Adolescence and young adulthood involve transitions from familiar surroundings to new environment and circumstances. Although these changes are opportunities for personal growth, they can be stressful as well. People handle stressful events and problems such as these by using coping strategies. The success of any coping strategy depends upon the circumstances under which it is used and panic suggesting that mental illness and ineffective coping methods can go hand in hand. Conversely, successful coping strategies often allow people to solve problems and maintain their mental health. Problem-focused coping, which involves doing something to make the stressful event manageable, can be very useful.

- The search for an identity involves the establishment of a meaningful self-concept in which past, present, and future are brought together to form a unified whole.
- must answer, for themselves, the questions: “Who am I?” and “Whom Am I to become?”
- experience a period of questioning, re-evaluation, and experimentation as they seek to develop a unified, consistent self-concept.
- develop further autonomy from parents, an autonomy that involves independence of action. They evaluate the judgment of other authority figures as well.
- accept their sexuality and conceptualize a sex-role identity (self-definition as a man or woman) that will continue through young adulthood into middle adulthood.
- make decisions regarding career choice and often experiment with one or more careers before deciding on an “adult” career.
- develop a commitment to a personally-held system of values, religious beliefs, vocational goals, and philosophy of life.

### Interpersonal Development

*(Some Older Adolescents…)*

- continue to take a third-party perspective, *i.e.*, can step outside themselves and consider both parties in the relationship -- the feelings, actions, and needs of those within the relationship. Relationships become more mutual; trust, friendship, and loyalty become significant factors in relationships.

*(Some Older Adolescents…)*

- expand their perspective to encompass self, peer group, and the larger world. The attitudes and views of the larger world are increasingly understood and taken into consideration.
- can comprehend more deeply the motives, feelings, and thought patterns of other individuals and groups of peoples, such as nations and classes.
- realize that other individuals are acting out of a complex web of beliefs, attitudes, and values that may differ from their own belief system.

### Intimacy Development

- develop deep, trusting, enduring personal friendships -- with members of the same sex and members of the opposite sex. Relationship become mutual and intimate.
- yearn for acceptance and love -- to be “who I am” and to really be accepted by others; to be able to honestly share their deepest selves.

### Moral Development

*(Some Older Adolescents…)*
• continue to reason morally at a conventional level, \textit{i.e.}, they resolve moral dilemmas in terms of the expectations of something other than themselves. This "something other" can be more personal: what their friends or other significant persons will think of them if they do or do not do such and such. It can be more impersonal: what the law or the system of good order calls for in a given situation.

(Some Older Adolescents...)

• move beyond conventional moral reasoning, evaluating earlier (inherited) moral principles in light of new experience and information. This involves a de-structuring and re-structuring which can be most unsettling. It can create a kind of vacuum in moral reasoning, in which the young person comes through as skeptical, negative, and relativistic.

\section*{Faith Development}

• critically reflect on their own life and its meaning, struggling to establish their own faith identity. They distance themselves from the authority of the community's faith, taking responsibility for their own faith life and journey. They begin to search for the intellectual justifications of faith. Critical judgment of the community's understandings and ways emerge as they strive to discover convictions worth living and dying for.

• begin creating a faith system/expression that is personally held and valued. They take seriously the burden of responsibility for their own commitments, lifestyle, beliefs and attitudes. They are developing an inner-directed faith identity. They are concerned with the integrity of belief and action.