

Life span development and lifelong learning

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The article "Life Span Development and Lifelong Learning" by Mark Smith provides detailed overview of developing process and special attention is paid to stages of development, gender and cultural conveniences, life events, and influences on development. The author defines development as change from one stage to another and the impact of this change is claimed to be permanent and lasting.

Also development suggests growth and progression through life stages meaning that a person becomes more and more mature. For example, Rutter describes development and maturity as "systematic, organized, intra-individual change that is clearly associated with generally expectable age-related progressions and which is carried forward in some way that has implications for a person's pattern or level of functioning at some later time". (Smith 1999)

Smith, the author of the article supports Levinson's idea that people are passing through various stages. For example, he distinguishes the following stages: childhood and adolescents (birth-20); early adulthood (17-45); middle adulthood (40-65); late adulthood (60 till death). Each developmental stage suggests changes influencing personal character and the tasks during changes are, firstly, to create niche in society, and, secondly, to work for advancement and progress. Individuation is one more process occurring throughout the life cycle. It is based on changing relations between a person and external world: mentor relationship, love and family affairs, etc.

Smith also discusses life events stressing that they strongly affect personal development. Among those events are death of a spouse, divorce, marital

separation from mate, death of a family member, personal injury and illness, marriage, being hired or fired from work, and pregnancy. Smith suggests that “ crises may not be experienced as crises if they occur on time”. (Smith 1999) In conclusion the author argues that there are no predictable and stable stages of development.

Works Cited

Smith, Mark. (1999). Life Span Development and Lifelong Learning. Available at http://www.infed.org/biblio/lifecourse_development.htm

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