

# Traits and Giving Meaning to the Gratitude

## Held by the Elderly

– From interviews about life stories –

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The purpose of this study is to elucidate the traits and the meaning of gratitude held by the elderly. In this study, six elderly people were interviewed (mean age 80.8 years, three men and three women) about their views on gratitude using an approach involving interviews about life stories. To analyze the data obtained from the interviews, the M-GTA method was used. The result of this study showed that 16 categories came to the fore (i.e., abstract piety, the power of positive acceptance, comparison with other people, the satisfaction of being healthy, family relations, the benefits received from parents, the joy of child-rearing, succession to the next generation, the joy of study, the joy of work, thoughtfulness and kindness from the superiors, encouragement from other people, ambivalent feelings, satisfaction in the present condition, the joy of helping others, and preparation for the future). The result also showed that experiences fostering some regret change into a means to evaluate the past, solve conflict, and integrate the past, either through chance, awareness, or the passage of time.