

Theories of Development and the Ego

Erikson is credited with being one of the originators of Ego psychology, which stresses the role of the ego as more than a servant of the id. According to Erikson, the child's environment is crucial to providing growth, adjustment, a source of self-awareness and identity.

Favorable outcomes of each stage are sometimes known as "virtues," a term used in the context of Erikson's work as it is applied to medicine, meaning "potencies." Erikson's research suggests that each individual must learn how to hold both extremes of each specific life-stage challenge in tension with one another, not rejecting one end of the tension or the other. Only when both extremes in a life-stage challenge are understood and accepted as both required and useful, can the optimal virtue for that stage surface. Thus, 'trust' and 'mis-trust' must both be understood and accepted, in order for realistic 'hope' to emerge as a viable solution at the first stage. Similarly, 'integrity' and 'despair' must both be understood and embraced, in order for actionable 'wisdom' to emerge as a viable solution at the last stage..

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Erik_Erikson

1. Basic trust vs. Basic mistrust (Virtue: Hope)

This stage covers the period of infancy, 0-1 year of age, the most fundamental stage. Whether the baby develops basic trust or basic mistrust is not merely a matter of nurture. It is multi-faceted and has strong social components. It depends on the quality of the maternal relationship. The mother carries out and reflects their inner perceptions of trustworthiness, a sense of personal meaning, etc. on the child. If successful in this, the baby develops a sense of trust, which "forms the basis in the child for a sense of identity." Failure to develop this trust will result in a feeling of fear and a sense that the world is inconsistent and unpredictable..

2. Autonomy vs. Shame (Virtue: Will)

Covers early childhood around 1-3 years old. Introduces the concept of autonomy vs. shame and doubt. The child begins to discover the beginnings of his or her independence, and parents must facilitate the child's sense of doing basic tasks "all by himself/herself." Discouragement can lead to the child doubting his or her efficacy. During this stage the child is usually trying to master toilet training.

3. Initiative vs. Guilt (Virtue: Purpose)

Preschool / 3-6 years. Does the child have the ability to or do things on their own, such as dress him or herself? If "guilty" about making their own choices, the child will not function well. Erikson has a positive outlook on this stage, that most guilt is quickly compensated by a sense of accomplishment.

Diagram

4. Industry vs. Inferiority (Virtue: Competence)

School-age / 6-11 years. Child compares self-worth to others (as in a classroom environment). Child recognizes major disparities in personal abilities relative to other children. Erikson places some emphasis on the teacher, who should ensure that children do not feel inferior.

5. Identity vs. Role Confusion (Virtue: Fidelity)

Adolescent / 12-18 years. Questioning of self. Who am I, how do I fit in? Where am I going in life? Erikson believes, that if the parents allow the child to explore, they will conclude their own identity. If, however, the parents continually push him/her to conform to their views, the teen will face identity confusion.

6. Intimacy vs. Isolation (Virtue: Love)

The first stage of adult development, usually happens during young adulthood, which is between the ages of 18-35. Dating, marriage, family and friendships are important during this stage. Successfully forming loving relationships, individuals experience love and intimacy. Those failing to form lasting relationships may feel isolated and alone.

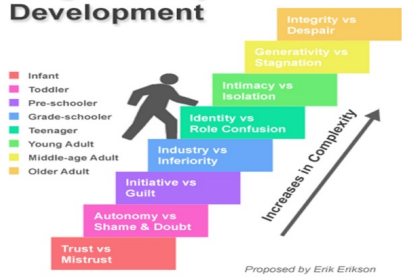
7. Generativity vs. Stagnation (Virtue: Care)

The second stage of adulthood is between ages 35-64, during which people normally settle into their life and know what is important to them. A person is either making progress in their career or treading lightly in their career and unsure if this is what they want to do for the rest of their working lives. Also, a person is enjoying raising their children and participating in activities, giving them a sense of purpose. If a person is not comfortable with the way their life is progressing, they're usually regretful about the decisions and feel a sense of uselessness..

8. Ego integrity vs. Despair (Virtue: Wisdom)

This stage affects the age group of 65 and older, a time where the individual has reached the last chapter in their life and retirement is approaching or taken place. Ego-integrity means the acceptance of life in its fullness: the victories and the defeats, what was accomplished and what was not accomplished. Wisdom is the result of successfully completing this final developmental task. Wisdom is defined as "informed and detached concern for life itself in the face of death."

Stages of Psychosocial Development



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