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Unit 5 Essay Questions

Human Growth and Development

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1. There are many challenges that come with transitioning from high school to college. For example, one may have had a tight knit friend group in high school. This group of peers may have made attending school easier by offering support and even a form of entertainment. However, once one enters college, it is very rare that those same friends go with them. College also requires students to have a sense of independence when it comes to getting their assignments done. There are no progress reports to update parents, there is no one running behind you to ensure the work is being completed. Meeting deadlines is solely up the student. These challenges mirror the transition from elementary to middle school. For example, elementary schools offer a lot of support for students. It is almost impossible to “fail” in elementary school. This is because if a student is displaying difficulty in completing certain tasks, teachers and parents immediately get involved. This could lead to more one on one help, or even placement in a more fitting classroom that supports the child’s specific needs. Middle school, though still filled with student support, is where students begin to gain a sense of independence. Students will start to utilize lockers, pick up a heavier workload, and are expected to be in their seats ready to learn within a certain window of time. This is similar to college in that it is solely up to the student to make it to their scheduled classes on time. Tardiness in college, though, will not lead to a phone call home. Tardiness in college will simply diminish the student’s

grades. Tardiness in middle school differs from that of college because it will lead to parents and/or caregivers being notified of this behavior. This could lead to possible intervention. The transition to middle school is different from the transition to college in that majority of one's friends from elementary school have more than likely transitioned to middle school with them. It is not until college that students begin to disperse to different states, cities, or stay home and do courses online which breaks up friend groups. Some students also opt out of college altogether which can lead to friends losing touch as well.

2. The sort of exercise program that current research on exercise best supports is anything that encourages at least 180 minutes of physical activity per week. This could be swimming, jump roping, sports, dancing, bike riding, etc. Some of the benefits of exercise in adolescents is reduced obesity, lower blood pressure, reduced triglyceride levels, improvement in sleep and mental health, and a reduced risk of type II diabetes. Sitting down and eating homecooked family meals also reduces the risk of obesity in adolescents. Currently, studies are showing that white (non-Latina) adolescent boys are the most physically active, while African American adolescent girls are the least physically active. Culture does tend to impact how active adolescents may be. For some families, being active together can be linked to family bonding time and creating memories. For example, a father and daughter may go outside and verse each other in basketball four nights a week due to a shared love for the sport. A mother and son may have a tradition of going bowling every Friday night as a means of bonding. For some families, physical activity may not be shared or encouraged due to the parents or caregivers work schedule. They may not have time to go out and play with their children.

They also may not even have the time to regularly cook meals. This can lead to the over consumption of obesity forming foods!

3. When it comes to my career plan, I am very excited. I will be done with my bachelor's in social work (or BSW) in December. My plan for now is to move to an apartment in Virginia with my significant other, and find a job in Washington, D.C. Ideally, I would want to work a government job or a school district job so that I can have adequate pay and benefits. I want to work somewhere that allows me to move around (as opposed to sitting in one office all day.) I have a lot of experience working hands on with vulnerable people, so I know that this, as well as my education will make my resume quite attractive. Having adequate health insurance means a lot to me, because once I am settled in my career, I want to work on having my first baby. While working and having no kids, my significant other and I plan to work as much as we can to save money for a home and a family. I do plan to continue my Masters online (if possible) while working. I want to get my LCSW (License in Clinical Social Work) so that I can be certified to go into private practice. This will allow me to counsel people via zoom, telephone, or in office. This will also allow me to collect insurance, and create my own schedule. I look forward to this because, again, I desire to make a difference in the lives of those who I work with. I also want the freedom to be able to be present for my family. I do not want to miss out on milestones with my children or time with my husband because I am being mandated to work long hours. All in all, though, despite this being the blueprint that I have laid out, one of the biggest lessons we are taught in the social work program is to BE OPEN. This means that just because you love children (for example) does not necessarily mean that working with them may be the best fit for you, and vice versa. I plan to stay open

minded, prayerful, and take opportunities that support my desire to be a GOOD wife and a good, present mother to my future children. Once I retire and my children are grown, independent adults, I would love to teach a college level social work course. Working with future social work students would be fulfilling because I remember how fun (and difficult at times) the program was for me. Ultimately, I want to pay it forward by instilling wisdom and optimism into social work students one day.

4. Society tends to place expectations on our experiences from the day that we are born. Some of these expectations can be about development. For example, by the age of two years old, a toddler is generally expected to be talking. By age 16, teenagers are expected to have some idea about what their plans are after school. Society expects them to know whether or not they will be continuing their education after high school, and if so, what major will they choose? When it comes to adulthood, those expectations as well as the implications of them become major. What is deemed a normal end goal for most adults is for them to have a thriving career, a family (consisting of a spouse and children) and a home. When one does not have those things, they are deemed abnormal. In today's society especially, a single adult is deemed undesirable or unlovable. When I was single, no one took the time to ask me about school, work, or my hobbies. Most loved ones would say "you grew up to be so pretty, why don't you have a boyfriend?" I would also hear things like "I want to see you as a mother, holding your beautiful baby." Though they often said these things as a compliment, I did not receive them as such. Constantly being reminded that I am single and do not have a child was hurtful. For me, it reiterated the lie that something must be wrong with me. These comments made me feel as though I was behind in life, even though that season of being single and focusing on my goals was God

ordained. I walked away from those comments feeling like I was less than a woman because I did not have a husband and a child to support my womanhood. Unfortunately, there are many movements that support this toxic way of thinking. Movements like the “Red Pill” movement as well as the “manosphere” have actually coined a term called “hitting the wall.” This means that if by thirty years old, a woman does not have a loving husband or children in a loving home, she has hit the wall and is doomed to a life of loneliness and misery. There is also a movement called “Passport Bros” that encourages single men from America to travel abroad to find young, submissive, domesticated foreign women to settle down and have families with. Most single adults in today's time are either working a great deal to be able to afford to live (especially if they live on their own.) They are also often enjoying the time of independence. This could mean going out and seeing the world, dating, finding themselves, or even continuing their education. Just the same though, from my personal experience, none of the elders around me truly saw the benefits in me living life as a happy, single entity. I was made to feel as though I was not measuring up to the woman in my family who came before me. We live in a different time, though. Things are not as affordable as they once were, and women have discovered it is in fact okay to be single and happy if you so choose. Our worth cannot be found in relationships or motherhood. We simply are who we are and that's sufficient enough.

5. Being a college student can be extremely lonely. As stated in a previous question, often times the friend group that one had in the hallways of high school do not transfer over to college. This is because friends may go to colleges in different cities/states, move away to pursue other goals, or simply lose contact because of the demands of life. Also, the demands of a college student who is also working are far greater than they may have been

in high school. Balancing work and grades is not an easy feat and makes it difficult to maintain relationships. What one can do to alleviate this, though, is join campus-based activities. This will afford them the opportunity to connect with those who are also on the same campus as them, and understand their time constraints. Sometimes, loved ones may not fully understand the demands of college life, but fellow students will. Students can also alleviate loneliness by making it a point to call and check in with loved ones, despite being busy. This can be done over the phone and even via video calls. Having this sense of connection can help alleviate those feelings of isolation. The act of keeping busy itself can also help to alleviate that sense of loneliness. When your day is filled with constructive, positive things that are moving you closer to your goals, you may not even notice feeling lonely due to your focus on meeting deadlines.

6. According to psychologist Robert Sternberg, love is composed of three elements: intimacy, passion, and commitment. These three elements collectively make up his “Triarchic Theory of Love.” By this definition, if a relationship only has one of these elements, it will not last. In order for a relationship to be successful, it needs to have all three elements in play. For example, a marriage comprised of a couple who loves each other but lacks passion is not a marriage that will succeed. Another example is a marriage that has the elements of love and passion, but no commitment. According to the Triarchic Theory of Love, this union will not be as strong and successful as a marriage that has all three. Intimacy, though, does not have to mean sex. Intimacy can be found in laughing together, going out for ice cream on a Sunday afternoon, or watching a movie closely on the couch. Commitment is the notion of making a choice to be with your partner no matter what may come your way. Commitment is adhering to the agreements of the

relationship (according to whatever boundaries have been established) and staying the course, even when you feel as though you don't like your significant other in that certain moment. Passion is a heightened sense of emotional regard for one another. When you are passionate about the union, you will show up and be present—mentally and emotionally. The Triarchic Theory of Love is not just limited to marriages but can also apply to platonic relationships as well. Two platonic best friends can be passionate about their bond, share non sexual intimacy and love one another. Again, as long as those three elements are in play, the relationship, according to Robert Sternberg will be fulfilling for both parties involved.

7. When an individual experiences a divorce, they go through a process to find themselves again. During that time, they may experience an abundance of different emotions and thoughts. According to the text, divorce can be brought on by getting married young, financial turmoil, lack of education (and opportunities), and having a child(ren) out of wedlock. Some of the characteristics of divorced individuals include (but are not limited to) substance misuse, domestic violence, cheating, and one person doing more work than the other. According to studies, divorce generally takes place within the first five to ten years of marriage when the aforementioned factors are in place. Granted, couples headed down this pathway may choose to work things out in an effort to save their marriage. If, in the event, their efforts do not work, they may still divorce. Within the dynamic of Christianity, for example, encourages people to get married young and quickly. This is in an effort to bring the couple closer to a sin free life. However, many of these couples do not end up staying the course due to their lack of understanding of each other. They also possess a lack of understanding of themselves due to being young and focused on doing

the right thing. I actually know a young couple who is in that position. They had the best of intentions, yet their history prior to meeting one another began to present itself, and the willingness to commit through the process of healing was not there for them. They decided they did not like each other after all and are making efforts to split up.

8. When a person reaches early adulthood, they are essentially at their biological “peak.”

This is not to say that they cannot get better, but naturally, without any manipulation, one is generally at their best when they reach this phase of life. Some of the physical changes that take place in early adulthood are height increase (one may reach their peak height measurement at this point), weight gain, muscle gain, and the necessary agility to maneuver. At this phase of life, one may go out at night to celebrate with friends, get to bed at 4am and still have the wherewithal to make it to their 7am work shift. In early development, the body is generally strong enough to withstand lack of sleep or overconsumption of certain food and drink. It is not until one moves out of early adulthood that they begin to feel the effects of not prioritizing rest and healthy eating. Maintaining this peak health does not require too much at this phase of development. Some of the physiological changes that begin to take place during early adulthood are reaction time, increase in bone density and heart health. This phase of life is marked by an increase in fine motor/sensory skills. Though the body naturally produces these peak results in early adulthood, it is still wise for young adults to take care of their health. The sooner healthy habits begin, the better. Some things young adults can do to optimize health is take vitamins, rest, exercise, eat three complete meals and drink lots of water. These habits will make the transition out of early adulthood smoother.