



Erikson's Psychosocial Model

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On Tasks, Virtues and Crises

When does a person start to learn how to trust other people? In what age would a person be ready to know how can he become a good individual? Why do many people feel some sort of identity crisis going on inside of them? These are just a few questions that are explained in the theory developed by Erik Erikson. Erikson's Psychosocial Model involves 8 stages of human development across the lifespan.

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Stages of Erikson's Psychosocial Model

1. Trust vs. Mistrust (0 - 1 Year)

Virtue: Hope

The infant's basic needs are required to be satisfied by his primary caregivers, preferably his parents. When the baby is crying because he is hungry, his mother must satisfy his hunger through giving breast milk and feeding him. If the infant is able to consistently rely on his mother for sustenance and support, he would develop a sense of trust, he knows that he can hope for a dependable someone to satisfy his needs. However, when his mother does not positively respond to the baby's need, the infant would have a sense of mistrust, that is, he

feels that everyone is unreliable.

2. Autonomy vs. Shame & Doubt (2-4 Years)

Virtue: Will

When the child reaches the age of 2 to 4, he begins to explore his environment. When the parents are supportive and encourages him to do so but still protects him from danger, the child feels a sense of autonomy. However, when parents or caregivers are restricting the child from learning things, like not letting the child dress himself when he says he can do it, the child may feel shameful and doubtful of trying new things.

3. Initiative vs. Guilt (4 to 6 Years)

Virtue: Purpose

When the child reaches this age, he may feel that he wants to accomplish activities on his own for a certain purpose. Caregivers must promote a sense of initiative in them such as letting them be the leader of a group of children. On the other hand, he may feel guilty about his needs and wants if the parent would not allow him to do things independently.

4. Industry vs. Inferiority (7 to 12 Years)

Virtue: Competence

At this age, children are more eager to learn more things, and want to master skills like reading and writing, to the extent that they compete with other children. When parents and teachers are able to encourage children through praising them for their accomplishments, they feel that they are productive, and they show industry through being patient and diligent. However, if they are punished for exerting efforts, they may feel inferior and their self-esteem becomes low.

5. Identity vs. Role Confusion (13 to 19 Years)

Virtue: Fidelity

Becoming an adolescent involves feeling a mixture of emotions. At this age, the person wants to know who he really is through the roles he plays in the society. When he fails to accomplish this identity crisis, he would have role confusion which would affect his adult life.

6. Intimacy vs. Isolation (20 to 40 Years)

Virtue: Love

At this age, an individual may feel loved and wanted when he encounters someone with whom he can share the rest of his life. When his friends settle for good to form their own families and the person is left without anyone to accompany him, he may feel isolated and withdrawn.

7. Generativity vs. Stagnation (45 to 65 Years)

Virtue: Care

At this age, the person wishes to produce something of real value for the benefit of the younger generation. When, he fails to do so, he may feel that he is unproductive.

8. Ego Integrity vs. Despair (65 Years Onwards)

Virtue: Wisdom

Towards the end of one's life, the person would look back at his past years. When he feels that he had lived a satisfying life, he would have a sense of ego integrity. However, he may feel that he's in despair if he was unproductive or was not able to accomplish his life goals.

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