

Erik erikson

[Life](#), [Childhood](#)



Erik Erikson ----- Erikson was born on June 15, 1902 in Germany, and he died in 1994. His father is a Danish man who left his mother even before he was born. His mother is Karla Abrahamsen, was a young Jewish woman who raised him alone in the first three years of his life. Later, his mother married a German doctor, Theodore Homburger. They moved to Karlsruhe in southern Germany. During his childhood to his early adulthood, he was Erik Homburger, and his parents kept the details of his birth a secret. (1) His own life history is one that he feels had a distinct bearing to the development of his own outlook. He apparently went through a lot of conflicts, confusion and crises that later he was to write about. He referred to his own life history in some of his writings.(2) By 1933, he migrated to the United States and officially changed his name to Erik Erickson from Erik Homburger. He worked at the Austen Riggs Center in Stockbridge Massachusetts and made reseach at Yale, Harvard and University of California. (kaplan) It was during this time when he did his famous study about the modern life among the Lakota and the Yurok. (1) By 1950, he was able to publish his book Childhood and Society wherein he presented his psychosocial theory of development that discussed the crucial steps in an individual's relationship with the social world, as seen on the interplay between biology and society. (3) Erikson drew more on the Freudian psychology, but he contributed more in elaborating and expanding the structure of psychoanalysis that was laid down by Freud. Erikson concentrated in children's development beyond puberty and concluded that human personality is not determined only by childhood experiences but also by those of adulthood. (3) Much of Erikson's work is focused on the formation

of individual identity, the operation of consciousness in a well-adjusted person, and societal influences on child development. He is quite astray from more traditional Freudians by placing a significantly greater importance to development after the first few years of life. (5) Though some critics may claim that Erikson's elaboration significantly deviated from the spirit of psychoanalysis and that his theory fell out of Freudian tradition, he still felt that his views are in agreement with the basic doctrine of psychoanalysis of Freud, he even preferred to be called a post-Freudian. (2) The Epigenetic Principle His formulations were based on the concept of epigenesis, a term he borrowed from embryology. For Erikson, development functions by the epigenetic principle, it means that individuals develop through a predetermined unfolding of personalities in eight stages. His epigenetic principle holds that development takes place in sequential, clearly defined stages, and that each stage must be adequately resolved for a smooth flow of development. According to epigenetic model, if successful resolution of a particular stage does not occur, all subsequent stages reflect the failure in the form of physical, cognitive, social or emotional maladjustment. (3) The Psychosocial Theory of Development It is important to have a clear understanding what is meant by psychosocial when used in conjunction with development. It means specifically that the stages of a person's life from birth to death are formed by social influences interacting with a physically and psychologically maturing organism. (2) In his theory, he presented his conception of eight stages of ego development across the life cycle. Each stage of development, are with their respective developmental tasks, which he termed as crises, which are needed to be resolved to attain growth and

development of specific virtues. (3) Crisis refers not to a "threat of catastrophe, but to a turning point, a crucial period of increased vulnerability and heightened potential, and therefore, the ontogenic source of generational strength and maladjustment." (3) Crisis is brought by increasing physical maturity, together with the increasing demands placed upon the person by parents, society or both. The crisis is inherent in each stage and must be resolved by the ego within optimal time of each stage. (4) Meanwhile, virtues are said to be the psychosocial strength that helps the individual through the rest of the stages of development. On the other hand, if a certain stage was not well managed, the individual tends to develop maladaptation and malignancies that endangers the future development. A malignancy involves too little of the positive and too much of the negative aspect of the task, and a maladaptation means too much of the positive and too little of the negative. (1) Each stage is not passed through and then left behind, each stage contribute to the formation of total personality. All of the stages have a certain optimal time. (2) Moreover, Erikson presented something about the interactions of generation, which he termed as mutuality. If Freud made it clear that parents strongly influences the child's development, Erikson, on the other hand, pointed out that it is a reciprocal process because, according to him, children also influences the development of their parents. Moreover, it is even appropriate to add third generation to the picture, because many have been influenced by grandparents, and them by their grandchildren as well. (1) Also, Erikson referred to a term called ritualization, which means a playful and yet culturally patterned way of doing or experiencing something in the daily interplay of individuals. The main

purpose of ritualization is to help the maturing individual into an effective and familiar member of the community.(2) Stage (age) | Psychosocial crisis | Significant relations | Psychosocial modalities | Psychosocial virtues | Maladaptations & malignancies | I (0-1) -- infant | trust vs mistrust | mother | to get, to give in return | hope, faith | sensory distortion -- withdrawal | II (2-3) -- toddler | autonomy vs shame and doubt | parents | to hold on, to let go | will, determination | impulsivity -- compulsion | III (3-6) -- preschooler | initiative vs guilt | family | to go after, to play | purpose, courage | ruthlessness -- inhibition | IV (7-12 or so) -- school-age child | industry vs inferiority | neighborhood and school | to complete, to make things together | competence | narrow virtuosity -- inertia | V (12-18 or so) -- adolescence | ego-identity vs role-confusion | peer groups, role models | to be oneself, to share oneself | fidelity, loyalty | fanaticism -- repudiation | VI (the 20's) -- young adult | intimacy vs isolation | partners, friends | to lose and find oneself in a another | love | promiscuity -- exclusivity | VII (late 20's to 50's) -- middle adult | generativity vs self-absorption | household, workmates | to make be, to take care of | care | overextension -- reactivity | VIII (50's and beyond) -- old adult | integrity vs despair | mankind or " my kind" | to be, through having been, to face not being | wisdom | presumption -- despair |

Chart adapted from Erikson's 1959 Identity and the Life Cycle (Psychological Issues vol 1, #1) The First Stage: Trust vs. Mistrust (Birth to about 18 months old) The task is to develop trust without completely eliminating the capacity for mistrust. The infant's development of basic trust comes from the earliest experiences with its primary caretaker (usually the mother). In his book Childhood and Society, he stressed that trust is not dependent on the

absolute quantities of food, but rather on the quality of maternal relationship. A baby whose mother knows and responds to its needs in a consistent and timely manner will learn to tolerate the inevitable moments of frustration and deprivation. If the caretaker can give the newborn a degree of familiarity, consistency, and continuity, the child will feel that the world — particularly the social world — is a safe place to be, that people around are reliable and loving. However, if the parents are inconsistent, unreliable and inadequate in meeting the child's needs, or if they reject or harm the child, it will lead to the development of the child's mistrust. Apprehensiveness and suspiciousness will be developed in the child. (1) It must be understood that it does not require the parents to be perfect. Actually, those who are overprotective to the child, that they are always there when the child first cry comes out, will result to a maladaptive tendency which Erikson referred as sensory distortion. It may lead the child to be very gullible, who could not believe that anyone would mean them harm, and will retain a naïve and Pollyanna perspective. Meanwhile, if it went the other way, the child will develop the malignant tendency of withdrawal which is characterized by depression, paranoia and possibly psychosis. (1) If proper balance is achieved, the child will attain the virtue of hope. Erikson states that " Hope is the enduring belief in the attainability of fervent wishes, in spite of the dark urges and rages which mark the beginning of existence. " (2) It means that even things are seemingly not going well, things will work out well in the end. Another sign that the child is doing well is when he/she is not overly upset by the need to wait a moment for the satisfaction of his/her needs. Parents does not need to be flawless, and the child still trust them enough

that if they could not immediately meet his/her needs, they will still be there soon to provide for his/her needs. The idea of " Things may be tough now, but they will work out. " It is also the positive ability, in later life, gets the person through disappointments in love, career, and other domains of life.

(1) The first stage is also the stage of numinous ritualization. By this, Erikson meant the baby's sense of the hallowed presence of the mother, her looking, holding, touching, smiling, feeding, naming, and otherwise recognizing him.

Through recognition of the infant by the mother makes the infant feels affirmed and it also certifies the infant's mutuality with the mother. (2) The Second Stage: Autonomy vs. Shame and Doubt (About 18 months to about 3 years) As in the Freudian system, this period is emphasizing on the anal stage. The task is to achieve a degree of autonomy while minimizing shame and doubt. Development in this stage largely depends on the amount and type of control exercised by adults on the child. Erikson asserted " This stage, therefore, becomes decisive for the ratio between loving good will and hateful self-insistence, between cooperation and willfulness, and between self-expression and compulsive self-restraint or meek compliance. " (3) If the

parents or the available caretakers allow the toddler to explore and manipulate, it will encourage the child to develop a sense of autonomy or independence. Yet the parents should not discourage the child but also not to push them. This way, the child will develop both self-control and self-esteem. (1) This is the stage that promotes freedom of self-expression and lovingness. Having a sense of self-control gives the child with a lasting feeling of good will and pride; while a sense of loss of self-control can cause a lasting feeling of shame and doubt(2) In this stage, it is rather easy to

develop a sense of shame and doubt. If the parents discourage the child's attempts to explore and be independent, the child will soon give up the assumption that he/she could not act on his/her own. But unrestricted freedom and no sense of limit may also lead the children to develop shame and doubt. It may give them the impression that they are not good for much.

(1) However, a little "shame and doubt" is not only inevitable, but it can also prove to be beneficial. Without this, the child will develop the maladaptive tendency called by Erikson as impulsiveness. It is sort of shameless wilfulness that leads the person to get into things or decisions without having proper deliberation. On the other hand, too much shame and doubt leads to the malignancy called compulsiveness. A compulsive person feels that their entire being rides on everything they do, and it means that everything should be flawlessly done. By following all the rules precisely keeps the person away from any mistakes and mistakes must be avoided at all expense. (1) Attaining a proper balance of autonomy and shame and doubt, the child will develop the virtue of willpower or determination. Trained self-will and the example of superior will exhibited by others are the two roots from which the virtue of will develops. The child learns from self and others what is expected and what is expectable. Will is the ever-increasing strength to make free choices, to decide, to exercise self-restraint and to apply oneself. (2) The ritualization in this stage is termed by Erikson as judicious, because the child starts to judge itself and others and to differentiate between what is right and what wrong. It is the time when the child develops the sense of rightness or wrongness of certain acts or words, which serves to be preparatory for the next stage of experiencing guilt. Moreover, it is also in

this phase of development when the child starts to distinguish “ our kind” and others judged to be different; it means that others are not like its own kind can be automatically assessed as wrong or bad. (2) The Third Stage: Initiative vs. Guilt (about 3 years to about 5 years) The task that confronts the child in this stage is to learn initiative without excessive guilt. In this stage, the child is already in an increasing mastery of locomotor and language skills that expands its participation in the outside world and stimulates omniscient of wider exploration and conquest. At this point the child’s participation is active and intrusive. The intrusiveness is manifested in the child’s fervent curiosity, competitiveness and physical aggression. (3) It is an age of child’s expanding mastery and responsibility. Initiative means the positive response to the world’s challenges, taking on responsibilities, learning new skills, and feeling purposeful. The parents can promote initiative by encouraging children to try out their ideas. Curiosity and imagination should be encouraged. It is the point for play and not yet for a formal education. At this period, the child is capable of imagining the future, one that is not a reality yet. Imagination is the attempt to make that non-reality a reality. If the children can imagine of the future, it also means they can plan; hence they can be responsible and guilty as well. The capacity of moral judgment has arrived. (1) Excessive initiative and scanty guilt results to a maladaptive tendency called ruthlessness. The ruthless person takes the initiative to be very pleasing; They have their plans, whether it is a matter of school or romance or politics or career, but the problem is just that they do not mind on who they may hurt in achieving their goals. The goals are everything, and guilty feelings are for the weak. The extreme form of

ruthlessness is sociopathy. Conversely, too much guilt is a malignancy called by Erikson as inhibition. The inhibited person will not try things because "nothing ventured, nothing lost" and, particularly, nothing to feel guilty about. Attaining a good ration leads to the virtue of purpose. Purpose, as defined by Erikson is "the courage to envisage and pursue valued goals uninhibited by the defeat of uninhibited fantasies, by guilt and by the foiling fear of punishment." This age of play is characterized by dramatic ritualization. The child actively participates in playacting, wearing costumes, imitating adult personalities, and pretending to be anything that reaches its imagination. (2)

The Fourth Stage: Industry vs. Inferiority (About 5 years to about 13 years)

The task is to develop a capacity for industry while avoiding too much sense of inferiority. It is the phase where the child must start to tame the imagination and start in devoting themselves to education and to learn social skills the society requires him/her. At this point, the child must submit to controlling its exuberant imagination and settling down to formal education. It develops a sense of industry and learns rewards of perseverance and diligence. The interest in toys and plays is gradually superseded by an interest in productive situations and the implements and tools used for work. However, the hazard in this is that the child may develop a sense of inferiority if it is unable to master the task that is undertakes or which are set for it by teachers and parents. (2) The child is already in a broader social sphere, the parents, and other family members joined by teachers, peers and other members of the community at large. Everyone gives toll on the development of the child: Parents are expected to encourage, teachers must exhibit care, peers must learn to accept them. Children must learn that there

is pleasure not only in conceiving a plan, but in carrying it out. They must learn the feeling of success, whether it is in school or on the playground, academic or social. (1) The child discovers the pleasure of production. Erikson mentioned in *Childhood and Society* the child's " ego boundaries include his tools and skills: the work principle teaches him the pleasure of work completion by steady attention and persevering diligence. " (3) The child is ready to learn about and use tools, machines, and methods preparatory for adult work. When the child developed sufficient intelligence and capacity for work, it is important that the child is able to apply him/herself to this work to prevent feelings of inferiority. In this stage, child is in need to have specific instructions in fundamental methods to be familiar with a technical way of life. (2) One way to distinguish the difference between a child from the third stage and one from the fourth stage is by observing them at the way they play games. Four-year-olds may love games, but have only a vague comprehension of the rules, may change them several times during the course of the game, and be very unlikely to actually finish the game, unless it is by throwing the pieces at their opponents. On the other hand a seven-year-old is dedicated to the rules, considers them very much, and is more likely to get upset if the game is not allowed to come to its required conclusion. (1) A sense of competence is achieved through applying oneself to work and to completing tasks, which eventually develops workmanship. (2) If the child experienced having harsh teachers or rejecting peers, for example, and had feelings of little success then he or she will develop instead a sense of inferiority or incompetence. When the children's efforts are thwarted, they are made to feel that personal goals cannot be

accomplished or are not worthwhile, and a sense of inferiority develops. Erikson added another source of inferiority, and they are racism, sexism, and other forms of discrimination: If a child believes that success is related to who you are rather than to how hard you try, then why try? (1) If the child had too much industry, it will lead to the maladaptive tendency called narrow virtuosity. It is seen in children who are not allowed to "be children", they are those whose parents or teacher pushed them into one area of competence without allowing them to develop broader interests. They are seemingly without a life: child actors, child athletes, child musicians, child prodigies and the like. Their industry is seemingly admirable, but taking a closer examination of these children, it is all that stands in the way of an empty life. Meanwhile, it's extreme is the malignancy called inertia. It includes all those who suffer from having inferiority complexes. If one failure is encountered, the individual will be very discouraged and unable to take another chance of trying. The person becomes inert. (1) Developing balance between industry and inferiority will lead to the emergence of the virtue of competence. Competence is the free exercise of one's adroitness and intelligence in the completion of tasks, unimpaired by inferiority.(2) The school age is the phase of formal ritualization, it is observed when the child learns how to perform methodically. The child strives to do its things in the proper way, be it skills in school or tasks at home. The Fifth Stage: Identity vs. Role Confusion (about 13 to 21 years) It corresponds to Freud's genital stage. The task in this stage is to achieve ego identity and avoid role confusion. For Erikson, this stage bears significant importance in the period of development. (4) The

adolescents are becoming preoccupied with the question of identity. Erikson claimed that youth are now " primarily concerned with what they appear to be in the eyes of others as compared to what they feel they are, and with the question of how to connect the roles and skills cultivated earlier with the occupational prototypes of the day. " Childhood roles and fantasies are no longer appropriate, but adolescents remain far from being equipped to become an adult. Erikson also emphasized that the integration that occurs in the formation of ego identity encompasses far more than the summation of childhood identifications. (3) Ego identity means knowing who you are and how you fit in to the rest of society. It requires that the person takes all he had learned learned about life and self and mold it into a cohesive self-image, one that the community finds meaningful. (1) By the final part of adolescence, formation of cliques as well as identity crisis is bound to occur. Erikson calls the crisis normative because it is a normal event. Inability to negotiate this stage leaves adolescents without a solid identity; they suffer from identity diffusion or role confusion, characterized by not having a sense of self and by confusion about their place in the world. Problems in gender identity and sexual role may manifest at this time. Role confusion ensues when the youth is unable to formulate a sense of identity and belonging. Erikson held that delinquency, gender-related identity disorders, and borderline psychotic episodes can result from such confusion. Adolescents may defend against role diffusion by being part of cliques or cults or by identifying with folk heroes. Intolerance of individual differences is a way in which the young person attempts to ward off a sense of identity loss. Falling in love, can also serve to be a process by which the adolescent may clarify a

sense of identity by projecting a diffused self-image onto the partner and seeing it gradually assume a more distinctive shape, and an overidentification with idealized figures are means by which the adolescent seeks self-definition. (3) The maladaptive tendency in this stage is called fanaticism. It is seen when a person becomes overzealous in identification to a particular role in a particular society or subculture that there is no room left for tolerance for other's ideas, beliefs or stands. A fanatic believes that his way is the only way. Adolescents are known for their idealism, and for their tendency to see things in black-and-white. These people will gather others around them and promote their beliefs and life-styles without regard to others' rights to disagree. On the other side, the malignant tendency is repudiation. They repudiate their membership in the world of adults and, even more, they repudiate their need for an identity. The individual compensates for a lack of identity by fusing with a group that eagerly provides the members with details of an identity: religious cults, militaristic organizations, groups founded on hatred, groups that have divorced themselves from the painful demands of mainstream society. They may become involved in destructive activities, drugs, or alcohol, or may withdraw into their own psychotic fantasies. (1) If the person successfully handled this stage, the virtue of fidelity is achieved. Erikson defined fidelity as " the ability to sustain loyalties freely pledged in spite of the inevitable contradictions of value systems. " (2) It means loyalty, the ability to live by societies standards despite their imperfections and incompleteness and inconsistencies. It is not about blind loyalty, and it is not about accepting the imperfections. But fidelity means that the person have found a place in that

community, a place that will allow him to contribute. The ritualization in this stage is called ideology. It is the solidarity of conviction that incorporates ritualizations from previous life stages into a coherent set of ideas and ideals. (2) The Sixth Stage: Intimacy vs. Isolation (about 21 years to 40 years) It is the stage of young adulthood, and the task is to achieve some degree of intimacy, as opposed to remaining in isolation. During this stage, the young adults are prepared and willing to unite their identity with others. They seek relationships of intimacy, partnerships and affiliations, and are prepared to develop the necessary strengths to fulfil these commitments despite the sacrifices they may have to make. (2) Intimacy is individual's ability to grow close to others, as a lover, a friend, and as a participant in society. Because the person already developed a clear sense of who she/he is, the individual is no longer fearful of losing itself. Fearing commitment in some people may serve to be a manifestation of immaturity in this stage. This fear may not be obvious but a lot of people are always putting off the progress of their relationship. (1) Although love is present in the earlier stages, the development of true intimacy transpires only after the adolescence age. Young adults are now capable of committing themselves to a joint relationship in which their mode of life is mutually shared with an intimate partner. Although one's individual identity is already maintained in a joint intimacy relationship, one's ego strength is dependent upon the mutual partner who is prepared to share inside their relationship. (2) The successful formation of a stable marriage and family depends on the individuals' capacity to become intimate. The years of early adulthood are crucial for deciding whether to get married and to whom. (3) The

maladaptive form in this stage is coined as promiscuity. It refers to the particular tendency to be intimate too freely, too easily, and without any depth to the intimacy. While the malignancy is termed as exclusion, refers to isolating oneself from love, friendship, and community. (1) It is one's unwillingness to commit oneself to intimacy. Persons with schizoid personality disorder remain isolated from others because of fear, suspicion, the inability to take risks, or the lack of a capacity to love. (3) When this stage is successfully negotiated, the person will attain the virtue or psychosocial strength Erikson calls as love. Love is, in the context of this theory, means being able to put aside the differences and antagonisms through mutuality of devotion. It includes not only the love founded in a good marriage, but the love between friends and the love for one's neighbour, co-worker, and compatriot as well. (1) The ritualization in this stage is the affiliative, this is sharing together of work, friendship and love.

The Seventh Stage: Generativity vs. Stagnation (about 40 years to about 60 years) This stage is that of middle adulthood, and it includes the period in which the individuals are already actively involved in raising children. The task here is to cultivate the proper balance of generativity and stagnation. This stage is characterized by the concern with what is generated — progeny, products, ideas and so forth — and the establishment and setting forth of guidelines for up-coming generations. (2) It means the extension of love into the future, it is concerned for the next generation and all future generation. It means less "selfish" than the intimacy of the previous stage, the sixth stage refers to the intimacy, love between friends or lovers, is a love between equals, and it is necessary to be reciprocal. With generativity,

the implicit expectation of reciprocity is no longer there, at least not as strongly. Although the majority of people practice generativity by having and raising children, there are many other ways as well. Erikson considers teaching, writing, invention, the arts and sciences, social activism, and generally contributing to the welfare of future generations to be generativity.

(1) Erikson emphasized the mature person's feeling of being needed.

Through generative behaviour, the individual can pass on knowledge and skills while obtaining a measure of satisfaction in having achieved a role with senior authority and responsibility in the tribe. (3) Meanwhile, stagnation

refers to self-absorption and caring for no-one. The person who is stagnant stops to be a productive member of the society. (1) The maladaptive

tendency in this is called overextension, wherein the person tries to be so generative that he is no longer allowed to have time for self, rest and relaxation. The person who is overextended no longer contributes well. On

the other hand, the malignant tendency is rejectivity. Having very little generativity and too much of stagnation means losing participation or contribution to the society. (1) This is the stage of the " midlife crisis."

Sometimes men and women take a look at their lives and ask that big, bad question " what am I doing all this for?" Notice the question carefully:

Because their focus is on themselves, they ask what, rather than whom, they are doing it for. In their panic at getting older and not having experienced or accomplished what they imagined they would when they were younger, they try to recapture their youth. Men are often the most flamboyant examples: They leave their long-suffering wives, quit their humdrum jobs, buy some " hip" new clothes, and start hanging around singles bars. Of course, they

seldom find what they are looking for, because they are looking for the wrong thing. (1) This failure of generativity can lead to profound personal stagnation, masked by a variety of escapisms, such as alcohol and drug abuse, and sexual and other infidelities. (3) But if the person is successful at this stage, he/she will have a capacity for caring that will serve through the rest of the individual's life. The virtue of care develops. Care is expressed by one's concern for others, by wanting to take care of those who need it and to share one's knowledge and experience with them. During one's lifetime a multitude of experience, knowledge is accumulated. All these must be preserved and protected for they are cherished experiences. Caring and teaching are responsible for the survival of cultures, through repetition of their customs, rituals, and legends. The advancement of every culture owes its progression to those who care enough to instruct and to live exemplary lives. (2) The ritualization of this stage is the generational, which is the ritualization of parenthood, production, teaching, healing etc. They assume roles in which the adult acts as a transmitter of ideal values to young. The Eight Stage: Integrity vs. Despair (About 60 years to death) This last stage, referred to the late adulthood. The task is to develop ego integrity with a minimal amount of despair. This stage can be described as a state when one reaches after having taken care of things and people, products and ideas, and having adapted to the successes and failures of existence. Through the accomplishments of individuals, they may reap the benefits of the previous seven stages of life, and perceive that their lives have some order and meaning. (2) Ego integrity means coming to terms with one's life, and thereby coming to terms with the end of life. If the person is able to look

back and accept the course of events, the choices made, the life as the individual lived it, as being necessary, then the person need not to fear death. (1) This stage, especially from the perspective of youth, seems like the most difficult of all. First comes a detachment from society, from a sense of usefulness, for most people in our culture. Some retire from jobs they've held for years; others find their duties as parents coming to a close; most find that their input is no longer requested or required. Then there are the illnesses of old age, such as arthritis, diabetes, heart problems, etc. There come fears about things that one was never afraid of before -- the flu, for example, or just falling down. Along with the illnesses come concerns of death. Friends die. Relatives die. One's spouse dies. Faced with all this, it might seem like everyone would feel despair. (1) If a person lacks ego integrity, he is feels that everything is so short to attempt something in order to make life a new and meaningful one. The idea of death is fearful due to the feelings that it means life had been useless at all and not worth to be remembered. In response to this despair, some older people become preoccupied with the past. After all, that is where things were better. Some become preoccupied with their failures, the bad decisions they made, and regret that (unlike some in the previous stage) they really do not have the time or energy to reverse them. The maladaptive tendency in the last stage is called presumption. This is what happens when a person "presumes" ego integrity without actually facing the difficulties of old age. The individual will try to act young and avoid facing the reality of being elderly, while avoiding facing and dealing with the real issues in this last stage of development. They will cling to a belief that their lives really went great, while discarding

the fact that their life is already at dusk. The malignant tendency is called disdain, by which Erikson means contempt of life, one's own or anyone's. It may lead to depression and psychosomatic illnesses. The virtue in this stage is what Erikson call as wisdom. Wisdom is the virtue that develops out of the encounter of integrity and despair in the last stage of life. Wisdom means detached concern with life itself, in the face of death itself. (2) Accordingly, when a person achieves wisdom, he is no longer afraid of dying. The ritualization in this stage is called integral, and it is reflected to the wisdom of ages . It involves the wisdom to place one's own life in a larger perspective, that is, to see one's finite life contributing to culture. Sources: (1) Boeree, G. (2006) ' Erik Erikson'. Personality Theories. Original E-Text-Site: [http://www. ship. edu/%7Ecgboree/perscontents. html](http://www.ship.edu/%7Ecgboree/perscontents.html) (2) Hall, C. S. and Lindzey, G. (1978). Theories of Personality, 3rd Edition. Canada. John Wiley & Sons. (3) Sadock, B. J. and Sadock, V. A. (2007). Kaplan & Sadock's Synopsis of Psychiatry: Behavioral Sciences/Clinical Psychiatry, 10th Edition. Philadelphia. Lippincott Williams & Walkins. (4) Lundin, R. W. (1996). Theories and Systems of Psychology. Heath (5) --, (2001). The Gale Encycloedia of Psychology, 2nd Edition. FarmingtonHills USA. Gale Group.