

1.

Mid Life Development



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2.

Development



Development

- Early Literature focused on early childhood emotional and interpersonal development
- Increased focus on cognitive and intellectual development through adolescence- Piaget
- Ego Psychologists – Anna Freud, Erik Erikson shifted focus from childhood and pathology to adaptive function

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3. Development



Development

- Erikson – developed model of stage of development extending through late adulthood with stage specific polar tasks e.g. generativity vs. stagnation in mid-life
- Jung – viewed second half of life as period of increased focus on internal life and spiritual issues
- Dante: The Inferno “Midway upon the journey of our life I found myself within a forest dark, For the straightforward pathway had been lost.”

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4. Development



Development

- Transformation often appears in dreams and works of art in symbolic form “descent is for the sake of ascent”
- “Easy is the Descent to Avernus: night and day the door of gloomy Dis stands open; but to recall thy steps and pass out the upper air, this is the task, this is the toil!”
Virgil, Aeneid, VI, 126-29
- “He reduced Himself as it were, down to the lowest of rungs, until a part of God above was placed into the darkness of matter. The intent of this was that the lower rungs themselves be uplifted so that there be a “A greater light that comes from darkness.” [Ecclesiastes 2:13]. This was the meaning of Joseph’s descent into Egypt, the lowest of rungs, the narrow strait in the Great Sea. Through him joy was to be increased and the light brightened, for joy is greater when it has been lifted out of darkness.

Rabbi Menahem Nahum of Chernobyl (1730-1797)

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5. Development



Development

- McArthur Study of Midlife Development- Little evidence for frequent mid life crisis
- Daniel Levinson – Studied Early Adult and Midlife development by interviewing in detail approximately 40 men and establishing biographical data of life course

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6. Levinson Model



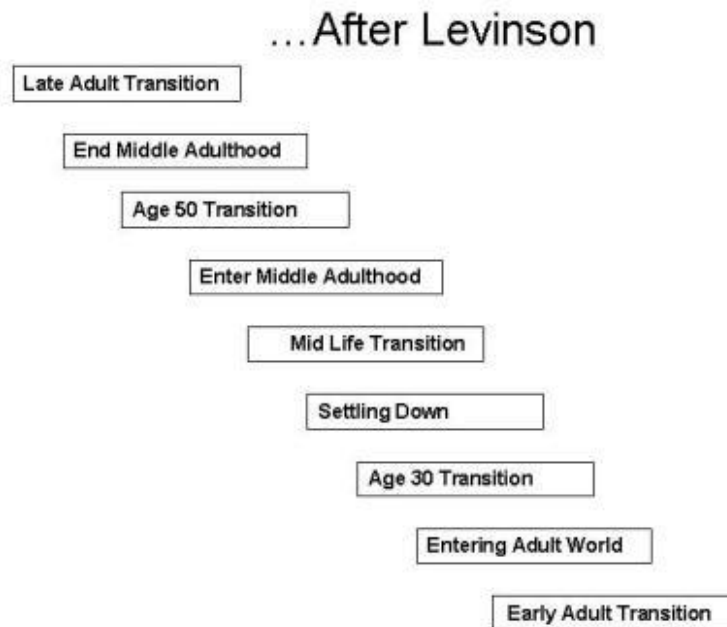
Levinson Model

- Levinson assumes a series of stable period where life structures are established punctuated by transition period
- Key tasks are establishing major interpersonal relationships and work
- Role of the “Dream” - a complex image of self in the world and life goals
- Stable periods establish provisional life structures, including work roles and relationship

"The primary tasks of every transition period are to question and reappraise the existing structure, to explore the various possibilities for change in self and world, and to move toward a commitment to crucial choices that form a basis for a new life structure in the ensuing stable period." Levinson

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7. ...After Levinson



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8. Levinson Model



Levinson Model

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- Failure to achieve the dream, or choice which reject the dream may create increased stress
 - Transitional periods are often provoked by a diminished sense of time, a success, or failure to achieve a particular life goal
 - Most periods of transition require reappraisal of who one has been, how successful (in work or relationships) they have been and how true to their deepest self (the Dream)
 - Periods of more severe crisis are often punctuated by failure to see how a transition or a new life structure can be created, especially with a diminished sense that time to achieve ends in infinite

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9.

Mid Life Tasks



Mid Life Tasks

Midlife Polarities:

- Young/Old
- Destruction/Creation
- Masculine/Feminine
- Strength/Weakness
- Attachment/Separation

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10.

Mid Life Tasks



Mid Life Tasks

- The "Dream" re working of the dream often requires modification in goals of youth which may seem unattainable. How to maintain key components of the dream including heroic qualities without creating unrealistic structure
- More severe crises may be associated with major job change, divorce
- People are pushed back on internal resources
- Resolution of crisis may require restructuring of self, religious change or formal psychotherapy
- Change in mentoring and generativity relationships

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