

# Theory comparison questions essay sample

[Psychology](#)



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1. What is the crisis experienced in Erikson's first stage of psychosocial development? How did Chrystell resolve this stage? What was the outcome of the crisis? What is favorable or unfavorable?

First stage: Oral-Sensory Stage: Basic Trust versus Mistrust

Child learns through the mother the basic concepts of trust or mistrust based on how the mother acts towards the child (happy and involved mothers lead to a trusting infant while aloof and cold mothers lead to a mistrusting infant).

Chrystell resolved this stage in a healthy manner, meaning she came out of it with trust towards others. Her mother was always there for her in the first few years of her life and was always supportive. She was never cold, aloof, or absent when she was needed. This led to Chrystell resolving this stage in a favorable manner.

2. What is the crisis experienced in Erikson's second stage of psychosocial development? How did Chrystell resolve this stage? What was the outcome of the crisis? Was it favorable or unfavorable?

Second Stage: Muscular-Anal Stage: Autonomy versus Shame and Doubt

Child learns potty training and, during the process, learns social rules.

Through the resolution of this stage, a child can feel either autonomy (pride towards one's self) or a sense of shame/doubt towards one's self.

During Chrystell's childhood, her parents were always supportive and reinforcing in their actions towards her. When she was learning potty training, her parents never scolded her for having accidents. Instead, they encouraged that she could do better next time and not to worry.

These behaviors led to Chrystell's healthy favorable resolution of this stage, leading to her sense of autonomy.

3. What is the crisis experienced in Erikson's third stage of psychosocial development? How did Chrystell resolve this stage? What was the outcome of this crisis? Was it favorable or unfavorable?

Third Stage: Locomotor-Genital Stage: Initiative versus Guilt

Children become more open towards the world and themselves, learning more about their own bodies and their external surroundings. During this stage, children's imaginations race allowing them to explore a vast range of opportunities through play activities. They also begin to fantasize about "possessing" their opposite sex parent while "dethroning" their same sex parent. If their parents scold and punish them for this advancement, they develop guilt. If their parents guide and direct them towards socially acceptable behaviors in a positive manner, they gain a sense of pride.

During this stage of her development, Chrystell's parents provided a positive and supportive environment for her to explore her imaginative growth.

Instead of forcing her to partake in specific play activities, their parents provided multiple options and let Chrystell choose which one she preferred to take part in. This constructive act of letting Chrystell choose led her to a favorable resolution of this stage of psychosocial development, leading to a sense of pride, because the option to choose her play activities allowed her imagination to thrive and let her become proud of herself and her actions.

4. What is the crisis experienced in Erikson's fourth stage of psychosocial development? How did Chrystell resolve this stage? What was the outcome

of the crisis? Was it favorable or unfavorable?

#### Fourth Stage: Latency Stage: Industry versus Inferiority

Children develop a sense of industry (feeling confident in their abilities to thrive) from identifying with their parents and teachers as people who constructively teach how to be confident in their own innate abilities and self-worth to society. If they do not resolve this conflict, they gain a sense of inferiority (feeling self-conscious towards their abilities and feeling that they cannot be an effective member in society in later life).

At first, Chrystell was on the road to resolving this stage unfavorably, leading to inferiority, due to the birth of her younger sister. Having a younger sister around caused her parents to shift most of their attention towards her instead of Chrystell. This caused jealousy and anxiety in Chrystell because she thought her parents favored her sister over her. This anxiety caused her to obtain a stutter and self-confidence issues, but when her little sister got a few years older, her mother began to divide her attention evenly between the two children, allowing Chrystell to overcome her feelings of jealousy, anxiety, and low self-efficacy, thus allowing her to overcome this conflict in a favorable manner, leading to a feeling of industry.

Erikson's theory is sometimes described as a good guide for parents. Find examples of this guidance in the case study and describe them.

In Erikson's stages of development, a common theme is that parents should not be overbearing – instead they should encourage the autonomy and abilities of the child to thrive on their own through the guidance of the parents. Some examples of this in the case study are as follows:

Chrystell's parents positively reinforcing the act of potty training by not scolding her when she had accidents.

Chrystell's parents allowing her to choose which play activities to take part in.

Chrystell's parents encouraged her to walk, hold a spoon, and feed herself at her own pace instead of forcing the acts on her before she was ready.

### Theory Comparison Questions

1. How would Maslow's theory explain Chrystell's experiences? Are all her needs fulfilled? Explain. How do Maslow's needs compare with the crises in Erikson's stages? Maslow's theory of basic needs (Hierarchy of Needs) states that people progress through life by obtaining specific needs to sustain life in a specific order:

Physiological Needs: breathing, food, water, sleep, homeostasis, excretion of waste, etc.

Safety Needs: security of body, employment, resources, family, etc.

Love/Belonging Needs: friendship, family, sexual intimacy

Esteem Needs: self-esteem, confidence, achievement, respect from others, etc.

Self-Actualization Needs: morality, creativity, spontaneity, problem solving, etc.

According to Maslow, Chrystell progressed through life by healthily fulfilling these needs. She started by fulfilling the basic physiological needs followed by safety needs (around ages 4-12). Because she is only age 8, she has not fully fulfilled all of these needs stated by Maslow, but you can see where she

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is starting to grasp the idea of some of them, such as belonging in the family and the development of positive self-efficacy.

Maslow's needs compare well with Erikson's stages of development.

Although they may not be exactly the same in terms of development through aging, many of Maslow's needs are similar to Erikson's stages of psychosocial development:

2. Use Bandura's concept of reciprocal determinism to explain how Chrystell's stuttering was resolved after her baby sister was born. How is Bandura's theory different from Erikson's in its emphasis?

Bandura's concept of reciprocal determinism states that an individual is both influenced by and influences their personal factors, the environment around them, and other people. In other words, while a person is influenced by their surroundings, that person also influences those around them as well.

According to Bandura's theories, Chrystell's stuttering was likely caused by an excess amount of stress caused by the birth of her sister. Because she is influenced by her environment, this stress manifested itself in the form of a stutter. It was not until after the younger sibling became 2 or 3 that her stuttering was resolved. It is likely that her stuttering, while caused by her environment, also influenced her mother to spend more time with her (ergo influencing the environment as well). This caused a decrease in Chrystell's amount of stress and jealousy and, as a result, resolved her stuttering.

While both Erikson and Bandura focused on an individual's personal factors, they differ in the sense that Erikson also focused on parental and authority

figure involvement in a child's life while Bandura focused on everyone in the environment as a whole – not just parents and teachers, but friends and other people as well.

3. How could Sullivan's good mother/bad mother personification explain Chrystell's breastfeeding experiences? How is the emphasis of Sullivan's theory similar to that of Erikson's?

According to Sullivan, the bad mother personification grows out of the child's bad experiences with the mother's nipple due to lack of fulfilling their hunger needs. The good mother personification then grows when the child becomes mature enough to recognize the cooperative behavior between them and their mother.

Chrystell's breastfeeding habits as an infant can relate to the good-mother personification. Instead of finding a lack of food based needs from the mother, she quickly realized that it was a cooperative effort between both her and her mother. Therefore, Chrystell only sought nourishment when she needed it and when her mother would give it, not whenever her mother thought it was ready for her.

4. How does Erikson's concept of initiative compare with Rotter's concept of locus of control?

- Rotter's locus of control had 2 aspects:
- External Locus: life is dictated by external factors (fate)
- Internal Locus: life is dictated by internal factors (one's own abilities)
- Erikson's concept of initiative is greatly similar to Rotter's concept of internal locus of control. Both state that the child has the ability to choose

what to do and where to go in life. The contrast to initiative, according to Erikson, is guilt, which is characterized by a feeling of being unaccepted and, as Rotter would say, one's life being ruled by others (which is similar to his external locus of control).

## Case Study 9

### Application Questions

1. Which of Horney's neurotic trends (or basic adjustments) is Samara demonstrating? Explain.

Samara is demonstrating moving-toward strategy (compliance). She has a need to be loved and find constant approval by others to give her self-worth. She is submissive and compliant, often times not even having her own opinion, which is why Tom broke up with her. She lets her boyfriend choose what to order at a restaurant, what movie to see, where to go, etc. All Samara is concerned with is seeking love, and keeping it; however, her methods of constantly letting her boyfriend choose and do everything, is backfiring. She feels she is being caring and loving, but she is really just being possessive, submissive, and insecure. Tom said he didn't even feel like he knew her, or what she liked to do, or eat! This is because she didn't think or act for herself, but instead, just complied with whatever her boyfriend wanted to do. For example, " When Paul would ask her what she wanted to do, she always replied, " whatever you want."

2. Which of Horney's neurotic needs does Samara demonstrate? Find examples.

Samara is demonstrating a constant need for love and approval/need for



affection, as well as a need for a partner. She even remarks, “ If you have love, you have everything.” She just wants somebody to love her so she can be protected (feel secure) and not be alone. It is said that she always has a boyfriend, moving from one to the next. She is always seeking a relationship, and is persistent about marriage. It is also clear that she needs someone else to make her decisions for her, and she thinks that is her being unselfish. It is also said that she is rarely alone, and does whatever her boyfriend wants to do. She is also possessive and gets offended and insulted when her boyfriend does not spend every minute with her. This neurotic behavior of a need for a partner causes her to be overly clingy and overly dependent

3. According to Horney’s theory, what is the cause of Samara’s neurotic behavior (The answer is not found in the case study, it is based on text and class notes)?

Horney would say that Samara’s behavior is a cause of her childhood. She grew up in a traditional middle-eastern family, where marriage and fulfilling the duties of wife and mother was very important. According to Horney, the reason for Samara’s insecurities, and submissiveness is due to her being exposed to basic evil as a child, thus resulting in her experiencing basic hostility. Her parents perhaps did not make her feel secure at all times, thus not fulfilling the infantile safety need. This then caused her to foster hostility towards her parents. Instead of expressing that hostility, she repressed those feelings, which could have led to her basic anxiety, causing neurosis later on. As part of her neurotic character, she feels helpless, thus turning to men to provide and make every decision for her. In turn, she may also view the world as harsh, and she needs protection. In her mind, her parents

responded to her need for security via basic evils, thus causing her to respond with basic hostility.

4. Is Samara's view of her actual self an accurate one? Is there a discrepancy between her actual self and real self? What would be her idealized self?

Unfortunately for Samara, she does not have an accurate view of herself.

She believes that her neurotic characteristics, such as constantly seeking to be loved, possessiveness, and submissiveness, are a reflection of her unselfish personality. In her mind, she always puts the other person first, and she considers herself a loving, generous, and unselfish person. In her mind, she is doing everything right, and she can't figure out why these men are breaking up with her. She is perplexed as to why her friends are married, and she is single, when she considers herself a much nicer person than them when it comes to relationships. There is a great discrepancy between her actual self and her real self. Her actual self/real self is who she actually is, and that is possessive, submissive, compliant, insecure, and dependent. However, her ideal self, which she thinks is her actual self, is caring, loving, unselfish, and generous. This discrepancy is a cause of her neurosis. The idealized self is unattainable, and is driven by the "tyranny of the should," meaning that it is controlled by what society and the world tells you that you should do. This is what drives the neurotic behavior because it is something that can never be achieved.