

# Psychology of Adjustment PSY 131

## Chapter 2 Reviewing Your Childhood and Adolescence

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### Reviewing Your Childhood and Adolescence: Overview

- Freud's Psychosexual Developmental Theory
- Group exercise: Reflections on middle childhood (6-12 years)
- Erikson's Psychosocial Developmental Theory
- Group exercise: If I could live my adolescent years over again...

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### Freud's Psychosexual Theory

- 3 personality processes
  - ID-pleasure principle
    - ↳ demands immediate gratification
  - EGO-reality principle
    - ↳ directs ID impulses toward appropriate targets
  - SUPEREGO-conscience, idealism
    - ↳ unconcerned with reality
    - ↳ directs actions towards moral, ethical, religious principles

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## Freud: General ideas

- most interaction between these processes is unconscious
- conflicts between personality processes give rise to anxiety
  - can be conscious or unconscious
  - uncomfortable state
  - we use defense mechanisms to cope
- possess fixed amount of psychic energy
  - excessively directing toward worries leaves little for activities that make life fulfilling

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## Ego-Defense Mechanisms

- Psychological strategies we use to protect our self-concept
- We use ego defenses at various stages of life to soften the blows of reality
- Ego defenses help us cope with anxiety
- These defenses have adaptive value if they are not excessively used to avoid facing reality

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## Freud: 5 Stages

- Oral (b-1)
- Anal (1-3)
- Phallic (3-6)
- Latency (6-12)
- Genital (12 on)

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## Small Group Discussion

- Take a few minutes to get acquainted with each other, nominate a recorder/reporter (can change later)
- Recall and share experiences during early school years (ages 6-12)
- What was school like for you?
- In what ways did you find success?
- Are there any failures that stand out for you?
- How do you suppose your elementary school years, especially the primary grades, have affected you now?
- How did these years and the experiences you had then affect your self-concept (the way you viewed yourself and how you felt about that self-image)?

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## Erikson's Psychosocial Theory

- no formal training in psychology
- trained by Freud as a psychoanalyst
- split over too great an emphasis on sex and aggression in Freud's theory

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## Erikson (cont.)

- eight psychosocial stages
- each stage there are crises, conflicts, or critical issues to be resolved
- address these conflicts satisfactorily and move on
- failure to resolve a given crisis must deal with it later
- crises are all worked through in the context of interactions with others

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## Erikson: Infancy

- Core task: Develop sense of trust in self and others
- Erikson's core struggle: trust versus mistrust
- Critical importance of sense of being loved during infancy
- Infancy provides the foundation for later development

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## Erikson: Early Childhood

- Erikson's core struggle: autonomy versus shame and doubt
- Central task is to begin the journey toward autonomy
- A time for learning what it means to be interdependent
- Importance of developing emotional competence

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## Erikson: The Preschool Years

- Erikson's core struggle: Initiative versus Guilt
- A time for learning basic attitudes regarding sexuality
- A time for increasing the capacity to understand and use language
- Importance of learning to accept the full range of one's feelings

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## Erikson: Middle Childhood

- Erikson's core struggle: Industry versus Inferiority
- Increasing understanding of self --- gender, race, culture, abilities
- Relationships as a major focus during middle childhood
- A time for developing the self-concept

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## Erikson: Adolescence

- Erikson's core struggle: Identity versus Role Confusion
- A critical period in the development of personal identity
- Implications of individuation or psychological separation from parents
- Psychological moratorium - a time for experimentation with different roles before making major commitments

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## Small Group Discussion II

- "If I could live my adolescent years over again, what I'd most like to change would be. . . ."
- Spend about 10 minutes discussing, then groups will report

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