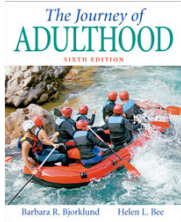


The Journey Of Adulthood, 6/e
Helen L. Bee & Barbara R. Bjorklund

Chapter 12

THE SUCCESSFUL JOURNEY



Barbara R. Bjorklund Helen L. Bee

Themes of Adult Development

Young Adulthood (18-25)
Early Adulthood (25-40)
Middle Adulthood (40-65)
Late Adulthood (65-75)
Late, Late Adulthood (75 +)

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Themes of Adult Development

Young Adulthood (18-25)

- Period of considerable change (e.g., education, independence, etc.).
- High level of change often associated with high level of stress.

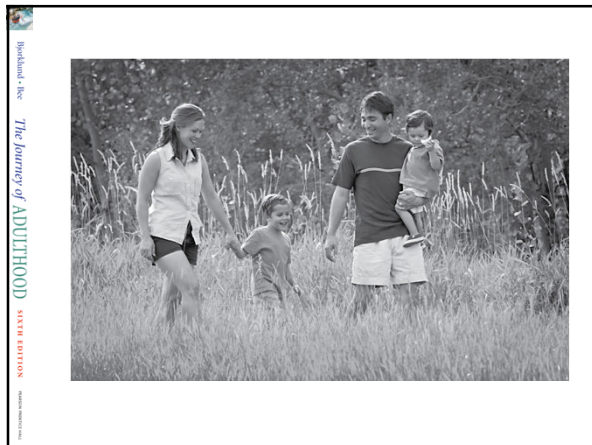
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Themes of Adult Development

Early Adulthood (25-40)

- Peaks in physical and mental functioning.
- Move from conformity to individualistic approach.

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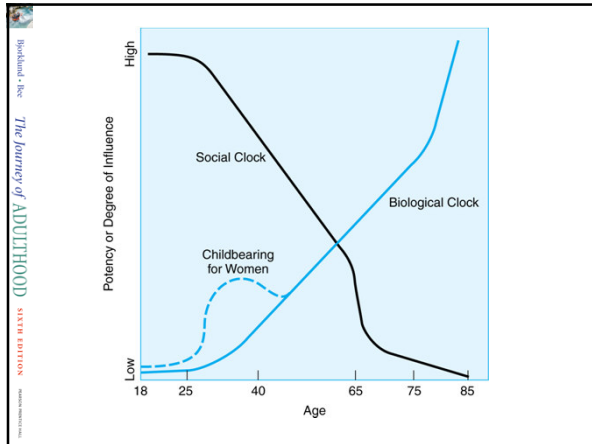


Themes of Adult Development

Middle Adulthood (40-65)

- Time of distinct change.
- *Biological clock* plays important role.
- Signs of aging become more and more apparent and less easy to overcome.
- *Social clock* becomes less significant.
- Sense of choice appears key to this age period.
- There is considerable variability in pathways during this period.
- *Midlife Crisis*

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Themes of Adult Development

Late Adulthood (65-75)

- Young old are more like middle aged than like the old old.
- Period marked by loss of work role.
- *Disengagement*: healthy withdrawal from social roles and contacts and greater freedom from the rules and expectations of early childhood.
- Some literature suggests this is not a universal process.
- Adults who remain engaged report higher levels of satisfaction.

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Themes of Adult Development

Late, Late Adulthood (75 +)

- Fastest growing segment of the U.S. population.
- Time when processes of physical and mental aging really accelerate.
- Physical limitations result in further disengagement.
- *Selective optimization with compensation*
- *Life Review*: progressive return to consciousness of past experience, and particularly, the resurgence of unresolved conflicts.
- Period of preparation for death.

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Variations in Successful Development

Overall Life Satisfaction

Age:

- Age has little systematic relationship to the level of reported well-being.
- Younger adults experience stronger feelings – positive and negative.
- Adults use different comparative base to define successes over lifespan.

Personality:

- Personality indices are associated with happiness.
- Positive social relationships contribute strongly to happiness.
- A sense of personal control is linked to satisfaction.

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Variations in Successful Development

Individual Differences in Quality of Life

- Health
- SES
- Age
- Gender
- Race and ethnicity
- Marital status
- Activities
- Social integration
- Psychosocial factors
- Social comparisons
- Cultural differences

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Other Measures of Life Success

- **Psychological health:** characterized by warmth, responsibility, independence and calmness.
- **Psychosocial adjustment:** those who age well are those who start out well in young adulthood.

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A Model of Growth and Development

- 1) There are shared, basic sequential physical and psychological developments occurring during adulthood, roughly (but not precisely) age-linked.
- 2) Each adult's development occurs primarily within a specific pathway or trajectory, strongly influenced by the starting conditions of education, family background, ethnicity, intelligence, and personality.

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A Model of Growth and Development (cont.)

3) Each pathway is made up of a series of alternating episodes of stable life structure and disequilibrium.

4) The outcome of periods of disequilibrium may be either positive, neutral, or negative.

- The effects of several disequilibrium periods are cumulative.
- Range of possible outcomes in terms of adaptive/maladaptive and maturation do not correlate perfectly with happiness.

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A Last Look at the Model

- Limitations in this model are its oversimplification and cultural-specificity.
- Nonetheless, the model is a useful way to organize the diverse and complicated process of the journey of aging.

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