

Developmental psychologist: neal krause

Profession



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He was born in Mineola, New York in 1948 and grew up in New Jersey with his family. He has spent most of his adult life teaching others about development during the aging process. He graduated with his bachelor's degree from the University of Oklahoma, received a master's degree from Sam Houston State University and a Ph. D from Akron University and Kent State University. He teaches at the University of Michigan and has written numerous articles about the topic of relieving stress during the final phase of life's development. Neal Krause Developmental psychology is the study of human growth and development.

It focuses on the ways in which humans grow, learn and increase in knowledge throughout the average life span. Most developmental psychologists focus on the early years of the life cycle because this is the time in which development and learning occurs the most rapidly. In the first few years of life a person goes from being a completely helpless creature dependent upon others for nutrition, safety basic cares and comfort to being a somewhat autonomous individual. What many of these psychologists fail to realize or focus on however, Dr. Neal Krause makes up for.

He shows the world that although the early years are important development does not end at the age of five. The speed of development and learning does slow down as the person matures into adulthood, but it does not stop. Each new experience or challenge brings new information and changes the developmental process. Just as everything has a beginning, it also has an ending and human development is no exception. It often appears that as human beings age and get closer to the end of life, the development

reverses and they revert back to the beginning stages. This factor in itself creates an entire field of developmental psychology.

It can be a very frightening and frustrating time in which people who have cared for others realize they need to be cared for. The loss of independence during these years can make this phase of development one of the most stressful. This development of the aging population is the area in which Dr. Neal Krause has found his specialty. Neal Krause is currently a major influence in the field of developmental psychology focusing on the process and development at the end of the life cycle. He is on the teaching staff at the University of Michigan's School of Gerontology, where he has taught and conducted studies since 1986.

He specializes in the study of the effects of stress on the aging process and finding ways to better cope with this stress. By studying the ways aging populations of different cultures, gender and social groups deal with the stresses at the end of life; he can help provide better coping methods for these people and the people who often help care for them in the later years. Dr. Krause's personal journey through life's development began humbly, like that of most post World War II babies, on December 14, 1948 in Mineola, New York. He was the second child born to blue collar working class parents (N.

Krause, personalcommunication, September, 10, 2007). His father left school during his second year of high school to join the work force (N. Krause, personal communication, September, 10, 2007). He spent most of his earlychildhoodyears in New Jersey along the north shore, where he and his parents settled along with his older brother and younger sister (N. Krause, <https://assignbuster.com/developmental-psychologist-neal-krause/>

personal communication, September, 10, 2007). His teenage years were just as modest as his early childhood. He attended public high school in a very overcrowded school building (N.

Krause, personal communication, September, 10, 2007). The building was too crowded to accommodate all of the district's students at the same time; therefore the school operated on a split session schedule. Neal Krause attended school from 6: 30 am. until 12: 30 pm. The second half of the student body attended from 1: 00 pm until evening (N. Krause, personal communication, September, 10, 2007). In order to savemoneyfor college, Neal worked thirty-five hours per week after school and on weekends at a shoe store as a stock boy (N. Krause, personal communication, September, 10, 2007).

He attended college at the University of Oklahoma where he received his first degree a Bachelor's in Business Administration in Marketing and Management (umicpeople, 2005). He chose this school, because the tuition was only fourteen dollars per credit hour for out of state tuition and since he was paying for it himself this was his most reasonable choice (N. Krause, personal communication, September, 10, 2007). In order to help pay for his college tuition he worked forty hours each week in a mental institution that he stated resembled the one from the movie " One Flew over the Coo- Coo's Nest" (N.

Krause, personal communication, September, 10, 2007). His full time job at this facility led to a low grade point average at school, but an interest in human behavior and his futurecareer(N. Krause, personal communication, September, 10, 2007). After hisgraduationfrom University of Oklahoma, he

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decided to pursue his education in human behavior. This decision led him to Sam Houston State University where he received a Masters degree in psychology and sociology. He then went on to receive a PhD. from a combined program between Akron University and Kent State University in sociology.

He graduated from this program in 1978. His paid professional career began in 1978 in his area of interest human behavior and coping mechanisms. He spent the next twenty-nine years dealing with the topic of stress and continues to do so. Stress is a factor that affects every human on the planet in some way at some point during the life span. Stress can have both positive and negative effects on the body. In positive ways it can motivate a person to strive towards his best ability or flee an area of danger. In the negative aspect it can cause serious health issues to manifest (high blood pressure, heart attack, ulcers).

Dr. Krause realized that although stress occurs in everyone's life, not everyone develops the negative effects of stress. He has made it his mission to discover why some people find effective and healthy ways to cope with stress and others succumb to the negative health factors that can result. From 1978 to 1981, he took a postdoctoral fellowship at Indiana University. This was where he met his wife (N. Krause, personal communication, September, 10, 2007). The fellowship led him to Yale for a year where he worked on a large community survey for the elderly (N.

Krause, personal communication, September, 10, 2007). The offer of a better salary led him to Galveston, Texas and the medical branch of University of Texas (N. Krause, personal communication, September, 10, 2007). While

employed by the University of Texas, his work focused a great deal on the stress of women of various cultures who chose to work outside of the home as opposed to those who chose to be homemakers. Most of these studies and articles occurred in the late 1970's and early 1980's (umicpeople, 2005).

At this time in history the issue of women in the workplace was very relevant to society as this was the generation of the "super mom", who wanted to do every aspect of life to perfection. The study of stress levels in this population was quite significant at the time. One study conducted in 1983 was proposed on over the debate about whether a woman's marital and child rearing stress was relieved by working outside of the home. One side of the argument stated that by working outside the home, women would have a break from marital and care giving responsibilities, thus relieving stress.

The opposing side stated that the stress would in turn be increased due to the fact that the responsibilities would still be present when she returned home, thus multiplying the stress. The study indicated that although some of the stress of homemaking and marital responsibilities were somewhat decreased no significant difference appeared in the child rearing responsibilities (Krause, 1983) He left Texas to move to Michigan in the mid 1980's. He began his teaching career at the University of Michigan in 1986, where he received his tenure in 1989 and became a full professor in 1992 (N. Krause, personal communication, September, 10, 2007). He has remained there since that time. He currently is an instructor and researcher in the School of Gerontology at the University of Michigan. After moving to Michigan he changed the focus of his research to the elderly and the rapid aging of the "baby boom generation". He has studied the aging population

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in different cultures and genders to find the differences in the aging processes in the various populations. Since the end of life brings about major changes in independence and security, stress becomes a significant issue.

This can be a frightening time and one of the most stressful during the life p. Continuing on his theory that some people cope with stress more effectively than others, he has focused on how various elderly people deal with stress in different ways and what factors make the differences for those who age with less stress. One of his studies involved over eight hundred elderly people (over age sixty-five) from mixed cultural backgrounds and both genders. They were asked what roles in life were most important to them.

The study determined that most elderly people mentioned a parenting, grand parenting, other relative, or community role. Those with control over this kind of role in their lives had a tendency to live longer and have more value in their lives (Krause and Shaw, 2000). This study also determined that the reason for this longevity and quality may be partly due to the habits of the people. Those with well defined roles were less likely to participate in unhealthy habits such as smoking and consuming excessive alcohol than did the people without these roles, thus leading to longer and often healthier lives (Krause and Shaw, 2000).

In addition to this study, he conducted one along the same lines with the elderly population and their perceived role of security (that if they need help or support from someone it is available). This study concluded that as age increases this feeling of having needed support tends to decline and thus the security with it (Krause, 2007). These studies led to studies on the social relationships of the elderly. Most of the studies determined that the people

with healthy social relationships had less negative effects from stress and appeared to live more fulfilling lives.

The studies went from the basic study of roles in life to determine differences in other populations. He began to focus more on the differences between aging people from different cultural backgrounds. During his studies of people from different cultures he noticed that some cultures were more effective in coping with the factors of stress during aging in spite of having healthy values and roles in life. One of these cultural differences was between elderly Caucasians and elderly African Americans. He determined that the African Americans on average had fewer negative effects of stress than did the same age population among Caucasians.

He added the aspect of spiritual beliefs and religion to the list of possible coping mechanisms. One of these studies found that African Americans tend to read the Bible more and pray more. The study also indicated that because of the traits of culture, African Americans tend to develop a closer more personal relationship with God (pray as if God is literally in the room with them and talk more personally) and therefore may be able to find this relationship helpful in coping with the stresses of daily life (Krause and Chatters, 2005).

He went on to study the same effects in Mexican Americans. The culture is different and the ways in which they practice religion is often different. He also conducted studies on people from Japanese backgrounds. In addition to the cultural differences in the ways elderly people cope with stress, Dr. Krause went on to explore the reasons that people within the same culture often dealt differently with the aging process. He continued to study the <https://assignbuster.com/developmental-psychologist-neal-krause/>

religious aspect after noting that it had played a significant role in cultural studies.

He studied the differences in gender in relation to religion and coping. He noted that in general women attended church more regularly and sometimes had a deeper spiritual devotion than men. He continued the studies with some studies on religion with respect to developing a positive relationship with the clergy and social relationships within the church. In all of the studies the overall indication was that the more healthy relationships, the more positive experiences and the deeper religious devotion, the better equipped the better the person tended to be at positive coping.

Dr. Krause studied the effects that negative experiences such as traumatic events can have on coping as well as negative experiences in social and religious situations. The results of these studies provided support for the studies of the positive effects of religion and relationships on a person's longevity and quality of life in later years. People with negative experiences in religion were less likely to attend church regularly or develop positive relationships within the church and less likely to cope effectively with stress.

People who claimed to be deeply religious, but claimed to have doubts about their religion had a tendency to develop stress during the aging years. Those who had suffered multiple traumatic events during their lives or within recent years had less effective coping mechanisms especially if they did not have strong family support. He has added a sense of self-esteem to the studies and has found that people with very high self-esteem and very low self-esteem both have negative effects on coping, but a comfortably positive self-esteem is a healthy balance.

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An additional factor that was determined to make a difference in coping mechanisms focused on social and economic status of the individual. With the cost of healthcare and nursing facilities for the elderly, having a lack of financial means had a strong negative effect on the individual's ability to cope with stress in the final phase of life. In addition to knowing they have nothing left to leave their children. Throughout the past three decades Dr. Neal Krause has explored the extensive topic of stress and how people cope. He has studied the difficulty of aging and has found how some people make the aging process easier.

His studies have concluded that the people with well defined positive roles and a strong support (family or social) system tend to develop positive coping skills in all cultures. Deep religious conviction and involvement in a church community can act as a positive support system and help a person develop positive coping skills. People with a healthy sense of self and value of self worth in various cultures developed coping mechanisms. African Americans had a tendency to develop more healthy skills than Caucasians, possibly due to religious beliefs and practices.

His studies demonstrate that financial planning in early years would help alleviate stress in later life. Dr. Krause has an appreciation for the elderly and development at the end of the life p. He has demonstrated that there are ways to make this phase of life better and continues to study ways in which the stress and anxiety of the aging process can be alleviated. His study of this last phase of the life cycle helps younger people know steps they can take to minimize their level of stress during these years.

If they develop strong family, spiritual and social relationships and have a financial plan for the aging years, they can hope to reduce the negative effects of stress during the aging years. Dr. Krause currently teaches doctorate classes to other researchers in the field to help them gain a better appreciation of the value of the final phase of the human life cycle. It is no mystery to anyone that stress can have a negative impact on people's lives. As the computer and electronic age make life easier, it also seems to make it move faster and instead of stress being reduced the stress increases as people struggle to keep up with society. Dr.

Krause has shown that a big part of psychology and human development is finding a healthy balance in the stress levels of life. He has dedicated his life to helping people find this balance. He has chosen to focus on a population that many in the field of psychology have chosen to ignore, the elderly. He believes that although progression and learning slow during these years and in many cases reverts back to child hood, this is still a very important phase of human development and must not be forgotten. This regression to childlike behavior means a loss of independence and security. It brings about a fear of the unknown and eventual death.

It includes a loss of dignity and privacy. Elderly people face losing the ability to make their own decisions and care for others. They have to face the reality that instead of being the care giver they have to be the one being cared for. In many cases they can no longer live alone and have to decide if they will stay with family or go to a care center. If they go to a care center, they may not have enough money to cover the incredible expenses involved in elderly care. With a large portion of the nation's population rapidly

reaching retirement age, these concerns are becoming a reality for increasing numbers of people everyday.

This phase of life is one of the most frightening and stressful phases of life. If properly planned for however, it can be one of the most enjoyable and fulfilling. Dr. Krause has spent nearly thirty years studying and attempting to find ways to help people age with more dignity and less stress. He has studied the coping mechanisms that work effectively and those that lead to premature aging and even death. He has published his findings to help those who care for the aging populations and those who are looking at retirement age find the most effective coping mechanism possible for what can be one of the most stressful times of life.

Most people will go through this phase of life and many of the nation's population is either currently going through this phase or soon will be. With this realization the focus of psychology is rapidly changing to what Dr. Krause has known all along. They are beginning to realize that the aging process of human development is a vital part of the life cycle. There are more studies being made all of the time and the government is beginning to realize that the elderly need assistance in funding the mounting cost of care.

Most employers now offer retirement plans to help their employees prepare for the retirement years. Home health is becoming an option to help elderly people maintain independence for longer periods of time. This involves care givers providing support to elderly people in their own homes. Many of these changes are taking place in society because of studies conducted such as the ones Dr. Krause has conducted throughout his career. These studies have helped many people be more prepared for retirement and aging. It

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helps to have this valuable information to help make the “ golden years more golden”.

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