has been explored as part of the “negative side of creativity” (Liu & Ye, 2015), where creative engagement can be linked to self-harming behaviors. Furthermore, negative emotional states such as sadness have been found to enhance creativity (Palmiero et al., 2023). The drive rooted in self-dissatisfaction resonates with existential philosophy, particularly with Kierkegaard's reflections on despair and becoming. Thus, dissatisfaction could justifiably remain a recognized motive within the model. However, this presents a paradox in therapeutic practice: if improving the artist-client's well-being risks dulling their

creative potential, it raises the question of whether well-being is always a desirable goal, or if certain negative states are, in fact, essential to the creative process.

Lastly, although several potential extensions to the *inner dimension* were identified in Study 2, the primary focus remains on the *curiosity drive* and *action-oriented regulation*. Curiosity emerged as a central guiding force in the artists' experiences of becoming themselves and may serve as a key motivational mechanism. In Model 1, the *inner dimension* is presented through manifestations that have both positive and negative aspects. In this context, the positive side is represented by curiosity, which drives exploration and self-growth, while the negative counterpart can be identified as boredom and a sense of pointlessness, linked with *remorse*. This duality is reflected in research, where curiosity is positively associated with self-growth and psychological well-being (Cankaya et al., 2018).

The case of *action-oriented regulation* is less straightforward when considering its place within the *inner dimension*. This tendency represents a desire to engage in action as a means of avoiding excessive or unproductive reflection. While it may initially appear as a behavioral strategy, it could also be interpreted as stemming from an inner drive—a practical inclination toward action as a form of self-regulation. In this sense, it reflects a deeper motivational orientation: to cope with existential uncertainty or emotional discomfort through purposeful engagement.

The decision to embark on research on the Conscience of Becoming the Self originated from a humanistic belief in people's inherent sense of inner potential. Based on this premise, individuals should have an understanding of what is beneficial or detrimental to their self-realization. Making the right decisions in this matter should bring a person closer to their authentic self. Over time, one's behavior should reflect heightened functioning correlated with rising psychological well-being. (Maslow, 1954, 2014; Rogers, 2014).

However, the correspondence of scientific terms concerning being is a subject of debate. How much authenticity is associated with self-actualization? Self-actualization aims to maximize an individual's potential. How authentic are people who self-actualize? Those are some inconsistencies that may create an interesting area for reflection. Humanistic psychology describes self-actualizing individuals as those who exhibit a particular positive behavior, which is theoretically linked to a sense of fulfillment in being. The findings of this dissertation also identified behavioral expressions of authenticity and inauthenticity. While Maslow's descriptions and the behaviors observed in this study share similarities, the emphasis is placed differently.

The difference appears in the results and in the definition of Conscience of Becoming the Self. This concept emphasizes that individuals are interconnected with society and may find their purpose for realization within these social relationships. However, social relations held a different status in humanistic psychology.

Referring to Maslow, fulfilling self-actualization need affects the person's behavior on a multilevel dimension. One of these aspects is the social sphere. At first need for love and belongingness is a requirement to engage in self-actualization properly, without fear of loneliness and desperate attempts for attention from significant others (Maslow, 2006). In contrast, when motivation functions on a higher-needs level, self-actualizing people create independent, in-depth, valuable relationships. The point is that engagement in the social sphere is treated as subordinated activity regarding self-actualization.

While in this study, engagement in the social sphere is recognized as an equally valuable way of realization of potential. Fulfilling social roles, being useful for society were a solid and significant aims for some participants. For example, sacrificing one's own carrier for being a mother was perceived as an accomplishment, not a failure. A person would feel satisfied with this decision if "being a mother" was considered essential. Thus, personality

and all behavior are changed due to this decision. Therefore, self-actualization, a term for realizing potentialities, had limited usage in this study. Participants had a broader understanding of what is significant for self-realization.

In the humanistic field, Rogers spread the importance of social relationships and the qualities of these relations in his reflections on authenticity. Genuine relations where the person is actively listening and honestly open to another person are essential for self-development (Rogers, 2016). Free expression of authentic being should lead to authentic relations (Rogers, 2014). This notion was depicted in this study as well. Research showed that being in a state of authenticity recognizes the social sphere as an enriching field of possibilities for self-growth and self-expression. In contrast, the state of inauthenticity associates the impact of society with the oppression of true being.

Apart from different take on social relations, there is also one more difference between the Conscience of Becoming the Self take on self-realization and humanistic approach on this matter. In the definition of Conscience of Becoming the Self, preceding self-realization is the creation of personal meaning, whereby individuals shape and align their behavior accordingly. Therefore, it entails not only realizing potentialities but also selecting a path that harmonizes the progression of potentialities with values and the surrounding circumstances. On two points this position is coherent with existential psychology. First, significance of meaning is underlined and fulfills leading role, what is consistent with Frankl's take on this matter. The hierarchy of values is like a framework to which, development of potentials is adjust. Perhaps, the needs that an individual perceives as essential transcend themselves into values. The values are operationalizations of beliefs and goals people strive to achieve (Schwartz, 2006). The values have a universal range (Rokeach, 2018); however, each value's importance differs among individuals, groups, and cultures (Russo et al., 2022; Schwartz, 2006). The unique set of values interfere with each other and, as a result, modify behavior (Schwartz, 2006).

Secondly, the impact of the environment is acknowledged to have a positive influence, so far as a person is able to derive meaning from their own experiences, even if those experiences are negative. Consequently, suffering and pain in life can serve as catalysts for personal growth and transcendence (Frankl, 1984; Henson et al., 2021; Opoczyńska, 2002). This stands in stark contrast to humanistic psychology, which often views environmental inconveniences as hindrances to self-actualization. This reflects a fundamental difference in approach—whether a person grows within the conditions of their background, or in opposition to them.

Therefore, the set of potentialities is developed depending on the personal framework of interpretations and hierarchy of values a person has rather than simply aiming for mastering individual potential. Provided narrations showed that participants broadly understood success, accomplishment, significant goals, resources, or difficulties. These interpretations were shaped by their experiences. This underlines how individual perspective on self-realization is crucial. These findings prove and reflect Roger's notion of the importance of the phenomenological interpretation area within every person (Rogers, 2014). That is why this aspect was considered in the definition of the Conscience of Becoming the Self and then was found within qualitative material. Moreover, engaging in social relations or being useful to society can be as significant as mastering individual potential.

All these aspects encompass the concept of the Conscience of Becoming the Self, and they align with the experiences reported by the participants.

Another aspect to consider is the use of the word "self" in the Conscience of Becoming the Self. In the Polish translation, it is rendered as "Sumienie Stawania się Sobą," where "sobą" implies a closer alignment with the concept of a real, desired state of being. In contrast, "self" may be misconstrued as "jaźń," a psychological construct responsible for integrating an individual's functioning on both conscious and unconscious levels—inner

awareness of own being, subject of cognition (*Jaźń*, n.d.-a; *Jaźń*, n.d.-b). The process of becoming is essentially interconnected with the latter understanding of self and indirectly is shaped by the Conscience conceptualized in this thesis. However, it appears that "oneself" might better align with the meaning assigned to the discussed Conscience. Therefore, substituting "self" with "oneself" could result in "Conscience of Becoming the Oneself," where "oneself" signifies the inner state of being that a person consciously and unconsciously desires to achieve most. The "one" in the word "oneself" might be understood as the chosen self, the self that belongs to a person in some way but is still a work in progress, not fully achieved and perhaps somewhat out of reach.

However, whether it is "oneself" or "self," the term may raise further controversy. In some Eastern philosophical traditions—particularly in Buddhism—the notion of a stable self is considered a psychological illusion (Epstein, 1997; Trzciński, 2001). Within this framework, devoting significant effort to constructing and nurturing a personal identity may divert awareness from the present moment, which, from a mindfulness-based perspective, is where genuine insight and well-being are cultivated (Kabat-Zinn, 2004).

This idea may appear contradictory to a Western perspective, where the concept of self—and its development—is foundational to both philosophical inquiry and psychological theory (James, 1957; Rogers, 1980). Nevertheless, acknowledging this divergence invites a possible shift in focus: rather than emphasizing a fixed "self" or "oneself," we might turn our attention toward *becoming*—prioritizing the ongoing process or journey of personal development rather than its hypothetical endpoint. This orientation aligns with one participant's suggestion that "Conscience of Becoming" may, in fact, be a more suitable term than "Conscience of Becoming the Self."

However, the concept in question will be referred to by its original name to make dissertations easy to follow.

Further research is needed to fully understand the nature of the Conscience of Becoming the Self. Such research endeavors would provide valuable insights into the underlying structure of this phenomenon, offering improved explanations and a deeper understanding of its intricacies. The study involving artists opened up the possibility for further investigation into in-depth experiences. This group demonstrated particularly strong manifestations of certain phenomena, offering a richer understanding of how these are enacted in real life. The specific characteristics of this group may suggest the value of exploring differently profiled groups, which could reveal a new, equally deep set of manifestations. Participants in Study 2 were all in middle adulthood—professionally active, productive, yet already relatively settled. Some even reflected that, for type of, self-reflection is simply too late, as "the cards had already been dealt." This observation indicates that a younger group might provide access to the Conscience of Becoming the Self in "real time." Young adulthood, or even adolescence, could be promising stages for further research, as these life phases involve active identity exploration and high-stakes decision-making about the future (Erikson, 2004).

The quality of life has been rising considering basic elements such as medical care, access to education, economic stability. Specialized knowledge is easily accessible through their mainstream, easy-to-understand versions and spread through the internet. The subject of "being best version of self", or "being true self" is quite present in public domain, alongside with "leaving comfort zone" for better self-realization and self-discovery. Relatively stable socio-economic sphere, and higher level of knowledge concerning development, change the understating of self-growth and authenticity. Simple fulfilling daily tasks may not be enough.

The Conscience of Becoming the Self is the internalized response to the perceived quality of one's own self-development. It includes an awareness of the *sense of fittingness* in the personal process of becoming. It regards the process of shaping one's being as a moral and

existential duty toward oneself. As the refined definition suggests—with minor improvements to emphasize both the significance of the self and the process of becoming—Conscience of Becoming the Self can be understood as the internal compass guiding the individual's growth in alignment with their authentic path.

Conscience of Becoming the Self (perhaps *Conscience of Becoming the Oneself*, or simply

Conscience of Becoming) recognizes the experience of an ongoing process of becoming or creating oneself as a moral/existential duty toward the self. Through self-observation and self-monitoring, the person evaluates the degree of adequacy between how and what has been pursued and what is sensed—both intuitively and rationally—as the optimal realization of individual potential. This includes particular attention to the **felt sense of fittingness** of one's path—a subjective, experiential sense that the process feels *right*. This sense is responsive to one's life circumstances, personal values, and the evolving personal trajectory across the life span.

In regard to definition, perhaps it should be an individual's decision whether to place greater emphasis on the creation of a defined self or on the ongoing process of becoming.

The Conscience of Becoming the Self is related to essential spheres of self-fulfillment, self-growth, authenticity, and psychological well-being. However, further investigation on the Conscience of Becoming the Self may bring an extended sphere of interpretation of human functioning within the psychology of personality, psychology of the self, or positive psychology. As this study depicts, psychological difficulties may accompany inadequate self-development, e.g., low motivation, low self-esteem, and frustration. For example, the developmental crisis of integrity vs. despair might be explained on the Conscience of

Becoming the Self ground, when person struggles with accepting the final effect of own being (Erikson, 2004).

Hence, a more clearly conceptualized the Conscience of Becoming the Self may serve as a therapeutic guide in cases where the process of personal development is hindered or frustrated. However, it is important to emphasize that the concept of Conscience of Becoming the Self is not intended to reinforce the widespread societal pressure toward constant self-improvement. In a context where the market of self-development offerings is saturated, and the ideal of a “better self” can become overwhelming, this concept should instead support individuals in finding balance across the essential domains of life, in ways that align with their current personal resources and capacities.

In terms of the Conscience of Becoming the Self, a person does create an individual set of norms concerning their own self-development. A person chooses the foremost goal, whether it is mastering talent or being helpful to the community, and forms own being adequately. The person chooses what potential is key for his or her being. The adequacy between what people strive for, what is sensed as right, fittingness path, and own behavior is essential and can be assessed only by a person. Therefore, not mastering own potential, e.g., talent, might be a good decision if it brings a person closer to whom she or he wants to be. Being consistent with guidelines of own religion, or setting own individual, independent guidelines are both valid and meaningful as far as they help a person stay true to oneself. An ultimate sacrifice can be an idealized embodiment of the function the Conscience of Becoming the Self should serve. The functional body is then destroyed, but the person's experience of fulfillment is transgressed beyond what is explainable on scientific grounds.

Reflection on process of becoming

While the primary focus of this study was not the process of creating self, the design of the interview provided a valuable opportunity to explore this aspect. As a result, an analysis

concerning the process of creating self was included in the findings, warranting a brief reflection in the discussion.

The findings presented in the results section have been derived from in-depth interviews with participants and their subsequent analysis. Thus, the conceptual models presented herein represent the author's interpretation and organization of the participants' experiences. These models serve as a framework for comprehending and capturing the rich and diverse range of experiences shared by the participants.

The first element of the process of creating being was *distinguishing self and personality* (perhaps, also in this case, word “oneself” would fit better) and *awareness*. Described as separate processes, they are, in fact, coexisting together. Creating *personality and self* through experiences can be compared to creating self-knowledge. It is answering a question of what I am, or what qualities I have. However, this is not an aware search, but rather creating something in action.

Therefore, it is more like a task unconsciously performed by a person: creating content of own personality. This content is then subject to questioning, and the *self* is the one who asks these questions. *Awareness* described in the study reflects a process that constitutes *the self* and the struggles *the self* needs to verify to achieve a true being. Thus, *awareness* is more likely associated with self-regulation. Therefore, *distinguishing self and personality* and *gaining awareness* self-regulate and build up self-knowledge, and finally constitute personality and self. From this perspective, self and personality are indeed like a changeable but complete synthesis (Galarowicz, 2014; Toeplitz, 1980), a self-updating product. In my understanding of being, these two processes refer to being as an adjective (experiences of being) and attitude towards own being, both of which build-up being as an object.

This distinction was necessary because while some participants were able to describe themselves or their experiences concerning becoming, their narrations lacked a sense of self-

awareness (described category *gaining awareness*). On the other hand, there were participants who exhibited both these aspects, demonstrating a clear understanding of the self and expressing self-awareness in their narratives.

At this point of discussion, I would like to contemplate over experiences of authenticity explored in this study.

The perceived final product of being is then experienced in a more advanced way in terms of authenticity. For this, an individual must have some inner idea, a sense of a true being to which the current being is compared. The difference between the two, then, is experienced and assessed.

Based on the result, authenticity can be perceived as a conditional state. However, those conditions vary from inner to external type. Authentic people experience those conditions as *inner*; thus, achieving psychological stability and acceptance is necessary. In contrast, inauthentic people set those conditions in the qualities of the environment. Thus, an accepting and tolerant society is necessary (*external conditions*). This distinction can be explained on the grounds of locus of control (Colman, 2009), which might predispose some people to find solutions within the self (inner control) or within external elements (external control). The other possibility is that objectively, participants' environmental backgrounds differed concerning tolerance and acceptance. It is probably a concern of future, deeper studies. Lastly some participants did not depict any conditions to be authentic, as this state is smooth and natural.

This brings us to another issue on this subject. Following intuition based on existential philosophy, being authentic is at the cost of a heavy, multifaceted burden. However, most participants declared that being self is the source of comfort, while 18 said otherwise. Therefore, there are some inconsistencies to reflect on. Do the majority part of participants just not blessed with Kierkegaard's gift of awareness yet? Consistent with Kierkegaard, it

could be assumed that those participants did not really and deeply reflect on the subject of true being. The state that they perceive as authentic is not actually authentic. Likewise, the experience of unconditional authenticity could indicate a challenge in delving into profound reflections on the subject, revealing difficulty articulating it verbally.

However, this way of interpretation takes away credibility from participants—their ability to reflect and answer the questions of their phenomenological experiences reasonably. The assumption that an individual has his own truth is the foundation of qualitative research. Therefore, other explanations should also be considered.

Firstly, the existential philosophy perspective on being is profound and complex but associated with neurotic emotional states or emotional disturbance. At least, thinkers I referred to in theoretical introduction. Therefore, existential philosophy captures the whole issue of being, or just the part, that is most coherent with the personality structure of existential authors. If the second option is correct, that implies that the existential take on being is incomplete. This gives space for possible interpretations of true being as a source of comfort, for example, on the ground of positive psychology.

Firstly, there might be different psychological foundation of experiencing being and authenticity, rooted in different personality structures of individuals. Therefore, there should be search aimed to investigate whether people with different personality profiles exhibit authenticity in some unique way, or existential approach is universal, and being does concern existential burden.

Secondly, there was a change in society between the present and the 19th and 20th centuries when the existential approach in philosophy and psychology was born. Less oppressive and open for education, societies that focus on the needs of individuals and freedom of expression happen worldwide. There are still countries that do not fit the criteria of democracy; however, the general understanding of people's development is rising.

Therefore, “being self” is possible as there is generally a higher level of tolerance and acceptance. That is why the existential approach might apply partially, or the range of emotional expression of being has changed.

Among 18 participants that declared authenticity as discomfort, some experienced it as a value, a state to achieve and fight for. That is more coherent with Nietzsche’s will to power or Tillich's courage to be—the inner need to strive for an authentic being. However, the final state of being should bring self-affirmation, peace, and spontaneity (Kierkegaard, 1849/2008; Tillich, 1952)

Therefore, there is a question if there are different ways to experience authenticity or different stages of authenticity.

The other reason for experiencing authenticity as the discomfort was the negative evaluation of own being. There comes the question of why a positive picture of self is not present to refer to. Being a good person, or a perfect self, may not be coherent with being true self. Recognizing own personality flaws as significant for own identification might lead to the conclusion that pursuing true being is harmful to others or give troubles for a person, thus brings discomfort. On the contrary, being self might harm a person when society is not an accepting environment.

This is one of the reasons why inauthenticity is a source of comfort, as it allows one to be safe if expressing true being brings unnecessary attention. Therefore conformism (Fromm, 1998) might give an illusion of safety and even satisfaction (Kierkegaard, 1849/2008). Furthermore, inauthenticity is also an expression of being and, as such, a part of being (Heidegger, 2010). However, most participants associated inauthenticity with discomfort, as it is effortful state, of unnecessary pretending.

It is challenging to decide what is authenticity or true self-affirmation. Even conformism might be a way of protecting true being in the long run (Kozielecki, 1996).

Reflection on this study's result shows how essential an individual framework of interpretation is. However, there is still an issue of how much credit is given to the participant. How much of an answer depicts the experience, and how much do participants rationalize the narration?

Critical reflection of methodology

The purpose of conducting thematic analysis with a larger and more diverse group of participants was to gain a broader perspective on the phenomenon of the *Conscience of Becoming the Self*. In contrast, the use of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) in a specifically selected group of visual artists functioned as a magnifying lens, offering an in-depth exploration of individual lived experiences. In Study 1, the majority of participants were Polish, with 18 participants from other countries, including 10 from English-speaking backgrounds. The analytical models were developed irrespective of nationality, as responses from the non-Polish subgroup did not indicate any need for culturally distinct conceptualizations.

It is important to note that the models were developed primarily based on participants from Western cultural backgrounds. Consequently, a key direction for future research is to examine individuals from Eastern cultural contexts to verify, refine, or expand the existing models.

Future research on the Conscience of Becoming the Self may proceed along three primary lines. First, the use of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) could deepen our understanding by offering an in-depth, experiential perspective within specific population groups. Second, a qualitative approach could involve analyzing data using the existing categories of the Conscience of Becoming the Self while also remaining open to new codes that may complete or expand the model. This strategy may prove more time-efficient compared to fully open-ended qualitative analyses. Third, incorporating a quantitative

paradigm—such as developing a dedicated questionnaire—would enable researchers to examine the frequency of specific manifestations and explore individual differences across various groups.

Thematic analysis enabled an in-depth and multifaceted exploration of the Conscience of Becoming the Self, as well as the broader processes of self-growth and identity formation. As a result, the synthesized themes presented in the figures and tables encompass a broad and diverse range of content. While a more selective or reductionist approach might have yielded more concise and easily generalizable findings, it would have also compromised the richness and depth of the data. In the future, it may become necessary to streamline some elements to enhance coherence. In thematic analysis some elements appear repeatedly throughout the analysis from different perspectives or as part of different phenomena. *Awareness* is an excellent example of a subject present throughout the result section. The reason for that is the aim of an open exploration. Therefore, I gave each subject a space for interpretation.

As I mentioned, within the analysis process, I was open to rearranging and rethinking the structure of Conscience of Becoming the Self. As a result, extensive interpretation of the process of becoming the self, emerged alongside the updated structure of Conscience of Becoming the Self.

However, this study was not designed to explore some of the presented functions and phenomena deeply. Therefore, research directed precisely to explore one aspect or another would extend its content. For example, *tool-raising awareness* might have more elements than *the inner standard of being* and *vision of self*. Therapy could also be considered as such a tool. However, in this study, it was assigned to *experiences*. Experiencing authenticity and inauthenticity have more shades than described in this study. Concluding, created categories concerning the process of creating being do not couch the whole process, but its part that emerged through the interview. The interviews designed to explore each aspect individually

(e.g., being in the context of authenticity) might bring a much broader context for interpretations. That is why this is another limitation of this study. What models tell about the process of becoming the self is possibly incomplete.

In the Study 1, the diversity in participants' ability to reflect on self-realization was evident, and their engagement in this study pleasantly surprised me. However, it posed an intellectual challenge for some participants to engage in the interviews fully. This aspect serves as both a limitation and a positive aspect of the study, as it provided an opportunity to observe how individuals who initially struggled eventually approached the study. It is important to note that the responses from these individuals may represent readily accessible content for self-reflection rather than necessarily being the most significant. Therefore, with appropriate guidance, other pertinent subjects might come to light. Still, exploring connections between certain professions and the experience of the Conscience of becoming the Self is also an interesting path for future research.

The methodology employed in Study 1 provided convenient access to the interview process. Participants were directed to a dedicated webpage by clicking on the provided link, where they could complete the interview and upload their responses. This approach offered flexibility, allowing participants to engage with the task at their convenience, whether it be at any time, from any location, and with the necessary amount of time they required.

The chosen methodology offered several advantages, including convenience and accessibility. However, it should be noted that the accessibility of the interview process was limited to individuals with devices capable of opening the provided link, such as a computer.

However, conducting interviews in this manner does lose some of the advantages of traditional face-to-face interviews. One limitation is that the researcher cannot guide the conversation or assist participants in understanding the questions. On the other hand, participants may feel more at ease completing the interview in the comfort of their own

homes, rather than engaging with a stranger on complex matters of self-development. While an interviewer can serve as a facilitator for the participant's reflection, their presence can also influence and shape the participant's responses. With approach in Study 1, the researcher has minimal control over the interview process, allowing participants to engage with the questions on their own terms. As a result, participant's reflections are solely their own and are influenced solely by their individual awareness.

The qualitative material collected in Study 1 does not require transcription since it is already in written form. This eliminates the risk of data loss that may occur during the transcription process, which is typically the initial stage of data processing in qualitative methodology. Transcription can introduce changes to the original message, often due to technical limitations such as imperfect transcriptions from voice recordings or the need to reconstruct the interview from notes. Thus, the qualitative material analyzed in this study consists of pure, unaltered responses from the participants.

Study 2 employed Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), a methodological approach that allowed for a deep immersion into the individual experiences of the artists. This approach was invaluable in capturing the nuanced and subjective nature of the Conscience of Becoming the Self as experienced by this group. However, a key limitation lies in the extent to which these insights can be generalized to a broader, non-artist population. Due to IPA's idiographic focus and time-intensive nature, applying it to larger samples is highly impractical—arguably its most significant methodological drawback.

Furthermore, traditional face-to-face interviews and online interviews both have their respective advantages and disadvantages. While in-person interviews allow for richer interpersonal engagement, they can be time-consuming for participants and may deter some individuals from engaging in deeply reflective conversations. In contrast, the online

interviews used in Study 1 offered greater flexibility and accessibility, possibly encouraging more openness due to the perceived distance and anonymity.

At this point, it remains uncertain whether written responses in a potential second interview would yield data of lesser value. However, it is worth considering that interviewer guidance—while beneficial for clarifying questions and maintaining focus—can also unintentionally steer responses. This duality, noted in Study 1, reflects both the strengths and limitations of interviewer presence in qualitative research. In this sense, the two studies may be seen as complementary, each contributing unique perspectives to a fuller understanding of the phenomenon.

The most important critique I have in mind is the notion that the awareness and focus I placed on whether creating a being is significant—or whether it's more about presence in the process of becoming—may, in fact, not be necessary for well-being. As one participant said, he might feel the Conscience of Becoming the Self and the duty to progress, yet this extensive self-knowledge might not be important, and perhaps unaware people may pursue a happy life. Personally, I do not believe that a genuine sense of happiness is possible without a conscious and aware journey through one's own self and life path; otherwise, the feeling of happiness would seem artificial and flat. However, it is important to me to acknowledge that perhaps it is not rigid self-knowledge, psychological insight, or structured self-reflection that is responsible for a sense of balance—some people may instinctively possess it and pursue happiness anyway. Nevertheless, I hope that for those who need that knowledge, the Conscience of Becoming the Self might serve as a source of liberation or meaningful insight.

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Abstract in English

The objective of this study is to explore the meaning and impact of one's own development in individual experiences. Themes such as finding the true self, becoming the best version of oneself, and achieving personal growth are pervasive in mass media and the collective consciousness. The concept of Conscience of Becoming the Self operationalizes the intuitions found in humanistic and existential psychology, suggesting that individuals not only experience their own being but are also conscious of the quality of their self-growth, to the extent that an inadequate state of being may become a matter of conscience. Therefore, this study aims to explore the Conscience of Becoming the Self in people's experiences and describe its psychological manifestations. To achieve this, two studies were conducted: the first employed thematic analysis to explore a broad spectrum of the phenomenon based on data from 74 participants (including 61 Poles); the second focused on the individual experiences of four visual artists, using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) as the methodological approach. The first study revealed that the Conscience of Becoming the Self can be delineated into two primary dimensions: the *behavioral* and *inner* dimensions. The *behavioral dimension* pertains to behavior within the context of self-development. The *inner dimension* manifests positively as a *motivational force* driving individuals to pursue their desired way of being. Conversely, its negative manifestation is akin to conscience, termed *remorse*. This inner response surfaces when self-growth is perceived as inadequate. The second study highlights the role of inner guidance, along with motivation driven by curiosity, dissatisfaction, and a desire for transgression, in the experience of self-growth. In addition to elucidating the structure of Conscience of Becoming the Self, the analysis delves into the process of self-creation—how individuals experience distinguishing self and personality and the process of gaining awareness. Furthermore, categories were formulated to depict experiences of authenticity and inauthenticity.

Keywords: Conscience of Becoming the Self (COBS), Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), conscience, self-actualization, self-growth, authenticity, being, becoming, thematic analysis

Abstract in Polish

Przedmiotem tych badań była eksploracja znaczenia oraz wpływu jaki doświadczanie własnego samorozwoju ma na człowieka. Obecność w przestrzeni publicznej jak i indywidualnej zagadnień dotyczących „stawania się najlepszą wersją siebie”, „bycia sobą”, „drogi najlepszego samorozwoju”, wskazują na ważność tych kwestii w życiu człowieka. Koncept Sumienia Stawania się Sobą, jest operacjonalizacją intuicji obecnej w humanistycznej i egzystencjalnej psychologii, która to wskazuje, iż człowiek jest świadomym, doświadczającym siebie bytem. W obszarze tego doświadczenia istotne jest rozpoznanie poziomu swojego samorozwoju i adekwatności własnych działań względem pewnego prawdziwego, „ja”. Założeniem tej pracy jest, iż powyższe aspekty uzyskują w perspektywie indywidualnej człowieka, ważność obowiązku etycznego względem samego siebie. Dlatego celem niniejszego badania jest eksploracja i opisanie w jaki sposób Sumienie Stawania się Sobą jest doświadczane przez pojedynczych ludzi, oraz jakie są jego psychologiczne manifestacje. Aby to osiągnąć zastosowano paradygmat badań jakościowych. Przeprowadzono dwa badania, gdzie pierwsze uwzględnia szerszą perspektywę tego zjawiska, ujęte za pomocą analizy tematycznej (76 badanych, z których 61 było narodowości polskiej) oraz drugie badanie skupiające uwagę na indywidualnej percepcji Sumienia Stawania się Sobą, u grupy czterech artystów, których doświadczanie było analizowaną za pomocą Interpretacyjnej Analizy Fenomenologicznej. Wynikiem tych analiz było wyłonienie dwuwymiarowej struktury zjawiska Sumienia Stawania się Sobą. *Wymiar behawioralny* odnosi się do rozwojowych i nierozwojowych strategii zachowania w kontekście samorozwoju. Z kolei *wymiar wewnętrzny* ma wyraźne dwa odcienie, pozytywne (*siła motywacyjna*) i negatywne (*wyrzuty*). *Siła motywacyjna* objawia się jako kierująca ku właściwemu - w postrzeganiu osoby -samorozwojowi. *Wyrzuty* z kolei to wewnętrznie doświadczana niespójność między rozwojem realizowanym a tym

odczuwanym jako optymalny. Badanie drugie uzupełniło ten obraz o głębszy wgląd w poczucie wewnętrznego prowadzenia oraz uwzględnienie motywacyjnego aspektu braku satysfakcji, ciekawości oraz potrzeby przekraczania siebie.

Ponadto analizy badań dały możliwość wglądu w percepcję osób badanych w kontekście kreacji swojego bycia poprzez doświadczanie i proces uzyskiwania wglądu tj. świadomości samych siebie. Co więcej utworzono również kategorie, obrazujące jak badani doświadczają autentyczności i jej braku.

Słowa kluczowe: Sumienie Stawania się Sobą (SSS), Interpretacyjna Analiza

Fenomenologiczna (IPA), sumienie, samoaktualizacja, samorozwój, autentyczność, bycie, stawanie się, analiza tematyczna,

Appendices

Appendix 1: Interview from master's thesis

Ew: + Czy w ostatnim czasie wydarzyły się jakieś istotne dla Pana/Pani wydarzenia? (Pyt. dodatkowe w sytuacji dużej odległości między wykonaniem testów a wywiadem)

1. Czy ma Pani/Pan poczucie osiągnięcia w życiu tego, co Pan(i) zamierzał(a)? - jakie są Pani(a) największe sukcesy?

- co pozostało niespełnione lub nieosiągalne? - czy przy większym zaangażowaniu były to rzeczy możliwe do realizacji?

2. Czy są jakieś plany, marzenia, których nie udało się Pani(u) zrealizować, a o których myśli Pan(i) czasem?

3. Czy przypomina sobie Pan(i) takie sytuacje w życiu, w których można było coś osiągnąć lub coś ważnego zrobić, a jednak Pan(i) zaniechał(a) tego, a potem było szkoda? Co to było, o co wówczas chodziło?

4. Czy ma Pan(i) poczucie winy z powodu jakichś nie zrealizowanych możliwości, planów lub marzeń? Jak można opisać te uczucia i w jakich okolicznościach się pojawiają?

5. Czy pojawiają lub pojawiały się u Pana(i) coś takiego jak wyrzuty sumienia w związku z zaniedbaniem rozwoju swojego talentu lub samoograniczeniem rozwoju osobistego? Jak można opisać te uczucia i jakich sytuacji dotyczą?

6. W jakim stopniu w swoim życiu był(a) Pan(i) wierny(a) sobie? I co Pan(i) czuje, kiedy brakuje tej wierności?

7. Jaki wpływ na życie człowieka może mieć poczucie winy z powodu zaniechania realizacji planów lub zaniedbania osobistego rozwoju?

8. W kontekście całej naszej rozmowy, jak ocenia Pan/Pani swoje zaangażowanie w swój rozwój w przeszłości i teraz?

9. Proszę sobie wyobrazić, że naprzeciwko Pani/Pana siedzi Pani/Pan z dzieciństwa. Proszę sobie popatrzeć na to dziecko. Proszę powiedzieć, przekazać sobie jakąś wiadomość, przesłanie, może coś ważnego, coś co przyjdzie Pani/Panu do głowy (czuje Pan/Pani największą potrzebę)? Proszę powiedzieć, to tak, żeby to dziecko mogło to zrozumieć.

10. Czy chce Pan/Pani coś dodać?

Appendix 2: Thematic Analysis Mapping Table

| Interview data | Content from interview(notes) | Themes | Definition | Meta category |
|---|---|--|---|---|
| Int 1: Men, 22 years old, Polish, Bachelor's degree, Polish Studies: Anthropology and Culture, Student, Informal relationship, Atheist | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - appearance of characteristics described as most important is consistent throughout whole interview - self-awareness of own authentic being - self-awareness of own inauthentic being (mask, playing role) - awareness of the process of creating own self | Self-awareness of one's own being | A coherent understanding of one's qualities, interconnected with biographical knowledge, that helps recognize the position of one's self | FOUNDATION FOR AUTHENTIC SELF |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - most important and repetitive characteristics: melancholy, emotional regulation, influential romantic relations, alienation from social context, high abilities, - romantic relations as strongly influential for being creation - self-regulating through solitude exploration - maximizing(perfectioning) own mental abilities | Subjective influential factors | Set of personal, social factors that are recognized by a person as influential and significant | SIGNIFICANT FACTORS OF SELF-DEVELOPMENT |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - thoughtful time planning - managing various duties - persistence in self-development | Effort and engagement in self-development | Effective strategies that can be used by a person in his/her self-development | STRATEGY AND PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - creating own self through emotions - emotions as expressions of authentic being - negative emotions (anger, sadness) as transmitters of lost development al chances | Emotional regulation/emotional transmitters | The role that emotions play in significant processes related to personal functioning. | POSITION TO EMOTIONS |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - experiencing feelings of lost time due to laziness and giving too much time for pleasure - dropped out, recognized artistic passions and abilities - remorse, and experiencing feelings of lost chances due to unperfected potential | Lost chances | Areas of self-growth recognized by an individual, often identified by specific past events, where the level of progress is experienced as insufficient. | POSITION TO EMOTIONS |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - being authentic self as a positive aspect of functioning, giving peace, balance, and happiness - the inner standard of being as a construct created through cultural and | Attitude towards authentic being | The stance a person adopts while reflecting on their | FOUNDATION OF AUTHENTIC SELF |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|--|--------------------------------------|
| | social standards, not harming own personality - the conscience of becoming the self as a voice that gives signals to us that we are not valid(odpowiedni) in the context of social standards | | own state. | |
| Int 2: Woman, 25 years old, Polish, Bachelor's degree, Automation and Robotics, Employed, Single, non-practicing believer, catholic | - attitude towards social context: conformism, being easily influenced, playing a role, social context as a source of inauthentic being - conditional being yourself - personalities compromise - being self only alone - awareness of authentic/inauthentic being - authenticity – subject, authenticity - object | Boundaries of authenticity and its meaning | A wide range of factors identified by an individual, along with the meanings they attribute to these factors, perceived as limiting their authentic being. | FOUNDATION FOR AUTHENTIC SELF |
| | - constant aspects of self-development: need for constant development, need for planned development, constant work on character - a personal recipe for success: assiduity, self-confidence, reasonable planning, faith in set goals, humility - meaning of carrier: goal, success, source of development, stabilization, source of confidence - utility: being useful/helpful to others | Foundation of self-development | A set of aspects identified by an individual as the basis for establishing their self-development. | STRATEGY AND PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT |
| | - visualization as a form of self-regulation: while making important decisions, visualization of future self, visualization of goal - a shame when the luck of assiduity - being self not always a source of comfort - rationalization of inauthentic behaviours | Regulation of self-progress behaviour | Mental strategies for managing personal development | FOUNDATION FOR AUTHENTIC SELF |
| | - cots of self-progress: health, stress, relations - desire to learn as a first impulse - re-evaluation of the meaning of relationships (appreciation) - personal characteristics: optimism, chaos, openness, lack of assertiveness - need for change as an impulse - easy with making decisions and taking risk | Personal self-progress pattern | An individual's path of self-progress emerges from a person's experiences and characteristics, both negative and positive. | STRATEGY AND PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT |
| | - inner standard of being as a general pattern of self-development (not unique) - COBS: determines ideals to achieve - positive/negative general sensation as a sensor of the distance between person and ideal to achieve | Ideals in self-development | The role of ideals in personal growth and development. | CONSCIENCE OF BECOMING THE SELF |
| Int 3: Woman, 20 years old, | - lost self/ confused self - unconscious sphere of being needs, desires, etc. | | The experiences and understanding a person has | POSITION TO SOCIAL |

| | | | | |
|--|--|---|---|---|
| Polish, high school degree or equivalent, Cognitive Science, student, employed, Single, Atheist | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - social pressure as a sources of inauthentic behaviour - subordinating own needs to other's expectations, requirements - need for social acceptance for authentic decisions - not taking a risk of self-development - altruism as a significant part of being | Self-creation in social-context | regarding how social context affects the formation of self. | CONTEXT |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - lack of stability, sense of security, and continuity in relations with significant others in childhood - self-isolation or/and difficulty in making relations with peers - low self-esteem - full subordination to expectations of significant others in childhood - vision of self as an escape from reality in childhood | Aspects conditioning self-creation in life story/span (czynniki warunkujące siebie w historii życia) | Significant conditions in a person's biography affecting self-creation within a social context. | SIGNIFICANT FACTORS OF SELF-DEVELOPMENT |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - hopelessness due to lack of awareness of self (what I really want) - hopelessness due to lack of authenticity (with inner location of control of actions) - feeling objectified due to lack of authenticity - being own self as a source of discomfort - taking masks as part of being - rationalization when not taking the risk of development - fear of being rejected when authentic - being split between being authentic and conformist - low motivation - low reliability - vision of authentic self as frustrating, impossible to achieve goal - describing herself with negative characteristics | Consequences of taken position in relation to authenticity | The way a person experiences and explains their own decisions and intellectual attitude towards authenticity. | FOUNDATION FOR AUTHENTIC SELF |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - awareness of subordinate towards society - resistance towards social influences - getting your own way – step to authenticity - vision of self as a way to achieve authenticity - the inner standard of being as a process of self-awareness started in childhood - COBS helping to find a way to herself | Gaining awareness of own being | The steps and ways that helped a person gain better awareness of their own being. | FOUNDATION FOR AUTHENTIC SELF |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - faith in the future - faith in the kindness of people - finances resource - independency - job as a source of stabilization - set goals: studies and job (though difficulty in deciding priorities) | Positive resources | The range of positive resources recognized by an individual throughout their entire life | STRATEGY AND PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT |

| | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|--------------------------------------|
| | + importance of material goods and leisure time | | | |
| Int 4: Woman, 23 years old, Polish, Bachelor's degree, Biomedical Engineering, student, employed, Single, non-practicing believer | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - being too well-organized and need to be spontaneous - acceptance of failures and fear of failures - being empathic and peaceful /submitting to public opinion | Contradiction tendencies | It appears when a person presents needs, desires, or plans that are, to some extent, contradictory. | QUALITY OF THE INTERVIEW |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - seeking freedom through socialization and being spontaneous - exceeding personality through socialization and being spontaneous - will to work hard and accept the difficulties of life - acceptance of own decisions - forming self through independent: observation, listening, reading, discussing and being open to ideas - the process of creating self as evolution - the process of creating self as achieving a higher level of self-development, simultaneously revealing a new sphere of abilities - satisfaction of being independent - seeing own potential in small things - will for constant development | Clarifying self | The ways, strategies, and behaviours a person pursues in life to learn more about themselves, along with their interpretations of these efforts. | STRATEGY AND PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - difficulties as impulses to progress (loss of friend->socialization, financial difficulties in the family - financial independence) - supportive family - gratefulness for parents - being helpful and useful to others as an important factor - possibility for development provided (she could learn and studying) | Interpretation of circumstances | An individual approach a person takes in interpreting significant circumstances. | POSITION TO SOCIAL CONTEXT |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - acceptance of own decision - rarely acting against oneself - when I think I am not what I could be – somatic sensations (hot, stomach sensations) - lack of authenticity: sense of smothering (poczucie zdławienia) - vision of self as constantly present, chosen goal to achieve through the chosen path to this goal - inner standard of being – way to achieve goal: high- closer to goal, low: further to goal - COBS – taking care to stick to the chosen path of development - Disturbances of the chosen developmental path: somatic sensation - being self as a source of comfort is accepting self | Protecting self/own being | Psychological strategies employed to ensure the process of creating one's being is smooth and guided. | FOUNDATION FOR AUTHENTIC SELF |
| Int 5: Woman, 24 years old, | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - no recognition of concrete stages of development - unidentified aspects of development: costs, achievements, crucial circumstances | Unclear picture of the process of | Responses that indicate a lack of coherent, developed, and enriching | QUALITY OF THE INTERVIEW |

| | | | | |
|--|---|---|--|--------------------------------------|
| Polish, Bachelor's degree, student, Second- Generation Humanities, specialization in Digital Human, non- practicing believer, Christian | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - low awareness of self while making decisions in the past - unreflective decision making - no awareness of a coherent story of own progress - taken actions not related to "self," "I" - a sense of drifting through stages of development - difficulty in recalling the process of own development - focus on results (who am I, what goals I could have achieved) rather than on the actual process | creating self | narrative about the decision-making process regarding self-growth in life. | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - negative evaluation of life - dissatisfaction with the present way of being - wanting of <i>different</i> being - the necessity of permission to be authentic - authenticity as comfort when accepted - lack of authenticity source of instability - the feeling of inconsistency - small contact with self - inconsistency with what she could become: remorse, shame, insecurity, wanting to run away | Troubled authenticity | A situation where a person, when reflecting on authenticity, expresses difficulties and discomfort related to this subject. | FOUNDATION FOR AUTHENTIC SELF |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - blockades - difficulty in recalling the process of own development - strong memory of not achieved goals, but no recollections of aspects of creating self - strong focus result, not on an actual process - vision of self-giving incompatible emotions: happiness, sadness, excitement | Inconsistencies in the story of development | The responses indicate inconsistencies or poor memory regarding the individual's self-development. | QUALITY OF THE INTERVIEW |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - drifting through stages of development, no sense of control - values from parents -unreflective behaviour - taken actions not related to "self," "I" - feeling less authentic in a social context | Low sense of control | The individual's narrative reveals a lack of concrete guidance or connection to personal decisions, with a stronger emphasis on the impact of social and external circumstances. | STRATEGY AND PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - COBS: recognition of what is good or bad for us - inner standard of being influencing who we become: deciding what action to undertake - manifestations of COBS: intuition, regrets, | Idea of controlling and recognition as a function of development | Controlling one's actions and recognizing personal growth and goals as integral to the developmental process. | CONSCIENCE OF BECOMING THE SELF |

| | | | | |
|---|--|---|--|--------------------------------------|
| Int 6: Men, 24 years old, Polish, master's degree, criminology, unemployed, single, atheist | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - problematic authenticity - problematic singularity - fear of being rejected - alienation in social context - fight in social relations - strong inner motivation - development through learning and curiosity - acceptance of life the way it is - achieving self-confidence - achieving a wider worldview | Self vs. Society | The way the independent self emerges from the social context and how a person experiences this process. | FOUNDATION FOR AUTHENTIC SELF |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - actions always consistent with personality - actions result from conscious and unconscious process - no possibility of inconsistency | Extent of consistency | The extent of consistency in a person's behaviour. | STRATEGY AND PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - conscience only as traditional morality - no reflection on the inner standard of being | The traditional understanding of the terms | A tendency to use traditional, well-known ways to reflect on new developmental concepts, such as inner standard of being or conscience, or a lack of any reflection on these subjects. | QUALITY OF THE INTERVIEW |
| Int 7: Man, 23 years old, Bachelor's degree, oceanography, student, single, non-practicing believer, catholic | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a sense of fighting for own life - strong inner motivation - achieving goals despite lack of approval - difficulty in controlling aggression - leadership skills - suicide attempt as the impulse to fight for life - suicide attempt as the impulse to re-evaluate values, perspective - learning from mistakes - lack of social support as the impulse to be independent | Will for power | A strong attitude allows for the transformation of difficulties and life disadvantages into a powerful motivator for better development. | STRATEGY AND PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - low faith in his abilities from family - no family support - resignation from no progressive relations - negative attitude toward people | Social support evaluation | The way a person assesses social relations and their impacts. | POSTION TO SOCIAL CONTEXT |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - acceptance of life situation - rejection of values given by parents - flexible authenticity in order to feel comfort - inner standard of being as a motivator for progress - achieving satisfaction, new friends, other paths of development | Steps to development | The essential steps a person describes as having gone through in their self-development. | STRATEGY AND PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT |

| | | | | |
|--|---|--|---|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - inconsistency with what I am and could be – the impulse to change | | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - moral conscience only - not answering questions - no reflection of undeveloped potential - possible blockades | Unclear message | Answers to some questions are not provided or possibly intentionally omitted. | QUALITY OF THE INTERVIEW |
| Int 8: Woman, 25 years old, Polish, master's degree, Germanic Philology, employed, single, atheist | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - identifying dreams as a major self-creating aspect - dreams as a major progress influencer - creating self through dreams - goals formed into dreams - dreams frequently appeared in narration - forming worldview and priorities through achieving dreams and goals - creating goals with ease | Self-fulfillment through dreams and goals | Dreams and goals identified by a person serve as key drivers and essential guides in pursuing self-fulfillment. | STRATEGY AND PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - curiosity - stubbornness - dreams - goals - discovered passion: music - consequence - always being authentic - vision of self (vision of self and goal to achieve) present when making decisions | Progress pushers | Elements identified throughout the life span that serve as motivating forces driving a person's self-growth. | SIGNIFICANT FACTOR OF SELF-DEVELOPMENT |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - frequent thinking about own achievements and dreams - excitement as emotional input before achieving goals - happiness after achieving goals - taking independent decisions | Positive regulation | Engaging in positive strategies while pursuing set, desired objectives. | STRATEGY AND PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - reflections about unachieved dreams - little anger when not getting to the goal - fear of unachieved goals having a bad influence on the present - acceptance of past failures - lack of authenticity ->feeling down (przygnębenie) - experience of COBS | Experiencing progress failures | Being cautious and highly vigilant about unachieved yet desired objectives, the lack of which is experienced mostly negatively. | CONSCIENCE OF BECOMING THE SELF |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - vision of self: formed vision of self and of goal which wants to be achieved - the inner standard of being guidelines thanks to which we become ourselves - COSB: inner assessment and self-judgment of what we have become - COBS: feeling guilty when we don't do something for own development | Guidance in development | The inner mental processes, both positive and negative, aimed at maximizing the possibility of achieving self-growth goals. | CONSCIENCE OF BECOMING THE SELF |

| | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--------------------------------------|
| | Need to be more open to people | | | |
| Int 9: Woman, 20 years old, Polish, high school degree or equivalent, student, employed, single, practicing believer, catholic | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a source of fear (before the situation) - a source of (if successful) pride, happiness, and satisfaction - lack of authenticity -> feeling of insecurity, feeling of misunderstanding, feeling remorse because (sort of) cheating “other” - frequent reflections on inconsistent with self-decisions - vision of the self-taking form of inner dialogs (You are “this”, so you should do “that”) - standard of being – what I want, what is my goal | Troubled authenticity | A person is highly aware of their own position in relation to authenticity and inauthenticity while making decisions or engaging in behaviours. Accordingly, their experience of these situations can range from positive to negative. | FOUNDATION FOR AUTHENTIC SELF |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - difficulty in expressing feelings - need to accept own traits (not to suppress or hide them) | ambiguous acceptance | The person does not fully accept their own characteristics and personality. | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - missed opportunities source of negative emotions: sadness, despair, lack of motivation to do anything - remembering missed opportunities when having a very bad day - lack of authenticity -> feeling of insecurity, feeling of misunderstanding, feeling remorse because (sort of) cheating “other” - reflection about inconsistent with self decisions source of destructive emotions, which motivates to find solutions for better behaviour - inconsistency with what I should be and what I am, a source of fear and motivation, resignation | Negative, positive circulation | Emotional reactions to unsatisfying decisions and actions concerning self-growth and authenticity can range from motivating to lowering the mood. | POSITION TO EMOTIONS |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - assertiveness - the importance of own moral code - behaving according to own priorities and reason - vision of self, appearing when involved in ideological confrontations (saying own mind in unpreferable circumstances) | Taking a position in a social context | The character traits and behaviours that emerge when a person asserts themselves in a social context. | POSITION TO SOCIAL CONTEXT |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - developing a strong character - shaping patience, persistence, consideration - recognition of own goals - shaping priorities through acceptance, analysis, and reacceptance and rejection of values given by parents - importance of assertiveness, behaving according to own moral code - key circumstances concern social context (family problems, removal when she was in kinder garden, also studies, work) - fighting with neurosis | Sculpturing character | Moments, situations, and personal behaviours in life, perceived by the individual as playing a significant role in shaping their character. | STRATEGY AND PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT |

| | | | | |
|---|--|---|---|--------------------------------------|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - providing judgment of people and guidance of life - COBS, manifest itself through thoughts, physiological reactions | Regulation of self-development | This involves using self-awareness and internal standards to guide personal growth and decision-making. It manifests through evaluating one's actions and experiences, often involving judgments and physiological responses, to ensure alignment with personal values and goals. | CONSCIENCE OF BECOMING THE SELF |
| Int 10: Men 28 years old, Polish, master's degree, Biology, Employed, single, atheist, associates Buddhist approach | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - independency of thought - independency from social norms - criticism towards the world (krytycyzm) - huge cognitive effort in own progress (meditation, reflection, listening, observation) - the importance of meditation - the importance of "reason"(mind) - acceptance of having an unfavorable social image (dziwak) - separating oneself from reality in order to develop - liberal family | Cognitive and social independence | Developing personal independence through self-reflection, mental work, and establishing a clear stance within the social-cultural context, seen as essential for the individual. | POSITION TO SOCIAL CONTEXT |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - overloading of cognitive, lack of practise - low engagement - low conscientiousness - lack of regularity | Lack of pragmatism | A daily functioning strategy that prioritizes cognitive processes, such as thinking, over practical, well-established actions that a person regularly engages in. | STRATEGY AND PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - everyday reflection about unrealized dreams and plans - negative emotional reaction when thinking about unrealized dreams and plans (torment, despair, feeling of lost time, discouragement, lack of motivation for work, frustration, little self-hatred) - missed opportunities delayed self-development | Attitude toward unfulfilled potentialities | The stance a person takes regarding unfulfilled potential, often expressed through negative emotional states and thoughts that are triggered when recalling specific events related to the subject. | CONSCIENCE OF BECOMING THE SELF |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - need for personal transgression - being self as a natural part (flow) of life (naturalny nurt życia) | | The process through which an individual gains self- | FOUNDATION FOR AUTHENTIC |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - gaining self-awareness and insight into a way of development - discovering passion and love - forming priorities through observation and analysis - the importance of strong motivation and will to change in the process of creating self - being inauthentic gives a feeling of being limited and “muted’ (zamulony) - being inauthentic gives somatic symptoms: stomach ache, problems with breathing, chest tightness - vision of self experienced multiple times but randomly and unconsciously | Self and authenticity | knowledge and self-awareness, forming a mental image of themselves. This image then serves as a reference point for distinguishing between authenticity and inauthenticity in their life. This distinction can manifest through emotional responses and somatic symptoms. | SELF |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - as God, executioner - expressed as standard and creation of our life | Executive role of COBS | The function of conscience as a guiding and regulatory force, that helps execute process of self-development and personal growth. | CONSCIENCE OF BECOMING THE SELF |
| Int 11: Woman, 19 years old, Polish, high school degree or equivalent, student, employed, single, atheist | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - building values through experiences of different social groups (family-understanding of money only as a tool in life; friends – openness, living fully, benefiting from culture; herself - sticking to own rules) - change of environment interpreted as stimulation - luck and fortune as crucial circumstances | Practical usage of social context/ Stimulating function of social group changes | The ability to productively adjust and effectively utilize the social context and available resources for self-growth and stimulation. This enables an individual to derive benefits from both positive and negative circumstances within their social environment. | POSITION TO SOCIAL CONTEXT |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - being limited by the fact of no financial independence (young age) - being self -> understood as living according to own rules - being self as a source of comfort - fighting for own worldview as substantial for personality - lack of authenticity brings anger and rationalization (you cannot be 100% yourself always) | Importance of independence and worldview | The significance of material independence and the expression of one's worldview, identified as crucial foundations for reflecting on the self and authenticity. | FOUNDATION FOR AUTHENTIC SELF |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - solid and successful pursuit of goal - a strong push towards the goal - stubbornness as a characteristic helpful to pursuing the goals | | The qualities exhibited by an individual throughout life, indicating persistence, | STRATEGY AND PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - luck and fortune as crucial circumstances - ability to sacrifice for action/ being ready for sacrifices (in the past, sacrifice of time, social life) - easy in taking risks (in progress matter) - satisfaction with what was accomplished - strong need for trying new things, getting new experience - becoming self through extremes and analysis - often thoughts about unrealized plans but also thought that she has time to do them - the inner standard of being defined as the pace of the psyche evolution - vision of self, experienced as a successful realization of the chosen idea - COBS described as an inner motivator | Progressive factors of character and circumstances | a willingness to take risks, focused actions, and favourable circumstances that drive and support self-progress. | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ambiguous evaluation of herself - discomfort in social relations - difficulty in emotion control - sometimes acting not consistently with her personality: a little anger, aversion to be limited by other people - inconsistency between who she is and ought to give her frustration (appears when she agrees to unfounded compromises) | Difficulties | A combination of external circumstances and personal characteristics that an individual perceives as challenging or obstructive. | SIGNIFICANT FACTORS OF SELF-DEVELOPMENT |
| Int 12: Woman, 20 years old. Polish, high school degree or equivalent, student, in informal relationship, practicing believer, own religious, own religious beliefs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the constant pursuit of being the true self - being self as a constant state, being not self as effortful acting - being self as a source of comfort - getting self-awareness during therapy - getting self-awareness through fighting with social phobia - fighting with social phobia as something adequate for personality - the process of becoming the self, experienced as searching - often thought about 'who am I?' - experienced a lack of self-knowledge concerning the subject of true self - impulsive acting recognized as inconsistent behaviour (with who she ought to be) - vision of self, most often appears during therapy sessions and night reflections - vision of self, experienced as pleasant when appear, giving sense of goal | Discovering the state of being self | The way a person has experienced their true self and the significant circumstances they recall as part of the process of recognizing it, including both positive and negative experiences. | BASIC NEEDS |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - emotional instability - low self-confidence - wanting to improve social skills - suspicion of borderline - social phobia - recognition, and realization of psychological problems and pursuing | Psychological problems | Areas of psychological functioning identified by an individual as needing improvement and, in some cases, requiring treatment. | BASIC NEEDS |

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| | <p>treatment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - creativity and empathy as most valuable self-characteristics - forming priorities mainly through the inner cognitive process: inner dialogs, gaining knowledge, reflection - the strong will to fight with flaws of own character - gaining self-awareness and self-knowledge through therapy (fight with psychological problems) - rarely thought about unrealized plans: small sadness, acceptance of the situation - the role of COBS is recognized as guiding us to a chosen goal/path(to what we were aiming for) manifesting with inner dialogs - often experienced COBS | Characteristic of progress | A set of traits, behaviours, and circumstances recognized by an individual as significant and valuable for their personal development and self-improvement. | STRATEGY AND PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT |
| Int 13: Woman, 19 years old, Polish, high school degree or equivalent, student, single, practicing believer, Christian | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - laconic answers - low precision of answers - some questions left without answers (que. 9. vision of self questions) - the uncertainty of answers - no consistent overall picture of the interview (inconsistencies in answers) | Insufficient quality of answers | The answers lacked precision and failed to convey a clear message, with some questions left unanswered. These issues made it difficult to experience the interview as consistent and integrated. | QUALITY OF THE INTERVIEW |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - recognized no changes to become more self - no reflection about inconsistent for personality decisions - no 'vision of self' experiences - no memories of significant for personality achievements - rarely thoughts about unachieved plans | Spheres concerning low reflection or being withheld | Areas of reflection where a person provides limited answers, indicating minimal contemplation or reluctance to discuss these subjects. | BASIC NEEDS |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - need to improve social relationships (experienced as recently neglected) - choice of studies as a crucial impulse for the development - declared positive self-view - crucial characteristics: ambitious, talented, neutral - sacrifices of sleeping time and neglecting relationships to achieve progress - forming priorities based on one person's observation (one role model?) - crucial circumstances are recognized around social relations and age of majority - notable social impact recognized as negatively influential | Ways and importance of development | Strategies, behaviours, self-characteristics, circumstances, and significant objectives identified by an individual as essential for shaping their path of self-development, along with their personal perceptions of these elements. | STRATEGY AND PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - being self as inner harmony, giving a source of comfort - being self as being resistant to social pressure - the process of becoming the self through experiences (unclear) | | The perception and interpretation of experiences related to one's | FOUNDATION FOR AUTHENTIC SELF |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - thinking about what could have been when thinking about unachieved plans - thoughts that unachieved plans might change her life - lack of authenticity brings negative emotions (I feel bad) - inconsistency between who she is and ought to be brings feelings of self-objectifying and feeling of a low sense of control - inconsistency between who she is and ought to be appears when submitting to social pressure - COBS role is defined as creating the path of personality and making decisions manifesting through inner voice (she experienced) - the inner standard of being – defined as a fight between who you are and what people expect from us | Sensing the self and the right path of development// | inner sense of authenticity and the perceived rightful path of growth. | |
| Int 14: Men, 19 years old, Polish, high school degree or equivalent, student, geography, Informal relationship, practicing believer, “practising” understood as looking for own path and own community | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - creativity as a major characteristic - creativity as a means of expressing self - own artistic exhibitions recognized as significant achievements - own artistic exhibitions as visualization of important for him issues - own artistic exhibitions as a means of expressing and presenting self - the process of artistic creation as a source of pleasure before, during, and after - aimed development in art: artistic high school | Experiencing self through art and creativity | Artistic activities that stimulate personal creativity as a means to deeply experience and understand the self | STRATEGY AND PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - being inauthentic brings a very bad emotional state - the process of becoming self, involving mostly inner, cognitive work: intensive reflection, juggling (kombinowanie)? - being self as a source of comfort, but a way to be self is very difficult - often thoughts about inconsistent to own personality decisions, which brings feeling subdued (przygaszony), experienced as being “excluded from life” - feeling inconsistent about who am I and ought to be, appears in difficult situations and also randomly in some cases | Masking unmasking the true self | The mental and cognitive work a person recognizes as significant in the process of shaping who they are today, along with an inner sensitivity to any signs of deviation from acting in alignment with their personality and self. | BASIC NEEDS |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - actual psychiatric problems bring difficulty generally in functioning and in being self - psychotherapy and pharmacotherapy are recognized as needed to feel more self - psychiatric problems(fear) recognized as mask which cover the true self - being authentic as difficulty, while being tense (emotional problems, stress) (kiedy w człowieku jest takie spięcie) | reducing psychiatric problems as bringing closer to true self | Recognizing current psychiatric challenges as struggles to overcome in order to unchain the connection with the self, allowing for freer self-experience. | |
| | Inner <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - feeling overwhelmed by emotions and own sensitivity - psychiatric problems as serious cost of development - psychiatric problems bringing difficulty in normal functioning and in | Experienced | Problems a person faces stem from internal sources such as emotional functioning, psychiatric | POSITION TO EMOTIONS |

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| | creating functional relationships - experiencing stress Social - experienced difficulties in family relations and crazy friends (szaleni znajomi, pejoratywnie?) | difficulties | challenges, and identified struggles in social relationships. | |
| | - crucial circumstances of development concerning external factors such as relations with others; environmental of leaving - experience and knowledge as profit of development - psychiatric problem as one which should have been taken care of earlier - intensive way of experiencing - inner and social difficulties - rarely thinking about own achievements - motivation for achievements (mostly artistic): need to express self - often thought about lost developmental chances (which could have changed who he is now), brings: fear, panic (possibly connected with anxiety disorders), sadness, remorse - vision of self as a positive motivator - the inner standard of being defined as need to pursue towards chosen ideal - COSB's role is judging behaviour or attitude towards some issues. Manifested in fear, sadness, stress (emotional reaction), remorse | Regulation of the process of becoming the self | A framework of positive and negative multidimensional aspects that a person identifies as influential in integrating the self and guiding personal development. | STRATEGY AND PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT |
| Int 15: Woman, 34 years old, Polish, Doctorate, Polish Philology, History of Art, Film Studies, employed, Married, practicing believer, Christian | Inner - shyness - lack of assertiveness - mental disorders (also making it difficult to create relationships) - low belief in own abilities in the past - low self-confidence Outwards - difficulty in creating relationships - criticism from others - toxic relationship in the past | Inner and outwards difficulties in becoming self | A set of psychological traits and social conditions recognized by a person as obstacles in the process of self-discovery. | SIGNIFICANT FACTORS OF SELF-DEVELOPMENT |
| | - creating self through social roles: e.g. motherhood - vision of self: self-confirmation in decisions requiring leaving the comfort zone, but essential for development - vision of self-giving inner peace - still unclear picture of self (no reference point while making decisions) - strong determination in action (will to fight for herself) - changes in priorities concern the highest values (social): friendship->love>motherhood | System of the action | A framework that integrates a person's motivations, priorities, reflections, and self-creation through social roles, guiding decision-making and self-development, and pursuing self-confirmation by | CONSCIENCE OF BECOMING THE SELF |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - often (a few times a month) reflection about missed opportunities: remorse, strong will to turn back time - acceptance of the inevitability of difficult periods in life/ fatalistic attitude - inconsistency between who she is and ought to appear in situations of denying chances, emotional vegetation: irritation, rumination - the inner standard of being: leaving comfort zone in order to of self-development; - COBS: guardian informing when we become bad person, she experienced it when fighting for herself | | stepping out of the comfort zone. | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - mental disorders (personality disorders) - being self as a source of comfort if a healthy personality - no point of references, no clear self, therefore difficulty in making decisions consistent with personality - often inconsistent (probably impulsive) with own personality actions - rare reflection about inconsistent with own personality decisions: feeling bad, feeling deprived of own selfhood | Health vs. unhealthy personality/ troubling unidentified self I pod kategoria | The fundamental role of psychological health in forming a functional personality and self, both serving as anchors for making consistent decisions. | BASIC NEEDS | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - pursuing through the creative process, making dreams come true - supporting relationships: love, family | - aspect supporting the process of becoming the self Tu koniec | Recognized by a person, specific elements of one's character, such as creativity and the quality of social relationships, that make the process of becoming the self smooth and supported. | STRATEGY AND PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a broad sense of achievements - material stability and wealth - gaining inspiration | Achievements | The way a person understands and defines achievements, considering a wide range of life spheres and personal goals. | SIGNIFICANT FACTORS OF SELF-DEVELOPMENT | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - intelligence - artistic sensitivity - spirituality | - achievements of the personality | The traits and characteristics a person recognizes as accomplishments within their personality, which they take pride in. | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - family - husband - sister - children | - achievements of building a strong network of | Nurturing and sustaining meaningful connections with family members, including a spouse, siblings, and children, are | | |

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| | | relationships | recognized accomplishments that are seen as key achievements in a person's life. | |
| Int 16: Woman, 24 years old, Polish, Master's degree, Law, criminology, Employed, Single non-practicing believer | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - strong task orientation - the process of creating self: setting higher standards for oneself. (podwyższanie poprzeczki) - ability to sacrifice for a goal - key characteristics to pursue goal: ambition, self-confidence, self-determination - gaining social prestige as the main motivator - narrow interpretation of what self-development and achievements are: achieving goals in the area of education (self-realization through mastering abilities) - overcoming disease and being appreciated as a crucial impulse to build self-confidence, self-determination, and sense of self-worth, and awareness of what she wants from life | Will to Power | A strong task orientation and desire to set higher standards for oneself, fuelled by specific personality traits (e.g., ambition, self-confidence, self-determination), enabling an unwavering pursuit of chosen goals, regardless of difficulties. | STRATEGY AND PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - always feels and acts authentic - no reflection about inauthentic actions - authenticity source of comfort, acting consumes energy - always gains "the self" she wants to achieve | Stable authenticity | The experience of authenticity as consistently present in one's behaviour, serving as a source of comfort and driven by a clear vision of the self that a person aims to achieve.. | FOUNDATION FOR AUTHENTIC SELF |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - often experiencing and acting according to the vision of self, which helps to accomplish goals and to create new ones - the inner standard of being understood as though thanks to which things she wants to become reality - COBS: summarizing each stage of life and drawing conclusions / occurring through reflection about life/ she experienced it, it motivates her to reanalysis her actions | Characteristic of the process of creating self | An individual's personal framework of mental strategies, such as visualizing the desired self, setting goals, analyzing experiences, and drawing conclusions, that supports self-development. | FOUNDATION FOR AUTHENTIC SELF |
| | | Positive and negative regulation | Refers to two distinct yet simultaneous, approaches to regulating self-development—one positive and one negative. | FOUNDATION FOR AUTHENTIC SELF |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - often thought about achievement consistent with personality - learning from mistakes, acceptance of missed opportunities | Positive regulation: | Self-development approach characterized by adjustable | STRATEGY AND PATTERNS OF |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - getting experience from every moment of life - rarely thought about unrealized plans (appears when a bad day) | | strategies such as self-motivating reflection on achievements, productive analysis of mistakes and life experiences for self-improvement, and limiting potentially harmful focus on unrealized plans. This approach emphasizes constructive engagement with personal progress and experiences. | DEVELOPMENT |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -fear of failure - stress - high, overwhelming self-expectations (wymagania względem siebie) | negative: | Self-development approach that emphasizes negative experiences, activated both when a person faces the possibility of failure and when confronting overwhelming self-expectations. This approach often results in feelings of fear and stress. | STRATEGY AND PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT |
| Int 17: Woman, 22 years old, Polish, Bachelor's degree, Romance Philology, Student, Informal relationship, non-practicing believer, generally catholic | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - key characteristics concerning optimistic temperament, expressive character, being empathic - being concerned with aligning oneself with one's own temperament. - most important achievements concerning positive emotional state (happiness, carelessness, liberty) - seems to avoid negative feelings - positive or submissive attitude: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ->unrealized plans in life: learning from past mistakes, lessons for the future, no remorse, acceptance of the situation | Temperamental and emotional expression as crucial for self-identification | The way in which a person's inherent temperament and emotional responses are essential in shaping and recognizing their unique identity, serving as a foundational aspect of how they perceive themselves. | FOUNDATION FOR AUTHENTIC SELF |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - no reflection about significant achievements (no answer for question 5) - rarely reflection on unfinished plans - no reflection about inconsistent in personality decisions - no reflection on inconsistency between who she is and ought to be - doesn't understand the concept of vision of self - to feel more herself, she considers more superficial changes (body exercises, makeup) - sometimes, it seems questions were not fully understood or deeply | Lack of in-depth reflection on self-position: knowledge. | This may stem from two possible explanations. First, a person may have limited awareness of their position within the broader context of self-development or decision-making, making it difficult | QUALITY OF THE INTERVIEW |

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| | <p>considered</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - some answers in the interview are inconsistent | | <p>to grasp the meaning of certain questions. Second, the person may be reluctant to share a specific self.</p> | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - difficulty in public speaking among strangers - acceptance of self and the world (way of acting and biggest difficulty in the process of creating self) - fear of new things - forming priorities through a long analysis of what is most important - a schematic process of becoming the self until “reviling true self” in high school (change of environment) - an inner standard of being: values necessary that everyone should have to be base for later creating own personality | Dealing with life | <p>This refers to the process of managing personal challenges, such as public speaking and fear of the unknown, while developing self-acceptance and forming priorities. It involves a long, reflective analysis to establish core values, leading to a clearer understanding of one's true self, often marked by significant life changes like transitioning environments.</p> | STRATEGY AND PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - forming priorities through analysis but seems to be a very impulsive and temperamental person, not likely to have deep reflections (interview) - fear of new things, but the easiest thing in the process of being was a decision to change | Behaviour-self view discrepancies | <p>Reflections that reveal discrepancies between a person's described behaviours and their declared views on issues of self.</p> | QUALITY OF THE INTERVIEW |
| Int 18: Woman, 20 years old, Polish | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - unable to assess who she is - unable to present her priorities - unable to describe her personality - doesn't deeply understand the concept of personality, authenticity, self-development, vision of self, inner standard of being - superficial understanding of own being: answers questions about self very superficially (focusing on body image or current events) - frequently writes that she doesn't understand questions concerning herself, her authenticity, etc. - says she never reflects on her own development/progress | Insufficient foundation for qualitative Self-reflection | <p>The individual appears to have limited self-awareness and lacks regular, spontaneous reflection on self-development, which hinders their ability to address questions related to their personality, authenticity, and personal growth."</p> | FOUNDATION FOR AUTHENTIC SELF |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - negative evaluation of one's own body image - in the process of becoming the self describes depression and anxiety tendencies since primary school as crucial, during studies – relative psychological stabilization | | <p>A person's biography is marked by significant psychological difficulties, including depression,</p> | BASIC NEEDS |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - first suicidal attend in primary school - currently reports social anxiety and depression - describe her personality as suicidal personality, and act consistent with personality – suicide attempt - crucial circumstances of own development: depression, anxiety, social difficulties, negative body image | Complexes and depression as crucial for the process of becoming the self | anxiety, suicidal attempts, and body image issues. These experiences profoundly influence their reflections on self, shaping their understanding of identity and personal development. | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - vulnerability to social impact - strong dependency on other people in relationships quickly gets attached to people, focuses on opinions people may have about her - difficulties in social relations - difficult and complex relations with father: helped with buying flat but has a difficult character - the cost of becoming self: self-denial, renouncing own opinion, limiting relations with family - inconsistency between who she is and ought to be strongly connected with social relations: she feels regret and sadness that she failed somebody (often feels this way) | Social delicacy | A person feels fragile and dependent in social relationships, leading to a lack of confidence in their decisions. As a result, they do not feel safe to freely express themselves. | POSITION TO SOCIAL CONTEXT |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - positively assess own cognitive abilities: intellect, logical thinking, self-control - own flat as a source of safety and peace from father - supportive fiancé | Positive resources | A wide range of resources identified by a person as supportive, including material resources (e.g., housing, financial stability), personal attributes (e.g., personality traits), and social support (e.g., supportive relationships with others). | SIGNIFICANT FACTORS OF SELF-DEVELOPMENT |
| Int 19: Woman 24 years old, Polish | strong personality <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ambitious - perseverance (wytrwałość) - leadership skills - pragmatism - rationality - well-organized - independency no questioning authenticity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - short, direct answers about self or authenticity | Down-to-earth | A set of core attributes for effective leadership and self-management, combined with a consistent and undeniable sense of authenticity, which together foster a grounded and practical personality. | STRATEGY AND PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - always feels herself (no discussion about it) | | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - strong desire to progress, no fear of coming out of comfort zone - strong will for power - determination, self-denial, overcoming pain connected with disease symptoms, sacrificing free time in order to progress - motivator: doing her own way - vision of self as always present motivator, determining every decision made - lack of authenticity: feeling of self-disappointment - inconsistency between who she is and ought to be: feeling of lost time and energy perceived as her own weakness, appears when she acts as other people want - decisions inconsistencies with own personality: everyday reflection; feeling disappointed in own behaviour and feeling of subordination to others and acting to satisfy others, fear of repeating this situation | Keep moving forward in the process of becoming the self | Persistence and determination in advancing beyond the comfort zone despite difficulties, driven by a clear recognition of one's own self and strong psychological control to act in alignment with one's true self. | FOUNDATION FOR AUTHENTIC SELF |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - acceptance of limitations, fast growing up: in childhood disease of family members, diagnosis of own disease - key moment: discussion with doctor that she will never be able to be independent->rising fire of will to power - the necessity of self-dependence, the frustration of independence need, acceptance of giving up swimming career: growing up - self-development, independence, creating life goals: study - discovering leadership skills: Work experience - ending negative relationship: redefining own characteristics | Key moments of reconfiguration | Reflecting on one's own biography enables a person to identify crucial moments that acted as catalysts for self-awareness, motivation, and mindset shifts. | SIGNIFICANT FACTORS OF SELF-DEVELOPMENT |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - high expectations towards self - emotionally never fully satisfied with accomplishments (always everything could be done better) - overwhelming emotional tension of which she is aware of - rare reflections about significant achievement - very often (even everyday) reflection about unfinished plans and dreams - strong reflections about lost chances that could have changed who she is | The emphasized role of perfectionism in self-development | The role of high expectations and an enduring sense of dissatisfaction with one's accomplishments significantly influences self-development. This influence is marked by overwhelming emotional tension, a lack of acknowledgment of one's achievements, and a focus on unfinished plans and unfulfilled dreams, which can alter personal | SIGNIFICANT FACTORS OF SELF-DEVELOPMENT |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - priorities created by parents: high expectations, conditional love, pressure on her as a women - reflection about unrealized plans: feeling disappointment in herself and subordination towards others - strongly highlighted the importance of duty to help others - developmental reflections about inadequate progress strongly connected with social subordination - the inner standard of being: having ethical standards and following them, becoming a person who can bring something good to other people - COBS: importance of own decision on other people; own wealth should be obligate to help other people | Self and others | <p>development.</p> <p>The extent to which a person perceives their own self as shaped by social context and how the value of being socially useful influences decisions about self-development.</p> | POSITION TO SOCIAL CONTEXT |
| Int 20: Woman, 19 years old, Polish | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - vision of self – defined as a life goal - chosen at age 8 life goal presently seems very difficult to achieve (and painful and effortful in a process) - cannot change chosen path – it is hard to change whole life plan - inconsistency between who she is and ought to be – feels every day when studying - ought to be – is her life goal, becoming a teacher of mathematics - everyday thoughts of uncertainty concerning her life go - vision of self (teacher of mathematics?) brings anxiety - being at the crossroads between pursuing a chosen goal and giving it up and changing the goal | Life goal destabilization | A person initially sets a clear and consistent life goal at an early age, dedicating their entire life to it. However, they are now experiencing doubt and confusion, accompanied by anxiety, about whether to continue pursuing this goal or make a significant life change. | CONSCIENCE OF BECOMING THE SELF |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - naivety - difficulty in “reading” people’s intentions - no trust in people - being afraid people will take advantage of her (być wykorzystanym) - history of being used – workgroup in school, taking whole work | Problem in setting boundaries | A person faces difficulties in social relationships due to inadequate social skills, such as the inability to recognize others' intentions, leading to challenges in establishing and maintaining personal boundaries. | POSITION TO SOCIAL CONTEXT |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - crucial circumstance: friendship with teacher (authority) - creating priorities through conversations with her authority (teacher) - the importance of social prestige - key circumstances talk with boyfriend (who also was cheating on her) - the importance of time with family (adequate for personality was talking with the family to spend more time with them) | | Understanding and improving oneself through involvement in various social groups and the guidance of significant people (e.g., authorities), as | STRATEGY AND PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - through past experiences, she learned to be more independent from other people and be able to have fun by herself - “white-green family”: strong identification as fun of football club - being self as a source of comfort coz at the end, only right people stay around her - in the process of creating self, an important aspect was accepting “other person” - scouting as an environment important for the process of creating self: discovering the world, discovering herself; voluntary and student council (samorząd uczniowski) and first job also as important for the process of creating self - believes that who we become depends more on nurture than on our conscience. - most important characteristics concerning social relations: friendly, naivety, genuine | Importance of social relations | well as self-identification within these social groups (e.g., football team, family). | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - no changes to feel more self - being self as a source of comfort coz at the end, only right people stay around her - no decisions inconsistent with own personality, always behaves according to her conscience and who she is - always authentic - strong personality characteristics: self-confident, friendly, uncompromising, stubborn, good in event organization - describes COBS expressing itself through visions, nightmares, thoughts/ but she declares never to experience it - the inner standard of being defined as growing up | Declared self-stability | A person who expresses a strong sense of self and consistent behaviours aligned with it, alongside a dynamic personality, remains authentic and does not experience unpleasant thoughts or nightmares about neglected self-development. | FOUNDATION FOR AUTHENTIC SELF |
| Int 21: Woman, 23 years old, Polish | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - wants to improve self-confidence - need to reduce the experience of parental control to feel more self - consistent with personality decisions, pursuing own decisions: independence from parents - motivator: searching for freedom, expressing herself the way she wants - lack of authenticity experienced as playing in theater for someone, not for herself - inconsistency between who she is and ought to be when making decisions according to society's pressure - vision of self: perceived as the perfect version of self but not accepted by society | Need for autonomy | The issue of control is central to self-reflection and serves as a key motivation in life. One must act according to one's own desires and resist social pressure, which is experienced as a source of inauthentic, subordinated behaviour. | POSITION TO SOCIAL CONTEXT |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - taking challenges: solitude (loneliness) when moved from hometown to far away city study, fear of the possible unsuccessful result of own independence - pursuing own decisions even against parental disapproval - creating priorities through re-evaluation of values in action (awareness that things considered important are not important after all) - the process of creating self experienced as <i>discovering</i> “me” through being different people | Self-knowledge through experiences | The importance of actions taken while maintaining autonomy is emphasized as a crucial means of self-discovery. This process allows for the re-evaluation of external points of reference, such as values inherited from parents. | FOUNDATION FOR AUTHENTIC SELF |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - reflections about unrealized plans bring feelings of resentment - reflections about unrealized plans bring rancor towards parents for lack of guidance in her progress - unrealized plans definitely would change who she is - often reflect on inconsistent personality decisions - when thinking about inconsistent with personality decisions, she feels regret to herself that her decisions could have changed a lot in her life and decrease pain - defining the role of COBS as guiding person’s compass in order to become the best version of ourselves; it would be expressed through certainty in making own decisions, she did experience it - often reminds herself of situations consistent with personality decisions | Inner compass | A person demonstrates strong self-guidance through frequent introspection on unrealized plans and inconsistent or inauthentic behavior, accompanied by emotional reactions such as resentment and rancor towards parents for perceived lack of support. This self-guidance involves adhering to a positive mental image of the desired, best version of oneself and is supported by regular reflection on decisions that align with one’s personality. | CONSCIENCE OF BECOMING THE SELF |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - in social relations: shyness, thoughtfulness, unconditional kindness to others (even though there might be no repayment) - easy to make new relations - inner standard of being: standard which helps to fit in, to become a certain type of person, which is flat (nijaki), extremely mediocre, type of person that doesn’t exist - key circumstances concerning changes in the social environment: secondary school with friends with kindergarten, hated boarding school, moving to a different city to study, breaking toxic relations - being self as a source of comfort, which improves relations with others - importance of friends support | Being among others | This theme comprises three components: how a person presents themselves in social relations based on their characteristics, the social circumstances they identify as crucial for self-development, and how they perceive and experience themselves within these social interactions. | POSITION TO SOCIAL CONTEXT |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - optimism - a sense of humour | Positive attitude | The qualities of a person that build a positive attitude. | POSITION TO EMOTIONS |
| Int 22: Woman, 25 age years old, Polish | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - difficult childhood experiences and memories -> bad impact on self-progress in the present and the past - gaining feeling of safety, and self-respect -> change of toxic environment (necessary to move out at age 18, pathological mother) - development of artistic talents: gaining self-confidence, the feeling of belonging, the feeling of being accepted, development, gaining psychological knowledge - developmental decisions aimed at improving artistic talent | Neglected and Fulfilled Needs Over Time: | This theme explores the transition from a troubled childhood, where personal needs were neglected, to a later stage, where improvements in the environment foster a sense of fulfilment, confidence, and acceptance. These factors are crucial for self-development, which is closely linked to enhancing artistic talent. | BASIC NEEDS |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - creativity - openness for experience: new people, new places, new hobbies - artistic talent - easiness in meeting new people - desire for travels - passions - vision of self- the one she wants to be: concerning mostly herself as a traveller | Aspects fuelling self-development | Identified by a person as factors that have been instrumental in their growth and progress. These aspects include personal attributes, self-assigned goals and values, and visions of self, all of which support and drive the individual's journey toward self-improvement and achievement. | SIGNIFICANT FACTORS OF SELF-DEVELOPMENT |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - self-sacrifices to reach the goal: artistic high school (waking up early, more work); moving out (being independent, resigning from an artistic school, working at age 18, sacrificing friends and material stability) - overcoming difficulties: fear of losing financial stability, fear of being left by a partner - forming priorities through reflection - the process of becoming the self: childhood: the authority of elder siblings, creative upbringing/ adulthood: being brave, dealing with growing up things, artistic interests - to feel more herself- constant work on development | Effort in the process of creating self/ things to work on | The commitment to personal development involves making significant sacrifices to overcome difficulties, enabling one to pursue goals such as enhancing talent or achieving autonomy. This process includes forming priorities through reflection and navigating both | FOUNDATION FOR AUTHENTIC SELF |

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| | | | childhood influences and adulthood challenges. Continuous self-work and development are recognized as crucial for aligning more closely with one's true self. | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - wish to have more distance from herself - lack of authenticity: feeling of greyness, blandness, as if she should create appearances for other people - being self as comfortable if society is tolerant - COBS- helping recognize if the way to reach our goal doesn't hurt anyone | Being in a social context | This theme explores the stands a person takes within social relations, along with their subsequent experiences and reflections. It assesses the role of society in shaping a person's perception, highlighting how society can be supportive if it is tolerant or limiting if it imposes specific behaviours on the individual. Additionally, it emphasizes the importance of ensuring that pursuing personal goals does not harm others, reflecting a commitment to ethical and considerate behaviour in achieving one's objectives. | CONSCIENCE OF BECOMING THE SELF |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - adequate decisions for personality: choosing an artistic school, often thinks about it, - motivator: need to develop artistically, believe in own potential | Potential development | Recognized by a person a significant area of growth or capability that a person is eager to cultivate, reflecting a strong desire to develop and enhance own skills or attributes. | CONSCIENCE OF BECOMING THE SELF |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - unfulfilled plans reflection: modified by mood: bad->often thinks, good-rarely / symptoms: conscience remorse, feeling of low self-value, difficult to say how it could have changed her - decision inconsistent with personality -> regulated by mood | Mood modification | The significant influence of emotions that accompany reflections on failures in self-development. | CONSCIENCE OF BECOMING THE SELF |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - difficulty in answering questions about feeling inconsistent with who she is and ought to be - no reflection on the inner standard of being | Blockade | Occurs when a person responds inconsistently or selectively to questions, providing detailed answers in some areas while offering limited responses in others, indicating unintentional omission of certain reflective areas.. | CONSCIENCE OF BECOMING THE SELF |
| Int 23: Woman, 24 years old, Polish | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> limited understanding of some questions or blockade limited answers for some questions: the issue of weight, the central issue to make sense of some questions (how you got to this point of life understand as reaching proper weight. | Quality of developmental reflection | The manner in which a person answers questions indicates that their understanding of development and self-awareness is underdeveloped and may be subordinated to a singular, troubling issue, such as weight. | QUALITY OF THE INTERVIEW |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> vision of self-reflection that appears while thinking about future decisions inner standard of being: creating own person COBS- educational function, manifested through negative emotions Rare thought about good and bad developmental decisions: rarely thoughts about adequate for personality decisions, motivator: partner, studies, desire to live in a new place rarely thoughts about unrealized plans, tries to not think about it / little remorse, sadness, wouldn't change anything no inadequate with personality decisions or lack of authenticity | Developmental regulation | The lack of negative reflection on poor self-development decisions and the ability to visualize the future self while making decisions. | CONSCIENCE OF BECOMING THE SELF |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> priorities taken/learned from parents process of creating self-importance of correct relations with parents important circumstance and achievement: leaving parents' house to live with partner | Parental influences | This theme encompasses the priorities and values learned from parents and highlights the importance of establishing healthy relationships with them in the process of self-creation. | POSITION TO SOCIAL CONTEXT |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> weight complex focus on self-appearance | | The set of personal attributes, including | BASIC NEEDS |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - expressive nature: likes fun, funny, likes new places) - well-organized - nervousness - being self as a source of comfort, true self shouldn't be self-blocked - cannot do anything more to feel more self - key circumstances as achievements: finishing school, getting to university, independent leaving | Self-description | character traits and physical appearances, along with key achievements described by the person, that are essential for understanding oneself and making decisions. It also encompasses a person's stance towards their true self, ensuring authenticity and comfort without obstruction. | |
| Int 24: Woman, 23 years old, Polish | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - accepting her introverted self - strongly identifying with her sensibility - feel always fully herself and authentic - being self as a source of comfort - always making decisions consistent with her personality - adequate for personality situation was being afraid about partner's health->she was ashamed of it (the only person yet who gave something negative in this question) | Gaining and remaining true self | Recognizing the qualities essential for oneself and nurturing them while accepting and embracing these traits provides a sense of comfort through self-awareness and consistency. | FOUNDATION FOR AUTHENTIC SELF |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - in the past, acting in order to be accepted by society (high school): playing party girl, likable girl-> discovering the need to be the true self - being helpful and taking care of other people as a crucial characteristic - forgetting about own needs - in the process of becoming the self, the importance of good relations with family and partner - difficult circumstances: death of a parent, humiliation (wyśmiewanie) by peers - learning that family is most important through a dramatic event (death of one parent when she was young) - inconsistency between who she is and who ought to brings her feeling of helplessness and sadness that social situation has overcome her, appears in situation of acceptance by important people | Remaining self in social context | The experience of oneself within a social context reveals how social expectations can restrict self-expression. This leads to increased self-awareness and a negative emotional response when a person struggles to remain consistent and true to oneself in behaviour and decisions. | POSITION TO SOCIAL CONTEXT |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - importance of own priorities and values: making decisions accordingly - forming priorities through experiences and various domains - need to overcome complexes and low self-esteem - safety and love from partner - reflection about unrealized plans comes when she has worse days, emotional reaction: feel sad that she has wasted so many occasions | Self-development-most important domains | This refers to the areas a person identifies as crucial for self-development. It includes domains that require improvement, such as self-esteem and | STRATEGY AND PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - vision of self: helps making decisions consistent with own values, reminds values we want to follow - vision of self appears before important decisions conflicting mind and heart - the inner standard of being the inner creation of authentic self through own experiences, thoughts, feelings | | <p>overcoming complexes, as well as the processes and contexts involved in formulating priorities and values. It also encompasses regulating emotions, particularly negative ones, in the face of self-development challenges. All these aspects are recognized as integral experiences, thoughts, and emotions that contribute to create an authentic self.</p> | |
| | - conscience should be expressed through reason, seems to be understood as normal conscience | Conscience as reason | A person understands conscience as being guided by rational thought and reasoned deliberation rather than purely emotional responses. | QUALITY OF THE INTERVIEW |
| Int 25: Men, 28 years old, Polish | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - difficulty in having regularity in life (meals, sleeping) - priority: being strong to be supportive for others - a process of creating self through achieving high goals - being tenacious and consequent in goal realization - regulating the feeling of being on the wrong path (self-awareness) and evoking rapid changes in one's behaviour in situations significant for personality. - reminds himself “the awareness moment” when having self-doubts, to self-motivate himself with good memories - motivations to act consistent with own personality: intuition, fear of leading an unhappy life - difficulty in being patient and countenance in the realization of own ideas - doesn't experience sacrifices: making things he likes (hobbies, dreams etc.) - making adequate for personality decisions are emotionally unsteady: feeling bad before, then proud, fear, sure, self-confidence, | <p>Self-regulation</p> <p>Steadfast self-regulation in personal development</p> | <p>Identifying specific behavioural, personality, and mental aspects that function as regulators for one's self-development.</p> <p>Demonstrates qualities such as consistency and tenacity in achieving goals and realizing ideas, driven by a high level of self-awareness. This intuitive awareness is often supported by accurate emotional responses, ensuring that decisions and behaviours remain consistent and supportive</p> | STRATEGY AND PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT |

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| | | | of others while striving for a fulfilling and happy life. | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - expressing self through auto presentation - the importance of social opinion - likes to be seen in the crowd - need for individuality - sociability - own career path ->starting own company - arrogance - being self as a source of comfort - being self is to express himself and using his own advantages in the presence of others - goals concerning social relations: being popular, being successful with women - inconsistency between who he is and ought to be, appears when he cannot express himself publicly; this feeling is experienced as very, very bad | Standing out | Self-presentation is recognized by a person as a crucial means of expressing oneself and maintaining well-being, with the pursuit of social popularity being essential. | POSITION TO SOCIAL CONTEXT |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - lazy genius - difficulty in choosing the most important circumstances - avoids thinking about unrealized plans - doesn't understand question about decisions inconsistent with personality (blockade?) - feel very bad the lack of authenticity in life - easiness in coding in programs - wish to be younger or to start studies earlier-> probably wish to be further in his life than he is now - vision of self as a natural, everyday experience - the inner standard of being: being person you are not ashamed to see in the mirror - COBS: would put a person back on the right track, would force us to by yourself at most/ expressing through "pain in ass" because of unused occasions, he thinks everyone had experienced it | Self-recognition | The extent to which a person identifies significant personal characteristics and critical circumstances in their self-development, and experiences the alignment between their current self and their authentic self, guided by their own self-development ideals. | SIGNIFICANT FACTORS OF SELF-DEVELOPMENT |
| Int 26: Woman, 20 years old, Polish | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - focus not on how to feel more self but how to be better self - often references to "perfect self" or "ideal self" - own values and hierarchy as key points of reference - low self-confidence - unstable self-esteem (high and low) - shyness - the ability to focus on a task: self-discipline, hard-working | | The focus on self-improvement is directed more towards achieving an ideal self that aligns with personal values and priorities, supported by attributes helpful in | STRATEGY AND PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - recognition of own assets: ambition, intellectuality, individuality, sensibility, introversion, - conditionally being self as a source of comfort when high self-esteem - significant for personality achievement: writing bachelor thesis for 5 but at cost of nerves and neurosis relapse - sometimes thinks about decisions inconsistent with own personality/ self-blaming that she wasn't faithful to herself/ tries to remember those moments to learn from mistakes - lack of authenticity-> feeling tired and unhappy because she is not doing what she wants - inconsistency between who she is and ought to be doing something consistent with her personality (conformist) but against own hierarchy of values - vision of self after situations when she should have behaved differently (to ideal self) - she doesn't need a vision of self to work on herself, she only needs her values - the inner standard of being – cannot be defined before she knows who she should become | Being better self | realizing tasks, rather than merely understanding and learning about the current self. This drive is fueled by unstable self-esteem and low self-confidence, which are seen by the person as necessary for attaining true authenticity. | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - shyness - being sensitive to other people's problems - being a conformist - being self-experienced as difficult in a new social environment - positive environment in childhood: loving and supportive parents, creative parenting, free for passion - difficulty in creating social relations since childhood (with peers and love interests) - significant for personality achievement: being helpful to two friends in need, but at the cost of own emotional exhaustion - sometimes thinks about unrealized plans, which are mostly concerned about making social connections (for sure, they would change who she is) - inconsistency between who she is and ought to be blaming herself, she should defend her opinion and help the weak, not submit herself | Being for others (In relation to others) | The role and impact a person has in social relations, which they recognize as significant in their decision-making and as essential characteristics of their self-concept | POSITION TO SOCIAL CONTEXT |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - own hierarchy of values - neurosis, emotionality and fear as often cost of development - important motivators in behaviour: ambition, kindness to other people and their problems - experienced as important earnings: social relationships, the satisfaction of own achievements, the possibility of a dream job | Key aspects (motivating own behaviour) for own being | Identified by a person, these pivotal aspects encompass elements from their biography, personality, social experiences, and personal | SIGNIFICANT FACTORS OF SELF-DEVELOPMENT |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - positive breeding, leaving with grandparent (shifting attention from her to grandparent) - self-esteem: effects comfort of being self, when low, she thinks about important for personality achievement to motivate herself - not often thinks about important for personality achievements (regulated by actual level of self-esteem) - COBS- function: self-motivating to work on herself and avoid mistakes, manifested through: thoughts about own mistakes, reflection about what has created us (what did she mean?), | | <p>achievements. They help clarify priorities in self-development, which is regulated by the current level of self-esteem and motivated by the desire to learn from mistakes.</p> | |
| <p>Int 27: Woman, 22 years old, Polish</p> | <p>Emotional instability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - depressive states - emotional lability - getting treatment: pharmacological and psychotherapy - significant for personality decision: starting psychological treatment , motivator: prevention from suffer and suicide (sometimes thinks) - need for higher emotional stability <p>Emotionality through social relations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -empathy - importance of well-being of other people - need to think more about other people than about herself <p>Emotional manifestation of COBS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - unrealized plans gives her feeling of loss, unfairness, jealousy / often have this reflections and feel she could have been happier now - decision inconsistent with personality: she feel as timid, being submissive with low self-confidence - lack of authenticity: feeling very bad | <p>Face of emotions</p> | <p>Refers to the presence and significance of emotions in a person's functioning and regulation. Emotional stability is perceived as a necessity and a conscious choice for well-being, especially in contrast to ongoing emotional difficulties. Emotions play a role in fostering a sense of social support for others and serve as a mechanism for regulating the experience of self and self-development. They can induce negative feelings when reflecting on inconsistent or inauthentic behaviours or on neglected and lost self-growth opportunities.</p> | <p>POSITION TO EMOTIONS</p> |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the courage to discover new places (journeys) and being in distant relationship - empathy and sensitivity for other people - emotionality source of sensitivity and also psychological problems - susceptibility to social influence - importance of well-being of other people | <p>Key personality aspects</p> | <p>Pivotal elements recognized by an individual that significantly contribute to their personality. These aspects can have both negative and positive dimensions and may</p> | <p>SIGNIFICANT FACTORS OF SELF-DEVELOPMENT</p> |

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| | | | manifest as attributes evident in social interactions or as personal traits used directly by the individual. They encompass one's worldview and priorities. | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - susceptibility to social influence - the importance of the well-being of other people - to feel more herself, she wants to care less about other people's opinions - decision inconsistent with personality: she feels timid, being submissive with low self-confidence - important social support: friends, partner, grandmother - good childhood - non-functional family: father with emotionality problems, verbal aggression, suppressing sexuality - to be self, she needs to go out of her comfort sphere - moving out for studies as important circumstance - important for personality decision: being in a distant relationship, motivator: need to be in a relationship, need for love, a sense of belonging, fear that no one will love her(thinks sometimes) | Social impact | The stances a person takes within a social context encompass how they experience being in social relations and the effects these relations have on their well-being and self-development. | POSITION TO SOCIAL CONTEXT |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the courage to travel and make difficult decisions - inconsistency between who she is and ought to be: feelings as if she is a bad person who tries to repress the truth / appears when she sees someone she would want to be - vision of self: feels self-fulfilment and a sense of purpose/ appears when she has stable self-esteem and empathy for others - the inner standard of being: expectations from herself - COBS: have an impact on self-esteem and on goals we choose/ manifests through feeling regret, undoing something - priorities created through upbringing, relation with grandmother, friendships | Self-growth | Self-growth involves developing courage to face challenges and make pivotal decisions while managing feelings of inconsistency between one's current self and ideal self. It includes nurturing a vision of self-fulfilment, guided by personal standards and shaped by upbringing and key relationships. This process impacts self-esteem and goal-setting, often manifesting through regret or adjustments in actions. | CONSCIENCE OF BECOMING THE SELF |

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| <p>Int 28: Woman, 30 years old, Polish</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - shyness - withdrawn - secrecy - to be more self she wishes to be more fabulous and not stressed by social conversations - inconsistency between who she is and ought to be, appear in social situations/ inability to casually converse - importance of appearance: doesn't want to appear as an aloof person - difficulty in self-presentation - vision of self appears when she is open in a company after alcohol, it gives her a feeling of relief and a liberating feeling | <p>Social awkwardness</p> | <p>Characteristics recognized by a person that contribute to an overall picture of difficulty in engaging smoothly and appropriately in social relations while behaving freely as oneself. The desire to overcome this state is closely linked to the feeling of liberation.</p> | <p>POSITION TO SOCIAL CONTEXT</p> |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - empathy - sensitivity - good-natured - the importance of being kind to others - significant for personality decisions: she doesn't listen to anyone, motivator: inner needs, beliefs and will to help others - costs: broken heart twice-> key circumstances, difficult love relationships - finding a supportive relationship | <p>Caring for others</p> | <p>Self-qualities and personal development are oriented toward being caring and helpful to others, even though a person acknowledges the costs associated with this attitude.</p> | <p>POSITION TO SOCIAL CONTEXT</p> |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - being self as a source of comfort, however, she feels not understood because of her introversion - experienced the costs of being an emotional person - fighting for herself and overcoming emotional crises - unrealized plans: quit often reflection, explains that some plans would be to psychologically overwhelming for her emotional personality/ it would change - inconsistent with personality decisions: often reflects, gives her frustration, lack of assertiveness - lack authenticity: feeling bad | <p>Emotional introvert self</p> | <p>A person recognizes that being emotional and introverted are key aspects of their personality that influence their behaviour and self-development. However, these traits may lead to a person feeling misunderstood by others or experiencing psychological burdens.</p> | <p>POSITION TO EMOTIONS</p> |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - determined: in important cases, doesn't listen to anyone - being formed by difficult circumstances - COBS: would keep a person in "line" (w ryzach), manifestations: a person has a need to be "someone", but not at all costs - the inner standard of being: possessing some characteristic but in some range (w pewnych wielkach) - in significant for personality decisions: she doesn't listen to anyone, motivator: inner needs, beliefs and will to help others - acceptance of own reality (wouldn't change anything) ? | <p>Self-guidance in spite of all:</p> | <p>A person demonstrates a self-guided, autonomous, and determined attitude in situations and decisions deemed crucial while also showing an acceptance of reality when no further action is possible. A person acknowledges that</p> | <p>STRATEGY AND PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT</p> |

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| | - building priorities based on catholic values, but she doesn't practise (nie praktykująca) | | confronting challenging circumstances was significant for self-development. | |
| Int 29: Woman, 25 years old, Polish | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - need for higher self-respect - vision of self appears when she acts in a way that fully uses her potential - vision of self appears when she allows herself to decide about herself and gets her own way/ wonderful feeling - difficulty with getting her own way - achievements: higher autonomy - significant for personality decisions concerns fighting for autonomy, expressing her own opinion and protecting herself (writing about her feelings to someone who hurt her)/ thinks rarely -motivator: couldn't leave it unsaid - sacrifices: resignation from own desires - honest | Autonomy through self-respect | The concepts of autonomy and self-respect are intertwined within the realm of self-awareness and self-development. A person views these issues as crucial for realizing their full potential and experiencing an authentic self. However, achieving both is perceived as a challenging journey, requiring struggle and perseverance to maintain one's path. | FOUNDATION FOR AUTHENTIC SELF |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to be more self she needs to be more assertive in family relations and with partners - in process of becoming the self importance of adjusting to new partners - being formed through expectations of love interests / becoming the one partner wanted to "see" - forming priorities through love fascinations - wouldn't get married if she could change the past - easy to start relationships - submissiveness | Disappearing self in relations | A person feels that their identity is shaped and influenced by social relationships and expectations, particularly in romantic relationships. This experience comes with a simultaneous awareness that increased assertiveness is necessary to reconnect with and reassert their true self. | POSITION TO SOCIAL CONTEXT |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the constant desire for peace - keeping oneself to oneself - lack of authenticity: necessary self-cheating - inconsistency between who she is and could be: feelings of losing life and respect for herself appear when she, instead of doing what she wants, does what others want, getting apparent calm (pozorny spokój .tłum.) ? - polite and kind | Peace and conformism – a double edge sword | The dual nature of seeking peace and social calmness can be supportive and comforting, yet it often leads to conformist behaviour that conflicts with one's true self. This conformism can result in | FOUNDATION FOR AUTHENTIC SELF |

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| | | | self-deception, accompanied by negative emotional states and a lack of self-respect. | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - being self as a source of comfort, being self only through acceptance of our true self - becoming the self through upbringing and education, relationships | Emerging self necessities | A person identifies vital influences that have shaped their identity, such as upbringing, education, and relationships, alongside the conditions they perceive as essential for feeling comfortable and authentic, such as self-acceptance. | FOUNDATION FOR AUTHENTIC SELF |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - unrealized plans- indirect answers, blockade (would definitely change who she is) - reflections about inconsistent with personality decisions: multiple times reminds herself of the negative effects of those reflections, - inner standard of being: aiming to become the best (according to herself) version of self - COBS: assessing if a chosen way is proper/ manifests through feeling if we are doing something bad or good for ourselves and others/ experienced | Aiming for self and self-development | A person remains vigilant about behaviours inconsistent with their true self, often leading to later reflection accompanied by negative emotions. A person guides self-development by intuitively sensing whether the chosen path aligns with becoming the best version of oneself while also respecting one's own and others' well-being. | CONSCIENCE OF BECOMING THE SELF |
| Int 30: Woman, 21 years old, Polish | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - describes herself as an analytical one - following the reason and reflection - wish for less stress - motivator for important personality decisions: reason and being trustful - COBS- manifested in thoughts (negative behaviour – remorse; positive: aiming to get the goal; presenting what way we went through) | Self through reflection, reason, and emotions | A person describes their character and mentality as being shaped by an analytical and reflective decision-making style, which guides self-development toward achieving goals. This process, however, is often accompanied by stress and remorse when things do not go as planned. | CONSCIENCE OF BECOMING THE SELF |
| | - describes herself as naive | | A person identifies a set of | POSITION TO |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - too trustful to people - trying to be helpful to people - progress in cost of social relations (small number of friends, low social life) - humiliation by trusted person as significant circumstances | Troubling position in relationships | personal attributes, such as naivety and trustfulness, that may lead to disadvantages in social relations. These traits are contrasted with a strong inclination to be helpful to others. The individual acknowledges that failed and harmful social experiences have played a crucial role in shaping their life. | SOCIAL CONTEXT |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - rare inconsistent with personality decisions/ delicate anxiety and shame - always authentic - no experiences of vision of self-> she is making decisions according to herself | Consistency with self | A person maintains that their behaviours and decisions are consistently aligned with their true self, leading to authentic actions and choices at all times. | FOUNDATION FOR AUTHENTIC SELF |
| <p>Inconsistency in interview</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - describes herself as reflexive and naive - hardworking and lazy - reflexive and impulsive <p>Negativity in interpretation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - being self as source of comfort but can be shameful if focusing on bad self-characteristics - difficulty to give examples of important for personality decisions - important for personality decisions: negative flashbacks - rare thought about lost chance; feeling of regret that she didn't tried; wouldn't change anything | Style of narration | This refers to the qualities reflected in a person's responses that create a distinct narration style. Inconsistencies in the interview arise when a person makes contradictory statements. Additionally, injecting negative interpretations into questions designed for positive reflection or struggling to answer such questions casts a negative tone on the interview. | FOUNDATION FOR AUTHENTIC SELF |
| <p>Social</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - important factors: family support - people described as important for personality development <p>Personal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hardworking | | These elements are recognized by a person and frequently mentioned in an interview as contributing to self-development. These | SIGNIFICANT FACTORS OF SELF-DEVELOPMENT |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - hard working, - hardworking on difficult studies - inner standard of being: aiming for better self, working on self weaknesses - Faith in herself - low self-esteem - low self-confidence - to be more self she wish to have higher faith in herself, her knowledge and generally higher faith - low faith in her abilities - in process of becoming self importance of low self-esteem - inconsistency between who she is and could be bring need of motivator to have faith in herself - feeling of inconsistency appears when she feels she is “not enough” and in stressful situations | Important factors | factors can include social influences such as supportive relationships and essential people, as well as personal attributes like a strong work ethic, overcoming weaknesses, and striving for a better self. Additionally, they encompass aspirations to develop qualities like greater self-confidence and authenticity, which align more closely with one's personality. | |
| Int 31: Woman, 22 years old, polish | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - feeling of inaccuracy of own behaviour: loss of energy, engagement in own development (comparing to gymnasium) - COBS: two functions: control over our behaviour and learning how to correct behaviour and own characteristics. - memory of unrealized plans – every day (would change her current state into more accurate and fulfilled- sort of inner voice of development informing that she should do more) | Regulation of self-actualization level (accuracy) | A person experiences an inner voice with an evaluative character, constantly assessing the gap between their current self-development and their desired or previously higher level of development. This ongoing evaluation guides behaviour and personality improvement. When this inner assessment is unfavourable, it often leads to frequent reflection on unrealized plans. | CONSCIENCE OF BECOMING THE SELF |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - experiencing low motivation for development - need for breaking own limits - need to leave comfort sphere - visit psychologists to overcome psychological problems: crisis and low to motivation to act - psychologists to work on emotionality - huge remorse, powerlessness, regret, little despair, anger, frustration, feeling of sucking in quicksand | Signals (warnings) of inaccurate self-actualization | A broad range of mental processes associated with flawed self-development. On one hand, these signals—such as the need to step out of one's comfort zone or break personal limits—can motivate and | CONSCIENCE OF BECOMING THE SELF |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - decision inconsistent with personality: remembers sometimes, frustration, - lack of authenticity – sadness - inconsistency between who she is and ought to be: feeling of droning in quick sand/ when she has energy to act but limit herself to minimum / appear when she has something interesting challenge but it requires breaking her own limits, going out of comfort and safety zone, stress, experiences | | inspire a person to take action. On the other hand, they may lead to unpleasant emotions or somatic sensations, indicating a misalignment in the self-actualization process. | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - need for breaking own limits - need to leave the comfort sphere - need, desire to live (sort of energy to act and live) - priorities formed through autonomy, teenager rebellion (independence), gaining success, development (progressing), becoming a better person, need for achievements (transcendence) - vision of self: a person who is active and engaged in additional activities (like in a gymnasium), gives a feeling of satisfaction of fulfilment - inner standard of being: frame which contains a perfect or better version of self to which everyone should (doesn't have to) aim for | Motivators and regulators to overcome self | A set of aspects identified by a person that creates a psychological state encouraging decisions or actions that push beyond personal limits, bringing one closer to the desired self and resulting in a sense of satisfaction and fulfilment. | CONSCIENCE OF BECOMING THE SELF |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - low motivation - low motivation to act - low self-esteem - anxiety disorders and depression - neuroticism - low faith in herself - low persistence - high emotionality - being self as a conditional source of comfort coz some of her characteristics may be badly interpreted by other people | Negative baggage | Personal attributes or an insufficient level of desired qualities that a person perceives as burdensome and detrimental. These aspects create internal conflict, leading to an ambiguous experience of one's authentic self. | SIGNIFICANT FACTORS OF SELF-DEVELOPMENT |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - openness to experience: science, new people, experiences, world - contemplativeness - social - helpful - honest | Positive engine | Self-characteristics that contribute to a positive self-image and drive personal growth. | SIGNIFICANT FACTORS OF SELF-DEVELOPMENT |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -loss of motivation and engagement in comparison to past - low engagement in additional activity - low energy - emotional breakdown during studies - feeling that she should have done more engagement in the past, coz now her development is inaccurate (too low), and she has no power to raise it - seeing herself as an example of a common path of progress (not as an | Current situation/difficult moment in time | A person perceives a notable decline in self-development compared to the past, characterized by reduced motivation, engagement, and energy. This recognition leads to a | ACTUALIZATION OF THE PAST |

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| | individual) - a process of creating self: sensed as drastically stopped in comparison to a gymnasium - vision of self: a person who is active and engaged in additional activities (like in a gymnasium), gives a feeling of satisfaction of fulfilment / now it does not appear | | strong inner drive to address and improve the current situation. | |
| Int 32: Woman, 21 years old, Polish | - separating herself from social impact - independence from people's opinions - the inner standard of being: I can stand up to someone in a situation that is uncomfortable for me - adapting to others is (pandering to social impact) is a source of autointoxication, self-cheating, cheating own self - lack of authenticity brings feelings of being lost, self-laying - need for autonomy - healthy egoism - being self as a source of freedom - becoming self as a path gained through maturity | Resurfacing the self in a way that restores authenticity | The challenge of developing an independent and genuinely expressed self, irrespective of social circumstances, is seen as essential for authentic self-expression. Failure to achieve this can lead to distressing states such as feelings of self-deception, confusion, and self-betrayal. | FOUNDATION FOR AUTHENTIC SELF |
| | - significant influence of people in the process of becoming the self - significant influence of people on forming priorities - chasing dream - hard working - autonomous decisions | Main factors in self-creation: | These are social and personal factors that are recognized by a person as influential in shaping and building one's identity. | FOUNDATION FOR AUTHENTIC SELF |
| | - unrealized plans: reminds herself every day, gives a feeling of sorrow (żal), feeling of hopelessness, nothing would change - decisions inconsistent with personality: reminds often, need to avoid negative feelings - inconsistency between who she is and ought to be: inner conflict, feeling lost, pain/ appears in not specified circumstances | Adverse effects of insufficient self-development | Issues arising from inconsistencies between a person's desired behaviours, self-concept, and current state of self-development frequently appear in reflections. These inconsistencies often lead to inner conflict, pain, hopelessness, and sorrow, which the person strives to avoid. | CONSCIENCE OF BECOMING THE SELF |
| | - adequate for personality decisions and achievements reminds very often, gives a feeling of satisfaction and happiness - vision of self: faith, belief in herself, feeling of confidence/appears in moments of deep reflection | Positive regulation of | A person is frequently motivated by recalling their own achievements and consistent decisions, guided | CONSCIENCE OF BECOMING THE SELF |

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| | | self-development | by a vision of their ideal self. This approach fosters positive states such as self-belief, confidence, satisfaction, and happiness. | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - COBS understood as a moral conscience - doesn't give clear answers for some questions or tautological answers | Challenges in integrating conscience and self-development | When addressing personal development as a matter of conscience, a person may interpret conscience primarily as a moral tool. This approach can lead to difficulties in providing clear answers to certain questions, resulting in tautological responses. | QUALITY OF THE INTERVIEW |
| Int 33: Woman, 21 years old | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - well-organized - good at managing formal groups - good in planning - hard-working - helpful - forming priorities through creating a hierarchy of events that are designed to improve development - adequate for personality decisions: taking challenging duty to lead a group of people (university union) | Set of skills | A recognized collection of abilities that enable a person to effectively self-organize and manage a group, empowering them to take on challenges in leadership and coordination. | SIGNIFICANT FACTORS OF SELF-DEVELOPMENT |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - priorities formed by deadlines imposed by others - the process of becoming the self through relations with people who later pushed her(encouraged her) to take on challenges - motivator for adequate personality decisions: faith of other people that she can manage some task - quiet - calm - making connections with small groups of people - lack of authenticity brings stress coz she feels she needs to impress others - inconsistency between who she is and ought to be: comparing her achievements to achievements of people in her age/ also pressed by image spread by media - inconsistency between who she is and ought to appear when other people achieve some success - being self conditionally as a source of comfort: being appreciated (comfort), | Socially motivated | A person's self-assessment, achievements, and self-development are strongly influenced by social comparisons, often leading to feelings of tension and inadequacy. These comparisons, which range from individuals in their immediate surroundings to public figures and media influences, shape their sense of progress and personal growth. While society can also play a | POSITION TO SOCIAL CONTEXT |

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| | <p>starting a relationship (no comfort)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - manifestations of COBS: our psychological state and how other people see us | | <p>positive role by motivating the person to engage in new challenges, these external influences tend to stimulate the person more than their own internal drive.</p> | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - low self-esteem - low faith in own abilities - wish to improve her faith in herself and not to be afraid to show it - lack of determination and low willpower to take challenges, to overcome herself - unrealized plans: feels regret(żal) that she didn't have the courage and strong will to start or continue some experience/ it would develop herself as a person, but wouldn't change much - the importance of taking risks and challenges, mostly concerning education and carrier - she would use more chances of development when she had more time for it - vision of self: when she notices that some decisions may bring her closer to what she wanted to achieve/fears from unknown and determination to prove something to herself and others | <p>Need for resolve in own actualization</p> | <p>A person perceives a deficiency in crucial personal attributes like self-esteem, faith in their abilities, determination, courage, and willpower. These qualities are seen as essential to regaining self-motivation, taking on challenges, seizing opportunities, and engaging in potentially developmental experiences.</p> | <p>CONSCIENCE OF BECOMING THE SELF</p> |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - in questions about adequate achievement or neglected plans, she doesn't say about the frequency of memories but gives a number of these situations - the inner standard of being – something everyone aims for, what gives a full complete feeling of leaving and using a maximum of own potentiality - COBS function: showing what is bad and wrong, and if bad->regrets and reproaches; Good: satisfaction - manifestations of COBS: our psychological state and how other people see us | <p>Narration- understanding of development and self</p> | <p>The person's approach to self-development is reflected in how they interpret and communicate their achievements and shortcomings. When questioned about accomplishments or neglected plans, they tend to quantify experiences rather than express the emotional frequency or impact. Their inner standard of being, the ideal of self-fulfilment, is perceived as an ideal that everyone strives for, representing the potential for personal growth. The</p> | <p>CONSCIENCE OF BECOMING THE SELF</p> |

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| | | | Conscience of Becoming the Self (COBS) functions as a moral compass, guiding the person through feelings of regret or satisfaction based on their actions. This inner conscience is manifested both in their psychological state and how they are perceived by others. | |
| Int 34: Men, 25 years old, Polish | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - searching for meaning in life - evaluate himself as a bad person (negative evaluation) - being self as a source of discomfort because he thinks he is a bad person - emotions in the past as an element of self-identification - lack of authenticity sensed as not harmful to himself - rare reflections about inconsistent personality decisions, those reflections have no impact on him - inconsistency between who he is and ought to be brings him a feeling of helplessness that he cannot be himself - the inner standard of being: self-realization through living in harmony with yourself - function of COSB: checking if we live in harmony with ourselves - COBS manifests through sensations that would inform us about inconsistent with our self-decisions | Unclear attitude towards own self and authenticity | The person expresses varied and sometimes conflicting views on self and authenticity, resulting in an unintegrated perspective on these concepts. They do not see inauthentic or inconsistent behaviours as particularly harmful or uncomfortable, potentially due to negative self-evaluation. Despite this, the person searches for meaning in life and values harmony, believing it should be maintained through a sense of coherence between actions and self-decisions. Additionally, they experience feelings of helplessness when confronted with inconsistencies between their current self and the potential they could have achieved. | FOUNDATION FOR AUTHENTIC SELF |
| | - being a loner as an important characteristic | | The person places | POSITION TO |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - self isolation as not an acceptable characteristic - being neutral and emotionally self-controlled - being proud of learned emotional control (suppression) - in the process of becoming the self, the only factor described was eliminating and suppressing own emotions to “become no one” - emotions in the past as an element of self-identification - being unable to be himself appear in moments of sadness, lower mood - reflection about unrealized plans appears very often and gives emotional reactions like sadness, anger, regret (žal), would change | Strong emotional control and social isolation | significant emphasis on controlling emotions, a skill developed over time and seen as a personal achievement. However, this control has led to feelings of repression and a diminished sense of uniqueness, as emotions were once central to their self-identity. This emotional restraint contributes to a sense of isolation, which is experienced negatively. Additionally, negative emotions often arise when reflecting on unrealized plans. | EMOTIONS |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - priorities formed by maturation and environmental changes - key circumstances of development: being abandoned by love of his life, need to be financially independent - financial independence as difficult but significant circumstance - the importance of other people help | Being formed by environment and circumstances | In reflecting on their biography, a person emphasizes the significant role that environmental circumstances and social relationships have played in shaping their priorities and development. Influential factors include the importance of other people, particularly in the context of challenging love relationships, as well as a strong desire for independence. | POSITION TO SOCIAL CONTEXT |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - leaving according to self as important at the same time being inauthentic as no problem - carelessly answered questions | Inconsistent | The manner in which a person answers questions reveals some contradictions and demonstrates a careless approach to specific | QUALITY OF THE INTERVIEW |

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| | | narration | responses. This inconsistency is reflected in the use of contradictory statements and is further evident through the vocabulary and grammatical errors present in the answers. | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - smart - intelligent - wants to improve physically - vision of self – positive impact, appears during reflections about the future or while creating plans for the future - adequate for personality decisions: rarely, motivator: curiosity, it increased self-esteem (playing guitar) | Positive elements | These attributes and motivations contribute to an individual's self-improvement and well-being. They may include personal qualities, a desire for improvement in specific areas, and a positive vision of the future that arises during reflections or planning. Such elements serve as motivators that support a constructive approach to personal development. | SIGNIFICANT FACTORS OF SELF-DEVELOPMENT |
| Int 35: Men, 26 years old, Polish | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - being faithful to one's own values and being proud of them - main priorities created and stable from the beginning, adding less important priorities with maturity - stable values - strongly aimed for goals - being persistent in achieving goals - motivator: personal hierarchy of values - self-motivation - negative emotions (being angry with himself) if he doesn't stand out for his opinions, values - tries not to think about unrealized plans, not to regret anything-> coz his decisions are always well thought-out - vision of self as an overview of who he wants to be and ways how to achieve it appears in important life situations - need for inner peace and less getting nervous about (denerwować się) - high self-control (spending little money, no pleasures) | Self-focused awareness | A person exhibits a framework of stable and pivotal self-awareness traits that guide self-development in a desired direction. These traits include a strong adherence to professed values and priorities, an intense and persistent drive to achieve goals, high motivation, and a clear vision of self that emerges in crucial life situations. Additionally, self-control and an acute sense of what is needed for | STRATEGY AND PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT |

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| | | | life balance, such as reducing stress, are vital aspects. Thoughtful decision-making plays a crucial role in preventing the loss of developmental opportunities. | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - being self as a source of comfort and liberty - being persistence - achievements consistent with own personality: standing up to the lecturer/self-motivation through reminding the moments when he wants to give up, being proud of standing up for his opinions, values - being angry with himself if he wouldn't stand up for himself - easiness in making new acquaintances, friendly - critical circumstances: having “current” friends who improve his development; in the past, having people who would pull him down | Social independency | A person, when reflecting on their biography, highlights characteristics and situations that affirm and reinforce their sense of independence, liberty, and determination in following their own path and expressing their views, regardless of social circumstances. This independence is seen as a significant achievement, one that motivates and instills a sense of pride in the individual. | POSITION TO SOCIAL CONTEXT | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - importance of faith in himself - growth of faith in himself as a significant profit - defend own opinion - defend own authenticity - being self as a source of comfort and liberty - being socially independent as self-motivation to behave according to own authenticity - never have feelings (moments) of inauthenticity - doesn't have feelings of inconsistency between who he is and who he ought to be because he is exactly the person he wanted to be since childhood - vision of self as an overview of who he wants to be and ways how to achieve it appear with critical life situations - creation and contact with “future self” - inner standard of being: one needs to know who he wants to be in the future and behave as his “future self” | Definitely authentic/ awareness | The desire to uphold a self that has been consciously chosen, along with a self-development path that aligns with this vision, forms the foundation for consistent, authentic behaviour. This approach, supported by strong self-belief, provides a sense of comfort and freedom, even within social circumstances. | FOUNDATION FOR AUTHENTIC SELF | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - difficulty in describing developmental processes (creation of priorities, process of becoming the self) or aversion to share this information - definite way of answering questions | Disturbances in narration – | This theme refers to how a person narrates the process of self-creation. The | CONSCIENCE OF BECOMING THE SELF | |

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| | | withholding information | manner in which they respond may present a limited or incomplete picture of the issues at hand, potentially due to a desire to keep certain information private. | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - COBS is described as having only negative manifestations: function-> should “bite” if a person hasn’t become the “one” he dreamed of, manifestations: inner bad mood - in the process of becoming the self, a strong focus on the vision of the “future self” | What drives the development | A person recognizes that central for self-growth is the chosen self that person dreams to be (future self), and inner, negative process experienced as “self-biting” or negative mood, should appear if a person fails to achieve the self. | STRATEGY AND PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT |
| Int 36: Woman, 31 years old, Polish | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - emotional thinking, answering questions considering mostly emotional statements - laconic, general answers - main characteristic: irritability (wybuchowość) - to be more self, need to control anger - key circumstances of development: need to focus thoughts - unrealized plans: remorse, anger, would change - reflections about inconsistent personality decisions have a huge impact on her - inconsistency between who she is and ought to be: pain and remorse - vision of self brings feeling of warmth and happiness - Cobs manifestations: all sorts of emotions leading to goal | Emotional experiencing | A person exhibits strong emotional regulation, evident in their narration and self-description. This emotional regulation acts as a modifier of self-actualization, generating either positive or negative states depending on the perceived quality of self-growth. These emotional states guide the individual toward achieving their goals. | POSITION TO EMOTIONS |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - low self-belief - claims that her whole personality needs to be improved (corrected) - difficulties in development: not succumbing to her own weaknesses - positive developmental reflection: rarely - unrealized plans and inconsistent with personality decisions: often reflection | Negative processing | A person reflects on their biography, often highlighting negative aspects such as low self-belief, insufficient resistance to personal weaknesses, frequent reflections on missed developmental | CONSCIENCE OF BECOMING THE SELF |

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| | | | opportunities, and decisions that are inconsistent with their personality. Positive developmental experiences are rarely emphasized. | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - main characteristics: wise - need to gain knowledge as the primary motive for development - easiness in learning - self-growth as important factor in the process of becoming the self - the process of becoming self, described as slow growth - priorities through experiences - key circumstances of development: solitude, need to focus thoughts - adequate for personality achievements: writing novel, being the best - motivator: talent development (actualization of writing talent) - unrealized plans and inconsistent with personality decisions: often reflection - the inner standard of being: the creation of one's own self (własnej osoby) - Cobs: function of guideline, did experienced | Self-development identification | This theme refers to the unique set of personality traits, behavioural styles, driving motivators, and reactions that shape and control the quality of an individual's self-development. It also includes the significance a person places on personal growth. Positive aspects of personality, such as specific characteristics or skills, can facilitate smoother development. | STRATEGY AND PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - being self as a source of comfort coz there is no need to prove anything to anyone - need for more time for herself in the past - critical circumstances of development: solitude, need to focus thoughts - inauthenticity brings her feeling of alienation - inconsistency between who she is and ought to be appear in social situations - vision of self appears when she does what she likes and wants to do | Social space | A person anchors their self-awareness in recognizing and overcoming social pressure to embrace their authentic self, thereby avoiding negative states like alienation or feeling overwhelmed by expectations. In this process, the person identifies solitude and dedicating more time for self-reflection as essential for focusing their thoughts and maintaining authenticity. | POSITION TO SOCIAL CONTEXT |
| Int 37: Woman, 33 years old, | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the constant feeling of being self - being satisfied and assured with all his decisions concerning unrealized plans | Self-assuring | A person asserts that they consistently act coherently and authentically to fully | STRATEGY AND PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT |

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| Polish | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - made best possible decisions: no remorse concerning lost plans, very few decisions inconsistent with personality, and none or very rare reflections on this subject - never experience inauthenticity - didn't experience inconsistency between who he is and ought to be - vision of self appears in moments of satisfaction of what he is doing right now | | realize their potential in a satisfying way, thereby dismissing reflections on unfinished plans or inauthentic behaviour. | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ambition - restlessness - positive thinking - persistence - willing to achieve the goal - motivator: thinking about the future - often thinking about positive aspects of development: adequate for personality achievements - rare or none thought about negative aspects of development: inconsistent decision, neglected plans, unrealized plans - making decisions in accordance with the vision of self- self-fulfilling and moving forward - the inner standard of being: fulfilment of minimum expectations one have to himself - easiness in adapting to new environment | Functional style of behaviour | A person exhibits a set of goal-oriented traits, including ambition, restlessness, positive thinking, persistence, and a strong willingness to achieve goals. These traits, combined with a self-motivating focus on the future and frequent reflection on achievements, drive positive self-growth and authentic behaviour. | STRATEGY AND PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - improvement through systematic growth of each characteristic independently - constant growth - being self as a source of comfort coz there is no need to pretend. Pretending may bring around people who do not truly accept us - the process of becoming the self: steady and regular since childhood | Self-stability | The processes related to the emergence of self and self-development are experienced by the person as smooth, balanced, and systematic throughout their entire life span. | STRATEGY AND PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - opens for people, sociability -adequate for personality decision: doing sport, the importance of doing sport, being fit in the development - easiness in adapting to a new environment - essential costs and circumstances concerning social relations and adapting to new environment: neglecting social life, need to live with relatives - priorities through experiences of everyday life and work - COBS: manifest through remorse only when we are unsatisfied, no positive function, didn't experience | Key aspects of personal growth | Recognized by a person, these are pivotal factors that drive personal growth. They include social skills essential for adapting to new environments and overcoming challenges, as well as the capacity to make sacrifices in the pursuit of self- | STRATEGY AND PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT |

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| | | | improvement. | |
| Int 38: Man, 32 years old, Polish | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the importance of failures and drawing conclusions from them - becoming the self through experiencing failures and drawing conclusions - considering the past he would do many things differently - reflection about inconsistent with personality decisions as motivator, very often reflection - unrealized decisions, and plans would for sure change who he is - unrealized plans, very often reflection, sadness and regret (żal) | Created through failures | A productive attitude towards failures, where analysis, reflection, and the experience of negative emotional states lead to gaining valuable knowledge and motivation for more effective self-development. Thus, failures are experienced as significant circumstances that contribute to personal growth. | STRATEGY AND PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - costs of development: need to leave home and friends - difficulty: loss of social support (leaving home-city), the emotional burden of missing "home" - significant change in the environment - easiness in making new acquaintances - priorities formed by upbringing, the social impact of a significant member of the family (ancestors, family), and environment - being consistent with one's own values in social relationships as significant for personality - doesn't like his trustfulness - being communicative in business | Social- environment influence | The social situations and the position one takes within them are depicted by a person as influential throughout their lifespan. Qualities such as the ability to adapt flexibly to social inconveniences while remaining coherent with one's priorities and values are seen as essential for personal development.. | POSITION TO SOCIAL CONTEXT |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - introvert - person who loves freedom - building own autonomy - being resistant from stress - bitterness - versatility - hard-working - tenacity - self-actualization - pursuit of the goal - being self, only source of comfort - inauthenticity: feeling bad - need for more inner peace and distance to feel more self | Integrity | A person demonstrates qualities and a mentality that contribute to a cohesive and integrated sense of self. They consistently follow their priorities and values, persist in achieving their goals, and self-actualize in alignment with an autonomous, independent self. This approach enhances their awareness, | SIGNIFICANT FACTORS OF SELF-DEVELOPMENT |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - significant for personality decision: closing friendship because of own hierarchy of values, very often a reflection - motivator for significant for personality decisions: honour, inner values | | allowing them to identify and address essential needs for personal well-being, such as inner peace and distance from external pressures. | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - key circumstances: life - inconsistency between who he is and ought to be: didn't understand the question - the inner standard of being: didn't understand the question - haven't experienced a vision of self - COBS: function of controlling common sense, manifestation through signals what is bad and good, experienced | Generality vs. detail | The responses to specific questions are characterized by generalizations and a lack of specific details from personal experiences. This approach reveals a tendency towards abbreviated or underdeveloped descriptions, suggesting that some aspects of self-reflection may not be fully explored or available for detailed consideration. | QUALITY OF THE INTERVIEW |
| Int 39: Men, 44 years old, Polish | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - importance of physical strength in self-description: huge, tall - brave - stubborn - high self-confidence and feeling of satisfaction with own achievements - determination - feeling proud - dissatisfied with own quick temper and often not noticing sadness of close ones - vision of self-connected with high pride of own achievements - significant with personality decisions: finishing matura exam after returning from the army | Strength in self-actualization and self-description | A person highlights traits that contribute to an empowered self-image, encompassing physical and psychological attributes. These traits include bravery, stubbornness, high self-confidence, and pride in achievements, which are accompanied by a strong sense of determination. While these characteristics foster a robust and assertive personal identity, they can also lead to challenges, such as a quick temper. | SIGNIFICANT FACTORS OF SELF-DEVELOPMENT |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - achievements: family (children, wife), dream job - importance of career, job: self-realization and feeling comfortable - costs: resignation from the matura exam in order to join the army | Social factors intertwined with | When reflecting on their own biography, a person identifies two major | SIGNIFICANT FACTORS OF SELF- |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - hard-working - motivator for significant personality decision: family support (wife)->social support - significant with personality decisions: finishing the matura exam after returning from the army - priorities formed by situations - vision of self appears in the context of job satisfaction | career actualization | influences on self-development: social circumstances and career achievements. These include having a supportive family and navigating educational and professional challenges successfully. The interplay between these social and personal factors significantly impacts career actualization and overall self-growth. | DEVELOPMENT |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the process of becoming the self: developmental - the importance of satisfaction and pride in one's own achievements - being self as a source of comfort coz we do what we want - inauthenticity: feeling uncomfortable - motto: everything happens with a reason; every situation (even negative) creates us as an individuality - inner standard of being: maturity to some things, behaviours, etc. - Cobs: function of gaining awareness about our achievements and what we have lost - manifestations of Cobs: inner voice in our mind - COBS experienced as inner dialogs with himself <p>Positive more often than negative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - reflection about decisions significant for personality: quite often - reflection about unrealized plans: rarely - inconsistent with personality decisions: almost never, feeling of uneasy | Form of developmental reflections | This refers to the mental process and type of reflection a person engages in regarding their self-development. It emphasizes positive aspects, often highlighting successes and sound decisions, while rarely focusing on inconsistent personality choices or unfulfilled plans. The underlying significance lies in gaining a comprehensive awareness of the entire self-development process and following one's inner voice, which is crucial for productive growth. | CONSCIENCE OF BECOMING THE SELF |
| Int 40: Men, 30 years old, Polish | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - need for stability - lack of being systematic - lack of consequence - difficulty in making decisions (to commit to one path) - making many things at the same time, no prioritising, difficulty in giving up some things | Lack of planning in action | A person exhibits characteristics and strategies that lead to an experience of an unguided, unstable life. In the long run, this prohibits making | STRATEGY AND PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - lack of ability to focus on one subject - in the past, he wishes to choose one path and consequently continue it - the importance of finding the right direction in life which will bring satisfaction on every level of our life - costs of development: leaving some interests - once made, the decision allows acceptance of losses | | reasonable decisions that allow for a consistent, sensible direction. Instead, the person attempts to engage in many activities simultaneously, without prioritizing, which results in a sense of chaos and ineffective self-development. | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - positive thinking - being self as a source of comfort only if a person accepts self and things she/he is doing -> source of inner peace - Significant in becoming the self: facing the truth about oneself, accepting one's own flaws, understanding one's desires, analysing one's mistakes and the opinions of others about us, and drawing conclusions. - no self-acceptance brings frustration and auto-destruction - searching for solutions instead of complaining about life - acceptance of himself, including his own flaws - describes himself as a simple person with flaws and virtues - being self as a source of comfort if we accept what we are doing (acceptance and being self); no acceptance of self, brings frustration and auto-destruction - motto: characteristics a person poses are not advantages or disadvantages a prior. These are just qualities which can be used in a positive or negative way - reflections about unrealized plans: in the past, regret and tries not to have regret now, instead now tries not to make the same mistake, analyse and learn, acceptance of what had already happened - reflection about unrealized plans once more often, once rarely, very often/ after that, try to think positively - reflection about unrealized plans wouldn't change who he is but who he feels he is and how he makes his decisions - sometimes, reflections about decisions inconsistent with own personality- have a motivating effect or sometimes bring him down | Self-acceptation and moving forward | The combined significance of self-awareness and knowledge that builds a sense of truth about oneself, along with self-acceptance, serves as a solid foundation that enables a person to freely express themselves and find comfort in authenticity. Reflecting on unrealized plans and inconsistencies in behavior provides a platform to analyze and learn from mistakes, marking a significant shift from the self-blame and regret expressed in the past. Although this reflection can act as a motivator, it may also, at times, lower one's mood. | STRATEGY AND PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - describes himself as having a good heart - describes himself as having the ability to understand other people - describes himself as having the ability to understand other - helping other - adequate for personality decisions concerning helping other people | Significance of altruism | Consideration for others plays a significant role in self-description and self-development. It should be factored into decision- | POSITION TO SOCIAL CONTEXT |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - motivator: need to help other people - COBS function: verifying our attitude to other people and ourselves and would push us to change for the better or to correct mistakes or pain given to others | | | <p>making, reminding a person that self-progress must be balanced with the well-being of others.</p> | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - great dreams - finding the passion that provides financial stability and personal satisfaction - significant moments(changes) in life: a mixture of coincidence, ambition, and luck - significant for personality achievement: agreeing to cooperate in a field he had no prior experience - reflection about the significance of personality achievement appears in conversations or deep reflections about future - motivator: need to do something new, need for adventure - lack of autonomy: feeling of no energy - inconsistent between who he is and ought to be: feeling of inside pain, located in the chest or head/ but not physical also too many thoughts on the mind (why, what for) - inconsistent between who he is and ought to be, appears when he gets in the wrong path and tries to cheat himself into that it is the right one (self-cheating to not see the mistake) - vision of self: inner harmony, approval, and excitement, energy for change and for plans realization - vision of self: appears after longer reflections and difficult days when a solution comes to mind (for inner and our troubles) - the inner standard of being: individual, very silent inner voice giving right answers - COBS function: verifying our attitude to other people and to ourselves and would push us to change for the better or to correct mistakes or pain given to others - COBS manifestation: inner anxiety, no consent for made decisions/ experienced | <p>Sensing self</p> | | <p>The collection of experiences related to recognizing one's desires, testing limits, and being in action, when combined with deep reflection, creates an overall, integrated sense of self. This integrated sense of self allows for attentiveness and inner guidance, helping a person recognize when they are acting incoherently with their true self and pursuing the wrong path, which can lead to the unpleasant experience of self-deception.</p> | <p>CONSCIENCE OF BECOMING THE SELF</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - described as important in development: social relations, inspiring histories taken from culture (movies, books, authentic stories) - costs in development: limiting time for friends - priorities formed differently at each stage: social factor->parents, favourite teachers, friends; environment-> scouting, school, church, music environment; cultural factor: pop culture - the process of becoming the self: being confused by information where the most important influence had parents than friends, searching for an | <p>Social-environmental-cultural factor</p> | | <p>A person demonstrates a discerning recognition of external influences—social, cultural, and environmental—that play a role in significant processes contributing to the overall sense of an integrated self.</p> | <p>POSITION TO SOCIAL CONTEXT</p> |

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| | individual path, awareness in making relationships - key circumstances: rapid changes in the environment (need to reevaluation social relations) | | The stages of this process emerge from social circumstances and the positions the person takes in response to them. | |
| Int 41: Men, 26 years old, Polish | - good memory - high learning abilities - smart - declares analytical attitude toward life - self-control - intellectual abilities allowed him to finish difficult studies without any sacrifices - COBS function: remembering about failures to not repeat them, remembering successes to be inspired by them, experienced - a manifestation of COBS: in the form of a list <i>what to do</i> and <i>what not to do</i> while making significant decisions | Analytical development | Refers to a person's set of cognitive and self-regulation traits that, when combined with an analytical approach, enable them to achieve significant educational accomplishments with minimal sacrifice. This approach shapes their decision-making in life, helping them recognize what actions to take and avoid in a broader, more impactful sense. | SIGNIFICANT FACTORS OF SELF-DEVELOPMENT |
| | - doesn't answer questions about being self as a source of comfort or not - easy in making new relationships but difficulty with male-female relationships - sometimes, no clear answers - cannot describe what was his motivator for significant personality decisions – subconscious - in time, he learns significant achievements make him better | Unclear point | The manner in which a person responds to questions does not provide enough insight into their experiences related to self-creation and self-development. | QUALITY OF THE INTERVIEW |
| | - feeling of being lost - lack of self-confidence - make himself a fool to lower expectations towards him - need to be more assertive and resistant to other opinions - relentless - being self depends on the social circumstances a person is in at the moment - describes finding own characteristics and style of life as difficult - priorities formed dependently from his own desires and social expectations - significant for personality achievements: finding an adequate job despite low self-belief, how often: average? - reflection about unrealized plans: very?, self-regret (żal do siebie), possibly would change who he is | Finding own way of being | A person identifies unfavourable personal attributes that hinder their ability to establish their own path. This recognition prompts the need for more effective resistance and assertiveness against social influences, making their sense of self less dependent on external circumstances. Additionally, the individual | FOUNDATION FOR AUTHENTIC SELF |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - reflections about inconsistent personality decisions appear very often - lack of authenticity brings unwillingness to development - a feeling of inconsistency between who he is and ought to be: brings a feeling of being lost, an example of the moment: after studies he didn't know what to do - vision of self, described as anger and grim satisfaction, appear when he cannot fall asleep and nothing concerns him | | becomes cautious of inconsistent self-decisions or neglected self-development, frequently reflecting on these issues and feeling troubled by them. | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - easiness in making new social connections - need to improve shyness in male-female relationships - perfect observer - to be more self need for higher assertiveness - process of becoming the self: high school as significant moment of development (crucial moment, before no development, great jump, and balanced development) - university as important time - learning an important ability of healthy adaptation to new environments (learned in high school, wish to have learned in earlier in the gymnasium) - ability to make new friends - crucial circumstance: opening himself to the opinion of the environment and learning to be a good observer of the environment in order to assess own expectations - the inner standard of being: using interaction with the outside world to form one's own personality | Awareness of environment | A person is highly aware of how their environment impacts them and of their abilities and challenges in this context. They recognize how different stages of development intersect with their current environment. As a result, they strive to integrate their ability to observe and interact with their surroundings to shape their personality. | POSITION TO SOCIAL CONTEXT |
| Int 42: Men, 26 years, Polish | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - emotionality and emotional lability as characteristics he has to work on - costs of development: repressing emotions - wish to improve emotional stability - describes himself as calm - instability in making own opinions: extremely different approaches towards the same subjects - instability in some situations: saying too much - need for psychological stability - denying emotions: describes weak or mild emotional reaction to developmental decisions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ->reflection about unrealized plans appear very often, makes him a little bit sad, would change ->reflection about decisions inconsistent with personality: rarely reflection, sometimes makes him sad ->reflection about inconsistency between who he is and ought to be: makes him a little bit nervous and appear in conversations with other people | Unclear emotional status | Emotions play a significant role in a person's behavior and self-image. Consequently, the individual seeks to manage their emotions, aiming to reduce emotional instability. At the same time, the person rarely reflects on failures or inconsistencies in self-development, often denying or minimizing emotional reactions related to these issues. | POSITION TO EMOTIONS |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - short answers as if written in a hurry - inconsistencies in answers - need for psychological health seems to block developmental reflection - describes himself as an emotional person but gives low emotional reaction for developmental decisions - COBS is understood more as a moral object: function of COBS: moral compass; manifestations of COBS: choosing what is good for us and morally approved | Quality of interview/quality of reflection | The manner in which a person answers questions suggests a lack of careful engagement, as indicated by brief and sometimes self-contradictory responses. The individual does not perceive self-development as a matter of conscience. | BASIC NEEDS |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - emotional instability - instability in opinions - priorities formed depending on actual need - the process of becoming the self, described as sinusoidal - psychological stability in need, major motive - significant for personality decisions: decision to start psychological treatment, rarely think about it - motivator: depression - key characteristic: laugh - to be more self he would quit studies but earlier says quitting studies as key circumstance (happened already or he wish to make it happened?) - in the process of becoming the self: other people as important - lack of authenticity makes him vulnerable | Unstable conditions of the process of creating self | A person presents a set of qualities that may destabilize the process of finding one's self on an emotional level, making a person dependent on social opinions; thus, a person forms priorities on the spear of need that on a holistic sense of self, resulting in feeling vulnerable in moments of inauthenticity. Thus, a person experiences a desire for psychological stability, which is necessary at the moment. | BASIC NEEDS |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - financial and material independence: leaving without parents, job, own car - being helpful as a key characteristic - being assertive, a significant characteristic - being self as a source of comfort, being self is good for psychological health - the importance of becoming a responsible person - other people as important, easy in making new relations - vision of self: appears when he consequently is doing things other people say are wrong, but in the end, he is right, describes it as a nice feeling - inner standard of being: fight for own opinion - instability in making own opinions: extremely different approaches towards the same subjects | Independency as significant | The value a person places on financial and material independence, along with the personal attributes that support this need. It also includes deriving comfort from being oneself, which promotes psychological health. This concept balances responsibility, helpfulness to others, and the ability to form new | STRATEGY AND PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT |

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| | | | relationships, while maintaining a consistent vision of self despite opposing views. It involves upholding personal opinions, which can lead to instability due to varying perspectives on the same issues. | |
| Int 43: Men, 38 years old, Polish | <p>Meaning of intellectual abilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - intelligence - ambitious - wish to improve intellectual abilities - wisdom, knowledge as important achievements of development and significant goals - inner standard of being: inner development, emotional <p>Strength and stability in behaviour</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - hard-working - tenacity in pursuing goals - proud of physical and psychological strength - sacrificing free time and pleasures - self-confidence as important achievement of development - significant for personality achievement: helping man in need and catching his oppressor, thinks quite often, motivator: sense of injustice (person in need), anger for villainy - conscientiousness - vision of self: feeling of consistency, appearing in important situations - doesn't like chaos in action - wouldn't make any changes - cheerful - sociable <p>Self-aware learning through experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - taking benefits from own being: being self as a source of comfort, takes benefits from own abilities and own experience - priorities: change from wanting to <i>have</i> (youth) to <i>be</i> - the process of becoming the self: everything comes with time - decisions inconsistent with personality: rarely (once a month), treats it as a lesson on what <i>not to do</i> - priorities: change from wanting to <i>have to be</i> | Key aspects of behaviour | <p>Key Aspects of Behavior: A person recognizes a configuration of aspects that describe their behavior. This descriptive framework consists of three main elements that are coherent with the person's narrative:</p> <p>Meaning of intellectual abilities: The presence of intellectual virtues, such as intelligence and self-regulation, plays a crucial role in how the person describes and governs their behaviour.</p> <p>Strength and stability in behaviour: Character strengths and resilience traits ensure the pursuit of goals while maintaining an internal sense of justice.</p> <p>Self-aware learning through experience: This attitude allows the person to be self-aware during experiences, enabling them to fully benefit from their abilities and qualities while simultaneously ensuring</p> | STRATEGY AND PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - reflection about the inconsistency between who he is and ought to be: feeling of no sense of life and a strong need to change, appear in in-depth reflections about life - reflection about the inconsistency between who he is and ought to be: feeling of no sense of life and the strong need to change, appear in in-depth reflections about life - key circumstance: becoming a father, change of perspective - COBS as having only moral meaning: moral compass, manifested through inner voice, experienced | | decision-making is aligned with their true self. | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - tries to avoid reflection about unrealized significant plans: changes answer about the frequency of these reflections (firstly, sometimes, then changes for rarely, once a month) also avoids answering the question of what impact this reflection has on him - decisions inconsistent with personality: rarely (once a month), treats it as a lesson on what <i>not to do</i> - difficulty in maintaining motivation after failures - lack of authenticity: feeling of emptiness - reflection about the inconsistency between who he is and ought to be: feeling of no sense of life and a strong need to change, appear in in-depth reflections about life | Attitude toward failures of being | This refers to how a person confronts failures in maintaining consistency with their self-decisions or in pursuing productive self-development. A person may sometimes avoid reflecting on these failures, showing inconsistency in how often they acknowledge them, even within their own narrative. However, when they do reflect, they often admit to a loss of motivation and sense of meaning following such failures, which can, in turn, activate a strong desire for productive change. | CONSCIENCE OF BECOMING THE SELF |
| Int 44: Men, 27 years old, Polish | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - acting vs. being self: a reflection that being self is a source of comfort for people who need a sense of security, being self is being honest, and it protects from being discovered as playing someone else/ the other way round is for people who like to “act” and “pretend” - being self as a source of comfort, significant characteristics: honesty - the process of becoming the self in childhood strongly influenced by a school (imposed way of thinking), destroying his self-confidence and burying him for 10 years - a reflection that what a person becomes is influenced mainly by the environment - COBS function: helping a person to build a personality adequate to the | Social interpretation of development | In reflecting on self-development, a person emphasizes the social aspects and circumstances of this process, believing that self-development should aim to create a personality adaptable to current cultural norms. The individual distinguishes between acting and | FOUNDATION FOR AUTHENTIC SELF |

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| | <p>culture person is formed by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - inner standard of being: schema of each stage of psychological and mental development typical for everyone/ however, it is a small part of the process of creating a person's personality - very high need for social relations, difficulty in maintaining social relations | | <p>authentic behaviour, prioritizing the latter, as honesty is significant, particularly when maintaining social relationships.</p> | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - in the past, priorities were understood as "things to do": football and good marks in childhood, high school: guitar, sports during studies - priorities developed now to actualization (improving own abilities and job abilities) - a significant achievement for personality was his personal way of coping with psychological injury / (though he could pick career change), rarely thinks about it - isolating himself from others as a coping strategy in the past: in the past, dealing with psychological problems by isolating himself from other people - in the present, tries to think about <i>what to do now</i>, - in the past, dealing with psychological problems by isolating himself from other people, now tries to think about <i>what to do now</i> - wrongly chosen studies, he should have chosen the career path he has now - the process of becoming the self: firstly, dominated by a limiting way of thinking. High school: loose of self-confidence in own abilities, studies: passivity - the process of becoming the self: lack of sensible self-guidance until career path change - reflections about unrealized plans: rarely, feels little regret but still, would change for sure - never or rarely have feelings about inconsistency between who he is and ought to be, inconsistent with personality decisions, lack of authenticity | <p>Awareness of changes in the process of becoming the self</p> | <p>A person can articulate the gradual changes in self-development and self-recognition, detailing how their priorities have shifted and what factors influenced these changes. They outline coping strategies from both past and present, highlighting significant stages and moments in their self-development, both positive and negative. The person, however, expresses a low frequency of reflection on inconsistencies and failures in behaviour and self-development.</p> | <p>ACTUALIZATION OF THE PAST</p> |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - describes himself as a little bit autistic - breaking way of thinking from school as crucial in finding himself again and finding a new job - breaking childhood limiting way of thinking - ambition - being honest, as being honest is being self - being self as a source of comfort - patience - significant moment: gaining self-confidence again (through breaking childhood way of thinking), deciding to change career path - fear of life changes though made great change in carrier | <p>Distinguishing himself</p> | <p>A person identifies key moments that have deepened their self-understanding, such as overcoming a limiting childhood mindset or adapting to a completely new career path. These moments are supported by personal qualities like ambition and honesty. The</p> | <p>STRATEGY AND PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT</p> |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - significant: career change for job adequate for personality and goals (quitting job he hated) - engagement in career change: learning for a whole year, adapting to a new job - to feel more self, he wishes to spend more time with his friends (logistic difficulties) - never or rarely have feelings about the inconsistency between who he is and ought to be, inconsistent with personality decisions, lack of authenticity -> if it happens, treated as accidental mistakes - acts according to own system of values | | individual continuously evaluates their current state, recognizing needs such as spending more time with friends or staying true to their values. However, they rarely reflect on inconsistent or inauthentic decisions, as such moments are perceived as incidental. | |
| Int 45: Men, 40 years old, Polish | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - avoiding answering questions about positive parts of development: significant achievement, characteristic he is mostly proud of - short answers or general answer - possibly wanted to hide own identity - inconsistent answers: acting not authentic described as not harmful, but COBS and inner standard of being described fully as protector of authenticity | Negligent interview | A person responds to questions with brief, impersonal answers, sometimes even leaving some questions unanswered. The narration also reveals inconsistencies, with statements that are occasionally contradictory. | BASIC NEEDS |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - describes himself as joyful and optimistic - being self makes him happy - no improvements to feel more self - proud of many characteristics of his - he is self while doing most of the things in his life | Positive being | A person portrays themselves as a positive individual, proud of their accomplishments, and consistently aligned with their true self throughout life. | POSITION TO EMOTIONS |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - vision of self: appears like a dream during sleep - priorities formed in a slow process - every stage of life shows new things - the process of becoming the self, described as lighting - learning from mistakes, drawing conclusions - what was easy: from the current perspective everything and would not change anything | Generalities of development | A person provides general answers to questions about their development, making it difficult to discern their unique experiences and perspectives. | FOUNDATION FOR AUTHENTIC SELF |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - loves competition - used to do sport (professionally ?) - describes himself as a sport-type - in self-description focus on own physicality (men after 40, athletic) - athletic body | Sport as a significant factor in self-formation | Sport is highlighted as a pivotal element in self-identification and self-development, having served as the primary | SIGNIFICANT FACTORS OF SELF-DEVELOPMENT |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - unsatisfied with own irritability and arrogance - with to improve own temper - sacrifices of training - do not give up - key circumstances: end of sports carrier - achievements form character | | driver of personal growth. The necessity to resign from it and cope with that change is recognized as a crucial circumstance. | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - being influenced by the role of father and husband (by family) - significant circumstance: marriage, birth of children - sport as an important factor in life - unrealized plans: less frequently, experienced as thought it wasn't meant to be like this, would change - reflection about decisions inconsistent with own personality: sporadically, - a reflection that inconsistent with personality actions that make other people happy, do not have any impact on him - lack of authenticity: acting not fully according to own personality does not bring him a feeling of lack of authenticity - acting not according to his own personality does not bring him a feeling of lack of authenticity - no experiencing feelings of inconsistency between who he is and ought to be - the inner standard of being: defined as becoming the one we are, avoiding acts against our will - COBS: function: remembrance to not make mistakes or act against one's own personality - COBS manifestations: while making decisions under similar circumstances that already happened; behind the head is conscience, which is like a brake, yes experienced | Relation to self and authenticity | The roles of father and husband, along with significant life events like marriage and the birth of children, underscore the importance of sport in the person's life. Reflection on unrealized plans, inconsistent decisions, or inauthentic behavior occurs sporadically, as these events are seen as inevitable and relatively harmless if they aim to please others, although they may spark a desire for change. The inner standard of being involves staying true to oneself and avoiding actions against one's will. Self-development should be guided by an internal conscience that acts as a brake during decision-making, helping to avoid mistakes and ensuring alignment with one's personality. | STRATEGY AND PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT |
| Int 46: Men, 46 years old, Polish | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - describes himself through characteristics used in relations: sociable, nice and friendly - underlining the importance of friends and environment in one's own development - difficulty: catching up with friends | Described socially | Social identification is prominent in the person's narrative, as they describe themselves using abilities that are valuable in social | POSITION TO SOCIAL CONTEXT |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - easiness in making new friends - priorities taken from parents - wish he had more time with his parents in the past - key circumstance: at age of 15, being responsible for own siblings | | interactions. The importance of quality time with friends and parents is emphasized, along with the responsibility taken for siblings, all of which are portrayed as influential factors in their self-development. | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the process of becoming the self: growing up - do not remember significant achievements, do not reflect about them - reflections about inconsistency between who he is and ought to be limited to situations when he is drunk, feels embarrassment - what to improve: style of life - being self as a source of comfort - lack of authenticity: would say that sometimes person needs to be silent - declares no sacrifices | Limited reflection | The responses given by the person appear simplified, limited, or overly general, making it difficult to fully understand their individual perspective on the issues discussed. While the person acknowledges that authenticity brings comfort, they also admit that inauthenticity may sometimes be necessary, such as choosing to stay silent in certain situations. | QUALITY OF THE INTERVIEW |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - short, fast answers - simple answers, lack of deeper reflection - answering in general way | Quality of interview and reflection | The responses provided by the person are brief and straightforward, often lacking in-depth reflection or detailed exploration of the topics discussed. | QUALITY OF THE INTERVIEW |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - reflection about unrealized plans: often/ remorse of conscience, sadness, lost chance, would change for sure - reflection about decisions inconsistent with own personality: often, reflection that he impresses only himself at this moments - vision of self: pleasant pursuing goals, appears when he makes good choices - inner standard of being: self-actualization - COBS function: like an alarm “be careful what this can lead to” - COBS manifestations: anger, sadness, didn’t experience - hard-working | Way of self-actualization control | An individual describes self-characteristics and mental processes that influence their self-actualization. While they believe that conscience should play a key role in guiding development—acting as an alarm that triggers negative emotions | CONSCIENCE OF BECOMING THE SELF |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - wise | | like sadness and anger in response to unrealized plans or inconsistent decisions—they admit that they have not actually experienced these emotions in such situations. | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - strong - handsome - hard-working - wise - impatient and sloppy: unsatisfied with these characteristics | Self-description | The individual offers a collection of traits that shape their self-image, encompassing positive physical attributes (such as being handsome and strong), positive psychological qualities (like being wise and hardworking), and negative psychological traits (such as being impatient and sloppy). There is an expressed hope for improvement in the negative aspects. | SIGNIFICANT FACTOR OF SELF-DEVELOPMENT |
| Int 47: Men, 45 years old, Polish | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - difficulty in differentiating and describing developmental processes (doesn't describe the process of forming priorities but enumerates most important values; the process of becoming the self and process of forming priorities are described almost the same way) - possible do not fully understand questions - marriage as an important factor, overshadowing other reflections - general descriptions, as if lacking words, intuitive writing, using adjectives instead of description - the inner standard of being: in a life span our experiences form our standard - COBS: control function/ manifestations: dilemmas, experienced - lack of authenticity: makes him weak | Difficulty in expressing knowledge about development | The individual appears to struggle with articulating their understanding of self-discovery, prioritizing values, and assessing the quality of their self-development. This difficulty suggests a potential lack of vocabulary or limited access to self-awareness in these areas. Despite this, the person acknowledges that inauthenticity weakens them, indicating an awareness of the | BASIC NEEDS |

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| | | | importance of authenticity in their development. | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - family, children, wife – as significant social support - reliability, protectiveness, empathy, being nice as important characteristics - key circumstance: getting married - significant for personality achievement: getting married; frequency of reflection: every day; motivator: love - key values: love, family, job and stabilisation - the process of becoming the self: happiness, love, protectiveness, stabilization - easy to find a job - being self as a source of comfort coz he feels good in his skin - no changes to feel more self - the importance of persistence | Source of stabilisation and self-comfort | <p>The individual identifies family—specifically their children, wife, and marriage—as crucial elements of social support, serving as key motivators and sources of daily reflection. Core personal traits such as reliability, persistence, protectiveness, empathy, and kindness are emphasized as essential qualities that maintain a sense of stability.</p> <p>Becoming oneself is deeply intertwined with values like love, family, job, and stabilization, collectively contributing to feelings of happiness and comfort in one's identity.</p> | SIGNIFICANT FACTORS OF SELF-DEVELOPMENT |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - difficulties: family, job, child <p>traveling neglected needs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - reflection about unrealized dreams: frequency: bi-weekly; pity he cannot travel around the world; yes, would change - vision of self appears when he have unexpected journey, experienced as interesting, happiness, not really rational - feeling of inconsistency appear under the circumstances of travelling of his friends or his/ experienced feeling of uneasy, as if he was cheating himself - costs: could not travel around the world <p>improvements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - higher consequence - want to improve openness - reflection about inconsistent for personality decisions: rarely, make him a little sad, | Troubling spheres | <p>A person identifies a list of unmet desires and sacrifices, such as the unfulfilled wish to travel, which remains a persistent, unsatisfied need that they think about frequently. This unfulfilled desire is significant as it induces feelings of self-cheating when comparing their own travel achievements to those of friends.</p> <p>Additionally, the person recognizes areas of self-functioning that need</p> | CONSCIENCE OF BECOMING THE SELF |

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| | | | improvement, including a need for greater consistency and openness. | |
| Int 48: Men, 52 years old, Polish | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - honour and conscientiousness as significant characteristics - the process of becoming the self acting according to own moral and religious code and duties - adequate for personality decisions: changing job for less profitable but more adequate for own moral values, with prospects for development of own interests, and giving satisfaction of being helpful for others/ sporadically (coz life can still surprise?) - motivator: moral code, the inner belief of the necessity of being self instead of acting like a marionette - lack of authenticity makes him feel like a slave who sells his own ideals and values - being self as a privilege, demanding constant fighting. No always possible way of expressing own alterity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - reflection about inconsistent with personality decisions appears in situations of taking duties of the leader; bravely and categorically - the inner standard of being: coherency with own values, modification and control of behaviour adequately to own priorities - the function of COBS: first, inner judge and verifier of behaviour in the context of rules, norms, faith, and possibilities in the real world, experienced - manifestations of COBS: assessment of own behaviour in the context of possibilities and rules <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - vision of self: appears in situations of not acting according to own rules: working on Sundays/experiencing as self-betrayal, helplessness, lack of humanity - feeling of inconsistency between who he is and ought to be: appears in job where his values are not respected: truth and honesty are rated lower than profit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - costs: small pleasures | Values as a modifier of reality in emphasizing own alterity | <p>An inner moral code, composed of values, priorities, ideals, and beliefs, serves as a critical verifier and motivator for one's behavior, acting as an essential reference point in decision-making and ultimately shaping a person's self-identity. The quality of self-development and authentic behaviour is closely tied to the consistency of these personal rules. Consequently, a lack of authenticity feels like a betrayal of one's ideals, while maintaining authenticity is seen as a privilege that requires constant effort and struggle.</p> | SIGNIFICANT FACTORS OF SELF-DEVELOPMENT |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the feeling of inconsistency between who he is and ought to be: does not appear because of family support - priorities formed adequately to needs of significant life goals: science, job, marriage, parenthood - difficulty in adapting to the new environment of the city and science where truth is not always appreciated - feeling of inconsistency between who he is and ought to be: appears | Social forming | A person is self-aware of the social circumstances from which they have emerged and remains sensitive to current influences. Effectively managing social roles and | POSITION TO SOCIAL CONTEXT |

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| | <p>when his children do not follow his values being useful and helpful as an important motive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - significant characteristic: openness to the needs of others - sensitive to other people's foolishness <p>- need to improve social relations: finding new interesting people, in job focusing on relations with co-workers not only on the job do be done</p> <p>- easy: to work for other people, see the result of work, happiness, and satisfaction</p> <p>- achievements: family</p> <p>- the self-confidence of being good in social roles: key circumstance: fear he won't manage to fulfill the role of husband, father; achievements: the confidence of himself as partner, friend, husband, father</p> | | maintaining relationships, particularly with family, is recognized as a significant achievement, contributing to increased self-confidence and satisfaction with who they are. | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - man of strong opinions - not satisfied with not enough assertiveness and stubbornness - middle-aged man - always busy <p>- easy: to work for other people, see the result of work, happiness, and satisfaction</p> <p>- difficulty in adapting to the new environment of the city and science where truth is not always appreciated</p> <p>- the self-confidence of being good in social roles: key circumstance: fear he won't manage to fulfill the role of husband, father; achievements: the confidence of himself as partner, friend, husband, father</p> | Strength and persistence of self | A person's qualities of character and behaviour portray them as independent and confident in social roles and people management. This position has been achieved by overcoming an initial fear of failure in these roles. However, the person still desires to develop greater assertiveness. | POSITION TO SOCIAL CONTEXT |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - looking for new books - importance of "truth" and own statements and values - significant achievement of gaining education despite financial difficulties <p>- in the process of becoming the self: important was: job, responsibility, and faith</p> <p>- key circumstances: finishing studies</p> | Scientific and job development | The pursuit of knowledge and truth in the scientific realm, combined with the persistence to complete studies despite challenges, and finding a job aligned with personal values and beliefs, are recognized by the individual as significant drivers in shaping who they are today. | SIGNIFICANT FACTORS OF SELF-DEVELOPMENT |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - reflection about unrealized plans: not really often, <p>- reflection about unrealized plans: nothing can be changed, and those thoughts have a destructive impact on new challenges, bringing fear of new things (to not lose again)</p> | Effect of unrealized plans | The individual experiences a strong emotional reaction when reflecting on unrealized plans, often | CONSCIENCE OF BECOMING THE SELF |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - reflection about unrealized plans: regretting not enough resolve, stubbornness, or bravery to achieve something or do something better - unrealized plans: would change but he does not regret, building character | | <p>marked by regret over lacking the resolve, stubbornness, or bravery to accomplish goals or improve past actions. However, recognizing the destructive impact of dwelling on these regrets, the person consciously avoids frequent reflection on such failures, instead adopting the belief that failures contribute to character building.</p> | |
| Int 49: Men, 28 years old, Polish | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - process of becoming the self: coping with problems, experiencing crises, wining with obstacles - key circumstances: new challenges - vision of self: doing things as he wants, pursuing more challenges, appearing when new tasks and problems come - the inner standard of being: getting to the chosen goal | Struggling as a strategy for development | <p>An individual emphasizes the developmental benefits of facing and overcoming struggles and difficulties. This approach is seen as essential for achieving chosen goals, as it fosters resilience and growth through a challenge-oriented attitude.</p> | STRATEGY AND PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - insular-isolated like on an island - not satisfied with his antisocial - difficulty in cooperating with people - key circumstance: new schools - difficulty in saying own opinion in public: adequate for personality decision: not saying anything when someone was yelling at him, motivator: own personality - being self as comfort because pretending is exhausting - sacrifices: no parties | Socially uncomfortable | <p>The individual expresses feelings of discomfort and isolation within social contexts, struggling to cooperate with others and assert personal opinions. Despite these challenges, the person emphasizes that being true to oneself brings comfort, as pretending to be someone else leads to exhaustion.</p> | POSITION TO SOCIAL CONTEXT |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the feeling of inconsistency between who he is and ought to be: rarely, he thinks he is who he should be - COBS function: reflection | Uncertain developmental | <p>The individual demonstrates an inconsistent and</p> | QUALITY OF THE INTERVIEW |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - COBS manifestation: depends on someone's attitude, maybe negative or positive - reflection about consistent personality decisions: limited to situations of social difficulty in saying own opinion - reflection about unrealized plans: sometimes he wonders what his life would have looked like; they would change who he is <p>blocked reflection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - no reflections about inconsistent personality decisions - not often reflecting on consistent personality decisions - blockade reflection about unrealized plans: frequency of reflection about unrealized plans: avoiding answering questions (no, he does what he wants/) - reflection about inauthenticity: none - admits not to experience COBS <p>contradictions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - describes himself as happy, though significant characteristics is being sad and neurotic - contradicting himself throughout the interview - repeatedly says he does what he wants, though he also admits having a problem standing up for himself publicly - admits to not paying much attention to reflections about inconsistent for personality decisions, though he gives an example of not expressing his opinion publicly | reflection | contradictory approach to self-reflection, particularly regarding personal authenticity and alignment with their ideal self. While they often claim to be content and assertive, their reflections reveal uncertainty, avoidance, and contradictions, especially in areas like expressing opinions publicly and considering unrealized plans. The person admits to limited reflection on consistent and inconsistent personality decisions, further complicating their self-assessment and developmental understanding. | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - conscientious - punctual - perfectionist - important event: finishing studies (graduation) - priorities: goals set since primary school - easy to learn during studies - achievement: diploma - would start studies earlier | Intellectual base | The person is characterized by a strong intellectual foundation, marked by conscientiousness, punctuality, and perfectionism. Significant life events, such as academic achievements, reflect priorities established from a young age. The desire to have started studies earlier underscores a deep value placed on intellectual growth and education. | SIGNIFICANT FACTORS OF SELF-DEVELOPMENT |
| Int 50: Men, | - significant: open to people, kind, humorous | Criteria of social | The person recognizes | POSITION TO |

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| 32 years old, Polish | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - being self as a source of comfort, no need to adjust to anybody, wearing various masks is a source of discomfort, being self – less stress, more comfort in life / no changes to feel more self - in the process of becoming the self, the importance of significant others: parent, peers (less), mentors - priorities formed through conversations with friends who achieved success - adequate for personality decisions/achievements: helping sick family member - motivator: own empathic personality, values taken from parents - adequate for personality: helping other people - reflection about the inconsistency between who he is and ought to appear in relation to others when he needs to adjust to the situation - vision of self appears in moments of freedom (especially with family), in running, and in job rarely | context | social support, comforting relationships, and guidance as crucial for self-formation and development. Traits such as empathy and helping others are viewed as essential. However, social influences can also have a limiting effect, as the need to adjust to others can lead to an inconsistency between who the person is and who they desire to be. | SOCIAL CONTEXT |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - avoiding reflections about unrealized plans coz it lowers his mood - reflections about inconsistent personality decisions bring him anger, lower his self-esteem, frustration - lack of authenticity: unsure, tense, stressed, upset - reflection about inconsistency between who he is and ought to be: lack control in life, uncertainty causing tenseness, stress | Emotional modifier | Reflection on self-development, particularly on unfulfilled or neglected areas, triggers unpleasant emotional reactions that the person seeks to avoid. Similar feelings of tension, stress, and a sense of lost control, along with lower self-esteem, arise when the person encounters decisions or behaviours that are inconsistent with their personality or feel inauthentic. | POSITION TO EMOTIONS |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - sometimes, many years of analysis of mistakes let him go forward - avoiding reflections about unrealized plans coz it brings him repetitive, overwhelming analysis; those situations would change who he is - avoiding reflections about inconsistent with personality decisions (rare reflection) - achievement: learned to make faster analysis - difficulty in overcoming self-limiting schemes of thinking and habits from childhood - needs to improve: self-focus - proud of ability to draw conclusions | Analysis strategy | A person adopts an analytical approach when reflecting on self-development and coherence with their identity. This overwhelming, repetitive analysis is recognized as a twofold tool: it aids in progress by drawing valuable conclusions, yet it | CONSCIENCE OF BECOMING THE SELF |

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| | | | also brings discomfort. Eventually, the person had to overcome this self-limiting analysis, shifting towards a faster and more productive mindset. | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - cots: leaving the sphere of comfort, acting in discomfort and stress - the process of becoming the self: sinusoidal character, once up, once down - significant circumstances concerning traumas: own serious illness, an accident he caused and put him in hospital, severe sickness of a member of a family, breaking up with girlfriend - priorities formed by crisis, for example severe sickness of a family member, financial crisis - adequate for personality decisions/achievements: helping sick family member/motivator: own personality/frequency of reflection: when he talk about this situation - learning from one's own and others mistakes - cots of development: bad decisions which put him two steps back, but drawing conclusions would push him two steps forward - proud of: perseverance, finishing studies | <p>Struggles as an essential factor</p> | <p>The person perceives struggles as a crucial element in their self-development, often involving stepping out of their comfort zone and facing discomfort and stress. The process of becoming oneself is experienced as sinusoidal, with periods of highs and lows. Significant life events, such as personal and family illnesses, accidents, and breakups, have shaped their priorities, often formed in response to crises. The person emphasizes learning from both personal and others' mistakes. Although bad decisions sometimes set them back, they believe that drawing conclusions from these experiences pushes them forward.</p> | <p>STRATEGY AND PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT</p> | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - vision of self, experienced as self-acceptation, self-realization - need to improve self-discipline - key characteristics described as inner and psychological - inner standard of being: creating character and personality based on deeply embedded ethical values and hierarchy of values - COBS function: gives a signal if this act or decision we plan to commit is consistent with our hierarchy of values, experienced | <p>Inner qualities</p> | <p>The person emphasizes inner and psychological characteristics, viewing self-acceptance and self-realization as central to their vision of self. They are guided by a deeply</p> | <p>CONSCIENCE OF BECOMING THE SELF</p> | |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - COBS role of filter, meaning: criterion in decision making - the manifestation of COBS: change of decision, based on two different criteria | | <p>embedded ethical framework and a hierarchy of values that shape their character and personality. They believe that development should be directed by clear criteria for decision-making, ensuring alignment with their core values.</p> | |
| Int 51: Men, 36 years old, Polish | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - completely no reflection on adequate for personality decisions - no reflection about inconsistent with personality decisions - never experienced a vision of self - no reflection about lack of authenticity because he always is authentic, no changes to feel more self - could not point out key circumstances - very short answers | No developmental reflection/blocked? | <p>The person provides brief, undeveloped answers, resulting in ambiguity regarding their reflection on self-development and self-awareness. This lack of depth suggests either a blockage in their ability to engage with these topics or a reluctance to explore them further.</p> | QUALITY OF THE INTERVIEW |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - unrealized plans: rare reflection, would change, anger - COBS function of frustrations, manifestation: in thoughts - peaceful and patient - being self may be toxic for other people, being self at any costs may give apparent comfort, with time bringing troubles - inconsistency between who he is and ought to appear in the context of earnings, brings regret (żal) | Conflict between self-perception and expectations | <p>A person experiences negative emotional states such as anger, frustration, and regret when faced with disruptions in self-development or dissatisfaction with their self-image, although such reflections are rare. Despite these challenges, the person maintains a generally peaceful and patient demeanour. They hold a belief that being true to oneself can sometimes be detrimental to others and may result in long-term personal difficulties, thus</p> | CONSCIENCE OF BECOMING THE SELF |

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| | | | emphasizing the potential negative aspects of authenticity. | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - describe himself through physical characteristics: middle height, dark hair, brown eyes - achievements: build a house - costs concerning financial limitations: no vacations, cheap car - difficulties: lack of money, son's accident - achievements: stable job - inconsistency between who he is and ought to appear in the context of earnings, bringing regret (żal) - would choose a different career | Material and physical aspects | The emphasis on material needs and achievements—such as financial stability, building a house, and physical attributes—reveals their significant role in self-identification. These aspects indicate that a prosperous career and financial success are highly desired for the person, contributing to their self-concept and aspirations. | BASIC NEEDS |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the inner standard of being: being consequent - accessible in flexible fulfilling duties - priorities formed in the home - the process of becoming self - being faithful to his ideals - always himself - important circumstance: birth of children - hard-working - wish to improve punctuality and assertiveness | Duties and consistency | Central to self-identification and self-growth is the commitment to being consistent and faithful to one's own ideals, which allows the person to always feel true to themselves. Reliable qualities such as punctuality and assertiveness are areas where there is a desire for improvement. Situations involving high responsibility, such as the birth of children, are significant milestones that highlight the importance of fulfilling duties and maintaining consistency. | SIGNIFICANT FACTORS OF SELF-DEVELOPMENT |
| Int 52: Men, 29 years old, Polish | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - proud of own family - in self-development, the importance of meeting his wife - the process of becoming the self strongly influenced by starting one's own | Breakthrough event: starting family | The experience of starting a family, particularly significant moments like | POSITION TO SOCIAL CONTEXT |

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| | <p>family early</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - key circumstances: fast development of his family, having a child - adequate for personality achievements: becoming a father, not often reflection, motivator: cannot imagine life without his son, before fear, later adapting to situation | | <p>the birth of a child, serves as a pivotal reference point for the person when reflecting on self-development and self-identification. These events, coupled with the responsibilities they bring, are seen as character-building, recognized as key achievements, and act as powerful motivators for self-improvement. Fulfilling the role of a father aligns with the person's sense of identity and purpose.</p> | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - being responsible as an important characteristic -decisiveness as an important characteristic - perfectionism an important characteristic - unsatisfied with being lazy - do not experience high sacrifices - difficulties in being persistent in achieving goals - the feeling of inconsistency between who he is and ought to be: experienced as a lack of self-fulfilling, aversion to everything/ experienced when reaching goals is too difficult - vision of self: very positive, feeling good when things are working out/appears when things he planned work, or he sees the result of his work - COBS function: inner responsibility, which can guide us towards appropriate goals/ manifestations: pangs of conscience, intrusive thoughts about own behaviour, yes experienced | <p>Goals in self-development</p> | <p>The individual exhibits a mindset and traits that ensure persistence and effectiveness in achieving goals. Disruptions in this process are closely tied to a lack of self-fulfillment, particularly when a goal proves too difficult to attain. Self-development regulation is seen as a mechanism that aids in reaching these goals, often through intrusive thoughts and pangs of conscience that drive the person toward their objectives, while positive feelings arise when plans progress smoothly as expected.</p> | <p>STRATEGY AND PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT</p> |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - proud of the job, job as a significant achievement - in development importance of studies, various student internships, job | <p>Studies and career peruse</p> | <p>Academic education and career advancement are</p> | <p>SIGNIFICANT FACTORS OF</p> |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - difficulty in being persistent in searching for a job - unrealized plans: starting second major, frequency: do not answer, regret, pangs of conscience, would start second major earlier | | <p>significant achievements in the individual's self-growth. Key milestones, such as starting a second major and completing internships, highlight this progression. However, there are still some unrealized plans that the person regrets and feels pangs of conscience about, though the frequency of these reflections is uncertain.</p> | SELF-DEVELOPMENT |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - describes himself mostly by terms assessing appearance: the way I look is fine, I think the way I look is ok - neat, clean - masculine - wish to improve his physique | Physical appearances focus | <p>The individual's self-description emphasizes physical attributes that contribute to an overall image of being a good-looking man, though there is a desire to further improve their physique.</p> | SIGNIFICANT FACTORS OF SELF-DEVELOPMENT |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - being open and sociable are important characteristics - difficulties experienced as lower with support of close ones - priorities formed by upbringing, friends, environment - the process of becoming self-influenced by the environment, growing up, development, and +early starting a family - regard to emotions of significant others - Inconsistent with personality decisions: appears in conversations with close ones when he does not want to hurt them; reflections have no impact on him - unsatisfied with his jealousy | Environmental and social forming | <p>A person emerges self within the social context and adjusts behaviour to consider the emotions and opinions of significant people. As a result, they may act inconsistently with their own personality to prevent hurting others. Consequently, personal attributes related to flexibility in relationships are considered important.</p> | POSITION TO SOCIAL CONTEXT |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Avoiding answering about frequency of reflection: adequate for personality decisions, unrealized plans, decisions inconsistent with personality - inner standard of being: development of own person/ personality - feels himself 100% | Reflection | <p>A person tends to avoid discussing the frequency of reflections on topics such as personality decisions,</p> | QUALITY OF THE INTERVIEW |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - being self as source of comfort coz pretending would make him tired - lack of authenticity: never feel it | | <p>unrealized plans, or decisions inconsistent with their personality. They emphasize an inner standard focused on the development of their own self and personality. They feel completely in tune with themselves, finding comfort in being authentic, as pretense would be exhausting. Consequently, they report never experiencing a lack of authenticity.</p> | |
| Int 53: Men, 72 years old, Polish | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - distant reflection: time for reflection about past development: twice a week in an armchair: adequate for personality decisions, decisions inconsistent with own personality - COSB function: pangs of conscience, thought how I could lead to this, depends from the past assessment manifestations: anger, sadness, fear or happiness / yes experienced in a positive way - unrealized plans reflections bring regret (żal), pangs of conscience - unrealized plan: didn't buy a new car (salonu), instead bought cheaper and used the money for other purposes, no regrets | <p>Pragmatic reflection vs. Emotional</p> | <p>The person engages in pragmatic reflection about their past development and decisions, including those inconsistent with their personality, approximately twice a week in a calm setting. This reflection often involves pangs of conscience and contemplation of how different choices could have led to different outcomes. Reflections on unrealized plans, such as everyday decisions like which car to buy, typically evoke regret and pangs of conscience. Emotional reactions during these reflections can range from anger, sadness, and fear to positive feelings.</p> | <p>CONSCIENCE OF BECOMING THE SELF</p> |
| | - elder, polite man, tidy, hard-working | Self as it is | The person is an elder, | FOUNDATION |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - feel himself, though wish to be more assertive - being self as a source of comfort - the process of becoming the self: getting to know himself, new environment, new society, life - key characteristics: manhood, decisiveness, hard-working - vision of self: pleasure, feeling of responsibility and full authority, appear in important decisions where he needs to resign of something - the inner standard of being: doing things in accordance with himself - adequate for personality decisions: if he decided something, he did it - motivator for personality adequate decisions: personality, need, hunch (przeczuć) - inconsistent for personality decisions: he is as he is - lack of authenticity: feeling of being lost - inconsistency between who he is and ought to be: never felt this way, he kept moving forward or accepted if something went wrong - he thinks he is who he should be | | <p>polite, and hard-working individual who feels comfortable with themselves but desires to be more assertive. They view the process of self-development as learning about themselves and adapting to new environments. Key characteristics include manhood, decisiveness, and -hard work. Their vision of self involves pleasure, responsibility, and authority, especially in significant decisions. They adhere to their inner standards by aligning actions with their true self. Motivation for decisions comes from personal conviction and intuition. They have never experienced a significant inconsistency between who they are and who they should be, feeling content with their self-concept and accepting outcomes as they come.</p> | FOR AUTHENTIC SELF |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - feel himself, though wish to be more assertive - the process of becoming the self: getting to know himself, new environment, new society, life - wish to be more assertive - key characteristics: care for others - key circumstances: wife's accident <p>parenthood</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - proud of raising his two children | <p>Socially formed process of becoming the self</p> | <p>The individual's self-development is deeply intertwined with social roles and influences, particularly parenthood, family values, and responsibilities. Parenthood is seen as a pivotal life</p> | <p>POSITION TO SOCIAL CONTEXT</p> |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - important moment: birth and upbringing of children - sacrifices of first child, resignation from travels around the country - upbringing children as the most difficult and responsible task - achievements: children and grandchildren <p>values from parents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - importance in development: father teachings, he followed his father's way - priority taught by parents that family is most important, and that is his greatest responsibility <p>family</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - wish to improve relation and take care more for his wife, be less possessive - home and land inherited after parents as a source of stability - important moments: getting married - he wishes he had taken care of his wife better - key circumstance: death of parents | | <p>stage requiring sacrifices but also serving as a significant source of pride. The person has internalized values from their parents, especially lessons from their father about caring for others and the importance of family responsibility. Family remains a crucial reference point for ongoing self-improvement, both in striving to be a better husband and reflecting on past behaviors with a desire to improve. Overall, the person's character is shaped and strengthened through the fulfillment of social roles and adaptation to social expectations.</p> | |
| Int 54: Men, 30 years old, Polish | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - forced interview - no will to elaborate on questions - no deeper reflection or awareness of own process of development - possibly do not want to share information about himself - possibly not willing to openly attend interview | Neglected interview | <p>The person's responses suggest a lack of motivation for in-depth reflection and a reluctance to share their own perspective.</p> | BASIC NEEDS |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - denying ever experience inconsistent with personality decisions, lack of authenticity, feeling of inconsistency between who he is and ought to be - no reflection on COBS, the vision of self, the inner standard of being - never experienced COBS or vision of self - do not try show difficulties, costs, or any details on the process of becoming the self - cannot show key circumstances of self-development | Questionable quality of reflection | <p>The person denies ever experiencing disturbances in their self-development or behaviour as insufficient or inauthentic. However, their minimal elaboration and lack of justification in their responses suggest a lack of insight and a superficial attitude toward the questions.</p> | BASIC NEEDS |
| | - adequate for personality decision: getting married, frequency of reflections: | Social importance | The social environment and | POSITION TO |

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| | <p>sometimes/ motivator: love and need to start own family</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - priorities formed: upbringing by parents - important in the process of becoming the self: family support (family, friends) - childhood as easy part of the process of creating self - process of becoming the self: every life experience taught him something and formed him | | <p>relationships are recognized as essential in the process of self-recognition, such as forming priorities through parental upbringing and supportive connections. Moreover, there is an underlying belief that experiences within these contexts serve as a valuable way to learn and as a tool for shaping one's identity.</p> | SOCIAL CONTEXT |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - focus on physical aspects in self-introduction: 189 cm tall, blond hair, blue eyes, thin - qualities focused on self-control: patience, self-restraint, punctuality, responsibility, wish to be more sociable - the importance of studying in forming self - lack of self-confidence but generally satisfied with life - being self as the source of comfort - reflection about unrealized plans: once a week, pangs of conscience, sadness, would not change who he is | Holistic self-perception and reflection | <p>The individual's self-concept is shaped by a blend of physical self-awareness, disciplined qualities like patience and responsibility, and the influence of education. Despite a lack of self-confidence, they generally feel satisfied with life and find comfort in authenticity. Regular reflection on unrealized plans brings about emotional responses such as sadness and pangs of conscience, though these reflections are not seen as altering their core identity.</p> | SIGNIFICANT FACTORS OF SELF-DEVELOPMENT |
| Int 55: Men, 50 years old, Polish | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - firm, responsible, conscientiousness - in the process of becoming the self-importance of ambition, firmness self-motivation to say own opinion publicly: reminding himself adequate for personality act: breakthrough standing up to his colleagues in school/ making his own statement, being more respected/, motivator: situation made by his colleagues/ - being self as a source of comfort coz pretending is exhausting | Through inner control | <p>Self-motivation, supported by goal-focused characteristics such as ambition, firmness, and a desire to express opinions and earn respect, describes a person of integrity. This</p> | CONSCIENCE OF BECOMING THE SELF |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - vision of self: gives him a feeling of fulfilment, appears when he feels control over life - the inner standard of being: the whole spectrum of life impulses that affect the psychophysical development of a person - COBS function: would show how to act through (manifestation) aversion to do anything against own beliefs | | <p>integrity fosters comfort in authenticity, with self-development guided by coherence with personal beliefs. A fulfilling vision of self emerges when life feels under control, and an inner standard of being acts as a driving force, influencing both the psychological and physical development of the individual.</p> | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - priorities formed through career goals: getting an education, getting a satisfying job, now family - the process of creating the self: carrier - wish to put more attention to learning in the past - key circumstances: passing an exam to dream university, school far away from home, job, meeting his future wife, the birth of a child - important characteristics: helpful and thoughtful - biggest achievements: wife and children - sacrifices: being separated from family - difficulty in stabilization between job and family life - achievements: financial stability achieved with the help of his wife and family stabilization - to be more self needs to have more free time | Carrier-family in development | <p>A person experiences a notable shift from a career-driven focus to one centered around family in their self-identification. Their biographical reflection intertwines past educational and career achievements with the current significance of family. This shift represents a significant achievement and source of stability, with family becoming the primary reference point for decision-making. Despite this focus, the person emphasizes the need for free time to feel more aligned with their sense of self.</p> | SIGNIFICANT FACTORS OF SELF-DEVELOPMENT |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - unrealized plans reflection: not often, moderate regrets (wyrzuty), would change who he is - decisions inconsistent with personality reflection: rarely makes him feel a little bad, - lack of authenticity: makes him feel uneasy | Rare negative developmental reflection/moderate reaction | <p>The person engages in infrequent reflection on unrealized plans and decisions inconsistent with their personality, resulting</p> | CONSCIENCE OF BECOMING THE SELF |

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| | - experiencing no feeling of inconsistency between who he is and ought to be | | in moderate regret or unease. They experience a lack of authenticity as uncomfortable but do not feel significant inconsistency between their current self and their ideal self. | |
| Int 56: Men, 43 years old, Polish | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - feels good about himself - being self as a source of comfort coz doesn't like to pretend someone else - acceptance as significant in the process of becoming the self - difficulties: tolerance from others / being tolerated by others - the inner standard of being: truthfulness - COBS manifestation: self-acceptation | Importance of acceptance | Self-acceptance is seen as a crucial regulator of self-development, essential for feeling comfortable when being authentic. A person also acknowledges the challenge of dealing with intolerant relationships, highlighting the importance of acceptance from others in their personal growth. | FOUNDATION OF AUTHENTIC SELF |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - stable - key characteristic: keeping own word - perseverance - wish to be more patient - motivator adequate for personality decisions: reasonable decisions - always being authentic - easy to make partnerships - would change future planning | Stable character | The individual's self-description highlights personal attributes such as stability, reliability, and perseverance, combined with a mindset focused on patience and making reasoned decisions. These qualities contribute to an overall image of a stable character, reinforcing a consistent sense of authenticity. | SIGNIFICANT FACTORS OF SELF-DEVELOPMENT |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - rare reflection about unrealized plans, no pangs of conscience, would change nothing - declares experiencing no inconsistent with personality decisions, have no impact on him, - declares experiencing no feeling of inconsistency between who he is and ought to be | Lack of reflection | An individual reports infrequent reflection on unrealized plans or behaviours that are inconsistent or inauthentic, viewing such occurrences as rare and insignificant, | BASIC NEEDS |

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| | | | with little impact on their life. | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - costs: some costs - achievements: achievements useful in the future - priorities: self-determined - the process of becoming the self: course of life - key circumstances: adjusting circumstances - adequate for personality decisions: situations self-determined, rarely, motivator: reasonable decisions - vision of self: described as experiencing, appearing in life - COBS: function: naturalness | Tautological answers | The individual responds to questions by using repetitive or rephrased terms from the questions themselves, resulting in answers that provide minimal new information or personal insight. | BASIC NEEDS |
| Int 57: Men, 33 years old, Polish | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - wish to be a good role model for his children as significant in self-description - key characteristic: empathy - proud of a happy family - cots: early adult life, need to support himself financially in a young age, lost fun time during studies - would work harder before starting own family - priorities formed under the influence of his family of origin and his own current family - key circumstances: situation in family of origin and own family | Family creation/ stage of life brake trough | The upbringing in a family of origin and experiences within the nuclear family are recognized as pivotal in self-identification and self-development. These influences have shaped priorities, with starting and fulfilling the roles of a good partner and father seen as essential and significant achievements. | POSITION TO SOCIAL CONTEXT |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - proud of job position, like his job - need to improve even more organization and learn to relax - adequate for personality decisions: success in important project/ frequency: rare - unrealized plans: neglected language learning, it was difficult to get back to it and took much more time/ often reflection, little impact on who he is | Carrier development significance | Career development and the desire for improvement, such as enhancing self-management skills and balancing relaxation with work, are seen as significant for self-development. Proper career progress aligns with the individual's personality, and unrealized plans often focus on neglected opportunities for skill improvement. Reflection on these missed opportunities occurs | STRATEGY AND PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT |

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| | | | frequently despite having little impact on the person's current sense of self. | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - self-confidence - motto: taking from life as much as possible - key characteristics: bravery - key characteristics: be precise (dokładność) - proud of the ability to overcome obstacles - proud of the ability to adapt to new environments - feels himself, does not need to change anything - being a source of comfort, no not need to pretend, does what he wants - import in life: determination, thinking about the future - achievements: achieved what he had dreamed since childhood, life on a good level - easy in finding what he wants to do in his life - process of becoming the self: leaving own life on own rules, guiding own goals, doesn't care about opinions of insignificant people - motivator for adequate for personality decisions: thinking about the future - gaining higher self-confidence after a successful project (adequate decision) - vision of self: making own decisions, good feeling, feeling free, appearing every day when he does what he wants - acceptance of troubles (difficulty in acceptance of problems, of fact, that life is not perfect / he can try to make it better) - tries to always act in coherency with himself and to be authentic so he doesn't experience inconsistent with personality decisions and reflection about it - lack of authenticity: feels uncomfortable - doesn't experience reflections about inconsistency between who he is and ought to be: declares he is happy | Fate in own hands | The individual exhibits a strong sense of control over their life, underpinned by psychological strengths like self-confidence, bravery, precision in behavior, and a mentality focused on maximizing life's opportunities. They believe in overcoming obstacles and are clear about what they want. In their journey of self-creation, living by their own rules and achieving goals set in childhood reinforces the belief that they hold their fate in their own hands. Authenticity is crucial for their comfort, as anything less feels unsettling. | STRATEGY AND PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - rare frequency about adequate for personality decisions/ wish to have a higher frequency of this reflection - inner standard of being- declares he does not understand this term yet - COBS as having possibly significant meaning, though it is difficult to describe its manifestations - COBS: possibly he had had experienced however he is not aware of it yet - doesn't describe the impact of reflection on unrealized plans - tries to always act in coherency with himself so he doesn't experience inconsistent with personality decisions and reflection about it - doesn't experience reflections about inconsistency between who he is and | Not yet awareness | The individual finds it challenging to address questions about more complex aspects of self-development, with some reflections appearing incomplete. They acknowledge low or no reflection on achievements that align with their | BASIC NEEDS |

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| | ought to be: declares he is happy | | personality and do not fully describe the impact of unrealized plans. Despite denying acting incoherently with their self, they admit to possibly lacking sufficient awareness on these issues. Instinctively, they sense that these matters might be significant, even if their understanding is not fully developed. | |
| Int 58: Men, 26 years old, Polish | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the importance of ambition - pursuit of the goal - costs: no free time - difficulty: many duties, little time - easy in coping with sports duties - process of becoming the self: hard and long work in order to achieve goals - vision of self: feeling that makes him aware of what he is doing, appears when he needs to make difficult choices - proud of wins in sports competitions - proud of finishing studies and gaining knowledge - likes sport - wish to improve the figure - motivator for adequate personality decisions: family support | Hard-working and achievements | The drive to achieve goals is a central motivator, leading the individual to commit to hard work, ambition, and perseverance, even at the expense of free time and balancing numerous responsibilities. This dedication has resulted in a series of sports and academic education accomplishments, viewed with pride. Alongside solid self-motivation, the person also acknowledges family support as a critical source of encouragement. | STRATEGY AND PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - unsatisfied with being too nervous and worrying too much about little things - describes himself as crazy - to feel more self-need to be more spontaneous - reflection about adequate personality decisions appear in bad moments - unrealized plans: tries to not think about it and declares reflection has no impact on him, every failure changes a person - declares not to experience feelings of inconsistency between who he is and | Denied emotionality | The individual identifies as emotional and expresses a desire for greater spontaneity yet is dissatisfied with certain aspects of their emotional nature, such as nervousness. While a | POSITION TO EMOTIONS |

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| | who ought to be | | negative emotional state may prompt reflection on unrealized plans, the person claims not to be significantly affected by these reflections, actively avoiding them. Additionally, they assert that they never experience a disconnect between their current and envisioned self. | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - priorities: changed with age (pretty general answer) - no key circumstances - unrealized plans: tries not to think about it and declares reflection has no impact on him; every failure changes a person - declares not to experience feelings of inconsistency between who he is and ought to be | Blocked, limited reflection | The individual's reflections on self-development and related challenges appear restricted, as they provide brief or underdeveloped responses and often deny engaging in such reflections. | QUALITY OF THE INTERVIEW |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - being self as a source of comfort coz he can behave as he feels - the inner standard of being: conscience is signalling that that person is doing something against himself - COBS function: guidance towards values a person believes in/ manifestation through feeling guilt or satisfaction, yes experienced - declares having very little inconsistent with personality decisions /motivates him to not make these kinds of decisions - lack of authenticity: feeling uncomfortable - declares not to experience feelings of inconsistency between who he is and ought to be | Consistency with self | The individual places high importance on self-awareness and maintaining consistency with their own priorities, values, and beliefs as critical drivers of personal growth. Their sense of authenticity and integration is closely tied to this consistency, with feelings of guilt or satisfaction depending on how well they align with their self-perception. Consequently, the person generally feels authentic, as any lack of authenticity leads to discomfort. | FOUNDATION FOR AUTHENTIC SELF |
| Int 59: Men, 28 years old, | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - hard-working a significant characteristic - in the process of becoming the self: important hard work and perseverance | Strongly determined | Perseverance and hard work are seen as essential | STRATEGY AND PATTERNS OF |

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| USA | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to feel more self ->more rest - difficulty: working full time in school - priorities formed: what needed to get done first - the process of becoming the self: challenging - being honest | | motivators in the individual's process of self-development, with a focus on achieving desired goals despite the challenges faced. | DEVELOPMENT |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - costs of development: time with family - daughter as an impulse for adequate for personality decisions - it seems family is important, but it is not included in understanding one's own self , rather as separated elements - easy to get support from others | Family at the edge of being | While family holds significant importance in the person's mindset, with less time spent with family perceived as a loss and the daughter serving as a motivator for aligning behaviour with personal values, family issues seem to play a secondary role, functioning more as a subplot rather than a central theme in the person's life narrative. | POSITION TO SOCIAL CONTEXT |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - biggest achievement: almost finishing a doctoral degree - in the interview touching mostly on career sphere: working at school, PhD, | Carrier focus | Self-development is primarily centered on career, with the greatest achievement being academic advancement, including earning a PhD while maintaining a full-time job. | STRATEGY AND PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - being jealous as a characteristic he would like to change - vision of self: dreadful experience - being self a source of comfort - not often reflect on adequate personality decisions - often reflects on unsuitable for personality decisions, a lot of impact on him, - lack of authenticity: unfulfilled - inconsistency between who he is and ought to be: stressful, appears in moments of bad decisions - function of COBS: improve, yes, experienced | Self comparison – self-competition | The person experiences self-comparison and self-competition, driven by characteristics they wish to change, such as jealousy. Their vision of self can be associated with distressing experiences. While they use being true to oneself as a source of comfort, they often reflect on decisions | FOUNDATION FOR AUTHENTIC SELF |

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| | | | inconsistent with their personality, which significantly impacts them. They find inconsistency between who they are and who they ought to be to be stressful, especially when making poor decisions. The function of their self-comparison is to improve, and they have experienced this function actively. | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - short answers consisting of one two words - avoiding answering questions about unfinished plans or dreams - no details, circumstances, mostly general - difficulty in describing positive achievements or adequate for personality decisions - the inner standard of being: morals | Laconic style of narration | The person provides brief and general answers, often avoiding certain questions, such as those about unrealized plans, and appears to struggle with delving deeper into some topics. | QUALITY OF THE INTERVIEW |
| Int 60: Women, 45 years old, USA | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - being a mother taking the worst and the best of her - homeschooling her son as significant advantage - sacrificing love job to take care of her own children at home - significant for personality decisions: using her own imagination to get to her son - being compassionate as significant characteristic - adjusted kids as a significant achievement - strong identification with parental role - quick burnout as a teacher (becoming a teacher she always hated) - hard-working and frustration | Centrality of motherhood and career sacrifice: | The individual identifies becoming a mother as a pivotal moment in their life, making it the primary focus of their self-identification and a central reference point for further self-development. In this role, they subordinate all personal qualities to the goal of raising and educating their son, which has required hard work, frustration, compassion, and significant personal sacrifices, including in their career. | SIGNIFICANT FACTORS OF DEVELOPMENT |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - looking at both sides - easy in writing, half-written book | Social and creative identity formation | Social roles and creative endeavors deeply influence | POSITION TO SOCIAL |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – home-schooling her son brought her confidence and faith in her own teaching abilities back – being creative, inquisitive and opinionated as significant characteristics – open ways to develop volunteering at life history camp, homeschooling son, – creating self through faith and digging in, learning, and being interested – being compassionate as a significant characteristic – being a mother as significant in forming self – job resignation to – motherhood as significant in creating self – volunteering in live history camp as a significant achievement – -strong identification with social role – importance of social relations: what to do differently: maintain some relations, better behaviour to kids, different talk with deceased parents – interesting: the husband is mentioned only once that she had to give up her job as he would provide better – significant for personality achievements: using imagination to help teach son | | the individual's self-concept. Being a mother is central to her identity, with homeschooling her son restoring her confidence and faith in her teaching abilities. Creative and inquisitive by nature, she finds fulfilment in activities such as writing, volunteering at a life history camp, and exploring new learning opportunities. Despite significant life changes, like resigning from her job to support her husband's career, she remains deeply connected to her social roles and is driven by compassion, imagination, and a desire to foster better social relationships. | CONTEXT |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – important in forming self: Christian faith – Bible as guidance for better self – frequent references to the Bible in reflections – Bible support in difficult times in senior school – wish she had faith she had when she was younger – currently questioning her faith, the possibility that her major foundation of personality wasn't real – fear of the possibility that God is not real – inconsistency between who she is: brings it to God, asking for forgiveness /made feel hopeful and real | Struggling foundation | A person is deeply affected by the shift from their former foundation of Christian faith, which once guided their decision-making, self-identification, and self-regulation. Now, they are experiencing a crisis of faith, leading to a significant challenge in maintaining these aspects of their life. | FOUNDATION FOR AUTHENTIC SELF |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – wanting to be a teacher since 7th grade – deeply experienced teaching failures and burnout – had to leave love job for children (probably school) | Teaching as important | Choosing a career path at a young age, e.g., teaching, serves as a crucial guide for personal development. | STRATEGY AND PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – teaching son as equivalent of teaching aspirations/fulfilment in teaching – nightmares about teaching attempts: not adequate with personality or own vision of teaching | | However, the struggles associated with this profession are often felt deeply, and reflecting on these challenges can sometimes lead to haunting nightmares. Over time, the initial sense of job satisfaction may be replaced by a deeper fulfilment, particularly when the impact of teaching extends to one's children. | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – dissatisfied with losing temper too quickly – with to improve: being lazy sometimes – scatterbrained | Emotionality | Struggling with emotionality often leaves the person dissatisfied with losing their temper too quickly. Additionally, they wish to overcome bouts of laziness that sometimes creep in and to improve their tendency to be scatterbrained. | POSITION TO EMOTIONS |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – nothing to change unless she puts some act, but does it much less than in the past: less acting now, more self – used to "play" in the past, now is authentic – being self as a source of comfort/ some parts of her as a source of struggles – unsuitable for personality decisions: reflections sometimes, not that often as used to be (the same as putting some acts, now more authentic) – lack of authenticity: I feel like I'm hiding – inconsistency between who she is and ought to be: guilt, shame, feeling a hypocrite – faith as foundation for self – physical self-description: female, burnet with little grey hair, 45 years old | Self status | The individual reflects on the evolution of their self-perception and expression over time, noting a shift from frequent inauthenticity in the past to a present commitment to authenticity. Currently, they prioritize being true to themselves and are particularly sensitive to any deviations from this standard, experiencing emotions such as shame, guilt, and hypocrisy when | FOUNDATION FOR AUTHENTIC SELF |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – problem with losing temper | | they fall short of their desired self. Despite this progress, the person acknowledges ongoing struggles with aspects of their character, such as a tendency to lose temper quickly. Physical appearance is mentioned as part of their self-identification, while faith remains the foundational element of their self-concept. | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – significant for personality achievements: using imagination to help teach son – a lot thinks about the significant for personality decisions – unfinished plans interpreted as stuff left unfinished (tak jakby spłykanie efektu z drugiej strony tez przejawy bardzo mocne, rationalization? Try to slower the effect of this thoughts?): unfinished book, unrealized projects for son, – reflection about unfinished plans like tightening of the chest, a gnawing, thinks she mulls over – avoided answers about the frequency of thought about unfinished plans – wouldn't change who she is but would change the effect she has on the world – unsuitable for personality decisions: reflections sometimes, not that often as used to be(the same as putting some acts, now more authentic) – unsuitable decisions: nightmares about failed teaching attempts/effect: long time, - feeling bad about herself – inconsistency between who she is: brings it to God, asking for forgiveness /made feel hopeful and real | Regulation of self-development | The individual actively reflects on her self-development, particularly focusing on the use of imagination in teaching her son as a key achievement. She struggles with unfinished plans, often rationalizing them while experiencing discomfort when reflecting on them. Though she desires to change her impact on the world, she seeks to remain true to herself. Past decisions inconsistent with her personality lead to occasional reflections, sometimes manifesting as nightmares. She finds reconciliation through her faith, which provides hope. | CONSCIENCE OF BECOMING THE SELF |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – not experienced vision of self – do not understand COBS or inner standard of being_> bad translating, she says | Translation challenges | The individual struggles to answer questions about certain developmental | QUALITY OF THE INTERVIEW |

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| | | | concepts due to difficulties with an inconvenient translation. | |
| Int 61: Woman, 21 years old, Australian | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – essential for personality characteristics: being reflective – essential for personality characteristics: openness to learn and grow – multidimensional achievements: academic achievements, financial achievements, social relations, outward Bound – multidimensional self-fulfilment – broad understanding of development, fulfilment, achievements – significant for personality achievement: challenging own personality in a good way – form of reflection about unfinished plans: why, what thoughts to analyse and avoid when a similar problem occurs – reflection about unsuitable for personality decisions: shows her how much she has grown – believe that who we are is not stagnant; change is healthy – vision of self: exciting times, love to dream and envision things, it makes goals / appear when thinking about the future, goals, and thoughts where she would like to be at specific points of life – COBS: we are influenced by our biases and experiences in life; we have to try to be more aware, reflective of things, and also critical of the information we receive – form of cobs: subconscious biases due to experiences in life | Self-reflection- self - recognition and broad understanding of development | For a person being reflective is essential for personality The individual places great importance on being reflective, considering it essential for personality and behaviour. This reflective nature supports a multidimensional understanding of achievements and fulfilment, driven by the belief that the self is not stagnant. Through self-reflection, the person regulates their development, striving to remain aware of their behaviour, critically analyse information, and understand why specific plans were not achieved to avoid future shortcomings. Additionally, they acknowledge the influence of subconscious biases, shaped by life experiences, on their decision-making and self-perception, and work to recognize and address these biases in their ongoing self-development. | STRATEGY AND PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – most proud of the ability to consider other's perspectives before reacting emotionally – understanding | Balancing own needs with social needs | The individual carefully balances two significant approaches: the importance | POSITION TO SOCIAL CONTEXT |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – essential for personality characteristics: approachable – significance of consideration of others – well-working relationships: family, partner – not satisfied: difficulty with expressing and sharing my emotions with others – importance of social relationships, environment – significant achievement: good relationship with partner, own social group – significant for personality decision: learning to pursue self-needs, standing up for herself – motivated for significant personality decisions by recognition of own and other feelings – doesn't feel inauthentic: feels she tries to stand up for herself: rights, values, morals, opinions, etc. – in the past: inauthenticity when she tried to please others, she felt lacking something in her life, wasn't happy, felt isolated and alone in a group of people – inconsistency between who you are and ought to be in the past appeared in alone reflection when thinking about conversations or social situations she was, or when she was comparing herself to people at her age she considered happy | | <p>of considering others and the social environment, and the pursuit of personal needs and standing up for their own values and priorities. These dual aspects are pivotal for their self-perception and self-development, as adhering to both is most consistent with their personality. The person is acutely aware of aligning their behavior with these principles, having previously struggled with inauthenticity when trying to please others or feeling inadequate when comparing themselves to happier peers. Now, they consistently feel authentic while also experiencing strong, fulfilling social relationships, which they view as key achievements. However, a sphere where the person still struggles is in adequately sharing their emotions.</p> | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – inner standard of being: who I am at the core/ her values, morals, beliefs, feelings – priorities from emotions, values, morals – learned ability to feel comfort with self while being under different circumstances – being resistant to social judgment – the importance of being able to freely express herself – trusting my guts – realization that happiness can be achieved by being genuine and | Major foundations of self | <p>The individual identifies their core self as being rooted in values, morals, beliefs, and feelings. Learning to feel comfortable with themselves, trusting their instincts, and freely expressing who they are has been essential in their</p> | FOUNDATION FOR AUTHENTIC SELF |

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| | <p>self-reflection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – frequent reflection about the significance for personality decisions, self-motivating by remembering this moment – in significant for personality decisions pushed by recognition of her and other's feelings, adrenalin and anxious before, after, pride of self and empowered – COBS experienced every day of her life | | <p>journey toward happiness. They draw motivation from memories of personal achievements and are driven by emotions like adrenaline, anxiety, and pride. This emotional and motivational foundation supports their daily self-regulation and ongoing self-development, which they experience as an integral part of their awareness every day.</p> | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – being self as comfortable now, had to learn in time – had to learn the ability to feel comfort with self while being under different circumstances – had to learn to be resistant to social judgment – learning ability to assess whether something will have a positive or negative contribution to her life – the process of becoming the self with age becomes more genuine and informed – learning to stand for one's own needs – (not often)less frequent reflections about unfinished plans, as she realized dwelling on these moments puts her down – form of reflection about unfinished plans: why, what thoughts to analyze and avoid when a similar problem occurs – reflection about unfinished plans: guilt and shame – unfinished plans would make her a better person – at the moment, unfished plans are the same as unsuitable for personality decisions – inconsistency between who you are and ought to be: do not happen anymore/in the past: feel guilt and low – limiting negative reflections, limiting inauthentic behaviours in time or blocking negative reflections | <p>Rise of awareness over time</p> | <p>The individual has experienced a significant increase in self-awareness throughout their life. The journey toward feeling comfortable with oneself has become more genuine and informed over time, with recognizing and standing up for personal needs being key milestones. As a result, reflections on unfinished plans or decisions inconsistent with their personality have become less frequent than in the past, as dwelling on these moments often brings feelings of guilt and shame. Similarly, reflections on the desired yet unachieved self are also minimized. Overall, the person consciously tries to limit</p> | <p>ACTUALIZATION OF THE PAST</p> |

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| | | | negative reflection to maintain a healthier mindset. | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – short – healthy – brown, short hair – want to improve muscle mass | Physical description | The individual provides a physical self-description, highlighting current attributes and areas they wish to improve, such as increasing muscle mass. | SIGNIFICANT FACTORS OF DEVELOPMENT |
| Int 62: Woman, 22 years old, British | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – low motivation for pursuing an interview – short answers – leaving questions without answers: "unsure", "no" – avoiding answers about frequencies of reflection | Neglected interview | The individual responds briefly to questions, leaving some unanswered, which suggests a lack of motivation to engage fully in the interview process. | QUALITY OF THE INTERVIEW |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – "unsure": no answer if being self is a source of comfort or what changes to feel more self – "unsure" how formed priorities – "unsure" what impact on her could have unfinished plans – "unsure" about unsuitable for personality decisions – "unsure" what pushed her into significant decisions – 'No' inconsistency between who she is and ought to be – "no" inner standard of being – "no" circumstances of appearing vision of self – "unsure" COBS – in self-description, there is a high focus on physical description – general answers – difficulty in extracting individual elements of development – no detailed reflection about own self-development(not this level yet) – process of becoming the self: changing – blockades | Limited reflection | The individual frequently responds with "unsure," making it challenging to discern their understanding and developmental patterns, potentially indicating a limited degree of self-reflection. | QUALITY OF THE INTERVIEW |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – brown hair – brown eyes – petite, hourglass – would like to change cellulite – not satisfied: body hair | Physical description | In their self-description, the individual primarily focuses on their physical appearance, including aspects they wish to improve, which are also | SIGNIFICANT FACTORS OF DEVELOPMENT |

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| | | | centred around their physical attributes. | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – important in the process of becoming the self: persistence and passion – putting myself first as difficult and significant in the process of becoming the self – significant decision: volunteering for passion – costs: relationships and money – vision of self: positive, gives her drive to continue pursuing it – reflection about unfinished plans: negative with self-disappointment – reflection about significant decisions: fondly (before excitement) – crucial circumstances: deaths(driven by traumatic events?) | Pursuing myself | <p>The individual's journey of self-recognition involves a crucial step of prioritizing themselves and passionately pursuing the process of becoming their true self, even if it comes at the cost of relationships and financial stability. They acknowledge reflecting on unfinished plans, which often leads to feelings of disappointment, while significant decisions evoke a sense of fondness. Additionally, the death of a significant other is highlighted as a pivotal circumstance in their self-development.</p> | SIGNIFICANT FACTORS OF DEVELOPMENT |
| Int 63: Woman, 27 years old, Australian | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – neurotic core – critical – pessimistic – impulsive – reflective intellectuality – self-reflective about self and others – self-conscious – intellectually curious – unfinished plans would have changed who she is; she would have been further along her trajectory and possibly would achieve stable relations, family, home, stable health – social positivity – generally kind – empathic | Triple personality foundation and dark side | <p>In the person's narration, three foundational aspects of their personality are identified, along with a darker, more troubling aspect of self.</p> <p>Neurotic Core: This includes a critical and pessimistic attitude, coupled with impulsive behaviour, forming a base of inner turmoil.</p> <p>Reflective Intellectuality: This foundation comprises cautious self-reflection, intellectual curiosity, and a heightened self-awareness.</p> | FOUNDATION FOR AUTHENTIC SELF |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – trustworthy – eager to please – funny – open person – need to be a mother – significant for personality: playing with nephews – developmental blockades – substance addiction – eating disorder – anxiety control – loneliness | | <p>Social Positivity: This aspect involves positive traits that enhance sensitivity to others' needs and strengthen social bonds.</p> <p>However, there is also a dark side to their personality that hinders self-development, characterized by psychological disorders and dysfunctions, such as loneliness.</p> | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – social characteristics as crucial for personality – stable, maintained relationships as an important achievement – loneliness – priorities formed mainly by parents and their expectations - installed by parents (studies, career, family)/ wish to value her own health more – parents modelling poor coping strategies and experiencing of emotional neglect – in her development, the importance of sacrifice by parents (costs) – interpreting genetic problems and adverse childhood experiences as sources of the addiction problem – (parents important: seem to impose things on her) – crucial moment: breaking toxic relationship, being abused – strong focus on her body and how other people perceive – inconsistency between who she is and ought to appear in situations when she compares herself to others, in the work environment, in situations where demands are put on her that she cannot meet – vision of self: not sure, but sometimes "ideal me", referring to ideal self: what I would do? How would I look like (be like)? also appear when she compares herself to others | <p>Socially incoherent status</p> | <p>The person experiences a disconnect in their social relationships. While social characteristics are crucial and maintaining stable relationships is considered important, there is a notable tension. For instance, the influence of parenting is seen as pivotal in shaping their self, yet these influences are evaluated negatively. Despite being in relationships, the person often feels lonely and, when overwhelmed by demands, compares themselves to others. This comparison leads to feelings of inadequacy and prompts them to envision what their ideal self would do in such situations.</p> | <p>POSITION TO SOCIAL CONTEXT</p> |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – overcoming anxiety as a significant achievement – dissatisfied with self-indulge - dissatisfied with self-medicate with substances due to intolerance of own emotions – wish to improve tolerance of own emotions – to feel more self-acceptance of some emotions, not being clouded by anxiety in some situations (being inhibited) – reflection on unfinished plans very frequently, almost every day – reflection about unfinished plans makes her feel guilty for not prioritizing self-development in favour of drug abuse – reflection about unfinished plans, specifically neglected due to fear and avoidance that she later regretted – unsuitable for personality decisions: frequently recall, feel pretty down – inconsistency between who you are and ought to provokes: anxiety, incompetent, shameful, sometimes hopeless | Anxiety regulation | <p>The individual frequently struggles with anxiety and difficulties in controlling and accepting emotions, which are both areas they aim to improve and factors that significantly influence their behaviour. These challenges have led to substance abuse and addiction. This cycle fuels reflections on unfinished plans and inconsistencies in behavior, increasing the frequency of such reflections while simultaneously lowering mood and provoking feelings of anxiety, incompetence, shame, and hopelessness. These reflections are particularly severe, leading the person to believe that different choices in the past might have improved their current situation.</p> | STRATEGY AND PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – being self as a scary prospect sometimes (afraid of being sober, being too close to reality) – like feeling "numb" and being disconnected from herself – being disconnected too much from herself can be pretty distressing - >need to be in touch with herself – to feel more self-acceptance of some emotions, not being clouded by anxiety in some situations – difficulty in being in contact with some emotions – to feel more self, stop using substances – to feel more self, lose weight – negative feelings about own feelings and behaviours as a source of | Striving – avoidance self | <p>The experience of being authentic and true to oneself presents contradictory challenges. On one hand, fully engaging with one's true self can be intimidating, as it brings the reality of one's emotions and circumstances into sharp focus. On the other hand, disconnecting from reality</p> | FOUNDATION FOR AUTHENTIC SELF |

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| | <p>addiction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – "change" as painful, stagnant early adulthood and adolescence/ but in the last two years, progress in self-respect, independence, substance abuse – unsuitable for personality decisions: frequently recall – lack of authenticity: feeling like an imposter and thinking about herself as incompetent | | <p>and losing touch with one's inner self is equally distressing. As a result, the individual finds themselves caught between the desire to stay connected with their emotions and authentic self, and the impulse to retreat into a numb, detached state, avoiding the discomfort of self-awareness.</p> | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – achievements: career, stable employment – achievements: finishing postgraduate, – achievements: overcoming own anxiety, – achievements: owning car, – achievements: consistent friendships – importance in the process of becoming the self: hope for the future and connections with others – crucial moment: breaking toxic relationships, being abused, finishing school – significant for personality: playing with nephews, getting new perspective: a sense of genuine enjoyment, a new way of looking at things, appreciation of here and now / after good about herself / frequency: few times a week – unfinished plans would have changed who she is; she would have been further along her trajectory, possibly would achieve stable relations, family, home, stable health – example of unfinished plans: relationships with other people, developing physical and mental health – inner standard of being: the inner sense of what your expectations are for yourself, others and boundaries you have, ethical stance on situations which are driven by values – cobs: do not understand translation, did not experience | <p>Multidimensional understanding of achievements and development</p> | <p>The individual views achievements through various dimensions, recognizing success in career, education, personal growth, and relationships. They highlight significant milestones like overcoming anxiety, maintaining consistent friendships, and finishing postgraduate studies. The process of self-development is influenced by hope for the future, connections with others, and crucial life moments, such as breaking free from toxic relationships. The individual reflects on unfinished plans, acknowledging that fulfilling them could have led to further personal progress. Their understanding of development also includes an "inner standard of</p> | <p>SIGNIFICANT FACTORS OF DEVELOPMENT</p> |

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| | | | being," which guides their ethical and personal expectations. | |
| Int 64: Woman, 30 years old, British | <p>- crucial circumstances: growing up in extreme poverty around crime</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – motivation for significant decisions: positively channelling justified rage – priority: never give up and similar motto for the process of becoming the self – proudest achievement: getting a degree with brain injury – what important: perseverance – significant characteristics: annoying, resilient – unfinished plans: mixture of sadness and pride / less frequently (ale czy mniej z czasem, czy mniej w porównaniu do pozytywnych) – unsuitable for personality decisions: less frequently, sometimes do not know how it happened – vision of self appeared as a kid growing up, hiding my true self from fear – difficult choices: move forward in life and seek what I find – what was easy to do: nothing – what to do differently: ignore that one person – missed opportunities: being in movie industry but not making further connections/could have been rich but possibly not happy | Negative engine and overcoming struggles | This concept refers to the way in which adverse circumstances and negative experiences—such as growing up in extreme poverty, experiencing crime, and suffering from a brain injury—serve as powerful motivators for personal growth and achievement. Despite facing significant struggles, the individual channels their justified anger and frustration into a positive drive to make meaningful decisions and achieve long-term goals, such as earning a degree despite severe challenges. The persistence in the face of hardships, along with the determination to never give up, becomes the cornerstone of their journey toward self-actualization and resilience. | STRATEGY AND PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT |
| | <p>significant achievements: I influenced change</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – significant characteristics: funny, humour, resilience, creative, enthusiastic, resilient – significant achievements reflection frequency: daily, feeling great – vision of self: powerful motivator – unsuitable decisions: reflection as a source of strength to draw from | Positive engine | The Positive Engine is the driving force behind a person's success, fuelled by their ability to influence change, maintain resilience, and reflect daily on their significant achievements. This motivation is reinforced by their humour, | STRATEGY AND PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT |

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| | | | creativity, and enthusiasm, which together create a powerful internal source of strength, inspiring ongoing personal and professional growth. | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - simple, short answers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – repetitive answers – do not understand some question – questionable engagement in interview – possibility not deep reflection(not deep enough) – COBS: no special conscience, people are just themselves, don't believe in a higher form of being human – rationalization (unfinished plans) | Quality of the interview and reflection | Short and repetitive answers in some cases indicate that the person may not have fully engaged in the interview, possibly due to a lack of motivation, a desire to keep self-knowledge private, or insufficient reflection on issues of self-development. Additionally, the person believes that conscience serves primarily as a moral guide, rather than as a tool for deeper self-awareness. | QUALITY OF THE INTERVIEW |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – no changes to be more self – inner standard of being: my own expectations of self – vision of self: appeared as a kid growing up, hiding my true self through fear – inconsistency between who she is and ought to be experienced as a schism inside of me (appears when taking the wrong job) – lack of authenticity: ashamed of myself | Self-presence | The individual reflects on their experience and attitude towards themselves, acknowledging that there is nothing they would change or improve. However, they also recognize that their own high expectations and lack of authenticity can lead to feelings of shame and internal conflict, particularly when they stray from their desired self—such as when taking a job that feels misaligned with who they truly are. | STRATEGY AND PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT |

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| <p>Int 65: Woman, 23 years old, British</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – essential characteristics: caring, warm – self-characteristic: kind, funny, empathic – achievements: kindness – in the process of becoming the self-importance of social support: people who care for me and I care for me – difficult choice: letting go of not good relationships – becoming the self: pursuing own interests and goals despite social opinion – significant for personality decision: consistent help for a friend to deal with his mother's death / as she considered social characteristics as significant for personality: kind, being an empathic person – motivator for significant personality decision: natural consideration for a friend (before sad and depressed/ after happy) – unsuitable for personality decisions: occasionally, try not to/ feels guilty that haven't been nice to fit in? – Inconsistency between who she is and ought to be: appears in social situations, would change her personality to fit in (more mean) – inner standard of being: the way I am naturally and the way I would be if all other circumstances, people, or other was not taken into consideration | <p>"Social" as a significant part of personality</p> | <p>The individual identifies social characteristics as a key aspect of their personality. Establishing and maintaining meaningful relationships are seen as critical achievements, reflecting their personal choices and the pursuit of their interests and goals, even when these go against social opinions. Being helpful and supportive to significant others aligns with their personality, making the well-being of close ones a central motivator in decision-making. The person strives to remain authentic, avoiding the discomfort of artificially fitting into social contexts, and values the natural expression of self within relationships.</p> | <p>POSITION TO SOCIAL CONTEXT</p> |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – no changes to feel more self, feeling herself for the first time in a long time, – describing current times as feeling true self, necessary time of perceiving true self – being self as a source of comfort. She used to not be herself and realized that "didn't bring her joy". It is important not to act like someone else. Being herself brought her peace and comfort – in becoming the self, difficulty to be good to herself – priorities used to be set up a strong, big, distant goal (e.g., becoming a clinical psychologists) and material generalities: house, earning a lot of money/ use to consider being best of herself if she achieved those / now she changed her attitude: achieving this won't make her happy, setting new | <p>Breakthrough authentic self</p> | <p>The individual has undergone a significant transformation in self-experience compared to the past, where there was a deep disconnection from their true self. A crucial turning point came after their fourth suicide attempt, leading to the realization that being disconnected from oneself fails to bring joy. Now, the person feels</p> | <p>FOUNDATION FOR AUTHENTIC SELF</p> |

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| | <p>priority: enjoy the journey, enjoying herself, I am good enough no matter what</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 4th suicide attempt in March 2020- a breakthrough in thinking: enjoy life, enjoy herself, be yourself – importance of interpretation/apparent own ideology – I am the best representation of myself at this moment – in becoming the self: doing the best I can with enthusiasm – nothing was easy in the process of becoming the self but everything was easy once I found peace with myself and felt better being my authentic self, I found (creating self) much – accepting her own journey, accepting what has been, but wishes she had more understanding and patience to herself along the way – vision of self: appear in the situation of making significant decisions/experienced as positive, inspiring – inner standard of being: the way I am naturally and the way I would be if all other circumstances, people, or other was not taken into consideration – COBS: function: it would make people more motivated to be a version of themselves/ forms: not sure/ haven't experienced – unfinished plans would change who he is, but she does not know how | | <p>comfort and peace with who they are, largely due to a shift in mindset from focusing on long-term, overwhelming goals to appreciating the present moment and embracing self-acceptance. Although they believe that self-regulation should guide and motivate personal growth, they have not fully experienced this process yet.</p> | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – in the process of becoming the self-importance of going through mental health struggles to grow as a person – described herself as sometimes very emotional, anxious, quiet, and unconfident at times – achievements: overcoming struggles, fighting with mental health – crucial circumstances: bipolar, eating disorder, autism, 4th suicide attempt in March 2020 – 4th suicide attempt in March 2020- breakthrough in thinking: enjoy life, enjoy herself, be yourself | <p>Troubling mental-health</p> | <p>The individual recounts a history of mental health struggles that have deeply impacted their life. Overcoming these challenges is seen as a significant achievement, representing a fight for their well-being. A pivotal moment in this journey was their fourth suicide attempt, which served as a breakthrough, prompting a shift in mindset towards embracing life and finding joy in the present.</p> | <p>BASIC NEEDS</p> |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – achievements: writing of book – achievements: getting a degree – becoming the self: pursuing own interests and goals despite social opinion; maintaining good long-term decisions (e.g., University) – achievements: learning skills – achievements: getting job – priorities used to be set up a strong, big, distant goal (e.g., Becoming a clinical psychologist) and material generalities: house, earning a lot of money/ use to consider being best of herself if she achieved those | Self-actualization | <p>The individual's journey toward self-actualization involves pursuing personal interests and goals despite social pressures, with achievements such as writing a book, earning a degree, and acquiring new skills and a job. Initially, their priorities were focused on distant, significant goals like becoming a clinical psychologist and achieving material success, believing these would represent the best version of themselves. However, this process reflects a broader quest for self-fulfilment and realization of their potential.</p> | STRATEGY AND PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – frequency of significance for personality decisions: not often because it is sad (helping a friend), do not reflect coz it was a natural act – reflection about failed dreams: very often, without meaning to, uncontrollable thought – reflection about failed dreams experience: guilt, embarrassment, disappointment – inauthenticity: I do not feel good about myself or my decisions. I feel out of place and uncomfortable, like there is always a thought at the back of my head – unsuitable for personality decisions: occasionally, try not to/ feels guilty that haven't been nice to fit in? – Inconsistency between who she is and ought to be: experienced uncomfortable, yearning, sad | Negative self-development regulation | <p>The individual's process of self-development is often hindered by negative emotions and reflections. They experience frequent, uncontrollable thoughts about failed dreams, leading to feelings of guilt, embarrassment, and disappointment. Inauthenticity results in discomfort and a persistent sense of unease. Decisions that do not align with their personality occasionally cause guilt, especially when they involve not</p> | CONSCIENCE OF BECOMING THE SELF |

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| | | | being true to themselves to fit in. The inconsistency between who they are and who they feel they ought to be creates a sense of sadness and yearning, negatively impacting their self-development journey. | |
| Int 66: Woman, 32 years old, Canadian | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – describes herself as a rigid person, – reliable person: being well-organized, reliable, thoughtful, and professional – essential characteristics: reliability, professional – wish to be more flexible and open to new experiences and ideas, – to feel more self, try to experience more, be more relaxed – wish to be less judgmental – process of becoming self-important: prioritizing – costs of becoming the self: inflexibility – difficulties: financial | Rigid, tough personality | The individual describes themselves as having a rigid personality, characterized by being well-organized, reliable, thoughtful, and professional. These traits are seen as essential, but the person acknowledges the drawbacks, such as inflexibility and a tendency to be judgmental. Despite their reliability, they wish to be more flexible, open to new experiences and ideas, and less judgmental. | SIGNIFICANT FACTORS OF DEVELOPMENT |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – broad understanding of achievements: schooling, job, friends, family – achievements: my degree, relationships//including both self-actualization and relationships – unsure or not yet reflections about significant achievements for personality, visions of self, inner standard of being – COBS role defined as: likely important and playing a big role, forms: emotional, mental but not experienced | Developmental reflection | The individual demonstrates a broad understanding of achievements, valuing accomplishments in schooling, career, friendships, and family. They recognize both self-actualization and relationships as key achievements, yet they are unsure or have not yet deeply reflected on significant achievements related to their personality, | CONSCIENCE OF BECOMING THE SELF |

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| | | | visions of self, or inner standard of being. They acknowledge the likely importance of subconscious biases (COBS) in their development, believing they play a big role emotionally and mentally, though they have not directly experienced or fully understood them. | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – unsure about significance for personality achievements or motivator for these acts, how often: not very often – vision of self: not experienced, not described – inner standard of being: not experienced – no example of unfinished plans – COBS: not experienced – unsure about crucial circumstances of the process of becoming the self – unfinished plans: how frequent: not very well/experienced: discomfort ->quit general answer / would change: not many of these sorts of situations and they don't weigh prominently for me | Suppressed/ immature or blocked reflection | <p>The individual exhibits uncertainty and limited engagement with self-reflection. They are unsure about the significance of their achievements or the motivators behind their actions, and they rarely contemplate these aspects. They have not experienced or described a clear vision of self, an inner standard of being, or examples of unfinished plans. Additionally, they struggle to identify crucial circumstances in their process of becoming themselves. Their reflections on unfinished plans are infrequent and vague, leading to discomfort, but these situations do not weigh heavily on them. The overall pattern suggests a level of suppressed, immature, or blocked</p> | QUALITY OF THE INTERVIEW |

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| | | | reflection. | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – unfinished plans reflection: – unsure if being self is a source of comfort – wish to be more open to experiences and ideas, more flexible to feel more self – unsuitable for personality decisions: how frequently reflections: somewhat/ <p>impact of this reflection: a feeling of questioning self</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – lack of authenticity: guilt – inconsistency between who she is and ought to be: experienced: uncomfortable/appear in situations of comparing self to others | Self-status | <p>The individual's self-perception is marked by uncertainty and a desire for growth. They are unsure if being their true self provides comfort and wish to be more open and flexible to feel more aligned with their identity. Reflections on decisions that don't align with their personality occur somewhat frequently and lead to self-questioning. A lack of authenticity triggers feelings of guilt, while inconsistencies between who they are and who they feel they ought to be cause discomfort, especially when comparing themselves to others.</p> | CONSCIENCE OF BECOMING THE SELF |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – reflection about the inconsistency between who she is and ought to appear in situations of comparing herself to others – priorities formed: very much family values – stages to become to this point: balancing family expectations and own expectations | Social impact | <p>The individual's self-perception and development have been significantly shaped by social influences, particularly family values. They have prioritized balancing family expectations with their own, which has guided their journey to their current self. Reflections on inconsistencies between who they are and who they believe they should be often arise when they</p> | POSTION TO SOCIAL CONTEXT |

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| | | | compare themselves to others, highlighting the social impact on their self-concept and personal growth. | |
| Int 67: Woman, 53 years old, Australian , | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - sometimes, not answering directly - short answers | Laconic style of answering | The individual tends to provide relatively brief and occasionally indirect responses to questions, which may make it challenging to fully understand their thoughts or motivations. | QUALITY OF INTERVIEW |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - lovely: general characteristic - funny, warm, caring, essential characteristic - not satisfied with anxiety, irritability, overly sensitive - costs: stress - lack of authenticity: empty | Emotional-social self- description | The individual is described as lovely, funny, warm, and caring, with these traits being essential to their character. However, they are dissatisfied with their anxiety, irritability, and sensitivity, which they feel contribute to stress and a sense of emptiness, impacting their authenticity. | SIGNIFICANT FACTOR OF DEVELOPMENT |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - pursuing social independency - being more forceful socially - increase social confidence: what changes to feel more self - don't hold back socially: what to do to feel more like yourself - worrying less about what others think: as an answer if being self is a source of comfort - what was the difficult choice to make? Many to walk to the beat of my own drum, not always follow - significant decision for personality: helped protest against animal cruelty when the opportunity presented itself - reflection about unfinished plans gives feelings of embarrassment and shame - crucial circumstances: university, not having children, not accepting | Social style independence pursuit | The individual focuses on increasing social independence by being more assertive and confident, reducing concerns about others' opinions, and actively pursuing their own values and goals. Significant decisions include protesting against animal cruelty and choosing to remain independent by not settling for inadequate relationships | POSITION TO SOCIAL CONTEXT |

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| | relationships that were not good enough, staying independent | | or conforming to societal expectations. Reflecting on unfinished plans evokes feelings of embarrassment and shame, with key circumstances being university life and personal choices about relationships and family. | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – how priorities formed: more wisdom to inform priorities, look better for herself now – various stages of your life: hard-earned, natural process, by mistakes and taking chances – what to do differently: make decisions based on the knowledge she has now, not worry too much (impossible) – how to manage to this point of life: hard work, learning, inquiry, spiritual path – lost chances would change who she is; everything has meaning – impact of reflection about unsuitable for personality decisions: I'm relieved "I've changed to know myself and take care of myself more – feeling of inconsistency between who she is and ought to be: appears when life needs to be changed, usually a major life change point – no vision of self, more visualization of future scenarios during decision-making – inner standard of being: self-aware – motivator for significant decisions: a sense of right and wrong – COBS: as make a lot of difference/forms: self-determination, awareness, compassion, less confusion – COBS experienced as meditation – when the mind slows, awareness increases – changing the negative into a positive approach – to change: increase consistency of positivity – reflection about unfinished plans: I try to be mindful of these memories and replace them with positive thoughts and cognitions about what the event means to me now. | Differences in awareness | <p>The individual's awareness evolves through hard-earned wisdom, learning from mistakes, and spiritual growth. Priorities are now informed by deeper self-knowledge and a more positive perspective. They reflect on past decisions with relief, feeling they've grown and taken better care of themselves.</p> <p>Inconsistencies between their current self and desired self emerge during major life changes. They visualize future scenarios rather than having a fixed vision of self and are guided by a strong sense of right and wrong. COBS (Consciousness of Being Self) plays a role in enhancing self-determination, awareness, and compassion, experienced through practices like meditation. They aim to replace negative reflections with</p> | ACTUALIZATION OF THE PAST |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – once, twice a year, reflection about significant decisions for personality, unfinished plans – unsuitable for personality decision reflection: not a lot | Frequency of reflection | positive reinterpretations. The individual reflects on significant decisions and unfinished plans once or twice a year. They do not frequently dwell on unsuitable decisions for their personality. | CONSCIENCE OF BECOMING THE SELF |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – achievements: I live outdoor adventures, Love well, have fun – what was easy: being active, loving, and physical activity – most proud of truth, adventure, love | Active, outdoors, intensive style | The person values outdoor adventures, love, and fun. They find being active, loving, and engaging in physical activities easy and are most proud of living truthfully, seeking adventure, and fostering love. | STRATEGY AND PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT |
| Int 68: Woman, 21 years old, British | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – declares no personality and now time before to make one – being self a source of comfort or not: it is incredibly stressful and often unsafe – to be more self: Stop masking, insist on getting my needs met, get the treatment I need. – realization of own mental state by comparison to other people – crucial circumstances: seeing other people being happy and calm, which she never experienced, and focusing of this lacking – significant for personality achievements: needs more diagnosed more – reflection of unsuitable for personality decisions: very often – impact of reflection of unsuitable for personality decisions: gaining awareness of what happened and why. Awareness of unfulfilled needs of her in the past. The feeling of helplessness and motivation to get treatment – lack of authenticity: exhaustion, anxiety – inconsistency between who she is and ought to be: she distinguishes what she ought to be from social (causes helplessness, depression, anxiety, occasionally anger) expectations and her own expectations (hopelessness and motivation to keep trying to get treatment) | Self-awareness/ self-understanding | The person is currently struggling with their identity and self-concept, finding being themselves incredibly stressful and often unsafe. They aim to improve self-comfort by stopping pretense, meeting their own needs, and seeking treatment. The realization of their mental state has come through comparisons with others, particularly noticing a lack of happiness and calm that others experience. Crucial moments include seeing others' well-being and recognizing their own unmet needs. Significant achievements are yet to be diagnosed or addressed. | FOUNDATION FOR AUTHENTIC SELF |

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| | | | They frequently reflect on unsuitable decisions, leading to increased awareness of past unfulfilled needs and feelings of helplessness, alongside motivation for treatment. Lack of authenticity results in exhaustion and anxiety, while inconsistency between their current self and expectations leads to feelings of helplessness, depression, and occasional anger. | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – unfinished plans: no memory, no reflection of it – significant for personality achievements: not very often recollection – COBS: not experienced, not able to describe – inner standard of being: do not understand – vision of self: cannot see any visions, have aphantasia | Limited reflection of self-development | A person exhibits minimal recollection or reflection on unfinished plans and significant achievements. A person provides minimal understanding or analysis of issues related to self-development | QUALITY OF THE INTERVIEW | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – general characteristic: I'm autistic, disabled, mentally ill, agender, asexual, exhausted – achievements: Finding out I'm autistic, learning about my disabilities, I got my ADHD diagnosed – characteristics not satisfied with: Mental illnesses, constant exhaustion, constant pain, constant lack of safety – what to change: Mental illnesses, constant exhaustion, constant pain, constant lack of safety – in the process of becoming the self, importance of fear of pain – costs: worsening mental illnesses and other disabilities – difficult choices: Accessing treatment, getting diagnoses, refusing to mask, insisting on getting disability accommodations I need – significant for personality achievement: I got my ADHD diagnosed – Desperation: I can't keep suffering much longer. | Being mentally ill as a key characteristic and key circumstance | The individual identifies as autistic, disabled, mentally ill, agender, and asexual, with a significant focus on mental illness, constant exhaustion, and pain. Achievements include discovering their autism and obtaining an ADHD diagnosis. Despite these achievements, they are dissatisfied with ongoing mental health struggles, lack of safety, and constant exhaustion. They have | BASIC NEEDS | |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – What to do differently: getting diagnosed and treated earlier – motivator for personality adequate decisions: desperation, can't keep suffering much longer / before was terrified to no be diagnosed longer – priorities: based on what I have been denied, which has hurt me the most | | made difficult choices like accessing treatment and refusing to mask. Their process of self-development is heavily influenced by the fear of pain and the costs of worsening conditions. Significant decisions are driven by desperation and the need for treatment, with priorities shaped by past denials and resulting hurt. | |
| Int 69: Men, 51 years old, Hungarian | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – no answer to the question about unrealized plans – no answer to question unsuitable for personality decisions – no answer question of inconsistency between who he is and ought to be – no answer for vision of self – no answer for the inner standard of being – no answer for COBS – short, one-word answers – possibly low involvement in interview – being self as a source of comfort or not: none (seems to not have reflection about it yet) – not described process of becoming the self – highest achievements: achieving goals | Neglected interview/blocked—immature reflection: | A person provides minimal responses or leaves questions unanswered, suggesting either a lack of engagement with the interview or an inability to reflect deeply on complex issues related to self and self-development. | QUALITY OF THE INTERVIEW |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – significant for personality decision: come to another country / how often remembered: remembered, before: bad – motivator for decision: hard life – what is important: family – difficult choices to make: financial – most crucial circumstance: real-life situation | Life-changing event | A person identifies relocating to a different country as a pivotal change in their life. Other significant factors include family, motivation to make financial sacrifices, and hard work, alongside responding to real-life situations. | SIGNIFICANT FACTORS OF DEVELOPMENT |
| | – priorities: made by practice | Down-to-earth self- | A person describes their | SIGNIFICANT |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – what was easy: nothing – achievement: pay for the car – motivator for decision: hard life – what is important: family – difficult choices to make: financial – most crucial circumstance: real-life situation – what differently: more school – what changes to feel more self: guts – general characteristics: energetic – most essential: giving – not satisfied with: easily discouraged – what to change: confidentiality | description | <p>priorities as shaped by practical experience. They report that nothing was particularly easy, with paying for a car being a notable achievement. Hard life has been a strong motivator for decisions, with family being a key focus. Financial difficulties have been significant, and real-life situations are considered crucial. The person wishes they had pursued more schooling and feels that having guts would help them feel more authentic. They describe themselves as energetic and essential characteristics include being giving. They are not satisfied with being easily discouraged and want to improve confidentiality.</p> | FACTORS OF DEVELOPMENT |
| Int 70: Woman, 34 years old, Rumanian | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – possible language struggles – not full answers – disconnected answers: not fitting the general idea of self-development – seems to be engaged in the interview but not achieving the full meta level of reflection. – general character of used words | Interview quality | <p>e person displays possible language struggles and provides incomplete or disconnected answers that do not align well with the overarching theme of self-development. Although they appear engaged in the interview, they do not reach a comprehensive meta-level of reflection. The general character of the language used is inconsistent with a deeper</p> | QUALITY OF THE INTERVIEW |

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| | | | exploration of self-development. | |
| | <p>Family</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – achievement: family – in the process of becoming the self, family is considered important – difficult choice: choosing family (possible between carrier and family) – achievement: children – priorities: family(I) <p>work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – achievement: lovely work – what to do differently: work at home and earn money – priorities: work(II) <p>self-actualization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – most proud of characteristic and essential personality: intelligence – to feel more self need to achieve her goal – in the process of becoming the self needs to sacrifice own career – priorities: self-actualization (II) – lost chances example: when can't pass the exam – general characteristics: active, smart | The three most important domains of development | <p>In a person's narration, three domains of development can be extracted.</p> <p>Family: Achievements include raising children and prioritizing family life, which is viewed as crucial in the process of becoming the self. Significant choices involve balancing family and career responsibilities.</p> <p>Work: Achievements involve having a fulfilling job. To align more with self-actualization, changes include working from home and earning money. Work is a key priority.</p> <p>Self-Actualization: Pride in intelligence and achieving personal goals. Sacrifices in a career are necessary for self-actualization, with lost opportunities like failing an exam impacting this domain. Self-actualization is a key priority.</p> | SIGNIFICANT FACTORS OF DEVELOPMENT |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – lost chances reflection: rarely frequency/ those reflections experienced as something she doesn't like (would not change who she is), e.g., When can't pass the exam – unsuitable for personality decisions reflection: frequency: rarely/impact: I am sad – inauthenticity: I want to cry | Avoiding/blocked reflection | <p>The person finds reflecting on inadequate self-progress unpleasant and tends to avoid it, leading to a decreased frequency of such reflections. The experience of inauthenticity is so distressing that it</p> | CONSCIENCE OF BECOMING THE SELF |

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| | | | brings them to the point of wanting to cry. | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – reflection about significant achievement: when she dances – motivator for significant personality decisions: try to feel freedom like during dance – what was easy to do: cooking – is being self a comfort or not? I can do what I want – inconsistency between who you are and ought to be: not sure to describe | Disconnected reflection(not added to general reflection about self-development) | The person's responses appear detached from the overall narrative, making them feel separate and not integrated into a broader reflection on self-development. | QUALITY OF THE INTERVIEW |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – reflection about the inconsistency between who she is and ought to be: when I don't know what to do – vision of self: experienced as feeling confident, appears when she is at home – inner standard of being: who I am? – COBS: no description, not experienced – significant achievement reflection frequency: whenever she is stressed / before anxious after free | Functioning of reflection | The person's reflection tends to be situational and reactive, often triggered by stress or uncertainty. They experience self-reflection as confidence at home but struggle with a clear inner standard of being, frequently questioning their identity. Reflections on significant achievements occur mainly in stressful moments. | STRATEGY AND PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – not satisfied: very generous – want to change: responsibility – the process of becoming the self: hard – most crucial circumstances: money and time | Challenges of generosity and responsibility in self-development | Them refers to the internal struggle an individual experiences in balancing their generous nature with the weight of responsibility. They are dissatisfied with being "too generous" and wish to change aspects of their responsibility, indicating a conflict between their natural tendencies and the demands of their circumstances. The process of becoming their true self is described as difficult, influenced heavily | SIGNIFICANT FACTORS OF DEVELOPMENT |

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| | | | by practical concerns like money and time. This title captures the tension between personal traits and the external pressures shaping their journey of self-development. | |
| Int 71: Woman, 24 years old, British, Ukrainian | <p>being helpful</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – general, social characteristics: empathic, laidback(wyluzowany), judging, assertive – wish to change empathic, and compassion (lower it)/describe herself as too helpful for others, easy to be used – helpful person – not satisfied with being introverted – significant for personality: multiple times when she helps others <p>healthy distance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – to feel more self: I would like to become selfish but I wouldn't feel like myself – reminding significant for personality decisions: quite often, they remind her why I need to change – how did you feel before/after significant behaviors: before good after disgusted of terrible behaviour of people – inconsistency between who you are and ought to be appear when She tries to please other people instead of saying no <p>elimination of bad influence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – costs: got rid of a lot of toxic people, around who she had to adjust and be fake – difficult choices: breaking harming friendship – easy to do: spotting toxicity in people – what to do differently: cut off people not silently but telling them how awful they are – crucial circumstances: the realization that people who she thought were her friends treated her very poorly | Triad meaning of social context | <p>This title refers to the three interrelated themes within the social experiences of the person:</p> <p>Being Helpful: The individual is characterized by a strong sense of empathy and helpfulness, which they recognize as a core part of their identity. However, this generosity also leads to being easily used by others, creating a desire to reduce these traits to avoid exploitation.</p> <p>Healthy Distance: The person struggles with maintaining a balance between helping others and preserving their own well-being. There is a tension between wanting to be more self-centred (to protect themselves) and the discomfort that this might bring, as it conflicts with their self-perception.</p> <p>Elimination of Bad Influence: A significant aspect of their social context is the active effort to remove toxic people</p> | POSITION TO SOCIAL CONTEXT |

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| | | | <p>from their life. The individual has become adept at recognizing harmful influences and has taken steps to distance themselves, though this process has come with the emotional cost of breaking off relationships.</p> <p>Together, these three elements illustrate a complex dynamic of navigating social relationships, balancing personal needs with empathy, and protecting oneself from negative influences.</p> | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – in the process of becoming the self: being at peace with myself – achievement: being true to yourself – self-center: making priorities: realization the only person that matters is herself, I am a priority, my well-being, peace of mind – process of becoming the self: a hard and very slow process that needed a lot of mental work and self-talk – unfinished plans would have changed; perhaps she could have been at peace with herself earlier – essential characteristics: genuine, introverted, creative, intuitive, hard-working, punctual – being self as the source of comfort: being true to yourself, personality-wise, is comfortable because I think faking a personality is draining and confusing for yourself like you don't even know how to act anymore – inner standard of being: they are standards that one develops for oneself that are referred to before making a decision | Self balance- self centre | <p>The concept revolves around the process of becoming at peace with oneself by prioritizing personal well-being and staying true to one's core values and characteristics. It emphasizes the importance of self-focus and self-care in the journey toward authenticity, where maintaining personal integrity and mental peace is key. This approach involves a gradual, introspective process of self-recognition, where unfinished plans might have delayed this inner harmony, but ultimately,</p> | FOUNDATION FOR AUTHENTIC SELF |

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| | | | being genuine and aligned with one's inner standards offers a deep sense of comfort and stability. | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - unfinished plans reflection: quiet often - significant for personality decisions: quite often, to remind herself why needs to change - unsuitable for personality decisions: very, very often - lack of authenticity: irritated - reflection about unsuitable for your personality impact: it's just reminding me how stupid I was - reflection of unfinished plans: guilty, anger | Intense developmental reflection | This term refers to a highly frequent and emotionally charged process of self-reflection. A person often revisits unfinished plans and significant decisions, leading to strong feelings of guilt, anger, and irritation, particularly when recognizing past decisions that conflict with their true personality. This reflection serves as a constant reminder of the need for personal change and growth, highlighting the intense emotional impact of self-evaluation and the drive to align more closely with one's authentic self. | CONSCIENCE OF BECOMING THE SELF |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - seems to be involved in the interview - seems to be quite honest - emotional in the interview (anger in connection with social situations) <p>some areas of reflection not yet developed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - vision of self: not experienced - COBS: not experienced, don't know forms, function: maybe it would help people understand themselves more/easier - motivation for significant personality decisions: nothing | Quality of interview | The interview reveals that the person is engaged and honest, showing emotional responses, particularly related to social situations. However, some areas of reflection are underdeveloped or not yet experienced. Notably, there is no clear vision of self, and the individual is unfamiliar with the concept and function of COBS, which might aid in self-understanding. Motivation | QUALITY OF THE INTERVIEW |

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| | | | for significant personality decisions is unclear or absent. | |
| Int 72: Woman, 21 years old, Thai | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – general characteristics: passionate and open-minded – essential characteristic: being open-minded to new people – characteristics most proud of: being able to travel alone – would like to change confidence, courage – what she found easy: be independent – unmade plans: example: Studying abroad but not making the most out of it | Discovering | This refers to the process of identifying and embracing personal attributes and experiences. Key aspects include being passionate and open-minded, valuing independence, and taking pride in traveling alone. It involves recognizing areas for growth, such as improving confidence and courage. Unmade plans, like not fully utilizing the opportunity to study abroad, highlight areas where further self-discovery and action could enhance personal development. | STRATEGY AND PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – not satisfied with: introvert – what changes to feel like more self: be honest with herself and focus on her own thoughts rather than others – source of comfort: t being self is a source of comfort: this way, you are not putting pressure on yourself to please others – getting to this point, what important: my own happiness – costs: eliminate toxic people you trusted – difficult choice: moving on from someone I trusted – what to do differently: less on advice from other people, focus on own instinct – motivator for significant decision: compliments – inconsistency between who you are: describe: conflict personality, appear in situation when you are in love with someone – vision of self: describe: confident person / describe circumstance: extrovert, loud, careless – inner standard of being: true, inner personality | Me/others | This concept focuses on aligning personal identity with social interactions and relationships. It involves being authentic, prioritizing personal happiness, making choices based on self-instinct rather than external advice, and managing conflicts between one's true self and social expectations. | POSITION TO SOCIAL CONTEXT |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – getting to this point: achievements: being able to move on – priorities formed: started focusing on the short-term goals that were reachable – process of becoming the self-described as chaotic – crucial circumstance: failure – significant for personality found my hobby in content creation and pursued it/frequent: occasionally – motivator for significant decision: compliments – significant-> before, I felt demotivated then; after the compliments motivate and passionate – vision of self: describe a confident person / describe circumstance: extrovert, loud, careless – unfinished plans: frequent: often/ experience as regret most often – lack of authenticity: demotivated – unsuitable for personality: frequent: often/impact made me felt bad | Acting way/self-regulation | This involves managing one's behaviour and decisions based on personal goals and feedback. It includes focusing on short-term, achievable goals, handling failures, finding motivation through external validation, and dealing with feelings of demotivation and regret. The process is described as chaotic, reflecting the challenge of aligning actions with self-identity while managing authenticity and emotional impact. | CONSCIENCE OF BECOMING THE SELF |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – inconsistency between who you are: describe a conflict personality, appear in a situation when you are in love with someone – COBS: don't know – unfinished plans would change coz it's similar to the butterfly effect | Questionable answers | These are responses that lack clarity or depth, often due to uncertainty or insufficient understanding. They may include unclear descriptions of personal experiences or concepts. | QUALITY OF THE INTERVIEW |
| Int 73: Woman, 23 years old, Vietnamese | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – ambitious – hard-working – achievement: hard work in order to achieve goals – what to change: focus on the future – process of becoming the self: hard and lonely process – example of unfinished plan: not doing my best at studying and making connections – vision of self appears in the middle of big decisions – feeling of inconsistency between who she is and ought to be appear when working towards a goal – not satisfied with perfectionism – what easy: nothing | Reaching goal personality self-description | This describes a person driven by ambition and hard work towards achieving goals. The process is seen as challenging and solitary, with a focus on future objectives. Unfinished plans and a vision of self emerge during significant decisions. Feelings of inconsistency and dissatisfaction with perfectionism are notable aspects of their journey. | STRATEGY AND PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – short answers – vision of self describe: it feels right – inconsistency between who you are and ought to be: described like there was something missing – unsuitable for personality decisions: impact: how far I've come/unsuitable for personality decisions: frequent: no – what different would she do: no – being self as a source of comfort: makes her feel aligned – what changes to feel more self: change habits | Not very specific or clear interview | This describes an interview where responses are brief and lack detail. The vision of self feels right, but there's a sense of something missing in terms of alignment. There's minimal reflection on unsuitable decisions or changes. Being authentic feels comforting, with changes needed in habits to enhance self-alignment. | QUALITY OF THE INTERVIEW |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – biggest achievements in a way to get to this point: choosing what I really wanted instead of what other want – difficult choice; to choose what matters to me – priorities: made after finding her true values – crucial circumstance: awareness of being in the wrong department where she was doing what she didn't want to – significant for personality achievement: go after she really wants/ frequency: often /motivator: instinct /before-after: as baggage has been lifted – unfinished plans: not being enough or my best / frequent: seldom / would change: yes, would have learned more – what considered important to get to this point: own values – inner standard of being: being your truest and most authentic self as possible – COBS function: bring self-awareness into people's lives/ form: being authentic/not experienced – lack of authenticity: I feel empty and fake – costs: leave some people behind | "My need" development resolution | This describes the process of aligning personal achievements and decisions with one's true values and desires. Key aspects include choosing based on authentic desires rather than external expectations, making difficult choices to follow one's values, and prioritizing self-awareness. The resolution involves addressing unfinished plans by learning more and being true to oneself, despite potential costs like leaving some people behind. | STRATEGY AND PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT |
| Int 74: Woman, 25 years old, Italian | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – describes herself as a young Italian women who lives in Poland, studies and work here – most proud of being an Expat, language abilities – what was important to get to this point: moving to another country coz she had to – costs: being far from family and own country – key circumstance: moving to Poland | Me as Expat | This describes a person who has relocated from Italy to Poland for study and work. Proud of her achievements and language skills as an expat, she identifies strongly with this experience. The necessity | SIGNIFICANT FACTORS OF DEVELOPMENT |

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| | | | of moving and the associated costs, such as distance from family and home, are significant in her self-identification and development. Being an expat is a key aspect of her self-concept and personal growth. | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – essential for personality: sociable soul (dusza towarzystwa), great dreams, ambitious, sensitive – not satisfied with->being explosive sometimes – importance of not being judged in a new environment (no one knew her in a new environment) – in the process of becoming the self: difficulty in finding true friends in a new environment/ now difficulties concerning the pandemic – lack of authenticity: like an automat without emotions – inconsistent with personality decisions: difficult to say how often, for small things often example: going to a party she did not want go/ negative effect coz she feels she cannot on communicate effectively – significant achievements before and after: before: feeling that she won't make it, panic/after great satisfaction | Social-emotional character | <p>This category focuses on the interaction between social traits and emotional experiences:</p> <p>Social Traits: Includes being sociable, ambitious, and sensitive, with challenges in finding genuine connections and dealing with judgment in new settings.</p> <p>Emotional Experiences: Addresses struggles with emotional disconnection, inconsistency, and the impact of social decisions on well-being.</p> <p>Self-Development: Involves adapting to new environments, managing authenticity, and navigating social and emotional conflicts.</p> <p>Achievements and Challenges: Notable for overcoming initial uncertainties and achieving satisfaction despite difficulties in social integration and emotional</p> | SIGNIFICANT FACTOR OF DEVELOPMENT |

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| | | | balance. | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – most proud of: carrier – not satisfied with too many negative thoughts about herself sometimes – taking challenges to see if it is possible to be on her own (what was important to get to this point: moving to other country coz she had to) – difficulties: she always doubted her dreams – moving to another country was significant also because no one knew her, so no one could judge her – achievements: being independent and responsible – easy: finding a job, flat, bureaucracy – lost chances: experienced as: terrible fear, panic, and feeling that she won't make it or is not worthy – significant achievements before and after: before: feeling that she won't make it, panic/after: great satisfaction – decision master, bachelor's degree, sending a CV and looking for a job, getting own flat, lonely travels, a little ambitious and courage | Fighting for own self-confidence | <p>This category describes the process of building self-confidence through significant personal challenges. It involves moving to a new country to escape past judgments, becoming independent, and facing self-doubt. Key achievements include finding a job, securing a flat, and managing bureaucratic hurdles, all contributing to a sense of self-worth and satisfaction. The process often entails overcoming negative self-thoughts, experiencing fear and panic, and ultimately gaining confidence and personal satisfaction.</p> | STRATEGY AND PATTERNS OF DEVELOPMENT |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – vision of self: vision who I want to be/ appear when thinking about own future or when something in the present is inconvenient – inner standard of being: like inner mantra, which has the goal to remind me who I am, who I want to be, what are my values – COBS: function: conscience is awareness of what is good or bad/ function: giving direction – COBS experienced when analysing events and own events (e.g. writing diary), yes experienced – to be more self: need to start some sport to have more energy and strength, and be resistant to stress/ – in the past, being self was problematic and uncomfortable, now it might be similar in difficult/crisis situations but generally, she feels good with herself – motivator: getting awareness of the fact that only she can change her life for the better <p>mistakes and problems learning self</p> | Getting to know herself | <p>This category encompasses the journey of self-discovery and personal growth through reflection on one's vision, inner standards, and experiences. It involves defining who one wants to be, guided by a personal mantra and the conscience of what is right or wrong. Key aspects include gaining self-awareness through analysis of events and journaling, and adapting priorities based on past mistakes and negative experiences.</p> | FOUNDATION FOR AUTHENTIC SELF |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – nothing would do differently: people have to experience a variety of things to get to know oneself and develop own potential – priorities formed through mistakes and negative experiences, which gave her awareness of what hurts her, what she wants, what is her priority – process of becoming the self: nothing special, probably others experience similarly, but own life seems to be difficult | | Despite difficulties and crises, the process ultimately leads to feeling comfortable with oneself and recognizing that self-improvement is a personal responsibility. | |
| | <p>- lost chances: often(once a month), tries not to think of it, but when she does, she may cry/experience as: terrible fear, panic, and feeling that she won't make it or is not worthy would change? Unfortunately yes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – inconsistency between who she is and ought to be: shame, feeling that she should do more /example: Argument with boyfriend – reflection about significant achievements: often(every month) those moments are important – significant achievements before and after: before: feeling that she won't make it, panic/after great satisfaction | Intense experiencing regulation of self-development | This involves frequent, emotional reflection on lost opportunities and personal inconsistencies. It includes regular contemplation of significant achievements, where feelings of panic and inadequacy are contrasted with eventual satisfaction and growth. The process is marked by intense emotional responses and ongoing adjustments to align personal actions with self-perceived expectations and values. | CONSCIENCE OF BECOMING THE SELF |