

Learning Activity #6

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Erikson defines identity as “the major personality attainment of adolescence and as a crucial step toward becoming a productive, content adult. Constructing an identity involves defining who you are, what you value, and the directions you choose to pursue in life,” (Berk et al, p. 408). Young teenagers and young adults go through an identity crisis where life goals and the future can seem unobtainable or not possible. We learned from earlier chapters about the different cognitive processes, like attention, perception, and memory. We can compare these two with the “identity versus role confusion” which is the “successful psychosocial outcomes of infancy and childhood that pave the way toward a positive resolution,” (Berk et al, p. 408). Past adolescent incidences that might have altered one’s growth mentally and physically can play into the role of how a child grows up seeing themselves and their identity challenges them in the future. But this ties back to the cognitive process of attention, perception, and memory. Learning from these mistakes or success with attention and perception, carrying them with you to the next big hurdle in your memories can help an adolescent be able to attack a future problem with more positivity and confidence.

The conversation with Darryl and Louis is one that I think we all had growing up. Who are we now? What are we going to become? There are four identity statuses: identity achievement, identity moratorium, identity foreclosure, and identity diffusion. With Darryl questioning what his life could had been if fate didn’t put him where he is today, how he’s envious of his older brother for knowing more about what he’s doing in life; I believe we can put him in the identity diffusion column. Darryl is currently feeling that he’s set in what he is, that no matter what he does his brother will be ahead of him. But it seems like he’s lacking a

direction in where he wants to go, and it doesn't seem like he's seeking ways to reach them, just complaining about how his brother is ahead. He's jealous that his brother, Jules, is in the identity achievement column. This means that Jules has a set idea of values and goals, knows what to do with information regarding that, and is taking action. With Darryl's friend, Louis, I believe he is in the identity moratorium column. He's not as question inquiring as Darryl is, but Louis seems to not have as many fears compared to Darryl. Louis seems to not be exploring different ideas and values just yet, and doesn't really see a need to. It's like he's waiting for future Louis to figure it out instead of present Louis.

I believe there are many outside factors that contributed to my own identity progress. I grew up in a low-middle class family, my father is an alcoholic, my parents divorced when I was in middle school, and I had horrible self esteem due to how I perceived myself and the way kids treated me. My parents weren't as strict with my schooling until I got older in high school, but by that time everyone seemed so much farther ahead of me. I felt lost and afraid. I feel like I was a mixture of identity foreclosure and identify diffusion. I kind of agreed to where I was in life and where I saw myself going. I knew I wasn't destined to be a great thing like a doctor or a scientist, and I was set on not trying to reach further than what I could achieve. I guess I kind of settled come senior year of being undecided at the University of Maine and was hoping that a path would open up to me without having to do much. Thanks to friends, I got where I needed to be when I attended the University of Southern Maine and then eventually here at Beal College.

References

Berk, L. E. (2018). *Development through the lifespan*. Boston: Pearson.