

**Human Behavior Course
2004**

ADULT DEVELOPMENT

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HUMAN BEHAVIOR COURSE 2004
ADULT DEVELOPMENT - HANDOUT

LEARNING OBJECTIVES & ISSUES FOR THOUGHT.

1. Know Erickson's eight stages of development and have a basic understanding of what characterizes each stage.
2. Know the basic defense mechanisms, why defense mechanisms are important, and Vaillant's hierarchy of defense mechanisms.
3. Have a general familiarity with the three landmark studies that have dominated adult life-cycle scholarship (studies by Gould, Vaillant, and Levinson).

Adulthood I.

I. Introduction

Lecture Notes

Historical Perspective: Developmental stages have been described for thousands of years -- Talmud, Confucius, Shakespeare's "As You Like It" (Attach 1). See Table 1.1-1 below:

TABLE 1.1-1
Three Versions of "The Ages of Man"*

The Sayings of the Fathers (from the Talmud)

- 5 years is the age of reading (Scripture);
- 10 for Mishnah (the laws);
- 13 for the Commandments (Bar Mitzvah, moral responsibility);
- 15 for Gemara (Talmudic discussions; abstract reasoning);
- 18 for Hupa (wedding canopy);
- 20 for seeking a livelihood (pursuing an occupation);
- 30 for attaining full strength ("Koah");
- 40 for understanding;
- 50 for giving counsel;
- 60 for becoming an elder (wisdom, old age);
- 70 for white hair;
- 80 for Gevurah (new, special strength of age);
- 90 for being bent under the weight of the years;
- 100 for being as if already dead and passed away from the world.

Confucius

The Master said:

- At 15, I set my heart upon learning.
- At 30, I had planted my feet firm upon the ground.
- At 40, I no longer suffered from perplexities.
- At 50, I knew what were the biddings of heaven.
- At 60, I heard them with docile ear.
- At 70, I could follow the dictates of my own heart; for what I desired no longer overstepped the boundaries of right.

Solon

- 0-7 A boy at first is the man; unripe; then he casts his teeth: milk-teeth befitting the child he sheds in his seventh year.
- 7-14 Then to his seven years, God adding another seven, signs of approaching manhood show in the bud.
- 14-21 Still, in the third of the sevens, his limbs are growing: his chin touched with a fleecy down, the bloom of the cheek gone.
- 21-28 Now, in the fourth of the sevens, ripen to greatest completeness the powers of the man, and his worth becomes plain to see.
- 28-35 In the fifth, he bethinks him that this is the season for courting, bethinks him that sons will preserve and continue his line.
- 35-42 Now, in the sixth, his mind, ever open to virtue, broadens, and never inspires him to profitless deeds.
- 42-56 Seven time seven, and eight; the tongue and the mind for fourteen years are now at their best.
- 56-63 Still, in the ninth, he is able, but never so nimble in speech and in wit as he was in the days of his prime.
- 63-70 Who to the tenth has attained, and has lived to complete it, has come to the time to depart on the ebb-tide of Death.

* From Levinson D J, with Darrow C N, Klein E B, Levinson M H, McKee B: *The Seasons of a Man's Life*. Alfred A Knopf, New York. 1978.

ALL THE WORLD'S A STAGE,
AND ALL THE MEN AND WOMEN MERELY PLAYERS.
THEY HAVE THEIR EXISTS AND THEIR
ENTRANCES,
AND ONE MAN IN HIS TIME PLAYS MANY PARTS,
HIS ACTS BEING SEVEN AGES. AT FIRST THE
INFANT, MEWLING AND PUKING IN THE NURSE'S
ARMS. THEN THE WHINING SCHOOLBOY, WITH
HIS SACHEL AND SHINING MORNING FACE,
CREEPING LIKE SNAIL UNWILLINGLY TO SCHOOL.
AND THEN THE LOVER SIGHING LIKE FURNACE,
WITH A WOEFUL BALLAD MADE TO HIS MISTRESS'
EYEBROW. THEN A SOLDIER, FULL OF STRANGE
OATHS AND BEARDED LIKE THE PARD, JEALOUS
IN HONOR, SUDDEN AND QUICK IN QUARREL,
SEEKING THE BAUBLE REPUTATION EVEN IN THE
CANNON'S MOUTH. AND THEN THE JUSTICE, IN
FAIR ROUND BELLY WITH GOOD CAPON LINED
WITH EYES SEVERE AND BEARD OF FORMAL CUT,
FULL OF WISE SAWS AND MODERN INSTANCES,
AND SO HE PLAYS HIS PART. THE SIXTH AGE
SHIFTS INTO THE LEAN AND SLIPPARED
PANTALOOK WITH SPECTACLES ON NOSE AND PUCH
ON SIDE, HIS YOUTHFUL HOSE, WELL SAVED, A
WORLD TOO WIDE FOR HIS SHRUNK SHANK, AND
HIS BIG MANLY VOICE, TURNING AGAIN TOWARD
CHILDISH TREBLE, PIPES AND WHISTLES IN HIS
SOUND. LAST SCENE OF ALL THAT ENDS THIS
STRANGE EVENTFUL HISTORY, IS SECOND
CHILDISHNESS AND MERE OBLIVION, SANS
TEETH, SANS EYES, SANS TASTE, SANS
EVERYTHING.

SHAKESPEARE, "AS YOU LIKE IT", vii 142-166

II. Review Erik Erikson's Stages

Lecture Notes

This is a favorite of USMLE and I suggest you keep this summary for USMLE study (Attach 2, three pages).

III. Roger Gould: "Concept of Adulthood Development," chapter 45, pp. 1998-2007. See Table 45-1 below:

TABLE 45-1

The Four Major False Assumptions and Subassumptions

Major false assumption I: I will always belong to my parents and believe in their vision of reality.

Five Subassumptions

1. If I get any more independent, it will be a disaster.
2. I can see the world only through my parent's assumptions.
3. Only they can guarantee my safety.
4. They must be my only family.
5. I do not own my body.

Major false assumption II: Doing it their way with will power and perseverance will probably bring results, but when I become too frustrated, confused, or tired or am simply unable to cope, they will step in and show me the way.

Four Subassumptions

1. Rewards will come automatically, if you do what you are supposed to do.
2. There is only one right way to do things.
3. My loved ones are able to do for me what I have not been able to do for myself.
4. Rationality, commitment, and effort will always prevail over all other forces.

Major false assumption III: Life is simple and controllable. There are no significant coexisting, contradictory forces within me.

Four Subassumptions

1. What I know intellectually, I know emotionally.
2. I am not like my parents in ways I do not want to be.
3. I can see the reality of those close to me quite clearly.
4. Threats to my security are not real.

Major false assumption IV: There is no evil in me or death in the world; the demons have been expelled.

Four Subassumptions

1. Death cannot happen to me.
2. It is impossible to live without a protector in life (women).
3. There is no life beyond this family.
4. I am an innocent.

R. Gould: "adult consciousness is shaped by gradually understanding and transcending the childhood consciousness and beliefs..."

R. Gould: "an adult view of the world is realized to the extent that we challenge and master these false assumptions or illusions of safety from childhood."

ERIKSON'S EIGHT STAGES OF MAN

Unlike others among Freud's followers, such as Adler and Jung, who sought to substitute their own conceptions for Freud's, Erikson has further differentiated some of the Freudian conceptions and incorporated these into a broader ego psychology that goes beyond classical psychoanalysis while remaining faithful to its inspiration. Within Freudian psychology, which emphasized the role of unconscious drives and mental processes, the ego was relatively neglected until the last years of Freud's life. Once the ego was freed from its ties to instinctual forces, the way was clear to elaborate a theory of the relatively autonomous ego. This, in effect is what Erikson has done. Erikson, has, however, focused upon a hitherto neglected aspect of ego functioning. Erikson has argued that the ego comes equipped with a number of social senses that undergo elaboration parallel with intellectual and physical development. The "psychosocial stages" outlined by Erikson are in effect the stages in the elaboration of these social senses. The psychosocial stages differ from the Freudian stages. In Freudian theory, the psychosexual stages are described in terms of their "geography." In Erikson's theory, the stages are described in terms of a series of encounters between the ego's various social senses and the developmental tasks endemic to each stage of the human life cycle. In describing the psychosocial stages of development, Erikson suggests that an individual's social propensities are bipolar. While all of these social senses are present from the start of life, there is a period in the life cycle during which a particular pair, because of a complex of developmental and sociocultural factors, comes into special prominence. The experiences that occur during this period have more than usual impact upon strengthening or weakening the bipolar propensities. At each stage certain social propensities come to the fore and pose a crisis for the individual, inasmuch as during that period one or another propensity will become dominant and may remain so throughout the life cycle. Which propensity will upon the individual's social experiences during the period and upon what has occurred before in the individual's life history. This is not to say that the outcomes of these "crises" are permanent and unchangeable, but only to emphasize that the outcomes tend to be self-reinforcing and hence are more difficult to change after the critical period is over.

I. Trust and Mistrust

During the first two years of life, the crisis at the forefront of the infant's interpersonal encounters has to do with the strengthening of his sense of trust to a greater extent than his sense of mistrust. Both trust and mistrust are required for effective adaptation to the social world. Healthy personality development demands that the child's sense of trust in other people and in himself outweigh his sense of mistrust of others and of the self. Consequently, it is important during the first years of life that the experiences which nourish the child's sense of trust outweigh the experiences that reinforce his sense of mistrust. A strong sense of trust, balanced by a moderate amount of distrust, is the best outcome to the developmental stage.

II. Development of Autonomy vs Shame and Doubt

The second stage in Erikson's scheme, roughly the second and third years of life, is concerned with the crisis as to whether the toddler's sense of autonomy will be strengthened to a greater extent than his sense of shame and doubt. The sense of autonomy shows itself in the child's newly developed powers of motor control and language production. The preferred outcome of this period is that the child's sense of autonomy outweigh his sense of shame and doubt.

III. Emergence of Initiative and a Sense of Guilt

The next stage, roughly the age of 3 to 5, sees the coming into prominence of the crisis between the encouragement of a sense of initiative and that of a sense of guilt. In Erikson's view, these social senses are prominent at a time when the child's motor skills are quite advanced and at a time when his language skills are quite proficient. At this period young people have a strong desire to choose what materials they want to work with and what activities they want to participate in.

IV. A Sense of Industry or of Inferiority

Beginning with the elementary school years (usually ages 6-7) and extending through the period of early adolescence, Erikson proposes that other social propensities come into prominence, namely, the sense of industry on the one hand and the sense of inferiority on the other. The sense of industry parallels the school-age child's new mental and motor capacities. On the motor plane, the child has acquired fine as well as large muscle motor control and can use a variety of tools such as drills, saws, and hammers with considerable skill and precision. Along with the new motor skills which emerge at this stage are new intellectual skills which take the school-age child far beyond the mental powers of the preschool child. There are, however, many children whose sense of industry is not encouraged and whose sense of inferiority is nourished instead. A child who has a physical handicap, a mental limitation or an emotional disturbance may have school experiences that reinforce his sense of inferiority. The child of low average intelligence, for example, meets repeated failure in school and soon begins to hate the while experience.

V. Ego Identity and Role Confusion

With the onset of adolescence, and all of its dramatic changes in the child's physiology, physiognomy and intelligence, still other social propensities come into prominence. At this stage, according to Erikson's theory, what come to the fore is the adolescent's sense of ego identity on the one hand and his sense of role confusion on the other. The resolution of the "crisis" or confrontation between ego propensity and social milieu in adolescence is determined by many factors, including the family, adult instructors and peer group. In constructing his sense of ego identity, the young person must integrate what he has learned about himself from his many different social roles and relationships.

A. Among the adolescent's new intellectual powers is his ability to deal with theories, to integrate disparate phenomena and events within more general encompassing laws and principles. This ability is then put in the service of nourishing a sense of ego identity, a sense of continuity and sameness amidst the flux of change which is adolescence.

B. Other young people have trouble integrating their diverse roles, attributes and personality characteristics and experience an enhanced sense of role confusion. In some instances, the difficulty derives from an overwhelming sense of mistrust which makes the young person reluctant to commit himself to any particular life style.

C. Still other young people deal with the problem by adopting a negative identity, which is often a pattern of behavior proscribed by parents or society.

VI. The Young Adult: Intimacy vs Isolation

A. The propensities which move into the limelight during young adulthood are intimacy on the one hand and isolation on the other. Intimacy, in Erikson's framework, is more than sexual and has to do with caring and sharing as well as with physical intimacy. True intimacy presupposes that the individual regards someone else's needs and concerns as being as important

as his own. (Erikson's conception of intimacy is very close to that of Harry Stack Sullivan.) But intimacy presupposes a solid sense of ego identity, because a genuine concern for others presupposes a sense of personal solidarity, the absence of any fear or anxiety about losing oneself in the act of giving to someone else. This holds true on the intellectual, emotional and sexual planes, where true giving can occur only when the individual who is giving fears no loss of self in the process.

VII. A Generative Sense vs Psychologic Stagnation

In the usual course of events, an outcome of intimacy is marriage and the establishment of home and family, still other social propensities come to the fore. In Erikson's view, there is on the one hand the possibility of nourishing a budding sense of generativity, of concern for and dedication to the next generation and future generations. Ordinarily, generativity is shown in the rearing of children and participation in programs for youth. But marriage and children are not essential for reinforcing the sense of generativity.

VIII. A final Sense of Integrity or Despair

A. Toward the end of life, the mature years, there is time for reflection upon one's life and how it has been lived. Such reflection brings forward two other social propensities, i.e., a sense of integrity and a sense of despair. Erikson argues that the individual who looks backward upon his life with some satisfaction and with few regrets nourishes a sense of integrity, a sense of having lived totally and well and of being able to accept death without merely succumbing to it. But the individual who looks back at his life as a series of missed opportunities, of personal and social misfortunes, nourishes a sense of bitter despair at what might have been "if only." In such individual, death is feared because it brings home the fact that the past cannot be undone and life cannot be lived over.

The Universals in Erikson's scheme are the social propensities of trust vs mistrust; autonomy vs shame and doubt; initiative vs guilt; industry vs inferiority; ego identity vs role confusion; intimacy vs isolation; generativity vs stagnation; and integrity vs despair. The extent to which these propensities are realized and balanced is dependent, however, upon the particular nature of the individual's experience. Hence Erikson's theory is consonant with the current view in genetics which regards traits as being determined by a "gene complex" which has a particular "norm of reaction," a range of phenotypic manifestations whose particular realization will depend upon the kind of environment in which they are placed.

A second characteristic of Erikson's scheme of development has to do with the way in which social experience is communicated. Erikson suggests that individuals carry with them residual identities from their sociocultural past which have been transmitted unconsciously in certain attitudes and patterns of behavior. Attitudes, roles and behavior patterns are thus transmitted unconsciously from parent to child in such ways that a child can demonstrate an orientation of grandparents whom he has never known and whom his own parents did not subconsciously emulate.

- IV. George Vaillant
-Hierarchy of Defense Mechanisms
-See Attachment III.

G. Vaillant: *“Adult development occurred because of a gradual shift from IMMATURE to MATURE EGO DEFENSES*

G. Vaillant: *“Factors that accounted for the development of more mature defenses over time:*

- (1) *Development of a person’s nervous system (cognitive development),*
- (2) *The presence of suitable models for identification,*
- (3) *Parenting experiences early in life, and*
- (4) *Close personal support network.*

G. Vaillant: Corroborated Erik Erikson’s model of the Life Cycle...but offered one change,

G. Vaillant: Between Erikson’s stage of Intimacy vs. Isolation (#6, 21-40 y.o.) and Generativity vs. Stagnation (#7, 40-65 y.o.), Intermediate stage of CAREER CONSOLIDATION.

G. Vaillant/ CAREER CONSOLIDATION
L. Cartwright: STAGE (Men & Women)
(1) Narrowing of focus,
(2) Less affable and outgoing,
(3) Less sensitive to the needs of others, and
(4) Increasingly focused on achievement and ambition.

Vaillant's Hierarchy of Defense Mechanisms

I. **Psychotic Defenses:** common in healthy persons before the age of 5; normal in adult dreams and projective testing.

- a. **Denial** of external reality
- b. **Distortion:** gross reshaping of external reality to suit inner needs, such as wish fulfilling delusions
- c. **Delusional projection:** frank delusions (usually persecutory) about external reality

II. **Immature Defenses:** common among healthy children and adolescents, in individuals with character (personality) disorders, and among adults in psychotherapy.

- a. **Fantasy:** the use of fantasy to create more comforting or controllable people in one's own mind or to resolve conflicts with others
(e.g. often used in chaotic and abusive families since the reality is so devastating)
- b. **Projection:** attributing one's own unacceptable thoughts/feelings to someone else
- c. **Hypochondriasis:** transforming negative feelings towards someone else, towards oneself, and then into physical symptoms
- d. **Passive Aggressive Behavior or Masochism:** similar to c., aggression is ineffectively expressed through passivity toward self or others
- e. **Acting out:** behavioral actions to avoid conscious awareness of unpleasant feelings

III. **Neurotic Defenses:** universal and common in all of us, especially under stress

- a. **Intellectualization:** the thought is conscious and one "overvalues" cognition, without awareness of the associated feelings. (Described aptly as "one living in their head!")
- b. **Repression:** the feeling is often conscious, but the associated thoughts/images are not. Present in amnesia and conversion disorders
- c. **Reaction formation:** One is aware of thoughts and feelings which are counter to unacceptable unconscious impulses
- d. **Displacement:** Redirection of conscious feelings and thoughts toward a "safer" object, than the one that caused the stress

IV. **Mature Defenses:** common in healthy adolescents and adults and synthesize impulses, conscience and reality

- a. **Sublimation:** process in which impulses are modified and directed into more acceptable channels
- b. **Altruism:** regard for the interests and needs of others

c. **Suppression**: conscious decision to “put off” or not pay attention to conflict or situation (repression puts it totally out of one’s mind)

d. **Anticipation**: realistic experiencing of both thoughts and feelings associated with future conflict or loss

e. **Humor**: emphasizing the amusing or ironic aspects of the conflict as a way of dealing with stress or conflict. He does not have a negative impact on others - if it does it more appropriately belongs to passive-aggression or displacement.

V. Daniel Levinson
 -Developmental periods in the eras of
 early and middle adulthood.

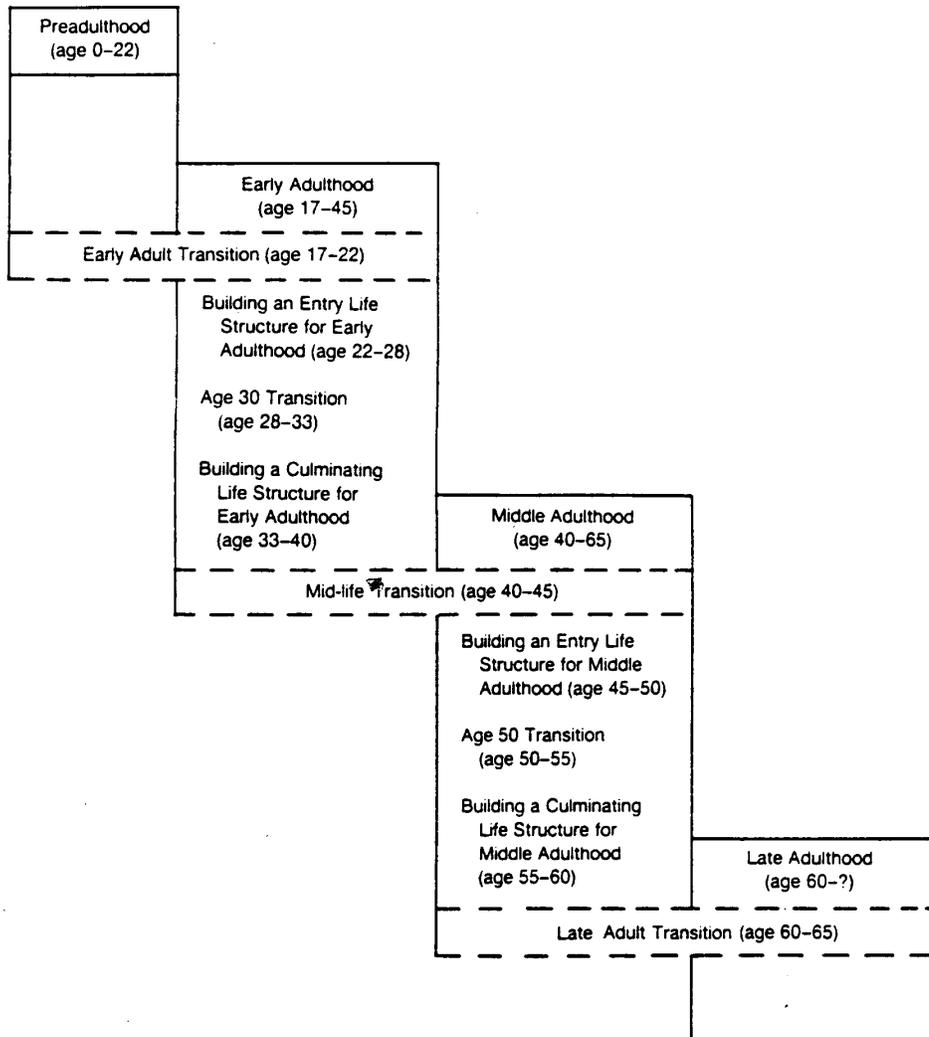


FIGURE 1.1-1. *Developmental periods in the eras of early and middle adulthood.* (Adapted from Levinson D J, with Darrow C N, Klein E B, Levinson M H, McKee B: *The Seasons of a Man's Life.* Alfred A Knopf, New York, 1978.

VI. Erik Erikson: "Revision" of epigenetic life cycle model to a "life-spiral" model.

Lecture Notes

VII. Criticism of developmental models of adulthood are presented.