

Table 9.4

**Erik Erikson's Psychosocial Stages of Development**

Life Stage	Psychosocial Conflict	Positive Resolution	Negative Resolution
Infancy (birth to 18 months)	Trust vs. mistrust	Reliance on consistent and warm caregivers produces a sense of predictability and trust in the environment.	Physical and psychological neglect by caregivers leads to fear, anxiety, and mistrust of the environment.
Toddlerhood (18 months to 3 years)	Autonomy vs. doubt	Caregivers encourage independence and self-sufficiency, promoting positive self-esteem.	Overly restrictive caregiving leads self-doubt in abilities and low to self-esteem.
Early childhood (3 to 6 years)	Initiative vs. guilt	The child learns to initiate activities and develops a sense of social responsibility concerning the rights of others; promotes self-confidence.	Parental overcontrol stifles the child's spontaneity, sense of purpose, and social learning; promotes guilt and fear of punishment.
Middle and late childhood (6 to 12 years)	Industry vs. inferiority	Through experiences with parents and "keeping up" with peers, the child develops a sense of pride and competence in schoolwork and home and social activities.	Negative experiences with parents or failure to "keep up" with peers leads to pervasive feelings of inferiority and inadequacy.
Adolescence	Identity vs. role confusion	Through experimentation with different roles, the adolescent develops an integrated and stable self-definition; forms commitments to future adult roles.	An apathetic adolescent or one who experiences pressures and demands from others may feel confusion about his or her identity and role in society.
Young adulthood	Intimacy vs. isolation	By establishing lasting and meaningful relationships, the young adult develops a sense of connectedness and intimacy with others.	Because of fear of rejection or excessive self-preoccupation, the young adult is unable to form close, meaningful relationships and becomes psychologically isolated.
Middle adulthood	Generativity vs. stagnation	Through child rearing, caring for others, productive work, and community involvement, the adult expresses unselfish concern for the welfare of the next generation.	Self-indulgence, self-absorption, and a preoccupation with one's own needs lead to a sense of stagnation, boredom, and a lack of meaningful accomplishments.
Late adulthood	Ego integrity vs. despair	In reviewing his or her life, the older adult experiences a strong sense of self-acceptance and meaningfulness in his or her accomplishments.	In looking back on his or her life, the older adult experiences regret, dissatisfaction, and disappointment about his or her life and accomplishments.


Source: Adapted from Erikson (1964a).

## Identity versus role confusion (adolescence)

The beginnings of the formation of an identity take place with a sense of direction and uniqueness.

- Who am I?
- Am I comfortable with who I am?
- Am I part of the community?

Identities can be made through our peers, religion, job, possessions, etc.

<b>Identity</b>	<b>Identity confusion</b>
<p>Through experimentation with different roles, the adolescent develops an integrated and stable self-definition that they are comfortable with.</p>  <p>(image source: unknown)</p>	<p>An apathetic adolescent or one who experiences pressures and demands from others may feel confusion about his or her identity and role in society. They may feel alienated.</p>

- People who successfully resolve conflicts of identity develop a sense of community and works well with others and contribute to society.

## **Role Confusion**

Erikson maintains that identity confused youths try to establish their identities by over-identifying with an assortment of heroes, cliques or crowds and become defensive about criticisms of these heroes (is derived from these heroes, not of their own accomplishments). From the role confused person, these heroes and role models can do no wrong.

- Adolescents who are unclear about their identity, Erikson argues is not their fault, but can be traced to a generation of adults, some of who are unclear about their own values and cannot provide guidance.
- People who unsuccessfully resolve their conflicts act in a scornful and hostile way towards the community and form associations with others who act in this way.
- The implicit thinking is “Why should I respect society when society doesn’t respect me?”

Based on Erikson’s approach, what are the possible implications for dealing with juvenile delinquents?

Example:

A Catholic adolescent is allowed to explore other religions in an attempt to establish her own religious value structure. An adolescent who is not allowed to explore other religions on his own may have difficulty developing an individual religious value structure.

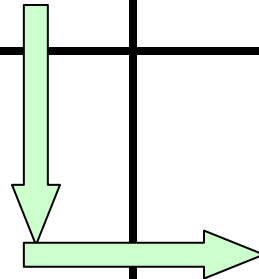
## Marcia's Identity Statuses

**Identity diffusion:** Young People drift aimlessly toward adulthood without any goals: "I don't know where I am going," "Nothing has any appeal."

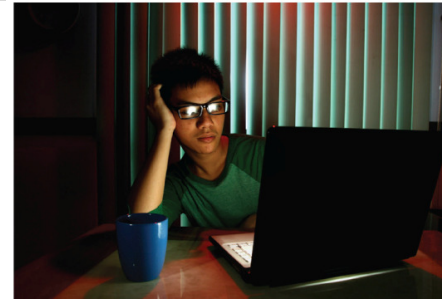


Dark Moon Pictures/Shutterstock

Healthy  
progression



**Identity foreclosure:** A person who adopts an identity without any self-exploration or thought—generally adopting an identity handed down by an authority figure—usually the parents.



junpinzon/Shutterstock



Robert Daly/Getty Images

**Identity moratorium:** The person is engaged in the exciting search for an adult self. The person is trying out different philosophies and ideas and is important for discovering who you are.




Tetra Images/Getty Images

**Identity achievement:** The person who has examined their options and decided on what is the best fit for them.

What is crucial is that we make a commitment and feel confident that this decision expresses our inner self.

## Intimacy versus isolation (young adulthood)

Can I form lasting relationships with others or will I have difficulty sharing with others?

<b>Intimacy</b>	<b>Isolation</b>
<p>By establishing lasting and meaningful relationships, the young adult develops a sense of connectedness and intimacy with others.</p>  <p>(image source: Carpenter and Huffman)</p>	<p>Because of fear of rejection or excessive self-preoccupation, the young adult is unable to form close, meaningful relationships and becomes psychologically isolated.</p>

For Erikson, intimacy involves the ability to relate one's deepest hopes and fears to another person and to accept another's need for intimacy in turn—which goes beyond sexual intimacy.



I was tired of my lady, we'd been together too long  
Like a worn out recording of a favorite song  
So while she lay there sleepin' I read the paper in bed  
And in the personal columns, there was this letter I read

If you like piña coladas and getting caught in the rain  
If you're not into yoga, if you have half a brain  
If you like making love at midnight in the dunes of the cape  
Then I'm the love that you've looked for, write to me and escape

I didn't think about my lady, I know that sounds kind of mean  
But me and my old lady had fallen into the same old dull routine  
So I wrote to the paper, took out a personal ad  
And though I'm nobody's poet, I thought it wasn't half bad

Yes, I like piña coladas and getting caught in the rain  
I'm not much into health food, I am into champagne  
I've got to meet you by tomorrow noon and cut through all this red tape  
At a bar called O'Malley's where we'll plan our escape

So I waited with high hopes and she walked in the place  
I knew her smile in an instant, I knew the curve of her face  
It was my own lovely lady and she said, "oh, it's you"  
Then we laughed for a moment and I said, "I never knew"

That you like piña coladas and gettin' caught in the rain  
And the feel of the ocean and the taste of champagne  
If you like making love at midnight in the dunes on the cape  
You're the lady I've looked for, come with me and escape



If you like piña coladas and getting caught in the rain  
If you're not into yoga, if you have half a brain  
If you like making love at midnight in the dunes on the cape  
Then I'm the love that you've looked for, write to me and escape

Yes I like piña coladas and getting caught in the rain  
I'm not much into health food, I am into champagne  
I've got to meet you by tomorrow noon and cut through all this red tape  
At a bar called O'Malley's where we'll plan our escape

## Intimacy versus isolation (young adulthood)



We all have emotional baggage in our life. Do we feel comfortable sharing with others and feel we will still be accepted for who we are.

## Intimacy versus isolation (young adulthood)

Courage is knowing it might hurt,  
and doing it anyway.

Stupidity is the same.

And that's why life is hard.

- Jeremy Goldberg

When we take risks in life and made to feel stupid about them, do we feel comfortable sharing with others that we trust?

## **Love through the Lens of Attachment Theory**

In the strange situation

- Securely attached babies run to their mother with hugs and kisses when she comes into the room.
- Avoidant infants act cold and aloof, and indifferent when the caregiver returns.
- Anxious-ambivalent babies are overly clingy, afraid to explore the toys, and angry and consolable when the caregiver returns.

## Adult Attachment Styles



Westend61/Getty Images

### Secure adult attachment

These individuals give their partners space to be their own person, but still committed to the person. Their faces show joy when talking about their partner\* and more likely to be successful in love and happier marriages. They are committed to the relationship—including in times of difficulties.



Fuse/Getty Images

### Avoidant/dismissive adult attachment

These individuals are withholding, aloof, and reluctant to engage with their partner. They want to stay independent, very reluctant to share and avoid getting too close.



Bill Aron/Photo edit

### Preoccupied/ambivalent adult attachment

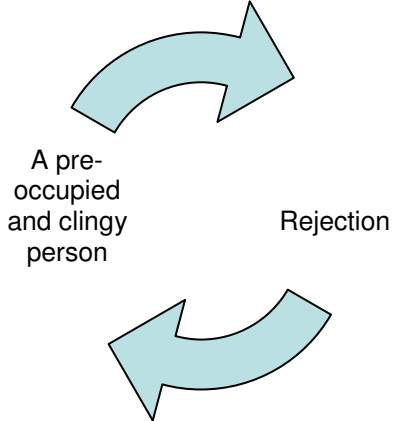
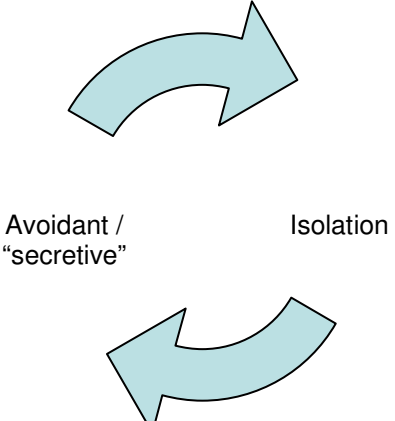
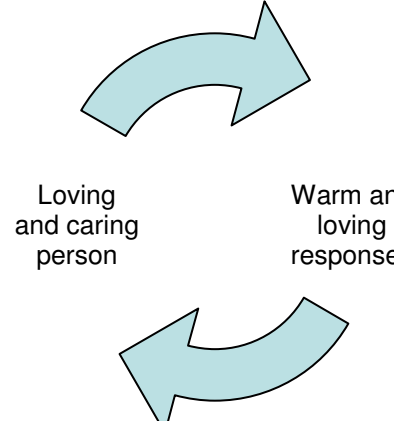



These individuals fall quickly and deeply in love, but are engulfing and needy in relationships. They often end up being rejected or feeling unfulfilled.

## **Adult Attachment Styles**

Attachment styles are malleable. It depends on the person (do they blame others for their troubles, or have insight into the changes they need to make in their life) and the environment—the people they associate with and how supportive they are of good or bad behavior. About half the women in a two-year study changed their attachment style from insecure to secure.

## Adult Attachment Styles

Attachment styles (whether secure or insecure) tend to be relatively stable without intervention and a self-fulfilling prophecy. Our behavior elicits the type of responses that reinforce the original behavior.

<b>Preoccupied / Ambivalent</b>	<b>Avoidant / Dismissive</b>	<b>Secure</b>
<p>A preoccupied, clingy person tends to be repeatedly rejected.</p>	<p>An avoidant individual remains isolated when they don't self-disclose personal information.</p>	<p>A loving person gets more secure because their caring behavior evokes warm, loving responses.</p>
<div style="text-align: center;">  <p>A pre-occupied and clingy person</p> <p>Rejection</p> </div>	<div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Avoidant / "secretive"</p> <p>Isolation</p> </div>	<div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Loving and caring person</p> <p>Warm and loving responses</p> </div>
 <p>Bill Aron/Photo edit</p>	 <p>Fuse/Getty Images</p>	 <p>Westend61/Getty Images</p>



## Woman Shares Texts Showing the Difference Between A Healthy And Controlling Relationship





**Table 10.9 : Evaluating Your Own Relationship:  
A Section Summary Checklist**

	No	Yes
<p>1. Are you and your partner on the same wavelength in terms of values, and did you connect over similar passions or flow states?</p> <p>You don't have to be clones, but having mutual passions and <i>regularly sharing</i> those interests is a key to keeping passion alive.*</p>		
<p>2. Do you believe that your partner embodies your ideal self?</p> <p>Looking up to your partner as someone you want to be like predicts staying together happily, as well as growing emotionally toward your ideal.</p>		
<p>3. Do you see your partner as utterly terrific and unique?</p> <p>Deciding that this person has no human flaws is not necessary—but seeing your partner as “unique and special” also predicts being happy together.</p>		
<p>4. Is your romance moving along steadily (versus being turbulent)?</p> <p>If you experience minor ups and downs in your feelings of love, that's fine, but it's a bad sign if you repeatedly break up and get together again.</p>		
<p>5. Is your partner able to fully reach out in love, neither intensely jealous nor aloof?</p> <p>Some jealousy or hesitation about commitment can be normal, but in general, your partner should be securely attached and able to love.</p>		
<p>If you checked “yes” for all five of these questions, your relationship is in excellent shape. If you checked “no” for every question, your “relationship” does not exist! One or two no's mixed in with yes's suggest areas that may need additional work.</p>		

- Select someone who is similar in values and interests, but don't necessarily search for a partner with your exact personality traits.
- Find someone you respect as an individual.
- Focus on the outstanding characteristics of the other person (but don't ignore serious problems).

Expect that there will be conflict in a happy relationship. Both happy and unhappy relationships have conflict. The difference is not how often they argue, but how they argue. Happy relationships where there is conflict, the partners fight fair. Unhappy relationships where there is conflict, the partners fight unfair.

## Finding a Career

Having a realistic expectation about a career can be difficult. While it is important to aspire to grand career goals, most young adults have unrealistic expectations.

When students have an inflated view of their academic abilities, students are shocked when they receive feedback regarding their performance, and their self-esteem drops.

It is considered normal to have a slightly positive view of the self—that you are better than average, but problematic when you have an overly inflated view of the self. Regarding high school students,

- 60% of surveyed high school students rated themselves in the top 10%
- 25% rated themselves in the top 1%

They used different operational definitions of what is best, such as math, sports, music, art, glee club, social friends.

- Young people who enter upbeat and competent are more likely to be successful and grow when attending college.
- Those who are high in the personality trait conscientiousness are more likely to be reliable, exhibit self-control and reason in thoughtful ways ([page 299](#)).

These are abilities tied to the executive functions of the frontal lobes. In addition, if you can identify your talents and find a lifestyle and job that matches those talents, one can succeed.

## Table 10.4: Succeeding in College/Finding a Career Identity: Tips for Young People and Society

<b>For Young People</b>
1. Understand that when you enter college, you may overestimate your academic abilities. It takes time to get adjusted to the demands of this new life!
2. Focus on finding your flow in selecting a career. Avoid obsessing about different possibilities, but understand that it can take time to formulate a clear career plan.
3. If you need to drop out for some time, understand it's not the end of the world. Having a year or two off may help you home in on a career identity and be a better student.
<b>For Colleges (and Society)</b>
1. Provide support <i>throughout</i> college to help students succeed.
2. Reach out to low-income students and offer special services for parents or working adults.
3. Institute a national (ideally, mandatory) year of government service for all young people at age 18 and offer apprenticeship programs linked to jobs—ones that offer a conduit to careers without college.
4. Make negotiating young people's school-to-work transition a national priority!