

5.4 Life style of Middle adult

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- Economic security
- Widowhood/widower
- Singlehood
- Parental guidance to the children
- Leadership role
- Planning for retirement
- Increasing family responsibility
- Personality development: mind body connection
- Child's health education

Economic Security

In middle age stability of work, job satisfaction and prestige are more important than earning. There is usually a change in attitude towards the use of money. As a result middle aged adults realize that they need to meet family need and set aside some monies for emergencies and for their old age. There is worry about financial security in case of the death or illness of the bread earner.

Widowhood/widower

- Widowhood status indicates loss of spouse. Widowhood changes lifestyle of a person in terms of financial and social network. After death of spouse, some widow/widower may return to their ongoing job or start new job to run family. But some may experience a decline in health.
- In Hindu society, widowhood carries several changes, especially for women. Since women's value is maintained through her husband, traditionally widows wear plain white dress and forbidden from wearing any jewelry.

- Widows are not allowed to attend ceremonies for preventing any kind of misfortune. The property of deceased husband is transferred to their sons and she has to rely on her sons.
- At present, the fate for widows is gradually changing and such changes are mostly obvious in the urban areas.

Parental guidance to the children

- As middle-aged adults they are rearing their children. So, they are responsible to provide them (both children and parents) basic physical needs and medical care.
- Middle aged adults should also help their children to develop a positive self concept and should remember that raising a child is an ongoing process. As children grow towards adolescence, middle aged parents need to give them increasing independence and gradually be willing to let them take risk for success or failure of their own.

Leadership role

- The middle aged adult's cognitive stage is in favor of an informal leader if other factors are favorable.
- The middle aged person may demonstrate this leadership ability on job or in community.

Planning for retirement

- Adjustment to retirement depends on the kind of retirement which may be voluntary or compulsory, regular or early. Different job has different provision for retirement. Middle age is a time period for the preparation of retirement in most of the job in Nepal. Retirement brings pleasure to some and may be financial troublesome to others.

Increasing Family Responsibility

- Usually middle aged adults needs to adjust with impeding retirement from the work. Many of them also have increasing responsibility of their growing children as well as ageing parents at the same time who have different kind of needs.
- Middle aged adults must provide for the basic physical needs and medical care for health maintenance of their children and ageing parents.

- At the same time they also have to maintain their own health. There is increasing economic burden in middle aged adults regarding higher education and marriage of their growing children. Thus, this generation is also known as "Sandwich generation".

Personality development: mind body connection

- Personality actually matures as we get older. A healthy personality is one that is balanced. People suffer tension and anxiety when they fail to express all of their qualities. In middle age, people may become freer to express all of traits as the situation arises. Men become more interested in intimacy and family ties. Women may become more assertive. This gender convergence is also affected by changes in society's expectations for males and females.

- Mind-body connection means that our thoughts, feelings, beliefs, and attitudes can positively or negatively affect our biological functioning. In other words, our minds can affect how healthy our bodies are!
- On the other hand, what we do with our physical body (what we eat, how much we exercise, even our posture) can impact our mental state (again positively or negatively). This results in a complex interrelationship between our minds and bodies.

- Healthy lifestyle changes in middle age can improve mental health. They can also help prevent the worsening of chronic health problems, such as diabetes or heart disease. Positive social relationships in middle age tied to more beneficial outcomes. Both the quality and number of relationships and social connections can impact immune system function, inflammation in the body, and the progression of chronic conditions, such as heart disease and cancer.

Child Health and Education

Middle aged adults have increasing responsibility of their children's education and maintaining their health status. They may have young adult children and aging parents at the same time, who have different kinds of need and financial help. Middle aged parents must provide for basic physical needs such as food, shelter, clothing, and medical care to their children and aging parents. There is increasing economical burden to middle aged adult for higher education and marriage of their growing children.

Unit- 5.5 Developmental Tasks

- Maintain a pleasant and comfortable home.
- Assure security for later years, financially and emotionally.
- Share household and other responsibilities, based on changing roles, interests, and abilities.
- Maintain emotional and sexual intimacy as a couple or regain emotional stability if death or divorce occurs.

- Maintain contact with grown children and their families.
- Decrease attention on child-care tasks and adapt to departure of the children.
- Meets the needs of elderly parent in such a way as to make life satisfactory.
- Participate in community life.
- Use competencies built in earlier stages to expands or deepen interest and social or community involvement.
- According to Erikson, **Generativity vs Stagnation**.

- During this time, adults strive to create or nurture things that will live longer than them; often by parenting children or contributing to positive changes that benefits other people.
- Contributing to society and doing things to benefit future generations are important needs at the generativity versus stagnation.
- Generativity refers to making your mark on the world by caring for others as well as creating and accomplishing things that make the world a better place.

- Stagnation refers to the failure to find a way to contribute. These individuals may feel disconnected or uninvolved with their community and with society as a whole.
- Those who are successful during this phase will feel that they are contributing to the world by being active in their home and community.
- Those who fail to attain this skill will feel unproductive and uninvolved in the world.

5.6 Transition to Later Maturity

- The middle-ager has developed a sense of the life cycle; through introspection, he/she has gained a heightened sensitivity to the personal position within a complex social environment.
- Life is no longer seen as an infinite stretch of time into the future.
- The person anticipates and accepts the inevitable sequence of events that occur as the human matures, ages, and dies.
- The middle-ager realizes that the course of his/her life will be similar to the lives of others.

- Personal mortality, achievements and failures, and personal strengths and limits must be faced if the person is to be prepared emotionally and developmentally for later maturity and the personal aging process.
- The person realizes that the direction in life has been set by prior decisions related to occupation, marriage, family life, and having or not having children.

- While occupation and life-style can be changed, at least to some extent, the results of other earlier decisions cannot be changed. The consequences must be faced and resolved.
- The person in late midlife realizes that life's developmental markers and crises call forth changes in self-concept and sense of identity, necessitate incorporation of new social roles and behaviors, and precipitate new adaptations.

- But they do not destroy the sense of continuity within the person from youth to old age.
- This adaptability and sense of continuity is essential for the achievement of ego integrity in the last years of life.