

AUTOETHNOGRAPHY OF HOW CHILDHOOD TRAUMA MEMORIES AFFECT  
SOCIAL LITERACY PRACTICES INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

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by

Krisshundria D'che Monet James

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APPROVED:

Nancy K. Votteler, EdD  
Dissertation Chair

Hannah R. Gerber, PhD  
Dissertation Co-Chair

Melinda Miller, PhD  
Committee Member

Victoria Hollas, PhD  
Committee Member

Stacey Edmonson, EdD  
Dean, College of Education

## **DEDICATION**

To my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, I dedicate this dissertation. There were so many days I struggled to connect my ideas and to capture the words that portrayed the very essence of my thoughts, but through prayer and meditation, I thank you for being a mighty and powerful God with your infinite grace and mercy guided me along the way. If not for your strength, love and your many blessings you poured upon me, this work would have been impossible. Thank you for always guiding me in the right direction and for knowing what is best for me more than I do. Thank you for the many times you have forgiven me whenever I deviated from your path. Thank you for always reminding me that sometimes you are the only one I can trust or lean on. Sometimes, you are the only I can talk to, and you are the only one who is truly listening. Thank you for all the lessons, especially the hard ones. Thank you for giving me the strength I needed to endure pain and be comfortable with my loneliness in order to walk out your purpose for my life.

To my loving and wonderful mother, Brenda. I dedicate this dissertation. You are my best friend and my biggest supporter. No matter how many times I fell short, you pushed me to keep going and wiped my tears. No matter how many times I complained, you listened. You were right there through this entire journey. You gave me the emotional support and offered your invaluable wisdom and advice when I needed it most. Mommy you taught me to persevere and prepared me to face the challenges with faith and trust God no matter what. You modeled the example of what a woman of faith endures and tackles with no fear. Thank you for guiding me down the right path. Thank you for pushing me to be great. I thank you for raising me into a wonderful, smart, bright,

and brilliant woman. Mommy I love you and appreciate you. I thank you for everything you have done! You are a special blessing to me!

To my little sister Keondria, I love you with all my heart. You are someone who helps me find my smile. You are someone who lets me know that my efforts really are worthwhile, and that my accomplishments are worthy ones. You let me know that you will catch me if I fall. You're so much more wonderful than you will admit to being. You watch out for me and help me through it all. You are someone who'll be there for me, through thick and thin. I can depend on you always, right down to the end. Your support and encouragement can never be replaced. Your presence always seems to keep a smile on my face. Safe and secure is how you always make me feel. Every moment spent with you, too great to seem real. I love you baby sister!



## ABSTRACT

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This dissertation, written as a series of autoethnographic stories and reflections that represents my understanding of how traumatic experiences among children and teens is often overlooked as a factor impacting the social literacy practices in classroom. This study uses autoethnography to examine the psychological impact of my own childhood traumatic experiences in relation to my adulthood. In this autoethnography, I share and examine my personal story of traumatic experiences and how I coped with the traumatic experiences to grow mentally and spiritually. This dissertation is an autoethnography that uses heartfelt, reflective writing of memories of trauma with the purpose of gaining a deeper understanding of my identity using storytelling. This storytelling and writing helped me get through the emotional times and make sense of my life during and after traumatic experiences that affected my academic success. This autoethnography is about journaling, writing personal poems and song lyrics and observing my daily life through the sometimes difficult or traumatic memories that show up in my life from time to time that affected my childhood and adulthood inside and outside the classroom. It is about narrative healing, storytelling, and transformation through the practice of autoethnographic writing.

**KEY WORDS:** Literacy; Language; Effects of trauma; Traumatic experiences; Memory; Cope with trauma; Relationships; Academic success; Writing; Storytelling; Autoethnography

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To my loving and wonderful mother, Brenda, I love you! You are my best friend and my biggest supporter and my number one fan. No matter how many times I fell short, you pushed me to keep going and wiped my tears. No matter how many times I complained, you listened. You were right there through this entire journey. You gave me the emotional support and offered your invaluable wisdom and advice when I needed it most. Mommy you taught me to persevere and prepared me to face the challenges with faith and trust God no matter what. You modeled the example of what a woman of faith endures and tackles with no fear. Thank you for guiding me down the right path. Thank you for pushing me to be great. I thank you for raising me into a wonderful, smart, and bright woman. Mommy I love you and appreciate you. I thank you for everything you have done! You are a special blessing to me.

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## **PREFACE**

Welcome to my autoethnography; it has been a long process and hard work and commitment. It is a partial account of how memories of my childhood trauma affected my literacy inside and outside of the classroom and how my mind, body, spirit, and emotions responded at different moments thorough out my healing journey. The stories you are about to read are memories of my traumatic experience and how I utilize the pain I experienced and the pain I caused others as opportunities to grow mentally and spiritually to develop my literacy skills. The stories demonstrate the opportunities for poems, song lyrics, personal dairies and journals that demonstrate the complexity of my learning and healing process, my lack of comfort with ambiguity, a tendency to see everything as “all or nothing”, became overarching challenges that created issues that had an effect on my social literacy practices. These issues include building trust, establishing boundaries, deciding which stories to tell, learning to overcome the trauma and healing, and assessing the level of safety I felt inside and outside the classroom or around people.

I have been in counseling since middle school, but the best therapy for me has always been writing. From counseling, I was reminded of that writing will lead to healing. I had a few counselors to tell me to write it out and release the pain of memories of trauma. I challenged myself to write it out. I would write everything that hurt me. Everything bad thing that happened to me and everything that was said to me that did not feel good. Everything I have ever thought, said, or felt about myself that was not good. Everything I did that was not good. I have written so many letters, emails, and text messages that I deleted because it helped me overcome trauma and build my literacy skills. Once you write it out and let it out, you must promise yourself to let it go with

prayer behind it. The most important thing is you must forgive people and most of all forgive yourself! God will give you a new start, you just have to receive. Wisdom for those are experiencing trauma include (a) knowing that it is okay to share their stories and testimonies, (b) realizing that life and school are not separate, (c) understanding that going through the process of healing takes time and space to find ways to cope with a traumatic experience, (d) identifying trustworthy outlets to practice self-disclosure to forgive yourself and whoever hurt you and (e) knowing how teachers can help students who go through trauma increase their academic success.

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## **CHAPTER I**

### **Introduction**

Childhood trauma will have an instantaneous, immediate, and probably overwhelming impact on the power of the ability of a child to learn and how they communicate inside and outside of the classroom. This issue is usually ignored by our education system because the child does not know how to speak out after experiencing trauma. When I was a child, literacy was an important part of education where learning starts through the implementation of instruction through real life experiences. 21<sup>st</sup> century learners like myself mainly inherit memorization of facts, procedures and connect with real life experiences, which is not enough for success. Students like myself needed to be able use critical thinking in order to evaluate what is being read and to be able to express clearly both verbally and in writing, and understand what is being taught. When I was in middle school, literacy was seen as a learning process, a set of skills, can be applied and as text. Earlier in historical literacy was seen as oral competencies, such as reading and writing to enhance cognitive skills (Manguel 1996). Skills were developed for learners like myself to gain access to knowledge and information. As I learned, I became more literate. When I was a child, I began to read through a process of decoding by learning to connect words with the real-life things, describing words and sounding words out on the page of a book through pronunciation, but childhood trauma affected this.

There are methods set in place to help educators like myself enhance the knowledge of students who experience trauma. As a teenager, I began to develop stronger critical thinking skills and a better understanding of my traumatic experiences. I saw in the classroom how history took a shift to meet the needs of 21<sup>st</sup> century learners who

have experienced trauma and struggle with language and literacy. 21<sup>st</sup> century learners like myself who experienced trauma need the proper support in order to have early opportunities to develop the foundational skills that will help them reason, think creatively, analyze data and work collaboratively in the future in order to heal from trauma. 21<sup>st</sup> century learners that are going through trauma or have experienced trauma also need help with developing innovative solutions, critically thinking through complex problems, and the ability to work and communicate inside and outside of the classroom. 21<sup>st</sup> Century learners' literacy is more than just reading and writing. It is knowing how to learn and knowing what strategies to use to cope with trauma while learning to be able to tell the stories of the memories of childhood trauma. Utilizing scientific research on cognition and meta-cognition, teachers and students need to understand how the brain creates and uses subjective knowledge, and the different processes that create objective knowledge after trauma. Students need to know how concepts work to define and categorize knowledge, and how concepts can be organized into conceptual frameworks that interconnect facts into larger fields of knowledge (Barber 2012). Students need to be able to understand concepts as tools, which can be used to solve real-world problems (Fish, 2011, p. 15, 29). This will allow 21<sup>st</sup> century learners like myself better cope with childhood trauma memories.

Literacy is very important when it involves 21<sup>st</sup> century learners because of writing and technology shapes literacies and make writing more diverse (National Council of The Teachers of English & WETA 2021). I was able to type personal poems, song lyrics, personal dairies, and journals to tell stories of what I remember of my traumatic experiences as a child. Literary using technology deals with programing a code

or just to know how to work simple tools like cell phones, computers, and laptops. These types of technology like cell phones, computers and laptops can help you when you experience trauma because it helps you master the basic literacy skills when you are diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

The use of technologies enables shifting the locus of care from the traditional provider's office to mobile, online, and virtual environments which are less threatening for patients with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), helping to overcome the core nature of the illness which includes avoidance and increased personal isolation. (Azarang et al., 2019)

After going through my traumatic experience, I experienced post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). This caused me to want to find ways to express how I was feeling on the inside. Technology was becoming more advanced, and the meaning of literacy is becoming more complexed for the 21st century learners. This meant learners like myself were able to type and publish narratives, poems or any other form of writing about traumatic experiences.

Educators and policy makers need more skills and trainings to help children, teenagers and adults in the future who have experienced trauma. There are individuals like myself who may have been through trauma as a child, teenager or an adult that write narratives, books, journals, poems, song lyrics and get them published as a part of the healing journey because it becomes an outlet. My literacy was impacted by many traumatic experiences that happened and it sometimes still sits in my memory. Literacy is very powerful, especially when experiencing trauma because it affects the way you speak, interact with others, read, and write. For a while, as a child and teenager I was

very quiet, and I did not speak much. I used my trauma literacy on every topic to talk, to understand, to communicate facts, opinions, and everything else, but I did not know how to express myself out loud inside and outside the classroom.

Writing helped me cope with the trauma and enhanced my literacy skills inside and outside of the classroom. While going through or surviving trauma, one may feel the need to express emotions through writing in journals or personal dairies, writing poems, writing song lyrics, narratives or on social media. In today's society, social medias have taken over the world and people are saying things that could lead to regretting it. When I was a teenager, I put all of my feelings regarding my life on social media. It was my way of getting out how I felt about my life and how it was affecting me mentally, physically, and spiritually. These things cannot be taken back because it has been written down. It becomes permanent and is now able to be traced. The world is moving at a fast pace and sometimes life gets people off track because of trauma and my life was all over the place. I felt lost; I did not know what direction to go in. When going through traumatic experiences or traumatic events, it forces you to grow faster like it did to me. This means that individual may not have grasp the basic concepts of literacy and may have trouble learning and focusing inside and outside of the classroom like I did.

Without having the basic tools of literacy, humans are brainless and just wondering around. I was brainless and I was just wondering through life trying to figure out who could save me. When going to trauma you feel lost and brainless because the memories are chasing you and running through your mind every second of your life. This may cause someone to not think before speaking or making a poor decision inside or outside of the classroom. When I was younger after experiencing trauma, I never thought

before speaking. I was so angry on the inside that I wanted to hurt everyone because I was hurt. They do say, "Hurt people, hurt people." This could lead to bad consequences inside and outside of the classroom. If literacy were banned, the world would be with many problems, especially if people go through and survive trauma, it will make things worse for life.

Most people would react based off an emotion or feeling. Often, I felt invisible, like I was a ghost. I watched my friends engage with each other while I was silent and angry on the inside. I found myself crying or laughing for no reason while in the middle of conversations with others. This was a sign of me expressing my emotions more intensely, so I could actually feel them. I felt like I had no control over my emotions and even the smallest things set me off. Having emotions that seemed out of place or come and go very quickly caused me to isolate myself from others. I reacted off my emotions and feelings all the time after experiencing trauma. It was like the traumatic experiences controlled my mind, my life, and my academic success in school.

If looking through a lens of roles of powers and expectations history of literacy/reading instruction thus far, moral power and control takes over because people were expected to worship God. I grew up in a family where worshipping God was very important. My grandfather was a pastor, so I was raised in the church. Through the lens of power there is a magnifying glass that changes perceptions, communication, and relationships for those who go through traumatic experiences. People put on acts for those in power whether it is conscious or not and it alters people's relationship to them, and hence their perception of themselves. I acted a certain way around family and another way around friends when I was younger. People depend on the reflection of others like

those in power to get a sense of themselves. I viewed myself based off what people thought about me because I did not know my worth after going through traumatic experiences. Looking through the lens of power changes this reflection and sometimes can put people at risk. How does this lens of power operate?

People may see a leader as a symbol or role model for their life to be complete, not just as an individual who is of higher authority. I saw my grandfather that was a pastor and teachers as a role model in my life. I often looked to people to help me get out, turning away from family. I wanted to get out of what I was trapped in and needed people to model what life should be like for me inside and outside of the classroom. My mom was a great role model for my life, but I even turned away from her because I was running away from my problems and did not want my mom to help me fix it. I wanted to do everything myself. Everything you do in society does becomes a cultural norm to obey or resist and you do it because it is what you see.

Sometimes people in society will be unfairly criticized, actions are misinterpreted, and failures are unexcused inside and outside of the classroom. It is critical to be aware of others' projections, stereotypes, and unrealistic expectations of the role, and ultimately those of high power set high expectations for society to follow. Roles of power and assumptions take control of the mind, and it allows for people to be treated differently and relate differently, especially if there is trauma involved. Leading through this twisting lens of power and expectations it can be challenging for those who go through trauma to follow those who are in a role of responsibility, authority, and power. Assumptions are then increased because those who go through trauma feel like they are judged based off actions and behavior. When being judged and laughed at based off literacy development in



the classroom or because you are too quiet, it caused me to shut down and not want to speak about my traumatic experiences. Writing it down to tell a story was the only way to get out of the broken feeling I had inside.

I only felt free when I was writing things down inside and outside the classroom. I had so much built up inside of me and I was afraid to speak even when it came to my academics. I was very shy around people inside and outside the classroom and I was too shy and timid to meet new people when being introduced. I had my guard up; I was very defensive of who I would allow into my life and open up to. I had reduced concentration and memory and intrusive thoughts about the trauma that occurred in my life. This went on from the age of twelve up until today's adulthood. This is still the same. I have to observe a person and really get to know them before allowing them into my life. Many times, I felt like I was unable to manage my emotions, and I reacted in ways that affected my relationships with my peers and teachers and my education. My literacy was affected by these traumatic experiences. I could never forget because it chased me every day. My everyday life was affected and continues to help my literacy skills grow inside and outside of the classroom.

Student trauma is real, but connections with teachers can help heal. I had anxiety after experiencing trauma. When I faced challenging life situations, I often leaned on others like mentors and teachers. When I was going through a traumatic experience, there was a higher risk for negative impacts on my learning, social life, health, and wellbeing. That is because both my emotional and social pain took over my brain and body. Not only did I go through all these different emotions, but the people around me did too. Often, I did not want to admit how I was feeling and put on a brave face. The people

around me did not realize what I was going through. Others may assume that everything is fine, which can make it hard to tell them if it is not. Communication problems may mean that you cannot explain how you are feeling, even if you want to.

My trauma had an emotional impact on me because it changed my brain, affecting my memory, my cognition, and my learning capacity. I felt down and sad after experiencing trauma. I was so depressed and started feeling hopeless and the sadness did not go away. It lasted for weeks or even months and would come and go. The results of my trauma led me to acting out, exhibit big emotions, and struggling with impulsivity in school. This got me in trouble or is mistaken for a learning disorder. In order for students like myself to be receptive to learning during or after experiencing trauma, there needs to be a supportive ecosystem around social and emotional development inside and outside the classroom. After experiencing trauma, I felt like I needed the extra attention and guidance in my life. I would act out in the classroom or sit alone in the classroom because I did not trust anyone. By my teachers forming strong connections with me in the classroom and my classroom environment, it yielded my relational literacy and allowed adults to develop understanding and empathy for me and other students who have experienced or experiencing trauma.

### **Educators and Policy Makers' Response**

Educators and policy makers need to consider that traumatized children or teenagers often have trouble managing strong emotions. In addition to connecting and bonding with students inside and outside of the classroom who have been traumatized and helping them build missing skills; it is important educators give as much positive attention as possible. It is already a problem that many teachers are never really taught

how to help students who have experienced trauma. This can put a stress and strain on their own health and personal lives. Educators and policy makers need to be able to identify when a child is experiencing trauma and develop coping strategies for their schools and classrooms. Policy makers and educators need to support each other in creating and sustaining a positive mindset and environment, a place and belief that all students can achieve success, regardless of what they are experiencing inside and outside of the classroom. When teachers or educators feel tired and discouraged when it comes to their students, it is important to step back from any stressful situation and remember the bigger picture of what needs to be accomplished. Schools should connect school staff and teachers who might be experiencing difficult situations with students who have experienced trauma by providing the proper training classes and skills. School leaders should take a school-wide approach and create trauma-informed schools that recognize and work with community members can help students that have been impacted by trauma and traumatic stress.

### **Background of the Problem**

Trauma occurs when external events overwhelm a person's coping responses and takes over the mind. Trauma can result from adverse childhood experiences, natural disasters, accidents, interpersonal violence, or war. Children from all races and socioeconomic backgrounds are influenced by traumatic experiences and it affect their development of literacy inside and outside of the classroom. Children and teenagers' reaction to trauma can interfere with brain development, learning, and behavior and all of these have a tremendous impact on academic success and the overall school environment. Children and adolescents are developing and growing daily and sometimes life

experiences influence humans' development in both negative and positive ways. Physiological changes to children and teenagers' brains as well as emotional and behavioral responses to trauma have an impact on the way they learn, school engagement, social life, and academic success.

A trauma-sensitive school takes time to focus more on providing a culture in the schools that prioritizes safety, trust, choice, and collaboration. "A trauma-sensitive classrooms framework takes this fact into consideration and results in systems creating policies and practices that empower, build resiliency, and support the optimal development of children and their families impacted by trauma" (Bailey et al., 2016 p. 38). Coping skills and improved communication strategies are needed for those who experience trauma. Trauma experiences during the most sensitive times in children and teenagers' lives can be harmful to brain development because it affects the way children and teenagers view themselves, other people, and the world (Bailey et al., 2016 p. 38). How does trauma affect the structure of the brain? Traumatic experiences will change the structure and functioning of children and teenagers' brains through the activation of stress response systems because of the memories they have kept in the back of their heads (Child Welfare Information Gateway 2015). It is important to know what are triggers to those who have experienced trauma and how do they respond to those triggers. The brain is imaging those memories of trauma and children and teenagers may want to write or tell a story about those traumatic experiences (Child Welfare Information Gateway 2015). The brain can be affected after experiencing horrible traumatic experiences because of the result behind that trauma.

In addition to changes to the brain, trauma might impact students' learning and behavior in class. "Traumatized students struggle to use language to relate to people, often because they are unable to use language to articulate emotional needs and feelings. Consequently, they have trouble identifying and differentiating emotions" (Wolpow et al., 2009, p. 12). Children and teenagers who have dealt with trauma might find it more difficult than their peers to concentrate on class material or process new information given; they may even have trouble reading or writing. Teachers can not punish kids for struggling to read or write because if they can read, they may have a chance to find success in school to help them overcome trauma and if they cannot, school will only seem like another source of pain and failure added to all the other sources of pain and failure that will lead them to needing more therapy (Dykstra 2019). To make sure children and teenagers literacy skills are developing in the classroom teachers must be willing to treat students' behavior like reading and math.

Teachers need to be sure to help students that are experiencing trauma or have been through a traumatic experience by giving them the proper activities for reading and writing support they need by switching the channel or switching activities that are cognitive distractions or thought breaks (ASCD 2021). Children and teenagers should not be punished in the classroom for struggling with social, emotional, or behavioral skills when it comes to literacy. When punishment emerged such as corporal, suspension, and expulsion it may have made it impossible for students to learn how to behave better because you never know if they have been through trauma (Nussbaum, 2018). Looking from the lens of a trauma-informed perspective, teachers need to realize children and teenagers need interventions, coaching, and support to develop their social-emotional

skills, not punitive measures when they are not able to perform at the expected level (McInerney & McKlindon, 2014). Teachers and mentors have a special role and have a big impact on children and teenagers social-emotional skill development through relationships inside and outside of the classroom (Abud 2017). Connection to trauma sometimes affects children and teenagers social-emotional development, so having a good support system like teachers and mentors helps.

Children and teenagers who are going through trauma or have experienced a traumatic experience need the proper connections in the classroom in order to build and develop literacy skills. “Students struggling with the effects of trauma need structure and high expectations. They need to be empowered to succeed because they benefit from having real choices and control” (Wolpow et al., 2009, p. 71). This will help children and teenagers learn from each other in a social context in the classroom. “By providing safe outlets for symbolic or explicit expression (art, music, sports, writing) we can provide pressure valves to express the unspeakable” (Wolpow et al., 2009, pp. 22-23). Teachers and mentors need to make sure there are a lot of opportunities for student-to-student discussion, collaboration, and feedback in the classroom within students’ zones of proximal development, so that literacy skills can become stronger. “Sharing as a group adds a special touch to the discussion and group discussion. The goal is for students to move away from the “formal” written components by allowing students to read the selection and then discussing the text as group to add value to each learner even if they have been through trauma” (Price & Willingham, 2006, p. 30). Better communication will help children and teenagers open up more in the classroom and help them cope with the harmful effects of trauma. “Teachers can do a great deal to create a climate of safety

for their students by being attuned and communicating clearly with their students to the needs of their students in order to help students identify and deal with their triggers” (Wolpow et al., 2009, p. 81). Students can listen to somebody else tell the story or tell a story too, and just focus on comprehending it to help them heal from their trauma.

### **Philosophical Stance**

My philosophical stance as a researcher is how can I know the reality behind childhood trauma memories that influence social literacy practices inside and outside of the classroom. With the method of my research being Autoethnography, I as a researcher looked at what is the reality behind the perspectives of my childhood trauma memories from the paradigm of subjectivism and constructivist/interpretive paradigm. As a researcher, I viewed the reality of childhood trauma memories as all knowledge and is purely a matter of perspectives. With me being overcomer of childhood trauma, I am telling a story of what I can remember from the traumatic experience and depending on what perspective I viewed my childhood trauma memories from determines how my childhood memories have influenced my social literacy practices.

With the method being autoethnography, this research was viewed from a constructivist/interpretive paradigm because the reality of childhood trauma memories needs to be interpreted. By interpreting childhood trauma memories from my journals, song lyrics, and poems, I as the researcher discovered the underlying meaning of traumatic events and activities in my writing. I used my research to discover meanings that present theme identifications. The themes showed how my writing shaped my identity. In autoethnographic research, observations, life history, and theme identification from the use of discourse interpreted the language behind my poems, journals, song lyrics

and writing and thematic analysis for the research to find codes and themes in my poems, journals, and song lyrics. As the researcher I told my story through my writing to find themes and the meaning behind my use of language. This research is viewed from more of a constructivist/interpretive paradigm but can also be viewed from a subjectivism paradigm. As the researcher, I studied how childhood trauma affects social literacy practices inside and outside of the classroom from an autoethnographic approach, it was based off my experiences of childhood trauma and how it affected my social literacy practices. Subjectivism is the theory that perception or an individual's consciousness is reality and there is not an underlying true reality that exists, independent of perception. The nature of reality is dependent on the individual's consciousness and subjective awareness of experiences and perceptions. Constructivist/interpretive paradigm helped me as the researcher be the voice for those who are afraid to speak about how their memories have affected the way they communicate with others and their academic success. This helped me as the researcher be the voice to be able to analyze the language used in writing when going through traumatic experiences and themes that can be found.

### **Statement of the Problem**

There is so much pain within the individuals or students inside and outside of the classroom, educators should be mindful that going through traumatic life experiences or surviving traumatic life experiences can sometimes emerge as behaviors that educators may label as challenging. Trauma can cause students to behave in many ways inside and outside of the classroom that may cause educators or others to view those individuals differently or place a label on those individuals. It is critical for teachers and educators recognize that frustrated students are often those that have experienced the highest levels



of trauma and need the most loving attention and support in the classroom. Children and teenagers who have difficulty connecting and relating to their peers tend to experience ongoing social difficulties throughout their schooling and adult life. The behavioral symptoms of children surviving trauma can be misrepresented or misunderstood because the individuals are reacting based off what they can remember from childhood trauma (Van der Kolk 2005). An individual's behavior symptoms can be intentional and a controlled act or diagnosed as a particular disorder not specifically related to trauma, such as oppositional defiant disorder or attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder, rather than as symptoms of trauma because the childhood trauma memories can cause individuals to behave in many different ways (Van der Kolk 2005). In order to understand children's puzzling behaviors, it is very important that teachers and educators take time out to communicate with children's families on the regularly basis to be able to understand certain behaviors seen in the classroom might be connected to some traumatic experiences (Wright 2014).

## **Theoretical Framework**

### **Cognitive Behavioral Theory**

Cognitive Behavioral Theory focuses on the connection between thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, and identifies how changes in an individual's thought process can influence their emotions and behaviors with different reactions when in stressful situations (Beck Institute for Cognitive Behavior Therapy 2021). Cognitive behavioral theory could be a commonly employed by counselors and therapists to assist individuals cause positive changes by helping them identify and reduce emotional distress, like anxiety, or depression. as an example, shifting an individual's negative thinking into

positive thinking can increase the possibility of healthier behaviors and improve their emotion regulation. Using this theory individuals are ready to become responsive to their thoughts and feelings, in order that they will be ready to identify and challenge their thoughts and feelings about themselves, the people around them, and therefore the world around them. A growing awareness of the impact and frequency of trauma and the stress that children, teens, and young adults are through led to multiple frameworks for trauma-informed programs (Hull & Phifer, 2016). Using reminders of traumatic experiences or emotions related to the traumatic experiences, are often wont to help to heal, recover and help the individual feel safe when a personal is experiencing from negative emotions from the memories of the trauma.

Once an automatic thought occurs within the individual about their traumatic experiences, it triggers a sense that may be a positive or negative emotion, which then triggers the individual's response, like a behavior and/or physiological response to their traumatic experience (Beck Institute for Cognitive Behavior Therapy 2021). These thoughts that the individual has can either be neutral, positive, or negative. Living on the day-to-day basis and interacting with others, every individual has their own thoughts. Thoughts have the flexibility to influence individual's feelings and behaviors.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to observe my use and practices of literacy when going through a traumatic experience and coping with the memories of trauma. In the research, I specifically sought to explore through autoethnographic analysis of my personal journals, personal poems, and personal song lyrics to see how the influence of trauma affects my social literacy practices inside and outside the classroom through

storytelling. This autoethnography is about my personal poems, journaling, personal song lyrics and observing my daily life through the sometimes difficult or traumatic memories that show up in my life from time to time that affected my childhood and adulthood. It is about narrative healing, storytelling, and transformation through the practice of autoethnographic writing. Data from my observing my daily life inside and outside the classroom, personal poems, personal song lyrics and journals was used from 2004-2006.

### **Research Questions**

1. How did my memories of traumatic experiences affect my emotions?
2. How did my traumatic experiences affect my language and literacy inside and outside of the classroom?

### **Limitations of the Study**

This study is limited in its scope to the viewpoints and experiences related to how my childhood trauma memories affect social literacy practices inside and outside of the classroom like language and literacy. This research is a personal narrative and storytelling and limited to the observations and interpretations of encounters and interactions of my personal life inside and outside of the classroom. This research may sound like it is coming from a psychological counseling point of view when looking at my language and literacy inside and outside of the classroom.

### **Organization of the Study**

The dissertation was divided into five major units or chapters. Chapter I contains an introduction, a statement of the problem, a purpose statement, limitations, design of the study/procedures, operational definitions, and the organization of the study. Chapter II contains a review of the literature. The methodology and procedures are discussed in

Chapter III. Chapter IV is the analysis of the research being presented which is the research findings. Chapter V contains an Introduction, Summary of Study, Conclusions (organized by Research Questions or Hypotheses), Discussion, Suggestions for future research, Implications, and Conclusion.

### **Significance of the Study**

This study is significant because it looks at how language and literacy is impacted by traumatic experiences and can affect the way students perform academically, their emotions and their behavior inside and outside the classroom. With so many children and teenagers experiencing traumatic experiences, teachers need to be mindful of their approach in the classroom. Society has limited understanding of how teachers' knowledge and confidence in supporting students who experience traumatic events is limited. Previous research suggests teachers feel unprepared to address the needs of the students who are going through traumatic experiences and who have experienced trauma (Alisic, 2012). Teachers need the proper training to become more knowledgeable and aware in order to improve their understanding of trauma and its influence on children's emotional, behavioral, and academic functioning. When you been through traumatic experiences, as a student you want to be able to seek opportunities for help and know that you have counselors, teachers, and mentors that you can develop a relationship with to help you academically and emotionally. This study is unique because it examines an under-researched area of childhood trauma and relationships, specifically examining the relationship between the child and teachers and how a child's social literacy practices are affected inside and outside the classroom due to trauma. Each story and trauma are also different. All of the stories must be told, and voices need to be heard.

In addition, this personal study may inform researchers and teachers to understand how children perform in the classroom who experience trauma. The way I behaved as a child and teenager inside and outside of the classroom showed how potential patterns of trauma and how I had trouble coping when experiencing trauma or after experiencing trauma. Parents and teachers should take into consideration that childhood trauma is a complex phenomenon that impacts the child's emotions and behaviors (Van Wesel et al., 2011). Trauma affected my life in many areas as a child and teenager such as the social, emotional, and interpersonal, which all lead to a less adjusted child and teenager who struggled academically.

### **Definition of Terms**

For the purpose of this study, the following definitions apply:

Trauma: generally defined by stress events that present extraordinary challenges to coping and adaptation; one or more blows, rendering helplessness, causing internal changes (Agaibi & Wilson, 2005, p. 196; Terr, 2003, p. 323).

Cope: to deal or struggle with events that have changed the "normal" sequence of life.

Over-coming: gaining success over adversity, such as childhood trauma.

Autoethnography: A highly personalized genre of writing and research where the author uses his or her experience to extend understanding of a particular subculture.

Reflexive Journal: A written personalized diary account about any trauma a person may have experienced.

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD): diagnosis of a person who has been exposed to a traumatic event in that actual or threatened death or serious injury or threat to the physical integrity of self or others is present. Response involved is intense fear,

helplessness or horror; recurring dreams or thoughts of events; feelings of detachment from others; and cognitive, occupational, and social impairment (APA, 2000, pp. 218-220).

Traumatic event: Briere and Scott (2013) described a traumatic event as one that is “extremely upsetting, at least temporarily overwhelms the individual’s internal resources, and produces lasting psychological symptoms” (p. 8). Traumatic events or stressors can be anything resulting in a person feeling that his/her life or another person’s life is in danger.

### **Conclusion**

A study such as this holds significance for shifting the way trauma healing is approached when exploring my language use and meaning of my life, my journals, poems, and song lyrics. While childhood trauma is a core component of this study, healing is its main nascence and the conversation. By exploring my childhood trauma, healing, and showcasing why healing is needed, it is my intention to address the work necessary to create solutions to the problem of childhood trauma, trauma recovery and how trauma affects literacy inside and outside of the classroom. Burke (2018) stated that “Trauma is the absence of action.” In my own experiences of trauma, I have found this to be very true because parts of my life fell apart and led to experiencing a little post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). As a survivor of childhood trauma, you must be willing to review what you have been through and create disclosure to yourself first in order to heal. This is a way for you to believe your own stories as you come back to the root to your trauma and it’s the one thing that allows you to speak your truth without fear.

To “own” your story, you must be transparent with yourself and others in order to share how much pain you have been carrying and how far you are willing to go with your healing process to become a better version of you after being exposed to different traumatic experiences. It sometimes takes years for you to look at your bad childhood memories, but you must be willing to unlock your thoughts through writing whether it’s journaling, poems, diaries, song lyrics, etc., so you can bring light to your darkness. This is where I began to discover that I do not need to be silent about my trauma. I need to own my story, so that I will be able to help others with their childhood trauma experiences and educate others on children and teenagers’ exposures to different life experiences like post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), horrible traumatic experiences, the types of traumatic experiences and the number and percentages of children and teenagers who have experienced trauma.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **Review of Literature**

#### **Historical Perspective**

Historically, literacy has evolved over time by influencing human's behavior and thinking. For example, since the beginning of history (the telling of which is also a story), society has known that words are dangerous creatures and are created from the human's mind. In history in general, the past becomes an image that symbolizes what is created in one's memory. Telling a story and writing helps humans cope with the trauma and enhancing literacy skills. Literacy is used on every topic to talk, to understand, to communicate facts, opinions, and everything else. While going through or surviving trauma, a person may feel the need to express emotions through writing on social media as well. This means that individual may not have grasp the basic concepts of literacy. Sharon Salzberg once said, "Someone who has experienced trauma also has gift to offer all of us in their depth their knowledge of our universal vulnerability and their experience of the power of compassion" (Brainy Quote 2021). Survivors of trauma are quite complicated and affected by their own experiences because they begin to experience free thinking. They no longer choose to follow authority because they are traumatized and looking for the accessibility of natural supports and healers to cope with their life skills.

People read themselves in order to understand and learn who they are. In Manguel (1996) *History of Reading* it stated,

James Hillman argues that those who have read stories or have had stories read to them as a child are in better shape and have better prognosis than those to whom a story might be introduced like the hornbooks or bible. (p. 11)



Reading and writing helps the soul find itself, so after going through trauma people may write in journal or write narratives. Instead, they follow their own way of religion not what immediate family, preachers, pastors, priest, and the responses of the larger community wants them to live and follow. Galinsky, Rucker, & Hu (2014) stated,

We propose that through the observation of other's behavior, consumers come to hold beliefs or expectations tied to the behavior that is enacted by the powerful and powerless. (pp. 382-383)

Power guides human's behavior and can be misunderstood when creating assumptions about those who are going through trauma or have been through trauma. Religious motives control reading instruction. The frameworks of writing against belief, the role of imagination, investigating cultures of belief and the three modes of belief, all suggest inter-linking relations between cognition, self, and identity engaged with meaning-making processes and their expressions. One can be controlled by emotions and encounter religious challenges when going through or surviving trauma.

It is very difficult for some humans to connect religious belief and authority when there is trauma. The story method emerged in the 1880's. Manguel tells stories in the *History of Reading* (1996) about what he remembers himself doing as a little boy. Why tell stories? That's an engine of a question that drives his book *History of Reading*. Manguel is persuasive in the answers he offers. With stories humans fight against the unreality of the world. Without stories, there are no memories. Comprehension and vocabulary will grow stronger in children who have stories told and read aloud to them. Stories chosen that people have interest in rather than for the attainment of a particular reading level challenge expands children and teenagers' intelligence as they explore

exciting ways of life and expression. Those going through trauma or who have survived trauma tell stories or write based off what they remember from their traumatic experiences. The printing press led to those who chose to express themselves deeper to help others publish their stories, drawings, pictures, and other work from what they remember about their traumatic experience.

### **The Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study**

Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) Study was the largest study ever done on childhood trauma. This research study consists of 17,000 participants. The original ACE Study was conducted at Kaiser Permanente from 1995 to 1997 with two waves of data collection (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2021). Over 17,000 Health Maintenance Organization members from Southern California that received physical exams had to complete confidential surveys regarding their childhood experiences, current health status and behaviors. The Family Health History and Health Appraisal questionnaires were used to collect information on child abuse and neglect, household challenges, and other socio-behavioral factors in the original CDC-Kaiser ACE Study recognized (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2021). Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) study looked at the effects of adverse childhood experiences over the lifespan and the researchers found in this study that trauma/traumatic experiences happen earlier than they are recognized (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2021). Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) found that trauma can have an affect an individual's physical and emotional health throughout their life span (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2021). Study findings lead the researchers to see that the

relationship between ACEs and negative health and well-being outcomes show that as ACEs increase so does the risk for negative outcomes.

## **Exposure**

**Exposure to Traumatic Events.** There are a lot of children and teens who have experienced or witnessed trauma that has led to a negative impact on their academic performance, interpersonal relationships, and healthy development. “The National Survey of Children’s Exposure to Violence (2021) found that over 60% of children surveyed experienced some form of trauma, crime, or abuse in the prior year, with some experiencing multiple traumas (The National Child Traumatic Stress Network 2021). Children and teens who have been exposed to trauma may develop coping mechanisms and behaviors that interfere with academic success and impair social-emotional development. 26% of children within the United States can witness or experience a traumatic event before they turn four (National Center for Mental Health Promotion and Youth Violence Prevention, 2012). As the range of traumatic events experienced throughout childhood will increase, the risk for the following health problems in adulthood increases: depression; alcoholism; drug abuse; suicide attempts; heart and liver diseases; pregnancy problems; high stress; uncontrollable anger; and family, financial, and job problems (National Center for Mental Health Promotion and Youth Violence Prevention, 2012). Exposure to traumatic events can be a numerous of traumatic events experienced by an individual. “As many as 2.5 million youth per year experience homelessness. Along with losing their homes, community, friends, and routines as well as their sense of stability and safety many homeless youths are also victims of violence or other traumatic events” (The National Child Traumatic Stress Network 2021). Previous

research has shown exposure to traumatic events is associated with many children or teens showing changes in behavior that could lead to suicide if they are not supported after traumatic events. Child abuse reports involved 7.9 million children, 142,056 children received foster care services, 491,710 victims (74.9%) are neglected, 115,100 victims (17.5%) are physically abused, 60,927 victims (9.3%) are sexually abused, 39,824 victims (6.1%) are psychologically maltreated (American SPCC 2021).

There is an association between the exposure to traumatic events and suicide behavior that is consistent with the interpersonal-psychological theory of suicide (Joiner, 2005). According to the interpersonal psychological theory, an individual with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) has increased exposure to traumatic events that could increase his or her risk of engaging in changes of behavior or committing suicide because the exposure to traumatic events is repeated. This can lead to not fearing death and being able to tolerate self-inflicted pain that is learned from experiencing painful, provocative traumatic events repeatedly (Capron et al., 2012a). The authors explain how there are physiological and emotional responses that trigger from traumatic experiences that lead to the characteristic of PTSD that cause traumatized children to develop a view of the world that incorporates pain, betrayal, shame, guilt, hurt, rejection, and trust issues. Young children exposed to five or more significant a lot of vital adverse experiences in the first three years of childhood face a 76% chance of having one or more delays in their language, emotional or brain development. 60% of adults report experiencing abuse or other difficult troublesome family circumstances throughout childhood (National Center for Mental Health Promotion and Youth Violence Prevention, 2012).

Children who have experienced maltreatment prior to age 3 are at risk for social skills deficits, daily living skills deficits and special education placement when school aged (Scarborough & McCrae, 2010). The likelihood of mental health problems appears to grow with an increase in the number of traumas experienced (Finkelhor, Ormond, & Turner, 2007). Children and teens are affected in numerous ways whether it is affective, behavioral, cognitive, or physical. In qualitative research, studies reveal that children under six are at risk for developmental delays, lower cognitive functioning, difficulty regulating, posttraumatic play, restrictive play and exploration, sleep disturbances, high levels of fussiness, temper tantrums, clinginess and separation anxiety, and regression of previously acquired skills and milestones (Mongillo et al., 2009). Looking at these qualitative studies, research shows how traumatized children and teens that have been exposed to trauma will continue to show physical symptoms of fear because their brains are stuck in their reaction to the traumatic experiences that keep bringing back horrible memories. Every healthy interaction with children or teens, especially when they are sustained, can help promote new adaptive wiring in the brain to help cope with the trauma they have experienced. If there are the proper people in place to address and treat childhood trauma and toxic stress from the bad memories, this will reduce health and social emotional problems throughout the life span. Trauma can have a long lasting and a deep negative impact on development, health and safety of children and teens if they do not receive the proper trauma informed care after their exposure to traumatic events.

The researchers discussed their results and people who have experienced trauma are fifteen times more likely to attempt suicide, four times more likely to become an alcoholic, four times more likely to develop a sexually transmitted disease, four times

more likely to inject drugs, three times more likely to use antidepressant medication, three times more likely to be absent from work, three times more likely to experience depression, three times more likely to have serious job problems, two and a half times more likely to smoke, and two times more likely to develop chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (National Center for Mental Health Promotion and Youth Violence Prevention, 2012). Children and teens that are exposed to trauma could lead to them having many cognitive symptoms like delayed development, altered learning trajectories, problems focusing, problems completing tasks, problems following directions, regression of acquired skills, speech and language delays and loss of previously achieved developmental milestones.

Children and teens that are survivors of traumatic experiences often experience the feelings of anxiety, worry, shame, guilt, helplessness, hopelessness, grief, sadness, and anger. This may lead to higher rates of anxiety, depression, suicide and self-harm, PTSD, drug and alcohol misuse and relationship difficulties after surviving traumatic experiences. Children and teens who have been exposed to traumatic experiences may develop a heightened stress response. This has an effect on children and teen's ability to regulate their emotions through life, leads to sleep difficulties, lowers immune function, increases the risk of a number of physical illnesses throughout adulthood and their mental cognitive development. Many may suffer with serious post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

## **Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)**

**History.** Many people experience traumatic events in their lives, including children and teens. If children, teens, or adults experience a traumatizing event, they can suffer from PTSD by experiencing or witnessing a terrifying event. Some statistics from the study about PTSD was provided. PTSD is found to occur in approximately one in ten of individuals affected by a traumatic event. On average in studies, 60% of men and 50% of women experience a traumatic event throughout their lifetimes. Of these, 4% of men are found to develop PTSD and 10% of women are found to develop PTSD at some point in their lives (Gregory, 2021). As proved by past research, the majority of people who witness or live through a traumatic event will not suffer from PTSD (The National Institute of Mental Health, 2021). Most can possibly have memories of the events, but their lives will not become negatively impacted by it in their daily interactions. In this study the author indicated that memories can be triggered by sights, sounds, smells or even feelings that children, teens or adults experience that may lead to PTSD. These triggers can bring back memories of the trauma and cause intense emotional and physical reactions (Gregory, 2021). Children, teens, and adults are more likely to suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder if the traumatic event they endure is life-threatening or severely traumatic to your personal safety. Additionally, the more exposure to the event or prolonged exposure to a traumatic event is also more likely to increase your chances of developing PTSD (Gregory, 2021). Without the right treatment, PTSD can become chronic and have a major impact on children, teens and adult's normal psychosocial and physical development and functioning in everyday life.

**Definition.** Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is a disorder that affects the mind that is caused from experiencing or witnessing any major traumatic or life-threatening events. PTSD causes psychobiological dysfunctions that can affect a person's daily life and be life threatening (Chiappelli et al., 2005). In this study, PTSD is marked by clear biological changes. Children, teens, and adults with PTSD often relive the experience of trauma through nightmares and flashbacks. They also have difficulty in sleeping. Behavior becomes an issue after experiencing trauma and is usually triggered by related disorders such as depression, substance abuse and problems of memory and cognition. The researchers argued that stress research and PTSD research are intertwined. Psychobiological manifestations in PTSD and in complex PTSD (disorder of extreme stress) evidently pertain to the same domain of mind-body interactions, which are elucidated in psychoneuroimmunology research (Chiappelli et al., 2005). Children, teens, or adults who go through traumatic experiences may have temporary difficulty adjusting and coping, but overtime with good self-care, things may get better. If the symptoms get worse, last for months or even years, and interfere with their day-to-day functioning, it may be a sign of PTSD.

**Symptoms.** PTSD is diagnosed after a person experiences the symptoms for at least one month following a traumatic event (Anxiety and Depression Association of America, 2021). In qualitative studies, PTSD symptoms are generally grouped into four types: intrusive memories, avoidance, negative changes in thinking and mood, and changes in physical and emotional reactions. Symptoms can vary over time or vary from person to person. Symptoms may be seen in children, teens, or adults when there are significant problems in social life, school, or work situations and in relationships. PTSD



can also interfere with their ability to go about with normal daily tasks. PTSD is determined by three main types of symptoms: Re-experiencing the trauma through intrusive distressing recollections of the event, flashbacks, and nightmares, emotional numbness and avoidance of places, people, and activities that are reminders of the trauma and increased arousal such as difficulty sleeping and concentrating, feeling jumpy, and being easily irritated and angered (Anxiety and Depression Association of America, 2021). Research shows that it remains unclear whether trauma types differentially impact emotion dysregulation, and whether this in turn contributes to elevated PTSD.

The qualitative research reveals that PTSD can be tough to identify, especially when it's happening in your own mind. Findings suggest that symptoms of PTSD include persistent intrusive recollections, avoidance of stimuli related to the trauma, negative alterations in cognitions and mood, and hyperarousal (Bisson, et al., 2015). With PTSD, a person may experience memories over and over of the major traumatic experiences. They may also experience avoidance where they do not want to think about it or talk about it. Then you may start to see some behavioral changes and mood swings (WebMD, 2021). Motivation to maintain daily activities or to be around normal people will decrease.

**Identifying PTSD in Students the Classroom.** Evidence from research suggests that children and teens that are exposed to trauma have decreased social competence and increased rates of peer rejection. When a child or teen is suffering from PTSD or other trauma exposure, it is helpful for teachers, staff, parents, and caregivers to understand that that child or teen's behavior can be affected in a variety of different ways. For children and teens in schools, PTSD can manifest in disorganized behavior or agitation. The three symptom clusters for PTSD include re-experiencing (for children, this can

repetitively play or re-enacting the trauma in play), numbing and avoidance (such as avoiding traumatic reminders and talking about trauma, not participating in activities previously enjoyed), and hyperarousal (such as irritability, anger, difficulty sleeping) (Baweja et al., 2012).

Responding to Students with PTSD in Schools. Teachers should listen to their students when speaking to give them a voice in the classroom. School-based services may be good for underserved ethnic minority youth who traditionally are less likely to receive such services (Baweja et al., 2012). The researchers believe that speaking with students can occur one-on-one if a teacher and student find themselves in a relatively private place to talk to make the students feel more comfortable after experiencing trauma. In addition, the authors noted that in order for children and teens to be successful in school, the adult should be willing to listen without judgment, showing interest, empathy and availability in order to let the students know they are here for them (Baweja et al., 2012). The teacher can open the discussion by acknowledging what has happened and letting students know that it is not only acceptable to share their experiences and establishing that the school is a safe place to do this. Findings from the results show in order to support and facilitate the coping process of students who have experienced trauma, teachers and staff must be able to help students understand the range of normal stress reactions (Baweja et al., 2012).

The Cognitive Behavioral Intervention for Trauma in Schools (CBITS) program, a brief, ten-session group school-based program can help those who have been through trauma. School counselors, nurses, psychologists, or social workers can take on this task. Qualitative researchers believe that if teachers and other school staff are willing to reach

out to students and check in with students on a regular basis this will help students build trust again with peers and others around them (Baweja et al., 2012). Finding suggest from (Baweja et al., 2012) that students need to be encouraged to interact, share “recovery” activities and take on team projects with other students, friends, or teachers. Trauma-Focused Coping is a 14-session group intervention program that adapts basic cognitive behavioral techniques for students who have experienced a single incident trauma. When students experience this type of interaction with their peers, students feel the caring and consistent support of adults and their peers in their lives, even during a difficult time of coping. Students need the proper support system and programs to help move past having PTSD.

### **Storytelling and Trauma**

**History.** Edward Miller once said, “Stories are our primary tools of learning and teaching, the repositories of our lore and legends. They bring order into our confusing world. Think about how many times a day you use stories to pass along data, insights, memories, or common-sense advice” (Liferarian Association 2021) Stories are what humans grew up hearing, teaching individuals the difference between right and wrong. As a child, an individual may have come home from school, eager to tell their parents stories about their day. The stories that individuals tell as a child that sticks with them their entire life is passed down for generations, serving as the same benefit as it did for their elders. “Visual storytelling has kept evolving and become a staple in human civilization. Art has been a medium allowing humans to pass on history and legends through images” (Parkes 2021). Storytelling has history to it that can be passed down to

the next generation. Stories have existed for a long time through history, and the telling of stories has changed forms significantly throughout the ages.

Humans' desires to tell and hear stories has remained the same and has not changed, and still has a huge impact on the way individuals look at life. The ability to tell stories effectively and memorably is a part of daily life skills. "Historical examples of visual storytelling have been found in Egyptian pyramids, on ancient Greek vases and frescoes, Chinese tapestries, statues, canvases, through photographs, and most recently made accessible through video" (Parkes 2021). A history of storytelling can be told through pictures. A picture really can be worth a thousand words that can enough stories throughout history to keep humans entertained forever. Those who have been through traumatic experiences may relate their experiences to the books they read aloud or pictures they connect with from memories of trauma and tell their story to let their voices be heard. "Storytelling through art is nothing new. Humans have long used pictures to communicate their greatest tales" (The British Museum 2017). Humans have discovered that their stories can be told through different objects from around the world and throughout human history even if they have experienced trauma. "The Chauvet cave in France is the oldest representation of storytelling found thus far, dating to 36,000 years ago. Later forms of visual storytelling can be found in Egyptian hieroglyphics from around 3,000 B.C., which mixed pictographic symbols and sounds in order to tell a story" (Pelt 2018). Stories can be communicated with or without words when experiencing trauma or after experiencing trauma because individuals are using different forms of language to express their inner thoughts of deeper truths.

**Definition.** Trauma is an emotional response to a terrible event like an accident, rape or natural disaster that leads to shock and denial after it occurs (American Psychological Association 2021). Traumatic experiences can impact learning, behavior, and relationships at school and at home. “A traumatic event is a frightening, dangerous, or violent event that poses a threat to a child’s life or bodily integrity” (The National Child Traumatic Stress Network 2021). By being able to retell your own story from what you remember, you are using different forms of imagery and exploring different ways of interpreting one’s reality using methods of storytelling that can provide an individual with a sense of hope, belonging, and meaning for people that have been through traumatic experiences (White & Epston, 1990). Trauma literacy is being able to respond to the healing process and learn new ways to grow in areas that are related to traumatic experiences. “Trauma literacy,” is a form of how individuals develop their language literacy because it empowers individuals to be able to not only be able to understand themselves, but also understand other individuals better (Trauma Literacy 2019). It also allows individuals to take responsibility for their actions and their circumstances. Without trauma literacy, language literacy and learning would be limited along with the potential of individuals improving in many areas of their lives and the collective of humanity (Trauma Literacy 2019).

**Trauma Storytelling and how it Improves Speaking Inside and Outside the Classroom to Cope with Trauma.** Telling one’s story about a traumatic experience can be easy or it can be difficult depending on the individual when expressing themselves inside and outside of the classroom. Barkhuizen and Wette (2008) stated,

When teachers tell their stories and reflect on their experiences, they are able to make meaning of them and gain an understanding of their teaching knowledge and practice. (p. 374)

Hearing a painful story that is similar to the traumatic experience an individual has gone through can be a reminder of one's own painful experiences or can bring hope to that individual that they are not the only one that has been through that traumatic experience. "The process of recounting and retelling one's story allows for the opportunity to understand and reorganize traumatic experiences, which are inherently fragmented, and from which survivors often emerge numb or disassociated" (National Resource Center on Domestic Violence 2017). Telling stories about an individual's traumatic experience starts the healing process and helps build resilience. "For survivors of childhood trauma, memories may be lost, blurry, or out of sequence. The process of fitting the pieces together, even if some of those pieces are missing, can be tremendously healing" (National Resource Center on Domestic Violence 2017).

Stories are what help the individual gain their power and own who they are. "Stories are equally powerful to the storyteller." On the path to healing and resilience, telling one's story is an important step-one that helps an individual identify and name their experiences so that they can begin to incorporate them into their whole self (National Resource Center on Domestic Violence 2017). Going through a traumatic experience shapes an individual and their memories of their trauma helps connect them to why they are where they currently are and how they will respond to people and things around them. In the project the researchers found that it is through stories individuals that have been through trauma feel connected to each other and the process of sharing it

publicly can have a variety of benefits for the storyteller, including realizing that one's own story can be a catalyst to help, inspire, or motivate others (National Resource Center on Domestic Violence 2017). Storytelling is a way of dealing with trauma and a healing outlet for individuals. For those individuals who have experienced trauma, by sharing their own experiences creates produces a form of a personal narrative that can help individuals to develop new meaning on past traumatic events.

## **Writing**

**Therapeutic Writing.** There can be safety in telling stories through the expression of writing. Writing is cathartic and you just unload what you are thinking on paper. "Therapeutic journaling is the process of writing down our thoughts and feelings about our personal experiences. This kind of private reflection allows us to sort through events that have occurred and problems that we may be struggling with" (VA Office of Patient Centered Care and Cultural Transformation p. 1). Some people use journals to write, and some people use locked dairies with keys to write. Sometimes when you go back to your writing when you have experienced trauma, it could pull you back into your trauma by reliving that moment. "Much good literacy practice includes learners writing about their own lives. Learners are often asked to keep "response" or "dialogue" journals where the instructor or facilitator writes a reply or reaction after each journal entry" (Horsman, p. 66). Reflecting and writing about how you feel is the process of how writing works and the context to how writing transpired which creates a "writing story" (Richardson, 1994). Trauma may upset individuals at times and make individuals feel like they are out of place and emotional. Journaling helps take control of individual's emotions and helps cope with trauma. "While trauma can upset our beliefs about how life

works, processing trauma through writing seems to give us a sense of control” (Newman 2020). Journaling is a form of therapy that helps release the thoughts of traumatic experiences by expressing words on paper to tell the individual’s past or present story.

“Journaling is a tool to put our experiences, thoughts, beliefs, and desires into language, and in doing so it helps us understand and grow and make sense of them” (Newman 2020). Journal helps individuals release their thoughts and emotions, so that they can take the necessary steps to heal from their traumatic experiences. When journaling individuals should be aware of rehashing the same difficult feelings and emotions over and over in their writing because it could cause them to fall back into depression by reliving the memories of their traumatic experiences. “Confiding on paper can be a valuable alternative and a way to express ourselves with absolute freedom. Journaling lets us process secrets before we reveal them to others” (Newman 2020). Writing in a journal or dairy is a form of expression that could help heal from traumatic experiences, but individuals may need to also seek therapy or counseling during therapeutic writing in order to fully heal during this process. National Research Council (2012) stated,

When the connections between reading and writing are made explicit during instruction, a more integrated system of literacy skills develops, and learning is facilitated. Historically, reading and writing have been taught as separate language skills.

Teachers and professors’ goals should be to grow and sustain a community of readers, writers, and thinkers especially trauma students.



**Songs and Poetry.** Writing song lyrics sometimes makes those who have been through traumatic experiences feel safer than directly speaking about what the individual has been through. Music plays a role in helping individuals cope who have experienced trauma, whether it be through the intervention of music therapists, community music, writing music, making programs or individual music listening (Clift et al., 2010). Music has been used as a healing outlet to help those who have experienced trauma. Songs and poetry allow for those who have experienced trauma to express oneself and to relive and reflect on memories and experiences. Writing music as a form of therapy does not completely cure or solve problems resulting from traumatic experiences but writing music as therapy can help children and adults in crisis learn and use positive coping skills to express difficult feelings and emotions (American Music Therapy Association, Inc 2006). Billy Collins once said, “Poetry provides us with the history of the human heart” (Masterclass 2021). Writing songs and poetry gives individuals who have been through traumatic experiences the power to open up and express what they are feelings on the inside. “Poetry allows humans to distill emotions and difficult experiences into well-chosen words. Writing poetry during challenging times not only makes way for the purging of the tough stuff, but it also bonds humans more closely together” (Werner 2021).

### **Summary**

No feeling is greater than being able to tell a story whether speaking or writing with a strong voice about traumatic experiences students have experienced in silence. Experiencing trauma may impact one’s self-confidence, self-acceptance, ability to adapt to stressful situations, and so on and being able to speak out about their trauma helps

students connect with their inner healing. Empathy, compassion, collaboration, and empowerment needs to be emphasized in order to help students build strength and regain control of their lives. There is a need for change in order to transform the world's view on trauma. "The transformation or change in a helper's inner experience as a result of responsibility for and empathic engagement with traumatized clients" (Saakvitne et al. 1999). As a whole, researchers are suggesting that children and teens that have been through traumatic experiences are likely to experience one or more cognitive difficulties.

There is so much more research that is needed to be explored such as: the impact of timing of abuse or any traumatic experience or how long did the traumatic experiences occur, whether it matters that the trauma is familial or not and whether cognitive difficulties are due to the PTSD that arises as a result of traumatic experiences. Also, there is a lot of research out there about creating a safe environment in the classroom, but what about a safe place to talk for those who have been through traumatic experiences. Those who have been through traumatic experiences need an outlet to release what they have gone through to prevent them from staying in a bad mental state with memories trapped on the inside. There is just research about how to create trauma informed schools, but not trauma informed homes. Where is the research about implementing trauma approach programs into the schools and homes to help the students that have been through traumatic experiences? There is also research out there about trauma informed care, but where is the research about taking the trauma informed care and implementing programs into the schools and homes to help prevent children and teenagers from going through horrible traumatic experiences and the healing journey after experiencing trauma.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **Methodology**

#### **Introduction**

Within the classroom and outside the classroom, there are issues that are unaddressed or unanswered such as the influence of trauma and storytelling. Children and teenagers who go through trauma may socialize less with others because they are living amidst major changes that where they need help letting others into their lives (Child Mind Institute 2021). They are having to create new ways with words, new literacies, and new forms of learning because they have trouble focusing and thinking things through (Child Mind Institute 2021). Literacy development can be shaped and affected by traumatic experiences which includes student's perceptions of one's competencies with the resources of their various contexts inside and outside of the classroom. I sought this understanding to determine historical underpinnings of contemporary trends of how my uses and practices inside and outside of the classroom are affected by traumatic experiences. What I examined and explored in this research project is how childhood trauma inhibits my ability to read, learn, interact with peers, and communicate with teachers/professors; and how I have healed from the traumatic experiences in my childhood by writing and telling stories.

#### **Purpose of Study**

The purpose of this study was to observe my use and practices of literacy inside and outside the classroom when going through trauma and after experiencing trauma. In the research, I specifically explored through autoethnographic observations how the

influence of childhood trauma memories affected my social literacy through storytelling by using journals, personal song lyrics and personal poems.

## **Methodology**

### **Ethnography**

Ethnography is writing about cultures unlike your own by using methods like observing, interviewing, surveys, etc. to gain a better understanding of what the researcher may see, hear, taste, smell, and touch. A well-known definition of ethnography is found in McGranahan (2014) the writing of the people, the writing of society, and the writing of culture. By ethnographic research, anthropologists mean the ever-evolving Malinowskian program of an ethnographer in the field conducting participant-observation paired with a range of other methods, living within a community, and getting deeply into the rhythms, logics, and complications of life as lived by a people in a place, or perhaps by peoples in places (p. 24). Ethnography helps researchers understand how life operates outside of their everyday life. With the ethnography, authors feel that they have control and understanding over the individuals that they are writing about even if a person is writing about themselves. There are different levels in which they operate and interact and why human behave the way they do. Morgan-Trimmer and Wood (2016) explained that through living and working with communities through extended periods of time, often months or years, ethnographers aim to see and describe the world through the eyes of members of that community. They pay specific attention to the standard of living, narratives of events, social interactions, and the cultural meanings and practices of a community.

During the process of ethnography, it may help the researcher reveal common cultural understandings related to the phenomena under the subject in which is being studied. There is a danger that the man of science could introduce bias toward views of his or her own culture. Ethnographers could validate findings through typical repository analysis, observations, consultation with consultants, use of surveys, interviews, and different techniques not distinctive to descriptive anthropology to assist them become am knowledgeable at what is being researched.

### ***Autoethnography***

Autoethnography is an emerging qualitative research method that allows the author to write in a highly personalized style, drawing on his or her experience to extend understanding about a societal phenomenon. Autoethnography is grounded in postmodern philosophy and is linked to growing debate about reflexivity and voice in social research (Wall 2006, p.1). Autoethnography is a form of narrative study that is written and recorded by the individual who is the subject of the study (Ellis & Bochner, 2000). Ellis, Adams and Bochner (2011) demonstrated that autoethnography is “an approach to research and writing that seeks to describe and systematically analyze (graphy) personal experience (auto) in order to understand cultural experience (ethno)” (p. 273). Spry stated that autoethnography “a self-narrative that critiques the situatedness of self with others in social contexts” (2018, p. 710). This is where an explanation of the personal, emotional, analytic, and redolent approach leads up to ethnographic research.

Autoethnography begins with a personal story, in this case my story about how childhood trauma memories affected me inside and outside of the classroom. Bochner and Ellis (1996) believed the aim of using personal narratives “... is to allow another

person's world of experience to inspire critical reflection on your own" (p. 22). Thus, the purpose of autoethnography is to rebuild the researchers or writers experience in a reflexive way, to aim to make a connection between the reader and the writer telling their story to him or her to think and reflect about his or her own experiences. Writing Autoethnography, researchers are able to talk about their own personal experiences that gives them a voice to be heard. It also helps researchers like myself explore emotional experiences, identity, self-concept and motivation.

Autoethnographers use storytelling, showing and telling, and alterations of authorial voice to produce accessible texts that describe these patterns, with the aim to reach a more diverse mass audience than the traditional research readership. (Lucero, 2018, p. 2)

Autoethnography allows for researchers to share personal narratives that gives readers access into their private worlds and provide rich data.

### **Research Questions**

1. How did my memories of traumatic experiences affect my emotions?
2. How did my traumatic experiences affect my language and literacy inside and outside of the classroom?

### **Research Design and Methods**

In this autoethnographic study, I was the primary data source. The experiences for this study of how childhood trauma memories affected my social literacy practices inside and outside the classroom are recounted by my childhood memories, self-observations, self-reflective (journal writing), my my personal song lyrics and poems. The memories, self-observations, self-reflective journal writing, personal song lyrics and

poems were all data captured from the past and present perspectives of my lived experiences. I used thematic analysis to analyze my data sources using Braun and Clarke's six phases of thematic analysis. First for Phase 1, I reread my reflexive journals, personal poems and song lyrics I wrote to become familiar with my data sources to analyze each individual data source. Next for Phase 2, I generated initial codes to code highlighting sections of each individual data source finding phrases or sentences and came up with shorthand labels or "codes" to describe the content. Then for Phase 3, I generated themes and looked over the codes I created to identify patterns among them to help me come up with my themes. Next for Phase 4, I developed a color-coding system for key words. Then I created a table with themes of each individual data source that included subcategories and reviewed my themes to make sure that my themes were useful and accurate representations of my data sources. Next for Phase 5, I defined and named my themes of my data sources. Finally for Phase 6, I wrote up my analysis of the data sources which were my reflexive journals, personal poems and song lyrics.

### **Ethical Considerations**

My study entailed my lived experiences of my personal journey of childhood trauma memories and how all of this affected my identity and shaped me as an individual that resulted in changes in my social literacy practices. My research was from a very transparent point of view when I analyzed my personal journal, poems, and song lyrics. My qualitative study was used to explain, clarify, and elaborate the meanings and language I used from different aspects of my experience of trauma. My research was also from years of my life that trauma was the greatest that shaped my identity after experiencing trauma that may seem bias. The process of preparing this writing story

(Richardson, 1994) revealed to me how the value of experience and reflection could impact others. Anxiety arose while writing my thoughts, thinking about how to represent myself, how various kinds of data are valued, how others would respond to my story, and how to work ethically within autoethnography.

### **Data Collection**

According to Ellis and Bochner (2000), “in reflexive ethnographies, the researcher’s personal experience becomes important primarily in how it illuminates the culture under study” (p. 740). The different types of data I collected are my personal journals, personal poems, and personal song lyrics. I analyzed my journals, song lyrics and poems from 2004-2006 during my roughest time of life after dealing with a major traumatic experience. I did not go outside of those two years because 2004-2006 is when the trauma was the greatest for me in my life. Participant observation is a very important characteristic of autoethnographic work that relies heavily on self-reflection (Duncan, 2004). The population size was how many of my journals were analyzed, how many of my song lyrics were analyzed, and how many of my poems were analyzed. I only analyzed my journals, song lyrics and poems from 2004-2006 ages twelve to fourteen because that is where trauma affected my brain and mindset, academics, social and emotional life and relationships with my family, peers, and teachers. I bounded my study to those two years because that was the height of the trauma in my life. I applied sampling theory to my journals, song lyrics and poems.

**Journals.** My sampling consisted of 300 of my journal entries from the years 2004-2006. According to Krejcie & Morgan, I needed a sample of 169 for initial analysis. Therefore, I randomly selected a 169 of my journal entries from my total data



corpus. From there, I applied selection and deselection criteria for my journal entries using journals entries that talk about trauma, journal entries that talk about depression, journal entries that talk about negative emotions and journal entries that use positive descriptive words that are adjectives, adverbs, and participles to determine what journals would be included in my final sample. For my final sample there were a total of forty-two journal entries: twenty-one journals that talk about trauma, four journals that talk about depression and seventeen journals that use positive descriptive words that are adjectives, adverbs, and participles.

As I conducted my analysis of my journals, I used a reflexive journal. Roller and Lavrakas (2015) wrote that a reflexive journal is used for the “soft data” for this study and is a valuable resource to use in order to review and judge the quality of the data that is gathered in the process as well as the researcher’s interpretations during phases of analysis. I only looked at my journals that relate to trauma, emotions, and descriptive journals. I narrowed the sample size down by using the questions:

- Does the journal entry talk about trauma?
- Does this journal entry talk about depression?
- Does the journal entry deal with negative emotions?
- Does this journal entry use positive descriptive words that are adjectives, adverbs, and participles?

**Song Lyrics.** I used five of my song lyrics for sampling and analyzed all five of my song lyrics from the years 2004-2006 for this research. Sampling theory indicates that because the data corpus is so small, I had to use all five. My song lyrics for sampling, and what I analyzed, consisted of two song lyrics that related to trauma and three song lyrics

that are descriptive song lyrics. I looked at all of my song lyrics that related to trauma and depression and descriptive song lyrics that use descriptive words that visualize, describe, and define people or visualize, describe, and define actions. For my final sample size, there were a total of five song lyrics: two of my song lyrics that related to trauma and depression and three of my song lyrics that used descriptive words that visualize, describe, and define people or visualize, describe, and define actions.

**Poems.** I used all twenty-two of my poems for sampling. According to sampling theory, I had to initially analyze all poems before I applied selection and deselection criteria. The selection and deselection criteria for poems were:

- Does this poem talk about trauma and depression?
- Does this poem use unique feeling words that connect to positive or negative emotions?
- Does this poem use positive or negative descriptive words that are adjectives, adverbs, and participles?

For my final size were a total of twenty-two poems: ten poems that talk about trauma and depression, six poems that use unique feeling words that connect to positive or negative emotions and six poems that use positive or negative descriptive words that are adjectives, adverbs, and participles.

## **Data Analysis**

**Data Representation.** When I was a child, literacy to me felt like I had to express my feelings through spoken words (verbally) when in conversation with another person because of my memories of childhood trauma. Verbal expression is very important in literacy when you experience trauma because it helps you feel like you have a voice.

Storytelling inside and outside of the classroom helped me to improve both my memory and the ability to use stronger language, which is necessary for developing my literacy. With stories I had to fight against the unreality of the world. Without stories, there are no memories of the trauma you experience. I started writing my journals, poems, song lyrics at the age of 12 after experiencing a horrible trauma in my life.

**Data Coding.** For my research, I used thematic analysis and Saldana's three types of coding: Emotions Coding, Descriptive Coding, and In Vivo Coding. Phase 1 of thematic analysis is where I read and re-read my data sources. This is where I became familiar with my data sources, and it was helpful to make notes and jot down early impressions. In this phase, I reread through my journals, poems, and song lyrics to become familiar with the data and became familiar with patterns of each data source. Next, Phase 2 of thematic analysis is where I generated initial codes. In this phase I organized the data in a meaningful and systematic way and the coding reduced lots of data into small chunks of meaning. There were different ways to code and the method was determined by my perspective and research questions. I started to code the data of my journals, poems, and song lyrics from the years of 2004-2006.

My data was clustered into three types of data: journals, song lyrics and poems. As shown in Table 1 below, I knew I was observing my journals (J) if there is light blue. I knew I was observing my Poems (P) if there is yellow. I knew I was observing my song lyrics (SL) if there is green.

**Table 1***Identifications*

Journals (J)
Poems (P).
Song Lyrics (SL)
Emotions Coding
Descriptive Coding
In Vivo Coding
Themes-(Orange)

For Phase 2 as shown in Table 1 above, I coded my data via these three coding techniques which are Emotions Coding in red, Descriptive Coding in purple, In Vivo Coding in green. Emotions coding is where the emotions recalled and/or experienced by the participant or inferred by the researcher about the participant (Saldana 2013 p. 105). Descriptive Coding summarizes in a word or short phrase, like a noun which is the basic topic of a passage of qualitative data (Saldana 2013 p. 88). In Vivo coding refers to a word or short phrase from the actual language found in the qualitative data (Saldana 2013 p. 91). The next step was Phase 3 where I searched for themes. As shown in Table 1 above, themes are coded in orange. A theme is a pattern that captures something significant or interesting about my data resources and/or my research questions. I combined several codes into a single theme where I begin to take those codes and propose little one-word phrases and begin to cluster them into similarities. These codes became my themes for my data sources. Phase 4, I reviewed the themes of my data

sources. I double checked, looked at the themes and made sure that the themes matched with my data sources. During this phase, I reviewed, modified, and developed the initial themes that I identified in phase 3 using the questions do the themes make sense, does the data sources support the themes, if themes overlap, are they really separate themes and are there themes within themes (subthemes)? I was able to reference back to my journals, poems and song lyrics by light blue representing journals, yellow representing poems, green representing song lyrics and orange representing themes. Phase 5 is where I defined my themes from my data sources. This is where I came up with definitions for my themes and wrote down the definitions for my themes. Finally, Phase 6, is where I wrote up my analysis of all the data sources and decided which themes made meaningful contributions to understanding what was going on within my data sources.

**Data Interpretation.** Literacy can provide an individual with the tools necessary to free himself the childhood memories of trauma. Speaking (S) is language that helps humans with their cognitive development such as words that are sophisticated ideas humans can use to have a voice by telling their stories of their traumatic experiences. Telling stories is among the more effective instructional approaches for developing a human's oral language skills and vocabulary. Writing about your traumatic experiences can help individuals because it helps them re-evaluate their experiences by looking at them from different perspectives, so they can heal properly. Writing helps individuals get passed negative trauma-related thoughts and emotions by creating a story that links together the emotional childhood memories of trauma.

I was able to use storytelling and writing to turning my bad memories into motivation to help others. My memories of the trauma being written on paper was used as

an outlet for expression and for sharing traumatic events that left me with negative thoughts and emotions. Storytelling and talking about my traumatic experiences inside and outside of the classroom helped me with my healing journey. My trauma and its influence on literacy and language inside and outside the classroom expanded my intelligence because I was able to explore healing outlets for ways to express childhood trauma memories. Whenever I dealt with something difficult or bad that happened in my life, I turned it to writing. Writing helped me process, work through challenges, and make sense of my emotions I was feeling.

Storytelling and writing also helped me to express myself to others. Sometimes the writing turned into something I shared with the public, or I may have wrote it down in my journal because it is very personal. Not everything you write needs to be shared. There are benefits to writing, even in if you choose not to share what you write. Writing and storytelling gave me the opportunity to process what was on my mind and practice formulating and communicating my ideas. Writing and storytelling was a powerful tool for me to deal with trauma. Reading can also be an important part of the healing process. When I read about other people struggles that experienced similar traumatic experiences like myself, it helped me to not feel alone. Writing and storytelling helped me heal my wounds. It seemed like it was a health benefit because it reduced my stress and improved my cognitive function. When I shared my trauma, I was able to connect with people on a deeper level. Every time I shared parts of my stories, I was able to release built up anxiety, stress, and guilt. Through doing that I was not allowing past events to control my life. I was able to release my past through connecting with others, sharing my stories, and allowing myself to move ahead one more step.

## **Conclusion**

Writing helps heal wounds. Writing when going through trauma after experiencing trauma is an effective way to access an inner world of feelings to help individuals recover from traumatic experiences and everyday stress. When individuals are traumatized, they are often encouraged to confront their experiences by talking or writing about them. Writing in reflexive journals, writing song lyrics, and poems helps individuals who have been through trauma acknowledge and express deep emotions that might have been ignored. Expressing emotions (both positive and negative) through story telling inside and outside classroom when describing individual's traumatic events can have a positive impact on an individual's psychological outcome.

## CHAPTER IV

### Understanding the Journey of Trauma through Writing

#### Introduction

Imagine feeling empty on the inside and needing an outlet. What do you do? Going through my traumatic experiences I was trying to find out who I was spiritually and emotionally. My pain was beyond my ability to handle, and I was not able to control my emotions during my traumatic experiences. My childhood trauma memories kept reoccurring, became overwhelming and lead to stress in my life that affected my mental health and identity. Writing about my childhood memories of trauma played a large role in my healing process. Having to relive my painful childhood memories of trauma when writing about it was a nightmare and emotional disturbance. I wrote journals, poems, and song lyrics with quotes, expressing my feelings, and telling my story in any form of words to release my emotions and images in my head. As a writer, I took the time to tell my story and releasing the most important traumatic experiences that I thought would help others cope with their traumatic experiences. This chapter presents key findings from forty-two of my reflexive journal entries, five of my personal song lyrics and twenty-two of my personal poems.

**Purpose Statement.** The purpose of this study was to observe my use and practices of literacy when going through a traumatic experience and coping with the memories of trauma. In the research, I specifically sought to explore through autoethnographic analysis of my personal journals, personal poems, and personal song lyrics to see how the influence of trauma affected my social literacy practices inside and outside the classroom through storytelling. Data from my observing my daily life inside



and outside the classroom, personal poems, personal song lyrics and journals was used from 2004-2006.

### **Method of Data Analysis**

Thematic analysis allows a theoretically flexible approach when evaluating qualitative data. “Thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data. It minimally organizes and describes your data in (rich) detail. However, frequently it goes further than this, and interprets various aspects of the research topic” (Braun & Clarke, 2006: 79). When using thematic analysis as the researcher you want to be able to acknowledge your own theoretical positions and values in relation to qualitative research. Thematic analysis can be a method which works both to reflect reality, and to unpick or unravel the ‘surface of reality’ (Braun & Clarke, 2006). It is important to determine the type of thematic analysis you want to do and the claims you want to make in relation to your data sources, so you will be able to know what approach to take when coding your data sources and properly finding themes.

### **Data Analysis Findings**

For my research, I used thematic analysis and Saldana’s three types of coding: Emotions Coding, Descriptive Coding, and In Vivo Coding. Braun and Clarke (2006) process of the six stages of familiarization, coding, the initial generation of themes, review of themes, defining and naming theme, and writing up was used to develop an understanding of my reflexive journals, my personal song lyrics, and my personal poems. In reflexive thematic analysis there is an inductive (data-driven) approach. Also, for my research I used an accessible and theoretically flexible interpretative approach to qualitative data analysis that facilitates the identification and analysis of patterns or

themes in my data sources. Data were obtained to be thematically analyzed based on the occurring themes to get a valid explanation of my data sources. After generating the codes of each individual data source, themes were reviewed of each individual source. The sources were compared to combine multiple codes together, combines multiple themes together and each theme was named and defined. To finish the process, I put my findings down in writing.

### **Findings and Results**

The research questions that guided this study were: How did my memories of traumatic experiences affect my emotions? How did my traumatic experiences affect my language and literacy inside and outside of the classroom? Looking through the lens of cognitive lens my research draws on research in cognition and psychology looking at how I made decisions, how my traumatic experiences affected my social literacy practices inside and outside of the classroom and my emotions. Bringing together psychobiological and neural approaches, these two together determine the way a human's personality functions (Fiori, 2019). My thinking when experiencing trauma and after experiencing trauma affected my feelings and emotions when finding my identity and purpose. The intrapersonal dynamics of individual functioning is the way people reflect on themselves to find their identity, how people interpret their inner and outer worlds, and how people project the self in the future when it comes to their purpose (Fiori, 2019). What I thought about myself is what is what I became. My bad experiences affected my thinking and caused me to have negative feelings and emotions about my identity and purpose.

My emotions and feelings played a major role in my life. There are many types of emotions I experienced during trauma and after experiencing trauma. No matter how hard I tried, I could not control my emotions, I only attempted to hide them. My emotions influenced every aspect of my life, what I did, what I said in my writing and my relationships with people. Experiencing trauma, I went through identity crisis where I struggled to find where I fit in society and in the world at large. I experienced feelings of being lost and not knowing who I was. My negative mind frame caused my feelings and emotions to be all over the place when writing about my trauma. I was worried about what people thought about me when experiencing trauma and after experiencing trauma. Writing about my trauma was my way of breaking free from the chains of what society expected of me and my way to discover who I wanted to be. My trauma caused me to have unstable mental health that created sadness and sorrow inside of myself. While writing my trauma was not gone from my mind, it was attached to me, and I could not let it go. Writing about my trauma caused changes in my external and internal factors. I experienced different kinds of emotional responses to different types of my traumatic experiences.

**Data Source #1: Journals**

My initial sampling consisted of 300 of my journal entries from the years 2004-2006. According to Krejcie & Morgan, I needed a sample of 169 for initial analysis. Therefore, I randomly selected a 169 of my journal entries from my total data corpus. From there, I applied selection and deselection criteria to determine what journals would be included in my final sample. My selection and deselection criteria required that I only

looked at my journals that related to trauma, emotions, and descriptive journals. I narrowed the sample size down by using the following questions:

- Does the journal entry talk about trauma?
- Does this journal entry talk about depression?
- Does the journal entry deal with negative emotions?
- Does this journal entry use positive descriptive words that are adjectives, adverbs, and participles?

My final sample size as shown in Appendix A, Appendix B, and Appendix C, I analyzed forty-two journal entries: twenty-one journals that talk about trauma, four journals that talk about depression and seventeen journals that use positive descriptive words that are adjectives, adverbs, and participles.

**Phase 1:** Phase 1 is where I read and re-read my reflexive journal entries. This is where I became familiar with my trauma journal entries, depression journal entries and descriptive journal entries and it was helpful for me to make notes and jot down early impressions. In this phase, I reread through my trauma journal entries, depression journal entries and descriptive journal entries to become familiar with journal entries and became familiar with patterns of my journals.

**Phase 2:** Phase 2, I coded my data via these three coding techniques which are Emotions Coding in red, Descriptive Coding in purple, In Vivo Coding in green for my trauma journal entries, depression journal entries and descriptive journal entries.

**Phase 3:** Phase 3, I generated themes for my trauma journal entries, depression journal entries and descriptive journal entries. I looked over the codes created,

identified patterns among them and started coming up with themes. I searched for themes in my trauma journal entries, depression journal entries and descriptive journal entries. I combined several codes into single themes and clustered them in similarities. Themes are coded in orange.

### ***Trauma Journal Entries***

As shown in Appendix A and Table 2 below are the codes I discovered for Emotions Coding in my trauma journal entries that I used for my themes.

**Table 2**

### ***Emotions Coding***

Theme	Sample Codes
Negative feelings and emotion	Sad and hurt, wounded, damaged, hopeless, confused, broken, unworthy, overwhelmed
Feelings and Emotions	Vulnerable, sadness, tired, strong, caring, powerful, strong, stressed
Discovering Identity	Worthless, unworthy, hurt, broken, wounded, confused, gloomy
Discovering Kingdom Identity	Lonely, sad, broken, sadness, miserable, broken, thoughtful, triumphant and victorious, powerful
Discovering Life Purpose	Hopeless, miserable, unworthy, strong, thoughtful, damaged, worthy, vulnerable, confused

As shown in Appendix A and Table 3 below are the codes I discovered for Descriptive coding in my trauma journal entries for my themes.

**Table 3**

*Descriptive Coding*

Theme	Sample Codes
Negative feelings and emotion	Pain, negative thoughts, tears, scared
Feelings and Emotions	Pain, tears, Faith and God
Discovering Identity	Worthless, unworthy, hurt, broken, wounded, confused, gloomy
Discovering Kingdom Identity	Faith and God, church, pain, mirror and God, heart
Discovering Life Purpose	Self, God, life, pain, trauma, thoughts, scars, heart, and mind

As shown in Appendix A and Table 4 below are the codes I discovered for InVivo coding in my trauma journal entries that I used for my themes.

**Table 4**

*InVivo Coding*

Theme	Sample Codes
Negative feelings and emotion	Pain, negative thoughts, tears rain, wondering, emotional place, painful
Feelings and Emotions	Loved, heart pounds, hope, joy, happy, down

(Continued)

Theme	Sample Codes
Discovering Identity	Wondering care, think of me, pain, emotional, broken, tears rain, growth
Discovering Kingdom Identity	Hope, haith, God, earth, understand, mind
Discovering Life Purpose	Earth, understand, realize, faith, wondering, change, mind, purpose, feeling like losing my mind

### ***Depression Journal Entries***

As shown in Appendix B and Table 5 below are the codes I discovered for Emotions coding in my depression journal entries that I used to for my themes.

**Table 5**

### ***Emotions Coding***

Theme	Sample Codes
Discovering Kingdom Identity	Hopeful, thankful, grateful, thoughtful, sad
Discovering Identity	Confused, determined, scared
Discovering Purpose	Proud, confident, confused, lost and sad

As shown in Appendix B and Table 6 below are the codes I discovered for Descriptive Coding in my depression journal entries that I used for my themes.

**Table 6***Descriptive Coding*

Theme	Sample Codes
Discovering Kingdom Identity	Faith, God, Experience, Self and Life
Discovering Identity	Self, Life, God, Faith
Discovering Purpose	Self and life, Experience, Music and self

As shown in Appendix B and Table 7 below are the codes I discovered for InVivo Coding in my depression journal entries for my themes.

**Table 7***InVivo Coding*

Theme	Sample Codes
Discovering Identity	Krisshundria, gain better self-confidence, see no me, switch is off, pain, Mean and hateful people
Discovering Kingdom Identity	God by my side, courage, faith, confidence
Discovering Purpose	Growing up in life, hoping to help myself blossom, Influence People



### *Descriptive Journal Entries*

As shown in Appendix C and Table 8 below are the codes I discovered for Emotions coding in my descriptive journal entries for my themes.

**Table 8**

#### *Emotions Coding*

Theme	Sample Codes
Discovering Kingdom Identity	Strong, bold, worthy, relieved
Discovering Identity	Inspired, focused, confident, bold, courageous, strong, worthy, relieved
Feelings and emotions	Bold and powerful, bold and confident
Life's purpose	Determined, Motivated, Happy, Delightful, worthy
Feelings	Positive, triumphant, confident
Emotions and Identity	Determined, victorious, triumphant
Self-Identity	Worthy, proud, bold, courageous, self-critical, conscious, self-conscious

As shown in Appendix C and Table 9 below are the codes I discovered for Descriptive Coding in my descriptive journal entries.

**Table 9**

#### *Descriptive Coding*

Theme	Sample Codes
Discovering Kingdom Identity	Faith and self, God, Faith

(Continued)

Theme	Sample Codes
Discovering Identity	Faith and self, self, self-affirmations
Feelings and emotions	Self-talk, feelings,
Life's purpose	Self and people, Mirror and self- Self and God, self
Feelings	Self-talk, therapy, feelings
Emotions and Identity	Determined, victorious, triumphant
Self-Identity	Self and God, Self-affirmations, self-love, Queen, mirror and self

As shown in Appendix C and Table 10 below are the codes I discovered for InVivo coding in my descriptive journal entries for my themes.

**Table 10**

*InVivo Coding*

Theme	Sample Codes
Discovering Kingdom Identity	God, determines where favor rest, process, growing
Discovering Identity	Help me realize, myself, mirror
Feelings and emotions	Courageous, brilliant, loving
Life's purpose	Leader, validate, mediate, society
Feelings	Sassy, smart, successful
Emotions and Identity	Determined, victorious, triumphant

(Continued)

Theme	Sample Codes
Self-Identity	Observing, motivated, hello beautiful, I am beautiful, undefeated, unbreakable, powerful, mirror and self

**Phase 4:** I reviewed the themes of my trauma journal entries, depression journal entries and descriptive journal entries. I double checked, looked at the themes and made sure that the themes matched with my trauma journal entries, depression journal entries and descriptive journal entries.

*[Themes for Trauma Journals].* Negative feelings and emotions and Feelings and Emotions, Discovering Life Purpose, Discovering Kingdom Identity, Discovering Identity

Negative feelings and emotions, feelings, and emotions, discovering identity and discovering kingdom identity were the themes in my trauma journals. My trauma journals demonstrated I was experiencing a lot of brokenness, sadness, hurt and pain while writing these journals. I said things in my trauma journal entries like “I feel as if I lost you. You left me here wondering if you even care or think of me. My tears rain daily. My heart pounds and hurts because you are not here for me and my mind floats arounds” that showed how hurt and sad I was in life about the loss of my daddy’s love. I was battling with my purpose and identity when I wrote things like, “I don’t even know my purpose here on Earth. Water me God and help me grow. I trust you God and the process.” There were a lot of discovering identity and purpose in my trauma journal entries when I

discovered quotes like, “Battling with her faith day by day and she manages to say she is okay. Fighting this faith fight, she looks up to the hills and keeps her trust in Him.”

Strong feelings and emotions were also shown in my trauma journal entries when I said things like, “I’m bruised and broken. There are barely happy moments in my life because sadness takes over. I’m so tired of struggling. I just feel like giving up in life. Just wish all this pain and suffering would go away.” Reading through my trauma journal entries and identifying key words that show feelings and emotions, signs I was battling with my identity or kingdom identity, and trying to find my purpose in life, is how I was able to come up with my final themes for my trauma journal entries. I said things in my trauma journal entries like “I believe in myself, but I’m left in the dark and torn, falling and picking myself back up” that showed key themes of discovering kingdom identity and discovering identity and life’s purpose.

*[Themes for Depressions Journals].* Discovering Kingdom Identity,

Discovering Identity, Discovering Purpose

Depression in my depression journal entries was definitely the silent killer that had my emotions all over the place without warning, punishment, or any sympathy. Depression was one of the things I experienced a lot while discovering my identity, discovering my kingdom identity, and discovering my purpose. In my depression journal entries, I learned depression heavily influenced my emotions, my outlook on my life and more than often ended up changing my life in a major way. In my depression journal entries, I discovered in my writing, I experienced depression and often felt very sad and torn every day and crying very often. I was battling with depression and my identity when I said in my depression journal entries, “There is no light, I see no me. A lot of

space, A lot of pain, A lot of stress, just darkness in me.” While reading my depression journal entries, all I saw was myself struggling with my identity and purpose in each journal entry. With the codes of life and self, words in my poems were said like, “Tired of feeling hopeless and moody. Falling to reach the rains reflection from the ground and all I did was frown. Hoping to help myself blossom up.” The codes of feeling worthlessness, helplessness, shame, and sadness were most commonly recorded in my depression journal entries that helped me come up with the themes Discovering Kingdom Identity, Discovering Identity, and Discovering Purpose.

*[Themes for Descriptive Journals].* Discovering Kingdom Identity,  
Discovering Identity, Feelings and Emotions, Life’s purpose, Feeling,  
Emotions and Identity, Self-Identity

I discovered confessions to boost my feelings and emotions in my descriptive journals. Some confessions I made in my descriptive journals to help me identify my themes were,

I am treasure and courageous! I will make it because I am capable of all things! I am an overcomer Through Jesus because I am brave, fearless, and powerful! I am God’s daughter, and I am loving and caring! God has a plan for my life rewarding, magnificent, and favorable! I have a bright and brilliant future! I am fearfully and wonderfully made!

When I viewed these confessions in my descriptive journals I immediately thought about my feelings, emotions, and identity. My sense of self started to develop when I was a child and growing up when I viewed in my descriptive journal powerful words like,

I AM Beautiful and Brilliant, Leader and Loving, Obedient and Optimistic, Sassy and Smart, Successful and Shinning, Outstanding and Observing, Motivated and Marvelous, Undefeated and Unbreakable, Powerful, Passionate and Patient,

Philippians 4:13 "I can do ALL things through CHRIST who strengthens ME!

These words in my descriptive journals helped me come up with my themes Discovering Kingdom Identity, Discovering Identity, Feelings and Emotions, Life's purpose, Feeling, Emotions and Identity, Self-Identity. My feelings and emotions played a huge role in the way I thought about myself. My descriptive journals were a lot about how I felt about myself.

My favorite descriptive journal I enjoyed going back to view was Hello Beautiful.

It has very powerful, encouraging words to the self. The words were,

Hello Beautiful, it's me! You have grown in a bright, smart, and intelligent young lady. Hello Beautiful, what do you see? Afraid of the world at times, when suddenly a beam of light shines through you core to help you blossom into your true self. No one by one you open up to come out of your shell. Smile beautiful, you're growing again. It takes an abundance of love and care to cause a flower like you to grow and grow and blossom each day. Hello Beautiful, Let God have his way because who you are blossoming into you will cherish each day. Hello Beautiful, it's me, you are pretty and awesome, magnificent, and caring. Love yourself beautiful, it's you you're looking at in the mirror each day. Hello Beautiful, now continue to glow and grow. Shine Bright Beautiful. Hello it's me Beautiful.

I saw when identifying my themes that it was all about discovering myself, and my identity, and who did I believe I was in the kingdom.

**Phase 5:** Phase 5, I defined and named my themes of trauma journal entries, depression journal entries and descriptive journal entries.

### **Defining and Naming Themes for Journal Entries**

*[Theme for Trauma Journals].* Discovering Kingdom Identity through feelings and emotions are the ability to be aware of God, self, and the way an individual feels about life and think about life, make decisions to pursue spiritual growth by expecting God's guidance, and build a community of trust and serve others.

*[Theme for Depressions Journals].* Discovering Kingdom Identity & Purpose is where an individual finds one's identity in God, and we can rest in full comfort knowing that we were created in His image.

*[Theme for Descriptive Journals].* Discovering Kingdom Identity through feelings and emotions is where an individual finds their identity in God, they are accepting a new identity in Christ, and we battle with negative emotions and feelings to let go of the old version of themselves to create positive emotions and feelings with their new identity in Christ.

*[Final Theme for all Data Sources #1].* Discovering Kingdom Identity & Purpose through feelings and emotions is knowing God and understand who an individual is within God. This is where individuals are able to find the reasons for their lives in God and are recognized by God can develop their true identities and discover safeness and meaning for their lives. This is gaining

wisdom and understanding why an individual feels the way they feel and why they experience positive and negative emotions when it comes to their identity in Christ.

**Phase 6:** Phase 6 is where I wrote up my analysis of my trauma journal entries, depression journal entries and descriptive journal entries and decided which themes made meaningful contributions to understanding what was going on within my journal entries.

### **Data Source #2: Song Lyrics**

I used five of my song lyrics for sampling and analyzed all five of my song lyrics from the years 2004-2006 for this research. Sampling theory indicates that because the data corpus is so small, I had to use all five. My song lyrics for sampling, and what I analyzed, consisted of two song lyrics that related to trauma and three song lyrics that are descriptive song lyrics. As shown in Appendix D and Appendix E, I analyzed two of my song lyrics that related to trauma and depression and three of my song lyrics that used descriptive words that visualize, describe, and define people or visualize, describe, and define actions.

**Phase 1:** Phase 1 is where I read and re-read my song lyrics. This is where I became familiar with my trauma and depression song lyrics and descriptive song lyrics, and it was helpful for me to make notes and jot down early impressions. In this phase, I reread through my trauma and depressions song lyrics and descriptive song lyrics to become familiar with my song lyrics and became familiar with patterns of my song lyrics.

**Phase 2:** Phase 2, I coded my data via these three coding techniques which are



Emotions Coding in red, Descriptive Coding in purple, In Vivo Coding in green for my trauma and depression song lyrics and my descriptive song lyrics.

**Phase 3:** Phase 3, I generated themes for my trauma and depression song lyrics and descriptive song lyrics. I looked over the codes created, identified patterns among them and started coming up with themes. I searched for themes in my trauma and depression song lyrics and descriptive song lyrics. I combined several codes into single themes and clustered them in similarities. Themes are coded in orange.

### ***Trauma and Depression Song Lyrics***

As shown in Appendix D and Table 11 below are the codes I discovered for Emotions coding in my trauma and depression song lyrics for my themes.

**Table 11**

#### *Emotions Coding*

Theme	Sample Codes
Discovering Kingdom Identity	Aggressive, joyful, and wounded, hopeful, depressed
Negative feelings and emotions	miserable, bitter, sadness, depressed, overwhelmed

As shown in Appendix D and Table 12 below are the codes I discovered for Descriptive Coding in my trauma and depression song lyrics fir my themes.

**Table 12***Descriptive Coding*

Theme	Sample Codes
Discovering Kingdom Identity	God, Life, Devil.
Negative feelings and emotions	Love, Life, Devil

As shown in Appendix D and Table 13 below are the codes I discovered for InVivo coding in my trauma and depression song lyrics for my themes.

**Table 13***InVivo Coding*

Theme	Sample Codes
Discovering Kingdom Identity	Understand, losing my mind, mind, real, feel, God, Praying, Soul, World
Negative feelings and emotions	Full of pain, pressure, Made me suffer

*Descriptive Song Lyrics*

As shown in Appendix E and Table 14 below are the codes I discovered for Emotions coding in my descriptive song lyrics for my themes.

**Table 14***Emotions Coding*

Theme	Sample Codes
Kingdom Identity through feelings and emotions	Worthless, misused, misunderstood
Feelings and Character Traits	Anxious, amused
Discovering Kingdom Identity	Thankful and blessed, heartfelt, humble, proud, strong, worthless. misunderstood

As shown in Appendix E and Table 15 below are the codes I discovered in for Descriptive coding in my descriptive song lyrics for my themes.

**Table 15***Descriptive Coding*

Theme	Sample Codes
Kingdom Identity through feelings and emotions	People, God, guy, self & God, self, God
Feelings and Character Traits	People, Self and God
Discovering Kingdom Identity	God and self

As shown in Appendix E and Table 16 below are the codes I discovered in for InVivo coding in my descriptive song lyrics for my themes.

**Table 16***InVivo Coding*

Theme	Sample Codes
Kingdom Identity through feelings and emotions	Hard to believe, feel worthless and irritated, people turn their back, Worship God, Forgive my sins
Feelings and Character Traits	Name is Lil Krissy, Thank you Lord, Fat and Beautiful, Call you strong
Discovering Kingdom Identity	God completes me, life, complicated, pain

**Phase 4:** I reviewed the themes of my trauma and depression song lyrics and descriptive song lyrics. I double checked, looked at the themes and made sure that the themes matched with my trauma and depression song lyrics and descriptive song. *[Themes for Trauma and Depression Song Lyrics]*. Discovering Kingdom Identity, Negative feelings, and emotions.

In my trauma and depression song lyrics I discovered I was going up and down on a depression roller coaster. My depression was misunderstood and was like a horrible monster to me when I said things in my trauma and depression song lyrics like,

My heart can't take no more pain, so baby let me know. Time after time I should walk out the door. My heart is full of pain, please no more games. I want to know if it's real? Quit breaking my heart, baby let's make a deal. Can you tell me how you feel, is it real, Is it real?

These trauma and depression song lyrics demonstrated feelings of pain, hurt, trauma and feelings of bad love that helped me to discover the theme negative feelings and emotions.

I discovered in my trauma and depression song lyrics that I was battling with myself experiencing negative feelings and emotions trying to discover my kingdom identity. I said things like,

Rap: Hard times livin' in rough days, God sees me feelin' my pain. I'm in this world thinking how Ima make it, can't even take it. The devil tried to break me, cause he didn't respect me. Time after time my soul got low. Broken and shattered, God knew what was wrong, I'm all gone, blinded writing this song. Lord break my pain, gain my soul through this bad rain. I knew if I was praying and praising God, he would be there to save me, grace me, so the devil wouldn't take me. Only God can guide me, I only wanna stay alive and not die please.

I discovered that writing these song lyrics was my form of therapy when battling with kingdom identity.

I discovered that I wrote trauma and depression song lyrics as an expressive outlet for my negative feelings and emotions of trauma. I said things in my trauma and depression song lyrics like,

2nd Rap: I'm tired of this pain, I'm going insane. Look you what you put me through, I don't need you. You made me suffer and wanted me to follow you, bow down to you, and made me feel smaller than you. I have news for you, I'm through with you. You thought I was rug and I had to tug on you, but I'm steppin' on you. Criss cross, I'm stomping on you. Stomping you down to ground, you

betta not make a sound. You gone, devil you no longer have ahold of my soul,

I'm free. God got me, I'm blessed indeed. My soul is back, devil you are whack!

Experiencing trauma was an awful thing and experiencing it as a child was a lifelong journey of healing. Writing my trauma and depression song lyrics, I discovered that I used words like, "Life may hard, Life may complicated, but I have to keep movin', when I know God is there for me" that created me into the person I am today and has influenced my kingdom identity.

*[Themes for Descriptive Song Lyrics].* Kingdom Identity through

feelings and emotions, Feelings and Character Traits, Discovering Kingdom Identity

I discovered the themes Feelings and Character Traits, in my descriptive song lyrics when I saw words like

It's hard to believe how I feel worthless and irritated because people are not interested in me. It's hard to see people turn their back on me because I'm free, non-violent, and unhappy.

These words I discovered demonstrated in my descriptive song lyrics how the world encourages an individual to look within themselves for their identity, but instead an individual's natural tendency is to search for their identity in external things of the world.

I discovered the themes Discovering Kingdom Identity Kingdom Identity through feelings and emotions when I saw words in my descriptive song lyrics like

It's hard to believe how much peace I have because people take it from me all the time, but I gain it back because God completes me. It hard to go through a great

life because I'm always struggling. It's hard for a lot of things, but God's there for me, so I'm safe and secure.

**Phase 5:** Phase 5, I defined and named my themes of trauma and depression song lyrics and descriptive song lyrics.

### **Defining and Naming Themes for Song Lyrics**

*[Theme for Trauma and Depression Song Lyrics].* Discovering

Kingdom Identity through negative feelings and emotions is where individuals carry the heaviness associated with the negative feelings and emotions about life and are not aligned with God's purpose and identity for their lives.

*[Theme for Descriptive Song Lyrics].* Discovering Kingdom Identity through feelings and emotions is where individuals are an emotional wreck with false identity labels and individuals identify themselves with how they think and feel.

*[Final Theme for all Data Sources #2].* Discovering Kingdom Identity through feelings and emotions is when individuals feeling emotions is their physical and fallen world and they feel many positive of negative emotions that affect identity given to them by God.

**Phase 6:** Phase 6 is where I wrote up my analysis of my trauma and depressions song lyrics and descriptive song lyrics and decided which themes made meaningful contributions to understanding what was going on within my song lyrics.

### **Data Source #3: Poems**

I used twenty-two of my poems for sampling. According to sampling theory, I had to initially analyze all poems before I applied selection and deselection criteria. The selection and deselection criteria for poems was:

- Does this poem talk about trauma and depression?
- Does this poem use unique feeling words that connect to positive or negative emotions?
- Does this poem use positive or negative descriptive words that are adjectives, adverbs, and participles?

As shown in Appendix F, Appendix G, and Appendix H, I analyzed all twenty-two of my poems as my final sample size. My final sample size consisted of ten poems that talk about trauma and depression, six poems that use unique feeling words that connect to positive or negative emotions and six poems that use positive or negative descriptive words that are adjectives, adverbs, and participles.

**Phase 1:** Phase 1 is where I read and re-read my poems. This is where I became familiar with my trauma and depression poems, emotions poems and descriptive poems, and it was helpful for me to make notes and jot down early impressions.

In this phase, I reread through my trauma and depression poems, emotions poems and descriptive poems to become familiar with poems and became familiar with patterns of poems.

**Phase 2:** Phase 2, I coded my data via these three coding techniques which are Emotions Coding in red, Descriptive Coding in purple, In Vivo Coding in green for my trauma and depression poems, emotions poems and descriptive poems.



**Phase 3:** Phase 3, I generated themes for my trauma and depression poems, emotions poems and descriptive poems. I looked over the codes created, identified patterns among them and started coming up with themes. I searched for themes in my trauma and depression poems, emotions poems and descriptive poems. I combined several codes into single themes and clustered them in similarities. Themes are coded in orange.

### ***Trauma and Depression Poems***

As shown in Appendix F and Table 17 below are the codes I discovered for Emotions coding in my trauma and depression poems for my themes.

**Table 17**

#### ***Emotions Coding***

Theme	Sample Codes
Discovering Identity	Lonely, sadness, lonely, anger, sadness
Negative feelings and emotions	Shattered, weak, discouraged
Discovering Kingdom Identity through faith	Sadness, lonely, powerful, clueless, hopeful
Life's purpose and identity	Clueless and confused, thoughtful
Discovering Kingdom identity through negative feelings and emotions	Lonely, sadness, lonely, anger, sadness, powerful
Identity	Lonely, thoughtful, powerful
Identity and negative experiences	Hopeful, clueless, depressed, lonely
Discovering Kingdom Identity	Hurt and wounded, strong, positive, troubled

(Continued)

Theme	Sample Codes
Discovering identity through feelings and emotions	strong and powerful
Feelings and emotions	hurt and wounded, strong, positive, troubled

As shown in Appendix F and Table 18 below are the codes I discovered for Descriptive coding in my trauma and depression poems for my themes.

**Table 18**

*Descriptive Coding*

Theme	Sample Codes
Discovering Identity	Life, heart, God
Negative feelings and emotions	Life and devil, self and devil
Discovering Kingdom Identity through faith	Faith, God, life, self, people, devil
Life's purpose and identity	Mind, self, life, Faith, God
Discovering Kingdom identity through negative feelings and emotions	Faith, God, life, self, people
Identity	Self, friend, life, people, Faith
Identity and negative experiences	Self and devil
Discovering Kingdom Identity	Self and God, self and devil, God, Faith
Discovering identity through feelings and emotions	Life, Faith, life and devil

(Continued)

Theme	Sample Codes
Feelings and emotions	Life, faith, God

As shown in Appendix F and Table 19 below are the codes I discovered for InVivo coding in my trauma and depression poems for my themes.

**Table 19**

*InVivo Coding*

Theme	Sample Codes
Discovering Identity	Hurt, heartbroken, yourself, strong, people talking about you, people don't care, life, understand, pain, sadness overweighing
Negative feelings and emotions	Hurt, disaster, emotions, depression, goes together, hole full of pain
Discovering Kingdom Identity through faith	Praying, head held high, faith, God, life
Life's purpose and identity	Pain, trials, think I got time
Discovering Kingdom identity through negative feelings and emotions	God is my help, lead, life, life, struggle, let go, represent
Identity	Pain inside, put away, life
Identity and negative experiences	No dreams to follow, people talk
Discovering Kingdom Identity	God, Faith, life, person lead me wrong, strong, alone, life, storm, rains, pains never stops, flowing

(Continued)

Theme	Sample Codes
Discovering identity through feelings and emotions	God keeping me, blessed, strong, life hard, life complicated, keep movin' listen, people talk about me, see people
Feelings and emotions	Pain, down, breaks you, haunts you, healed, feel like giving up in life, praying, crying, help, devil trying all of this

### *Emotions Poems*

As shown in Appendix G and Table 20 below are the codes I discovered for Emotions coding in my emotions' poems for my themes.

**Table 20**

### *Emotions Coding*

Theme	Sample Codes
Life's Purpose	Confused, sadness, hopeful, honest, worried
Feelings and emotions	Overwhelmed, sadness, and happy
Feelings and emotions	hopeful, joyful, caring
Feelings	Worried, caring, proud
Feelings and emotions	Vulnerable, loved, confident
Feelings and emotions	Powerful, relaxed, caring
Feelings and emotions	joyful, strong, empathy, caring

As shown in Appendix G and Table 21 below are the codes I discovered for Descriptive coding in my emotions' poems for my themes.

**Table 21**

*Descriptive Coding*

Theme	Sample Codes
Life's Purpose	God, singing, heart
Feelings and emotions	Experience, love
Feelings and emotions	Love, heart
Feelings	Mother's love, love
Feelings and emotions	Self-love, love
Feelings and emotions	Love, pleasure
Feelings and emotions	Love, pleasure

As show in Appendix G and Table 22 below are the codes I discovered for InVivo Coding in my emotions' poems for my themes.

**Table 22**

*InVivo Coding*

Theme	Sample Codes
Life's Purpose	singing, rule my life, trouble off my mind accomplish, dreams
Feelings and emotions	The joy of my life, spoil you
Feelings and emotions	Singing, hurt, passionate, royalty

(Continued)

Theme	Sample Codes
Feelings	Special, love you, smile, breaks us, flows heart, true, God, special little sister
Feelings and emotions	Strong, uplifted, singing, never fall apart
Feelings and emotions	feel, proud moment, happy
Feelings and emotions	Catch, need you, loves me, heart, happy

### ***Descriptive Poems***

As shown in Appendix H and Table 23 below are the codes I discovered in my descriptive poems for Emotions coding for my themes.

**Table 23**

### *Emotions Coding*

Theme	Sample Codes
Experiencing negative feelings and emotions	Fear and afraid, self-conscious
Positive feelings and emotions,	Joyful, proud
Discovering Identity	Worried, thoughtful, focused
Feelings and emotions	Blessed and determined
Feelings and emotions	Caring, respectful
Discovering Identity	Calm, grateful, blessed, thankful, thoughtful

As shown in Appendix H and Table 24 below are the codes for Descriptive coding in my descriptive poems for my themes.

**Table 24**

*Descriptive Coding*

Theme	Sample Codes
Experiencing negative feelings and emotions	People that are like snakes
Positive feelings and emotions,	Love and family
Discovering Identity	Traits, life, freedom, love
Feelings and emotions	love
Feelings and emotions	Love, freedom
Discovering Identity	Freedom, life, self, people

As shown in Appendix H and Table 25 below are the codes for InVivo coding in my descriptive poems for my themes.

**Table 25**

*InVivo Coding*

Theme	Sample Codes
Experiencing negative feelings and emotions	Feel alone, stressed
Positive feelings and emotions,	Beautiful, intelligent, kind, free
Discovering Identity	Watchful, worry, beware, bites, pray
Feelings and emotions	Crazy, young, interesting

(Continued)

Theme	Sample Codes
Feelings and emotions	People think of you, life, crazy, glamorous times, loving
Discovering Identity	Adventures, energetic, free, pray, believe, powerful

**Phase 4:** I reviewed the themes of my trauma and depression poems, emotions poem and descriptive poems. I double checked, looked at the themes and made sure that the themes matched with my trauma and depression poems, emotions poems and descriptive poems.

*[Themes for Trauma and Depression Poems].* Discovering Identity,

Negative feelings and emotions, Discovering Kingdom Identity through faith,  
Life's purpose and identity, Discovering Kingdom identity through negative  
feelings and emotions, Identity, Identity and negative experiences, Discovering  
Kingdom Identity, Discovering identity through feelings and emotions,  
Feelings and emotions

I discovered in my trauma and depression poem Rough times that the themes  
discovering identity and negative feelings and emotions when I state,

I've been through so much pain, so many trials, you think I got time for your  
mess. Sticks and stones may break my bones, but I'll never let a person rule me  
until I'm gone, I'll never let a person lead me wrong, I must stay strong and live  
alone.



I discovered negative feelings and emotions in my depression and trauma poems that affected my moral character. When going through trauma and hardships, I wrote in my trauma and depression poems words that relate to kingdom identity like

My life is a storm, it rains everywhere, the pain never stops flowing and my emotions keep going, the tears lead up to a river and I tend to shiver, empty and overflowed, it comes and go, I believe in myself, but is there any faith left.

I discovered the words in my trauma and depression poems were words that demonstrate me feeling uncomfortable and wanting to escape these negative feelings and emotions and the dangers of unmanaged stress that affected my identity, kingdom identity and discovering my faith.

*[Themes for Emotions Poems].* Life's Purpose, Feelings, and emotions, Feelings and emotions, Feelings, Feelings and emotions, Feelings and emotions, Feelings, and emotions

I discovered my emotion poems showed a lot of feelings and emotions. My emotions poems revealed that I was building habits that encourage me to feel more positive emotions that helped me to be happier and do better with my life. Here is a sample from my emotions poem Ode to Singing:

Singing you rule my life, You make me happy throughout my life You are the best thing ever shown in my life, Singing you are my passionate and you give me royalty Oh my Singing, you keep me strong and uplifted.

My emotions poems demonstrated positive feelings and emotions that helped me become a better version of myself and the things that I enjoy doing in life. Here is a sample from my emotions' poem Mommy's Love:

She loves me with all her heart and nothing keeps us apart, she hugs me tight and makes things right, when we're not together, she loves me forever, when I am sad, she cares for me, her love is like honey, it sticks to me.

I discovered in my emotions' poems experiencing positive feelings and emotions enhanced my resiliency. In my emotions poems my positive feelings and emotions I discovered that I had a positive regarding any situation, people, and life as whole.

*[Themes for Descriptive Poems].* Experiencing negative feelings and emotions, Positive feelings and emotions, Discovering Identity, Feelings and emotions, Feelings and emotions, Discovering Identity

In my descriptive poems I discovered I used a lot of words that demonstrated me discovering my identity and feelings and emotions. In my descriptive poem Drug Free I use words that describe feelings and emotions when I state,

I gotta believe, achieve, and succeed because I'm Drug Free around me smoke weed and need a little help please, but I'm free, I can't be layed on my back because crack is whack, Doing all these crazy things, that's not me, Young, Interesting, Black, Powerful, and Smart, Why tear my life apart, I want to love and help the ones in need.

This poem demonstrates how strong my feelings and emotions were about living a good life and not doing drugs. I also discovered that I use words in my descriptive poem life experience like,

Music is my life, my experience, Life is very agile throughout times and there are boisterous moments and sad moments, My music leads to encouragement, but we

fear what people think of you. Sometimes life goes crazy, but there are glamorous times, when you tend to shine and show who you are and what you are about.

This descriptive poem demonstrates how individuals experience life, what they love, what they may like and what they may not like and relates to discovering identity.

**Phase 5:** Phase 5, I defined and named my themes of trauma and depression poems, emotions poems and descriptive poems.

### **Defining and Naming Themes for Poems**

*[Theme for Trauma and Depression Poems].* Discovering Kingdom Identity & Purpose through feelings and emotions is where individuals living as emotional beings in this world and need a steady dose of renewing their mind. Individuals cannot live in this world and not do something that has negative effects without having negative feelings and emotions. As spiritual beings, individuals must know who we truly are, and individuals must know who created them and live with in eternity, our Creator God.

*[Theme for Emotions Poems].* Discovering Life's Purpose through feelings and emotions is where individuals experience positive or negative feeling and emotions to find their purpose in life and wonder what the meaning of life is. It is God's best plans for life.

*[Theme for Descriptive Poems].* Feelings and Emotions is the things individuals in life that influence the way they think or feel whether positive or negative and to individuals understand themselves.

*[Final Theme for all Data Sources #3].* Discovering Kingdom Identity and purpose through feelings and emotions is the world lies and tells individuals that

negative experiences and emotions are normal, and they should accept them for their lives. God equipped individuals and empowered individuals to rise above their circumstances they face in this world and learn who they are according to how he sees them. Life for individuals is a positive journey of living as a healthy emotional being discovering their identity, not having an emotional wreck life.

**Phase 6:** Phase 6 is where I wrote up my analysis of my trauma and depression poems, emotions poems and descriptive poems and decided which themes made meaningful contributions to understanding what was going on within my poems.

### **Discussion of Findings**

My identity is naturally formed and rooted in key relationships and attachments with family members, communities, religious groups, nations, and God. Finding purpose, kingdom identity, meaning, and value can be hard when experiencing trauma. It is not always easy to learn difficult and new things about yourself and your life. Negative experiences and negative emotions may challenge your identity. Your feelings and emotions are all over the place and your mind is full of negative thoughts when going through trauma or after experiencing trauma. Changes in one's emotional life can affect your kingdom identity. Your emotions and feelings may lead you toward our Kingdom identity and life purpose or away from it. The world is full of opportunities and choices, and if you don't know your identity and purpose, then you do not know yourself.

Growth, changes, and transformations when experiencing trauma or after experiencing trauma helps you develop your kingdom identity and discover your life's purpose. There can often be obstacles standing in the way that keep you from discovering your purpose and identity. Humans are brought into this world looking outward. Life is

absorbed into us. We observe people around us, our circumstances and situations, social interactions, and our surroundings. As you grow deeper into your identity, you begin to look inward. Everything you have collected and stored in your brain; you begin to connect it to the “self” that you begin to discover. Building your kingdom identity is a constant battle between what you think of yourself, other people’s judgement, and society expectations. You have fight daily to control your negative feeling and emotions to keep your kingdom identity strong to help yourself discover life’s purpose.

### **Summary of Findings**

It was up to me as an individual to fight daily for my kingdom identity, so the rest of the world can see me for who I truly am. No matter what kind of feelings or emotions I experienced during trauma of after experiencing trauma, it was up to me how my life would go. Exploring my personal life thoroughly when experiencing trauma and after experiencing trauma helped me to understand the impact of my trauma and experiences when me to become a better version of myself. My emotions influenced the way I thought and felt about myself. When humans think of their identity, they look at their journey in life. Finding my kingdom identity and self was a long process of discovery and understanding what my purpose is in life, so that I could live life to the fullest. The journey to self-discovery gave me a deeper understanding of who I was, what my strengths and weaknesses were, and how I can best use them when it comes to my life’s purpose.

### **Transferability/Implications**

There are individuals like myself who experienced trauma and have survived traumatic experiences that may have an incorrect label placed on us based off our writings or stories being told. Using the wrong kind of analysis for some writings and stories undermined the development of my language and communication skills and resulted to incorrect research. Learning how to make strategic meaning of your data sources was important because readers must know how you used keywords and phrases to create codes, themes, subthemes, and definitions for themes for your data sources. Individuals may predict that their writing or stories have one meaning behind them, but the reader when viewing codes or themes may find another meaning.

### **Establishing Trustworthiness**

Creating and adhering to the Braun and Clarke (2006) process of the six stages of familiarization, coding, the initial generation of themes, review of themes, defining and naming theme, and writing up increased the trustworthiness or validity of the study. I outlined a practical process for conducting thematic analysis that aims to meet the trustworthiness criteria to make sure my data was organized. I analyzed my data sources for codes and themes and had someone to check my codes and themes behind me. In the organization phase, an explanation of how the concepts or categories are created will provided to indicate the trustworthiness of study (Elo et al, 2009). Data used from my reflexive journals, my personal song lyrics and my personal poems will have patterns of meaning behind it for the audience to find out once it has been analyzed.

### **Limitations**

Different types of themes are generated from the data sources. Thematic analysis encourages researchers to apply their knowledge to their research. Researchers stick with the theoretical framework when using thematic analysis. Researchers reread their data sources to understand their meanings and then generate codes. Thematic analysis gives flexibility to the researchers, and it allows them to use their personal experiences.

### **Conclusion**

People like myself wonder what their writing will lead towards and who the writing will influence or impact after experiencing trauma. The purpose of this study was to observe my use and practices of literacy when going through a traumatic experience and coping with the memories of trauma. Survivors of trauma reactions to the aftermath of trauma is quite complicated because they are affected by their own experiences, their thinking and coping and life skills. Their behavior and thoughts may change their thinking and have a positive impact on their lives once they find out the true meaning behind their writing after experiencing trauma. In addition to analyzing my reflexive journal, personal song lyrics and personal poems, I learned educators must pay close attention to students who are experiencing trauma or have experienced trauma in order to help them cope with trauma and help them heal properly from trauma.

## **CHAPTER V**

### **The Experience**

#### **Introduction**

Writing my story was the most difficult yet rewarding endeavor I have encountered. I wanted to give a voice to those that have been through traumatic experiences. I've learned that experiencing trauma helps a person grow into a stronger version of themselves mentally and emotionally. Going through traumatic experiences I have learned that my feelings are valid inside and outside of the classroom. I wanted to tell my story of how controlling my emotions and changing my mindset helped me change and grow into a better version of myself. Constructing my identity during this process was for my growth to empower others. I wanted to make a difference in the world by telling my story and the steps of my journey. The process of reading my journals, song lyrics and poems, remembering what happened and how I felt about it in the past and then reflecting on and analyzing those experiences helped me process why I felt tremendous pain.

Writing my story was my therapy, and that therapy helped me better understand my feelings and emotions to share my experiences with others and re-connect with the world. True, self-conscious reflection of myself from my journals, song lyrics and poems felt incredibly draining and emotional when analyzing for codes and themes. I was able to learn more about the connection between trauma the self and emotions. It is important that individuals around those who have experienced trauma encourage them to talk openly about how they have been feeling since the traumatic event. Trauma is not the end of a person's story. Healing can take place and we can manage it. A person must be



willing to understand the old version of themselves during trauma and the new version of themselves after trauma.

### **Summary of Study**

My study presented a personalized account of the use of my reflexive journals, personal song lyrics and personal poems using autoethnography as the methodology and thematic analysis as the method for my data analysis. The intention was to illustrate how my traumatic experiences had an impact on my language and literacy, my feelings, and emotions and how I healed. My study was designed to answer two questions: How did my memories of traumatic experiences affect my emotions? How did my traumatic experiences affect my language and literacy inside and outside of the classroom?

For this study, I explored through autoethnographic analysis of my data sources by observing my daily life inside and outside the classroom, personal poems, personal song lyrics and journals from 2004-2006. I reflected on my personal journals, personal poems, and personal song lyrics during the greatest time of my trauma to see how the influence of my trauma affected my social literacy practices inside and outside the classroom through storytelling and writing.

The study was theoretically framed by Cognitive Behavioral Theory where individuals are ready to become responsive to their thoughts and feelings to help them be ready to identify and challenge their thoughts and feelings about themselves, the people around them and the world around them after experiencing trauma. A qualitative research approach was used for this study. The study was conducted using autoethnography, a form of personal writing that invites and engages the reader into the cultural experiences

of the writer (Ellis and Bochner 2000). The reader is invited to relive my traumatic experiences through my writing. Therefore, I write this in first person.

The literature review focused on exposure to traumatic experiences and the after effect of traumatic experiences. I also examined literature on what is post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), the symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), identifying post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in students in the classroom and how to respond to students with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in schools. Finally, I investigated the literature on storytelling and trauma and writing through trauma. This study was conducted to contribute to the body of research where those who have been through traumatic experiences are researchers who write about themselves and their work. This study was conducted to give “voice” to those who have been through traumatic experiences and feel like they do not have an outlet or a voice to tell their stories about their trauma.

### **Conclusions**

Writing about my traumatic experiences felt very painful, and it also offered me as the writer or researcher a way of coping with life’s tragedies. In Chapter 1, I laid the foundation for my study by indicating how trauma can affect your emotions, relationships with your peers, your language and literacy inside and outside of the classroom. Humans’ behaviors may change inside and outside of the classroom based off the traumatic experiences they have been through. My language and literacy along with my social literacy practices were impacted tremendously inside and outside of the classroom because experiencing trauma you lose your identity of who you are.

While going through my healing process, the journey was hard after experiencing trauma. Individuals like myself become strong, resilient and gain a voice after experiencing trauma. Individuals like myself have to the power to overcome childhood trauma or any other traumatic experiences by changing their mindset and controlling their emotions. After experiencing trauma or going through trauma, telling your story gives you inner strength and courage. Experiencing pain and struggles helped me push through challenges mentally and emotionally with the proper support by my side. My approach towards trauma shifted allowing myself to understand my story and the stories of others around me who have experienced trauma. By using autoethnography, I used the theoretical frame to learn more about my identity, my healing journey, my emotions and was able to tell my story from a personal perspective.

After experiencing a traumatic experience, a person has protective factors that help them heal properly and control their emotions. Traumatic experiences lead to either physical or emotional pain. Trauma is not just stored in your thoughts and memories, but it takes control of your well-being. When I experienced trauma, I felt silenced and alone, so it affected me physically and emotionally. When you are re-experiencing your trauma, you are taken back to that heightened emotional state over and over again. My psychological state of mind during and after trauma left me struggling with upsetting emotions, memories, and anxiety that wouldn't go away. It can leave you feeling numb, disconnected, and unable to trust the people around you. Whatever the cause of your trauma, and whether happened to you years ago or yesterday, you can make the healing changes and move forward with your life with the proper support. Recovering from trauma takes time, and everyone heals at their own pace. Working through trauma can be

scary, painful, and potentially re-traumatizing when going through your healing process. In order for me to heal from psychological and emotional trauma, I had to take time to dig deep within myself and resolve the unpleasant feelings and memories I avoided.

### **Discussion**

Looking through the lens of cognitive lens, childhood trauma memories may be reoccurring and become very overwhelming and stressful in one's life. This could lead to mental health issues like depression or even post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Experiencing trauma could be beyond one's ability to cope, or integrate the emotions involved with that experience. It is important that individuals take mental health seriously when experiencing trauma or after going experiencing trauma. Writing, drawing, or telling the stories about the traumatic experience may be an excellent outlet for those who are experiencing trauma or have experienced trauma to grow towards a more adaptive psychological functioning. (Benight & Bandura, 2004) suggests that those who try to connect their experiences of trauma into existing beliefs about oneself, others, and the world often end up not being able to understand their experience and perceptions of control of self or the environment (i.e., coping self-efficacy). This will allow the brain to release the negative thoughts or feelings of the traumatic experiences by telling their story behind writing and drawing and also lead those individuals towards their healing journey.

While going through the healing journey, in order to self-regulate and have positive growth and development, those who are going through traumatic experiences or have experienced trauma, have to be connected to the right relationships and have the proper support system in order to heal properly (Natural Lifemanship, 2018). This may

cause these individuals who have experienced trauma to want to help people who are trying to understand the person's traumatic experiences while helping them find their true identity. Individuals must be patient with those who have been through traumatic experiences as they go through their journey of self-discovery. Those who have been through traumatic experiences are going through their journey of healing mentally and emotionally and are learning to let go of their bad memories of the past.

### **Implications**

There are many individuals who have been through traumatic experiences or who have survived traumatic experiences that may have trouble with their language and literacy. This may be because of their behavior inside and outside the classroom, their writings, and their drawings when going through their healing process results from horrible pain and negative emotions. Individuals may predict that their writing or drawings have multiple bad meanings behind them when expressing their feelings or emotions. It is important that educators are staying consistent with their student's cognitive abilities as well as their social and emotional needs, so that they will be able to interpret what students are feeling or thinking when experiencing trauma and after experiencing trauma. During traumatic experiences individuals only see difficulty and pain, so individuals inside and outside of the classroom should be properly trained to help care for those who are going through trauma or have been through trauma.

### **Suggestions for Future Research**

There is a need for change to transform the world's perspective of trauma. "The transformation or change in a helper's inner experience as a result of responsibility for and empathic engagement with traumatized clients" (Saakvitne et al. 1999). As a whole,

researchers are suggesting that children and teens that have been through traumatic experiences are likely to experience one or more cognitive difficulties inside and outside of the classroom. There is so much more research that is needed to be explored such as: the impact of timing of abuse or any traumatic experience or how long did the traumatic experiences occur, whether it matters that the trauma is familial or not and whether cognitive difficulties are due to the PTSD that arises as a result of traumatic experiences. Also, there is a lot of research out there about creating a safe environment in the classroom, but what about a safe place to talk for those who have been through traumatic experiences. Those who have been through traumatic experiences need an outlet to release what they have gone through to prevent them from staying in a bad mental state with memories trapped on the inside.

There is just research about how to create trauma informed schools. Where is the research about implementing trauma approach programs into the schools to help the students that have been through traumatic experiences? There is also research out there about trauma informed care, but where is the research about taking the trauma informed care and implementing programs into the school. Where is the research about certified trainers or certified individuals that are set in place just for these programs for trauma to help individuals go through their healing journey? Lastly, there needs to be more research about stories of trauma, how individuals went through the traumatic experiences and the complete steps individuals took during their healing journey to help them inside and outside of the classroom.

### **Limitations**

Moving through childhood trauma is a lifelong process. My role as a researcher grows from my own past childhood traumatic experiences and my process of working through my trauma with direction from God and social, psychological, and spiritual support systems. If an individual has been through traumatic experiences as the researcher, collecting, analyzing, and coding can be a difficult process because the individual is trying to bypass being bias. Readers' exposure to certain things can change their thinking towards the researcher's message that was intended to be said. The process of this study was very time consuming and a long process. The task of becoming familiar with data sources and categorizing three different types of sources to find codes, individual themes and defining the themes was tedious. Learning how to reduce the codes as least as possible is hard as researcher with no experience. Condensing the phrases into codes and themes took time.

Errors may occur because of missing entries or mistakes in coding if researchers do not pay close attention to the words in common or words found more than once when finding subcategories for themes. Errors can occur with the coding if you do not condense the phrases down enough to get themes or incorrect entries will result in invalid numbers and frequencies of words to place in a category to come up with a code or theme from words or phrases. I also had to learn to control my emotions and feelings during this process because I am still going through my healing process. It feels painful to relive the traumatic experiences. Doing autoethnography you do not benefit from experiences of multiple participants because it is you as an individual telling your story.

## **Conclusion**

It takes time to heal the wounds that deeply cut you mentally and emotionally. Pain and hurt are all you feel. Sometimes the trauma controls your mind and leaves you bleeding on the inside. Exposure to traumatic experiences can have a negative impact on your cognitive, emotional, physical, and behavioral effects on individuals. Unresolved trauma can prevent you from healing properly. Individuals suffering from trauma do not just need professional engagement. Individuals need to be aware and connect with their trauma in order to heal. Learning to write about your trauma helps you to process the painful experiences and gives you the steps to overcome it. To cope with your trauma and heal from feelings of isolation, depression, feeling worthless, and identity issues, writing about life and telling your story is a great thing to do in order to heal. Writing about your trauma, you will recognize the connection through reflecting on your trauma by thinking through your emotions and bad experiences.



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## APPENDIX A

### TRAUMA JOURNALS

5/5/2006

Lost of Daddy's love

I thought you loved and care for me daddy. I feel as if I lost you. My heart pounds and hurts because you are not here for me and my mind floats arounds. You never take the time to call m, so our relationship falls. You just left me here, wondering if you even care or think of me. You left me in so much pain, emotional and broken. My tears rain daily saying why can't you just understand and realize you're my dad and be glad. You are blessed to have a daughter like me, I give you joy and make you happy, but you let me down, left me with a frown. My faith is left high wondering if you would change your mind to come see me, call, and laugh with me, but this time is the most difficult time because I can't get that. I love you with all my heart and our love will never fall apart. I will be waiting on your call or your visit daddy, I hope you still love me.

*Handwritten notes on the left margin:*  
 1st set of brackets - sad  
 2nd set of brackets - hurt  
 3rd brackets - sad  
 4th brackets - hurt  
 5th brackets - sadness

*Handwritten notes on the right margin:*  
 Heart & mind  
 Pain  
 Love

*Handwritten legend:*

- - Emotions coding
- - Descriptive coding
- - In Vivo coding
- - Themes
- - Final theme

Negative Feelings & emotions

CS Scanned with CamScanner

## Prayer to God

1/15/2006

I don't even know my purpose here on Earth. I know I am caring, and I know I am kind, but I am not happy. I know I want my own counseling business, but how can I help others if I am in pain. I do not know where to start. God I am asking you to take away this pain and hurt. God I am asking that you turn things around and help me to stop being so angry, emotional, and feeling like I am losing my mind. I ask God that you reveal my next step. I ask God that you direct my footsteps. I am so tired God. Lord, I ask that you send me blessings my way. I believe I walk in uncommon favor, but am I good enough for your favor God? Lord let your uncommon favor rain on me like the rain waters the trees and plants. Water me God and help me to grow from the unhappy place I am at. God, I believe doors are opening for my life. Let the doors swing open for my life. I believe you are able God. I believe opportunities are coming for me life. I believe speaking engagements are coming my way for me to tell mt story. I believe life is getting beet for me at this moment while I am miserable and unsettled. Lord, I just thank you! Lord, I believe and you and I know I will be out of this painful and emotional place soon. Lord, I believe in you. I trust in you God. Fight this huge battle in my mind and in my life for me, In Jesus Name AMEN!!!!

[sadness] [tired] [unhappy] [hopeful] [Life & God] [Faith & God] [Faith & God] [Faith & God] [God]

1st brackets - sadness

2nd brackets - tired

3rd brackets - sad &amp; unworthy

4th brackets - hopeful

5th brackets - hopeful

1st brackets - Life &amp; God

2nd brackets - Faith &amp; God

3rd brackets - God

4th brackets - Faith &amp; God

5th brackets - God

[red box] - Emotions coding

[blue box] - Descriptive coding

[green box] - In Vivo coding

[orange box] - Themes

Final theme

Discovering

Life's purpose

through Kingdom

Identity



God Help me!

1/14/2006

Sometimes life is rough. I trust you God and the process. I know better days are coming. Sometimes I feel like you're the Big Guy is giving me the silent treatment. I keep pouring my heart out, but He's giving me the cold shoulder. God, I know you do not desire for me to struggle all of my life. Hearing you God has changed my life on a very deep, spiritual level. I know this is just a season I am going through growth and changes. I'm hurting inside. God I do not know what to do or what direction to go in, so I ask that you guide my footsteps and open up my heart to you. Jesus, I ask that you bring the right people to my life for me to be able to express my feeling and emotions and to help me manifest my vision and walk out your purpose for my life. Lord, I'm tired of being depressed, broken, shattered, sad and miserable. God I can't fight this battle alone. God, I surrender to you. Many times, I just want to give up, throw in the towel and say forget it all, but I know giving up is not an option, so I keep pushing. Then I think about what do I have to live for, but when you're silent I know it's just the enemy trying to drift me away from you. God, I know that you will never leave my side. God help me!

Final theme - Life's purpose

Emotions coding

Descriptive coding

In Vivo coding

Themes

CS Scanned with CamScanner

She's just a girl  
2/09/04

She's just a girl Who Manages to say I'm ok, but deep down inside she's ready to Break, she walks with her head held high, but she really just wants to cry. She turns to people for help, and no one knows how she truly felt. She walks alone day by day and never really knew how to pray. She's lost and trying to find her way. She stuck in this rut, where she sees darkness, she is pushing trying to break through to get to the light, fighting this faith fight. She looks up to the hills and keeps her trust in him although man tries to get in the way. She loves life and hates life at times, but she has a mission she is aiming for. She knows what her focus needs to be on, but she has a couple road blocks every now and then. Sometimes she just needs to go off on her own, she's not sad, she's not mad, she's not angry, she just needs to recharge her batteries to continue her fight. Battling with her faith day by day and manages to say she's ok. Waiting for God to come through, she's waiting for his voice to see what to do. God says Patience my child patience my child, do you trust me? She nodes her head and begins to pray more. There is no end to her story, just a testimony and giving God all the Glory!!

*Handwritten notes and brackets:*

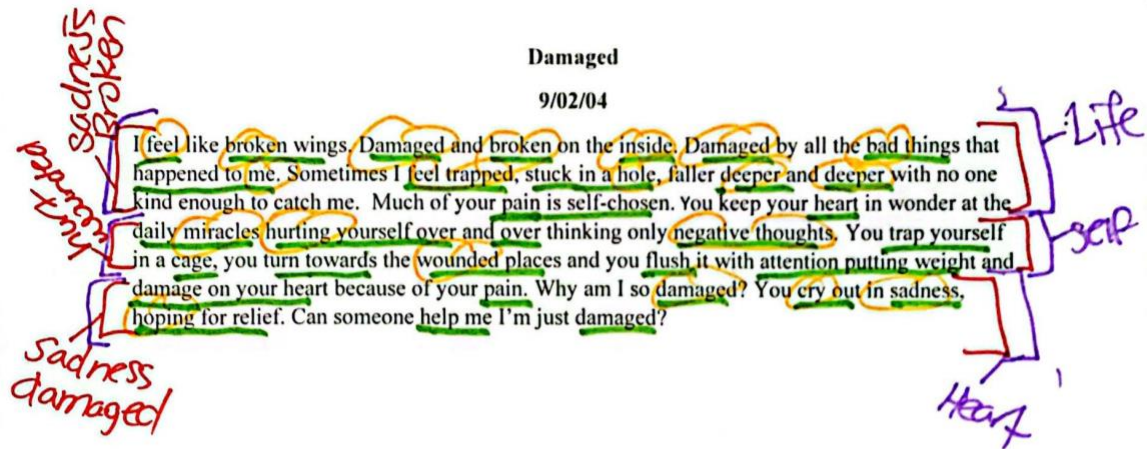
- Left side (red):** sad, lonely, confused, lost, hopeful
- Right side (purple):** self, Faith, Life, Faith & God

1st brackets - sad & lonely  
2nd brackets - confused  
3rd brackets - Lost & hopeful  
4th brackets - hopeful

1st brackets - self  
2nd brackets - Faith  
3rd brackets - Life  
4th brackets - Faith & God

Final theme  
Discovering  
Kingdom  
Identity

■ - Emotions coding    ■ - Themes  
■ - Descriptive coding  
■ - In Vivo coding



1st brackets - sadness & Broken  
 2nd brackets - hurt & wounded  
 3rd brackets - sadness & damaged

1st brackets - Life  
 2nd brackets - self  
 3rd brackets - heart

Final theme  
 Discovering  
 Identity

■ - Emotions coding  
■ - Descriptive coding  
■ - In vivo coding

■ - Themes



**Broken Pieces**  
2/24/2006

Broken into pieces, I see no me, aching with pain, and suffering. God told me to be free, and let the angels surround me. Let me indeed be free, relaxed, in peace, reaching beyond The Lord and mean no harm. God's watching me and the devil tried to torture me, take me, and destroy me, but I had little faith in me. I knew The Lord would forgive me, so I fell back into The Lord's hands as he helped me stand tall, powerful, and open-minded. The devil no longer had hold of me and I was glad my soul was free and capable of anything. There is no more bondage holding me captive. God loves me and his captivating love carries me. God is within me, I feel free, I feel loved, I feel like I can breathe better, and I am easy-going. God is like a breath of fresh air to me, elegant and gracious to me. He loves me, directs me, and never gives up on me.

*Handwritten annotations:*

- 1st bracket (left): sad & broken
- 2nd bracket (left): strong & hopeful
- 3rd bracket (left): caring & strong
- 1st bracket (right): God
- 2nd bracket (right): Faith
- 3rd bracket (right): God

1st brackets - sad & broken  
 2nd brackets - strong & hopeful  
 3rd brackets - caring & strong

1st brackets - God  
 2nd brackets - Faith  
 3rd brackets - God

■■■■ - Emotions coding

■■■■ - Descriptive coding

■■■■ - In vivo coding

■■■■ - Themes

Final theme - Discovering Kingdom Identity



Scanned with CamScanner



SADNESS.VS.HAPPINESS  
Current mood: sad  
Category: Life

3/2/05

YOU KNOW SOMETIMES I JUST WONDER ABOUT LIFE. YOU GO THROUGH SO MUCH AND YOU PRAY AND PRAY AND IT FEELS LIKE NOTHING EVER HAPPENS. PEOPLE TALK DOWN ON YOU. PEOPLE ARE JUST EATING AT YOU AND BREAKING YOU DOWN IN LIFE. I TRY TO STAY STRONG, BUT I WONDER WHY DO WE GO THRU THESE THINGS IN LIFE. SOMETIMES I JUST FEEL LIKE GIVING UP IN LIFE BECAUSE I'M SO TIRED OF STRUGGLING. I FEEL LIKE JUST THROWING AWAY MY LIFE BECAUSE I FEEL IF I AM TOO BROKEN, I TRY TO TELL MYSELF I'M BRUISED, BUT NOT BROKEN. I SUFFER WITH LOW-SELF ESTEEM AND I HAVE SO MANY NEGATIVE THINGS THROWN AT ME IN LIFE AND TOO FAST. I PRAY AND I TRY TO FOLLOW GOD'S WORD, BUT IT SEEMS LIKE THESE BATTLES WON'T PASS. I LET GO AND LET GOD HANDLE THESE BATTLES AND ROUGH TIMES, BUT I'M STILL LIVING OFF TOO MUCH PAIN AND EMOTIONS AND I JUST DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO. I JUST WISH ALL THIS PAIN, SUFFERING, AND EVERYTHING THAT TRIES TO BREAK ME DOWN WOULD JUST LEAVE MY LIFE AND I CAN JUST BE ME. THERE ARE BARELY HAPPY MOMENTS IN MY LIFE BECAUSE SADNESS TAKES OVER. NO ONE UNDERSTANDS HOW YOU FEEL OR NO ONE TENDS TO SAY THE RIGHT THINGS WHEN YOU FEEL THIS WAY. MOST PEOPLE TAKE YOU FOR A JOKE AND TAKE FOR GRANTED THE THINGS YOU DO FOR THEM. I TRY TO HELP EVERYONE ELSE WITH THEIR PROBLEMS AND THEY'RE STRONG, BUT I CAN'T DO THE SAME. THERE IS NO ONE THERE BEHIND ME TO BAG ME UP, BUT GOD. SOMETIMES I THINK THINGS MOVE A LITTLE TOO SLOW. I WISH MY LIFE WOULD TURN AROUND AND I WOULD SEE MORE HAPPINESS THEN SADNESS!!!!!!

10:12 PM - 0 Comments - 0 Kudos - Add Comment - Edit - Remove -  
SHARE

Final theme: Feelings & emotions

Involving

Themes

hopeless  
faithful life  
Broken  
people  
lived life  
sad  
Broken  
unworthy  
hopeful  
God  
sadness  
life  
sadness  
life  
sadness  
people  
lonely  
people  
sadness  
life

Emotions coding

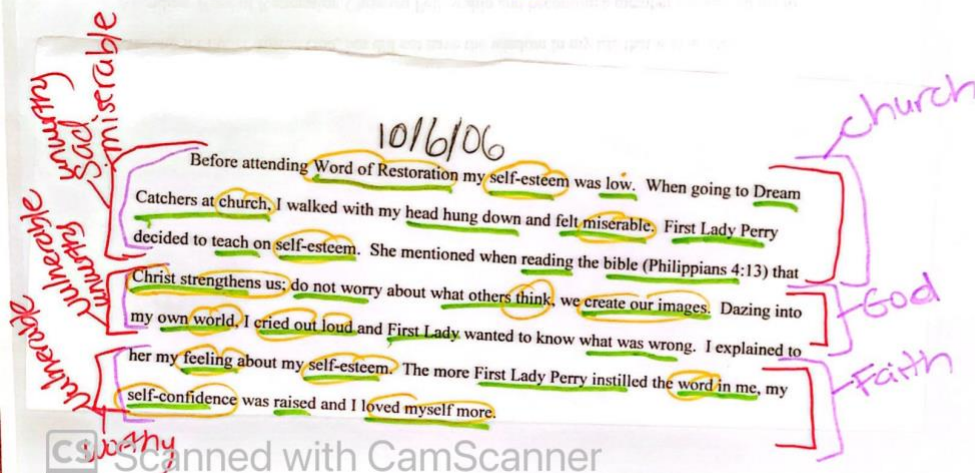
1st brackets - hopeless  
2nd brackets - Broken  
3rd brackets - Tired & sad  
4th brackets - Broken & un  
5th brackets - hopeful  
6th brackets - sadness  
7th brackets - sadness  
8th brackets - sadness  
9th brackets - lonely  
10th brackets - sadness

Descriptive coding

1st brackets - Faithful life  
2nd brackets - people  
3rd brackets - life  
4th brackets - self  
5th brackets - God  
6th brackets - life  
7th brackets - life  
8th brackets - people  
9th brackets - people  
10th brackets - life

-  - Emotions coding
-  - Descriptive coding
-  - In vivo coding
-  - Themes

Final theme - Discovering  
Kingdom Identity



4/3/04

Life as A Storm

My life is a storm, It rains everywhere, the rain never stops flowing and my emotions keep going, the tears lead to crying and I tend to shiver, empty and overflown, it comes and go, I believe in myself, but is there and faith left, the lightning strikes and lights up my mind, plenty of thoughts inside, but left in the dark and torn apart, falling and picking myself back up, the wind blows and noone knows because my life is a storm and it rains everywhere.

sadness  
hopeless  
1/34/04  
pos  
fellowship

Life  
Life  
Faith  
Life

Final theme - Feelings & emotions

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Emotions coding  
In vivo coding  
Themes



2/7/05

tiny hurt  
 tiny hurt  
 strong  
 You see they label you, put a name on you, but do they really know you. They make assumptions about you that feels like it is going to kill you, but the strength you have nothing can shake you. You look in the mirror and say God you got me.

 mirror  
 God

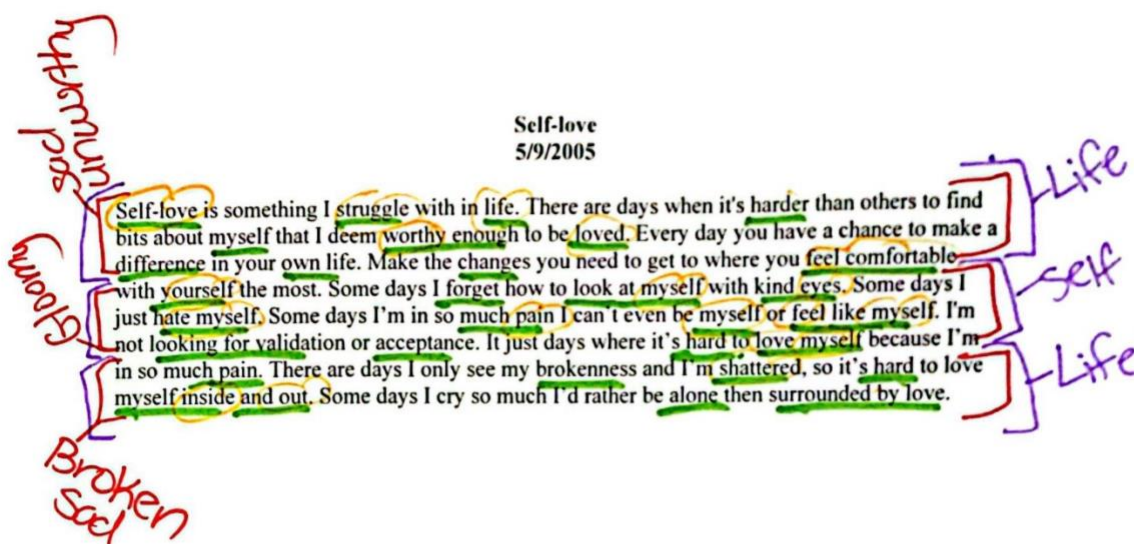
 Final theme - Discerning  
 Identity

- Themes

- Emotions coding

- Descriptive coding

- In vivo coding



- - Emotions coding
- - Descriptive coding
- - In Vivo coding
- - Themes

Final theme - discovery  
Identity

### My Tears 6/11/04

Do we cry to heal ourselves? Do we cry simply to shed a tear? Do we cry to help with our pain because I'm in pain. Tears, tears why don't you just go away? Why must you come back almost every day? Tears you remind me of my pain. Tears you remind me of my past. My tears I just want happiness, not sadness. Tears can you be happy tears? The bruises, the scars of my pain, do tears help take that away? Tears oh tears you're flowing so fast and you're telling the story of my pain.

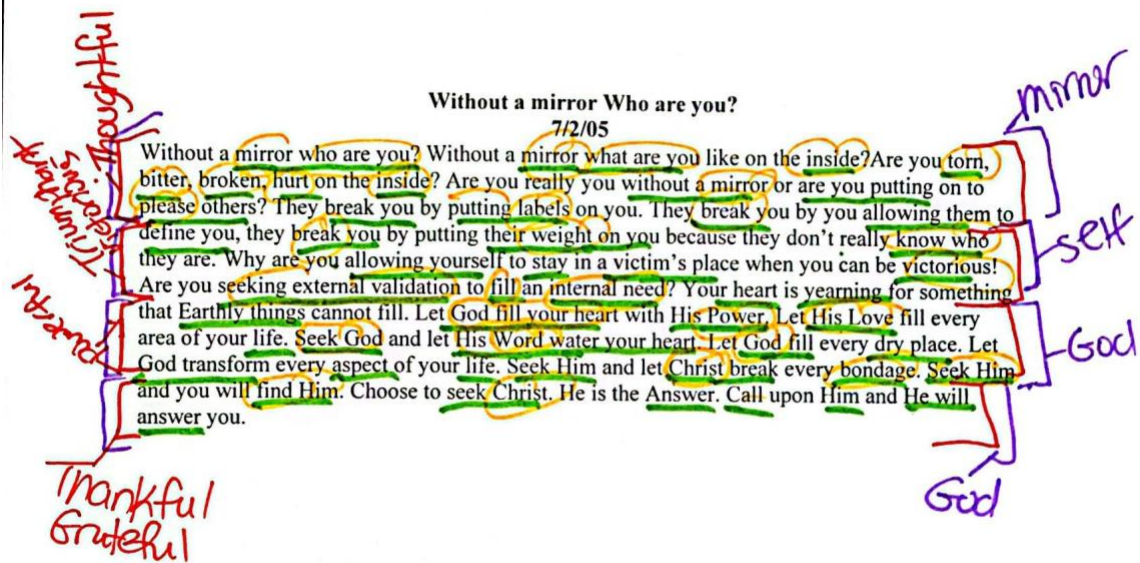
sad  
broken  
Broken  
wounded

Tears  
Tears

- Emotions coding
- Descriptive coding
- In vivo coding
- Themes

Final theme - Feelings & emotions





1st brackets - Thoughtful  
 2nd brackets - Triumphant & victorious  
 3rd brackets - powerful  
 4th brackets - Thankful & Grateful

XXXX - Emotions coding  
XXXX - Descriptive coding

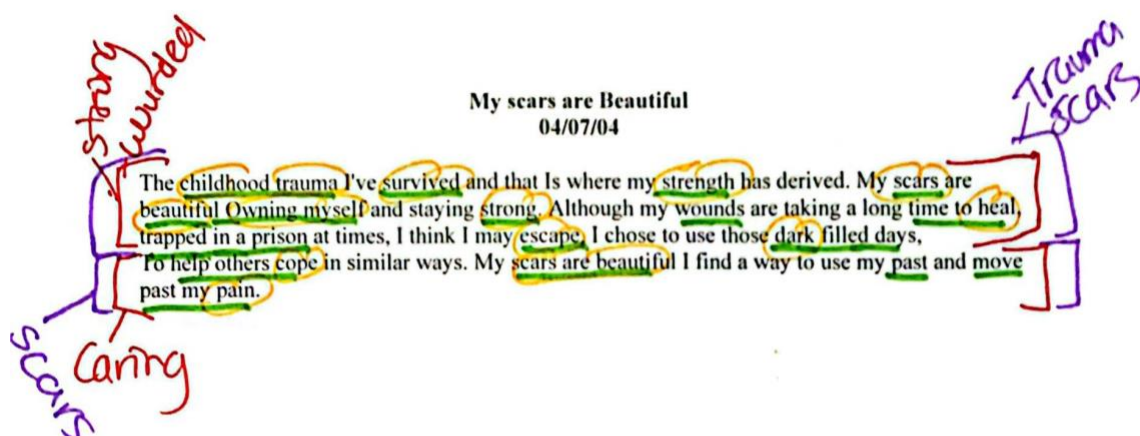
1st brackets - mirror  
 2nd brackets - self  
 3rd brackets - God  
 4th brackets - God

XXXX - In Vivo coding  
XXXX - Themes



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Final theme - His covenant Kingdom Identity



- [ ] - Emotions coding 1st brackets - strong & wounded
- [ ] - Descriptive coding and brackets - Caring
- [ ] - In vivo coding 1st brackets - Trauma
- [ ] - Themes 2nd brackets - scars

Final theme - Pains lead to healing

Finalized Theme Scars of pain lead to healing



## Dysfunctional


1/2/2004


Several years in counseling, I'm trying to process my anxiety and pain. It just keeps coming back full circle. Got to patch up that childhood trauma. Many times, I feel broken even though I'm healing. Nothing ever quite makes sense. These feelings of shame don't make sense. I'm dysfunctional. This pain is a villain seen in darkness. Sometimes when emotions are so overwhelming that my mind literally goes blank.

confused  
brokenchild  
trauma

pain

overwhelmed

 - Emotions coding 1st brackets - confused  
broken  
2nd brackets - overwhelmed

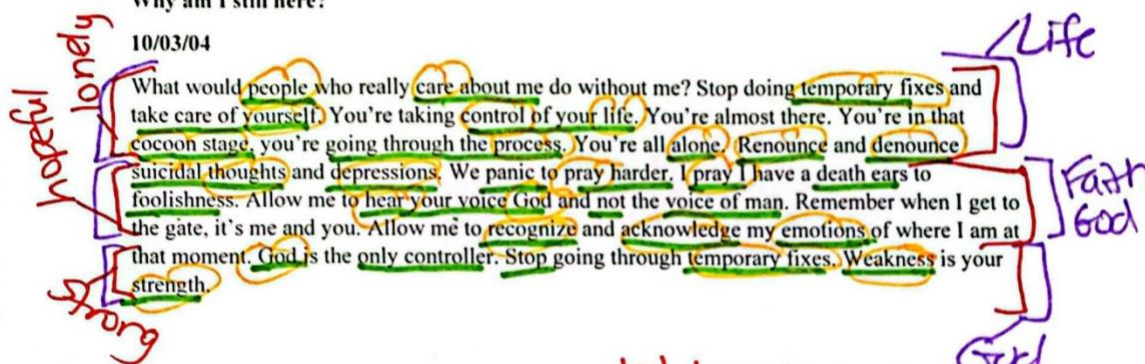
 - Descriptive coding  
1st brackets - God & Trauma  
2nd brackets - pain

 - In vivo coding  - Themes

Final theme - Feelings of Trauma

Why am I still here?

10/03/04



- Emotions coding  
 1st brackets - lonely  
 2nd brackets - hopeful  
 3rd brackets - strong

- Descriptive coding  
 1st brackets - Life

2nd brackets - Faith & God

3rd brackets - God

= In vivo coding

- Themes

Final Theme

Discovering Kingdom

Identity

# My validation don't come from people

07/30/05

My validation don't come from people. I've been caring it so long. I'm starting to look like that little girl. I don't want to look like that little girl anymore. I can't just lay in my bed anymore and sober over what people did to me. Today we end the self-destruction. We end the suicidal thoughts. It's level to it. Every part of what you been through there is a new level to you. I am a queen and my superpower is overcoming your challenges. I knew God had something in store for me. Fear has no control over me. Do it afraid. Who cares what they think about me. You are free. You can cry freely. Because my crown may tilt, it will never fall. What did you have to go through in order to know it was God? Forgiveness is key number one. Forgive those who transpass against us. I knew it was God when I was able to Forgive.

- - Emotions coding
- - Descriptive coding
- - In Vivo coding
- - Themes

Final theme  
Discovering Kingdom  
Identity

Battle  
09/06/2005

This battle of this pain is tiring. This never-ending pain man I need to stand guard over my own mind. It is attacking me mentally, physically, and emotionally. The end of pain often seems nowhere in sight. Perhaps pain never ends. I'll never stop fighting back. Some days, though, I don't win. I know eventually I trust God I will win.

Tired  
Strong  
Body Pain  
Faith  
God

- XXXX - Emotions coding
- XXXX - Descriptive coding
- XXXX - In Vivo coding
- XXXX - Themes

Final theme  
Feelings of identity



## Shame

6/27/2004

sad [ This pain and shame are eating me alive. So much pain and shame, and it weighs heavy. My explosive rages, my constant apologies. I feel bad again. My lack of control of my emotions as they spill all over and are wild and messy. No energy today. I'm sad again today. Living in shame causes me so much pain. ] pain  
sad [ ] pain

- [ ] - Emotions coding 1st brackets - sad  
2nd brackets - sad
- [ ] - Descriptive coding  
1st brackets - pain  
2nd brackets - pain
- [ ] - In vivo coding
- [ ] - Themes


Final theme  
Feelings and emotions


Past  
04/23/2004

My past is trying to steal my life, piece by piece. My smile; my happiness; my ability to be present; my sleep. I don't know what to do? It follows me around the house. It comes along for every car ride. Sometimes it has all control of my mind. My past is constantly playing with my mind and thoughts. The pain of my past is making normal function such a struggle.

*1st bracket - sad & stressed*  
*2nd bracket - sad & stressed*

*thoughts*  
*mind*  
*ights*

 - Emotions coding *1st brackets - sad & stressed*  
*2nd brackets - sad & stressed*

 - Descriptive coding  
*1st brackets - thoughts*  
*2nd brackets - mind*

 - In vivo coding

 - Themes

Final Theme

Feelings of the mind

Where do I run to?  
5/15/04

Where do I even start? There are so many emotions, jumbled and confused. I am silent. They swirl in my head, beating against the inside of my mind, loud, aggressive, demanding validation, demanding comfort. My body feels nothing. I'm numb and in pain. Thoughts are crashing into the walls of my mind. Where do I run to? When I'm feeling down and worthless, Who do I turn to?

confused  
sad  
worthless

mind  
Thoughts

-  - Emotions coding
-  - Descriptive coding
-  - In vivo coding
-  - Themes

Final theme  
Feelings

## APPENDIX B

### DEPRESSION JOURNALS

Depression journals

5/12/2006

Sing Little Girl

Growing up in life, I've always wanted to be a singer. I was too scared to be a singer. I was too afraid to start in the church choir. I push myself to write positive and encouraging songs to help encourage and influence other people and hoping to help myself blossom up. I always helped others write music but failed to do it for myself because I was too shy and timid. People would tell me you sound wonderful and amazing singing; you should join the choir. When I had courage, faith and confidence in myself, then came the mean and hateful people that would laugh at me, put me down and tell me you can't sing because they were cruel and careless. They told me you wouldn't make it to be a singer that pushed me to show unbelievable people who I was and who they were dealing with. This made me moody and pessimistic when it came to my singing.

My dreams were big for me. I was 3 years old and singing. I joined the choir at my grandfather's church. I was boisterous and determined because I knew I could do it. I was still shy and timid and doing great. I wasn't able to lead songs, but I paise danced. I was proud of myself, and I overcame fear. My mom wanted to get me into some singing classes as soon as possible to help me gain better self-confidence.

**Emotions coding:** scared, scared, determined, scared, proud, confident

**Themes:** self & life, music, self, people, singing, Faith

**Final Themes:** Life's purpose & discovery, Identity

**Legend:**

- - Emotions coding
- - In Vivo coding
- - Descriptive coding
- - Themes

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## No Light

5/5/2005

There is not light. I see no me. The switch is off, I can not see. A lot of space, A lot of pain. A lot of stress, just darkness in me. A lot of space, I feel so empty, broken, angry, and resentful. I was supposed to go left, but I went right, there was no light in my sight, indolent, and vague. A light clicked on, but not for long, clues floating in the air, but I was not aware of anything, just lost, torn, and shattered. Thoughts of I couldn't even stare, where is my light, I'm not even hopeful. I'm frighten, so my light clicked on with a song, it was God, I wasn't put the side. I was just tired, tired of feeling hopeless and moody. I was not blind, it was just time, time to surrender to God and give him my all. All I could see was me being blessed, favored by God, and I knew I was getting to my next and out of this bad season of no light.

Tired  
hopeful

Life  
of  
self  
Life  
Faith  
God  
life

- [REDACTED] - Emotions coding
- [REDACTED] - Descriptive coding
- [REDACTED] - In Vivo coding
- [REDACTED] - Themes
- [REDACTED] - Final Theme - Discovering Kingdom Identity

6/7/04

I am Krisshunda. It means sunshine, came out smiling and grinning and was the sunshine to everyone's world. Mommy was there at birth, daddy was not there. At 4 years old my mom dated a man and I started to call him daddy. They got married when I was young, so this man was all I knew as daddy. My dad never came around. I went to visit him one time as a child and hated it because I was so far from my mom.

Experience

Final Theme  
Discovering Identity

Emotions coding

Descriptive coding



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In Vivo coding

Themes

Scanned with CamScanner



My Life  
04/13/2006

My life belongs to God, as he heals me when I'm ill. My life passes through God's hands as my tears reach the edge of my nose, falling to reach the rains reflection from the ground and all I did was frown. To know that I will always be loved and with God by my side and I thank him for going through crucial and cruel pain just for me. When it's my time to go to a special place like Heaven, I know I can only imagine life being glamorous. My life is rough and tough, but there are also special moments that are charming, funny, and optimistic. Am I willing to live my life warm-hearted and thoughtful or even loving to be the way God wants me to be? It's my life I have the decision how to live it, but I choose God's way, loving, thoughtful and shining like the twinkle of the stars.

*Handwritten notes around the text:*  
 Left side: God, thoughtful, grateful, thankful, grateful, thankful  
 Right side: Life of God, Life of God

■ - Emotions coding  
■ - descriptive coding  
■ - IN Vivo coding  
■ - Themes  
■ - Final Theme  
 Discovering Kingdom Identity

CS Scanned with CamScanner  
depression

## APPENDIX C

### DESCRIPTIVE JOURNALS

**CONFESSIONS**  
3/15/2006

*Bold  
Confident*

I am treasure and courageous!

I will make it because I am capable of all things!

I am an overcomer Through Jesus because I am brave, fearless, and powerful!

I am God's daughter, and I am loving and caring!

God has a plan for my life rewarding, magnificent, and favorable!

I have a bright and brilliant future!

I am fearfully and wonderfully made!

*self*

*God*

*God*

*self*

positive descriptive words

■ - Emotions coding     ■ - In Vivo coding  
■ - Descriptive coding     ■ - Themes  
■ - Final Theme - Discovering Kingdom Identity

Scanned with CamScanner



Final Theme - Discovering Kingdom Identity

Emotions coding In vivo coding  
Descriptive coding Themes



# HAIKUS

10/15/06

10/15/06



confident

YOURSELF

I am tremendous,  
Filled with Royalty and Fame,  
Loved by everyone.

self



LOVE

Love is wonderful,  
It brings tears and memories,  
Love brings joy and peace.

Happy

Love



NATURE

Summer is awesome.  
It is filled with joy and love,  
Blessings and great times.

Happy

Nature



Final Theme - Feelings & emotions



Scanned with CamScanner



Emotion coding



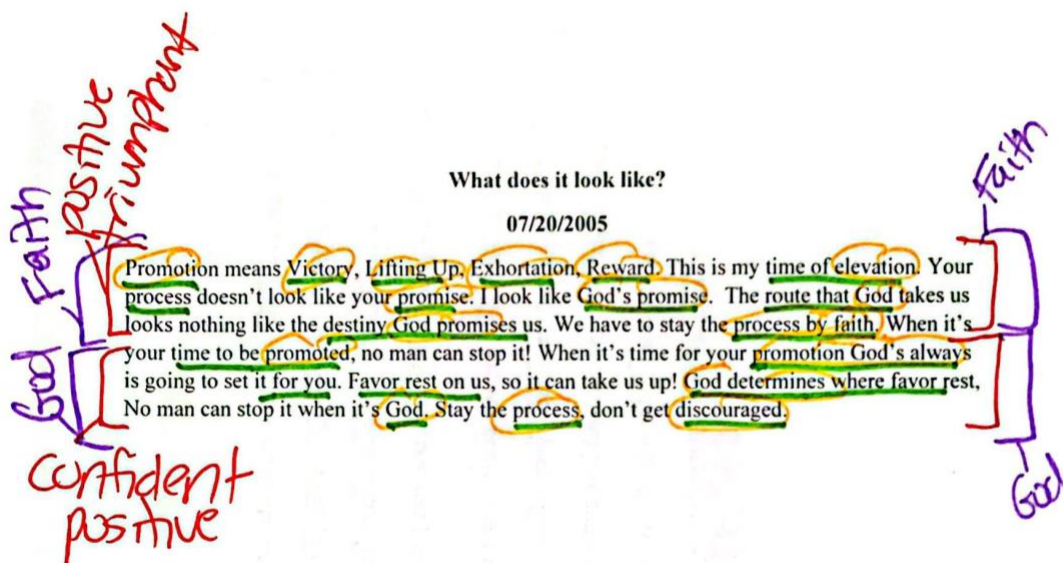
Themes



Descriptive coding



In vivo coding



 - Final Theme - Life's purpose

 - Emotions coding

 - In vivo coding

 - Description coding

 - Themes

08/2006

Being sweet and kind can lead very far in life. People fall in love with me and friends enjoy me. Being a new student at Desoto High School is lame, but it is fun because seniors make it outrageous. Experiencing new things at Desoto High School upsets me, but it does not stop me from being me. High School is preparing me for the real world. Teachers at Desoto have high expectations and will prepare you for college.

It has been a long journey now that I am a senior. Knowing that I am a senior, hating rules, and loving freedom, I am responsible. Trials and tribulations help me realize the important things about myself. My God-Mother Latisha is fantastic because she motivates me to stay strong and do my best. Failure is not an option, so pushing myself and striving towards the top

happy  
determined  
motivated

school

self  
life

Final Theme- Discovering Identity



Scanned with CamScanner

-Emotions coding

-Descriptive coding

-Themes

-In Vivo coding



# Hello Beautiful 07/20/2005

Proud  
 Proud  
 Joyful  
 Proud  
 (snoobies)  
 delightful

Hello Beautiful, it's me! You have grown in a bright, smart, and intelligent young lady. Hello Beautiful, what do you see? Afraid of the world at times, when suddenly a beam of light shines through you core to help you blossom into your true self. One by one you open up to come out of your shell. Smile beautiful, you're growing again. It takes an abundance of love and care to cause a flower like you to grow and and grow and blossom each day. Hello Beautiful, Let God have his way because who you are blossoming into you will cherish each day. Hello Beautiful it's me, you are pretty and awesome, magnificent, and caring. Love yourself beautiful, it's you you're looking at in the mirror each day. Hello Beautiful, now continue to glow and grow. Shine Bright Beautiful. Hello it's me Beautiful.

self  
 self  
 God  
 self

- Final Theme - discovering Identity

- Emotions coding

- Descriptive coding

- Themes

- In Vivo coding

Look at you  
11/24/06

Look at you blooming into your most beautiful, ethereal, authentic and divine self. Do you see yourself? Girl look at you with your hard working, diligent, and blessed self. Look at you. Believe in yourself. You're stronger than yesterday. Look at you with your smart and creative self. Look at you, the realist person you know. Look at you as precious as a Diamond. Look at you as priceless as you can be. Look at you focused on you. Don't stop, Girl look at you!

Courageous  
Confident  
Inspired  
Focused

self  
self

Final Theme - Discovering Identity

Emotions coding    Descriptive coding  
In Vivo coding    Themes

## Queenin' by Krisshundria James

7/20/06

You see being a Queen it's not something you need someone to validate, meditate, hate or relate. Being a Queen, you are aware of whose you are and who you are. You shine bright like a star and you realize how powerful you are. A Queen knows her worth and Walks with her head held high. Because being created in The Image of God, Oh My. You don't need anything or anyone to identify. You don't even have to justify, verify or qualify because of what society and the world wants you to live by. You see being a Queen is different, allow me to testify. God made us queens that are strong, bold, courageous and confident and when you lay eyes on her, you will know you are in the presence of royalty and greatness. The world tries to make her, break her and even shake her, infact they may even hate me, but the way she loves herself, knows thyself and carries herself, you can't even break her down or make her frown. She conquers the world with God fighting for her, and she compares herself no one. She's priceless, She's a Diamond and when the pressure comes on her, She knows who to call on to regain her strength again. See this is just the beginning, when you see her walk her walk and talk her talk, know it was all God. she has a story, but God gets the glory.

happy

confident

Bold

courageous

Strong

Bold

Queen

God

Queen

self

God

God

- Final Themes Discovering  
Kingdom Identity

- Emotions coding - Descriptive coding  
- In Vivo coding - Themes



Scanned with CamScanner

You Are  
1/15/2004

You are not small. You are not unworthy. You are not insignificant. You are to accept yourself as a work in progress and continue to build yourself into the person you're dreaming to be. You are the person you have all the potential to be. Accept your flaws, accept your truths. Accept your past and make light of them. You are loved. You are special. You are sweet. You are courageous. You are powerful when you believe in yourself. You are who God created you to be. You are blossoming. You are worthy of everything.

worthy  
Bold  
Bold  
courageous

self

self  
God

Final Theme - Discovering Identity

Emotions coding

Descriptive coding



In vivo coding

Themes





Who Am I?

7/7/05

Music is my oxygen, it turns my soul and makes me gorgeous. It flows through my veins  
 and soothes my mind, so I write songs and poetry. Thinking is difficult, but writing is my  
 passion. English is my favorite, but exercising the brain can become tiresome. Poetry and songs  
 are my escape because parents never understand and mothers are too difficult to talk to.

Boys are great, but loving Ivan is the best. When there is no one to talk to, he is always  
 there. Baby Phat and Aeropostale is my fashion. Although I am beautiful in it, being better than  
 any one else is not so. When I was younger, I played dress up and loved clothes. My mom put  
 me in fashion shows and I loved the camera. Today I still love the camera and I do photo shoots.

Happy  
 relaxed  
 Happy  
 Confident

music  
 Therapy  
 Love  
 self-love

Final theme - Discovering Identity

Emotions coding  
 Descriptive coding  
 - Themes  
 - In Vivo coding

PROUD  
09/05/2006

I'm so proud of me. I made it this far. I made it to the 9<sup>th</sup> grade, and I passed with great grades. I am proud of me because I really suffered through a lot of stuff I don't talk about and probably never will, but I'm still standing. I still want a future full of laughter, happiness, surprises. I still have faith and want better. This is everything. I don't care how hard it gets or what tries to knock me down or make me frown, I'm so proud of me. Being happy and accomplishing my goals is a big deal to me. I'm on my way there, so I'll forever be proud of me.

*Handwritten notes:*  
 - Left margin: "proud" (vertical), "proud Determined"  
 - Right margin: "school", "Faith & self"

- Final Theme - Feelings, emotions & Identity

- Emotions coding - Descriptive coding  
 - IN UNO coding - Themes

I shall

04/04/2004

What seest is Thou? What do you see Krissy? Live in a Season of a continuous Victory. Jeremiah 1:4-20 is my promise. This season I shall I have total Victory!!!! This season I shall overcome every enemy!!!! A brand-new year. What do you see? What you see has a lot to do with where you are going to go in life!!! God is your father and your destiny in his hands! Some way somehow God is going to get you to the place you need to be! Get yourself ready!! You don't get ready unless you're going somewhere!! God is getting ready to take you somewhere!! You may not know where you're going but get yourself ready to go!! Change your position!! You been sitting in that situation too long! Trouble, obstacles and difficulties are coming, but you are stepping into a season where you will overcome everything!!! I have been chosen; God has his eye on me! I am the perfect candidate for what God wants to do!! Seest-to look until you experience it, you look until you see yourself in it, look until you see it inside of you. I see the rod of the almond tree-while all the other trees are not blossoming, you will Blossom!

*Victorious*  
*triumphant*  
*courageous*  
*determined*  
*hopeful*

*Faith*  
*God*  
*Faith*  
*God*  
*God*

Final Theme - Discovering Kingdom Identity

CS - Emotions coding  
- In Vivo coding  
- Descriptive coding  
- Themes



You're different  
08/12/2004

So what they talk about you, you're different. You're rare. You're kind. Despite the similarity of being like some people, every part of you has its own conception, you make your own choices, you have your own mission. Indeed, you blossom and inspire the soul of people. A golden spirit that no one can touch, but God of course. Continue to be different, you're not like them. Let your light shine bright like a diamond and continue to be your own unique you.

Bold  
Confident

Bold  
Confident

self

God  
self

Final Theme - self identity

Emotions coding    descriptive coding  
In vivo coding    Themes



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**Hats Off**  
6/24/05




It's time to take that Hat off of Fear, That Hat off of Self-Doubt, That Hat off of thinking you're not good enough, That hat of self-sabotaging, that hat of mental bondage, that hat of brokenness, That Hat off of Thinking you're a nobody, that Hat off of wondering who you are because of negative things people say, That Hat off thinking you're not pretty enough or good enough because of the way you look on the outside, That Hat off of Pain, That Hat Off of Bitterness, That Hat off of not feeling Valuable or loved, That Hat off of Hurt, That Hat off of feeling Unworthy, That Hat of hiding who you are really are on the inside.

Take a look in the mirror And Put on the Hat of who God has called you the be, The Chosen One, Fearfully and Wonderfully Made, A Royal Priesthood, A Chosen Generation, Strong, Courageous, Beautiful, Bold, Worthy, Love who you are, Embrace you are, Walk in Confidence, Know that you were created in The Image of God, You are God's Masterpiece, You are Unique, You are Loved and Most of All You are Blessed because God made you Victorious!

*Handwritten notes and connections:*

- not labeled with confidence* (written vertically on the left)
- self-talk* (written vertically on the right, connected to the first paragraph)
- Feelings* (written vertically on the right, connected to the first paragraph)
- mirror* (written vertically on the right, connected to the second paragraph)
- God* (written vertically on the right, connected to the second paragraph)
- God & self* (written vertically on the right, connected to the second paragraph)
- Triumphant Victorious* (written at the bottom left)

 - Final Theme - Discovering Kingdom Identity

 - Emotions coding     - descriptive coding  
 - In vivo coding     - Themes

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Loving you  
1/5/2005

Loving yourself is tough. Waking up every day with a proud sense of who you are can feel exhausting, or even impossible. I know deep down, I can be the best version of myself when I love myself fiercely and freely. Sometimes it takes mantras, prayers and sticky notes on the wall and chats in the mirror to make me love myself more. I know I have to love and cherish me. I have to love myself on the inside too, not just the outside. I will take time out to think about what it takes to love myself more and more each day. What do I like about myself? What do I not like about myself? I can change my negative thinking into positive thinking to love me. I must love me!

*Handwritten notes:*  
 - Left margin: Fearless, Courageous, Resilient  
 - Right margin: self-love, mirror self, self-love

**Final Theme - Discovering Identity**

■ - Emotions coding   
 ■ - Descriptive coding  
■ - In vivo coding   
 ■ - Themes

**You Glow**  
2/6/06

You Glow differently when your confidence is fueled by belief in yourself instead of validation from others. Your light up the room when you see yourself the way God sees you instead of others. You shine differently when you stop worrying or thinking about what people think or say about you. You glow up when you grow up. You glow when you stop comparing yourself to others. You glow when look carefully at what you are doing. You glow when you speak up for yourself. You glow when you embrace a growth mindset. You glow when you prioritize learning and constant improvement. You glow you free yourself from needing approval from others.

*Handwritten notes:*  
 - Left margin: *confident* (vertical), *comparing self* (vertical)  
 - Right margin: *self*, *God*, *self*, *people*, *self*, *self*  
 - Below text: *relieved*

*Final theme - Discovering identity*

*Legend:*  
 ■ - Emotions coding  
 ■ - Descriptive coding  
 ■ - Thematic coding  
 ■ - Intuitive coding

**Breaking through the mirror**  
7-21-06

There's a Ministry in The mirror. Mirrors show every imperfection. A mirror reflects what it sees. You're checking everything. If you see something you don't like, you're going to fix it. You're looking pass the actual you in the mirror. You gotta look on the inside at the inward part. In the mirror you're seeing a reflection of everything you need to check about yourself.

**Handwritten notes:**

- Left side:** self-critical [conscious] self-conscious
- Right side:** mirror mirror & self

**- Final theme - Discovering Identity**

**Legend:**

- Emotions coding
- Descriptive coding
- In vivo coding
- Themes



## APPENDIX D

## TRAUMA AND DEPRESSION SONG LYRICS

Is it real?

RnB Guitar Track (Reason 4)

12/15/2006

*miserable* *real* *understand* *love* *sadness* *love* *sadness* *depressed* *Heart* *bitter* *feel* *real*

I thought I told you a thousand times it's real but baby you don't understand how it feels. Time after time, I'm losing my mind. I'm out of control, I'm letting you go. Is it real my heart is broken what do I feel? Baby I tried to let you go, but my mind keeps telling me no, is it real, Is it real. Can you tell me how you feel because ignoring me, this isn't real. My heart is too precious to play these selfish games, I want to let it go, but I love you too much, so baby is it real. I want to let it go, but you keep telling me no. Can you tell me how you feel baby is it real, is it real? My heart can't take no more pain, so baby let me know. Time after time, I should walk out the door. My heart is full of pain please no more games. Can you tell me how you feel baby is it real. Can you tell me how you feel I wanna know if it's real. Quit breaking my heart, baby let's make a deal. Can you tell me how you feel is it real, Is it real?

Emotions coding

- 1st set of brackets - miserable
- 2nd set of brackets - sadness
- 3rd set of brackets - bitter
- 4th set of brackets - sadness
- 5th set of brackets - depressed

Descriptive coding

- 1st brackets - love
- 2nd brackets - love
- 3rd brackets - Heart

In vivo coding

Real understand  
mind real mind  
Feel real walk out  
Love pain  
Feel

① Theme's  
Feeling Pain  
Emotions  
Love  
Trauma

② Heart  
Feeling's Emotion  
Heart Pain

③ Final Theme's  
Feelings & Emotions  
Of the Heart

④ Final Theme's  
Negative Feelings  
and Emotions



## Themes

God Devil Life  
God's child  
praying pressure  
soul

Hard Life

6/15/2004

Discovering  
Final Theme - Kingdom  
Identity

**Saying @ the beginning:** How many people out there know we go through some things, but at long last God is there for us, life just got a lot easier. **Empathy God**

**Chorus:** Life may hard, Life may complicated, but I have to keep movin', when I know God is there for me. **hopeful Life**

**Rap:** Hard times livin' in rough days, God sees me feelin' my pain, I'm in this world thinking how I'ma make it, can't even take it. The devil tried to break me, cause he didn't respect me. Time after time my soul got low. Broken and shattered, God knew what was wrong, I'm all gone, blinded writing this song. Lord break my pain, gain my soul through this bad rain. I knew if I was praying and praising God, he would be there to save me, grace me so the devil wouldn't take me. Only God can guide me, I only wanna stay alive and not die please. **Overwhelmed broken worried**

**Chorus:** Life may hard, Life may complicated, but I have to keep movin', when I know God is there for me. **hopeful**

**2nd Rap:** I'm tired of this pain, I'm going insane, Look you what you put me through, I don't need you. You made me suffer and wanted me to follow you, bow down to you, and made me feel smaller than you. I have news for you, I'm through with you, You thought I was rug and I had to tug on you, but I'm steppin' on you. Criss cross, I'm stomping on you, Stomping you down to ground, you betta not make a sound. You gone, devil, you no longer have ahold of my soul, I'm free, God got me, I'm blessed indeed. My soul is back, devil you are whack! **Overwhelmed Devil Aggressive**

**Chorus:** Life may hard, Life may complicated, but I have to keep movin', when I know God is there for me. **hopeful**

**3rd Rap:** I'm Blessed not ya'll, I'm God's child, He won't let me fall. The devil put me through so much, I had to call on you, lean on you, while the devil put that thing called pressure on you, God I hung on to you, I'm stuck on you. I'm in your hands and I'm safe, free and relieved because of you. **Joyful & wounded**

**Chorus:** Life may hard, Life may complicated, but I have to keep movin', when I know God is there for me. ---hold--- **hopeful**

## Emotions coding

1st bracket - empathy  
2nd bracket - hopeful  
3rd bracket - overwhelmed & broken  
4th bracket - worried  
5th bracket - hopeful  
6th bracket - overwhelmed  
7th bracket - Aggressive  
8th bracket - hopeful  
9th bracket - Joyful & wounded

## Descriptive coding

1st brackets - life  
2nd brackets - life  
3rd brackets - God  
4th brackets - Life  
5th brackets - Devil  
6th brackets - life  
7th brackets - life  
8th brackets - God  
9th brackets - Life

## In Vivo Coding

Themes  
Final Themes

8th brackets - Life

## APPENDIX E

### DESCRIPTIVE SONG LYRICS

#### IT'S HARD TO BELIEVE

2/16/2005

Rap:

It's hard to believe how people treat me because they don't need me. It's hard to believe how cruel and nonchalant people are. It's hard to believe how I feel worthless and irritated because people are not interested in me. It's hard to see people turn their back on me because I'm free, non-violent, and unhappy. It's hard to believe how much peace I have because people take it from me all the time, but I gain it back because God completes me. It's hard to go through a great life because I'm always struggling. It's hard for a lot of things, but God's there for me, so I'm safe and secure.

Chorus to Song:

Life may hard, life may be complicated, but when God's right here with me, I know I am free.

Emotions coding

- 1st brackets - worthless
- 2nd brackets - misused & misunderstood
- 3rd brackets - relieved
- 4th brackets - calm & relieved

Descriptive coding

- 1st brackets - people
- 2nd brackets - God

- In Vivo coding

Themes

- God
- Safe and secure
- Life
- Believe
- Emotions and Feelings
- Free

Final Theme

Discovering  
Kingdom Identity  
through feelings and  
emotions



All The Time

06/2/2004

Anxious  
Guy  
Ecstatic

I see you looking at me in church. You look so fine, you look so sweet, standing on your two feet by me. When I look in your eyes, you look so fine, all the time to the point I keep you in my mind. You are mines all the time with you handsome, tall and charming self. You make shine, blush, and knock me off my feet. Sometimes I look at you just to say man you're all mines. You're so charming, sincere, and caring. I call you strong and handsome, every time I see you. You can call me anytime at 323-2678 and just because I know this feeling is real and reliable.

Amused  
Amused

### Emotions coding

1st brackets - Anxious & amused  
2nd brackets - Amused & ecstatic  
3rd bracket - ecstatic

### Themes

Feelings

Character Traits  
moral Church

### Descriptive coding

1st brackets - Guy  
2nd brackets - Guy

### Final Theme

Feelings & Character  
Traits

### In Vivo coding



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## Dedicated to God Rap

11/08/2006

Yo, my name is lil Krissy and I worship God. He forgives my sins all da time and I thank Him all the time, I'm still here, I thank you Lord. Fat and Beautiful, I appreciate it God. I used to think I was doing it right, but I realized I was doing it wrong, close minded, and alone. I heard this song, and a light came on, shining bright like a diamond, helped me move on from the pain that forced guilt to my heart. I'm free mane, fantastic, God holds the key to my like mane. Feeling excellent, blessed and energetic. It was all God mane.

Ya'll heard me I'm lil Krissy, I'm taking my sins and throwing them away baby. I'm not the same person, God's forgiven me. I want to go to Heaven, so I gotta be diligent and educated on His word that set me, so I'm dedicated and devoted to Christ. He has my life, It's time for me to keep my heart clean, so devil stay away from me. I'm God's child now, I'm free, focused, and loyal to God, Ima beast.

self &amp; God

self

God

God

Thankful  
Blessed

Heartfelt

Humble

Proud  
& strongEmotions coding

1st brackets - Thankful & blessed  
2nd brackets - Heartfelt  
3rd brackets - Humble  
4th brackets - proud & strong

Descriptive coding

1st bracket - self & God  
2nd brackets - self  
3rd brackets - God  
4th brackets - God

In Vivo coding

Themes  
God Heaven Feelings  
Devil Emotions  
Loyal

Final Theme -

Discovering  
Kingdom Identity



## APPENDIX F

## TRAUMA AND DEPRESSION POEMS

Psychology class 5/11/05 10pm

**Rough Times**

I've been through so much pain,  
 so much trials, you think I got time for  
 your mess, I must stay in school and  
 try to keep it cool as my heart skips  
 one beat when people try to play me like  
 a fool, and I know I must fight the  
 power forever to keep up with my Lord.  
 Sticks and stones may break my bones, but  
 I'll never let a person rule me until  
 I'm gone, I'll never let a person lead  
 me wrong, I must stay strong and live  
 alone & lonely.

**Emotions coding**

Lines 1-3 1st bracket - Strong  
 Lines 4-6 2nd bracket - powerful  
 Lines 7-9 3rd bracket - Strong & powerful  
 Lines 10-12 4th bracket - Lonely

**Descriptive coding**

1st brackets - Life  
 2nd brackets - Heart  
 3rd brackets - God  
 4th brackets - life

**In Vivo coding**

**Themes**

Pain Trials Life  
 power Lord  
 person rule me  
 fight strong  
 Alone

**Final theme**

Discovering  
 Identity

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Written by: Krissy James 4/23/06 9:05 a.m.

## Life As A Storm

My life is a storm, it rains everywhere,  
the rains never stops flowing and my emotions  
keep going, the tears lead to a river, and I tend  
to shiver, empty and overflowed, it comes and  
go. I believe in myself, but is there any faith  
left, the lightning strikes and lights up my mind,  
plenty of thoughts inside, but left in the dark,  
and torn apart, falling and picking myself up,  
the wind blows and no one knows because my  
life is a storm and it rains everywhere.

Life  
Sad  
Empty  
Self  
Broken  
Shattered  
Life

### Emotions coding -

1st brackets - Sad lines 1-3

2nd brackets - Empty line 4-6

3rd brackets - Broken & Shattered lines 7-10

### Descriptive coding -

1st brackets - life

2nd brackets - self

3rd brackets - life

- In Vivo coding

### Themes

Life Pain  
Emotions  
Empty overflowed  
Torn apart  
Thoughts

### Final Theme

Negative Feelings  
and Emotions



By: Krissy James 11/10/04 ~ Poem

## Hard Life

I'm suffering everyday of my life  
 Keeping God first, trying to make it,  
 the devil doing so many things trying  
 to break me, I'm on my knees praying  
 every minute, wondering why me and  
 why does my life have to have so much  
 frustration, stressed out and trying  
 to hold my pain, I can only keep  
 praying and keep my head held high  
 with faith in me, if I keep God in  
 my life, my life just got easier and the  
 pain inside me will get put away.  
 like nothing ever happened.

### Emotions coding -

1st brackets - lines 1-3	- weak	- Theme
2nd brackets - lines 4-6	- discouraged	God Deal
3rd brackets - lines 7-9	- hopeful	Pain Life
4th brackets - lines 10-14	- hopeful	Suffering
		praying
		Stressed

### Descriptive coding -

1st brackets - Life  
 2nd brackets - Faith 3rd brackets - Faith  
 4th brackets - Faith

### In Vivo coding

- Final Theme  
 Discovering Kingdom  
 Identity through Faith



05/06/05

Poem

By: Krissy James

# Clueless Life

Living the life wondering who I am,  
 what do I mean to other people and  
 what am I in this world for? Living  
off the edge, broken, hurt, tattered,  
 I feel as I'm invisible, unloved, and  
no dreams to follow. People take advantage  
 of me, talk about me, don't care about  
 the way I feel, I just want to be me,  
 live a life with a complete vision, but  
 I have no clues to know who I am,  
 where I stand, and what I will be  
 in the future, I feel like I am dying,  
crying all day long, with no one knowing  
 what's wrong, God's my help to lead  
 me through life, but still I struggle  
 and let go, now I know there's no  
 me, no one left to know where I  
 was suppose to be and I was to  
represent and what I mean to  
others, I'm just left wondering,  
 with a light heart and my  
feelings and thoughts going different  
ways.

Life

Sex  
depressed  
lonelyPeople  
hopefulSelf  
clueless  
confusedGod  
sadnessLife  
TiredPeople  
ThoughtfulMind  
Thoughtful

- Emotions coding

- Descriptive coding

- Final Theme  
Life's purpose & Identity

- In Vivo coding

- Themes




Poem


By: Krissy James  
 Written: 4/15/06  
 Took 2 minutes to write

## A Crazy Life


*Self Life Sadness*  
 Hurt, disaster, emotions, depression,  
 it all goes together, in a whole full of  
 pain, hurt constantly, heart broken,  
*People Lonely*  
 depending on yourself to stay strong,  
 people talking about you, people just  
 don't care about you, can't take  
 life, no one tends to understand your  
 pain, *Life Sadness* sadness over-weighting your  
 happiness, you try to keep your mind  
 focus on God, but the pain takes  
 you down, breaks you and hurts you  
 after healed, you feel like giving  
 up in life, throwing away life, praying  
 all day long, crying always, trying to  
 get help from where ever you can,  
*God Life hurt wounded*  
 The Devil is trying to continue to  
 do all of this, but it's God's mercy  
 who's keeping me or I would've  
 been took my life away, God is  
 keeping me and I will continue  
 to stay blessed and strong.  
*Life Sadness*  
*Devil Hurt*  
*God hopeful*

 - Emotions coding

 - Descriptive coding

 - In vivo coding

 - Themes

 - Final Theme - Discovering Kingdom Identity through negative feelings and emotions

CS

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By: Hissy James 8/17/06 Poem

## Keep Movin

Strong Life [Life may be hard, Life may be complicated, but I have to keep movin, I listen to people talk about me, I see people do me the wrong way, I must forget it and move on, I try so hard not to let a tear roll down with fear, but life makes you want to give up, but I realize that I must keep movin and just forget about mean and hateful people and keep going.]

■ - Emotions coding

■ - Descriptive coding

■ - In Vivo coding

■ - Themes

■ - Final Theme - Identity



Friend  
Sadness  
Anger  
Self  
Lonely  
Friend  
Sadness  
Lonely  
Self  
Lonely  
Friend  
Anger  
Self  
Sadness

You was a true friend, but our  
friendship came to an end, you  
made me suffer and pretend  
we were close, now it's like  
I'm in a hole, I'm invisible,  
You made a fool of me and  
now my heart is beginning, a boy  
came into your life and I  
now I'm not in the light, I'm  
lost, I'm down, now I got to  
frown, were at the end, were  
at the end, why did it have to  
fall and go dead and now  
were not friends because of  
something stupid you did and it's  
at a end, we were supposed to  
be king and never again will we be  
close friends, IT'S AT THE END!!

👉 - Final Theme - Identity & negative experiences



Johnny James 03/20/05 poem

## No More Pain

I rose this painful world wondering  
how I was going to make it because  
I felt like I couldn't take it people  
try to break me because they hate me  
and I knew I had to have the strength  
to go on, and only God knew what  
was wrong, if I had to fight for  
all my might, I was ready to go  
on strike, Lord broke my pain,  
and my soul gained and I knew it  
I kept praying and praising God would  
be there for me.

Life  
Painful  
strong  
Painful

Life  
Painful  
strong  
Painful

Life  
Painful  
strong  
Painful

Faith

Emotions coding

Descriptive coding

In Vivo coding

Themes

Final Theme

Discovering Kingdom Identity



11/2009  
11/5/2009

poem

Krissy James  
Ms. Forde  
English II, 1st Period

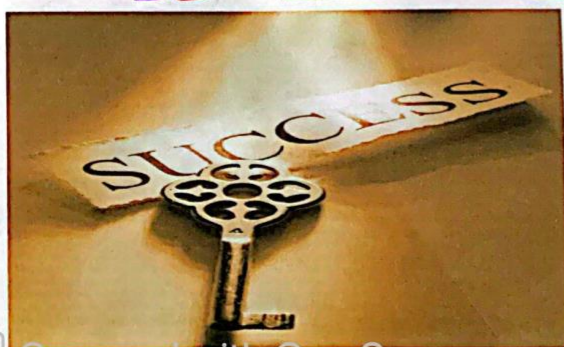
# RHYME SCHEME



Life

Emotions, feelings, tough time, fear,  
 We go through it all year,  
 Crying all day long,  
 Wondering when this pain will be gone.  
 I give encouragement to the crowd  
 and it really makes me proud,  
 Praying for the ones in need,  
 so they will get blessed indeed,  
 I see many in tears,  
 but I tell them everything is alright because God is here,  
 Many have to stay strong  
 and things won't go wrong,  
 Some ways are blocked by clouds,  
 but it will move around,  
 If we put our faith in God, We will succeed,  
 and overcome these obstacles and proceed.

Life Caring Faith Hopeful Faith God



~~Emotions~~ - Emotions  
cooling

 - Descriptive coding

**Invivo Coding**  
Thema

CS

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Final Theme - Discovering Identity through feelings & emotions



By: Kristy James 04/2005 Poem

**Free**

I'm tired of this pain you've put  
 me through look I don't need you, you  
 made me suffer and expected me to follow  
 you, but I have news for you, you  
 think I'm a rug, so you can't step on  
 me, so believe it or not, you and I'm  
 free and you no longer have hold of me

**Life & Pain**  
**Anger**  
**Internal**  
**Self**  
**Devil**

- - Emotions coding
- - Descriptive coding
- - In Vivo coding
- - Themes
- - Final Theme

Feelings & emotions

CS Scanned with CamScanner

## APPENDIX G

## EMOTIONS POEMS

11/2008  
11/5/2016

Poem

# ODE TO SINGING

**Singing happiness**

Singing,  
you rule my life.  
You make me happy throughout my life.  
You are the best thing ever shown in my life.

**Singing joyful**

Singing,  
Oh how I love you.  
You are always in my heart.

**Singing happy**

Singing,  
is like my boyfriend,  
we have great relationships.

**Singing calm**

Singing,  
I sing everywhere I go,  
It lights up the room and everyone knows,  
it expresses my feelings and takes trouble off my mind.

**Singing worried**

Singing,  
if you were to die from my life,  
I'd be hurt.

**Singing joyful**

Singing,  
You are my passionate  
and you give my royalty.

**Singing strong empathy**

Singing,  
Oh my singing,  
You keep me strong and uplifted.  
Singing we will stay close and never fall apart  
because I'll run for you and  
You'll be there for me to catch me when I need you.

**Singing caring empathy**

**Legend:**

- Red box - Emotions coding
- Purple box - Descriptive coding
- Green box - In Vivo coding
- Yellow box - Themes
- Orange box - Final Life's purpose Feelings & Emotions

CS Scanned with CamScanner



By Anthony Jones

6/23/05

Poem 11

# Mommy's Love

happy She loves me with her heart and nothing keeps us apart, she hugs me tight and makes things right, when we were not together,  
caring She loves me forever, when I am sad, she cares for me, Her love is like honey, it sticks to me, she believes in me, so I can accomplish my dreams, And my love is always in her, just like hers is in me. My mommy makes me happy. My mommy makes me feel proud.  
happy proud mother

mother's love  
mother's love  
mother's love

Final Theme - Feelings & emotions

■ - Emotions coding  
■ - Descriptive coding

■ - In Vivo coding  
■ - Themes




Quem 8/12/2006 4m' Krissy


Dear Keondria,

from the moment I met you August 12th, 1997, you sparked my eyes. You were the most precious girl I could ever meet. You were the joy of my life and all I wanted to do is spend my first time calling you Keondria. I knew you were an angel. Time is better time. I let you know, you were my special little sister and I loved you more. I went to bed excited to wake up the next day to hold you. My little sister is the best thing in the world since August 12th, 1997 and until this day I say you were a special angel from heaven.

Love,

Your big sister Krissy

 - Emotions coding

 - Descriptive coding


1st brackets - Baby sister

2nd brackets - Experience


3rd brackets - love

4th brackets - sister

5th brackets - love

 - In Vivo coding

 - Themes

 - Final theme - Feelings

Poem

3/15/2010

## Shakespearian Sonnets

## (Love Sonnet) Oh My Deep Love -

O my love is deep, deep inside of you,  
 That makes me smile because nothing shall break us,  
 It flows through my heart and always stays true.  
 God sent an angel to me, so I can only trust,  
 For then, it takes time for the love to float,  
 But it will only dig deeper and increase,  
 It burns inside of me just like you wrote,  
 And it is eternal and leaves me in peace,  
 Take all my love; you shall have it all,  
 Through my body I give you my soul,  
 One thing I express is this love will never fall,  
 For you and me will make it whole,  
 Where we grow old under one condition,  
 When time passes by love is the true definition.

~Krissy James~

love  
 God  
 heart  
 love  
 love

happy  
 loving  
 caring  
 caring  
 hopeful  
 hopeful

## (Love Sonnet) Light of Love

Oh how it's bright and gives me great beauty,  
 For my love for it, leaves me gloomy,  
 Shines deeply on me like the sun, I can finish my duty,  
 But often I may need thee to be roomy,  
 Sometimes thy heart shines and leaves me blind,  
 When it gets hot, the feeling becomes painful,  
 But the signs you give are needful and kind,  
 O thy heart is not disdainful,  
 And as I breathe, oh I dwell among strength,  
 For my hurt and sorrow,  
 For our charm will have everlasting length,  
 And our love will lead to tomorrow,  
 Challenging the tenderness of our minds,  
 But our love for one another will always shine and combine.

~Krissy James~

love  
 love  
 love  
 love  
 love

confused  
 overwhelmed  
 sadness  
 confused  
 sadness  
 hopeful

- Emotions coding

- Descriptive coding

- In Vivo coding

- Themes

- Final Themes  
Feelings & emotions



Krissy James

7<sup>th</sup> period

Poem

## Spenserian Sonnets

## (Love Sonnet): Love and Affection

My love for you is going to stay,  
For the honesty in your eyes sparks my heart,  
When I'm in your arms I can never run away.

I will love you until death do us apart,  
And to keep happiness we gave commitment from the start.

When you laugh I admire your smile,  
For you take the time out to do your part,  
And the feelings you have for me won't agile.

Oh baby you make me smile.

Sometimes the love we have seems like art,  
I cherish our time together, but my heart can be fragile,  
Oh my heart thanks you for being this smart.

Sometimes I tend to get weak,  
For our love will last forever and be unique.

~Krissy James~

honest &amp; happy

hopeful

happy &amp; hopeful

joyful

caring

## (Love Sonnet): Love is Sweet

When I think about the gentle touch of us holding hands,  
It opens up my heart and causes me to see,

For my love for you expands,

I can only think about you and me.

The love you show leaves me feeling free,

For our happiness leaves us to dream,

Once again I begin to see,

Oh our love is known to be a team,

At this time, our love is at the extreme.

Our arms brag to each other how we feel,

Sometimes love causes me to daydream,

But I know our love is always real,

For our happiness will stay sweet,

And you are my love and my treat.

~Krissy James~

thoughtful

happy

caring

happy

happy

- Emotions coding

- Descriptive coding

- In Vivo coding

- themes

- Final Theme  
Feelings & emotions



Poem

By: Krissy James

6:50 p.m.

11/21/06

## This Feeling

The way I feel about you makes me smile everytime I hear your voice. I can't take you off my mind. When you hold me, my heart skips one beat. Everytime I hear your name, I blush and say that's my baby always and forever. This feeling makes me want you more and more everyday. There are people who try to break us apart, but my heart won't allow that to happen. My mind tells me to kiss them lips and they're as soft as a pillow. When we're together the world revolves around us and I can't let go of your love. I take the time to show you the meaning of love and my emotions of love flow right to you. You treat me like an angel and take care of my needs just as you please. The thing about love is I expect to be treated perfect and you satisfy me. I can't explain to anyone how I feel but baby I know I love you and I can't leave you.

First theme - Feelings &amp; emotions

Pleasure

Thoughtful

Heart

Love

Caring

Love

Unbreakable

Yes

Confident

CS

Scanned

- Themes

- Emotions coding

- Descriptive coding

- In Vivo coding

## APPENDIX H

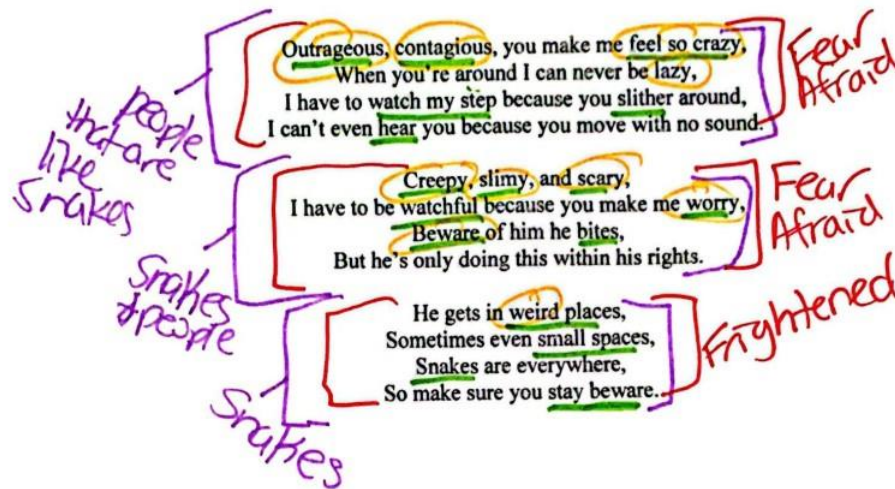
## DESCRIPTIVE POEMS

Krissy James  
7<sup>th</sup> period  
Animal Poems

11/2006

Poem

## The Adventurous Snake(Experience)



- Emotions coding

- Descriptive coding

1st brackets - people & snakes

2nd brackets - snakes & people

3rd brackets - snakes

- In vivo coding

- Themes

- Final theme  
Experiencing feelings & emotions

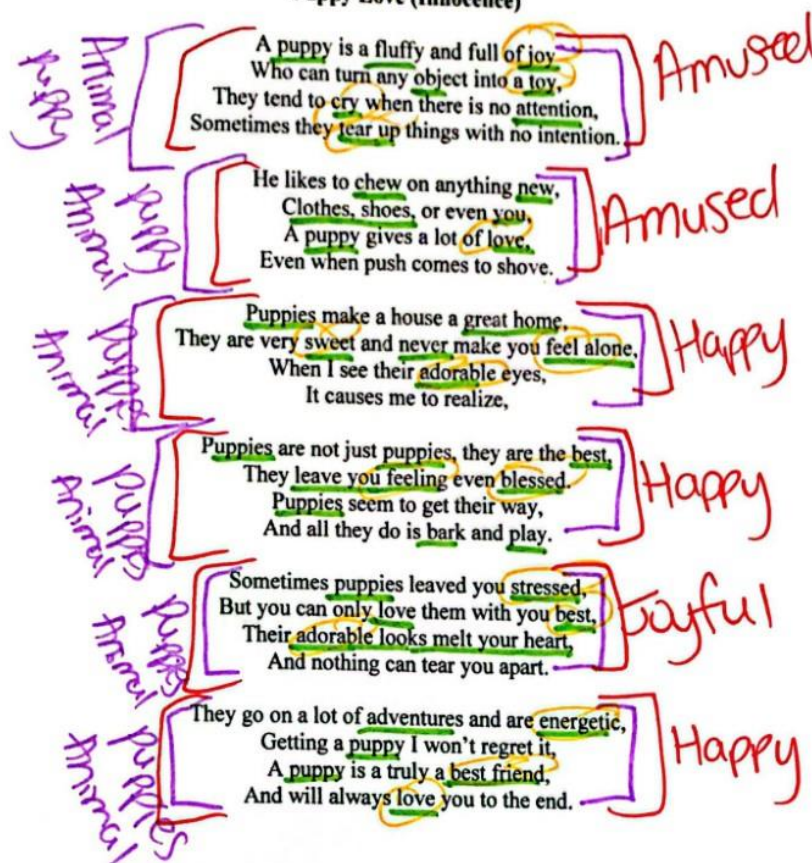


Krissy James  
7<sup>th</sup> period  
Animal Poems

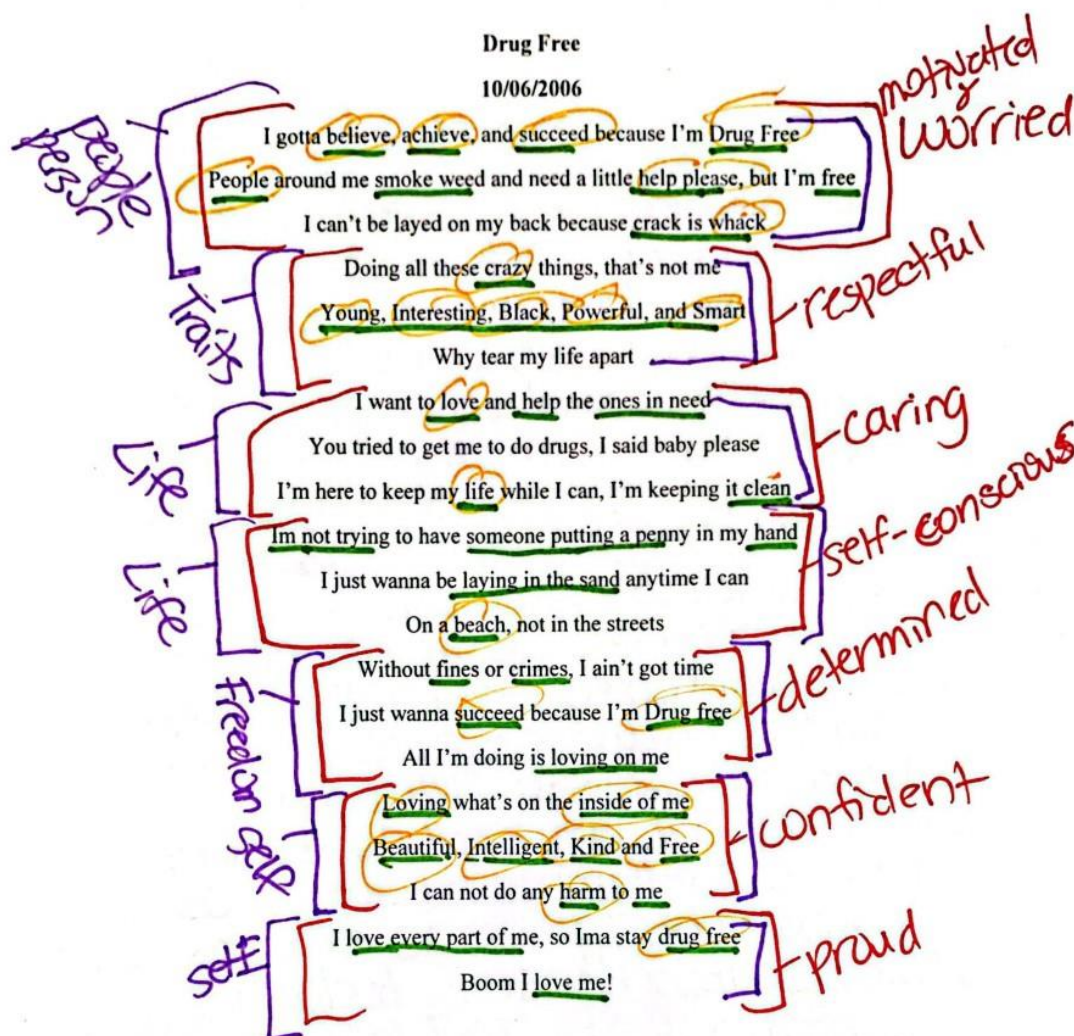
11/2006  
11/1/2006

Poem

### Puppy Love (Innocence)



- - Emotions coding
  - - Descriptive coding
  - - In Vivo coding
  - - Themes
  - - Final Theme
- positive feelings & emotions





4/23/2004

~~poem~~

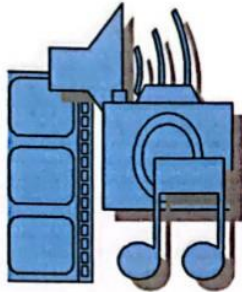
Poem

# LIFE EXPERIENCE

Happy  
 Proud  
 Throughout  
 Calm

Music is my life, my experience. Life is very agile throughout times and there are boisterous moments and sad moments. My music leads to encouragement, but we fear what people think of you. Sometimes life goes crazy, but there also glamorous times, when you tend to shine and show who you are and what you are about. Loving music is like being a vegetarian, you keep things to a limit. I don't want my music to cause segregation or separate me from people in the world. My music is like a breath of fresh air. Everyone becomes pregnant with it and enjoys it.

Joy / music  
 Life  
 music  
 music  
 life



1 - Final Theme  
 Feelings & emotions

- Emotions  
 Coding

- Descriptive coding

- In Vivo coding

- Themes



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by. rinstyarnes 2/16/06 Poem

Thank You

Thank you for the gift of Life,  
For letting me be me,  
For the freedom I have,  
and the things I see

Grateful  
Blessed

For everything I can hear  
without any fear  
All the songs I can sing  
For the joy I have  
and the joy I bring

Thankful

—Therapy  
—Feelings  
& emotions

Thank you  
For having me loved  
And the love ones I can and  
cannot touch

Thankful

Thank you for letting me love  
the ones that aren't loved  
For all the beauty  
Ever clean and new  
I just thank you  
For bringing me what I need  
and being blessed in deed.

Thankful

Thankful  
Blessed  
Life

Emotions coding

Descriptive coding

In Vivo coding



Poem By: Krissy James 07/12/05

## 9th grade Drama

I'll soon be in the 9th grade,  
 Freshman with no pain, but when  
 I get there am I going to remain?  
 It's time to step up to my game,  
 and not play around like I'm in  
 the 2nd grade, man I'm not  
 going to be the same, I'll just  
 pray and do my thing to get  
 where I want to be so I can  
 remain. (Leaving me, leaving my family)  
 staying fix on important things. (Love family)  
 No Drama, just focus on me. (Gimme)  
 in hot, everyone will love me. I'm not  
 your average 9th grader, I'm an  
 example the light and when I'm  
 around, everyone and everything will  
 be alright. (people)

worried  
 Determined  
 hopeful  
 Focused  
 Delightful  
 hopeful

life  
 life  
 Love family  
 self

Emotions coding

Descriptive coding

In Vivo coding

Themes

1st brackets - School 6th brackets - people

2nd brackets - life

3rd brackets - life

4th brackets - love + family

5th brackets - self

Final Theme  
 Discovering  
 Identity



## VITA

**Krisshundria James, Ed.D**

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### Professional Overview

Certified Christian Counselor, Certified Life Coach, Certified Spiritual Life Coach, teaching useful emotional and behavioral regulation techniques, collaborating with clients to develop action plans that center on the actualization of their stated ambitions, evaluating clients' advancement toward goal actualization and encouraging continued and sustainable progress. Experienced Adjunct Professor, Substitute teacher, Tutor and In Class Support Special Ed Paraprofessional practiced at teaching classes aimed at students concentrating in Social Studies, Reading Language Arts, Science Math, Education and Special Education. Initiated interactive activities that furthered understanding and created a positive learning environment helping beginning students develop creative talent and persevere through educational and professional challenges.

### Summary of Skills

- Communication
- Leadership
- Organization
- Editing
- Creating Assessments and Exams
- Detail Orientated
- Public Speaking/Motivational/Inspirational Speaker
- Author
- Writing
- Editing
- Counseling
- Coaching
- Newsletters
- Blogging
- Good listener
- Having understanding of human psychology
- Interpersonal skills
- Engage in critical thinking
- Diversity/Diverse backgrounds
- Customer Service
- Credit Repair
- Online classroom experience
- Social Media Savvy
- Publishing familiarity
- Goal Setting
- Lesson Plan Development

- Multi-Media Instruction
- Learning Strategies
- Testing and Evaluation
- Interviewing (Recruitment and Employment)
- Individualized Education Program (IEP) and Data Collection Sheets
- Teaching
- Creating Positive Learning Environment
- Microsoft Word/Excel/Powerpoint
- Online Marketing
- Volunteer Clerk & Receptionist
- Media Relations
- Fundraising
- Reconcile Cash/Balance Cash Drawer
- Adobe Photoshop
- POS Net
- Skew Gun to Mark Down Prices

## **Education**

**Sam Houston State University**  
**Doctorate of Education-Literacy**  
 Huntsville, Texas  
 January 2019-present

**Christian Bible Institute and Seminary**  
**NACC Board Certification-Christian Counseling**  
 August 2019-December 2019  
 Houston, TX

**University of Concordia Portland**  
**Masters of Education-Curriculum and Instruction: Methods and Curriculum**  
 June 2017-July 2018  
 Portland, OR  
 2013-2014

**University of Houston-Downtown**  
**Bachelor of Arts – Corporate Communications**  
 Houston, TX  
 2012-2014

**Houston Community College**  
**Associates of Arts-Communications**  
 Houston, TX  
 2010-2012

**A+ Texas Teachers Alternative Certification Program**  
 Houston, TX  
 2015-present

## **Professional Experience**

**Blossom Up, LLC-Founder & CEO****Certified Life Coach & Spiritual Life Coach, Certified Counselor****03/2018-Present**

- Meet with clients to discuss needs and goals
- Develop strategies and plans for clients
- Keep records of client progress
- Meet with and evaluate clients
- Adjust clients' goal strategies as needed
- Gauging clients' requirements and how coaching might best address these.
- Delineating clients' goals through ongoing discussions thereof.
- Identifying internal and contextual roadblocks, and then devising plans to ameliorate these.
- Teaching useful emotional and behavioral regulation techniques.
- Collaborating with clients to develop action plans that center on the actualization of their stated ambitions.
- Evaluating clients' advancement toward goal actualization.
- Encouraging continued and sustainable progress.
- Assess patients through detailed conversations, interviews, and observations to determine the appropriate testing or examination.
- Diagnose patient's mental and emotional disorders.
- Create effective treatment plans that include counseling, medication, or other services.
- Work with your patient and develop goals.
- Regularly discuss the treatment plan with your patient to identify faults or room for improvement.
- Educate appropriate coping mechanisms to help patients through tough situations.
- Record the patient's progress and change their treatment plan when needed.
- Perform initial evaluations of client needs and develop customized treatment plans.
- Educate staff and clients on stress and trauma coping mechanisms.
- Provide individuals with the resources they need to reach personal goals.
- Monitor client progress and modify their treatment plans as needed.
- Coordinate with social and medical agencies, healthcare providers and community outreach programs to provide clients with needed services.
- Completed continuing education courses to maintain National Certified Counselor certification and stay up-to-date on the latest practices.

**Galena Park Independent School District – Degreed Substitute teacher****08/2015-Present**

- Performing all duties listed in basic education or exceptional education teacher job description and collaborating with colleagues to construct benchmark lessons.
- Teaching in teams and participating in professional development activities. Teaching as a reflective practitioner.
- Meets and instructs assigned classes in the locations and at the times designated. Assumes the same responsibilities as a regular classroom teacher for students, equipment, materials and facilities. Performs any special duties the classroom teacher may have.
- Checks the class roll at the time and in the manner designated by the building principal. Records names, dates of absences, and tardiness as instructed.

- Maintains the regular routine of the class and follows as closely as practical the lesson plan of study. Works to meet the individual needs, interests, and abilities of the students.
- Creates a classroom environment that is conducive to learning and appropriate to the maturing and interest of the students.
- Guides the learning process toward the achievement of curriculum goals.
- Encourages students to set and maintain standards of classroom behavior conducive to good learning. Maintains a level of discipline in the classroom. Prevents students from leaving the classroom unnecessarily.

**United Credit Education Services-Agent**  
**05/2020-present**

- Signs customers up to get their credit repaired.

**Sam Houston State University-Pool Faculty**  
**08/2018-01/2020**

- School of Teaching and Learning Lecturer-Pool faculty are term positions hired to teach one to four courses per semester. Course requirements may include a combination of teaching on-campus classes at The Woodlands Center, classes at the main campus in Huntsville, and online classes, depending on the needs of the academic department. Lecturer-Pool faculty hiring is based upon student demand, on a semester-by-semester basis. Sam Houston State University will accept applications from qualified applicants on a continual basis

**Houston Independent School District – Degreed Associate teacher**  
**11/2015-03/01/2019**

- Performing all duties listed in basic education or exceptional education teacher job description and collaborating with colleagues to construct benchmark lessons.
- Teaching in teams and participating in professional development activities. Teaching as a reflective practitioner.
- Meets and instructs assigned classes in the locations and at the times designated. Assumes the same responsibilities as a regular classroom teacher for students, equipment, materials, and facilities. Performs any special duties the classroom teacher may have.
- Checks the class roll at the time and in the manner designated by the building principal. Records names, dates of absences, and tardiness as instructed.
- Maintains the regular routine of the class and follows as closely as practical the lesson plan of study. Works to meet the individual needs, interests, and abilities of the students.
- Creates a classroom environment that is conducive to learning and appropriate to the maturing and interest of the students.
- Guides the learning process toward the achievement of curriculum goals.
- Encourages students to set and maintain standards of classroom behavior conducive to good learning. Maintains a level of discipline in the classroom. Prevents students from leaving the classroom unnecessarily.

**Humble Independent School District-Inclass Support Paraprofessional 12/4/2018 – 06/01/2018**

- Work under the supervision of the special education case manager to support students and collaborate with special and general education teachers.
- Assist in the Implementation of student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) process and perform daily activities using specific materials/methods and/or materials modifications designed by special education teacher and support personnel.
- Work with the classroom teacher and special education case manager to help document services provided related to IEP objectives and assist in teaching and generalizing coping strategies across all settings.
- Support students with emotional and physical behavioral challenges and instruct and support students in developing social skills.
- Maintain control during behaviorally challenging episodes or events.

**First Data - Collector****03/16/2015-11/20/2015**

- Investigated all payment arrears for various debt portfolios.
- Managed communication with all debtors through telephone.
- Administered various debtor processes for all collection activities.
- Monitored collection of debt and in some cases terminated records.
- Maintained record of all activities and assisted in litigation process.
- Evaluated foreclosure clauses and if required referred to a collection agency.
- Assisted to resolve all complaints from members.
- Coordinated with customers to help reduce bad debt.

**Fortbend Independent School District-Avid Tutor****01/13/2014-06/15/2014**

- Determine from student notes and discussions, the concepts that need to be taught or retaught.
- Evaluate student binders, including calendars, class and textbook notes, etc.
- Become familiar with the materials in the AVID Curriculum Libraries.
- Become familiar with the textbooks and materials used by AVID students.
- Maintained record of all activities and assisted in litigation process.
- Conduct tutorial sessions in all areas of mathematics; therefore, a strong math background is mandatory.
- Conduct mini lessons in the process of writing in all subject areas, study skills, and other aspects of college preparation.
- Set an example of personal excellence and high expectations for AVID students to follow.
- Work with students in any phase of the writing process, such as brainstorming, clustering, revision, and editing.
- Communicate frequently and honestly with the AVID coordinator/teacher regarding student progress and areas of concern.

**Bryant's Academy- Volunteer Tutor EC-6****07/01/2007-present**

- Determine from student notes and discussions, the concepts that need to be taught or retaught.
- Evaluate student binders, including calendars, class and textbook notes, etc.
- Become familiar with the materials in the AVID Curriculum Libraries.
- Assist children enrolled in prekindergarten through the sixth grade in developing reading, writing and math skills.

- Help enhance self-esteem and confidence in the child through patience and encouragement.
- Maintained record of all activities and assisted in litigation process.
- Commit to a minimum of six hours a week for one academic semester or academic year.
- Assist children in reading, writing, and other literacy-based skills in cooperation with daycare/school staff.
- Tutor at least three students in weekly one-on-one (or 1:2, 1:3) literacy sessions. (Goal is to provide at least 15 sessions for each student in the course of the school year.).
- Complete a tutor log following each session. Information needs to be as accurate as possible because it is used to satisfy the requirements of daycare/school grant.

#### **Sienna Kids Academy- Lead Teacher**

**03/12/2012-03/30/2013**

- Create a developmentally appropriate program for our students
- Develop weekly lesson plans, activities, and class set-ups.
- Assess children's needs and development.
- Work closely with families to encourage mutual cooperation.
- Provide guidance to instructional staff to help resolve issues with students when necessary.
- Ensure the safety of all children in our program.
- Closely follow licensing regulations related to childcare.

#### **Primrose Schools of Sienna- Lead Teacher**

**08/10/2010-03/12/2012**

- Create a developmentally appropriate program for our students
- Develop weekly lesson plans, activities and class set-ups.
- Assess children's needs and development.
- Work closely with families to encourage mutual cooperation.
- Provide guidance to instructional staff to help resolve issues with students when necessary.
- Ensure the safety of all children in our program.
- Closely follow licensing regulations related to childcare.

#### **Certifications**

Certified Spiritual Life Coach-2018-Present  
 Certified Life Coach-2018-Present  
 Certified Public Speaker-2018-Present  
 Certified Christian Counselor-2019-Present  
 Mental Health & First Aid-2019-Present  
 CPR & First Aid-2016-Present

#### **Memberships and Affiliations**

Communications and Digital Media Club 2012-2014  
 Black Student Association Member 2012-2014



Delta Gems 2006-2011

Family, Career & Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) 2009-2010

National Association for the Advancement of Colored People 2019-present

National Association of Christian Counselors August 2019-present

Sam Houston Alumni Association 2019-present

T.A.F.E. (Texas Association of Future Educators) 2007-2010

### **Honors/Recognition**

- Generation Holy Nation Outstanding Alumni Award July 2012
- Teacher of the month October 2011
- Hard worker 2006-2010
- Certificate for Perfect Attendance 2006-2009
- Choir Certificate/Plaque 2003-2010
- Fulfilling Customers Expectations of Continual Good Service 2008-2009

### **National Presentations**

- 2019 ALER Conference  
 Title: Practices of literacy through a historical lens: An ethnographic observation by doctoral students of practical application of course content of LITC History of Literacy  
 Category: Teacher Education

### **Courses Taught**

- Fall 2018 CIEE 2333 Becoming A Teacher
- Fall 2018 CIEE 2333 Becoming A Teacher
- Spring 2019 CIEE 2333 Becoming A Teacher
- Spring 2019 CIEE 2333 Becoming A Teacher
- Spring 2019 CIEE 2333 Becoming A Teacher
- Fall 2019 CIEE 3374 Human Growth and Learning
- Fall 2019 CIEE 2333 Becoming A Teacher
- Fall 2019 CIEE 2333 Becoming A Teacher
- Spring 2020 CIEE 3374 Human Growth and Learning

### **Publications**

- Broken Pieces Still Blossom: Exiting Pain Entering Victory
- I Feel Beautiful: Embracing Your Confidence a Book for Young Girls, Young Ladies and Women
- I Feel Beautiful: Embracing Your Confidence a Book for Young Girls, Young Ladies and Women  
 Boosting Your Confidence Workbook
- Kicking Down the Fence: Setting Standards & Boundaries
- Kicking Down the Fence: Setting Standards & Boundaries Workbook
- Unveiled Transparency: Battle Scars Unleashed