Interpersonal Development across the Life Span: Communion and Its Interaction with Agency in Psychosocial Development

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In recent years feminist psychologists have raised important criticisms of traditional psychological theories, particularly those theories which propose to be comprehensive descriptions of human development. Gilligan [1982] argues that these theories have been dominated by a male-biased emphasis on separation and individuation, thereby failing to provide an understanding of development of relationships and connectedness. For example, Erikson's [1950, 1968] model of personality development begins with a stage of connectedness in infancy (trust vs. mistrust), but then fails to describe development in terms of relationships until the adult stage of intimacy versus isolation. One might wonder how the capacity for intimacy can suddenly emerge in later life, with almost no previous preparation, particularly when all prior development is focused on increasing separateness. Franz and White [1985] argue that Erikson's theory, in neglecting relationship issues, does not provide a framework for understanding how individuals move from the dependency of the trust versus mistrust stage to the mature interdependence of the intimacy stage. In light of these criticisms, there is a need for new theoretical understanding that accounts for the important function of interpersonal relations in the life cycle.

Many of the more recent conceptual efforts in this area (e.g., Kegan, 1982; Gilligan, 1982; Franz and White, 1985] have been influenced by Bakan's [1966] presentation of the duality of yearnings in human existence, namely the yearning for 'communion' and the yearning for 'agency', i.e., a yearning to be included and connected coexisting simultaneously with a yearning to be independent and autonomous. Both of these, the yearning for communion and interpersonal connectedness and the yearning for individuation and agency, must be accounted for in a comprehensive theory of development.

It is important to emphasize that these two needs are in constant tension throughout the life cycle and are manifested simultaneously at each stage of

development. This simultaneity and its importance in development is aptly captured by Gilligan [1982, p. 66]: 'we know ourselves as separate only insofar as we live in connection with others, and ... we experience relationships only insofar as we differentiate other from self'.

Some theories have had difficulty with this concept. For example, Kegan [1982], while attempting to include both communion and agency in his portrayal of personality development, alternates the stages in his helix of evolutionary balances in favor of one theme or the other. However, in order for a theory to present a complete understanding of development, it must account for the continuous, simultaneous importance of both relationships and individuation at every point in the life cycle. Consequently, Franz and White's [1985] proposal of a two-strand, 'double-helix' model, 'in which two separate but interconnected strands of psychological individuation and attachment ascend in a spiral' [Franz and White, 1985, p. 247], appears to be more adequate for conceptualizing personality development. This double-helix model allows for the inclusion of transformations in both agency and communion themes, as well as their impact on each other throughout the life cycle.

Since traditional theories have addressed the progress of the 'agentic' strand, the new task involves presenting an equally comprehensive treatment of communion development. A number of theorists, including Kegan [1982], Gilligan [1982], Selman [1980] and Franz and White [1985], have contributed significantly to a growing understanding of the qualitative changes in the development of interpersonal connections. However, there appears to be a need for a concerted effort toward synthesizing and integrating these understandings into a more complete explication of the stages of communion development and the transformations in interpersonal relating across the life span.

The following presentation undertakes just such an effort. Drawing from theoretical and empirical literature, stages of communion development will be presented and supported by critically explicative findings. The stages themselves have been developed along the conceptual lines of Erikson's [1950, 1968] theory for ease of comparability to his and others' developmental theories. In addition, the following conceptualization draws on Veroff and Veroff's [1980] model of development based on motivation theory and research. Thus, each stage will be presented in terms of (1) the corresponding developmental task of communion and its interaction with agency development; (2) the interpersonal need which motivates the individual at that time, and (3) the nature of relationships which occur at that stage (table I).

Table I. Stages of communion development

Ages	Erikson's stages and other stages	Communion stage	Interpersonal needs
Infancy	trust vs. mistrust Kegan: incorporative Maslow: physiological survival	incorporative bonding vs. withdrawal	responsiveness
Toddler age	autonomy vs. shame, doubt Loevinger: pre-social Maslow: safety	secure attachment vs. fear of abandonment	acceptance
Preschool age	initiative vs. guilt Kegan: impulsive Loevinger: impulsive	interactive association vs. egocentric disregard	attention
School age	industry vs. inferiority Kegan: imperial Loevinger: opportunistic	social relatedness vs. self-insistence	approval
Early adolescence	affiliation vs. abandonment (Kegan) Kegan: interpersonal Loevinger: conformist Maslow: belonging and love	affiliation vs. exclusion	affiliation

Table 1. (Cant.)

Ages	Erikson's stages and other stages	Communion stage	Interpersonal needs
Late adolescence to young adulthood	identity vs. role confusion Kegan: institutional Loevinger: conscientious Maslow: esteem	belonging vs. alienation	belongingness
Young to middle adulthood	intimacy vs. isolation Maslow: being-love	intimacy vs. isolation	intimacy
Middle adulthood	generativity vs. stagnation Kegan: inter individual Loevinger: autonomous Maslow: self-actualization	interdependence vs. interpersonal constriction	reciprocity
Old age	integrity vs. despair	interpersonal acceptance vs. relational distress	companionship

References: Erikson [1950, 1968], Kegan [1982], Loevinger [1976], Maslow [1954].

Infancy; Incorporative Bonding versus Withdrawal

During the first stage of the life cycle, the dual themes of agency and communion are already in evidence. Birth brings the first experience of separation and the emergence of agentic, instrumental behavior directed toward fulfilling the infant's needs. This soon leads to the need for environmental mastery [White, 1959] and

the need to differentiate and discriminate stimuli [Piaget, 1952]. Simultaneously, infants are in need of continued symbiotic connection with caretakers and are involved in maintaining, strengthening and developing this communal relationship. Within this context, infants develop a variety of behaviors, including smiling, vocalizations and imitation, which bring caretakers closer in shared experiences of excitement and satisfaction [Packer, 1983]. Thus, along with emerging agentic development, infancy also involves sustaining and deepening the primary communal, interpersonal bond.

In the present effort to conceptualize a theory of communion, this initial relationship development is termed 'incorporative bonding', which captures the essence of the infant's interpersonal connection at this stage. Infants have been characterized as incorporative [Erikson, 1968; Kegan, 1982] based on their involvement in taking in experience through their mouth, eyes and other senses. According to Fraiberg [1959], in the context of nursing and along with experiences of satisfaction and pleasure, the infant takes in the presence of the caretaker. Thus, within the primary symbiotic relationship, the infant develops an initially undifferentiated, 'incorporative bonding', which is then strengthened by dynamic interaction, expressive, imitative communication and joyful, interactive play. The term bonding is used here in an effort to distinguish this early form of connection from the more differentiated attachment of the next stage.

The infant's basic, vital need at this stage of life is the communal need for responsiveness. Adequate sensitivity and 'responsiveness' is essential for infant development [Ainsworth et al., 1974], both in terms of promoting agentic environmental curiosity and in terms of facilitating interpersonal bonding. Without positive interpersonal experiences and adequate mutual 'responsiveness', the infant's connectedness is likely to be seriously weakened, leading to withdrawal, reactive rejection and/or a failure to thrive.

Hence, the term 'withdrawal', in counterpoint to 'incorporative bonding', describes the form of estrangement which may occur in infancy due to inadequate 'responsiveness'. 'Withdrawal' not only hampers and weakens the infant's communal development, but also inhibits the infant's agentic development. When 'withdrawal' occurs, the infant may simultaneously fail to develop an adequate interest in the environment as well as an adequate sense of interpersonal connectedness [Fraiberg, 1959]. This clearly illuminates the close interaction and interdependence of the two strands of development.

In addition, as the infant matures and the agentic capacity to discriminate stimuli evolves, the infant gradually develops a more differentiated [Kagan, 1978], selective communal bond with primary caretakers as marked by the emergence of separation anxiety [Bowlby, 1969]. This product of combined agentic and communal development provides a critical test in the infant's interpersonal connectedness. Once again, adequate and consistent 'responsiveness' by the caretaker strengthens interpersonal bonding while lack of responsiveness intensifies anxiety, weakens bonding and contributes to estrangement and 'withdrawal'.

Finally, it is in the context of the primary, 'incorporative bonding' relationship and based on the adequacy of interpersonal 'responsiveness' within that relationship that the infant develops the communal capacity for Erikson's [1950, 1968] 'basic trust versus mistrust'. Although Erikson has captured an important aspect of what occurs interpersonally in this stage, 'trust versus mistrust' is but one component of what evolves within the primary relationship and hence is limited in conveying the overall nature of communion development at this stage.

Consequently, in explicating a model of communion development, the development of the primary interpersonal relationship and its nature, namely 'incorporative bonding', has been emphasized. It is only within the context of this relationship that the development of trust based on adequate mutual regulation and 'responsiveness' can emerge. Moreover, other interpersonal communal capacities, including expressive, interactive communication, emerge and strengthen interpersonal bonding. It is also within the context of this nurturing relationship that an agentic orientation toward environmental exploration is promoted, and spontaneous communication is modified to serve deliberate, instrumental purposes [Packer, 1983]. Thus, the agentic and communal strands interact to reinforce each other's development.

Toddler Age; Secure Attachment versus Fear of Abandonment

Emerging out of infancy, the young toddler develops new agentic and communal abilities. In terms of agentic development, the young toddler now becomes capable of asserting a new sense of 'autonomy' and will [Erikson, 1950]. In terms of communion development, the toddler becomes capable of a new sense of interpersonal connection, namely a more fully evolved capacity for 'attachment'.

In its use here, 'attachment' refers to a deeper, more substantial capacity for interpersonal connectedness based on an increasing ability to discriminate self from other and the achievement of object- and self-constancy [Piaget, 1952]. With these new abilities the infant's earlier, more diffuse bonding is transformed into a more differentiated, selective and stable sense of 'attachment'. This capacity for attachment is then further consolidated during the toddler years and, depending on the nature of the youngster's interpersonal experiences, a measure of security or anxiety in relationships is attained.

These two developments, agentic autonomy and communal attachment, are intricately intertwined, particularly since successful development in autonomy is heavily dependent upon the development of 'secure attachment'. Research has shown [Bowlby, 1969; Ainsworth et al., 1974] that it is when children develop secure emotional attachments that they manifest an adaptive balance between seeking and enjoying contact with primary caretakers and using them as a secure base from which to explore the environment. Thus, it is only in the context of the reliable, predictable availability of caretakers and the attending emergence of a new, secure sense of attachment that successful attempts at autonomy are facilitated [Franz and White, 1985].

Furthermore, agentic autonomy directly impacts on communion development by seriously testing the security of the toddler's developing attachments. Toddlers, in the effort to gain control over bodily functions [Erikson, 1950, 1968], begin to assert a new sense of control and willfullness in relationships. They become capable of active participation in giving or withholding, complying or resisting. This new capacity for independent action provides a strong challenge to the toddler's sense of security in those relationships and can lead to a 'fear of abandonment' if these bids for independence are not received appropriately.

Thus toddlers, at this time, develop a new interpersonal need beyond basic responsiveness, namely the communal need for acceptance. What toddlers need now is a recognition, acknowledgement and 'acceptance' of their newly emerging self. Otherwise, their efforts at self-assertion lead to 'fear of abandonment', threaten 'secure attachment', as well as inhibit the development of successful autonomy resulting in feelings of 'shame and doubt' [Erikson, 1950, 1968]. In other words, both 'secure attachment' and successful 'autonomy' are predicated on the interpersonal acceptance with which the newly emerging self is received, as well as on the continued nurturing responsiveness which keeps the self safe and secure. The two- year-old's ever-present 'no!' is a 'declaration of

independence, but there is no intention to unseat the government [Fraiberg, 1959, p. 65] since that government is still greatly needed and desired.

Hence, if the toddler's newfound spirit of independence is met with 'acceptance', supportive acknowledgement and guidance, the newly emerging self can form strong 'secure attachments' without 'fear of abandonment'. Moreover, the toddler can become an active, dynamic participant in the give and take of relationships. On the other hand, lack of 'acceptance' can lead to passivity, 'fear of abandonment' and inhibited or ambivalent attachment. Thus, the toddler's reception in the interpersonal context plays a profound role in the nature of developing attachments and the quality of further communion development.

As can be seen, the developments of this stage offer a particularly clear portrayal of the interdependent relationship between communion and connectedness and agency and individuation pathways. There is no agency development without a corresponding development in communion, there is no individuation without a context of relationships, and both agentic and communal developments are heavily determined by the extent to which specific interpersonal needs are met. Consequently, in conjunction with Erikson's [1950] agentic developmental task of 'autonomy' versus 'shame' and 'doubt', the interpersonal developmental task of 'secure attachment' versus 'fear of abandonment' is proposed to account for the issues encountered by the toddler along the communion pathway of development. Furthermore, it has been shown that both autonomy and attachment are intricately related, as well as mutually dependent upon the degree of interpersonally based 'acceptance' experienced by the toddler. By highlighting these communal elements and their dynamic nature, a more comprehensive, inclusive understanding of development emerges.

Preschool Age: Interactive Association versus Egocentric Disregard

Erikson [1950] describes the next, preschool stage in terms of the developmental task of 'initiative' versus 'guilt' which essentially conveys its agentic developments and the corresponding emergence of more aggressive, directed action. This new capacity for purposive action impacts on the young child's communal development and facilitates the emergence of a new social assertiveness in relationships [Veroff and Veroff, 1980]. Moreover, the child's increasing ability to differentiate self from other evolves into a capacity for

perceiving others as psychologically separate persons with whom the child can associate and interact. Thus, along with increasing agentic activity and differentiation, the young child develops new communal abilities, including a more interactive, dynamic capacity for relationships.

Taking these elements into account in describing the transformations along the communion pathway, the interpersonal development characteristic of the preschool years involves the emergence of a new capacity for 'interactive association'. This transformation in interpersonal relating is marked by a progressive shift from the toddler's involvement in parallel play to the preschooler's newly developing capacity for associative, interactive play, which evolves in the next stage into cooperative group play [Parten and Newall, 1943]. The term 'interactive association' is used here to describe the nature of the preschooler's interpersonal relating, differentiating it from the preceding stage's attachment and the next stage's capacity for bidirectional social relatedness.

At the preschool stage, the child is not yet capable of bilateral, mutual consideration; instead, relationships are seen as useful for pragmatic, unilateral assistance in fulfilling the child's own needs [Selman, 1980; Hoffman, 1976]. Hence, the child's perspective on relationships is still essentially egocentric [Franz and White, 1985]. However, interactive association with others challenges the child's egocentric tendencies and can facilitate early friendships [Selman, 1980], empathy [Hoffman, 1976] and sharing [Fraiberg, 1959]. Lack of supportive interaction inhibits the development of pro-social behaviors, including the communal ability to care and share, contributing to the estrangement of 'egocentric disregard' and embeddedness in omnipotent fantasies and aggressive rivalries.

The primary communion need which strongly influences the successful attainment of 'interactive association', as opposed to 'egocentric disregard', is the interpersonal *need for attention*. This need for 'attention' grows out of the increasing realization not only that there is a separate other, but also that this other can react and respond to the self. The young child then actively seeks out reactions in a new quest for 'attention', recognition and responsive support. The never-ending 'why?' question of the four-year-old is a classic example of this, in that it is often not so much that the child wants to know the answer, but that the child revels in the fact hat this simple word can be used to elicit all sorts of interesting responses from others. In seeking out these interpersonal reactions, provided they are met with appropriate 'attention', the preschooler's capacity for dynamic, interactive association and social dialogue is enhanced. Furthermore, it

is in the context of these interactions that the child's agentic initiative can gain the support and attention necessary for successful development.

In a study by Baumrind [1968] it was found that children who are met with supportive, appropriate attention develop positive, energetic self-assertion, self-reliance, self-control and cheerful, friendly relations with peers. On the other hand, children whose bids for attention are met with punitive, non-supportive responses develop a tendency toward aggressive, impulsive behavior or apprehensive, passive withdrawal. Thus, adequate appropriate attentiveness is essential in the development of both agentic and communal behaviors at the preschool stage, and the two pathways are found to be closely interrelated once again.

It is in the context of the youngster's associative playfulness and social assertiveness in seeking 'attention' in relationships that tendencies toward 'egocentric disregard' and self-gratifying impulsivity [Kegan, 1982] are challenged and the capacity for 'interactive association' is promoted. Moreover, it is in these relationships that agentic initiative is enhanced by supportive attention. In addition, both agentic and communion pathways are fundamentally and dynamically involved in the negotiation of the oedipal conflict with its aggressive rivalries and associated guilt [Erikson, 1950]. Moreover, the resolution of this conflict has a strong formative influence on both further individuation and future relationships. Thus, once again, a more complete understanding of development emerges only with the elaboration of both agency and communion strands and their mutual interaction.

School Age: Social Relatedness versus Self-Insistence

Entering the school years, the child develops new agentic capacities, which Erikson [1950, 1968] depicts in his 'industry' versus 'inferiority' stage. However, it must be emphasized again that there is no agentic development without a corresponding communion development, no individuation without a context of connection, and each further differentiation emerges within a new 'culture of embeddedness' [Kegan, 1982].The capacity for industry emerges within the context of entering the larger social world of the school with its new interpersonal demands. This interpersonal context and the transformations therein must be elaborated in conveying a full understanding of the developments of this stage. Hence, the communion stage of 'social relatedness'

versus 'self-insistence' is proposed to describe the nature of school children's interpersonal development.

Sullivan [1953] emphasizes the importance of this expanding social network in development, stating simply that 'the juvenile era can scarcely be exaggerated, since it is the actual time for becoming social' [Sullivan, 1953, p. 227]. Upon entering school, the child encounters an expanding interpersonal network, including the increasing importance of peer relationships. This requires the development of new interpersonal competencies in response to the attending new, diverse social demands. In the context of these new demands, the child comes to recognize that subjective experiences differ and must be taken into account in the mutual regulation of relationships. In doing so, the child now becomes capable of engaging in true cooperative behavior [Piaget, 1952] and reciprocal, mutual consideration in relationships [Selman, 1980; Hoffman, 1976]. Thus, a new capacity for interpersonal awareness and more mature 'social relatedness' is facilitated.

As children develop an increasing ability to recognize and take into account other people's perspectives and needs, they also come to realize that others respond to the self in a like manner. This leads to a growing awareness of subjective, psychological and emotional experience, along with the realization that others can subjectively react to and evaluate the self. Consequently, the child becomes increasingly more sensitized to the reactions of others, and reactions of pleasure and approval begin to acquire a unique, powerful, incentive value [Veroff and Veroff, 1980]. Thus, in the context of a new awareness and need for psychological and emotional support, the school-aged child develops a new communal need, the need for approval. This new need for 'approval' and being liked by companions further facilitates evolving interpersonal competencies and the developing capacity for 'social relatedness'. In addition, the need for 'approval' also serves to mitigate against the estrangement of this stage, namely its 'self-insistence'.

According to Selman [1980], although relationships at this stage move toward bilateral, reciprocal and mutually sharing partnerships, they are still largely oriented toward serving the child's own needs. This self-serving, self-focused quality is aptly captured in Kegan's [1982] 'imperial balance' and Loevinger's [1976] 'opportunistic' stage. However, in the child's growing involvement in interpersonal relatedness, persistent self-interest is gradually channeled into the service of others, particularly in obtaining common goals and psychological rewards such as approval. This transformation is marked by an age-related

progression from egocentric to more sociocentric expectations in relationships [Bigelow, 1975]. In this way, the need for 'approval' in an expanding field of interpersonal connectedness serves to mitigate against 'self-insistence' and promotes cooperative, bilateral 'social relatedness'.

Not only is the communal need for 'approval' vital in negotiating the balance between these two poles, it also serves an equally important function in agentic development. The development of 'industry' versus 'inferiority' [Erikson, 1950] is predicated not only on actual successes and failures, but also on the interpersonal responses with which the child's productions are received. In other words, the negotiation of this agentic balance is also determined by the communal context in which it occurs and the degree to which the child's endeavors are met with interpersonal 'approval'.

Once again it is found that communion development plays an important role in the development of agency. Correspondingly, the child's agentic efforts impact on communion development, since these endeavors facilitate engagement in an expanding sphere of relationships and further foster the necessity for interpersonal skill development. It is often in the context of the child's efforts at industry that self-interest must be subordinated in cooperative endeavors to achieve common goals. Thus, agency and communion developments interact dialectically, each giving rise to and facilitating the emergence of the other.

Early Adolescence: Affiliation versus Exclusion

In describing adolescence, Erikson [1950, 1968] again focuses on agency, in terms of the developmental task of 'identity formation', without emphasizing the inherent importance of the relationship developments at this time. Kegan [1982], in recognizing the importance of relationships, argues that Erikson's identity stage captures a later development, but does not address the early adolescent period of intense connection, inclusion and highly-invested interpersonal relating, which precedes identity formation. Thus, in the present effort to provide a comprehensive understanding of development, including the communion pathway, an early adolescent stage is added, namely 'affiliation' versus 'exclusion', which emphasizes the important interpersonal developments of this period.

The primary communion need which drives the interpersonal developments of this stage is the need for affiliation, defined as a driven need to establish and maintain positive, affective relationships [Atkinson et al., 1954]. It is associated with the use of social comparison as a basis for determining social acceptability [Veroff and Veroff, 1980], an increased tendency for conformity [Hardy, 1957], overconcern about making a good impression on others [Exline, 1960] and an anxious, driven concern about being liked by peers [Byrne, 1961; Boyatzis, 1973]. Thus, the need for affiliation is characterized by an anxious, conformity-oriented eagerness for gaining social approval and social acceptance, mainly from peers.

It is this need for 'affiliation' which shapes and drives the interpersonal relationships of early adolescence. Moreover, it is these relationships which playa profound role in agentic identity formation. Erikson [1950, 1968] himself points out that adolescents define themselves in the context of their relationships and through the eyes of others. Even more strongly, according to Kegan [1982, p. 96], at this 'interpersonal' stage adolescents are their relationships and 'there is no self independent of the context of "other people liking"'. Hence, in the early phases of identity formation, when young adolescents are involved in agentic individuation and self-exploration, they are desperately in need of a communal, 'affiliative', interpersonal context in which to define themselves.

This need for 'affiliation' and for fusing with others in order to complete the self [Kegan, 1982] contributes to the intensity of early adolescent relationships. Breaking away from parental attachments, they develop intense, close, same-sex 'chumships' [Sullivan, 1953], which then interlock with other dyads in forming 'homogeneous' groups [Selman, 1980]. Within these groups, young adolescents demand total conformity, since any diversity is experienced as extremely threatening to their fragile sense of self and its cohesion. Consequently, it is in this context that young adolescents, driven by an anxious, conformity-oriented need for 'affiliation', keep themselves together by forming clannish, excessively stereotyped, in-group cliques and can be remarkably cruel in their exclusion of those who are different [Erikson, 1950; Veroff and Veroff, 1980].

Involvement in these 'affiliative' relationships is essential to both agentic and communal development. It is within these relationships that the young adolescent's sense of self emerges and is supported by consensually validating, mutual acceptance [Sullivan, 1953]. Moreover, it is within these relationships that youngsters develop important interpersonal competencies, such as personal sharing and self-disclosure, empathy, mutual concern, self-sacrifice,

collaboration and trustworthiness [Sullivan, 1953]. Furthermore, the 'chumship' experience of 'loving someone like oneself' [Farber, 1980, p. 48] provides an important preparation for the heterosexual relationships of later adolescence and the intimacy of adult relationships.

Recognizing the importance of 'affiliation' for further development, it becomes clear that the estrangement of this stage, namely the experience of 'exclusion', can be devastating to both agency and communion development. 'Exclusion' can lead to poor self-image development, low self-esteem, 'personality warps' [Sullivan, 1953], narcissistic self-interest, anxiety in relationships and failure to develop adequate interpersonal skills. One need only observe early adolescent behavior to see the severe distress that 'exclusion' can cause and the extreme measures of 'affiliative' conformity which will be undertaken to avoid this consequence.

Thus, depending on the degree to which 'affiliative' relationships and needs are met, in contrast to experienced 'exclusion', the young adolescent emerges with a variety of interpersonal competencies and the beginning seeds of an agentic, individuated sense of self.

Late Adolescence to Young Adulthood:
Belonging versus Alienation

Having internalized an initial sense of self based on participation in the in-group's homogeneous identity and the experience of mutual acceptance, adolescents now gradually begin to perceive ways in which they differ from the rigid, conformist expectations of the group. It is in this experience, involving the recognition that one is different from others and cannot always meet their expectations, that a new, more individuated sense of identity begins to emerge. Along with this agentic development, the nature of the adolescent's interpersonal relationships is also transformed. The adolescent is now no longer satisfied with rigid conformist expectations which require giving up that which is unique to the self. Instead, he or she begins to seek interpersonal contexts where this newly differentiated sense of self can fit in and 'belong'.

Thus, the primary communion need emerging at this stage is a new interpersonal *need for belongingness*. This new need to 'belong' [Veroff and Veroff, 1980] is a broader, more complex and more differentiated concept than the previous need

to affiliate. In developing a new, more separate sense of an'!', older adolescents no longer simply conform, but rather embark upon actively choosing to join specific systems which support their newly developing, unique sense of self [Kegan, 1982]. They come to value group memberships and reference group reactions in a new way, as reflections and verifications of their emerging identity. It is in this context that individuals tryout different roles and join systems, institutions and ideologies [Erikson, 1968; Kegan, 1982]. In turn, these relationships and memberships serve a vital function in supporting the consolidation of a sense of self, defined through others as well as separate from them [Weiss and Lowenthal, 1975; Selman, 1980]. Therefore, if adolescents do not experience a sense of social 'belongingness', a devastating, profound sense of 'alienation' can emerge and severely hamper further development.

Once again agentic individuation serves to transform the nature of relationships, and relationships profoundly affect further development in both agency and communion. Seeking to 'belong' while still maintaining a distinct identity, older adolescents struggle with issues of conflicting loyalties and responsibilities. This contributes to the next stage's capacity for commitment. As older adolescents become increasingly sensitive to psychological complexity and multivariate needs, they are confronted with plurality, diversity, ambiguity and conflict. This requires the development of a new capacity for tolerance of both themselves and othersin relationships. Moreover, as the more individuated adolescent participates actively in relationships, he or she becomes capable of coordinating mutuality and recognizing dependency. As such, the earlier orientation toward simply pleasing or gaining approval in relationships can be transformed into a new, more mature ethic of responsibility and care through mutual helping and support [Gilligan, 1982]. Thus, increasing individuation transforms interpersonal connectedness, and a variety of new interpersonal competencies is promoted.

All of these elements come into play in identity formation, career exploration, social participation and interpersonal relationships of this stage. A very important interpersonal development of this period is the engagement in heterosexual dyadic relationships, including dating, sexual exploration and romantic love. A variety of interpersonal experiences in the preceding stages contributes in important ways to these relationships, including the nature of dependency attachments in the first stages, the negotiation of the oedipal 'romance' in the preschool stage, the juvenile's experiences of idealizing hero worship and the young adolescent's experiences in dyadic 'chumships' as well as in their 'crushes' and infatuations [Friedlander and Morrison, 1980; Farber,

1980]. All of these, along with the general resolution of previous communion stages, profoundly influence the shape of romantic relationships.

Although older adolescents and young adults endeavor to establish more substantial romantic relationships at this stage, they have not yet developed a full sense of identity necessary for the next stage's capacity for intimacy [Erikson, 1950, 1968]. Erikson [1968] states that adolescent love essentially involves projecting and clarifying one's self-image in order to attain a sense of identity. It should be added that it is also an effort to explore new avenues of communion and interpersonal connectedness. In the context of these early romantic relationships, older adolescents practice and play at intimacy, thereby developing important interpersonal competencies.

Early romantic relationships tend to take the form of intense, infatuated, idealizing absorptions [Friedlander and Morrison, 1980] strongly related to earlier dependency needs [Rubin, 1970]. This infatuated style of loving involves the merging fusion of diffuse boundaries, much as Erikson [1968] suggested. The adolescent, having not yet developed a distinct, differentiated, realistic sense of self, is incapable of real, sustained intimacy with a realistically perceived separate other.

However, as a sense of self continues to emerge, interpersonal fusion can be experienced as threatening to a fragile sense of identity [Erikson, 1950]. In these cases, fusion is avoided and relationships become characterized by more formalized, stereotyped and traditional role prescription [Erikson, 1968]. Frequently marriages at this stage become another way of meeting the older adolescent's need to join and 'belong' to institutions and as such tend to be role-focused as prescribed by these institutions. Still, it is in the context of these relationships that the adolescent's sense of identity can be further consolidated along with the interpersonal experiences which facilitate the development of the next stage's capacity for intimacy. Thus, having these relationships along with an attending sense of 'belongingness', as opposed to 'alienation', determines later adult development in both agency and communion.

Young to Middle Adulthood: Intimacy versus Isolation

This stage of communion development is aptly named 'intimacy versus isolation' by Erikson [1950] himself. After describing numerous stages in terms of agentic

differentiation, it is at this point that Erikson finally brings interpersonal connectedness to the fore as an important aspect of psychosocial development. According to Erikson [1968], it is only now, with the consolidation of an individuated identity that the capacity for true mutuality and intimacy can emerge. However, Erikson's conception is limited, since agency alone does not adequately account for the emergence of intimacy. Instead, as has been shown here, agency and communion have interacted in dynamic interdependence, with each contributing importantly to new developments. The capacity for intimacy, which emerges now, builds on and consolidates all prior interpersonal and agentic attainments.

Furthermore, these two processes - agentic attainment of a personal identity and communal attainment of a capacity for intimacy - do not produce static achievements, but rather continue to interact dialectically. In consolidating a sense of self, one can share that self intimately with another. In sharing the self, one also comes to know it - to become even more intimate with one's inner self. Doing so facilitates continued agentic personal growth, which further facilitates one's capacity for deeper interpersonal intimacy. Moreover, as Farber [1980] points out, a well-integrated sense of identity also includes perceptions of one's self in the context of relationships in terms of one's capacity for giving and loving.

Thus, agency and communion continue to evolve hand in hand, with intimacy becoming an essential element in continued psychosocial development, both in terms of facilitating personal growth and in providing satisfactory experiences of interpersonal connectedness. Without intimacy, one comes to experience a painfully heightened sense of 'isolation' [Erikson, 1968], loneliness and depression [Waring et aI., 1983]. Failing to share the innermost self severely hampers further personal growth, since the self does not come to be known in meaningful ways. Moreover, interpersonal development is impeded and relationships become stereotyped [Erikson, 1968], impersonal [Farber, 1980], superficial and meaningless.

Consequently, the vital need at this stage of life, contributing to both agency and communion, is the need for intimacy. McAdams [1982] defines the need for 'intimacy' as a preference or readiness for experiences of interpersonal warmth, closeness and communion. It involves a welcoming of others into mutually enjoyed, egalitarian union [Maslow, 1954] and the surrender of manipulative control [Buber, 1965] in genuine concern for the well-being of another

[Sullivan, 1953]. In short, what emerges at this time is a new need for warm, 'intimate', supportive, mutual relationships.

Within the context of this substantially different sense of interpersonal connectedness, previous interpersonal competencies are consolidated and new ones emerge. In a full recognition of self-other distinctness, one can come to a new awareness of the dynamic interaction between two people and develop a more mature capacity for mutuality. This new capacity involves the development of (1) communication skills in appropriate mutual self-disclosure and interpersonal discovery [Levinger, 1974]; (2) the ability to perceive the other realistically, tolerating and accepting the differences revealed in closer intimacy; (3) interactive skills in resolving conflicts and problems [Navran, 1967], and (4) the ability to make, and keep, commitments in relationships [Levinger, 1974]. The extent to which these capacities develop determines whether relationships are transformed from institutional, rule- and role-bound relationships to emotionally expressive, companionate relationships characterized by deepening intimacy, communication, rapport and respect [Reedy etal.,1981].

These further communal developments also have an important effect on young-adult agency. The capacity to invest one's self and make abiding commitments is essential in career development and agentic goal achievement. It is at this time that adults need to make career and life style commitments despite inevitable doubts, conflicts, restlessness and necessity for sacrifice and compromise [Erikson, 1950; Berman and Lief, 1975]. Thus, the attainment of 'intimacy' and the capacity for self-investment has profound implications, not only for mature dyadic intimacy and love, but also for goal-oriented career and personal achievements. The success with which the need for 'intimacy' is met will profoundly affect the quality of continued development in both agentic achievement and communal connectedness.

Middle Age: Interdependence versus Interpersonal Constriction

Depending on the adequacy of previous developments in personal growth and mature, intimate mutuality, what can emerge during the middle adulthood stage is a participatory appreciation and enjoyment of communal 'interdependence'. This capacity emerges out of the simultaneous awareness of both one's distinct individuality and one's interpersonal connectedness [Kegan, 1982]. In attaining

this awareness, the individual becomes capable of recognizing the important, reciprocal 'interdependence' of separate selves within relationships. Moreover, there emerges an active delight in one's individual contributions to relationships, along with a broader sense of generative responsibility to the larger social system [Veroff and Veroff, 1980]. Thus, it is in the context of an emerging sense of communal 'interdependence' that an agentic orientation toward productive 'generativity' [Erikson, 1950] is attained. Engaging in 'generative' endeavors, in turn, strengthens and expands one's sense of 'interdependent' interpersonal connectedness.

Adults who attain a sense of 'interdependence' develop a deeper orientation toward caring for others [Franz and White, 1985], an altruistic concern for establishing and guiding the next generation, and an involvement in 'generative', creative productivity [Erikson, 1950, 1968]. Along with these developments, they experience a continued expansion of interest, growth and delight in all areas of life. They continue to enjoy productive careers and then greet retirement with a sense of freedom [Rollins and Feldmann, 1970], channeling their energies creatively. Their marriages remain vital as their love, intimacy and commitment continue to grow, deepen and mature [Swenson et aI., 1981; Reedy et aI., 1981]. As parents, they take active interest in the growth of their children, facilitating their development and welcoming the transformations in parent-child relationships.

On the other hand, the failure to develop a deeper sense of 'interdependent' human connectedness severely hampers both communion and agency in adulthood. In terms of communion, it can lead to progressive interpersonal impoverishment [Erikson, 1968], rejection of connectedness [Franz and White, 1985] and the estrangement of 'interpersonal constriction'. In terms of agency, it can lead to a diminished capacity for active, 'generative' participation in the social system, along with an attending profound sense of 'stagnation' [Erikson, 1968]. Work and later retirement are faced with anxiety, boredom and depression. Marriages become characterized by progressive distancing, decrease in intimacy and interpersonal impoverishment [Berman and Lief, 1975; Swenson et al., 1981], which can lead to acting-out, divorce or just boredom and stagnation. As parents, there is a failure to recognize and truly care about children's growth and individuality, leading to a failure to promote successful development in the next generation [Erikson, 1968].

The critical communion need which promotes development of 'inter-dependence' and 'generativity' as opposed to 'interpersonal constriction' and 'stagnation' is the

need for reciprocity. Tesch [1983], studying adult relationships, found that the experience of 'reciprocity' increases in importance in adulthood. 'Reciprocity' allows for harmony between the yearning for inclusion and the yearning for distinctness. It is within the context of mutually supportive, 'reciprocal' relationships that an individual can be encouraged to develop and grow toward self-actualization. Moreover, it is in the context of 'reciprocal' mutuality that interpersonal connectedness is deepened and a sense of 'interdependence' emerges. Lack of 'reciprocity' results in a sense of estrangement, progressive decline in connectedness and inhibiting constriction, along with an increasing sense of boredom, self-absorption and stagnation.

Reciprocity brings together all the previously developed interpersonal competencies and places a deeper, more profound emphasis on empathy, understanding and compassion; on giving and receiving; on responsibility, dependability and commitment, and on mutual support, trust, openness and acceptance. Beyond acceptance, individuals also come to admire, respect and truly value the unique individuality of another [Tesch, 1983]. All of these together facilitate the emergence of deeper, more vital, reciprocally rewarding, interdependent relationships, involving a healthy mix of autonomy and intimacy, as well as a commitment to continued growth and development [Macklin, 1983]. Moreover, a deeper, more mature form of intimacy, involving the capacity to be absorbed in sharing with another while remaining unique and separate [Buber, 1965], can emerge at this time.

The degree to which 'reciprocity' is attained will profoundly affect all communal and agentic developments of this stage. It determines the degree to which adults channel their energies into 'generative', creative, altruistic endeavors rather than disengaging from others and living increasingly constricted and restricted life styles. Furthermore, the negotiation of this balance will greatly affect the resolution of the next, last stage of agentic and communal psychosocial development.

Old Age: Interpersonal Acceptance versus Relational Distress

The last stage of the life cycle brings with it the task of dealing with the issues of aging, illness and death. In facing one's own mortality and potential separation from the social system, one must come to terms with one's life as it has been lived, with living out one's remaining years and with dying. All of these issues can be faced with a sense of distress and despair, or with a serene sense of

acceptance. Attaining a balance between these two is the underlying issue in the concluding developments of both agentic and communal pathways.

In terms of agentic development, it is at this stage that one consolidates one's own individual life cycle and emerges with a sense of 'ego integrity' versus 'despair' [Erikson, 1950]. In terms of communion, the final stage brings about a culmination of one's interpersonal development as well as the task of dealing with the many changes occurring in one's interpersonal connections. Capturing the nature of this communal task, the last stage is termed 'interpersonal acceptance' versus 'relational distress'.

Facing mortality, both one's own and that of significant others, brings with it the ultimate challenge to one's sense of connectedness. It is at this stage of life that individuals must face and come to terms with many losses and changes. In dealing with these changes they must simultaneously develop the capacity to let go and the capacity to reconnect despite loss. It is in this context that the adequacy of prior communion development plays a central role. Those who have evolved adequate communal competencies will be able to continue maintaining a sense of connectedness, while simultaneously preparing for ultimate, final separation. Morever, they can develop a tranquil sense of 'interpersonal acceptance' regarding the changes occurring in their interpersonal sphere. This experience, in turn, enables them to continue engaging in active, vital, satisfying and fulfilling relationships throughout the last years of life, despite potential, and real, losses.

On the other hand, individuals who have not evolved adequate communal connectedness may be unable to overcome serious losses or negotiate the changes in relationships. This further inhibits the attainment of an attitude of 'interpersonal acceptance' and results in 'relational distress'. This 'relational distress' may be manifested in a number of ways. Some older adults may withdraw from interpersonal connections, resulting in lonely isolation, impoverished living and depression. Others may desperately hold on and cling to others, which is often manifested in intrusive neediness and equally unsatisfying relationships. Still others may experience a great deal of resentment, bitterness and frustration in relationships, leading to complaints and demands or hostile rejection of others. In all these cases, the relational distress further disrupts interpersonal connectedness and causes additional difficulties in resolving the issues of the final stage of life.

In facing these issues, the communal need of this last stage is the need for companionship. It is the need to be accompanied and supported in one's final years, the need for continued interpersonal connectedness while facing losses and separations. 'Companionship' with peers, significant loved ones and the younger generation serves to maintain communal connectedness, promotes involvement in active living and facilitates continued appreciation and enjoyment of one's last years. Moreover, these relationships also provide opportunities for useful productivity, contributing to a continued sense of self-worth. Thus, 'companionship' during old age serves as an important source of rejuvenating vitality, growth and fulfillment while effectively mitigating against distressing loneliness and despair.

Clearly, interpersonal relationships serve a vital function in determining the quality of life during old age. It is within the context of these relationships and one's continued feelings of connectedness that a sense of 'interpersonal acceptance' can emerge. It is also within the context of this connectedness and the continued experience of usefulness, selffulfillment and active engagement in the social system that a sense of 'ego integrity' [Erikson, 1950] can be consolidated. Once again, communal and agentic strands of development can be seen to be intricately related. Indeed, in the final resolution of one's life cycle both communal connectedness and agentic action serve equally important roles. Successful communal and agentic integration enables the elderly individual to cope with issues of aging and mortality with a minimum of distress and a maximum of serene acceptance. Old age and death can then be faced with tranquility, wisdom and a 'detached yet active concern with life bounded by death' [Erikson, 1968, p. 40].

Reprise: Love and Development

Correcting for agentic bias in traditional theories, an attempt has been made to include stages of communion development within a comprehensive model of lifespan psychosocial development. Expanding upon Erikson's [1950, 1968] model, each stage of psychosocial development has been presented in terms of both its agency and its communion developments. Transformations in interpersonal relating across the life cycle have been presented, along with the specific communion needs which facilitate development at each stage. Moreover, it has been shown that at each point in the life cycle agentic and communal pathways are intricately related, directly affecting each other's

development. What emerges is a model of personality development which attempts to account for both individuation and connectedness, as well as their interaction across the life span.

Within this context, an important endeavor here has been the delineation of a stage model of communion development. It has been shown that the critical tasks and needs of each stage of the life cycle lead to the development of new, qualitatively different forms of interpersonal connectedness. Each transformation in communion subsumes and builds upon previous developments and is significantly determined by the adequacy of those developments.

The infant who receives adequate responsiveness becomes capable of incorporative bonding. If the toddler's self-assertions are met with acceptance, this bonding is transformed into a sense of secure attachment. The preschooler who is met with appropriate attention becomes capable of interactive association. The school child's need for approval then facilitates the emergence of true social relatedness. The young adolescent transforms social relatedness into conformity-oriented affiliation. If affiliative needs are met, the older adolescent develops more differentiated belongingness. With adequate experiences of belonging, the individual becomes able to engage in the mutuality of intimacy. The adult who experiences interpersonal reciprocity attains a higher awareness of communal interdependence. Finally, the aging adult who deals with losses within the context of continued companionships faces mortality with a sense of interpersonal acceptance.

On the other hand, each stage has its own qualitatively different estrangement based on unmet interpersonal needs. Without adequate responsiveness the infant withdraws. Lack of acceptance in the toddler years leads to fear of abandonment. During the preschool years, inadequate or inappropriate attention results in egocentric disregard. Lacking adequate experiences of approval, the school child remains self-insistent and self-centered. Without adequate affiliation, the young adolescent suffers from the devastating effects of exclusion. Failing to experience belongingness, the older adolescent suffers from a sense of alienation. Without experiences of intimacy, the young adult is left with a sense of isolation and loneliness. Lacking experiences of reciprocity, the middleaged adult becomes interpersonally impoverished and constricted. Without companionship, the older adult experiences relational distress and despair in facing mortality.

In general, individuals emerge out of each functional stage attaining some balance between new forms of connectedness and the effects of impeding estrangements, including some degree of both poles. Moreover, each new stage provides opportunities for reintegrating previous stages and overcoming deficits within the context of new, more gratifying relationships.

These resolutions not only affect general interpersonal interactions, but also shape the quality of dyadic love relationships. Those who remain at earlier stages of communion development will manifest what White et al., [1986; see also White et al., this volume] describe as a lower-level, self-focused, egocentric, self-serving form of relatedness in their marriages. Those who attain adequate affiliation and belongingness, but stop short of full intimacy, will manifest what White et al. [1986] describe as a role-focused, tradition-bound, conformist orientation to their marriage. Those who attain the higher developments of intimacy and interdependence will manifest an 'individuated-connected' relationships pattern, including the ability to integrate conflicting needs and value partners for their unique qualities [White et al., 1986]. Thus, this model of communion development not only depicts a broader interpersonal picture, but also explains variations in specific relationships from a developmental perspective.

Furthermore, in emphasizing the relationship of this communion model to agentic development, a more integrated understanding of development emerges. Moreover, it is possible to transcend the myopic polarization of male-female sex differences in favor of perceiving the universality of agency and communal pathways and their continuous interaction throughout the life cycle. Although there may be some gender differences in the orientation to agency and communion, both men and women are consistently involved with both agentic, individuated action and communal, interpersonal relatedness at every developmental stage. Therefore, a comprehensive model of human development must include both agency and communion pathways.

Summary

Correcting for agentic bias in traditional theories, this theoretical conceptualization of life-span psychosocial development provides a model of communion development and describes its relationship with agency development. Expanding Erikson's theory, developmental stages are described in terms of (1) the transformations in interpersonal relating characteristic of each stage, (2) the communion need which motivates and facilitates development and

(3) the dialectic interaction between agentic individuation and communal connectedness, and their role in development. This presentation integrates various relevant theoretical and empirical findings in an attempt to provide a more comprehensive understanding of development which includes both agency and communion themes.

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