Analysis of the Cultural Interview

The excerpts provided here are intended to give you a sense of a variety of ways that you might approach integrating both the content of the interview (e.g., voice of the interviewee) and the synthesis of the literature (multicultural and social justice themes) to support a thesis statement and key arguments in this portion of the paper.

**Example 1**

Shadowed Stories in an Able-Bodied Society

Approximately 7‒15% of all premature infants will be affected by an ocular disease known as Retinopathy of Prematurity (ROP) (Moore, Berger, & Wilson, 2014). . . . [Content removed] The individualistic framework that shapes Canadian society influences systemic factors and personal realities and impacts Sara’s experiences with her identities.

**An Individualistic Society**

The cultural values that flourish in Western capitalist society are embedded in neoliberal ideals (Galer, 2012). Self-determination and independence construct and shape identity goals (Brown, 2011; Galer, 2012). Individual achievement is a top identity goal welded through economic success (Galer, 2012). In Galer’s study, participants with disabilities reported how mainstream ideals are important factors in their individual backgrounds and personal identity goals. Participants revealed a desire to achieve independence. Sara discussed how she hates feeling dependent on others and wants to achieve a self-sufficient and independent existence. She noted, “If I don’t get what I need or what I want, then I am obviously not trying hard enough . . . everything rests on my shoulders . . . essentially you are your own obstacle.” Autonomous functioning and the needs and goals of the individual are valued in individualistic cultures (Murdick, Shore, & Chittooran, 2004). The tendency to move away from those who are different can be viewed as consistent with individualistic goals (Murdick, et al., 2004). From this perspective, people with disabilities may face a conundrum. The individualistic goals that many people with disabilities strive to achieve may actually stand as an obstacle for actualizing this reality (Brown, 2011; Murdick et al., 2004). For example, the desire to achieve independence may be stunted by the lack of inclusiveness in the Canadian workforce (Galer, 2012). Despite policies that exist, society still tends to view people with disabilities as *others* (Brown, 2011; Murdick et al., 2004).

**Example 2**

As ongoing news stories about same-sex marriage, discrimination, and human rights continue throughout the Western world, a microcosm of these issues and their personal impact can be seen in one person's life. In this interview, I had the opportunity to explore one individual's worldview including his values and beliefs, his experiences related to developing a gay identity in this culture, and how these experiences fit with research and theories related to multicultural counselling. **Len's experiences revealed the importance of resilience in developing coping skills to counter internalized homophobia due to oppression and discrimination and in creating his own unique path to a positive gay identity.**

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**Len's natural character traits helped to buffer stress**. Kwon (2013) stated that a "source of resilience lies in the ability to tolerate stress by focusing on the future, envisioning a better life and actively pursuing goals with determination" (p. 372). Len was highly goal-oriented from a young age. He managed the bullying at school by maintaining a focus on finishing school and moving away from the small town in which he grew up. Finding a safe space through moving is one aspect of resilience (Zubernis, Snyder, & McCoy, 2011). Hope and optimism can also help to buffer stress (Kwon, 2013; Stewart, 2012). Len tends to focus on the positive. He started off discussing his worldview by stating, "We are incredibly lucky to be born at this time in this part of the world." His strengths focus comes through in his teaching of music: "Be as positive as possible, realistic, but positive. If I had a student that did two things wrong and seven things right, then I say focus on the seven things." His highly optimistic view of life is revealed even in how he considers individuals who have discriminated against him. He makes allowances for ignorance, lack of education, and lack of exposure to alternate viewpoints. Len enjoys humorous banter (Roberts, 2011). . . . [content removed] Len's goal-seeking, optimism, humour, and altruism have helped him with stress relief.

**Example 3**

Schock-Giordano’s (2013) ethnocultural spin on the ABC-X model of family stress can help clarify how Bilal’s family support got him through this difficult time. Adapted from Price, Price, and McKenny’s (2009) model, the A of the model is the stressor, the B is the family’s resources and strengths, C is the meaning attached to the event as a family, and X is the stress that it produces. In Bilal’s case, A was the death of Bilal’s wife, B was the close family ties as well as support from other factors like religion and community, C is Bilal’s belief that his wife’s death was Allah’s will, and X is the stress outcomes such as money difficulties as well as closer bonds with Bilal’s children (Schock-Giordano, 2013).