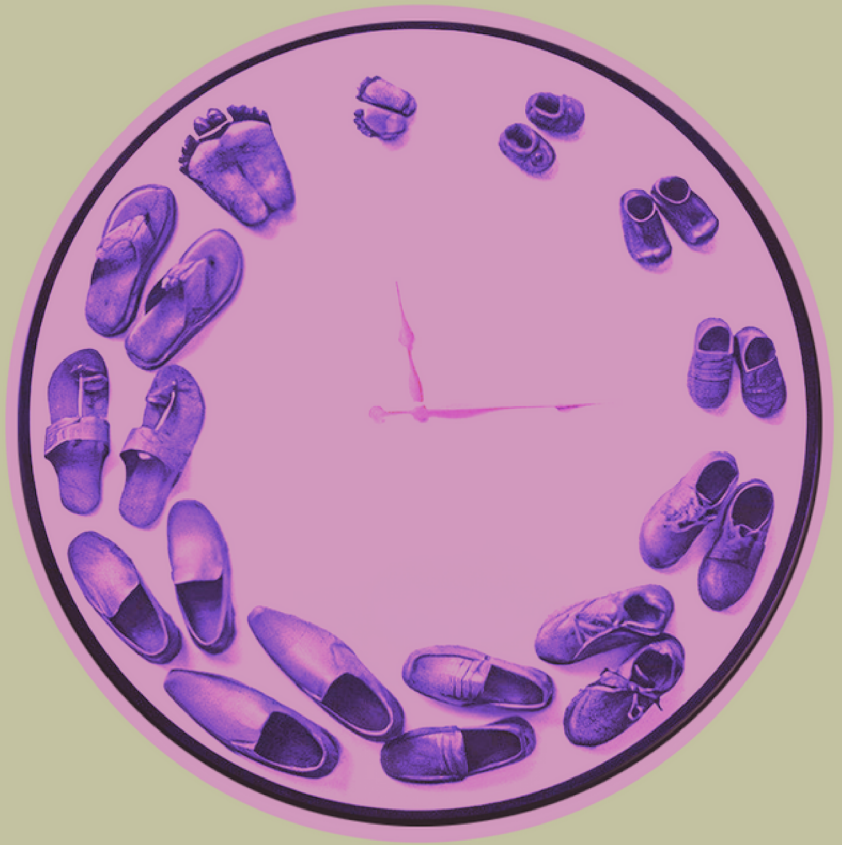


THE PSYCHOLOGIST'S NOTEBOOK

Volume 2

TIME CAPSULE: KNOW YOUR PSYCHOLOGICAL STAGES

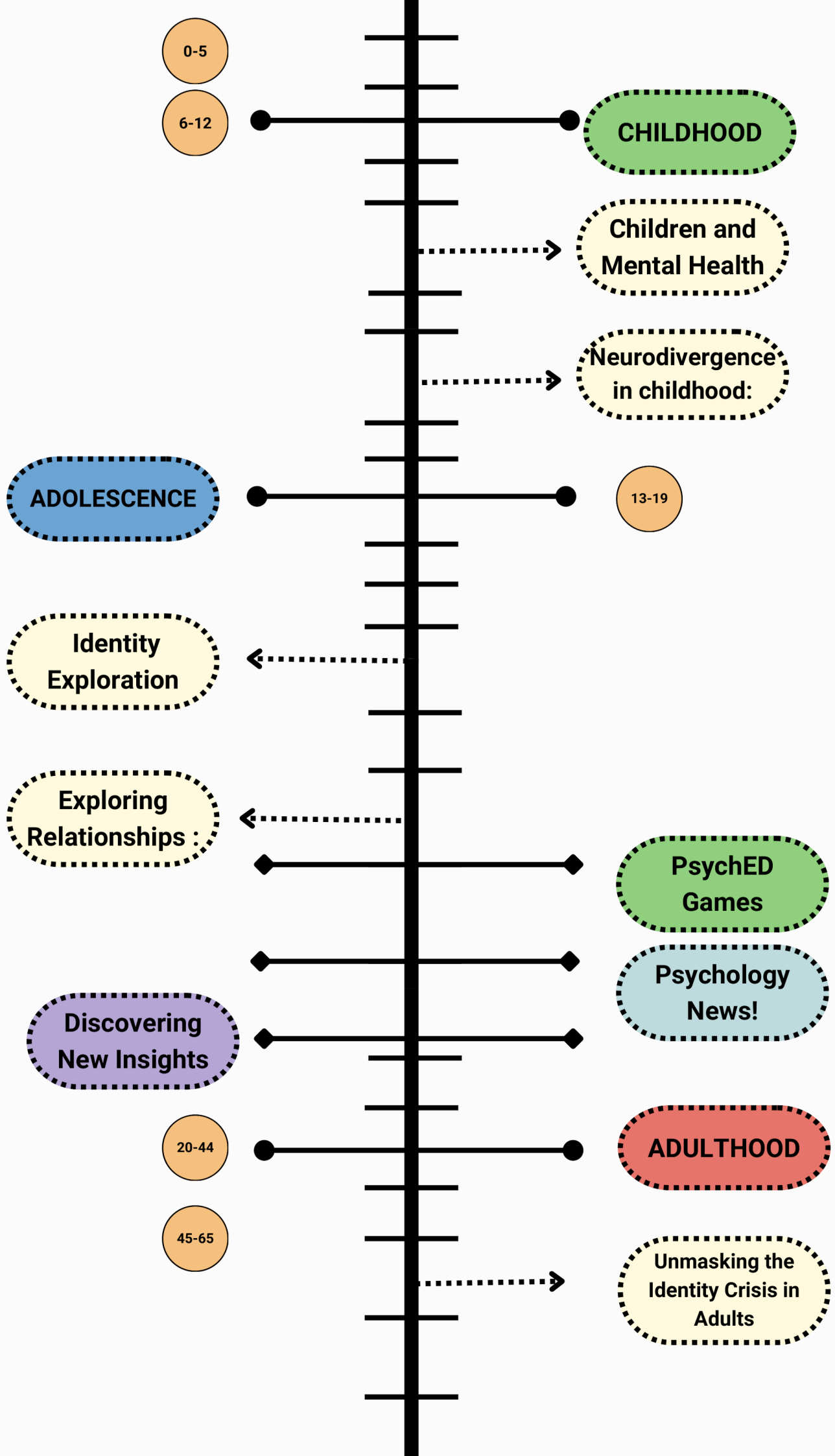


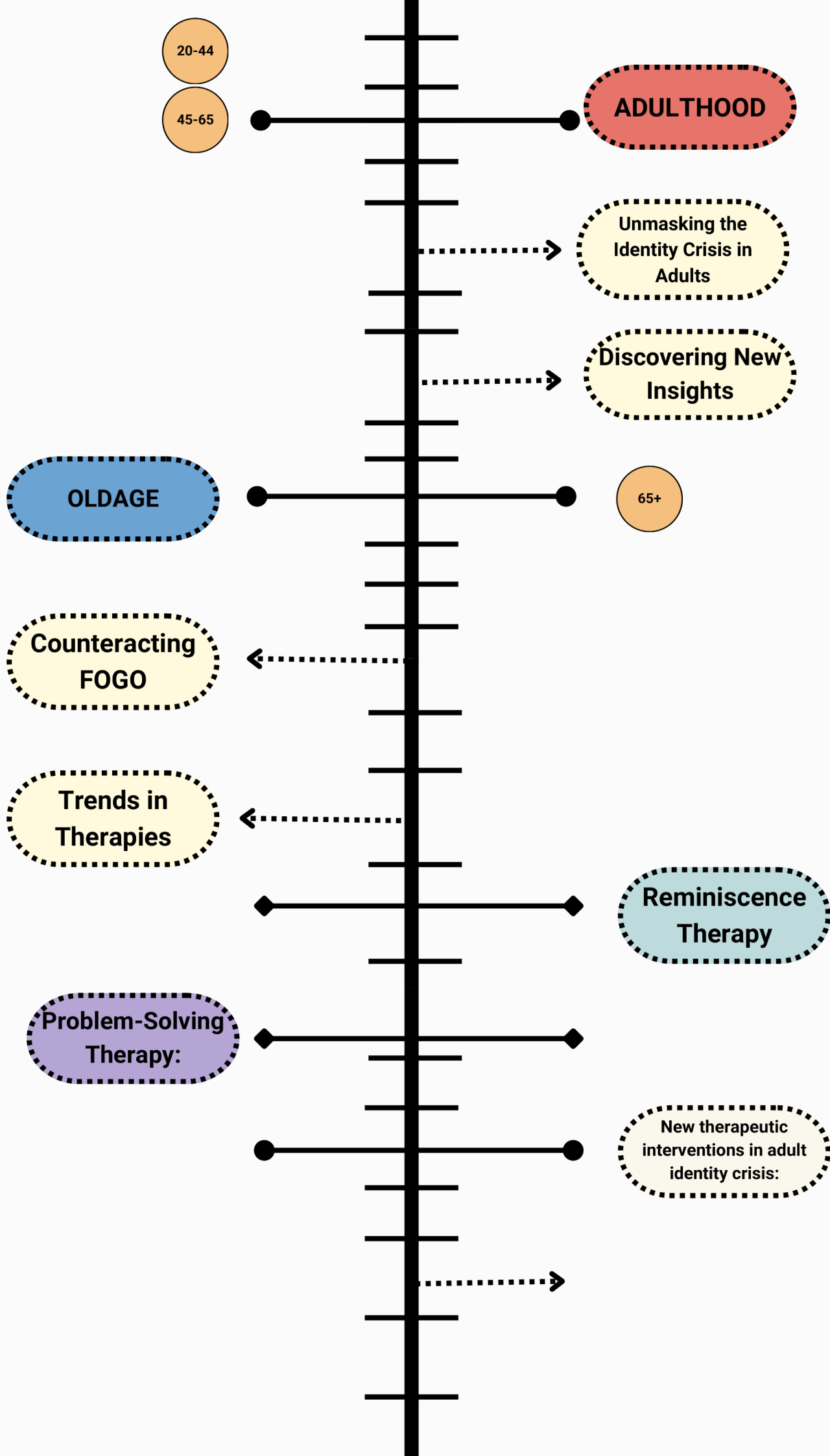
A Psychologist's Guide to
Embracing Neurodiversity
in Children

How Positive Aging can
Help you Conquer FOGO

It is a True Love or a
Temporary Obsession?

The Perpetual Search for
Self-Identity in Adulthood







DEVELOPMENT STAGE Childhood



"The path of development is a journey of discovery that is clear only in retrospect, and it's rarely a straight line."

— Eileen Kennedy-Moore

Celebrate Differences: A Psychologist's Guide to Embracing Neurodiversity in Children



Social media loves to talk about the term neurodiversity but what does it actually mean? Well, to put it simply, *“Neurodiversity is the idea that there’s natural variation in how people’s brains work and how people experience, understand, and interact with the world. This means there are natural differences in the way people learn and communicate.”*

As the name itself suggests it represents the diversity in mental abilities and the acknowledgment that people can be different, and function differently and that is completely okay.

What makes someone neurodivergent?

There are certain neurodevelopmental and psychological disorders that affect individuals' overall abilities, making them different from their peers in their behavior, brain functioning, emotions, etc. *Their brain develops differently before birth and during childhood, and affects how someone communicates, behaves, and responds to the world around them.* Again, this doesn't necessarily mean that having these disorders is innately bad or wrong. As mentioned earlier it represents diversity and acknowledges it. Neurodivergent children are also often called Children With Special Needs or CWSN.

The disorders that lead to neurodivergence are;

- Autism spectrum disorder (this includes what was once known as Asperger's syndrome).
- Attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).
- Down syndrome.
- Dyscalculia (difficulty with math).
- Dysgraphia (difficulty with writing).
- Dyslexia (difficulty with reading).
- Dyspraxia (difficulty with coordination).
- Intellectual disabilities.
- Mental health conditions like bipolar disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder, and more.
- Prader-Willi syndrome.
- Sensory processing disorders.
- Social anxiety (a specific type of anxiety disorder).
- Tourette syndrome.
- Williams syndrome.



Fun fact!

People who are neurodivergent are often very creative, have better focus, are topic experts, are more loyal and honest, have better visual acuity, are more understanding, and are more interested in social issues. There are studies to back this up!

Impact of neurodivergence on childhood

Being neurodivergent means that your communication, the way you express yourself, the way you receive and understand the world around you, your behaviour, and your emotional patterns are all different from that of neurotypical folks. So understandably children can face difficulties because of it. Especially in school and during learning. These differences can be difficult for an adult to navigate as well.

Often times people get diagnosed much later in life, especially women. So a lot of children do not get an official diagnosis. This can create a lot of challenges for children with their families, peers, and even in academics. They may be called lazy, or different, or struggle with relationships and socialization. They may face significant issues in learning as well which if not addressed or cared for can create a lot of stigma and even emotional and behavioural issues.

Decoding Childhood Mental Health: Phases or Problems?

"If you see someone without a smile, give them one of yours."



Raising a child can be quite the challenge, wouldn't you agree? Even in the best of circumstances, their behaviour and emotions can fluctuate quickly and often. It's completely normal for children to experience moments of sadness, anxiety, irritability, or even show signs of aggression from time to time. They might occasionally struggle to sit still, pay attention, or effectively communicate with others. In most instances, these are just common developmental phases that children go through. However, in some cases, these behaviours could be indicative of more serious underlying issues in certain children.

We might often overlook how the child's mental health is important for their overall well-being.

As parents, we often prioritise the physical health of our children, becoming instantly alarmed by even a minor sneeze or a small rash. These concerns can quickly trigger our anxieties and prompt us to take immediate action. However, do we react with the same level of concern when faced with our child's angry outburst or a moment of isolated behaviour? The answer is likely not.

Many people overlook emotional displays as indicators of poor health. Unlike physical ailments, mental health concerns often go unnoticed. However, good health encompasses not only physical well-being but also mental stability.

Mentally healthy children often have a positive approach toward life and get along well at home, school, and community.

There are a number of factors impacting a child's mental health. Let's take a look at a few of those quickly:

One of the most crucial contributors is the parenting style. [Children's mental health is significantly shaped by how parents interact with them. In many instances, the style of parenting plays a pivotal role in either enhancing or hindering a child's mental well-being.](#) Research has shown that today's parents tend to be very open and friendly with their children. However, I believe that, in many cases, they tend to overindulge their kids, striving to fulfill their every desire. This can have a detrimental impact on children, as it fosters an attitude of "I get what I want." When these youngsters inevitably confront the realities of the outside world, their heightened sensitivity leaves them vulnerable to mental distress.

[Another significant factor contributing to mental distress is the academic pressure that children face. In today's highly digitalized and materialistic world, the landscape poses numerous challenges to the mental well-being of young students.](#) Many parents today establish exceedingly high, often unrealistic, expectations for their children, encompassing both academic achievements and extracurricular activities. This constant comparison with their peers adds another layer of stress, significantly impacting their mental health.

Inevitably, children internalise this pressure and struggle to find a healthy outlet to release their frustrations, often resorting to aggression as a means of coping.

Another significant factor impacting mental well-being is the compelling need to belong and be a part of a social group. We humans, being inherently social animals, have an innate need to connect with others, and it's one of our fundamental requirements. This desire to fit in is deeply ingrained in children. Kids and young people often go to great lengths to find acceptance among their peers. However, in some cases, once they become part of a group, there's a tendency for some children to exclude others. Those who are left out are typically perceived as different in some way, and they feel a strong pressure to change themselves in order to conform to the group's expectations. Deliberate exclusion, in such cases, can be viewed as a form of bullying.



Apart from the ones stated above, there are numerous other factors that impact the mental well-being of children. These include, extreme temperament, whether it's extreme shyness or aggressiveness, which can significantly influence their emotional state. Low levels of self-esteem and self-confidence can also be detrimental. Poor bonding with parents and other family members can lead to feelings of isolation and insecurity. Family-related challenges like broken family relationships or having divorced parents can be emotionally taxing.

Experiences such as bullying, peer rejection, and discrimination can cause considerable distress. Emotional trauma and stress, coupled with the traumatic experience of physical or sexual abuse, can have long-lasting consequences. Feelings of isolation and separation anxiety can contribute to a sense of loneliness and unease. Socio-economic disadvantages can add an extra layer of stress to a child's life, making it even more crucial to address these factors in promoting their mental well-being.

Social and emotional development in children is closely tied to their relationships with the people who care for them, be it parents, grandparents, or teachers. It's fascinating to observe how children react to different responses from adults. When a child takes a tumble and looks around for an adult's reaction, their response can greatly influence the child's emotions. If the adult rushes over with concern, the child might burst into tears, but if the adult reassures them with a simple, "You're okay!" and continues with their activities, the child usually remains calm. This interaction highlights how children learn to interpret and express their emotions by observing the responses of the adults around them.

For instance, consider Rohit Verma, an 8th-grade student from Kerala, who often grapples with feelings of depression and frustration when things don't go as he hoped. He confesses, "I sometimes have this overwhelming urge to vent my frustration by lashing out at everything in my path. There are moments when I direct my anger towards my parents and even my friends. Later, when I reflect on my actions, I can't help but feel remorse, but in the heat of the moment, I struggle to control myself." Rohit's experience serves as a poignant reminder of the complexities of children's emotional development and the need for guidance and support in navigating these challenging emotions.

To put it simply, a child's mental health is influenced by several key factors: their innate temperament, the mental well-being of their parents, the quality of interactions with caregivers, and the emotional environment in both their school and neighbourhood.



Did you know?

The brain is about 2% of a body's weight but uses 20% of the body's total energy and oxygen intake.

-Your brain is 73% water. It takes only 2% dehydration to affect your attention, memory and other cognitive skills.

-The brain operates on the same amount of power as a 10-watt light bulb.

-The cerebrum is the largest part of the brain and makes up 85% of the brain's weight.

Your skin weighs twice as much as your brain.

Mental Health and Wellness Tips for Students!



1. Music

Research from the British Academy of Sound Therapy (BAST) has shown there is a common dosage for music and revealed how long an individual needs to listen to it for a therapeutic effect to be experienced. Various studies have also proven the calming effect of classical music. As well as having the power to ease nerves and jitters, and decrease your heart rate, it can also lower your cortisol levels and increase blood flow to the brain.

2. Get Active

paper titled "Role of Physical Activity on Mental Health and Well-Being," Mahindru, Aditya et al. discuss the therapeutic effects of yoga. Yoga has been found to activate neuromuscular systems, stimulate the limbic system, and reduce sympathetic tone, making it a useful treatment for various conditions. Mind-body interventions, aimed at enhancing the mind's ability to regulate bodily functions, have shown promise in treating neurosis-related mental health issues. In their review

3. Journaling

There are benefits of journaling for anxiety symptoms. One study by Hasanzadeh, Khoshknab, and Norozi found that the simple act of journaling reduced anxiety in women who were suffering from multiple sclerosis. Another study found that journaling could help students effectively manage stress and anxiety, as well as improve overall classroom engagement.

4. Progressive relaxation

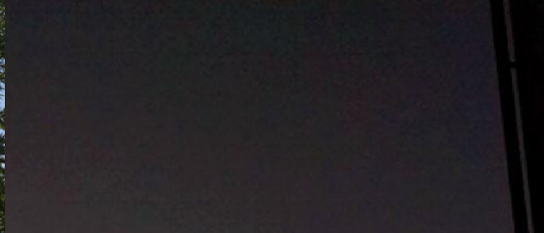
Also known as body scan meditation, progressive relaxation is a practice aimed at reducing tension in the body and promoting relaxation.

Oftentimes, this form of meditation involves slowly tightening and relaxing one muscle group at a time throughout the body.

In some cases, it may also encourage you to imagine a gentle wave flowing through your body to help release any tension.

5. Art therapy

Arts and creative therapies may be helpful if you find it difficult to express your thoughts and feelings. They may also help address painful feelings or experiences, including experiences of trauma. Visual art therapy (known as 'art therapy') involves using visual art materials. For example, you might use pens, pencils, crayons, paint, chalk, clay, or collaging. You might also use digital media, such as photos or video. You don't need to have any art skills or experience.



DEVELOPMENTAL STAGE

ADOLESCENCE



"Adolescence is the chief rapids in this river of life which may cut a deep canyon and leave its shores a desert."— G. Stanley Hall

You are encouraged to sit and rest,
relax and cuddle, and gently engage with
the artwork on display.

"Discovering Your True Self: The Key to a Fulfilling Life"

As individuals, we often question who we are, what we value, and where we belong in the world. Throughout life, we engage in a continual process of self-discovery, navigating experiences and relationships that shape our understanding of who we are and what resonates with us. However, adolescence stands out as a pivotal phase where this exploration takes center stage, as young individuals actively seek to define their values, beliefs, and aspirations.

Erikson, a renowned psychologist, believed that during adolescence, the primary psychosocial task revolves around the establishment of one's identity. It's a time when you try out different things to see what you like and who you want to be. This includes your attitudes, how you dress, what you do for fun, who you hang out with, and what you're into at school. If you look at pictures of yourself from when you were 13, 14, 15, or 16, you might notice how you changed in how you dressed and acted during those years. That's just a normal part of trying new things.



Adolescents, in their quest to discover their true selves, often embark on a journey through multiple identities before finding one that aligns with their core being. This process of identity development, influenced by factors such as family life, environment, and social status, is a complex one.

Empirical studies indicate that it's more accurately described as *identity development rather than formation*, as it confirms a normative process of change in both the content and structure of one's self-concept.

Recall your childhood when your parents typically selected your friends or organized playdates with certain children they knew and liked. As you've grown older, you've assumed the role of deciding who your friends are and the groups you associate with.



It's natural for individuals to identify with and compare themselves to their peers as they contemplate who they aspire to be or what they aim to achieve. Peer influence stems from a desire to belong, to emulate admired peers, to engage in what others are doing, or to possess what others have. This influence can manifest overtly ("Come on, it's just one beer, and everyone else is having one") or more subtly, such as making beer available at a gathering.

In some cases, peer pressure isn't easy to define. Groups can convey subtle signals without uttering a word, hinting at how you should dress, speak, or adopt specific attitudes toward school, peers, parents, and teachers to gain acceptance and approval. People often feel compelled to conform to avoid feeling awkward or uncomfortable in social situations, seeking cues from others about what's acceptable behavior.

To some extent, peer pressure is a normal part of adolescence, a time when individuation from parents is at its peak. Individuation involves the process of defining and establishing a unique identity. [During this phase, adolescents look to their friends as role models in shaping their own identities.](#)

The desire to fit in and look socially acceptable drives many young individuals to step out of their comfort zones and engage in behaviors they might not otherwise choose. This constant urge to conform to what is perceived as cool or trendy among peers can lead to actions under peer influence.

Another powerful aspect of peer pressure is the fear of missing out (FOMO). Adolescents often feel compelled to follow the crowd because they don't want to be left behind, sometimes disregarding their own desires in favor of what others are doing.

Unfortunately, in some cases, peer pressure can become relentless, with individuals persistently trying to persuade others to go along with them. When this behavior involves threats or verbal abuse, it crosses the line into *bullying*.

Bullying is an extreme form of negative peer pressure, which can have a profound impact on an individual's self-esteem, both emotionally and sometimes physically. For instance, if a friend pressures a newly sober friend to drink and then mocks and belittles them for refusing, it transitions from peer pressure to outright hostility and bullying.

Moreover, peer pressure can perpetuate bullying within a group. For example, if one person in the group mocks someone, others might join in, fearing that not doing so would make them the next target. This complex interplay of peer dynamics underscores the importance of understanding and addressing these issues with sensitivity and care.

As we continue to explore the dynamics of peer interactions and their impact on adolescent development, it becomes increasingly evident that fostering a sense of self-worth and identity is essential. By doing so, we can empower the next generation to make choices that reflect their genuine desires, values, and aspirations, ultimately helping them build a strong foundation for a fulfilling and authentic future.



Psychology News!

Ketamine infusions might improve cognitive function in depressed individuals

A study of individuals with treatment-resistant depression found that four infusions of the antidepressant ketamine led to enhanced cognitive functioning that persisted for five weeks. These improvements appeared to be independent of the antidepressant response. The study was published in the Journal of Affective Disorders.

<https://www.psypost.org/2023/11/ketamine-infusions-might-improve-cognitive-function-in-depressed-individuals-214565>

Unraveling Love: Is It True Love or a Temporary Obsession?



Love, an emotion so profound, often sweeps us off our feet, enveloping us in an exhilarating whirlwind of affection and longing. This enchanting experience, particularly in the early stages of a new romance, can make the world fade away, leaving just one person in the spotlight.

However, what happens when this infatuation takes a dangerous turn, evolving into an all-consuming craving? This is where a simple crush transforms into limerence – a state of intense romantic infatuation blended with a touch of obsession and a storm of fantastical desires, all fixated on one extraordinary individual.

Psychologist Dorothy Tenov introduced the term "limerence" in the 1970s. Her work revealed that some people's experiences of love were exceptionally intense. The intensity of limerence doesn't discriminate; it can affect anyone, transcending gender, age, culture, and background.

Limerence encapsulates a state of being trapped in a web of uncertainty and hope. The person in this state is constantly oscillating between the fear of rejection and the yearning for reciprocation. It's the inability to confess feelings and the absence of complete rejection that defines limerence. Within this web of emotions, the limerent individual becomes engrossed in analyzing the object of their affection, diligently scrutinizing their every gesture and expression for signs of reciprocation. They replay past interactions and indulge in vivid fantasies of a shared future. The hallmark of limerence is that these thoughts and desires are uncontrollable and all-consuming.

While there's absolutely nothing wrong with seeking love – the innocent, deeply human desire to connect with another person – it's crucial to distinguish between love and limerence. Love is a product of chemical reactions in our brain and body, compelling us to form emotional and physical bonds with someone. It's selfless, involving genuine concern for the other person's happiness, and it respects their feelings and desires.

On the contrary, limerence is a turbulent mix of emotions, often masquerading as love because it's glamorized in movies and songs. However, the driving force behind limerent behaviors is anxiety, stemming from the limerent's needs rather than a genuine concern for the other person's well-being. Limerence also burdens the other person with an expectation that their feelings should be reciprocated, paving the way for jealousy and potential anger if the LO (Limerence Object) has other relationships. Limerence, therefore, carries a heavy burden of anxiety, uncertainty, and discomfort for everyone involved.

Connection is a fundamental human need that begins at infancy. Babies are hardwired to form strong attachments to their primary caregivers, as their very survival depends on it. When children endure ongoing neglect without the psychological and physical safety they need, they internalize fear. For children, the fear of abandonment looms large. This fear is not just a childhood concern but a primal and universal fear, experienced to varying degrees by us all. Abandonment issues are rooted in experiences that left you feeling like you couldn't rely on others to fulfill your needs, whether due to real or perceived abandonment, emotional or physical neglect.



Abandonment wounds run deep, and they can take various forms, whether through absent, abusive, or inadequate parenting. Sometimes the wounds are subtle, originating from emotionally unavailable parents, teasing siblings, or the feeling of being routinely ignored. Peer rejection, chronic sickness, romantic break-ups, or prolonged singleness can also trigger these wounds, shaping your attachment style.

(If you're curious to know which attachment style you might have, I have a test for you:

<https://www.infiheal.com/personality-test/adult-attachment-style/>)

Insecure attachment, particularly anxious attachment, bears a striking resemblance to limerence.



It arises from inconsistent caregiving during childhood, leading to an unbalanced sense of security in relationships. Those with an anxious attachment style often grapple with preoccupation about their relationship, emotional dependency, and low self-esteem. Their self-worth becomes contingent on gaining the approval and acceptance of others, creating a profound fear of rejection and a constant need to please their partner.

In essence, limerence is not caused by the limerent objects' exceptional desirability but by unmet childhood needs. Now, let's explore the phases of limerence with brevity:

Pre-Limerence: In this initial phase, there's no specific love interest, but a deep yearning to fall in love and be loved in return. When someone shows potential signs of reciprocation, they become the limerent object. Typically, the choice of partners isn't selective; anyone offering intense love becomes the limerent's focus.

Pre-Reciprocity: In this stage, the limerent becomes enamored with the limerent object, believing that there's some interest on the limerent object's part, even without explicit reciprocation. The search for signs of the limerent object's affection leads to moments of elation but also doubt and anxiety about whether the feelings are mutual.

Reciprocity: If the limerent object rejects the limerent, it might end the limerent episode, often causing emotional devastation. When the limerent object reciprocates, a fervent and obsessive love usually unfolds. As the relationship progresses, limerence may wane as commitment and love deepen, but it can persist in the face of ongoing uncertainty.

Gradual Dissolution: In most cases, limerence naturally diminishes, which can be challenging for those involved. It can lead to confusion and, at times, the end of the relationship. Alternatively, it can pave the way for the transition to a healthier form of love.



Psychology News!

Diminishing Addiction Cravings by Altering Vivid Imagery

A new study introduces a novel approach to combat addiction by using Eye Movement Desensitization Reprocessing (EMDR) to alter the vivid imagery associated with addiction memories. This innovative therapy, coupled with cognitive behavioral therapy, shows promise in significantly reducing cravings and negative thought patterns in substance use disorders.

<https://neurosciencenews.com/addiction-vivid-imagery-25211/>

Reciprocity: If the limerent object rejects the limerent, it might end the

Post-Limerence: After the intensity of limerence fades, some relationships grow stronger through open communication and collaboration, while for others, the loss of limerence can be a heart-wrenching experience. In such cases, the limerent individual might return to the pre-limerence stage, longing to love and be loved once again.

Limerence's impact varies in intensity, determining the need for intervention. **It's crucial to remember that limerence isn't primarily about the limerent object; it's a manifestation of deeper psychological yearnings and wounds within yourself.** Taking an introspective approach is the first step toward healing. Limerence, while intense and sometimes deafening, signifies your capacity to love intensely. Redirect that love inward, using it as a tool to heal past wounds and insecurities. Embrace self-compassion, be your own best friend, and embark on a journey to overcome limerence while fostering healthier relationships in the future.

Psychology News



Highlights!



Simple blood tests can help diagnose bipolar disorder

University of Cambridge researchers employed an online psychiatric assessment and a blood test to diagnose bipolar disorder, correcting misdiagnoses of major depressive disorder. The blood test alone identifies 30% of bipolar disorder cases, with enhanced accuracy when paired with a digital mental health assessment.

<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2023/10/231025162958.htm>

Yeast cells can produce drugs for the treatment of psychotic disorders

An international team of researchers has demonstrated that genetically engineered yeast cells can produce the natural plant product alstonine, which has shown positive effects in treating schizophrenia.

<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2023/11/231110112450.htm>

How climate change could be affecting your brain

In a paper published today in Nature Climate Change, an international team of academics explore the ways in which research has shown that a changing environment affects how our brains work, and how climate change could impact our brain function in the future.

<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2023/11/231113111833.htm>

Early-life stress changes more genes in the brain than a head injury

A surprising thing happened when researchers began exploring whether early-life stress compounds the effects of a childhood head injury on health and behavior later in life: In an animal study, stress changed the activation level of many more genes in the brain than were changed by a bump to the head.

<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2023/11/231113111823.htm>

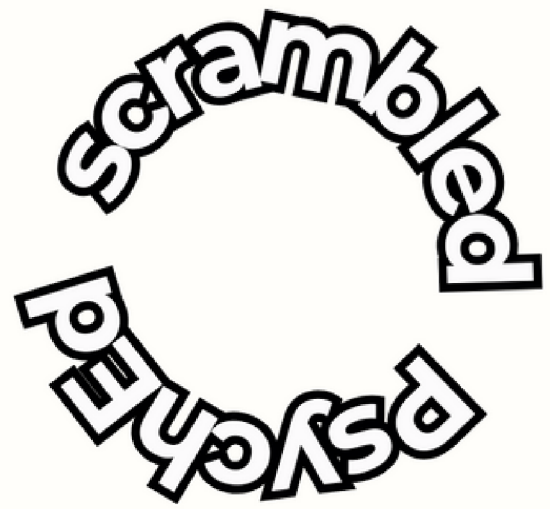
—PsychED—

WITH DR. PSYCLOPS!



FROM DR PSYCLOPS

I HAVE THE ANSWERS TO PREVIOUS VOLUMES OF PSYCHED GAMES!
CHECK TO SEE HOW MANY YOU GOT RIGHT LAST TIME!



UNSCRAMBLE THE PSYCH WORDS

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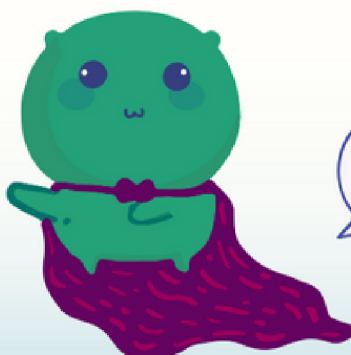
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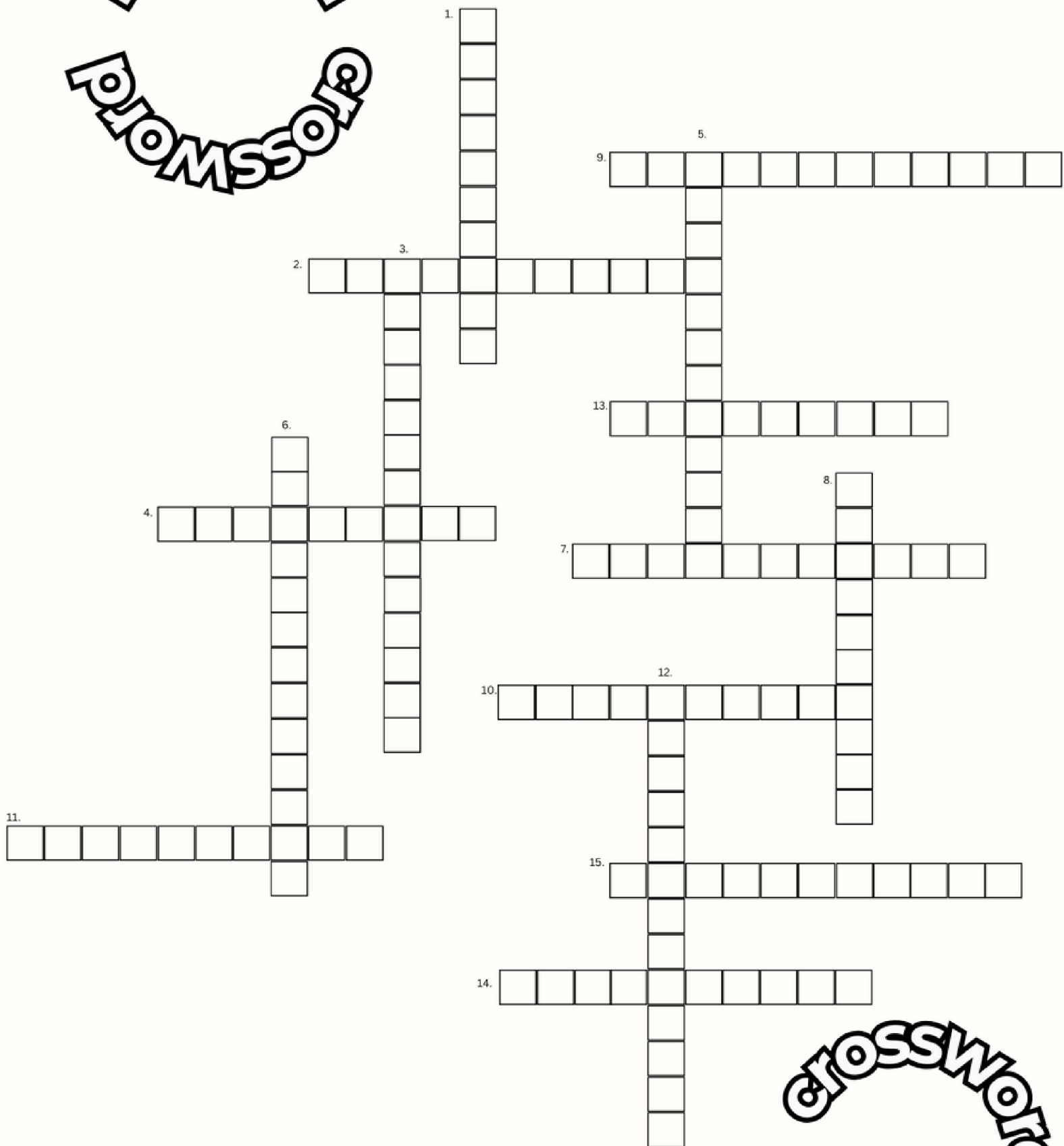
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Healo hint! Think developmental theories, areas, etc

PsychE
CrossWord



CrossWord
PsychE



Across

- 2.** German-American psychoanalyst known for his theory on psychological development of human beings. He coined the phrase identity crisis.
- 4.** A mental rule of thumb that can facilitate problem-solving and probability judgments.
- 7.** Constant feelings of inadequacy or insecurity in your daily life due to a belief that you are physically or mentally not up to par with others.
- 9.** A mental quality that consists of the abilities to learn from experience, adapt to new situations, understand and handle abstract concepts, and use knowledge to manipulate one's environment.
- 10.** A Swiss psychologist known for his work on cognitive development. His theory of cognitive development and epistemological view are together called "genetic epistemology."
- 11.** A proposed explanation for a phenomenon that can be tested through experimentation or observation.
- 13.** Factors or elements that can change and impact the outcomes in a scientific experiment or study.
- 14.** Hostile or violent behavior, often associated with anger or frustration.
- 15.** A statistical measure that indicates the extent to which two or more variables change together. The term describes the degree of relationship between two factors in a scientific study.

Down

- 1.** An agent that induces developmental abnormalities in a fetus.
- 3.** Experiential or functional form of memory which cannot be recalled.
- 5.** A phenomenon in which one seems to direct feelings or desires related to an important figure in one's life—such as a parent—towards the therapist.
- 6.** The oldest school of psychology, which uses the method of introspection to identify the basic elements of psychological experience.
- 8.** The process of organizing and interpreting sensory information.
- 12.** The treatment of psychological disorders through various therapeutic techniques.



CASE MASTER

As promised in the last volume of The Psychologist's Notebook, I will now disclose what the previous case's diagnosis was! Kathleen had **ADHD**. a big pat on the back for those of you who guess right!



FROM DR PSYCLOPS NOTES!

THE NAME KATHLEEN WAS TO PAY HOMAGE TO CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGIST **KATHLEEN NADEAU**. DR. NADEAU IS AN INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNIZED AUTHORITY ON ADHD. AND HAS BEEN KNOWN TO HELP PEOPLE - ABOVE ALL GIRLS AND WOMEN - UNDERSTAND AND DEAL WITH THE DISORDER, BECAUSE WOMEN AND GIRLS ARE THE ONES DOCTORS HAVE HISTORICALLY UNDERDIAGNOSED AND UNDERTREATED.



Memory is such a fascinating thing to me, it is as if we have a depository of every moment of our life, well documented. I like to imagine a big gothic hallway, decorated with photographs wall to wall, with rooms that each represent a big moment, an era of our lives. One room for our infant life is quite distant farther down the hallway, one for our childhood filled with toys and laughter and scares. Adolescence was filled with hope and dreams and angst of all the things that were too important, too big for us. Adulthood, with relationships and pain and highlights and achievements. Each room was filled to the brim with memories. That is how I like to see it. All it takes is a stroll down the hallway to relive those moments cherished and sacred, abandoned and ignored. All are still present regardless. But what happens if we lose the key to the rooms, What if the photographs start to fade, what if we lose our way? What happens to our palace then? Does it stay intact waiting for us to return? Or does it deteriorate forever longing?

You may be wondering who am I. I am your friendly neighborhood psychologist Dr. PsyClops and I have another interesting story for you today.

My client today is a 75-year-old man, Mr Roderick Allan. This is his third visit with me, whenever he is here, he likes to have a warm cup of coffee and says it calms him down. A man after my own heart. His primary reason for being here is that he is confused. And that worries his children. So to keep their heart he comes to visit me twice a month and we get to chatting.

Mr Roderick was just telling me about how much his day-to-day life has changed in the past few years. Reminiscing about how he used to be so fit and energetic, he tells me his days now are filled with confusion. He doesn't remember where he keeps his things, he forgets to take his meds much to his children's dismay. He tells me everything is just hazy. He wants to remember what it was like before but even that is difficult. He has been feeling incredibly restless these days and he doesn't seem to understand why either.

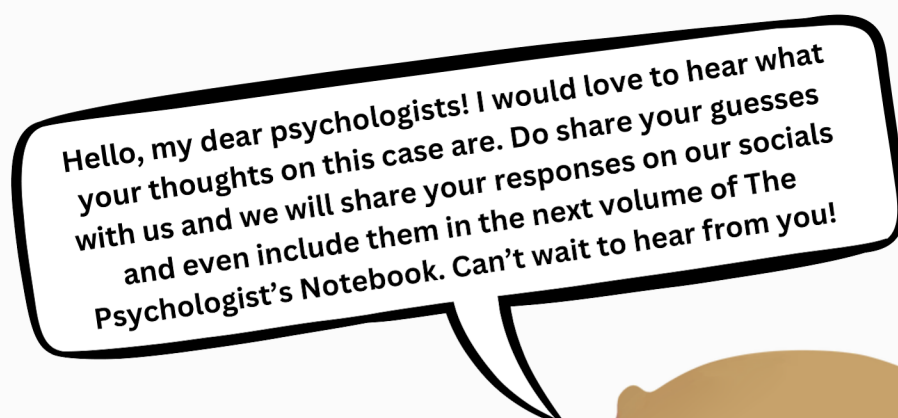
He tells me how he hears the voice of his wife often, talking to him like she used to. Anytime he would forget where he kept his bowtie or hat he would hear his wife's voice telling him how forgetful he is. He tells me he can feel her sometimes at night, not that he minds. When I asked if that scared him, he simply said, "I miss her too much sometimes I feel her touch, the sound of her voice crystal clear. It gets too lonely. Maybe I am losing it. But if I get to see her I am okay with it." This reminds me of the first time Mr. Roderick visited me, he told me he was running late because his wife couldn't find her glasses bless her heart, his son told me later that same day it had been three years since his mom had died. Another reason why he insisted his father visit me. He thought maybe his father was having too much of a hard time moving on. He thinks I can help him with the grieving.

Mr Roderick tends to face the most trouble when he has to do things on his own. The last time he was around I thought we could do one of his favourite activities, crocheting, however, he faced a lot of trouble even holding the needle, let alone remembering how to do it. We had bonded over our shared love for knitting but he told me that it had been difficult ever since his stroke, after his wife died. He misses the man he used to be. Misses his life. He tells me there are times when he cannot even remember at all what it used to be like. Fearing that this decay will catch up to him in the present and engulf everything around him. He fears not being able to remember his grandchildren's name, or his own for that matter.

Life, as far as I have noticed it, is as cruel as it is beautiful. As much love, and life we experience we also see it decay. Like everything that is alive, our minds too slowly come to an end. No matter how much we want hold on, no matter how much we grieve, we end up reaching a point in our lives where we have ended up so far ahead that we cannot see where we came from. We reminisce and we long but our own memories betray us. Our thoughts become slower until even they betray us. I want to comfort him I cannot promise him that what he fears won't happen, but i can try to help him today, as much as I can.

I have a question for you that I can't wait to hear your responses for! My dear budding psychologists, how would you hypothesize the diagnosis for Mr Roderick's case? And what approach would you take to help him?

Tune in to the next issue where I tell you the answer and we go over a new case! Till then my friends goodbye and take care.





DEVELOPMENTAL STAGE

Adulthood



"Don't you find it odd," she continued, "that when you're a kid, everyone, all the world, encourages you to follow your dreams. But when you're older, somehow they act offended if you even try."

— Ethan Hawke, The Hottest State



Lost in Translation: The Perpetual Search for Self-Identity in Adulthood

Imagine, walking and suddenly looking at yourself in the mirror and not being able to recognise your own reflection. Have you ever found yourself questioning who you are and where you fit into this world? Feeling lost? uncertain about your place in society.? anxious for all the wrong reasons, and now do I sound like a TV commercial for weight loss?

Finding yourself in the puzzle of adulthood can be difficult. Adulthood is a journey we all embark upon, expecting it to be a time of stability, self-assurance, and a clear sense of who we are. But what if I told you that adulthood often brings something unexpected, something that's like a puzzle piece missing from the bigger picture of our lives?

All these emotions and uncertainties often define what we refer to as an 'identity crisis.'

Before we delve deeper, let's understand what an identity crisis is. Imagine it as a puzzle. Each piece of the puzzle represents an aspect of your identity - your beliefs, values, roles, and aspirations. An identity crisis occurs when you're unable to put these pieces together, leaving you feeling puzzled about your own identity.

There can be multiple factors behind this like, Societal Expectations, from a young age, society shapes our understanding of who we should be. As we grow older, these societal expectations can create a conflict between our authentic selves and the roles we are expected to play. Life is a series of transitions, and each one challenges our identity. Graduating, getting married, starting a family, or even retiring can disrupt our self-perception, leaving us wondering, "Who am I now?"

The constant bombardment of media, advertising, and social comparison also plays a significant role in the identity crisis. It's easy to lose sight of who we are when we're constantly comparing ourselves to others. Identity crisis in adulthood can be an emotional rollercoaster.

It's important to remember that it's entirely normal to experience any emotion during this journey. The path to self-discovery starts with self-exploration.



Take time to reflect on your values, interests, and passions. Who were you before societal expectations got in the way? Psychologists can provide valuable insights during an identity crisis. They can help you explore your thoughts and emotions, guiding you toward a clearer sense of self.

An identity crisis isn't just a personal struggle; it can affect your relationships, career, and overall well-being. Some individuals use their identity crisis as an opportunity to change things they always wanted. Embracing your true self might lead you to a more fulfilling professional life. The conflicts and doubts that arise can create ripples that extend into various areas of your life.

Some individuals use their identity crisis as an opportunity to change things they always wanted. Embracing your true self might lead you to a more fulfilling professional life. The conflicts and doubts that arise can create ripples that extend into various areas of your life. In the journey of life, the identity crisis is not a dead end but a crossroads. It's an opportunity to explore, evolve, and rediscover oneself.

The path may be challenging, but it ultimately leads to personal growth and self-acceptance. Many individuals emerge from an identity crisis with a stronger sense of self, better life choices, and increased overall well-being, as they align their lives with their true values and desires.



Psychology News!

Prenatal hormones play a major role in sexual orientation development

A new scientific paper published in Adaptive Human Behavior and Physiology provides evidence that the hormones present during early development in the womb can affect a person's sexual orientation. These hormones appear to mainly work by influencing gene expression patterns in the developing brain, ultimately influencing whether someone will be attracted to the same or opposite sex.

<https://www.psypost.org/2023/11/prenatal-hormones-play-a-major-role-in-sexual-orientation-development-according-to-new-research-214475>



Healo finds!

Discovering New Insights



Triguna (Sattva, Rajasa, and Tamasa) Personality Traits and Karma Yoga: Developmental Trends Among Indian Adults

The study examined the relationship between Triguna personality traits (Sattva, Rajasa and Tamasa) and Karma Yoga attitudes of young adults between 18 and 35 years from Vadodara city. The sample consisted of 160 men and women participants, including 80 college students (18–25 years) and 80 employed and married professionals (25–35 years). Results indicated that Sāttvika traits of Sattvic Knowledge and Tranquillity were significantly positively correlated with Karma Yoga. Employed adults scored significantly higher on Karma Yoga and Sattvic Knowledge, whereas college students scored significantly more on Rajasic Habits and Tamasic Knowledge. For better well-being outcomes during adulthood, the study recommends yogic interventions that can enhance Sāttvika traits and inculcate Karma Yoga.

<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s12646-023-00740-8>





Beyond the 'Self' in Self-regulation of Emotions in Children: Role of Parental Expressiveness

This study explored emotion regulation patterns in children, parental self-expressiveness, and their correlation. Using ERICA and ERQ-CA for children and SEFQ for parents, 130 children (aged 8–13) and 30 parents in Bhubaneswar, India, were studied. Children favored cognitive reappraisal over expressive suppression. Parents showed more positive expressiveness than negative. Children's emotion regulation correlated significantly with positive parental expressiveness, with mothers and fathers showing different levels of significance. Positive parental expressiveness predicted children's use of expressive suppression but not cognitive reappraisal. The findings have implications for parenting and family-life education in India.

<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s12646-022-00678-3>

Mental Fitness: Psychological Warfare from Battlefield to Playground

This paper emphasizes the significance of mental fitness for cricketers using mythological stories as inspiration. It introduces a mental fitness model named SPORTS with six components, addressing aspects like self-awareness, mental preparation, positivity, confidence, team spirit, and self-motivation. By mastering their minds, players can achieve holistic development—physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. The proposed model draws wisdom from Lao Tzu's quote, guiding cricketers to overcome challenges on and off the field. Incorporating mental fitness into training can enhance players' overall performance, making them resilient individuals and positive role models.

<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s12646-022-00686-3>





DEVELOPMENTAL STAGE

Oldage

"I am incapable of conceiving infinity, and yet I do not accept finity. I want this adventure that is the context of my life to go on without end."

— Simone de Beauvoir , La vieillesse

From a Psychologist's Desk: How Positive Aging Can Help You Conquer FOGO

Are you scared of aging? If you are, you aren't the only one! It's so common that people have started calling it "FOGO" -fear of getting old. You might have also heard of the term "[gerontophobia](#)".

A 2014 survey of 2088 Americans aged 18 and older, commissioned by the drug company Pfizer, found that 87 percent of participants had at least one fear about getting old. In India this is further complicated by variables like socioeconomic status, locus of control, gender etc. It is estimated that more than 18 million elderlies live below the poverty lines, where lack of health benefits and discrimination doubly affect the lives of elderly. So, fear of being old seems prevalent here too.

While often perceived as a Western concern, research actually indicates that in Eastern countries, a sort of paradoxical thinking exists. There's Implicit bias and stereotypes about the elderlies being a financial and physical burden alongside outward respectful behaviours.

It seems that the negative portrayal of aging is universal, with media messaging from "wrinkle-free" face creams to "OK, boomer" memes reinforcing the notion that being old is undesirable. Consequently, older individuals internalize these stereotypes, leading to self-fulfilling prophecies like, "I am so old already; of course, bad things are going to happen to me!"

Addressing these stereotypes and alleviating fears related to old age is where "positive aging" plays a pivotal role. Positive aging involves embracing old age as a natural and fulfilling stage of life, emphasizing physical, mental, and spiritual growth. It challenges societal misinterpretations, presenting a holistic life span approach where aging becomes a journey and adventure.

This approach takes in many facts that are usually misinterpreted in society (Yes, even by psychologists) For example, if you thought cognition inevitably declines for all older people, it's actually wrong! **Contrary to common beliefs, cognitive decline is not inevitable for all older individuals.** Psychologist Becca Levy's research suggests that **various cognitive functions actually improve in later life, including metacognition, interpersonal conflict resolution, and semantic memory.** Understanding these positive aspects of aging challenges preconceived notions.

Many such findings have been shared, such as how older people are actually happier, mentally healthier, and are resilient- they have the ability to bounce back from tragedy more than their younger counterparts!



So , how can we promote these positive beliefs about aging both in the elderly and young population? It requires a collective effort, starting with ourselves. Consider the following:

Age as a Number: Imagine the possibilities if age were viewed merely as a number. **Embracing the process of growing older with compassion and gratitude changes our perspective.**

Identity Beyond Work: *Recognize that we are not defined solely by our work. Engaging in hobbies, learning new skills, contributing to charity, and making a difference in the world all shape our identity beyond professional roles.*

Beyond Physical Appearance: *Our value extends beyond physical appearance. Identifying our worth through choices, attitudes, and personal beliefs rather than superficial attributes shifts the focus from aging as a burden to a natural and welcomed process.*

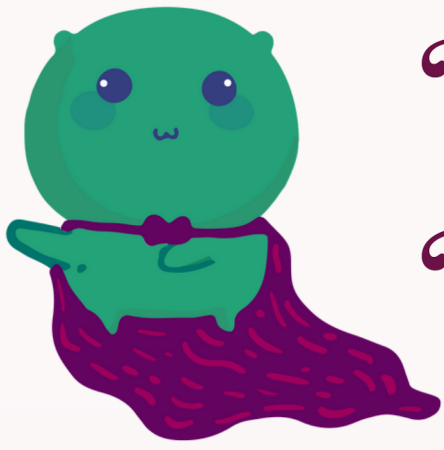


HEALO FINDS;

Trends in Therapies

Researchers are increasingly recognizing the nuanced needs of the elderly and are tailoring interventions that go beyond traditional approaches. In the ever-evolving landscape of elderly care, two therapeutic approaches, Reminiscence Therapy, and Problem-Solving Therapy, are emerging as interventions that are offering profound benefits for the aging population.

These therapies represent the cutting edge of new research trends in geriatric psychology... By integrating reminiscence and problem-solving therapies into the therapeutic landscape, we are paving the way for a more holistic and personalized approach to elderly care, enriching the lives of our aging population.



Reminiscence Therapy:

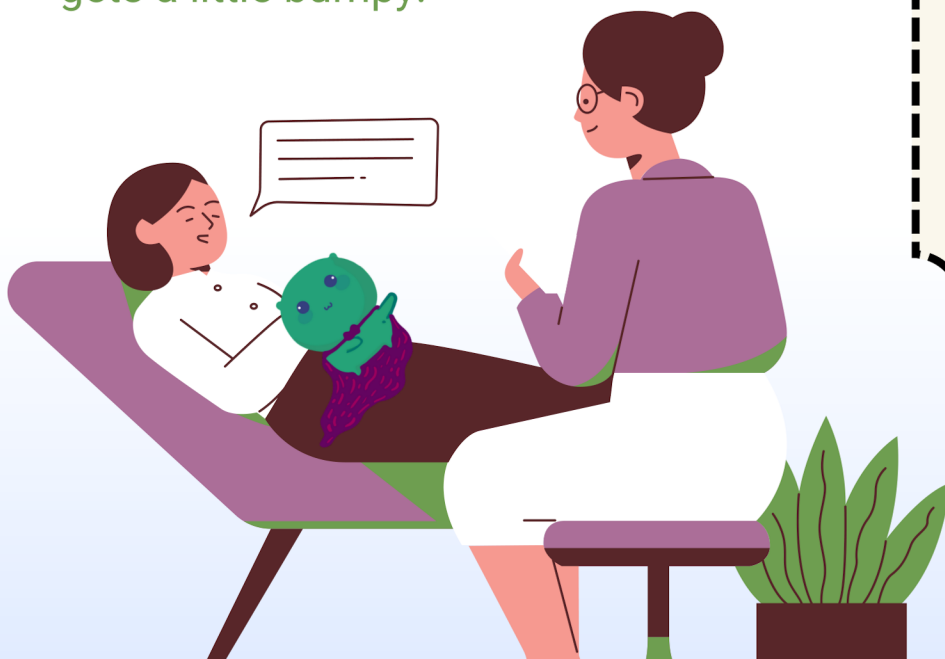
Reminiscence Therapy involves the recall of past experiences, often facilitated through guided conversations, photographs, or other prompts. This therapeutic modality not only serves to bridge generational gaps but also fosters a sense of identity and purpose among the elderly. Recent research has shown its efficacy in improving cognitive functions, reducing symptoms of depression, and enhancing overall emotional well-being. As we delve into the archives of one's life, we uncover a powerful tool for promoting mental health in the elderly.

Problem-Solving Therapy:

On the other frontier, Problem-Solving Therapy equips the elderly with valuable skills to confront and overcome life challenges. Through structured sessions, individuals are guided to identify problems, generate potential solutions, and implement effective strategies. This approach not only empowers older adults to tackle daily hurdles but also cultivates a proactive mindset, fostering a sense of control over their lives. In recent studies, Problem-Solving Therapy has exhibited promising results in reducing stress, enhancing coping mechanisms, and elevating overall psychological well-being.

New therapeutic interventions in adult identity crisis:

Imagine a puzzle we used to think only teenagers had to solve, the "Who am I?" puzzle. But now, this same puzzle is popping up in the lives of grown-ups, too! It's like suddenly finding yourself in a maze without a map. It's different from the mid-life crisis, which feels like being stuck and unsure about the choices made so far. **Adult identity crisis is more like trying to fit into a role that doesn't quite feel right anymore and realizing the labels that once defined you don't quite stick anymore. Like a rollercoaster of emotions, from confusion to frustration to even a little bit of excitement. This new understanding of identity crisis shows us that finding ourselves isn't just for one age group—it's a lifelong adventure, and it's okay if the journey gets a little bumpy.**



Psychology News!

Study reveals improving deep sleep can prevent dementia

A study suggests that a 1% decrease in deep sleep each year for individuals over 60 years old increases the risk of dementia by 27%. The research, conducted by the Monash School of Psychological Sciences and the Turner Institute for Brain and Mental Health, followed 346 participants aged over 60 who completed two sleep studies. The findings highlight the importance of maintaining deep sleep in older age as a potential preventive measure against dementia.

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/home/science/study-reveals-improving-deep-sleep-can-prevent-dementia/articleshow/104833178.cms>

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