

# Guided Autobiography for Older Adults

## Overview

This proposal outlines two separate Guided Autobiography courses designed for adults aged 50-90. Each course stands independently, allowing participants to choose one or both based on their interests and needs. While the courses are designed to be taken sequentially (Course 1 and then Course 2), both courses support the creation of personal narratives. Courses will be offered one per OLLI term.

Both courses are based on the Guided Autobiography process developed by Dr. Jim Birren and Dr. Cheryl Swenson at the Birren Center, a California non-profit. Dr. Orem has been certified by the Birren Center in 2024 to teach GAB courses.

## Course 1: Core Life Narratives (4 Sessions)

**Title: "Foundations of Your Story: Exploring Life's Central Themes"**

This course guides participants through four foundational themes that form the backbone of most personal narratives:

### Session 1: Branching Points

Participants identify and explore pivotal moments that altered their life's direction, including major decisions, unexpected events, or realizations that shifted their path.

### Session 2: Family

This session explores family relationships, dynamics, and traditions that shaped identity, examining inherited values and family influences.

### Session 3: Career and/or Life Path

Participants examine their work life, professional identity, and the meaning derived from their vocations, reflecting on career choices and accomplishments.

### Session 4: Money

This session addresses participants' relationship with finances throughout life, examining attitudes toward money and how economic circumstances shaped opportunities.