

# Sexuality at different life stages essay



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Sex is an essential behavior for our existence in the human race. An individual may begin to experience sexual behaviors even prior to birth. Throughout an individual's life they will experience different stages of sexuality. This paper will address concerns, feelings, and changes that Anna, Tom and Susan, and Bill are experiencing during their specific life stage as well as some coaching ideas and recommendations to aid them through the roadblocks in his or her way so they each can continue to move through the life stages of sexuality. Adolescence Stage

Anna is an adolescent girl who has a boyfriend whom is three years older than her. Anna's mother has expressed some concerns about the relationship because of the age difference and feels that her daughter may get taken advantage of from a more experienced, older male. Anna's boyfriend is ready to incorporate sex into their relationship, but Anna is feeling confused and torn on her own feelings towards her boyfriend and the feelings her parents are expressing towards her boyfriend as well as the relationship. It is important for Anna in this stage of her life to take a step back and think about all the feelings she is experiencing.

She needs to think about what her true feelings are for her boyfriend and the meaning of their relationship. When having sex for the first time, Anna should ask herself, "Are there reasons to have sex right now, what will having sex do or not do for my relationship, and should my values and beliefs influence whether or not I have sex now"? Today sex is very common before marriage (Rathus, Nevid & Fichner-Rathus, 2005), but there are still many people who practice abstinence until they find their partner in

marriage. There are many outside factors that influence adolescents to have sex.

Friends and the media are the biggest influences, there are few times where a parent provides more influence than a girl's or boy's best friend. As a parent, we talk about and educate our children on the repercussions of sex including STDS and unwanted pregnancies, the ultimate decision is made by the individual with hopes from the parent's that what has been taught is thought about and or practiced. In thinking about her own feelings, Anna needs to take into consideration her parents views and feelings on sex. Open communication between Anna and her parents will allow for an open relationship and when or if a question needs to be asked or a situation arises, there will not be animosity between anyone involved. Although Anna's mother is feeling anxiety about the situation, she also needs to remain strong and supportive of her daughter even though she may have to make some tough decisions such as should she try to protect Anna from becoming pregnant by bringing her to get birth control, or does she feel it will encourage sex between Anna and her boyfriend? Anna needs to make an informative decision about herself, her feelings towards her parents, and her relationship. The Later Years

Tom and Susan is an elderly, retired couple. Susan has shown a renewed interest in sexual activity whereas Tom is uncertain about his sexual abilities at his age. It is important that Tom and Susan communicate and express their sexual desires to one another because it is still an important factor in their relationship. Tom and Susan must be aware of the physical as well as the psychological changes that they may be experiencing. As an individual

ages, their appearance starts to change including gray hair emerges, wrinkles appear, and the skin becomes much more loose which can cause an individual to become self-conscious or less attractive.

The outside appearance tends to be a minor bump in the road compared to the giant wall created by what is happening on the inside of the body (Rathus, Nevid & Fichner-Rathus, 2005). An individual in their later years may have an easier time overcoming sexual anxiety if they know what will or what is happening to their body. With women, menopause may produce a lack of interest in sex due to the decrease in hormones. Older males often express the inability to have or maintain an erection proving it difficult to have sex or finish sex (Rathus, Nevid & Fichner-Rathus, 2005).

Although Tom is experiencing anxiety, he will want to explore why he feels the way he does about sex, talk with Susan about his concerns, and explore ways to fix the problems. Sexuality and Disabilities Being paralyzed from the waist down, Bill has faced many obstacles in his life. He is now in a romantic relationship and wishes to be intimate with his partner, but is unsure how to express his interest. People with disabilities are often seen as sexless and childlike (Rathus, Nevid & Fichner-Rathus, 2005). For Bill to engage or consider sex he must know the extent of his injuries.

Although Bill is paralyzed from the waist down, it does not mean he cannot achieve an erection. Within the spinal cord there are two erection hot spots one focuses on erections due to mental stimulation and the other is from reflexes or direct stimulation (Rathus, Nevid & Fichner-Rathus, 2005). Bill needs to know whether or not either of these two hot spots are damaged. Bill

needs to be positive about sex as well as his disability, have positive and productive relationships, be aware of his sexuality, learn to cope with barriers to sexuality that he may come into contact with, and maintain a healthy lifestyle for himself.

It is important that Bill ignores the stereotypes and negativity due to his disability. Conclusion An individual goes through many life stages of sexuality in a lifetime, although there may be a map for direction, there is no certain path in which one needs to follow. Each stage may cause or bring along some obstacles, but there are ways to overcome them. The important aspects through all the life stages of sexuality are to communicate, ask questions, and listen.