

## Adolescent Development

48.212: Dr. Jeffrey Leitzel  
Ch. 8: Identity

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## Outline/Overview

- Self-concept
- Five factor model of personality
- Self-esteem
- Identity achievement/statuses

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## Changes in Self-Conceptions

- Movement toward complex, abstract and psychological self-conceptions
- Realization: personality is expressed in different ways in different situations
- Differentiated self-concept
  - Actual self
  - Ideal self
  - Feared self

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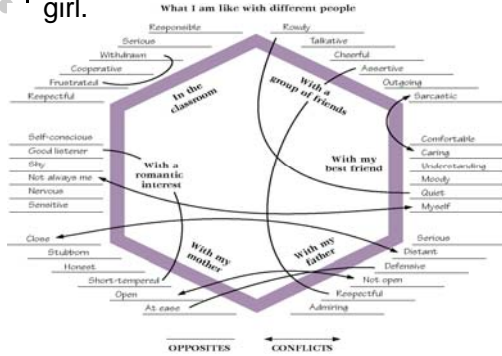
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## The multiple selves of a 15 year old girl.



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## Dimensions of Personality

- The Five-Factor Model "BIG FIVE"
- Five critical personality dimensions
  - Conscientiousness: responsible
  - Agreeableness: kind or sympathetic
  - Neuroticism: anxious or tense
  - Openness to Experience: curious
  - Extraversion: outgoing and energetic

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## Dimensions of Personality

- Big Five traits
  - Influenced by combination of genetic and environmental factors
  - Highly stable over time
  - Strong links between early temperaments and adolescent personality
- Adolescence is NOT a time of rebirth in terms of personality

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## Self-Esteem

- Self Esteem
  - How an individual feels about him or herself
- No dramatic drop in self-esteem
  - Baseline self-esteem
- Adolescents' feelings about themselves fluctuate day-by-day
  - Barometric self-esteem
- Measures
  - Global – Rosenberg
  - Domain specific - MSEI

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## Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale

Strongly agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

1. I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.
2. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.
3. All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.
4. I am able to do things as well as most other people.
5. I feel I do not have much to be proud of.
6. I take a positive attitude toward myself.
7. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.
8. I wish I could have more respect for myself.
9. I certainly feel useless at times.
10. At times I think I am no good at all.

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## Gender Differences in Self-Esteem

- become smaller over course of adolescence
- more pronounced among white and Puerto Rican teens
- less pronounced among African American teens

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### Ethnic and SES Differences in Self-Esteem

- African American girls, compared to white and Hispanic girls
- Highest self-esteem among African-American teens – why?
- Low self-esteem among Hispanic American teens – why?
- Middle-class youngsters have higher self-esteem than their less-affluent peers

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### Erikson: Identity versus Identity Diffusion

- Identity results from mutual recognition between young person and society
- Forges an identity, but at the same time, society identifies the adolescent.
- As alternatives increase, establishing a sense of identity is more difficult
- Likelihood of prolonged identity crisis is greater today than in the past

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### James Marcia's Identity Statuses

- Made commitments?
- Exploration?

		Commitment	
		Yes	No
Exploration	Yes		
	No		

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## Marcia's Identity Statuses

- Initial instability
- College facilitates exploration
- Immediate work after H.S. can speed process
- Negative Identity

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## Research on Identity Development

- Establishing identity generally does not occur before age 18
- During college years vocational plans solidify but not religious and political commitments
- College may prolong psychosocial moratorium
  - especially in political and religious beliefs

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## Identity status?

*When asked if she had ever reconsidered her political beliefs, Hillary answered, "No, not really, our family is pretty much in agreement on these things."*

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### Identity status?

*When asked if he had ever had doubts about his religious beliefs, Ramon said, "Yes, I guess I'm going through that right now. I just don't see how there can be a God and yet so much evil in the world."*

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### Identity status?

*When asked how willing she would be to give up going into her chosen occupation if something better came along Darla responded, "Well, I might, but I doubt it. I've thought long and hard about law as a career. I'm pretty certain it's for me."*

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### Identity status?

*When asked about his attitude toward nontraditional gender roles, Joel responded, "Oh, I don't know. It doesn't make much difference to me. I can take it or leave it."*

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