

## Module 3



# Guidance for Human Development and Adjustment



DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY AND  
FOUNDATIONS OF EDUCATION  
NATIONAL COUNCIL OF EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND TRAINING

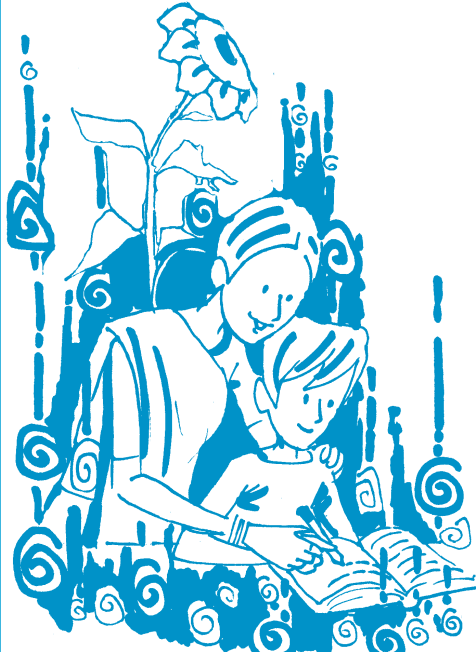
*It is like the art of the gardener under whose care a thousand trees blossom and grow. He contributes nothing to their actual growth; the principle of growth lies in the trees themselves. He plants and waters ... so with the educator: he imparts no single power to men. He only watches lest any external force should injure or disturb. He takes care that development runs its course in accordance with its own law.*

—PESTALOZZI



# Guidance for Human Development and Adjustment

Module 3



विद्यया ऽ मृतमश्नुत



एन सी ई आर टी  
NCERT

राष्ट्रीय शैक्षिक अनुसंधान और प्रशिक्षण परिषद्  
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*Blue Fish*

## About the Module

This is the third module of the course in Guidance and Counselling. It aims at enabling you to understand development and adjustment as processes that continue over the life span of a person. These two processes are interdependent. The understanding of these processes will enable you to understand some of the problems that occur during the early stages of the life span of students and the way these influence adjustment, quality of their life and relationships in the school and in future years. These problems at times are caused by genetic, personal, familial or other environmental factors such as harsh punishment by the teacher or bullying by other students. This may lead to serious emotional or behavioural problems.

The first unit provides a background on the characteristics of different stages of development and the individual differences, and their effect on adjustment of students. The second unit deals with various approaches to understand personality and facilitating development. The third unit focuses on identification of the various patterns of behaviour that characterise well-adjusted and maladjusted students. The fourth unit examines the influence of various factors such as hereditary and environmental factors on development and adjustment. This module aims at helping you understand the characteristic patterns of development, different stages of life and the influences which lead to different personality formations. Insight into the background of pupils and its implications for quality of life, mental health and well-being will enable you to deal with students more effectively.

There are self-check exercises and activities in every unit which will help you evaluate your progress through the module. Summary given at the end provides an overview of the unit, and references and additional readings give additional sources of information.





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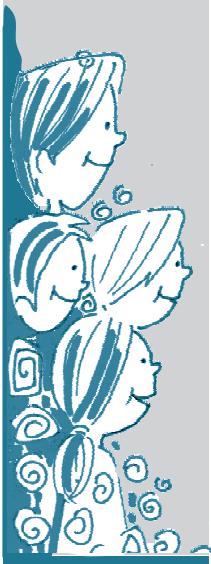
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# 1

## Human Development in Life Span Perspective



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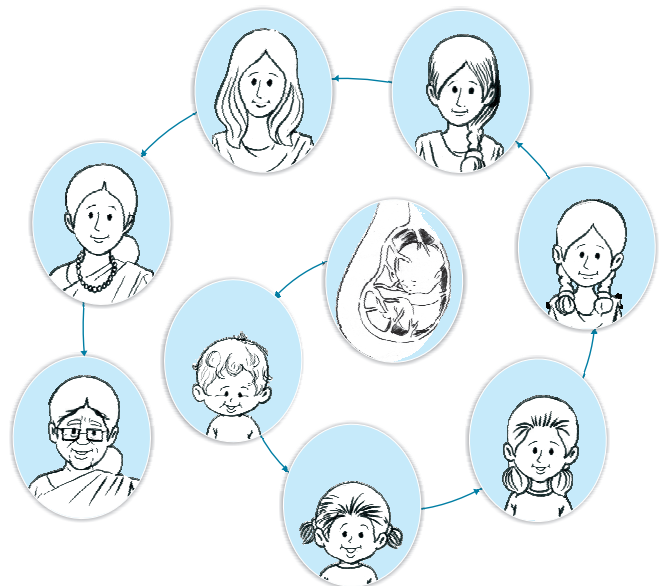


# Human Development in Life Span Perspective 1

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The development of a cell into a human, and the subsequent changes that take place as child turns into adult, turns into a senior citizen, has always fascinated scientists. The obvious physical characteristics are documented not only in the field of medicine but literature, the arts and photography. A tiny cell grows into a child who matures into an adult and later to an old man. Development takes place very fast during the early years and up to early adulthood; many visible changes take place in the body. But do you know that it continues from birth till death? Since visible changes are occurring fast in early years, much attention was paid to development in early childhood. All interventions were focused at the early years. Later psychologists recognised adolescence as the time of stress and fast growth, and focus of the interventions shifted to include adolescence as well. However, increase in longevity, and concerns for quality of life during late adulthood and even in old age have led to the understanding that development continues even during this period, and the fact that the development at any particular stage influences development at a later stage.

Therefore it is important to understand how development is occurring throughout the life span. Understanding of development as a lifelong process and study of changes, growth patterns and influencing factors in different stages is called life span approach to development. Knowledge of these changes and influencing factors in different stages will enable us as counsellors to develop insight into problems occurring at



*Fig 1.1 : Individual Progressing through Life Span*

successive stages and ensure that effective measures are taken in time to facilitate healthy development. Thus, life span approach to development is aimed at ensuring quality of life for all age groups.

In this unit, you will be introduced to the nature of human development in life span perspective, i.e. the characteristic features of development in this approach. The pace of development and the factors that influence development will be discussed. The pattern of development all through the life span, crucial periods and their characteristic features will also be discussed and the significance of this approach for counselling will be outlined.

## 1.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to

- *describe* the nature of development in life span perspective.
- *explain* the characteristics of development.
- *discuss* the role of heredity and environment in development.
- *describe* the pace of development across life span.
- *describe* the various periods of development with regard to their unique characteristics.
- *explain* the implication of life span approach to development for counselling.

## 1.2 NATURE OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Development connotes a series of changes occurring with age which enable individuals to grow bigger, acquire new characteristics and capabilities. The changes are occurring in–

- Physical structure
- Cognition and language
- Social-emotional and moral expression.

### 1.2.1 Physical Structure

Physical growth brings about changes in size and shape. These changes in size are not only in terms of height, weight and size which are observable, but internal growth is

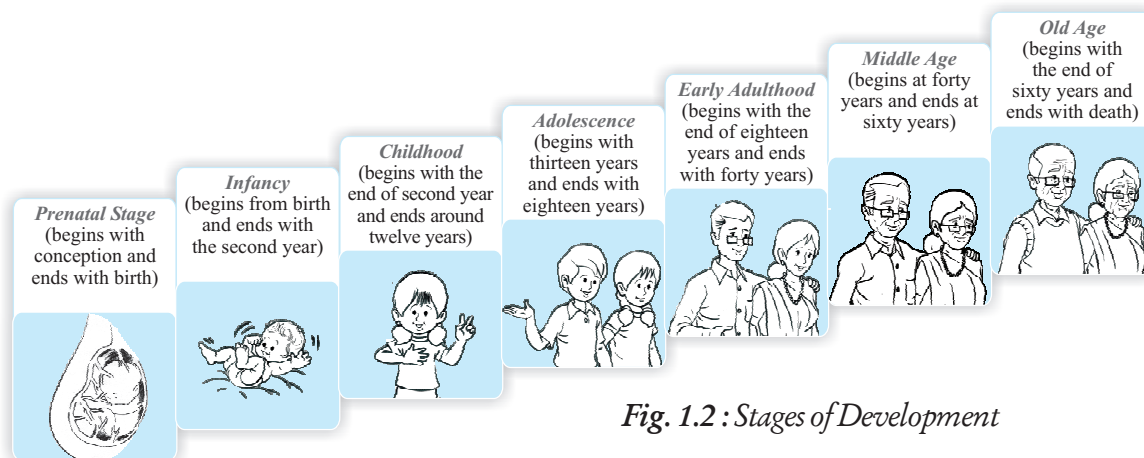



Fig. 1.2 : Stages of Development





also taking place in heart, stomach, eyes, intestines, etc. Besides, the bones are growing at a fast pace; however there are differences across children. As a child grows, the muscles are also strengthening. Overall a child has more fat during early childhood and acquires muscles as adolescence proceeds. There are other changes also taking place in the motor skills, and coordination on motor tasks of a complex kind like motor driving, swimming, etc. These complex tasks are possible due to coordination of a number of different kinds of muscles.

### 1.2.2 Cognition and Language

Cognition is making meaning out of the environment. It involves thinking and solving problems. Cognitive capacity generally increases with age. The kind of changes taking place and the influences of these changes, etc. have been explained by different theorists. One prominent theory is that of Piaget, which addresses the early developmental changes. According to him, two important processes of **assimilation** and **accommodation** are going on which are important for cognitive development. Assimilation is receiving information as it is, from the environment. For example, looking at a chair the child learns to say chair. Accommodation is adjusting/using new knowledge to previous learning. For example, once the child learns chair is for sitting, s/he may refer to any other thing used for sitting, also as a chair.

According to Piaget development proceeds through the stages of (i) sensori-motor; (ii) pre-operation; (iii) concrete operation; and (iv) formal operation. During sensori-motor stage the child acquires coordination of his reflexes, motor movements and actions. In the pre-operation stage the child acquires many concepts or mental images, and uses words to understand and describe those images. But it is important to understand that not all the mental images or experiences can be expressed through words by the child. The child does not understand the various relationships among events, he cannot understand that when he gets locked in a room, he will be set free after sometime by his/her parents. He can only see his/her own perspective.

During concrete operational stage, children's thinking is better developed and they are able to understand the relationship between different concrete events. By the time the child reaches formal operational stage, he is able to understand the abstract concepts, and relationships among abstract concepts too.

The language development too follows a similar pattern. The words are acquired to describe objects and gradually abstract concepts are acquired. Problem solving and thinking is facilitated by acquisition of language.

### 1.2.3 Social-emotional and Moral Development

Emotional development refers to the development of feelings of happiness and unhappiness, and further differentiation of these emotions into affection, excitement, delight or distress, anxiety, fear, etc. The social development of the child begins first with developing attachment with family members and gradually with others like peers, teachers, neighbours, etc. As relationships broaden, emotional development accelerates.

Gradually as the child grows s/he moves in various organisations like community, work set-up, etc. His/her behaviour and relationships have to be based on values, attitudes and norms of the community. Moral development involves behaving in ways in accordance with these values.

### 1.3 DEVELOPMENT – A LIFELONG PROCESS

Development is a dynamic and lifelong process. Development takes place along many dimensions, each of which are interdependent. Maturation and learning are infinite. As mentioned earlier, both opposing processes of growth and decay are involved in development over a lifetime. Both these processes begin from conception and terminate at death. Growth processes dominate the early part of life, while decay is accelerated during the later stages of life.

The cycle of growth and decay is evident throughout human lifespan. Even at the advanced stage of old age, growth does not come to a grinding halt as evidenced by hair growth and cells replacement.

There are different periods which could be distinguished by visible changes. These periods of development are marked by typical characteristics of that period such as—infancy is associated with gaining control over elimination, development of language; middle childhood is characterised by fast development of language; adolescence is characterised by visible secondary sexual characteristics.

Now, let us look at some other characteristics of development.

#### 1.3.1 Development is Universal

Development follows a typical pattern that is highly organised. These patterns are common to all the human beings and the pattern of development is same among all the human races living anywhere in the world. The development of individuals may vary; some may be ahead of others but the sequence never alters. For instance, babies crawl before they walk, they walk before they run, they babble before they talk.



Another universal feature of development lies in progress from the general to the specific behaviour/capacities. First gross, general responses are learned and later more skilled, and focused behaviour results. In the beginning the movements of the body are diffused and irregular, with passage of time the movements become precise; language is indistinguishable but gradually with time it turns more precise and specific.

As you can see, developmental patterns discussed above are universal to all mankind, the pattern is programmed by genetic endowments of all human beings. Although the specific behavioural competence may vary, the patterns are constant for all human beings.

### 1.3.2 Development is Multidimensional

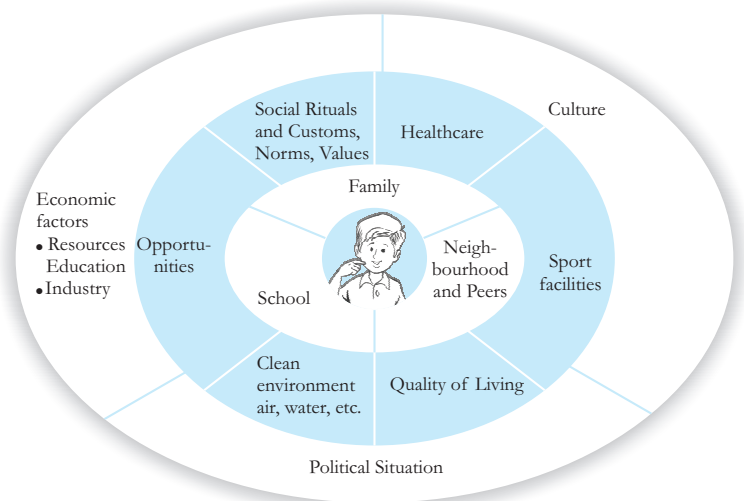
As a result of biological, cognitive and socio-emotional development, changes take place in physical (increments in height and weight of the body), motor (development of movements and muscular control of the body), linguistic (speech/language), intellectual (development of higher mental processes), social and moral characteristics. Each one of these aspects of development has been investigated by studies on development. It is important to understand that development of the various aspects listed above are not independent of each other. For instance, fine motor coordination is necessary for developing writing skills. It is for convenience of understanding that you will focus on specific aspects of human development, one at a time.

Each stage of development takes place under the influence of other environmental factors. Thus, you will need to consider the context in which you look at each of the developmental phase.

### 1.3.3 Development is Contextual

Those responsible for children's education, care and counselling have to understand that not only the micro factors like family, teachers, neighbourhood, etc. affect development but less conspicuous macro influences like law, customs, economy, culture, etc. also affect development. If one compares development of cognitive capabilities, age at which secondary sexual characteristics are acquired, sense of career orientation, etc. among children born in early 19<sup>th</sup> century and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the differences are remarkable.

The macro factors like general economic conditions, socio-political



*Fig. 1.3 : Micro and Macro Influences on Development*

climate, social norms, etc. prevailing in the society play an indirect role in development. These factors influence the general quality of life, sense of security and general availability of health resources, care, opportunities for education, etc. These in turn influence the family environment and ultimately the child's development.

These contextual factors present in the environment, whether physical, psychological, economic or socio-cultural, all have potential to influence the quality of development. The quality of air, water, nutrition, presence or absence of any particular pollutant, etc. may cause abnormality of development. For instance, children born after the nuclear holocaust in Japan suffered skin problems, and air in polluted cities leads to frequent bronchial problems among children. Not getting enough Vitamin A may cause poor eyesight.

The socio-emotional factors in the environment such as, warmth, love and care available in the family, also influence psychological development, sense of security, self-esteem and ability to take initiative. The insecurity and poor self-esteem among children are the result of living in homes which have psychological climates beset with fear, criticism, punishment, etc. Similarly, cultural factors like homogeneous cultural climate, languages spoken in the area, exposure to art and music, and economic forces like globalisation, war, economic boom, etc. influence the individual's development to a great extent. For instance, those with exposure to different languages and cultures, art or other, kind of sports or skills would have alternatives to develop their potential and feel more secure and comfortable in diverse cultural climates.



### Self-check Exercise 1

Fill in the blanks from the following alternatives.

- a. physical and socio-cultural
  - b. growth, atrophy
  - c. maturation, experiences
  - d. dynamic, lifelong
1. Development connotes a progressive series of changes due to \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
  2. Development is a \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ process.
  3. Two essentially opposing processes involved in development are \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
  4. Development is influenced by \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ factors.

Taking into account all of the contextual factors that could influence development, you might wonder how you could study their individual effects. Two perspectives are discussed below.

It is difficult to study the influence of individual factors because it may or may not be visible until it has caused real facilitation or trouble. The fact that developmental



changes are not always visible raises the question of continuity or discontinuity of development which is discussed in the following section.

### 1.3.4 Continuous or Discontinuous Development?

A few developmentalists view life span development to be taking place through smooth transition from one developmental level to another. Thus, development is considered a gradual continuous change in which the achievements at one level are built on those of previous levels. Continuous change implies incremental quantitative changes rather than qualitative ones.

If development is considered only from the point of view of outer visible changes taking place in the individuals, several separate periods can be distinguished. Time of early childhood is when child is totally dependent and is acquiring skills of motor coordination, speaking and relating to others. Adolescence is the time when the individual develops emotional independence and sexual capabilities. Adulthood is distinguishable by the assertion of emotional, social and economic independence, decision making, beginning a new family or home and so on. But if one looks at the development in terms of processes underlying these developmental changes, every behaviour/change is taking place in a continuous manner. Emotional development, thinking and decision making about economic independence, social relationships, etc. gradually develop with hormonal levels building up. This point of view dominates the field of life span psychology. The basic underlying developmental processes that lead to visible changes remain the same over the course of the entire life span. What is observed as change in one stage is a change in degree consolidation of incremental change leading to overt expression or higher levels of coordination or expertise.

Other developmentalists consider change to involve discontinuous processes. This means there are gaps between quantum jumps bringing about observable changes in the development. That is, development happens in distinct steps. These developmentalists emphasise classifying life span into distinct critical stages. For example, adolescence appears to be a critical stage for emerging sexuality.

However, you would find that both the conceptualisations are relevant. Both the views would be based on facts relating to development and both the views are important for understanding development. The stage view provides reference points for understanding changes while continuity or life span perspective enables us to study processes underlying different capabilities emerging across the life of the individual and the factors that affect them. Hence, without compartmentalising our understanding into continuous and discontinuous perspectives, we shall study development as it occurs during the entire span of life.



#### Self-check Exercise 2

1. Give some examples of microsystem that affect child development.
2. How do macro factors affect family climate of the child?

## 1.4 HEREDITY, ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

Development takes place partly due to the unfolding of the potential inherent in the genetic make up or heredity of the individual, and partly due to the learning taking place in the environment. The genetic code decides the time of maturation. Maturation provides the basic raw material which makes learning possible. For instance, a child cannot walk or talk unless his/her physical capabilities for these activities have matured. Once maturation is attained, the extent of expertise attained will depend on the external stimulation. Thus the processes of maturation and learning are interdependent.

However, there are certain activities or functions which are characteristics of all human beings such as sitting, standing, walking, etc. which could mature on their own. Here, the role of training is very little but in developing some specific skills like use of a particular language or painting or driving, etc. the role of training is crucial. But utility of training for a skill depends on attainment of maturity in respect of functions basic to the skill. The physical changes are predominantly caused by heredity and nutritional factors, while high level motor skills and cognitive capabilities, viz. thinking and information processing and different kinds of specialised abilities, develop due to an interaction between heredity, environment, and the processes of maturation and experience. Interaction with other individuals and exposure to social situations facilitate development and maturation of socio-emotional capacities and interpersonal relationships.


Maturation of physical capacities depends on the heredity, nutrition and caring environment available to the person. But ultimately the stimulation provided by the environment is crucial in unfolding the potential inherent in the genetic make up. Some stimulating factors which accelerate development besides adequate nutrition are healthy environment, freedom from disease, love and care, interaction with adults and early detection of developmental problems. These help in attaining maximum maturation or expression of hereditary capabilities. Similarly, presence of stimulating and enriched environment enables acquisition of maximum expertise or skill. These two processes of maturation and skill development occur in a spiralling manner. The maturation of linguistic capabilities and further learning enables acquisition of higher levels of skills possible.

Individual differences in intelligence, personality and other domains are resultant of constant interaction between hereditary endowment and constant stimulation of



*Fig. 1.4 : Skill Development Facilitated by Environmented Support*





learning. However, heredity sets limits to development. The maximum height a person may gain is defined by his genetic make up although even that limit is sometimes not reached due to lack of facilitation in the environment. At the same time, in spite of the best of motivation and favourable learning conditions, one's limits for progress are set by maturation. For example, the genetic code for walking decides that child's leg muscles mature late, no amount of nutrition or facilitation will lead to early walking by the child. The maturation point at which the skill could be mastered is called readiness to learn. Developmental readiness to learn plays a crucial role to permit learning. The developmental readiness is contingent upon maturation. Here again the learning and maturation do not operate independently. Both interact in producing the developmental readiness. When a child is ready to learn due to maturation (say, the development taking place in cortex) the favourable conditions for learning will interact with maturation and optimal achievement in respect of learning takes place. When favourable conditions are not present, even achievement of the readiness to learning will be retarded. Similarly, when the child has attained the maturity to learn a task and this is not accompanied by the presence of favourable conditions for learning, the acquisition of skill on the task will be retarded. Only when the maturation needed for learning the task or developmental readiness, and conditions favourable to learning the task co-exist, optimal achievement will happen.



### Self-check Exercise 3

State whether the following statements are true or false.

1. Individual differences in intelligence, personality and other domains are due to the constant interaction between heredity endowment and constant learning.
2. Unfolding of genetically determined abilities, potentials and traits is due to maturation.
3. Continuous change/development implies both quantitative and qualitative changes.

## 1.5 PACE OF DEVELOPMENT

Pace of development refers to the rate at which development is taking place across the life span. It varies from individual to individual, not only in terms of rate as such, but different patterns of the rate of development are seen for the same individual at different times in his/her life. Some may develop slowly in early childhood on some aspects like height, weight, etc. but pick up as they grow or vice-versa. In respect of other aspects of development like motor coordination, abstract thinking, language development, aesthetic sensitivity, emotional development, etc. different patterns of development may be visible. The pace of development also depends on genetic, family/home environment, socio-cultural and other environment related factors which have been discussed in the preceding section.

Genetic factors have been found to contribute to all aspects of development and to the occurrence of retardation. A vast number of characteristics spring from the human genetic structure. However, no single person would exhibit all the characteristics that the genetic code makes possible. An individual's genetic heritage, the actual genetic material received from heritage, is termed a genotype. An expression of an individual's genotype is called a phenotype. The individual may have gene for both blue and brown eyes but blue eyes being recessive may remain hidden, while brown eye being dominant may be expressed and the person will have brown eyes. Phenotypes include both a person's physical and psychological characteristics.

The influence of the home on development is interesting. The food habits (nutrition) practised in the home, for example, seem to influence the pattern of development. Children fed with non-vegetarian food have been found to show remarkable gain in height and weight during development. Further, well nourished girls attain puberty at an early age compared to those who do not get adequate nourishment. Apart from home culture, attainment of puberty seems to provide example for cultural effect on development as well. In poorer and developing countries, the onset of puberty is late compared to the age of puberty in developed countries. Girls from divorced families or families high on interpersonal conflict tend to begin menstruation earlier than girls from families with lower levels of stress.


Some traits have a wide reaction range, which means that environmental factors can alter the expression of genetic potential of these traits and cause variation. For example, height and general musculature may show a wide range of development depending on the nutritional status of the individual. Some other traits are immune to extensive changes in the environment. These characteristics appear to remain constant throughout a particular developmental stage, regardless of the environmental assaults on them. Children belonging to a culture who had experienced extreme malnutrition as infants have shown normal social and cognitive development later in childhood in spite of their deprivation earlier. Thus, we find that heredity and environment mutually affect one another in their influences on development. These influences cause variation in the development of individuals.

Differences in the pace of development occur not only across individuals but also at different periods for the same individual. These aspects of development are discussed below.

### 1.5.1 Individual Differences in Development

Each individual is different in his/her genetic inheritance and learning in the environment. Even identical twins are not exactly similar in behaviour and personality. It has also been found that individual differences appear as one proceeds along life span. As they grow, the individuals develop unique organisation of characteristics which distinguish them from others. For instance, adolescence is more characterised by individual differences than childhood; differences are still more pronounced in adulthood than in adolescence, and so on. Adults are not only much more complex than children but they increasingly differ from one another as they proceed further





through the span of development. Even when two children are placed in the same environment, they perceive the environment differently. Hence, it is extremely difficult to predict how two individuals will react to a given situation even when adequate material is available on their hereditary and environmental characteristics. Since each individual is unique and has his/her own pace of development, we, as parents and teachers, cannot set our expectation about them and judge them entirely based on our knowledge of persons of similar age or group. Thus, it should be recognised that each individual is unique and individual differences set the stage for progress of the society as the different kinds of abilities are complemented by each other.

Counsellors, parents and teachers are expected to understand each individual's unique strengths and help him/her build on it rather than expect same level of achievement from all.

Differences also characterise the rate of development of the same individual at different times. These differences in the rate of development of an individual are explained in the next section.

### 1.5.2 Differences across the Life Span

Development is characterised not only by individual differences but also within the individual variation across time. Development does not proceed mechanically at the same pace throughout a life span.

The pace of development of a child in its infancy, for example, cannot be assumed to characterise the development in subsequent periods. A few children have been found to be slow in picking up language in the early stages of childhood, but catch up with others at a later stage. Growth of height and weight is also not uniform from childhood to adulthood. The rate of development varies during different periods. The adolescent period is known for its growth spurt. However, all adolescents may not show spurt at the same time. The rate of decline during later years may be faster in some and not so fast in others, depending on the health, diet, activity patterns and of course, hereditary factors. Thus, there is no uniform pace of development either for the individual or for the various developmental stages. The way environmental factors could be manipulated to accelerate the individual's development is discussed in the next section.

### 1.5.3 Environmental Stimulation of Development

It is possible to enhance development through environmental factors like holistic nutrition, stimulating family environment, parental care, interaction with adults, languages spoken at home, etc. The food given to the child fulfils his/her requirements of essential nutrients, proteins, etc.; as a result the chances of physical well being and health become better. Quality of food may also affect height or weight of the child. Similarly other conditions such as quality of parental care by way of interaction, emotional support, intellectual stimulation through exposure to different kinds of places, experiences, books, stories, etc. enhance children's intellectual and social development. It should however be clarified that over stimulation is as harmful as under stimulation of the children. A child who is fed excessive nutritive food may

become obese, over exposure to reading story books, visits may cause aversion, boredom, distraction or even excessive interest in one activity at the cost of other activities. Parents or caregivers therefore have to exercise balance and guide the children appropriately so that optimum acceleration may be achieved.

Development can be stimulated by directly encouraging an individual to use an ability that is in the process of developing. Stimulating environments promote development, particularly when the individual has acquired maturation and is psychologically ready. The timing and the period of development would be important for attaining effective outcomes. For instance, premature children are not left to their own course of development, rather the caretakers in the hospitals stimulate them by moving their limbs, turning them into different positions, talking to them, etc. Due to this intervention, these children develop faster than those premature children who were not stimulated similarly.

Likewise, when children are stimulated by evoking their interest in reading, they are likely to learn to read sooner than children who are not exposed to such a programme. Children who live with adults or to whom parents talk frequently during the pre-school stage learn to talk sooner. In the same manner, when stimulation is given for working out the muscles, motor development may occur at a faster rate among the children. During adulthood and old age, encouragement to engage in stimulating mental and physical activities has been found to significantly slow down the declining effects.

We have discussed how development is influenced by a number of factors like genetics, family, socio-cultural environments, etc. These differences cause a lot of variation among individuals as well as changes across the life span development. You will read about the various milestones of development in the next section.



#### Self-check Exercise 4

1. What is environmental stimulation?
2. What is the effect of over stimulation?
3. How does a stimulating environment promote human development?  
Explain with an example.

## 1.6 MILESTONES OF DEVELOPMENT

In an earlier section we discussed continuous vs. discontinuous development. Although we believe that development and acquisition of different kinds of skills—motor, languages and thinking, etc.—involves continuous growth which may not be visible when these skills are evolving. As these mature they seem to appear suddenly, which gives the impression that there is a sudden and new development. All human beings undergo such developmental changes and growth patterns. The visible changes in human development across life span appear in respect of certain skills and abilities roughly around the same time, although there is variation in the rate of development across individuals.





The different patterns of observable developmental changes are associated with certain stages or periods across all human beings. Developmentalists used these characteristics to distinguish each stage from the other. These stages are labelled infancy, childhood, adolescence, adulthood and old age. Each stage has its own characteristic traits, also termed developmental tasks. The patterns of physical health, abilities, temperament, emotions, interests and other characteristics which are typical of these stages of development vary considerably across individuals and groups. However, there are similarities and commonalities. For example, for most children birth takes place after nine months of conception but birth has been found to take place in exceptional cases after seven, eight or even ten months too. The variation takes place in both the time, quantity and quality of development. Some children at birth are not born with rooting reflex which enables them to suckle at the breast of the mother. Some children may not stand and walk even after one and a half years and so on. But by and large most of the children roughly acquire certain qualities or learn to perform tasks associated with various stages of development listed below, within the range of years mentioned against that stage. Thus, these stages of development are based on the developmental tasks attained. Every individual goes through these successive developmental stages. The stages of development are—

1. *Prenatal Stage* – begins with conception and ends with birth.
2. *Infancy* – begins from birth and ends with the second year.
3. *Childhood* – begins with the end of second year and ends around twelve years.
4. *Adolescence* – begins with thirteen years and ends with eighteen years.
5. *Early Adulthood* – begins with the end of eighteen years and ends with forty years.
6. *Middle Age* – begins at forty years and ends at sixty years. Recently middle age is considered to end at 65 in North America and Europe as defined by becoming a senior and retirement (from work) age.
7. *Old Age* – begins with the end of sixty years and ends with death.

Each stage involves a typical pattern of physical, psychological and social development along with its own challenges of growth and problems.

In moving from one stage to another, every individual ought to have successfully completed the previous stage of developmental period by mastering the skills and competence needed for that stage. These skills and competencies are called developmental tasks. Growth is consolidated from stage to stage and accumulates the trend of development already made in the previous stages. When an individual slips into the next stage of developmental period without acquiring the growth and maturity expected of the previous stage, he/she would remain immature and is prone to have poor adjustment.

A brief description of various stages of development is given below.

### 1.6.1 Prenatal Stage

The prenatal period is important to understand life span development. The kind of genetic make up a child growing up in womb receives, the emotional experiences of the mother during pregnancy, the nutritional health status enjoyed by the mother during

this period, all influence the quality of development of the child. The development in the prenatal period itself could give advantage or disadvantage to the child.

It is important that the genetic abnormalities are identified in time so that the child is protected from a number of complications later. Other maternal conditions like HIV, drug use, smoking or alcohol use, etc. cause complications for future development of the child even before birth. An HIV infected mother can pass on infection to the child. Smoking and abuse during pregnancy may cause damage to the development of the brain of the child.

### 1.6.2 Infancy


Birth is a trauma for the child; from the safe and constant environment of a secure and warm womb the child is forced into a harsh fluctuating environment, is forced to breathe and feed on his/her own. Even though development is continuous, the child has entered a new phase which lasts for about two years. The infant is learning and adjusting to the external environment from the time is born. The development depends on bonding with the mother and a sense of security and emotional support from others in the family. The sensory apparatus of the infant, his capabilities for knowing and focusing on objects and faces, the perceptual or sensorimotor capabilities too are developing gradually. They develop coordination between their sensations and motor activities. The child gradually learns to understand that even when out of sight, objects do not disappear. Language development is one of the crucial functions in this stage of development.

The emotional development of the infant is expressed in its distress or happy behaviour. A child well taken care of will be happy most of the time which foretells his/her positive emotional development. Social development at this stage involves developing emotional bonds with the mother, father and other caregivers. The child learns to trust his family and develops a relationship with them. This is the first relationship where the child learns to respect social rules and norms. Parents' reactions to a child's demands and emotional expression lay the foundation for personality development. The child is moving towards independence and autonomy. Care, warmth and love at this stage is very important. Marital harmony or discord between parents, and the kind of climate that prevails at home have a strong impact on the child's temperament and social attitudes. Observing the father shout and scream at mother, the child too may model such behaviour leading to a potential discord in his/her marital life.

### 1.6.3 Childhood

Childhood extends upto twelve years. This period is distinguished from infancy as the child is becoming more independent due to his/her physical development, walking without help and gradually learning to run, jump, and acquiring greater motor control and coordination. They are able to play and interact with others. Fine motor coordination is gradually acquired which is taking place fast now, as the child can move around and manipulate objects. He is able to symbolise his experiences and





refer to them verbally. He cannot distinguish however between reality and experience, i.e. what he wants/believes is reality for him. If he wants something he thinks it can be done. This behavioural egocentrism characterises a child up to seven years. But as his cognitive development proceeds, he questions why there is a discrepancy between what he wants and reality. This phase continues for about 4-5 years. For instance, the child asks his father why clouds do not come down.

By the time children are about seven years old this questioning gradually leads to reasoning and they are able to reason with the concrete objects. They can clarify objects. The child is able to reflect on the obvious characteristics of objects rather than his own imagination. At this stage, interaction with adults who are able to stimulate the child's thinking, point out objective characteristics and encourage his questioning, furthers his intellectual development. The patience exhibited by adults to a child's somewhat incomprehensibility of what is most obvious to them results in faster cognitive development. Cultural factors also play a significant role. A child not exposed to cultural variations could get confused. However patience and response to queries of children help them to develop socially and adapt faster to their environments.

All through childhood parenting is very crucial. Warm, encouraging parents who firmly discipline the child and motivate hard work enable children to develop self respect and respect for others. Parents who are too harsh or too indulgent fail to develop self control in their children. As a result the child fails to achieve and thus self-esteem is also low. Role of peers, siblings, and other significant adults is crucial in developing appropriate personal-social skills.

The role played by cultural factors has to be understood as some of these are crucial for the attitudes and values learned, which have long term consequences for the academic, personal and social life later on as adults. For instance, lack of self-discipline, hardwork and gender attitudes will affect not only the school achievement and relationships with peers, on the job and marital happiness also will be affected.

Childhood is also a time when the child learns the ethical and moral behaviours. The adults interact with them, structure their environment and deal with behaviour that results in breaking rules and norms, accelerating their moral development. However, if adults ignore the anti-social behaviour and do not structure their environment to facilitate learning of social values and norms, moral development lags behind. The child up to about seven years of age is driven by egocentricity, so denial of what he likes or dislikes could be used to reward and punish him/her for breaking rules. By the time child is beyond 7-8 years old he can reason and understand that breaking rules or norms or any undesirable behaviour will bring punishment. However, research in the area of moral development reveals that positive and supportive behaviour is effective in encouraging moral values and norms. Facilitating development of ethical decision making at this stage enables the young child to stay focused in the next stage.

#### 1.6.4 Adolescence

This is the stage when the child begins to experience spurt in growth and hormonal activity which is expressed in terms of changes in body size, changes in body

proportions, development of primary and secondary sexual characteristics, viz. development of breasts, menstruation among girls and beard, muscles, nocturnal emissions in boys. These changes also cause a lot of confusion and embarrassment. The self-image becomes a great concern. The adolescent's self-concept is fluid at this time. He is in the process of trying out his career options, dealing with attraction for the opposite sex, and asserting his individuality and capacities of independent decision making. The societal pressures to restraint the growing sexuality and delay gratification till the individual is ready to assume responsibility of a family by entering a suitable career causes stress and anxiety.

The adolescent is capable of a high level of reasoning, just like adults. He is expected to behave like one but parents are not yet ready to give total independence, as a result there is sometimes lot of stress in the family which causes guilt to the youngster. How the adolescent should behave, the level of independence, norms and rules for behaviour in the family with elders and others, all these conditions are suddenly enforced. It is advisable to begin early so that crisis could be averted at this stage. The role confusion or identity crisis, rebelliousness vs. role clarity, responsibility, acceptance of social norms, enable one to mature smoothly from adolescence to adulthood.

The adolescent has to accept one's physique and the appearance, establishing acceptable standards of behaviour towards the members of opposite sex, achieving emotional independence from parents and other significant adults, developing intellectual skills and concepts for competence, developing socially approved values and shifting from longing for peer approval to adult approval. Thus adolescence is a time of implementation of one's intellectual, emotional development for entry in a career, consolidate one's social-emotional development and prepare for adulthood. The next stage is adulthood discussed in the next section.

### 1.6.5 Early Adulthood

Adulthood is the longest period of the life span. This is usually subdivided into early adulthood, the middle adulthood and the late adulthood or 'old age'. The early adulthood extends from 18 to approximately 40 years, middle adulthood or 'middle age' extends from approximately 40 to approximately 60 years and late adulthood or 'old age' extends from approximately 60 years to death.



*Fig. 1.5 : Dilemma of a Career Choice*





Vocational and family adjustments in early adulthood are especially difficult because most young adults have limited foundations on which to build their adjustments due to the newness of the roles these adjustments require. Personality development and the qualities of tolerance, acceptance, responsibility, caring, etc. are important for making adjustments to both family and occupation. However, cultural differences may be crucial, depending on the emphasis on preparation for family life. The major problems in vocational adjustment in early adulthood consist of selection of a vocation, achieving stability in the job and adjustment to work situations. How successfully men and women make these adjustments can be judged by their achievements, personality characteristics, voluntary changes of jobs and the satisfaction derived from the jobs. A number of conditions contribute to difficulties in marital adjustments, the most common of which are limited preparation for marriage, early marriages, mixed marriages, shortened courtships, lack of identity in marriage and marked role changes. Among the common adjustment problems in marriage, adjustment to a mate, sexual adjustments, financial and in-law adjustments are the most difficult.

Parenthood may be regarded as a 'crisis' in the individual's life because it necessitates changes in attitudes, values and roles. This is especially true for women who may have to give up careers for which they have been trained and in which they have been successful. Of the many factors influencing adjustment to parenthood, the most important are attitudes towards pregnancy and parenthood, age of parents, sex of children, prenatal expectations, feeling of prenatal adequacy, attitudes toward changed roles necessitated by parenthood and the child's temperament. Attitudes and emotional handling of one's own parenthood by mother and father have implications for children's development and family happiness.

Adjustment to physical changes in middle age is especially difficult in the areas of appearance, physiological functions and sexuality during the period of middle age. It is during this age that female menopause and male climacteric occur. Female menopausal syndrome is due partly to estrogen deprivation and partly to environmental stress which is psychological in origin. The male climacteric syndrome is due to a combination of physiological and psychological conditions that often lead to changes in attitudes, behaviour and self-evaluation.

### 1.6.6 Middle Age

Changes in interests in middle age are far less pronounced than those occurring during the earlier adult years. They are, for the most part, the result of role changes. Parents become grandparents. They play less of a role in providing direct guidance for their children. Interest in religion or spirituality in middle age is usually greater than in early adulthood. It is often based on personal and social needs and may have implications for the emotional and social well being of individuals.

### 1.6.7 Old Age

Old age begins at approximately about sixty years. Certain physical and psychological changes occurring at this period are likely to lead to reduced physical and social activity,

and capacity to make adjustments in daily routine. Physical changes include reduced and weakened musculature, weak eye sights and physical activity. Emotional sensitivity and insecurity increase. As a result, during this period there is increased physical and economic dependency on others. Establishing new social contacts is difficult at this age. While leisure time increases at this period due to retirement and changes in pattern of the family structure, it is difficult to fill extra time with new interests and activities.

Thus, the new born baby gradually and continuously develops to acquire physical, intellectual and moral capabilities. The capabilities and skills of the child keep growing at a steady rate although the growth may or may not be visible, these result in sudden expression of new characteristics and cognitive skills at specified times during life span. The characteristics specific to a certain time period define that stage of development. During later stages of development very fast physical development is gradually replaced by qualitative changes in thinking, future planning, coordination and time perspective which become highly pronounced during adulthood. These qualitative changes bring about development of career maturity and extension of relationships in terms of intimacy with others and family. During old age decline of capabilities is more pronounced, so also experience and perspective taking. Thus, different abilities continuously emerge and disappear during the life span.

### Activity 1



Talk to individuals in different stages of development about the difficulties they are experiencing and make a list of problems or issues an individual faces in each of the developmental stages.

### Self-check Exercise 5



1. State the stages of human development.
2. Mention various issues associated with development during adolescence.
3. Mention at least two important adjustments to be made during adulthood and middle age.
4. Fill in the blanks from the following alternatives—
  - a. speech skills, socialisation
  - b. the content of speech
  - c. parturate, neonate
  - d. socialisation
  - e. storm and stress
  - f. hormonal
  - (i) The period of infancy is divided into \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
  - (ii) Babyhood is a time of beginning of \_\_\_\_\_.
  - (iii) \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ progress rapidly during early childhood.
  - (iv) \_\_\_\_\_ tends to deteriorate during late childhood.
  - (v) Puberty is caused by \_\_\_\_\_ changes.
  - (vi) Adolescence is believed to be a period of \_\_\_\_\_.



## 1.7 IMPLICATION OF LIFE SPAN DEVELOPMENT FOR COUNSELLING

The counsellors encounter clients who report problems in their academic, social, emotional and personal lives. These problems occurring at a certain stage may have their root in the developmental process. The counsellor has to take into account not only the present developmental stage and the characteristics of the client but also the history of their past development. The changes taking place in the physical, emotional, social skills and competencies are progressive in nature, and mastery of such skills is important at each stage. If there were shortcomings or development was delayed in any area, it could cause problems in development in the next phase too. Therefore, counsellors have to see the present difficulties or developmental processes in the context of total life span of the client and see that the earlier problems are also tackled adequately. A life span developmental approach suggests that any problem of the client must be looked at holistically and not in an isolated manner by the counsellor. Many a problem which appears to be out of proportion may actually be the result of just a passing phase in the developmental sequence, or a problem which is being ignored could have serious consequences in the life of a child. Understanding developmental phases and their characteristics enables counsellors to discriminate the normal deviations from the abnormal. Look at the following case to understand the impact of deviations and in adequate handling of these.

### CASE 1

Anil, 4 years old, would often refuse to go to pre-school and would cry when forced. Parents thought it to be just the result of too much pampering at home by grandparents. Anil was dealt with sternly and sent to school forcibly. He cried a lot but somehow managed to stay in school. Gradually, he became very submissive and quiet which parents found convenient and thought he had adjusted to school. But as he progressed from class to class, his performance never picked up. He would often fall sick and complain of stomach ache and never made friends. Only after school years were over, Anil who was 20 now, became articulate about his fear of his teachers in pre-primary who used to beat children. He overcame his fear and anxiety, and turned out to be much better at studies during college years. However Anil could never be confident in social situations. Had his parents realised that separation anxiety from parents can be overcome if the school is a nice, warm and caring place, Anil would not live all his school years with pent up feelings. His achievements would have been different.

Sunil on the other hand was a very quiet child who would not talk too much. Both his parents were working and could spend very little time with him. He was very good in studies but not very outward. His parents were happy with his progress. When he grew up he was a very successful career person but never learned to develop healthy social relationships. He always felt very awkward in social situations.

## 1.8 Summary

Human development is viewed from a life span perspective with its continuities and discontinuities. Development occurs in all the domains of physical, intellectual, emotional, social, in an integrated fashion. The pace of development at different times in a person's life could be different and it may also be different across individuals. Development is influenced both by hereditary factors as well environment. The understanding of the development and various influences on it would enable us to identify factors which could accelerate the development or which would create bottlenecks. The genetic factors which could cause complications could be attended to early enough rather than be allowed to become unmanageable. Similarly need of environmental factors which could give advantage to the child such as enriched and stimulating environment, parental care and warmth or firm discipline, or emotional support, etc. could be detected. Development unfolds through various stages in life starting at the point of conception, through infancy, childhood, adolescence, middle age and old age. The characteristic features of these stages and the tasks, which qualify for success of each stage and set the stage for mastery of next stage, have been discussed. The nature and pattern of development vary across these stages. Implications of a life span approach to development for counselling have also been discussed.

### Self-evaluation Exercises

1. What is development? Describe the main features of life span perspective on human development.
2. Discuss the issues that are associated with development.
3. How do different factors cause variation in development among individuals?
4. How does the environmental context influence a child's development? Support your answer with examples.
5. What are an individual's dominant psychological concerns during the stages of puberty and adolescence?
6. Explain how development at any stage influences development in the later stages.

### Answer Key to Self-evaluation Exercises

1. Content should include the meaning of development. The following points should come under the features of life span perspective on human development.
  - Development is a lifelong process.



- Development is universal to mankind.
- Development is multidimensional.
- Development is contextual.
- Development is continuous and discontinuous.



2. The following points should come under issues–
  - Heredity, environment and development
  - Development is continuous and discontinuous
  - Development and associated factors
  - Individual differences
  - Differences across the life span
  - Environmental stimulation
3. Try to analyse the answer in the context of height, weight, food habits, etc.
4. Answer should deal with the various factors like genetic, family/home, socio-cultural, etc. The relationship between heredity and environment should be emphasised. Examples could be cited from general subjects like food, height, behaviour, etc.
5. Focus on the issues of identity, autonomy, intimacy, sexuality and achievement with brief explanations.
6. Try to analyse your answer in the context of various stages of development.



## Answer Key to Self-check Exercises

### *Self-check Exercise 1*

1. c                      2. d                      3. b                      4. a

### *Self-check Exercise 2*

1. Family, teachers, peers, neighborhood, etc.
2. Macro factors influence the quality of life, sense of security and general availability of health resources, care, opportunities for education, which in turn influence family environment and ultimately the child's development.

### *Self-check Exercise 3*

1. True                      2. False                      3. False

### *Self-check Exercise 4*

1. Stimulation in terms of holistic nutrition, family environment, parental care, interaction with adults, languages spoken at home, etc.
2. Over stimulation is harmful as a child fed excessive nutritive food may become obese, over exposure to reading books, visits may cause aversion, boredom, distraction or even excessive interest in one activity.
3. Stimulating environments promote human development, particularly when a child is in a state of both maturational and psychological readiness. For example, premature

children develop faster when the caretakers in the hospital simulate them by moving their limbs, turning them into different positions, talking to them, etc.

### Self-check Exercise 5

1. The stages of human development are–
  - Prenatal stage
  - Adolescence
  - Old age
  - Infancy
  - Early adulthood
  - Childhood
  - Middle age
2. Various issues associated with development during adolescence are social and emotional changes concerning identity, autonomy, intimacy and sexuality.
3. Two important adjustments to be made during adulthood are vocational and family adjustments. Adjustment to physical changes and changes in interests are two important adjustments made during middle age.
4.
  - (i) c
  - (ii) d
  - (iii) a
  - (iv) b
  - (v) f
  - (vi) e

### Suggested Readings

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# 2

## Perspectives on the Nature and Development of Personality

- 2.0 Introduction
  - 2.1 Objectives
  - 2.2 What is Personality?
  - 2.3 Approaches to the Understanding of Personality
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# Perspectives on the Nature and Development of Personality

# 2

## 2.0 INTRODUCTION

In the previous unit you would have learned about how development proceeds, and the different areas of human development. Various factors like the biological, psychological and social that influence development, and produce variation in temperaments, expressions and interactions of the individuals. These variations become the basis of different kinds of personal characteristics and uniqueness of the individual.

You may realise that we cannot understand or know the personality of a person by just looking at her/him. It is the manner in which he/she interacts, expresses and relates



to others around him/her that helps us to understand the personality of the person.

In this unit you will gain knowledge about personality theories. These theories focus on biological, psychological and social aspects. You will also examine the differences between western and eastern traditions with regard to the study of personality.

## 2.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you would be able to

- *identify* the key characteristics of personality.
- *define* personality.

- *list* the different approaches to the understanding of personality.
- *distinguish* subjective and objective approaches.
- *state* the major psychodynamic models of personality theory.
- *identify* the basic principles of each theoretical model.
- *explain* various concepts relating to the notion of “Self.”
- *state* the implications for development of personality.

## 2.2 WHAT IS PERSONALITY?

The term personality is derived from the word “persona” that means “the mask.” In Europe, the Greek and Roman actors would wear the masks of their characters when they went on stage. Often one actor would have more than one character or person to depict on stage, and the mask he carried communicated the character that he was playing.

Personality is a complex construct. It has been defined in different ways, by various authors, through the ages. Most psychologists regard personality as a person’s unique and relatively stable behaviour pattern. Personality thus refers to who you are, what you have been and what you will become. It is a combination of talents, abilities, attitudes, values, hopes and habits that makes each individual a unique person. We will now elaborate on some distinct features of personality.

Some key characteristics are —

- Personality includes everything about a person (e.g., physique, attributes, emotions, thoughts/cognitions, memories and behaviours).
- Personality is not just a collection of traits or characteristics, but the way they are patterned.
- Personality is not static or fixed; it is dynamic. It continually changes and adapts, while making adjustment to the environment.
- Personality is multidimensional.
- Personality exhibits self-consciousness as one of its main characteristics.
- Personality is a developmental process that is a complex interaction of heredity, maturation, learning and environment.
- Personality is a set of habit patterns that persist over time.
- Personality is changing in small invisible ways, however, change is visible only over a period of time.
- Personality is not to be equated with one’s character. The term character implies value judgment on the person whereas personality describes a person.
- From the above-mentioned characteristics of personality, you will see that a definition emerges.

Personality is a complex pattern and organisation of cognitions, emotions and behaviours that provide direction to a person’s life. It is a developmental process that is based on experiences and memories to construct the present and future.

### Activity 1



How will you distinguish an integrated personality from a disorganised one? Mention three features you may have observed in a person having an —

| A. Organised Personality | B. Disorganised Personality |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1.                       | 1.                          |
| 2.                       | 2.                          |
| 3.                       | 3.                          |

From the above activity you will realise that people who have organised personalities are intellectually, emotionally and socially better adjusted and enjoy healthy relationships. Those with disorganised personality tend to be unpredictable in their intellectual, emotional and social behaviour; as a result others sometimes find them difficult to deal with, due to their erratic behaviour.

There are a number of ways to approach the understanding of personalities and organise common characteristics. You will study some of these approaches and organisations of personality traits in the next few sections.

## 2.3 APPROACHES TO THE UNDERSTANDING OF PERSONALITY

There are various approaches to the understanding of personality. Most of these approaches can be grouped into four categories, namely, type and trait, psychodynamic, behavioural and humanistic. We will now discuss these approaches to understanding personality.


### 2.3.1 Type and Trait Approaches

Psychologists who follow these approaches have proposed many ways to categorise personalities into types. According to one psychologist, Carl Jung (1963), a person is either an introvert (shy and self-centred, whose attention is directed inward) or an extrovert (bold and outgoing, whose attention is directed outward).

Two cardiologists, Meyer Friedman and Ray Rosenman (1974), on the basis of their observations, proposed a classification of people as either “type A” personalities or “type B” personalities. Type A people are ambitious, highly competitive, achievement-oriented and striving. Such people have time urgency and chronic anger or hostility. It may interest you to know that they run the risk of developing hypertension, acidity and heart attacks. In contrast, people with type B personalities are comfortable, realistic, and do not set difficult goals. Hence, they are unlikely to get those diseases associated with type A personalities.

Hans Eysenck (1965) used the term type for sets of correlated traits or personality dimensions, specifically introversion-extroversion (E), neuroticism-stability (N) and





psychoticism (P). The dimension of extroversion refers roughly to how outgoing and sociable you are. Neuroticism captures the degree of anxiety, worry or moodiness, while the dimension of psychoticism represents the tendency to be insensitive, uncaring or cruel toward others.

The main problem with the type approach is that it seems too simplistic to explain the uniqueness and complexity of human personality. Even though types tend to oversimplify personality, most often they are used as a shorthand way of labelling people, who have several key traits in common. A personality type is a broad category, but people exhibit a combination of personal traits. Now, let us have a look at some of the trait theories.

The trait approach has greater potential to describe an individual's uniqueness. According to this approach, although individuals differ from one another yet they behave consistently across a wide variety of situations. Trait theories assess how people differ, particularly in their predispositions to respond in certain ways to a variety of situations. These theories mainly emphasise people's characteristics such as straightforwardness, shyness, kindness, trustworthiness and so on, which are the stable dimensions of personality along which people vary. Thus, traits are tendencies to behave in a relatively consistent and distinctive way when faced with a particular situation.

A psychologist, Gordon Allport (1961), identified several kinds of traits. According to him, *common traits* are characteristics shared by most members of a culture, while *individual traits* define a person's unique personal qualities.

Allport also made distinctions between *cardinal traits*, *central traits*, and *secondary traits*. A cardinal trait is so basic that all of a person's activities can be traced to that trait. Few people are characterised by cardinal traits. Gandhiji's simplicity and Abraham Lincoln's justice are examples of cardinal traits. In all the activities or behaviour of the person, the influence of these cardinal traits is clearly visible, so much so that the quality is addressed by the person's name like Gandhiji's simplicity. Central traits are the core qualities of personality. Central traits are the outstanding characteristics of an individual. Trust, creativity, cooperativeness or sociability, consciousness etc., could be easily identified as some individual defining characteristics. Although these may appear as prominent characteristics of these individuals but these are not as basic as cardinal traits. The central traits are more consistent than the secondary traits. In contrast, secondary traits are less consistent, relatively superficial aspects of a person. These are traits such as "likes ice cream" or "prefers imported goods."

Another psychologist, Cattell (1965), attempted to find how traits are interlinked. He studied the features that make up the visible areas of personality and called these as *surface traits*. He noted that surface traits often appear in clusters or groups. In fact, some traits appeared together so often that they seemed to represent a single basic trait. Cattell called such underlying personality characteristics as *source traits*. He used a statistical technique called *factor analysis*, to group surface traits that frequently are found together such as fun loving and talkative. These surface traits are thus reduced to source traits.

Research points to the conclusion that there are five basic dimensions of personality: *extraversion* (talkative, sociable, fun-loving and affectionate), *agreeableness* (sympathetic, warm, trusting and cooperative), *conscientiousness* (ethical, dependable, productive and purposeful), *neuroticism* (anxious, insecure, guilt-prone and self-conscious) and *openness to experience* (daring, nonconforming, showing unusually broad interests and imaginative). As you can see that each of these five factors represents a combination of several more specific traits. These five main traits are known as the Big Five Factors or the Five Factor Model.

Genetic studies of separated identical twins suggest that heredity contributes significantly to adult personality traits. Other studies on identical twins and other close relatives show that intelligence, some mental disorders, temperament and other complex qualities are also influenced by heredity. These traits which make up the personality of an individual could be sometimes the cause of emotional problems such as anxiousness, guilt, insecurity etc. These traits are assessed by the counsellors through inventions like Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI) or other tools which assess various personality traits. When these personality traits of the client are known to the counsellor s/he may draw the attention of the individual to these traits and discuss what kind of situations trigger the problematic behaviour represented by these traits, and develop consciousness in them about their behaviour patterns and help them alter the expression of typical traits which create trouble.

Let us see what some of the other approaches to the understanding of personality besides trait and type approach are.



### Self-check Exercise 1

1. Write any five characteristics of personality.

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2. Identify the Big Five Factors of personality.

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## 2.3.2 Psychodynamic Approaches

These approaches focus on unconscious motives that are not easily identified. These motives are generally not owned up to due to social disapproval. Motives such as hatred, aggression and sexual deviance etc. would be considered in this realm. There are three approaches in the psychodynamic approach given by Freud, Jung and Adler that we will discuss now.





### Freud's Psychoanalytic Theory

Sigmund Freud's (1933, 1976) psychoanalytic theory attempts to explain personality, motivation and psychological disorders by focusing on the influence of early childhood experience. He also emphasised the importance of unconscious motives and conflicts, and the methods people use to cope with their sexual and aggressive urges. Freud's psychoanalytic theory has three main parts, which are briefly described below.

- (i) **Structure of Personality:** Freud conceptualised the individual psyche as a composite structure with three regions namely, the Id, the Ego and the Superego. At birth only the Id is present. The Id consists of primitive instincts that aim at seeking pleasure. The Ego is awareness of the real world. The Superego comes into existence almost simultaneously. It represents the dos and don'ts of parents and authority figures. It is represented as the "Conscience" and the "Ego-ideal." It sets standards and takes the Ego to task for its weaknesses and incapacity to control the Id. Though Id, Ego and Superego have distinct functions, they have to work in harmony like a good team, for a healthy personality. The balancing act between these three aspects is the dynamics of personality, which is discussed in the following sections.
- (ii) **Personality Dynamics and Levels of Consciousness:** Freud used the concept of unconscious to explain why people act in irrational ways. He proposed three basic awareness levels: the conscious, the preconscious and the unconscious. At the conscious level, we are aware of certain things around our thoughts and us. At the preconscious level are memories and thoughts, which we become aware of if we take a moment to reflect, for example, when is your birthday, or what did you have for lunch. It is difficult to retrieve buried memories from the unconscious level, as they provoke anxiety such as when did you lose your wallet. However, you can have a glimpse into these unconscious levels, through the "slip of the tongue" and dreams.

The ego is under constant pressure, as it has to satisfy the Id's demands for pleasure and obey the Superego's commands for ethical behaviour. This leads to anxiety and conflict, whether to have pleasure or behave ethically, for example, you want to skip your preparation for test to go to a movie with friends. In order to reduce these uncomfortable feelings, ego uses some defence mechanisms. We will now see the description of these ego defence mechanisms that operate and determine our reaction to the situations:

**Displacement:** One redirects one's feelings from the original source to another target. For example, you are very angry with your teacher but cannot express your anger to her. You go home and on the slightest pretext you start yelling and crying if mother says something. In such a situation you are displacing your angry reactions from teacher to mother because you can take liberties with your mother but not the teacher. It is not a conscious reaction, it happens automatically.

**Rationalisation:** Coming up with various explanations to justify yourself and your actions. It means finding a rational explanation for something bad that has

happened to you to absolve yourself from the blame and guilt. For example, when you get poor results in exam, you say that the teacher was biased or the questions were tough rather than acknowledging your own lack of adequate efforts.

**Projection:** Attributing unacceptable impulses or feelings to others. To avoid anxiety we may attribute our unacceptable thoughts and feelings to others. You may hate your father but since it is not acceptable to your conscience, you may believe that your father hates you.

**Reaction formation:** Turning the feeling into its opposite, the expression of the opposite of disturbing ideas and feelings. Unconsciously you may thoroughly dislike or hate your mother or father or child but you may feel excessive love for them. The employee who is angry with boss may go out of the way to be kind and courteous to him. One gets to see such examples more often in neurotic behaviour.

**Denial:** Refusal to deny a threatening thought or situation. On hearing a very bad news unexpectedly, one often fails to believe and acknowledge that it actually happened. It takes some time before one actually registers the inevitability of the event. One keeps feeling it must be wrong news.

**Repression:** Removal of threatening thoughts from awareness and banishing its memory. It operates at unconscious level without our being aware of it. Suppression of certain painful feelings or memories is a mild example of it as we deliberately try to engage our mind somewhere else so that we are not tormented by it. The manifestation of this behaviour is often seen in neurotic illness.

**Regression:** Reverting to an old, usually immature behaviour to ventilate one's feelings which might be suitable for less mature stages than the adult stage, for example, screaming and throwing things when angry, wanting excessive attention of the family when we are sick.

**Sublimation:** Transforming hurtful feelings and impulses into something creative and constructive. A woman suffering from cancer starts working for other cancer patients. Great work of art and literature may arise from some tragedy in life. Such types of behaviour may initially arise to cope with the tragedies of life but later it may acquire its own force and transform one's life.

The development of personality is the next aspect of this personality theory that is discussed below.

- (iii) **Psychosexual Stages of Development:** Freud placed a lot of emphasis on biological development in general and sexual development, in particular. In his theory of child development, Freud described a succession of stages that revolve around body zones. According to him, from birth onwards, individuals have an innate tendency to seek pleasure, especially through physical stimulation and particularly, through stimulation of those parts of the body that are sensitive to touch. Freud referred to these parts of the body as erogenous zones.

If a child's needs at one of the psychosexual stages, were either unsatisfied or over satisfied, fixation would take place, that is, the child would show continued attachment to an earlier stage, even after moving on to a new one. As a result,





the behaviour patterns and problems from the fixated stage would persist and often get carried over to adulthood. The stages are given below.

1. **The Oral Stage** (Birth to about age 1): At this stage, the infant derives pleasure from mouth. If a baby is denied gratification or is over gratified (mothers continue to feed for two or more years) in this aspect, the baby will acquire an oral fixation. This fixation, in adulthood, may result in behaviour such as greed, insecurity, dependence and passivity.
2. **The Anal Stage** (age 1 – 3 years): At this stage, when parents give toilet training to the child, he is controlled and faces reality outside. Also, the ego starts emerging, as it has to control the Id. Fixation at this stage, results in adult characteristics of messiness, disorderliness, temper tantrums, cruelty, destructiveness and sadism. The individual may also become compulsive, over-conforming, stingy, obstinate or stubborn, and show exaggerated self-control.
3. **The Phallic Stage** (age 3 – 5 years): At this stage, children develop romantic and sensual feelings toward the parent of the opposite sex. Boys identify with the behaviour patterns of their father, including their attitudes, values and sense of what is right and what is wrong. Likewise, girls do the same with their mother. This results in the development of the superego.
4. **The Latency Stage** (age 6 – onset of puberty): Freud did not consider this stage to be very important to the development of personality. At this stage, as the child learns more about the world, sexuality is largely repressed and the ego expands. This stage is marked by intellectual development; the child learns many defence mechanisms and various skills.
5. **The Genital Stage** (Puberty onwards – adolescence and beyond): Mature heterosexual interests begin to appear at this stage. Success of this stage depends on the success at the earlier stages. This stage is set for responsible enjoyment of adult sexuality, which, according to Freud, is the epitome of healthy development

Each stage oral, anal, phallic and genital focuses on a zone of pleasure. The gratification of needs at each stage mentioned above is very crucial for the healthy development of personality. Constructive parent child relationship leads to a healthy personality, while unhealthy childhood experiences may lead to a neurotic personality. There are difficulties or frustrations faced during the process of development, the person could become fixated at a particular level of development and may show problematic behaviour. Some children who have shocks of falling or facing any other kind of aggression at early age become very quiet and are easily scared. The deep seated insecurity leads them to dependent personality. It is difficult to trace the cause of such behaviour.

Treatment of behaviour/personality disorders based on psychodynamic approaches is called psychoanalysis. It involves encouraging the client to go back in time, recall childhood experiences, and talk about whatever comes to mind. The client is encouraged to trace unconscious memories to become conscious of them and share them with the counsellor who is called psychoanalyst. The psychoanalyst also uses

projective tests such as Rorschach Ink Blots, etc. which require a lot of interpretive skills on the part of the counsellor. Those who may be interested in acquiring a greater understanding of this approach may further refer to books on Freud.

Next, psychodynamic personality theory called Jung's Analytical Psychology is discussed below:

### Jung's Analytical Psychology

Another psychoanalyst, Carl Gustav Jung placed more emphasis on the goals, hopes and plans of individuals for future.

According to Jung, the unconscious consists of two layers; one is the collective unconscious and the other is personal unconscious. Collective unconscious is the foundation of personality. It is the storehouse of archetypes. Archetypes are primordial images, impressions or predispositions that were common to human race. Some of the most common ideas/images are God, rebirth, devil or the wise old person. Jung was the first to describe the introverted (inner-directed) and extraverted (outer-directed) personality types.

Each individual has a personal unconscious, which develops out of conscious experiences that have been repressed or forgotten.

The next psychodynamic personality theory that you would be introduced to, apart from Freud's and Jung's is that of Adler's.

### Adler's Individual Psychology

Adler (1927), another psychoanalyst emphasised the social influence on personality development. He believed that we are social creatures governed by social urges, not only by biological instincts. According to him, the main driving force in personality is a striving for superiority. This striving to adapt, improve oneself, and master life's challenges is universal.

Adler asserted that everyone has to work to overcome some feelings of inferiority by a process called *compensation*. Compensation involves efforts to overcome imagined or real inferiorities by developing one's abilities. He believed that compensation is entirely normal. However, in some people, inferiority feelings can become excessive, resulting in inferiority complex. A person with inferiority complex experiences exaggerated feelings of weakness and inadequacy. Adler believed that either parental pampering or parental neglect could cause an inferiority complex. A person may develop a 'selfish style' or a positive 'upbeat style' of life, based on the experiences within the family.

According to Adler, mature and well-adjusted people have needs for power, control, mastery and personal growth, as well as needs to participate in a larger community.





### Self-check Exercise 2

1. Who contributed to each the following?
  - a. Psychosexual stages of development
  - b. Collective unconscious
  - c. Striving for superiority
2. What are three components of Freud's Personality Theory?
3. What are the three levels of consciousness described by Freud?
4. What are the key components of Adler and Jung's Personality Theories?

This was the last psychodynamic personality theory.

You have so far learned about trait and type personality theories and psychodynamic theories of personality. Next we will discuss behavioural theories.

### 2.3.3 Behavioural and Cognitive Approaches in Counselling

These approaches emphasise the ways in which habits are formed through learning processes. The learning and behavioural theories of personality have emerged from theories of learning.

#### (i) *Behavioural Theories*

Skinner (1938) proposed that personality development occurs through learning. He believed that most human responses are shaped by the "operant conditioning." Consequences like reinforcement, punishment and extinction determine people's ways of responding. When responses are followed by favourable results or rewards, these get strengthened. When responses lead to punishment, these get weakened. When a teacher appreciates a child for a certain behaviour that behaviour will increase in frequency. For instance a child is appreciated for cleanliness. He is likely to take care of cleanliness whereas if a child is punished that will lead to weakening of the behaviour which is punished. But it is important to know that the rewards and punishment are different for different individuals. Verbal praise may be reward for one child but may not be for other who expects a more tangible reward.

#### (ii) *Bandura's Social Learning Theory*

Albert Bandura (1965) believed that personality is largely shaped through learning. He holds the view that conditioning is not a mechanical process in which people are passive participants. Instead, he maintains that people actively seek and process information about their environment to maximise favourable results. Bandura's key point is that many response tendencies are the product of imitation. Both children and adults tend to imitate people they like or respect more than those they do not. People are also prone to imitate the behaviour of those whom they consider attractive or powerful such as film stars or sports personalities. Imitation is more likely when people see similarity between models and themselves. Thus, children tend to imitate same-sex role models more so than opposite-sex models. Finally, people are more likely to copy a model if they observe that the model's behaviour leads to positive outcomes.

According to social learning theory, models have great impact on personality development. Children learn to be assertive, conscientious, self-sufficient, dependable, easy going and so forth, by observing others behaving in these ways. Parents, teachers, relatives, siblings and peers serve as models for young children. Bandura and his associates have done extensive research showing how models influence the development of aggressiveness, sex roles, and moral standards in children. Understanding of these learning theories of personality helps the counsellor to identify the source of faulty learning and also the rewards which hold the behaviour in place. A number of counselling techniques called behaviour modification are based on these approaches. You would read about them in the module. In order to help the client the counsellor explores the faulty behaviour learned by him/her and also traces the source of influence on his/her behaviour like favourite models, parents or other significant people s/he imitates.



### Self-check Exercise 3

1. Behavioural theories hold that normal and abnormal behaviours are –
  - a. learned
  - b. hereditary
  - c. deep conflicts
  - d. none of the above
2. How do learned responses get strengthened or weakened?  
Explain using examples.

You just learned the behaviourist approach. You will now be introduced to the humanistic approach to understanding personality.

## 2.4 HUMANISTIC APPROACHES

These theories emphasise individual freedom and development of “self” and how the individual sees himself/herself (self) and the world.

This approach accepts the individual’s experiences as authentic and real. Behaviour is determined by the way one sees and experiences the world rather than by objective reality. One of the humanistic theorists is Carl Rogers (1961). We will discuss his theory in detail.

### Rogers’ Approach

This approach stresses that each individual plays a major role in shaping his/her own destiny. Rogers believed that human beings are basically good but their personalities become distorted by pressures and expectations in the environment. The main ingredients of the theory are self and incongruence.

#### (i) Self

The self, or self-concept, is your own mental picture or image of yourself, as distinct from other persons or things. The self-image incorporates our abilities

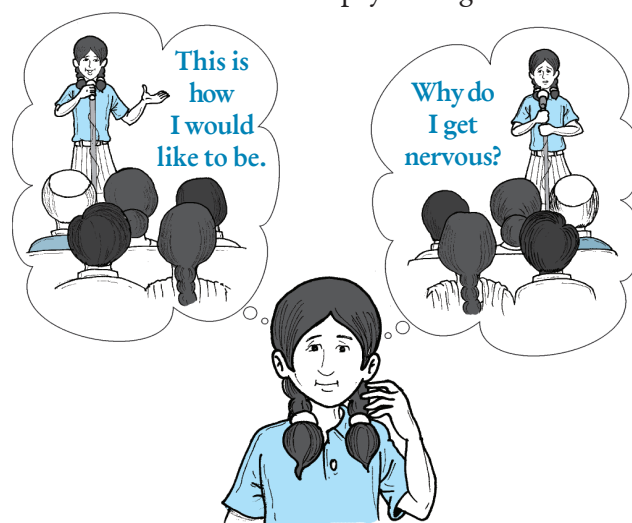


and limitations, how we feel and our perceptions of:

1. what we really are like (self-image)
2. our sense of self-worth, as a person (self-evaluation), and
3. our aspirations for growth and accomplishment (self-ideal).

(ii) *Incongruence*

Incongruence is the degree of disparity between one's self-concept and one's actual experience. In contrast, if a person's self-concept is reasonably accurate, it is said to be congruent with reality. Everyone experiences a certain amount of incongruence. However, too much incongruence results in rigidity, defensiveness, maladjustment and undermines one's psychological well-being.



*Fig. 2.1 : Incongruity in Self-concept Causes Discomfort*

Thus, every individual has a real self (true-self) and an ideal self (what the self would like to be). In case of mismatches or incongruence between the two selves, there is trouble. Such people are rigid, defensive and maladjusted. In matured, adjusted people, there is congruence between the total person and the self. You may have experienced in your class that some children have very wrong estimates of their own ability or other characteristics. These children get highly disappointed when they face reality. They tend to ignore the experience of failure or blame it on others.

How maladjustments or incongruence in the self could be removed is described below.

**Development of the Self:** Rogers believed that childhood experiences promote congruence or incongruence between one's self-concept and one's experience. People have a strong need for affection, love, acceptance and approval from others. Early in life, parents provide this affection. Some parents make their affection very conditional; that is, it depends on the child's behaving well and living up to expectations. When parent's love seems conditional, children often block out of the self-concept those experiences that make them feel unworthy of love. On the other hand, some parents make their love unconditional. Their children have less need to block out unworthy

experiences, because they have been assured that they are worthy of affection, no matter what they do.

- (i) **Anxiety and Defence:** Rogers held the view that experiences that threaten people's personal views of themselves are the main cause of troublesome anxiety. To ward off this anxiety, individuals often behave defensively, in an effort to reinterpret their experience, so that it appears consistent with their self-concept. Thus they ignore, deny and twist reality to protect their self-concept.
- (ii) **Fully Functioning Person:** We must recognise and accept our feelings and actions rather than denying them. According to Rogers, all people live in a subjective world, which can be known, in any complete sense, only to themselves. The more rigid and inflexible an individual's self-concept, the less open he or she will become. In contrast, relatively well-adjusted individuals want to grow into, what Rogers calls "fully functioning persons."

You have just finished one humanistic theory of personality by Carl Rogers. This theory of personality had launched Rogerian approach to counselling, which is based on the premise that unconditional positive care and love which is called 'unconditional positive regard' helps the child to accept himself—weaknesses and strengths—as well as restores congruence between his self and reality. When self is based on reality experiences, the individual becomes fully functional and relates to others meaningfully. You will read about this theory in Module 2, Unit-5 on "Person-Centred and Gestalt Approaches". Another theory, which uses the concept of self, is Maslow's, which is presented below.

### Maslow's Theory of Self-actualisation

Maslow's (1970) work on self-actualisers is valuable in this regard. The concept of self-actualisation is closely related to mental health. Self-actualisation means developing to the fullest the potential and talents that each one of us have within us. Maslow studied people living unusually effective lives using almost all of their talents and potentials, for example, Albert Einstein, William James, Eleanor Roosevelt and Abraham Lincoln. He also did a case study on artists, writers, poets and other creative individuals. He concluded from his study that it is not only highly acclaimed people but ordinary people like a housewife, carpenter, clerk or student could live creatively and make full use of his or her potentials. His primary contribution was to draw attention to the possibility of continued personal growth. He considered self-actualisation an ongoing process, not a simple end point to be attained only once. On the basis of his study he found the following characteristics that self-actualisers displayed –

1. Efficient perceptions of reality; they were able to judge situations correctly and honestly.
2. Comfortable acceptance of self and others; they were able to accept their own human nature with all its shortcomings. The shortcomings of others and the contradictions of the human condition were also accepted with humour and tolerance.





3. Spontaneity; extended their creativity into everyday activities. They tended to be unusually alive, engaged, and spontaneous.
4. Task centering; had a mission to fulfill in life, or some task or problem outside of themselves to pursue.
5. Autonomy; were free from dependence on external authority or other people. They tended to be resourceful and independent.
6. Continued freshness of appreciation; the self-actualiser seems to constantly renew appreciation of life's basic goods. The beauty of sunset or a flower can be experienced with the same freshness and exhilaration even though they might be common experiences. There is an "innocence of vision," like that of an artist or a child.
7. Fellowship with humanity; felt a deep identification with others and the human situation in general.
8. Profound interpersonal relationships marked by deep, loving bonds.
9. Unhostile sense of humour; this refers to the capacity to laugh at oneself.
10. Peak experiences; reported the frequent occurrence of peak experiences. These were marked by feelings of ecstasy, harmony, deep meaning and feeling of oneness with the universe. In short, self-actualisers feel safe and non-anxious, accepted, loved, loving and alive.

Thus we see that movement towards better mental health takes us more and more towards human perfection. It will be relevant here to mention the Indian concept of *Sthitaprajna*, which is illustrated in the *Bhagavad Gita*, a book of profound wisdom on science of life and the most exalted scripture in Hinduism. The state of *Sthitaprajna* illustrates the pinnacle of human perfection. It is also known as *Moksha* or self-realisation marked by complete resolution of ego and oneness with entire creation. Mental health is a prerequisite to take this journey towards self-realisation which only rare saints and sages are able to attain. Swami Ramkrishna Paramhansa and Maharshi Ramana are two illustrious examples who lived in 20<sup>th</sup> century. It is beyond the scope of this chapter to go into the depth of this issue. However any discussion on mental health would be incomplete without reference to *Moksha* or state of detachment, which is considered to be the final and ultimate of all human pursuits in Indian philosophical traditions.



#### Self-check Exercise 4

1. Humanistic theories emphasise
  - a. frustrations
  - b. individual freedom
  - c. learning
  - d. unconscious factors
2. List at least five or six characteristics of self-actualisers.



#### Activity 1

Study the lives of great men like Gandhi, Einstein and others who have inspired generations of people. Examine how they have lived their life and how they could inspire people to follow them.

Lives of great men reveal to us the adaptive patterns of behaviours. These behaviours vary a lot depending on where and at what time the person lived; though the patterns are not same, there are commonalities and adjustive patterns visible.

So far you learnt, trait and type, psychodynamic, behaviorist, and humanist approaches to the study of personality. Next you will learn about comparison of self in Indian and western traditions.

## 2.5 CONCEPT OF SELF AND CONSCIOUSNESS

Each culture has its own values and approved way of living that affect the thoughts, the feelings, the emotions, the actions and endeavors of its people.

The American culture, for instance, emphasises egocentric and more realistic tendencies, whereas the Indian culture emphasises values such as a sympathetic attitude, self-sacrifice, cooperation, self-discipline and self-ideals. Westerners prefer ways of enjoyment and progress in action and generally dislike inner life and meditation. The outlook of Indians is oriented towards inner life, development of the self and preservation of the traditions, while that of the Westerners is oriented towards mastering the environment and improving the human condition through deliberate and effective action.

Indian philosophers and psychologists, however, perceive some life force over and above these traits that enables the individual to think, to feel, to will and to act. This life force is a constant factor that persists amidst biological, psychological and environmental changes. They have named it “self-consciousness” or “self-illumination.”

You learnt about a number of different ways of understanding personality. You will now read about how this knowledge is useful in facilitating adjustment and development.

### 2.5.1 Implications for Development and Adjustment


Adjustment is a continuous process and involves many aspects of behaviour. However, there is no adjustment in the absolute sense. A person who is ever changing and ever adapting to circumstances is considered to be well adjusted, while the poorly adjusted person shows signs of anxiety, aggression and distorted thinking. Such a person is less adaptive as he or she responds much the same way regardless of the circumstances, often leading to inappropriate behaviour.

The humanistic theories have significant implications for adjustment because these theories emphasise the role of self in the development of personality. Theories and development of self-concept and self-awareness indicate that the self is the fundamental characteristic of a human being. A well-formulated self determines the personality structure of the individual.

Whether the individual will be adjusted or maladjusted in his/her life depends largely upon the extent of his/her development of the self.

The core of our individuality, the very essence of our personality, lies in our perception of our “self” and our perception of others. These perceptions are based on our past experiences and determine our behaviour toward others. It is thus the end






product of our interaction with others. Now, let us discuss how “self-concept” and “self-esteem” influence an individual’s adjustment.

Self-concept is a person’s perception of his or her own personal traits. A person’s self-concept consists of all of his/her ideas, perceptions and feelings about who that person is. Self-concept has a major impact on behaviour. Once a stable self-concept exists, it tends to shape our subjective world by guiding what we pay attention to, remember and think about. Self-concepts can greatly affect personal adjustment, especially, when they are inaccurate or inadequate. If a student thinks he is stupid, worthless and a failure, despite getting good grades in college, then he/she has a negative self-concept and probably, will be depressed or anxious no matter what or how he/she does.

Self-esteem is how a person evaluates himself/herself. A person with a negative self-concept suffers from low self-esteem. A person, who has high self-esteem, is confident, proud and self-respecting. A person, who is self critical, insecure and lacking in confidence, has low self-esteem and is usually anxious and unhappy. People who have low self-esteem typically also suffer from poor knowledge about the self. Such people’s self-concepts are inconsistent, inaccurate and confused. Self-esteem tends to rise when we experience success. It is also enhanced by praise from others. Thus a person who is competent and effective, and who is loved, admired and respected by others, will almost always have high self-esteem. The reasons for having high self-esteem can vary in different cultures. For instance family’s socio-economic status may confer high self-esteem in some cultures while personal achievement may be considered more crucial in some others. In traditional Indian society women who are more sober and quiet get social approval, whereas outgoing and bold are not quite favoured therefore, former type of women are more likely to have higher self-esteem.

## 2.6 Summary



We have discussed the nature and characteristics of personality. We have also discussed various approaches to personality. The three main perspectives are biological, psychological and social.

Type and trait approaches categorise personality approaches into types or identify stable dimensions of personality. In psychodynamic approaches, we described the theories to understand personality in depth. Behavioural theories based on learning are described. The humanistic theories deal with self and interaction with others.

Finally, we also described the concept of self and consciousness in Western and Indian traditions and its implications for development and adjustment.

These theories of personality are helpful for teachers and counsellors, in understanding their students/clients better.

1. What do you understand by
  - (i) personality type?
  - (ii) personality trait?
2. Describe the five stages of personality development as given by Freud.
3. Give at least six different types of defence mechanisms that you have used or that you have seen others using.
4. Discuss briefly the principle ingredients of Rogers' theory.
5. Illustrate the Western and Indian concept of self.

### Answer Key to Self-evaluation Exercises

1. (i) Hans Eysenck used the term "type" for sets of correlated traits or personality dimensions, specifically introversion-extroversion (E), neuroticism-stability (N) and psychoticism (P). A personality type is a broad category, but people exhibit a combination of personal traits.
  - (ii) The trait approach means that people differ from one another, yet they behave consistently across a wide variety of situations. Please note that trait theories assess as to how people differ, particularly in their predispositions to respond in certain ways, across situations. These theories emphasise mainly on people's characteristics such as straightforwardness, shyness, lousiness, kindness, trustworthiness and so on. Some examples of traits are cardinal traits central traits and secondary traits.
2. The stages of personality development given by Freud are –
 

*The Oral Stage* (Birth to about age 1): At this stage, the infant derives pleasure from mouth. If a baby is denied gratification or is over gratified, the baby will acquire an oral fixation.

*The Anal Stage* (age 1 – 3 years): At this stage, when parents give toilet training to the child, he is controlled and faces outside reality.

*The Phallic Stage* (age 3 – 5 years): At this stage, children develop romantic and sensual feelings toward the parent of the opposite sex.

*The Latency Stage* (age 6 – onset of puberty): At this stage, as the child learns more about the world, sexuality is largely repressed and the ego expands.

*The Genital Stage* (Puberty onwards – adolescence and beyond): Mature heterosexual interests begin to appear at this stage.
3. Some examples of the defence mechanisms are:
 

**Displacement:** one redirects one's feelings from the original source to another target.

**Rationalisation:** coming up with various explanations to justify



yourself and your actions. It means finding a rational explanation for something bad that has happened to you to absolve yourself from blame and guilt.

**Projection:** attributing unacceptable impulses or feelings to others.

**Reaction formation:** turning the feeling into its opposite, the expression of the opposite, of disturbing ideas and feelings.

**Denial:** refusal to deny a threatening thought or situation.

**Repression:** removal of threatening thoughts from awareness and banishing its memory.

**Regression:** reverting to an old, usually immature behaviour to ventilate one's feelings that might be suitable for less mature stages than the adult stage.

**Sublimation:** transforming hurtful feelings and impulses into something creative and constructive.

4. The main ingredients of the theory are self and incongruence that are discussed below.

**Self:** The self or self-concept is your own mental picture or image of yourself, as distinct from other persons or things.

**Incongruence:** Incongruence is the degree of disparity between one's self-concept and one's actual experience. In contrast, if a person's self-concept is reasonably accurate, it is said to be congruent with reality.

5. Western culture emphasises egocentric and more realistic tendencies. Westerners prefer ways of enjoyment and progress in action and generally, dislike inner life and meditation. Westerners are oriented towards mastering the environment and improving the human condition through deliberate and effective action. The Indian culture emphasises values such as a sympathetic attitude, self-sacrifice, cooperation, self-discipline and self-ideals. The outlook of Indians is oriented towards inner life, development of the self and preservation of the traditions.

## Answer Key to Self-check Exercises

### *Self-check Exercise 1*

1. The five characteristics of personality are:
  - (a) Personality describes the characteristics of a person.
  - (b) Personality is not a combination of separate characteristics but patterning of these characteristics.
  - (c) These characteristics are stable and persist over time.
  - (d) Personality is the result of genetic make up, maturation and environment.
  - (e) Personality is changing in small invisible ways but change becomes visible over a period of time.

2. The five factors of personality are:
- (a) Extraversion
  - (b) Agreeableness
  - (c) Conscientiousness
  - (d) Neuroticism
  - (e) Openness to experience

#### Self-check Exercise 2

1. (a) Freud (b) Jung (c) Adler
2. The three components of Freud's Personality Theory are:  
(a) id (b) ego (c) superego
3. The three levels of consciousness are:  
(a) conscious (b) preconscious (c) unconscious
4. Jung – Collective consciousness and personal unconscious, archetypes, introverted (inner-directed) and extroverted (outer-directed).  
Adler – Lifestyle, inferiority vs. superiority, needs for power, control, mastery and personal growth, and need to participate in a large community.

#### Self-check Exercise 3

1. (a) learned
2. Learned responses get strengthened when they are followed by rewards and they get weakened when they are followed by punishments. For example, a child misbehaves with his mother and father just laughs; this leads to strengthening of child's rudeness to mother since father rewarded the child by laughing with him/her. Similarly if he snubs the child, the child is less likely be rude to his/her mother.

#### Self-check Exercise 4

1. (b)
2. Being calm and peaceful within; simplicity, spontaneity, naturalness; openness to new ideas and thoughts, experiences; acceptance of reality and realistic orientation; objectivity, etc.

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# 3

## Adaptive and Non-adaptive Patterns of Behaviour

- 3.0 Introduction
- 3.1 Objectives
- 3.2 Meaning of Adaptation
  - 3.2.1 Adaptative Patterns of Behaviour
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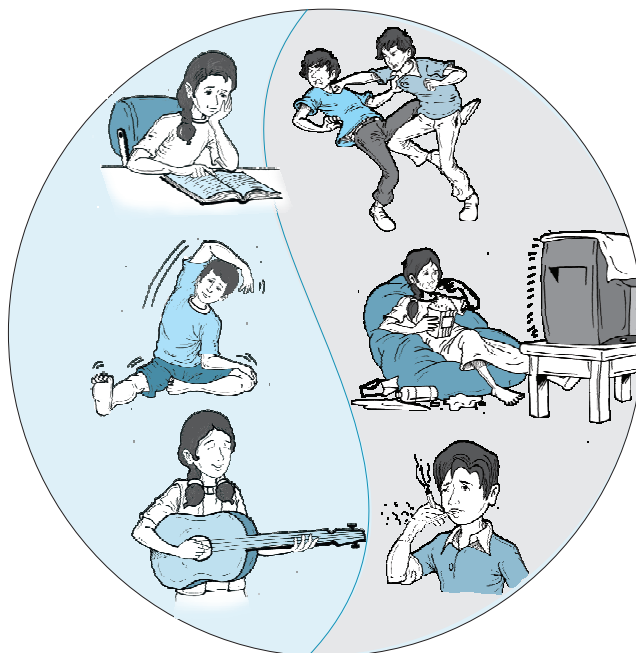
# Adaptive and Non-adaptive Patterns of Behaviour 3

## 3.0 INTRODUCTION

You are already familiar with the process of human development and how various types of internal and external factors affect our growth and adjustment. In this unit we will examine in detail the behaviour that reflects and contributes to the development of adaptive and maladaptive patterns.

In the first section, we will introduce you to adaptive patterns of behaviour. This section deals with insight into why and how people react and adapt to life situations. Some can adapt well, displaying confidence in making a change. These behaviour patterns are adaptive. Next section deals with maladaptive patterns which result in anger, frustration or loss and depression. Some individuals obviously are not adapting to the changes they face. These are the maladaptive patterns of behaviour examined in this section.

In the next section we discuss how adaptive behaviours facilitate mental health and the behaviour patterns characteristic of mentally healthy. In the second section we will examine various ways in which people respond to the demands of everyday life. Some of these behaviours enhance our adaptation to life situations whereas other types of behaviours may actually be contributing to maladaptation. Understanding such behaviours helps us in making sense of our own as well as others' reactions. We will briefly discuss various types of defensive behaviours and also the fact that rigid and overuse may slowly pave the way for psychological and physical illness.



Finally, in the last section we will briefly take up different explanations for understanding individual differences in human behaviour.

### 3.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to

- *describe* the nature of adaptive and maladaptive patterns of behaviour.
- *explain* the relationship between adaptive behaviour and mental and physical well being.
- *describe* characteristic behaviour of mentally healthy people.
- *differentiate* between realistic coping and defensive coping.
- *explain* variety of maladaptive behaviour patterns.
- *describe* how failures in adaptation result in psychological disorders.
- *explain* how individual differences in adaptive behaviour are acquired.

### 3.2 MEANING OF ADAPTATION

Adaptation refers to the thinking and response patterns that help in reducing the problems and stresses of life, making us at ease with our selves and others.

The following sections will help you understand the significance of the concept as they apply to human behaviour.


#### 3.2.1 Adaptive Patterns of Behaviour

In order to enhance our effectiveness as counsellors in dealing with children it is important to understand clearly what adaptive behaviour implies. The following example shows adaptive reaction to a problem situation.

“Kiran was a very good student but her results of 10<sup>th</sup> class board examinations were much below her expectation. She was very upset about it. She became very quiet and would have minimum interaction with others including her parents and siblings. She stopped watching TV and going out with her friends. She cried on smallest issues and remained sad. Her parents were very concerned about her. After a few days, she slowly made an effort to come out of her sadness and started picking up activities of her interest and became communicative. She thought to herself that she would wait for her mark-sheet and figure out where she went wrong. She resolved to work harder for her next exams and may be change her strategy for study and preparation. She also thought that she would discuss with her teacher about the methods to improve her performance in examinations. In a few days time she started feeling much better, resuming her usual activities.”

This is an example of adaptation where the person has tried to deal with an unpleasant situation in a way that helped in solving the problem. It means dealing with one’s negative feelings, e.g. sadness, frustrations and hurts, etc. in a way that does not hamper one’s functioning for unnecessarily long period of time. One tries to understand why things happened contrary to ones’ wishes and expectations and bring required change in one’s thoughts and actions. Such positive and constructive ways of thinking promote confidence in our capabilities to deal with problems and challenges





in life. This is called adaptation. Adaptive behaviour allows us to manage stress and enables us to maintain our cool despite adverse circumstances. Thus, those behaviours that help us in meeting the stresses of life may be called adaptive. Following strategies can enhance our adaptive capacity—

- Allowing oneself time to sit and think through the problem; going over the problem in one's mind and trying to understand it.
- Talking out one's feelings to someone who understands you as a person.
- Looking at the problems in a more objective and logical way, trying to find the best possible solution which is also workable.
- Having faith in one's ability to cope with the problematic situations.
- Being flexible in one's views and actions if situation demands.
- Spending time with positive people or receiving professional counselling if needed. It can help to initiate a positive approach.
- Learning to connect with one's inner spiritual energy through prayer, meditation or any other thing that makes one peaceful, thus strengthening oneself to initiate positive action.
- Giving up inertia and trying to engage oneself in daily routine work as much as one can.
- Engaging with sports, regular walk, listening to music or any other hobby that brings down to some extent the agitation and prepares one's mind for clearer thinking.

### Activity 1



1. Think of some people who in your view have managed well the crises and difficulties in their lives. Identify those behaviour patterns in them that you think help in effective adaptation.
2. Think of those difficulties that you managed well. Identify the attitudes and behaviour that helped you in successfully dealing with the situations.

If we look at the above list of behaviours, we would notice that there is an active effort to get over the difficulties.

## 3.3 MALADAPTIVE BEHAVIOURS

Maladaptation refers to thinking and behaviour patterns that create or increase our stresses and difficulties without reducing the problems being faced. The following section is about the behaviours that can hinder effective adjustment and general well being.

### 3.3.1 Maladaptive Patterns of Behaviour

Maladaptive behaviours are more of a reaction to the situation governed by immediate impulses and not addressing the problems. They are not helpful in providing solutions to our problems. They lower our confidence in ourselves, subject us to negative emotions and lower our efficiency in dealing with everyday life situations. The following example illustrates maladaptive behaviour.

“Mona has always been doing well in her examinations. However, she did not get expected results in her 10<sup>th</sup> class examinations. She was very upset about it and started doubting her capacity. She did not want to meet any one including her friends and became very irritable. She started getting angry on slightest provocation and felt no one loves her. She lost interest in studies and started finding faults with everything. Her parents were very concerned about her.”

Mona’s behaviour is an example of maladaptive reactions that can hinder effective adjustment and general well being. Mona could not resolve her problems and started losing interest in studies. She became very irritable and pessimistic. It may be observed that in such situations, we often become more vulnerable to many other minor or major irritations that keep happening in everyday life. Anger and grief are natural responses to difficult and stressful situations. However, the way we handle them will determine whether we grow and mature or become more and more vulnerable to such situations in future and keep behaving in maladaptive ways. Some maladaptive behaviours are listed below—

- Responding to problems in an impulsive way, e.g. exploding into anger or going into isolation, not talking to any one, refusing to eat, etc.
- Brooding over the problem with a feeling that why should it happen to me or fantasising on how things should have been, without an effort to find a practical solution to the problem.
- Worrying constantly.
- Excessive indulgence in smoking or drinking.
- Avoidance, i.e. trying not to think about problems and behaving as if nothing has happened. It also may mean keeping one’s feelings to oneself and bottling things up or, alternatively, avoiding people altogether.
- Putting the blame on others or on one’s circumstances and not acknowledging the reality.

### Activity 2



1. Look at those people who seem to be unhappy most of the time. Compare their behaviours closely with those listed above. How well does the list describe the behaviour of people you looked at?
2. Examine your own reactions to difficult situations and identify if they are adaptive or maladaptive behaviours. Examine how they affect you.

The above list of maladaptive behaviours would have revealed to you that maladaptive behaviours are those that do not result in actual solution of the problem. Brooding, blaming, worrying, inaction or negative action etc. do not help in solving problems. If carried for too long, they may harm our relationships with people, lower our efficiency to work and manage our other duties and responsibilities.

Adaptation and maladaptation are not discrete categories, i.e. it is not correct to say that a person is either adaptive or maladaptive. Most people have a mix of both,



i.e. sometimes they respond to situations in adaptive ways and at other times in maladaptive ways. Very few people are at extremes. Responding with behaviour tending towards maladaptation will increase our vulnerability to fear, anxiety, depression, etc., whereas behaviour tending more towards adaptive ways will enhance mental health. This leads directly into a discussion on the relationship between adaptive behaviour and mental health.



#### Self-check Exercise 1

1. What are adaptive and maladaptive behaviours?
2. Give three examples of adaptive and maladaptive responses.

### 3.4 ADAPTIVE BEHAVIOUR AND MENTAL HEALTH

Practice of adaptive ways in a variety of situations in life takes us more and more towards mental health. Just as healthy body enhances our capacity to fight the disease causing elements in our body and increases our stamina, similarly healthy mind increases our capacity to withstand adverse situations of life. Enhancing our mental health reduces the tendencies to respond in maladaptive ways. It promotes a positive and constructive approach to life situations. It enhances our vitality, confidence, ability and courage to handle variety of problems and challenges. Positive adaptive responses allow the calm and peace within making a person less vulnerable to worries, anxiety and depression. It enables a person to quickly bounce back to a positive and peaceful state of mind after being temporarily disturbed by adversities.



#### Activity 3

1. Think of a person who, in your view, remains often disturbed. Observe his/her behaviour and see if he/she has some of the behaviours listed as maladaptive.
2. Think of a person who has impressed you very much. Describe the dominant features of his/her personality.

From the above activity you would ascertain that the qualities which help us stay happy and satisfied are those which make us look at most situations positively, enable us to face challenge with greater effort and allow us to have confidence in our ability. Look at some of the characteristics of the mentally healthy people.

#### 3.4.1 Characteristics of Mental Health

Some of the characteristics of healthy mental states are—

- physically healthy
- calm and peaceful within
- simplicity, spontaneity, naturalness

- greater acceptance of oneself and others with strengths and weaknesses
- openness to new ideas, thoughts and experiences
- acceptance of reality and realistic orientation
- objectivity
- courage of conviction, firm moral and ethical standards
- emotional security and inner strength
- self-discipline
- democratic attitude, accepting and respecting differences of opinions
- care and concern for others.

You will read more about the characteristics of mentally healthy in Unit-1 of Module-10.

So far we have familiarised ourselves with adaptive and maladaptive patterns of behaviour, their relationship with mental health and the possibilities of human perfection as elucidated in Indian religio-philosophical literature. In the following section we will examine in detail the various types of coping behaviours people adopt to deal with stresses and difficulties in their lives and the way it influences their mental health.

### 3.5 REALISTIC COPING VS. DEFENSIVE COPING

All of us are different and unique in terms of how we perceive, think and act in variety of situations in our lives. We are constantly faced with demands arising from various sources outside, e.g. family, work, relationships, etc. We also feel the pressure of needs arising from within, e.g. we want to do well in studies or work, we are afraid of disapproval from others, we want to devote time to our friends or for learning something, or health issues, etc. When these needs and demands are within comfortable or tolerable limits they can be dealt with without undue pressure. But when they become more than what we can comfortably cope with in terms of severity or duration, they place special demands on our adaptive capacities and skills. Under such situations people show different kinds of adaptive reactions as given below—

- **Effective coping:** They may try to understand the problem and find some solution, being objective in understanding the situations as they are, no matter how painful it is, and taking up the desired course of action which will help in dealing with the situations.
- **Defensive behaviour:** Ignoring or avoiding the problem and finding diversion.
- **Getting irritated and offensive,** avoiding dealing with the problem.

The first of the above reactions can be called realistic or effective coping whereas the other two could be considered maladaptive in different degrees. Sometimes ignoring or avoiding the problem could be a better way of dealing with the situation, but not always. Avoidance may actually lead to more difficulty because the problem remains unattended. Frequent anxiety and irritation not only disturbs others but also ourselves. Thus our behaviour patterns seem to range from personality enhancing and socially effective to being extremely disruptive to oneself and others. The first of the above stated behaviours is the most effective way of adapting to the realities of our life and requires introspection, objectivity and strength to carry out desired action. The other two may involve different degree of defensive coping which we would take up in greater detail.



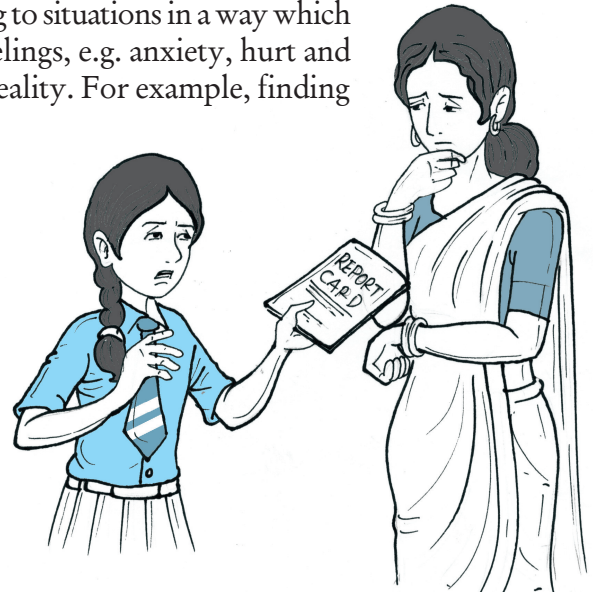
Defensive coping means responding to situations in a way which will give some relief from negative feelings, e.g. anxiety, hurt and guilt at the expense of distorting the reality. For example, finding faults in others when they criticise us or giving excuses when we are unable to accomplish something that was expected of us. Such defensive behaviours protect us from being consciously aware of a thought or feeling that is painful and difficult to tolerate.

Defensive behaviours are used to defend oneself from hurt and anxiety and thus protect self-esteem. It is important to note that one may or may not be conscious of one's

defensive behaviour; one may not be aware of the actual impulse within that prompted defensive behaviour or even if one is aware one may not recognise the nature of one's defenses.

Defensive behaviours largely operate on unconscious or sub-conscious levels of mind. These are also acquired unconsciously from those in our environment. We do not use them deliberately. They happen automatically in situations that are painful and threatening to us. Just as bodily reflexes automatically operate to protect our body from harmful situations, similarly, defensive patterns of behaviour automatically come up to protect our psychological self or ego from anxieties and hurts. Gradually these are learned as they reduce anxiety, hurt by providing excuse or avoidance of problems.

Defensive behaviours manifest themselves in different forms as mentioned below.



### 3.6 DEFENSIVE BEHAVIOURS

Identifying various types of defensive behaviours and uncovering the unconscious workings of the mind were the greatest contributions that Freud made to our understanding of the human mind. It is well accepted today that all forms of neurotic disorders (popularly called mental illnesses) are the manifestations of exaggerated use of defensive behaviour. Simply stated, it can be said that low self-esteem coupled with high emotionality and lack of adequate emotional security may make a person vulnerable to the exaggerated use of defensive behaviour. Defensive behaviours are not deliberate, they operate at sub-conscious or unconscious levels. Defensive coping is normal and often helps us in warding off our anxiety and guilt without disrupting our every day life. Various types of defensive behaviours have already been described earlier in Unit-2 of this Module.



#### Activity 5

Examine yourself to see if you sometimes adopt some of these defensive behaviours. Think of alternative ways of dealing with such situations.

If you examine carefully you will find that all the defensive behaviours except sublimation are attempts to avoid and distort the painful events and situations in a way that reduces its impact on us. However such behaviours may become maladaptive and even pathological when they become rigid, overused, inappropriate to one's maturity level and out of synch with the reality of the situation. Such a person loses the flexibility of mind and behaviour, and thus develops rigid ways of perceiving, thinking and acting. Slowly it weakens ourselves, diminishes our capacity to see the reality as it is and renders our behaviour irrelevant and ineffective. Such behaviours in extreme form may pave the way for serious psychological problems which is the topic of the next section.

### **3.7 PSYCHOLOGICAL OR MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS**

#### ***FAILURES OF ADAPTATION***

There are people in every society who suffer from various types of mental health problems. The causes of such conditions are still unclear but it has been observed that early life experiences, biochemical constitution and environmental pressures contribute significantly to the development of mental health problems, also called psychological or mental disorders. Very low self-esteem, failures and frustrations, lack of support and high levels of stress play an important role in it. Listed below are various types of psychological disorders; though they are not very serious conditions yet they disrupt our everyday living in a major way.

#### **Chronic anxiety condition**

Unrealistic or excessive anxiety and worry about everyday things in life often accompanied by autonomic arousal. For example, rapid heart rate, diarrhoea, sweating, tremors, frequent urination etc.

#### **Obsessive compulsive condition**

This is also a form of anxiety condition where the person is having recurrent obsessions (persistent ideas, thoughts, impulses or images which are perceived as senseless and intrusive) or compulsions (repetitive stereotyped behaviour, e.g. repeated handwashing, excessive concern for rigid order which consumes lot of time and interferes with daily life). These are severe, time consuming, stressful and disturb everyday life including social and occupational functioning.


#### **Phobia**

Extreme irrational fear of animals, insects, height, water, fire, open or closed spaces, etc. One may have phobia for more than one object.

#### **Dissociative conditions**

Disturbance or alteration in the normally integrative functions of identity, memory or consciousness, e.g. dissociative amnesia, fugue, multiple personality or dissociative identity disorder.





In dissociative amnesia there is selective memory loss that has no organic cause. An individual may not remember anything from their past or may not be able to recall specific events, places, people, etc. while their memory for other events remains intact.

Dissociative fugue involves going away from one's home and workplace, assuming a new identity and inability to recall the previous identity.

A person with dissociative identity disorder or multiple personality assumes alternate personalities that may or may not be aware of each other.

### Neurotic depression

Chronic depressive mood which persists for weeks and months. It is marked by low energy and fatigue, low self-esteem, poor concentration, feelings of disinterest and hopelessness, eating and sleeping disturbances.

### Conversion conditions

A loss of or alteration in physical functioning suggesting a physical disorder but actually is a response to stress and psychological problems, e.g. paralysis, seizures, muscular coordination disturbances, tunnel vision, loss of or disturbed sensations in parts of the body, etc.

### Psychosomatic illness

All bodily diseases have a psychological component. Persistence of illness or slow recovery, etc. is affected by our attitudes, optimism, will to recover and a disciplined life. Some of the examples of psychosomatic illnesses are asthma, ulcer, hypertension which have both psychological and biological basis.

### Hypochondriasis

Some people have excessive preoccupation with the fear or the belief that one has a serious disease, based on the signs or sensations as evidence of physical illness. Absence of any indicators in medical reports also cannot convince them that they do not actually suffer from illness.

You may be wondering why some people develop these problems. It is not necessarily the severity of adversities in their life that is responsible for it. Some people are more vulnerable to them than others and this vulnerability arises from early life experiences, temperamental dispositions in which our biochemical constitution and neurochemistry also plays a role and the circumstances of life. In the following section, we will briefly examine various viewpoints that attempt to explain the individual differences in our perceptions, thoughts, feelings and actions.



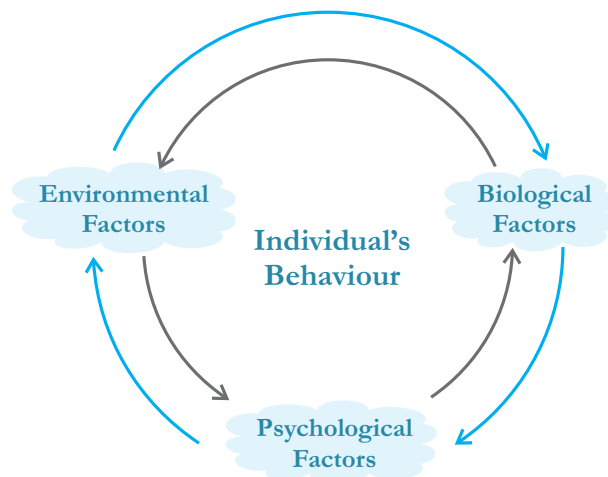
#### Self-check Exercise 2

1. State one example for each of the psychological defenses.
2. Identify the defensive behaviours that are operative in each of the following situations:

- a. Meera had a fight with her friend. She reached home and her mother asked her to do some work which was long pending. Meera got very irritated with her mother accusing that she is always after her.
- b. Kapil was very distressed at his exam results and blamed teachers' bias for it.
- c. Parul is envious about her friend's talent in music. Says negative and bad things about her friend in her absence and praises and talks high of her talent when she is present.
- d. Deepak does not remember the incident when he was saved from drowning in the ocean.
- e. Meetu was very angry with his assistant in the office and he started throwing things at him.
- f. A couple loses their son in a road accident. They form an organisation to help accident victims.

### 3.8 EXPLAINING INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES IN PERSONALITY AND BEHAVIOUR

You must be wondering why people behave so differently from each other, why some individuals acquire more adaptive behaviour patterns than others in terms of their adaptive capacity and mental health. Understanding the differences in human behaviour is one of the major challenges facing Psychology. There are innumerable factors which influence our behaviour. Besides, its impact on us is highly interactive and multiplicative, i.e. they are all the time in dynamic interaction with each other and keep producing slight change in the ways in which we perceive and respond to our life situations. Thus we are also constantly changing with our life experiences. This makes the search for a precise answer extremely complex. However, we can summarise vast number of such factors involved in acquisition of different type of behaviour patterns in three broad categories, illustrated in Fig. 3.1.



*Fig. 3.1: Factors Influencing Acquisition of Behavioural Patterns*

#### Environmental Factors

The importance of environmental factors, e.g. family, school, neighbourhood, society and culture, in shaping our adaptive behavioural capabilities cannot be underestimated.





All these are not static in nature; they keep changing with time. Their impact on different individuals is also not the same because each person has his/her own inner biological make-up which modifies the way s/he receives and perceives environmental influences in their own unique way. Various biological factors, e.g. biochemical constitution, genes, handicaps, diseases, etc. are also important sources producing variations in our behaviour. Thus we all are born with a certain

biological constitution which predisposes people to certain behaviour patterns that influence our reaction tendencies. Even newborn babies show differences in their behaviour, e.g. some babies will cry more, show greater startle reflexes, show differences in feeding and sleeping behaviour.

### Psychological Factors

Intra-personal or psychic factors, e.g. past experiences, cognitive structures like attitudes, beliefs, values, etc., personality traits, temperament and emotionality, psychological needs, etc. are very important sources of variation in human behaviour. Various explanations have been offered by different psychologists to explain the role of the above factors. These explanations emerging from different theoretical frameworks can be classified in four major categories namely psychodynamic, behaviouristic, cognitive and humanistic, and existential perspectives (For more detailed account of these perspectives, refer to Unit-2 of this Module titled “Perspectives on the Nature and Development of Personality”).

*Psychodynamic* view lays emphasis on certain deep lying emotional experiences in our sub-conscious and unconscious mind. A great deal of emphasis is laid on the experiences in the first few years of life including infancy and early childhood. These experiences sensitise us to perceive, feel and respond to our situations in a certain way. According to this view the change can be initiated by bringing these memories and their associated emotions into awareness and integrating them with the conscious self.

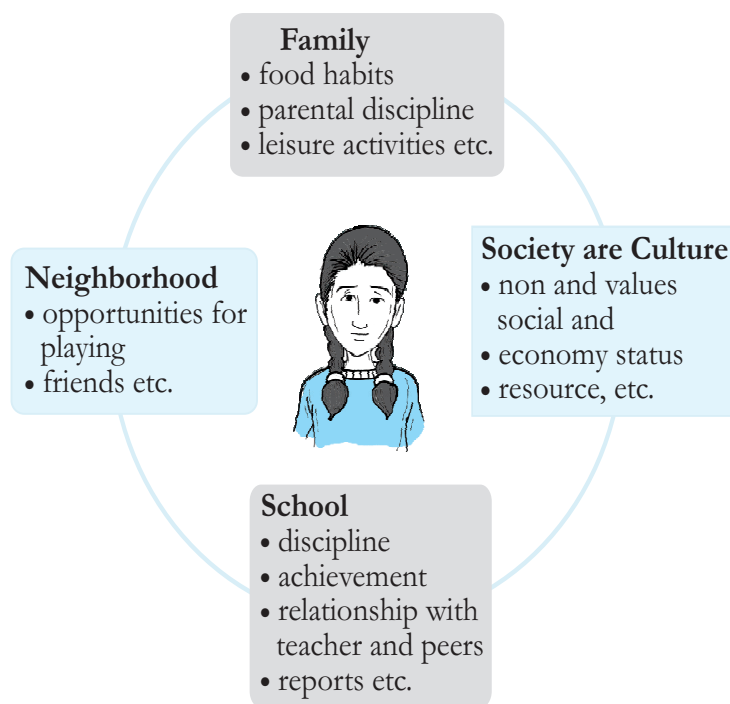


Fig. 3.2

*Behaviouristic* view tries to explain our behaviour through past learning experiences. Learning takes place by classical conditioning or association of certain responses to the autonomic responses already in the subject's repertoire. Another kind of learning takes place by way of operant conditioning which means that a response which operates in the environment to bring about a positive reinforcement is learnt. Thus according to them all behaviour is learnt and changes could be brought about by unlearning existing behaviour and relearning desirable behaviour by rewarding behaviour to be learned and punishing behaviour to be forgotten.

*Cognitive* view holds that it is our cognitive schemas i.e. our values, attitudes, beliefs, opinions and ideologies which determine our perceptions and behaviour. In other words we have learnt to interpret our experiences in a certain way and these learnt styles are referred to as attitudes and beliefs, etc. Modifying our perceptions and behaviour requires change in these cognitive schemas.

*Humanistic and existential* view highlights the importance of recognising that human beings are free agents to choose a course of action and direction for their lives as opposed to be passive victims of their circumstances. They also suggest that this capacity of freedom is unlocked if we are at ease with ourselves, i.e. feeling positive about ourselves and do not have negative or inferior feelings about ourselves. According to them it is important for us to recognise that each individual has his own perception of the world and responds accordingly to it. This subjectivity of experiences should be taken into account in our everyday interactions with each other.

All the above explanations are very helpful in understanding ourselves as well as others. However, none of these views are complete in themselves in explaining human behaviour yet each of them carry an element of truth. Undoubtedly, our thoughts, feelings and actions are influenced by our past experiences, learning, cognitive schemas and the self-images that we carry of ourselves. Nonetheless, we as human beings have also the freedom and capacity to change our lives within some broad limits. However it may happen only when there is a greater insight and awareness into our own selves. It also depends on whether we take care of the ways in which we adapt to the demands of various situations in our lives.

### Activity 6



1. Apply the above viewpoints to yourself and see their relevance in explaining some of your own behaviour.
2. Introspect and identify your values, beliefs and habits and see how they are influencing your behaviour.

The above activity might help you to see that when you are fully conscious, your behaviour is more effective and even your habits do not mechanically decide your actions/behaviour, rather you may not act out of your habit or belief but based on the requirement of the situation.



### 3.9 Summary

This unit explains the concept of adaptive patterns of behaviour such as having faith in one's ability to cope, being flexible, looking at problems objectively etc. that help us in managing our stress and take appropriate action in response to it, thus enhancing our mental well-being whereas non-adaptive patterns of behaviour such as excessive worry, brooding, etc. further increase our stress and difficulties.

Practice of adaptive ways of living promotes confidence, enhances our vitality and ability, and courage to handle variety of problems.

Excessive use of defensive behaviour such as denial, repression, displacement, etc. leads to various neurotic disorders.

The discipline of psychology offers various explanations to understand individual differences in behaviour, namely, psychodynamic, behaviouristic, cognitive, and humanistic and existential theories.

Psychodynamic theories believe in intrapsychic forces, e.g. unfulfilled wishes and desires, and experiences in infancy and childhood that greatly influence the shaping of our personality. Behaviouristic theories lay emphasis on learning in shaping our behaviour. Cognitive view emphasises on our cognitive structures e.g. beliefs, attitudes, values and ideology, in shaping our personality. Humanistic and existential theories stress upon the uniqueness of human beings and the choices that we make, which shape us into what we are.

None of these viewpoints taken in isolation is complete in understanding human behaviour. All of them carry partial truth, therefore, all of them together give us more complete understanding of human behaviour.

#### Self-evaluation Exercises

1. Explain the meaning of adaptation and maladaptation.
2. Describe various types of defensive behaviours.
3. Explain the relationship between defensive behaviour and mental disorders.
4. How is development of adaptive and maladaptive behaviour explained in different theoretical frameworks?

#### Answer Key to Self-evaluation Exercises

1. Adaptation refers to healthy or positive thinking and response patterns that help in reducing the problem and stresses of life, whereas maladaptation refers to unhealthy or negative thinking and response patterns that further increase our stresses and difficulties without reducing the problems being faced.



2. Defensive coping helps us in removing our anxiety and guilt. Explain any four types of defensive behaviour given in the unit with examples.
3. Excessive defensive behaviour is linked with mental disorders such as all forms of neuroticism.
4. Elaborate on the following:
  - Psychodynamic theories believe in intra-psychic forces such as unfulfilled wishes and desires, and experiences in infancy and childhood that influence the shaping of our personality.
  - According to behaviouristic view, all behaviour is learnt. Therefore change can be brought about by unlearning existing behaviour and relearning desirable behaviour.
  - According to cognitive view, one can modify one's behaviour by bringing change in one's cognitive schema, i.e. values, attitudes, beliefs, etc.
  - Humanistic and existential view emphasise the uniqueness of human beings and the choices we make, which shape us into what we are. According to them, all individuals have their own perception of the world and respond accordingly.

## Answer Key to Self-check Exercises

### *Self-check Exercise 1*

1. Some examples of adaptive responses are– having faith in one's ability to deal with a problem, being flexible in one's views and actions, and looking at problems in more objective and logical way.  
Some examples of non-adaptive response are brooding, inaction, blaming or worrying or even negative action to create trouble for others rather than positive and productive action.

### *Self-check Exercise 2*

1. Displacement: a man very angry with his boss, on returning home starts to yell at his wife and child as he cannot answer back to his boss.  
Rationalisation: a child scoring low in his/her exam blames teacher for inadequate teaching.  
Projection: a man may hate his wife but may believe that wife hates him.  
Reaction formation: a husband disliking his wife and children may feel excessive love for them.  
Denial: a wife hearing the news of the death of her husband fails to believe that it has actually happened.  
Repression: a sick person may actually work more in order to take away his/her mind from sickness.





# 4

## Facilitating Development and Adjustment

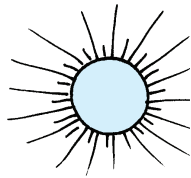
- 4.0 Introduction
  - 4.1 Objectives
  - 4.2 Development and Adjustment as Complementary Processes
  - 4.3 Factors Affecting Development and Adjustment
    - 4.3.1 Internal Factors
    - 4.3.2 External Factors
  - 4.4 Interaction of Internal and External Factors and Its Implications
  - 4.5 Mastery of Developmental Tasks
  - 4.6 Shaping of Identity
  - 4.7 Some Useful Strategies for a Counsellor/Teacher
  - 4.8 Summary
- Self-evaluation Exercises  
Answer Key to Self-evaluation Exercises  
Answer Key to Self-check Exercises  
Suggested Readings





# Facilitating Development and Adjustment

# 4



## 4.0 INTRODUCTION

You have already learnt that development is a lifelong and continuous process that takes place in the physical, mental, emotional, social, religious, and moral domains. The development process moves through different stages, from infancy to childhood to adolescence to adulthood with the requisite age specific milestones being achieved at each stage. Each stage poses new challenges to people and they respond to these by adjusting in their own ways and at their own pace.



In this unit, you will learn about various internal and external factors that influence development and adjustment, and the acquisition of age appropriate behaviours. You may find a basic knowledge of these factors important to you as a teacher/counsellor in order to be able to help the children accomplish the mastery of numerous developmental tasks.

Different individuals are born with different predispositions and live in different environments. They thus acquire different levels of development and adjustment, all of which may not be conducive to learning. The factors implicit in human predispositions and environment will be discussed here in relation to different demands of development and adjustment in a school situation.

## 4.1 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to

- *state* the interrelationships between development and adjustment.
- *list* the internal and external factors of development and adjustment.

- *understand* the interrelationships and interactions between internal and external factors and their effect on development and adjustment.
- *describe* the implications of developmental tasks for development and adjustment.
- *state* the role of counsellors and teachers in facilitating adjustment.

## 4.2 DEVELOPMENT AND ADJUSTMENT AS COMPLEMENTARY PROCESSES

You may have wondered why some students are so difficult to manage. This may be due to individual differences in their development and adjustment processes which operate in an interrelated and complementary manner. The two processes work together in a person's life. Adjustment aims at satisfying personal needs as well as the demands of the environment. There is no sharp line that separates development and adjustment. Both processes are characterised by change and stability. The change is due to development to a great extent. Development takes place in several domains such as physical, intellectual, language, emotional and social. The rate of development in different individuals may be different. Level of development attained in any one domain influences development in other domains as well. The greater the development in any one domain, greater is the capacity for adjustment. During development the person is at the centre, while in adjustment the emphasis is on the relationship of the person with the environment.

It is considered a necessary precondition of schooling that children develop to a level where they can be comfortably away from home, have been toilet-trained, can take care of their basic needs like eating, which will help them in adjusting to the school demands. The adjustment achieved by children in turn promotes their development further by providing them opportunities to do better and learn more. The common school tasks expected of children such as reading, writing, etc. require that they have developed requisite eye-hand coordination, hand-motor control, etc. to be able to meet the demands of school and adjust to school context. When children at a particular age have developed in a domain (i.e., cognition) to an expected level they demonstrate appropriate adjustment levels, which leads to further development.


Because of the achievement of higher levels of development they tend to see things differently and as a result gain mastery of environment. They also gain self-confidence. On the whole, as development proceeds there is a continuous reorganisation of experiences that leads to better adjustment. You may reflect on your experiences of arriving at better adjustment in any situation.

### Activity 1



Think of the children in your class. Can you remember a *child* who has difficulty in using appropriate words while talking to you or other children in the class who often laugh at her/him and embarrass him/her? What do you think of *such children*, whether they are low in ability or effort or have they had no chance to develop their language?





From the above activity you may have concluded that poor language development in a child may cause social and emotional problems as well. Now let us see what are the factors that determine the rate of development.

### 4.3 FACTORS AFFECTING DEVELOPMENT AND ADJUSTMENT

The processes of development and adjustment are influenced by numerous factors and can be grouped into internal and external factors. The internal factors are within the person, while the external factors lie in the outside context. Let us discuss both of these factors in detail.

#### 4.3.1 Internal Factors

Internal factors include those factors that are inherited such as physiological and genetic characteristics, colour of the eyes, hair, temperament, sensitivity, motor coordination, musculature, vitality, speech and hearing mechanisms, energy levels, metabolism, nervous system and glands. These factors affect the ability, amount of effort and the persistence a child can put into school tasks and achieve success.

**Example:** Rita is a 10-year-old girl of Class V. She eats well, participates in tough physical exercises, works hard for her school work and succeeds.

What do you think are the internal factors that contribute to her achievement?

#### 4.3.2 External Factors

Besides the internal factors you have learnt about, external factors are present in the environment. These are embedded in the family, school, community and the cultural context of the child. Family members, peer groups, neighbourhood, school, community and cultural context influence how children think, socialise and how they acquire awareness of self and others in their environment. The environment sets limits to the opportunities available to the children.

**Example:** Rani lives in a slum and goes to a neighbourhood school. The drain near the school is always overflowing with garbage scattered all over. She is constantly reporting sneezing and stomach ache. She is small in size compared to others in her class. What can be the factors of environment you think are affecting her development? Some of the factors in the environment are now described below.

##### *Family Influence*

You realise that the family is the most important institution in the development of the child. Family is the primary social unit where the foundation is laid for development and adjustment. It is in the family that the child's basic needs (food, safety, care, etc.) are fulfilled. The socio-economic status of the family sets the limits to the quality of care and support. These go a long way in building a sense of security and self-esteem in the child. The child gets opportunity and exposure necessary for development and adjustment in the family. The child learns to interact in the family beginning with parents, brother, sister and others. The parental styles of warmth, love, acceptance, rejection, etc. affect the development and adjustment of the child differently. Warm

and accepting parents inculcate healthy socio-emotional development and satisfying relationships. Parents who often neglect their child can cause hostility, anger, apathy and passivity in the child. In addition to the type of parenting, the overall emotional climate of the family lays the foundation for development and adjustment. Family climate is the result of the quality of interpersonal relationships among family members (between parents, siblings and extended members of the family).

**Example:** John is 12 years old and studies in Class VI. He likes his parents as they never refuse him anything, scold, guide or command. In your view, are the parents practising the right parenting style?

Yes\_\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_\_.

Why do you think so?

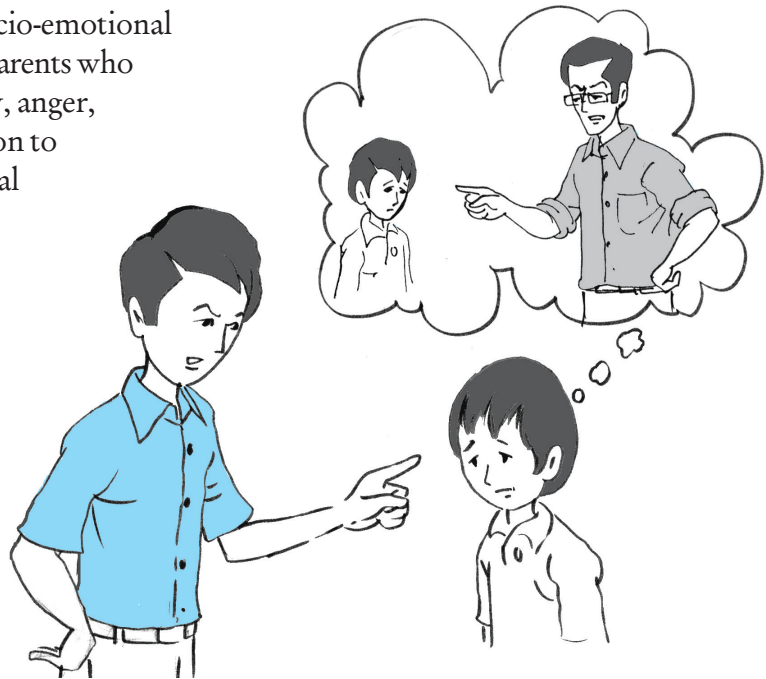
Not setting limits to the child's behaviour does not enable him to adopt mature behaviour.

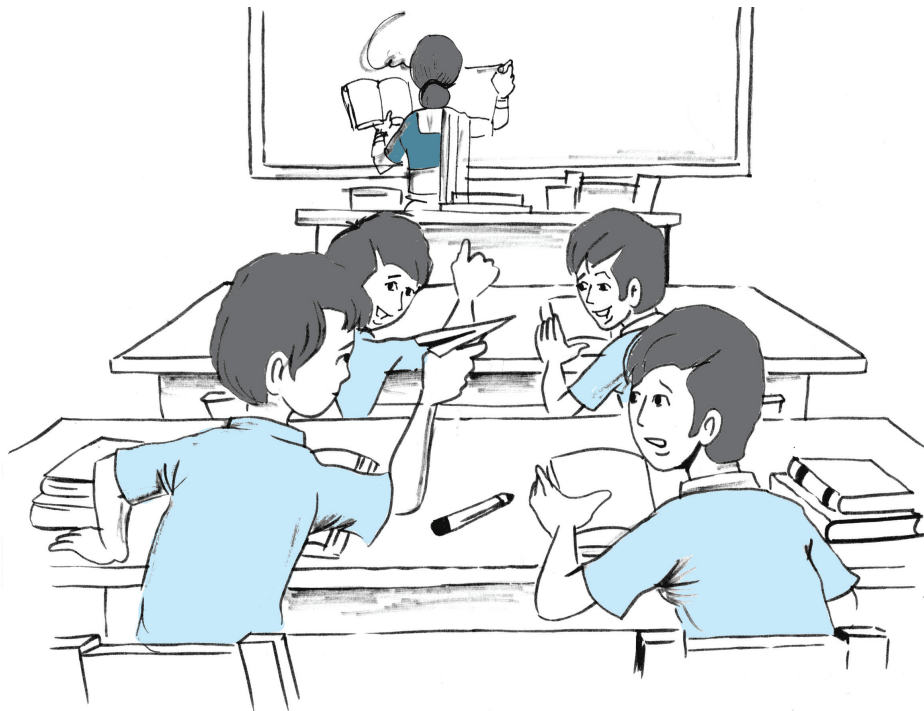
### *School Influence*

After the family, school has come to occupy a central place in the child's life in all societies. School as a social unit affects the development and adjustment of children as they spend a good part of their waking hours there. In school, children face the challenges of using their skills of interacting with others namely, teachers and classmates. Based on their experiences in school they develop ideas about socially acceptable behaviours. Some of the important school related factors are the school and classroom climates, teachers' attitudes and behaviours, instructional materials (especially the aids and supports), disciplinary practices and peer interactions.

School climate sets the overall tone for the teaching and learning processes and the interpersonal relationships among teachers and students. In a school with a permissive atmosphere, the children may lack responsibility, respect for authority and become egocentric. Under an authoritarian discipline, the children may show signs of nervousness, resentment, become tense and even rebellious. In a democratic discipline, children feel encouraged to attempt things, develop their self-esteem and are happy and well-adjusted. When a teacher is positive and open in the classroom, the children feel motivated to study, stay relaxed and succeed.

The curriculum and the teacher are the other important factors in school. The curriculum content and how teachers deal with it in the classroom shape children's thinking is obvious. Flexibility in the content and transaction of the





curriculum enable different learners to cope with school demands and build on their capacities to different extents.

**Example:** Lara lives in a hilly area and is a very skilled climber, loves natural beauty and knows about plants and herbs in the vicinity. She loves reading fiction but looks outside the window in the science class. When teacher scolds her for inattentiveness, other children laugh at her.

Why do you think Lara is inattentive? Lara's example illustrates that a child is not interested in a subject when it is taught in a routine and dry manner. In order to arouse the interest of the child, the teacher has to try innovative teaching methods closer to real life. Teachers' interactions and relationships with students reflect their own personality type, attitudes, beliefs and values, social bias and prejudice towards different social groups and learners. The teachers need to ensure that the teaching-learning tasks and processes enable children to consolidate their strengths and overcome the weaknesses in a non-threatening and constructive classroom climate.

**Example:** A school principal speaks in the school assembly and says that the teachers and students need to be cooperative, unbiased and friendly with each other. In his office he orders teachers. The children from disadvantaged groups are made to wait for long time and are treated with indifference.

What do you think of the school climate, teacher-student interactions and school authority in this school?

The school influences children's development and adjustment in a number of ways. Within the school, an important influence is the peer group. Peer influence is discussed below.

### *Peer Influence*

Remember how your friends and classmates influenced you and your life. Gradually an individual moves out of home and expands his horizons to his age-mates for play activities. Peer group greatly influences development by changing social attitudes and behaviour patterns. These social attitudes go a long way in determining one's adjustment in the society. As one grows older, pressures from the peer group supplement the development and adjustment, helping to learn socially approved behaviour. At the same time, peer group creates more challenges and are potential threats to adjustment.

If the relationships with peers are pleasant, an individual enjoys social contacts and wants to continue them. If, on the other hand, these contacts are unpleasant or frightening, children will avoid them and may become maladjusted. During the teen years, peer influences become particularly important in social interactions and shaping plans for the future. Often peers come to replace family influences as a socialisation factor for teenagers.

Peer influence is thus an important factor that affects social and emotional development of children. Another factor, which you may not be aware of, is community that affects development and adjustment.

### *Community Factors*

The nature of neighbourhood (its socio-economic status and attitudes), availability of common spaces such as playgrounds, parks, shopping complex, resident welfare associations and media facilities play an important role in facilitating development and adjustment. Where, when and how do residents in a neighbourhood interact? How do children come together, help and share with each other? These interrelations further the development and adjustment of members of the community. This also enhances the sense of belongingness and collective well being.

**Example:** Ankit is 13-year-old studying in a private school. He lives in a good middle class colony and likes to meet boys of his age even if from different schools. Many mothers encourage their children to play with schoolmates only and discourage them to interact with school children from lower social-economic strata.

Can you think of other ways in which parents and families create a positive or negative influence in the community? You will be able to list a number of factors. Another important factor is technology and media that influences development of children and their adjustment. Let us now look at technology and mass media influences.

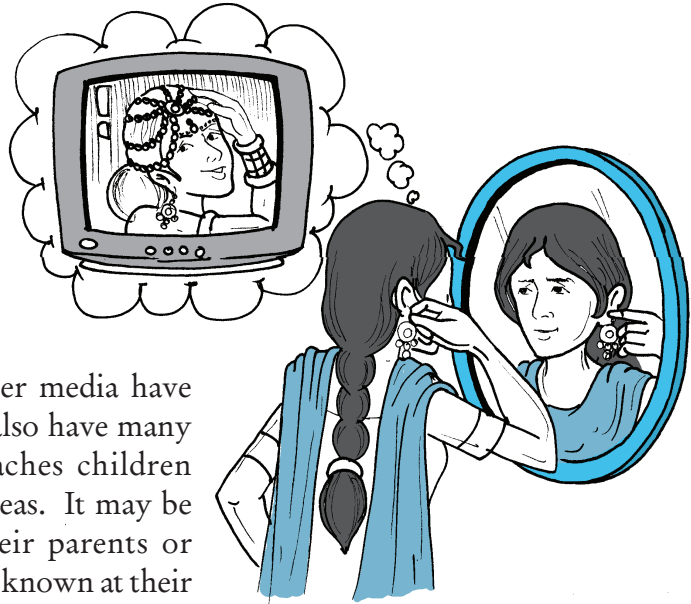
### *Technology/Mass Media*

Personal computers, radio, cell phones, TV, Internet, etc. are some of the examples of technology that can have strong influence on your students. These gadgets consume a lot of time everyday of both teachers and students. For teachers, a new role has emerged where they must counteract what impact media may have on their students' thinking. Many times what is depicted in media differs considerably from reality. Often, it encourages an uncritical acceptance of whatever is presented or offered to the audience. Teachers must facilitate discussions that allow students to look at the



information they are receiving with a more critical eye. Because of the time we all spend on mass media, there is constant reinforcement of whatever learning takes place. A lot depends on the way the events are depicted in the media.

Though television and other media have many disadvantages, these also have many advantages. Television teaches children about many subjects and areas. It may be much more than what their parents or teachers could possibly have known at their time. Children learn from television. The overriding influence of different forms of mass media on our lives is well-known. It has also impacted the lives of children at home and school. It affects the activities and the routines of children in numerous ways. Its influence on personal and social adjustment of children may be positive or negative.



*Media Influence Our Choices*

### Activity 2

Get the children to watch television programme for half an hour everyday for 5 days. Identify aspects which would have positive/negative influence on the viewers. Discuss with children of your class the ways in which television influences them positively and negatively and make a list.

So far, you have looked at some of the internal factors and external factors that influence development and adjustment. Now you will explore the ways in which these two factors interact.

## 4.4 INTERACTION OF INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL FACTORS AND ITS IMPLICATIONS

The internal and external factors exert joint influence. When internal factors such as a weak physique or bad temperament are supported by weak family atmosphere and severe school climate, the overall influence can decide the child's development and personality.

You may find that a child having robust health and good sports facilities in school and neighbourhood is likely to excel in sports at the school level, and moves further on to inter-school, district and state levels. Students grow up with many influences on

their health, outlook on life and approach to choosing a career. Some people choose to give into their situations while others would see the same conditions as a challenge to be superceded. It is important for you to understand that internal and external factors interact to determine development and adjustment and take that into account when helping students to adjust.

Let us look at the implications of the interaction of internal and external factors. You will need to know the implications of the interactions of internal and external factors to teach effectively.

Variation in development and adjustment occurs due to the following reasons:

- (i) Children are born with different predispositions and it is not appropriate for teachers to expect same level of performance from all.
- (ii) Since children have different patterns of development, the same environment may lead to different outcomes.
- (iii) Children attain peak maturation at different ages.
- (iv) Some of the problems such as language development or attention automatically improve with time.
- (v) Encouragement, support and stimulation are essential especially at the early stages of life.
- (vi) Timing of the inputs and experiences play an important role in development.
- (vii) For example, if parent/teachers pressure children into learning, little progress is made until the children are developmentally ready.



### Self-check Exercise 1

1. Why do individuals differ from each other in their development and adjustment?
2. What are the inherited factors responsible for adjustment?
3. What are the factors outside the individual which influence his/her adjustment and development?

By now you have some understanding of the development and adjustment processes. What is expected of a child at different stages of development is called a developmental task. These tasks are to be mastered by children successfully. Developmental tasks are discussed below.

## 4.5 MASTERY OF DEVELOPMENTAL TASKS

A developmental task is a set of behaviour that ought to be accomplished at a certain period of life. The learning of a developmental task at an appropriate point of time enables one to learn successive tasks easily. For instance, once the child has learnt to sit, s/he is ready to learn to walk and run. Only when the timing is right, is it possible to learn a particular task. This is referred to as the 'teachable moment.' It is important to keep in mind that unless the time is right, child will not succeed in learning that task.



Some tasks are accomplished because of physical maturation (e.g., learning to walk), while others are learnt due to the cultural pressures of society (e.g., learning to read). Some other tasks are accomplished out of personal values and aspirations of the person, such as becoming a doctor or a dancer. Successful mastery of a task leads to happiness and success in later tasks. Failure to master the task causes feelings of unhappiness, disapproval of society and difficulty in later tasks. You may recollect from your experience that only when you developed the skills to play, were you included in the play activities by your peer group.

There are certain clear-cut universally valued developmental tasks that every culture expects children to master (by acquiring certain essential skills) at various stages of life.

You as a teacher/counsellor will find it useful to know what these developmental tasks are, particularly what is right at different stages of schooling.

Here are some of the developmental tasks to be achieved by children at different stages.

| Infancy and Early Childhood   | Middle Childhood   | Adolescence   |
|---|--|---|
| Learning to walk<br>Learning to take solid foods<br>Learning to talk<br>Learning to control the elimination of body wastes<br>Learning sex differences and sexual modesty<br>Acquiring concepts and language to describe social and physical reality<br>Readiness for reading<br>Learning to distinguish right from wrong and developing a conscience | Learning physical skills necessary for ordinary games<br>Building a wholesome attitude towards oneself<br>Learning to get along with age mates<br>Learning an appropriate sex role<br>Developing fundamental skills in reading, writing and calculating<br>Developing concepts necessary for everyday living<br>Developing conscience, morality and a scale of values<br>Achieving personal independence<br>Developing acceptable attitude towards society | Achieving adequate relationships with own and opposite sex<br>Achieving a masculine/feminine social role<br>Accepting oneself<br>Achieving emotional independence from adults<br>Preparing for marriage and family life<br>Preparing for a career<br>Acquiring ethical values to guide behaviour<br>Desiring and achieving socially responsible behaviour |



From this description, you may have understood the tasks to be mastered at different stages. Now take up any particular task during adolescence and list the tasks to be accomplished. You may notice that each one of these tasks could be broken down to small components. For instance, “Desiring and achieving socially responsible behaviour” in the above table. This task could be accomplished only when the boy/girl; (i) understands social responsibility, (ii) has healthy attitudes towards others, (iii) has healthy interactions with others, and (iv) has respect for the values of the group.

### Activity 3



Along the lines of the above description please take up the task “Preparing for a career” during adolescence and give five components which need to be mastered.

You would have understood by now how the mastery of developmental tasks at different stages of growth is basic to the development and adjustment processes. An adolescent who has mastered well the task of preparing for a career is well equipped to choose a realistic career.


Failure to master developmental tasks can have serious consequences. First, as it makes the child feel inferior, this can lead to unhappiness. Second, it results in social disapproval often accompanied by social rejection. Finally, it may make the mastery of new developmental tasks even more difficult. Each year the child will lag behind and that lag may be cumulative. By contrast, children who master the appropriate developmental tasks early are rewarded by social approval leading to self-approval and thus to their happiness.

Development is fully integrated into the shaping of a young person’s capacity for achievement. This is part of the identity that they ultimately assume in life.

## 4.6 SHAPING OF IDENTITY

You know that attempting to achieve a positive personal identity is the major developmental task of students from elementary to school leaving stage. This also often extends to college years. Do you know what is identity? In the section below you will read about ‘Identity’. As the child passes from primary through elementary school age s/he is constantly confronted with increasing social demands, expectations for mature behaviour. They also wish to achieve independence. They are influenced by internal and external factors discussed earlier. In order to cope with their expanding social universe, they search, explore and learn new social skills and refine those they already have. The self-concept broadens beyond family to include friends, peers, teachers and others who help them formally and informally. They are learning the rules of social relationships, and ways of enhancing self-esteem. These components contribute to the shaping of identity. The surge for independence brings in the need to choose, try and discard different types of behaviour and the process continues. Temper tantrums, mood swings, fights, tears-all constitute part of this process of developing





identity. They learn skills related to getting along with the group such as ability to give and take, participate in group events, attain some consistency and predictability, maintain confidentiality, satisfying needs in a peer context and adopting appropriate sex roles. They also learn how to answer questions, compile and evaluate information.

You have to remember that personal identity means knowing myself in relation to “me” and in relation to “others”. The building blocks of personal identity are competence, positive self-esteem and integrity. As the youngsters grow and prosper on the time scale, if they suffer, so does the identity. Peer group is important as the context within which one learns about self and gains insight into what is desired and despised. A small segment of identity originates from this insight and a large segment of one’s assessment of the group is formed. In this context of assessing the group and the group assessing the individual, two important components of personal identity emerge: (i) importance of the individual, and (ii) the group for each other.

You have to be aware of another aspect of identity formation called ‘social identity’ as every person represents beyond self the social group to which one belongs. For example, an ethnic group, religion, tribe, caste and even gender. Social identity is a part of an individual’s self-concept that comes from her/his membership in the relevant social group along with the value and emotional significance attached to the membership. The various group memberships determine one’s social identity, as these remain the reference points of all social expectations, norms and behaviour. Neighbourhoods, community and schools bring together persons from different social groups and are capable of generating social climate ranging from accepting to rejecting. A positive social identity formation would require a social climate that would nurture a sense of ease in relating to each other, a sense of social belongingness and thus empowerment. The roots of several social bias, prejudice, discriminations and strife begin here and this needs to be carefully addressed.



### Self-check Exercise 2

1. What is identity?

## 4.7 SOME USEFUL STRATEGIES FOR A COUNSELLOR/TEACHER

You have learned about the processes of development and adjustment. Let us now understand what help you can render in your role as a counsellor/teacher. Remember the counsellor can only do something and not everything possible to solve the problem. What will enable you to deal with the students effectively?

- Provide ample opportunities to use the five senses such as seeing and hearing. At home see that the child has plenty of scope to observe, experiment, try, etc. to promote the development of senses so that development and learning would take place. Ensure a sufficiently safe environment in which exploration does not meet with accidents. In such environment, the child automatically develops a trust in the adults around and grows up better.

- When adults allow him/her to do things, s/he feels that they are confident of her/his abilities. Trusting adults automatically facilitate adjustment and further development.
- The adults need to be clear of what they expect of the child and of the promises made. Setting clear/appropriate limits and behaviour guidelines enables the child to realise what can be tried. The need for discipline/advice is minimised.
- Children need to be encouraged to take initiative at the personal and group level, as it will help them learn concepts and have an idea of things around them. This is an important strategy to use and could also be communicated to parents.
- Growing emotionally is very important as even adults find emotional maturity as necessary as intellectual development. It is essential to learn to live together. Parents need to be encouraged to stay calm and emotionally balanced.
- Development of autonomy is an important developmental task to be achieved by every child.
- Since many tasks are difficult to be accomplished, children often experience dissatisfaction and frustration. The failure to meet expectations leads to lack of trust or doubt about their own capacities. Parents need to be made aware of such issues that could be inadvertently causing more damage.
- A caring and comforting atmosphere coupled with nurturing relationships will help in facilitating the developmental task of identity formation.
- Teachers may be observant of friends/peers with whom their children move and the type of activities they indulge in, etc.

Teachers must be sensitised to the needs of children and the need of updating with new and innovative techniques of teaching-learning and handling children. This will minimise scholastic problems and disinterest in studies. The teachers need to learn how to handle children with respect and regard, on being impartial and use the appropriate disciplinary methods.

#### 4.8 Summary

In this unit, you learned that in order to perform your role as teachers and counsellors it is essential to understand how the processes of development and adjustment complement each other and identity formation takes place. Development is dynamic and continuous, and influences adjustment, as well as is influenced by it. There are several factors influencing development and adjustment. Some are internal to the person and some are external. The internal factors are within the person such as physiological systems, metabolism, brain, pulse rate or eye colour. The external factors are in the environment. Some factors like family, school, neighbourhood and community were discussed. You also learnt that the internal and external factors continuously interact with each other and impact the development and adjustment of an individual. This also affects the achievement of mastery of various age appropriate developmental tasks.





1. How can you provide an environment conducive to facilitating development of students in school?
2. What are developmental tasks and why are they important to a person?
3. In what ways do you think the knowledge of developmental tasks can help you as a counsellor/teacher?
4. How can teachers and parents promote healthy identity development?

### Answer Key to Self-evaluation Exercises

1. Conducive environment for facilitating development of children in school could be provided by generating awareness among teachers and school authorities about the needs of children and organising school climate to respond to these needs. The children must be treated with love, care and dignity irrespective of their background. The school must provide safe and motivating atmosphere to children to develop and try out their abilities in different areas—physical, academic, music, etc. The climate should be challenging but not over-stretching to cause stress. All kinds of interpersonal relationships in the school, teacher-parent, teacher-pupil and peer-peer should be screened for stress and violence to offer safety and encouragement.
2. Developmental tasks are sets of behaviour which an individual needs to achieve or master at a certain period of time. For example, a small child is expected to walk and talk in monosyllables about the age of 1 year. By the time s/he is about 2–3 years, s/he learns to make request in small sentences. Attainment of these developmental tasks is important as learning of future tasks is dependent on attaining the tasks set for the previous stage of development. Mastery of tasks set for a particular stage makes one successful in later tasks and makes the child feel happy, while failure leads to unhappiness and disapproval of others.
3. Knowledge of developmental tasks can help a teacher/counsellor to understand the child's level of development and find out the kind of experiences s/he needs to develop further. For instance if a teacher observes that a primary school child cannot speak sentences properly or pronounce words clearly s/he would not be ready to benefit from school instruction. The teacher can arrange interaction with parents to make them aware of the situation and suggest ways of enhancing the child's development and attainment of the developmental task of articulating his needs in his/her words and speak few sentences by removing fears if any, or by increasing verbal interactions, story telling, etc.



4. The parents and teachers are role models who demonstrate the behaviour which is most likely to be adopted by children. It is, therefore, their responsibility that they are careful of what kind of behaviour they are projecting and encouraging consciously or unconsciously. The kind of comments these important people make on child's abilities, personality, achievements and the expectations they convey are very crucial for the development of the child's identity. If parents provide positive feedback, i.e. concentrate on the strengths of the child rather than pick on their weaknesses it leads to positive self-image and overall positivity in attitude. Similarly demonstration of encouragement, love, positive attitudes towards others, cooperation, truth, justice and self-discipline, etc. by teachers and parents themselves will facilitate the development of a similar identity among children.

## Answer Key to Self-check Exercises

### *Self-check Exercise 1*

1. Individuals differ from each other in development and adjustment because the rate of development in different individuals is different, and the level of development attained in one domain influences development in other domains too. Higher level of development leads to higher adjustment also. Those with higher level of development gain mastery of their environment that leads to better adjustment.
2. The inherited factors responsible for adjustment are physiological and genetic characteristics such as colour of the eyes, hair, temperament, sensitivity, motor coordination, musculature, vitality, speech and hearing mechanisms, energy levels, metabolism, nervous system and endocrine glands, which affect the effort and the persistence of a child.
3. The factors outside the individual which influence his adjustment and development are: first, the family in which the child's basic needs are fulfilled and foundations of a healthy personality are laid. The socio-economic status of the family determines the socio-emotional development and the kind of interpersonal skills s/he is likely to develop. The schools also play an important role by exposing children to teaching-learning, disciplining and motivating them to develop their capabilities, self esteem and personality as responsible and productive citizens. Besides these two, the neighbourhood, media, and peer group are some other factors which influence the development of children.

### *Self-check Exercise 2*

1. Identity refers to one's knowledge, feelings and attitudes about self. It is a description of "me" in relation to "others". Social identity means individual's self-concept that comes from her/his membership in the relevant social group along with the value and emotional significance attached to the group membership.



### Suggested Readings

Papalia, D.E., Olds, S.W. and Feldman, R.D. 2004. *Human Development* (9<sup>th</sup> ed.). McGraw-Hill, New York.

Berk, L.E. 2003. *Child Development* (7<sup>th</sup> ed.). Prentice-Hall of India Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi.

Lefrancois, G.R. 2005. *Theories of human learning: What the Old Woman Said* (5<sup>th</sup> ed.). Wadsworth, California.

Hurlock, E. B. 1997. *Child Development* (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). Tata McGraw-Hill, New Delhi.

Bapat, A. 1999. *Developmental Psychology*. Himalaya Publishing House, Bombay.



# NOTES



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## List of Course Material

### 1. Course Guide

Major inputs include objectives, scope, rules, syllabi as well as procedures for admission, transaction and evaluation for all the three phases of the course.

### 2. Course Modules\*

- i. Module- I : Introduction to Guidance
- ii. Module-II : Counselling Process and Strategies
- iii. Module-III : Guidance for Human Development and Adjustment
- iv. Module-IV : Career Development-I
- v. Module V : Career Information in Guidance and Counselling-I
- vi. Module VI : Assessment and Appraisal in Guidance and Counselling-I
- vii. Module VII : Basic Statistics in Guidance and Counselling-I
- viii. Module VIII : Guidance in Action
- ix. Module IX : Special Concerns in Counselling
- x. Module X : Developing Mental Health and Coping Skills
- xi. Module-XI : Career Development-II
- xii. Module XII : Career Information in Guidance and Counselling-II
- xiii. Module XIII : Assessment and Appraisal in Guidance and Counselling-II
- xiv. Module XIV : Basic Statistics in Guidance and Counselling-II

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\* Each module consists of number of self-learning units.

### 3. Practical Handbook

Provides areas and strategies for conducting and undergoing practicum, field experience and internship.

### 4. Tutor Guide

Lists guidelines for tutors, supervisors for course transaction and evaluation during all the three phases of the course.





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शिक्षण ५ पुस्तकसूची



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NCERT

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