

Adulthood

Adulthood Tasks

1. Integrate multiple relationships.
2. Integrate conflicting values.
3. Integrate values and behavior.
4. Act on incomplete and ambiguous information.
5. Use full set of behavioral strategies flexibly.

2

Neuroplasticity & resilience

- Neurology is not fixed.
- Newly maturing areas are the most plastic.
- The cortex matures into the mid-30s.
- Flexibility lies most in slow cortical processes.
- Reflective integration is both slowest & also most flexible.

3

Reflective Integration

- Prefrontal cortex: dissociative processes
 - Information is held discretely (compare/contrast)
 - Extraneous information is inhibited
 - Focuses the mind
- Posterior cortex: associative processes
 - Interactive connectivity
 - Increase range of eliciting cues and meanings
 - Find unexpected associations and meanings

4

Integrative Processes

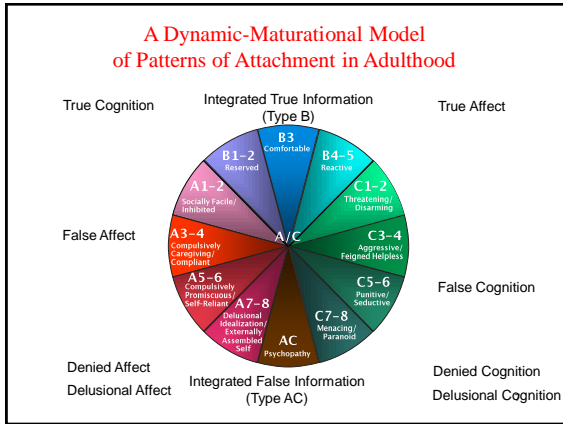
- Working memory (preconscious)
- Reflection (conscious)
- Reflective integration (conscious)

5

Reflective Functioning & Reorganization

**The past is immutable,
but its meaning is rewritten
every time it is recalled.**

6



Culture

- The means by which adults pass to children the accumulated knowledge of the invariant aspects of the local danger and the best ways to protect oneself.
- Context-defined balance of risk and opportunity that is heavily weighted toward past experience.

8

Type A Strategy

**Do the right thing –
from the perspective of other people.**

9

What is dangerous?

- **Doing what you want.**
- **Showing your true feelings.**
- **Taking your own perspective.**

10

What is safe?

- **Not doing the wrong thing.**
- **Doing the right thing, from the perspective of powerful people.**
- **Attending to powerful people.**

11

Type C Strategy

**Be true to your feelings –
And don't listen to others' arguments.**

12

What is dangerous?

- Not attending to relationships.
- Letting important people not attend to you.
- Believing that others will do as they say.

13

What is dangerous? (con't)

- Compromising, i.e., taking the perspective of others.
- Delaying gratification.
- Feeling comfortable, i.e., exploration and reflection.

14

What is safe?

- Use of split, exaggerated, & alternated affect.
- Insistence upon your own perspective, without negotiation, compromise, or delay.
- Deceptive attacks.

15

Type A vs. Type C

- | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| • Cognitively organized | • Affectively organized |
| • Others' perspective | • Self perspective |
| • Dismiss self | • Dismiss others |
| • Preoccupied with other | • Preoccupied with self |
| • Exaggerate prediction | • Omit/dismiss cognition |
| • Omit/dismiss neg. affect | • Exaggerate neg. affect |
| • Minimize problems | • Emphasize problems |
| • Distance the past | • Retain the past |

16

Array of Attachment Relationships

1. Infancy:
Parents: Non-symmetrical & non-reciprocal
2. Preschool:
Parents: Disputes about symmetry & non-reciprocal
3. School years:
Parents: Less non-symmetrical & non-reciprocal
Best friend: Symmetrical & non-reciprocal

17

Array of Attachment Relationships, con't

4. Adolescence:
Parents: Disputed symmetry & less non-reciprocal
Romantic partner: Symmetrical & becoming reciprocal
5. Adulthood:
Spouse: Symmetrical & reciprocal
Children: Non-symmetrical & non-reciprocal
Parents: Symmetrical & reciprocal -> Role-reversing
Grandparent: Attachment figure to grandchild

18

Safety in Sexual Relationships

1. Man → Woman:

a. Promote safety of spouse & children

or

b. Dominate and terrorize.

19

Safety in Sexual Relationships, con't

2. Woman → Man:

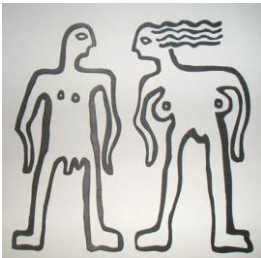
a. Promote the man's reproductive opportunity

or

b. Cuckold him.

20

Resolving Disagreements



21

Adaptation

1. Not Type B.

2. Not developmental history.

3. Not a state.

22

Adaptation is a **PROCESS**
in which not fully accurate DRMs
are constantly reorganized
into less inaccurate DRMs
that permit flexible and adaptive use
of all the behavioral strategies
without distorting the mental processing
of information.

23

Adaptive Adults

1. Protect themselves;

2. Select reliable and loving reproductive partners;

3. Protect partner and progeny;

24

4. Foster development of their children:

- a. When & where there might be danger;
- b. How best to respond to danger and risk of danger;
- c. How to reflect productively on experience to generate new information;

25

Balanced Mental Processes

1. Use the whole range of simple to complex processing loops;
2. Differentiate and use all the transformations of information;
3. Recognize and use all strategies in contextually appropriate ways.

26

Mature (Earned) B

- Mind is freed from development context
- Mind recognizes both safety and danger
- Mind regulates behavior

27