

The Cycle of Development

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Abstract

Human growth is a cycle of development composed of stages which begin in childhood and repeat throughout life. The stages, being, doing, thinking, developing identity, being skillful, regeneration, and recycling, are described along with their corresponding ego states, clues and symptoms to their identification, and the key transactions which provide an optimum stroke diet for health growth. The cycle of development is compared and contrasted to alternative theories of development, and is held to be significant because of its utility as a tool to anticipate and resolve the many transitional aspects of life.

Cycles of Development

Topsy was a frowsy-haired slave girl who, in her formative years, became famous because no one raised her, she "just grewed." Yet she "grewed" into a competent and creative woman who returned to Africa to teach the children of her own country (Stowe, 1852). Eric Berne was a twinkley-eyed boy who was raised, with the support of a family, into a man of such remarkable stature that his influence has yet to be measured. Topsy passed through childhood and into adulthood catch as catch can, while Eric Berne made the same transition with considerable parenting, education and rigorous training, yet *both of them grew*.

What then is the fundamental design common to the growth of a Topsy as well as an Eric Berne? What are the shared patterns of growth, the primitive forms we

carry deep in our ancestral memory? When temporarily we erase our race and color, class and background, gender and circumstance, what process do we share with all the members of our species?

Like the stages of growth in all nature, the patterns of adult life are cyclic, seasonal and based on a continuation of the stages of growth in childhood. We return to certain themes and issues over the course of time. We grow through the physical and emotional changes typical of each stage in childhood, then go back again and again.

On the surface, we might dismiss these episodes in adulthood as nothing more than a temporary reversion to childish behavior or overlook the similarity of themes. When taken as part of a constellation of other physical and behavioral clues over time, however, they are indications of our need to carry out the developmental tasks associated with a particular stage.

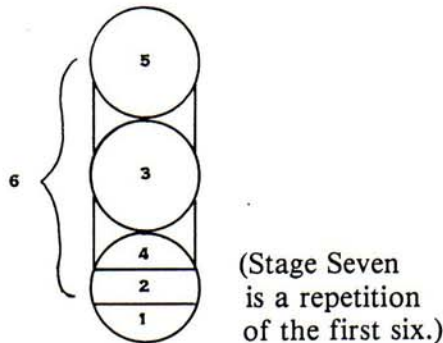
Each stage within our life cycle is the platform upon which, during a day, a year, or a lifetime, we enact the primal theatre of life. Each one is a scene of action during which we respond to certain specific needs, using methods and techniques which may or may not be satisfying. We experience conflicts, deal with issues and (hopefully) develop the inner resources which will carry us on to the next stage successfully.

Growing through each stage in childhood or in adulthood, is an opportunity. We can use this time to develop a part of our power or ability as human beings. The stages and the powers we can develop in each are:

Stage One	The Power of Being
Stage Two	The Power of Doing
Stage Three	The Power of Thinking
Stage Four	The Power of Identity
Stage Five	The Power of Being Skillful
Stage Six	The Power of Regeneration
Stage Seven	The Power of Recycling

During childhood, we become familiar with the setting of the six stages for the first time. Through experience, we find out what that phase of life is all about. We make decisions which, for better or worse, become part of our life plan. We develop the ego state which corresponds to that stage, creating an aspect of our character which becomes a part of our completed personality.

The following diagram correlates the stages with the formation of the ego stages:



Having established this foundation, we then enter a seventh, or adult stage. Here we continue to recycle through the first six stages, carrying out the same developmental tasks as those in childhood on more sophisticated levels. During this adult phase, we develop each inner character further and act out our life story. Thus in adulthood we repeat patterns of growth established during childhood, normal developmental stages and our life plan. (*How we repeat these is discussed in Stage Seven.*)

•Whether first forming our personality in childhood or enriching in adulthood what is already formed, we need certain fundamental exchanges in relationships with others for the security, confidence and stimulation necessary to carry out the tasks at hand. These key transactions are specific to each stage. They provide the essential nutrients for healthy growth like amino acids provide essential nutrients for growing body cells.

Following is a description of each stage, its corresponding ego state, the power we develop through the associated tasks, and the fundamental transactions which nourish growth.

The Stages

STAGE ONE: THE POWER OF BEING (NATURAL CHILD)

Oral needs (to be taken care of, fed and touched) never go away, but recur periodically throughout life. Like an infant in the first six months of life when we first developed our Natural Child, we reenter a stage when we need to develop our Power of Being. We stop doing things, stop thinking and simply exist. During this time we may want to eat frequently and sleep for longer periods of time. We may experience mouth sensitivity, have difficulty thinking and lack an ability to concentrate. We seek recognition for who we are rather than what we do. We want to be touched and nurtured, and to have our existence, not our acts or accomplishments, recognized. We often want to stop thinking or doing things for awhile and have someone else take over. We want to be physically close and develop or renew a loving, sensual and intensely emotional bond with another person.

An outgoing, successful and gregarious business woman of 52 described her experience in Stage One this way: "I'm delegating my responsibilities to other people as much as I can. The pleasure's gone from parties and traveling for me right now. I'm having *quiet* time at home with my husband for the next several months. I don't want to have to think about anything if I can arrange it. This is my time to hibernate."

Common Clues: A return to Stage One is characterized by such statements as, "I've run out of gas emotionally. I need to fill up my tank again," "I can't seem to stop my hand from going to my mouth." "My mouth is so sensitive." or "My gums ache." Themes related to dependency and supply are in the foreground. For example, we may feel a sense of helplessness, and may become preoccupied with whether we can trust others. We may question our own adequacy, unsure of whether we are capable of finding satisfaction, or sensuality, or vitality. Our question is, "Do we have enough: (food, money, love, or sex) to supply and sustain our existence?" In

dreams, our emphasis is on feelings and sensations. Dream images tend to be misty and blurred, with vague, often unrecognizable shapes in shadows of light and shade.

Stage One is significant for people:
 During the first six months of life,
 When we're tired, hurt, vulnerable, ill or
 under stress,
 During periods of rapid change or growth,
 When suffering a personal loss,
 When taking care of an infant or when
 pregnant,
 In the beginning of a process (new job or
 relationship).

Key Transactions: A nutritious stroking diet during Stage One includes warm, intimate, pleasurable physical contact and messages which say, "You have a right to be here." "Your needs are OK with me," "I'm glad you're a (boy-girl)." "I like to be near you, to hold you," "You don't have to hurry, you can take your time." We need to decide that it's OK for us to be here, to take in nourishment, to be touched, and to be cared for.

At this time we are like a newly planted seed - our new growth is hidden below ground and is not apparent. Stage One is a time to gather strength, building energy in order to reach the critical mass which ultimately will give birth to action. To do things now is to dissipate. Instead, it is time to take in.

STAGE TWO: THE POWER OF DOING (LITTLE PROFESSOR)

The need to explore the world and feed our senses through direct action continues throughout life. Like a toddler between six and eighteen months of age when we first develop our Little Professor, we return to a phase of intense curiosity to develop our Power of Doing. We just can't wait to see what the world is like. We want to get up and go, move, smell, taste, touch, see, explore! We want a variety of stimulation, for the world seems new and we need to develop our sensory awareness by *doing* rather than thinking about it. We want to follow our own urges without constraint. We're finding new footing, getting our feet on the ground in a different way.

"I've been in school since I was five years old," an interning physician said, "and I'm almost 28. I've been too confined. I don't know what the rest of the world is like. I'm putting off my decision about a specialty or a residency. I'm going to take a hiking tour in Mexico, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Tibet and Switzerland. I need to know what's out there before I figure out how I want to fit into it."

Common Clues: "I have a short attention span now," or "I don't want to have any goals for a while" are expressions typical of Stage Two when issues related to *doing* are prominent. For example, we may become preoccupied with when to initiate and when to be inactive. We may experience conflicts about whether to be goal directed or have no goals. Our ability to be mobile is of paramount importance; so much so that we may become fearful of immobility. We display great curiosity and intuitiveness. We develop new motivations in life. We seek pleasure, avoid pain and especially enjoy activities involving variety, movement and grounding such as walking in a new place. Our dreams may contain themes of movement, activity and sensory experience.

Stage Two is significant for people:
 Between six and eighteen months of age,
 After being nurtured awhile,
 In any new physical setting,
 As part of a creative process,
 In order to learn a new sensory skill such as
 music or language,
 As a prelude to establishing a new level of
 independence
 When taking care of a toddler.

Key Transactions: A nutritious stroking diet during Stage Two includes a continuing supply of physical affection, especially with those with whom we're emotionally bonded (lover, spouse, parent, therapist). We also need other messages which say, "You can be curious and intuitive." "It's OK for you to initiate." "It's OK to explore and experiment." "You can do things and get support at the same time." "You can get attention or approval and still act the way you really feel."

In Stage Two we are like a seed just sprouting a new shoot. Our energy is bursting forth anew, and we can see new growth almost daily. This stage is a time for action; a time to seek even though we may not know in advance what we are seeking. In seeking to know what is not yet understood, we find our way. We need to decide that it's OK for us to move out into the world, to explore, to feed our senses and still to receive support.

**STAGE THREE: THE POWER OF THINKING
(ADULT EGO STATE)**

Like a child between eighteen months and three years of age, when the Adult ego state is first forming, we need to establish a new sense of independence, individuality and separation in Stage Three. We want to make room for ourselves apart from others. We want to be different, unique. We need to create a separate position and so may become rebellious. "No" and "I won't" are favorite mottoes. We test reality and push against others while developing each new level of thinking. We may become preoccupied with finding out and establishing "how important am I?" We want to find the limits in ourselves and in situations. We may express intense negativity and ambivalence. We're concerned about what control we have over ourselves or a situation or relationship. We want what's "mine" apart from "you" or "yours." We may invite others to think for us and then feel furious if they do as we learn new levels of conceptual ability and develop new areas of thinking.

A twenty-eight year old man had done well working for a computer company since his graduation from college. "This job was perfect for me then," he said, "But now I can't imagine staying here. There is no room to be *me*, there's just company rules, company policy, and sacred traditions. I don't want to fit into their mold. I'm thinking I'll try it on my own."

Common Clues: Statements such as "I feel angry. I'm not angry about anything in

particular, I'm angry about everything in general," or "This is *mine*" are characteristic. Themes relating to separateness, responsibility, and thinking are common, especially resistance, contrariness, forgetfulness, discounting/accounting, stubbornness, procrastination, and greed. Dreams often involve being stuck—unable to get free to get anywhere.

Stage Three is significant for people:

One and a half to three years of age,
When breaking out of a dependency
relationship (with a lover, spouse,
mentor, friend),
When learning new information,
When developing a new personal position
or taking a stand,
When changing agreements,
When parenting a toddler.

Key Transactions: In the process of separating, we need to hear messages which affirm that "You can let people know when you feel angry." "I'm glad you're growing up." "You can think for yourself," "You don't have to be uncertain, you can be sure about what you need." "You can think about your feelings and you can feel about your thinking."

This is a time for that which is individual: a bloom, a leaf, or a branch like no other. Now with all our might we strive to say not just "I am me." We need to decide that it's OK to push and test, to find the limits, to say "no," and to become separate.

**STAGE FOUR: THE POWER OF IDENTITY
(SUPERNATURAL CHILD*)**

Like a child between three and six years old, when we first formed our Supernatural Child* (witch, troll, or ogre), we periodically develop and update our identity. We want to discover anew who we are and what it means to be the sex we are. We experiment with social relationships and become preoccupied with power. We need to separate fantasy from reality. Like throwing a stone in the water to see how far the ripples go, we test the consequences of our own behavior and exert our power to find out what happens.

*I have renamed this aspect of the personality because while witch, ogre or troll refer to pathological function, Super Natural Child refers to this part as being above the Natural Child, and also signifies the interest in magic characteristic of this stage.

During Stage Four we become fascinated again with our ability to affect other people. We may set up disagreements, or experience urges to shoplift, or repeat false rumors as if they were known facts. We want to find new meaning in being male or female. We may report, "I don't know who I am anymore," or do things just to see what happens. We want to change our entire internal organization. To do that, we may require "time out" to dismantle the old identity and lay the groundwork for the new.

In her mid-fifties, a nurse who had worked to support her children found herself in the midst of an identity change. "My children are grown now and I'm thinking about retirement. The last few years have been exciting because I've been finding out what I am besides a supermom or a doer. As a result I'm delighted to be selling my house and giving away 30 years of clutter."

Common Clues: Developing a new identity brings up issues related to power and gender; potency and impotency, fantasy and reality, creating and destroying, hurting and healing, being sane or crazy, magic, being male or female, ways to channel impulses.

Stage Four is significant for people:
 Between three and six years of age,
 After renegotiating a social contract,
 When carrying out a new role,
 When seeking a new relationship to family,
 job or culture,
 When caring for pre-school children.

Key Transactions: In creating a new identity, we need messages which say, "You don't have to act scarey or sick or sad or mad to get taken care of." "You can be powerful and still have needs." "It's OK for you to explore who you are. It's important for you to find out what you're about." "It's OK to imagine things without being afraid you'll make them come true." "It's OK to find out the consequences of your own behavior."

Just as a plant grows in relation to its own surroundings while also helping to create them, so we discover that in knowing others we find ourselves. We need to decide that it's OK to have our own view of the

world, to be who we are, and to test our power.

STAGE FIVE: THE POWER OF BEING SKILLFUL (PARENT EGO STAGE)

Like a young boy or girl between six and twelve years old, when we first form our Parent ego state, we periodically need to develop new tools, learn skills, and decide on values which are consistent with our goals. To do this we argue and hassle with others' morals and methods, often wanting to do things our own way and no one else's. We need to experiment with different ways to do things, to make mistakes. That way we find out what works and can put together the pieces in a way we design to work for us.

Whether forming new Parent structures or updating old ones, we actively disagree with others' methods. We make their ways not-OK as a temporary part of the process. We may become clumsy and make mistakes as we experiment to find out what works. We try on new social roles as we let go of old ones and may feel gangly and awkward. We seek contact from people outside our usual circle of family or friends to find out how others do things, especially if they are our own gender or are part of our peer group.

A man in his early sixties reported, "My grandson and my son have a lot in common with me. My grandson's eight, he's learning how to play baseball and get along with the other kids and do homework. At thirty, my son's learning how to be a working engineer and a father. And I'm learning how to be retired. That's not easy, I put too much value on work. I'm sure glad I've got my grandson. Being his grandpa gives me a lot of meaning in life and I really need that right now."

Common Clues: Learning new skills brings up issues around how to do things and what values are OK. Time structuring, peer group contact, or peer group pressure, and same sex relationships are major themes. We are concerned here with defining reality, dealing with authority, arguing and judging, and skills appropriate to our gender.

Stage Five is significant for people:
 Between six and twelve years old,
 After updating our identity,
 When learning new skills,
 When changing cultures,
 When parenting a six to twelve year old.

Key Transactions: In Stage Five we need messages which say, "It's OK to learn how to do things your own way, to have your own morals and methods." "You don't have to suffer to get what you need." "You can do it your way." "You can think before you make that your way." "It's OK to disagree." "Trust your feelings to guide you."

The opportunities of life unfold to those who create the way. Doing things our own way, we do them as naturally as a leaf turning towards the sun. In this fashion we too open the possibilities of life before us and find the ways to assure our survival. In Stage Five, we need to decide that it's OK to learn how to do things our own way and to have our own morals and methods.

STAGE SIX: THE POWER OF REGENERATION (UNIFYING EGO STAGES)

Like an adolescent between thirteen and eighteen years old, when we first began to unify our ego states, we go through adult phases when we are preoccupied with sex and with people as sexual beings. We may experience turbulent body changes, especially in energy levels. We want to experiment with new ways of being sexual. We develop a personal philosophy and find a new place in the grown-up world.

As grown-ups returning to Stage Six, we may find a place to hang out such as a coffee shop or soda fountain. We may feel naive and virginal again despite having been actively sexual for years. We may even report needing to stop having sex as part of a reorganization process, or that we are chafing at the constraints of a monogamous relationship because we want to play the field and experiment with new people or new situations. We need to integrate our need for sexual activity with needs from all other stages. To do that, we develop our own personal philosophy. Not only does that aid our integration process, it also becomes the position from which we relate to

the world in a new and grown-up way. We finally break out of our mentor relationships and become free to make it in the world on our own.

As the parents of two teenagers, one couple in their mid-forties were dealing with the changes each wanted to make. "As his wife, I've been quite accommodating all these years. Now I want him to recognize that I have my own values and life to live, my own direction to take. Following his path will only lead to big trouble later." Her husband reported, "I may have children almost grown, but I'm still an active, vital, vigorous man. I want her to fall in love with me again. I'm mature and that's exciting and sexual. I want to use the energies I have while I still have them."

Common Clues: A bout of acne, adolescent dreaminess, or a preoccupation with sex, sex, sex; sexual feelings, being a sexual person, how to be sexual and be safe, etc. are common Stage Six signs. In addition, earlier themes return in short episodes. Finally, the need for parenting (or mentoring) is given up and a new level of maturity is achieved.

Stage Six is significant for people:
 Between thirteen and eighteen,
 After developing new morals or skills,
 When preparing to leave a relationship,
 job, home, locality,
 When ending any process,
 When parenting teenagers.

Key Transactions: In returning to Stage Six, we need to hear messages which say, "It's OK to be responsible for your own needs, feelings, and behavior. You can be a sexual person and still have needs." "It's OK to be on your own." "My love goes with you." "You're welcome to come home again."

As we accept and use our own maturity, new growth begins, nurtured by what has come before. In this way, the cycle is repeated. In Stage Six we need to decide that it's OK to be sexual, it's OK to have a place among grown-ups and to succeed.

STAGE SEVEN: THE POWER OF RECYCLING

Entering adulthood near the age of nineteen, we have completed a circle of development. Our personality is formed, and no

more new components will be added. This is a new situation; we have never been here before. We may be uncertain and unsure, not knowing whether the rules are the same, or the terrain smooth or difficult. We need companions—people to whom we can emotionally bond for support in our new cycle of growth. We need to go slowly, to feel our way along, and learn to just be alive in this new situation, gathering strength for the days to come. We are like infants again in that we are new in the world. Each repetition has its own quality just like each summer is different from another and each harvest is different from the last. As we mature, we naturally advance and refine and so does our perception of the stages. Each beginning of the cycle is an important turning point. Sometimes these even take the character of a life crisis so intense that we're confused as to whether we're having an outbreak of script or an outbreak of normal development.

A man in his mid-fifties experienced this confusion. "I developed a severe case of dissatisfaction. I was restless, couldn't sleep, I lost my appetite for life. I knew a big change was brewing. (Stage One:) For a while I daydreamed. During some time off I realized I didn't like where I was anymore. I wanted to shuffle the deck completely and deal myself a new situation. (Stage Two:) I loved my friends bringing me pictures of people doing different things and living in faraway places. Some of them helped me arrange trips and job interviews to check out the possibilities. (Stage Three:) When I got it clear that I was tired of working with my head and wanted to work with my hands, I had to take a stand. On a weekend away with friends I fell in love with this old farm. (Stage Four:) That was an identity crisis. Me, a farmer, the egg head, the intellectual? (Stage Five:) Next we figured out how to make it work by running a furniture repair business in the barn and teaching part time at the college. (Stage Six:) I went right back to the beginning then, reviewed the whole thing, pulled up stakes, had a big farewell party and moved in."

Recycling in adulthood takes on an individual rhythm and character. Once our

basic pattern is formed in childhood, we can be triggered to recycle certain stages by external events. As parents, for example, we return to the stages of development in which our children are currently growing. As therapists, we can return to the developmental stages of clients.

In adulthood we can also play different roles as we recycle. One time we may be children, then parents, clients or therapists, victims, persecutors, losers or winners. During one repetition we may, like Topsy, grow with little guidance, while in the next we find a mentor or a program to foster our growth. For example, ages which are multiples of thirteen seem to have major significance for Stage One. Thus a person twenty-six and one of fifty-two have in common the same developmental stage and tasks. A twenty-six year old may use this time in Stage One to create a close emotional bond by marrying, the fifty-two year old may decide to arrange maximum time off from work and social obligations to ponder life and discover new meaning in staying close to friends and family.

This developmental time clock is illustrated below, using a 72 year old as an example.

In addition to the deep influences of the developmental time clock, a grown up person can also deal with the lesser impact of several other stages at any given time. These stages influence, but do not override the need to complete the tasks of the current developmental time clock stage.

Cycling through these secondary stages can be triggered by outside circumstances or by the individual's decision. Outside influences such as returning from a long trip, meeting one's life partner, or even walking into a party may trigger a brief return to Stage One, while a decision to leave a marriage, take a new job, or move to a new home are personal decisions to end one cycle and begin another.

Our development in this seventh stage is aided by the same messages which helped our previous progress. It is not as if, once receiving them, we had somehow taken them in forever any more than we could eat one perfect meal and never eat again. We need to decide to continue getting what we

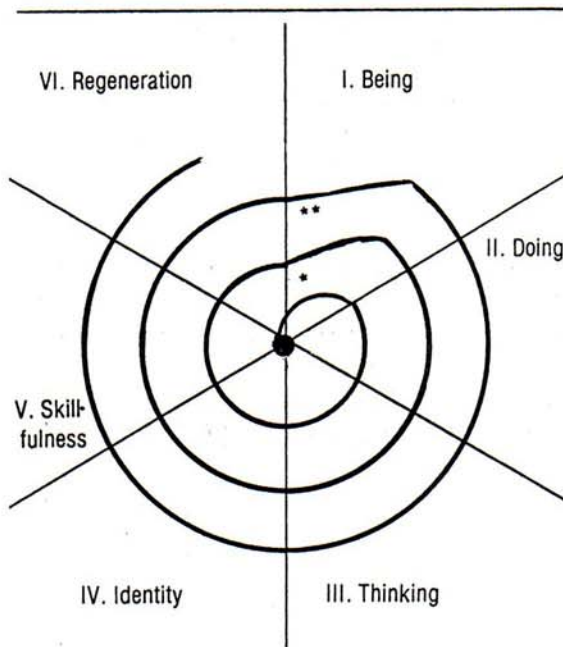


Figure 1
Major Phases of an Individual's
Developmental Time Clock

*End of adolescence

**End of second major cycle, often called "midlife crisis,"
Berne referred to it as "the protests, often bizarre, of
middle age."

need when we experience the normal symptoms of our stages, to carry out the tasks on the next level and learn the new lessons.

Whatever our role or age or circumstance, the cycle of development is the ring of power within which we can grow and reap the fruits of life. We bear the fruits of life within the cycle of repeating stages just as we bear children within the cycle of reproduction. Through the circle, the symbol of unity and completeness we "arrive back at where we started, and know the place for the first time." (T.S. Eliot)

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To discover this pattern of human development common to everyone, I began an informal study in 1970. Using a clinically intuitive method like that of behavioral scientists, I have become familiar with the developmental process of some five hundred people ranging in age from newborn infants to seventy-two year olds. I have both observed infants and participated in

their care. I have interviewed older children and adults. Approximately two hundred of these people made contracts for change in individual and group sessions in which they participated an average of six months (with a range of three months to two years). To maintain a fresh perspective I purposefully did not become acquainted with the developmental theories of others in the field at that time.

In a second phase of study, I lived in the rural mountains of a large wilderness area where few aspects of modern technology had been allowed to penetrate. Here, I observed and participated in a life and culture where health and well-being depended on the patterns of nature, where waking and sleeping were governed by the cycles of the sun and moon and the changing of the seasons. Noticing related themes in different people, out of curiosity I began asking questions and discovered similar patterns at the same ages. Through studies of Eastern and Native American thought, the patterns of nature and self-reflection, I began to see the cyclic process of growth in adult life and its relation to the foundations of childhood. Working in a clinical setting and then in culture close to the earth, I began to understand the timing of the repetitions and the tasks which are appropriate to them.

The idea that our growth is a cycle is not new. Native American culture has long recognized the Medicine Wheel Circle as a way of understanding the universe and the life of each person in it. "This great circle," says Hyemeyohsts Storm in *Seven Arrows* (1973), "is the lodge of our bodies, our mind and our hearts. It is the cycle of all things that exist. The circle is our Way of Touching and experiencing harmony with every other living thing around us."

The division of the cycle into seven periods is not new either. There are counterparts in all religions; in the ancient Egyptian and Persian doctrines, in the Kabbalah and in Taoism. Plato, too, speaks of seven phases. They are part of Hermetic doctrine, of Buddhism and of the alchemist's *Great Work* (Rupertini, 1978). The *I Ching, Chinese Book of Changes* (Wilhelm, 1950), describes it thus:

"The idea of return is based on the course of nature. The movement is cyclic, and the course completes itself. Therefore it is not necessary to hasten anything artificially. Everything comes of itself at the appointed time. This is the meaning of heaven and earth.

All movements are accomplished in six stages and the seventh brings return. Thus the winter solstice, with which the decline of the year begins, comes in the seventh month after the summer solstice. . . . In this way the state of rest gives place to movement."

Our modern philosophy, however, has mimicked modern technology. Our factories create products through linear, step-by-step processes which have industrialized the world. Likewise, we have come to see people's growth like that of products, governed by laws of technology instead of those of nature.

Sigmund Freud (1893), viewed adulthood as a time when early, unconscious conflicts were re-enacted. Although he recognized repetitive patterns in his patients, he emphasized them as part of a "repetition compulsion," or a compelling need to repeat negative experiences.

Eric Erikson (1950, 1968) was a pioneer in the field of adult development who theorized that each stage of growth throughout life contained its own conflicts which required successful mastery to motivate progression to the stages following. Although he showed how each stage used previous ones as a foundation, he still presented a linear model in which earlier development is a building block for the next. Eric Berne was no doubt considerably affected by these views of his analyst.

Berne (1970) maintained that childhood illusions dissolve one by one, leading to the various life crises described by Erickson: ". . . among them the adolescent reappraisal of parents, the protests, often bizarre, of middle age, and the emergence of philosophy after that." He recognized, however, that the processes which develop in childhood remain active throughout life.

In defining the continuing activity of childhood ego states in adulthood as normal, he also restored their dignity.

Other followers of Berne have taken note of a developmental process. Jacqui Schiff (1975) in collaboration with others, used a developmental framework of nine childhood stages which were significant treatment issues for adult clients. Fanita English (1978) refers to a developmental basis for seven subsystems within the Child, all of which have potential for operating in the "now" and which can be cathected just like ego states. Jean Maxwell and Bill Falzett (1974) pointed out stages involving children and parents. In 1974, my book, *Becoming the Way We Are*, presented stages of development corresponding to the ego states delineated by Berne and the connective patterns which were common to childhood and adulthood.

In 1978, Forman and Ramsburg extended development through four stages: prenatal, childhood, adolescence and adulthood. They described Berne's theory as saying that the "relationships between the growing individual and the people in his (sic) life form the basic factor around which personality develops." They added that later theorists emphasized various developmental tasks which are definable in terms of the person's social relationships at each stage.

In 1978, Daniel Levinson published *Seasons of a Man's Life*, his report of a ten year longitudinal study of development of men in midlife. Popularized by Gail Sheehy in *Passages* (1976), Levinson's model proceeded in a linear fashion, but his use of seasons as an image implied a pattern we repeat at regular intervals.

Indeed it might *seem* that a journey which begins at point A (birth) and proceeds to point Z (death) proceeds along a straight line. The fallacy of such a conclusion was shown when Ferdinand Magellan's voyage encouraged a more rounded world view. In a similar way, we may mistakenly deduce that our progress through life occurs in a straight line, failing to notice, despite some similarities of landscape, that the further we grow from our starting place the closer we come to it.

To look upon our lives as cyclic rather than linear is to allow ourselves to experience a different condition than that we have been trained to accept. A cyclic pattern may be foreign to our intellect but it is basic to our nature.

The significance of this developmental cycle is in its application, for we can use it to develop our power in all the phases of our lives. Individuals can understand the issues of personal growth and thus translate script limitations into options for effective action. Couples utilize it to resolve conflicts and start supporting their different stages of growth. Parents employ it in behalf of meeting their own needs and those of their developing children. Teachers find it provides an essential foundation for learning in pre-school, primary and secondary grades, high school, college and adult education. Patients with physical illnesses work with it to discover and resolve the developmental basis of physical problems. Organizations use it as a framework for needs common to all members of their group. Therapists find value in using it as a structure for the process of change.

Such a wide range of application is possible because the tides of every life in every time and place are connected to the cycle of development as essentially as the ocean tides are connected to the pull of the moon. By paying attention to our normal body clues and by carrying out the developmental tasks associated with each stage, we gain full use of the abilities given to each human being:

- to *exist*, to live and to be
- to *act*, to do things
- to *think*, using logic and concepts
- to have an *identity* and know who we are to develop *skillfulness* through structures and values
- to *regenerate*, producing life anew, and to *recycle*, developing effectiveness at every age.

Through understanding this basic pattern of growth, we can relax in knowing that "there is no steady unretracing progress in this life; we do not advance through fixed gradations and at the last one pause . . . But once gone through we trace the round again; . . . Where lies the final

harbor whence we unmoor no more?" (Melville, Moby Dick.)

The Developmental Cycle, Its Stages, Clues and Tasks

STAGE ONE, THE POWER OF BEING, BIRTH TO SIX MONTHS

Normal Clues: Wanting to eat frequently, mouth sensitivity, difficulty thinking, lack of concentration and wanting to be dependent on others.

Developmental Tasks: To take in recognition for who we are, to be taken care of, to be touched, to be nurtured, to be sensual and to bond emotionally.

STAGE TWO: THE POWER OF DOING: 6 TO 18 MONTHS

Normal Clues: Wanting a variety of stimulation, wanting to see, hear, taste, touch, smell new things and to expand and explore our world.

Developmental Tasks: Wanting to explore the environment without having to think about it and to develop a sensory awareness by doing.

STAGE THREE: THE POWER OF THINKING, 18 MONTHS TO 3 YEARS

Normal Clues: Wanting to be different from others, developing a separate position, rebelling, saying, "No, I won't."

Developmental Tasks: Testing reality, pushing against others, establishing independence, expressing negativity and learning to think.

STAGE FOUR: THE POWER OF IDENTITY, 3 TO 6 YEARS

Normal Clues: Wanting to know who we are, preoccupation with power and with gender differences, experimenting with social relationships and the consequences of behavior.

Developmental Tasks: Separating fantasy from reality, testing recognition of reality through consequences and exerting our power to affect relationships.

STAGE FIVE: THE POWER OF BEING SKILLFUL, 6 TO 12 YEARS

Normal Clues: Arguing and hassling with others' morals, values and methods and wanting to do things our own way and nobody else's.

Developmental Tasks: Experimenting with different ways of doing things, making mistakes to find out what works, and arguing with others about how they do things.

STAGE SIX: THE POWER OF REGENERATION, 13 TO 18 YEARS

Normal Clues: Preoccupation with sex, with people as sexual beings, and turbulent body changes, especially hormone and energy level changes.

Developmental Tasks: Experimenting with being sexual, developing our own personal philosophy and finding our place among grown-ups.

STAGE SEVEN: THE POWER OF RECYCLING, BEGINS AT 19

Normal Clues: Experiencing all the normal symptoms of the previous stages and experiencing more than one stage at a time.

Developmental Tasks: Developing and maintaining relationships we need for support, claiming our power in adulthood, updating and carrying out our life plan and solving life's problems and challenges.

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