

Scale of Self-Development

Nine levels of ego or self-development representing successive degrees of complexity and sophistication in the organization of experience or frame of reference for our identity and behavior. Scale includes impulse control, character development, conscious preoccupations, cognitive complexity, and interpersonal style

Postconventional Development—Self-Referral Predominant Mode

Stages E7-E9 involve an inner-directed or self-actualized or Self-Referral frame of reference. Growth of an inner sense-of-self that provides personal autonomy and identity. Ideals and values coming from 'inside' instead of orienting to and internalizing rules and norms that are 'outside' of oneself. The individual has differentiated the self from roles and expectations of authorities and defines moral values in terms of self-chosen principles. Extraordinary flexibility, and tolerance of ambiguity. Inner sense of fulfillment. Life lived in deeply moral principles. Mutual respect and acceptance of individual differences.

E9: Integrated (One does not identify oneself with any of the changing contents of awareness; conflicts resolved by transcending opposites/polarities, unifying and integrating ideas that appear incompatible at earlier levels)

E8: Autonomous (fully postconventional; established at Maslow's Self-Actualization level; deep appreciation of autonomy; inner conflicting needs and duties not projected onto other people and the environment;)

E7: Individualistic (Transitional; deeply principled, independent, respectful, flexible, diplomatic; concern with psychological causality and personal development; greater tolerance for differences in context and point of view)

Conventional Development—Object/Self-Referral Transition Mode

Stages E4-E6 finds one's identity in terms of representational notions about one's self. Identity molded by symbolic representation. Growing appreciation of conventions and rules that govern interpersonal relations and society. Increasing ability to conform to conventions. Majority of U.S. population.

E6: Conscientious (Self-monitoring, objectification of self and world reaches extreme; self-respecting, communicative, responsible in relation to others; capacity for self-criticism and formulation of ideals and long-term goals)

E5: Self-aware (U.S. norm; growing ability to take oneself as an object of thought; transition to broader comprehension of self and society; growing awareness of multiple possibilities)

E4: Conformist (transition at late adolescence; social reinforcement for approval/belongingness; Self-definition stems from membership in the social group; other directed, dependent, exploitive; distortion of rules and gang morality)

Preconventional Development—Object-Referral Predominant Mode

Stages E1-E3 are largely defined by needs-gratification or object-referral frame of reference. Highly ego-centric, impulsive, identity in terms of objects. Fulfillment determined by objects of world. Difficult to perceive and understand others' point of view. Minimal awareness of inner states. Strong tendency to be exploitive of others and are unaware or do not understand conforming to rules, conventions or laws of society. Young children to adolescents.

E3: Self-protective (Wary and fearful of others and being 'caught'; concerns for material and physical rewards and punishments)

E2: Impulsive, ego-centric (individual lacks self-control, focus on short term gratification; stereotypic, dichotomous frame of reference)

E1: Symbiotic, infancy (sensorimotor, object-dependent; not applicable to adults)

Jane Loevinger, *Personality Prediction Behavior*, Zucker, etal editors, 1984; Hy and Loevinger, 1996