

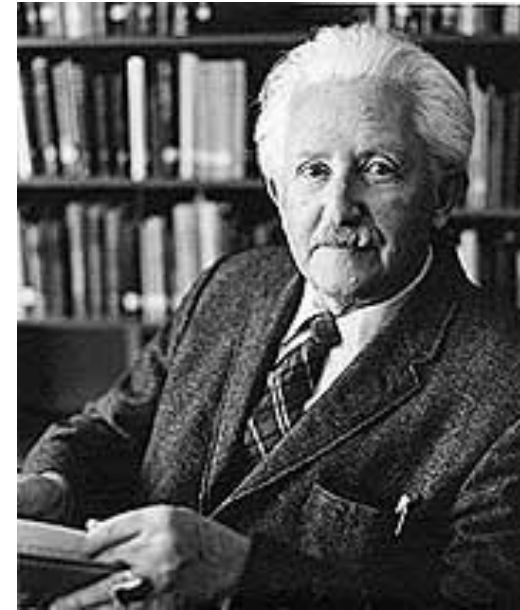
# The psychoanalytic approach

**Neo Freudian theory ,application and assessment**

# Erik Erikson...

1902 - 1994

Erik Erikson was born in Frankfurt, Germany. His biological father abandoned the family before Erik was born. During his childhood, and his early adulthood, he was Erik Homberger, (named after his pediatrician/step-father) and his parents kept the details of his birth a secret. So here he was, a tall, blond, blue-eyed boy who was also Jewish. At temple school, the kids teased him for being Nordic; at grammar school, they teased him for being Jewish.



After graduating high school, Erik focused on becoming an artist, wandering totally carefree around Europe with a friend, struggling with the question “who am I?”. He eventually began teaching art at a school run by a friend of Anna Freud (Sigmund Freud’s daughter), he gathered a certificate in Montessori education and one from the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society. He was psychoanalyzed by Anna Freud herself, and studied Freud’s work carefully. While Freud believed in “destiny”, Erikson believed that a child’s “environment” had a great influence on their development.

With the advent of World War II he immigrated to the United States. He later taught at Yale, and later still at the University of California at Berkeley. It was during this period of time that he did his famous studies of modern life among the Lakota and the Yurok.

When he became an American citizen, he officially changed his name to Erik Erikson. No-one seems to know where he got the name! Erikson was known and praised for his theories on psycho-social development, personality, and identity crisis.

# 8 Stage Theory of Psycho-social Development...

Erik Erikson refined the work of Sigmund Freud, creating the 8 stage theory of psycho-social development. This theory is widely accepted as “fact” in the psychology community today. The first 6 stages deal with the developing child and young adult. Freud outlined the stages of his theory in a manner imitating “developmental tasks”. In other words, every human being, in order to successfully deal with life in society, will pass through each stage...preferably in order and preferably during a specific timeframe. If an individual does not “accomplish the task” in one of the 8 stages, difficulties emotionally and socially will undoubtedly show up later in life.

## ***Stage 1: Trust***

### **1. Learning Basic Trust Versus Basic Mistrust (Hope)**

Chronologically, this is the period of infancy through the first one or two years of life. The child, well - handled, nurtured, and loved, develops trust and security and a basic optimism. Badly handled, he becomes insecure and mistrustful.



This baby cries for the parent. The parent responds. This helps establish trust.

## ***Stage 2: Autonomy***



Autonomy is not, however, entirely synonymous with assured self - possession, initiative, and independence but, at least for children in the early part of this psychosocial crisis, includes stormy self - will, tantrums, stubbornness, and negativism. For example, one sees many 2 year olds resolutely folding their arms to prevent their mothers from holding their hands as they cross the street. Also, the sound of "NO!" or "I can do it myself!" is heard often.

### **2. Learning Autonomy Versus Shame (Will)**

The second psychosocial crisis, Erikson believes, occurs during early childhood, probably between about 18 months or 2 years and 3½ to 4 years of age. The "well - parented" child emerges from this stage sure of himself, elated with his new found control, and proud rather than ashamed.



"Why?"

## ***Stage 3: Initiative***

### **3. Learning Initiative Versus Guilt (Purpose)**

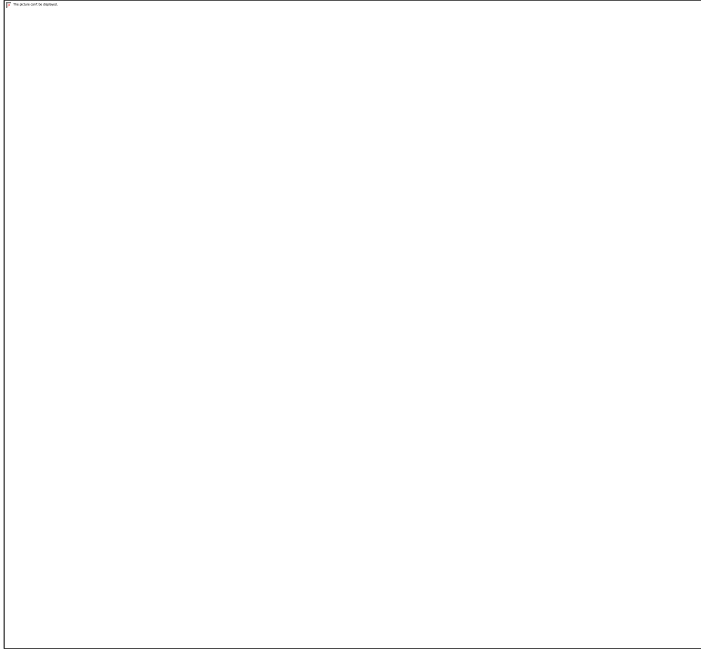
Erikson believes that this third psychosocial crisis occurs during what he calls the "play age," or the later preschool years (from about 3½ to, in the United States culture, entry into formal school). During it, the healthily developing child learns: (1) to imagine, to broaden his skills through active play of all sorts, including fantasy (2) to cooperate with others (3) to lead as well as to follow. Immobilized by guilt, he is: (1) fearful (2) hangs on the fringes of groups (3) continues to depend unduly on adults and (4) is restricted both in the development of play skills and in imagination.



It's time for bed. This 4 year old starts the job of cleaning up his crayons before going.



# ***Stage 4: Industry***



**Work hard; play hard; do your best!**



## **4. Industry Versus Inferiority (Competence)**

Erikson believes that the fourth psychosocial crisis is handled, for better or worse, during what he calls the "school age," presumably up to and possibly including some of junior high school. Here the child learns to master the more formal skills of life: (1) relating with peers according to rules (2) progressing from free play to play that may be elaborately structured by rules and may demand formal teamwork, such as baseball and (3) mastering social studies, reading, arithmetic. Homework is a necessity, and the need for self-discipline increases yearly. The child who, because of his successive and successful resolutions of earlier psychosocial crisis, is trusting, autonomous, and full of initiative will learn easily enough to be industrious. However, the mistrusting child will doubt the future. The shame - and guilt-filled child will experience defeat and inferiority.

# ***Stage 5: Identity***

## **5. Learning Identity Versus Identity Diffusion (Fidelity)**

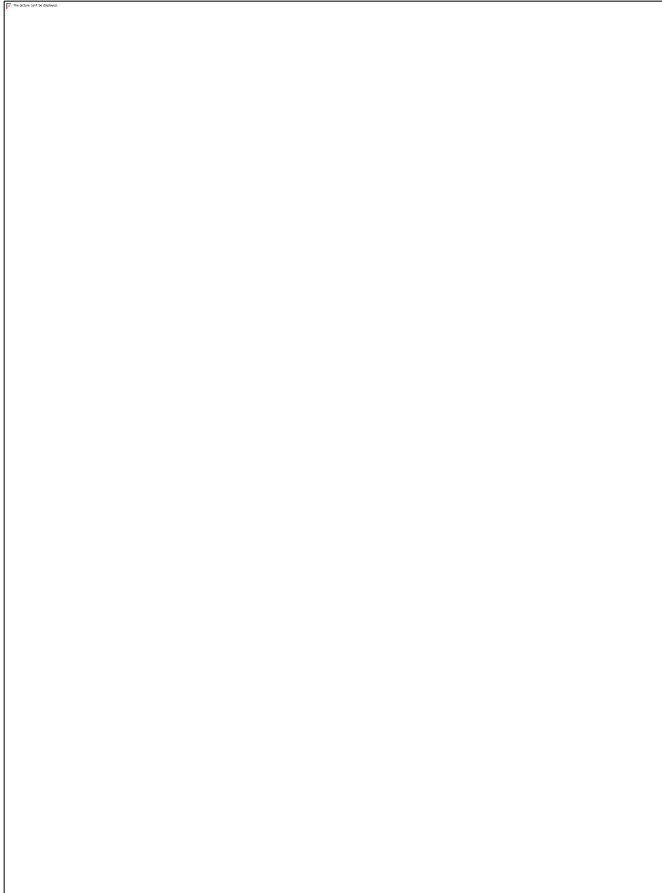
During the fifth psychosocial crisis (adolescence, from about 13 or 14 to about 20) the child, now an adolescent, learns how to answer satisfactorily and happily the question of "Who am I?" But even the best-adjusted of adolescents may experience some role identity confusion and self-doubts. Erikson believes the young person acquires self-certainty as opposed to self-consciousness and self-doubt. He comes to experiment with different - usually constructive - roles rather than adopting a "negative identity" (such as delinquency). He actually anticipates achievement, and does achieve, rather than being "paralyzed" by feelings of inferiority or by an inadequate time perspective. In later adolescence, clear sexual identity - manhood or womanhood - is established.

The adolescent seeks leadership (someone to inspire him), and gradually develops a set of ideals (socially congruent and desirable, in the case of the successful adolescent).

Erikson believes that, in our culture, adolescence affords children a time for to experiment, trying various roles, and thus hopefully find the one most suitable for them.

# ***Stage 6: Intimacy***

The definition of intimacy is “a close, personal relationship”. Two people have detailed knowledge of each other, resulting from a close or long association or study of one another. The relationship may be sexual or platonic in nature.



## **6. Learning Intimacy Versus Isolation (Love)**

The young adult, successful in establishing identity, can now experience true intimacy - the sort of intimacy that makes possible good marriage or a genuine and enduring friendship.



## 7. Learning Generativity

### Versus Self-Absorption (Care)

In adulthood, the psychosocial crisis demands generativity, both in the sense of marriage and parenthood, and in the sense of working productively and creatively.

## ***Stage 7: Generativity***



## ***Stage 8: Integrity***

### 8. Integrity Versus Despair (Wisdom)

If the other seven psychosocial crisis have been successfully resolved, the mature adult develops the peak of adjustment; integrity. He trusts, he is independent and dares the new. He works hard, has found a well - defined role in life, and has developed a self-concept with which he is happy. He can be intimate without strain, guilt, regret, or lack of realism; and he is proud of what he creates - his children, his work, or his hobbies. If one or more of the earlier psychosocial crises have not been resolved, he may view himself and his life with disgust and despair.

