FAMILIES
Families are transgenerationally produced and propagated human social systems whose main modes of organization and development might reasonably be expected to parallel generally those in other human systems at both the individual and the social levels. Let’s agree to take the prototypical “family life cycle” as a process involving three successive generations, and to identify its beginning with the coming together of two young persons. Having reached, say, the GENITAL STAGE of psychosexual development (as depicted in the columns to the left) they meet at a point in their lives at which (neurobi-psycho-socio-culturally speaking) both are ready, willing and able to differentiate enough from both their families of origin and their current peers in order to form a family unit of their own. The point at which “boy meets girl” begins a process of courtship and indicates the start of a new family system building process — which may take a variety of trajectories. The following entries trace a typical trajectory from the moment of courtship until the death of both spouses.

STAGE I: ORAL PHASE: INFANCY:

The coming together (“engagement?”) is an encounter (negotiation process) in which the two individuals must somehow reconcile many and varied traces of their respective (and collective) pasts — including attitudes toward marriage and family that have been shaped by their respective experiences growing up in their own families of origin. Each arrives at this point with more or less different worldviews, value systems and lifestyles. Typically, this part of the process is marked by an interplay of “approach/avoidance” behavior by both partners, and by “family problems” traceable to differences, disparities and disapprovals on all sides. This initial “entry” phase involves the working out of basic trust/mistrust issues. From a structural/developmental point of view, can it be seen as a counterpart of the developmental processes described immediately to the left and right of this column?

STAGE I: PREAFFILIATION:

Consider the situation of an MIT undergraduate student poised, so to speak, at or before the actual point of entry into a particular classroom on the first day of a new spring term at MIT. What social influences are playing upon her or him? Has s/he arrived, at least at a provisional decision to consider committing to this class? Given that this one was chosen from among a number of other possible HASS elective classes to attend, are there still likely to be some unresolved commitment issues? How about personal and social demand characteristics of the upcoming semester? Is s/he operating under any significant academic/extracurricular constraints/ foreseeable time conflicts? How (in what ways) and how much “how about extent” is her/his readiness, willingness and ability to act conditioned and constrained by social influences arising from a tension between having some genuine personal and social interest in being a serious student of the subject.

MODELS OF INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT

SHAKESPEARE

All the world’s a stage, And all the men and women merely players. They have their exits and their entrances, And one man in his time plays many parts, His acts being seven ages.

PHYSICAL / BIOLOGICAL

At first the infant, Mewling and puking in the nurse’s arms.

FREUD (psychosexual)

ContactFocus: feeding; mouth/breast unable to distinguish between self and other, and between internal and external stimuli/sensations; net affirmative maternal responsiveness to needs (if consistent and neither excessively harsh nor unconditionally permissive, encourages infant to assume a “psychological set” of trustful passivity = “optimism”)

ERIKSON (psychosocial development – viewing persons-in-contexts)

SPHERE OF SIGNIFICANT SOCIAL RELATIONS: infant and primary caretaker (usually biological mother)

MAIN DEVELOPMENTAL TASK: to get needs (mainly oral/nutritive) met;

MAIN DEVELOPMENTAL CRISIS: basic trust vs. basic mistrust;

FAVORABLE OUTCOME: drive and hope

UNFAVORABLE OUTCOME: apathy and fearful-ness; autism; paranoia

BIRTH–3 MONTHS:

human infant exhibits extreme neoteny (is born in a relative state of neurobiological, psychological and sociocultural immaturity in comparison to many other mammals); may be early defined by caretakers as “easy” or “difficult”; “fussy” or “calm”; sleeps a lot; his nervous system is anatomically and physiologically “incomplete”; it is relatively insensitive and unresponsive to environmental changes (noises, etc.); early reflexes include sucking, tonic neck, grasping, etc.; head needs to be externally supported; gaze alert...

 mini
**MODELS OF INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT**

**SHAKESPEARE**

As You Like It

**PHYSICAL / BIOLOGICAL**

**3–6 MONTHS:**
- gaze follows moving objects; eyes focus;
- smiles; responsive to mother's face; hand/mouth activity; head erect; social responsiveness; laughter; eye-hand coordination;
- orality; binocularity; sits supported; legs bear weight; reaches;
- localizes sounds; explores; cries easily

**6–12 MONTHS:**
- responds to own image in mirror; babbles; squeals; apprehensiveness with strangers; interest in people & toys; plays "peek-a-boo"; responsiveness to own name and "no!"; moves from supine/sitting to prone; may begin creeping/crawling; approximates thumb and forefinger; supports own weight; vocalizes "ma" "ba" "da" etc.; social interest; independent movement; may walk with support; possible time of weaning; begins to feed self; exploratory behavior; "adventureousness" and self confidence; evidences teething-related discomfort; irritability; excitability; responsiveness; creativity

**12–18 MONTHS:**
- vocabulary; negativism; turns pages; climbs; plays; builds; scribbles; runs; hand preference; follows directions; 3-4 word phrases; points/turns toward named objects; dressing ability; alternates between independent and dependent activity; obeys and disobeys instructions

**FREEDE (psychosexual)**

(1) psychosexual development – viewing persons-in-contexts

**ERIKSON**

(3–6 MONTHS:)

**FAMILY**

**OTHER GROUPS**

before us and desiring to pursue, instead, some other competing interests? Are there any other boundary conditions to consider? How well does it fit into your schedule? What is s/he instead thinking? Is s/he experiencing any approach/avoidance conflict(s)?

**BIOLOGICAL (psychosocial)**

development –

**MODELS OF FAMILY AND GROUP DEVELOPMENT**

**STAGE II:**

"Marriage" (or its equivalent in terms of "commitment") and the establishment of a common household entails for both partners a transition from a state of relative independence to one of relative interdependence. Ideally (but not invariably) the new relationship is based on trust built up in the course of the preceding set of more or less explicit negotiations. Not atypical, this is a point at which unresolved (and perhaps transgenerationally "inherited") issues of power and control come to the fore. As each partner struggles (in his/her own habitual way) to realign connections/separations involving previous social relations (including families of origin), a further mutually and reciprocally acceptable cycle of conflict and reconciliation of differences necessarily takes place. Among the problems commonly encountered at this stage may be mentioned: residual ambivalence concerning loyalties to families of origin; issues of "commitment," distance regulation, sexual adjustment and disappointed initial expectations.

**STAGE II AT THE POINT OF ENTRY:**

Amid continuing approach/avoidance conflicts, one enters the place. Safely seated and beginning to settle in, the prospective participant is now concerned about personal safety and security issues. What will the class be like? Will it be a fun? Who are the instructors? Who are the other people here? Will the workload be heavy? What will I need to do to get through (or ace) it? How much time and effort will I have to put into it? Will I get what I want out of it (gradewise and otherwise)? Will I have a good learning experience? Here, as a rule, approach/avoidance conflict gradually gives way to "attentive exploration" with a view toward resolving some of the basic trust/mistrust issues that must be dealt with in making even a provisional commitment to the process of becoming a member of the group. The underlying and frankly self-centered question at this point is, "What's in this for ME?"

Assuming that the goal is to develop a relatively open and cooperative (as compared with closed and competitive) learning situation (which is our stated aim), it is appropriate at this point for leadership: • to allow – indeed, to support – the need for group members to maintain their distance; • to let them approach at their own speed, while at the same time inviting trust; • to facilitate exploration of substantive curricular topics while stimulating/entertaining discussion of commitment issues; • to provide information regarding the demand characteristics of the situation, goals and objectives. The likelihood of dropouts is quite high here.
MODELS OF INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT

SHAKESPEARE
As You Like It

PHYSICAL / BIOLOGICAL
18–36 MONTHS: ANAL PHASE:
continuing postnatal myelinization of spinal cord; capacity for bladder/bowel control

FREUD (psychosexual)
retentiveness/explosiveness; possessiveness; anal zone becomes focus in connection with "power and control" issues in connection with toilet training and/or maturation; child experiences pleasure from anal "holding in" and "letting go;" controlling/appropriately releasing urine and feces and, by extension, hygiene/cleanliness become issues; becoming independent requires discipline and self-control; "learning styles" begin to emerge with self development and interactions with others sowing seeds of future mental/behavioral patterns; for example: in the extreme, either "obsessive/compulsive" and "impulsive/hyperactive" behavior may develop out of early experiences with things and other persons (psychoanalysts are thus intensely interested in what they call "object relations" (including relations with both parents & extended family)

ERIKSON (psychosocial)
SPHERE OF SIGNIFICANT SOCIAL RELATIONS: child and parents; nuclear family
MAIN DEVELOPMENTAL TASK: to learn to hold on and to let go
MAIN DEVELOPMENTAL CRISIS: autonomy and self esteem vs. shame and doubt
FAVORABLE OUTCOME: sense of self-control and will power
UNFAVORABLE OUTCOME: resulting from parental permissiveness: problems in management of aggression; resulting from parental over-restrictiveness: extreme obedience to authority; conformity; need for approval; shame, doubt; fear of loss of power and control

ERIKSON
STAGE III: STAGE III POWER AND CONTROL:
With the birth of a child, the family undergoes a transition from a dyad to a triad. Here the focus of negotiation shifts to issues of parental interdependence in the face of mutual responsibility for the well-being of a highly dependent new family member. The new parents must concurrently adjust to big changes in their relations with each other as well as their conjoint responsibility for an extremely needy infant; common issues at this point in the process include increased feelings of abandonment and/or fear of the loss of the other’s love by one or both of the partners.

MODELS OF FAMILY AND GROUP DEVELOPMENT

FAMILY
STAGE III POWER AND CONTROL:
Once their initial commitments to membership in a group have been made, prospective (now provisional) members must come face to face with the reality of the group and begin to negotiate various issues with each other within it (e.g. determining the parameters of their individual and collective responses to the demand characteristics of the unfolding situation).

OTHER GROUPS
What is really going on here? Who is in charge? How do I fit into this arrangement? What is my status/role here? What am I supposed to be doing, thinking, learning? Do I like it? Notice that these questions are only slightly less self-centered in topic and tone than the basic trust/mistrust questions listed above.

This is a phase of the process in which members of a group-in formation must needs struggle with each other and with the nominal leadership (where such exists) to arrive at some "definition of the situation" that is reasonable and workable for them, both individually and collectively. Who is to determine the nature and scope of the prevailing rules and goals? The likelihood of drop-outs continues to be quite high here, as is the probability of frankly hostile, aggressive, and negative behavior toward the group development process itself and those responsible for imposing it. Not uncommonly, the effort to gain a degree of power and control leads to proposals to formalize the proceedings by enacting rules, regulations, voting procedures, etc. The result of following these leads is invariably the establishment of a "zero-sum" game in which every disagreement is "resolved" by having some winners and some losers. During this rather chaotic phase, a leadership aiming for a more "win-win" approach needs to focus on allowing resistance to be expressed and rebellion to be developed within limits conducive to the protection of individual rights and general safety. In order to be effective, leadership will continue:

a) to provide activities conducive to increased individual and collective competence, b) to clarify (inssofar as possi-
### MODELS OF INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT

**SHAKESPEARE**  
*As You Like It*

**PHYSICAL / BIOLOGICAL**

**FREUD**  
(psychosexual development – viewing persons-in-contexts)

**ERIKSON**  
(psychosocial development – viewing persons-in-contexts)

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#### 3–6 YEARS: PHALLIC PHASE: PRESCHOOLER: STAGE IV: INTIMACY AND TASK ORIENTATION:

- **bodily control:** both gradual and sudden changes from infantile to juvenile physique, behavior
- **Sphere of Significant Social Relations:** family and nursery school or daycare
- **Main Developmental Task:** to make; to go after, to imitate
- **Main Developmental Crisis:** initiative vs. guilt
- **Favorable Outcome:** purpose and direction
- **Unfavorable Outcome:** see column to left

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#### 6–12 YEARS: LATENCY STAGE:

- **fine muscle control:** physical growth rate beginning to slow
- **Sphere of Significant Social Relations:** neighborhood and school
- **Main Developmental Task:** to make things; to compete and cooperate with peers
- **Main Developmental Crisis:** industry vs. inferiority
- **Favorable Outcome:** self-esteem, competence and skill
- **Unfavorable Outcome:** low self-esteem

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#### YOUNG CHILD:

- **Main Developmental Task:** to make things; to compete and cooperate with peers
- **Main Developmental Crisis:** industry vs. inferiority
- **Favorable Outcome:** self-esteem, competence and skill
- **Unfavorable Outcome:** low self-esteem

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### MODELS OF FAMILY AND GROUP DEVELOPMENT

**FAMILY**

- **Other Groups**

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### SHAKESPEARE PHYSICAL / FREUD ERIKSON FAMILY OTHER GROUPS

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**As You Like It**

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3–6 YEARS</th>
<th>PHALLIC PHASE:</th>
<th>PRESCHOOLER:</th>
<th>STAGE IV:</th>
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<tr>
<td>bodily control; both gradual and sudden changes from infantile to juvenile physique, behavior</td>
<td>Sphere of Significant Social Relations: family and nursery school or daycare</td>
<td>Main Developmental Task: to make; to go after, to imitate</td>
<td>Favorable Outcome: purpose and direction</td>
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<table>
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<th>6–12 YEARS</th>
<th>LATENCY STAGE:</th>
<th>YOUNG CHILD:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>fine muscle control; physical growth rate beginning to slow</td>
<td>Sphere of Significant Social Relations: neighborhood and school</td>
<td>Main Developmental Task: to make things; to compete and cooperate with peers</td>
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<tr>
<th>FAVORABLE OUTCOME:</th>
<th>UNFAVORABLE OUTCOME:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>purpose and direction</td>
<td>low self-esteem</td>
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...Then the whining schoolboy, with his satchel!  
And shining morning face,  
Creeping like a snail  
Unwillingly to school.
<table>
<thead>
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<th>MODELS OF INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT</th>
<th>MODELS OF FAMILY AND GROUP DEVELOPMENT</th>
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<tr>
<td>SHAKESPEARE As You Like It</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>PHYSICAL / BIOLOGICAL</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>FREUD (psychosexual)</td>
<td>OTHER GROUPS</td>
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<td>ERIKSON (psychosocial)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>12–18 YEARS:</strong></td>
<td><strong>STAGE V: DIFFERENTIATION/ INTEGRATION:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PUBERTY:</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>return or reactivation of phallic phase coupled with sexual maturation; depending on prior experience acquired in earlier stages, narcissistic object love (see Shakespeare’s description) may or may not become focus</td>
<td><strong>FAVORABLE OUTCOME:</strong> development of situationally appropriate identity; transition to adulthood; exploration, integration or re-pudiation of family culture; sense of devotion and fidelity; satisfactory career choice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ADOLESCENT:</strong></td>
<td><strong>UNFAVORABLE OUTCOME:</strong> inauthenticity; delinquency; neurosis; psychosis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPHERE OF SIGNIFICANT SOCIAL RELATIONS: peer groups; same and opposite sexes</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>MAIN DEVELOPMENTAL TASK: to be/become oneself; to accept oneself; to share oneself with others</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>MAIN DEVELOPMENTAL CRISIS: identity vs role confusion</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>YOUNG ADULT:</em></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>SPHERE OF SIGNIFICANT SOCIAL RELATIONS: adult community apart from family of origin</td>
<td>As evidence of competency grows (in terms both of intimacy and task orientation), the cohesiveness of the system becomes increasingly apparent as does the somewhat paradoxical fact that group unity depends on the readiness, willingness and ability of the membership to recognize that their own (formerly highly problematic) diversity as a source of their own great and unique strength. Freer expression of thoughts and feelings in a social context that demands mutual respect and support and honest/forthright constructive criticism as well as positive feedback leads to a lessened preoccupation with power problems. Leadership comes to be seen less and less as the power/responsibility of identifiable “leaders” and serves increasingly as a function that simply moves around in ways that are responsive both to collective needs and personal imperatives. The group itself comes to be viewed by its members as a more or less distinct compositely unified system with a definite identity. “Giving to” the group (and its members) comes to be regarded as a value complementary to “getting from” them. (Compare with Stage II) Traditions begin to develop; repetitive tasks become increasingly regarded as merely “going through the routine”, cooperation/collaboration increases at small group levels; more slowly at large group level; complaints of dissatisfaction and “boredom” occasionally resurface; but – if previous crises have been properly negotiated – there is a possibility for intimacy-building and goal oriented activities to become increasingly effective and sustained.</td>
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<tr>
<td>16–30 YEARS:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>GENITAL STAGE:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>(early adulthood); depending on prior experience acquired in earlier stages, narcissistic object love (or its equivalent) may or may not be increasingly supplanted by couplings involving more mutual and reciprocal relations; conflicts between dependence upon and independence from family of origin</td>
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<tr>
<td>FAVORABLE OUTCOME: solidarity with others; love; affiliation</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>UNFAVORABLE OUTCOME: isolation, loneliness; alienation; anomie</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>YOUNG ADULT:</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peak of physical development and sexual activity</td>
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<tr>
<td>...And then the lover, Sighing like a furnace, With a woeful ballad Made to his mistresses eyebrow.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>...Then a soldier, Full of strange oaths and bearded like the pard, Jealous in honor, sudden and quick in quarrel, Seeking the bubble reputation Even in the cannon’s mouth.</td>
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**BIOLOGICAL (psychosexual)**

12–18 YEARS: Puberty: Return or reactivation of phallic phase coupled with sexual maturation; depending on prior experience acquired in earlier stages, narcissistic object love (see Shakespeare’s description) may or may not become focus.

18–30 YEARS: Genital Stage: Depending on prior experience acquired in earlier stages, narcissistic object love (or its equivalent) may or may not be increasingly supplanted by couplings involving more mutual and reciprocal relations; conflicts between dependence upon and independence from family of origin.

**Stage V: Differentiation/Integration:**

The partial exit of the youngest child from the family and his/her entry into the larger world continues the pattern of partial separations; Children in school bring family beliefs and values and practices into confrontation (and sometimes conflict) with those of the surrounding community with discrepancies provoking and increase in tensions within the family.

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As evidence of competency grows (in terms both of intimacy and task orientation), the cohesiveness of the system becomes increasingly apparent as does the somewhat paradoxical fact that group unity depends on the readiness, willingness and ability of the membership to recognize that their own (formerly highly problematic) diversity as a source of their own great and unique strength. Freer expression of thoughts and feelings in a social context that demands mutual respect and support and honest/forthright constructive criticism as well as positive feedback leads to a lessened preoccupation with power problems. Leadership comes to be seen less and less as the power/responsibility of identifiable “leaders” and serves increasingly as a function that simply moves around in ways that are responsive both to collective needs and personal imperatives. The group itself comes to be viewed by its members as a more or less distinct compositely unified system with a definite identity. “Giving to” the group (and its members) comes to be regarded as a value complementary to “getting from” them. (Compare with Stage II) Traditions begin to develop; repetitive tasks become increasingly regarded as merely “going through the routine”, cooperation/collaboration increases at small group levels; more slowly at large group level; complaints of dissatisfaction and “boredom” occasionally resurface; but – if previous crises have been properly negotiated – there is a possibility for intimacy-building and goal oriented activities to become increasingly effective and sustained.
...And then the justice,
In fair round belly with good capon lined,
With eyes severe and beard of formal cut,
Full of wise saws and modern instances.
And so he plays his part.

...The sixth age shifts
Into the lean and slippered pantaloon,
With spectacles on nose and pouch on side.
His youthful hose, well saved, a world too wide
For his shrunk shank, and his big manly voice,
Turning again toward childish treble, pipes
And whistles in his sound.

...Last scene of all,
That ends this strange eventful history,
Is second childishness, and mere oblivion.
Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans everything.

Elizabeth Kübler Ross derived from her work with terminally ill patients a conceptual framework within which dying is understandable as a process involving a more or less clearly recognizable (if not entirely invariant) sequence of phases or stages (denial and repression, bargaining, anger, depression, and acceptance).

In its final phase, the life cycle of a human social group may be experienced in a similar way by at least some of its members. To be more precise, members tend to separate from groups in ways that are both dispositionally and situationally influenced. Thus, all other things constant, our approaches to leavetaking tend to be fairly consistent for each of us from one situation to the next. For most people, endings are usually marked by a mixture of feelings, including sadness and happiness, resistance and relief. (It deserves note that, for some people, in at least some situations, acquired tendencies toward the denial and repression of feeling may blunt awareness and expression of both negative and positive attitudes toward both the group process and its termination.)

Insofar as possible, time should be taken at the end of a group learning experience to review and evaluate the experience as a whole within the context of a coherent conceptual framework. This will hopefully prove conducive to the development of a valid and reliable basis for grading the quality of the performance of the system as a whole and of its constituent subsystems (including study groups and individuals). Evidence of group development (or lack thereof) may be derived from a review and/or re-enactment of attitudes and behavior from the point of entry onward (e.g. compare/contrast journal entries, minutes, etc.) from early and later stages.

...As children reach adolescence, acquire more autonomy, and come increasingly under the influence of peer group norms; family ties are increasingly tested. Amid conflicts between them and their parents, parents revisit or relive their own adolescent conflicts with their parents. This stage or phase begins roughly at the point at which the first child exits the family to establish an independent household. As children individuate and become more independent of and separate from their parents, the latter begin to anticipate the exit from their living unit of the last child.

...In the (once again dyadic) context of the "empty nest," relations between the parents/spouses are further tested. This phase may be marked by increased or renewed closeness between the parents or it may precipitate what has been called "the twenty-year fracture." The nature and seriousness of family problems at this stage depends in part on the manner in which earlier stages turned out (how well or poorly crises were negotiated).

It may also be determined by the emergence of conflict with new sets of "in-laws" acquired through children’s marriages, by parental illnesses, retirements and grandparenthoods, etc.

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