



McMaster Divinity College

MS 3XK3/ 5XK5/ 6XK6

On Being a Healthy Human: Understanding Human Development and Maturity

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Mondays 9:00am to 10:50am

COURSE SYLLABUS

1. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will seek a broad understanding of healthy human development over the life span, as it relates to counselling and ministry, integrating theological perspectives on the nature of man, maturity, and our goals in the “curing of souls”. The course will survey psychological theories of healthy human development including psychodynamic, cognitive, behavioral, interpersonal, moral, and social systems paradigms. In all phases of life, we will see the importance of the relational context of growth and change. After considering different approaches to integrating theological and secular views, we will explore how the normal issues of different stages over the life span influence the formation and development of faith. Student assignments will include applying the general theories to specific populations and circumstances, critiquing the theories presented, considering the implications of a developmental perspective for counselling and other areas of ministry, and reflecting on the significance of developmental theories in understanding our own psychological and theological formation and maturity.

MS 3XK3 for MDiv, MTS SPECIALIZATIONS: Counseling and Spiritual Care, Church and Culture, Christian World View,

MS 5XK5 for MA, and MS 6XK6 for DPT, and PHD - ADVANCED RESEARCH STUDENTS: Students have assignment requirements that involve more reading and more comprehensive or in-depth written assignments (see below). The instructor will meet with advanced students once or twice per semester to discuss appropriate focus for their proposal, approve the bibliography for their papers, and will be expected to accrue some teaching experience in assisting with in-class activities and giving one short presentation within the course (see Assignments listed below).

2. COURSE FORMAT

This online course is offered as an in person, on campus class which is live-streamed for distance learners, scheduled once a week, to allow maximum time for direct interaction with the instructor, as well as interaction with other students. Course objectives will also be met through personal reflection, reading and written assignments, and other asynchronous (on your own time) online activities, including watching pre-recorded material, other videos, and possibly online discussions with classmates. Class sessions will include didactic instruction, case studies, and other experiential activities such as group breakout discussions and analyses. Assignments are formulated to master the content of the relational developmental theory reviewed, and then be able to apply this content to actual contexts in ministry.

3. LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students should attend to the learning objectives for their specialization. Through required and optional reading, lectures, class discussion and exercises, and the completion of assignments, the student should fulfill the following course objectives:

For Church and Culture (CC) and Christian World View (CW) Specialization Students, and Advanced Students:

Knowing

- To understand human development through a bio-psycho-social-spiritual lens, and recognize the important milestones, needs, and influencing factors in the different seasons of the life span.
- To understand how these developmental issues are imbedded in the relational imperative of our human nature.
- To understand how these developmental issues interact with the development of spirituality in general and faith specifically.

Being

- To gain self-awareness as a ministering person through self-reflection and self-evaluation of one's personal developmental journey.
- To reflect on and identify the growing edges of our own Christian maturity, and identify processes and goals for our own personal development.
- To increase empathy and acceptance in hearing others' experiences, and openness to the experience of one's own inner conflict and struggles.

Doing

- To develop a psychologically and theologically informed perspective on human development across the lifespan.
- To practice empathic listening skills, effective responses, and appropriate support in all of our interactions and relationships, in order to communicate with people in a manner that is appropriate to their developmental level and socio-cultural identity.

- To reflect on the use of developmental perspectives to understand faith formation, structure and content, and formulate a holistic conceptualization of Christian maturity
- To read research and evaluate the implications of articles on human development that are pertinent to one's area of ministry practice.
- To apply developmental perspectives in designing ministry strategies in one's area of ministry practice
- Advanced Students: To practice skills in facilitating other students' learning through discussions interaction and class teaching.

For Counselling and Spiritual Care (CS) Specialization Students:

Note: *These learning objectives are coordinated with the expected competencies for CASC/ACSS certified chaplains and pastoral counsellors and the College of Registered Psychotherapists of Ontario (CRPO).*

Knowing

- To have an integrated knowledge of human development across the lifespan (CRPO & CASC).
- To understand the psychological significance of spiritual, moral, social, emotional, cognitive, behavioural, sexual, gender, and biological development (CRPO & CASC).
- To understand how these developmental issues are imbedded in the relational imperative of our human nature
- To understand how these developmental issues interact with the development of spirituality in general and faith specifically

Being

- To gain self-awareness as a ministering person through self-reflection on and self-evaluation of one's personal developmental journey (CASC).
- To reflect on and identify the growing edges of our own Christian maturity, and identify processes and goals for our own personal development.
- To increase empathy and acceptance in hearing others' experiences, and openness to the experience of one's own inner conflict and struggles.
- To practice empathic listening skills, effective responses, and appropriate support in all of our interactions and relationships.

Doing

- To communicate in a manner appropriate to a client's developmental level and socio-cultural identity (CRPO & CASC).
- To assess and understand the client's spiritual, moral, social, emotional, cognitive, behavioural, sexual, gender, and biological development and to integrate this assessment within the counselling or treatment process (implied within CRPO competencies).

- To reflect on the use of developmental perspectives to understand faith formation, structure and content, and formulate a holistic conceptualization of Christian maturity.
- To assess for faith process and development, faith structure and content (CASC)
- To be able to understand a client's source(s) of spiritual strength, hope, methods/ways of coping, needs, risks and wellness goals through personal encounter with the client (CASC).
- To read and evaluate the implications of research articles on human development that are pertinent to one's specific area of practice or ministry (CASC & CRPO).
- To apply course materials and independent research to assessing and discussing client case examples.

4. COURSE TEXTS

All required textbooks for this class are available from the College's book service, READ On Bookstore, Room 145, McMaster Divinity College. Texts should be purchased before the first day of class. Please contact READ On Bookstore, 5 International Blvd, Etobicoke, Ontario M9W 6H3: phone 416.620.2934; fax 416.622.2308; email books@readon.ca. Other book services may also carry the texts.

A. **Required Textbooks:**

Balswick, Jack O., King, Pamela Ebstyne, & Reimer, Kevin S. *The Reciprocating Self: Human Development in Theological Perspective*, 2nd Edition. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2016.

Cloud, H., Townsend, J., Carder, D., and Henslin, E. *Unlocking your family patterns: Finding freedom from a hurtful past*. Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2011.

Advanced Students: (additional texts)

Aden, Leroy, Benner David G., and Ellens, J. Harold. *Christian Perspectives on Human Development*. Lansing, MI: Baker, 1992.

Entwistle, David N. *Integrative Approaches to Psychology and Christianity: An Introduction to Worldview Issues, Philosophical Foundations, and Models of Integration* (4th Ed). Englewood, NJ: Cascade Books, 2021.

B. **Required Articles:**

To supplement the text, lectures and class projects, required articles or their links will be provided on the class website on A2L (See Class Schedule when due).

Hill, Cathryn I. "A Developmental Perspective on Adolescent "Rebellion" in the Church." *Journal of Psychology & Theology*, Vol. 14 No. 4 (1986), 306-318.

Trokan, J. "Stages of the Marital and Family Life Cycle: Marital Miracles." *Pastoral Psychology*, Vol. 46 No. 4 (1998), 281-295.

Henning, Doug. "Psychological Development and Meaningful Faith: When Faith Works", *In Pursuit of Truth: Journal of Christian Scholarship*, published online April 27, 2011. <https://www.cslewis.org/journal/psychological-development-meaningful-faith-when-faith-works/view-all/>

Worthington, Everett L. "Religious Faith Across the Life Span: Implications for Counseling and Research", *The Counselling Psychologist* Vol. 17 No.4 (1989), 555-612.

C. Additional Reading and Resources:

Selected bibliographies are provided on A2L as well as copies or links to some supplementary texts and articles, providing a beginning resource for research papers and further reading. These bibliographies and resources are **not** meant to be exhaustive or to be the only sources of information for student papers.

5. INSTRUCTOR

Biography: Cathryn Harris, Ph.D. C.Psych. is an Affiliate Professor at McMaster Divinity College. She is a Registered Psychologist (CPO) with competencies in both Clinical and Counselling Psychology, a Registered Marriage and Family Therapist, and Approved Supervisor in Marriage and Family Therapy with AAMFT and CAMFT, and a Certified EMDR Therapist. For 35 years, and currently fulltime, she has provided psychotherapy and psychological assessments to individuals, couples, families, children and adolescents in outpatient private practice. She has also worked in inpatient and day treatment programs, and provided consultation to pastors, teachers, and business professionals on individual and organizational issues. She has been continuously involved in the training and supervision of Christian mental health professionals for over 30 years, beginning as Adjunct Professor at Rosemead School of Psychology and at Fuller Graduate Seminary for a short while, and for the longest time as Clinical Supervisor for a Christian counselling ministry that placed counselling interns in churches throughout Southern California. It has also been her privilege on a few occasions to provide counselling skills training specifically to Pastors and enjoys being able to do more of this at MDC. Dr. Harris has been married for over 30 years to another psychologist, and has one adult daughter who has managed to survive that experience.

Contact and Availability: Dr. Harris is available for one-on-one consultation briefly after class and during breaks on the day class is scheduled. Otherwise, students may contact her at drathryn@mcdivinity.com. **Please make sure you put "Human Development course" in the subject line of any email to rapidly identify your communication.**

6. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. Class Participation and Self-Reflection - 20% of grade

- i. **Attendance, and participation** in class lectures, group activities, and online asynchronous activities as assigned.
- ii. **Reflection Papers:** For each reading assignment, submit approximately 2 pages, interacting with either Balswick et al or Cloud et al on a personal level, at the level of disclosure that feels comfortable to you. The purpose of these brief papers is to accomplish the “being” goals by identifying and discussing how the material illuminates developmental factors in your life, or the life of someone close to you, both negative and positive, and how these may have shaped your personality, relationships, and/or faith journey. See the specific questions for each week.
- iii. **Advanced Students:** Your participation grade will also include assisting and facilitating class and online discussions, as assigned according to the needs of the class, and making a 20 minute presentation to the class based on the research of your midterm and/or final paper where it fits into a corresponding unit for the class. The latter will be refined in discussion with the professor. Grading criteria will be supplied on the first day of class.

B. Major Assignments: (Advanced Students, see additional details below)

- i. **Midterm Paper: Literature Review - 40% of grade:**
DUE OCTOBER 31st

For ALL SPECIALIZATION STUDENTS: (MDiv and MTS)

Include relevant chapters from the course texts, one academic monograph (i.e., book) related to this topic, and no fewer than 7 relevant academic (i.e., peer-reviewed) articles drawn from the counselling, pastoral counselling or pastoral care literature.

Paper length: 12-15 pages, double spaced, not including references.

Assignment Description:

A literature review focused on a topic of interest as it applies to individuals and/or families within a specific developmental stage as pertinent to your ministry. This literature review will form the basis for your final paper, which will be applying your research to your area of ministry and/or specialization. It is expected that your review will be integrative in highlighting relevant themes and conclusions drawn from the literature. Make sure that you demonstrate how this issue relates to

normal human development and/or maturity (eg. what typical or normative needs or milestones does this issue interrupt or distort?)

Use the following parameters to narrow your research:

Topic: A specific aspect of human experience, e.g., death & bereavement; family violence; illness & disability; immigration; learning disorders; mental health; parent-child attachment; separation, divorce & remarriage.

Developmental influence: Consider its possible effects on an individual's or family's development e.g., behavioural, biological, cognitive, emotional, gender, moral, sexual, social, and spiritual.

Phase of Life: in infancy, childhood, adolescence, emerging adulthood, middle adulthood, or late adulthood.

Specific Population/Context of Ministry: e.g. cultural community, missions context, school setting, type of client.

e.g. "The effects of divorce on church participation and faith commitment in Asian-Canadian adolescents"

e.g. "The effects of child sexual abuse on attachment styles, dating, and socialization during young adulthood in North America".

FOR ADVANCED STUDENTS (MA, PhD, DPT)

It is expected that students will read at least 4000 pages of text in this course, including the assigned textbooks, and additional sources related to their topic of choice that includes academic monographs (books) and *no fewer than 20* relevant academic articles (i.e., peer-reviewed) or chapters of books. Bibliography should be pre-approved by the professor.

Paper Length: 24 to 30 pages, double spaced, not including references.

Assignment Description:

A literature review that explores in depth a particular developmental theory and its implications across the life span.

Identify and evaluate the philosophical assumptions, values, understanding of development, key themes, stages of development and supporting research related to a specific psychological development theory (e.g., Attachment Theory, Erikson, Fowler, Kohlberg, Objects-Relations Theory, Piaget, etcetera). Include current developments and trends in research supporting, challenging, or modifying the original historical theory.

ii. **Final Paper: Application of Literature Review** - 40% of grade:
DUE DECEMBER 5th

SPECIALIZATION STUDENTS:

It is expected that you will build on the knowledge gained from the course, and demonstrate how you would apply the insights gained from your **Literature Review** assignment within a ministry context or in the work of counselling and spiritual care.
Paper Length: 12-15 pages, double spaced, not including references.

For Church and Culture (CC) and Christian World View (CW) Specializations

You will draw on the sources used in the first assignment, and you should employ at least 5 additional source materials to support your view and your plan, for example, sources on ministry applications and strategies.

Developmental Theory and Research applied to a Ministry Application: Discuss how you would apply the conclusions and themes of your literature review in the context of your ministry, particularly what you would do based on your research to encourage greater psychological and/or spiritual maturity and health in your community. Describe the context, goals, and challenges of your ministry context as it applies to your topic. Then discuss, what are the specific implications of the literature review for your work? How would these developmental factors influence faith development and spiritual maturity? How does this research inform ministry strategies? What specific ministry strategies would you employ for this population in this context? Give the rationale and goals for these strategies and activities from this developmental perspective.

For Counselling and Spiritual Care (CS) Specialization Students:

Include at least 5 relevant peer-reviewed articles, additional to your original literature research paper which focus on therapeutic strategies.

Developmental Theory and Research applied to Counselling/Pastoral Care:

Building on your literature review for your midterm, this paper will outline specifically how you would apply those conclusions therapeutically in counseling or caring for persons in your ministry context. Develop and describe an individual, family, or group case example, either hypothetical and/or drawing from personal or ministry experience (taking care to disguise all potentially identifying elements) (this can be single spaced and a smaller font to save space for discussion). Use your chosen developmental lens and research to assess the individual, family, or group in your example, and outline the counseling or other intervention strategies you would use based on your research to help them towards greater spiritual and/or psychological maturity.

ADVANCED STUDENTS (MA Research, PhD, DPT):

It is expected that the student will not merely draw on the sources used in the first assignment but will read at least another 1000 pages of source material additional to that included in your mid term paper, and draw on systems of integration sources, integrative, and theological articles. Relevant sources can be obtained from the instructor. Consultation with the professor is appropriate to refine the focus of your paper consistent with your research. Bibliography should be pre-approved by professor.

Paper Length: 30-35 pages, double spaced, not including references.

Integrative Theological Analysis: Use the text by Entwistle, and other theological and integrative articles, to reflect on the assumptions, insights, and values of the specific developmental theory you chose to explore in depth for your midterm, and discuss how it applies to an integrated view of development, spiritual formation, Christian ministry and/or worldview.

A. Consider one or more of the following questions, and discuss your rationale:

How can this developmental theory be complimentary to or integrated with Christian thought and ministry and how? How can it lend insight into a theme or character in Scripture? How can it contribute to our conceptualization of spiritual formation or Christian maturity?

B. Also discuss: If complementary and able to be integrated, what integration approach are you using in your analysis? Or if not, why not, and based on what integration approach are you forming your conclusion?

C. Conclusion: What is the integrated developmental perspective on your topic that you arrive at based on this analysis?

**** You must support your view,** citing other sources, and not just give your own opinion, **and you must identify which system of integration you are using.** Consider Scriptural and other pastoral and theological sources to support your discussion.

7. COURSE ADMINISTRATION

College Style for Submission of Written Work: All stylistic considerations (including but not limited to questions of formatting, footnotes, and bibliographic references) must conform to the McMaster Divinity College Style Guidelines for Essays and Theses <http://mcmasterdivinity.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/mdcstyleguide.pdf>. Failure to observe appropriate form will result in grade reductions.

Statement On Academic Honesty: Academic dishonesty is a serious offence that may take any number of forms, including plagiarism, the submission of work that is not one's own or for which previous credit has been obtained, and/or unauthorized collaboration with other students. Academic dishonesty can result in severe consequences, e.g., failure of the

assignment, failure of the course, a notation on one's academic transcript, and/or suspension or expulsion from the College. Students are responsible for understanding what constitutes academic dishonesty. Please refer to the Divinity College Statement on Academic Honesty ~ <https://mcmasterdivinity.ca/rules-regulations/>.

Gender Inclusive Language: McMaster Divinity College uses inclusive language for human beings in worship services, student written materials, and all its publications. It is expected that inclusive language will be used in chapel services and all MDC assignments. In reference to biblical texts, the integrity of the original expressions and the names of God should be respected, but you will need to use gender-inclusive language for humans, and you will need to quote from a gender-inclusive version such as the following: NRSV (1989), NCV (1991), TEV/GNB/GNT (1992), CEV (1995), NLT (1996), TNIV (2005), and the Common English Bible (CEB 2011).

Submission of Written Work:

A digital copy of all written materials must be submitted online through Avenue to Learn by their due dates (do NOT send by email). ***Late submission of assignments may be deducted 2% for every late day beginning 5 pm the day the assignment was originally due.***

Length: Students are expected to adhere to the page count. If a paper exceeds the page count, grace will be accorded for the first 10 % over. However, the grade will be reduced by 1/3 of a letter grade for each additional 10% a paper exceeds the stipulated page count.

Cell Phone/Computer Policy: Students are to refrain from texting or conducting cell phone conversations while class is in session. Should you need to maintain contact with family members and/or your church or ministry, please turn off the ringer so as to avoid disturbing others; upon receipt of an urgent call, you may discretely excuse yourself from the classroom or video conference. The same policy applies to all computer generated sound schemes or other electronic annunciation systems.

Copyright: ***This syllabus is the property of the instructor and is prepared with currently available information. The instructor reserves the right to make changes and revisions up to and including the first day of class.***

8. COURSE OUTLINE : LECTURES, READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS SCHEDULE

(see next page)

8. COURSE OUTLINE: LECTURES, READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS SCHEDULE

(Due on class date indicated)

Throughout the semester, in person/live-synchronous class sessions will involve lectures with supplementary content from the instructor, small and large group discussions, and other interactive activities. Reading, reflection papers, and other asynchronous online assignments which may be assigned for each week are designed to prepare for that class and are due at the time of the class.

WEEK 1: Monday Sept. 12th: *Introductions and Introduction*

Reading Assignments: (***required by first class*): Balswick Chs. 1 & 2, Cloud pp. 7-16, review Syllabus

Reflection Paper Due: After reviewing the syllabus - what are my personal goals for this course? How do I want my life and/or ministry to be different 13 weeks from now?

Lecture Topics: Goals, Expectations, and Challenges of the Course

Introduction to the Text and to the Field: The relationship of Psychology to Theology and The “Problems” of Psychology

On the Nature of Human Nature: An Introduction to Theological Anthropology

WEEK 2: Monday, Sept 19th: *Overview of Psychological Theories of Development*

Reading Due: Balswick Ch. 3 & 4

Reflection Paper Due: We all have an implicit or explicit theory of human nature. How does the text and lecture fit with and/ or challenge the view you arrived with at the outset of this course?

Lecture Topics:

Additional details on the Psychological theories surveyed in the Text

Other historical theories of psychological and social development

WEEK 3: Monday Sept 26th: *The Social Context:*

A Relational/Systems Perspective on Development

Reading: Balswick Ch. 5

Reflection Paper: In what way do you notice that your relationships and social context while growing up has affected you personally and spiritually? Give one specific example and explain.

Lecture: The Relational *Imperative* of Development

We are “wired” for relationship!: Neurobiology and attachment

Mirroring as foundational to relationship

Attachment vs. Separation-Individuation throughout life

WEEK 4: Monday Oct 3rd: *Pregnancy, Birth, Infancy and Toddlerhood (0-5yrs):*

The drama of attachment vs. autonomy begins!

Reading: Balswick Ch. 6; Cloud Ch. 7

Asynchronous Online Assignment:

Videos on normal infant and toddler development (see A2L Module)

Reflection Paper: What is your earliest memory (memories) in regards to relationship?

Give at least one example. How does this relate to your development later in life, particularly the themes of attachment vs. autonomy? OR Answer one of the reflection questions in Cloud et al. Ch. 7.

Lecture: Negotiating Attachment and Autonomy in the earliest years

Attachment Theories of Development

WEEK 5: Monday, Oct 10th: Thanksgiving Holiday, No Class

Online Asynchronous Activities: TBA/ See A2L Module

WEEK 6: Monday Oct 17th: Topic: *Childhood (6-12yrs)*

Reading: Balswick Ch. 7, Cloud Ch. 8

Reflection Paper: Pick one reflection question from Cloud Ch. 8

Lecture: Key Details in Understanding Childhood

The importance of availability and stability

Class and asynchronous activities: TBA.

WEEK 7: Monday October 24th: No Class. Hybrid Intensives/ Reading Week

WEEK 8: Monday October 31st: *Adolescence*

ASSIGNMENT DUE: MID TERM RESEARCH PAPER

Reading Due: Balswick Ch. 8, Cloud Chs. 5, 6 & 9

Reflection Paper Due: How do you see the central issues, needs and conflicts of adolescence playing out in your experience? Give at least one specific example.

Lecture: Key Details in Understanding Adolescence

Revisiting Separation-Individuation

The effect of social media on the capacity for healthy relationships

Class and asynchronous activities: TBA.

WEEK 9: Monday Nov 7th: *Moral and Spiritual Development*

Reading: Balswick Ch. 12 & 13, Articles: Hill, Henning, Worthington

Reflection Paper: Chose one question from Cloud Chs. 5 or 9.

Lecture: An integrative View of Christian Maturity

Class and asynchronous activities: TBA.

WEEK 10: Monday Nov 14th: *Emerging and Young Adulthood*

Reading Due: Balswick Ch. 9, Cloud Ch. 10

Reflection Paper Due: Choose a reflection question at the end of Cloud Ch.10.

Lecture Topics: Key Details in Understanding Emerging Adulthood

“Failure to Launch” and other challenges

Class and asynchronous activities: TBA.

WEEK 11: Monday Nov 21st: *Marital and Family Development*

Reading Due: Article: Trokan, Cloud et al Chs. 1 through 4

Reflection Paper Due: Choose a reflection question from Ch. 4

Lecture Topics: Key Details in Understanding Marriage and Family Development

Biblical Examples of Healthy and Unhealthy Families?

Class and asynchronous activities: TBA.

WEEK 12: Monday Nov 28th: *Middle Adulthood*

Reading Due: Balswick Chs. 10 & 11, Cloud Ch. 11

Reflection Paper Due: How do you see the central issues, needs and conflicts of middle adulthood playing out in your personal or professional life? What did you observe about your parents in this stage of life? Give at least one specific example.

Lecture Topics: Key Details in Understanding Middle Adulthood

The varied faces of "Mid Life Crisis"

WEEK 13: Monday Dec 5th: *Late Adulthood & Wrapping Up (excuse the pun!)*

ASSIGNMENT DUE: FINAL APPLICATION PAPER

Reading Due: Balswick Ch. 9, Cloud Appendix A "Helping the Helpers" (pp.215-221)

Reflection Paper Due: Based on Cloud Appendix A and this course, what are my typical "traps" in ministry? What are the growing edges in my psychological, relational and/or spiritual journey? What are my next steps?

Lecture Topics: Key Details in Understanding Late Adulthood

Making the ending count!

Class Discussion: What was the most valuable thing about this course? What was the least valuable or most frustrating? What will you take with you?

Course Evaluations