**Walden University**

**Program: Master of Social Work**

**Course: SOCW 6210: Human Behavior and the Social Environment II**

**Credits:** Quarter **Length:** 11 weeks

**Launch Date:** 11/29/2021

**Course Description:**

This advanced course is designed to prepare students for clinical social work practice that reflects an advanced understanding of life-span development and socio-psychological identity development with individuals from young adulthood through later adulthood, their families, within groups, and communities. Throughout this course, students will use their learning around life-span development and socio-psychological identity development to understand human behavior and, particularly, individual and family functioning within the environmental context. With an emphasis on ethical practice in social work, this course gives students the opportunity to use this information to inform their assessments, evaluations, interventions, and advocacy for their clients.

**Prerequisites:**

* SOCW 6200: *Human Behavior and the Social Environment I*

**Course Introduction:**

In *Human Behavior and the Social Environment I* (HBSE I), you addressed the biological, psychological, and social dimensions of human development from birth through adolescence. In this course, HBSE II, you continue your exploration of these dimensions as you study the young, middle, and later adulthood stages of the life span.

Your understanding of the life span and the many factors that influence behavior at each stage is essential as you plan a career in social work. Every client with whom you will interact has a personal story. The story consists of inherent qualities and characteristics that make it unique. In addition, the individual's social environment contributes to this story, as the environment has a strong influence on the person's behavior and well-being in every stage of development.

In this course, you consider the biological, psychological, and sociological factors that are especially influential in adulthood. Individuals in young adulthood typically start their careers, select romantic partners, and assume financial independence. Individuals in middle adulthood may reach their peak income-producing years, raise children, or begin to care for older family members. Individuals in older adulthood may face the challenges of declining incomes and increasing health concerns.

As you consider the changes associated with these stages of the life span, you take into account the theories that attempt to explain human development. You apply these theories and your understanding of the person and the environment to specific social work cases and to social work practice in general. In the final weeks of the course, you look at the entire scope of two people’s lives—through an analysis of the character Ray, who continues with you from HBSE I, and through an interview with an older adult. These examples give you an opportunity to integrate theories and develop a deeper understanding of the life span, an understanding you can then carry with you to practice.

Welcome to SOCW 6210: *Human Behavior and the Social Environment II*!

**Course Text(s):**

Zastrow, C. H., Kirst-Ashman, K. K., & Hessenauer, S. L. (2019). *Understanding human behavior and the social environment* (11th ed.). Cengage Learning.

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**Note:** For Outcomes/Alignment Chart, course Bibliography, and Grading Grid, please reference the Walden Syllabus Template document.

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**Week 1: Resiliency**

**Introduction**

As you learned in HBSE I—and no doubt from personal experience—development across the biological, psychological, and social domains involves exciting and joyous milestones but also challenges and negative influences that can have lifelong ramifications. Studying the life span provides a lens through which social workers can view the common human experience and better understand their clients.

In HBSE I, you examined human behavior in infants, children, and adolescents and the environmental influences that are particularly salient during these stages of development. This course addresses the remainder of the life span: young and middle adulthood through later adulthood.

In this first week, before moving ahead to adulthood, you take stock of the foundational knowledge you gained from HBSE I. You also consider the concept of resiliency and its relevance to the person and the environment.

**Learning Objectives**

Students will:

* Summarize growth and insights from HBSE I course
* Analyze applications of the concept of resiliency to social work practice

**Learning Resources**

**Required Readings**

Zastrow, C. H., Kirst-Ashman, K. K. & Hessenauer, S. L. (2019). *Understanding human behavior and the social environment* (11th ed.). Cengage Learning.

* Review Chapters 1–9.

Dye, H. (2018). The impact and long-term effects of childhood trauma. *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment*, *28*(3), 381–392. https://doi.org/10.1080/10911359.2018.1435328

Harvard University Center on the Developing Child. (n.d.). *Key concepts: Resilience*.

<https://developingchild.harvard.edu/science/key-concepts/resilience/>

Kte’pi, B. (2020). Resilience (psychology). In *Salem Press encyclopedia*. Salem Press.

**Required Media**

Walden University, LLC. (2019–2021). *MSW field experience* [Video]. https://class.waldenu.edu

Walden University, LLC. (2021). *Social work case studies* [Interactive media]. https://class.waldenu.edu

* Navigate to Talia.

**Discussion 1: Introductions**

In HBSE I, you began your study of the biological, psychological, and social dimensions of human development. As you think back on your learning in that course, what concepts come to mind? Why do these ideas resonate with you, and how might you apply them in your future work as a social worker?

For this Discussion, you create a video to introduce yourself to your colleagues and Instructor. Then, you reflect on your learning in HBSE I and consider what new knowledge and insights you hope to gain here in HBSE II.

**To Prepare:**

* Revisit the major concepts from the HBSE I course by reviewing Chapters 1–9 in Zastrow et al.
* Consider what you learned in HBSE I and what you are looking forward to in HBSE II.

**By Day 3**

**Record and post** a 2- to 3-minute video that includes the following:

* Your introduction (name, geographic location, and other pertinent details as appropriate for your colleagues)
* A brief summary of your learning from the Human Behavior and the Social Environment I course
* Your expectations for this course; for example, topics and concepts you are hoping to learn about
* A brief personal perspective on how understanding the person and the environment relates to social work practice

*Note: To upload your media to this Discussion thread, use the Kaltura Media option from the mashup tool drop-down menu. Refer to the Kaltura Media Uploader area in the course navigation menu for more information about how to upload media to the course.*

*Include a transcript and/or edit closed captioning on your video to ensure that your presentation is accessible to colleagues of differing abilities.*

**By Day 6**

**Respond** to two colleagues with a thoughtful question or suggestion.

**Discussion 2: Resiliency**

Perhaps you have observed a friend or family member after a tragedy and thought, “I’m not sure how they are managing” or “I wouldn’t be able to function.” Why do some individuals, despite overwhelming hardship, have the capacity to adapt and “bounce back,” whereas others, faced with similar circumstances, do not? The answer is resiliency, also referred to as resilience. Social workers help clients strengthen their resiliency as a protective factor against change and adversity across the life span.

Talia Johnson, whom you met briefly in HBSE I, is a young adult who has experienced a sexual assault. How might the concept of resiliency apply to her? For this Discussion, you explore resiliency and integrate it in social work practice using Talia’s case. As you progress through the course, continue to consider resiliency’s role in well-being across the life span.

**To Prepare:**

* Review the Learning Resources on resiliency.
* Access the Social Work Case Studies media and navigate to Talia.
* As you explore Talia’s case, imagine that you are her social worker, and consider how you might apply the concept of resiliency to her case. Also think about how you might apply the concept to social work practice in general.

**By Day 4**

**Post** a Discussion that includes the following:

* An explanation of how you, as Talia's social worker, might apply the concept of resiliency to Talia and her situation
* Examples from Talia’s case and the resources to support your strategy
* An explanation of how you might apply the concept of resiliency more generally to social work practice

**By Day 7**

**Respond** to two colleagues in one or more of the following ways:

* Add to your colleague's suggestion for applying resiliency to Talia's case by suggesting an adaptation of the strategy.
* Critique your colleague's suggested application of resiliency to social work practice, stating whether you would use the strategy in your own practice, and why.

Use the Learning Resources to support your posts. Make sure to provide APA citations and a reference list.

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**Week 2: Biological Aspects of Young and Middle Adulthood**

**Introduction**

The transition from adolescence to young adulthood is generally a hopeful time. Young people may be told that they can be anything or achieve anything they want to; their lives stretch before them. They may enter the workforce to support themselves financially, or they may attend college; they may live independently, or they may continue to reside with parents or caregivers if that option is presented to them. Though young adulthood is exciting in these big steps, it can also present anxieties around money, career, identity, and relationships. Young adults may have concern for their future.

How that future progresses is dependent on many factors, including the social environment and the biological, psychological, and sociological functioning of the individual. Recall Ray, whose early life you traced in the HBSE I course. At 18, Ray is orphaned on the cusp of young adulthood. He is grieving the loss of his parents and struggling to retain his employment. Where does Ray’s life go? How will he navigate the complexities of young and middle adulthood?

This week, you consider the biological aspects of young and middle adulthood, exploring health issues and changes in physical development during this period. You also consider how your understanding of these issues might influence your assessments of individuals like Ray, who are in this stage of the life span.

**Learning Objectives**

Students will:

* Apply classifications of young and middle adulthood to personal experience
* Explain the dangers of generalizing young and middle adulthood experiences across all clients
* Analyze health concerns in middle adulthood in relation to social work assessment
* Analyze effects of demographic characteristics on health in middle adulthood

**Learning Resources**

**Required Readings**

Zastrow, C. H., Kirst-Ashman, K. K., & Hessenauer, S. L. (2019). *Understanding human behavior and the social environment* (11th ed.). Cengage Learning.

* Chapter 10, "Biological Aspects of Young and Middle Adulthood" (pp. 455–484)

Levine, M. E., & Crimmins, E. M. (2018). Is 60 the new 50? Examining changes in biological age over the past two decades. *Demography*, *55*(2), 387–402. https://doi.org/10.1007/s13524-017-0644-5

**Required Media**

Walden University, LLC. (2021). *Meet Ray, age 19 to 40* [Video]. Walden University Blackboard. https://class.waldenu.edu

**Discussion: Classification of Young and Middle Adulthood**

When did you become an adult? Was it the day you turned 18, the day you graduated high school, or the day you moved out of your parents' or caregivers' home? The authors of your course text, Zastrow et al., use the term *young adulthood* for ages 18 to 30, and *middle adulthood* for ages 30 to 65.

Are these young and middle adulthood classifications useful? How do they compare to your own unique experience at these life stages? Indeed, your description of what it means to be an adult and how and when an adolescent transitions into adulthood may differ from that of Zastrow et al.—and from your colleagues.

For this Discussion, you analyze the author's classifications of young and middle adulthood and consider how diversity might influence the common experience.

**To Prepare:**

* Review the assigned chapter of the course text, paying close attention to Zastrow et al.’s classifications of young and middle adulthood. Reflect on your own experiences in these time periods and consider the extent to which Zastrow et al.’s description applies to you.

**By Day 3**

**Analyze** Zastrow et al.’s classification of young and/or middle adulthood in the context of your own experience. How does the classification align with your own development during this time period? If your experience is different, why might this be? In particular, consider how the diverse aspects of your identity might impact your experience.

**By Day 6**

**Respond** to two colleagues by comparing your experience with theirs. Then, address the dangers of generalizing young/middle adulthood experiences across all clients.

Use the Learning Resources to support your posts. Make sure to provide APA citations and a reference list.

**Assignment: Middle Adulthood Health, Demography, and Social Work Practice**

You may have heard young adulthood described as “the prime of life,” and biologically speaking this is certainly true. Individuals at this stage are generally at their peak strength and stamina. In middle adulthood, however, when metabolism begins to slow, maintaining fitness becomes more difficult. Health concerns also tend to increase with age, becoming more prevalent during this time. What other physical changes occur as individuals move into middle adulthood?

In this Assignment, you address the health concerns that clients may face as they reach middle adulthood. You also address the potential impact of the environment on the health of people in this stage.

**To Prepare:**

* Review the Learning Resources on biological aspects of middle adulthood.
* Search online and in the Walden Library to find at least one scholarly resource describing demographic factors associated with health.

**By Day 7**

**Submit** a 2- to 4-page paper that includes the following:

* A description of at least three health concerns that clients may face as they reach middle adulthood
* An analysis that explains how factors such as race/ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and other demographic characteristics might impact the three health concerns you identified
* An explanation of how you, as a social worker, would take these potential health concerns and the environmental factors that influence them into account as you complete your assessments

Use the Learning Resources and additional research to support your analysis. Make sure to provide APA citations and a reference list.

#### **Submission and Grading Information**

**To submit your completed Assignment for review and grading, do the following:**

* Please save your Assignment using the naming convention “WK2Assgn+last name+first initial.(extension)” as the name.
* Click on the **Week 2 Assignment Rubric**to review the Grading Criteria for the Assignment.
* Click on the **Week 2 Assignment**link. You will also be able to “View Rubric” for grading criteria from this area.
* Next, from the Attach File area, click on the **Browse My Computer** button. Find the document you saved as “WK2Assgn+last name+first initial.(extension)” and click on **Open**.
* If applicable: From the Plagiarism Tools area, click on the checkbox for **I agree to submit my paper(s) to the Global Reference Database**.
* Click on the **Submit** button to complete your submission.

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**Week 3: Psychological Aspects of Young and Middle Adulthood**

**Introduction**

Young adulthood is a pivotal period in which individuals make decisions that can change the trajectory of their lives. However, because the brain is still growing into one’s 20s, emerging adults may still act impulsively or engage in behavior that is not fully thought out. As young adults transition into middle adulthood, they assume increased responsibilities. Generally, adults at this stage have accumulated some satisfaction from their maturity and accomplishments, and their decision making is more sophisticated.

In each of these periods, psychological development continues as individuals wrestle with themes of intimacy, family, and meaning-making. Mental health and substance use become concerns in cases of accumulated stress and unresolved trauma. And for some, middle adulthood brings a crisis in which they question and reassess their lives.

This week, you examine the social environment’s impact on psychological functioning through a case study involving a military veteran. You also look closely at the phenomenon of the midlife crisis and how you might work with adult clients in this situation.

**Learning Objectives**

Students will:

* Analyze the effects of the social environment on psychological functioning in young adulthood
* Apply psychoeducation to social work practice with clients and families
* Identify community resources for mental health
* Compare characteristics of a midlife crisis across genders
* Evaluate strategies for helping clients through midlife crises

**Learning Resources**

**Required Readings**

Zastrow, C. H., Kirst-Ashman, K. K., & Hessenauer, S. L. (2019). *Understanding human behavior and the social environment* (11th ed.). Cengage Learning.

* Chapter 11, "Psychological Aspects of Young and Middle Adulthood" (pp. 485–535)

Herzog, J. R., Whitworth, J. D., & Scott, D. L. (2020). Trauma informed care with military populations. *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment*, *30*(3), 265–278. https://doi.org/10.1080/10911359.2019.1679693

Piotrowski, N. A., & Prest, L. A. (2019). Midlife crisis. In B. C. Auday, M. A. Buratovich, G. F. Marrocco, & P. Moglia (Eds.), *Magill’s medical guide* (8th ed.). Salem Press.

Schnyders, C. M., Rainey, S., & McGlothlin, J. (2018). Parent and peer attachment as predictors of emerging adulthood characteristics. *Adultspan Journal*, *17*(2), 71–80. https://doi.org/10.1002/adsp.12061

Sherman, M. D., & Larsen, J. L. (2018). Family-focused interventions and resources for veterans and their families. *Psychological Services*, *15*(2), 146–153. https://doi.org/10.1037/ser0000174

**Required Media**

Walden University, LLC. (2021). *Social work case studies* [Interactive media]. https://class.waldenu.edu

* Navigate to Marcus.

**Discussion 1: Mental Health and the Family**

The unique pressures of young and middle adulthood—financial and career ambitions, building a family, caring for older relatives—can contribute to mental health and substance use issues. It is important to remember that these issues affect not only the individual but also loved ones living in the same home such as partners and children.

In cases of mental health and substance use, social workers can use psychoeducation with family members to provide information about a mental health issue and treatment. When using this intervention, social workers must adapt it to the specific family members, accommodating their cognitive level and age.

For this Discussion, you analyze a case in which a returning soldier, who is also a husband and father, experiences mental health symptoms resulting from combat.

**To Prepare:**

* Review the Learning Resources on psychological aspects of young and middle adulthood, psychoeducation, and military populations.
* Access the Social Work Case Studies media and navigate to Marcus.
* As you explore Marcus’s case, consider the ways in which the social environment, including the trauma he has experienced, has impacted Marcus’s psychological functioning.

**By Day 3**

**Post** an analysis of how the social environment has contributed to Marcus’s psychological functioning. In what ways has trauma impacted Marcus’s daily functioning? Describe how you as the social worker would integrate elements of psychoeducation with Marcus and his family. How would you adapt psychoeducation for the cognitive level of the family member?

**By Day 6**

**Respond** to two colleagues by critiquing their strategies for applying psychoeducation and providing suggestions for how to approach the situation differently. Additionally, share at least one community resource in your area that could help Marcus and his family.

Use the Learning Resources to support your posts. Make sure to provide APA citations and a reference list.

**Discussion 2: Characteristics of Midlife Crises**

Picture someone standing in the middle of a bridge. First, they look back at where they have been and what they have done along the way to that point; then they look forward, seeing what little space they have left to travel and considering the extent they will be able to make the journey meaningful. If the bridge represents life, the person stuck in the middle, in a period of uncertainty and evaluation, is someone in a midlife crisis.

The phenomenon is often portrayed in popular media: a middle-aged man buys a sportscar, has an extramarital affair, and begins socializing with the younger generation. But what exactly is a “midlife crisis,” and why does it occur? While some researchers question the term, stating that such crises are not necessarily limited to midlife, it is believed to be experienced by a sizable segment of the population. However, the crisis may look different from person to person.

For this Discussion, you describe a midlife crisis and how biology, psychology, and sociology interact to create the phenomenon. You also envision yourself as a social worker addressing this phenomenon with a client.

**To Prepare:**

* Review the Learning Resources on midlife and middle adulthood.
* Consider the phenomenon of a midlife crisis, its characteristics/features, and how it may vary for people of different genders.

**By Day 4**

**Post** a description of the characteristics/features of a midlife crisis, including the different experiences in terms of gender. Explain how biology intersects with psychology and social factors in this phenomenon, and provide an example. Then, explain how you as a social worker could help a person navigate a midlife crisis.

**By Day 7**

**Respond** to two colleagues by respectfully agreeing or disagreeing with their characterization of a midlife crisis. Also offer additional insight about how social workers can help people through midlife crises.

Use the Learning Resources to support your posts. Make sure to provide APA citations and a reference list.

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**Week 4: Sociological Aspects of Young and Middle Adulthood**

**Introduction**

As individuals transition into young and middle adulthood, they make important lifestyle decisions. These may include decisions about whom to marry or whether to marry at all. They may include decisions about whether to have children or about how to take care of elderly relatives. The decisions adults make in the young and middle adulthood period affect the new roles they assume, such as parent, spouse, significant other, or caregiver. Additionally, life events may occur that require adults to adapt to new roles, for example, stepparent, widow, or divorcee.

These decisions, circumstances, and environmental factors naturally impact the sociological well-being of adults. Consider a young couple who experience infertility and, despite several rounds of IVF treatments, are unable to conceive. They find themselves “left behind” socially as their friends have children and build their families. Or a stepparent who now must navigate social interactions with new family members and assume authority over their stepchildren.

This week, you explore the sociological aspects of young and middle adulthood. You focus on poverty, a social problem experienced by some in this period, and the use of genograms in social work practice to address the complexity of family systems.

**Learning Objectives**

Students will:

* Analyze the impact of poverty on individuals in young and middle adulthood
* Evaluate theories of poverty
* Develop a genogram
* Apply genograms to social work practice

**Learning Resources**

**Required Readings**

Zastrow, C. H., Kirst-Ashman, K. K., & Hessenauer, S. L. (2019). *Understanding human behavior and the social environment* (11th ed.). Cengage Learning.

* Chapter 12, "Sociological Aspects of Young and Middle Adulthood" (pp. 536–603)

Auerbach, M. P. (2021). Cultural theories of poverty. In *Salem Press encyclopedia*. Salem Press.

Auerbach, M. P. (2021). Social theories of poverty. In *Salem Press encyclopedia*. Salem Press.

Miller, B., & Bowen, E. (2020). “I know where the rest of my life is going”: Attitudinal and behavioral dimensions of resilience for homeless emerging adults. *Journal of Social Service Research, 46*(4), 553–570. https://doi.org/10.1080/01488376.2019.1607647

Pope, N. D., & Lee, J. (2015). A picture is worth a thousand words. *The New Social Worker*. https://www.socialworker.com/feature-articles/practice/a-picture-is-worth-a-thousand-words-genograms-social-work-practice/

**Genogram Software**

Wondershare EdrawMax. (n.d.). *Online genogram maker*. <https://www.edrawmax.com/genogram/genogram-maker/>

GenoPro. (n.d.). *GenoPro 2020*. <https://genopro.com/>

**Required Media**

Walden University, LLC. (2021). *Social work case studies* [Interactive media]. Walden University Blackboard. https://class.waldenu.edu

* Navigate to the Hernandez Family.

**Discussion: Poverty in Young and Middle Adulthood**

Poverty has a strong influence on the lives of adults. When an adult lives in poverty, the effects extend beyond that individual to all those who depend on the adult. The problem of poverty in the life of an adult becomes a family or community problem, and few social problems are more impactful.

Thirty-four million people, or 10.5% of the U.S. population, live in poverty (U.S. Census Bureau, 2020). As a social worker, then, you are likely to address the needs of clients whose adverse circumstances are strongly influenced by this condition. Increasing your understanding of poverty will equip you to better understand and assist your clients.

For this Discussion, you analyze theories of poverty as well as poverty’s effects in young and middle adulthood.

**Reference**

U.S. Census Bureau. (2020, September 15). *Income and poverty in the United States: 2019* (Report No. P60-270). https://www.census.gov/library/publications/2020/demo/p60-270.html

**To Prepare:**

* Review the Learning Resources on sociological aspects of young and middle adulthood, as well as theories of poverty.
* From those described in the resources, select the theory of poverty that most resonates with you.

**By Day 3**

**Post** a Discussion that includes the following:

* An explanation of how poverty impacts the experience of individuals in young and middle adulthood
* A statement as to whether poverty is the result of cultural or social factors; provide support for your position and an example to illustrate it.
* An answer to the following questions about the theory of poverty you selected:
  + What aspects of this theory would be most suitable for your practice? Why?
  + What aspects of this theory do you find problematic in terms of your knowledge of social work practice? Explain.

**By Day 6**

**Respond** to two colleagues in one or more of the following ways:

* Critique your colleague's explanation of how poverty impacts individuals in young and middle adulthood.
* State whether you agree or disagree with your colleague's position on poverty being the result of cultural or social factors. Provide support for your position.
* Critique a colleague’s evaluation of a different theory of poverty than you selected.

Use the Learning Resources to support your posts. Make sure to provide APA citations and a reference list.

**Assignment: Using a Genogram in Social Work Practice**

As you likely know from your own life, human relationships are complex. As such, social workers may find it difficult to keep these important interactions in mind when addressing an individual client's needs. Several tools have been developed to assist in understanding and assessing relationships in the context of social work. One is an ecomap, which shows connections between the client or family and the social environment. Another is a genogram, which records the members of a family and their relationships, in much the same way as a family tree. Because it shows multiple generations, a genogram is useful in identifying, among other things, intergenerational trauma. Once a social worker creates a genogram for a client, they may refer to it when analyzing the client's unique situation.

For this Assignment, you develop a genogram of your own family or a family with which you are familiar. You then reflect on that experience and apply your learning to social work practice.

**To Prepare:**

* Review the Learning Resources on genograms and how to create them.
* Access the Social Work Case Studies media. Navigate to the Hernandez family, and explore the example genogram.
* Using a free genogram software or freehand, develop a genogram of your own family or a family with which you are familiar.

**By Day 7**

**Submit** a 2- to 4-page paper that includes the following:

* A completed genogram of your own family or a family with which you are familiar (as a pasted screenshot, PDF, or image)
* A reflection on what you learned by completing the genogram
* An explanation of how a genogram would be useful in social work practice
* An example from the genogram you created or the Hernandez Family genogram to illustrate the application of this tool in social work

Use the Learning Resources to support your Assignment. Make sure to provide APA citations and a reference list.

#### **Submission and Grading Information**

**To submit your completed Assignment for review and grading, do the following:**

* Please save your Assignment using the naming convention “WK4Assgn+last name+first initial.(extension)” as the name.
* Click on the **Week 4 Assignment Rubric**to review the Grading Criteria for the Assignment.
* Click on the **Week 4 Assignment**link. You will also be able to “View Rubric” for grading criteria from this area.
* Next, from the Attach File area, click on the **Browse My Computer** button. Find the document you saved as “WK4Assgn+last name+first initial.(extension)” and click on **Open**.
* If applicable: From the Plagiarism Tools area, click on the checkbox for **I agree to submit my paper(s) to the Global Reference Database**.
* Click on the **Submit** button to complete your submission.

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**Week 5: Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation**

**Introduction**

Gender identity and sexual orientation are critical issues that affect an individual's development from childhood through adulthood and the life span. In HBSE I, you explored adolescence as a period when individuals are grappling with identity—who they are and where they fit in the world. For some, this question of identity is not confined to adolescence; as they mature and interact with the social environment, their perception of their identity evolves. This includes both gender identity and sexual orientation.

This week, you pause in your chronological analysis of life span development to explore issues related to gender identity and sexual orientation. First, you respond to a client who is experiencing anxiety related to sexuality. Then you evaluate empirical research to deepen your understanding of gender identity and sexual orientation and their influence in this time period.

**Learning Objectives**

Students will:

* Demonstrate practice skills in client scenarios involving sexual orientation
* Evaluate approaches for working with LGBTQ clients in middle adulthood
* Analyze evidence-based research on gender identity or sexual orientation across the life span
* Apply evidence-based research on gender identity or sexual orientation to social work practice

**Learning Resources**

**Required Readings**

Zastrow, C. H., Kirst-Ashman, K. K., & Hessenauer, S. L. (2019). *Understanding human behavior and the social environment* (11th ed.). Cengage Learning.

* Chapter 13, "Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity" (pp. 604–639)

Fabbre, V. D. (2017). Agency and social forces in the life course: The case of gender transitions in later life. *The Journals of Gerontology: Series B, 72(3),* 479–487. <https://doi.org/10.1093/geronb/gbw109>

Ferguson, A. D., & Miville, M. L. (2017). It’s complicated: Navigating multiple identities in small town America. *Journal of Clinical Psychology, 73*(8), 975–984. https://doi.org/10.1002/jclp.22507

Greene, D. C., Britton, P. J., & Shepherd, J. B. (2016). LGBTQ aging: Mental health at midlife and older adulthood. *Journal of LGBT Issues in Counseling*,*10*(4), 180–196. https://doi.org/10.1080/15538605.2016.1233839

Hereth, J., Pardee, D. J., & Reisner, S. L. (2020). Gender identity and sexual orientation development among young adult transgender men sexually active with cisgender men: ‘I had completely ignored my sexuality … that’s for a different time to figure out.’ *Culture, Health, & Sexuality, 22*, 31–47. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13691058.2019.1636290>

Human Rights Campaign. (n.d.). *Glossary of terms*.

<https://www.hrc.org/resources/glossary-of-terms>

Walden University Library. (n.d.). *Subject research: Social work*. <https://academicguides.waldenu.edu/library/subject/socialwork>

**Required Media**

Walden University, LLC. (2021). *Video case: Sharon* [Video]. Walden University Blackboard. https://class.waldenu.edu

**Discussion: Sexual Orientation Across the Life Span**

You may think of someone’s sexual orientation as a fixed part of their identity—gay, straight, asexual, bisexual, etc. But this is not true for all. For some, sexuality is fluid, meaning it changes over time and due to environmental factors and life circumstances. For others, they may be living one reality while suppressing their true sexuality due to societal pressure. Only later in life do they awaken to who they truly are.

Social workers must develop strategies for working with members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) community as they navigate life and evolving notions of identity. In this Discussion, you practice skills in responding to just such a situation. Your client is a woman who has been in a heterosexual marriage for many years before coming to realize she is gay.

**To Prepare:**

* Review the Learning Resources on sexual orientation development and on LGBTQ aging.
* View the *Video Case: Sharon* video and consider how you would respond to Sharon’s concerns as a social worker.

**By Day 3**

**Record and post** a 1- to 2-minute video in which you directly respond to Sharon as her social worker. In your video, be sure to situate what Sharon may be feeling within middle adulthood and demonstrate empathy for her experience. Then, in your post, reflect on your approach and the practice skills you displayed.

*Note: To upload your media to this Discussion thread, use the Kaltura Media option from the mashup tool drop-down menu. Refer to the Kaltura Media Uploader area in the course navigation menu for more information about how to upload media to the course.*

*Include a transcript and/or edit closed captioning on your video to ensure that your presentation is accessible to colleagues of differing abilities.*

**By Day 6**

**Respond** to two colleagues by identifying and explaining at least one specific strength of their approach. Then, respectfully evaluate the extent to which their approach reflects knowledge of human behavior and the social environment and ethical practice.

Use the Learning Resources to support your response posts. Make sure to provide APA citations and a reference list.

**Assignment: Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation Research**

Misconceptions and stereotypes abound with regard to gender and sexuality. This is due to many factors, including media portrayals of LGBTQ individuals, outdated understandings, and socialization within the family and culture. Social workers must strive to avoid these misconceptions and remain bias-free while also making the best possible client decisions. By surveying evidence-based research, you can remain current with best practices and ensure you are using the most up-to-date language and methods with the LGBTQ population.

For this Assignment, you search for and analyze a peer-reviewed research article on gender identity or sexual orientation, consider what you have learned, and apply your findings to practice.

**To Prepare:**

* Conduct a search in the Walden Library to identify **at least one** peer-reviewed research article that addresses gender identity or sexual orientation in young or middle adulthood.
* Select an article that you find especially relevant to you in your role as a social worker.
* Consider how you might apply the findings from both the research article and the Learning Resources to social work practice.

**By Day 7**

**Submit** a 2- to 4-page paper that includes the following:

* A summary of your findings regarding gender identity or sexual orientation and its impact on life span development. This should include information from the Learning Resources and from the journal article(s) you selected during your research.
* An explanation of how you might apply your findings to social work practice.

Make sure to provide APA citations and a reference list.

#### **Submission and Grading Information**

**To submit your completed Assignment for review and grading, do the following:**

* Please save your Assignment using the naming convention “WK5Assgn+last name+first initial.(extension)” as the name.
* Click on the **Week 5 Assignment Rubric**to review the Grading Criteria for the Assignment.
* Click on the **Week 5 Assignment**link. You will also be able to “View Rubric” for grading criteria from this area.
* Next, from the Attach File area, click on the **Browse My Computer** button. Find the document you saved as “WK5Assgn+last name+first initial.(extension)” and click on **Open**.
* If applicable: From the Plagiarism Tools area, click on the checkbox for **I agree to submit my paper(s) to the Global Reference Database**.
* Click on the **Submit** button to complete your submission.

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**Week 6: Biological Aspects of Later Adulthood**

**Introduction**

With advances in healthcare, disease prevention, and treatment, people are living longer. In fact, U.S. life expectancy rose 10 years between 1960 and 2015 (Medina et al., 2020) and now hovers around 78 (Arias et al., 2021). As the population ages, the time period known as *later adulthood* widens and increases demand for gerontological social workers. Thus, an understanding of issues and challenges related to aging is of paramount importance for social workers and others in the helping professions.

Later adulthood includes ages 65 and above. As individuals transition to this stage, they may begin to notice biological changes such as a stooped stature, thinning hair, increased fatigue, and hearing loss. Ray, for example, experiences physical pain and degeneration due to many years of demanding factory work. Because of the broad time period, the biological experience of later adulthood varies greatly from person to person.

This week, you explore the varied biological aspects of later adulthood and consider how the environment might accelerate or decelerate the aging process. You also consider a topic of growing significance for social workers—end-of-life care.

**References**

Arias, E., Tejada-Vera, B., & Ahmad, F. (2021, February). *Provisional life expectancy estimates for January through June, 2020* (NVSS Report No. 010). https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/vsrr/VSRR10-508.pdf

Medina, L., Sabo, S., & Vespa, J. (2020, February). *Living longer: Historical and projected life expectancy in the United States, 1960 to 2060*. U.S. Census Bureau. https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2020/demo/p25-1145.pdf

**Learning Objectives**

Students will:

* Explain the social environment’s influence on biological changes in later adulthood
* Examine the effect of biological changes on psychological and social domains in later adulthood
* Analyze how personal perspectives on aging impact social work practice
* Analyze the role of the social worker in end-of-life care and planning

**Learning Resources**

**Required Readings**

Zastrow, C. H., Kirst-Ashman, K. K., & Hessenauer, S. L. (2019). *Understanding human behavior and the social environment* (11th ed.). Cengage Learning.

* Chapter 14, "Biological Aspects of Later Adulthood" (pp. 642–671)

Nelson, T. D. (2016). Promoting healthy aging by confronting ageism. *American Psychologist, 71*(4), 276–282. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0040221

Ricks-Aherne, E. S., Wallace, C. L., & Kusmaul, N. (2020). Practice considerations for trauma-informed care at end of life. *Journal of Social Work in End-of-Life and Palliative Care*, *16*(4), 313–329. https://doi.org/10.1080/15524256.2020.1819939

Rine, C. M. (2018). Is social work prepared for diversity in hospice and palliative care? *Health and Social Work*, *43*(1), 41–50. https://doi.org/10.1093/hsw/hlx048

**Required Media**

Walden University, LLC. (2021). *Meet Ray, age 41 to 68* [Video]. Walden University Blackboard. https://class.waldenu.edu

**Discussion: Perspectives on the Aging Process**

You may be familiar with the phrases, “You’re only as old as you feel” and “age is nothing but a number.” To what extent do you believe these common sayings? Do you see yourself as younger or older than your biological age? And what are your views on the aging process—is it something to be avoided and feared, or celebrated?

As individuals grow older, they experience biological changes, but how they experience those changes varies considerably. Someone who is particularly fit at 70, for example, might perceive themselves to be in their 50s. And someone who has dealt with significant hardship and ailing health who is 70 might feel like they are in their 80s. Aging adults’ experiences are influenced not only by how they feel but also by how an older adult *should* look or *should* act, according to societal norms and stereotypes.

In this Discussion you examine biological aspects of later adulthood, and how these aspects intersect with psychological and social domains. You also consider your own views on aging and how they might impact your work with older clients.

**To Prepare:**

* Review the Learning Resources on biological aspects of later adulthood and the aging process. Identify the biological changes that occur at this life stage.
* Consider your thoughts and experiences related to the aging process and people who are in later adulthood.

**By Day 3**

**Describe** two to three biological changes that occur in later adulthood, and explain how the social environment influences them. Then explain how these biological changes could affect the psychological and social domains. Finally, reflect on your own thoughts, perspectives, and experiences related to the aging process. How might these perspectives impact your work with older adults?

**By Day 6**

**Respond** to two colleagues by describing additional ways in which their perspectives might impact work with older adults.

Use the Learning Resources to support your posts. Make sure to provide APA citations and a reference list.

**Assignment: End-of-Life Care and Social Work Practice**

Naturally, death and dying is also a biological change that occurs in later adulthood. As older adults age, they may experience diseases that impact their already vulnerable organ and immune systems such as cancer, Alzheimer’s, and cardiovascular issues. They may die painlessly at home surrounded by the support of many loved ones, or may suffer severe pain for months before dying in a health facility with little social support.

In either case, it is possible that many health and helping professionals interact with the dying person and their family. Social workers in particular play a key role, working to ensure that the individual’s wishes are honored and that the death is dignified.

For this Assignment, you examine the social worker’s role in the many aspects that accompany end-of-life planning and care.

**To Prepare:**

* Review the Learning Resources on end-of-life care and social work, and reflect on the social worker's role in end-of-life care and planning.
* Search in the Walden Library for **at least one** additional peer-reviewed research article that addresses how a social worker might support clients as they plan end-of-life care.

**By Day 7**

**Submit** a 2- to 4-page paper that analyzes the role of the social worker in helping to plan end-of-life care. Include possible consideration of palliative care, euthanasia, hospice care, the living will and advanced directives, and other factors.

Use the Learning Resources and **at least one** additional peer-reviewed research article to support your analysis. Make sure to provide APA citations and a reference list.

#### **Submission and Grading Information**

**To submit your completed Assignment for review and grading, do the following:**

* Please save your Assignment using the naming convention “WK6Assgn+last name+first initial.(extension)” as the name.
* Click on the **Week 6 Assignment Rubric**to review the Grading Criteria for the Assignment.
* Click on the **Week 6 Assignment**link. You will also be able to “View Rubric” for grading criteria from this area.
* Next, from the Attach File area, click on the **Browse My Computer** button. Find the document you saved as “WK6Assgn+last name+first initial.(extension)” and click on **Open**.
* If applicable: From the Plagiarism Tools area, click on the checkbox for **I agree to submit my paper(s) to the Global Reference Database**.
* Click on the **Submit** button to complete your submission.

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**Week 7: Psychological Aspects of Later Adulthood**

**Introduction**

Many aspects of living as an older adult may differ significantly from what an individual experienced in an earlier stage of the life span. For example, changes in older individuals' income, living arrangements, social connections, and physical strength may influence how they view themselves, interact with others, and think about their futures. They may experience grief and depression if their physical health does not permit them to live in their own homes, or if they have lost a spouse or loved one. They may connect more deeply with their religious faith. They may also feel regret, fear, or a sense of peace as they approach their own deaths.

This week, as you explore the psychological aspects of later adulthood, you consider theories of successful aging and their application to social work practice. You also consider how you might apply models of grieving to support families in a hospice environment when an aging family member is dying.

**Learning Objectives**

Students will:

* Explain the impact of life events on psychological functioning in later adulthood
* Apply theories of successful aging to social work practice
* Apply models of grieving to a hospice environment
* Evaluate models of grieving as they relate to social work practice
* Analyze how diversity impacts grieving
* Explain strategies for self-care as a social worker in grief counseling

**Learning Resources**

**Required Readings**

Zastrow, C. H., Kirst-Ashman, K. K., & Hessenauer, S. L. (2019). *Understanding human behavior and the social environment* (11th ed.). Cengage Learning.

* Chapter 15, "Psychological Aspects of Later Adulthood" (pp. 672–702)

Newell, J. M. (2019). An ecological systems framework for professional resilience in social work practice. *Social Work, 65*(1), 65–73. https://doi.org/10.1093/sw/swz044

Teater, B., & Chonody, J. M. (2020). How do older adults define successful aging? A scoping review. *International Journal of Aging and Human Development*, *91*(4), 599–625. https://doi.org/10.1177/0091415019871207

Yousuf-Abramson, S. (2020). Worden’s tasks of mourning through a social work lens. *Journal of Social Work Practice*, 1–13. https://doi.org/10.1080/02650533.2020.1843146

**Required Media**

Walden University, LLC. (2021). *Social work case studies* [Interactive media]. https://class.waldenu.edu

* Navigate to Sara and to Francine.

Walden University, LLC. (2021). *Models of grieving* [Interactive media]. https://class.waldenu.edu

**Discussion: Psychological Aspects of Aging**

What does it mean to age “successfully”? Though the concept of success is relative, theories of successful aging explain factors that support individuals as they grow old. Factors such as maintaining physical and mental activity and disengaging from community obligations contribute to older adults’ ability to function. As a social worker, you must understand these supportive factors in order to address the needs of older clients and their families.

As you will see in this week’s media, situations involving Alzheimer’s or dementia, interpersonal conflict, and grief can complicate the process of successful aging. For this Discussion, you review one of two case studies involving an older woman and apply a theory of successful aging to the case.

**To Prepare:**

* Review the Learning Resources on psychological aspects of later adulthood, focusing on key life events and on theories of successful aging.
* Access the Social Work Case Studies media and explore the cases of Sara and of Francine.
* Select a theory of successful aging to apply to **either** Sara's or Francine’s case.

**By Day 3**

**Post** a Discussion in which you:

* Identify whether you have chosen to analyze Sara's or Francine's case for the Discussion.
* Explain key life events that have influenced Sara's or Francine’s psychological functioning. Be sure to substantiate what makes them key in your perspective.
* Explain how you as a social worker might apply a theory of successful aging to Sara’s or Francine’s case. Be sure to provide support for your strategy.

**By Day 6**

**Respond**to two colleagues who chose a different case and/or theory than you did. State whether you agree with your colleague's strategy for applying the theory to the case. Justify your response and suggest one additional way your colleague might support the client’s psychological well-being.

Use the Learning Resources to support your posts. Make sure to provide APA citations and a reference list.

**Assignment: Models of Grieving**

The death of a loved one is a significant event experienced by everyone at some point in their lives. Thus, it is important for social workers to understand how grief affects surviving friends and family. Models of grieving establish the general stages or process through which an individual progresses; however, these stages do not necessarily occur in lockstep order. People who experience grief may do so in a different sequence or revisit earlier stages. Additionally, individuals’ social environments, including diversity and cultural factors, influence how they approach their own death or grieve the loss of others. Understanding the various ways people cope helps social workers anticipate their responses and assist them.

Grief work is challenging. Addressing the needs of grieving family members can diminish social workers’ emotional, mental, and physical resources. In addition to developing strategies to assist grieving individuals in crisis, then, you must develop strategies that support your own self-care.

In this Assignment, you apply a grieving model to work with families in a hospice environment, address how diversity affects grieving, and suggest strategies you can use for self-care.

**To Prepare:**

* Review the Learning Resources on models of grieving, and select one model to use for this Assignment.
* Also review the Newell (2019) article on professional resilience and self-care.

**By Day 7**

**Submit** a 2- to 4-page paper in which you do the following:

* Explain how you would apply the grieving model you selected to social work with families in a hospice environment. Explain why you chose this grieving model versus others.
* Identify elements of the grieving model that might be difficult to apply to your social work practice. Explain why you anticipate these challenges.
* Analyze how diversity might impact the grieving process. How would this inform your application of the grieving model?
* Identify strategies you would use for your own self-care as a social worker providing grief counseling. Explain why these strategies might be effective.

Use the Learning Resources to support your application of the grieving model. Make sure to provide APA citations and a reference list.

#### **Submission and Grading Information**

**To submit your completed Assignment for review and grading, do the following:**

* Please save your Assignment using the naming convention “WK7Assgn+last name+first initial.(extension)” as the name.
* Click on the **Week 7 Assignment Rubric**to review the Grading Criteria for the Assignment.
* Click on the **Week 7 Assignment**link. You will also be able to “View Rubric” for grading criteria from this area.
* Next, from the Attach File area, click on the **Browse My Computer** button. Find the document you saved as “WK7Assgn+last name+first initial.(extension)” and click on **Open**.
* If applicable: From the Plagiarism Tools area, click on the checkbox for **I agree to submit my paper(s) to the Global Reference Database**.
* Click on the **Submit** button to complete your submission.

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**Week 8: Sociological Aspects of Later Adulthood**

**Introduction**

Zastrow et al. (2019) refer to individuals in later adulthood as "a population-at-risk" (p. 705). From low social status and discrimination to financial concerns, lack of housing, and elder abuse, older adults can experience significant social challenges. Social service organizations and social workers are positioned to address some of these needs within their communities. Federal programs such as social security and Medicare also aid in offering income stability and healthcare for older adults. What role might you as a social worker play in meeting the needs of those in later adulthood?

This week, you consider factors that impact the vulnerability of individuals in later adulthood, including differing cultural perspectives of older individuals, and consider ways to increase support for this population in your local community.

**Learning Objectives**

Students will:

* Analyze sociocultural differences in perspectives on aging
* Apply sociocultural perspectives on aging to social work practice
* Evaluate local community resources for older individuals
* Propose improvements to address service gaps for older adults

**Learning Resources**

**Required Readings**

Zastrow, C. H., Kirst-Ashman, K. K., & Hessenauer, S. L. (2019). *Understanding human behavior and the social environment* (11th ed.). Cengage Learning.

* Chapter 16, “Sociological Aspects of Later Adulthood” (pp. 703–728)

Quach, L. T., Primack, J., Bozzay, M., Madrigal, C., Erqou, S., & Rudolph, J. L. (2021). The intersection of physical and social frailty in older adults. *Rhode Island Medical Journal, 104*(4), 16–19.

Teater, B., Chonody, J. M., & Davis, N. (2021). Risk and protective factors of loneliness among older adults: The significance of social isolation and quality and type of contact. *Social Work in Public Health, 36*(2), 128–141. https://doi.org/10.1080/19371918.2020.1866140

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (n.d.). *Aging: Resources near you*. <https://www.hhs.gov/aging/state-resources/index.html>

**Discussion: Sociocultural Differences in Perspectives on Aging**

Some cultures view death not as an endpoint but as a beginning, or not as a distinct separation but merely a thin veil or doorway through which a person passes. Other cultures esteem the older generations and honor them for their wisdom, whereas others regard elders as incapable of contributing to society. How might these distinct views on death and older people influence perspectives on the aging process? What other cultural differences might impact perceptions of aging?

This week, you explore different cultures' views of aging and consider how these differences might influence social work. You also think cross-culturally about how you could integrate another culture’s perspective in your practice.

**To Prepare:**

* Review the Learning Resources on sociological aspects of later adulthood.
* Using the Walden Library, research two cultures different from your own and examine their perspectives on aging.
* An example search in the library databases is *social conditions* or *sociocultural* AND *aging*.

**By Day 3**

**Post** a comparison of your culture's perspective on aging to the perspectives of the two cultures you researched. Explain why you think these differences exist. Also, explain how different perspectives on aging might impact social work practice.

**By Day 6**

**Respond** to two colleagues who addressed cultures that are different from the ones you addressed. Share an insight from reading your colleagues' postings. Describe how you might incorporate the cultural perspectives on aging described by your colleagues into your own social work practice.

Use the Learning Resources and additional research to support your posts. Make sure to provide APA citations and a reference list.

**Assignment: Community Resources for Older Individuals**

Volunteers, organizations, and political officials in local communities often campaign to improve conditions and provide services to enhance the well-being of residents. If you are the parent of young children, for instance, you might focus on improving the local school or creating safe places where children can play. If you are an individual in later adulthood or a caregiver for an older adult, what community resources might be important to you? What social challenges could be resolved through increased community support?

In this week's Assignment, you evaluate the resources that your local community currently provides for its older members and propose improvements or additions to better meet older adults’ needs.

**To Prepare:**

* Review the Learning Resources on sociological aspects of later adulthood.
* Using the Internet and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services link in the resources, research agencies in your local community that support the issues and concerns of the older population.
* Note the services provided by these agencies and any gaps you see. Consider what improvements might be made to existing services as well as opportunities for new services to be added.

**By Day 7**

**Submit** a 2- to 4-page paper in which you do the following:

* Identify three agencies in your local community that support individuals in later adulthood.
* Provide an overview of the services each provides.
* Identify the service gaps you notice.
* Explain how to improve existing services to address these gaps.
* Describe services that should be added to better serve this population and explain why.

Use the Learning Resources to support your analysis. Make sure to provide APA citations and a reference list.

#### **Submission and Grading Information**

**To submit your completed Assignment for review and grading, do the following:**

* Please save your Assignment using the naming convention “WK8Assgn+last name+first initial.(extension)” as the name.
* Click on the **Week 8 Assignment Rubric**to review the Grading Criteria for the Assignment.
* Click on the **Week 8 Assignment**link. You will also be able to “View Rubric” for grading criteria from this area.
* Next, from the Attach File area, click on the **Browse My Computer** button. Find the document you saved as “WK8Assgn+last name+first initial.(extension)” and click on **Open**.
* If applicable: From the Plagiarism Tools area, click on the checkbox for **I agree to submit my paper(s) to the Global Reference Database**.
* Click on the **Submit** button to complete your submission.

**Looking Ahead: Week 10 Assignment: Life Span Interview**

For the Week 10 Assignment, you will interview an individual over 65 years old using the questions in the Life Span Interview document (located in the Learning Resources in Weeks 9 and 10). Identify an older adult now to see if they would like to participate in an interview about their life story. The older person could be someone in your family, in your community, or an acquaintance you would like to know better. You are encouraged to reach out to friends or family members or to a senior center, adult living facility, or nursing home to locate an interviewee.

When interviewing, please consider how to show respect to an individual of this age within their cultural value framework. Additionally, be sure to take notes as you conduct the interview. Afterward, you will use those notes to write and submit a narrative analysis based on the interview.

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**Week 9: Spiritual Development**

**Introduction**

Throughout your coursework in HBSE, you have explored many factors that influence an individual's behavior. This week, you focus on spirituality, something that contributes significantly to the way individuals view themselves and the world and find meaning in their lives. Spirituality is loosely defined as faith and connection to something bigger than oneself. This connection could involve a higher power or deity, a traditional religion, or communion with people or nature. In later adulthood, an individual’s spirituality may affect how they view the aging process and the comfort with which they approach death.

This week, you consider the influence of both a client's spirituality and your own spirituality on social work practice and examine the necessity of spiritual sensitivity and awareness. Then, you apply these considerations to practice by analyzing a case study involving a spiritual concern.

**Learning Objectives**

Students will:

* Analyze the role of spirituality in social work assessment and practice (D)
* Apply awareness of spirituality to social work practice (D, A)
* Describe approaches for addressing client crises involving spirituality (A)

**Learning Resources**

**Required Readings**

Zastrow, C. H., Kirst-Ashman, K. K., & Hessenauer, S. L. (2019). *Understanding human behavior and the social environment* (11th ed.). Cengage Learning.

* Chapter 3, “Spotlight on Diversity: Relate Human Diversity to Psychological Theories” (pp. 112–114)
* Chapter 7, Sections "Review Fowler’s Theory of Faith Development," "Critical Thinking: Evaluation of Fowler's Theory," and "Social Work Practice and Empowerment Through Spiritual Development" (pp. 339–342)
* Chapter 15, “Highlight 15.2: “Celebration of Life Funerals” (pp. 694–696)

Limb, G. E., Hodge, D. R., Ward, K., Ferrell, A., & Alboroto, R. (2018). Developing cultural competence with LDS clients: Utilizing spiritual genograms in social work practice. Journal of *Religion and Spirituality in Social Work, 37*(2), 166–181. https://doi.org/10.1080/15426432.2018.1448033

Oxhandler, H. K., Polson, E. C., & Achenbaum, W. A. (2018). The religiosity and spiritual beliefs and practices of clinical social workers: A national survey. *Social Work, 63*(1), 47–56. https://doi.org/10.1093/SW/SWX055

Pomeroy, E. C., Hai, A. H., & Cole, A. H., Jr. (2021). Social work practitioners’ educational needs in developing spiritual competency in end-of-life care and grief. *Journal of Social Work Education, 57*(2), 264–286. https://doi.org/10.1080/10437797.2019.1670306

Roh, S., Burnette, C. E., & Lee, Y.-S. (2018). Prayer and faith: Spiritual coping among American Indian women cancer survivors. *Health and Social Work, 43*(3), 185–192. https://doi.org/10.1093/hsw/hly015

**Document:** Life Span Interview (PDF)

**Required Media**

Walden University, LLC. (2021). *Social work case studies* [Interactive media]. Walden University Blackboard. https://class.waldenu.edu

* Navigate to Najeeb.

**Discussion: Spiritual Development**

Do you identify as a spiritual or religious person? How might your spiritual identity influence your social work practice—both for those clients who have a similar worldview and those who do not?

Spirituality, which may or may not include involvement with an established religion, contributes to human diversity and influences behavior. Sensitivity to and respect for a client's spiritual dimension reflects your appreciation of diversity and the code of ethics. As you consider the potential impact of your clients' spirituality on their perspectives and behavior, you must also consider how your own spirituality might influence interactions with a client.

For this Discussion, you examine the potential effect of your spiritual views on social work practice and share strategies for being spiritually aware.

**To Prepare:**

* Review the Learning Resources on spiritual development.
* Reflect on your own spiritual or religious beliefs and how they may influence your social work practice.

**By Day 3**

**Post** a Discussion in which you explain how considerations about clients' worldviews, including their spirituality or religious convictions, might affect your interactions with them. Provide at least two specific examples. In addition, explain one way your own spirituality or religious convictions might support your work with a client, and one barrier it might present. Finally, share one strategy for applying an awareness of spirituality to social work practice in general. Be sure to refer to the NASW Code of Ethics in your response.

**By Day 6**

**Respond** to two colleagues in one or more of the following ways:

* State how your colleague's examples of spirituality's influence in client relationships resonate with you. Provide support for your perspective.
* State whether you are likely to use your client's strategy in your own social work practice, and explain why.

Use the Learning Resources to support your posts. Make sure to provide APA citations and a reference list.

**Assignment: Spirituality and Social Work Practice**

Because it may be a significant part of a client’s social environment, spirituality plays a vital role in your understanding of the client, their needs, and potential treatment. Consider this example: A social worker recognizes a client’s strong Baptist faith; the social worker then facilitates services through the Baptist Church so as to build on an already established connection.

Being culturally sensitive by respecting your clients' spirituality and religious traditions is an important professional competence. Applying your spiritual awareness to a specific client case, however, may require even greater skill. In this Assignment, you consider how you might address a client’s crisis that includes a spiritual or religious component.

**To Prepare:**

* Access the Social Work Case Studies media in the Learning Resources and explore the case of Najeeb.

**By Day 7**

**Submit** a 2- to 4-page paper analyzing the case and applying your perspective on spirituality. Be sure to address the following:

* As a social worker, would you include spirituality and religion in your initial assessment of Najeeb? Why or why not?
* What strategies might you use to ensure that your personal values would not influence your practice with Najeeb? How would these strategies support ethical practice?
* How would you address the crisis that Najeeb is experiencing?

Use the Learning Resources to support your analysis. Make sure to provide APA citations and a reference list.

#### **Submission and Grading Information**

**To submit your completed Assignment for review and grading, do the following:**

* Please save your Assignment using the naming convention “WK9Assgn+last name+first initial.(extension)” as the name.
* Click on the **Week 9 Assignment Rubric**to review the Grading Criteria for the Assignment.
* Click on the **Week 9 Assignment**link. You will also be able to “View Rubric” for grading criteria from this area.
* Next, from the Attach File area, click on the **Browse My Computer** button. Find the document you saved as “WK9Assgn+last name+first initial.(extension)” and click on **Open**.
* If applicable: From the Plagiarism Tools area, click on the checkbox for **I agree to submit my paper(s) to the Global Reference Database**.
* Click on the **Submit** button to complete your submission.

**Looking Ahead: Week 10 Assignment: Life Span Interview**

For the Week 10 Assignment, you will interview an individual over 65 years old using the questions in the Life Span Interview document (located in the Learning Resources in Weeks 9 and 10). If you have not already done so, identify an older adult to see if they would like to participate in an interview about their life story. The older person could be someone in your family, in your community, or an acquaintance you would like to know better. You are encouraged to reach out to friends or family members or to a senior center, adult living facility, or nursing home to locate an interviewee.

When interviewing, please consider how to show respect to an individual of this age within their cultural value framework. Additionally, be sure to take notes as you conduct the interview. Afterward, you will use those notes to write and submit a narrative analysis based on the interview.

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**Week 10: Application of Theoretical Perspectives – Part 1**

**Introduction**

Throughout both HBSE I and HBSE II, you have explored and then applied theories of human development to social work scenarios and case studies. These theories aim to explain the human experience at various stages of the life span, and social workers use them to guide assessment and treatment. You have also examined other theories—such as those pertaining to resiliency, poverty, and successful aging. Are any of the theories you have studied of particular interest to you? How do you see them informing your day-to-day client interactions?

This week, you revisit these theories in the context of the entire life span, rather than just a specific stage or period. First, you view the final years of Ray’s life and, understanding his life trajectory, apply a theory of human development to it. Then, after interviewing an older adult, you analyze their life events through the lens of several theories.

**Learning Objectives**

Students will:

* Analyze theories of life span development
* Apply theories of life span development to social work practice
* Apply social work interview techniques
* Explain growth and insights related to life span interviewing and analysis

**Learning Resources**

**Required Readings**

Hutchison, E. D. (2019). An update on the relevance of the life course perspective for social work. *Families in Society, 100*(4), 351–366. https://doi.org/10.1177/1044389419873240

Smith-Osborne, A. (2007). Life span and resiliency theory: A critical review*. Advances in Social Work, 8*(1), 152–168. <https://doi.org/10.18060/138>

Zacher, H., & Froidevaux, A. (2021). Life stage, lifespan, and life course perspectives on vocational behavior and development: A theoretical framework, review, and research agenda. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 126*. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2020.103476

**Document:** Life Span Interview (PDF)

**Required Media**

Walden University, LLC. (2021). *Meet Ray, age 69 to 87* [Video]. Walden University Blackboard.https://class.waldenu.edu

Walden University, LLC. (2021). *Theories of human development* [Interactive media]. https://class.waldenu.edu

**Discussion: Theories of Human Development Across the Life Span**

As a social worker, you will never have the privilege of seeing a client grow and evolve over the entire length of their life. Even if you do work with a client for a long time, you won’t witness their evolution firsthand; rather, the client will convey to you what they are experiencing. For the purposes of the HBSE I and II courses, though, you have gotten this front-row seat into someone else’s life. You have seen Ray navigate hardship in childhood, adolescence, young adulthood, middle adulthood, and now later adulthood. You have seen him find a sense of joy and meaning.

Through Ray’s case, you can refine your application of human development theories in the context of an aging client who has lived a full life. For this Discussion, you do just that, selecting a theory and examining how it illuminates Ray’s life.

**To Prepare:**

* Review the case of Ray, as presented in animated videos throughout this course and HBSE I. Consider the trajectory of Ray’s life, key life events, and his biological, psychological, social, and spiritual development. Select one area of his life on which to focus your post.
* Select a theory of human development throughout the life span to apply to Ray’s experience. This may be a theory described in this or other weeks’ Learning Resources, or you may select a theory based on personal research.

**By Day 3**

**Post** your application of a theory of human development to Ray’s life. How does the theory deepen your understanding of Ray’s experience? How might this application of theory assist you as a social worker engaging with Ray? Finally, what does Ray’s example tell you about the human spirit, resiliency, and the capacity to evolve?

**By Day 6**

**Respond** to two colleagues who identified different theories than you did. Explain whether you agree with the application to Ray’s case and whether you would apply the theory to your social work practice. Provide support for your position.

Use the Learning Resources to support your posts. Make sure to provide APA citations and a reference list.

**Assignment: Life Span Interview**

Ray’s case has provided you with direct observation of a client’s history and life experiences. In the absence of this direct observation, social workers turn to assessment and interview techniques to gather essential facts about a client's life span. Interviewing is an important social work skill—and one that requires more than simply reading a set of prescribed questions. A social worker must also demonstrate professional communication, both verbally and nonverbally, ask appropriate follow-up questions, and take notes at the same time.

For this Assignment, you practice interviewing an older adult about life events, experiences, and feelings that have shaped them. You then transform your interview notes into a narrative—that is, a life story—of the individual ­you interviewed. You interweave within this narrative an analysis of the life story by integrating person and the environment concepts and theories drawn from HBSE I and II.

**To Prepare:**

* If you have not already done so, interview an older adult (age 65 or older) about their life story, using the Life Span Interview document in the Learning Resources. Take notes as you conduct the interview.
* Review your notes and begin to interpret the older adult’s life story through the lens of human behavior and the social environment.

**By Day 7**

**Submit** a 3- to 5-page paper in which you provide a narrative analysis of the Life Span Interview you completed. The paper should:

* Provide a chronological history of the individual’s major life experiences.
  + Identify specific biological, psychological, and sociological influences that shaped the individual’s experience.
* Analyze the individual’s experiences by applying theory and concepts learned throughout both HBSE courses.
  + Be sure to include the ways in which power, privilege, and oppression shaped their experience (e.g., race and ethnicity, gender, religion, ability, sexual orientation, etc.).
* Provide your reflection of the experience, both in interviewing the individual and analyzing their narrative.
* Explain what you learned and how you will apply this learning to future social work practice.

Use the Learning Resources to support your narrative analysis. Make sure to provide APA citations and a reference list.

#### **Submission and Grading Information**

**To submit your completed Assignment for review and grading, do the following:**

* Please save your Assignment using the naming convention “WK10Assgn+last name+first initial.(extension)” as the name.
* Click on the **Week 10 Assignment Rubric**to review the Grading Criteria for the Assignment.
* Click on the **Week 10 Assignment**link. You will also be able to “View Rubric” for grading criteria from this area.
* Next, from the Attach File area, click on the **Browse My Computer** button. Find the document you saved as “WK10Assgn+last name+first initial.(extension)” and click on **Open**.
* If applicable: From the Plagiarism Tools area, click on the checkbox for **I agree to submit my paper(s) to the Global Reference Database**.
* Click on the **Submit** button to complete your submission.

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**Week 11: Applications of Theoretical Perspectives – Part 2**

**Introduction**

As you approach this final week, reflect on your increased understanding of human development. You have explored the biological, psychological, and social factors influencing individuals at all stages of the life span. But what happens when a person, at a specific point in their life, interacts with various systems? Systems such as family, school, government agencies, places of employment, and community organizations? A human does not go through life in a bubble, as you have learned in this course; that human is shaped by the environment and unique context in which they live.

This week, you apply your increased understanding of life span development by examining how person and the environment concepts intersect with a systems perspective. You also consider how the application of a systems perspective might contribute to advocacy and social change.

**Learning Objectives**

Students will:

* Apply a systems perspective to social work
* Analyze the influence of a systems perspective on social work practice

**Learning Resources**

**Required Readings**

Zastrow, C. H., & Kirst-Ashman, K. K. (2019). Understanding human behavior and the social environment (11th ed.). Cengage Learning.

* Review Chapter 1, "Introduction to Human Behavior and the Social Environment" (pp. 1–44)

Wickrama, K. A. S., O’Neal, C. W., & Lee, T. K. (2020). Aging together in enduring couple relationships: A life course systems perspective. *Journal of Family Theory and Review*, *12*(2), 238–263. https://doi.org/10.1111/jftr.12369

**Required Media**Walden University, LLC. (2021). *Social work case studies* [Interactive media]. https://class.waldenu.edu

* Navigate to Lester.

**Discussion: Systems Perspective and Social Change**

As a social worker, when you address the needs of an individual client, you must also take into account the systems with which the client interacts. Obtaining information about these systems helps you better assess your client's situation. These systems may provide support to the client, or they may contribute to the client's presenting problem. Consider the example of a workplace; a client may get great satisfaction and sense of purpose from a career but the interpersonal relationships at the workplace itself are toxic. This system could be contributing both positively and negatively to the client’s well-being.

For this Discussion, you examine the systems perspective and its relevance and application to practice, in light of all you have learned about human behavior and the social environment.

**To Prepare:**

* Review the Learning Resources on the systems perspective.
* Access the Social Work Case Studies media and navigate to Lester.
* As you explore Lester’s case, consider the systems with which Lester interacts. Think about ways you might apply a systems perspective to his case. Also consider the significance of the systems perspective for social work in general.

**By Day 3**

**Post** an explanation of how multiple systems within the social environment interact to impact individuals across the life span. Use Lester’s case as an example. Then explain how you as a social worker might apply a systems perspective to your work with Lester. Finally, explain how you might apply a systems perspective to social work practice in general.

**By Day 6**

**Respond** to two colleagues in one or more of the following ways:

* Critique your colleague's suggestion about how to apply a systems perspective to Lester’s case.
* Identify one way that a concept in your colleague's post might contribute to advocacy and social change.
* Discuss how you might apply the empowerment and strengths approach to one of the concepts your colleague has presented.

Use the Learning Resources to support your posts. Make sure to provide APA citations and a reference list.

**Grading Grid**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Week** | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** | **6** | **7** | **8** | **9** | **10** | **11** | **Total Points** | **% of Grade** |
| **Discussion** | 60 | 30 | 60 | 30 | 30 | 30 | 30 | 30 | 30 | 30 | 30 | 390 | 39% |
| **Assignment** |  | 70 |  | 70 | 70 | 70 | 70 | 70 | 70 | 120 |  | 610 | 61% |
| **Total** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 1,000 | 100% |

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**Instructor Notes**

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