

Capella University

Human Development Case Studies

Case Study 1

Emilio is an 18-year-old senior in high school. It is the end of the school year, and after feeling excited to graduate most of this past year, lately he is not sure he is ready to leave high school. He has been feeling more irritable than usual and has been especially grouchy with his family. Everything his parents tell him annoys him.

He misses his girlfriend, who recently broke up with him. He is supposed to be leaving for college in August, but he is feeling nervous about it. Before, he was convinced he wanted to go into engineering, but now he is not so sure. He feels pressure to go to college, but right now all he wants to do is stay in the area and get a job and an apartment so he can hang out with his friends who are not going away to college.

Sometimes he is so frustrated he feels the urge to break things. A few

days ago when no one else was home, he punched the doorframe of his bedroom.

Case Study 2

Brenda is 43 years old and wants to make some life changes. She is unhappy with her career in marketing and with her relationship status. She was divorced five years ago from Robert, whom she met during her senior year of college. They had delayed marriage until after Robert finished medical school, and were married when Brenda was 27. They had discussed having children, but Robert never felt that the time was right.

Even though Brenda feels alone, she is not comfortable dating. She would like to go back to school, but is not sure what career she is interested in. Plus, she has been spending a great deal of time taking care of her aging mother, with whom she has had a strained relationship over the years.

Lately, she has been thinking something is wrong with her. The kind of identity issues she is facing seem more typical of a teenager, not a 43-year-old woman. She is beginning to withdraw and to feel lonely. She feels like she has failed compared to acquaintances who are married, have children, and seem to be enjoying their careers.

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