

# Erik Erikson's Psychosocial Stages Activity

Each of the situations below represents a **negative outcome** of one of Erik Erikson's Psychosocial Stages. **1.** Determine which psychosocial stage resulted in each set of behaviors described below; **2.** Speculate as to what circumstances may have resulted in the negative outcome (what should have been done to produce a positive outcome); and **3.** Describe what behaviors the person may demonstrate in the specific situation if they had a positive outcome.

1) Jason is a 14-year-old seventh grader who moved to Saint Cloud this summer from another state. He has recently been referred to the school psychologist because of concerns about both his academic performance and school behavior. A review of his school records shows that Jason repeated kindergarten and third grade. His elementary school grades were primarily S's ("Satisfactory") and N's ("Needs Improvement"). His current teachers state that they are unsure of Jason's academic skills because he typically does not turn in assignments and appears to "clown around" and not take exams and assignments seriously.

2) Brenda is a 5th-year undergraduate student at the College of Saint Benedict. She began her post-secondary education at CSB as a nursing major, but decided she wanted to pursue a career in special education, so she transferred to Saint Cloud State University. After a year at SCSU, she discovered that special education was not for her, so she transferred back to CSB where she registered for courses in the Social Science-Secondary Education sequence. She is now a Liberal Studies major, and will graduate in May. Brenda has thought about applying to law schools, but recently decided she really didn't want a career in law. At this point she has no firm career plans. Rather, she had decided to work as a waitress for at least a year, and after that, who knows?

3) Carrie is a 36-year-old woman who is currently being seen for counseling at the community mental health center. Her second marriage recently ended in divorce, and she has sought counseling so that she might "find" herself and get her life "back on track." Carrie married for the first time at age 18, but she and her husband grew increasingly apart and found they had little in common, other than their two children! She remarried shortly after her first divorce as she felt "empty" being alone and thought both she and her children needed a man in the house, but that marriage also proved unsuccessful. She is now thinking of attending college, and is trying to figure out what to do "with the rest of her life."

4) Eric's kindergarten teacher is very concerned about him. He is hesitant to get involved in group activities, and though he seems bright verbally, he tells his teacher he "can't" do the work and will not start assignments unless the teacher is there to help and reassure him. Additionally, he always waits for the teacher to help him put on his coat and boots, even though she has encouraged him to do so himself.

5) Anna is currently enrolled in the "Special Needs Program for Children with Severe and Profound Developmental Delays." She is four years old and her behavior is often "autistic-like" as she avoids eye contact, makes repetitive and bizarre hand movements, and she automatically repeats words that she hears. A review of her developmental history shows that her development was apparently "normal" for the first six months of her life. It was at that time Anna's mother developed severe depression and spent a year in a mental institution. During that year, Anna was left in the care of an aunt, who reportedly abused her both physically and psychologically. It was after her mother was released from the hospital that Anna was first seen at the mental health center and diagnosed as developmentally delayed.

6) Joe is a college junior with a mediocre academic record. Though he is very intelligent, his teachers often describe him as lacking in initiative and creativity. He does well in lecture classes, but is hesitant to participate in group discussions and has difficulty coming up with ideas for independent learning projects. He is hesitant to take chances and try new things, though he often would like to try them.

7) Karl is a 78-year-old widower who lives in a senior-citizens apartment complex. Though he is reasonably healthy, both physically and mentally, Karl rarely gets out and typically does not take part in activities offered through the local senior citizens center. Rather, he mostly sits at home and broods. He rarely interacts with his neighbors in the apartment complex, and even his children and grandchildren avoid visiting him because all he does is complain about how bad his life has been.

8) John is a 36-year-old divorced man whose ex-wife has custody of their three children. Though John has visitation rights, he rarely exercises them. Even when the family lived together, he was only minimally involved with his children as he was always "too busy." His job often required long hours and extended travel, but even when he was not working, John found little time for his kids. However, he always seemed to find the time for golf outings, poker night, and hunting and fishing trips with his buddies.

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Stage: \_\_\_\_\_  
Cause of negative outcome: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
How things may have transpired had there been a positive outcome: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. Stage: \_\_\_\_\_  
Cause of negative outcome: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
How things may have transpired had there been a positive outcome: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. Stage: \_\_\_\_\_  
Cause of negative outcome: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
How things may have transpired had there been a positive outcome: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. Stage: \_\_\_\_\_  
Cause of negative outcome: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
How things may have transpired had there been a positive outcome: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. Stage: \_\_\_\_\_  
Cause of negative outcome: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
How things may have transpired had there been a positive outcome: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

6. Stage: \_\_\_\_\_  
Cause of negative outcome: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
How things may have transpired had there been a positive outcome: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

7. Stage: \_\_\_\_\_  
Cause of negative outcome: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
How things may have transpired had there been a positive outcome: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

8. Stage: \_\_\_\_\_  
Cause of negative outcome: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
How things may have transpired had there been a positive outcome: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Read pages 170-173 in the 8E, or pages (450-453) in the AP\* text, and answer the following questions:

1. What are 2 common ways, according to the text, in which adolescents can form an identity?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. According to the text, what is a “purpose” for those in adolescence? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Provide evidence from the text to support the idea that identity becomes more personalized as a student enters high school. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. How could one support the idea that the teenage struggle for identity will play an important part in whether later adult relationships will prove to be positive, rewarding experiences?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. How does the idea of “secure base transfer” from lecture translate into peer relations in the teenage years, as described in the textbook? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_