

Adulthood case study

Education



Mr. Mort Philman is a 64-year old Caucasian male. His wrinkles, grey hair, and slightly stooping stance reflect his age. According to him, his body no longer functions the way it had for the past years. His renal heart failure gradually declines his health and his most recent surgery seriously affected his daily routine.

Being bedridden for weeks deprived him of the pleasure of doing the activities which he used to be engaged in. As for his cognitive functioning, his memory is still intact; he can still recognize his caregiver, sons, and other relatives. He is also updated when it comes to current events despite being homed in an institution for the elderly.

He had been happily married to his wife for 31 years, until his wife passed away in 2006 due to breast cancer. They were blessed with two sons who now have families of their own. They visit him in the institution once every two weeks.

However, Mort still feels weary and sad because of loneliness and constant feeling of nostalgia. The more he grows old, the more he feels futile about living.

Coming from a working-class family, Mort had to work to fund his schooling. When he was in his early 20's, he was working as a bartender and at the same time attending college in California. He was an outgoing type of person and wanted to be with his friends most of the time, but his work schedule did not allow him to do that.

Also, he did not have much time for love relationships at such an early time because he focused on his studies and work. He learned to drink because of

his job, but only did it occasionally because of his health condition. He was also advised by his doctor not to smoke because this would affect his heart ailment badly.

Fortunately, Mort was able to finish college with a degree in Accountancy. He got a good-paying job in an accounting firm located in New York where he met his first girlfriend/future wife. At this point, he was living independently albeit he couldn't afford to buy his own house.

He got married at a practical age of thirty-two and his wife gave birth to their first son, Jed, a year after their wedding. His wife quit her job to become a full-fledged housewife and mother to their son. Before Jed's 2nd birthday, his wife gave birth to another boy named Lloyd. They were living a simple yet happy family life until his first heart attack when he was 48 years old.

This had an immense impact on his career and home life as well because his sickness was incapacitating. Nevertheless, he was able to recover and go back to work for another six years. By that time, his health was deteriorating and had to stay home. This stagnation greatly affected his personality wherein he felt helpless and had to depend on his eldest son.

Several years later, his wife was diagnosed of having breast cancer and eventually died because of it. This became another mishap in his life which made him more depressed and alone. This build-up of negative feelings caused him another heart attack which required surgery for him to survive.

Since his sons were afraid that no one can attend to him when another heart attack occurs, they admitted him to an institution that cares for the elderly.

Analyzing Mort's development from early to late adulthood, there are different areas to be discussed. Concerning his physical development, Mort underwent the normal changes in an individual: decline of physical performance, noticeable wrinkling and sagging of the skin, grey hair, and reduced perceptual acuity like blurred vision (Santrock, 2002).

His main health concern is his heart condition which he has been nursing since he was young but eventually became severe when he experienced emotional difficulties during middle adulthood. For his cognitive development, it is observed that Mort's functioning is in the reflective, pragmatic and realistic according to Piaget's view of human cognitive development (Plotnik, 1999).

These characteristics are manifested by his capacity to introspect, make logical assumptions and address his present situation.

Delving into Mort's moral development, with regards to Kohlberg's theory of moral progression, it can be inferred that he has reached Stage 5 (Social Contract). With his experiences and wisdom, Mort has appreciated and evaluated the government laws since he believes that it promotes equity and human rights.

To give a concrete example, he succumbed to his sons' decision of placing him in an institution for the elderly because he is aware that it is for the common good (Santrock, 2002). Lastly, taking into account Erikson's psychosocial stages of development, Mort was able to achieve intimacy during young adulthood.

However, he stagnated during middle adulthood due to his heart condition and this developed into despair just recently catalyzed by his wife's death. Moreover, even though he has accepted what happened in his life, his pessimism and feelings of inadequacy remain.

It is recommended that Mort continue having medical check-ups to address his heart condition. It is also advised that he join a support group for people of his age and be given the opportunity to perform worthwhile activities.

His family should also allot more time for him and be involved in some of his activities. Such recommendations could help him restore his self-esteem and let him enjoy the remaining years of his life.

References:

Plotnik, R. (1999). Introduction to Psychology (5th ed.). USA: New York Publishing Inc.

Santrock, J. W. (2002). Life-Span Development 8th ed. New York: McGraw-Hill