

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

UNIT 3:

The Psychology of Human Development

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Introduction to Human Development

- **Human development** encompasses physical, cognitive, emotional, and social growth from conception to late adulthood, influenced by biological, psychological, and environmental factors.
- **Proper nutrition** and lifestyle choices are essential throughout development, particularly during pregnancy and early childhood.
- Parental health, genetic inheritance, and environmental factors significantly influence a child's development from conception onwards.

Developmental Processes

- **Human development** is guided by three foundational processes:
 1. **Growth and maturation** (biological processes)
 2. **Learning** (behavioral process)

Growth and Maturation

- **Growth** refers to measurable physical changes (e.g., increases in height, weight, and organ size).
- Although most prominent during infancy, childhood, and Adolescence.
- Growth continues throughout the lifespan, adapting to biological and environmental influences.

Growth and Maturation

- **Maturation:** the genetically programmed unfolding of physical and behavioral traits
- **Maturation** reflects the biological timetable of development, independent of specific experiences or learning.
- For instance, behaviors like walking, the onset of puberty, and the development of certain reflexes occur as part of an organism's natural progression toward physical and functional readiness.

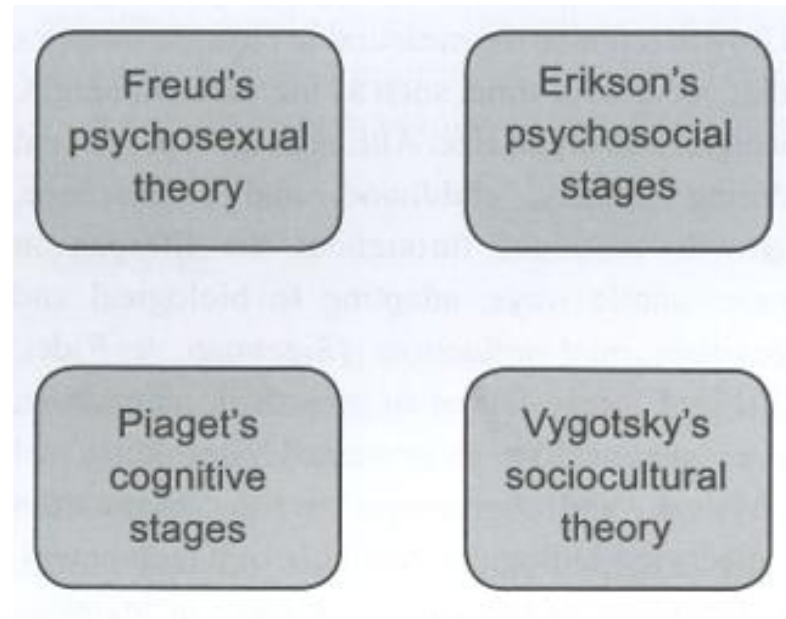
Learning

- **Learning** involves the acquisition of skills, behaviors, attitudes, and knowledge through experience, observation, and practice.
- Unlike **maturational**, **learning** is shaped heavily by environmental inputs such as education, cultural expectations, and social interactions.
- This allows individuals to adapt flexibly to diverse life context.

Key learning point

Human development is a lifelong interaction between biological maturation and experiential learning.

Major Theories of Human Development



- Understanding these theories clarifies why people behave, think, and feel the way they do at different life stages.

Freud's Psychosexual Theory

- Sigmund Freud's **psychosexual theory** posits that early childhood experiences shape personality through a series of **psychosexual stages**.
- Freud emphasized that unresolved conflicts at any stage could lead to fixation, impacting adult personality and behavior.

The Psychosexual Stages

1. **Oral Stage:** From birth to about one year of age, where pleasure is centered on activities involving the mouth.
2. **Anal Stage:** From one to three years, the focus shifts to bowel and bladder control, introducing issues of control and autonomy.
3. **Phallic Stage:** Emergence of the Oedipus and Electra complexes, where children develop erotic attraction to the opposite-sex parent and rivalry with the same-sex parent. During this stage, **the superego forms**, internalization ethical principles and taboos.
4. **Latency Stage:** From six to twelve years, sexual feelings are dormant, and the focus shifts to the development of social and intellectual pursuits.
5. **Genital Stage:** Begins in adolescence and extends into adulthood, characterized by the maturation of sexual interests and the establishment of intimate relationships.

Freud's psychosexual stages

Oral stage: Birth to 1 year
Erogenous zone: Mouth



Anal stage: 1 to 3 year
Erogenous zone: Bowel and
Bladder control



Phallic stage: 3 to 6 year
Erogenous zone: Genitals



Latent stage: 6 to puberty
libido inactive



Genital stage: Puberty to death
maturing sexual interest



Key learning point

Early childhood experiences play a pivotal role in shaping later psychological development.

Erikson's Psychosocial Development Theory

- Erik Erikson (1902–1994) introduced the **psychosocial theory** of development, expanding on Freud's ideas to cover the entire lifespan.
- The theory proposes **eight sequential stages** of human development, each characterized by a **psychosocial crisis** that must be resolved for healthy personality development.

Psychosocial Stages

1. **Infancy:** Conflict between **trust versus mistrust**, where babies learn whether their environment can reliably meet their needs.
2. **Early Childhood:** toddlers struggle between **autonomy** and **shame and doubt**, where toddlers strive to develop a sense of personal control.
3. **Preschool-Aged Children:** Conflict between **initiative versus guilt**, where the ability to initiate activities is crucial for a sense of purpose.
4. **Middle Childhood:** Focus on **industry versus inferiority**, emphasizing competence in social and academic skills.

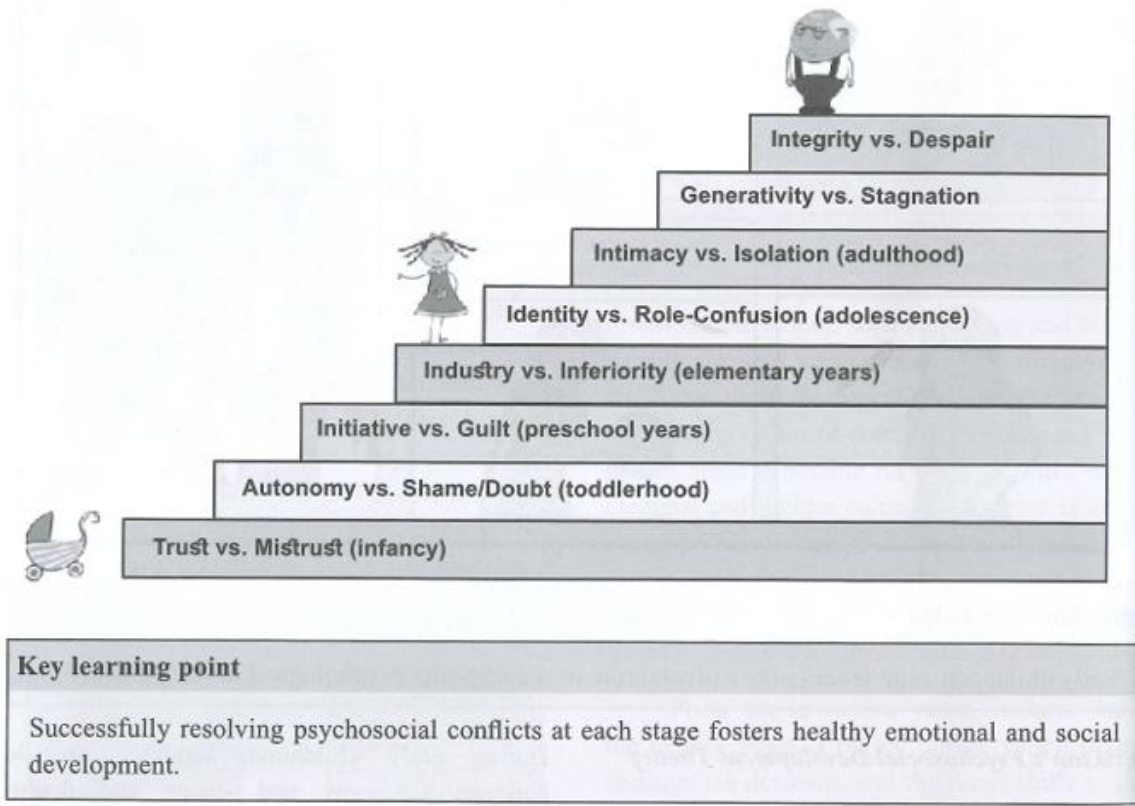
Psychosocial Stages

5. Adolescence: Task of **identity versus role confusion**, as teenagers explore and form their personal identities.

6. Young Adults: Crisis of **intimacy versus isolation**, seeking meaningful romantic and social relationships.

7. Middle Adulthood: Challenge of **generativity versus stagnation**, involving the desire to contribute to society and support future generations.

8. Late Adulthood: individuals confront integrity versus despair, reflecting on their lives with either a sense of fulfillment or regret.



Stage	Conflict	Description
Infancy	Trust vs. Mistrust	Babies learn whether their environment can reliably meet their needs.
Early Childhood	Autonomy vs. Shame and Doubt	Toddlers strive to develop a sense of personal control.
Preschool	Initiative vs. Guilt	Developing the ability to initiate activities is crucial for a sense of purpose.
Middle Childhood	Industry vs. Inferiority	Emphasizing competence in social and academic skills.
Adolescence	Identity vs. Role Confusion	Teenagers explore and form their personal identities.
Young Adulthood	Intimacy vs. Isolation	Seeking meaningful romantic and social relationships.
Middle Adulthood	Generativity vs. Stagnation	Desire to contribute to society and support future generations.
Late Adulthood	Integrity vs. Despair	Reflecting on life with a sense of fulfillment or regret.

Piaget's Cognitive Development Theory

- **Jean Piaget (1896–1980)** revolutionized the understanding of cognitive development by proposing that children actively construct knowledge as they interact with their environment.
- According to Piaget, cognitive development unfolds in **four distinct stages**.

Key Stages of Cognitive Development

1. **Sensorimotor Stage** (birth to 2 years):

- Infants learn about the world primarily through sensory experiences and motor actions.
- Development of **object permanence**: The understanding that objects continue to exist even when not visible.

2. **Preoperational Stage** (2–7 years):

- Marked by the emergence of **symbolic thought**, but thinking remains **egocentric** and **intuitive**, rather than logical.

3. **Concrete Operational Stage** (7–11 years):

- where they develop the ability to think logically about **concrete events** and understand concepts such as **conservation** and **reversibility**.
- **Formal Operational Stage** (11+ years):
- introduces the capacity for **abstract** and **hypothetical thinking**, allowing adolescents to reason systematically about complex problems.

- Piaget's work emphasized that cognitive development involves fundamental transformations in perception and reasoning, not just an accumulation of information.

Key learning point

Cognitive development progresses through a series of distinct stages, each laying the foundation for more complex thinking.

Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory

- **Lev Vygotsky (1896–1934)** proposed that cognitive development is fundamentally shaped by **social interaction** and **cultural context**.
- Central to this theory is the Zone of **Proximal Development (ZPD)**, which represents the range of tasks a child can accomplish with guidance from a more knowledgeable other.
- The **ZPD concept** supports the use of cooperative learning strategies in classrooms, enhancing social and cultural experiences.
- **Vygotsky** proposed that cognitive development occurs first on the **social plane** through interaction, then on the **psychological plane**.

Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory

- The process of **language acquisition** is exemplified in the way children learn through social interactions before internalizing skills.
- The **ZPD model** aligns closely with formative assessment and instructional scaffolding, emphasizing the importance of **supportive guidance** in learning.

Key learning point

Cognitive growth is deeply embedded within social and cultural environments.

The Human Lifespan: Key Developmental Stages and Their Characteristics

- The **human lifespan** encompasses five distinct developmental stages: **infancy**, **childhood**, **adolescence**, **adulthood**, and **aging**.
- Each phase presents unique physical, cognitive, emotional, and social changes that shape an individual's growth and development.

Infancy (0-2 Years): The Foundation of Life

- Infancy represents the most **rapid period** of growth and development.
- Infants undergo dramatic physical changes, tripling their birth weight and developing essential motor skills.
- The brain grows at an astonishing rate, with neural connections forming at a pace never again matched in life.
- **Cognitive development** follows Piaget's **sensorimotor stage**, where infants learn about the world through sensory experiences and motor actions.
- A key milestone is **object permanence**, the understanding that objects continue to exist even when out of sight.
- **Emotional development** centers around **attachment**, forming bonds with primary caregivers, which lays the foundation for future relationships.

Childhood (3-12 Years): The Age of Learning and Exploration

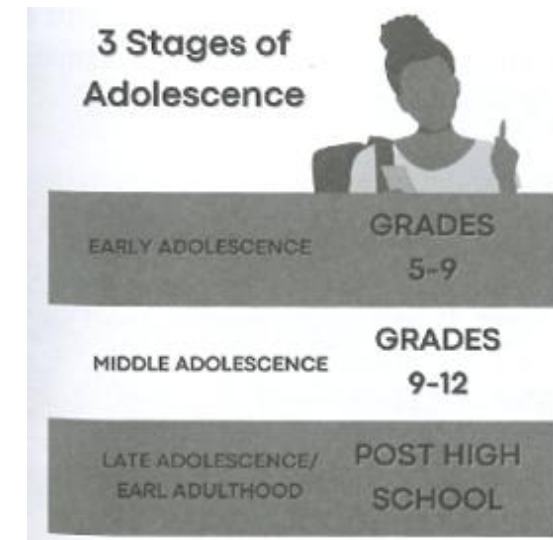
- **Childhood** is divided into early (3-6 years) and middle (7-12 years) childhood, each with distinct characteristics.
- Physically, children experience steady growth and refinement of motor skills, with the brain reaching 90% of its adult size by age 6.
- **Cognitive development** moves through Piaget's **preoperational stage** and **concrete operational stage**. Children develop symbolic thinking, language skills, and logical reasoning abilities.
- **Erikson's psychosocial theory** highlights the development of **initiative** (early childhood) and **industry** (middle childhood) as crucial emotional milestones.
- Socially, play becomes increasingly important, evolving from **parallel play** to **cooperative play**. Friendships grow more significant, and children begin to understand social rules and norms.
- The development of **self-concept** and **self-esteem** becomes prominent during middle childhood.

Adolescence (13-19 Years): The Transition to Adulthood

- Adolescence marks the transition from childhood to adulthood, characterized by **puberty** and significant physical changes.
- The **brain undergoes substantial reorganization**, particularly in the prefrontal cortex, which governs decision-making and impulse control.
- **Cognitive abilities** reach near-adult levels, with the development of **abstract thinking** and **metacognition**.
- Piaget's **formal operational stage** emerges, allowing for **hypothetical reasoning** and **problem-solving**.
- Emotionally, adolescents experience heightened sensitivity to social evaluation and increased **risk-taking behaviors** due to the developing **limbic system** outpacing prefrontal cortex maturation.

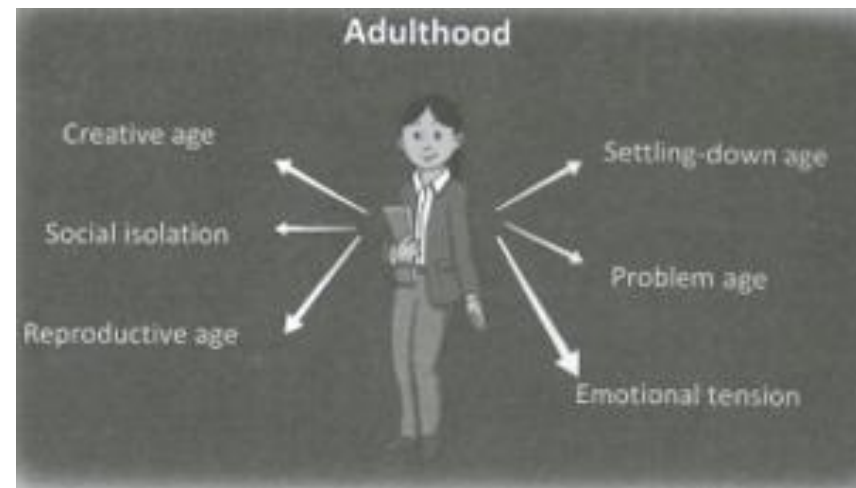
Social Development in Adolescence

- Social development focuses on **identity formation**, as described in Erikson's **identity vs. role confusion** stage.
- Peer relationships become increasingly important, while relationships with parents often undergo renegotiation.
- Many adolescents experiment with different roles and beliefs as they establish their **independent identities**.



Adulthood (20-64 Years): Peak and Stability

- **Adulthood** is typically divided into early (20-40 years) and middle (40-64 years) adulthood.
- **Early adulthood** represents peak physical condition, while **middle adulthood** brings gradual declines in muscle mass, bone density, and metabolic rate.



Cognitive Abilities in Adulthood

- **Cognitive abilities** generally remain stable, with **crystallized intelligence** (accumulated knowledge) increasing while **fluid intelligence** (processing speed) begins to decline in middle adulthood.
- Erikson's stages of **intimacy vs. isolation** (early adulthood) and **generativity vs. stagnation** (middle adulthood) highlight key emotional challenges.

Social Development in Adulthood

- In **middle adulthood**, adults typically focus on **career development**, long-term relationships, and **parenthood**.
- Middle adulthood may bring the “**empty nest**” **syndrome** as children leave home, along with increased caregiving responsibilities for aging parents.

Aging (65+ Years): Wisdom and Decline

- **Late adulthood** brings more pronounced physical changes, including **sensory decline**, reduced mobility, and increased susceptibility to **chronic illnesses**.
- **Cognitive changes** vary widely, with some experiencing mild forgetfulness while others develop more serious conditions like **dementia**.

Final Psychosocial Stage (Integrity vs. Despair)

- **Erikson's final psychosocial stage, integrity vs. despair**, emphasizes the emotional task of reflecting on one's life with satisfaction.
- **Socially**, older adults often face role changes such as **retirement**, **widowhood**, and increased dependence on others.
- Many maintain active social lives and continue contributing to their communities.

Biological and Culture in Human Development

- **Nature vs. Nurture in Human Development**
- Human development is shaped by a complex interplay of **biological factors** and **cultural context**.
- **Biological elements**, such as **genetics**, **brain maturation**, and **hormonal influences**, lay the foundational blueprint for development.
- Cultural and environmental conditions determine how that potential is expressed and refined.
- The relationship between biology and culture is systematic, with evolved predispositions allowing individuals to acquire contextually relevant information for their specific environments.

Biological Influences on Development

1. **Genetic inheritance:** Genetic inheritance determines physical traits and predispositions to various conditions, including developmental delays and temperament styles.
2. **Brain development** is another critical biological influence. The human brain undergoes rapid growth in early childhood, especially in areas related to **sensory processing, language, and emotional regulation**.
 - Neurodevelopment is highly sensitive to both internal (e.g., nutrient availability, genetic programming) and external (e.g., toxins, infections) factors.
 - **Genetic factors** and **brain development** in early childhood establish neural pathways supporting cognition and behavior.

Biological Influences on Development

3. Hormonal Influences During Puberty

- The surge of **hormones during puberty** significantly influences **adolescent behavior**, affecting **emotional regulation**, **risk-taking**, and **identity formation**.
- These hormonal changes contribute to brain-behavior interactions that shape developmental trajectories in both **positive** and **negative** directions.
- The biological changes of puberty are particularly important for the establishment of **romantic relationships** and the initiation of **sexual activity**.

Key learning point

10 basic principles of human development

1. **Development is Lifelong (Continual):** Development does not stop at childhood or adolescence but continues throughout adulthood and aging.
2. **Development is Multidimensional:** Involves changes in physical, cognitive, emotional, and social domains.
3. **Development is Multidirectional:** Some abilities improve while others decline.
4. **Development is Flexible:** The brain and behavior can adapt based on experiences.
5. **Development is a Combination of Nature (Genetics) and Nurture (Environment):** Genes interact with experiences (e.g., nutrition, trauma, education). Example: Height is genetically influenced but can be stunted by malnutrition.
6. **Development Involves Both Gains and Losses:** Growth in one area may come at the expense of another.
7. **Development is Cumulative (Early Experiences Matter, but Change is Possible):** Early childhood sets a foundation, but later experiences can modify trajectories.
8. **Development progresses from general to specific:** Initially, general skills develop first, followed by more specialized skills.
9. **Development proceeds from top to bottom and from inside to outward:** The head grows first, followed by downward growth. Internal vital organs develop first, then external body parts.
10. **A child's development should not be compared to others:** Growth follows varying timelines for each child, yet all ultimately reach the same outcome (for example, early speech is not an indicator of intelligence, and delayed walking is not a sign of disability).

Cultural and Environmental Influences

- **Cultural influences** play a crucial role in shaping developmental pathways and parenting strategies across different societies.
- The relationship between **biology** and **culture** is systematic, with evolved predispositions allowing individuals to acquire contextually relevant information.
- **Cultural influences parenting styles, educational practices, emotional expression, gender roles, and values around independence or collectivism.**
- For example, In **collectivist societies** (e.g., **Japan** or **India**), children are often encouraged to prioritize **social harmony**.
- In **individualistic cultures** (e.g., **United States**), children are urged to express **autonomy** and **self-confidence** from an early age.

Environmental Influences on Development

- The **environment** encompasses factors such as **socioeconomic status**, **nutrition**, exposure to **toxins**, and access to **education** and **healthcare**.
- For Example, **Poverty** has been linked to increased stress, reduced access to stimulating environments, and poor health outcomes—factors that can negatively affect both **brain development** and **educational attainment**.

Cultural Influences on Development

- **Cultural norms** influence developmental milestones.
- In some cultures, children walk earlier due to active motor training (e.g., Uganda), while in others, verbal communication is emphasized earlier.
- These variations underscore the importance of cultural sensitivity when evaluating developmental progress in clinical settings.

Human diversity

One compelling example of cross-cultural diversity in development comes from a study by Bornstein et al. (2012), which analyzed parenting behaviors in 9 countries. The researchers found that although warm parenting was universally valued, how parents expressed warmth (e.g., through physical affection vs. verbal praise) varied significantly. For instance, Italian mothers showed more physical affection, while American mothers used more verbal encouragement. Such findings highlight that while the need for emotional bonding is universal, its expression is culture-specific. These insights are crucial for clinicians working with multicultural families, helping them to avoid misinterpreting culturally normative behavior as signs of pathology.



Biological, cultural, and environmental factors that shape human development across different life stages

Developmental Challenges Across the Lifespan

- As individuals move through the lifespan, they encounter a series of **psychological, emotional, and social transitions**.
- Each life stage brings its own set of developmental tasks and challenges.
- **Childhood development** is often closely monitored and supported, while **adolescence** marks a crucial shift from concrete to **abstract thinking, sexual self-awareness, and identity formation**, impacting healthcare transitions.
- A well-planned healthcare transition from pediatric to adult care is essential for maximizing lifelong functioning and well-being, ideally occurring between ages 18-21.

Adolescence Challenges

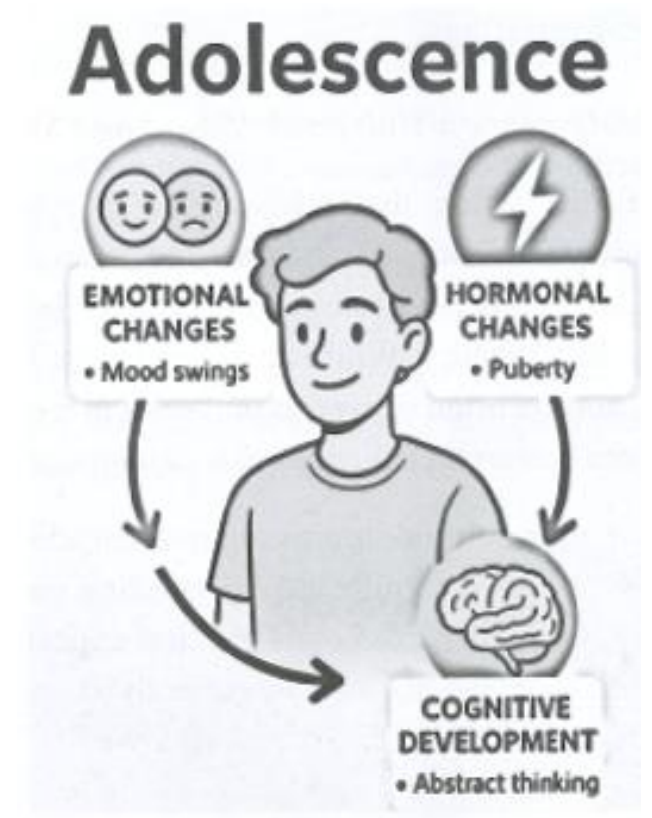
This phase involves heightened sensitivity to rewards and emotional cues, coupled with immature cognitive and emotional regulation capacities.

Adolescents often engage in risk-taking behaviors and experience mood fluctuations due to neurobiological changes and social influences

Identity formation is a crucial aspect of adolescence, with some youth attempting to stabilize their self-esteem through **risky behaviors** or **substance abuse**.

Adolescents experience **mood fluctuations** due to neurobiological changes and social influences.

Adolescence is a period of **vulnerability** and opportunity for **personal growth** and **reorganization of regulatory systems**.



Adult Challenges

- **In early adulthood**, individuals typically strive to form **intimate relationships** and establish **careers** (intimacy vs. isolation).
- Failure to do so can result in feelings of **loneliness** and **disconnection**.
- **Erikson's theory** of psychosocial development posits distinct stages across adulthood, influencing **well-being** and **personal growth**.

Stages of Adulthood

1. **Early Adulthood: Identity and intimacy** are crucial for satisfaction.
 2. **Middle adulthood** focuses on **generativity**, which strongly impacts **psychological well-being**, particularly for women).
 3. **Late adulthood** involves the **integrity vs. despair** stage, where individuals reflect on their lives and confront mortality.
- While **Erikson's model** provides a purposeful narrative for aging, empirical evidence for its stage-like nature remains limited.
 - **Childhood relationships** with parents influence adult offspring relationships and overall well-being.
 - The **process of reminiscence** and **life review** is considered healthy and necessary in **late adulthood**.

- Understanding these developmental stages can inform interventions for older adults, such as promoting **volunteer work** to enhance **generativity** and well-being.

Key learning point

Each stage of adulthood presents distinct developmental challenges that require psychological adaptation and support.

Critical thinking

Is Adolescence a Universal “Storm and Stress” Period?

The notion that adolescence is inherently turbulent—a time of “storm and stress”—was popularized by psychologist G. Stanley Hall in the early 20th century. While emotional volatility and rebellion are often viewed as universal in teenagers, modern research challenges this assumption.

Cross-cultural studies suggest that adolescent behavior varies significantly depending on social norms, family structure, and cultural expectations. For instance, adolescents in collectivist societies, such as Japan or China, report lower levels of conflict with parents and authority figures compared to their Western counterparts (Greenfield, 2009). In contrast, individualistic cultures may encourage self-expression and independence, which can manifest as perceived defiance or emotional intensity.

This raises a critical question: Are the challenges associated with adolescence biologically driven, or are they culturally constructed? Medical and psychological professionals must consider cultural context when evaluating adolescent behavior to avoid overpathologizing what may be normative variation.



Evaluating Development Awareness

- **Emotional Intelligence (EI) in Healthcare**
- **EI encompasses:** Self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills.
- In healthcare, EI is crucial for: Managing stress, improving teamwork, and enhancing patient care.
- Nurses with higher EI demonstrate: Better interpersonal relationships, professional success, and work-life balance.
- EI training in nursing education and continuing professional development is essential for improving healthcare outcomes.

Emotional Intelligence (EI) in Healthcare

- The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the importance of EI in boosting healthcare professionals' resilience and communication skills.
- EI is particularly valuable in fostering: Culturally sensitive care and addressing the needs of diverse patient populations.
- EI is a core competency for healthcare administrators and clinicians, contributing to effective management and enhanced clinician-patient relationships.
- Evaluating one's emotional competence is a vital step in achieving psychological maturity and professional growth.

Key learning point

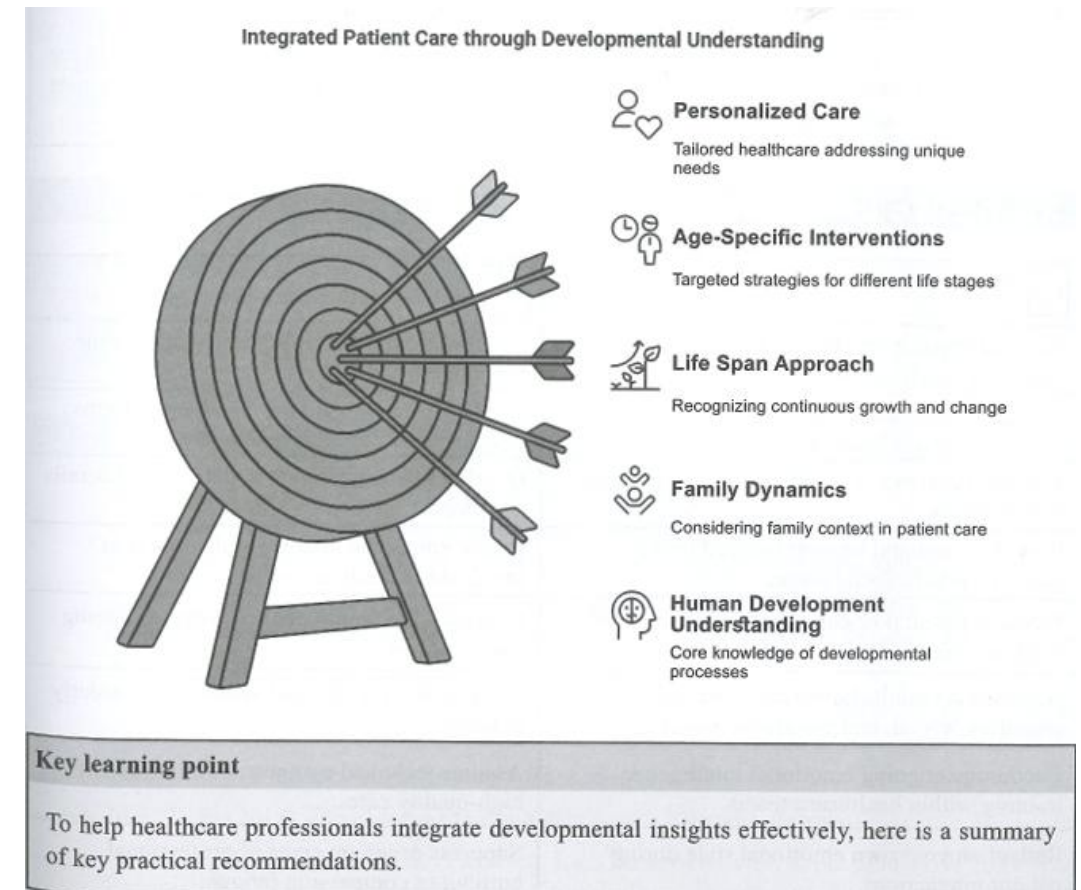
Emotional intelligence plays a critical role in effective patient care and personal well-being in healthcare environments.

Practical Applications for Healthcare Professionals

- Understanding human development helps professionals tailor care to meet patients' specific needs.
- Family physicians provide guidance during developmental transitions, recognizing links between medical issues, family dynamics, and life cycle events.
- A life span approach highlights ongoing growth and unique challenges.
- Viewing patients through a developmental lens allows personalized care, addressing age-specific risks and psychosocial issues.

Practical Applications for Healthcare Professionals

- This approach acknowledges the interplay between development and health outcomes.

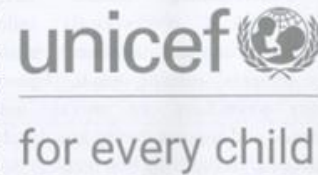


Psychology on the ground

An excellent example of applied developmental psychology comes from UNICEF's Early Childhood Development (ECD) programs, which focus on promoting health, nutrition, responsive caregiving, and early learning opportunities for children under five. Evidence from global studies shows that early interventions in cognitive stimulation and emotional support dramatically improve developmental outcomes, particularly in low-resource settings (UNICEF, 2017).

For instance, community health workers in rural Bangladesh were trained to provide structured play and parent education sessions, leading to significant improvements in children's cognitive and language skills compared to those without such interventions (Grantham-McGregor et al., 2014). This kind of psychology-on-the-ground approach demonstrates how theories of human development translate into measurable health and social outcomes.

In clinical practice, similar principles are applied when pediatricians screen toddlers for developmental delays, geriatricians assess cognitive decline in older adults, or psychiatrists consider psychosocial stressors when diagnosing mental health conditions.

**6. Practical Tips!**

☒ Do	☒ Avoid
Conduct regular developmental screenings during pediatric visits.	Assume all children reach milestones at the same rate.
Recognize cultural differences in developmental expectations and behaviors.	Apply Western-based developmental norms universally without adjustment.
Use age-appropriate communication strategies with patients.	Overload young patients with technical details or complex medical language.
Provide emotional support tailored to the patient's psychosocial stage.	Ignore emotional distress or dismiss it as unrelated to medical care.
Promote parental or caregiver involvement in treatment plans.	Overlook the family context when designing interventions.
Assess older adults holistically, including cognitive, social, and emotional aspects.	Focus solely on physical symptoms in elderly patients.
Encourage ongoing emotional intelligence training within healthcare teams.	Assume technical competence alone ensures high-quality care.
Reflect on your own emotional state during patient interactions.	Suppress or ignore signs of professional burnout or compassion fatigue.
Offer referrals to developmental or psychological specialists when needed.	Delay intervention due to uncertainty or lack of training.

Quick review and brief answers to unit questions

Here's a concise summary addressing the critical thinking questions posed earlier:

1. How do early childhood experiences shape later life outcomes?

Early experiences, particularly attachment and caregiving quality, lay the groundwork for emotional regulation, social skills, and resilience, influencing health and well-being across the lifespan (Berk, 2018).

2. What role do biological factors play in development?

Biological factors such as genetics, brain maturation, and hormonal changes provide the framework within which physical, cognitive, and emotional development unfold (Papalia et al., 2019).

3. How does culture influence development?

Culture shapes parenting practices, social norms, expectations for maturity, and emotional expression, leading to variations in developmental pathways across societies (Kagitcibasi, 2007).

4. Why is adolescence considered a critical stage?

Adolescence involves identity exploration, heightened emotional reactivity, and social repositioning, making it a key period for psychosocial and cognitive change (Steinberg, 2005).

5. How can knowledge of development improve healthcare practice?

By understanding age-specific needs, healthcare providers can tailor communication, anticipate challenges, and design interventions that align with a patient's developmental stage (Santrock, 2020).

6. What are major challenges in adulthood and aging?

Adults navigate relationship commitments, career development, caregiving roles, and later, coping with physical decline, social loss, and meaning-making in old age (Erikson, 1950).

7. How does emotional intelligence impact healthcare delivery?

High emotional intelligence improves empathy, communication, teamwork, and stress management, all of which are critical in clinical settings (Goleman, 2006).

﴿وَاصْبِرْ حَتَّى يَحْكُمَ اللَّهُ وَهُوَ خَيْرُ الْحَاكِمِينَ﴾

اللهم يا رحيم، يا لطيف، يا رزاق، نسألك بأسمائك الحسنى وصفاتك العلى أن تفرّج الكرب عن أهلنا في غزة، اللهم أطعمهم من جوع، واسقهم من ظمأ، وأمنهم من خوف.

اللهم إن الحصار اشتدّ، والطعام نفذ، ولا معين لهم سواك، فارزقهم رزقاً من عندك، يسرّ به قلوبهم ويقوّي به أبدانهم، اللهم افتح لهم أبواب فرجك، وابعث لهم من يُغيثهم.

اللهم اجعل لهم من كل ضيقٍ مخرجاً، ومن كل همٍّ فرجاً، اللهم كن معهم ولا تكن عليهم، ربّنا لا تُسلط عليهم  من لا يخافك ولا يرحمهم، اللهم عجل لهم بالنصر والفرج، يا أرحم الراحمين

دعواتكم لأهلنا في غزه ولمن قام بهذا العمل.