

# PSYCHOSOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

ERIK ERIKSON

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# Erik Erikson: 1902 to 1994

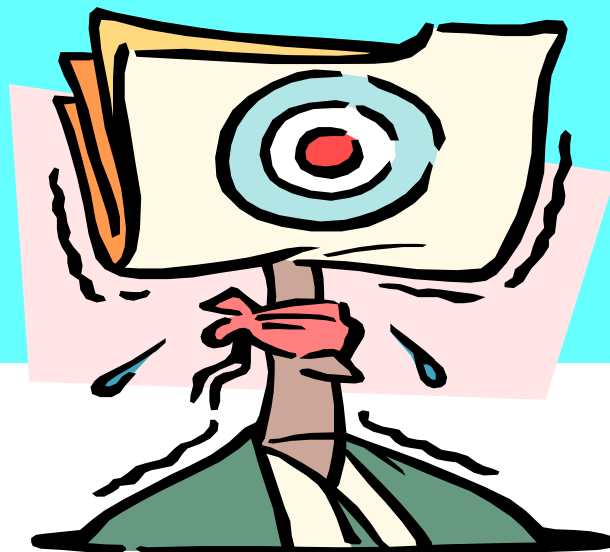
1. Born in Germany, an illegitimate child of Danish parents
2. This fact bothered him all his life
3. Dropped out of high school and spent time traveling in Europe and studying art

4. Met Sigmund Freud and studied Psychoanalysis with Freud's daughter, Anna Freud
5. Studied young people in different cultures
6. Became interested in how young people acquire a personal identity and how society helps shape it
7. Because his theory integrates personal, emotional and social development, it is often called **psychosocial theory**
8. Erikson is an **ego-analyst** – relationship between individual and the world or the self and the world
9. Completed his training at the time Hitler came to power and to escape the tension in Europe he went to the United States

## **Erikson's work is based on five assumptions:**

1. People, in general have the same basic needs
2. Personal development occurs in response to these needs
3. Development proceeds in stages
4. Movement through the stages reflects changes in an individual's motivation
5. Each stage is characterized by a psychosocial challenge that presents opportunities for development

- Erikson described the time that an individual experiences a psychological challenge as a **crisis**
- A positive resolution of a crisis means a favorable ratio of positive to negative psychosocial traits emerges
- A negative resolution results in individuals seeing the world as unpredictable and threatening



- This does not mean that people who successfully resolve the crisis never have negative thoughts or distrust another person
- In general, they see the best in others and have a positive orientation towards life

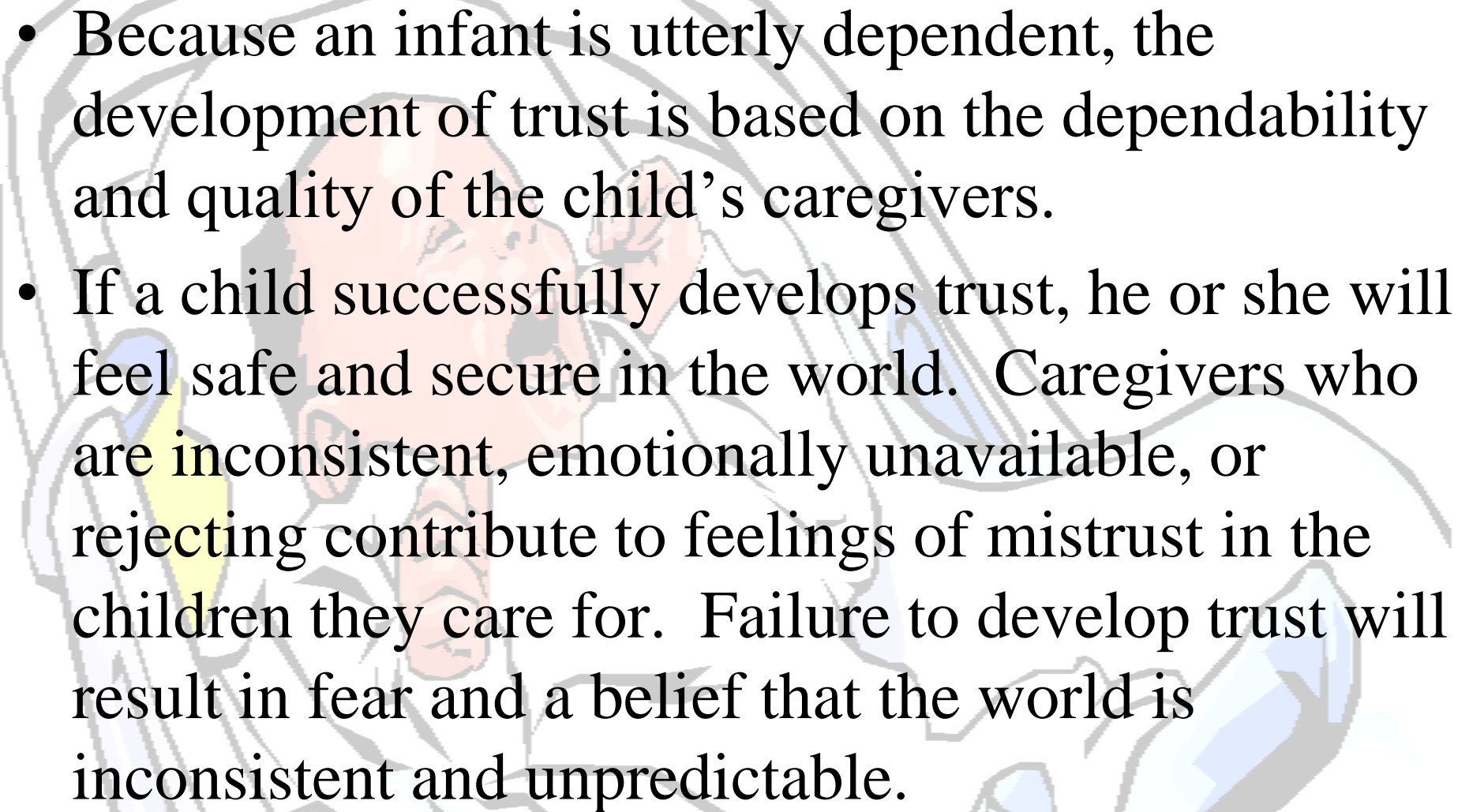


# Trust vs Mistrust:

## Infancy (Birth to approx. 1.5/2 Years)

The first stage of Erikson's theory of psychosocial development occurs between birth and one year of age and is the most fundamental stage in life.<sup>2</sup>

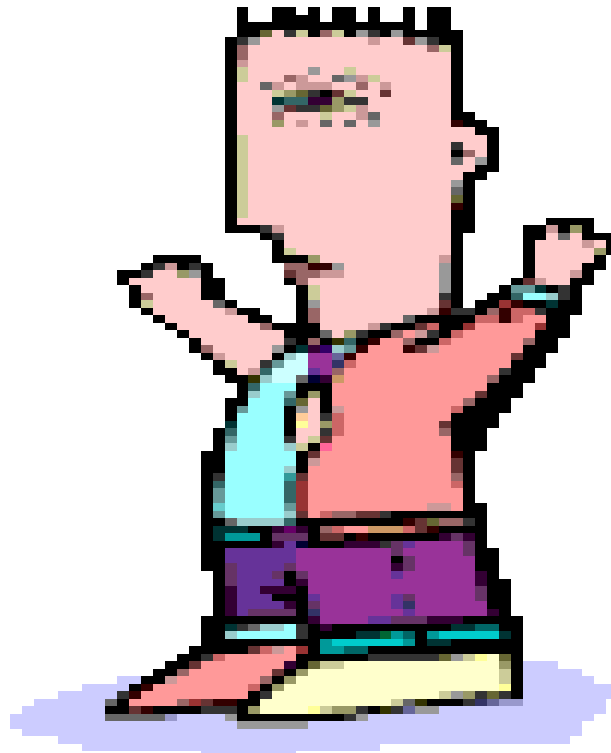


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- Because an infant is utterly dependent, the development of trust is based on the dependability and quality of the child's caregivers.
  - If a child successfully develops trust, he or she will feel safe and secure in the world. Caregivers who are inconsistent, emotionally unavailable, or rejecting contribute to feelings of mistrust in the children they care for. Failure to develop trust will result in fear and a belief that the world is inconsistent and unpredictable.



# Autonomy vs Shame and Doubt: Early Childhood (1.5/2 - 3 Years)

Securely attached children next face the challenge of autonomy, or doing things on their own

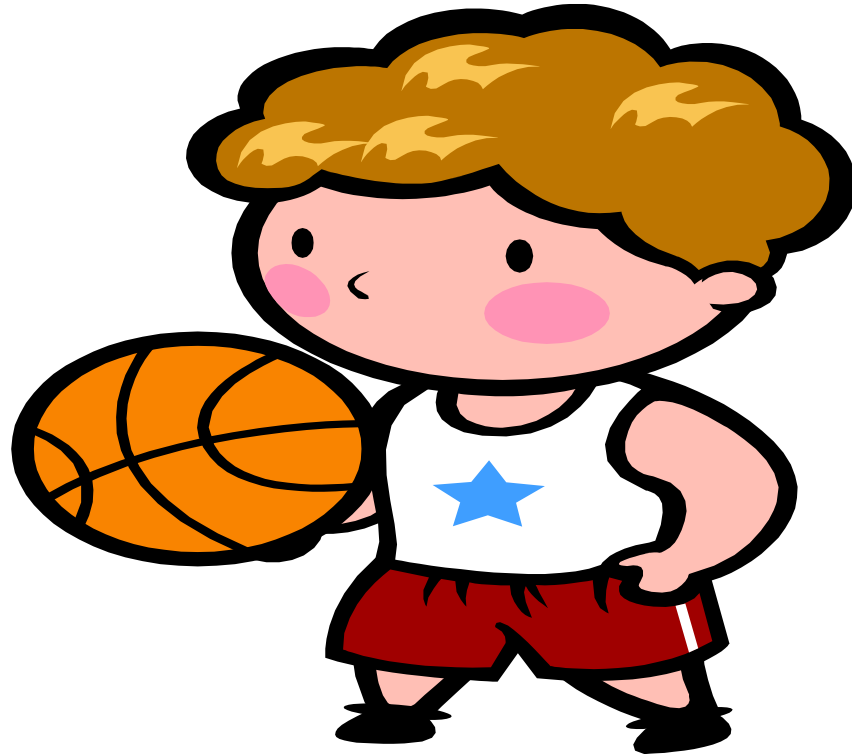


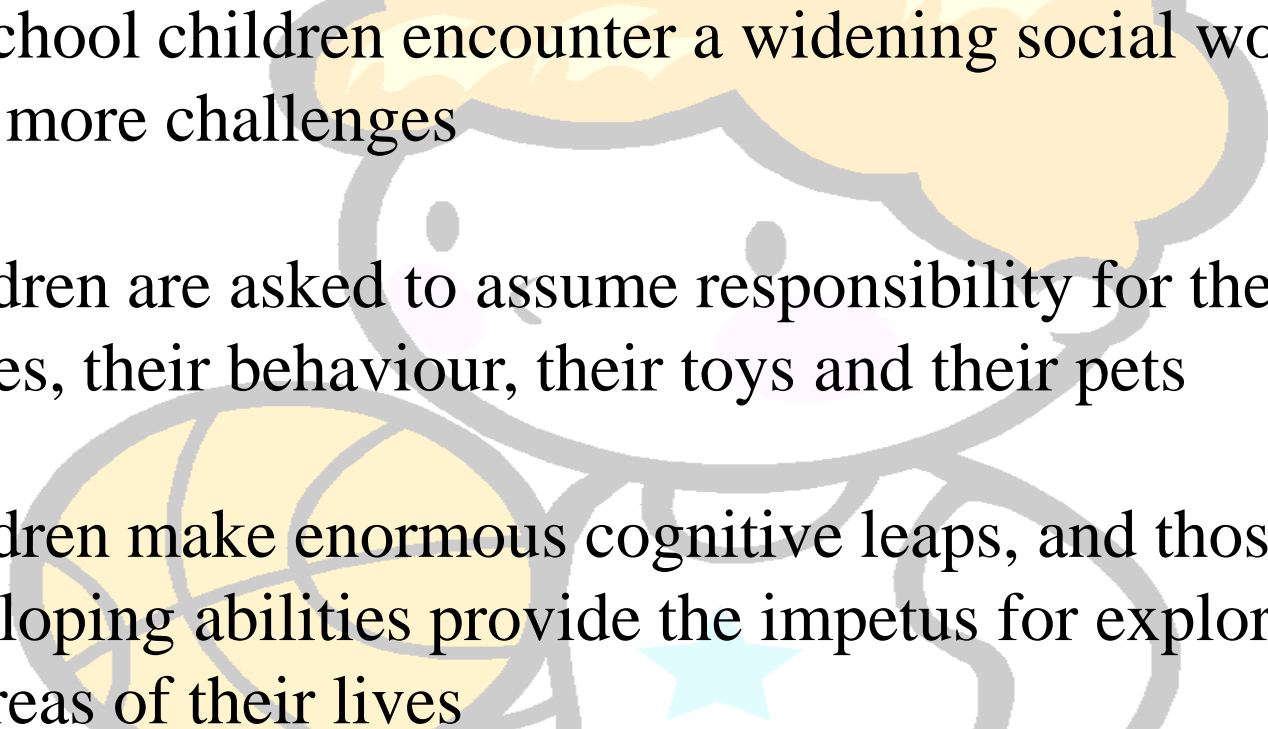
1. Child learns to feed and dress themselves and toilet training begins
2. The key challenges the child faces during this stage relates to exerting independence
3. Like Freud, Erikson believed that toilet training was a vital part of this process. However, Erikson's reasoning was quite different than that of Freud's. Erikson believes that learning to control one's body functions leads to a feeling of control and a sense of independence.
4. Other important events include gaining more control over food choices, toy preferences, and clothing selection.
5. Children who successfully complete this stage feel secure and confident, while those who do not are left with a sense of inadequacy and self-doubt.

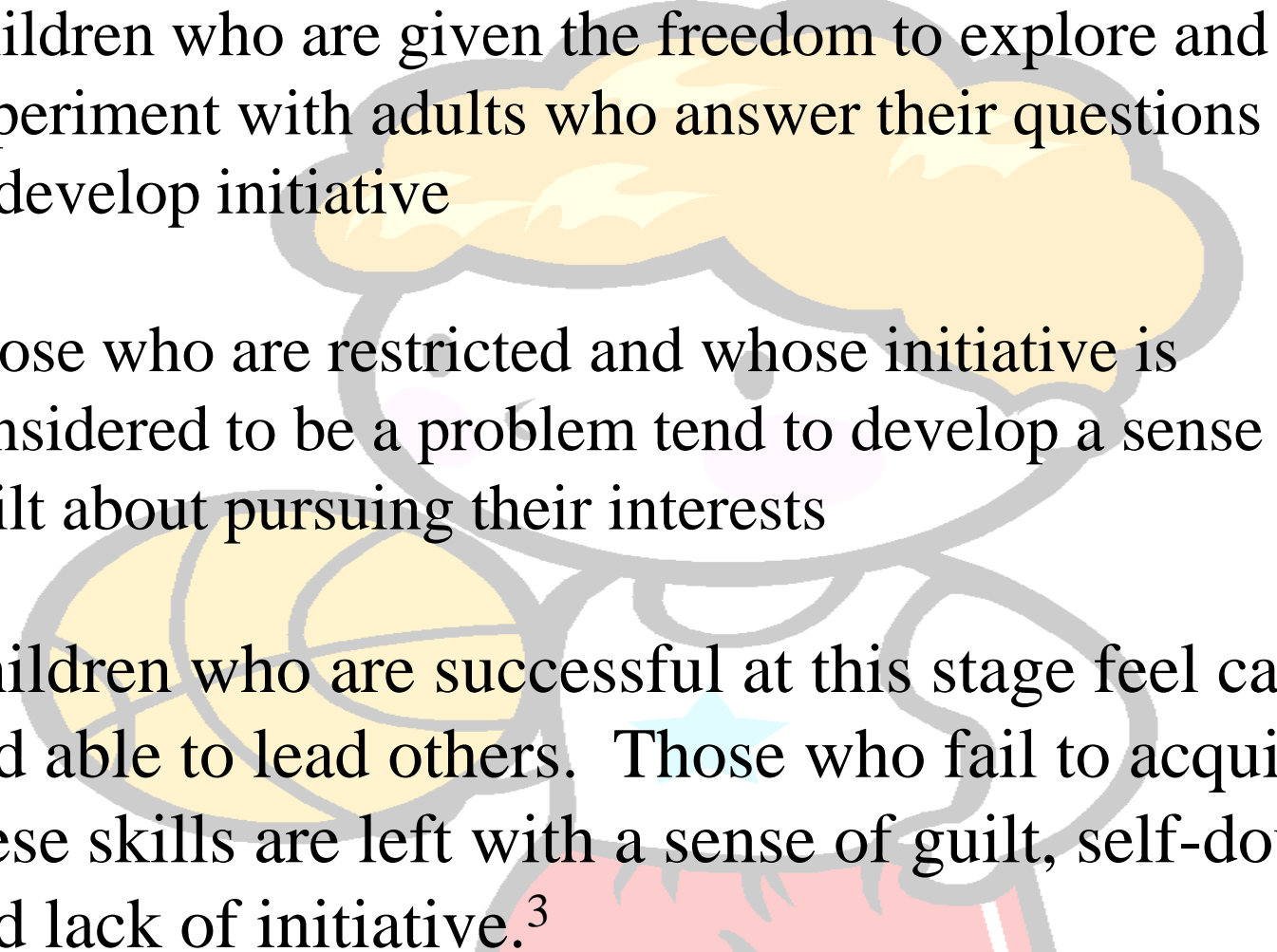
# Initiative vs Guilt:

## Preschool (3 - 5 Years)

- Initiative is characterized by an exploratory and investigative attitude that results from meeting and accepting challenges



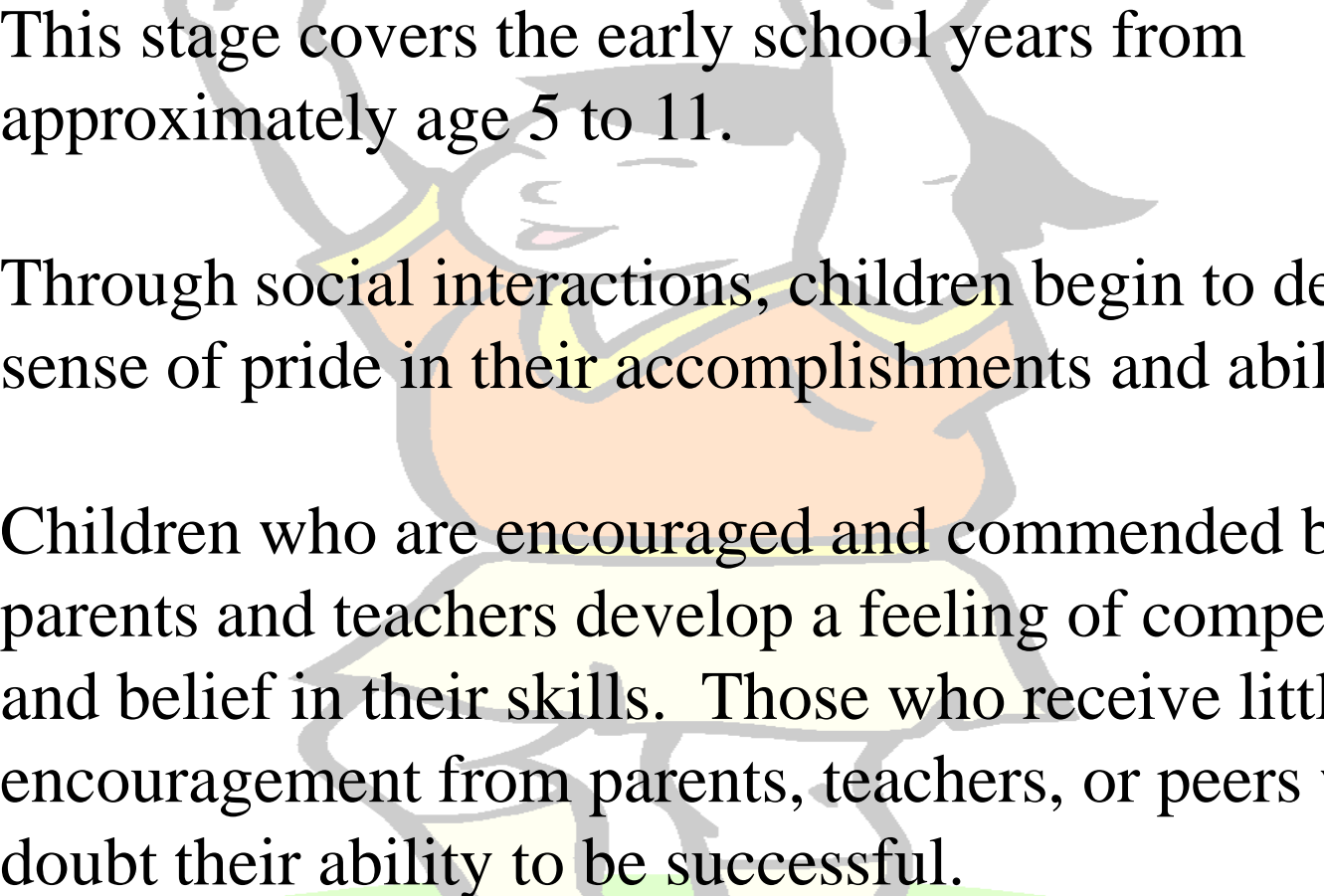
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1. Preschool children encounter a widening social world, and a lot more challenges
  2. Children are asked to assume responsibility for their bodies, their behaviour, their toys and their pets
  3. Children make enormous cognitive leaps, and those developing abilities provide the impetus for exploration in all areas of their lives

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4. Children who are given the freedom to explore and experiment with adults who answer their questions tend to develop initiative
  5. Those who are restricted and whose initiative is considered to be a problem tend to develop a sense of guilt about pursuing their interests
  6. Children who are successful at this stage feel capable and able to lead others. Those who fail to acquire these skills are left with a sense of guilt, self-doubt and lack of initiative.<sup>3</sup>

# Industry vs Inferiority: School Age (6 - 11 Years)

- Industry is the enjoyment of mastery and competence through success and recognition of one's accomplishment(s)



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1. This stage covers the early school years from approximately age 5 to 11.
  2. Through social interactions, children begin to develop a sense of pride in their accomplishments and abilities.
  3. Children who are encouraged and commended by parents and teachers develop a feeling of competence and belief in their skills. Those who receive little or no encouragement from parents, teachers, or peers will doubt their ability to be successful.

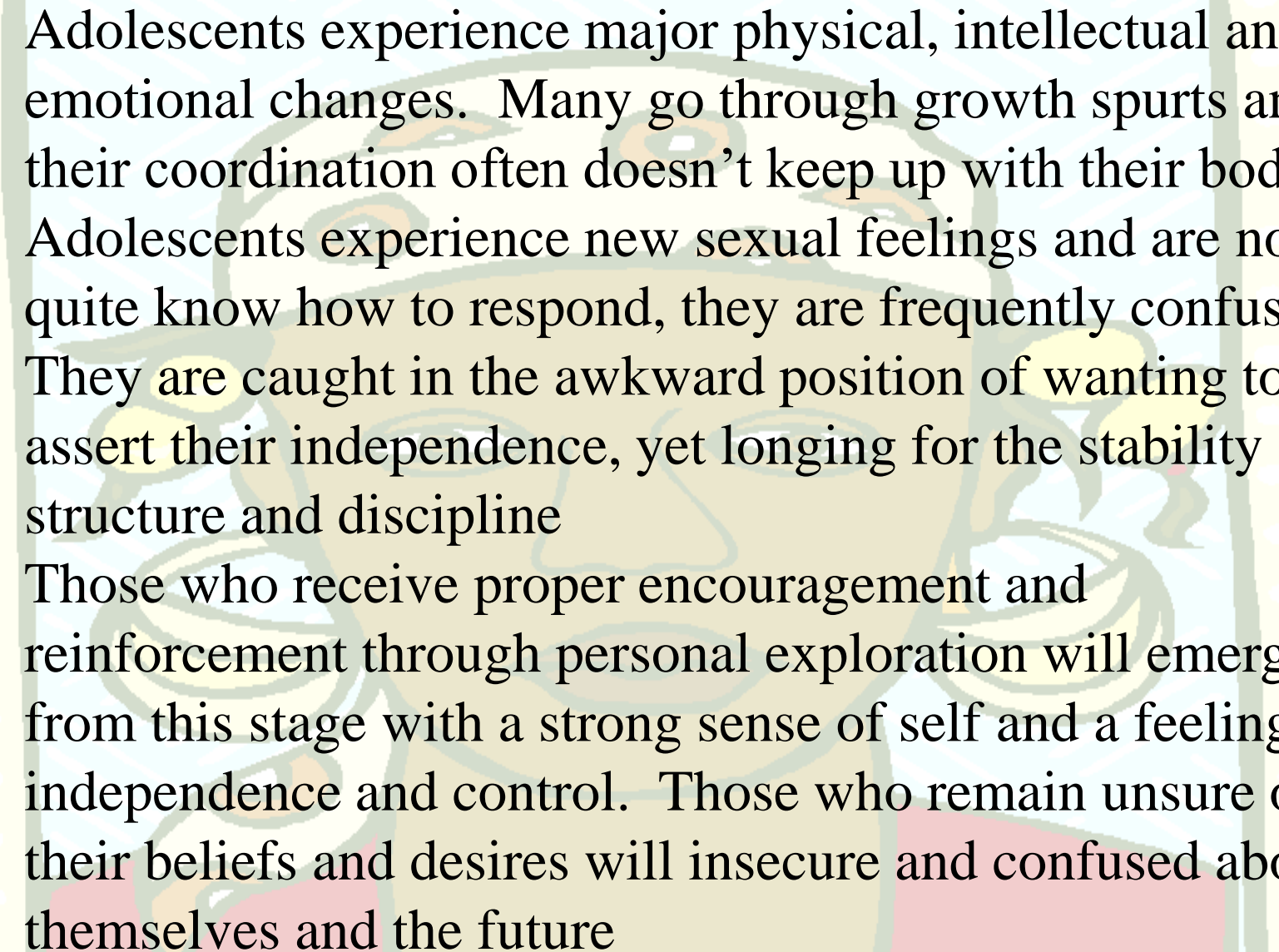
# Identity vs Confusion:

## Adolescence 12 – 18 Years

- In the adolescent years, youths develop a desire for independence from parents, achieve physical maturity and are concerned with the question of “Who am I?”





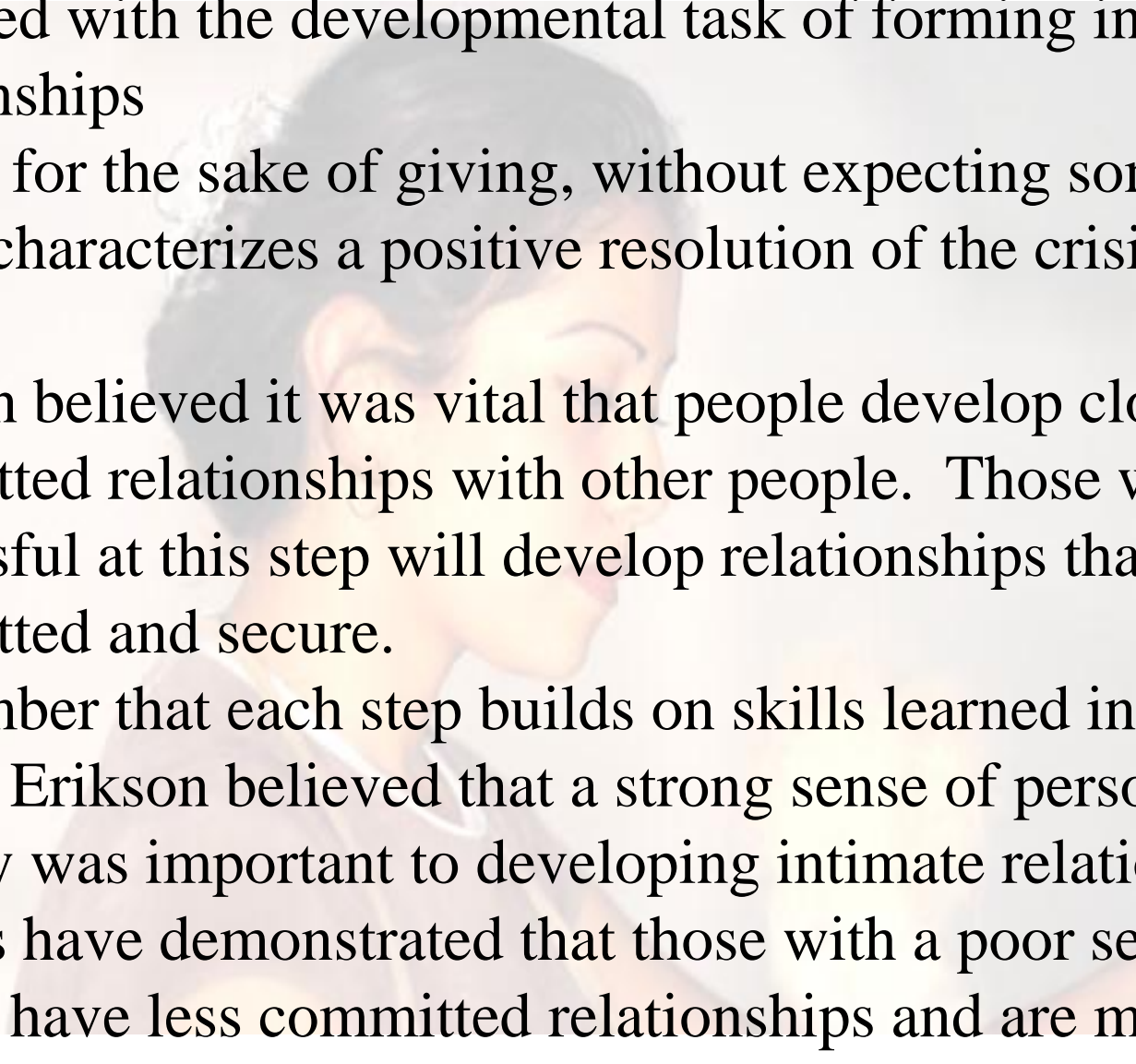
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1. Adolescents experience major physical, intellectual and emotional changes. Many go through growth spurts and their coordination often doesn't keep up with their bodies
  2. Adolescents experience new sexual feelings and are not quite know how to respond, they are frequently confused
  3. They are caught in the awkward position of wanting to assert their independence, yet longing for the stability of structure and discipline
  4. Those who receive proper encouragement and reinforcement through personal exploration will emerge from this stage with a strong sense of self and a feeling of independence and control. Those who remain unsure of their beliefs and desires will insecure and confused about themselves and the future

# Intimacy vs Isolation:

## Young Adulthood (19 to 40 Years)

- A person with a firm sense of identity is prepared for intimacy, or giving the self over to another

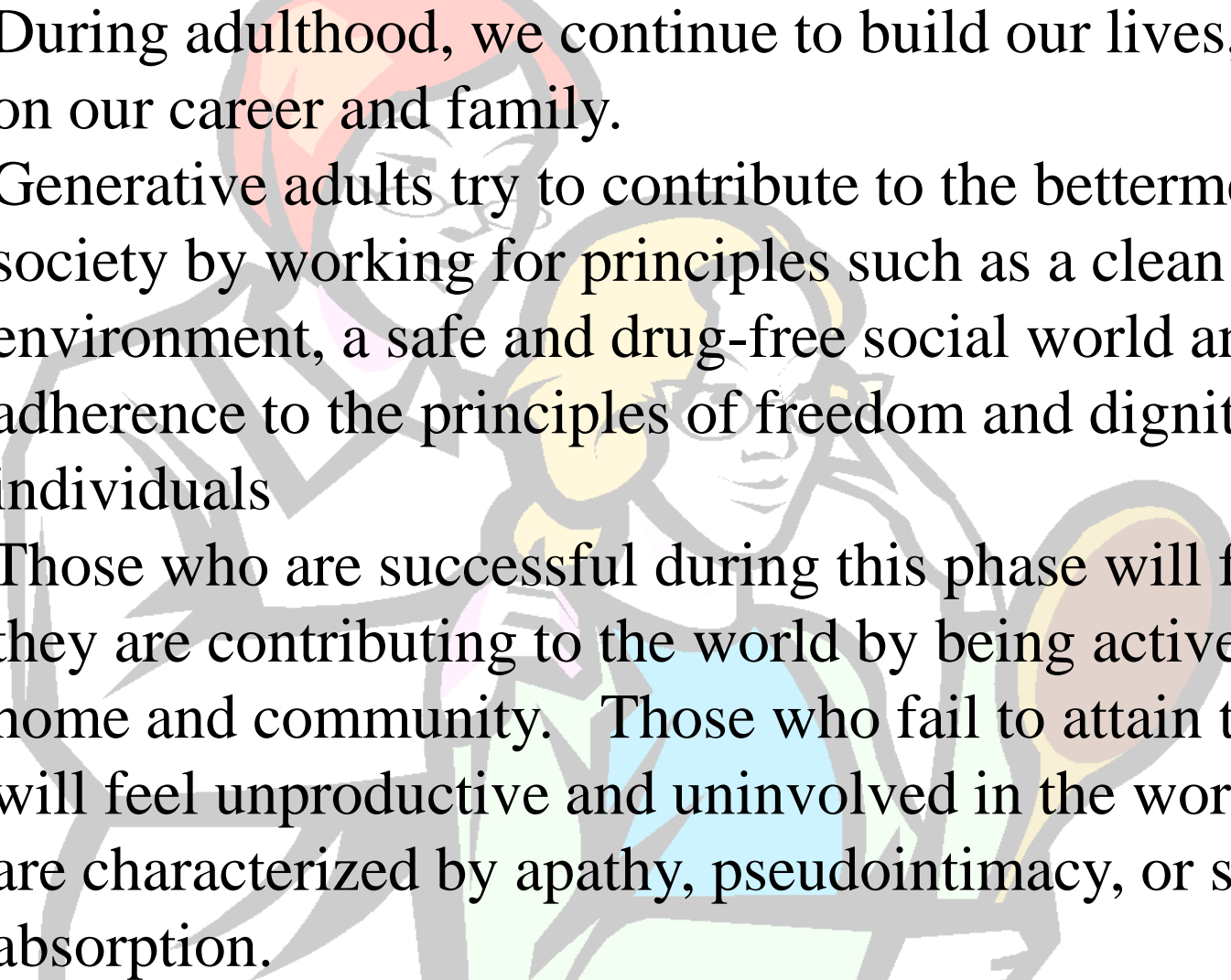


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1. This stage covers the period of early adulthood when people are faced with the developmental task of forming intimate relationships
  2. Giving for the sake of giving, without expecting something in return characterizes a positive resolution of the crisis at this stage
  3. Erikson believed it was vital that people develop close, committed relationships with other people. Those who are successful at this step will develop relationships that are committed and secure.
  4. Remember that each step builds on skills learned in previous steps. Erikson believed that a strong sense of personal identity was important to developing intimate relationships. Studies have demonstrated that those with a poor sense of self tend to have less committed relationships and are more likely to suffer emotional isolation, loneliness, and depression.

# Generativity vs Stagnation: Middle Adulthood (40 – 65 Years)

- The key characteristics of generativity are creativity, productivity and concern for and commitment to guiding the next generation



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1. During adulthood, we continue to build our lives, focusing on our career and family.
  2. Generative adults try to contribute to the betterment of society by working for principles such as a clean physical environment, a safe and drug-free social world and adherence to the principles of freedom and dignity for individuals
  3. Those who are successful during this phase will feel that they are contributing to the world by being active in their home and community. Those who fail to attain this skill will feel unproductive and uninvolved in the world. They are characterized by apathy, pseudointimacy, or self absorption.

# Identity vs Despair: Old Age (65 to death)

- People who accept themselves, conclude that they only have one life to live, live it as well as possible and have few regrets are seen as having integrity



1. This phase occurs during old age and is focused on reflecting back on life.
2. Those who are unsuccessful during this phase will feel that their life has been wasted and will experience many regrets. The individual will be left with feelings of bitterness and despair.
3. Those who feel proud of their accomplishments will feel a sense of integrity. Successfully completing this phase means looking back with few regrets and a general feeling of satisfaction. These individuals will attain wisdom, even when confronting death. They accept responsibility for the way they have lived and accept the finality of death