Contents

1. General Introduction  7
   1.1 Introduction  7
   1.2 Autobiographical memory  11
   1.3 Life events  19
   1.4 Method  26

2. Number of events  35
   2.1 Introduction  35
   2.2 Method  41
   2.3 Results  41
      2.3.1 Number of events  41
      2.3.2 Distribution of events  45
      2.3.3 Age first event, last event, expected death  51
   2.4 Discussion  53

3. Affect of events  57
   3.1 Introduction  57
   3.2 Method  61
   3.3 Results  62
      3.3.1 Mean affect  62
      3.3.2 Percentage of intense affect  66
      3.3.3 Distribution of affect over the lifespan  69
      3.3.4 Affect first and last event  78
      3.3.5 Best and worst times of life  80
   3.4 Discussion  83

4. Content of events  93
   4.1 Introduction  93
   4.2 Method  95
   4.3 Results  96
      4.3.1 W1: Content of events  96
      4.3.2 W1: Affect of events  102
      4.3.3 W1: Patterns of events  105
   4.4 Discussion  116
5. **Dynamics** 123
   5.1 Introduction 123
   5.2 Method 127
   5.3 Results 129
      5.3.1 W1 | W2 | W3: Content of events 129
      5.3.2 W1 | W2 | W3: Affect of events 131
      5.3.3 W1 | W2 | W3: Patterns of events 132
      5.3.4 W1→W2→W3: Number of stable events 142
      5.3.5 W1→W2→W3: Affect of stable events 150
      5.3.6 W1→W2→W3: Content of stable events 157
      5.3.7 W1→W2→W3: Bump and Present 165
   5.4 Discussion 173

6. **Considerations and Conclusion** 187
   6.1 Introduction 187
   6.2 Methodological issues 188
   6.3 Autobiographical memory effects 190
   6.4 Autobiographical memory over the lifespan 195
   6.5 Future studies 199
   6.6 Conclusion 201

References 207
Summary 225
Samenvatting 231
Dankwoord 237
Curriculum Vitae 238