

GUIDED AUTOBIOGRAPHY'S DEVELOPMENTAL EXCHANGE AND LATER-LIFE LEARNING: WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME?

JAMES E. THORNTON, PH.D., JOHN B. COLLINS, PH.D. *University of British Columbia, Vancouver* **JAMES E. BIRREN, PH.D.**

CHERYL SVENSSON, PH.D.

University of Southern California, Los Angeles

ABSTRACT

The developmental exchange is a central feature of social development, interpersonal dynamics, situated learning, and personal transformation. It is the enabling process in Guided Autobiography (GAB) settings that promotes the achievement of personal goals and group accomplishments. Nevertheless, these exchanges are embedded in the GAB structures of time, events, participants, themes, perspectives, medium, and quest for relevance. Ongoing research studies are gradually clarifying the actual, ideal, and social image of self as well as the processes, outcomes, and specific learning topics achieved during the GAB experience as they unfold through the listening, participating, and diversifying structures of the developmental exchange.

This article describes the processes of the developmental exchange shaped by group activities in Guided Autobiography and their relationship to learning in later life. Developmental exchanges are a result of social learning experiences