CHAPTER THREE: METHODS

Introduction

The purpose of this exploratory study is to understand some of the coping strategies utilized by midlife boomers from New Hampshire who report subjective well-being while being unemployed. At this stage of the study, coping with job loss will generally be defined as the cognitive and behavioral efforts to manage the taxing demands posed by job loss (Latack, Kinicki, and Prussia, 1995). The General Health Questionnaire (GHQ-12) is used to identify boomers who report positive subjective well-being during unemployment. To answer the central research question, the research design will allow for the in-depth examination of individual experiences with job loss and coping.

Research Design

A qualitative approach to data collection and analysis was chosen. This design will allow for documenting, analyzing, and interpreting patterns, characteristics and meanings of a small group of 15 participants.

In contrast, quantitative research is effectively used when studying large groups or samples and making generalizations about relationships and correlations among variables to a broader group or population. Many studies involving coping with job loss examine correlates of psychological well-being during unemployment. They also attempt to predict coping strategies correlated with either reemployment or subjective well-being (or both) for broad, universal populations.

Quantitative studies involving job loss, reemployment and subjective well-being generally involve passive processing of decontextualized individuals in large cohorts through...
pre-structured, closed-choice, scales, and questionnaires (Fryer and Fagan, 2003). These studies generally fall into three categories:

(1) Cross-sectional comparison of employed versus unemployed samples
(2) Longitudinal studies drawn from large data panels looking at people moving from unemployed to employed or from employed to unemployed
(3) Econometric studies which test econometric models such as the latent growth mixture modeling, which allows for the modeling of longitudinal data.

Fryer and Fagan (2003) argue that orthodox unemployment research has tended to use research methods that merely document psychological distress and ill-health, minimize the relationship between researcher and participant as a source of data pollution, minimize the extent of participant control of the research process, and exclude participants’ interests in research outcomes as a legitimate part of the research design.

On the other hand, narrative research is best for capturing the detailed stories or lived experiences of a single life or the lives of a small number of individuals (Creswell, 2007). Narrative research provides an approach for learning about the inner world of individuals through verbal accounts and stories presented by individual narrators about their lives and inner worlds. Josselson, Lieblich, and McAdams, (2002) concur, stating “In considering people as constructors of their experiences, [narrative] research takes a giant step away from parsing human experience into predefined “variables” and requires of the researcher an equally major shift in perspective and approach. Rather than forming hypotheses, the researcher frames questions for exploration; in place of measurement are the challenges of deeply listening to others; and instead of statistics are the ambiguities of thoughtful analysis of texts”( p.3).

The aim of this study is toward a more comprehensive understanding of how boomers experience and cope with longer-term unemployment. This objective calls for a qualitative approach that allows for in-depth examination of individual experiences.
Several reasons support the decision to use a qualitative approach to data collection and analysis. First, qualitative research seeks to be detailed, rich, and vivid in understanding and looks to include the social and environmental context and individual’s perspective in the inquiry (Neuman, 2003). This is an issue of particular relevance here given that coping is situation-specific, that is, it comes into play in specific situations and requires a contextual analysis of stressful encounters (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984; Latack, 1986).

Second, qualitative research focuses on the interplay between the environment and the individual. Here, the experiences of job loss and coping can best be understood by examining the very personal accounts of individuals who have experienced the phenomenon themselves within a particular context.

Third, qualitative research emphasizes collaboration between the investigator and the research participants, allowing for heightened understanding of individual process and the meaning that participants attribute to their behaviors and circumstances. In this case, the data are influenced by the interaction of the interviewer and the interviewee as well as other contextual factors (Lieblich, Tuval-Mashiach, and Zilber, 1998).

Narrative research is “up close and personal” in that it involves in-depth study of particular individuals in social context and time (Josselson et al., 2002). In-depth interviewing was selected in order to access content, including the experiences, perceptions, and attitudes of the unemployed boomer in this study. By using interviews, the researcher can reach areas of reality that would otherwise remain in accessible such as people’s subjective experiences and attitudes (Perakyla, 2005). Additional advantages of the in-depth interview include the researcher’s ability to probe and explore unanticipated issues. In this way, the researcher is also able to provide real-time clarification of any unclear responses.
Setting

The setting for this study is the State of New Hampshire. Study participants will be identified through the New Hampshire Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Title I Dislocated Worker Program with a specific focus on unemployed workers who were enrolled in the 2010 program year (7/1/2010 – 6/30/2011) and report positive subjective well-being at the time of the study.

New Hampshire has enjoyed one of the lowest unemployment rates in the United States for many years. Its seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was less than 4.0 percent from June 2004 to August 2008 (NHES, 2011a). Yet New Hampshire’s labor force has not been immune to the recent recession.

The unemployment rate climbed to a peak of 7.1 percent in February 2010 before declining to 5.8 percent in July 2010. The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate has continued to fall and resided at 5.6 percent in January 2011. Nationally, the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for January 2011 was 9.0 percent. Still, New Hampshire fared better than New England and the nation overall (NHES, 2011b).

While New Hampshire’s unemployment rate is the envy of most states, unemployed boomers in New Hampshire were not buffered from the national phenomenon of longer durations of unemployment. A review of the four-quarter moving average for the duration of unemployment in New Hampshire for people at midlife reveals that the average duration for people age 45-54 was 17.6 weeks during 2007 and jumped to 40 weeks in 2010. This similar trend is seen for people aged 55 and over where the average duration in 2007 was 21.1 weeks and rose to 48.2 weeks in 2010. In 2010, people age 45 to 64 in New Hampshire experienced the longest average durations of unemployment of all ages (NHES, 2011c).
The federal Workforce Investment Act (WIA) was signed into law August 7, 1998. This program provides a framework for an effective national workforce development system addressing the needs of businesses, job-seekers, and those wanting to further their careers (USDOL, 1998). The WIA program offers a full set of activities for its participants and a continuum of services that spans three successive levels: (1) Core Services; (2) Intensive Services; and (3) Training Services. For example, a dislocated worker may be determined eligible for WIA (Core Service), then receive formal assessment and testing, career counseling and job placement assistance (Intensive), and finally enter training or an educational program (Training). Career counseling and job placement activities continue throughout and following education and training until reemployment occurs.

Ultimately, the WIA employment counselor must attain a variety of performance measures as crafted by the Department of Labor. These measures include: (a) customer satisfaction; (b) entered employment; (c) six month job retention rate; and (d) six month average earnings (USDOL, 1998). Program clientele for the WIA Dislocated Worker Program consists of dislocated workers who qualify for WIA services. The number of registered dislocated workers during the 2009 program year was approximately 1000 people (includes ARRA funded services). WIA dislocated workers across the State of New Hampshire from different industry sectors will be within the scope of this study, with data being collected in the fall of 2011.

**Study Population**

The intent of this study is to focus on boomers at midlife aged 46-59. The study participants will be defined as unemployed individuals who meet the following criteria: (1) enrolled participant in the WIA Title I dislocated worker program; (2) between 46 and 59 years of age; (3) unemployed for 6 months or more; and (4) have demonstrated positive subjective well-being as evidenced by the GHQ-12 pre-screening questionnaire scores.
The population from which the initial sample will be drawn will include all Workforce Investment Act Title I dislocated workers enrolled between July 1, 2010 and June 30, 2011 and unemployed for more than six months. A sample of 200 dislocated workers will be invited to complete the General Health Questionnaire (GHQ-12). A purposive sample of 15 participants reporting positive psychological well-being on the GHQ-12 will be drawn from this broader population. A balance of males and females representing a variety of industry sectors and positions is desired.

The exclusion criteria for this purposive sample include: (1) all people younger than 46 or older than 59; (2) full-time employed individuals; (3) unemployed individuals currently receiving severance packages at the time of the dislocation; and (4) unemployed individuals receiving inheritances, lottery winnings, or other income outside of normal household income during the period of unemployment.

Data Collection Instrument

The study will use three data collection instruments. They are the participant background questionnaire, the interview protocol, and the General Health Questionnaire (GHQ-12).

Participant Background Data. Participant background data collected at the time of application (Appendix A) for WIA services will be available for this research. Items relevant to this study include: (1) date of birth; (2) date of dislocation; (3) employer; (4) education; (5) contact information; (6) employment data; (7) family status; (8) marital status; (9) head of household status; and (10) race.

In addition, a participant background data form (Appendix B) will be used to collect and confirm information just prior to the time of the interview, (such as age at time of interview and information related to severance pay and household income). Data from both sources will be
helpful to record the ways in which participants’ lives and job experiences are similar or
dissimilar from one another.

**Interview Protocol.** The interview protocol (Appendix C) is self-designed to understand
job loss coping strategies accessed by unemployed boomers. The interview questions and
structure of the protocol are derived from a number of related studies (Amundson and Borgen,
1987 and 1988; Patton and Donohue, 1998; Ebberwein, Krieshok, Ulven, and Prosser, 2004;
Zikic and Richardson, 2007). Moreover, the more general coping and job loss literature also
informed the interview questions.

The interviews will explore individual coping experiences with longer-term job loss.
Participants will be asked to consider their most recent job loss in answering the questions. In
addition, probes will be available to the researcher to elicit more information or clarification as
needed and to extract the role of emotions and the unconscious. The questions will be designed
to answer the research question. Quantitative and descriptive data on the study participants (e.g.,
demographic data and previous employment information) will be accessed from the WIA Title I
participant tracking and reporting system.

**General Health Questionnaire.** The GHQ-12 (Appendix D) will be used to identify a
purposeful selection of dislocated workers who report subjective well-being. Permission to use
the GHQ-12 was granted from GL Assessment Limited on March 23, 2011 (Appendix E).
According to Diener, Napa Scallon, and Lucas (2009), the term subjective well-being
emphasizes an individual’s own assessment of his or her life – not the judgment of “experts” –
and includes satisfaction, pleasant affect, and low negative effect (p. 69). They conceptualized
subjective well-being as a broad construct, encompassing four specific and distinct components
including: (a) pleasant affect or positive well-being (e.g.., joy, elation, happiness, mental health),
(b) unpleasant affect or psychological distress (e.g., guilt, shame, sadness, anxiety, worry, anger, stress, depression), (c) life satisfaction (a global evaluation of one’s life), and (d) domain or situational satisfaction (e.g., work, family, leisure, health, finances, self).

A vast array of scales and measures of subjective well-being outcomes are used in the unemployment literature, with the GHQ-12 being the most widely used means of assessing psychological well-being (Warr, 1987; McKee-Ryan, Song, Wanberg, and Kinicki, 2005). The GHQ-12 is used to detect psychiatric disorder in the general population and within community or non-psychiatric clinical settings. The GHQ-12 is very widely used by researchers in various fields and clinicians who wish to screen individuals (Goldberg and Williams, 1988).

A number of versions of the GHQ with various lengths (12-, 28-, 30- and 60-item) have been used extensively in unemployment studies. The GHQ-12 compares favorably with the longer scales as a robust measure of psychological well-being (Goldberg and Williams, 1988). In their study of 1013 South Australian young people, with average age of 19.6 years (SD = 1.04), Winefield, Goldney, Winefield and Tiggemann (1989) report scores for the GHQ-12 correlated .87 with the GHQ-28 and .96 with the GHQ-30. The latter two forms correlated with each other at .91.

The strength of the GHQ is its resistance to effects of sex, age, job level, and marital status (Banks, Clegg, Jackson, Kemp, Stafford, and Wall, 1980). Winefield et al. (1989) examined the psychometric properties of the GHQ-12, as revealed in three studies. Study A involved employees in an engineering firm (n=659), study B involved recent school-leavers (n=647), and study C included unemployed men (n=92). A number of two-group comparisons were undertaken using t tests to assess differences. In a comparison between four job levels (blue-collar, white-collar, supervisory and managerial employees) on the GHQ-12, scores in samples A
and B showed no association between job level and GHQ-12 scores for either sample. Likewise for age in samples A and C, there was no statistically significant relationship (p.192).

In addition, they report no significant differences between married and single participants in samples A and C. No sex differences were found in sample A nor for the unemployed group in sample B. However a sex difference was found among the young employed group in sample B ($t=2.76, P<0.01$ for the Likert-method), with females scoring higher than males.

Winefield et al. (1989) also found no statistically significant differences in scores for males and females on the GHQ-12 using Likert scoring. The mean for males is reported as 10.74 (SD= 4.76) and for females 10.65 (SD=4.94). In sum, the GHQ-12 scores in these studies were not sensitive to differences in age, job level, sex, and marital status.

Banks et al. (1980) advocate the use of the GHQ-12 as a constructive index of psychiatric illness for the study of employment and related issues. The GHQ-12 contains items that tap both positive and negative affect (e.g. feeling reasonably happy and feeling constantly under strain, respectively). It comprises six “positive” and six “negative” items concerning the past few weeks. Positive items include “Have you recently felt capable of making decisions about things?”, while negative items include “Have you recently felt constantly under strain?” The administration time for the GHQ is 3-8 minutes.

In this study, I am most interested in boomers who report a greater positive affect over negative affect while coping with long-term job loss. For this purpose, the GHQ-12 will be used to group the sample and to isolate boomers who report positive subjective well-being.

**Scoring.** Respondents complete a four-point binary response scale. The four possible answers are reduced to a binary score (0-0-1-1) and totaled. The binary method is characterized as the (0-0-1-1) and results in a score ranging from 0 to 12, with higher scores indicating greater
ill-health. The wording of the items means that they can all be scored in the same direction. All
items have a 4 point scoring system that ranges from a “better/healthier than normal” option,
through a “same as usual” and a “worse/more than usual” to a “much worse/more than usual”
option. This method of scoring the questionnaire is the GHQ scoring method. This method is
advocated by the test author (Goldberg and Williams, 1988). An alternative scoring method is to
employ a Likert-style 0, 1, 2, or 3-point allocation for each item. Winefield et al. (1989) reports
this method results in totals with a wider variability, where the mean and standard deviation
allow study of differences amongst low-prevalence groups with greater precision than does the
traditional binary scoring method.

For this study, it is necessary to specify a threshold value in order to group participants
in the initial large sample by positive and negative well-being. Goldberg and Williams (1988)
advise that it is best if the user specifies a required threshold value, based on past use or research
evidence relevant to their assessment circumstances.

Suggested default thresholds provided by Goldberg and Williams (1988) for the GHQ
scoring method using the GHQ-12 is a 1/2 whereby a binary method score of 2 or higher is
regarded as having poor psychological or subjective well-being. Following their guidance to base
cut-off scores on the use of research relevant to the assessment circumstance we look to Patton
and Donohue (1998).

In their research they used the GHQ-12 to screen for positive and negative subjective
well-being and subsequently conducted in-depth interviews. In contrast, quantitative
unemployment studies using the GHQ-12 rely on descriptive statistics, mean values, and
correlations. These studies do not include direct interviewing of the participants. My study
In their study, Patton and Donohue (1998) chose a GHQ-12 cut-off score of 3. This decision was guided by a number of factors. First, in his study, Banks (1983) reported the lowest rate of misclassifications with the GHQ-12 with a 2/3 cut-off score. Second, an examination by Patton and Donohue (1998) of the comparability of individual GHQ-12 scores and the content of participants’ interviews illustrated examples of poor psychological well-being in participants scoring 3 and above (p. 335). For my study, which mirrors the assessment circumstances of the research conducted by Patton and Donohue (1998) involving individuals experiencing longer-term unemployment; a cut off score of 3 will be employed. Participants scoring a 2 or below will be grouped as individuals reporting positive subjective well-being.

**Reliability and Validity.** Sound reliability and validity data for the GHQ are provided in the GHQ manual (Goldberg and Williams, 1988). Adequate reliability levels have been found with unemployed populations. Banks et al. (1980) reported acceptably high alpha coefficient with values falling between .82 and .90. Rowley and Feather (1987) found an internal reliability of .89 with their unemployed participants. Patton and Donohue (1998) reported a coefficient alpha of .82 with unemployed participants in their study.

**Procedure**

Participant selection and data collection will occur in two phases. Phase I will involve selecting a sample of 100 candidates who meet the selection criteria. They will be identified from the 2010 WIA Title I dislocated worker program (July 1, 2010 – June 30, 2011). Candidates will be located across the State of New Hampshire and represent a variety of industry sectors.

**Phase I: Selection.** In Phase I, the prospective participants will be invited to participate through a letter (Appendix F). The letter will identify the purpose of the study, the volunteer
nature of the study, the collaboration with the New Hampshire Workforce Opportunity Council, the selection criteria, and instructions on completing the participant Informed Consent Form (Appendix G). The form describes the risks and benefits of the study, confidentiality, and anonymity. Also included with the letter will be the General Health Questionnaire (GHQ-12) and the participant background questionnaire. The letter will explain that interested participants completing all forms and returning them in the pre-paid, self-addressed envelope will receive a $10 cash gift card in appreciation of their time.

Upon completion of the Phase I materials, each participant will receive a thank you letter (Appendix H). It will acknowledge their valuable participation, thank them for their time, include the $10 gift card, and reiterate that a small number of participants will be contacted for a further 60-90 minute interview. The letter will explain that if the participant is selected, further communication would be forthcoming from the researcher in the next month. It will also reemphasize that the selection will be based on many factors and that whether or not they are selected for an interview in no way minimizes their contribution to the study.

The first step will be to score the GHQ-12 and divide the group by using the cut-off score of 3. Thus, two groups of long-term unemployed people will be created. Those who score a 2 or lower will be categorized into the positive subjective well-being group and those scoring a 3 or higher will be categorized into a group reporting negative well-being. The selection phase will be concluded when 20 responses are returned and enough males and females are identified and scored a 2 or lower on the GHQ-12. This group reporting positive subjective well-being will be the focus of this research from here on.

Primary consideration will be given to achieve a similar concentration of length of unemployment between 6 – 18 months among the group reporting positive subjective well-being.
Lastly, consideration will be given to geographic location and prior employment industry sector.

Candidates exhibiting positive subjective well-being based on their GHQ-12 score will be contacted by telephone and/or mail and invited to participate further. In this way, a purposeful sample of 15 participants will be selected.

**Phase II: Interviewing.** Selected participants will be contacted by telephone to schedule an in-person interview at a location of their convenience. The telephone script (Appendix I) will be used to outline the purpose of the interview, how they will be conducted and audio recorded, and to solicit a convenient time and location for the interview. A telephone call will be made a few days before the interview to re-confirm the appointment time and location.

Face-to-face interviews will take place in settings of the participant’s choice that will allow for digital voice recording. The interview sessions will be approximately 60-90 minutes in length. The questions reflected in the interview protocol were structured to gain descriptive information about the coping process as experienced and recalled by the participant.

At the time of the interview, I will use the interview protocol, beginning with a review of the purpose of the study, confidentiality, and anonymity. After checking for questions, I will start the interview with warm-up questions designed to elicit a narrative of their experience with job loss.

Upon completion of each interview, I will take time to write field notes to capture my experience of the interview, the participant, and any reflections I had regarding the information shared. Surprises, questions, tensions, emotions, and insights will be captured.

Following each interview, the participant will receive a thank you letter via mail (Appendix J). The note will thank them for their participation and include a $30 cash gift card as a token of appreciation for their time and effort.
Participant Confidentiality

Throughout the study, every effort will be made to ensure the confidentiality of participants and related information. Pseudonyms selected by the participants will be used to disguise their identity. If personal quotes are used from the interview session, they will be attributed to the pseudonym. Under no circumstances will the real name of the participant or identifying information be revealed. Each participant will be asked to review a transcript of the interview and to correct, clarify, or delete information.

Informed consent forms and background data forms that contain identifying information will be stored separately from other data. Identifying information will be stored in a secure file cabinet in my home and destroyed by shredding three years after the completion of the study. The digital voice recorded tapes and all related research materials will be kept in a separate secure file cabinet in my home and destroyed three years after the completion of the study.

All written materials will be stored in files on a desktop computer in my home office, using password protection, to which only I will have access. I will also copy all of the written work onto a USB portable flash drive to serve as a back-up to all the interview data in this study, and it will be stored in a locked file cabinet in my home office. I will destroy all data/media after three years by deleting the files from both my computer and the flash drive, and shredding any hardcopy materials printed from the computer files.

In the course of the interview participants may be asked to disclose information that they might consider to be personal or sensitive. Participants will control the personal or sensitive nature of their disclosures by choosing whether or not to share a story that involves details of personal or sensitive nature. The questions themselves are not deemed to be of a personal or sensitive nature.
Participants may potentially encounter other forms of psychological or social risk *only if they choose to share a work decision story that involves details of a psychological- or social-risk nature*, so they will control the nature of their disclosures. The questions themselves are not deemed to be of a psychological- or social-risk nature.

The steps to be taken to minimize the risks identified will include reinforcing to the participant that the study is voluntary, and that the participant may withdraw at any time without creating harmful consequences. In addition, the researcher will note that if any questions cause personal anxiety, the participant should feel free to decline to answer any question that is found objectionable. The researcher will also note that should the participant experience emotional or psychological discomfort after the interview, they can contact the researcher by telephone and the researcher will make available a list of appropriate professional counselors.

The potential risks, if any, can *only be* publicly known risks if the participant chooses to share work decision stories in the interview. Even then such data will be disguised as names and other identifying elements will be removed to protect confidentiality and anonymity from transcription onward.

The potential risks of the study are minimal, while the many anticipated benefits to study participants include:

1. The occasion to spend time with someone who is interested in their job loss and coping experience and thoughts.
2. The opportunity for increased personal insight into their own experience of unemployment and coping.
3. Time for the participants to reflect on their professional and personal experience in a research project that is interesting to them at this stage of their life.
4. The possibility for participants to become interested in my topic and reflect on the job loss coping process with other unemployed people.
The occasion for career counselors, coaches, and employment placement specialist to be informed by the extent to which unemployed boomers cope and how they cope. This study will be reviewed and approved by the Fielding Graduate University Institutional Review Board. The IRB approval can be found in Appendix K.

Pilot Study

I will conduct a pilot study to test the design, use of the GHQ-12 questionnaire, and interview protocol. The research design calls for a two-phase approach. In phase I of the pilot, 25 prospective participants will be invited to participate through the selection process previously described. The goal of phase I of the pilot is to identify a minimum of three participants meeting the selection criteria and reporting positive subjective well-being.

Once two participants are identified, I will move into phase II of the pilot, to further test my methodology, including the interview questions and protocol with the two participants generated from phase I.

The pilot will be utilized to confirm the usefulness of the interview protocol. It will also provide a good opportunity to practice the entire process from beginning to end with the three participants. This includes audio recording, transcription, coding of data, data organization, tracking, analysis, and reporting.

Data Management

The first step will be to organize and prepare the data for analysis. This will involve working with the GHQ-12 scores, WIA participant data, background data, interview data and field notes. Excel spreadsheets will be utilized to facilitate the task of data organization, interpretation, and analysis. Qualitative analysis software (QDAS) will not be utilized for this study. One of the challenges of QDAS is the learning curve to use a large electronic data
management system. Since I have no experience with QDAS, I feel more comfortable with a paper-based system and using Excel spreadsheets to manage the data.

**GHQ-12 Scores.** Participant scores on the GHQ-12 will be entered into an Excel spreadsheet using pseudonyms. Results will be scored according to the procedures described herein. Participants will be grouped based on an examination of individual GHQ-12 scores. Those scoring a 2 or below will be grouped as participants reporting positive subjective well-being and participants reporting a 3 or above will be categorized as participants reporting negative subjective well-being. Mean GHQ-12 scores will be calculated so that the scores can be compared with existing studies.

The participants grouped as reporting positive well-being are the focus of this study. They will be placed in a separate spreadsheet. The relevant WIA participant data and background data collected will be added to this spreadsheet, which will be analyzed along with the content of participants’ interviews.

**Interview Data.** A digital voice recorder will be used to capture each interview. Afterwards, I will debrief my observations by taking field notes about the interview, responses to key questions, and any other notes helpful in evaluating the text of the interview. The field notes will be used to help me step back from the conversation and reflect on major themes and observations I made. A paper folder will be created for each participant. The field notes will be placed in this folder at the conclusion of the interview.

After each interview, the digital voice file will be transferred to my home computer. The electronic file will be identified with the pseudonym and the date of the interview and saved in an electronic folder on my computer identified with the pseudonym. A copy of the electronic file
Transcripts received back from the transcriptionist will be saved electronically to the folder on my computer identified with the participant pseudonym. In addition, a hard copy will be printed and stored in the paper file folder with the field notes.

Data Analysis

Data analysis involves making sense out of text and image data. Interviews, field notes, and various other types of data are often not amendable to analysis until the information they convey has been condensed and made systematically comparable (Berg, 1988). This involves preparing the data for analysis, conducting different analyses, moving deeper and deeper into understanding the data like peeling back the layers of an onion (Creswell, 2009). It also means dividing the data into meaningful units, whether these are words, phrases, sentences, or paragraphs. An objective coding scheme is applied to the notes and data, this process is commonly called content analysis.

Content analysis, briefly defined as the systematic, objective, quantitative analysis of message characteristics (Neuendorf, 2002), will be used to systematically analyze what is in the verbal data. A categorical-content approach as described by Lieblich, et al., 1998) will be employed. This is a form of content analysis that entails identifying categories and themes that become apparent through review of the data. According to Lieblich et al. this approach may be adopted when the researcher is primarily interested in a problem or phenomenon shared by a group of people. The study at hand is interested in the coping strategies utilized by mid-life unemployed boomers who report positive subjective well-being.
Reading the Data. Three readings of each interview will be completed in succession. Interviews will be read in the order they were conducted. On the basis of the research question, all relevant sections of text will be marked (Lieblich, et al., 1998). First, I will listen to each digital recording as I read through the transcript, making sure the transcript is accurate. This first step involves obtaining a general sense of the information and reflecting on its overall meaning. I will make notes in the margins and start recording general thoughts about the data at this stage. In addition, I will reread my field notes, debriefing summaries, and notes. While doing so, I will identify patterns and themes I noted in the field.

Second, I will reread the transcript to code for its topical content and use colored markers to indicate sections which relate to potential coping themes and categories, noting the participants’ words, phrases and examples. Themes will be the large grouping of ideas and categories will be those groupings within themes. This will involve coding participants’ statements about behaviors and coping strategies, grouping them according to similarities, and finally developing distinguishable themes and categories.

This will result in coding sections of the transcribed text according to the tentative themes developed during the interview process and reading of the transcripts. In this way the codes will be developed on the basis of the emerging information collected from the participants (Creswell, 2009).

Third, I will reread the transcripts with these themes and categories in mind to ascertain whether all information from the participants was adequately covered. Here I am looking for saturation. Saturation means that as the researcher, I have reached a point where I am getting duplication of ideas and redundancies (Creswell, 2007).
This reflective reading and re-reading process will enable me to move toward the synthesis of the themes and categories. In practice, it is “a circular procedure that involves careful reading, suggesting categories, sorting the subtext into categories, generating ideas for additional categories or for refinement of the existing ones, and so on” (Lieblich, et al., 1998, p. 113). Throughout this process I will return to my literature review to see what I am hearing from the participants in relation to what scholars and researchers have said about coping strategies correlated with positive subjective well-being.

**Synthesis of Themes and Categories.** I will use an Excel spreadsheet to capture the themes and categories. Across the top of the spreadsheet I will list each of the participants by pseudonym. Down the left hand column I will list the coping themes and categories identified. For each participant I will note which themes and categories appeared in passages of the interview transcript. I will note the page number and line number in the appropriate cell of the spreadsheet.

In this way I will begin to look at similarities across the interviews and common passages uttered by the participants. In addition, I will review the language used to describe categories and themes and to make sure they are accurate and concise. Independent from the researcher, a colleague or member of my committee will read one or two of the interviews and review the themes and categories identified by the researcher to provide for intercoder agreement.

Ultimately I will arrive at a coding schema that will reflect the data collected and be organized with themes and categories. Following Lieblich, et al. (1998), the themes and categories will be counted, tabulated, and ordered by frequency in accordance with the research aims and question. In addition, the contents will be used descriptively to formulate a picture of
the coping strategies utilized by midlife boomers who reported subjective well-being while being unemployed.

**Validation and Reliability**

Validity is not the same in qualitative research as it is in quantitative research. Following Creswell (2009), qualitative validity means the researcher checks for the accuracy of the findings by employing certain procedures. Qualitative reliability indicates the researcher’s approach is consistent and often refers to the stability of responses to multiple coders of data sets. The overall goal is to ensure consistent results in the study.

Several reliability and validity procedures as suggested by Creswell (2009) will be used. In the case of reliability, the researcher will: (1) send each participant a copy of their transcript to review for accuracy; (2) check transcripts to make sure that they do not contain obvious mistakes made during transcription; (3) make sure there is not a drift in the definition of codes or a shift in the meaning of the codes during the process of coding; and (4) find another researcher who can cross-check the codes for a sampling of the transcripts to determine whether there is intercoder agreement.

In the case of validity, the researcher will triangulate different data sources of information to build coherent justification for themes. Scores from the GHQ-12 will be compared for similarities and differences with the narrative stories of interviewed participants. Individual GHQ-12 scores of 2 or less will be compared with the content of participants’ interviews to illustrate coping strategies of participants reporting positive subjective well-being.

Second, the researcher will use rich, thick descriptions to convey findings and to “transport the readers to the setting and give the discussion an element of shared experience” (Creswell, 2009, p. 191). Third, the researcher will clarify the bias the researcher brings to the study. Throughout the process self-reflection and note taking will be utilized to capture how my
interpretation of the research and findings is being shaped by my background, culture, and socioeconomic origin.
References


Appendix A

Workforce Investment Act Application

Revised: October 11, 2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Security #</th>
<th>Initial Visit Date</th>
<th>Interviewer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Name</td>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>Last Name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birth Date</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Project Code</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**CHARACTERISTICS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Selective Service Registrant</th>
<th>Selective Service No.</th>
<th>Citizenship</th>
<th>Alien / Refugee Registration No.</th>
<th>Refugee</th>
<th>Temp. Work Permit</th>
<th>Expiration Date</th>
<th>Ineligible Non Citizen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No, not Registered</td>
<td></td>
<td>U.S. Citizen</td>
<td>Eligible Non-citizen</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, Registered</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not required</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exempt</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Veteran Status</th>
<th>Non Veteran</th>
<th>Recently Separated</th>
<th>Yes &lt;= 180 days</th>
<th>Yes &gt; 180 days</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, Campaign Veteran</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Active Service Dates</td>
<td>/ /</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, Disabled Vet</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes, Campaign–Vietnam Era</td>
<td>/ /</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, special disabled</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disability Status</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Yes, and disability is a substantial impediment to employment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If yes, please explain</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Migrant/Seasonal Farm Worker Family?</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dislocated Worker</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rapid Response</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**EDUCATION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Elementary/Secondary School Grades Completed</th>
<th>00 - 11</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of Post Secondary Years Completed</td>
<td>13 - 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ed. Beyond Bachelor’s Degree</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>High School Graduate</th>
<th>Certificate of Equivalency for a High School Degree (GED)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Post Secondary Degrees</th>
<th>Associates Degree</th>
<th>Bachelor’s Degree/Equivalent</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education Status</th>
<th>Student high school or less</th>
<th>Student attending post high school</th>
<th>Out of school, H.S. dropout</th>
<th>Out of school, H.S. graduate with employment difficulty</th>
<th>Out of school, high school graduate with no employment difficulty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Residential Address</th>
<th>Street</th>
<th>City</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Zip Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mailing Address</th>
<th>Street</th>
<th>City</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Zip Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Telephone</th>
<th>Home</th>
<th>Cellular</th>
<th>Work</th>
<th>E-Mail Address</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alternate Emergency Contacts (required)</th>
<th>First Name</th>
<th>Last Name</th>
<th>Relationship to Applicant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Phone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
**EMPLOYMENT DATA**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Family Members in House Last 6 Months</th>
<th>Relationship to Applicant</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Sources of Income Last 6 Months</th>
<th>Income Last 6 Months</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If no income in the last 6 months, attach Applicant Statement.

**Includable** Pre-Program earnings $

Number of weeks worked in previous 26 weeks ___  
Pre Program includable earnings for previous 26 weeks ______________

**Unemployment Compensation Status**  
- Claimant referred by WPRS (Profiled)  
- Claimant, not referred by WPRS  
- Neither Claimant nor Exhaustee  
- Exhaustee

**Labor Force Status**  
- Employed  
- Unemployed  
- No

**PUBLIC ASSISTANCE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF)</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Monthly Grant Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Long Term AFDC/TANF (30 or more months)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Stamps (within the past 6 months)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplemental Security Income (SSI)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refugee Cash Assistance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Assistance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pell Grant (current)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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</table>

**BARRIERS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Limited English Skills</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Receiving Services from other agency</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic Literacy Skills Deficient</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Youth Only (19-21)**  
- Not a youth

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Youth who needs additional assistance</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Substance abuse</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foster Child</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Pregnant or parenting youth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic Literacy Skills Deficient</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Grade Level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offender</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Homeless and/or Runaway</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**FAMILY, RACE, LANGUAGE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family Status</th>
<th>Non-dependent individual</th>
<th>Other Family Member</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parent in a 1 parent family</td>
<td></td>
<td>Not a family member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent in a 2 parent family</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| # dependents under 18                  | # of family members       |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marital Status</th>
<th>Single</th>
<th>Married</th>
<th>Divorced</th>
<th>Widowed</th>
<th>Separated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Head of Household</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic or Latino Ethnicity (regardless of race)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race (select one or more)</th>
<th>African American or Black</th>
<th>American Indian or Alaskan Native</th>
<th>Asian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hawaiian Native or other Pacific Islander</td>
<td>White</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary</th>
<th>read</th>
<th>Speak</th>
<th>write</th>
<th>reporting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
I hereby attest that the information I provided is accurate to the best of my knowledge. I give permission to check any sources deemed necessary to verify my eligibility for Workforce Investment Act services.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fund Source</th>
<th>Eligibility</th>
<th>Registration/Enrollment Date</th>
<th>WIA Employment Counselor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adult</td>
<td>Adult – Non Priority of Service</td>
<td>/ 20</td>
<td>_________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult - Employed Worker</td>
<td>Dislocated Worker Terminated or Lay off</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dislocated Worker Self employed</td>
<td>Permanent Closure</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix B

Participant Background Data Form
(Completed and mailed to researcher in advance of the interview)

BOOMERS REPORTING SUBJECTIVE WELL-BEING: AN EXPLORATION OF THEIR COPING PROCESS WITH LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYMENT

Thank you for choosing to participate in this study. The purpose of these questions is to collect some background demographic information in order to be able to know something about the ways in which participants’ lives and unemployment experiences are similar or dissimilar from one another.

Please take a minute to complete this form. I will keep this Participant Background Data Form with the transcript in one place, identified only with the anonymous first name you select. If the meaning of a specific question is not clear to you, please do not hesitate to contact me at (603) 995-6125 or via private e-mail at fclark@tds.net

Your Pseudonym or anonymous name: _________________________ (Please select a fictitious first name of your choice)

1. How long have you been unemployed? _____________________

2. Have you ever involuntarily separated from employment before? If so, when? __________

3. What is your current age? __________________

4. What was your occupation at the time of dislocation or job loss? ______________

5. What was your job title at the time of dislocation or job loss? ________________

6. Did you receive a severance package from your prior employer or other sources of payment at the time of your separation?
   □ Yes   If so, for how many months? ___________.
   □ No

7. At any time during this period of unemployment have you received an inheritance, lottery winnings, trust distributions, or other income outside of your household’s regular family income?
   □ Yes
   □ No

8. Which of the following ranges would you predict to be your family’s annual income?
   □ Below $25,000
   □ $25,000 - $50,000
   □ $50,001 - $75,000
   □ $75,001 - $100,000
   □ $100,001 and above.
   □ I prefer to keep this confidential
Appendix C
Interview Protocol

BOOMERS REPORTING SUBJECTIVE WELL-BEING: AN EXPLORATION OF THEIR COPING PROCESS WITH LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYMENT

Time Started: ______
Time Finished: ______
Total Interview Time: ______ (minutes)
Pseudonym: ________________
Telephone Number: ____________

Interviewer: Date:

I. Introductory Statement

Researcher’s instructions and introductory statement: - Opening comments for the interview

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. This pilot study is focused on how members of the Boomer generation cope with job loss. I am especially interested in learning about particular coping strategies which are used to buffer the impacts of unemployment. I am interested in exploring coping patterns among the participants of this pilot study.

This interview is part of a larger study in which I will interview other job changers. I would like to tape this interview so that I can spend more time listening and less time taking notes. Everything that you and I discuss will be kept confidential. I will also follow up with you after the tape recording of this interview has been transcribed to make sure the transcription accurately captures what you said. The follow up will involve my mailing a transcript of the interview to you and asking you to make any corrections to the transcript.

You may shut off the tape recorder at any time if its presence precludes your answering in a particular way. All identifying information about you and this session will be disguised before being revealed elsewhere. At no time will anyone be able to know what you said in answer to these interview questions, except me. I will ask you to choose a pseudonym for purposes of quoting you as none of your responses will be directly attributed to you. This will be done to minimize the potential risk to you regarding this study. If you chose to withdraw as a participant in this study, you may do so without creating any harmful consequences.

Thank you for volunteering to participate in this study and for completing and previously submitting the Background Data form, General Health Questionnaire, and Informed Consent. Upon review and receipt of the interview transcript you will receive $30 for your participation in this research.

Do you have any questions before we begin?
The questions that follow are very broad. There are not right or wrong answers. The questions are focused on your current experience with job loss and unemployment. Please feel free to tell me whatever thoughts come to mind, in whatever form they come to mind.

II. The Unemployment Experience

Researcher’s instructions and preliminary data collection to: - Ask for decision-making reactions

1. Can you describe in as much detail as possible your experience of being unemployed? I would like you to include how you came to be out of work, what you thought about when it happened and your thoughts since. Include your feelings, thoughts, and initial reactions to losing your job (that day and the weeks and months following)?

2. When you now find yourself unemployed, can you describe how you are dealing with job loss?

3. How do you live your life differently today as a result of being unemployed?

4. How has being unemployed impacted other aspects of your life?

5. How has the job loss affected family relationships?

6. How has the job loss affected financial plans?

7. How has the job loss affected plans to help your children or others?

8. Can you elaborate on what unemployment means to you in terms of your quality of life and expectations for the future? How are your expectations different now from when you first lost your job?

III. Supports

Researcher’s instructions and preliminary data collection to: - Ask about supports

9. As a result of being unemployed, have you turned to anyone for support? Who? Why?

10. How important have these supports been to you?

11. Have you noticed changes in your social networks during unemployment? Do you have any new social networks? Can you give me some examples?
IV. Structure of Time

Researcher’s instructions and preliminary data collection to: - *Ask about how participants spend their time*

12. Describe what a typical day is like for you during this time. Walk me through your day.

13. Can you tell me some of the similarities between how you spent your time during the first six months of unemployment and how you spend your time now?

14. Does anything stand out in your mind as being helpful to getting through each day, each week, each month?

15. If you had to name two or three activities that have seemed most important to your progress during this time, what would they be? (Clarification: Could you give me an actual example of that?)

16. Have you developed any new interests or activities?

V. Valuation of Job

Researcher’s instructions and preliminary data collection to: - *Ask about the value of a job*

17. What feelings do you have toward your previous job?

18. How frequently do you think about your previous job?

19. Has job loss changed your philosophy about work? What place does work have in your life? How important is work to you?

20. What do you expect to gain from obtaining employment?

VI. Job Search

Researcher’s instructions and preliminary data collection to: - *Ask for job search efforts*

21. Can you describe in as much detail as possible your job search efforts and experience?

22. Do you have goals for your job search? Tell me about those. Have your goals changed from the first six months of unemployment to now? How?

23. Approximately how many hours in a given week do you spend looking for a job?
24. What strategies are you using to find employment?

25. What challenges are you experiencing with finding employment?

26. Have you enrolled in an education or training program? If so, when and can you describe it for me?

27. Can you tell me some of the similarities between how you searched for a job during the first six months of unemployment and how you are seeking reemployment now?

28. If you had to name two or three job search activities that have seemed to be most important to your progress during this time, what would they be? (Clarification: Could you give me an actual example of that?)

VIII. Closing

Researcher’s closing questions and comments to:
- Ask remaining questions until no further items need to be asked
- Thank the participant for his/her participation
- Close and end the interview meeting

29. Would you say there’s anything in particular about you that has led to the progress you are making?

30. Is there anything else about the unemployment experience that you would like to add?

31. If you could add a question to this interview, what would you add that would help fill in the blanks of your story and experience? What am I missing?

In closing, thank you, again. I really appreciate your participation in this interview. I may contact you to clarify some of your answers.
Appendix D

GENERAL HEALTH QUESTIONNAIRE

Pseudonym: ____________________ (Write in the anonymous name you chose)

Please read this carefully:

We would like to know how your health has been in general, over the past few weeks. Please answer ALL the questions simply by circling the answer which you think most nearly applies to you. Remember that we want to know about present and recent complaints, not those you had in the past. It is important that you try to answer ALL the questions. Thank you very much for your co-operation.

HAVE YOU RECENTLY:

<p>| | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>been able to concentrate on whatever you're doing?</td>
<td>Better than usual</td>
<td>Same as usual</td>
<td>Less than usual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>lost much sleep over worry?</td>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>No more than usual</td>
<td>Rather more than usual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>felt that you are playing a useful part in things?</td>
<td>More so than usual</td>
<td>Same as usual</td>
<td>Less useful than usual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>felt capable of making decisions about things?</td>
<td>More so than usual</td>
<td>Same as usual</td>
<td>Less so than usual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>felt constantly under strain?</td>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>No more than usual</td>
<td>Rather more than usual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>felt you couldn't overcome your difficulties?</td>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>No more than usual</td>
<td>Rather more than usual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>been able to enjoy your normal day-to-day activities?</td>
<td>More so than usual</td>
<td>Same as usual</td>
<td>Less so than usual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>been able to face up to your problems?</td>
<td>More so than usual</td>
<td>Same as usual</td>
<td>Less able than usual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>been feeling unhappy and depressed?</td>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>No more than usual</td>
<td>Rather more than usual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>been losing confidence in yourself?</td>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>No more than usual</td>
<td>Rather more than usual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>been thinking of yourself as a worthless person?</td>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>No more than usual</td>
<td>Rather more than usual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>been feeling reasonably happy, all things considered?</td>
<td>More so than usual</td>
<td>About same as usual</td>
<td>Less so than usual</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Appendix E

GL Assessment Ltd
GENERAL HEALTH QUESTIONNAIRE – 12 ITEMS (GHQ 12)

USER AGREEMENT

Agreement Dated: March 18, 2011

1. LICENSEE’S NAME

Please type all details and send back as Word doc attachment

LICENSEE : Kelly A. Clark

Address : 1221 Battle Street
Webster, New Hampshire 03303 Country USA

VAT Number (if applicable) : N/A

Contact Name if Different from above:

Name :
Title :
Phone :
Fax :
Email :

Invoice Address if Different from above: (credit account form is required for invoicing – note 3)

For credit card payments please phone 0845 602 1937 or fax 0845 601 5358:

I would like to pay by credit card

GL READER CODE (Mandatory - note 4) 156648
QUALIFICATION CODE (Mandatory – note 4) 124834
For student licensees the following are also required: (note 5):

University Course and supervisor’s name: .................................................................

Supervisor’s GL Reader Code: ..................................................................................

Supervisor’s GL Qualification Code: .........................................................................

2. CONTEXT OF GHQ-12 USE PROJECT (note 6):

Title: Boomers Reporting Subjective Well-Being: An Exploration of their Coping Process with Long-Term Unemployment

Project Details

My study is an exploratory study. The purpose is to describe the coping strategies utilized by 15 mid-life baby boomers who report subjective well-being while being unemployed in New Hampshire. A qualitative approach to data collection and analysis was chosen. A descriptive qualitative design will be employed, which will allow for documenting, analyzing, and interpreting patterns, characteristics and meanings.

The study will use three data collection instruments. The participant background data form will be used to collect background demographic information to record the ways in which participants’ lives and job experiences are similar or dissimilar from one another. A scale such as the General Health Questionnaire (GHQ-12) will be used to identify a purposeful selection of dislocated workers who report subjective well-being.

A sample of 100 candidates or more will be selected from the Workforce Investment Act Title I dislocated worker program during the 2010 program year (July 1, 2010 – June 30, 2011). They will be geographically located across the State of New Hampshire and represent a variety of industry sectors. The prospective participants identified will be asked to complete a pre-screening instrument such as the GHQ-12 to assess subjective well-being. Fifteen candidates exhibiting positive subjective well-being will be contacted and invited to participate further. In this way, a purposeful sample will be selected.

.................................................................
3. STUDY FINANCING

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WORD.................................................................

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17. This Agreement shall be governed by and construed in all respects in accordance with English Law.
Appendix F
Selection Letter to Potential Participants – Mail

Dear (Name),

I am working in collaboration with the WIA Title I dislocated worker program in New Hampshire to conduct a study of baby boomers and their job loss coping experience. Through your participation in the WIA Title I dislocated worker program, you have been selected from a sample of WIA Title I dislocated workers to be part of a study, *Boomers reporting subjective well-being: An exploration of their coping process with long-term unemployment*. I reside in New Hampshire and I am a doctoral candidate at Fielding Graduate University in Santa Barbara, CA. This research will be used in my dissertation and possibly subsequent articles, books, or presentations.

The purpose of my research is to understand how unemployed, midlife boomers like yourself cope while being unemployed in New Hampshire. This study is completely voluntary. The study will include a Phase I and a Phase II. For most participants, participation in Phase I is the only requirement.

Phase I of the study involves your completion of a participant background information questionnaire and a brief survey questionnaire that includes twelve questions about your general and overall health. Upon completion and return of these three documents, Phase I participants will receive a $10 cash gift card in appreciation for their time.

Copies of both questionnaires are included. Please note that all personal/background information is completely optional and all information you share will be kept confidential and never linked to your real name. The questionnaires should take you 30 minutes or less to complete.

In Phase II, approximately 15 participants will be selected from those who completed the initial questionnaires to represent a diverse group of midlife unemployed boomers. Those individuals will be invited to participate in a 60-90 minute face-to-face interview to discuss their job loss and coping experiences in more depth. Upon completion of the interview and review of the interview transcript for accuracy, Phase II participants will receive a $30 cash gift card in appreciation for their time. Selection of Phase II interview participants depends on many factors. Whether or not you are chosen for an interview in no way minimizes your contribution to the study.

Before deciding to participate, please review the Participant Informed Consent form enclosed. This document describes the risks and benefits of the study and answers questions you might have as a study participant, including confidentiality and anonymity.

If you wish to continue to participate, please take the time to sign both copies of the Informed Consent Form; also complete the background data form, and the general health questionnaire. Return one copy of each completed document to me by (insert deadline) in the postage-paid return envelope enclosed.

Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Kelly A. Clark - Ph.D. Student, Human and Organization Development Program

Fielding Graduate University
(603) 995-6125 (home office)
fclark@tds.net (private e-mail)
Appendix G
Fielding Graduate University
Informed Consent Form

BOOMERS REPORTING SUBJECTIVE WELL-BEING: AN EXPLORATION OF THEIR COPING PROCESS WITH LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYMENT

Dear Research Participant: Date:

You have been asked to participate in a research study I am conducting as a doctoral student in the School of Human and Organization Development at Fielding Graduate University, Santa Barbara, CA. This study is supervised by Steven Schapiro, Ed.D. This research involves the study of boomers and the exploration of their coping process with long-term unemployment. This study is part of my Fielding Graduate University course work and is being done in complete cooperation with the WIA Title I dislocated worker program. You have been asked to participate in this study because you were selected from a sample of people enrolled in the WIA Title I dislocated worker program.

The study involves completing a background data form and general health questionnaire. For participants continuing on with Phase II of the study, there is a face-to-face audio taped interview to be arranged at your convenience. The interview will last approximately 60-90 minutes. The background data form and general health questionnaire will take approximately 30 minutes. The total time involved in participation will be approximately 90 -120 minutes.

The information you provide will be kept strictly confidential. You will not be mentioned by name in the final research document, and other identifying names, locations and so forth will also be removed to protect anonymity and confidentiality. No one else will know whether or not you decide to participate (unless you choose to disclose participation yourself).

The informed consent forms and other identifying information will be kept separate from the data. All materials will be kept in a two separate secure and locked file cabinets. The tape recordings will be listened to only by the Researcher, and possibly a confidential Research Assistant, who has signed the attached Professional Assistance Confidentiality Agreement. Any records that would identify you as a participant in this study, such as informed consent forms, will be destroyed by me approximately three years after the study is completed.

You will be asked to provide a different name for any quotes that might be included in the final research report. If any direct quotes are used, permission will be sought from you first. The results of this research will be used in my dissertation and possibly subsequent articles, books, or presentations.

You may develop greater personal awareness of the coping process as a result of your participation in this research. The risks to you are considered minimal and there is a slight possibility that you may experience some emotional discomfort during or after your
participation. Should you experience such discomfort and would like to talk with a counselor about it, please contact me for a list of therapists.

You may withdraw from this study at any time, either during or after your participation, without negative consequences. Should you withdraw, your data will be eliminated from the study and destroyed.

Phase I participants will receive a $10 gift card in appreciation for their participation upon completion and return of the background data questionnaire, General Health Questionnaire and this Informed Consent form. Phase II participants will receive an additional $30 gift card for their participation upon completion of the interview and review of the interview transcript for accuracy. You may request a copy of the summary of the final results by indicating your interest at the end of this form.

If you have any questions about any aspect of this study or your involvement, please tell me before signing this form. You may also contact the supervising faculty if you have questions or concerns about your participation in this study. The supervising faculty has provided contact information at the bottom of this form. If you have questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant, contact the Fielding Graduate University Institutional Review Board by email at irb@fielding.edu or by telephone at 805-898-4033.

Two copies of this informed consent form have been provided. Please sign both, indicating you have read, understood, and agree to participate in this research. Return one to me and keep the other for your files. The Institutional Review Board of Fielding Graduate University retains the right to access the signed informed consent forms and other study documents.

NAME OF PARTICIPANT (please print)

____________________________________

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT

____________________________________

DATE

Steven Schapiro, Ed.D
Fielding Graduate University
2112 Santa Barbara Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93105
(800) 340-1099

Kelly Clark
Ph.D. student, Fielding Graduate University
1221 Battle Street
Webster, New Hampshire 03303
E-mail: fclark@tds.net
Phone: (603) 995-6125
Yes, please send a summary of the study results to:

_____________________________________
NAME (please print)

_____________________________________
Street Address

_____________________________________
City, State, Zip
Dear (Name),

Thank you for completing the questionnaires for my study, *Boomers reporting subjective well-being: An exploration of their coping process with long-term unemployment*. I greatly appreciate the time you took to complete these documents. Enclosed you will find a $10 gift card as a token of appreciation.

The next steps involve analyzing data from the questionnaires completed in Phase I of the study. About 15-20 people from New Hampshire will be asked to participate in Phase II of the study. Phase II of the study will include a 60-90 minute interview at a convenient location for the participants selected. Selection of Phase II participants depends on many factors. I want to assure you that whether or not you are chosen for an interview in no way minimizes your contribution to the study.

If you are selected to participate in Phase II, you will receive a telephone call from me in the next several weeks to confirm your availability for a face-to-face interview. At the very least, I will be in touch when the study is complete and will mail you a copy of the executive summary of the study results.

In the meantime, if you have any questions about the study, please don’t hesitate to contact me. Thank you again for taking the time to assist in this research.

Sincerely,

Kelly A. Clark - Ph.D. Student,
Human and Organization Development Program
Fielding Graduate University
(603) 995-6125 (home office)
fclark@tds.net (private e-mail)
Appendix I

Interview Confirmation Telephone Script

Hello (name of potential participant),

Hi. This is Kelly Clark. How are you? … Do you have a few minutes to talk, now? …

*If my contact says no:* That is no problem. May we set up another time to talk? I am calling you about your participation in my dissertation research, and would like to share next steps with you, which will not take more than 10 minutes. How does (offer a few times to reconvene)? That will work well. Thank you for your time, and I look forward to speaking with you again shortly. Take care…good bye.

*If my contact says yes:* Good… This will not take more than 10 minutes, (name). I am calling you about research I am doing as part of my doctoral studies, which explores the coping experiences of people who have undergone in-voluntary job loss. You indicated in the questionnaire you completed for my study, “Boomers reporting subjective well-being: An exploration of their coping process with long-term unemployment” that you would be willing to participate in a 60-90 minute audio recorded in-person interview. The purpose of this interview is to discuss in greater depth your experience with job loss and what coping strategies you are using. I am calling to ask if you would be available in the next two weeks to talk with me.

Your interview participation is completely voluntary and if you have changed your mind, you may opt out of the study at any time. However, if you are available, I am very interested in talking with you and believe your experiences will contribute greatly to my study.

*If individual says no:* Thank you for your time and I will be sure to send you a copy of the summary report for this study upon completion of the research.

*If individual says yes to participate:* Thank you for your interest in participating in the study. I would like to take a moment to schedule an interview. What might be a good time to meet in the next couple of weeks? Thank you. I have you confirmed for ______ on ______________. Would __________________________ location be a convenient place to meet and to conduct the interview?
Thank you. I will re-confirm our interview and the location a few days in advance. I look forward to meeting with you and please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns. If necessary I will provide the following contact information to the participant.

Kelly A. Clark - Ph.D. Student,
Human and Organization Development Program
Fielding Graduate University
(603) 995-6125 (home office)
fclark@tds.net (private e-mail)
Appendix J
Phase II Participant Thank You Note

Dear (Name of Participant),

Thank you very much for taking part in an interview for my study, “Boomers reporting subjective well-being: An exploration of their coping process with long-term unemployment.” I very much appreciate the time you spent in talking with me. Enclosed you will find a $30 gift card as a token of appreciation.

I have also enclosed a copy of the transcript of your interview. Please review it and correct, clarify, or delete any information you choose. A postage-paid, self-addressed return envelope is enclosed for you to return your edited version to me within 10 days. If it is more convenient to send your edits via e-mail, please e-mail me at fclark@tds.net and I will send you an electronic version of the transcript.

Again, thank you for your participation in this study and please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

Kelly A. Clark - Ph.D. Student,
Human and Organization Development Program
Fielding Graduate University
(603) 995-6125 (home office)
fclark@tds.net (private e-mail)
Appendix K

(Insert IRB Approval)
Appendix L

Professional Assistance Confidentiality Agreement

Title of Research Project:  Boomers: An exploration of their coping process with long-term unemployment

Name of Researcher & Affiliation:  Kelly A. Clark, Fielding Graduate University

I have agreed to assist Kelly A. Clark in her research study on *Boomers reporting subjective well-being: An exploration of their coping process with long-term unemployment* in the role of transcriptionist.

I understand that all participants in this study have been assured that their responses will be kept confidential. I agree to maintain that confidentiality. I further agree that no materials will remain in my possession beyond the operation of this research project, and I agree that I will make no independent use of any of the research materials from this project.

__________________________________ (Assistant signature)

__________________________________ (Date)

__________________________________ (Assistant, printed name)

__________________________________ (Title)