

# Catechist Handout-F1

Week 4 – 10/17/2021

## An Evolving Personal Identity



### OBJECTIVES

- To help our teens better understand themselves by learning about the process of human development
- To offer a forum for our teens to reflect on their own experiences of growth and change
- To provide teens with a model for faith development and help individuals identify where they are in this process.
- To acknowledge that with growth, change and pain are inevitable and that during this time of transition their faith community supports and loves them.

### OVERVIEW

1. 4:00- 5:00pm - Mass
2. 5:15-6:45pm – Small Group Lesson Plan / Dismissal

### LESSON COMPONENTS

- A. Community Building
  - B. Scripture & Prayer
  - C. Shared experiences by adults and teens
  - D. Catholic Teaching/Insight
  - E. Putting Faith Into Action
- Announcements

### CATECHIST NOTES

#### CATECHIST BACKGROUND

TED Talks [The mysterious workings of the adolescent brain - TED.com](https://www.ted.com/talks/sarah...of...adolescent.../transcript?..)  
<https://www.ted.com/talks/sarah...of...adolescent.../transcript?..>

[Julian Baggini: Is there a real you? | TED Talk | TED.com](#)

#### Articles

[Adolescent Identity Development - ACT for Youth](#)

[Fostering Faith | America Magazine](#)

[Youth culture: teenage kicks in the digital age - The Guardian](#)

[Spiritual Development in Adolescents | Everyday Life](#)

...

[Meet Generation "Z" - Catechist's Journey](#)

## CATECHIST BACKGROUND

### Principles of Human Development


- Development is a continuous process from conception to maturity
- Human development is gradual and predictable
  - The sequences of development is the same for all individuals but the rate of development varies from person to person
  - Human development follows a direction and universal pattern
- Development is cumulative
  - A product of both heredity and environment
  - Development is a result of the interaction of maturation and learning
- Change/growth starts within - not always recognizable by outward appearances
- Different areas of development (physical, emotional, intellectual, social, spiritual) occur at different rates within and among individuals

### Adolescent Development

- Early adolescence 11-14; late adolescence 15-19
- The current Adolescent population is changing more rapidly than any generation that came before them and more rapidly than the adult population. Adolescents are also changing in more fundamental ways that the adult population.
- Begins with the onset of puberty (an internal marker)
  - Puberty typically starts earlier for girls than for boys
  - Puberty starts earlier than it used to.
    - For girls average start is between 10-12, but can begin as early as 7
    - For boys average start is between 11-13, but can begin at 8 or 9
  - Those who enter puberty at an earlier age complete the process sooner; those who enter puberty at a later age complete the process more gradually
  - First visible signs of the onset of adolescence are physical
- **Cognitive development**
  - Cognitive development refers to the construction of thought processes, including remembering, problem solving, and decision-making,
  - Recent research in adolescent brain development has demonstrated that the brain continues to develop into young adulthood. Neural connections are still being formed until the mid 20's.
  - The **Frontal Lobe** is the most recently-evolved **part of the brain** and the **last to develop** in humans. The frontal cortex is responsible for
    - Organization of multiple tasks
    - Impulse inhibition
    - Self control
    - Setting goals and priorities
    - Empathizing with others

## CATECHIST NOTES

- Initiating appropriate behavior
- Making sound judgments
- Forming Strategies
- Planning ahead
- Adjusting behavior when situation changes
- Stopping an activity upon completion
- Insight
- **Adolescents do not process and think the same way adults do**
- Behaviors common to adolescent thinking
  - to argue for the sake of arguing
  - to be self- centered
  - to constantly find fault in adult’s position
  - to be overly dramatic
  - teens do not always understand the consequences of their behaviors, in particular risk taking behaviors
  - teens might interpret social situation differently and respond with different emotions.
- Cognitive processes and skills continue to grow over the years
- Increasingly adolescents fine tune their abilities and progress from concrete to more abstract skill levels

	<p>19 years old</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ability to think abstractly</li> <li>• ability to analyze situations logically</li> <li>• ability to think realistically about the future, goal setting</li> <li>• moral reasoning</li> </ul>
<p>10 years old</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Entertain hypothetical situations, use of metaphors</li> <li>• <b>Need guidance for rational decision making</b></li> </ul>

**1. Social emotional development**

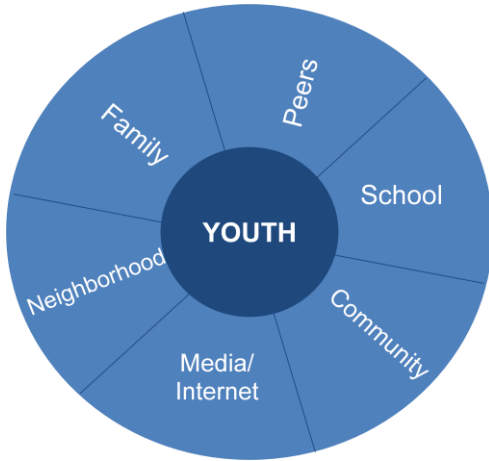
- In interaction with their social environments young people are trying to figure out
  - who they are
  - what makes them unique
  - where do they fit in
  - Referred to as Identity development (gender, sexual, ethnic) - Erik Erikson’s stage of **Identity vs. Role Confusion**
    - Identity is much more fluid than in previous generations
    - **The search for identity can be more complex when adolescents face the additional challenges of social injustice and discrimination**

Approx. Age	Virtues	Psychosocial crisis	Significant relationship	Existential question	Examples
School age 5–12 years	Competence	Industry vs. inferiority	Neighbors, school	Can I make it in the world of people and things?	School, sports
Adolescence 13–19 years	Fidelity	Identity vs. role confusion	Peers, role model	Who am I? Who can I be?	Social relationships
Early adulthood 20–39 years	Love	Intimacy vs. isolation	Friends, partners	Can I love?	Romantic relationships

Though **Identity Formation** is the primary task of adolescence, it is important to realize that since human development does not occur at the same time for everyone and adolescence is occurring earlier in the life cycle, issues/questions around the developmental tasks that precede and follow identity formation remain significant. Theorists whose primary work is with women argue that for girls the Intimacy question precedes and critically influences their sense of self.

- Self-esteem
- Role of peer group
  - More influential than family during mid-adolescence
  - Peer group important for the process of separating from family
- Role models – significant adults other than parents are important in helping teens consolidate a sense of identity (older siblings, more distant relatives, teachers, coaches, employers, catechists, celebrities...).
- How do I relate to others?
  - Emotional Intelligence – There are **5 main components** of emotional intelligence
    - Self-awareness.
    - Self-regulation.
    - Motivation.
    - Empathy
    - Development of social skills
      - how to communicate
      - interact with others
      - how to assess, cope with and control their emotions

## Key Social Environments of the adolescent



Adolescent development is filtered through and influenced by the social environments they are in.

How well adolescents master the challenges of developmental growth and change depend to some degree on how supportive and nurturing these environments are.

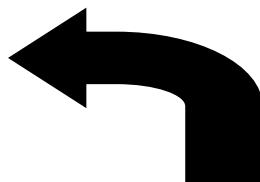
2. **Faith Development** is the process of growing and changing physically, cognitively, and emotionally in the understanding of our faith. We are always becoming always in process

**As we grow in faith we experience it and live it differently**

3. **Westerhoff Model** – amended

### Key points to make

- This is true for all people regardless of their religious faith tradition
- Stages can overlap
- This is not a linear model it is a spiral – we encounter each stage over and over as we grow. A new experience can cause us to ask new questions. Asking new questions can cause us to feel more or less connected to our faith or send us seeking out new experiences. Owned faith is not experienced as total and complete, but rather certain pieces of our faith become solidified and over time we come to own more and more of our faith.



Westerhoff model

## CATECHIST NOTES

**A. Experiential Faith**

- a. We receive the faith that is important to those who nurture us
  - **Sensual** understanding of faith – we see, hear, feel, taste the faith. Symbol and ritual are key in this stage of faith.
- b. What we see and do raises questions, leads to new ways of expressing our faith new ways of thinking (new insights) and feeling the faith. Internal responses are carefully monitored by the individual – doing and saying these things feels right, I like this, this brings me comfort, peace, joy

**B. Affiliative Faith**

- a. Participation leads to a sense of belonging.
- b. The participation of family, peers and role models validate the individual's experience of faith.
- c. External validation is carefully monitored by the individual – everyone is doing and saying these things it must be good/right. I feel comfortable with these people. I feel cared for, affirmed, supported by these people.

**C. Searching Faith**

- a. This is a time of asking questions...not blindly accepting what others have said.
- b. The individual seeks out other belief systems, new spiritual practices to compare his/her belief system to
- c. Often this is a time when spiritual practices and insights are added to a believers understanding of faith.
- d. Time of testing one's beliefs.
- e. Dissent becomes a crucial question – if I do not believe this or do that do I still belong to this faith community?
- f. What I think (head) is as important as what I feel (heart)

**D. Owned Faith**

- a. The individual claims his/her beliefs, values, spiritual practices
- b. strong, personal faith that one witnesses to and one is willing to make sacrifices for
- c. A faith marked by confidence, assurance, certainty, loyalty

## LESSON PLAN

### Community Builders

1. **Word Association exercise** – Direct students to page one of the teen handout and ask them to complete the Word Association exercise. After giving them a few minutes to write have them share one thing from their box with the small group.
2. **Self-Portrait exercises** – give each student paper and markers and have them create a self portrait. When students are finished have them share them with their small group.
  - A self-portrait is an image, painting, sculpture, or drawing whose subject is the maker of the artwork. To produce a photo self-portrait is to represent oneself or one aspect of oneself, literally or symbolically.
  - A **self-portrait** is our **inner image, our private image**. It is generally produced by reflecting on a period of time, in a situation centered on the creative process. It springs from the inner life of the author, who is also subject and spectator. He does not control the image; on the contrary, it's the creative process which allows the unconscious to speak with the language of art. The self-portrait is a profound dialogue with oneself, guided by the author's vulnerability.
    - **Examples:**
    - I feel like a trapeze artist in mid air - I have let go of one bar (childhood) and have not yet caught hold of the next one (adulthood)
    - My life is like a puzzle which is not yet fully completed  
I some pieces put together, I have other pieces I am not quite sure where to put, I may still be missing some pieces
    - I would describe my life as a house under construction.
    - I would describe my life as a plan for a road trip – I know some places I want to see and things I want to do, but am still open to changes in my itinerary.

### Scripture & Prayer

**Choose one or two passages that your group can read together and share.**

**John 1:12** - Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.

*I am a child of God and I belong to God.*

**Romans 8:35-39** "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? As it is written, "For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered." No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

*I am loved by God and nothing can separate me from His love.*

## CATECHIST NOTES

**Ephesians 1:4** “For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight.”

**1 Peter 2:9** “But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.”

*I am chosen by God.*

**Philippians 4:13** “I can do everything through him who gives me strength.”

*I am strengthened for all tasks to which God calls me.*

**John 14:16** “And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever.”

*The Holy Spirit is with me.*

**Hebrews 13:5** “Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, ‘Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.’”

*I am never alone --- God will not leave me.*

Discussion questions:

1. What does this passage mean? (simple comprehension)
2. What does this passage mean to me? (personal interpretation)
3. Why does God need to tell us these things?
4. What in this passage do you find comforting? Challenging?
5. How might you change your self-portrait to include God’s image of you?

**Shared experiences** Choose Activity 1 or 2

Activity 1: **Witness talk by catechist or peer or both**

*Key points to get across:*

1. All of us are trying to discover who we are, what makes us unique and where and how we fit in – give examples from your own life
2. This is as true for adults as well as teens because human development is a continuous process. We are always growing, changing, evolving. Change is often painful.
3. At certain times in our lives questions about who I am become more important to us. Give an example
4. Sometimes we think we have most things figured out and then a person, or event comes along and shatters our image of ourselves and we have to start putting the pieces together all over again – give an example

Direct students to **The Puzzle of Personal Identity** on page 2 of the Teen Handout. Let them follow the instructions or simply use it as a metaphor for your discussion.

- What things about yourself are you most proud of?
- What do your friends say about you?
- How do you see yourself changing? Can you identify the trigger for that change?

## CATECHIST NOTES



- How do you see your friends changing?
- What qualities do you most value in a person? Which of those qualities do you have? Which of those qualities do you wish you had?
- Can you identify one thing you are trying to change in your life?

## CATECHIST NOTES

### Activity 2: **Show one of these videos and discuss with the group**

[I am who I am - YouTube](#)

▶ 4:14

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nxg7DvRVaTc>

Identity Who Am I ?

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=tUJeOb1-mZ0](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tUJeOb1-mZ0)

The 4 Identity Myths (Jon Jorgenson)

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=o8I01BJ2bDQ](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o8I01BJ2bDQ)

Identity SHORT FILM (Award Winning Inspirational Short)

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=ikGVWEvUzNM](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ikGVWEvUzNM)

### **Discussion Questions:**

- What did you find \_\_\_\_\_ in this film/ talk?
  - Surprising
  - Insightful
  - Challenging
  - Truthful
  - Valuable
- What do you think the film maker(s)/speaker were trying to communicate about personal identity? Do you agree or disagree with their perspective – explain why?
- If you were to make a film or give a talk about identity what concerns/questions would you address?
- Since there are many areas in our lives that are changing during adolescence (physical attributes, intellectual and emotional capacities, social capabilities, spiritual/moral growth...) which do you think are the most challenging for people your age?

### **Catholic Teaching/Insight**

**As a group, focus on 1 or 2 dimensions of change to explore.**

**Maybe you want to revisit some of the topics you have already discussed.**

- How does your conversation on relationships on 10/25 help you see how you are growing socially, emotionally?
- How does what you covered in the self-esteem lesson of 10/4 help you connect how God sees you? 'When God creates each individual, He creates each one with special gifts and has a plan for each one. He formed us. He knows every hair on our head.'
- What aspects of Catholic Social Teaching can help us assess where we are morally?
- What patterns did you uncover in Reconciliation that you see in your life that either help or hinder your ability to grow/change? What changes did you decide to make as a result of reconciliation?

### Discussion Questions:

- Why is this aspect of personal growth so challenging/difficult/painful?
- What are ways others have helped you negotiate these changes?
- What are some things you might explore that could help you adapt to these changes more successfully?
- What are some of the benefits you have noticed as a result of these changes?

**Make the point that often strategies that are helpful in adapting to change in one area can be helpful in adapting to other areas of change.**

**If you have time or want to focus on faith development you can use this pdf to help members of small group assess where they are in their spiritual development**

[Where Are You in Your Spiritual Journey? - Clover](#)

### Acorns:

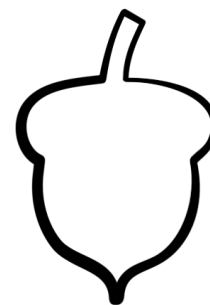
On TH03, there is a giant acorn with a quote about acorns and oak trees. There are also discussion questions and points to think about on the left-hand side. PLEASE take the time to talk about this symbol with the teens and go through the discussion questions.

Though this may seem childish, it will actually be a quite meaningful moment for many of the teens. This may be the moment when the teens realize that they don't have to have it all together yet and that they are meant for more.

- ***Lots of activities in the Teen Handout!***

### CATECHIST NOTES

Each teen will be given an acorn to take home with them as a symbol.



**LESSON PREPARATION NOTES:**

Is there something I want to pick up or go over from last week's class?

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My community building activity this week will be

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What parts of the lesson will the Peer Ministers lead/facilitate?

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Do I need anything from the Faith Office prior to class?

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Other

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**CATECHIST NOTES**

**CATECHIST NOTES**

Things I will need for class this week:

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The Key Ideas/Objectives for this week are

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Things I need to consult Mel about

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