Chapter 16
ADOLESCENCE: PSYCHOSOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

I. The self and Identity

A. Multiple Selves

1. Identity – a unique and consistent self-definition
2. Many adolescents experiment with many possible selves.
3. Why are they? What will they become? Who they fear becoming
4. False Self – A set of behavior that are taken on as a result of rejection
   • The acceptable false self – arise from perception that real self is rejected by parents and peers – self-hate can be a facet. Tend to feel worthless, depressed, and hopeless
   • The Pleasing false self – arises from wish to please or impress others. Very common. Tend to be less debilitated psychological and have greater self-understanding than the possible self that comes from rejection.
   • The Experimental false self – tried out just to ‘see how it feels’. Compared to other two, these adolescents report highest levels to self-esteem and self-knowledge.

B. Identity Status

1. Adolescents tend to distinguish their social competence from other aspects of who they are
2. Begin to ponder vocation, religion, politics, and sexual ethics
3. Identity vs. Role Confusion
4. Identity Achievement – the point at which a person understands who he or she is as a unique individual in accord with past experiences and future plans
5. Some experience Foreclosure – premature identity formation which occurs when adolescents adopt their parents’ or society’ roles and values without question
   • Relatively high in prejudice
6. Negative identity – is taken on because it is opposite of what parents or society wants (rebellious)
7. Identity diffusion – when the individual doesn’t seem to know or care what their identity is
8. Identity moratorium – an identity formation that allows time to explore alternatives without making final choices (college, military, Peace Corps, mission work, some internships)
9. Teens who achieve identity are relatively low in prejudice
10. Many go through a period of foreclosure or diffusion and then a moratorium before achieving identity
11. Status vs. Process (See Chart on Page 500)
   • Can a person achieves identity in one domain and still be searching in another?
12. Gender Identity – identifying as either male or female with the acceptance of all the roles and behaviors that society assigns that sex
   - Those who foreclose on being male or female find an easy set of rules to follow

13. Ethnic Identity
   - Ethnic identity becomes important when adolescents see their backgrounds as different from that of others
   - This is usually base more on family history and other peoples judgments than their own conclusions

C. Identity and Social Context

1. Societies make identity easier by:
   - Providing values that have stood the test of time and that continue to serve their function
   - Providing social structures and costumes that ease the transition from childhood into adulthood
2. In a culture where virtually everyone holds the same moral, political, religions and sexual values and where social change is slow identity formation is easy
3. The Impact of Social Change

II. Depression and Self Destruction

A. The Usual Dip
   1. Children from ages 6 to 18 in general feel less competent with each year.
   2. Self-esteem that is too high may lead to unrealistic expectations
   3. Self esteem that is too low may make a person stop trying

B. Mood Disorders in Adolescence
   1. Mania and Bipolar disorder become more common during adolescence and early adulthood
   2. Severe depression is very rare and is usually caused by parental neglect or abuse
   3. Depression rates double at puberty to 15% (1 in 5 girls and 1 in 10 boys)
   4. Primary cause of depression is family history, especially a depressed mother
   5. Suicide Ideation – thinking about suicide – is very common
   6. 1/3 of girls have been very sad in the past year and about ¼ have thought about suicide

C. Adolescent Suicide
   1. Individuals under 20 are less likely to kill themselves than adults
   2. The rate had tripled since 1960
   3. Parasuicide – deliberate act of self destruction
   4. Parasuicide is higher for girls; suicide is higher for boys
   5. Boys tend to use more lethal means when they attempt it
II. Rebellion and destructiveness

A. Facets
1. Internalizing problems – manifested inward, such as depression, inflicting harm on self, anorexia, bulimia, suicide
2. Externalizing problems – manifested outward, such as destroying property, defiance, suicide, “suicide by cop”
3. Both suddenly increase at adolescence
4. Externalizing problems more common in boys; internalizing problems more common in girls

B. Breaking the Law
1. Delinquency is one indication of emotional stress that adolescents felt
2. Delinquency rises rapidly at age 12, peaks at 16 and then declines
3. Most are experimenters
4. Wide spread and many never caught
5. The victims tend to be other teens
6. Crime Prevention
   - Life course persistent offenders are recognized early
   - First of their cohort to have sex, use gateway drugs, least involved in school, more into hanging out with older law breaking youths
   - Arrested many times for increasingly serious crimes
   - Anti social in preschool
   - BUT only half of these actually become serious criminals
   - Interventions – close cohesive neighborhood, effective school, supportive peers, stable family, best friend who discourages crime – can halt progression of crimes in adolescence
   - Intensive intervention that address the biological, cognitive, and psychosocial problems of teen may help (parents and teachers must also be trained)

C. Family and Friends
1. Parents
   - Generation gap is not as wide as thought
   - Most younger and older generation have similar values, unless older generation grew up in very different place and time
   - Generation sake – the need for each generation to view family interactions from its own perspective
   - Parents have a stake in believing that all is well and children are basically loyal to family values
   - Teens have a stake in believing that their parent are limited and out-of-touch

2. Parent-Adolescent conflict
   - There is a certain amount of conflict between parents and teens inmost families
   - This is more common in early adolescence and decreases over time
   - Early maturing offspring and mothers most likely
   - In Asian families the conflict arises later due to cultural value of family closeness and later age of puberty
Adolescents have never been found to benefit from parents that are lax or strict to point of abuse
Parental Monitoring is a deterrent to risky behaviors
Too much parental interference are strong predictors of adolescent depression

3. Peers
- The peer group is the social institution that eases the way into adulthood
- Peers source of self help and understanding
- Peers are a sounding board for values and aspirations
- Loyalty and intimate sharing are the most important aspects of friendship
- Peer pressure can be positive
- Usually prefer to be with peers with same value
- IN immigrant families peers provide a basis for establishing identify
- Some teens join ethnic based gangs for this reason

D. Parent and Teens: Influence on Sexual Behavior

1. Embarrassing mother
- Most [parents hesitate to discuss sex
- Usually say their children are not active
- Out of 35% of teens that were active only 14% of mothers knew
- Mothers that were more religious and more disapproving were least likely to know
- 72% moms said that they had talked to their teens about sex; 45% of children agreed
- Both moms and children are embarrassed to discuss sex

2. Peers
- Peers are the source of information
- Difficult to abstain if peers are sexually active
- Boys still believe that they have no control over their impulses
- Girls and boys are more likely now to talk about sex and contraception