

Life history of joanne



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Joanne was born in National Women's Hospital, Auckland, New Zealand in October 1964. Joanne's father worked full time as a plumber, her mother worked part time as a factory worker while also bringing up Joanne and her older brother. Joanne has spent all her life, from birth to present day, living in West Auckland. Joanne has never married and does not have any children. At the time of this interview Joanne is at the middle adulthood stage of her life.

This life history follows Joanne's life stages and identifies her major normative age graded events, normative history graded events and also non normative events, and reflects on the impact of these events on her development. Normative age graded influence included biological processes such as puberty and menopause, also included are sociocultural, environmental processes such as beginning formal education and retirement (Santrock, 2008). Normative history graded influences are common to people of a particular generation because of historical circumstances.

Other normative history graded influences include economic, political, and social upheavals (Santrock, 2008). Non normative life events are unusual occurrences that have a major impact on the individual's life (Santrock, 2008). During this essay Joanne's development stages will be discussed using theories on life span development by theorists such as Erikson, Piaget, Bowlby and others. The First Three Years (0-3) Physical Development Joanne was born in 1964, she was carried to full term, her mother states that it was a normal pregnancy and delivery, Joanne weighed 6 pounds 11 ounces.

Joanne was bottled fed from birth this was due to her mother having had a bad experience when breast feeding her first child. Joanne's first tooth broke

through at 7 months of age. Joanne took her first steps at 11 months and by 18 months Joanne could speak several words. Joanne states her mother says her development was normal (age graded normative events), her Plunket record shows that she reached all of her major physical milestones at the expected times. Cognitive Development

Between the ages of 0-3 years Joanne would have developed through Piaget's sensorimotor stage (normative age graded event) as her crawling, walking and hand-eye coordination were all documented as normal. Joanne would have progressed through this stage as she was a physically healthy infant. Psychosocial Development Joanne was raised in a nuclear family of two parents and one older male sibling. Her parents were both in their late twenties when Joanne was born.

Joanne's mother stayed home to look after the children whilst her father worked long hours as a Plumber (normative event). Joanne does not recall events from before the age of four (age graded normative event), but does recall a strong bond with her father. During this time her mother reported that if Joanne was left with another person for a period of time when she returned Joanne would be angry with her mother yet also want to be close to her (age graded normative event).

This is consistent with Ainsworth (1991) study on Attachment Theory (as cited in Burton, Western & Kowalski, 2008), infants who are angry and rejecting while simultaneously indicating a clear desire to be close to the mother have an ambivalent attachment style. Young Childhood (3 to 5 years) Physical Development At age 4 Joanne gained around 10 pounds in one year

(age graded non normative event) which caused some problems with children teasing her at kindergarten about her weight, according to Santrock (2008) the average child grows between 2? in height gains between 2 and 7 pounds a year.

Her height gains during this time were within the normal range. Cognitive Development Joanne struggled with remembering this stage of her life however she disclosed that from what she has been told by her mother that Joanne would spend many hours in her father's car talking and having conversations with herself (age graded normative event), Piaget called this kind of behaviour egocentric speech which reflects his belief that young children have difficulty taking the perspective of others (Berk, 2007).

Psychosocial Development This stage in Joanne's life also was a time of shyness for Joanne. Joanne remembers her mother telling her that she would cry and cling to her mother or father when Joanne was given to someone (age graded normative event). Attachment theory states that attachment is a developmental process based on the evolved adaptive tendency for young children to maintain proximity to a familiar person, called the attachment figure (Bowlby, 1999).

Joanne's parents were authoritarian (Burton, Western & Kowalski, 2009), placing high value on obedience and respect for authority, often not discussing why particular behaviours are important or listening to the child's point of view. Joanne's parents, particularly her mother often smacked her (history graded normative event) without discussion with Joanne of what she had done wrong. Middle and late childhood Physical Development Joanne

continued to gain weight throughout her middle to late childhood (age graded non normative event).

Girls are more likely than boys to be overweight (Santrock, 2008), also a change in Joanne's diet may have caused her weight gain to continue, with the introduction of several major fast food restaurants (historic normative event) such as Kentucky Fried Chicken and McDonalds in the early 1970's Joanne's family was drawn to the easy access of this type of food. During this time the family also became heavily involved in a Rugby League club and Joanne found her fitness greatly increased (age graded normative event).

Cognitive Development

Joanne states that she struggled with the school work that was given to her. One explanation is that Piaget's Concrete Operational Stage, (Santrock, 2008) Joanne's may have been impaired which could be explained by the effects of sexual, physical and emotional abuse that she endured from age 10 (non normative event). Piaget states that in this stage children can reason logically as long as reasoning can be applied to specific or concrete examples (Santrock, 2008). Research has linked child abuse with impaired cognitive development (Kurtz et al, 1993).

Psychosocial Development During this stage Joanne experienced sexual, physical and emotion abuse from within the family and from Joanne's neighbour (non normative event). There was also the start of school for Joanne, not that she can remember her first day at school, yet according to her mother Joanne went off to school following the other children from the

neighborhood (age graded normative event). Joanne went on to explain that she did not have many friends at school and kept to herself.

Joanne discussed that the only way to get the children at school to like or involve Joanne was for Joanne to start acting out with angry outbursts and become a bully to other children (non normative event). Poor emotion regulation, difficulty in adapting to school, attachment problems, problems in peer relations and delinquency can be attributed to the childhood abuse (Santrock, 2008). Adolescence Physical Development Joanne continued to gain weight throughout her adolescent years, Joanne says that partly this was a defence mechanism to be unattractive because of the abuse that she endured from age 10 till age 25 (non normative event).

Although this can also be attributed with the onset of Puberty, marked weight gains coincide with puberty (Santrock, 2008). In puberty (age graded normative event), Joanne started to notice her breasts increasing in size, hairs under her arms started to appear and at age 12 Menarche - a girl's first menstruation (Santrock, 2008). Joanne stated that other than going to a talk at school about puberty her mother had not discussed this with Joanne.

Joanne continued with her involvement in the Rugby League club throughout adolescence which helped with fitness and stabilising her weight. Cognitive Development Joanne finished primary and intermediate schools and continued on to high school (age graded normative event). Joanne left school at the age of 15 with no school qualifications, she further discussed with me that this should have been a time when she was learning about interpersonal

relationships, moral reasoning and behaviour, instead she was learning to survive (non normative event).

When Joanne left school she went straight on the unemployed benefit and started drinking and getting into trouble away from home (non normative event), yet in her home life her behaviour seemed normal to those around Joanne. Joanne found her attention to doing things was diminishing and she hated being at school and found every excuse not to go. Psychosocial Development During this time colour television came to New Zealand (historical normative event) which increased time spent in front of the television for some families.

From the age of ten years old till 15 years old there was intentional violation (non normative event) which made Joanne feel very unsafe and a very low self esteem something she still battles with to this day. Joanne remembers high anxiety of getting her first period and said she screamed at her mother and did not want to go to a family function “ because everyone would know she had her period and she would smell different”.

When Joanne was at school she continued to be a school bully, getting into fights and basically started rebelling against her parents and society as a way to deal with what was happening to Joanne (non normative event). Erikson's Socioemotional Development Theory (1965) states that at the stage of identity vs role confusion in adolescence, Joanne should have had industry at school where she would develop the capacity to work and cooperate with others, instead due to home life and the negative experience

she was having she have ended up with inferiority diffusion and left with feeling of incompetence and inferiority.

At the identity vs identity confusion stage, where she was trying to answer questions of who she was and how she belonged in society, and learning about her values, instead she fell into the identity confusion role where she had a negative outcome and confusion over her future as an adult (Erikson, 1965). Early Adulthood Physical Development In 1992 when Joanne was 27 years old she sustained a serious back injury due to a vehicle accident (non normative event).

Due to the vehicle accident Joanne had major physical changes, she lost the use of her normal bodily functions, including bowel and bladder function as well as the loss of the use of her legs and sexual function. This left Joanne in a wheelchair for approximately 3 years. Physical therapy started to rebuild the use of her legs with the use of crutches and eventually after many years to be able to walk unaided. Joanne's bowel, bladder and sexual function have never recovered from the accident (non normative event).

Joanne's accident has left lifelong disabilities that still affect Joanne to the present day. Cognitive Development With the vehicle accident brought huge changes to Joanne's cognitive development, instead of exploring her sexuality and place in the world, Joanne was faced with changes in the way she thought about the future (non normative event). Joanne was faced with having to deal with changing the way she thought about life, her career and her way of living. Joanne states that she spent many hours whilst bed ridden

thinking about realistic goals and how her emotions were shaping her thoughts.

Looking at the suggested stage of cognitive development, postformal thought suggests that we include the belief that solutions to problems need to be realistic, and that emotion and subjective factors can influence thinking (Santrock, 2008). Psychosocial Development Early Adulthood brought with Joanne's first time of employment. Joanne became a Taxi Driver when she was twenty which was the legal age to obtain a taxi licence. Joanne continued to drive taxis for the next 14 years until injury forced Joanne to stop working. Joanne was also heavily involved in teaching people to get their taxi licence and managing rental properties.

This was the first time in Joanne's life that she felt as though she had a role model, her employer, and some positive influences in her life, such as income security and job satisfaction. In 1992 Joanne had a serious vehicle accident which left her paralysed. Joanne spent 6 months at the Otara Spinal Unit for rehabilitation which gave her a sense of belonging to a group. In 1996 Joanne's primary abuser died which opened the floodgates to lots of flashbacks, memories and information that Joanne stated that she had blocked out of her mind for years since the sexual abuse between the ages of 10 and 15 (non normative event).

Joanne went on further to discuss that at this stage of her life as a coping strategy Joanne turned to using drugs both illegal and prescribed and quickly became addicted (non normative event). A combination of family, peer and psychosocial pressures increase a person's willingness to engage in

behaviours such as binge drinking, experimentation with prescription and recreational drugs, and to minimise or ignore the risks involved (Newman & Newman, 2009).

In 1997 Joanne hit rock bottom and took a major overdose and was clinically dead as a result but the doctors were able to revive her, she stated that she was angry over being brought back to life, but realised that it had once again made her beliefs and values in her life change. In 1997 Princess Diana the Princess of Wales was killed tragically in a car accident (historic non-normative event). This event had a huge impact worldwide and impacted Joanne personally as she had survived a horrific car accident when Princess Diana had not.

In 1998 Joanne further explored her sexuality and announced to anyone that would listen that she was a lesbian and had finally found herself, she states that for the first time in her life she felt secure in who she was. An individual's sexual orientation, same-sex, heterosexual or bisexual, is most likely determined by a combination of genetic, hormonal, cognitive and environmental factors (Baldwin & Baldwin, 1998 as cited in Santrock, 2008). Joanne never had consistent accommodation during this time in her life, moving regularly and never settling anywhere for too long. Middle Adulthood Physical Development Joanne in middle adulthood still lives with the physical effects of her car accident, she still has no control over her bowels, bladder or sexual function. Joanne disclosed that, at the age of 46, she was starting to feel the effects of growing old, such as the onset of menopause (age-graded normative event). Joanne has also noticed that her hair is greying

and her hearing, eyesight and memory are starting to fade slightly and that she now has hair where she has never had hair before, for example her upper lip and chin (age graded normative event). Cognitive Development

In 2004 at the age of 39 Joanne spent 9 months at Segar House, which is an intensive residential cognitive behavioural therapy programme, this taught Joanne skills in emotional regulation, behavioural analysis and cognitive thinking, which allowed Joanne to change her self-destructive patterns. After graduating from Segar House Joanne decided that it was time to make further changes in her life, and enrolled in University where Joanne gained a National Certificate in Mental Health Support Work along with a Diploma in Mental Health Support Work and finally graduating in July 2010 with a Bachelor of Health Science in Applied Mental Health.

During her study she was diagnosed with a learning disability, which had never been picked up in her childhood (historic non normative event). Once the correct support was in place Joanne found learning much more easy and enjoyable. Joanne says that she felt that her ability to understand the university work was harder than the younger students in her class, this is consistent with Horn's theory of Fluid and Crystallized Intellectual Development over a lifespan (Santrock, 2008).

Horn believed that crystallized intelligence, based on cumulative learning experiences, increases throughout the life span but fluid intelligence, the ability to perceive and manipulate information, steadily declines from middle adulthood (Santrock, 2008). At 46 Joanne is currently in look for a suitable position in the field that she has trained in, Joanne states that for the first

time in her life she feels that she has proven her intellect. Psychosocial Development University study brought about new social settings for Joanne, meeting and forming a lot of new friendships and acquaintances from university classes and work placements.

In 2001 the World Trade Centre was attacked by terrorists, which shook the world (historic non normative event). In 2006, Joanne moved in with a close friend and found a home life that was stable and secure. Joanne states that she finally felt that she had a place to belong to and to call home. Joanne also started thinking about what she had done in her life and what she was leaving for generations to come. This is consistent with Erikson's seventh stage in life which is Generativity vs.

Stagnation, Generativity encompasses adult's desire to leave legacies of themselves to the next generation, in contrast stagnation develops when individuals sense that they have done little or nothing for the next generation (Santrock, 2008) Joanne spoke about how much her life had changed in the past five years since deciding to study at university, she says that it changed her life for the better by bringing pride and self esteem into her life. Joanne's life to date has included a large number of normative age and history graded events, which have be punctuated by some significant life changing non normative events.

The sexual abuse from age 10 to 15 and her car accident that left her paralysed were two of these events. Joanne has always defined herself as more of a people orientated person rather than an intellect or physical person and considers that the psychosocial aspects of her life have had the

most influence. Joanne also stated that if it wasn't for her family and friends over her lifetime she is not sure that she would be where she is today. The information for this life history report was obtained from an interview conducted by myself for the purpose of this course. Written informed consent was obtained by the interviewee.