Adulthood

Adulthood Tasks
1. Integrate multiple relationships.
2. Integrate conflicting values.
3. Integrate values and behavior.
4. Act on incomplete and ambiguous information.
5. Use full set of behavioral strategies flexibly.

Neuroplasticity & resilience
- Neurology is not fixed.
- Newly maturing areas are the most plastic.
- The cortex matures into the mid-30s.
- Flexibility lies most in slow cortical processes.
- Reflective integration is both slowest & also most flexible.

Reflective Integration
- Prefrontal cortex: dissociative processes
  - Information is held discretely (compare/contrast)
  - Extraneous information is inhibited
  - Focuses the mind
- Posterior cortex: associative processes
  - Interactive connectivity
  - Increase range of eliciting cues and meanings
  - Find unexpected associations and meanings

Integrative Processes
- Working memory (preconscious)
- Reflection (conscious)
- Reflective integration (conscious)

Reflective Functioning & Reorganization
The past is immutable, but its meaning is rewritten every time it is recalled.
A Dynamic-Maturational Model of Patterns of Attachment in Adulthood

Culture
- The means by which adults pass to children the accumulated knowledge of the invariant aspects of the local danger and the best ways to protect oneself.
- Context-defined balance of risk and opportunity that is heavily weighted toward past experience.

Type A Strategy
Do the right thing – from the perspective of other people.

What is dangerous?
- Doing what you want.
- Showing your true feelings.
- Taking your own perspective.

What is safe?
- Not doing the wrong thing.
- Doing the right thing, from the perspective of powerful people.
- Attending to powerful people.

Type C Strategy
Be true to your feelings – And don’t listen to others’ arguments.
What is dangerous?

- Not attending to relationships.
- Letting important people not attend to you.
- Believing that others will do as they say.

What is dangerous? (con’t)

- Compromising, i.e., taking the perspective of others.
- Delaying gratification.
- Feeling comfortable, i.e., exploration and reflection.

What is safe?

- Use of split, exaggerated, & alternated affect.
- Insistence upon your own perspective, without negotiation, compromise, or delay.
- Deceptive attacks.

Type A vs. Type C

- Cognitively organized
  - Others’ perspective
  - Dismiss self
  - Preoccupied with other
  - Exaggerate prediction
  - Omit/dismiss neg. affect
  - Minimize problems
  - Distance the past

- Affectively organized
  - Self perspective
  - Dismiss others
  - Preoccupied with self
  - Exaggerate neg. affect
  - Emphasize problems
  - Retain the past

Array of Attachment Relationships

1. Infancy:
   - Parents: Non-symmetrical & non-reciprocal

2. Preschool:
   - Parents: Disputes about symmetry & non-reciprocal

3. School years:
   - Parents: Less non-symmetrical & non-reciprocal
   - Best friend: Symmetrical & non-reciprocal

Array of Attachment Relationships, con’t

4. Adolescence:
   - Parents: Disputed symmetry & less non-reciprocal
   - Romantic partner: Symmetrical & becoming reciprocal

5. Adulthood:
   - Spouse: Symmetrical & reciprocal
   - Children: Non-symmetrical & non-reciprocal
   - Parents: Symmetrical & reciprocal -> Role-reversing
   - Grandparent: Attachment figure to grandchild
Safety in Sexual Relationships

1. Man → Woman:
   a. Promote safety of spouse & children
   or
   b. Dominate and terrorize.

Safety in Sexual Relationships, con’t

2. Woman → Man:
   a. Promote the man's reproductive opportunity
   or
   b. Cuckold him.

Resolving Disagreements

Adaptation

1. Not Type B.

2. Not developmental history.

3. Not a state.

Adaptation is a PROCESS in which not fully accurate DRMs are constantly reorganized into less inaccurate DRMs that permit flexible and adaptive use of all the behavioral strategies without distorting the mental processing of information.

Adaptive Adults

1. Protect themselves;

2. Select reliable and loving reproductive partners;

3. Protect partner and progeny;
4. Foster development of their children:
   
a. When & where there might be danger;

b. How best to respond to danger and risk of danger;

c. How to reflect productively on experience to generate new information;

Balanced Mental Processes

1. Use the whole range of simple to complex processing loops;

2. Differentiate and use all the transformations of information;

3. Recognize and use all strategies in contextually appropriate ways.

Mature (Earned) B

- Mind is freed from development context

- Mind recognizes both safety and danger

- Mind regulates behavior