

Appendix 18.S1: Key Psychological Theories Related to Religious/Spiritual Development

Many R/S development theories already exist, and most fall into three categories: stage-structural (usually cognitively focused) theories, motivational theories, and relationally focused theories. In this appendix, we summarize some major theories from each of these categories.

Stage–Structural Theories

Most stage–structural theories of R/S development trace back to Piaget’s (1970; see Table S1) stage–structural theory of cognitive development, Kohlberg’s stage–structural theory of moral development (Kohlberg & Hersh, 1977; see Table S2), and Erikson’s (1963, 1982; see Tables S3 and S4) stage–structural theory of psychosocial development. Each of these theories assumes development (a) proceeds in universal, “hard” stages and stage-sequence and (b) affects functioning across all other developmental domains (emotional, relational, R/S, etc.). In Table 18.S1, we summarize Piaget’s (1970), Kohlberg’s (Kohlberg & Hersh, 1977), and Erikson’s theories, as well as three major R/S development theories that build on them: Fowler’s (1981) theory of faith development, Oser’s (1991) theory of R/S-judgment development, and Commons et al.’s (1998) model of hierarchical complexity (a theory of cognitive-complexity development).

Erikson’s Theory of Psychosocial Development. We begin by comprehensively summarizing Erikson’s (1963, 1982) psychosocial stage–structural theory, given how formative it was in shaping Fowler’s (1981, 1987) R/S development theory and how commonly it informs psychological empirical research on R/S development (see Chapter 18 in the current handbook).

Erikson’s (1963, 1982) psychosocial theory is a personality development theory (not a R/S development theory). This theory posits that someone’s personality traits (psychological characteristics and habits) emerge from the bidirectional interactions among their body (*soma*), mind (*ego* [self] or *psyche*), and relational/social–cultural ecology (*ethos*; Erikson, 1982).

Erikson's model is comprised of eight "hard" stages he thought people across cultures (i.e., universally) pass through sequentially across their lifespan. Each stage involves a *basic psychosocial crisis* (salient psychological [mental] and social [relational] struggle to resolve [integrate] tension between two antithetical psychosocial states—one positive/pleasant and one negative/unpleasant). Each crisis was thought to derive from a particular mode and zone of physical–mental ("psychosexual") energy. According to Erikson, crises are salient within a particular stage but have their roots in prior stages, and in subsequent stages, they normatively have consequences and can occasionally re-emerge in less salient form (Erikson, 1963, 1982).

Each psychosocial stage is navigated within a certain radius of significant social–cultural relationships, and this radius expands progressively across each subsequent stage. Each stage results in the emergence of either a *basic strength* ("ego quality"; adaptive psychological characteristic) or *basic pathology* ("basic antipathy"; maladaptive psychological characteristic), based on whether the developing person experiences a contextually adaptive, positive-over-negative ratio of the stage's paradoxical psychosocial states. Every stage occurs via a certain *binding ritualization* (culturally prescribed form of social bonding), which is the primary social–cultural mechanism for adaptive integration (linking) of the person's developing ego (mind) and their ecological context. Each stage's binding ritualization is guided by a certain principle of social order, but the ritualization can take on a maladaptive extreme form (*ritualism*) that has negative developmental consequences for the person (Erikson, 1963, 1982; Hall et al., 1998). Each stage's main characteristics and consequences are summarized below in Tables S3 and S4.

Erikson's psychosocial theory of personality development is based on what he called the *epigenetic principle* of identity—the assumption "that the conflicts of each life stage are systematically related to those of all other life stages, with a special time of ascendancy in the

life course for each, and that toward the end of each stage, a more or less lasting resolution to the conflict is found that will impact resolutions to all subsequent life stages” (Kroger, 2018, p. 334).

Erikson (1982) described the systematic relationship among all stages in the following way:

Epigenesis.... determines certain laws in the fundamental relations of the [developing ego's/person's] growing parts to each other.... There is both a sequence of stages and a development of component parts; in other words, [there is] a progression through time of a differentiation of parts... in which each part exists in some form before 'its' decisive and critical time normally arrives and remains systematically related to all others, so that the whole ensemble depends on the proper development in the proper sequence of each item. Finally, as each part comes to its full ascendance and finds some lasting solution during its stage... it will also be expected to develop further under the dominance of subsequent ascendancies and [ultimately], to take its place in the integration of the whole ensemble [into a functional whole—an integrated ego]. (pp. 28-29)

Erikson's psychosocial stage theory has applications and implications to R/S development, and Erikson explored several of these in his writings. For example, Erikson (1968, 1980) argued a person's sense of identity develops across their life cycle, even though identity development is particularly salient during adolescence. Erikson (1959, 1968, 1980) insisted that, throughout the life cycle, a person's identity always involves three dimensions—me in relation to myself (e.g., my body, emotions, thoughts, fantasies, dreams, impulses, and goals), me in relationship to others (the progressively expanding radius of significant social relations), and me in relationship to the world (e.g., humankind, identity-relevant cultural groups, and the cosmos). Regarding the last, Erikson believed that people universally sought to answer questions about ultimate meaning, such as “What does the world have to do with me? What is my place in the

world? Are there ultimate truths, and if so, how do we know what they are? Is there a God [or gods], and if so, what is God's nature and what does God have to do with me personally?" Like many of his predecessors and contemporaries (e.g., William James, Erich Fromm, and Abraham Maslow), Erikson (1959) viewed humans as *homo religiosus* (inherently R/S) and therefore normatively driven to search for sacred meaning and connection (Wulff, 1997). He agreed that humans by nature were concerned with classically R/S concerns, including core questions of transcendence, meaning, and purpose. Hence, Erikson viewed religion/spirituality as a common, central psychosocial mechanism in people's lifelong quest for a coherent sense of ego integrity (stable and adaptively well-integrated identity; Erikson, 1959, 1963, 1968, 1980, 1982).

Within Erikson's psychosocial theory, the ontological root of faith is the sense of basic trust that optimally develops during infancy (stage 1) and reascends while negotiating the identity-focused psychosocial crisis of adolescence. Erikson (1959, 1963, 1968, 1980, 1982) asserted that religion often plays a key role in identity formation, refortifying a sense of basic trust, which matures into adolescence's emergent basic strength—fidelity (faith). In fact, Erikson (1968) argued: "Religion, it seems, is the oldest and has been the most lasting institution to serve the ritual restoration of a sense of trust in the form of faith, while offering a tangible formula for a sense of evil against which it promises to arm and defend man" (p. 106). Additionally, he claimed: "whosoever claims that he does not need religion must derive such basic faith from elsewhere" (Erikson, 1980, p. 67). Furthermore, Erikson (1982, p. 58) emphasized that the core psychological strengths that ideally emerge from infancy, adolescence, and adulthood—hope, fidelity, and care, respectively—correspond to the theological virtues of hope, faith, and love (charity; see Chapter 25 of this *Handbook of Positive Psychology, Religion, and Spirituality* [Long et al., this issue]).

Fowler’s Theory of Faith Development. Two major stage–structural theories of R/S development are Fowler’s theory of faith development (Fowler, 1981, 1987; Fowler & Dell, 2006) and Oser’s theory of religious-judgment development (Oser, 1991; Oser & Gemünder, 1991; Oser et al., 2006). Fowler (1981) defines *faith* as “our way of finding coherence in and giving meaning to the multiple forces and relations that make up our lives” (Fowler, 1981, p. 4). Within Fowler’s (1981) faith development theory, R/S development is viewed as involving three main components: patterned knowing, patterned valuing, and patterned meaning constructions. There are seven stages in Fowler’s model (see Table S5 below for a description of each stage), beginning with an infant’s primal faith (Stage 0; developing a sense of basic trust) and progressing to more advanced (but less commonly achieved) stages of R/S development (Stage 6; developing a universally inclusive faith). Fowler’s model is best thought of as a series of “soft” stages, in that people can temporarily regress to an earlier stage or can function at more than one stage at once, depending on their current stresses and resources. Each stage reflects a particular form of R/S meaning making—a sense of selfhood (identity) and system of R/S beliefs, values, goals, and practices that inform how they view and navigate life at that time (Fowler, 1981, 1987; Fowler & Dell, 2006).

Oser’s Theory of Religious-Judgment Development. Oser’s (1991) theory of R/S development focuses on R/S judgment, which is defined as “the way in which an individual reconstructs his or her experience from the point of view of a personal relationship with an Ultimate (God)” (p. 5). R/S development thus involves age-related changes in how people judge (make R/S meaning) of their experiences by relating them to a personified deity. There are five stages in Oser’s model (see Table S6 below for a description of each stage), ranging from perceiving God as an active, powerful deity who intervenes unexpectedly and evokes a reaction

(“God from the machine”) to perceiving God and oneself as in constant, reciprocal, and unconditional relationship. Oser’s five stages come closer to Piaget’s conception of “hard” stages (in structure, sequence, complexity, and irreversibility). There is robust empirical support for Oser’s assertion that religious judgment represents a distinct and measurable form of human cognition. There also is evidence that most children and adolescents progress through Stage 3 in Oser’s model (autonomous, self-responsible R/S judgment) and the parallel Stage 4 of Fowler’s model (individualized, reflective faith). However, empirical evidence suggests that most adults remain at those two stages for the rest of their lives (Oser et al., 2006).

Commons’s Model of Hierarchical Complexity (Cognitive-Complexity

Development). Commons et al.’s (1998) model of hierarchical complexity is not a R/S development theory per se; instead, it is a 15-stage model of cognitive development (see Table S7 below for a description of each stage). This theory focuses on *cognitive complexity* (i.e., the complexity with which people can process information, solve problems, and complete tasks). Specifically, it hinges on how complexly a person can organize and coordinate information as they navigate life (Commons, 2008). A person’s stage of hierarchical complexity is characterized as “the highest order of [cognitive] complexity on which there is successful task performance” (Commons et al., 1998, p. 238), where *task performance* refers to the effective organization and coordination of information to complete tasks (Commons, 2008). Of note, this theory extends Piaget’s (1970) model into four postformal stages (i.e., past formal operations).

The model of hierarchical complexity has been applied and validated across a wide variety of developmental domains (Commons et al., 1998; Commons & Chen, 2014), including R/S development (Day, 2010, 2017b; Toth-Gauthier & Day, 2015). There is robust empirical evidence that R/S cognition is a distinct domain of development and that there are hard stages of

development in *R/S cognitive complexity* (i.e., the complexity with which people habitually process R/S information to make decisions, solve problems, and complete tasks effectively; Day, 2017b; Toth-Gauthier & Day, 2015). Research on this model suggests most adults reach and remain at Stage 10 (they can use logical and empirical evidence to process information, solve problems, and complete tasks). However, an estimated 20% of adults reach the first postformal stage—Stage 11 (they can integrate abstract concepts, tolerate ambiguity, and understand and navigate complex systems; Commons, 2007; Commons et al., 2011). Only a very small percentage of adults (< 1%) reach the three highest stages (Commons & Richards, 2003).

Taken together, there is robust empirical evidence that people's levels of faith development, R/S judgment, and R/S cognitive complexity are interrelated, such that people who demonstrate higher levels of R/S cognitive complexity also exhibit higher levels of faith development and R/S judgment (Day, 2017b; Toth-Gauthier, 2020; Toth-Gauthier & Day, 2015), at least as described and measured by Fowler's and Oser's theories. Growing evidence also suggests people who demonstrate these cognitively focused higher levels of R/S development tend to engage in more prosocial behavior and experience better well-being (Day, 2017a).

For an integrative view of how all the reviewed stage–structural theories relate to each other, see Table S8 below. As we specified in Chapter 18 of the current handbook, stage–structural theories are often critiqued because they tend to (a) focus too narrowly on individuals and on cognitions (and not enough on motivations, emotions, relationships, and ecologies); (b) underplay contextual and cultural influences on R/S development; (c) assume people develop in a normative (universal), discontinuous (discretely stage-like), and linear (sequential) way; (d) undervalue the unique nuances and complexities embedded in people's R/S expressions; (e) understate the wide variation of R/S expressions at any one age; (f) imply children are limited to

immature forms of religiousness/spirituality; and (g) use constructs that are difficult to operationalize concretely and apply cross-culturally (King & Boyatzis, 2015; Hood et al., 2018).

Motivational Theories

Pargament's Theory of Spirituality. Two major motivational theories relevant to R/S development are Pargament's (2007, 2013) theory of spirituality and the combined religious orientation theories of Allport (1950; Allport & Ross, 1967) and Batson (Batson & Schoenrade, 1991; Batson et al., 1993). These motivational theories focus on explaining *why* people are R/S. In his theory of spirituality, Pargament (2007, 2013) argues people intrinsically strive toward goals, especially personal goals of "ultimate concerns" (Emmons, 1999, p. 6)—the goals that guide a person's striving toward the sacred (Emmons, 1999; Pargament, 2007, 2013). According to Pargament's theory, people are R/S because they are fundamentally motivated to discover, conserve, and occasionally transform their relationship with "the sacred" (Pargament, 2013, p. 257), particularly when coping with stress or loss. Pargament's model is a "soft" stage theory. Pargament (2007, 2013) argues there are three stages involved in R/S development: discovery, conservation, and transformation. Each stage involves recognizable psychological and motivational (goal-relevant) processes that characterize the person's R/S development.

First, a person is motivated to *discover the sacred*. This process of discovery can occur at any time in their life (e.g., childhood, adolescence, or adulthood) and in a wide variety of ways (e.g., learning, conversations, experiences, or practices). Most commonly their search leads them to discover the sacred in the form of perceived supernatural entities (e.g., deity/deities, saints, ancestors, karma, or fate/destiny) or aspects of life that become perceived as "sanctified" (having sacred qualities), such that they are viewed either as a manifestation of the divine (e.g., close human relationships) or as having transcendent or divine-like qualities (e.g., nature or the

universe; Mahoney et al., 2021; Pargament, 2007, 2013). As part of this discovery, the person develops certain R/S goals (what Pargament calls “spiritual destinations”) that orient them toward whatever they now perceive as sacred (Emmons, 1999; Pargament, 2007, 2013).

Next, a person is motivated to *conserve* (hold onto) *the sacred*. They seek to do so via particular R/S pathways (habitual ways of meeting their R/S goals and thereby reaching their R/S destinations). These pathways can take on a wide variety of forms, such as private R/S practices (e.g., prayer, meditation, fasting), public R/S practices (e.g., R/S service attendance), or practices devoted to seeking sacred meaning and connection through nature, relationships, work, and so forth. The person particularly relies on these pathways to cope with situations of stress, threat, belief/goal violation, or loss (e.g., perceived violation or desecration of whatever they perceive as sacred). Pargament (2007, 2013) refers to such coping strategies as “conservational spiritual coping” (Pargament, 2007, p. 94).

However, sometimes these efforts of R/S conservation prove inadequate. At such times, people move into the third phase of Pargament’s spirituality theory—*transformation of the sacred*. This first involves the experience of *R/S struggles*—when an aspect of their R/S beliefs, practices, or experiences becomes the focus of negative thoughts, feelings, concerns, or conflicts (Exline, 2013; Exline et al., 2014). R/S struggles can be supernatural (e.g., with perceived divine entities or demonic forces), interpersonal (e.g., with other R/S people or with R/S institutions), or internal (e.g., with R/S doubts, moral failures, or perceived lack of ultimate meaning; Exline, 2013; Exline et al., 2014; Pargament, 2007, 2013). Pargament (2007) explains that, amid R/S struggles, “old roads to the sacred [R/S pathways/habits] and old understandings of the sacred itself [R/S destinations/goals] are no longer compelling [motivating]” (p. 112). Hence, the person may either spiritually disengage (e.g., temporarily or permanently) or engage in what Pargament

(2007) refers to as “transformational spiritual coping” (p. 94), which are employed mainly to bring about “fundamental changes in the place of the sacred or the character of the sacred in the person’s life [R/S destinations/goals] and secondarily to [bring about] a fundamental change in the pathways the individual takes to the sacred [R/S pathways/habits]” (p. 116). If this transformational R/S coping is effective, then the person may experience R/S growth and re-enter the phase of *conservation* (holding onto their adaptively transformed R/S goals and habits). However, if it is ineffective, then the person either may choose to disengage spiritually or may experience chronic R/S struggle and consequent R/S decline.

In addition to describing these soft stages of people’s R/S development, Pargament’s (2007, 2013) theory of spirituality also helps by explaining how religiousness/spirituality interacts with people’s well-being. Pargament (2007, 2013) argues that *integration* (i.e., “the linkage of differentiated elements,” Siegel, 2020, p. 461) is the marker and mechanism of healthy religiousness/spirituality. Specifically, he posits that *healthy religiousness/spirituality* is marked and facilitated by R/S destinations (goals) and pathways (habitual ways of meeting goals) that “work together in synchrony [and are] marked by breadth and depth, responsivity to life situations, flexibility and continuity, and a concept of the sacred that is large enough to encompass the full range of human potential and luminous enough to provide the individual with a powerful guiding vision” (Pargament, 2013, p. 267; see also Davis et al., 2021).

Religious Orientation Theories. There are two major theories that can be referred to collectively as *religious orientation theories*—Allport’s (1950; Allport & Ross, 1967) intrinsic–extrinsic orientation theory and Batson’s (Batson & Schoenrade, 1991; Batson et al., 1993) quest orientation theory. The term *religious orientation* (sometimes referred to synonymously as *religious motivation*) refers to a salient motivation (reason) for why a person is religious/spiritual

(Allport, 1950; Allport & Ross, 1967; Batson & Schoenrade, 1991; Batson et al., 1993; Hill et al., 2012). By definition, because it is a salient motivation, this R/S orientation is what drives and directs the person's religiousness/spirituality (search for sacred meaning and connection).

Allport (1950; Allport & Ross, 1967) initially proposed there are two major R/S orientations—an *extrinsic R/S orientation* (habitual motivation to engage in religiousness/spirituality as a means to an end) and an *intrinsic R/S orientation* (habitual motivation to engage in religiousness/spirituality as an end in itself). Subsequent research (e.g., Kirkpatrick, 1989; Kirkpatrick & Hood, 1990) has identified two subcategories of extrinsic R/S orientation: *extrinsic–social R/S orientation* (“the use of religion as a means toward social gain,” Kirkpatrick & Hood, 1990, p. 446) and *extrinsic–personal R/S orientation* (“the use of religion as a means toward gaining comfort, security, and protection,” Kirkpatrick & Hood, 1990, p. 446). These two extrinsic R/S orientations can be contrasted (individually or collectively) with an intrinsic R/S motivation, which Hill et al. (2012) has defined as follows:

An intrinsic orientation is the tendency to view religion as the reference point or framework from which other aspects of life are perceived and understood.... Religion is the supreme value, the final good, and the ultimate answer to life's most important questions. In short, it is a master motive, an internalized and sincere desire to serve the object of devotion. (p. 70)

Batson and colleagues (Batson & Schoenrade, 1991; Batson et al., 1993) have argued there is yet another major type of R/S motivation called *quest R/S orientation*, which is defined as “openly facing complex, existential questions (questions of life's meaning, of death, and of relations with others) and resisting clear-cut, pat answers” (Batson & Schoenrade, 1991, p. 430). Once more, Hill et al. (2012) have elaborated that quest R/S orientation involves three

interrelated facets: “(1) being prepared to confront existential questions without simplifying them, (2) viewing doubts as health, and (3) demonstrating openness to change” (p. 71).

Critiques of Motivation Theories. Taken together, these motivational theories provide helpful perspectives on the motivations behind why people are R/S. However, they do not provide much explanation for how these motivations develop and change. In addition, like the stage-structural theories, the motivational theories tend to be overly individualistic, underemphasizing the roles of context and culture in R/S development. They also do not comprehensively explain either (a) what a person’s religiousness/spirituality is (structural explanation) or (b) how a person’s religiousness/spirituality develops and changes through multilevel interactions with their ecologies (functional and developmental explanation).

Relationally Focused Theories

Some of the major relationally focused theories attempt to address these limitations. Most of the relationally focused theories of religiousness/spirituality are based on attachment theory (Ainsworth, 1985, 1989; Ainsworth et al., 1978; Bowlby, 1969/1982, 1973, 1980, 1988; Cassidy & Shaver, 2016; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2016), object relations theory (Fairbairn, 1952; Kernberg, 1966; Mahler, 1972; Rizzuto, 1979; Winnicott, 1953, 1965), social learning theory (Bandura, 1977, 1986, 2001; Bandura & Walters, 1963), and relational developmental systems theories (Lerner, 2006; Lerner et al., 2015; Overton, 2010, 2015; Overton & Müller, 2012). In this section, we briefly summarize four major relationally focused theories (although there admittedly are many others): (a) religious attachment theory (Granqvist, 2020; Granqvist et al., 2010; Granqvist & Kirkpatrick, 2016; Kirkpatrick, 1997, 1998, 2005; Kirkpatrick & Shaver, 1990, 1992), (b) religious socialization theory (Bandura, 2003; Boyatzis, 2005, 2006; Miller, 2015;

Oman, 2013), (c) Positive Youth Development theory (Benson et al., 2006; Lerner et al., 2003, 2015), and (d) Reciprocating Self theory (Balswick et al., 2016; King & Boyatzis, 2015).

Religious Attachment Theory. Religious attachment theory (Granqvist et al., 2010; Granqvist, 2020; Granqvist & Kirkpatrick, 2016; Kirkpatrick, 1997, 1998, 2005; Kirkpatrick & Shaver, 1990, 1992) is of course based on attachment theory (Ainsworth, 1985, 1989; Ainsworth et al., 1978; Bowlby, 1969/1982, 1973, 1980, 1988; Cassidy & Shaver, 2016; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2016). Attachment theory posits humans have an evolutionarily adapted, innate psychobiological (mental–physical) system called the attachment behavioral system. Across the lifespan, this system motivates people to develop strong socioemotional bonds (*attachment bonds*) with significant others (*attachment figures*) toward whom they engage in proximity-seeking behavior (*attachment behavior*) to alleviate distress, protect themselves from threat, and boost their confidence to explore their world. These attachment figures function as a *safe haven* from threat and distress and a *secure base* from which to explore the world with confidence and curiosity (Bowlby, 1969/1982, 1973, 1980, 1988; Davis et al., 2013, 2021; Granqvist et al., 2010; Granqvist, 2020; Thompson et al., 2021).

Depending on the experiences the person has in close relationships—first with caregivers but thereafter with other attachment figures across the lifespan (Ainsworth, 1989)—people develop mental representations called *internal working models* (i.e., stored beliefs, emotions, and action tendencies [BEATs; Dweck, 2021] about themselves, others, and themselves in relationship with others). These mental representations symbolize what has happened in prior relational experiences and thereby guide how someone navigates current and future relational experiences. As such, they form the structural basis for individual differences in how people

navigate relationships and understand themselves and others (Bowlby, 1969/1982, 1973, 1980, 1988; Davis et al., 2013, 2021; Dweck, 2021; Granqvist et al., 2010; Granqvist, 2020).

In particular, people normatively develop organized attachment patterns (*attachment styles*), defined as “a person’s habitual pattern of expectations, needs, emotions, and behavior in interpersonal interactions and close relationships” (Shaver & Mikulincer, 2007, p. 657). Such patterns reflect either a habitual experience of attachment security (*secure attachment pattern*; habitually pursuing relational closeness because others are expected to be available, responsive, and loving) or a habitual experience of attachment insecurity (*insecure attachment pattern*). There are two organized patterns of insecure attachment—an *avoidant attachment pattern* (habitually avoiding relational closeness, dependence, and expressiveness because others are expected to be unavailable, unresponsive, or unloving) and *anxious attachment pattern* (habitually being preoccupied with relational closeness because of anxiety about separation, abandonment, or insufficient love and care; Bowlby, 1969/1982, 1973, 1980, 1988; Cassidy & Shaver, 2016; Davis et al., 2013, 2021; Granqvist, 2020; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2016; Siegel, 2012, 2020; Thompson et al., 2021). Essentially, these two forms of insecure attachment involve one habit of minimizing attachment (*avoidant attachment pattern*) and another habit of maximizing attachment (*anxious attachment pattern*; Siegel, 2012, p. 154). There is a third form of insecure attachment called *disorganized attachment*, in which the person has no organized attachment pattern because of unresolved trauma or loss, typically due to experiences of caregivers who either were traumatizing (e.g., terrorizing) or were themselves traumatized (and socially transmitted that trauma to the child; Cassidy & Shaver, 2016; Siegel, 2012; Thompson et al., 2021).

Religious attachment refers to people's attachment behaviors, representations, and dynamics in perceived relationship with noncorporeal figures (e.g., deity/deities, saints, ancestors; Davis et al., 2013, 2021; Granqvist, 2020). Religious attachment theory (Granqvist et al., 2010; Granqvist, 2020; Kirkpatrick, 1997, 1998, 2005; Kirkpatrick & Shaver, 1990, 1992) is based on the assumption that a noncorporeal figure can meet Ainsworth's (1985) criteria for what constitutes an attachment figure:

- The figure is perceived as stronger and wiser than oneself.
- The person regularly seeks and maintains felt proximity to the figure through proximity-seeking behaviors (e.g., prayer).
- The figure functions psychologically as a safe haven (source of comfort and care) when the person is distressed, ill, afraid, or feels perceived or threatened separation from the figure.
- The figure functions psychological as a secure base—a source of felt security so that the person can explore their social world with confidence and curiosity.
- The person experiences anxiety if they perceive (or feel the threat of) separation from the figure, and they experience grief and mourning if they perceive the loss of the figure (e.g., a dark night of the soul; Davis et al., 2013; Granqvist, 2020; Moriarty & Davis, 2012).

According to religious attachment theory, people who have a R/S attachment relationship with one or more noncorporeal figure can develop the same forms of attachment they can develop in human attachment relationships: secure R/S attachment, avoidant R/S attachment, anxious R/S attachment, or disorganized R/S attachment. There are three hypotheses for

explaining the pathways by which people come to develop these R/S attachment patterns: (a) the correspondence pathway, (b) socialized correspondence pathway, and (c) compensation pathway.

First, the *correspondence hypothesis* posits that people develop R/S attachment representations and dynamics that correspond to (parallel) their human attachment representations and patterns. That is, if they have a secure attachment pattern with their human attachment figures, then they will have a secure attachment pattern in their R/S attachment relationship(s). Conversely, if they have developed a form of insecure attachment (avoidant, anxious, or disorganized attachment) in their human attachment relationships, then they will develop a correspondingly insecure attachment in their R/S attachment relationship(s).

Second, the *socialized correspondence hypothesis* posits that correspondence between secure human and R/S attachment patterns is contingent on (i.e., moderated by) parent religiousness. In other words, only people with caregivers who are both security-enhancing (e.g., reliably available, responsive, loving, comforting, and empowering) *and* religiously/spiritually oriented will develop corresponding secure human and R/S attachment patterns. This pattern is sometimes called the “two-level correspondence” pathway (Granqvist & Hagekull, 2003, p. 795), because the child develops religiousness/spirituality via social learning of the caregiver’s religiousness/spirituality (socialized correspondence) and develops secure R/S attachment because of generalized, secure internal working models that were formed through recurrent, security-enhancing relational experiences with these caregivers (internal working model correspondence).

Lastly, the compensation pathway posits that people who develop an insecure form of attachment in their human attachment relationships will develop a compensatory secure R/S attachment pattern, whereby their R/S attachment figure(s) serve(s) as a surrogate attachment

figure (e.g., a safe haven for regulating any insecurity or distress they experience in human relationships). There is empirical support for each of these hypotheses, suggesting more extensive research is needed to understand R/S attachment development and dynamics (for reviews of these hypotheses and this body of research, see Davis et al., 2013, 2021; Granqvist, 2020; Granqvist & Hagekull, 1999; Kirkpatrick, 2005; Kirkpatrick & Shaver, 1990, 1992).

Religious Socialization Theory. Religious socialization theory is based primarily on social learning theory (Bandura, 1977, 1978; Bandura & Walters, 1963), later called *social cognitive theory* (Bandura, 1986, 1989, 2001). Social learning theory posits that people develop habits (characteristic patterns of responding) based on acquiring novel responses by: (a) observing and imitating others (*observational learning and modeling*); (b) experiencing contingent rewards and punishments in the context of social relationships (*operant conditioning*); (c) interacting bidirectionally with their social and situational contexts (*reciprocal determinism*); and (d) developing socially transmitted cognitive representations (*social cognitions*; i.e., mental representations that guide how to perceive, interpret, and respond to socially relevant information), which then guide their thoughts, motivations, and behaviors. Religious socialization theory (Bandura, 2003; Boyatzis, 2005, 2006; Miller, 2015; Oman, 2013) applies social learning (social cognitive) theory to R/S development. It argues that people develop R/S habits (and the mental representations that underlie them) primarily through social learning and modeling (Bandura, 2003; Oman, 2013), dynamic bidirectional interaction within social relationships, and socially transmitted R/S habits of thinking, behaving, and relating (Boyatzis, 2005, 2006; Miller, 2015). These R/S habits can be transmitted through a variety of social conduits, chiefly including parents (Boyatzis, 2005; Miller, 2015; Oman, 2013) but also including peers (Adams et al., 2020; French et al., 2011), grandparents (Copen & Silverstein,

2008), nonfamily adults (e.g., role models, teachers; Eisman et al., 2016; Scales et al., 2006), and romantic partners (King et al., 2020).

Relational Developmental Systems Approaches. *Relational Developmental Systems Metatheory.* Relational Developmental Systems (RDS) metatheory (Lerner, 2006; Lerner et al., 2015; Overton, 2010, 2015; Overton & Müller, 2012) is a framework for explaining *lifespan development*, defined as “systematic intraindividual changes—from conception to the end of life—of an organism’s behavior, and of the systems and processes underlying those changes and that behavior” (Overton, 2010, p. 4). As such, RDS metatheory focuses on explaining *developmental change*. RDS approaches to R/S development emphasize the intraindividual changes that occur over time through interaction with the relational systems in which people are embedded (King et al., 2014, 2021; King & Boyatzis, 2015).

Overton (2010, 2015) has described developmental change as having six essential defining features that distinguish it from any other type of change. First, *developmental change involves change in the organization, structure, or patterned form of a system*, where a system is defined as “a whole which functions as a whole by virtue of the interdependence of its parts” (Overton, 2010, p. 19). Within RDS, this transformational change occurs both within the individual (internal system)—who has physical (biological) and psychological (cognitive, emotional, and motivational) subsystems—and between the individual and his or her multilevel relational context (relational developmental system). RDS posits that “it is the relational developmental system itself that organizes and regulates itself through complex and multidirectional relational coactions [i.e., interactions] with its biological, sociocultural, and physical environmental subsystems” (Overton, 2010, p. 5). The individual and relational

development systems are each open systems that are active, dynamic (changing), self-regulating, and self-organizing (Overton, 2010; cf. Siegel, 2012, 2020).

Second, *developmental change occurs through embodied action during multilevel relational experiences*. In fact, Overton (2010) asserts “the microscopic mechanism of all psychological development is the organism’s embodied action-in-the-world” (p. 22). This embodied action occurs through bidirectional interaction (“coaction”) among the person, their physical body (biology), and their multilevel sociocultural context (Overton, 2010, 2015; Siegel, 2012, 2020). In fact, within RDS metatheory, “all development is the result of, and all action is identified as, *experience* (i.e., embodied organized action)” (Overton, 2015, p. 54).

Third, *developmental change is ordered and sequential*. In other words, change in the system’s organization demonstrates a necessary order (moving from lesser to greater to optimal complexity) and universal sequence.

Fourth, *developmental change is epigenetic* (i.e., contextualized and socioculturally situated) *and emergent* (i.e., results in qualitatively novel properties of the system). Overton (2010) explains epigenesis and emergence in the following way:

Probabilistic epigenesis is the principle that the role played by any part of a relational developmental system—gene, cell, organ, organism, physical environment, culture—is a function of all of the interpenetrating and coacting parts of the system. It is through complex relational bidirectional and multidirectional reciprocal interpenetrating actions among the coacting parts that the system moves to levels of increasingly organized complexity.... [Importantly,] reference to ‘discontinuity’ in development is simply the recognition of emergent novelty and qualitative change of a system (Overton & Reese, 1981). Concepts of ‘stages’ and ‘levels’ of development are theoretical concepts, which

within a relational developmental systems perspective reference transformational change together with the associated emergent novelty, qualitative change, and discontinuity. (pp. 6-7)

Fifth, *developmental change of a system has directionality* (i.e., it is oriented toward a particular goal [*telos* or end state]; Overton, 2015; King & Mangan, in press). Within RDS, the end state of the relational development system is twofold—maximum complexity (achieved through *integration* [“the linkage of differentiated parts,” Siegel, 2012, p. 110]) and homeostatic equilibrium. More recently, some developmental scientists have suggested RDS embrace a *telos* of not just homeostasis but of an ongoing thriving trajectory for individuals, communities, societies, and the planet (King & Mangan, 2020).

Fourth, *developmental change of a system has directionality* (i.e., it is oriented toward a particular goal [*telos* or end state]; Overton, 2015; King & Mangan, in press). Within RDS, the end state of the relational development system is traditionally thought of as twofold—maximum complexity (achieved through *integration* [“the linkage of differentiated parts,” Siegel, 2012, p. 110]) and homeostatic equilibrium. More recently, as developmental psychologists have refined RDS theorizing about how human thriving leads to flourishing and to just societies, teleological perspectives of epigenesis have emerged. These perspectives have suggested that optimal integration leads not just to homeostatic equilibrium but to ever-optimizing person $\leftrightarrow$ context interactions that promote thriving trajectories for all individuals, communities, societies, and the planet (King & Mangan, in press; Schnitker et al., 2019). Within such a theoretical framework, the *Reciprocating Self* has been proposed as a dynamic *telos* (as opposed to a static endpoint) that perpetuates the goodness-of-fit between individuals and the broader world in which they are embedded. This view emphasizes the importance of ongoing individual, relational, and

aspirational development (Balswick et al., 2016; King, 2020; King & Mangan, in press; Schnitker et al., 2019; see also King et al., Chapter 17, this volume). More specifically, Balswick et al. (2016) define a *Reciprocating Self* as “the self that, in all its uniqueness and fullness of being, engages fully in relationship with another in all its particularity” (p. 24). It is a self that is both fully differentiated and fully integrated (linked) with a differentiated human or perceived sacred being (Davis et al., 2021; Siegel, 2012, 2020). Developmental psychology has always emphasized individual development in the context of relationships, but the telos of the Reciprocating Self elevates the importance of aspirational development, which includes the moral and spiritual development necessary to direct and motivate ethics and behaviors that maintain mutual reciprocity (see Appendix 17.S1, Figure 17.S1, this volume; see also Balswick et al., 2016; King, 2020; King & Mangan, in press; King et al., Chapter 17, this volume; Schnitker et al., 2019).

Finally, *developmental change is relatively permanent and irreversible*. In other words, developmental change is not merely transitory and easily revertible to its previous state.

The six defining features of developmental change are fundamental assumptions in RDS metatheory (and hence in PYD theory). Overton (2015) has summarized the other key principles of RDS metatheory in the following way:

Relational-Developmental-Systems as metatheory characterizes the living organism as an *inherently active, self-creating (autopoietic, enactive), self-organizing, and self-regulating, relatively plastic, nonlinear complex adaptive system*. The system’s development occurs through its own *embodied activities and actions* operating *coactively* [i.e., bidirectionally interacting] in a lived world of physical and sociocultural objects, according to the principle of probabilistic epigenesis. This development leads, through

positive and negative feedback loops created by the system's organized embodied action, to increasing system differentiation, integration, and complexity, directed toward adaptive ends [i.e., maximum complexity and homeostatic equilibrium]. (p. 47)

Reciprocating Spirituality. RDS approaches to R/S development emphasize the intraindividual changes that enable a person to experience and respond to transcendence through their interactions with their relational developmental system (King & Boyatzis, 2015; King et al., 2021). Given that RDS recognizes that development occurs at all levels of the system, Reciprocating Spirituality emphasizes the potential to change through reciprocating interactions that occur at any level, ranging from the neurological to interpersonal to perceived experiences with sacred beings or entities. Thus, Reciprocating Spirituality emphasizes the bidirectional influence between the individual and the transcendent, which results in structural changes that promote both religious and spiritual development (see King et al., Chapter 17, this volume). Specifically, religious development involves the changes in one's capacities to engage in the beliefs, relationships, and practices associated with religion (King & Boyatzis, 2015). Spiritual development refers to the changes in one's capacities to experience transcendence in a way that informs identity and worldview, resulting in fidelity that motivates values-aligned behavior (King et al., 2021; King et al., Chapter 17, this volume).

King and Boyatzis (2015) summarize key concepts of Reciprocating Spirituality theory: [R/S] development involves the growing capacity to transcend the self, requiring the increase of cognitive and emotional capacities to be aware of and grasp that which is beyond the self, while reciprocally growing in self knowledge and understanding. This process requires the development of identity, purpose, values, meaning-systems, and eventually results in fidelity to an ideology. Further reciprocity is evident as the

[developing] person then responds to transcendence out of a sense of fidelity with actions that are consistent with their beliefs, values, and self-concept. Such actions are characterized by contribution, compassion, and leadership and require prosocial, moral, and civic development (Lerner et al., 2003). Spirituality is more than a feeling of transcendence, but a growing sense of identity or awareness that motivates or propels [the person] to care for themselves and to contribute to the greater good (King et al., 2013) [Positive R/S development therefore] is characterized by connection, commitment, and coherence.... [and] the developmental trajectory of reciprocating spirituality is toward coherence of transcendence, fidelity, and contribution. (p. 984)

Positive Youth Development Theory and R/S Development. Because it is based on RSD metatheory, positive youth development theory (PYD; Benson et al., 2006; Lerner et al., 2003, 2015) focuses on the interaction between people and their multilevel relational contexts. It specifically focuses on the phenomenon of *developmental regulations*—reciprocal person–context relations that govern (regulate) “the course of development (its pace, direction, and outcomes” Lerner et al., 2015, p. 608). Within PYD theory, developmental regulations (person–context relations) that mutually benefit the person and their multilevel relational context are called *adaptive*.

PYD theory’s primary organizing principle is that the main goal of PYD is the promotion of (a) youth’s access to *developmental assets* (i.e., experiences, supports, resources, and opportunities that promote positive growth and development) and (b) *adaptive developmental outcomes* (i.e., outcomes that are beneficial both to the person and their multilevel relational context). PYD theory categorizes developmental assets into *internal assets* (e.g., personal resilience factors such as social competencies, positive values, positive engagement, and a

positive identity) and *external assets* (ecological resilience factors, such as environmental, relational, and contextual systems that offer support, empowerment, boundaries/expectations, and productive use of time; Benson et al., 2006, 2011; Lerner et al., 2015). According to PYD theory, PYD involves adaptive developmental regulations between a person's internal and external developmental assets, which leads the person to develop the Five 5 Cs of PYD (increased competence, confidence, connection, caring, and character). In turn, this PYD increases the person's positive contributions (sixth C) to self, family, community, and society (e.g., enhanced personal, family, community, and societal well-being) and reduces risk/problem behaviors (e.g., psychopathology, delinquent behaviors, or substance use; Lerner et al., 2015).

Benson et al. (2006) has summarized the six other key principles of PYD theory:

1. All youth have the inherent capacity for positive growth and development.
2. A positive developmental trajectory is enabled when youth are embedded in relationships, contexts, and ecologies that nurture their development.
3. The promotion of positive development is further enabled when youth participate in multiple, nutrient-rich relationships, contexts, and ecologies.
4. All youth benefit from these relationships, contexts, and ecologies. Support, empowerment, and engagement are, for example, important developmental assets for all youth, generalizing across race, ethnicity, gender, and family income. However, the strategies and tactics for promoting these developmental assets can vary considerably as a function of social location.
5. Community is a viable and critical 'delivery system' for positive youth development.

6. Youth are major actors in their own development and are significant (and underutilized) resources for creating the kinds of relationships, contexts, ecologies, and communities that enable positive youth development. (p. 896)

As it relates to R/S development, PYD theory identifies religiousness/spirituality as an internal and external asset that often promotes PYD and thereby leads to adaptive developmental outcomes. For example, religiousness/spirituality can be an internal resource (e.g., by supporting positive coping, meaning making, values, and identity) and external resource (e.g., R/S institutions and relationships that promote positive socialization, social support, virtue development, and civic engagement; Benson et al., 2006, 2011; King & Boyatzis, 2015; King et al., 2011; Lerner et al., 2015). King et al. (2011) posit that religiousness/spirituality can promote PYD via three pathways: (a) *ideological context* (embodied action between the person and their R/S context's beliefs, worldview, values, morals, and narratives), (b) *social context* (embodied action between the person and others in their R/S context, such as R/S teachers, leaders, coreligionists, mentors, and R/S role models), and (c) *transcendent context* (embodied action between the person and perceived sacred entities or realities).

Critiques of Relationally Focused Theories. Religious attachment and religious socialization theories are narrow in their conceptual and developmental scope. PYD theory is limited in that it only focuses on youth, and it addresses R/S development only peripherally. Reciprocating Spirituality theory is limited in that it does not offer a particularly comprehensive explanation for what someone's religiousness/spirituality is (structural explanation) or how and why their religiousness/spirituality functions differently at different times and in different contexts (functional explanation). Positive Religious and Spiritual Development (PRSD) theory

seeks to address these limitations, as well as the aforementioned limitations of stage–structural and motivational theories of R/S development (see Chapter 18 in the current handbook).

Tables of Stage–Structural Theories Relevant to Religious/Spiritual Development

Note. Each of these tables is informed by the respective theory’s seminal conceptual and empirical literature. For each theory, we have summarized key characteristics of people in that stage of cognitive, moral, psychosocial, or R/S development. We also have indicated the typical (modal) age period of people in that stage. Nevertheless, it is important to note that the developers and proponents of all these theories have insisted that age establishes platforms for optimal developmental opportunities, but it neither equals nor completely determines a person’s stage of development. All these theories are structural–developmental, interactionist models that emphasize the constant, bidirectional interplay of person and environment, including the recognition that context can facilitate, enrich, or inhibit developmental processes and outcomes. In other words, age does not necessarily indicate a person’s developmental stage. Some people reach higher stages earlier as a function of greater internal or external developmental assets and opportunities (e.g., genetic factors, innate abilities, personality factors, facilitating environments, parenting and family affordances, and community or cultural affordances). Therefore, the ages indicated for each stage should be considered a typical (modal) age period, with the recognition that there is a wide spread of ages for people in that stage. For each theory, there are approximate age minimums for the highest stages (e.g., it is developmentally impossible for a preadolescent or younger child to exhibit the highest stages of cognitive, moral, or R/S development). In each theory, there is general acceptance that the higher and highest stages represent a kind of best-case scenario for development; we know these high stages exist and that some exceptional people attain them, but we also know that most people do not. Furthermore, even though several of these theories’ proponents argue that their theory consists of “hard stages” without regression, research suggests people sometimes regress from one stage to a previous stage. This is particularly the case in Fowler’s theory of faith development. Indeed, Fowler acknowledged his theory’s stages were “soft stages,” with people occasionally regressing temporarily to a lower stage of R/S meaning making during particular circumstances (e.g., in the face of stress or adversity) but then returning to the higher stage. Similarly, research has found that people who reach the higher stages of Kohlberg’s moral development theory occasionally (but rarely) regress from Stage 5 (postconventional) to Stage 4 (conventional), but this regression seems to occur temporarily when they must function in a milieu (context) that is hostile to their higher-stage modes of functioning. However, across all the stage–structural theories reviewed here, there is no evidence that people ever regress to the lowest stages (e.g., from formal to preformal operations, conventional to preconventional morality, etc.).

Table S1: Piaget's Theory of Cognitive Development (Cognitive Functioning and Intellectual Learning; Piaget, 1970)

Stage	Typical period	Characteristics
1: Sensorimotor	Birth to around age 1.5 or 2 years	Cognitive functioning and intellectual learning occur via sensory and motor interaction with one's physical environment. The child forms <i>mental representations</i> ("cognitive structures that reflect acquired knowledge and experience, and that provide the material on which cognitive processes operate," Carlston, 2010, p. 39) and <i>neural representations</i> ("a pattern of neural firing that represents something, such as a memory, bodily sensation, or perception," Siegel, 2012, p. 479) that are based primarily on the child's embodied sensory, motor, and relational–affective experiences.
2: Preoperational	Around age 1.5 or 2 until 7 years	Cognitive functioning and intellectual learning occur increasingly via symbolic <i>information</i> ("patterns of energy that carry meaning and 'stand for' or symbolize something other than the energy itself," Siegel, 2012, p. 462). The child can increasingly form mental representations that are based on language, images, stories, and other types of symbolic information. He or she also can increasingly form mental representations that consider time (past, present, and future) and multiplicity (more than one aspect of something ["decentration"]). The child's cognitive functioning and intellectual learning is naively egocentric (focused on self-relevance).
3: Concrete operational	Age 7 to 11 years	Cognitive functioning and intellectual learning occur increasingly via logical reasoning ("operations"). The child can increasingly form mental representations that integrate logical connections among concepts, such as classification into conceptually related categories and understanding sequentially related processes. The child also can increasingly take another person's perspective into account during <i>information processing</i> ("a transformation of energy flow patterns that alters, reorganizes, and interconnects its symbolic value and emerging meaning over time, Siegel, 2012, p. 463).
4: Formal operational	Age 11 to 15 years	Cognitive functioning and intellectual learning occur increasingly via abstract reasoning. The individual can increasingly form mental representations that are based on abstract principles ("propositions") and logical deduction. During information processing, the person can increasingly take multiple people's perspectives into account at the same time. He or she also can engage in abstract reflection and hypothetical reasoning.

Table S2: Kohlberg's Theory of Moral Development (Moral Judgment and Reasoning; Kohlberg & Hersh, 1977; Kohlberg & Power, 1981)

Stage	Typical period	Characteristics
<i>Preconventional level</i>	Early and middle childhood	The child responds to cultural labels and rules of good/right and bad/wrong but interprets those labels and rules based on (a) their immediate and obvious consequences (tangible/hedonistic rewards, punishments, or exchanged benefits) and (b) the physical power of those who articulate the moral labels and rules (parents, teachers).
1: Punishment-and-obedience orientation	Early childhood	The child makes moral judgments based on the physical consequences of behaviors (avoiding punishments or achieving rewards) or the power of the rule-giver (deference to authority out of fear). The child's moral actions are based on physical self-interest.
2: Instrumental-relativist orientation	Middle childhood	The child makes moral judgments based on what satisfies their own instrumental needs (and occasionally those of others). Moral actions are based on the reciprocal, fair exchange of practical benefits.
<i>Conventional level</i>	Adolescence and young adulthood	The person increasingly makes moral judgments based on conformity to social conventions of good/right and bad/wrong. Moral behavior becomes less concerned with personal self-interest and more concerned with maintaining social relationships and the expectations/order of the social groups with which one is identified.
3: Interpersonal concordance ("good boy–nice girl") orientation	Adolescence	Behavior is judged as morally right if it is helpful to or approved by others in one's social group. The person engages in moral behavior to earn social approval by being "good" or "nice" (conforming to social conventions of morality to maintain social relationships). Moral behaviors start to be judged based on a person's intentions.
4: "Law and order" orientation	Late adolescence to young adulthood	The person is concerned with maintaining social order by obeying fixed social rules, respecting authority figures and the social system, and behaving morally out of a sense of social duty/responsibility.
<i>Postconventional level</i>	Young to middle adulthood (if at all)	Moral judgments are increasingly based on moral principles that are valid and valuable in their own right.
5: Social-contract orientation	Young adulthood (if at all)	Morally right behavior is based on people's individual rights and on critically examined and consensus-determined moral principles of an entire society. These principles are based on what is beneficial and good/right for as many people in the society as possible, and they can be revised as needed via a new, consensus-based social contract.
6: Universal-ethical-principle orientation	Middle adulthood (if at all)	Morally right behavior is guided by one's individual conscience and by abstract ethical principles (justice, reciprocity, equality, love, etc.) that are universally applicable across societies.

Table S3: Erikson's Theory of Psychosocial Development (Erikson, 1963, 1982)

Stage	Typical period	Characteristics
1: Basic trust vs. basic mistrust	Infancy (birth to age 1)	The baby's social radius narrowly revolves around his or her primary caregiver (e.g., mother), with whom the baby has a "numinous" (e.g., hallowed, transcendent) relationship. Ideally, through positive experiences in which the caregiver adequately and consistently fulfills the baby's physical, social, and emotional needs, the baby develops the ability to internalize basic trust in external sources of sensory pleasure, social recognition, and predictable routine. This basic trust (which enables the baby to sleep, eat, and excrete comfortably) is eventually present even in the caregiver's absence, and it gradually causes the basic strength of <i>hope</i> ("expectant desire," Erikson, 1982, p. 59) to emerge in the baby. The baby learns he or she can rely on and trust others to be a consistent source of care, warmth, and nourishment. However, if instead the baby experiences a preponderance of negative psychosocial experiences (of basic mistrust), then he/she develops the basic pathology of <u>withdrawal</u> (feeling abandoned).
2: Autonomy vs. shame and doubt	Early childhood (age 1 to 4)	The child's social radius now includes other parental persons as well. The child is learning to judge himself/herself, judge between right and wrong, know what is expected, know what its limits are, and exercise self-control and make autonomous decisions while accepting externally imposed limits. The child learns to navigate the dualities of self-choice/self-control and others' choice/limit-setting. Ideally, the child's positive experiences (e.g., affirmation of self-expression, limit-setting in a loving but clear way) will enable him or her to develop a sense of autonomy, as the basic strength of <i>will</i> emerges (the ability to make free choices, exercise self-control, and apply oneself). However, if the child's self-expression and attempts at self-control are recurrently met with negative external reactions (e.g., excessive punitiveness), the child will experience paralyzing shame/doubt and develop the basic pathology of <u>compulsion</u> .
3: Initiative vs. guilt	Play age (age 4 to 5)	The child's social radius is their immediate family. The child is filled with abundant energy and an eagerness to develop a stronger sense of initiative, motivation, and responsibility. They strive to grow in their ability to meet expectations, set and accomplish goals, and express themselves in creative but socially responsible ways. Much of these efforts occur in the form of play (e.g., physical and mental games, make-believe, imitation, dramatization). When the child's play and initiative is responded to in positive ways, he/she develops the basic strength of <i>purpose</i> . Conversely, when the child is met with recurrent negative responses, he/she experiences crippling guilt, leading to the basic pathology of <u>inhibition</u> .

Stage	Typical period	Characteristics
4: Industry vs. inferiority	School age (age 5 to 12)	The child's social radius expands to their neighborhood (local community) and school. The child focuses on learning, achieving, and producing. This focus tends to occur in the context of more formal and technical learning (as opposed to the focus on play during the previous stage). Ideally, the child develops mastery of a wide array of tasks and is rewarded externally and internally for success, achievement, and productivity. If so, he or she develops the emergent basic strength of <i>competence</i> . If the child recurrently either fails or is met with negative responses, he or she will experience inferiority and develop the emergent basic pathology of inertia (proneness to be inactive or to engage in meaningless, nonchallenging, or unproductive activity).
5: Identity vs identity confusion	Adolescence (age 12 to 18)	The youth's social radius broadens to their peer group, potential ingroups and outgroups, and older role models. The adolescent focuses on understanding and deciding who they are (identity) and who they want to be (identity-related goals). They are deeply concerned about how their self-perceptions relate to the perceptions that others (peers, parents, teachers, etc.) have of them. As the youth explores different ways of self-identifying and socially identifying (e.g., with particular social roles and social ingroups), he or she experiences identity confusion. If he/she is able to resolve this confusion and integrate a coherent, stable, clearly defined, and positive sense of identity, the basic strength of fidelity emerges. If not, then he/she experiences so much identity confusion they develop a basic pathology of repudiation (defensively rejecting various identities and ideologies).
6: Intimacy vs. isolation	Young adulthood (age 18 to 30)	In this stage, the young adult's social radius deepens (in intimacy) more than it expands per se. Ideally, the adult has developed enough of a well-defined, well-integrated identity that they can give and receive love in intimate relationships with romantic partners and close friends with whom they can engage in cooperation and competition that is mutually rewarding (e.g., enjoyable, meaningful, and challenging). This intimacy is found in fully sharing love, life, and work, and it typically culminates in the experience of full emotional and sexual union within a committed romantic partnership. If the young adult experiences a positive balance of socioemotional intimacy (vs. isolation), he/she develops the emergent basic strength of <i>love</i> . If not, they develop the emergent basic pathology of exclusivity.

Stage	Typical period	Characteristics
7: Generativity vs. self-absorption and stagnation	Adulthood (age 30 to 65)	The adult's social radius usually now revolves around family life and work life. In both spheres, the adult ideally engages in ever-increasing generativity (vs. self-absorption/stagnation), which leads to the emergence of the basic strength of <i>care</i> . The adult focuses on caring for younger generations, transmitting values, skills, and capacities that will positively impact not only the younger generation's future but also the future of the broader human species. This generative focus often is directed mainly toward the adult's genetic offspring, but it often is also directed toward other younger persons (younger coworkers, community members, etc.) and toward work (generating products, ideas, etc.). Essentially, generative adults recognize their interdependence on younger generations for the perpetuation of valuable knowledge, skills, attitudes, and traditions. If the adult engages in more self-absorption or stagnation (failure to find ways to contribute meaningfully to younger generations), then he/she develops the emergent basic pathology of reactivity.
8: Integrity vs. despair	Older adulthood (age 65 to death)	The older adult's social radius now typically broadens to the point of including all humankind, especially the global community of people in identity-salient cultural groups (people of the same religion, culture, race/ethnicity, nationality, occupation, etc.). Ideally, the older adult now has a mature, well-integrated, generative identity, cultivated through years of caring for others without losing a grounded sense of themselves (an integrated, stable, and strong ego identity). The preponderant experience of this ego integrity leads the basic strength of <i>wisdom</i> to emerge. It also leads to a sense of meaningful cosmic significance and both confidence and satisfaction in one's life and work, such that there is little to no fear of death. Conversely, without the stable experience of ego integrity, the older adult experiences despair and the basic pathology of disdain emerges.

Table S4: Erikson's Theory of Psychosocial Development (Erikson, 1982, pp. 33-34; see also Erikson, 1980, pp. 177-178)

Stage (typical age / period)	Psychosocial crisis	Physical–mental mode	Relational radius	Basic strength	Basic pathology	Binding ritualization	Social principle	Ritualism (pathology)
1. Infancy (age 0 to 1)	Basic trust vs. basic mistrust	Oral–respiratory / sensory–kinesthetic (incorporative modes)	Maternal person	Hope	Withdrawal	Numinous	Cosmic order	Idolism
2. Early childhood (age 1 to 4)	Autonomy vs. shame/doubt	Anal–urethral / muscular (retentive–eliminative modes)	Parental persons	Will	Compulsion	Judicious	“Law and order”	Legalism
3. Play age (age 4 to 5)	Initiative vs. guilt	Infantile–genital / locomotor (intrusive–inclusive modes)	Basic family	Purpose	Inhibition	Dramatic	Ideal prototypes	Moralism
4. School age (age 5 to 12)	Industry vs. inferiority	“Latency” (dormancy)	Neighborhood and school	Competence	Inertia	Formal / technical	Technological order	Formalism
5. Adolescence (age 12 to 18)	Identity vs. identity confusion	Puberty	Peer groups and outgroups / role models of leadership	Fidelity	Repudiation	Ideological	Ideological worldview	Totalism
6. Young adulthood (age 18 to 30)	Intimacy vs. isolation	Genitality	Partners in friendship, sex, cooperation, and competition	Love	Exclusivity	Affiliative	Patterns of cooperation and competition	Elitism
7. Adulthood (age 30 to 65)	Generativity vs. self-absorption / stagnation	(Procreativity)	Divided labor and shared household	Care	Rejectivity	Generational	Currents of education and tradition	Authoritism
8. Old age (age 65 to death)	Integrity vs. despair	(Generalization of physical–mental modes)	“Humankind” and “My kind” (identity-salient cultural group[s])	Wisdom	Disdain	Philosophical	Wisdom	Dogmatism

Note. This table's contents are mostly quoted from the indicated source (Erikson, 1982, pp. 33-34), with occasional minor rewording.

Table S5: Fowler's Theory of Faith Development (R/S Meaning Making; Fowler, 1981, 1987; Fowler & Dell, 2006; cf. Oser et al., 2006)

Stage	Typical period	Characteristics
0: Primal faith	Infancy to early childhood (birth to age 2)	The foundation of R/S meaning making is the preverbal (prelinguistic) formation of basic trust, socioemotional attachment, and differentiated mutuality. This primal (rudimentary) faith is formed through the child's relationship with their primary caregivers.
1: Intuitive-projective faith	Toddlerhood to early childhood (age 2 to 7)	The child's R/S meaning making is based on their emotional experiences, intuitive perceptions, and projected imagination. They are not yet able to differentiate fantasy from reality. The child projects their emotions and intuitions onto powerful R/S symbols and images that help them deal with intense positive emotions (love, security, safety, competence, etc.) and negative emotions (powerlessness, terror, guilt, etc.). These projections often involve issues of protection from threat and good triumphing over evil.
2: Mythic-literal faith	Middle childhood and beyond (age 7 to 12)	The child's R/S meaning making is characterized by literalness, simplicity, and one-dimensionality. Their primary means of making and sharing R/S meaning is through stories (myths, narratives, etc.), which are interpreted literally and simplistically. God is viewed as a good, just authority figure who rewards people for doing good and punishes people for doing bad.
3: Synthetic-conventional faith	Adolescence and beyond (age 12 to 18)	The person's R/S meaning making now involves capacities for abstract thinking, awareness of one's interior world and that of others, and social perspective taking. They develop a R/S worldview that is based on an uncritically examined synthesis of the conventional R/S beliefs and practices of significant others in their lives (parents, religious leaders, teachers, peers, etc.). They also synthesize a R/S identity that mirrors how they think significant others perceive them.
4: Individuative-reflective faith	Young adulthood and beyond (age 18 to 30)	The person's R/S meaning making is refined via critical reflection. They re-examine R/S beliefs and practices that were socially transmitted to them and develop a self-chosen R/S worldview and identity that is differentiated (individuated) from their groups of origin.
5: Conjunctive faith	Middle adulthood and beyond (if at all; minimum age 30)	The person's R/S meaning making is characterized by epistemological humility and dialectical balance between acting on internalized convictions and broadening and deepening those convictions through dialogue with religiously different others. There is an ability to integrate (conjoin) multiple perspectives and tolerate cognitive tension, paradox, and uncertainty.
6: Universalizing faith	Middle to older adulthood (if at all; minimum age 40)	The person's R/S meaning making is based on a vision of universal unity and harmony, motivated by a commitment to divine love, peace, and justice and to the sacredness of all humanity and creation. They work fervently to practice unconditional love, fight all forms of evil, and ultimately realize a holy "kingdom of God" on earth.

Table S6: Oser's Theory of Religious Judgment and Reasoning (R/S Meaning Making; Oser, 1991; Oser & Gemünder, 1991; Oser et al., 2006)

Stage	Typical period	Characteristics
1: Orientation of religious heteronomy (<i>deus ex machina</i>)	Childhood	God is viewed as an all-powerful Ultimate Being who intervenes actively but unexpectedly in the world. Humans respond reactively to God's powerful actions and will, and thus they have little to no autonomy.
2: Orientation of do et des ("Give so you may receive")	Preadolescence	God is still viewed as all-powerful and intervening. However, people now can influence God's actions and will through human promises, persuasive prayers, and good deeds. That is, humans have restricted autonomy.
3: Orientation of ego autonomy and one-sided responsibility	Adolescence	God's power and influence is substantially reduced. The person is fully autonomous, powerful, and responsible for their own life. If he or she still accepts God as real, then God is conceived as existing and functioning in a hidden, separate realm.
4: Orientation of mediated autonomy and divine plan	Adulthood (if at all)	God's power and influence is reacknowledged. The person seeks to understand God's divine plan and then live their life accordingly. Their autonomy is guided (mediated) by a divine plan. The person expresses their R/S faith through divinely guided social engagement.
5: Orientation of unconditional religiosity	Adulthood (if at all)	The person feels they are constantly and unconditionally interacting (communing) with God, such that all moments have (or can have) a R/S dimension. The person's R/S judgment and reasoning involves the effective differentiation and coordination of seven polar opposites: freedom vs. dependence, transcendence vs. immanence, hope vs. absurdity, transparency vs. opacity, eternal vs. ephemeral, trust vs. mistrust, and holy vs. profane.

Table S7: Commons's Model of Hierarchical Complexity (Cognitive-Complexity Development; Commons, 2007, 2008; Commons et al., 1998)

Stage	Typical period	Characteristics
0: Calculatory	Birth to age 2	The child can perform tasks involving exact computation with no generalization.
1: Sensory or motor		The child can discriminate sensory stimuli in a rote way, make stimulus generalizations, and move in response.
2: Circular sensory–motor		The child can recognize phonemes (distinct units of sound) and form open-ended classes.
3: Sensory–motor		The child can recognize morphemes (meaningful units of language) and form concepts.
4: Nominal		The child can use names (and other single words) and find relationships among concepts.
5: Sentential		The child can use pronouns, mimic and acquire sequences, follow brief sequential actions, and chain words together.
6: Preoperational	2 to 7 years	The child can make basic deductions, tell stories, follow lists of sequential actions, combine numbers and basic propositions, and count random objects and events.
7: Primary		The child can make basic logical deductions, understand rules involving time-based sequence, and conduct simple arithmetic problems.
8: Concrete	7 to 12 years	The person can conduct complex arithmetic problems, make reasonable plans and deals, understand and follow complex social rules, form social groups, and understand and coordinate the perspective of oneself and others.
9: Abstract	12 to 18 years	The person can discriminate abstract concepts (e.g., stereotypes), form concepts from finite classes based on an abstract characteristic, make categorical assertions, and make logical propositions and quantify them (e.g., some, none, all).
10: Formal		The person can argue using logical or scientific evidence, use linear but simplistic (unidimensional) logic, solve problems using logic and evidence, and form integrated (but unidimensional) relationships out of logically related concepts.
11: Systematic	Young adulthood (if at all)	The person can consider the relationships among several concepts and variables; integrate those relationships into a multivariate and conceptually coherent system; and consider events, relationships, and concepts within a multivariate context.
12: Metasystematic	Middle adulthood (if at all)	The person can name the properties of systems, meaningfully compare disparate systems and perspectives, and integrate multiple systems into a conceptually coherent metasystem (supersystem).
13: Paradigmatic		The person can integrate metasystems to form new paradigms.
14: Cross-paradigmatic		The person can integrate paradigms to form entirely new fields.

Table S8: Integration Across All Reviewed Stage-Structural Theories

Typical age/period	Piaget	Kohlberg	Erikson	Fowler	Oser	Commons
0	1: Sensorimotor		Basic trust vs. basic mistrust	0: Primal faith		0: Calculatory
						1: Sensory or motor
						2: Circular sensory–motor
						3: Sensory–motor
						4: Nominal
						5: Sentential
2	2: Preoperational	1: Punishment-and-obedience orientation	Autonomy vs. shame/doubt	1: Intuitive-projective faith		6: Preoperational
			Initiative vs. guilt			7: Primary
7	3: Concrete operational	2: Instrumental-relativist orientation	Industry vs. inferiority	2: Mythic-literal faith	1: Orientation of religious heteronomy (<i>deus ex machina</i>)	8: Concrete
12	4: Formal operational	3: Interpersonal concordance (“good boy–nice girl”) orientation	Identity vs. identity confusion	3: Synthetic-conventional faith	2: Orientation of do et des (“Give so you may receive”)	9: Abstract
		4: “Law and order” orientation			3: Orientation of ego autonomy and one-sided responsibility	10: Formal
18		5: Social-contract orientation	Intimacy vs. isolation	4: Individuative-reflective faith	4: Orientation of mediated autonomy and divine plan	11: Systematic
30			Generativity vs. stagnation/self-absorption	5: Conjunctive faith	5: Orientation of unconditional religiosity	12: Metasystematic
40		6: Universal-ethical-principle orientation		6: Universalizing faith		13: Paradigmatic
65			Integrity vs. despair			14: Cross-paradigmatic

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