

Digital Appendix B

ALTERNATE CASES WITH MODERATE OUTCOMES

1. Moderate Outcomes: Jamal Jones

2 Biological and Environmental Foundations

“Oh Jamal, you’re never going to know your Daddy. I didn’t either, and I turned out okay,” Neka whispers with a smile to her growing abdomen as she brushes her teeth before work. Neka’s statement holds true, and Jamal will never know the biological history of his own father. However, he will interact throughout his life with other biological family members, from his Uncle Malik to his mother to his two older brothers, Kiyun and Keyon. His smile will reflect a gap between his front teeth, similar to his shy, older brother Kiyun’s and the smile of his mother. In fact, this is the same smile Kiyun will show when he greets and holds baby brother Jamal for the first time.

Despite his closeness from the start with Kiyon, as a small child Jamal’s dimples and his bubbly personality will reflect that of his heavy-set older brother Keyon. As an infant Jamal is warm, friendly, and a bit tenacious, and he laughs regularly.

The Jones family lives in a low-income housing unit in an urban environment. Because of this the Joneses are close to several neighboring families, the Lewis family, the Milsteins, and the Washburnes. Growing up Jamal can hear the arguments that occur between his teenage neighbor Avi Milstein and his mother, Krista. He spends time as a child with Ms. Lewis, his mother’s close friend and support.

“Mom, I’m hungry,” is a phrase Jamal will learn to repeat early on from his brothers as Jamal and his family have few resources to spare during his childhood. Jamal’s family only rarely enjoys a dinner out together at Kiyon and Keyun’s favorite restaurant, McDonald’s. These and his other biological and environmental factors will increase Neka’s, prenatal stress levels. Biologically speaking, this means that greater than ideal amounts of corticosteroids will pass the blood-brain barrier during her pregnancy with Jamal.

Neka’s preeclampsia, which will be the cause of her needed bed rest in her pregnancy, puts Jamal at risk for a number of negative outcomes including preterm birth or being small-for-date, both of which would have cascading effects.

3 Prenatal Development, Birth, and the Newborn Experience

Because she has no money to spare, Neka is obligated to find a replacement job for the second position she lost as soon as she can. This means she spends only one of the doctor’s recommended two weeks of bed rest, but the doctor doesn’t understand her choice between doing the right thing for her body and making sure she can feed the children she has (and herself).

During the last weeks of her pregnancy, they didn't always have the best food or enough of it for Jamal's older brothers. While Neka works, she leaves Kiyun in the care of a neighbor who watches children in her home. Keyon attends the local elementary school. Some evenings, Malik joins the family for dinner if he isn't picking up an extra shift at work to help out.

Neka and Malik do their best to keep Jamal's older brothers fed and the lights turned on (while allowing for Malik to continue to pay his own bills). Neka and the boys need to cut back on all nonessentials, and they already spent very little money they didn't have to. Jamal is born full term but is mildly jaundiced and anemic due to Neka's poor diet.

She wants to take a normal maternity leave when Jamal is born but can't afford to. Even though she doesn't want to leave him so soon, she doesn't have a choice. He's no longer jaundiced, and his anemia receded after a couple weeks of breast-feeding, but Neka and Malik had to spend a lot of money to get Jamal healthy in his first few weeks of life. She needs to work as soon as she can.

4 Physical Development in Infancy and Toddlerhood

Going back to work at two jobs so soon after Jamal is born tears at Neka. She wants more time with him, and whenever she can spare an hour, she runs back to their apartment just to nurse him or hold him while he's napping. They bond well, and he is a happy, healthy baby boy. He's still staying with Ms. Lewis, who watches children in her home. This saves Neka money and also allows Jamal to be in a safe, comfortable setting with other children he already knows. His older brother, Neka's middle son Kiyun, also stays at this home, too, while Jamal's oldest brother Keyon attends the local elementary school. At least twice a week Uncle Malik continues to join the family for dinner.

"Uncle Malik, cheeseburgers are your favorite food! You always bring them when you come over. They're mine too, but Mom says I need to eat more apples," Keyon states thoughtfully. Looking at Jamal, who is at his mother's feet, he continues, "When can Jamal even eat cheeseburgers like us? All he ever has is milk, French fries, and the boring scrambled eggs mom usually makes!"

"Keyon! Where are your manners? And say thank you to your uncle for bringing over anything at all for dinner!" Neka chides.

She scoops Jamal up in her arms, moving him to his seat at the small kitchen table as Keyon apologizes, "Sorry, Uncle Malik. Sorry, Mom. Fries and burgers are good too." He sits and eats quietly after that, and Kiyun looks between his older brother's face and the two adults, worried because he doesn't know what's wrong.

Neka turns to her brother, "Malik, thanks for bringing over burgers again. Lately this kid is always on the move. We need a baby gate so I can keep him away from the stairs. I'm noticing that he's super curious about them, especially when his brothers run up and down." Fourteen-month-old Jamal gleefully reaches for a handful of French fries as he watches his family gather around the dinner table.

"Fy!" he says, turning to shove a French fry into Neka's nose. She laughs and tells him to eat his own fries. "Fy!" he says again, offering the soggy spears to his Uncle Malik.

Neka laughs at him and touches his head gently as she stands and clears the older boys' trash away.

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| 5 | Cognitive Development in Infancy and Toddlerhood | <p>Jamal first called Neka <i>Momma</i>. Now he can say <i>fy</i> for fries and <i>Key</i> and <i>Kie</i> for his brothers. He can also say <i>dog</i> quite well. Ms. Lewis, who takes care of him when Neka works, has a small dog he likes to play with.</p> <p>With the near-constant presence of his brothers and Neka and Uncle Malik around him, Jamal will learn more words every day. He also uses babbling to help go to sleep at night. Third and later children often talk later and less than other children in families, but Jamal is happy, and his pediatrician tells Neka he'll talk when he's ready, and she shouldn't be worried.</p> |
| 6 | Socioemotional Development in Infancy and Toddlerhood | <p>Neka notices that going to work has become a particular challenge. Every day now Jamal has a crying jag that lasts from the minute she starts to edge for the door until she can no longer hear him as she walks down the hallway away from Ms. Lewis's door. She went through the same thing with Keyon and Kiyun, so she knows this is perfectly normal. Jamal's just dealing with separation anxiety. She also knows he stops crying before she even gets to the car. Knowing these things doesn't make it any easier to leave him. Jamal sometimes frets when she gets back after work. The older boys didn't do that, and she wonders if there's something she's not doing right. She decides she'll ask the pediatrician at his next checkup.</p> |
| 7 | Physical and Cognitive Development in Early Childhood | <p>When Jamal approaches preschool age, Neka applies for him to start at the nearby Headstart Pre-K program. Both of his brothers, Kiyun and Keyon, attended the school, and Jamal is accepted into the program. Jamal begins to learn to draw, to write his letters, to count to ten on his fingers, to understand colors (his favorite is green), to describe shapes, and even to grasp a small bit of geography and other foundational real-world concepts. Additionally, preschool allows Jamal the opportunity to catch up with his more affluent peers in reading and math.</p> <p>At the first parent-teacher conference, Neka is dismayed when Jamal's teacher expresses some concerns. Jamal was significantly behind his peers in fine motor development. The teacher laid several pieces of paper on the table between them. They were different shapes like circles, diamonds, and rectangles edged with dotted lines, and Neka could see where Jamal had been instructed to cut around the edges with scissors. His edges were uneven, and often he'd cut into the shape. The teacher suggested that Neka could practice with Jamal at home and said that she was sure with practice Jamal would catch up quickly. With a sigh, the teacher also tells Neka that Jamal is struggling in his literacy skills. She asks if Neka reads to him at bedtime. Neka tells her that she does or one of his brothers does, but privately she wonders if they really do enough to keep him level with the other children. She makes the teacher a lot of promises about the time she'll spend with Jamal. She just doesn't know where she'll find it.</p> |
| 8 | Socioemotional Development in Early Childhood | <p>In his preschool Jamal makes a couple friends among his classmates, beginning to develop some of his social skills before starting kindergarten in a year. Neka knows all of the teachers and administrators and feels fortunate that Jamal will be headed to the program in the fall. When he starts, she picks up a couple extra shifts at work each week, which gives her the opportunity to put a little money aside, to buy a little bit better food for the family, and to upgrade the boys' shoes and coats for the coming winter.</p> |

Even though Jamal and his brothers are all in school during the day now, Ms. Lewis still keeps an eye on them while Neka works. Jamal likes going to Ms. Lewis's because he gets to spend time with one of Ms. Wilson's other charges and a good friend of Jamal's, Zuri, who didn't go to Headstart with him. Ms. Wilson has more kids than ever that she looks after, and the older kids like Zuri, Jamal, and Kiyun spend most of their time on the playground so she has an easier time with the babies, which means Jamal has to do homework later when his mom comes back for him, but that's okay. He likes hanging out with his brother and friends.

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| <p>9 Physical and Cognitive Development in Middle and Late Childhood</p> | <p>In elementary school, Jamal enjoys math and hanging out with his friends in their neighborhood. He plays basketball on their neighborhood basketball court, but he knows his mom doesn't have enough extra money to pay for uniforms, so he doesn't even ask if he can join a team. It's okay. She's working hard, and when he's old enough, he's going to get a job to help out like his older brothers. His oldest brother already works at the gas station down the road because he lied and said he was 15, even though he's only 13, and their middle brother delivers papers three mornings a week for spending money, even though he's only 11. Jamal figures he'll be able to take over the paper route in another year or so. He'll be busy enough then that he won't have time to worry about basketball.</p> |
| <p>10 Socioemotional Development in Middle and Late Childhood</p> | <p>Jamal's brother won't share his paper route. By the time Jamal gets close to finishing elementary school, he has to scope out his own route, which worries his mom because it's pretty far away from their neighborhood. Sometimes his brother sucks. After a few weeks, things seem okay, though. He likes having a little money. Every week, he gives three-quarters of what he makes to his mom, and he keeps one-quarter for himself for things like a Coke after school. He tries to ignore it if his mom cries a little when he gives her the money. Both of his brothers do it; he should, too. Besides, he gets the best grades out of all three of them. The only thing he misses is playing basketball, but he gets to do that on Saturdays.</p> |
| <p>11 Physical and Cognitive Development in Adolescence</p> | <p>Jamal's mom can be like every other parent sometimes, he thinks, which is to say oblivious. She's always asking if he has a girlfriend (sometimes she even asks about a boyfriend). When does she think he has time for that? Sure, he dealt with acne and his voice changing, and he definitely has a better build than his brothers with baseball and biking all over town for his paper route (thank you, Kiyun, for being a jerk). But really, a girlfriend? He still gets good grades, but that's because he's always got his nose in a book when he's not on the field or his bike.</p> |
| <p>12 Socioemotional Development in Adolescence</p> | <p>In high school, Jamal works nights and weekends to help Neka with the bills. His oldest brother has moved out and is supporting himself now, and Jamal and their middle brother do all they can to help out at home. He does his best in school. Sometimes, it's hard, and he falls behind (or falls asleep in class because he works so much). But he doesn't make trouble, and most of his teachers like him. Home is still the best place, and he still loves being at the dinner table with his brothers, his mom, and Uncle Malik whenever they're all together. It doesn't happen as much as it used to, but that's okay.</p> |

As graduation draws closer, Uncle Malik starts taking Jamal for a weekly burger and fries—their “boys’ night” his uncle calls them. Jamal tries to remember if his older brothers had the same sort of one-on-one times with their uncle and thinks maybe they did. When they’re at dinner, Uncle Malik always has something he wants to say, and Jamal figures this is the stuff his dad would talk to him about if he had one. Well, he does—Uncle Malik—and he doesn’t care that his biological dad isn’t around. A lot of what they talk about Jamal learned in sex ed. How not to get a sexually transmitted disease, how not to get a girl pregnant, and how not to take advantage of someone. Those were clinical discussions, though, and he likes having someone close to him that he can ask personal questions.

He knows a guy in school who got his girlfriend pregnant, and his old friend Zuri, who he doesn’t see anymore, had gotten pregnant the year before. If black teen pregnancy wasn’t an epidemic, it wasn’t exactly unheard of either. Jamal hasn’t had sex yet, but he isn’t opposed. It is cool to have Uncle Malik to talk about things with, and his uncle reminds him that sex doesn’t make him a man, and if he has to ask about having sex, then he isn’t ready to do it. That seems like a decent barometer to Jamal.

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| 13 | Physical and Cognitive Development in Emerging/Early Adulthood | <p>Jamal knows he wasn’t perfect in high school, but he also knows no one is perfect. He feels lucky when he graduates that there’s enough money for him to go to the local community college while he works part time. He isn’t sure what he wants to do with his life, but he’s absolutely sure what he doesn’t want to do with it, and that is live the way his mom has always had to from week to week or the way his oldest brother does, running fast and loose on the streets. Going to college seems like the best way to avoid both. By working hard, he manages to get a two-year degree in business administration that allows him to make a little more money than he had been. Just before he finishes his degree, his longtime girlfriend tells him they’re going to have a baby.</p> |
| 14 | Socioemotional Development in Emerging/Early Adulthood | <p>Jamal and his girlfriend Janine move into an apartment of their own close to where Neka lives. It makes Jamal sad to leave his mom. He loves her, and he doesn’t want her to be alone, but he’s going to be a father. It feels like the right thing to do. While they wait for the baby and Janine works as an administrative assistant for a local attorney, Jamal returns to the community college and takes the three courses and exam necessary to earn his CPA. He doesn’t know that this is his life’s dream, but it’s good money, and he has a family to support. Just before he and Janine welcome their son Andrew into the world, Jamal hangs his shingle and opens Jones Accounting.</p> |
| 15 | Physical and Cognitive Development in Middle Adulthood | <p>In middle age, Jamal has a relatively stable job history. Jones Accounting performs well and provides him and Janine with sufficient income to see them through the early years of raising Andrew. Eventually, Jamal decides he wants more. While Andrew is small, he supports Janine when she returns to school and earns a degree in economics, after which he does the same. Both of them take jobs afterward at local forecasting and research firms.</p> |
| 16 | Socioemotional Development in Middle Adulthood | <p>Jamal and Janine raise their son and, later, their daughter jointly, although they do not marry. During a one-year period of separation, Jamal has a brief relationship with another woman, resulting in a second daughter for whom he provides support until she reaches age 18. He is close to all of his children and remains close to his mother. He sees his uncle and brothers when he can and is active in Janine’s efforts to remain close to her family. When he looks back to his own childhood, Jamal doesn’t think about how far he’s come; he thinks about how lucky his whole family is.</p> |

When Janine raises the idea of purchasing a home rather than continuing to rent, Jamal agrees. They find a neat little Cape Cod not far from her parents' house and not far from Neka's. The children have a large yard, and despite the time and energy he spends on the upkeep, he knows it is a good move.

Uncle Malik dies suddenly of a stroke a few months before Andrew graduates from high school. Neka withdraws and grieves for her brother, who was such a support all of Jamal's life, and he lets her have this time to herself while he tries to figure out how to let go of the uncle who was the only father he ever knew. It isn't easy, and he finds himself more depressed than he feels he should be. After several months, he begins to pull himself from the fog of his grief and return to being the person he thought he was, but Janine will later tell him that he never really recovered.

17 Physical and Cognitive Development in Late Adulthood	<p>As Jamal ages, he experiences the normal declinations we would expect based on his genetic makeup, from weight gain to gray hair. He develops myopia and type II diabetes. However, due to his high-risk birth and impoverished childhood, these aging factors are exacerbated, and he faces additional declinations, including senile dementia and shortened life expectancy. Jamal is fortunate; he doesn't develop Alzheimer's and continues to know Janine until she passes away five years before he does at age 69 of complications from diabetes and dementia.</p>
18 Socioemotional Development in Late Adulthood	<p>Even as Jamal ages, he pushes off retirement as long as he can. Part of this is due to economic necessity, and part is due to desire. His children, having grown and started families of their own, aren't close. Neka passes away in her sleep of natural causes at the age of 76, when Jamal is in his mid-40s, leaving him bereft of his mother and only parent figure remaining to him. He still sees his brothers, but they are busy with their own families. He needs something to occupy himself—work it is.</p>
19 Experience With Death and Dying	<p>Jamal outlives Janine. She passes away at age 64 from coronary artery disease associated with diabetes. She and Jamal have lived together for more than 40 years, and he takes the loss extremely hard. It is his daughter by the other woman in his life who comes and stays with him for a few months while he adjusts to life without Janine. Eventually, he recovers enough that the children feel he can live on his own again. Jamal continues to work until he's 68 years old, passing away not quite a year later at age 69 from complications of diabetes and senile dementia.</p>

Case Discussion Questions

1. During Neka's pregnancy, Neka doesn't have the luxury of spending an entire two weeks on bed rest as the doctor recommends, much as she'd like to. She takes one week off and loses one of her jobs when she does so. With the loss of income, Jamal is born slightly jaundiced and anemic. Contrast this with Jamal's optimal case in which Neka's brother helps with bills and she's able to find a new job quickly. No one suffers lack of nutrition, and Jamal is born healthy. How does Neka's choice to return to work quickly contribute to Jamal's rocky start at birth? How might Neka's life circumstances leave her with feeling essentially choiceless in the situation (i.e., she did the best she could with what she had)?

2. In middle childhood, Jamal tries to contribute to the family's finances. He wants to share his brother's paper route, but his brother says no. As a result, he takes another route, which is much further from his home. What challenges to Jamal's development across any and all domains (biological, cognitive, and socioemotional) does this paper route pose? Why?
3. In early adulthood, Jamal chooses to attend community college and pursue an associate's degree so he can have a more stable job than he's seen in his family in the past. While he's in college, he learns he's going to be a father and moves in with the baby's mother. How does this outcome compare to Jamal's optimal outcome in which he attends college away from home on a baseball scholarship? What factors in Jamal's history led to these different outcomes?
4. Consider Jamal's optimal case outcomes at the end of his life and Erikson's integrity-versus-despair stage of psychosocial development. How does this case compare to that one? Consider all of Jamal's life events. How do you think those contributed to any differences in Jamal's end-of-life outcomes and his sense of integrity versus despair?

2. Moderate Outcomes: Naomi Rowe

2 Biological and Environmental Foundations

Alicia, who is African-American, and Justin, who is white, spends time decorating the second bedroom in their modest-but-comfortable apartment off base before Justin gets his orders to deploy. This gives him the opportunity to participate in as much of the pre-birth nesting as he can. After he's gone, Alicia spends some time putting pictures of Justin in an album for the nursery so that their baby will know the look of Daddy's face when he finally returns home.

Then Alicia faces several long, lonely months of pregnancy without him. As her belly grows, she rocks in the chair they put in the nursery and talks to their developing daughter. "Oh, Naomi, it's going to be so long before you meet your daddy. I wish he could be there when you're born to hold you and see you take your first breath. He's going to miss all of your firsts . . . rolling over, sitting up, first steps." Alicia begins to feel a little depressed at the thought.

Because the Rowe's live modestly and Justin works for the Army, they have good health care and access to good food, and she can see her midwife whenever she wants to. Alicia doesn't have to worry about having money for tests or prenatal medications. Her husband, however, is gone. Not only is he gone; he's very gone and isn't coming back for 24 months. Sometimes the loneliness is overwhelming. Sometimes the thought of having a child when she still feels like a child at 22 and raising that child for two years by herself feels overwhelming. There are days when Alicia wishes she didn't have to go anywhere or see anyone. These and other biological and environmental factors may increase her prenatal stress levels. Biologically speaking, this means that greater-than-ideal amounts of corticosteroids will pass the blood-brain barrier during her pregnancy with Naomi. If she's depressed, Naomi may also experience an excess of serotonin production during her prenatal development. Either or both of these may have long-term consequences for her development across all domains.

3 Prenatal Development, Birth, and the Newborn Experience

"Alicia," Justin's mother says a few weeks before Naomi's due date, "I have a treat for us today. Get dressed, and I'll pick you up in an hour." Alicia doesn't want to go anywhere. Her back aches, and she misses Justin. His mother's only being nice, and she doesn't want to hurt her feelings. So, she gets dressed, brushes her teeth, and gets in the car when her mother-in-law Sarah arrives.

They spend a lovely day at the spa, where Alicia is treated to a special suite of services just for pregnant women. She gets tired and asks to go home before the pedicure, but she thanks Sarah and admits it was nice to get out for a little while.

Naomi is born without complications at 38 weeks. She is healthy and scores highly on her one- and five-minute APGARS. This is due, in large part, to the excellent care Alicia took of herself during her pregnancy and the extras afforded to her from Justin's job, like TriCare insurance and on-demand medical care.

Naomi will grow accustomed to the stories of her birth, stories told by her mom and by her Grandma Sarah and Grandpa Joe. They all have their own versions, but they start and end the same. Mom called Grandma Sarah to say her back hurt so badly that she couldn't sleep, and her grandparents took Mom to the hospital. In the end, Only Mom was in the room with the midwife when Naomi was born. She was tired and wanted privacy, but her Grandma Sarah came in just after she was born and rocked her while her mom slept—three generations of Rowe women alone together.

**4 Physical
Development
in Infancy and
Toddlerhood**

Naomi spends her first months at home alone with Alicia. She is a happy, easy baby. In the beginning weeks, Alicia is happy for the quiet. She lets her mother-in-law Sarah take Naomi to give her a break several days each week. She uses the time to enjoy the quiet and think about Justin. After a few months pass, Alicia begins to experience postpartum depression. She becomes easily irritated and impatient with Naomi. Soon, she begins sleeping as much as she can, even bringing Naomi into the bed. She feels her bond with Naomi weakening, and even though she wants that to change, she gives up trying to make things better.

At Naomi's one-year checkup, the pediatrician asks a series of routine questions about Naomi's behavior and about her interactions with Alicia. Noting Alicia's soft and somewhat sad responses, the pediatrician puts her hand on Alicia's arm. "Alicia, what's bothering you?"

With no warning, Alicia starts crying. She hugs Naomi, and then she says, "It'll be okay. It's nothing."

"Hmm," the doctor says.

Alicia shakes her head. "Really it is. I've just been a little blue lately."

"Sounds like postpartum depression to me," the pediatrician tells her and, seeing Alicia's confusion, adds, "the baby blues. Don't worry. It's very common. I'm going to ask that you call your midwife and make an appointment for this week. Can you do that?"

Alicia nods. "Sure," she says, but she doesn't know if she actually will call. She doesn't know if she thinks it will help.

When Alicia leaves Naomi's checkup—with a perfect report on Naomi—she feels torn. Maybe she'll wait a few more weeks to see what happens. She can always call later if she doesn't feel better.

Naomi continues to have an active and stimulating infancy in spite of her mom's depression. Sarah and Joe are involved in her life and buy her a number of educational toys, and eventually Sarah joins a Mommy and Me playgroup she takes Naomi to twice each week. She's not the only grandmother there, and being around other children offers Naomi the opportunity to learn new words and practice communicating with others. Naomi's outside so often that blue becomes her favorite color (because she loves the bigness of the sky so much), and she develops a fascination for how the natural world operates, like how flowers grow and why butterflies like flower gardens.

5 Cognitive Development in Infancy and Toddlerhood

Most of the time, Sarah takes Naomi to story time at the library or to play with other children in the park, but sometimes Alicia takes her. Naomi likes it when Grandma Sarah takes her because she always gets ice cream for a treat on the way home. Mommy taking her is the best, though, because she gets on the ground and plays with Naomi in the sandbox building sandcastles and making up stories when they play. Naomi's favorite stories are the ones when Mommy starts by saying there's a poor, trapped prince in the high tower of the castle, and Princess Naomi must ride on her valiant steed to rescue him. Naomi isn't quite sure what a valiant steed is, but it sounds fun.

When they play *The Princess Saves the Prince*, Mommy does silly things. She makes Naomi run around the sandbox counting to funny numbers like 11 or 13, or she makes Naomi figure out a riddle like what letter comes between H and J in the alphabet. When Naomi can get the right answer, then she saves the prince! She's a good rescuer. Other children at the park try to figure out Mommy's riddles, too. Sometimes, they're faster than she is (but Mommy always lets Princess Naomi do the rescuing anyway), but mostly Naomi figures out the answers first. Mommy says she's clever. Naomi isn't sure, but she thinks that word means she's smart.

6 Socioemotional Development in Infancy and Toddlerhood

Alicia and Naomi have a difficult time during Alicia's postpartum depression, and Naomi's attachment process with her mother is interrupted. Eventually, Alicia tries therapy, although it takes Naomi several more weeks to be sure Alicia is happier again. By the time she's 18 months old, Naomi has biweekly playdates with her "friends," usually at a public park or story time at the public library, and Alicia takes her more often than Grandma Sarah now. Naomi prefers the park.

Just before her second birthday, her mother makes fish sticks and tater tots for dinner one night. Naomi has two fish sticks in her mouth and is singing her ABCs around them when the door to their apartment opens. Sometimes Grandma Sarah and Grandpa Joe come over for a surprise, and she turns around in her chair to wave to them. It isn't her grandparents. In the doorway stands a man she doesn't know. He looks sort of familiar, but she doesn't know him. "Mommy!" she calls to Alicia, who's in the bedroom folding clothes. "Mommy!"

Alicia calls back to her, "Coming. Just a minute, sweetheart!"

The man comes into the apartment and closes the door. "Naomi?" he asks.

Naomi isn't certain about the man, but she nods and swallows her fish sticks. "Yes."

"Naomi," he says as he get on his knees, "it's Daddy."

She climbs off her chair and walks over to him. He does look a little like the pictures in her room. She pokes at his arm and takes off his hat. Without his hat, he looks more like the picture. "Daddy?"

"Yes, it's Daddy. Can I hug you?"

"Yes, Daddy."

While Naomi gets her first hug from her daddy, who seems to be happy but is crying, Mommy comes back into the room. She yells, "Oh! Justin!" Daddy stands up, still holding Naomi, and hugs Mommy, too. "Why didn't you tell me you were coming today?"

"I wanted to surprise my girls," Daddy said.

Naomi pulls on his ear. "Want some fish sticks, Daddy?"

7 Physical and Cognitive Development in Early Childhood

Naomi is so excited for preschool. Her father takes her shopping for new tennis shoes and to visit the school where she will spend part of every day with her friends learning to read and write. Her mom buys her a new blue book bag with white stripes online, and she's going to pack Naomi's lunches in a matching lunchbox. She's going to have so much fun!

Alicia and Justin go to Naomi's first parent-teacher conference together. The conference is student led, and Naomi goes through a folder of work she selected to show her parents while her teacher tells them how she's doing in different tasks. She is especially proud when her teacher tells them how well she's doing writing her ABCs. Naomi works hard at writing.

8 Socioemotional Development in Early Childhood

Naomi sits at the table with her mother and father during the parent-teacher conference while her teacher tells her parents that she has something called "good leadership potential." Her teacher says she likes to help her friends in the class, and Naomi nods. This is true. Then her teacher says that sometimes Naomi can talk a little loudly or a little too much and not give other children a chance to speak in class. She frowns. She doesn't think she does this. Mommy looks at her with a funny face. Naomi can tell she isn't happy about that. She wonders if she's still going to get ice cream on the way home.

9 Physical and Cognitive Development in Middle and Late Childhood

In elementary school, Naomi does pretty well academically. She also shows a talent for soccer, and her father signs her up to play on the community rec team. She gets new cleats, her own ball, and a team jersey. She loves playing on a team with other girls and looks forward to her Wednesday afternoon practices and Saturday games. Her parents tell her that as long as she's doing well in school, she can play as much soccer as she wants. Pretty soon, Naomi's playing in all her spare hours. Her mom has to chase her down in the park close to where they live most evenings just so she can come home to eat and do her homework. "Girl, you and that ball'll be the death of me," Mommy scolds, but Naomi has the feeling that she isn't mad.

By the end of elementary school, Naomi is a star on her community league soccer team. She loves playing. Sometimes, when she's alone on the field near her apartment and she's practicing dribbling, she thinks about learning to play when she was little. She misses her dad and how they took that Saturday to pick out her cleats and a brand-new ball. She still practices with the same ball even though it's a little smaller than regulation; she calls it her lucky ball because her dad bought it for her. If she had her choice, she would go to school on the soccer field!

She likes school well enough, and she does great in most of her classes, especially when her dad's at home and not deployed. She doesn't do too bad in any of them, but it's a struggle sometimes when she's at home alone with her mom. Her mom is so sad whenever her dad goes away that Naomi doesn't want to bother her for help with the work she doesn't understand. Mr. Cooper in her fifth grade science class likes her, though, because she's good at all that plant stuff like photosynthesis. Grandma Sarah tells her this is to be expected; she always loved being outside and learning about nature when she was a little girl. She's pretty good at keeping all of their house plants healthy and green, too, when Alicia loses interest. Her mom says, "Honey, you know that's your thing. As long as I don't have to throw them out dead, we're doing great." "We're" not doing anything, Naomi thinks, but she doesn't say it.

10 Socioemotional Development in Middle and Late Childhood

When Naomi is in the second grade, her father is deployed again. He has to go away sometimes but usually only for a month or so. Her mom explains that this is because she and Daddy decided it would be better if Naomi lived as much as she could in one place. So, she and Mommy don't follow Daddy all the time when he goes different places in the United States (a place she's learning about in school). But when he leaves for a long time a long way away, she knows, because he takes her out for a special Daddy-Naomi dinner and explains why he's going away and where he'll be. He's going to a base on the other side of the world in a country called Turkey. Naomi laughs and tells him that's a silly name for a country. Daddy agrees. Then he explains how important Turkey is to a lot of different people from other countries right now, and she tries to understand. She feels bad for the children he tells her about, the ones living there in big tents and warehouses because they had to run away from their own houses in another country, but she's not sure why other kids get to have Daddy before she does. That doesn't seem fair at all.

"Will you send me pictures?"

"All the time, Stella."

She likes it when he calls her "star" because she feels special. "I wish you didn't have to go, Daddy."

"So does Mommy," her mother says as she joins them in Naomi's room, "but we'll be all right, won't we, kiddo?"

"I know you'll take care of each other, and I'll be back before you know it," Daddy says, but Naomi is pretty sure that last part isn't true. She's very unsure about helping take care of Mommy. She always gets so sad when Daddy isn't home, and Naomi feels like anything she does to try to help her makes things worse. But she nods and agrees to make them both feel better.

11	Physical and Cognitive Development in Adolescence	<p>Naomi stands staring into the bleachers with her foot on top of her lucky soccer ball. She's trying to practice, but there's Bradley Carter again, sitting there all alone watching her. He looks pretty cute.</p> <p>Her parents seem to always be asking her if she likes someone—anyone. Usually she shakes her head no, but Bradley Carter's face sometimes leaps into her mind. "It's okay if you do," her mom assures her, but her dad's expression says otherwise. Naomi figures it's just as well that she stays quiet. If they don't agree, there's no reason to put herself out there.</p>
12	Socioemotional Development in Adolescence	<p>Naomi watches her mom make dinner one night while she works on homework at the kitchen table. She wants to talk to her, but she's not close enough to her mom to talk about what bothering her.</p> <p>Erica and Sydney are Naomi's best friends. Sydney is white, but Erica's also mixed, like Naomi and Naomi's mom. It's not like being racial is all that uncommon, but that doesn't make it any easier. When she hangs out with Sydney and her friends, she can't be white enough. When she hangs out with Erica, they can't seem to be black enough. She's starting to understand why her mom says she's black, but she loves her dad and her grandparents so much. She doesn't want to forget that she's half white.</p> <p>She wishes she could talk to her mom about it. At least Bradley Cooper is mixed, too. He attends all of Naomi's soccer games. They go out whenever they can fit it in, and he waits a long time to bring up the topic of sex. She makes him work for it, but in their senior year of high school, they finally have intercourse.</p>
13	Physical and Cognitive Development in Emerging/Early Adulthood	<p>Naomi's parents drive her to college with a tiny U-Haul attached to the back of their SUV. She's nervous and excited and just a little scared. She's going to be housed with the soccer team, and as long as she works hard on the field and in the classroom, she'll keep her scholarship. She wants to make her parents proud.</p> <p>After unloading all of her boxes and setting up a lot of her things, she looks around her dorm room, terrified. Her dad asks what's wrong, and she tells him she's fine.</p> <p>"Just do your best," he tells her. "That's all anyone can do."</p> <p>"Thanks."</p> <p>"And kick a winning goal," he adds. "No pressure."</p>
14	Socioemotional Development in Emerging/Early Adulthood	<p>Her dad takes a trip to the dumpster to throw away packing trash while Naomi unpacks some clothes. Her mom busies herself setting out a couple family photographs and one of Naomi and Bradley. When her dad returns, they hear him enter the room with a booming, "Guess who I found wandering around outside?"</p> <p>"Surprise!" Bradley shouts from the doorway, and Naomi is overjoyed at seeing him. She gives him a hug and a quick kiss before asking him, "Are you all settled in on your campus?" She's referring to the branch campus in a neighboring town where he's going to college.</p> <p>"I am."</p> <p>"Awesome. Maybe we can all get something to eat once I finish up here."</p> <p>"Of course," her dad agrees, and Naomi goes into overdrive unpacking.</p>

For four years, Naomi is single-minded. She plays hard on the field, trying to be the best teammate she can and appreciating the amazing talent of her team. They win a state championship her junior year, and that is the highlight of her year. In class, she works hard, too. Majoring in botany, she works hard to finish her degree on time before she loses her soccer eligibility. On graduation, she takes a job working for the state's agricultural department.

She and Bradley have an on-again-off-again relationship. They're both busy, and after a year, Naomi asks for a break from their relationship. Bradley agrees, and she wonders if he already has his eye on someone else. She does. They date other people for a while. Naomi comes close to getting engaged to someone else her senior year. She runs into Bradley one weekend when she's home for a visit, and they get coffee together. She remembers all the reasons she loved him, and they decide to give their relationship another shot. It doesn't take long for her to be glad they did.

15 Physical and Cognitive Development in Middle Adulthood	Naomi works for the Department of Agriculture in a variety of roles until she finally lands the job she wants, director of technology innovation. The move to the new position is a big step for her because she has ideas she wants to share and she knows the team in that department is wonderful. This is what she's been working for.
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16 Socioemotional Development in Middle Adulthood	Naomi is on her second or third position for the Department of Agriculture when Bradley finally proposes. Thinking of her parents, who had a solid marriage in spite of her dad's absences and her mom's depression, Naomi says yes. She isn't young anymore, so they decide to have a child right away. Several months pass before she conceives their son Robert, but she delivers him healthy and on time when she's 33 years old. His younger sister Claire is born not quite two years later.
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As the children grow, so does Naomi's position with the Department of Agriculture. She works hard, and she works long hours. One day, she arrives home to have Bradley tell her that Robert had been playing with Naomi's old lucky soccer ball that he found sitting on the bookshelf. Bradley thinks Robert has a natural talent. Naomi gets Robert signed up for rec league soccer and, remembering her own special time with her dad, takes him shopping for his first cleats and ball.

Naomi and Bradley have a good marriage, and the children seem happy. She wishes she had more time to spend at home, but she knows how important it is to work hard and be reliable at her job, too. Her dad taught her that. In many ways, Naomi sees her life as the typical working mother's life: she never has enough time to do all the things she wants to do, and she's always too tired to do anything she actually wants to do. This sense of never having enough time gets worse when her mom dies.

Alicia had been quietly ailing for some time, and during her last winter she caught the flu and never recovered. Naomi misses her mother terribly, but she thinks about her childhood and coping with her mother's depression. She doesn't want that for her own children and tries to work through her grief quietly and in ways that don't disrupt their lives. She finds it helpful, too, that her dad spends more time with them now, eating dinner two or three nights a week at the house they bought across town. Seeing her dad so much keeps her connected to her mom in positive, not sad, ways.

17	Physical and Cognitive Development in Late Adulthood	<p>Naomi makes time to visit the doctor every year, a leftover habit from being an athlete she tells herself, for a general checkup, PAP smear, and mammogram. Every year, she expects good results but is glad to get them anyway. She has children—who seem prepared to give her grandchildren at any moment—a husband, and her career. What she doesn't have is time to get seriously ill. The doctor always tells her the same thing: she's in remarkable health for someone her age, which Naomi chalks up to all the years on the field.</p> <p>After one checkup, she receives a callback that something looks suspicious on her mammogram, and the doctor would like to do a needle biopsy. She tells Bradley but not Claire and Robert, who will only worry needlessly. She'll tell them when there's something to tell them. Bradley goes with her to the biopsy, which hurts far more than she's told it will, and afterward they have a quiet lunch at their favorite restaurant. Naomi wonders if they should've chosen someplace they like less in case the news is bad so they don't taint this one. When the office calls two days later, she and Bradley are not surprised but concerned to learn that Naomi will need a lumpectomy. They tell the children and schedule her surgery.</p> <p>When Naomi's tumor is biopsied, the oncologist describes it as early stage breast cancer and recommends a course of radiation. Naomi agrees, and after the treatments, she examines the burns on her breast while thanking God that the cancer was caught early. She isn't ready to die. She also enjoys a few weeks of the children waiting on her hand and foot.</p> <p>It takes five clear mammograms, but her oncologist finally pronounces Naomi cancer free. Grateful and hopeful for her future, Naomi continues running three to five miles each day well into her 60s and even in her 70s walks more than two miles each day. When asked about her vitality, she winks at Bradley and says, "He keeps me young." When she enters menopause, she finds out she isn't eligible for hormone replacement therapy because of her earlier breast cancer. The process is unpleasant, but she's healthy and reminds herself of that daily.</p>
18	Socioemotional Development in Late Adulthood	<p>When Naomi is ready to retire, Justin agrees to come and live with her and Bradley. Naomi is relieved. She worries about her dad all alone, and she loves having him around. Plus, as part of the sandwich generation, she figures that both of their children will be there when she and Bradley really need them.</p>
19	Experience With Death and Dying	<p>Justin and Bradley pass away within a year of one another, giving Naomi two large blows. Her dad dies of a heart attack, and Bradley has a stroke while on a walk with her one morning. The children and her three grandchildren support her grieving the best they can, but Naomi never recovers. She isolates herself and passes away in her sleep from undetermined but natural causes at the age of 84.</p>

Case Discussion Questions

1. During early childhood, Naomi attends a parent-teacher conference with her mother Alicia and her father Justin. The teacher tells them, among many positive things, that Naomi sometimes talks too much, and Naomi can tell from her mother's face that she's unhappy to hear this. In Naomi's optimal case outcome, Alicia makes the same face, but Naomi can tell that her mother isn't angry, but she might get talked to later. That is, she feels comfortable and secure in the knowledge of her mother's love and acceptance. What impact might Naomi's understanding of Alicia's emotive reaction in this case have on her life's trajectory across any and all domains (biological, cognitive, and socioemotional)?

2. In adolescence, Naomi struggles with her biracial identity, feeling not white enough for her white friends and not black enough for her black friends. She wants to talk to her mom about it but doesn't feel comfortable doing so. Contrast this with Naomi's optimal case outcome in which Naomi and Alicia have a lengthy conversation where each is vulnerable with the other about their experiences being biracial in their teenage years. How do Naomi's experiences in this case alter her life's trajectory across any and all domains (biological, cognitive, and socioemotional)?
3. In middle adulthood, Naomi has a steady job at the Department of Agriculture, a place she's worked since graduating college. She's still married to her first husband, a schoolteacher, with whom she shares two children. It's her husband who figures out that their son is a natural soccer player just like Naomi. Contrast this productive period of Naomi's life with her optimal case outcome in which she leaves the Department of Agriculture in her middle years to pursue her own business, marries the same man, has the same children, but discovers her son's talent herself. In what ways would we expect Naomi's life to be somewhat less fulfilling across any and all domains (biological, cognitive, and socioemotional) in this case?
4. Consider Naomi's optimal case outcomes at the end of her life and Erikson's integrity-versus-despair stage of psychosocial development. How does this case compare to that one? Consider all of Naomi's life events. How do you think those contributed to any differences in Naomi's end-of-life outcomes and her sense of integrity versus despair?

3. Moderate Outcomes: James Albert

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| <p>2 Biological and Environmental Foundations</p> | <p>Rosslyn and Joss spend a lot of time together in the evenings looking at the budget. They assess how much money they have saved, how much they need to pay their bills (and what they can cut), and how much Rosslyn can contribute. Then they look at the big-ticket item. Joss can choose to continue his insurance through his employer for up to 18 months, but he has to bear the full cost of doing so. It's a lot of money. They run some scenarios through the marketplace to see what the best option for them is. Rosslyn's supplement isn't a lot, but it might be better to use that and some savings to buy a cheaper plan.</p> <p>In the end, they decide to cut back on all nonessentials—Joss assures Rosslyn that pistachio ice cream is an essential—and buy an insurance plan through the marketplace. Because Joss is unemployed and Rosslyn is pregnant, they're eligible for some discounts. The plan ends up being a lot less expensive than paying Joss's employer to continue his old plan. Joss is also going to try hard to get a job as fast as he can even if it's a step down from his last one. The insurance, a less-than-ideal job, both are temporary stop-gap measures to tide them over. Besides, they have each other.</p> <p>Cutting back means a number of things for Rosslyn (and James) during the remainder of her pregnancy. She's used to buying whatever food she wants to buy at the grocery store. Their hamburgers are made with free-range beef, and every Sunday she roasts a free-range chicken. Organic vegetables, high-end dairy, bakery-fresh bread—Joss doesn't tell her what to buy, but they decide</p> |
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that the grocery bill needs to be cut in half. Rosslyn doesn't want to sacrifice all quality, but she knows many of her choices have to change. She decides good meat and dairy from the grocery store are the most important. Learning to bake her own bread, she begins buying vegetables from the local growers at the weekend farmers market. It takes her a couple weeks, but eventually she cuts the food bill almost by half. Joss is impressed, and they agree that her bread is better than the bakery's anyway.

What really hurts are the changes they make at the house. They turn the air-conditioner up to 74 and the heat back to 67. Such small changes, Joss thinks, but, wow, they make a difference in comfort levels. In January, he looks at Rosslyn curled up in the corner of the sofa with wool socks, a book, and hot cocoa. She's not complaining, so neither does he. It's hard, though, he thinks as he goes to the kitchen for another cup of coffee—anything to feel warmer. It's been four months. Two more months until the baby gets there, and Joss is no closer to a new job. He needs to find something soon because they're going to need new, expensive essentials like diapers, vaccinations, car seats, and baby food. To be fair, Rosslyn said she'd make the baby food, but with no job, Joss is looking more and more like a stay-at-home dad, and that means he needs to be learning some of this stuff. Even if he does stay home, there's not enough money. The baby's going to have to eat something. Joss can't make baby food from air. He hopes the kid looks like Rosslyn. He'll learn to stretch a dollar farther if the baby has her blue eyes instead of his green ones and her curly brown hair. He sincerely hopes he doesn't pass along a gene for the receding hairline that seems to be so prevalent in his family.

Rosslyn looks at him over her book and says, "I hope he has your red hair."

"Me, too," Joss agrees. "I was just thinking that."

"Really?"

"No. Of course not. I hope he looks just like you. Go back to your book, silly."

3 Prenatal Development, Birth, and the Newborn Experience

Rosslyn tries to take good care of herself during the pregnancy. She attends the first scheduled prenatal appointment after she and Joss change insurance plans, but as she sits in the waiting room, the financial consultant for the doctor's office asks to see her. She's told that the doctor doesn't accept that particular plan. The doctor will continue to treat Rosslyn, but she'll have to pay for her appointments and then file for insurance reimbursement after each appointment. She's not sure what to do in the moment without talking to Joss but says okay just to get this appointment out of the way.

After a long talk at home over barbeque and mashed potatoes, she and Joss decide to look for a doctor who will take their new insurance. There's a month until Rosslyn's next appointment, and with no job at the moment, Joss can do some calling around. She loves Dr. Gibson, but they can't stop eating or paying the mortgage. Three of four days of calls convinces them that they made a big mistake trying to save money. No one will take their new insurance. So, now they're paying for insurance they can't use and paying for all of Rosslyn's doctor's appointments. Joss thinks he's found a way to make the hospital take the insurance when Rosslyn delivers the baby and goes to work on that. If not, they'll be opting for a home birth, a running joke between them but not far off from the truth.

In her 39th week, Rosslyn feels ill at work. Her back aches badly. She's irritable and tired. She also wants to pee all morning long. After lunch, she tells her boss she needs to go home and rest, which is exactly what she does. An hour or so after lying down, she realizes no position is comfortable and reaches for the telephone. Joss is with his mother helping her paint the shutters, but it's probably nothing anyway. She dials the number for the doctor, not caring for once if she wastes money.

"Dr. Gibson's office," the receptionist says when she answers the phone. Her cheery voice annoys Rosslyn.

"This is Rosslyn Albert, I'm a patient of Dr. Gibson. I'm 39 weeks pregnant, and I do not feel well."

When requested by a nurse, she recites her symptoms. She says that, no, she doesn't have anyone who can drive her to the hospital just then but she's perfectly capable of driving herself. Protestingly, she declines the offer of an ambulance (thinking of the cost) and agrees to meet Dr. Gibson in the women's wing. After she hangs up, she calls Joss and tells him she's leaving for the hospital and will he please call her parents and then meet her there?

He sounds much less calm than she does, she thinks, when he agrees.

An hour or so after arriving at the hospital, checking herself in, and climbing mostly undressed into the hospital bed, Dr. Gibson arrives to check her out. Yes, she is definitely in labor. She tells the doctor that it doesn't feel nearly as terrible as she was led to believe it would.

"It will," he tells her just before he breaks her water.

Half an hour later, Joss and all the parents arrive at one time, and Rosslyn realizes Dr. Gibson was right. As Joss bends down to kiss her, she whispers, "Get. Me. Drugs."

Some uncounted amount of time later, an anesthesiologist administers an epidural, and Rosslyn's told she still has several hours of labor before she'll transition into the second stage and be ready to push her baby into the world. Unfortunately, delivery doesn't go according to Rosslyn's birth plan, and after several hours of active labor in stage two of childbirth, the doctor tells Rosslyn that she needs a cesarean section. The baby's heart rate has dropped, and Rosslyn's has risen, both to borderline unhealthy levels. Joss is beside her when Dr. Gibson and a surgical assistant pull a healthy, beautiful nine-pound baby from Rosslyn. All the months of waiting, the sacrificing, and the worrying were absolutely worth it. His first lusty cries as he greets the world please the doctor and call to her. A nurse hands him to her, although it will be some time before she's able to sit up in bed, hold him, or nurse him. She marvels at his sweet, fat face and kisses him before he's taken away. Dr. Gibson finishes her surgery, and Rosslyn eventually makes it through recovery and into a private room. When he's five or six hours old, James is brought to her, and she feeds him for the first time, counting fingers and toes and watching as his little fingers wrap around her finger when he falls asleep.

When Joss comes into the room, he holds their son, tickles his feet to make his toes spread and curl. This makes Rosslyn laugh, which she quickly stops. She didn't know how much her stomach would hurt just from laughing. Holding a hand over her belly, she looks at the baby. "It's a good thing you're cute," she whispers, "'cause this hurts, little guy."

4 Physical Development in Infancy and Toddlerhood

In the first few weeks of his life, James is at home with Joss and Rosslyn, both of whom care for him equally. They share all duties except breast-feeding, and Rosslyn jokes that she knows Joss would do that, too, if he could. Joss—not joking—agrees. It's a magical time for the little family of three. James is an easy baby, going to bed without fuss in the cradle kept at the end of his parents' bed, nursing quietly at night, and falling back to sleep when he is finished.

At the end of Rosslyn's six weeks' maternity leave, she reluctantly returns to work, still not quite back to herself from the cesarean. Before Joss lost his job, they'd discussed the possibility of Rosslyn taking advantage of the federal Family Medical Leave Act and staying with James another six weeks, but the leave is unpaid. They can't do that now. Although she cries from the moment she gets out of bed until the moment she gets to work, Rosslyn returns to work on the seventh Monday after James is born. She calls home every hour and manages to leave work two hours early. When she gets home, James is sitting on Joss's lap, sucking his father's thumb and drooling all over Joss's hand and his own shirt. Joss is using his other hand to look at job ads. She kisses them both.

"Everything go okay?" she asks.

"Since you asked an hour ago? Just fine."

"I'm sorry, but it's so hard to leave him."

"I know, Roz. We missed you, too. Didn't we, James?" he asks, smiling when the baby hears his name and looks up at his father with shining eyes.

When James registers Rosslyn's presence, he furrows his brow and reaches for her. Joss lifts him in the air under his armpits and hands him over to his waiting mother.

"Rosslyn, this kid needs some toys other than stuffed animals. I mean, I knew before that babies put things in their mouths, but all you gotta do is watch him closely to see that he's doing more than shoving things in there. He's *examining* them. He needs stuff he can feel and compare, like those books with fur and sandpaper and rubber and whatever."

"I know what you mean. We can go shopping this weekend. We can probably buy one or two things."

"Great. I think he'll enjoy that."

5 Cognitive Development in Infancy and Toddlerhood

Rosslyn and Joss take turns reading bedtime stories to James from the beginning of his young life. They received a few storybooks as baby gifts, and they also buy copies of some of their own childhood favorites when they have a few dollars now and again. This is their end-of-the-day quiet time with their son, and with a dim light and lots of cuddling, they make the most of it.

Soon after his grabbing phase, James begins asserting his own will on reading time. There are two or three books he seems to dislike, and if Rosslyn or Joss selects one of these, James pushes it away and turns his head to the side, whining. His parents find the behavior amusing but usually select another book as well.

By the time James is a year old, he babbles along with both his parents when they read one or two of his favorite stories, often using the same cadence and rhythm they do even if he doesn't use words. When a story contains one of the ten or 12 words he knows, he shouts it out just after Rosslyn or Joss speaks the word; he's proud of himself. By the time he's two years old, James can "read" two or three of his shorter storybooks by having memorized their content. He knows the words, their meanings, and their place in the book based on tying the words to the images on the pages. Even if not all the words are intelligible when his parents hear them, he knows them. His spoken vocabulary is exponentially larger than it was just one year before, and his receptive vocabulary contains enough words now that he understands most of the stories his parents read to him.

6 Socioemotional Development in Infancy and Toddlerhood

James has a fairly easy transition from being cared for at home to his new daycare routine. In the beginning, he dislikes the whole affair, crying when Rosslyn drops him off and pushing away from his teacher Miss Tina. He doesn't want to drink the milk Rosslyn pumped and bottled the night before and fusses loudly when the teacher tries to give it to him. Eventually, she gives up, kisses his wet cheek, and says, "You'll eat when you're hungry, I guess," which he does later in the day when Miss Tina tries again. It takes several days, but eventually James gets the hang of the bottle and settles into the daycare routine.

Rosslyn is a little tired from having to pump during the day at work, trying to make sure there's dinner at night, and doing the daycare run morning and afternoon—plus work, always work. Joss hasn't found a new job yet either, but Rosslyn's doing okay, and the daycare costs less than the doctor bills had when she was pregnant. It's only a matter of time, of course, before the right thing comes along for Joss. Surely things will look up then.

The pediatrician is pleased at James's three-month checkup. Dr. Morris squeezes James's fat legs and makes him giggle while he drools around his first tooth.

"He looks just great."

"But I can't pump as much breastmilk during the day when I'm at work," Rosslyn worries. "What if I can't produce what he needs? What if he likes the bottle better?"

"Unlikely. But Rosslyn, even if that happens, it's not the end of the world. You've given James a great start by nursing. It's really okay if he moves to the bottle."

Rosslyn is reassured about the baby's health, but now she's worried about the cost of formula. Maybe it'll all work out. Besides, James seems to have bonded well with Miss Tina, who tells her secretly one day that she can't help holding him just a little bit more than the other babies. "He's just so lovable," she says, "and he likes playing with my braids."

"I'm sure he does," Rosslyn tells her with a smile, "and we kind of like him at home, too."

Miss Tina laughs and hands the 17 pounds of squirming baby over. "Goodnight, sweetheart. Be good for your mama."

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| 7 | Physical and Cognitive Development in Early Childhood | <p>James is tall for his age—a little thin, Dr. Morris said at his last checkup, but healthy as a horse, whatever that means. Sometimes adults say things he doesn't understand and he has to ask Mom or Dad what they mean. Why is a horse healthier than a boy? Because it only eats apples and not ice cream? If that's the case, James thinks, he'll keep the lesser status of healthy as a boy, thank you.</p> <p>He's doing great in preschool, at least he thinks so. He knows all of his letters and how to write his name. The class is working on how to read some simple books, but it's hard for James because he knows all the books by heart. They've all been read to him a million times by his Mom or Dad, so he can't tell if he's reading or remembering. It's frustrating. Sometimes he gets mad when he's frustrated. Mom calls it "temper." He's not sure what that means either except that when she uses the word, she seems to be mad, too, so it shouldn't be too bad.</p> <p>Today, he's working on a practice letter sheet, tracing over the dotted letters to make his teacher happy. His best friend Zack is sitting beside him. Jack's already finished and has his head bent over his paper drawing funny lines in the margins. James likes Zack. They like to play the same things and are exactly the same size. They also have birthdays one week apart. That's pretty cool. Zack wears a little hat on his head. He told James it's called a <i>kippah</i>, and because he's Jewish he wears it all the time.</p> <p>"Even in the bath?" James asks one day.</p> <p>"Not in the bath," Zack laughs. "That would be dumb."</p> <p>James likes the lines Zack draws. They're something Zack says is Hebrew, which sounds very exotic. "What's that?" he whispers today.</p> <p>"Letters," Zack whispers back. "I'm trying to remember how to write all the Hebrew letters that are like the English ones we're writing."</p> <p>James is amazed. "You mean Hebrew is a <i>language</i>?"</p> <p>"Of course. It's the language Jewish people speak."</p> <p>That's cool, too, like Zack's <i>kippah</i>. "How do you say 'friend' in Hebrew?" he asks Zack.</p> <p>"<i>Yedida</i>."</p> <p>"<i>Yedida</i>. That sounds funny. I like it."</p> <p>Zack smiles at him. Zack is his <i>yedida</i>.</p> |
| 8 | Socioemotional Development in Early Childhood | <p>James's friend Zack looks funny. It's not just the hat. He's half Korean, and almost everyone else in their class is plain white. Sometimes, other kids call Zack names, and it makes James mad. He and Zack share a lot of things like food in their lunch boxes—Zack's Korean grandmother sends delicious <i>manju</i> that James particularly likes, and James always shares his mom's chocolate chip cookies.</p> <p>One day on the playground, James takes turns on the big slide with other kids in his class, landing with a <i>whoosh!</i> in leaves that crackle at the bottom. Laughing with his friends, he doesn't hear Zack at first, but when he does, Zack is calling for help. James looks for the teacher, but she's not outside with them. He wipes the leaves off his butt and rushes to the circle of boys around Zack and asks what's going on.</p> |

"Nothing," Zack says, but James can see he's been crying.

A big boy named Keith pushes Zack and says, "Liar! Tell 'em why you're crying, gook!"

James doesn't know what a "gook" is, but he can tell it's bad. Zack's face gets red, and he bites his lip. James turns to Keith and pushes him back. "Kook! Spook! Took! Zook!" he yells as he keeps pushing. "You're a big bully, and I'm telling Miss Thompson as soon as I see her. You better leave Zack alone." James points at all the boys around them. "All of you better leave Zack alone!"

He feels good for about five seconds until Keith pushes him back. This is unexpected—and rude. Caught off guard, James kicks Keith even though he can hear Zack behind him telling him it's okay and to stop before he gets in trouble. With one more shove for good measure, James turns his back on Keith but finds himself face-to-face with Miss Thompson, her hands on her hips and her face angry as she looks at him.

"Mr. Albert," she says with that voice none of the kids like, "Mr. Meadows," she says, referring to Keith, "did I see you two boys fighting?"

"No! No, ma'am. Keith was bullying Zack, and I only stopped him," Jack shouts to preempt anything Keith might say.

"That's not true!" Keith shouts back.

"Hmm." She puts her hands on her hips and looks at both boys. "Let's go inside and have a talk. We have to get to the bottom of what happened so I know what to tell your parents at the end of the day."

James is a little worried about what his parents will say, but he's more worried about Keith and whether or not he'll get away with lying. Bullies always do, he's heard.

9 Physical and Cognitive Development in Middle and Late Childhood

James's parents shove food at him all the time, but he's still skinny. Dr. Morris finally tells his mom not to worry, and that's a big relief for James. He can only eat so much spaghetti and meatballs! Dr. Morris says he'll probably just be tall and thin like Dad. Dad jokes that James can use that to get a basketball scholarship to college. James hates basketball, but his dad doesn't seem to get that.

What James does like is school. He just has a hard time showing that. He likes drawing, and all his school worksheets have little drawings in the margins. His mother complains about his doodles, and his teachers tell her he seems unfocused. His doodling seems to prove that to her, and she nags him about it. Dad says, "As long as you're not goofing off, I don't care when and where you draw," except that everyone seems to think he is goofing off, and he doesn't know how to show them he's not.

10 Socioemotional Development in Middle and Late Childhood

In third grade, James's friend Zack forms a club that meets during recess on the playground. The club has three members and is called Words Can Hurt. They spend their time thinking of ways to stop bullying. After a few weeks, Zack convinces James to join. James is skeptical because he doesn't like bullies but finds a good shove and a threat are usually pretty effective at stopping bullies from doing bad stuff. The club has specific rules, like everyone's ideas are as good as everyone else's and there's no leader in the group because everyone is equally important.

Their teacher Mr. Miller asks them if they'd like their club to become an official club at the school. James doesn't understand what this means, and Mr. Miller explains that the four boys would teach other students the principles of Words Can Hurt, and those students would train other students, and those would train . . . And James understands after that. Their teacher says that he and other teachers would think of students who would be good peer leaders and good candidates for messages about bullying, and the group could meet during lunch as often as they want.

James is excited. He likes being part of something that's good, and he hopes that maybe working with his friends and Mr. Miller will help *him* figure out how to stop bullying without fighting (which seems a lot like bullying to him). One day, he asks Mr. Miller, "Did you know that hitting to stop hitting seems a lot like bullying?"

Mr. Miller nods. "I did know that. Did you figure that out yourself?" James tells him he did. "That's good, James. I'm glad you've decided there's a way to deal with bullying that doesn't require more bullying. I'm proud of all you."

One day in late elementary school, James rushes through his homework to get to the dinner table on time. Dad's grilled burgers, and that's his favorite. Once they finish, his mom doesn't tell him to start clearing the table right away like she usually does. James wants to know what's going on.

"Something seems weird with you two."

"Noticed that, did you?" Dad asks. "Actually, Mom and I wanted to talk to you now that dinner's over."

Suspicious, James looks at them. "Did I do something bad?"

"Not at all," his mom tells him, laughing.

"Okay . . . what's up?"

"We're having a baby, James," Mom says. "You're going to be a big brother."

His dad looks at him with concern. "How do you feel about that?"

James thinks about it. He knows a girl, Katie, who got a baby sister a few months ago. She's told them all the horrible things about it like smelly diapers and how her sister cries all the time. But she also shows them lots of cute pictures of her sister.

"I think it's great!" James cries. His parents smile and reach to squeeze his hands.

"Oh, James," his mom says, "I'm so glad you're happy. We hoped you would be."

11 Physical and Cognitive Development in Adolescence

James works his way through middle school in a revolving state of annoyance (pimples, cracking voice, and longer, skinnier legs), elation (Sally smiles at him most days between English and French), depression (some days Sally *doesn't* smile at him), and excitement (he and his friends bring Words Can Hurt to the middle school as an official part of the health curriculum).

There are days he has no idea what to think. He eats the oatmeal his dad fixes for breakfast and tries to decide WWHD on those days. WWHD is What Would Heinz Do? It's a thing they learned in a class where you're supposed to decide if an old guy should steal a drug to cure his dying wife. James is still unsure if there's a right answer, but when he has 1,000-mile-an-hour days, he likes to think about the situation. Some days, he thinks it's yes. Some days, he thinks it's no. One thing he knows for sure is that it's a hard question! Like, shouldn't the wife live if she can, even if helping her live means the guy goes to jail? But would she want to live while she's sick and old and stuff if he's in jail? Mostly, James thinks that if he were Heinz, he'd beat up anyone who got in the way of saving his wife's life.

It's not much easier with Words Can Hurt. When he was a kid, he wanted to punch everyone who bullied Zack or one of the girls on the playground or basically anyone else. It was hard not to. That's one of the challenges they face when they talk through their Words Can Hurt lessons. There's no "good" pushing, shoving, hitting, and stuff. There may be *necessary* violence sometimes (rarely, he thinks), but there's none that's good. That doesn't mean he's gotten to where he wants to punch people any less. Sometimes he wants to do it really bad.

He and Zack still eat lunch together most days. They both usually get pizza and fries, like today, when Zack sits down with his tray and says, "Hey, you going to ask Sally to the eighth-grade formal?"

"What? Where did that come from?" he asks.

"I heard that she turned down Trevor Martin because she's waiting for you to ask her."

James acknowledges this makes a difference. "Then that would be a yes."

**12 Socioemotional
Development in
Adolescence**

James has a significant problem. He wants to have sex, but he doesn't want to have sex. Taking his parents at their word that he can talk to them about anything, he asks his dad if they can go for a drive. He decides this is good cover because they're already driving a lot together in preparation for James getting his driver's license in a couple months. Dad says sure, and they strap themselves into the family sedan.

Once on the open road, James is so glad he's the one driving. He knows his dad will look at him, and he's spared looking back by having to keep his eyes facing forward. His dad also can't really see James's hands shaking, because he gets to hold tightly to the steering wheel. Yes, this is a good idea.

"Dad?"

"Want some music, son?"

"No, thanks. I, uh—" James clears his throat. "I actually wanted to talk to you about something."

"Oh?" James heard his dad shifting a little in the seat beside him.

"Yeah. Do you mind?"

"Of course not. What's up?"

Pretend casualness. Good. Good, James thinks, that'll help. He hopes his dad keeps it up.

"So, I hoped we could talk a little about sex." Pausing, he rushes on before his dad can speak. "Maybe. I mean, if that's okay, but if it's not, that's okay, too."

"No, it's fine. It's perfectly fine," Dad tells him, and by the soft, even tone of his voice, James knows his dad is trying hard not to freak out. "I do thank you for not bringing this up in front of your sister."

"Dad, she's five." James gives his father a long-suffering sigh. "Okay, so, I haven't gotten anyone pregnant and I don't have an STD."

"James!"

"I thought that might relieve some worry." They both laugh, and his dad agrees he actually feels a little better knowing that. "But I do have a problem."

"That's fine, James. I'm happy to try to help."

"Yeah, okay, right. Thanks, Dad. I guess I'll just say it. God, this is so embarrassing. I know girls like me. I've had opportunities to . . . you know."

"Yes, James, I know." His dad coughs.

"Right, well, I could have a lot of times. Most of those times, I even thought about it way before I knew I could. Like maybe I made a date with a girl thinking I could have sex with her later, and then later she indicated that was a definite possibility. But between the beginning of the date and her indication that we could engage in . . . the sex, I realized I didn't want to." James grips the steering wheel. "What's wrong with me?"

Dad cracks his knuckles beside him and sits quietly for a minute. "Nothing, James. There's nothing wrong with you. You're just not ready—nothing else."

"So, I'm not weird?" James asks, a little disappointed.

"Not at all," Dad assures him.

"Well, thanks, Dad."

James decides to let it go. There doesn't seem to be any reason to ask when he *will* be ready.

13 Physical and Cognitive Development in Emerging/Early Adulthood

James's parents look at the boxes stacked in the foyer. His mom shakes her head. "I just don't understand," she says for the one hundredth time.

"What I don't understand," James counters, "is why you aren't grateful it's only this much."

He has four medium-sized packing boxes, a lamp, and three small boxes of books. It will easily fit in his trunk. What his mom is upset about is that he doesn't need them to drive him to college. He thinks for about a half minute that he should let them anyway, but he can do this himself and wants to. It's time to grow up.

The dorm room is tiny but functional. He doesn't know his roommate, but that's okay. James is pretty easygoing, after the ten minutes of unpacking their things, they're getting along pretty well.

"What are you majoring in?" his roommate Matt asks over dinner in the dining hall.

"No idea," James admits. "Maybe business. That seems the safe route. What about you?"

"Exercise science."

"Nice."

14 Socioemotional Development in Emerging/Early Adulthood

James has an academic advisor who helps him figure out what classes to take each semester. It helps. For a couple years, he takes the same courses his roommate does: some English, some history, and science and math. James always did like math, and he does well at it in college, which his advisor says is a good omen for him if he's majoring in business. For a moment, he wonders about majoring in math, but he doesn't mention it to his advisor.

In between his classes, he and his roommate eat as much it's possible for two growing young men to eat and hit more than their share of parties. Even though there're a couple girls James thinks are beautiful, he keeps everything with everyone casual. He's got his whole life to settle down, and college is not the time.

At least once a month, his parents send care packages: his favorite foods, little boxes of homemade cookies, and always a small check for spending money. Matt gets the same packages every now and then. Neither of them complains when the odd care package contains a box of condoms, and they dump those into the communal safe sex bowl that hangs out on the bookshelf between their beds.

In their junior year, James and Matt rent a room in a house just off campus. James's parents are skeptical, but they keep the parties to a minimum (for them) and their grades respectable. Sometime in the spring of James's senior year, a girl comes to one of the weekend parties with a friend of hers they often see. James hasn't met her before, but as far as he's concerned, it's love at first sight.

Her name is Stacey, and she's an English major. They spend the night talking, just learning about each other, and by the time the party ends, Stacey agrees to go out to dinner with him the following night. It takes James a long time to admit it, but if he'd focused a little more on his classes and a little less on the kegs in the past four years, he might've found Stacey a lot sooner. Stacey tells him he had to grow up before they would've worked. Maybe she's right. Whatever the secret sauce, he's crazy in love, and a few months after they graduate, James marries Stacey with his best friend Matt standing up for him and Stacey's sister standing up for her. James's sister is something sort of like a flower girl and sort of like a bridesmaid, in the middle of both. He's pretty happy as they settle in to their grown-up life in a little rental house near Stacey's parents' house in the southern end of the state.

**15 Physical and
Cognitive
Development
in Middle
Adulthood**

Stacey and James buy their first house when Stacey gets pregnant with their first child. It's a small house but in a good neighborhood. James has recently been promoted from assistant manager to manager at the retail store where he works, and Stacey has changed jobs from a small Internet ezine to writing press copy for the city government. Her health insurance is great and cheaper than his, so they switch and start saving some money for the baby.

With the new house, James starts hosting weekend barbeques for some of their friends from college who live close enough to drive in for the day. Stacey puts a good face on these days, knowing that he likes to hang with the friends they had in college (he had in college, if he's being honest), and some of them are married and starting families, too. So, she has the opportunity to spend time with other young mothers.

After about ten years of marriage, James and Stacey have two kids and have traded up to a larger house. Stacey still works for the municipal government, but James has changed jobs. No longer at the retail store, he's now the district manager for a fast-food chain, making a few thousand dollars more each year than he had been.

**16 Socioemotional
Development
in Middle
Adulthood**

"James." Stacey pours a glass of wine and sits at the kitchen table. The lights are off other than the dim one over the stove. The kids are in bed. "James, we have to talk."

James figures he knows what that means. "What's wrong?"

She looks at him like he should know. "I'm really happy with my job," she begins.

"That's great! I want you to be happy."

She ignores his interruption and goes on. "The kids are happy at school with their friends and the other things they have going on."

"Babe, I know all of this. What's the problem?"

"I'm not happy with us."

Sitting still, James thinks about her words. "You never said," he finally tells her.

"No, I didn't. I hoped if we spent more time together or I tried harder, I would feel differently. It didn't work."

"I get that."

"I'm not asking you to be someone different. The problem's me, James, not you."

"The old 'it's me not you' cliché, Stacey?"

Stacey drinks the last of her wine. Setting the glass carefully on the table, she looks at him and says, "I think we should consider a separation, James."

"What?" He's stunned. Never in his wildest imagination would he have expected her to say that. It feels like she's pulling this out of the blue. "I don't understand."

"Mom's already said she'll come and help with the kids until I figure things out."

"You've talked to your *mom* about this? Before you talked to me?"

She looks guilty, and he gets to his feet. "Can I at least have a night to think things through?"

"James, you can think about what you want to do as long as you want, but you're going to have to think somewhere else."

"Stacey, this is my house, too." He's getting angry. *It is* his house, dammit. "Why do I have a dinner and then get told you're booting me for absolutely nothing I've done wrong?"

"Do you want me to go?" she asks. "Because that will mean uprooting the kids. Do you want that?"

"You're making the decision that the kids will go with you when—again—you've said I did nothing wrong?"

Stacey sighs. "What do you want to do?"

"I'll sleep on the couch for a few days, and we'll keep talking until we figure out a scenario that works for all of us."

"That's fair enough," she agrees. "Let's talk some more tomorrow. I'm going to bed now."

"Okay." James watches her walk away, a little lost. He has no idea how they got here and no idea how to fix things.

James sleeps—lays awake without sleeping—on the couch and considers his options. He's not sure he has options. The way Stacey sounded, she's made up her mind and expects him to say okay.

He doesn't know why he doesn't get a say in the end of his own marriage. He loves his family, loves his wife. The whole conversation makes him so sad—and angry.

Their daughter Anna tiptoes into the den and sits at the end of the couch where James's feet hang over the armrest. He makes room for her and whispers, "Hey, doodlebug. Can't sleep?"

She doesn't ask why he's on the couch.

"No." Playing with the belt on her robe, she asks, "Can I come with you? I'll change schools if you're not in the same district."

He's touched and desperately wants to say yes. "Why do you want to do that, Anna?" he asks instead. "And why do you think I'm going anywhere?"

"Because I heard Mom talking to Grandma and because I'd rather live with you than her."

"What about your brother? What about your friends?"

"I only have to worry about my friends if you move far away, and if Jimmy stays here, then I figure you're not moving too far."

"That's true enough." He sighs deeply. "Your mom and I have a lot to discuss, but if this is what you really want, then I'll put that into the mix."

"Thanks, Dad." She stands and tries to smile. Before she turns back for her bedroom, Anna leans down and kisses his forehead. "Love you, Dad."

"I love you, too, sweetheart."

17 Physical and Cognitive Development in Late Adulthood

When James is in his 50s, his dad suffers a single, fatal heart attack. Two years later, his mom has a series of small strokes that leave her bedridden until she, too, passes away. Although active due to his work and still fit for his age, as enters his later years, James becomes increasingly concerned about his own cardiovascular health. He begins having an annual checkup with a general practitioner and for the first time in his life takes up jogging. He jogs a mile each morning and, if not particularly graceful or enthusiastic, feels like he's doing his part to keep himself heart healthy. He doesn't eat fried food (much) and steers clear of as much sugar as he can. He does have a fondness for cake.

Anna, his darling girl, has married and given him grandchildren that are doting. One grandson runs with him a time or two a week whenever he has time, and whenever he has time, Matt joins him, too. They're both concerned with growing older. Jimmy is also married with children. He lives farther away than James likes, but he sees them enough to remember their faces even if he is getting old, and he is definitely getting old. All the years of bills of lading and other small print have taken their toll. He wears glasses he's pretty well blind without.

A few times each year, his path crosses Stacey's and her second husband's (married six months after the divorce was final), and he's sure that isn't any good for his blood pressure. Still, he puts on a good face for the children. It's what a good parent does.

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| 18 | Socioemotional Development in Late Adulthood | <p>James spends part of each day writing down things he's learned over the years. It's not much, and he suspects no one cares. If Jimmy or his grandson finds something useful in the journal one day, well, that's nice. If not, it's a way to spend his days at the assisted living facility he's going to spend the last of his days in.</p> <p>He does have a few friends at the home. A couple, old geezers like himself, have kids here and there they don't see much either. One or two, also like James, has a doting grandchild, and they agree to share those young ones when they come around, like a communal bowl of children to keep the sun coming up as long as they can.</p> <p>In between, they play poker, betting on pudding cups, butterscotch candy, and contraband chewing gum (gets in the dentures).</p> <p>It's not the worst life, and at least he's done managing restaurant deliveries.</p> |
| 19 | Experience With Death and Dying | <p>Taking care of his health in the middle years, James is fortunate and doesn't develop diabetes or other chronic ailments during his later years. Genetics come for him at the end, however, and toward the end of his life, he develops congestive heart failure. His good cardiovascular care over the past 30 years helps him live with this condition for a number of years, but James eventually suffers a heart attack when he's 72 years old. He dies at the assisted care facility, leaving his son and daughter-in-law and his grandson behind.</p> |

Case Discussion Questions

1. During James's infancy, Rosslyn switches from breast-feeding to formula. This allows her to reduce her daily strain just a little, but it also stresses the family's finances some. How does this change have the potential to impact James across any and all domains (biological, cognitive, and socioemotional) as he grows?
2. In middle childhood, James's parents are annoyed by his consistent doodling in the margins of his school papers, a behavior that seems to also annoy his teachers. Joss and Rosslyn tell James not to draw in his margins. How does this parental perspective potentially change James's outcomes across any and all domains (biological, cognitive, and socioemotional) as he grows, specifically, compared to the optimal case in which James is encouraged to draw whenever and wherever he wants.
3. In early adulthood, James goes to college. He leaves home and moves into his dorm with a roommate he doesn't know and an undeclared major. Looking back at James's childhood, what event(s) may have occurred that explain the difference across any and all domains (biological, cognitive, and socioemotional) between the optimal case in which James's parents and little sister take him to his dorm even though "he doesn't really need it" and he has a clear direction ahead of himself (architectural engineering) and this one?
4. Consider James's optimal case outcomes at the end of his life and Erikson's integrity-versus-despair stage of psychosocial development. How does this case compare to that one? Consider all of James's life events. How do you think those contributed to any differences in James's end-of-life outcomes and his sense of integrity versus despair?

4. Moderate Outcomes: Riley Everett

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| 2 | Biological and Environmental Foundations | <p>Prenatal examination and history taking uncover that Kari may have used meth for as many as nine weeks during her pregnancy before her arrest. This would've allowed for her drug use to affect her growing baby. During the 12th week of her pregnancy, decreased utero-placental blood flow and increased fetal blood pressure are detected. Kari's physical health is quite poor but stabilized by the prison doctors. Riley, named for Mason's beloved grandmother whose maiden name was Riley, enters the world eight weeks early, small and highly reactive. She's removed from Kari's immediate care as soon as she can be and taken to the prison neonatal intensive care unit, where she's watched over by pediatric nursing specialists. She's not ill enough to remove from the prison but does require significant early care. It's difficult to know in the early days what may or may not be developmentally compromised in her due to Kari's drug use, but externally, she looks pretty good. The doctors tell Mason that much is a waiting game and give him some educational material on meth use during pregnancy as well as information on support groups local to his area. Mason takes her home two months after she's born once the doctors tell him she's able to be cared for outside the prison hospital.</p> |
| 3 | Prenatal Development, Birth, and the Newborn Experience | <p>Riley is a lovely baby. She isn't round and fat like so many babies Mason's seen. Okay, most of those are on television shows, so he probably doesn't know much about babies at all, but Riley's different. She's long and kind of skinny. The nurse practitioner he takes her to at the country health center says that might be genetic (Mason's sort of thin himself, and so is Kari, but she's a meth addict, so who knows about her?), or it might be a result of Kari's drug use. It might be a combination of both, and they may never know. It doesn't seem to be impacting her health; he's reassured. All of her is long, though, her neck, her legs, her arms, her toes, and her fingers.</p> <p>"Musician's fingers," his mother tells him while she rocks Riley after dinner one night. "Mark my words."</p> <p>Mason grunts at his mother. "You're just mad that I quit piano in fifth grade."</p> <p>"You played so well."</p> <p>"I played 'Mary Had a Little Lamb,' Mom. Let's not exaggerate."</p> <p>She laughs. "Okay. So maybe you weren't Mozart." Riley burps, and his mother shifts her to her shoulder. "What a good girl. Give Granny another one like that." She looks at Mason. "You have to go back to work soon."</p> <p>"I know." He sighs. "I don't want to. I don't think she's ready to be left with a stranger. She still gets so upset all the time. How do I tell a babysitter or whoever to keep the lights dim because Riley's sensitive to rooms that are too bright or to play music when she's cranky because that seems to soothe her?"</p> <p>"Why would you want to?"</p> <p>"I just said I didn't!"</p> <p>His mother cradles Riley again. "Remember that party we had last month?"</p> <p>"What? Your retirement party?"</p> |

She smiles. "One and the same. Look, your dad keeps the blinds closed all day 'cause of his glaucoma, and you can't just play any music for this girl. She has taste, Mason. Leave her with me. Save yourself the money and the worry. Riley and her Granny'll have a grand ol' time while Daddy's at work. Won't we, sweetheart?"

Relieved to know his daughter will be safe, loved, and understood, he admits that he's sure they will.

4 Physical Development in Infancy and Toddlerhood

Unlike Riley's mother Kari, Mason never used any drugs of any type. He never smoked. He did drink with fair regularity, but not after he brings Riley home. He has to put any spare pennies he has toward her care, and even if he didn't, he figures she deserves a substance-free upbringing given how her little life started out. If someone offers him a beer at dinner, he accepts, but he doesn't buy it anymore, and he's completely done with the bar scene.

The clarity of winning custody of his baby and keeping her life as pure and innocent as it can be pays off. He tells himself it does anyway. The pediatrician keeps telling him how great his baby dragon's doing at every checkup. She's growing slowly but eating well, and she meets all the important milestones the doctor asks about even if some of them are slightly delayed. She sits up and crawls on time, walks, and runs, although maybe she walks a few weeks later than average. The pediatrician reminds him that *average* is a word for a reason. Riley doesn't like sleeping alone, and lots of nights Mason moves her cradle into his room, which the doctor says is fine as long as they're both getting enough rest.

Riley remains sensitive to light and to overstimulation, but Mason's mom notices her reaction to music early on. She's easily calmed by music as long as it's the right music. She likes classical, particularly sonatas for piano and violin. Those seem to be at the right pitch to soothe her irritability.

By age two, she's caught up with her toddler peers in gross and motor skills. Socially, she is easily irritated and shy. Mason understands this may never change and arranges her world to be as soothing as it can be.

5 Cognitive Development in Infancy and Toddlerhood

Mason carefully watches Riley's development in the first year or so. He's worried that she isn't speaking much, although she does say *dada* near the end of her first year. The pediatrician assures him that this is a good sign and that she almost certainly knows more words than she says. Mason hopes so because that's pretty much all she says.

He's more heartened by her babbling than anything. The pediatrician tells him that counts as language, too, and when she finally starts speaking in two- and three-word combinations, he's delighted.

For Christmas the year Riley is two, Mason buys her a small electronic keyboard. She likes the music he and his mother play for her so much that he thinks maybe she'll like banging on the keys. Once she opens the box, he pops in the batteries he has waiting and turns it on for her. Pretty soon, she's pressing individual notes, happily lost on the floor among the wrapping paper and boxes. The electric keyboard becomes the one toy that follows Riley through all stages of her childhood development.

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| 6 | Socioemotional Development in Infancy and Toddlerhood | <p>The time commitment between two jobs and a newborn gets to Mason some days, but he powers through it. Mom helps, of course, and he knows it will get better in time. As exhausted as he is most days of the week and most months of the year, he makes it work.</p> <p>Mom's still looking after Riley, for which he's so glad. His beautiful girl gets so anxious that it scares him sometimes. She's such an affectionate child with her family, openly loving and giving without any reservations, but she's shy and reserved around strangers. He hopes she'll become more comfortable with other people in the future. She'll have to go to preschool eventually, Kindergarten, and high school one day. He makes a mental note to talk to the pediatrician about it at her next checkup.</p> |
| 7 | Physical and Cognitive Development in Early Childhood | <p>It's Sunday, and Riley sits in her closet crying. She's trying to be quiet so Daddy won't hear her. She's pretty good at being quiet, but her nose is running. If she sniffs or blows, he'll hear her. She'll let it run. She can hear him walking around their house and calling for her. Maybe he'll get tired of looking.</p> <p><i>"Riley! Come out! This is silly."</i></p> <p>Maybe not. She pulls her knees to her chest and holds her breath. It's hard with all the snot in her nose. She hears him stop in her doorway and lets out the breath. Reaching toward the door to her closet, she knocks lightly. His steps walk closer, and he speaks to her through the door.</p> <p><i>"Hey."</i></p> <p><i>"Hey, Daddy."</i></p> <p><i>"Wanna talk about it?"</i></p> <p><i>"No."</i></p> <p><i>"Let's start this over." He coughs. "Hey."</i></p> <p><i>"Hey, Daddy."</i></p> <p><i>"Let's talk about this."</i></p> <p><i>"Okay, Daddy."</i></p> <p><i>"You're worried about tomorrow?"</i></p> <p><i>"Yeah."</i></p> <p><i>"I'm going to be with you the whole time, baby dragon. If anything goes wrong, what'll we do?"</i></p> <p>Riley gets to her knees and pushes open the door so she can look up at him.</p> <p><i>"Breathe fire on 'em. Take no prisoners!"</i></p> <p><i>"You got it. Now, come on out. Let's figure out the trouble."</i></p> <p>She crawls out from the closet and onto Daddy's lap when he sits at the end of her bed. He hugs her close. That makes her feel better. Then he sticks the end of his sleeve in her face. She uses it to wipe her nose.</p> <p><i>"Thanks."</i></p> <p><i>"Anytime. We call this neo-chivalry." He plucks at her knee.</i></p> |

“Cool pajamas.”

She looks at the red pants with dragons flying all over them. They make her feel strong and powerful.

“Me, too. They were a birthday present.” This is a game they play.

“Yeah? From anyone I know?”

Riley giggles and hugs him. “From you, Daddy!”

“That’s right, baby dragon. Now, tell me why you were crying. And hiding! Because that’s new.”

“I’m scared,” she whispers into his neck.

“Scared? Of what?”

“Tomorrow. I *told you*.”

Daddy pats her back. “Are you afraid of the school or the people in the school?”

“Both,” she admits, thinking about the new preschool she’s supposed to start the next week. She doesn’t want to go to school with a lot kids she doesn’t know!

“Want me to tell you a secret?”

“Okay.”

“They have a piano, and Tuesdays are music days.”

Well, maybe she can at least *try* it and see how things go.

As it happens, things go better than Riley thinks they will but not as well as she hopes. She works hard to please her teacher, and her teacher tells her dad that she’s doing pretty good. Her teacher also tells Daddy that Riley might have something she calls “ADHD,” and that doesn’t sound good to Riley. Daddy tells the teacher that she doesn’t have it (Is it like a cold or like her hair and eye color?), but he tells the teacher than the pediatrician says sometimes people can mistake the signs of a preterm baby’s developmental progress from a child with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. He promises to talk to Riley but to also give the teacher some of the coping strategies they use at home. This seems to help a little, but the teacher still frowns at her sometimes.

The other children bother her sometimes, too. They’re loud, and they run around a lot. The noise and movement makes her wish she were a turtle with a shell she could climb into for protection instead of a girl with pretty brown braids her daddy puts in her hair every morning. Some days are a lot better than others.

**8 Socioemotional
Development
in Early
Childhood**

At a late-year parent teacher conference with Riley’s dad, her teacher tells him that Riley’s still struggling to make friends. She takes a long time to open up, her teacher says. Riley’s heard her dad say that to Granny before. She thinks it means being nice to people she doesn’t know or something like that. She must be the wimpiest dragon on the planet, she thinks, and wonders if Daddy is mad at her.

Her teacher also says that Riley tries hard with reading and writing. Riley's doing much better, the teacher says, at reading, but she has trouble writing. Riley knows this is true. It's hard to make the pencil go the way she wants it to, and she gets frustrated. After that happens, she cries, and then she can't stop, and then the teacher makes her leave the table, and it all gets bad after that. Riley wishes she never had to write at all. Daddy tells the teacher that he'll practice with her at home. Riley likes that. She likes spending time with Daddy at home.

Really, Riley doesn't like preschool much. The only things she likes at all are music days and hotdog days. All of this makes her scared about starting Kindergarten. The teacher talks about Kindergarten *all the time*. If preschool is like Kindergarten but easier, like the teacher says, Riley wants no part of it. She just wants to go back to the closet and hide again.

9 Physical and Cognitive Development in Middle and Late Childhood

Riley, who isn't a *bad* student, is sometimes mistaken for one. She doesn't talk to many people, and she doesn't always do what she's told. She means to, every time, but it's hard sometimes. The lights in the classrooms are so bright, and everything around her is loud. She seems to be a magnet for bullies, too. Eventually, Riley figures out that the only way to get by is to push back. This gets her in trouble more than once even though she tries to be good.

Her teachers try to help her with her schoolwork, but often she doesn't understand the lessons. When this happens, the teachers send work home for Daddy to help with, and Daddy spends a lot of time helping her with all her worksheets. She works hard, and each year she moves from grade to grade feeling more and more uncertain about what the teachers are teaching. If she worried about starting Kindergarten, she's absolutely terrified about middle school.

10 Socioemotional Development in Middle and Late Childhood

Riley has one or two friends now. They eat together at lunch and play together on the playground. Her best friend is Jasmine, and Jasmine is small and has short black hair with bangs. She wears glasses and likes country music. Riley thinks she can probably change that anyway.

She asks Daddy if Jasmine can sleep over, and it's funny to see his face. She can tell he's surprised. Jasmine is her first friend, and this is her first sleepover.

"Please, Daddy, please!"

Riley would never consent to sleeping anywhere else yet, and even having someone else to their house is a big step for her. Mason says okay. He's a little worried about the state of the trailer and negotiates with her.

"You bet, but why don't we see if Granny and Grandpa mind if we have your sleepover up at their house so you have more room?" Riley thinks this is a fine idea, and Mason is relieved. "Just get me a phone number so I can talk to one of her parents."

"Thank you, Daddy!"

After speaking a couple times with Jasmine's mother Philippa, it's decided that Mason will pick up both little girls from school on Friday, and Philippa will collect Jasmine from the house on Saturday sometime after lunch. It's a solid plan, and Mason prepares by buying hotdogs and potato chips and a half gallon of the ice cream Riley tells him on Thursday is Jasmine's favorite.

"Where's your coat," he asks as he makes the shopping list.

"I lost it," she says and points at the list. "Coke, too, please."

"This is all junk food. You know how I feel about junk food."

"Sorry, Daddy," Riley tells him even though both of them know she's not sorry at all.

He laughs and figures they'll talk about the coat later.

**11 Physical and
Cognitive
Development in
Adolescence**

Riley's progress through elementary school teaches her two things. First, she's never going to be an athlete. Second, she's never going to be a scholar.

Maybe there's a third thing: if you're not an athlete or a scholar, then you're getting bullied. She learns to push back, which she thinks is a good thing, but the teachers do not. She gets tired of explaining herself to her dad and eventually stops saying anything in school and tries to be as quiet and unobtrusive as she can—not like a mouse but more like a ghost. Sometimes, after she goes to bed, she has trouble falling asleep. She tries counting sheep (dumb), humming (annoying), and lots of other things, but none of them works. Her mind races around like a little hamster in a cage. During the day, she's super tired, but she can't help it as much as she wants to.

At the checkup just before sixth grade starts, her doctor tells Dad that she's a little pale and a little thin. After a few questions Riley answers as well as she can, the doctor tells her dad that Riley can have meds for her anxiety and that it might be a good idea. Riley doesn't want to take drugs right now, but she does want to sleep better. Her dad agrees to try the prescription, and Riley shrugs. Maybe it'll help.

When she's alone with the doctor, she tells her that she's worried about her period. It hasn't started yet, but Jasmine's has and a lot of other girls that she knows. The doctor reassures her. She tells Riley that because Riley's thin and has coped with chronic stress since her birth due to an underactive behavioral inhibition system (this is a new term for Riley, and she makes a note of it), she might be a little later having her first period. She also says this is normal and nothing to be concerned about. Relieved, Riley leaves with a tetanus booster and her last HPV vaccine. She's still not sure about that one, but she's not sure about a lot of the shots she gets at the doctor's.

After the doctor, her dad takes her to the pharmacy to get her prescription filled—Lexapro. Great, Riley thinks to herself, whatever. Back at home, she goes to her room and starts sorting all the school supplies her dad complained about buying. Most go into her book bag (last year's), but some get tucked into the drawers of her desk. She has paper, binders, and pencils (she has to sharpen 20 of them—yay, not), pens (blue per the list), two highlighters, two glue sticks, graph paper, a stapler, a pencil bag, a compass and ruler, a copy of *Tom Sawyer*, which her dad read to her when she was about seven, and rubber bands. Her dad says the rubber bands are a terrible idea, that all the kids will shoot balls of paper at each other and not just the boys. Riley agrees, but either the teachers didn't think of that or they needed rubber bands really bad.

When her dad calls her to dinner, she realizes she's smelled meat cooking for a while—burgers probably. She likes burgers—the meat, not so much the bread and other stuff, and sometimes the cheese. Pulling the zipper on her book bag closed, she drops it on the floor near the door and heads into the little kitchen.

12 Socioemotional Development in Adolescence

Riley is dimly aware that she's supposed to be involved socially as she moves through middle and high school. Other students go to weekend parties and football games. They do sleepovers and rafting trips. Jasmine sleeps over every now and then, but Riley doesn't have any social life other than that. She doesn't care about being a social butterfly. Boys notice her. She knows because they flirt with her. Sometimes they're bold enough to ask her out. She's still shy, though, and prefers to be at home alone. Although her anxiety is a little better when she takes the Lexapro, she's never going to be outgoing. It's just not in her. Besides, she doesn't think there's an expiration date on going out with boys, and she's too awkward about the whole process to think about it right now.

13 Physical and Cognitive Development in Emerging/Early Adulthood

Riley hears her dad park his truck behind the house. Any second, he'll walk into the kitchen and call out for her. It's the same every day and has been as long as she can remember.

"Hello, the house!" he hollers.

"Hey, Dad!" she calls back from her usual perch in the living room. She likes the corner of the sofa that faces the fireplace. Even when it's not cold enough for a fire, that whole wall feels so homey to her.

"There she is," he says, coming to kiss the forehead she offers by tilting her face up to his. He opens a Diet Coke and plops into his recliner, pushing the chair back so his feet lift a foot or so above the ground.

"Tough day?" she asks.

"Not really. Same ol' same ol.' You?"

She can't help being a little proud of herself when she hands him the paper. "I got in," she says with a big grin. "In" means the local branch of the state university, a smaller but local and affordable choice; she'd tried really hard to make happen.

"Riley! This is fantastic!" Dad whoops, pushing the chair back down so he can sit upright and read the letter a second time. "Honey, why didn't you tell me right away?"

"I kind of did." She frowns for a second. "The state grant and scholarship won't cover everything."

"Close though. Damn close. You just have to finish in four years. We'll make it work."

"I know. I can live at home, right? You're not kicking me out?"

"Long as you're in school or working, you've got a home."

Relieved, she smiles again. "Thanks, Dad."

Six months later, Mason takes her to orientation, where they learn everything they need to know about her commuter student life and about her elementary education major, where she'll be learning to teach children music.

Riley struggles through some of the core classes (why does she have to take some of this?), but some of it she likes (music appreciation, huh?). Mostly, she tries not to complain because every semester she gets to take something related to teaching or music, often both. After a year or so, that's almost all she's taking, plus she gets to be in an actual classroom a couple hours each day. It's a pretty good life, she has to admit, even though she has to work hard to keep herself on track for finishing on time. She doesn't want to cost her dad any more money than she has to. She also wants to be teaching for real as soon as she's able to.

14 Socioemotional Development in Emerging/Early Adulthood

In her junior year of college, Riley finds herself finished with her core courses. She has no classes left to take that aren't in the music or education departments and now has a student teaching position in a new classroom each semester.

She's so focused on her studies that she doesn't have time (or even wants to find the time) for much socializing. She's frequently asked on dates by classmates (and random strangers, which is disconcerting), but at 21 years old, she's never said yes. She's never been on a date, and she hasn't been kissed. Riley isn't concerned at all. She knows she's at least of average attractiveness because she gets flirted with. She can wait.

After securing her first full-time teaching position after graduation, Riley settles into grown-up life. She rents a small apartment a few miles from her dad and grandparents, furnishing it with hand-me-downs and salvaged pieces from the Habitat Restore. Carefully and quietly over the first couple of years, she inventories the instruments in her classroom and notices which need replacing, which she doesn't have at all, and which are in good repair. As she can, she requests upgrades from the administration. When she gets pushback, she buys new instruments from her own pocket. It doesn't matter to her. She has nothing better to spend the money on, and if she's going to do the job, she needs the tools to do it. She loves teaching. She loves the children, and they love her. Now that her classroom is well outfitted, she teaches every possible type of music from woodwinds and strings to percussion and brass. Life is perfect until the day a history teacher comes to her and offers an old trumpet to the room, an instrument he no longer plays. Riley, thrilled, accepts the trumpet with many thanks. As the teacher prepares to leave, he clears his throat and asks, "Ms. Everett, would you like to have dinner with me sometime?"

Riley, now 25 years old, considers. How can she possibly be afraid of a date now when she's all grown up and has become who she's supposed to be?

"I would really like that, Mr. Finch. How's Friday night?"

15 Physical and Cognitive Development in Middle Adulthood

Peter Finch, who romanced Riley in such an over-the-top way that their coworkers and students wondered what kind of flowers or chocolates or books would arrive next, sits and listens to his wife as she explains an idea she has.

Riley shows him the brochure from the college she attended as an undergraduate. "See? It's an advanced certification in special education with an emphasis on music therapy. I could finish in a year even though I'd have to work really hard. Would you mind?"

Peter scowls. “Why would you ask if I’d mind? I only ever want you to do the things you want to do. I think this is perfect for you, sweetheart.”

“I do, too,” she admits. “So, I’ll apply tomorrow?”

“You’ll apply tomorrow.”

Riley hugs and kisses him and wonders how she ever found someone so wonderful. She knows that Peter Finch is the absolute best thing to happen to her other than her dad.

He stands at the kitchen stove making pancakes—Dad never taught her to cook and so what?—and she watches him in her old, ratty bathrobe. His needs washing, but he doesn’t care. “More coffee?” she asks. That much she can do.

“Sure. Will you find the maple syrup, too?”

“I will.” Setting the table—also within her wheelhouse—she turns her head to the side. “Peter?”

“Yes, sweetheart?”

“This program only takes a year.”

“You said that already.”

“When I’m finished or even halfway finished . . . would you like to make a baby?”

“I should like that very much, Riley.”

“Good, so would I, but only if you promise to teach her how to cook.”

“Or him. I promise.”

“Then you and I really should have a long talk, Peter. There are some things about me you should know.”

“Tell me,” he asks, and she takes a deep breath.

“Let’s start with the fact that I was born in a prison.”

Over the next hour or so, she tells him about the woman called Kari Simmons and how Riley came to be Riley, flaws and all. She tries to keep it brief but also tries to cover all the essentials. At the end of everything, she realizes just what a hero her dad is.

**16 Socioemotional
Development
in Middle
Adulthood**

Riley waits for Peter at their favorite weekly spot for dinner, a tiny Mexican restaurant run by a local family. They’ve been eating here for years. It’s so hard to wait, but he has to get a tire changed on his car before meeting her. It’s fine. She pulls a folder of tests from her bag and begins to grade them. Never waste a minute; that’s how she operates.

“Margarita, señora?” the server asks, but Riley shakes her head no.

“*Agua solamente por favor.*”

A moment later, a glass of water is sat in front of her. She continues grading until Peter arrives at 6:15 p.m., only a few minutes late. She lifts her face for a kiss on her cheek before he sits. The tests go back in the folder and the folder back in her bag as he settles himself.

“Good day?” she asks.

“Fair. How was yours?”

“Pretty good. I ordered you a beer.”

“Looking better then.”

He smiles and she smiles back. She loves Peter’s smile. His beer arrives along with a plastic basket of tortilla chips and a plastic bowl of salsa. Riley loves the salsa here.

Peter digs in, and she watches him for a minute before sliding a box across the table. He looks at it and then at her. “Did I forget a birthday or an anniversary?”

“Not at all.”

When he unwraps the pair of baby booties, she smiles again. He looks back at her with a question in his eyes, and she nods.

“June,” she says. “A June baby.”

“And we’re agreed that we’ll have genetic testing done but only for information purposes, that we’re having this baby no matter what?”

She nods. “Right. That’s what I want to do.”

“Good,” Peter says, “me, too.”

“This is going to be good.” Riley reaches across the table. “You’re going to make a great dad, Peter.”

“We are going to make great parents.”

Riley works through the end of the school year even though she can no longer clean instruments off the floor between classes or at the end of the school day. Her belly is bigger than anything she could’ve imagined. At all the right intervals, they’ve done all the right testing, and so far, their baby looks perfectly healthy, although the doctor was clear that he—they are having a boy—could end up with Riley’s inability to filter out extraneous stimuli. She could cope with that because she understands it so well. Their son, a healthy boy they name Beau, is born in the second week of June, allowing Riley the summer off before school starts again in August. The small family spends the weeks quietly, although her family and his want plenty of time with the baby.

Peter’s mother, retired but still young and spry, offers to watch Beau during the days while Riley and Peter work once the school year rolls around again. Grateful, they leave him in her capable hands, and she helps the transition by doing things like running the baby to the elementary school during Riley’s lunch break and planning period so she can nurse him. In this way, they pass the first 18 months of his life with almost zero upset to his routine.

When Beau is in elementary school, Mason suffers a fatal heart attack brought on by years of chronic stress, low income, and poor social support. The loss undermines Riley, who isn’t prepared for her level of grief even though she lost both of her grandparents in the past two years. She takes three weeks off of work and sorts Mason’s things, cries, and wonders what life means without her father.

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| 17 | Physical and Cognitive Development in Late Adulthood | <p>Peter, the love of her life, taught with her, gardened with her, made pizza and watched movies with her . . . and parented with her . . . until their late 50s, when he suffers a stroke. As with her Dad, Riley isn't ready. Peter is so young and seemingly healthy that the stroke seems to come from nowhere. Later, talking to a brother and a cousin at the funeral, she learns that vascular disease runs in the family and Peter actually lived quite long for the Finch men. She doesn't feel better learning this.</p> <p>After Peter's death, Riley retires from teaching. Their son Beau, married with children of his own, encourages her to sell her house and move in with his family. Eventually, she does. For a few years, she lives quietly, making every effort not to upset their lives, until she's diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease. Riley makes the decision for herself to enter an assisted living facility while she's still capable of making decisions. She doesn't want Beau to have to do it later.</p> |
| 18 | Socioemotional Development in Late Adulthood | <p>In the facility where Riley spends her remaining days, Beau makes sure she is comfortable and cared for. He or his wife visit her daily, whether she's lucid or not, and they read to her or talk with her until she falls asleep. Although the facility is highly rated and the family is attentive, Riley passes away from Alzheimer's complications at age 65.</p> |
| 19 | Experience With Death and Dying | <p>Riley dies unattended overnight in her sleep at age 65. She has Alzheimer's disease and passes away due to complications from this illness.</p> |

Case Discussion Questions

- In early childhood, Riley, who is already anxious about attending preschool and making friends, has a teacher who tells her father Mason that she has ADHD. Mason knows she doesn't and even explains to the teacher why it might seem that Riley does. The teacher may not buy it. Compare this case to Riley's optimal case in which she is still anxious, but her teacher doesn't think she has ADHD. What differences can you expect across any and all domains (biological, cognitive, and socioemotional) based on this one small difference?
- In early adulthood, Riley faces college decisions. Mason has struggled with bills as long as she's been alive and has done everything for her. She chooses a local college where she can commute, and she and Mason figure out how to manage the tuition. Compare this to Riley's optimal case, where she goes away to college to study music. Clearly, her outcomes are altered. What specific events in Riley's past led to the divergence in these decisions? How so?
- In middle adulthood, Riley improves her career trajectory by looking into a postgraduate certificate in special education. She also considers having a baby with her partner Peter. Riley seems happy. Compare this to Riley's middle adulthood outcomes in her optimal case in which she has an MFA, plays for the Philadelphia Philharmonic Symphony, and lives with her grand love Paul, who is the principal conductor for the New York Symphony. Using any and all developmental domains (biological, cognitive, and socioemotional) explain how Riley arrived at these different places and why the outcome in this case is considered suboptimal.
- Consider Riley's optimal case outcomes at the end of her life and Erikson's integrity-versus-despair stage of psychosocial development. How does this case compare to that one? Consider all of Riley's life events. How do you think those contributed to any differences in Riley's end-of-life outcomes and her sense of integrity versus despair?

5. Moderate Outcomes: Leonardo Ramirez

2 Biological and Environmental Foundations

After speaking to a couple women at her church who comment on the rash, Alicia decides to miss a couple hours of work and have the rash checked out. She does her best to schedule the appointment close to her short lunch break to lose as little money as possible. Seeing the doctor allows her to be diagnosed and treated without further risk to herself or baby Leo. She's also able to make up the couple hours of work she missed over the next couple of afternoons. Feeling more relaxed, Alicia coasts into the third trimester of her pregnancy feeling much better about her ability to make good choices without fear of negative repercussions.

Hector watches Alicia as works in the orchard. He's never had a baby before, and he doesn't know how to judge everything that's happening. He loves living in America, but his English is poor. Alicia learned English in high school and gets by in the community much better than he does. He has to trust that her growing belly and early evening fatigue are normal. She tells him they are. He's worried about two things in particular. He doesn't know if *la Rubéola* she had a few weeks ago has hurt the baby. Alicia seems fine, and she says the doctor told her the baby would be fine. Still, he'll feel better when he sees the baby for himself. He's also worried about the one thing he has zero control over and all the blame for. His *abuela*, his father's mother, would fall into the darkest valleys of despair when Hector was a boy. He remembers how he felt visiting, her still, silent body with its bony shoulders sitting on a hard chair. His mama told him such things could be passed in the blood, and he worries he will have passed the darkness on to his own child even if he himself doesn't have those moments. Really, he wants the baby to be born so he has more control over how his child is protected. Until then, he thinks with a smile, he'll watch Alicia and her growing belly with pride and excited anticipation.

3 Prenatal Development, Birth, and the Newborn Experience

Alicia calls the nurse midwife who will deliver Leonardo twice with Braxton-Hicks contractions believing she's in labor. The midwife examines her and sends her home with assurances that many first-time mothers make the mistake of confusing Braxton-Hicks for labor. The third time, there's no confusion. The pain brings Alicia to her knees, and Hector helps her to the car before rushing her to the hospital.

After 15 long, loud, sweating hours of labor, Alicia pushes Leonardo into the world. His fat, round face is squished and squinting in the lights of the room, but he lets out a lusty cry that makes Alicia reach for him. Moments later, he's cradled at her breast, nursing happily, while Hector looks on smiling at them both. The hospital sends an interpreter into the room to translate as Leonardo is weighed, measured, poked, and prodded. The Ramirezes are told he's absolutely perfect, and as long as he and Alicia are doing well, they can go home the following day.

"Do you feel better now?" Alicia asks him later when the three of them are alone.

"What do you mean? How better?"

"Now that the baby is born and you see he's healthy?" she says, reminding him of his concerns about the measles.

“Oh, yes, that. I do feel better. I just worry about all the other things that might happen.”

Alicia laughs. “Ah, Hector, don’t. We live in the land of opportunity where anything is possible if you dream it and work hard, and our son is an American citizen. Relax and be happy.”

He looks at both of them and nods. “You’re right. You’re right, Alicia.” He knows she is, too, but he still worries.

4 Physical Development in Infancy and Toddlerhood

Alicia isn’t able to take a proper maternity leave from work. She misses a few days, and when her postpartum lochia slows, she returns to the farm with baby Leonardo tucked securely against her in a cotton sling tied to her back. In this way, she can nurse him when he’s hungry, pause when it’s necessary to change him, and continue to work her normal hours. The farm owner who pays them isn’t around often, but she doesn’t worry about him anyway. Other women have brought newborns with them from time to time, and she and Hector aren’t quite able yet to pay the woman in their neighborhood who watches most of the babies. Alicia thinks that maybe when Leonardo wants to be crawling and becomes more difficult to keep off the ground while she works, then it will be time to find another arrangement. She already misses more work than she’s comfortable with. Leo’s doctor appointments, her own clinic appointments . . . it’s all during work hours. She worries.

The baby’s transition occurs sooner than either she or Hector is ready for. Leo, who is a big boy with strong, sturdy legs and a sure gait from the moment he starts walking at 10 months, loves being beside both of them during the daytime, but it’s quickly evident that he won’t tolerate being confined to the sling any longer.

“Down!” he yowls, kicking against Alicia’s sides. When she doesn’t respond appropriately, he tries a different tactic. “¡Aba’o!” He can’t quite say *abajo* yet, but he’s gotten his point across before. Still, there’s no response other than a laugh from *Mamá*. He continues the assaultive demonstrations until his foot lands a solid kick to her kidney.

Alicia pulls the pay-as-you-go cellphone from her pocket and calls her cousin Luci, who works at a local discount store. Luci has papers, which is why she has a job with a regular paycheck. Alicia can only dream of such luxuries. But today is Tuesday, Luci’s day off. *Gracias del Señor*.

“Heylo,” Luci says when she answers. This makes Alicia smile, her cousin’s heavily accented English.

“Hola, Luci. ¿Puedes venir por Leo por favor? No le gusta la honda hoy.”

“Sí, por supuesto. Necesito diez minutos.”

“Claro. Gracias, Luci.”

Alicia shoves the phone in her pocket before someone sees her talking and begins to sing to Leonardo. Sometimes this calms him, sometimes not. Today seems like a rowdy day. With Luci on the way to get Leonardo, though, things will ease. Her cousin will be there in ten minutes. She can endure anything for ten minutes, even the increasing ferocity of Leonardo’s kicks into her hips and sides.

“Easy, baby,” she soothes, but he wants to be down on the ground exploring. She can’t blame him. If she were newly crawling and cruising and had the world—literally—at her feet, that’s where she would want to be, too. A friend of her cousin’s got work as a housekeeper in the rich neighborhood next to their own poor one. The friend is undocumented, too, but she says the lady she works for is nice. Luci’s friend, Jasmin, doesn’t get any more money than Alicia does, but she’s allowed to take her daughter to work with her as long as nothing is broken. Alicia dreams about a job like that, one where she can help feed her family but where she doesn’t have to worry about childcare or carrying a growing and heavy Leonardo on her back for the next four years until he starts school. She makes a reminder in her head to ask Luci about Jasmin’s job and if there might be another one like it.

On her back, Leonardo is drooling onto her neck. She hears him babbling, but his lilting voice begins picking up speed and excitement while she works down the row of corn she’s planting. “Loo-loo! Loo-loo!” he calls, and Alicia looks up. Luci is walking toward them. Alicia breathes out in relief even while Leonardo’s kicking revs up into marathons of excitement. “Loo! Loo-loo!”

Arriving at Alicia’s side, Luci laughs at Leonardo. “Leo! You’re so adorable. Why does *Mamá* say you’re bad, eh?”

“Not bad,” Alicia corrects her, “just impossible to keep on my back.”

“Veo,” Luci agrees. *I see*. “*Vaya* then, monster, come with me.” She holds out her hands and wiggles her fingers; Leonardo *hees* with excitement and comes close to jumping out of the sling altogether. Alicia quickly unknots the fabric and sets him on the ground.

“Thank you,” she says. “He needs to be down, but I can’t really do that here.”

“I know.” Bending, Luci scoops Leonardo into her arms. “Is your car unlocked? I need the car seat.”

“*Sí*. You know where we park, ¿*no*?”

“*Sí*.” She waves Leonard’s hand. “Tell *Mamá* ‘*adios*,’ Leo.”

“*I-o*,” he singsongs, making Alicia smile. She reaches to kiss his cheek before making shooing motions with her hands. “Now, go before I get into trouble!”

Riley waits for Peter at their favorite weekly spot for dinner, a tiny Mexican restaurant run by a local family. They’ve been eating here for years. It’s so hard to wait, but he has to get a tire changed on his car before meeting her. It’s fine. She pulls a folder of tests from her bag and begins to grade them. Never waste a minute; that’s how she operates.

“*Margarita, señora?*” the server asks, but Riley shakes her head no.

“*Agua solamente por favor.*”

A moment later, a glass of water is sat in front of her. She continues grading until Peter arrives at 6:15 p.m., only a few minutes late. She lifts her face for a kiss on her cheek before he sits. The tests go back in the folder and the folder back in her bag as he settles himself.

- 5 Cognitive Development in Infancy and Toddlerhood**
- Because the farm is staffed with a number of migrant workers like himself and Alicia but also local citizens who speak only English, Leonardo is around English and Spanish speakers all day every day. It makes Hector laugh when Leonardo's first word is *mamá*, and he asks Alicia says in Spanish, "What language do you think he's speaking in?" Alicia has no idea, but Hector loves his little boy's voice in whichever tongue he'll consider native. Sometime between 14 and 15 months, Hector notices that it isn't either-or with their son. There are words he uses that are clearly English and others that are just as clearly Spanish.
- Leonardo's bilingual abilities astonish his parents. Neither knew it was possible to be born and just grow up knowing two languages. As Leonardo continues to learn new words in English and Spanish, Alicia and Hector have many long conversations about what's best for him. They live in America, and English is the most commonly used language in the country. It's certainly the language used most often internationally, Alicia says when she argues they should force Leonardo into speaking only English.
- Hector argues that learning both doesn't seem to hurt their son's language development. Plus, if they force Leonardo to speak only English, how will Hector be able to communicate meaningfully with his son? Alicia, who doesn't speak fluent English, speaks enough to at least have a relationship with Leonardo no matter what they decide. Hector does not. When Alicia tries to explain how important it will be for Leonardo to fit in with his friends at school and elsewhere, Hector asks her, "Did you love your father?"
- "Of course," she says, angry at the question.
- "How close do you think your relationship would've been if you couldn't speak to him and have him understand you or the other way around?"
- "Hector—"
- "No! No 'Hector,' " he says flatly. "I should be able to talk to my son."
- 6 Socioemotional Development in Infancy and Toddlerhood**
- Like many toddlers in their small community, Leonardo's world expands by degrees until most families in the streets where they live consider him theirs. Everyone helps raise everyone else's kids, and this is a world where old prejudices die in the face of new and necessary alliances. Hector and Alicia's families are from Guadalajara in Jalisco, Mexico, but they live beside Juan and Lili from *Juayúa*, El Salvador. In another lifetime, neither family would've associated with the other, but now they're friends; they're family in this new world. So it is in the whole neighborhood where *Mexicano* and *Salvadoreño*, *Columbino* and *Boliviano*, where all their blended nationalities become Latinx. This is in part necessity and in part because *los Americanos* call them so. Hector isn't sure he cares so long as they all trust each other and look after one another. Leonardo doesn't care either.
- His favorite house after his own is Loo-loo's, *Mamá's* cousin Luci's. Luci doesn't have any children for him to play with, but she always has churros. Leonardo loves churros, and *Mamá* doesn't feed him many. His next favorite house is *Tía* Consuela's. She's very, very old, and lots of people call her Granny. *Mamá* calls her *Tía*, though, and so does Leonardo. She doesn't walk, her hair is white, like snow, and all the other children in the neighborhood are there lots because their

mamás y papás come to take care of her. When Leonardo is at Tía Consuela's with his *mamá* or *papá*, he always has someone to play with, and someone has always brought *pupusas* or tamales, which are his favorite things to eat after churros. Sometimes he even gets to go back to his friends' houses because their *mamás y papas* say to him that he is *un ángel*.

Tía Consuela's is probably the best place to go other than home or Loo-loo's, but he wouldn't want to spend the night. He likes to sleep in his own bed after his own *mamá* sings him songs from her own home when she was little. When she turns out the light, he sticks his thumb in his mouth, closes his eyes, and wonders if he'll ever get to see Mexico for himself. It sounds beautiful.

7 Physical and Cognitive Development in Early Childhood

"No tiene sentido para mí," Hector says, shaking his head.

Alicia looks at Leonardo's preschool teacher. He attends a program called Headstart, and the teacher is nice. "My husband says that what you say, it makes no sense to him. I'm sorry. He doesn't mean—"

"No, no," Mrs. Clifton says, waving her hand. "Please don't apologize. You're advocating for your child, you and your husband both, and this is great for Leonardo. Let me try explaining a different way."

"Thank you," Alicia tells her.

"The important thing to know is that Leonardo will do better in school—now and when he starts elementary school—if you and your husband continue to speak to him in Spanish at home. You can speak in English, too. That's okay. But research tells us that children who continue to learn their families' native languages do better at learning English than children who are forced to learn only English."

"Ah." Alicia turns to Hector around her growing belly and quickly translates. The smile that lights his face changes the atmosphere in the room. He gives Alicia an I-told-you-so look, and she scowls at him.

"Okay."

"Okay?" Mrs. Clifton asks. "Good. Leonardo's English is very good. So is his Spanish. He's a very smart boy, and he's a sweet boy, too. He's looking forward to being a big brother."

Alicia puts a hand on her belly. "I hope so. He has to share his room, so I hope he loves the baby."

"No doubt he will." Mrs. Clifton closes Leonardo's folder and stands up. "Really, all I have to say right now is to keep doing what you're doing."

After they leave the conference, Alicia walks to their third-hand car in silence.

"*Que pasa?*" Hector asks, even though he knows what's wrong. Alicia's upset that the teacher said Leonardo should keep speaking Spanish.

"*Nada. Esta bien,*" she says. *Nothing. It's okay.*

"Alicia, why does this bother you so much?" he prods in Spanish. "I don't know why you're so concerned about Leo speaking Spanish."

"Because," she yells, turning to glare at him, "I want our children to fit in here."

“And they will. You heard the teacher. They’ll learn English better if they also speak Spanish. The better they speak English, the better they’ll fit. *Si?*”

Not answering, Alicia pulls the car door open and climbs inside. “*No más. No quiero hablar de ello.*” *No more. I don’t want to talk about it.*

Hector falls silent as she wishes, but he’s going to keep speaking Spanish to Leonardo.

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| 8 | Socioemotional Development in Early Childhood | <p>Leonardo makes friends easily. When he transitions from preschool to elementary school, he has a core group of friends from his neighborhood, his <i>amigos</i>. They form a tight bond based on shared culture, geography, and goals, divvying up their lunches so no one eats what he brought and everyone eats what he wants most days of the week.</p> <p>In his neighborhood, Leonardo watches some of the older boys. There seem to be two types: mean boys and boys who grow up to be like their fathers. Leonardo will be one of the latter. He doesn’t want to be a mean boy and doesn’t know why the fathers let the mean boys stay in the neighborhood where they make fights and break things and their <i>mamás</i> cry. <i>Papá</i> says it’s because <i>Cuidamos a los que son nuestros. We take care of our own</i>, he says, but Leonardo isn’t sure what that means other than the mean boys get to live near him and keep being mean. He’ll never be a mean boy, he promises his <i>mama</i>.</p> |
| 9 | Physical and Cognitive Development in Middle and Late Childhood | <p>Leonardo’s years in elementary school are a blur of hazing and school days, where he does well enough in his classes to cause his parents no worries even if he doesn’t win any major achievement awards. Sometimes, when the parents of one of his neighborhood friends has to come to school for a meeting, he acts like an interpreter for them. Most of his friends don’t speak Spanish or at least don’t speak it fluently anymore. Their parents think it’s better if they speak only English. Only Leonardo’s parents and a few others in the neighborhood speak both Spanish and English at home. So, he helps teachers and parents communicate when he can, which helps his friends (usually, unless they’ve done something bad, which is almost never). He likes doing this even when his friends get into trouble. He doesn’t want any of them becoming like the rough kids in their neighborhood, and he likes that his <i>mamá</i> can talk to the schoolteachers without needing help. If he can help his friends and their parents, he wants to do that.</p> |
| 10 | Socioemotional Development in Middle and Late Childhood | <p>“<i>Lo siento, m’hijo.</i>”</p> <p>Leonardo shrugs off his father’s apology. “<i>Está bien.</i>” <i>It’s okay.</i></p> <p><i>Papá</i> caught him looking at a set of Legos® while they shopped at the big discount store. They’re buying things <i>Mamá</i> needs to help with <i>Señora</i> Valerio’s daughter’s <i>Quinceañera</i>. <i>Masa</i>, ingredients for <i>horchata</i>, <i>chiles anchos</i>, and several large chickens. Fortunately, these are dead. <i>Papá</i> tells him stories about killing chickens in the dooryard when he was growing up as a boy. The thought makes Leonardo shudder.</p> <p><i>Papá</i> doesn’t drop the subject. “I know you don’t get so many things as your friends get sometimes,” he says in Spanish.</p> <p>“It’s not a big deal, <i>Papá</i>. I have what I need.”</p> |

Leonardo decides this isn't the time to bring up working around the neighborhood in the summer. He's thinking about mowing lawns or walking dogs. He'll even walk the old people around the block so they get sun and exercise. They can talk about it later, though. *Papá* worries so much whether or not Leonardo frets about money. He doesn't want *Papá* to feel bad because he talks about working in the summer. It's hard to explain. Sometimes it's hard to understand even when he thinks about it. It would be nice to make a little money of his own, but he doesn't *need* anything, just like he told *Papá*. Their family is happy, and he likes being at home with them. His *Mamá* smiles and sings while she fixes dinner, and *Papá* dances with her around the kitchen, making her splash salsa on the walls. He has friends whose parents barely talk and who barely talk to their parents. Leonardo figures he might be poor, but he likes that better than he would a rich, silent house. That doesn't mean he doesn't want stuff. He does—a Coke or a candy bar, not big things. Twice he's been at the store with *Mamá*, and Ínigo and pocketed a Hershey bar. No one's going to notice, he tells himself, and he won't make a habit of it.

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| 11 | Physical and Cognitive Development in Adolescence | <p>By middle school, Leo finds himself navigating the complex subculture of the <i>barrio</i> while trying to keep his head above water in his mostly white but fairly poor school. The kids in the neighborhood he used to think of as <i>mean boys</i> have all grown up and moved away, but more grew into their shoes. There always seems to be a supply of children from his world who don't make it through school or who get pregnant, arrested, or kicked out of their houses and turn to the streets. Leo watches them with a wary, dawning comprehension. The line between success and defeat in their world is the bleeding edge of a razor. Even if he cuts himself, he wants to end up on the right side it. Some things he does without thinking. Like he hangs out with the neighborhood girls his age—everyone does, he tells himself—after school. What else is he going to do? He starts spending some time with the rough kids, too—not much, but he wants to know how to tell which are the really bad kids and which are just killing time. Leo isn't a bad kid, not one of the mean boys. He's just part of the fabric of his neighborhood. He starts watching <i>Papá</i> and the older men around them to figure out how to live the sort of life that would make them proud but would also lead him to be like them: good and strong, <i>un hombre de calidad</i>. <i>A man of character</i>. He'll never be a rocket scientist or an Olympic anything, but he can be something better. He can be a good person.</p> |
| 12 | Socioemotional Development in Adolescence | <p>In his freshman year of high school, Leo gets his first serious girlfriend. Maria lives two doors down from him, and her parents immigrated three or four years before his did. Their mothers are close friends, which both helps and hinders their budding romance. They're happy to see their children dating, but they also speak frequently enough to keep tabs on Leo and Maria's whereabouts <i>all the time</i>.</p> <p>Leo thinks it's probably easier to be a street thug.</p> <p>Maria's brother hangs out with a gang; Leo knows because he's seen Carlos with some of the other big guys a lot lately. He hasn't told Maria yet, but he feels wrong keeping it from her. He also doesn't want her to be in danger, and he's not sure which keeps her safer: telling her or not. Eventually, it all comes tumbling out.</p> |

"You what?" she asks.

"I've seen Carlos on the street a lot," he tells her again. "I'm sorry, Maria."

She shakes her head. "It's not true. You saw someone else."

"Maria, we've both lived on this same street our whole lives. I think I know who Carlos is!"

"I have to go," she says, standing up from the booth where they were sitting and sharing an order of French fries. "I have to talk to my brother."

"Do you think he'll tell you the truth?"

She shrugs. "I don't know, but I have to ask."

"And us?" he asks, scared he'd just blown it with her.

"I don't know that either. Can I come by later?"

He nods. "Of course. I'm sorry, Maria."

"Yeah, me, too."

13 Physical and Cognitive Development in Emerging/Early Adulthood

When Leo and Maria graduate from high school, their paths diverge. Maria gets married to a guy a couple years older than they are when she finds out she's pregnant, and Leo gets a job restocking shelves at a discount home improvement store. The money's pretty good. With it, he's able to help out his family with their expenses so that *Papá*, who's aging quickly from the years on the farm, can work somewhat fewer hours. He also gets to keep an eye on Ínigo. His little brother is smarter than Leo ever was in school, and Leo wants him to go to college in a few years. Ínigo, on the other hand, likes to run with a fast crowd in *el barrio*. This troubles Leo. He wants to stay close to home for a while, see if he can keep Ínigo on the right path, and take care of his parents a little, too.

After a few months saving up, he starts taking some education classes at the local community college, a couple each semester, and he only takes one on campus. The other he takes online. He doesn't want to take more time than necessary away from home. He's not a whiz at much, no surprise there, but he likes the concentration he has to apply to the work. It makes him feel like he's using his brain unlike his brother, who whizzes through everything. Leo even takes pleasure in the unrelated courses his advisor says all students have to take, something she mysteriously calls "the core." Whatever it all amounts to, in three years he'll have an associate of arts degree in early childhood education. The diploma won't help with his stocking shelves, but eventually he wants to get a full-time job working for the same elementary school he and Ínigo attended. He'd like to work as an interpreter for Latinx families and serve as a mentor to first-generation children.

In the middle of his first year of college, he comes home one afternoon to find Ínigo crying and his parents nowhere to be found.

"What's wrong? Where're *Mamá* and *Papa*?"

His brother wipes his hand under his nose and says, "*Papa* was arrested. A cop stopped him on the way home. I think there was a taillight out on the truck or something. 'Course he starts asking for papers—"

"I see." Leonardo reaches for the small book of phone numbers they keep in a drawer for this circumstance exactly. "And *Mamá*?"

"At the jail trying to get him out."

Leonardo calls the immigration attorney everyone in *el barrio* uses, and the woman heads to the jailhouse immediately. She has no explanation for Alicia and the boys why the process fails Hector over the next few weeks, but because he was arrested, he's scheduled for deportation back to Mexico. After many lengthy conversations, it's agreed that Alicia will go with him. Ínigo is in high school now, and Leonardo is capable of taking care of his brother until he graduates. Both boys are American citizens and not eligible for permanent entry into Mexico unless they entered as undocumented immigrants, the same as Hector and Alicia had entered America, but they can visit. When their parents leave, Leonardo isn't sure how to fill the gap caused by missing them. Taking care of his brother helps, but it's always there, this hole reminding him he's as good as orphaned.

**14 Socioemotional
Development in
Emerging/Early
Adulthood**

Since he and Maria broke up, Leo's spent time with a number of girls. Days exist when he doesn't want to count the number of girls. He hopes no one ever asks. He hasn't slept with all of them, not that there'd be anything wrong with that. He's just thought a lot of things were love that ended up being something well short of it. Well, maybe a couple times were better than others, he thinks as he looks at Regina Parredes in class one night. Regina lives in the same neighborhood he does, always has. Their mothers like to say they're crib buddies, but that makes Leo a little uncomfortable. Regina makes Leo a little uncomfortable, especially being in class with her since they broke up a few months ago.

After class, she catches up with him in the parking lot. He slows his walk to match hers, something he remembers without even realizing he remembers it.

"Hey," she says.

"Hey."

"Are you going to Luci's anniversary party?" she asks, referring to *Mamá*'s cousin's party to celebrate her tenth wedding anniversary. She's married a *gringo* no one liked at first but now everyone believes is Mexican adopted out at birth. Ricky's a good guy. "I'm making *Mamá*'s *tamales*."

Señora Parredes's *tamales* are known throughout *el barrio* as probably the best in North America outside of Mexico. Leo stuffs himself on them whenever he gets a chance. The chance to see Regina and eat the Parredes's *tamales* is a temptation too great for any man short of a saint.

"Then I'll be there."

"Leonardo?" she asks as they near his beat up old Chevy.

"Hmm?"

"How are you and Ínigo doing since your parents left?"

He shakes his head. "Some days are better than others."

"I'm sorry."

"Thanks. Me, too." He gives her a little smile. "Why did we break up?"

"I cannot remember."

He opens his car door but waits a beat before getting inside. “Can I take you to the party? You’ll need help carrying the *tamales*.”

“If this is a date, yes,” she teases.

“It is.”

As she finishes turning, she yells over her shoulder, “Wear a tie!”

15 Physical and Cognitive Development in Middle Adulthood

Leo, having kept a close eye on Ínigo as his little brother grew up, is the loudest to cheer him across the stage when he graduates from college. Luci and her husband Ricky, and Regina—Gina—to whom Leo is now engaged are there to see him. Later, they’ll send lots of photos to their parents. After a celebratory dinner Luci and Ricky pay for, they part. Leo takes Gina on a walk around a nearby park before they make the long drive home. While they stroll away their dinner, Gina takes his hand. He squeezes hers, and when she clears her throat, he turns to look at her in curiosity.

“Yes?” he asks.

“I don’t . . . Just . . . Leo, do you ever want to go back to school?”

“Do *you* want me to go back to school?”

She shakes her head with vigor. “Of course not. I want you to do or not do whatever makes you happy. I just wondered since we’re here with Ínigo if you thought about it ever.”

“Not really, to be honest. I’ve been at this handyman thing so long that I like it. The hours and the pay are good. If there’s any drawback it’s just that my back hurts from time to time from stooping.”

“Whatever you want, sweetheart. I just wanted to make sure you’re happy with things.”

“Gina, I have you. Of course I’m happy.”

Although Leonardo continues to do contract jobs as handyman in their neighborhood and beyond, he does think about lost dreams from time to time. More than that, he thinks about his lost parents. Heading into his late 40s, his family doctor warns Leo that he needs to take better care of his health. He’s gained a bit of weight in recent years—all those *tamales*, he thinks—and he has high blood pressure. The doctor explains that Leo has several risk factors for coronary disease that he might not usually think of, things like growing up poor in a rough neighborhood. Leo feels pretty far removed from his childhood and wonders how he’s supposed to change any of that now.

“You can’t,” the doctor confirms, “but you can reduce your already considerable risk by improving your diet, exercising more, and maybe working a little less.”

Leonardo makes some promises, but he has no ability or even the will to keep them. Work less? How can he work less with so much to and so many to support? The doctor doesn’t understand at all. He goes home and tells Gina, who promptly proclaims that they’re changing their household diet, eliciting groans from their three daughters.

“You can have *churros* every day or you can have *Papí*,” Gina tells them, putting an end to the complaining from everyone, Leonardo included.

**16 Socioemotional
Development
in Middle
Adulthood**

Leo parks the car as Gina turns around in her seat to check the twins. “Which of you stinks?” she asks them, eliciting grins but no replies from the nine-month-old girls. Lisa, their three-year-old *princesa*, holds her nose and points at the car seat closest to her. “Rosita?” Gina asks, and Lisa nods. “Not Yessica?” Leo would’ve sworn it was Yessi, but Lisa shakes her head.

Turning off the engine, he asks Gina, “Want me to take diaper duty and you can go inside with the other two, or you want me to take Yessi and Lisa inside while you change the stinkbug?”

“I’ll change her,” Gina offers. “Get me a Diet Coke when you get inside?”

“For you, I’ll get a Diet Coke *and* a piece of the moon.”

“Still a charmer,” she laughs, shaking her head. “Love you, Leo.”

“I love you more.” Turning to the backseat, he points at Lisa. “Come along, *chica*. *Vamos lejos*.”

“¡Sí, Papí! *Vamos ahora*.”

She climbs out from the extended cab of his truck when he opens her door and then stands beside his door while he unfastens Yessi’s buckles. So many safety contraptions—he hopes they actually work.

“*Bueno, cara*,” he whispers into her fuzzy head. “Let’s go see *Tío Daryl*, okay?”

In answer, Yessi pulls his nose, and Lisa laughs at her. “Do you like that, *Papí*? I don’t think I would like that.”

“It’s okay,” he answers. Looking at Gina, he waves before setting off across the parking lot. This is their annual day of barbeque and family fun when Ínigo brings his wife Karin with their son Mario to a midpoint between their two houses, and Leo’s family meets them there. This is the first time Ínigo and Karin have seen the twins, and Leo’s unexpectedly proud to show them off. As soon as they enter, Lisa runs for Ínigo, who has never made her feel like she is anything other than an actual princess, while their four-year-old Mario makes a beeline for Leo and Yessi. He bends to one knee so the boy can meet and touch the baby. After Lisa, Leo knows they’re not particularly fragile, and he lets Mario poke her with fair thoroughness until he’s distracted by the entrance of Gina with Rosita after which Mario repeats the process with Yessi’s twin.

“Hey there, old man,” Ínigo calls as the women embrace.

“You’re one to talk. Look at that grey.”

Ínigo straightens his thin shoulders. “Karin says I’m distinguished.”

“Full of it is more like it.” Leo sits on a picnic bench and bounces Yessi on his lap.

“Another couple years and the kids’ll be wheeling us in here.”

“For sure,” his brother agrees. “So, how’s it going? It still bugs me that we couldn’t get to Mexico last year.”

“Yeah, me, too,” he says, swallowing. “It’s been hard, especially on *Mamá*, but we’re all doing the best we can.”

“Do you think it’s enough?”

“I have to, you know? What choice do I have? If I don’t, I’ll worry myself into a heart attack.”

He thinks it’s enough. He has to believe he is.

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| 17 | Physical and Cognitive Development in Late Adulthood | <p>Leo knows not all things remain the same for all time. The world doesn't work that way, and thus, it's little surprise when the girls grow up, go to college like their brilliant mother, and move away. He and Gina stare at each other when Rosita—the last to fly the nest—drives away for the last time.</p> <p>"Did you ever think they'd actually leave?" Gina asks him.</p> <p>"Not really. No. Did you?"</p> <p>"No." She walks back into the house and fixes coffee. "Do you remember how to live with me without the girls?"</p> <p><i>"Lo recuerdo." I remember.</i></p> <p>"You're speaking more Spanish lately," she points out.</p> <p>"I am, sí."</p> <p>"¿Porque?"</p> <p>"It feels like the right thing to do. It's who I am, the language of my home."</p> <p>She leans over and kisses him. "It's nice. After dinner can we go through some of the bills? I'm not sure what we can pay this month."</p> <p>It's the same conversation every month, which makes it easy to prepare for.</p> <p><i>"Por supuesto, mi amor." Of course, my love.</i></p> |
| 18 | Socioemotional Development in Late Adulthood | <p>In his early 60s, Leonardo suffers a stroke. It's not fatal, and the homeowner is able to get an ambulance with first responders to the house where he's working on repairing a porch railing. They arrive within five minutes. He's lucky. He suffers no permanent muscle or cognitive damage from the event, but his doctor reminds him of their many talks over the years. He tells Leonardo with Gina present that Leo must lose some weight, reduce his blood pressure, and get a little rest. He also suggests perhaps Leo should think about retirement. Gina promises to make sure those things happen.</p> <p>"Why are you so obstinate?" Gina yells at him a month later when Leo refuses to get off the sofa.</p> <p>"I don't like the neighborhood!"</p> <p>She frowns. "What? We've lived here for almost 70 years. What's not to like?"</p> <p>"Things are changing."</p> <p>"Well, yes, they are."</p> <p>"I don't like it. The neighborhood's getting too big, and there're a lotta folks here that aren't Latinx, too."</p> <p>"They're nice people, Leo. You just have to get to know them."</p> <p>"I'd rather watch <i>Wheel of Fortune</i>. Do you know where the remote is?"</p> |
| 19 | Experience With Death and Dying | <p>With a carefully restricted diet and rigid exercise regimen that Gina engages in with Leonardo, he lives until his mid-60s. At the birthday party for a second cousin 89 times removed (<i>joking!</i> he tells people), he's able to reconnect with friends he hasn't seen in years. It's a wonderful day for the cousin and for Leo. He didn't know how much he missed these people until he saw them again.</p> |

After cake, Leo begins feeling ill. By the time Gina gets him to the hospital, he's nearly incoherent. Leonardo passes away from complications from the stroke he's had two hours later while holding Gina's hand and waiting to have scans made.

Having not been prepared for Leo's sudden death, Gina's grief is sudden and deep and lasts for a protracted period of time. She continues to live with Rosita until her own death at the age of 89, when she passes away from old age and complications arising from a recent bout of pneumonia.

Case Discussion Questions

1. During her pregnancy with Leonardo in both the optimal case and this case, his mother Alicia chooses to miss a few hours at work on the farm to visit the women's clinic and have a doctor look at a rash she's developed, which happens to be Rubella (i.e., German Measles). Contrast this decision with Leonardo's negative case outcomes in which Alicia chooses to keep working rather than risk her job and doesn't see a doctor. What impact might Alicia's choice in this case have on Leonardo's life's trajectory across any and all domains (biological, cognitive, and socioemotional)?
2. In middle childhood, Leonardo's little brother decides to steal a small item from a store while they're shopping with their father. Leonardo makes the choice to allow this one transgression go without comment but to keep a closer watch over Ínigo. Why is Leonardo concerned, and how does his inaction regarding his brother's behavior potentially alter the trajectory of his own life?
3. In Leonardo's early adulthood, Hector is arrested and deported. Alicia returns to Mexico with him. This leaves Leonardo in charge of his little brother Ínigo, at least until Ínigo finishes high school. It also orphans both boys as they can't move to Mexico with their parents without a lengthy immigration process; they would be undocumented there as much as their parents were undocumented in America and subject to deportation at a moment's notice. In Leonardo's optimal case scenario, Hector and Alicia continue living in America for the rest of their lives. What specific changes can we expect in Leonardo's future in this case as a result of Hector's deportation and Alicia's emigration compared to the optimal case?
4. Consider Leonardo's optimal case outcomes at the end of his life and Erikson's integrity-versus-despair stage of psychosocial development. How does this case compare to that one? Consider all of Leonardo's life events. How do you think those contributed to any differences in Leonardo's end-of-life outcomes and his sense of integrity versus despair?

6. Moderate Outcomes: London Dannel

2 Biological and Environmental Foundations

After recovery, it's determined that mom is permanently paralyzed from the waist down. Baby spends several weeks in the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) before life takes any significant new directions. All of Laura's prenatal appointments show a perfectly healthy, normally developing baby. She and Doug are thrilled, as are London's brother and sister to be. Max and Chelsea spend many hours helping their mom and dad redecorate Chelsea's room because the baby will share a room with her after he or she is born. Everyone agrees that it's a good idea to be surprised whether the baby is a boy or a girl, like the best birthday surprise, Max says, and Laura laughs, saying he's right. Even though they don't find out the baby's sex,

Laura and Doug are glad when prenatal testing confirms a healthy baby with no chromosomal abnormalities. They decide at that point not to screen for additional genetic problems even though they could do so. Their insurance will cover it, and Laura's graduate work in biogenetics informs their choices about the information they could gain from such testing. They know, however, they will love and raise their new baby regardless of any potential difficulties and decide the stress of knowing about looming problems would be bad for Laura's health and, subsequently, the baby's.

3 Prenatal Development, Birth, and the Newborn Experience

London is so small when the fetal surgeon delivers her. The emergency room team allows Doug to be in the room through the cesarean, but as soon as the baby is born, he's swept away and told to wait for London in the NICU. Laura will be a while, he's told; her injuries were severe, and she will be several hours yet in surgery. It doesn't take long for the pediatric team to get to the NICU, and Doug is allowed to be right there while London is assessed. He's painfully aware of the difference in size between her and Max and Chelsea, both of whom went a couple days past their due dates.

"Fourteen and three-quarters inches long," the nurse says softly to a waiting assistant recording vital statistics. "Big for a 27-week baby. That's good. Hey, Dad, do we have a name yet?"

Doug sniffs. They said she was big. That's a good sign. "Uh, yeah. London. Her name is London."

"London. That's nice. London, you're a big girl to be so small. We like to see that." She turns to the assistant and says, "Two-point-two pounds."

"Wow!" A new face appears and looks impressed by the number that Doug can't compute other than to compare with Max's six-eight and Chelsea's seven-four. The newcomer holds out his hand, and Doug shakes it. "Mr. Dannel, I'm Dr. Sanchez, the NICU attending. I'm just popping in to take a look at . . ."

"London," the nurse supplies.

"London." He looks at the nurse. "What've we got?"

"Fourteen and three-quarters inches, two-point-two pounds, three and six APGARS. Good lung sounds, strong heart, and she's hungry. She's voided already. So, let's get her something to eat and see what happens."

Dr. Sanchez nods and smiles. "Good." Then he lifts London, who fits in a single hand like a kitten, and turns her this way and that, inspecting. "Dad, she's got good muscle tone, good color, and she's breathing well without help right now. I want to put her in an isolette with oxygen and a feeding tube. Let's see if we can keep her stable for a couple weeks and step up her feeding from there."

"Can I touch her?" Doug ventures, having been scared to ask before.

Dr. Sanchez looks at the nurse and assistant. "Dad hasn't held her yet?"

"We've been here all of five minutes but no."

Seconds later, London is cradled in his hands as the nurse explains how to do a thing she calls “kangaroo care,” cuddling a naked London against his own bare chest.

“As much as she can tolerate and as much as you can be here every day.”

Gazing down at his daughter, Doug feels a swell of love and protection. “I think we can manage that.” A nurse shows him to a rocking chair, and as he sits, he asks, “Can someone please check on my wife?”

“Of course,” Dr. Sanchez assures him.

But Doug sees the look on his face. He feels like Dr. Sanchez has already checked on his wife and doesn’t want to tell him what he knows, a feeling confirmed as fact when the lead surgeon arrives in the NICU a few minutes later.

Dr. Alt brings a chair nearer to the rocking chair where Doug holds London and leans forward. Bracing his elbows on his knees, he clasps his hands and takes a deep breath.

“Don’t tell me you did everything you could,” Doug whispers.

Shaking his head, Dr. Alt says, “Actually, we did, but I won’t tell you that in the sense you mean. Laura’s out of surgery and out of immediate danger. We removed her spleen, a common outcome in serious accidents like this one. She also had a couple fractured ribs we’ve taped.”

Skeptical, Doug stares at him. “That doesn’t sound so bad.”

The orthopedic surgeon who was in with me, Dr. Bardsley, and I are both worried about Laura’s leg. She suffered a compound fracture as you know, and resetting it was difficult for Dr. Bardsley. Plastics assisted with the resection of nerves, but Doug, we’re going to have to wait and see about mobility.”

He shifts London a fraction of an inch and says, “I don’t understand. Do you mean she might lose the use of her leg?”

“I do.”

When Laura woke, she has no feeling in either leg. Tests, X-rays, and MRIs find nothing beyond the damage her surgical team knew about, but she fails every neurologic test to check sensation in her damaged leg and the undamaged one. Laura, they come to accept, is partially paralyzed and may not walk again.

**4 Physical
Development
in Infancy and
Toddlerhood**

During the first weeks of London’s life, Doug struggles to be everywhere at once. There’s one of him and four locations he needs to be sometimes. London needs him, and so does Laura, who has a long and painful recovery ahead of her. Max needs taking to and from preschool, and Chelsea needs taking to and from daycare. He can’t cope alone. Biting the bullet, he calls Laura’s mother and asks her to come stay for a while. Both sets of grandparents had come initially of course when no one knew whether Laura or London would make it, but they left to allow things to

quiet a few days later. Doug desperately needs someone now, and he knows that if he's able to take Laura home anytime soon, she will want her mom to be there helping her. So, with great reluctance, he calls Tammy and explains the situation. She tells him to breathe, to see to what he has to that morning, and she will be there by noon. He almost cries from relief.

With immediate concerns in Tammy's capable hands (Doug has no idea why he waited so long to call her, stereotypical mother-in-law reluctance probably, which is shameful), he passes many hours every day going between Laura and London's hospital rooms. He holds London, doing the kangaroo care the nurse showed him when she was first brought to the NICU, and he talks to Laura and shows her photos and videos of all the children. The pictures lift her spirits for a minute or two, after which she usually falls silent again, lost somewhere in the anger and self-pity of being a paraplegic. Doug doesn't know how to make her feel better.

He tries hard to be home for dinner every night. When Laura is able to sit in a wheelchair, he begins taking her to the NICU with him, and they take turns holding London, who seems to respond immediately to her mother's touch and voice. Laura, thank goodness, responds to London, too. The baby is still tiny and frail, but the feeding tube has been removed, and Laura and Doug take turns feeding her with a syringe until she's ready for a bottle. Laura, saddened by her loss of breast-feeding what will surely be her last child, works through depression over this and losing the use of her legs even while they watch London grow and put on weight underneath the translucent skin.

"I knew, of course," she tells Doug one day while he's got a naked London tucked inside his big flannel shirt. "I was just in bed too long, and I hadn't started producing milk yet anyway. I knew I wouldn't be able to nurse her, but it never really hit me until she was ready for the bottle."

"Try to think of our gains instead of our losses if you can," he says, reaching for her hand with his.

"I know."

She squeezes his hand, but she doesn't comment. He knows that's easier said than done for her. He's not the one in a wheelchair for the next four or five decades.

Over the next several months, London improves daily. They take her home when she's five weeks old. She's met the established goals of a whopping five pounds and a consistent eating and elimination schedule. She's also sleeping without any respiratory concerns, but Dr. Sanchez is sending her home with a breathing monitor she'll have to wear anytime they can't see her directly, like when they put her to bed or when she's in the car seat, to make sure she doesn't stop breathing for more than a second or two. They'll bring the monitor back weekly for several months to have the data in its memory read. Dr. Sanchez will be able to tell if London suffers from sleep apnea or other sleep and respiratory problems and, if not, will give their little wonder a clean bill of health.

At six months, this is precisely what she gets. Dr. Sanchez has a long conversation with Laura and Doug while London sits on his lap and chews his stethoscope.

“You know she looks great. She’s looked great if I’m honest since the minute I saw her. A 27-week baby can come with a host of problems, but you had a good surgical team who got her out and up here fast, and Laura, you clearly took excellent care of yourself during the prenatal period before the accident. She had the best odds possible. So, let’s talk about what you’ve seen and what you’ll see moving forward.”

Both Doug and Laura nod. “Please,” Doug says. “She’s so different from Max and Chelsea.”

Dr. Sanchez chuckles. “Yes, she would be.”

He spends a few minutes explaining the growth they’ve seen, both physically and also in terms of London’s abilities. “Some of what you’ll have seen you likely saw in her brother and sister and at the same times, particularly reflexive changes, social interactions, those sorts of things.”

“Yes,” Doug says, “but she’s still small. She rolled over ‘on time,’ I guess you’d say, but she isn’t sitting up yet or getting on her knees.”

“Not to worry,” Dr. Sanchez tells them. “You’re right. She’s small, but she’s showing every sign she’ll get to those soon. What you’re seeing are very typical preemie patterns. Some things she’ll do at just about the proper age plus the extra nine to 12 weeks she needed to gestate. That is, you’ll hardly notice the difference between her and her siblings. Other things, she’ll need to catch up with her peers in size before she’ll catch up in skills.”

“Will she?” Laura asks. “Catch up in size?”

“She should. There’s no guarantee, but she should. Often preemies will by two or three, and then you’ll begin to see that skill gap close. Your biggest concern will be respiratory problems—asthma, flu, and the like. So, keep a good eye on her, make sure all five of you get flu shots every year. Don’t delay going to the pediatrician if you’re concerned about something. I’m not worried at all about her development.”

Relieved on all fronts, the Dennels leave Dr. Sanchez’s office a half hour later. Doug buckles London into her car seat, lifts Laura into the passenger seat, then stows the wheelchair in the back. They’re going to pick up the older kids and take everyone for an ice cream cone at Dairy Queen.

5 Cognitive Development in Infancy and Toddlerhood

Laura watches London’s development like a hawk, always on the lookout for something to be wrong. The first thing she notices is that London doesn’t speak like Max and Chelsea did. By her first birthday, she says *no* and *ma* and *dada* and *mah* for Max and *chessy* for Chelsea. She doesn’t say anything else. At her 12-month checkup, Laura raises the concern with the children’s pediatrician.

Dr. Adams, in the middle of looking inside London's ears at the time, says, "Well, she's got a brain in here," which makes Laura laugh. "Seriously, Laura," the doctor tells her after she finishes the brief physical exam, "I understand your concerns, and we'll always keep a close eye on what might be considered delays of any sort with London."

"But . . . ?"

"But she doesn't have any other signs of developmental problems. My guess, if I had to hazard one, is that she isn't speaking because she either doesn't get a chance to or because she doesn't need to. There are four people in your house other than London, all of whom are used to filling the quiet. She also has two siblings who are each at an age when they're likely to speak *for* her. When London needs to speak or wants to speak, London will speak."

"You're sure?" Laura asks, hopeful but not convinced.

"One hundred percent? No, but pretty close. I'm not due to see her again until 18 months, but if you're still concerned in three months, make an appointment, and we'll see how she's doing."

Laura shakes Dr. Adams's hand. "Thank you. That makes me feel a lot better."

"Comes with the territory." She tousles London's sparse blond hair. "I'll see you soon, missy."

London waves backward. "Bye-bye."

"See?" Dr. Adams says as Laura negotiates the wheelchair out the door. "No one's here taking up her airwaves. "Go home, Laura. She knows what she's doing, and soon you won't be able to shut her up."

6 Socioemotional Development in Infancy and Toddlerhood

As a toddler, London is a mercurial child. Her parents and her brother and sister doted on her when she came home from the hospital, and that never really stops. No one truly spoils her, but she's always aware that she's considered special. From time to time, that influences her mood and interactions with others. She is, overall, a sweet and loving child, but she can also be willful and demanding, behaviors that try Laura's patience and make her wonder what's going to happen when she starts school.

"I think it's time for something more structured than daycare," she tells Doug one night.

"Princess exerting her royal will again?" he asks.

"Yes, and even though Chelsea and Max are good about it, this won't serve London well either with her brother and sister or with friends, teachers . . . *the world*," she finishes.

"Agreed. Do you want me to help you look for a place? Military school maybe?"

Laura laughs. "I think Sunrise will probably be fine," she tells him, referring to the preschool both Chelsea and Max attended from age three until they started Kindergarten.

"Probably," he admits, although I can call the Joint Chiefs and keep her on backup."

"You do that, but call Sunrise while you're at it. We're paid up at daycare through the end of the month. With any luck, they can start her next month. If not, find out how long the waiting list is?"

"Of course, my love. I'll do it tomorrow."

Laura sighs and readjusts her wheelchair to reach the bottle of wine on the counter. Doug hands her a glass. "Thank you. Now I can decide what color to paint the old naughty chair. We can't expect preschool to do it all."

"In that case, I'll go rummage in the attic for the chair while you ponder."

**7 Physical and
Cognitive
Development
in Early
Childhood**

"Doug, hi. Is Laura coming?" Miranda Thompson, London's preschool teacher at Sunrise, shakes his hand. They're on a first-name basis since Chelsea had been in her class only two years before and had just moved on to Kindergarten that year.

"Sorry, no. Just me this time. She's having a difficulty day today.

Miranda gives him a pained and sympathetic expression. "I'm sorry to hear that. Give her my best, please."

"Thanks, I will." He pulls one of the tiny chairs away from the moon-shaped table in the center of the room. "This is exciting, London's first parent-teacher meeting. Before we get started, please tell me she behaves while she's here."

Ms. Thompson laughs a little. "Well . . ." she hedges. Doug groans, and the teacher hurries to reassure him. "Oh, it's not as bad as all that. London is outgoing and eager to please. I'm sure you know this about her. She's also doing well with numbers and anything technological I put in her hands."

"That's awesome!" he says. "What's the catch then?"

"I have a little trouble getting her to focus during story time," the teacher admits, "and she seems to have a tendency toward clumsiness on the playground. I have to watch her carefully when she climbs the ladder for the big slide or when she's on the monkey bars. Again, I'm sure you know this about her."

Doug agrees. "But I hoped being around other children might help with that," he says.

The teacher smiles gently. "She's around other children at home, too, and Max and Chelsea are probably a little more invested in London's success than her peers here are. I'm sure you're right, Doug, and being around other kids her age will help her achieve some growth. I just want to reinforce that she's a little behind. Nothing to be overly worried about, but we do want to work on these areas."

"We will," he assures her quickly. "We definitely will."

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| 8 | Socioemotional Development in Early Childhood | <p>Finishing her first year of preschool, London evidences big social gains. She doesn't bully her sister and brother much anymore (or her parents), and she's frequently helpful at home, doing tasks such as taking silverware to the table while Max and Chelsea lay plates for mealtimes or putting a fresh bag in the trashcan after her dad takes the trash outside to the big can in the garage. She likes helping. Her mom especially makes her feel good for the things she does by smiling and hugging her. Helping is fun. Because her mom's in a wheelchair, London likes trying to help with all the things that seem to make her tired or make her frown. She can't do every one of them yet (like vacuum), but she can do a lot (like put dishes away). Helping makes her feel closer to Mommy, and that's the best feeling of all.</p> <p>Probably the best times she has at home are playing with Max and Chelsea. Max is seven now, and he has friends on their street who come over sometimes. Then he doesn't play with either London or Chelsea, but when they all play together, it's the best. They teach each other everything. One day, London tells Max that a friend of hers at preschool said London was weird for liking computers because she's a girl. Max tells her that's stupid, that girls and boys can do all the same things, except peeing. Girls can't do that standing up like boys can, but she shouldn't care because it's kind of hard anyway.</p> |
| 9 | Physical and Cognitive Development in Middle and Late Childhood | <p>London likes elementary school a lot better than preschool. Kindergarten was scary, but every other grade is fun. She's good at lots of subjects, like math and science, and she isn't bad at anything. Well, she's not good at physical education (PE), but no one conquers everything. At least that's what her dad tells her. In second grade, they have to run a mile in PE, and London gets a couple minutes into the job when she starts to feel like her chest is on fire. It's hard to breathe, and her eyes water until she can't see. She stops running even though Coach Parker yells at her. Dad has to pick her up at school that day, and London sees the doctor. The doctor listens to London breathe and then says, "Asthma," but London doesn't know what that means. She also says this isn't unexpected because London was "born so early." She gives Dad a bunch of papers for medicine and gives London a paper that says she doesn't have to run a mile for a while. That's not terrible even though she doesn't want to be "the sick kid" either. After a few weeks of figuring out how to use the new inhaler the doctor gives her and learning to trust the sense she has of when it's okay to run and when it's not, she finally finishes the mile, and Coach Parker gives her a secret cookie for congratulations. Finishing feels like the biggest accomplishment London's ever managed.</p> <p>In fourth grade, the elementary school wins something called "a grant," and even though London isn't sure what that is, she knows what it means. Every kid gets a brand-new tablet computer for the rest of the time they're in the elementary school. London is stoked! There are so many papers she and her dad have to sign, but she doesn't care. As soon as the tablet is in her hands, she figures out how to download a developer app and starts creating little programs of her own. She starts small, building a world traveling app based on live cams all across the</p> |

globe. Want to visit sub-Saharan Africa? Choose the Africam. That one is no more than a collection of cams sitting behind a frame with a menu. She builds and adjunct app that allows a person to control the frame like a television with a “remote” app for a smartphone. She thinks it’s a cute package even if it isn’t terribly sophisticated. By the time fifth grade starts, London has a small cottage industry going, and her dad helps her set up an online payment system. Charging less than a dollar per app, she starts saving for long-term dreams like a car and college or maybe funding a scientist’s cure for asthma. So far, she’s made \$11.88. Her dad warns her to keep herself on the right side of the law, which she doesn’t get but okay. He says he doesn’t have time to bail her out of jail between work, Max’s ball games, and all the kid ferrying he does. She knows it must be hard because Mom doesn’t drive at all. If only she could make an app to give parents more time.

**10 Socioemotional
Development
in Middle and
Late Childhood**

“Mo-om!”

Max calls for Laura, and London gives him an evil look, daring him to tattletale. When she hears their mother’s wheelchair nearing the doorway to Max’s room where they’ve been hanging out, she puts a hand over her chest, pretending to cough through an oncoming asthma attack. Max rolls his eyes.

“Oh, come on,” he complains. “How dumb do you think she is?”

“Oh, come on,” Mom says as her head appears in the doorway. “How dumb do you think I am?”

London stands up straight and points at Max. “He started it!”

“Did not!”

“Yes. You. Did.” London looks at Mom. “All I did was ask to use his laptop to write some SQL code, and Mr. High and Mighty has to birth a baby cow all over the—”

“Enough, London,” Mom says, interrupting.

“But—”

“No buts.” She looks at Max and smiles. “We’ll figure this out. Your laptop is safe.” To London, she says, “Come along to your room, and let’s have a talk about personal property and maybe creativity in trying to dupe your mother. Fake asthma? Really?”

“I just wanted to borrow it for a few minutes.”

“Right,” Mom agrees as they enter the room London shares with Chelsea. “The key word in all of that was ‘borrow.’ It’s his laptop, and if he says ‘no,’ that’s okay. Life isn’t going to be a string of yeses, London.”

“Well, that’s dumber than fake asthma,” she says, meaning this entirely. Mom laughs again, and London can’t help smiling a little. “Imagine how happy everyone would be if everyone else always said yes.”

Mom looks at her like she’s a little green alien and then says, “I think the world was like that under the reign of Caligula.”

“Who was that?”

“A Roman emperor, but you’ll want to wait a while before asking your teachers to tell you that bit of history.”

London knows kids at school who compete with each other for best attendance awards or spelling bee contests. London codes. Her competition is always boys, which annoys her sometimes. She tries to get some of her female friends to get involved in computers with her, but most aren’t interested. Even her teachers encourage her to do things like enter spelling bees or work harder on multiplication. There’s a million-word book challenge; why doesn’t she enter that? She doesn’t know why coding is such a big thing with everyone. She can’t change their minds, which means she sneaks around and does what she wants to in hiding, but she’s not sure how that’s fair at all.

11 Physical and Cognitive Development in Adolescence

Although Dr. Sanchez, the attending pediatric doctor in the NICU when London was born, as well as London’s childhood pediatrician told her parents that she would mostly likely catch up with her peers in size in the first few years of life, she remains thin and wiry through adolescence. Her height, slightly above average, is similar to her brother and sister, but her narrow frame gives her an androgynous appearance. This is emphasized by the short, blond, pixie haircut she wears.

She still takes asthma medicine in the mornings and keeps a rescue inhaler in her book bag. Endurance activities will never be part of her repertoire. She’s okay with that.

She spends most of her time on her homework and carving out hidden spaces for writing computer programs. She’s taught herself basic programming languages and a couple advanced languages as well. Her most enjoyable hours now are creating novel human-machine interactions. She’d love to win a science fair with what she can do, but she’s lost her bravery at telling anyone what she does. Her teachers don’t encourage her passion, and her dad’s too busy to tell them to shove it. He would; she’s sure of it. She just doesn’t have it in her to ask. Mom might. Maybe. She doesn’t go anywhere anymore, and it seems selfish to ask her, too. London codes in the closet and enjoys the pleasure of her own private achievements.

12 Socioemotional Development in Adolescence

Much to Laura and Doug’s dismay, London begins “dating” in middle school, coming home many days with a new “boyfriend” to talk about. They can barely keep up. Chelsea helps because she knows many of the boys London goes on about and is often friends with their older siblings. To their relief, no one seems to hold her attention for long. Rather, no one seems to successfully compete with a computer for London’s attention.

In tenth grade, London attends her first homecoming dance with a date. Doug and Chelsea take her shopping for a dress, all of which London rejects either on the hanger or without exiting the dressing room. She sends a text to her best friend Maggie Summerfield after she, Chelsea, and her dad leave the third department store.

“I just want to wear pants,” she types.

Maggie responds almost instantly as London knows she will. “Like jeans or something nice?”

“Nice. Like a suit or a tux or something.”

“Wear that. Isn’t that the point? If you like it . . .”

London turns to her Dad. “Can we look at tuxes maybe?”

Dad looks shocked, and London can see Chelsea biting her lip. “A tux?” Dad asks.

“Yes, Dad, a tux. I’d rather wear one of those than a frou frou dress.”

“I—” He doesn’t look like he knows what to say.

London looks at her sister. “Help, please?”

Chelsea, who’s recovered by now, puts a hand on Dad’s arm. “When did you ever care what any of us wore?”

“Did Max ever ask to wear a dress?” he asks.

“Dad!” Chelsea yells. “London’s wearing pants right now. I expect better of you.”

London does, too, but she doesn’t say it.

“I’ll get whatever you want,” Dad says softly, “but I don’t understand at all.”

London attends the homecoming dance with a group of friends including the boyfriend of the week. She and Charles dance and drink a weird ginger ale punch and try to pretend that his parents aren’t chaperones. Everyone has a great time. The DJ plays some oldies song that’s all angsty and slow, and she and Charles slow dance without getting close. She spies Maggie across the way dancing with their friend Ben and rolls her eyes. Maggie returns the look, and they both smile. Maggie looks great, London thinks. She’s wearing a dress London tried on and hated, but it’s perfect on her closest friend.

After the song, she disentangles herself from Charles’ clutches. “I need to go to the bathroom,” she tells him and is happy to see Maggie touching up her lipstick when she gets there.

“Tux is the bomb,” Maggie says. “I’m so glad you wore it.”

Grinning, London fixes her hair in the mirror. “Me, too. Thanks for helping me decide. My dad was *not* happy with the suggestion, and Mom was horrified when I told her. Oh well.”

Maggie turns and puts a hip on the old porcelain sink beside her. “I always want you to do what makes you happy.”

“I know.”

Before London can thank her again, Maggie takes a step forward and kisses her.

“Like that,” Maggie says.

“But I—”

“And I.”

“Can I do that again?” London asks her.

“I’m kind of hoping you do.”

**13 Physical and
Cognitive
Development in
Emerging/Early
Adulthood**

“London?”

London looks up from notes she’s making on a pad of paper. She’s trying to combine work and pleasure by writing a new program as part of her AP physics project. A couple sticking points bugged her, and the distraction is welcome.

“Dad?”

Dad sits across from her at the kitchen table and taps his fingers on the sticky top. Max hadn’t cleaned it well after breakfast; she knows it was his turn because it’s always his turn. When he moved back in after finishing college, Mom and Dad gave him extra chores. One of them is cleaning the table after every meal.

“Dad?” she repeats. “What’s bothering you?”

He smiles and stills his hand. “I just wanted to make sure I had a few words with you now that you’re off to college soon. No—your mom and I wanted to.”

“That’s crap, Dad. I appreciate the offer, but I’m aware that you single parent all of us. Mom nods assent now and then. So, what do you need?” Pushing her work to the center of the table, she looks at him. “Is this the fiscal, academic, or sexual responsibility talk?”

Dad looks shocked, and she lifts a shoulder.

“More of the latter, sort of,” he says. “And this is serious.”

“All ears, Dad.”

“We have zero real concerns about your ability to go to school and do well academically. I hope we’ve taught you to be very careful with money. We’ve just finished paying off the medical bills from Mom’s surgeries and—”

“I know all of this. No credit cards, no extra loans, low-key job on campus, and spend as little as I can.”

“Right.”

“So?” she asks, mildly curious. “The sex? If this is about safe sex, sex ed covered that ages ago.”

“I know. Look, London, this isn’t easy for me, and there’s a reason I’m talking to you instead of Mom. More than a quarter of young women are sexually assaulted while they’re in college, sweetheart. As a man, I can attest that some of those assaults aren’t necessarily intentional, but that doesn’t make them any less damaging. Kids mess up every day—every day. I want you to be aware and smart and on guard even while you have fun.”

She frowns, and can feel her face making the unhappy shape, while she thinks about her dad’s words. She’s still in the closet—about her sexuality and about coding mostly. It’s just easier to leave things that way for now. “Okay, Dad.”

“We don’t want to scare you. We just want you to be aware.”

“I will be. I promise.” They smile at each other, and she reaches for her homework. “While I’ve got you, can I bounce some ideas off you? I’m a little stuck.”

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| 14 | Socioemotional Development in Emerging/Early Adulthood | <p>In London's senior year of college, she wins a coveted study abroad position in Ethiopia. She wants to work on a project to allow a group of women to improve the quality of life in a village called Timbala by providing them with tablets, rudimentary coding training, and satellite Internet access. She's convinced the women will do the rest, like figure out water irrigation and local primary education. The study abroad will last the entire fall semester, and she'll finish college five months after she gets back to the States.</p> <p>She's never been as uncomfortable, hot, and dirty as she is in Timbala. There's nothing like doing without the luxuries of first-world living to realize they aren't necessities, she thinks. She's also never felt more alive and engaged in purposeful activity.</p> <p>When graduation day approaches, she takes a computer engineering job and tries not to think about how much she'd rather be in Ethiopia. After several months of working hard and saying no to every potential date, London agrees to dinner with a guy in her department. Who she is hasn't changed, but she also believes love is parts blind. He's a nice guy, super smart, and he makes her laugh. They date for a year before she admits she loves him and another before they finally get married, much to everyone's delight and secret relief. August Sommers is everything her parents wanted for her, and she seems to fit his parents' bill as well. If there is any dark cloud, it's only that they agree to have no children. For her parents, that's okay. Max has already delivered the requisite grandchildren. For her in-laws, not so much. August is an only child. London hopes they can love their granddogs as much as they would've grandchildren.</p> |
| 15 | Physical and Cognitive Development in Middle Adulthood | <p>Max, at 33, is living in a nearby town with his wife and infant son. Chelsea has moved to California to pursue an acting career, which means she's waiting tables and flashing smiles at anyone who looks remotely important. Mom and Dad seem happy to have her close by with August. Maybe they're relieved she didn't go back to the wilds again. She wishes they could see how beautiful it is in Ethiopia.</p> <p>"You're still going to the gym with Max?" Mom asks one night as she and Max join her parents for dinner.</p> <p>"I am. Four days a week. He's brutal. If I forget my inhaler at home, all bets are off."</p> <p>"He'll keep you in shape," Dad agrees. "Your brother's a walking ad for middle-age good health."</p> <p>"Too true."</p> <p>Mom interrupts. "And you're positive you don't want any children?"</p> <p>"More than," August says, relieving London of the need to once more justify their decision. "We like what we've got going."</p> <p>London squeezes his hand. "Who wouldn't?"</p> |

- 16 Socioemotional Development in Middle Adulthood**
- In their 30s, August and London begin attending a trivia night at a local pizza joint. Trivia is held on Thursdays, and they show up an hour early to have a pizza with another couple they like from work. After eating, they order a pitcher of beer and wait for the game to begin. It's a night they all look forward to each week, and the only weeks they miss in all their time going are the weeks that their parents pass. Their trivia nights invariably end the same way. They walk to their cars together, and Jewel says, "Gee, that was a blast."
- Her mild, old-fashioned language charms London.
- "It was!" she agrees as August and Jewel's husband Dan discuss the stock market.
- "I'm so glad we do this. Dan is a wonderful husband, but there's only so much ESPN I can watch after a day in the office."
- London smiles. "Same."
- "We should do lunch sometime," Jewel suggests, and London agrees. The week will pass, however, and Thursday's trivia will arrive without the lunch date happening. London needs to make that happen. She likes Jewel so much.
- 17 Physical and Cognitive Development in Late Adulthood**
- "I'm sorry, London," Dr. Oliver tells her at the end of their annual appointment.
- Beside London, August asks, "Isn't there anything that can be done?"
- "I doubt it. We'll send you on to a specialist, of course. We always do. But you've taxed your eyes most of your life with close computer screen work. It was almost inevitable that your eyesight would be the first thing to fail and that you would notice significant declination rapidly." Dr. Oliver pauses and sighs. "I'm sorry again."
- "I know," London says, attempting to comfort the doctor. "And the rest?"
- "Everything is well within normal range. I'd like to see a bit more lung capacity, but you've struggled with that your whole life. If you and August can maybe get outside and walk a bit more or maybe a stationary bike at the gym?"
- August shifts beside her. "Of course. Whatever she needs."
- "She is sitting right here," London complains.
- Dr. Oliver stands. "Indeed you are, and there's generally nothing wrong with you that a hot meal and a good nap won't fix. I'll have my nurse call with the appointment for the eye doctor."
- "Thank you," she and August murmur at the same time. August takes her elbow as they stand and make their way toward the door. She swallows the urge to say she can make her own way. She can't, and besides, it makes August feel good to help. Whatever makes August feel good makes her feel good.
- "Let's go home," August says in the elevator. "You can fix me lunch, and I'll read the news to you."
- "You're not worried I'll slice off a finger or use sugar instead of salt?" she grumbles.
- "Pfft," August admonishes. "You're getting old, not senile. Yet."
- They both laugh, and London is reminded that life is always what you make it. She thinks about her time in Africa when running water didn't exist and electricity was a memory. Yes, life is still good.

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| 18 | Socioemotional Development in Late Adulthood | <p><i>"Happy birthday, dear London, happy birthday to you!"</i></p> <p>London tears at the sound of Jewel and the restaurant staff singing. It's her 80th birthday, and 80 years ago no one in her life would've believed this day would ever come. She's glad it has even though she's lived through her parents passing and August, too. Even Jewel's healthy as a horse Dan passed away the year before. Now, it's just the two of them. The period of trivia nights when she and Jewel couldn't seem to keep a lunch date are long over. These days they lunch together most days, and it's the most rewarding part of growing old. As the server cuts the cake, Jewel takes her hand.</p> <p>"Happy birthday, darling," she says. "Are you ready for your present?"</p> <p>London nods. "Yes, please."</p> <p>"It's only a small thing." Jewel hands her a square box wrapped in heavy white paper. When London opens it, she finds a lovely diamond pendant in the shape of a heart.</p> <p>"Jewel!" She looks at the other woman. "It's beautiful."</p> <p>"It's purposeful," Jewel says. "I thought, since you stole my heart all those years ago, I could perhaps trade this one to get it back?"</p> <p>London's breath catches, and she lifts her eyes from the necklace to Jewel's face. "Jewel?"</p> <p>"Yes? Oh, don't be coy. Just put the necklace on. I want cake, and at our age we can't afford to delay things too long."</p> |
| 19 | Experience With Death and Dying | <p>"London, how are you feeling today? I worried when you missed lunch yesterday."</p> <p>Jewel lets herself into the living room through the front door of London's small cottage, and London tries to prop herself on the pillows she pulled from the bedroom earlier.</p> <p>"Not great actually. Bit of a cold. I'm sorry I didn't call."</p> <p>"No, no. It's fine. I was just worried. Can I get you anything?"</p> <p>"Nah. I'll be fine in a day or so. Just don't get too close. I don't want to pass this one to you."</p> <p>Jewel, smart about their aging, worthless bodies, nods and sits in a chair across the room. "What are we watching?"</p> <p><i>"Family Feud. Why are people so ridiculous?"</i></p> <p>"I cannot say, dear."</p> <p>The next morning, Jewel lets herself in again. London is still laying on the sofa where she was the day before, wearing the same clothes she wore the day before. Frowning, Jewel calls out softly, "London?"</p> <p>When she gets no answer, she approaches and reaches to put the back of her hand on London's forehead. It's cool and smooth, not hot with fever as she expected. She'd come fully prepared to force London to the doctor, but with the cool skin, she shakes her head—too late for that. She lifts London's wrist to check, but there is no pulse.</p> <p>"Oh, London." Leaning down, she kisses London's cheek before finding the telephone and calling the ambulance.</p> |

Case Discussion Questions

1. In her earliest hours, London's mother Laura is paralyzed partially (hips down) as a result of the accident that caused London's premature birth. Compared to London's optimal case in which Laura has extensive surgery but recovers fully, how does this early outcome alter London's life trajectory across any and all domains (biological, cognitive, and socioemotional)?
2. In middle childhood, London experiences an asthmatic emergency during PE at school one day. Because her mother is paralyzed (and never learned to drive once handicapped), her father Doug is called to get her from school. Compare Doug picking London up at school to Laura picking her up in the optimal case. What differences would we expect in London's outcomes based on this outcome alone?
3. From middle childhood through adolescence, London frequently finds herself in the position of either hiding or defending both her love of coding and her sexuality. Occasionally someone like her sister Chelsea will stand up for her, but often no one is around to do so. Compare the outcomes in this case to those in London's optimal case when Laura is actively unsurprised, sardonic, and buoyantly supportive of London's needs and preferences. How do the differences you note suggest differences in London's future across any and all domains (biological, cognitive, and socioemotional)? Why?
4. Consider London's optimal case outcomes at the end of her life and Erikson's integrity-versus-despair stage of psychosocial development. How does this case compare to that one? Consider all of London's life events. How do you think those contributed to any differences in London's end-of-life outcomes and her sense of integrity versus despair?

7. Moderate Outcomes: Edward Archer

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| 2 | Biological and Environmental Foundations | Edward's adoption records will be sealed, and if Brendon and Jared ever meet his mother, it will be only briefly when their baby is born. They know nothing about their baby's development other than what the adoption agency has told them: Mom doesn't smoke, drink, or use any drugs; she's healthy; no negative results have come of any prenatal testing. If anything arises, they'll be informed. |
| 3 | Prenatal Development, Birth, and the Newborn Experience | <p>Edward's prenatal development, to the best of Jared and Brendon's knowledge, is both normal and well supported medically. Mom has proper prenatal care and remains healthy throughout the pregnancy. Sometime several months into waiting for their baby, they receive separate calls on their phones. The baby is going to be born; would they like to come to the hospital?</p> <p>They would.</p> <p>The soon-to-be fathers wait in nervous anticipation in the hospital waiting room until a nurse and a social worker approach in the early hours of the morning. The nurse looks at Brendon, while the social worker looks at Jared.</p> <p>"Dad?" they both say at the same time. Everyone laughs, nervousness causing tremors in both men's voices.</p> <p>The nurse touches each of their elbows. "Would you care to come to the nursery and meet your son?"</p> |

Following both women down the hallway, Brendon asks a litany of questions. Is the mother all right? Did the labor and delivery go well? How were the baby's APGARs? Is he . . . ? No one wants to say "normal," but biological parents typically get to see firsthand and have that reassurance without asking.

The nurse pauses in walking and looks at them both. "It was a long delivery, but both of them were fine. The mother did well, and baby's fine. His initial APGAR was 7, a little low but okay, and his five-minute score was 9. He's doing really well."

He is, too, as the new fathers can see when they take turns holding him in the hospital nursery only a minute or so later. He's long and has a crop of dark curls. When he begins to fuss, Brendon hums a lullaby to him, and he quietyens. Their family, full of love before, is complete now.

**4 Physical
Development
in Infancy and
Toddlerhood**

Edward, a chubby and affectionate baby, loses much of his dark hair shortly after birth. This is replaced with fine, brown curls. His eyes, the dark blue of most infants when they're born, are now a rich chocolate, and his fair skin has a mole or two on his back. His fathers think he's perfect, and the pediatrician assures them he is.

If Edward has any troubles at all, it's only that he doesn't like to sleep alone in his nursery. At school, Jared asks all the teachers who are parents—mostly mothers—if they've ever had this trouble and listens to their advice, from "let him cry it out" (which sounds demonic) to "just tuck him in bed with you and Brendon" (which sounds like a recipe for infanticide). Batting it back and forth and losing sleep in the meantime, he and Brendon decide to move Edward's crib into their room for a while. Like magic, their baby becomes somnolent at 8 p.m. every night and doesn't wake until seven in the morning.

Even when they oversleep, one of Edward's dads takes time to cuddle him while he takes his morning bottle. They know parents—Jared's sister is one of them—who change the diaper and sit the baby in the car seat with a bottle propped on a pillow so they can multitask in the mornings before work. Jared and Brendon want Edward to feel loved and wanted from the beginning, and so they hold him. He eats almost constantly, but they become adept at multitasking *while* holding him, a feat of which they are both quite proud. Within a few months, Edward sits on the bathroom counter in front of Brendon playing patty cake with himself in the mirror while Brendon brushes his hair and fixes his tie.

"Bay-beeee," he drools, pointing at his own reflection.

Brendon wipes Edward's chin with a washcloth and scoops him into his arms, passing him to Jared as he walks into the closet for his shoes.

"Baby," Jared croons. "Such a smart boy."

Edward squeals, and both dads laugh with him.

Sliding his jacket on, Brendon holds out his arms. "Ready," he says. "It's my day. You'll remember to pick him up?"

Jared rolls his eyes. “Like I’d forget.”

They kiss quickly among a flurry of I love yous, and Brendon rushes from the house with Edward clapping and drooling on his freshly dry-cleaned blazer.

“It’s a good thing you’re cute,” he mutters as he opens the back door on his Volkswagen and bends to tuck the baby in his car seat.

- 5 Cognitive Development in Infancy and Toddlerhood**
- Edward’s crib is returned to the nursery when he’s eight months old, and he makes no fuss over the transition. Brendon and Jared take turns reading his bedtime stories—classics and modern favorites both—before tucking him in together. He’s such a good-natured boy that it’s hard to leave him, which they do like clockwork at 7:50 p.m. nightly.

When Edward is ten months old, Jared notices that he’s babbling along with his dads when they read to him. His rhythm and cadence is the same as theirs, even if the words are unintelligible. Jared praises his son and begins to spend time pointing to basic objects in the stories. “What’s that, Edward?” he asks, and often Edward responds with a sound that nearly resembles the picture in question.

Although he isn’t yet walking without holding onto furniture (or his dads’ pants legs), Edward does his best to keep up with his cousins when they visit family. At his grandma and grandpa’s house, he has two cousins who are not much older than he is, and at Granny Sue’s house, he has three cousins, but Greg is five and isn’t interested in babies. Edward and his cousins “play” near each other in happy harmony for long stretches of time, even if they don’t interact much. When he’s at home after visiting, Edward uses spoons, bananas, and sometimes a shoe to pretend he’s talking to his cousins or his grandparents. “ ‘Lo! ’Lo!’ ” he yells and laughs when one of his dads pretends to talk back. Soon, this becomes his favorite game at home.

- 6 Socioemotional Development in Infancy and Toddlerhood**
- At 13 months, Edward’s favorite game is peekaboo. He plays with anyone who will sit with him long enough. His conversational skills are improving, and he appears to understand the rudiments of dialogue: I say something, and then you respond. Much of the time, Jared and Brendon have no idea what he says, but Edward clearly infuses his babbling with tone and inflection and a great deal of enthusiasm. Dinnertime conversation is everyone’s favorite time of the day.

Edward clearly loves his dads. He is openly affectionate and behaves as any normal, securely attached child does when left at or collected from daycare. That is, he fusses for a few minutes when he’s left and is delighted when he’s picked up. His best friend, however, is the family’s English Mastiff, who was brought into the family as a puppy only a few months after Edward’s arrival. The rate of Duke’s growth quickly outpaced Edward’s, but he’s gentle with the toddler. Downtime often finds Edward laying on the floor with his head resting on Duke’s side. For his part, Duke is a reserved but formidable guard dog, standing between Edward and anything new to their lives, including trash that blows in their direction in the park. Once satisfied a new person is harmless, Duke relaxes and licks Edward’s head as if to say, “Mine. Be careful with him,” and he lies down to observe once more. Brendon just hopes Edward never gets it in his head to try and ride the poor beast.

If any event mars this joyful age for Edward's dads, it's the unexpected and unwanted appearance of the baby's biological father. Edward's birth certificate lists his parents as "Mother: redacted" and "Father: unknown." According to Drew Kays, he hadn't known Edward's mother was pregnant and only knows now because they ran into one another by chance and she told him about the adoption. He'd petitioned to learn of the adoption details because he hadn't consented to relinquishing his parental rights. And now? Edward's dads want to know. Drew doesn't want to make trouble for Edward or for his dads. He just wants them to talk about the possibility of his meeting his son.

**7 Physical and
Cognitive
Development
in Early
Childhood**

Edward, who at his five-year checkup is in the 60th percentile for height and 65th for weight, appears completely normal, average, and without any discerning or concerning characteristics. Brendon and Jared are relieved. Over the past five years, they've talked about the possibility of genetic testing for Edward. It's expensive, but they can afford it. Such testing would tell them what sorts of potential illnesses loom in Edward's future. After the checkup, they put away the idea for good. He's a healthy, normal kid, and anything that might happen now could happen to any parent. They'll take what comes, which they would've done anyway.

One thing they do is begin a process they've both dreaded and anticipated for all of their time with Edward. After the birthday party and all the gifts, after a couple days of routine, Brendon calls Edward to the table on a Saturday morning and sits him down. Jared joins them with two mugs of coffee and a tall glass of chocolate milk. Edward eyes the chocolate milk with suspicion. This is a treat.

"Dad and I want to talk to you," Jared begins, and Edward's eyes flick back and forth between them.

"Did I do something wrong?"

"No, son, nothing like that."

"Is someone sick? Granny Sue?" he asks, his tone elevating in pitch. Brendon's mother had been sick over the winter but was, as far as Edward knew, improving.

"Granny Sue's fine. Everyone's fine," Brendon says, patting his hand. "Nothing's wrong, bud. We just want to tell you a couple things. We waited until you were a big boy, and now you are."

Edward nods at that. He *is* a big boy, five years old. He'll go to Kindergarten in September. "What do you want to tell me, Daddy?"

"Do you remember when you had your birthday party and your cousins and friends came to help you celebrate?" Jared asks.

"Uh-huh," Edward answers, paying more attention to his chocolate milk than the question.

"Did you notice anything different about the parents of the other children than your parents?"

Edward scrunches his eyes to think. Maybe there was one difference. "Ben's daddy was without anyone else. Ben doesn't have another daddy or a mommy."

Jared sighs while Brendon chuckles. Edward recognizes mommies then and doesn't count them any differently than second daddies. Brendon doesn't know if that makes things easier or harder.

"Well, that's very true," Jared agrees.

"Is that what you mean?"

"Not exactly." Jared points to Brendon. "One daddy." Then he points to himself. "Two daddies."

"I got two daddies. So?"

"But most of your friends only have one daddy," Jared ventures.

"Right, but they have a mommy so that's okay."

"That's also very true," Jared tells him. "I wanted to ask you about the mommies. Do you ever wonder why you have two daddies instead of a daddy and a mommy or maybe just why you don't have a mommy?"

Edward shrugs. "No," he whispers, and both dads know he isn't telling the truth.

"Edward?" Brendon prompts.

"Sometimes I wonder why I don't have a mommy, but I know I'm super special because I have two daddies."

"Bud, you are on point today," Jared says and raises his hand for a high five. Edward stretches upward until their palms touch before pulling his glass back to his mouth.

"That's what we wanted to talk about . . . your mommy, not having two dads."

"Okay." Edward looks at both of them. "Do I have a mommy?"

Jared nods, and so does Brendon. "You do. She grew you in her tummy just like other mommies, and then she gave birth to you on your birthday."

"Where is she? What's her name?"

Jared and Brendon are prepared for these questions. Brendon ruffles Edward's hair and starts talking while Jared warms their coffee.

"We don't know her name, bud."

"Why not?" Edward asks.

"That's just the way it is in families like ours."

"Where is she?" Edward asks again.

"I don't know," Brendon tells him. "See, son, when you were born, you were adopted."

"I was a dopted what?"

He and Jared look at each other, momentarily confused. When they figure out Edward's misunderstanding, they smile, careful not to laugh and make him feel silly.

"Oh, no, Edward. Dad and I *adopted* you. You weren't a thing called 'dopted.' "

"What does that mean? 'Dopted.'"

"It means that your mommy loved you so much that she wanted you to come live with me and dad so you could have the very best life you could have."

"My mommy didn't want to live here, too?"

"I don't know, Edward, but I think she probably couldn't for some reason. The most important thing for her was making sure you had a good home with good parents."

"Like you and Dad!" he shouts, holding his hands above his head Superman-style.

"Like me and Dad." He looks at Edward and wishes he didn't have to say the rest of it. "You also have another dad."

"*Another dad?*" Edward seems hardly able to comprehend his bounty in the father department.

"Yes, son. When you were in your mother's tummy, she had to have another father to help make you."

"Oh." Edward looks very confused. "Do you know *his* name?"

"Actually, we do. His name is Mr. Kays. He's very glad you have a nice home and that you're healthy and happy."

Jared sits at the table again and catches Edward's eye. "Do you have any questions about your mommy or other father right now?"

"No. I don't think so. Maybe. Is my mommy pretty?" he asks, giggling.

"Well," Jared says, a low and serious tone in his voice, "I think she must be for sure since you are such a handsome guy."

Edward giggles again. "I think she's pretty, too."

"Anything else?" Jared asks.

"No. Can I play with Duke now?"

"Yes, you may. If you decide you want to talk about your other parents again, that's always okay with both me and Daddy."

"Okay." Edward slides from his chair and runs to the doorway, calling after the dog. As they hear the thumps of large, heavy feet, he turns and runs back to the table.

"Sorry! Forgot!" He kisses both dads so quickly they don't register much more than air and then bolts from the room to find his dog.

Jared looks at Brendon and blows out a short burst of air. "Not bad at all."

"Nah," Brendon says. "We've got this."

**8 Socioemotional
Development
in Early
Childhood**

Jared's sister Beth babysits for the two dads routinely so they can have a biweekly date night. They return the favor on off weeks. One Saturday night, Jared runs inside to collect a drowsy and heavy Edward, and Beth stops him at the door as he leaves.

"Jared, did you know Edward's favorite toy is a stuffed pink pig?"

Jared, who knows where this is headed, looks at her and whispers over Edward's ear, "Pigs are pink."

Narrowing her eyes, Beth says, "You know what I mean."

"I do, and I'm torn between amusement and annoyance. Do you really think his pink pig is going to make him gay?"

"No but—"

"What? The pink pig plus being raised by gay dads might?"

She lifts her shoulders. "Well?"

Jared fights to keep the irritation out of his voice. “I could remind you that his favorite pastime is wrestling with a 150-pound dog.”

“Mine might’ve been, too, if I’d had Duke as a child!”

“What’s good for the goose really isn’t good for the gander.” Jared paused. “I love you, and I know you’re only thinking of what’s best for Edward. So, I’m going easy on you here. Now, it’s cold. I want to get him home. Thanks for watching him tonight.”

Two weeks later, Brendon has a school function, and they reluctantly allow Drew to take Edward for the couple hours they’d be gone. Edward, as expected, totes his favorite stuffed pig along. Drew unexpectedly raises Beth’s concern with them when they return to collect Edward. Jared frowns at him. “Have you been talking to my sister?”

“What do you mean?” Drew asks.

“Nothing. Only we had a similar conversation recently. I tried to impress upon her that gay kids of straight parents understand there are other sexualities than being straight, and I’m pretty sure straight kids of gay parents know there are other sexualities than being gay.” He paused for breath as he stuffed the pig into his coat pocket. “In other words, it’s just a pig.”

9 Physical and Cognitive Development in Middle and Late Childhood

In elementary school, Edward applies himself diligently to all his subjects, even though he doesn’t particularly love any of them. He’s aware that his dad works at the high school a couple miles away, and all the teachers at all the schools know each other. He works hard because there’s no other way to be the kid of a school staff member.

In fifth grade, his math class does a unit on statistics, which dismays both his dads. “Statistics? Really?” This is from the father who spends his daytime hours predicting who will buy what and why.

“It’s not that different from advertising, Dad,” he tells him. “Want me to show you?”

“God, no. Just keep making As, and we’re good.”

The teacher has assigned a month-long stock market project, and Edward spends hours after school with Duke covering his bed, mapping out strategy, buying his imaginary stocks, and building a portfolio. He makes and loses a year’s worth of the family’s income before finally beating his other classmates for the most diversified portfolio, best profit-loss ratio, and most earned. Finally, he thinks, here’s something he’s good at: making money. If only it were real.

The worst thing happens to Edward in sixth grade. He finds out he needs glasses. This is, apparently, a genetic gift of his biological father. Yay, he thinks.

“Can’t I have laser surgery?” he begs his dads. “Contacts?”

“No, not yet, not either,” they both tell him.

“But *why*? Glasses are the kiss of death!”

“You better not be having any kisses,” Dad tells him.

Edward stares at himself in the mirror. “I don’t think you have to worry about that now.”

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| 10 | Socioemotional Development in Middle and Late Childhood | <p>Elementary school brings a dawning awareness for Edward that his family is different from the norm. He has two parents, which he hears is a good thing, but he has two fathers, which he learns makes him odd if not exactly a social pariah. He has cousins at the school, and they help stick up for him when kids on the playground push him around or make fun. He tries hard not to push back. He likes his family, and although he's happy to defend it, he'd rather people not care one way or the other.</p> <p>In sixth grade, a boy named John loses his mom in a car accident. It's terrible. No one else in the grade has had a parent die before. Edward doesn't know how that would feel, but when he tries to imagine it, he gets cold and sad inside. John is one of the boys who made fun of Edward for having two dads, but he figures that doesn't matter when your mom dies. Edward asks his dad to drive him to John's house after the funeral, and he goes to the door and asks for John. They talk only for a few minutes. Edward tells him how sorry he is about the accident, and John asks him if he wants to come inside and have some potato casserole. Waving his dad off, Edward goes inside with John, and they spend a few hours playing video games and talking about school. Every now and then, John sneaks downstairs and gets some cookies or something else for them to eat. At the end of the day, Edward's dad comes back for him. He and John share a fist bump, and Edward figures he can ride his bike back over the next day—just to check on him.</p> <p>Edward tosses Duke's lead onto the washing machine when he comes in the back door. It's cold outside! In the kitchen, he puts hot chocolate in the microwave just as the phone starts to ring. Looking at caller ID, he sees "Bridgewood Adoption Agency" scrolling across the screen. His dad—man, high school makes you gray fast—rushes into the room in his socks, and Edward hands him the receiver.</p> <p>"Something you want to tell me?" he asks.</p> <p>Dad shakes his head. "Not yet. Maybe. Hopefully." He presses the talk button. "Hello? This is Jared North."</p> <p>Edward grabs his hot chocolate when the microwave <i>dings</i> and wanders into the den with Duke. "Hear that, buddy? We're going to get a brother or sister."</p> |
| 11 | Physical and Cognitive Development in Adolescence | <p>"Dude, let me hold her. It's my turn!"</p> <p>"Shh," Edward admonishes, but he hands over the tightly swaddled bundle of baby sister to John. "Damn, she's cute, huh?"</p> <p>"Yeah." John bounces Valerie up and down slowly in his arms as he wanders around the den, Duke at his heels protecting the family's newest charge. "Is she, like, all loud and stuff?"</p> <p>Edward shrugs. "Sometimes but not much. She sleeps in my dads' room right now, and they pretty much take care of everything she needs. She just sleeps and smiles when I have her unless she needs a clean diaper. I'm pretty good at that."</p> <p>John looks at her face, sleepy and content since Edward gave her a bottle a few minutes ago. "I don't know . . . Coach Denver acts like seeing a newborn is all the birth control we need, but she kinda makes me feel funny, like—"</p> <p>"<i>I know</i>," Edward agrees. "My dad says it's because we're in puberty, and our biology says it's time to make babies."</p> |

“Can we fast forward until we’re on the other side of it? Because all I’m getting from puberty,” John says with emphasis on the word, “is acne and a voice that cracks whenever I try to talk to Sarah Jane Williams.”

“I’ll look for the Tardis,” Edward promised. “Meanwhile, maybe I’ll take that one back so you can set up the Playstation?”

12 Socioemotional Development in Adolescence

Edward spends his spare time play-recreating the work he did for the stock market assignment in elementary school. He tracks a number of individual stocks and creates his own imaginary portfolio. His friends love it. They call it Edward’s Fantasy Finance. What they don’t know is that he’s been saving birthday and Christmas money since sixth grade until he has enough to create a real portfolio, which he does as soon as he has enough to meet the minimum threshold. His dads sign for him to open the account because he’s underage.

He tells his best friend John, who borrows \$100 from his dad and gives it to Edward to invest. John tells a couple other friends, who give him another \$100. In a couple months, Edward doubles their money, and John returns his dad’s original \$100 while leaving the rest invested with Edward. Edward’s dads call him Alex P. Keaton, which he doesn’t understand at all but makes them both laugh when they say it. He’d try to figure it out, but he’s too busy making money and trying to get a girl (*any girl*) to notice him.

His biological dad casts the only shadow over his money fun. First, he asks Edward to invest some money for him, and when Edward makes a good amount in return, Drew wants him to keep doubling his money. Edward tries to explain that the market doesn’t work that way, but Drew doesn’t get it. He seems angry when Edward doesn’t do what he wants him to or when Edward loses money because he agrees to reinvest. It’s a no-win situation.

13 Physical and Cognitive Development in Emerging/Early Adulthood

“You’re sure?” Brendon asks Edward on the eve of his 18th birthday.

“Of course. I wouldn’t ask if I weren’t.” He looks from one dad to the other. “You still have Valerie for another nine years.”

Brendon frowns at him and shakes his head. “You’re talking about being so far that you can’t easily get home if you want to.”

“I know,” Edward agrees. He always thought he’d go to college close to home, but he’s decided to go on the other side of the state. He needs a break from Drew, who doesn’t understand him and makes him uncomfortable more often than not. He’d never tell his dads that, though. He doesn’t want to worry them. “I’ll call every week. I promise.”

Edward pursues his college degree for three and a half years, finishing a semester early despite his friends’ best efforts to drag him to Friday night football and after parties. He loves his friends, but he has dreams, too. The spring semester after graduation, he and his girlfriend visit the three campuses where he’s been accepted to business school. Jennifer will finish in May with the rest of their classmates, and he has plans for them, but first he has to decide among Harvard, Duke, and the University of South Carolina. They like all three campuses, and all three offer Edward good packages. The only school he truly falls in love with is South Carolina, and with Jennifer’s unqualified support, he accepts their offer.

Back at home, his dads, Valerie, and his best friend John take him out to celebrate. He invited Drew to come, but his biological father never replied. Every step he’s wanted to take, he’s made happen. Looking at his dads’ faces around the table, he knows these are the people who made it possible.

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| 14 | Socioemotional Development in Emerging/Early Adulthood | <p>Jennifer sits on Edward's bed while he sorts through his closet. He has 18 years' worth of mostly junk to get rid of as he prepares for his move to Columbia, South Carolina. A few months remain before he goes, but 18 years probably get the better of mere months, he thinks. On his bed, Jennifer flips through a box of old photographs that cover <i>Edward: The Awkward Years</i>. She laughs when she comes upon a picture of him with shaggy hair, braces, and a pimple that needed its own zip code. He keeps sorting, half holding his breath as she works her way to the bottom of the box. He knows when she gets there, because she grows quiet, eventually asking, "Ed, what's this?"</p> <p>He pokes his head from the closet and says, "What's what?" although he knows. "This," she replies, holding a small box on the air.</p> <p>"Oh, that? Nothing much. You can look if you want." He returns to the closet. He counts the seconds. One . . . two . . . three . . . four . . .</p> <p>"Edward?"</p> <p>He joins her on the bed. "Jennifer." Kissing her cheek, he makes his appeal. "I'm pretty sure I can't do much without you anymore, and I'm very sure whatever I do I don't do well unless your hand is in it. Don't make me go to Columbia alone. Marry me."</p> <p>She laughs and takes the ring from the box. "I have to marry you, don't I? Who's going to explain advanced calculus to you so you can finish your MBA? Besides, who'll cook for me when you're gone?" she asks, referring to Edward's hobby of amateur gourmet cooking.</p> <p>"Good point," Edward agrees. "Whatever it takes for you to say yes, I'll take it. You really have no idea how anxious I am." He is, too. Every time he thinks about starting graduate school and the money he'll owe and how stupid he'll feel if he fails, he comes close to a panic attack.</p> <p>"Well, we can't have that," she says, soothing him, "so, I suppose that's a yes then."</p> |
| 15 | Physical and Cognitive Development in Middle Adulthood | <p>Jared suffers a heart attack during Valerie's junior year of college. Cardiologists find significant blockage in one artery and perform an angioplasty. Jared is warned off a long list of his favorite foods and put on a diet regimen. Brendon tries to help, but tensions run high in the household due to Brendon and Valerie's attempts to become healthier for Jared and Jared's irritation at the required changes to his lifestyle. Valerie complains to Edward and Jennifer, who now have a toddler of their own.</p> <p>Jared passes away the following year after a second heart attack despite everyone's attempts to make the necessary changes to keep him well. Edward, mourning deeply and watching the devastation run through his family, decides to pay for the genetic testing his dads never wanted for him. He's specific with the geneticist. They only want to know about his risk for cardiovascular disease, late life killers like diabetes, and any diseases he might be a carrier for and have passed along to his son. The results are reassuring. He is remarkably unscathed genetically. If he suffers any major ailments as he ages, it will be because he makes poor lifestyle choices.</p> |

**16 Socioemotional
Development
in Middle
Adulthood**

When Edward returns home from work a night shortly before their oldest child Eddie leaves for college, Jennifer waits for him at the kitchen table. She has a glass of water and a half-eaten chocolate bar in front of her as well as an opened envelope. He has no idea what he's done wrong, but it's clearly something.

"Babe," he says, laying a kiss on her cheek as he drops his briefcase in a chair. "How was your day?"

"Good. Jim," she says, indicating a junior lawyer at the firm where she's a partner now, "got a new client that's pretty interesting. Nothing else really except this." She waves the letter.

"What is that?"

"It's from Harrington," their bank, she means. "Why didn't you tell me you were divesting your retirement account? That seems like the sort of decision husbands and wives make together."

"We didn't talk about it?" he asks, knowing they didn't. He meant to, but ultimately, he thought the money was his and so he should be able to reinvest it as he saw fit. Looking at her now, he realizes the tax penalty isn't the only penalty he's going to pay.

"We did not."

"I made a 28 percent return on that money within seven months, Jen."

"It was a huge gamble, and you should've told me."

Edward knows he has no choice but to capitulate. She's probably right. "You're right," he says and tries to keep the placating tone out of his voice.

"Do you mean that?"

"I do." Taking her hand, he gives her his most sincere smile, and says, "I should've made certain we were together on this. I just wanted to make sure we had enough when the nest was empty and we decided it was time to do all the things we keep talking about doing . . . Alaskan cruises, Mexican summers, taking our honeymoon again . . ."

She smiles at that. "Okay, but Ed, this really was a huge gamble. Please let's talk before doing something so risky next time."

"I promise."

Edward tries to keep his promise, but Jennifer is busy, and she should trust him. Marriage is about trust. She's known him long enough to put faith in his financial ability. None of that matters, however, when she finds records of the next transaction. Furious, she packs a suitcase and moves into a hotel without a conversation, leaving him only a note. A year of back-and-forth conversation leads nowhere, and in his 40s, Edward is a divorced investment banker who misses his wife and still tells people he's married. In his heart he is. He doesn't date, doesn't consider marrying again, and spends his free time taking care of Brendon and his little sister Valerie.

17	Physical and Cognitive Development in Late Adulthood	<p>Brendon, who has lived in a small condo near Edward for nearly 20 years, passes away in relatively good health but of advanced age when Edward is 60. The loss rocks him, and he finds the ensuing depression unexpected and difficult to work through. Others suggest he seek the advice of his physician, which he does, and the doctor recommends a low dosage of an antidepressant. The medicine seems to help. Although Edward's mourning process lasts a considerable amount of time, he faces it squarely. At the doctor's suggestion, he begins taking a short jog in the mornings. He doesn't know if the antidepressants or the jogging will help him live as long as his dad did, but he's not ready to die quite yet.</p>
18	Socioemotional Development in Late Adulthood	<p>On Edward's 75th birthday, he receives a telephone call. His youngest daughter Mary brings the phone to him with a brief shake of her head; she doesn't know who the caller is. Taking the phone, Edward puts it to his ear, expecting maybe to hear one of John's children. His best friend of more than 50 years died two years before, leaving a gaping hole in his own life. He's wrong, though; the voice is female and unknown.</p> <p>"Mr. Archer?"</p> <p>"Yes. This is Edward Archer. Who's this?"</p> <p>"This is Elena Brantley, Mr. Archer. I understand it's your birthday. Felicitations."</p> <p>"Thank you. Do I know you, Ms. Brantley?" Edward, innately suspicious, wonders who the woman is and how she knows it's his birthday. He's certain he knows no Elena Brantley.</p> <p>"No, you don't, but I'd like for us to know one another. That's why I've called. I hoped I could come see you one day this week. I'll be close to where you live and thought maybe you would enjoy a visit. My name is Elena Brantley, but that's my married name. My maiden name is Ellis."</p> <p>Edward shakes his head to himself. "I'm sorry. I don't know any Ellises. Should I?"</p> <p>"Maybe not," she says. "My mother was Ginny Ellis. <i>Our</i> mother was Ginny Ellis. I'm your sister, Edward."</p> <p>Edward sits quietly without speaking for a moment. He has a sister. Valerie is his sister. Does he want another? Perhaps not. He might not even like this woman, this Elena Brantley. However, she might have information he would like to know about his biological mother. He's never been curious enough about her to go in search of her himself, and she is almost certainly dead now. Elena Brantley can possibly give him something that would—what? Fill a need? Not that—satisfy some curiosity maybe.</p> <p>"I see," he says at last. "This is a shock."</p> <p>"I'm sure it is. If I've upset you—"</p> <p>"Not at all. When would you like to get together?"</p> <p>"Wednesday or Thursday maybe? I'll be passing through Johnsonville on my way to visit my children. I believe that's quite close to you."</p> <p>"It is," Edward confirms. "There's a barbeque place just off the highway at exit 94. We could meet there Thursday at 12:30 p.m. if that's convenient."</p> <p>"Sure. I'll look forward to it."</p> <p>Edward and Jennifer meet Elena Brantley, a warm and generous 60-something woman who resembles Edward in coloring and stature but not much else. They like her, but Edward feels no immediate affinity or sibling bond.</p>

Elena shows Edward the small cache of information she's put together on their mother Ginny. Sent into foster care when she was days old, Elena never knew Ginny either, but she sought her out as a teenager. It took her parents several thousand dollars and more than a year, but they found her finally. Elena approached Ginny alone, and Ginny wasn't pleased to meet her daughter.

"Was she a prostitute?" Edward asks.

"I never knew for sure," Elena confides, "but it certainly seemed possible."

Jennifer turns the photographs around and looks at them closely. "She was lovely," she says and smiles.

"Yes, she really was." A wistful tone enters Elena's voice. "Days come and go when I wish she'd cared more, but then I reminded myself she cared enough to let us go."

The statement makes Edward think. "Do you think there are more of us? Brothers and sisters?"

"No." Elena shook her head. "I've checked hospital records and birth records. It's just the two of us."

"You were adopted, too?" he asks.

"Yes, I was—to really wonderful parents. I couldn't have asked for them to be more wonderful."

"Same here. You'll have to come for the holidays then . . . if you want to," he adds.

"I have another sister. Her name is Valerie. My dads adopted her when she was an infant, too, and I'm sure she'd love to meet you."

They make a plan for December, after which Jennifer and Edward say good-bye to Elena and see her off to her children. Edward hadn't known what to expect or what he wanted from this meeting, but he goes home feeling satisfied and somehow lighter.

19 Experience With Death and Dying

Edward declares his intent to live forever. He works diligently at the task. As his 70s progress, reality slowly overcomes will, and he finds himself unable to jog like he used to. Many days, he has difficulty with a short walk to the end of the street and back. He gets confused easily, some days not recognizing Valerie if she visits. He tries to remember, but his mind feels like Swiss cheese. He doesn't know how he can still make money when he doesn't even know what the stocks are anymore, but he does.

He wants to see what happens when a new retailer sets its IPO. Of all the things he's held onto for the past year, that's the big one. At the opening bell for trading on the day the company goes public, Edward is so excited he almost pees himself. It's possible he does pee himself.

The anxiety he's battled throughout his adulthood rears its head. The IPO kept him entertained for week, but what now? He's old; his body's breaking down. Every day he gets so nervous that he makes himself ill and short of breath. Death would be easier or maybe not. He doesn't want to leave Valerie. Or Elena. Or Mary. But, oh, the relief of not worrying anymore. What a nice, comforting thought . . .

A doctor will later tell Mary he had an aneurysm rupture, that there was no hope, that he has organs and tissue worth donating to waiting recipients. He's got the little symbol on his driver's license. She says yes.

Case Discussion Questions

1. During Edward's toddlerhood, his biological father contacts his adoptive fathers. He would like the chance to meet Edward despite the fact that the adoption was sealed. How does this (potential) introduction of a third parent into Edward's life alter his life's trajectory? Do Jared and Brendon have any reason to distrust Drew, and would their reactions possibly alter Edward's life trajectory across any and all domains (biological, cognitive, and socioemotional)?
2. In his young adulthood, Edward elects to go to college many hours away from home, contrasted with the optimal case in which he lives at home during college. His reason for the change is to have a physical break from his biological father. What circumstances in Edward's life may have led to this decision, and what changes might this lead to in Edward's future across any and all domains (biological, cognitive, and socioemotional)?
3. In middle adulthood, Edward and his wife divorce. What behaviors on Edward's part contribute to this outcome, contrasted with the optimal case, and what conditions across any and all domains (biological, cognitive, and socioemotional) may be related to his subsequent decision to remain single rather than remarry?
4. Consider Edward's optimal case outcomes at the end of his life and Erikson's integrity-versus-despair stage of psychosocial development. How does this case compare to that one? Consider all of Edward's life events. How do you think those contributed to any differences in Edward's end-of-life outcomes and his sense of integrity versus despair?

8. Moderate Outcomes: Aiza Morris

2 Biological and Environmental Foundations

Trina, who is 35 when Aiza is conceived, has few prenatal issues. She's fit and healthy and has all the advantages financial resources can offer. However, she is also technically of advanced maternal age, and her ob-gyn keeps close tabs on her for any negative effects she and Aiza may experience because of this. Aiza's moms, on the other hand, live believing that 40 is the new 30, and aren't surprised when Trina's prenatal lab work always comes back within normal limits. Although Trina requires in vitro fertilization (IVF) for conception because she and Kristy rely on sperm donation, they opt for only minimal preimplantation testing on the embryo. Their IVF isn't an opportunity to create a perfect baby but, rather, the opportunity to create a baby. The rest they leave up to Trina's diet, exercise, and the care of her capable doctor.

Late in Trina's pregnancy, her ob-gyn grows concerned as Trina's blood pressure begins to creep higher with each visit. Eventually, they agree to induce labor at 38 weeks to avoid preeclampsia and any potential harm to Aiza, who is born vaginally and with no difficulties.

3 Prenatal Development, Birth, and the Newborn Experience

Trina delivers Aiza with Kristy by her side and Devon jumping up and down at the head of the hospital bed. As Aiza crowns, Devon peeks where the obstetrician sits on her stool, prepared to catch the baby, and he makes a face of extreme disgust, causing all in the room to laugh. Afterward, he keeps his feet near Trina's head but bounces in anticipation until they hear Aiza's first lusty cries.

"There she is!" Kristy says in completely unnecessary announcement. "Look at our girl."

Already crying from the abrupt drop in hormones, Trina holds out her arms. “Let me have her.” Demand met, Kristy cuts the cord and quickly wraps their new daughter in a swath of hospital blanket before handing her to Trina, who tucks Aiza close to her body and stares at her. “Ah, you are a beauty, aren’t you?” Trina inspects their new daughter. “You’re so small, sweetheart.”

Devon disagrees about the beautiful part.

“She’s dirty, and she’s bleeding.”

Kristy laughs. “Oh, no. Sweetie, she’s not bleeding. She’s just got a little blood on her from being born. The nurses will get her all cleaned up in a just a few minutes.”

“I can hold her?” he asks, still working on grammatical structure in his tender toddler years.

“Yes, baby,” Trina tells him. “Let Mommy sit you on the bed, and you can hold your baby sister. You’ll have to be very careful. She’s tiny and a bit fragile.”

“I be careful, Mommy. I not break her.”

4 Physical Development in Infancy and Toddlerhood

“Dis li’uhl piggy went ’oo market, dis li’uhl piggy went ’ome . . .”

Devon holds his baby sister on his lap and sings to her. He has to reach a long way to touch the tips of her toes, and she wiggles as he sings.

His mom hands him a bottle and asks, “Do you want feed Aiza, Devon?”

“Me do it!” he yells. Mommy bends down and helps him start feeding his baby sister. When everything is okay, she stands and starts working on dinner. “She’s eating,” he giggles, so happy he can help.

“She is,” Mommy says. “You’re a big helper, Devon. Remember to help her sit up a little so she doesn’t get choked.”

“Okay, Mommy. Me like helping.”

5 Cognitive Development in Infancy and Toddlerhood

Aiza lays on her back and grabs her toes. Rolling back and forth, she sings to herself. Although her moms don’t understand her gibberish, Devon tells them she’s singing real words. They believe him. Thus far, they know she can say *mama* and *ma* to refer to the two of them, *Deh* for Devon, the obligatory *no*, *hi* and *bye-bye*, *more*, *Aye-ee* to refer to herself, *Lalock* to refer to Sherlock their cat, and a half-dozen other common words. The singing? Well, they figure that’s Devon’s domain. Their son seems confused at their confusion, but they enjoy watching him lay his head on her pillow beside hers before bedtime while he teaches her new songs. Aiza seemed particularly fond of “The Itsy Bitsy ’Pider.”

6 Socioemotional Development in Infancy and Toddlerhood

When Aiza turns a year old, Trina decides she’s ready to return to full-time legal practice. After the first three months, she started corresponding with the office electronically and by cell phone, consulting on low-profile cases and providing needed information on cases that hadn’t closed when she left to have Aiza. Occasionally she and Aiza traveled together to the office for an hour or two. Now, she’s ready for full-time practice again. Devon, in preschool and without the need for full-time care, is less a concern than their Aiza. After a lot of conversation, Kristy and Trina decide the best answer is to hire a nanny three days each week. Trina will take Fridays off unless she has to be in court, which is unlikely. Kristy will continue to take her normal Wednesdays off. With a nanny the rest of the week, Aiza will be cared for all day, and someone will be there to collect Devon at the end of his preschool day at St. Andrews.

The moms spend a few weeks interviewing candidates they've secured through word of mouth from friends and coworkers. Along with all the usual qualifications, they want a nanny with a certified nursing assistant license or, at minimum, someone certified in CPR. Aiza's small size at birth and her subsequent respiratory ailments make both moms a little nervous, and it never hurts, they agree, to err on the side of caution. They also have Devon spend some time in each interview along with Aiza so they can get a feel for how the prospective nannies get along with their children. By the deadline Trina's given herself for returning to work, América Elizondo has joined the family three days a week, and Devon is eating out of her hand. Secure in the children's well-being, Trina dresses in a smart suit, kisses her wife and baby, and snaps her fingers at Devon. "Come along, babe. Time to go."

7 Physical and Cognitive Development in Early Childhood

It's not until second grade at St. Andrews that Aiza realizes she's different from her classmates. On the playground, a new girl called Amanda asks her, "What *are* you?" and the question catches the attention of several other classmates.

Stung, Aiza stares at her. "What do you mean 'what am I?' I'm a girl just like you."

"No," Amanda says, shaking her head. "Not that. I mean, you're not white like me, and you're not brown like Tiana. You're kind of light brown, but I don't see anyone else that color. So, what are you besides skinny and weird?"

"I'm brown and white," Aiza tells her. She's offended, but she doesn't know why. "I guess I am light brown."

"What's brown *and* white?"

Aiza decides she doesn't like Amanda, and she mostly likes everyone. Plus, the comment about being skinny stings—like she doesn't know she's skinny.

"I have a brown mommy, and my father was white. I'm brown, but I'm also white." This seems obvious to her. Looking at her other friends, it seems pretty obvious to them, too. Reassured, she continues. "Why do you care?"

"I've never seen a brown person with green eyes before," Amanda taunts.

"Now you have."

"And you don't braid your hair like all the other brown people I know."

Yes, Aiza definitely dislikes Amanda.

"I like to wear it like this. I have curly hair. Who cares about that?"

Close to Aiza's right elbow, her friend Susanna Webster says, "I wish my hair was curly like yours. You *are* kinda skinny, though."

Aiza looks at Susanna with some skepticism. "Thanks. I think. Wanna jump rope?"

8 Socioemotional Development in Early Childhood

Weekday evenings are predictable in the Morris household. Trina and Kristy work together fixing dinner. Neither is an outstanding cook, but they both prepare passable meals. No one's died yet anyway, they joke a few times a week. Monday and Tuesday, Devon helps while Aiza takes care of other household tasks like taking out the trash and cleaning the litterbox. On Thursday and Friday, the children switch. The moms are intent on allowing both Devon and Aiza to find their own paths, particularly whether they want traditional or atypical gender identities and the roles that go with them. However, they're also determined to make sure both can do all chores around a house and don't expect any division of labor based on body parts. The family doesn't talk about it unless one of the kids brings it up, but it's important for Trina and Kristy.

The only chore Aiza pushes back on is the litterbox. “It’s so gross!” she complains. To be fair, her brother does, too.

When Aiza exerts her will, Kristy (the bad cop) approaches the situation with loving firmness. Aiza learns there are boundaries, that if a chore is on her list, it’s pretty much non-negotiable, but she also learns that her mom is ready and willing to listen to her concerns. When Aiza says she doesn’t like “dirty” chores, Kristy points out that she doesn’t mind taking out the trash. Faced with her own inconsistency, Aiza agrees that maybe the litterbox isn’t *so bad* a couple days each week. She also admits that she doesn’t like doing it after Devon because her brother doesn’t do such a good job. *That*, Kristy tells her, is a legitimate complaint, and she will have a talk with Devon to correct that problem right away.

9 Physical and Cognitive Development in Middle and Late Childhood

Aiza spends the last two years of elementary school in a strange sort of space that’s devoid of Devon’s presence since he moved on to the upper school at St. Andrews. It’s weird. Their school is so small that she’s used to seeing him all the time or being in classes where the teachers have had him pretty recently. Now, it’s just Aiza, and she kind of likes it. It’s not that she and her brother aren’t close. They are. It’s just nice to see what it’s like to be out of his shadow. Everyone loves Devon Morris.

All of her teachers expect her to be great at everything. She knows because she’s heard them talking to her moms about it. Probably it’s because they’re both so educated and have such great jobs. Aiza’s not sure why that automatically means she has to be good at everything. She has trouble sometimes staying on top of everything and wishes she could go home and sleep. She doesn’t think anyone knows how exhausting it is being the Morris kid, especially Devon the Perfect’s little sister.

The weirdest thing happens in fifth grade science class. Her teacher does a lesson on making magnetic slime. It’s so cool! Aiza asks her moms if they’ll buy her the stuff to make it at home, and it becomes her thing. Soon, all her friends are paying her to make slime for them. She charges only a dollar, which is just enough to be able to keep buying materials. It’s pretty cool, though, and makes her feel a little better about school.

10 Socioemotional Development in Middle and Late Childhood

Aiza still doesn’t like Amanda Tate. It’s been four years, and she tried. Well, she tried twice, but she did try. Amanda is what’s more commonly known as a mean girl. The label is honestly come by, as her mama would say. Aiza isn’t a mean girl. She’s not a saint, much to the dismay of the Head, but she’s not a mean girl. Each of them has their faction, too. Amanda’s is white, which makes Aiza feel like a traitor to Mom, but the truth is what it is. Aiza’s friends are more like a rainbow. She worries sometimes that she collects the St. Andrews misfits and then dismisses the thoughts. Who cares? Everyone needs a home.

Amanda sneaks up behind Aiza at the upper school open house for rising seventh graders. Aiza’s moms are talking to Ms. Eddleman, who will be her homeroom teacher in a few months—and Amanda’s.

“Morris,” Amanda whispers.

“Tate.” Aiza turns around and faces Amanda. “What do you want?”

“Why don’t you like me? Or white people?”

Aiza laughs. “White people? *I’m* white. My mom’s white. Get over yourself, Amanda.”

She sees Devon coming toward her in the hallway and waves. She’s not scared of Amanda, but it’s always nice to have her brother around. When Devon joins them, he looks at the door.

"Ms. Eddleman? Sorry, Aiza."

"I'll live."

He looks at Amanda. "Slumming, Amanda?"

Aiza watches as Amanda loses her capacity for quick comebacks. It's so painful that any comedy in the situation falls flat. Amanda tries to shoot her an evil look but fails. Before the situation can deteriorate further, Aiza's moms return and wave at her and her brother. As Aiza walks away, she glances back at Amanda.

"See you Monday." In the car, she glares at Devon. "What was that? Is Amanda in love with you or something?"

Devon shrugs and grins at her. "Or something."

11 Physical and Cognitive Development in Adolescence

When she's 14, Aiza sits alone with her doctor. Their moms have taken her and Devon to the pediatrician for their normal checkups, and that means five or ten minutes of private time for questions and answers of an intimate nature. She swings her legs over the side of the examining table and waits. The silence makes her feel awkward.

"We talked about a lot of things with your moms, Aiza. I just want to double-check a few of those."

She lifts one shoulder. "Okay."

"No drugs?"

"No drugs," she confirms. If this is what the doctor wants to know, she'll be done fast. Devon was.

"No alcohol?"

"Only on New Year's when Mom gives me and Devon a glass of champagne."

"Good." Dr. Bennett looks at her with narrowed eyes. "And sex?"

Aiza laughs. "*No sex*," she assures her.

"Good again." Dr. Bennett nods. "Aiza, can I help you with anything you didn't want to say in front of your parents?"

She thinks about it. Is there? "I don't think so. Only . . . What if there is one day?"

"Then you'll call and tell the receptionist you have a question."

Aiza realizes that Dr. Bennett's answer makes her feel much better even though she can't say why. "Thank you, Dr. Bennett," she says. "That helps a lot."

"That's what I'm here for."

At 15, they repeat the process with an exception. Near the end of the conversation, Aiza asks, "How much doctor-patient confidentiality do I enjoy here?"

"Fairly complete," Dr. Bennett assures her. Holding up first, then two, then three fingers, she runs back through their topics. "Drugs, alcohol, sex?"

"Door number three."

"Complete confidentiality unless you have HIV."

"I don't."

"Then you're safe telling or asking me anything."

"Whew." Aiza blows out a breath. "I'm not," she rushes to say. "I'm not having sex. I'm not really even thinking about it. But I might soon. I was thinking about . . ."

"Options?" Dr. Bennett supplies.

"Yeah."

They agree that—condoms aside because they're critical for other preventions—Aiza should try the ring. Dr. Bennett hands her a paper prescription that she folds and slips into the pocket of her jeans.

"Thank you."

"Of course. It's good you're being forward minded, although I encourage you to continue waiting."

Aiza gives her a half smile. "We'll see."

12 Socioemotional Development in Adolescence

In the upper school at St. Andrews, Aiza navigates a complex social maze. She's in school with what are predominantly wealthy white kids, and she knows she's one of them. She's also a wealthy brown kid, as Amanda Tate goes to great lengths to remind her as often as possible. Susanna Webster—thank God for Susanna—remains a good friend and keeps her steady when she might lose her head over Amanda's stupid antics. She has other friends and spends time with them, football games when she goes to see Devon play, and after parties when her moms let her go. The parties are nearly as bad as school. Devon's always there, and he either ignores her (kid sister kills the football star vibe) or kills her fun when she starts to get lucky with a guy who doesn't yet know she's Devon Morris's little sister. It's always the same.

"Hey, Devon!" and he answers her with a look of such condescension that she slinks into the background like a wallflower.

Or she'll hear "Do we have a class together?" or something equally stupid from a guy she doesn't know and who knows he doesn't know her.

"I don't think so. I'm sure I'd remember."

There's a smile—a flirtatious leaning in with one shoulder. Aiza smiles back.

"Me, too. I'm [fill in the guy of the night's name], and you are . . . ?"

"Aiza." She never gives a last name. They'll find out soon enough. When she's super unlucky, they find out just about . . .

"Hey, Aiza! You get that text from Mom?"

There is no text from Mom.

Eventually, she learns to slip out a side door with [fill in the guy of the night's name] as soon as she sees Devon turn in her direction. It helps, but he always gives her grief when they get home anyway.

In 10th grade, she meets Dale Linwood when Devon brings him home one day after football practice. Dale is everything Devon is not: tall and wiry, all American with blond hair and blue eyes, quiet and gentle. Devon treats her like the kid sister she is, but although he shuts his door in her face, she manages to speak to Dale without tripping over her tongue when they run into each other in the kitchen a little while later. Much to Devon's dismay, Aiza and Dale start dating soon after that, and he takes her to his senior prom in the spring.

Trina helps her shop for a dress. After hours in fitting rooms at all the stores all the girls she knows are shopping at—God, they even run into Amanda Tate—Mom suggests they try a smaller boutique in town. Exhausted but determined, Aiza says okay, but this is the last one. When they arrive, Aiza looks around the shop and shakes her head.

“You weren’t kidding. It’s not much bigger than Mama’s closet in here.”

“Well,” Mom says, laughing, “Kristy always did like her clothes. Remodeling the guest room into a dressing room was a good investment.”

Aiza laughs with her in amusement as a dapper man in his 30s approaches them. She senses Mom opening her mouth and turns to her, finger on the air.

“No. Absolutely not. No one needs your gaydar to know how this guy’s not straight, Mom. Not everything is ‘part of the community.’ Some things just are.” Mom purses her lips, but her eyes are twinkling. “Thank you.”

Approaching, the man—his tag reads *Prescott*—holds a hand on the air. He speaks before reaching them. “Prom?” Aiza nods. “What a charming face and that hair! Makes me wish I were a hair dresser.” He turns and motions for them to follow, speaking to Aiza over his shoulder. “Of course, with those eyes, there’s really only one dress in the store you can wear.”

“But I haven’t looked at anything yet.”

“That’s how I earn my keep.” They arrive at the center of the boutique where a half-dozen other mothers and daughters (and one father-daughter pair) stand and sit in various configurations. A handful of mothers are alone, and Aiza hears girls calling from inside fitting rooms, too. “*Maman*,” Prescott says to Mom in French, “you’ll sit here with this.”

Mom sits in the plush white chair and accepts the champagne flute. Aiza raises a brow. Mom lifts a shoulder as if to say, “If I have to do the shopping and the paying, at least I can have Cristal while I’m so put upon.”

“You,” Prescott says, waving a hand up and down in front of Aiza, will follow me.”

Inside a fitting room, Aiza strips to her underwear and a bra bought for the day’s shopping. Prescott knocks on the door after an absence of several minutes, which she opens wide enough to take the perfectly sensible heels from him before reaching for the dress. He’d said there was only one, and she finds that hard to believe with all she’s tried on throughout the day. Dutifully, she works herself into the long, grey gown with embroidered overskirt in all the colors of a summer garden. She never would’ve picked it for herself to try on, but staring at herself in the mirror she’s forced to admit Prescott’s eye. It’s perfect, as her mother agrees five minutes later.

When she and Dale shop for his tux, he asks her what color tie and cummerbund to get, and she shakes her head at him. “Wear what you want to. No matter what it is, you’re going to look great.”

“But I don’t want you to think I clash with your dress,” he says.

Aiza smiles at him, thinking of her dress with its rainbow of colors. “I really don’t think that’s going to happen. It’s your prom. Wear whatever makes you happy.”

- 13 Physical and Cognitive Development in Emerging/Early Adulthood**
- “Hi, Mama.”
- Aiza kisses her mom on the cheek on a Wednesday afternoon—once again Kristy’s day off at the hospital—and tosses her book bag on the kitchen table. It’s been a pretty good day.
- “Hey, sweetheart. How was your day?”
- “Pretty good. I finished a sketch for the next project I want to do in my Welding II class. Wanna see?”
- “Of course. Sit down and show me.”
- Aiza sat. She pointed at Mama’s beer on the little paper coaster from their trip to the Grand Canyon the year before. “Can I have one of those?”
- “You’re 20. No, you may not.” Aiza rolled her eyes, but Mama ignored her. “Now show me this sketch.”
- “Okay.” She pulls the piece of paper out of her backpack and slides it across the table. “I know you wanted me to go to a university and get a fancy degree like you or Mom, but I really love being where I am.”
- Mama eyes her. “That’s true enough,” she concedes, “but community college seems like it’s been the best fit for you. I love the work you do in your iron classes. Welding is such a cool line for you, Aiza.”
- “Thanks for saying that, Mama. What do you think about this?” she asks, pointing to the pencil sketch of an elaborate headboard she envisioned to fit a queen-sized bed. It was her most ambitious project yet.
- “This is gorgeous.”
- Aiza beams. She can feel the smile cracking her face. “I’m glad you like it. If it comes out well, I might put it on Etsy or try to find a studio to sell it.”
- “I think you should. You’re so talented, sweetheart.”
- “Not traditionally. Who knew?”
- “I did.”
- Aiza rolls her eyes and hops up from the table. “Well, if I can’t join you in a beer, I’m going to my room to start figuring out materials.” She drops a kiss on her mom’s head and grabs her book bag. She’s so excited!
- 14 Socioemotional Development in Emerging/Early Adulthood**
- Aiza leans back in the overstuffed secondhand chair and crosses her booted feet at the ankles. The boots were Frye and salvaged from Mom’s closet a couple years ago. She loves the Western phase. Everything is soft leather and hunks of turquoise. Her wardrobe is decidedly more posh and timeless every time she helps her moms “clean out.”
- “Tired?” Bruce asks.
- She considered her answer. Bruce had offered to carry her sculptures from the elevator to the small gallery that consigned both their works, and she’d said no, thanks. She had it. The need to be competent often overrides her common sense. She should’ve said yes.
- “A little,” she admits, “and don’t even say it.”
- “I won’t.”

"Thanks, Bruce," she says, meaning it. He was okay—easy on the eyes, too, for a Bohemian artist.

"I won't," he corrects, if you agree to dinner."

"I—" Aiza stops and looks at him. "Is this a date?"

Bruce smiles. "I hope so."

They eat barbeque. When Aiza takes her first bite, she pronounces it passable but says, "Really, barbeque isn't barbeque if it doesn't come from Memphis."

This is met with, "Memphis?" from Bruce, who scoffs and says, "I beg to differ. Texas or it's not barbeque."

Their server puts her own two cents in, proclaiming the restaurant's barbeque excellent if only because it replicates that found in Lexington, North Carolina.

Bruce looks at Aiza, and they say the same thing at the same time.

"Taste test."

Spending a pleasant couple hours over peach cobbler and coffee, Aiza and Bruce make a barbeque bucket list, all the places they'd visit and try before proclaiming a "nation's best" if only they had unlimited time and resources. It's a fun list by the time Aiza calls an end to the extended dinner.

"I really need to get back to the gallery," she tells him. "Charles," the gallery owner, "hasn't ever let me put any pieces in there before, and I want to make sure the installation goes perfectly to plan."

"Can I help?" he asks. "I haven't had a lot of experience with sculpture, but I've hung around the gallery long enough to know how Charlie likes things."

She raises a brow. "You call him *Charlie*?"

Bruce shrugs. "Since I could talk anyway."

"Oh, I see." Aiza shakes her head. "You get your stuff in the gallery because you're the gallery owner's brother."

Pretending offence, Bruce puts his hand on his chest. "I get my stuff in the gallery because it sells, which galleries need to keep their doors open and discover new talent like yours."

"There is that," she concedes. "So come show me how *Charlie* likes things. He's not the only one who likes it when things sell."

Their courtship lasts longer than Bruce would like. Aiza, independent and accustomed to seeing women make decisions, takes the relationship through a series of slow, steady paces before her 30th birthday when Bruce finally proposes. She says yes, telling him it's only so she can travel on the barbeque bucket list honeymoon he's planned, but in her heart she knows she's made the best choice she could.

15 Physical and Cognitive Development in Middle Adulthood

Aiza spends a good portion of her 20s struggling to get her sculptures into local galleries. The market for large, welded iron icons isn't large, and she barely ekes out a living. She doesn't mind so much, and she frequently turns down offers of assistance from her moms (although she isn't above taking a \$20 now and again from Devon). For her, the need to prove that women can weld and that welding can be beautiful is too important to given in.

Bruce supports every move she makes, and he never makes her feel less than. She's so grateful. Not every spouse would be as tender and supportive as he is. She knows he would encourage her to open her own studio/gallery if she brought it up, but she doesn't want to do that. Contributing to the artistic variability in established galleries means more to her, and his support means the most of all.

**16 Socioemotional
Development
in Middle
Adulthood**

Bruce and Aiza travel back home for her moms' 35th wedding anniversary. After champagne toasts, cake, and a really sweet dance Kristy and Trina do alone to "Unforgettable," the first song played at their wedding, Bruce puts his arm around Aiza's waist.

"Do you remember our first date?"

"The barbeque?" she asks.

"I do." He pulls her a little closer. "I'd watched you all day lugging those heavy sculptures into the gallery, and you wouldn't let me help at all. I thought you were very stubborn."

"I was!" she admits, thinking back. "I didn't want you to think I *needed* your help, even though I really wanted it."

He laughs. "It took me a little while to figure that out, but I got it eventually. So . . ."

"So?" she asks.

"What if I suggested something else you might want my help with now that we're an old married couple that has officially dubbed Lexington the barbeque capital of the nation?"

Nervous, Aiza gave him a skeptical look. "What might that be?"

"How about a baby?"

"A baby?"

"It's not like I said a Martian, Aiza."

"Are you sure?"

"Well, I didn't think so. I look around and see human children with a fair degree of frequency. We don't have to do it because it's the thing to do but rather because we want to." The music stopped and he led her off the dance floor. "And I do. Want to."

Did she, though? She'd never thought about it before, but now that he'd raised the idea, she realized she did want to.

"Yes, let's do it."

Already in her 30s, Aiza doesn't want the anxiety her own moms had had with her. They squeak one out pretty quickly—a boy named Theo Ridley, even though Aiza retains her maiden name—and decide he is plenty. Treasured and passed from grandparents to grandparents when not with Aiza or Bruce, Theo grows into a rough-and-tumble little boy who loves to paint and read as much as he loves to climb trees and ride his bike. When Aiza bathes him or reads to him, she wonders how she ever had a life that didn't include him. When he is with his grandparents, she wonders how she ever gets anything done with him around. *Balance*, she tells herself, loving every single minute of the life she and Bruce built.

17	Physical and Cognitive Development in Late Adulthood	<p>Aiza makes almost no concessions to aging. Having worked for decades with iron, blow torches, clamps, and wrenches, she remains fit and strong, although her back gives her problems more than she'd like. Other than her back, she has few complaints and counts herself lucky. Given the nature of her job, she's able to work without retiring for a long time. She loves what she does, and Bruce encourages her long hours and creativity. He would, she thinks, because she does the same for him. They get each other.</p> <p>In her 40s, Aiza loses both of her mothers in close succession. Trina goes first, the victim of stress-related heart disease. Kristy passes away two years later. Healthy and active like Aiza herself, Kristy loses an unexpected battle with breast cancer. Stoic until the end, she tells Aiza her only consolations are that she lived to see her grandchildren born and that Aiza was the biological daughter of Trina, so Kristy doesn't have to worry about passing along the genetic predisposition to breast cancer to her daughter.</p> <p>Aiza grieves both losses for long months. By the time she finds her way out of the fog, she realizes how old she herself has become. She looks anxiously at Bruce every day and can't stop worrying if she should be worrying about losing him, too.</p>
18	Socioemotional Development in Late Adulthood	<p>In their late 60s, Bruce and Aiza have each other, Devon, and Theo. Devon's kids—grown and with their own families—visit some, but their family is shrinking. Aiza sometimes feels lonely and often worries about what will happen if Devon or Bruce passes before she does. She knows she's had a good life, but she's selfish and doesn't want to be alone.</p> <p>She and Bruce have more flexibility than Devon, and they visit whenever is possible. Their long weekends and joint vacations mean the world to Aiza, who always felt like family was the most important thing in the world.</p> <p>Bruce's brother Charlie, who still owns the gallery where Aiza first sold some of her unusual sculptures, makes sure that the small group of artists with whom they're all friends makes time for one another at least once a month. This helps Aiza feel less isolated. Bruce tells her he's glad of their closer friends, too, because he knows she'll be taken care of if he's the one to go first. She doesn't let him say more, refusing to discuss the day he'll be gone. Bruce tells her this isn't practical, but she doesn't care. Being alone is the one thing Aiza's never faced, and after watching her mom try to tackle widowhood, she knows it's not something she's up for.</p>
19	Experience With Death and Dying	<p>The year Aiza turns 80, she throws her back out. Through tears, she explains to the emergency room doctor what happened—nothing—and how it feels—like she's dying. Bruce holds her hand the entire time. While they wait for radiology to pick her up for an MRI, she and Bruce talk through her morphine-induced haze.</p> <p>"This was bound to happen, you know," Bruce tells her.</p> <p>"I somehow deserve to be in excruciating pain?" she asks.</p> <p>"Ha! Not at all, my love. I'm just referring to all the years of lugging hundred-pound sculptures around. You didn't expect to escape some lasting damage, did you?"</p> <p>Aiza waved a drunken hand on the air. "Why not?"</p> <p>"Because you're human."</p>

“Mrs. Ridley? We’ll take you now.”

A nurse in lavender scrubs and iridescent medical clogs helps her into a wheelchair and takes her to the imaging wing of the hospital, where she endures a 360 MRI as well as a set of X-rays. Three hours later, she and Bruce sign the papers for her surgery, a neurosurgery that lasts six hours. In the recovery room, she wakes slowly to more morphine and the face of Bruce hovering.

The doctor speaks to Bruce and explains that the surgery went well. Aiza is tired and will have a lengthy recovery period, but he anticipates a full recovery. Relieved, Bruce exhales; it’s a breath he holds when a nurse comes to him swiftly. Aiza’s suffering a postoperative complication that has nothing to do with the original surgery, and she’s headed back into the operating room. Someone will update him soon. He buys a vending machine coffee and waits. No one comes for hours, and when he sees the doors open, it’s a doctor and not a nurse. The expression on the doctor’s face tells him all he needs to know.

“I’m so sorry, Mr. Ridley,” she tells him, “we did everything we could.” Then she tells him about the procedure and what happened that led to Aiza’s death.

Case Discussion Questions

1. Aiza is born after Trina is induced due to concerns about rising blood pressure and possible preeclampsia. A couple weeks early, she is slightly small although not small-for-date. Compare this birth outcome with Aiza’s optimal case outcome. What impact might Aiza’s birth in this case have on her life’s trajectory across any and all domains (biological, cognitive, and socioemotional)?
2. In early adulthood, Aiza attends a local community college where she earns a degree in welding. She uses her skills to create artistic furniture and sculptures she sells and displays locally. This is a different life choice than Aiza’s optimal case outcome in which she attends university, also locally, where she gets to explore ideas about using emergent technologies to shape a better world. What in Aiza’s background would explain the divergence in these two paths? What can we assume with some certainty about her future, comparing each of these two outcomes?
3. In her 30s, Aiza marries fellow artist Bruce, and they have one child. Compare this outcome to that of Aiza’s optimal case in which she marries Dale, her once high school boyfriend, and the two opt to not have children. What factors in her childhood might’ve led to this divergence in midlife choices? How would expect this difference to manifest in subsequent periods of her development?
4. Consider Aiza’s optimal case outcomes at the end of her life and Erikson’s integrity-versus-despair stage of psychosocial development. How does this case compare to that one? Consider all of Aiza’s life events. How do you think those contributed to any differences in Aiza’s end-of-life outcomes and her sense of integrity versus despair?

9. Moderate Outcomes: Zack Park

2 Biological and Environmental Foundations

Rebecca and Joseph meet with Rebecca's psychiatrist together. Although they agree their choice is the best one for their growing family, they also know Rebecca will need everyone on the same page supporting her through the next several months. In the waiting room, Joseph flips through an issue of *GQ* while she tries to remember the keys to Chopin. She hasn't played piano since seventh grade, but trying to remember is soothing. She moves her fingers on her knees and hopes Joseph doesn't think she's crazy.

"You're not crazy."

"I'm a little crazy," she whispers.

"Okay, maybe a little, but life would get boring without a little crazy."

"Mrs. Park?"

The receptionist has appeared without Rebecca noticing. Score one for Joseph. Score all of them for Joseph. She loves him.

They enter Dr. Wen's office and sit on the sofa across the room from his desk. It's homier, Rebecca thinks every time she comes here. The desk is so . . . *clinical*. Dr. Wen joins them and shakes her hand and then Joseph's.

"Rebecca! You look great. Pregnancy agrees with you."

"Thank you." She taps her knees again. "You've spoken with my OB, I think?"

"Yep." Dr. Wen nods. "Dr. Lucas and I conferred about your case. You know, this isn't all that uncommon, women needing to decide what to do about an SSRI or other psychotropic med during pregnancy."

"It's not?"

"Not at all. Now, unlike some, you've got a little higher dosage of Paxil, and you've been on Paxil for a lot longer than many."

"Yeah."

Joseph clears his throat to ask, "What exactly does that mean?"

"It means that Rebecca really isn't accustomed to coping with her illness without medication. She'll also feel the lack of Paxil pretty acutely. It's not addictive; so I don't mean that. She's really coping well right now, and that's due in large part to her Paxil. With the higher dose, we'll have to wean her more quickly to get her off altogether, and she'll definitely feel that. She'll also just miss it. She's dealing with significant debilitation without treatment."

"That's why I'm here," Rebecca says, reminding both men that she, the patient, is in the room. "If I'm going to do this, and Joseph and I agree it's the right thing to do, then I need help getting through the next seven months."

Dr. Wen nods. "Yes, you do. After speaking with Dr. Lucas, we decided on the following schedule to get you off the Paxil." He hands her a card with a rough calendar handwritten on it. If she follows it, she'll be off the Paxil in two weeks. A little jolt of fear shoots through her at the thought; she's been taking it so long. Seeing her face, Dr. Wen smiles. "There's more. Here's the contact information for a psychotherapist in the area. She's great with patients who have OCD."

I think you and I slacked off on psychotherapy—and I didn’t push it—because you responded so well to Paxil. We need new methods now. And here’s the information for a support group for people with OCD. Some are in therapy, some are on meds, some do both, and some do neither. The group is open seven days a week, kind of like AA, but not everyone goes every day. I would encourage you to go as often as you need to. This is where you’ll find your greatest support.”

Rebecca looks at all three cards and tries to process the information. “Thank you,” she says even as she’s still thinking.

“Of course. Look, Rebecca, I really think your first step should be calling this psychotherapist. The tools she can give you right away will help replace the Paxil in very profound ways. Then get yourself to the support group where you can commiserate without other—”

“Crazies?” she asks, smiling.

“You know it.”

He asks if they have other questions. Joseph asks one or two, and Dr. Wen gives him a resource on loving someone with OCD. They leave soon after, both determined to get through the next seven months and to enjoy as much of it as they can. Rebecca grits her teeth. She wants to enjoy it. She does. Maybe it can all work out.

3 Prenatal Development, Birth, and the Newborn Experience

Joseph continues to work throughout Rebecca’s pregnancy. With a small but bustling medical practice he’s attempting to grow, it’s important he be in the office as much as possible. It’s also important for the practice he wants to grow because he’s practicing community-based general care. His clients are often uninsured or underinsured, and to assist with drains on health care systems like emergency room visits, he likes to be as accessible as possible. This leaves Rebecca alone much of the day and, often, at night, too.

Thanks to the suggestions of her obstetrician Dr. Lucas and psychiatrist Dr. Wen, she’s begun seeing a psychotherapist twice a month. Ms. Ivers has a master’s in counseling and a postgraduate certificate in applied behavioral analysis. She’s highly regarded in the therapeutic community, and she has room in her client list to begin seeing Rebecca right away. From the start, the two hit it off. Ms. Ivers agrees with Dr. Lucas and Dr. Wen about her decision to stop taking Paxil, to get some therapeutic help to learn coping strategies, and to join a support group. Coordinated care, Joseph calls it, and Rebecca knows how important he thinks it is.

In their third session, Rebecca rolls her eyes at herself and half laughs. “I feel like an alcoholic in the group meetings,” she tells Ms. Ivers.

“Why is that?”

“Because we all agree to take our illness one day at a time like addicts do in AA. ‘Just for today I will not wash my hands with bleach,’ or ‘Just for today I’ll leave the house without triple-checking to make sure the curling iron is unplugged.’”

Rebecca doesn’t admit that she goes to meetings only now and then. She wants to be more consistent, but she’s sometimes too anxious about going to go.

Ms. Ivers nods. “It’s a good strategy, both in AA and in cognitive behavioral therapy.”

"Is it?" Rebecca asks, unconvinced.

"Yes. Let's take the curling iron example since I know that's not you."

Rebecca touches her short boy cut. "Okay."

"Suppose I always triple-check that I've unplugged everything, and the only way I can make it through the day is to know that I've triple-checked, right?"

"Yeah."

"So, *just for today*," she says with emphasis, "I double-check instead of triple-check. I play out the scenario instead of imagining it. You know the one I mean?"

"I do," Rebecca admits. "What's the very worst thing that could happen if I don't fill in the blank or if I do fill in the blank?"

"Exactly. Of course, with the curling iron, I could burn down the house, kill the family pets. If I live in an apartment, maybe I burn down the whole building because it has substandard wiring, and a little old lady dies and—"

"Oh, my God!" Rebecca says, horrified.

Ms. Ivers laughs. "Okay. Admittedly, that went a little far, but that really is sort of worst-case scenario. So, today, I play it out, but of course I *have* unplugged the curling iron. I know that. Nothing bad happens. The goal? Maybe I go a week double-checking instead of triple-checking and try very hard to note that the world isn't ending every day. I also try very hard not to let the obsessions that started the whole routine overtake my world. I've learned to not only talk to myself but trust myself."

Rebecca finishes for her. "And next week I try just one day of checking only once before I leave."

"That's the idea, and really, who shouldn't check once? That's only the smart thing. Once we get to this point, then we attack those obsessive thoughts. What was your just for today today, Rebecca?"

She takes a deep breath. On the exhale, she says, "Just for today I won't look for patterns of three or tap on my knees to make myself less anxious."

"Ah," Ms. Ivers says, "the old three rears its head."

"So I'm not only crazy, but I'm cliché, too?"

They laugh together, and Ms. Ivers nods. "Afraid so. Good goals, though. The concern, of course, as Dr. Wen will have explained to you, is that with your elevated anxiety and the cessation of Paxil, you'll experience sustained or exaggerated periods of serotonin flooding. Stress hormones, too, like corticosteroids, but really we're most concerned about your serotonin levels and how that can affect your baby's development, specifically cerebral development."

"I know."

"Our goal is to keep you as even keeled as possible for as much of your pregnancy as possible. We can do this. I like the one-day-at-a-time plan. I'd also like to see you keeping a daily log of your activities and how you feel throughout the day. If you'll start that tomorrow, tonight even, then when you return, we can have a talk about it. Just be sure to bring the log with you."

"Good. Okay." Rebecca breathes deeply again. "Good. I think we can do this. Thank you."

"I think we can, too, Rebecca. Keep the faith and call me whenever you need to."

Rebecca uses the rest of her pregnancy and the log Ms. Ivers asks her to keep as the springboard for a memoir. As a writer, she likes the idea of sudden memoir—autobiography written as it's happening—and the log forms the backbone of that for her. She wonders why women don't talk about mental illness and pregnancy and wonders if doing so might help others. She hopes so anyway.

Just as she finishes a draft of the section on the second trimester, left behind weeks ago now, she feels a wave of complete exhaustion. Her back aches, and she wishes Joseph were home to give her a massage. Texting him, she says only *Tired and cranky. Come home soon, please.*

He does, but when he gets there, he takes a careful inventory of her pale face and constant stretching of her back then asks her a series of questions. Deciding she's in labor, he gathers her overnight bag for the hospital and calls Dr. Lucas, who meets them there.

As expected, it's a long labor, nearly 12 hours. Most first labors are, Joseph reassures her, as she breathes and crunches ice chips. She transitions in the 13th hour, and within 30 minutes of pushing delivers their beautiful son Zachary. Holding him, touching him, and seeing his perfect little face—such a politic combination of both their genes—Rebecca knows the hard work of being without the Paxil was worth it. Joseph takes a hundred pictures of them in the first hour, and she's never been happier in her life.

4 Physical Development in Infancy and Toddlerhood

Just as they did with the decision to discontinue her Paxil during the pregnancy, Rebecca and Joseph have discussed what to do once their baby is born. Rebecca feels like the frequent group meetings and the psychotherapy with Ms. Ivers helped her make it through the pregnancy unmedicated and mostly sane. (No one's perfect.) She also feels like she's done the best she can for as long as she can. Joseph agrees. More than that, they've taken to heart the words of Rebecca's obstetrician, who gives them information about newborns, their temperaments, and how temperament can change some if Mom is high strung or even the opposite. Joseph and Rebecca both know that she's more than "high strung," and they worry that she might affect the baby's early temperament, which is already likely to be more than a little reactive. For these reasons as well as Rebecca's own mental health, they've made the decision that she'll begin her meds again as soon as the baby is born, and Zack will be formula fed.

Joseph worries that Rebecca will feel guilty that she isn't breast-feeding Zack, but nothing could be further from the truth. When Zack wakes at 2:45 a.m. in the morning—every morning—Rebecca pats Joseph's butt and says, "Give him his bottle, won't you?" And there are as many nights that he gets home and she's feeding him a bottle while cooking dinner as there are nights that she hands him the spatula and rocks Zack in the old rocker in the kitchen while Joseph cooks. Of course, Joseph's *halmeoni*, his grandmother, gets her share of baby feeding, too, and that's maybe the biggest perk aside from Rebecca's meds to Zack being a bottle-fed baby.

Joseph returns from his practice late on a Thursday, afraid he's missed dinner. Coming through the door, he smells the delicious scent of his wife's meatball soup and hears Zack crying. Moments later he sees them standing in the doorway, Zack tugging on Rebecca's earlobe and fussing in some unknown frustration—not uncommon with the baby—and Rebecca, who points him toward the kitchen and hands Zack over to him.

"*Halmeoni*," she says. "I found her like that when I brought Zack down after his nap. Joe, she's a wonderful treasure in our lives."

Curious, he peeks over Rebecca's shoulder, earning himself a swipe from Zack's sloppy fist in the process. His grandmother sits at the kitchen table polishing Rebecca's silver candlesticks to be lit before the Shabbat meal the next day. The family has brass candlesticks that need less upkeep, but *halmeoni* knows Rebecca loves these. Even though she isn't Jewish, Joseph's grandmother appreciates the culture and traditions Rebecca embraces and wants their son to grow into in his home.

"Joe, I love our family."

"Of course you do." He squeezes her shoulder and kisses Zack's head. "We are the perfect family." Moving away from her, he steps into the kitchen and speaks to *halmeoni*. "*Insa, halmeoni. oneul halu eo ttaes-eo?*" Did you have a good day?

She smiles and nods. "*Dang-yeonhaji jagiya. hwanjaneun eottaess ni? sesang-eul dasi gu haessni?*" Of course, darling. How were your patients? Did you save the world again?

Rebecca joins them, smiling like Joseph's grandmother. "Save the world? *Halmeoni*, Joe is the world. Our world. Right, Zackie?"

5 Cognitive Development in Infancy and Toddlerhood

At 15 months, Zack is a slender, dark-headed, quiet boy. *Halmeoni* is his favorite person, but she may be edged out in his affections by Felix, the family cat. Felix, in repeated shows of extraordinary patience, allows Zack to pull his tail (and his whiskers), poke in his ears, and on occasion eat a pellet or two of his food.

No longer taking a bottle, Zack spends a good portion of each evening on the kitchen floor with Felix while one of his parents or his grandmother make dinner. When Mommy and Daddy talk and *halmeoni* cooks, Zack cruises around the table between his parents and waits for his grandmother to pass him a treat from the cooking food. Accomplishing these tasks, he starts to count his steps: *one, hana, two, du, three, se, four, ne . . .*

"Zack?" Daddy calls to him, and he looks at her.

"Mmm . . ." He blows bubbles looking at him.

"Did you just count in Korean and English? *Hangug-eolo mid-eul su iss-eoyo, jagi?*"

"Mmm . . ." He blows more bubbles and nods his head.

"That's good!" Daddy says.

"Is good boy, Zack," *halmeoni* says.

Zack reaches for more food, and she gives him a piece of cucumber.

"*Hana, du, se, ne . . .*"

"Good boy!" they clap, and Zack claps, too.

6 Socioemotional Development in Infancy and Toddlerhood

As Zack approaches his second birthday, Rebecca carries him to the pediatrician for a checkup. The vaccinations worry her—what about autism? On the other hand, the news is full of reports these days about measles outbreaks. Measles? No one should get measles anymore. She doesn't care what the pediatrician says about research, or at least she doesn't care much—but she dutifully submits to each and every one. She understands her fears are irrational, and look how healthy this beautiful child of hers is!

“He really is,” Dr. Greysmith agrees when Rebecca comments. “How’s his temperament?”

“Mostly lovely,” Rebecca tells her. “He has some terrifyingly fretful days, but mostly lovely.”

Dr. Greysmith glances at her. “That’s the second time you’ve mentioned fretfulness. I don’t have to tell you that could be an early sign of a nervous temperament. It’s nothing you did, Rebecca. Just be patient. He’s doing great. Good weight-to-height ratio. He’s in the 65th percentile for both. He’s meeting all developmental milestones as expected. He’s engaging,” she finishes with a huge smile as Zack laughs and claps to show off.

“I love coming here,” Rebecca confides, “if only so you can remind me that he’s perfect.”

“Well, consider yourself reminded. Now, any questions for me?”

“Only one. He’s speaking, of course. Pretty much what the books say to expect. But he’s speaking almost everything in both English and Korean.”

“Both are spoken in the home, if I remember correctly?”

“Right, but will that confuse him?”

Dr. Greysmith shakes her head. “Shouldn’t. Do you plan to introduce Hebrew?”

“I do unless you tell me that’s just too much.”

“I shouldn’t think so. I’ll be interested to see how our little guy progresses. Keep me posted, will you?”

Rebecca nods. “I will. Thank you. It’s so nice to have validation now and then.”

“Don’t I know it. My adolescent has me questioning every moment of medical school right now.”

They share a laugh before Rebecca rises to leave—one more moment of reassurance. She wishes Zack’s checkup weren’t an entire year away.

7 Physical and Cognitive Development in Early Childhood

Zack’s used to other kids looking at him funny in school. He wears a *kippah*, and not many Jewish boys do anymore. If that’s not bad enough, he’s clearly Asian-American and wearing a *kippah*. It’s like his parents want to see just how much a target they can make him for teasing. No one actually bullies him, though. There seems to be an unwritten rule about bullying anyone about religion, except the Islamic kids. All bets are off with them.

“Hey.”

It’s the same every morning in line for their pancake on a stick or Pop-Tart. Zack’s best friend James turns up, says hi, and thumps his *kippah*. James isn’t Jewish, but he also doesn’t care that Zack is.

“Hey.”

“What are you making for the science fair?” James asks.

“I don’t know. My dad wants me to do Mt. Vesuvius. You know, with baking soda and vinegar.” He lifts his shoulders and dares to tell his friend the truth. “It just seems boring to me. What about you?”

"No idea. At. All."

"So, a volcano, too?"

James laughs, and they take their Pop-Tarts and orange juice.

"Probably," James admits.

"What about PE? You going to do the fund-raiser?"

"Sure! If there's one thing I actually can do, it's throw a basketball."

Now Zack laughs. "Yeah, if no one's running toward you. I don't like basketball, so my dad's going to write a check. It feels like cheating, but I don't care. My dad says that discretion is the better part of valour. He also says that's the wrong saying but it makes sense for the situation. Whatever, man, I'm not throwing *any* balls and giving people more reasons to make fun of me."

**8 Socioemotional
Development
in Early
Childhood**

"Is it time?" Zack asks Mom.

She nods and touches his head. "It's time, sweetheart."

She looks at him like this is a good thing. The icy lump in Zack's stomach tells him something else altogether. He looks at her and tries hard not to cry.

"Does it *have* to be time?"

"Oh, baby." Mom gets on her knees at straightens his *kippah*. "Zack, honey, it's just Grandma and Grandpa Alpern. There's nothing to be scared of."

"Mom, I've never been in charge of lighting the menorah candles before. Not ever. Now you want me to do it in front of people who will care if I get it wrong? Thanks."

"Zack, it's going to be fine. I promise. Your grandparents love you. All of them." She sighs and pulls him into a hug. "Would you feel better if we did it together? You and I?"

"I would feel better if you did it without me."

Mom sighs. "Zack."

"You asked. I don't like doing things in front of other people, especially people that matter. *You* take drugs just to deal with how much you get nervous about things. I don't have drugs. I thought you would understand."

The way Mom's looking at him changes. Her face gets soft, and she smiles. "Oh, Zack. I do. I'm really sorry I forgot, sweetheart."

**9 Physical and
Cognitive
Development
in Middle and
Late Childhood**

Zack is nearing the end of elementary school. He can speak, read, and write in English, Korean, and Hebrew now, and his best friend James is interested in Hebrew. Zack teaches him a little bit here and there when he can, but for Zack, this is his people's language and where his whole culture comes from. His teachers try to talk to him about his language "fluidity" they call it, and his parents are called to school all the time about testing him. They always say no, and Zack always ignores what his teachers say about him being special. His family is special, he thinks, but he isn't. He's just lucky to be part of that family. Mostly, he wishes everyone paid him just a little less attention.

Except at home of course—he loves spending time with *halmeoni*, and he loves having James sleep over. Sometimes he thinks *halmeoni* isn't completely happy unless both he and James are at the house. James loves her cooking, and she spends lots of time in the kitchen whenever they have sleepovers. Sometimes, James comes to temple with him, too. Zack likes those days because afterward he and James lay around in the living room while the adults have big adult meals and he and James solve all the religious problems in the world. Zack doesn't understand why things seem so hard for the adults in the world to fix. They seem pretty easy to him and James.

One day, he's going to grow up and change the way people think about other people who are different than they are . . . if he can get over being nervous talking in front of other people.

10 Socioemotional Development in Middle and Late Childhood

Two days every week after school, Zack rides a bus downtown to his dad's office. This lets his mom take care of things like shopping and taking *halmeoni* to her own doctor's appointments or meeting with people about the books she writes. His dad is a doctor. Zack thinks that's pretty cool. When the bus drops him off, Dad makes him do his homework before he does anything else. In between seeing patients and making notes about seeing patients—Dad calls this his own “homework”—Dad quizzes Zack on his weekly spelling words and, sometimes, his math. This is the part he likes less about going to his dad's office. He knows his dad expects him to do well in school, and he gets so stressed out trying to get all the answers right. Sometimes he even tells his dad he doesn't have homework so he doesn't have to study with him. He feels bad lying, but his stomach hurts so much when messes up that the lie is worth it.

Dad takes him home those two days every week, and Mom and *halmeoni* call out to them when the door opens, “Do we hear our two handsome men coming home?”

Zack and Dad always call back, “Yes, you do! Do we hear our beautiful women calling to us?”

They meet in the kitchen, where the delicious smells of *halmeoni*'s authentic Korean dishes (on Mondays) and Mom's not-quite-kosher foods (on Thursdays) make their mouths water. Mom always covers Zack's face with kisses, and *halmeoni* always slips him some before-dinner treat he knows he shouldn't have. While Dad has a beer and sits at the table to talk to Mom about his day, Zack does his chores. He takes the trash outside to the trash can and, on Mondays, the cans to the street. The trash is collected on Tuesdays. Then he washes his hands and joins his family for dinner. After they eat, Zack walks the dog to the corner and back on his leash while Mom and *halmeoni* clean the dishes. Before bedtime, he sits at the table with Mom, and she teaches him some of the prayers from the Talmud or from the tiny prayer book she's kept for him since he was born.

“How was your group today?” she always asks when they're finished. She means the no-bullying group he and his friends started.

“Good.” Zack asks for a cookie, and she hands him two from the plate in the middle of the table. “Lots of kids come, so I think they like it.”

“I'm sure they do,” she says, brushing hair off his face. “And your test tomorrow? Not worried?”

He wants to tell her no, but he doesn't want to lie to her. Plus, Mom worries about a lot of things. She understands. If he's nervous, he tells her so.

“Can I take my shower now? I got a new book at the library today and want to read some before I go to sleep.”

"Library," Mom corrects, "and yes, you may."

"Thanks!" He jumps up from the table and dashes through the living room, where Dad and *halmeoni* are watching TV. "'Night!" he yells.

"Good night," they say, waving.

In fifth grade art class, Zack's teacher has students work the whole year on a family project. They can use any materials they want as long as they complete a "This Is My Family" composition by the time the annual school art walk comes around in April. Zack chooses clay, and he's excited! For months and months, he works on each individual member of his family. For Dad and *halmeoni* and himself, he uses a toothpick to carefully pull the eyes into just the right slant, rounded on top and kind of flat on the bottom. Each time he works on the project, he thinks about Kindergarten when kids used to bully him for looking different. It's why he and his friend James started their club to stop bullying. He doesn't feel different now; he feels like everyone is different in some way even if not all of those ways can be seen.

It's March when the art teacher takes Zack's finished sculpture to the local pottery to studio to be fired. Zack thinks that's a funny word for finishing his family project. When he gets it back, it's shiny and white. The teacher says that's what porcelain looks like when it's all finished. He loves it, and so does his family when they see it. Mom touches the tiny *kippah* he added to his own head, and *halmeoni* touches everyone's faces gently with one fingertip. There are so many nice projects, and he hopes his family likes his. He tried so hard to make it special.

11 Physical and Cognitive Development in Adolescence

Zack's 13 when his dear *halmeoni* passes away. Nothing's wrong with her; she's just old, and she dies. Dad gets sad for a long time. Zack is sad, too, but he doesn't want to talk to his dad about it. That feels unfair. He doesn't say anything and tries to focus on his schoolwork. It's his last year of middle school, and he's taking algebra with his friend James. It's a high school class, and they have to do well, or they'll start high school with bad marks on their report cards. Fortunately, Zack has all the reason in the world to bury himself in work. He likes math, and no one at home seems to think anything's weird about him studying all the time.

He's started walking to his dad's office on Mondays and Thursdays after school. The bus is no longer a fun or particularly safe place to be, but he still loves hanging out with his dad and playing with Resuscitation Annie. Sometimes, he and Dad sit in the exam room Zack plays in, and his dad asks him questions about symptoms to see if Zack can correctly guess a diagnosis or if Zack knows there are follow-up questions he's supposed to ask. He has a little divider in his head; on one side is the part that knows his dad is trying to groom him to become a doctor, and on the other is the side that has decided not to think about being a doctor or anything else for a while. It's bad enough being the weird Korean-Jewish kid everywhere. The bullying comes and goes but mostly comes with heightening intensity. Most people know he's Dr. Park's son, too. For a little while more, he wants to be Zack as much as he can.

"What would you do if a woman came in complaining of pain in her upper back and unusual fatigue?" Dad asks one day while Zack's poking around at Resuscitation Annie.

Zack doesn't look up but answers, "Send her for an echo and labs to check for heart attack."

"*Hmph*," Dad says, but Zack knows he's pleased. That was a hard one, and he got it right. He doesn't always.

He's still not ready to declare his intentions yet.

**12 Socioemotional
Development in
Adolescence**

"Big day," Dad says, standing in Zack's bedroom doorway.

"Mmm-hmm," Zack agrees, feigning nonchalance. He's so nervous; he feels like Mom with all her little rituals to keep her anxiety under control—not that he'd tell his dad that.

"Need some help with your tie?"

Zack shakes his head. "No, thanks. I'll be down in a minute," he says, hoping to nudge his father politely from the room. It seems to work, and he has a few minutes to himself before both parents call him downstairs.

"Zack, it's time to leave!"

"Coming," he whispers, then repeats himself more loudly, "coming!"

It's Shabbat following his 13th birthday, and although Zack relaxed his math studies a bit to prepare for his bar mitzvah, he's still terrified.

Mom says having the ceremony on Shabbat is nice. Other members of the temple can come and see him become a man. Zack laughs at that. He's 13 and feels more like a baby than a man, but he loves his religion and its customs. Beyond that, he wants to get through the ceremony without peeing his pants or throwing up on the Torah. He likes being wrapped in the blessings of his synagogue even if he is scared witless.

He completes the first reading of the Torah and sees that Rabbi Stein is pleased. Moving on, he takes a deep breath in and out and says, "We are very fortunate. Our life comes from God, and that life is a gift. Gods gives us even more than that. How empty our lives would be without the wisdom to live them properly. This is like the gift of an advanced technology—or better still a small child—without any information on how to use it or care for it. You would be frustrated, yes? Our lives could be like that. So frustrating and seemingly pointless. But we have the Torah, which is like an instruction manual for our lives. Through its teachings, we have the keys to unlock the full richness of God's gift."

When he finishes, he glances first at the rabbi and then at his mom, who is beaming with pride. He knows this ceremony is the event that signifies his becoming a man and not the study that has made him a man, but with nearly everyone in the synagogue watching him, it feels awful and terrifying anyway. For the next while, he closes his eyes now and again as he reads, trying to forget all the people and remember who he is and what he's doing. It doesn't work well, but he muddles through the best he can.

Afterward, his parents throw him a posh party at the country club. The menu is kosher, because so many of their friends from the synagogue will come by, but mom made sure to include some of his favorites. There's a cool bagel station, with all different kinds of bagels on sticks standing up on the table, and a candy station with his name on all the candy wrappers, macaroni and cheese with different veggie toppings, and a cool burger station, too. Mom and Dad compromise on the party. She got elegant decorations, and he got fun. Zack didn't care as long as some of his friends came, which they do.

"I really don't get the whole 'I'm a man now' thing," his friend Marybeth from school says on a break between dances.

"Me either," James admits, even though he and James have talked about it more than once.

"I'm not really. A man," Zack says. "Not like you're thinking. I'm still just like you. It's more like a rite of passage. More like I'm not a little boy anymore."

Marybeth chews on a burger with hot ketchup and onions. “That makes more sense,” she says around a mouthful.

James looks at her and laughs. “You’re gross, you know that?”

“That’s why you’re both secretly in love with me.”

James looks at her like she might’ve just lost the last remaining part of her mind. “Is that it?”

“That’s it,” she confirms. Licking her fingers, she points to a boy across the room, “Who’s that, Zack?”

“Eric. He’s from my synagogue.”

“Introduce me?”

“Sure, if you get Hannah Roni to go to the movies with me.” Hannah is Marybeth’s best friend and even then is dancing with little old Mr. Mandel not 15 feet away.

Marybeth looks at him like she’s disappointed in the level of challenge. “Done.”

13 Physical and Cognitive Development in Emerging/Early Adulthood

Zack’s mom hugs him for the hundredth time. When she draws away, he hears her soft *hmp* as his dad says, “Rebecca, are you ready?”

“Of course, I’m not ready. How can I be ready to leave him so far from home?”

“Mom,” Zack reminds her with a smile, “I’m an hour and a half away. You can’t even get through *La Boheme* in the time it takes to get to me.”

He doesn’t tell her he’s waiting on them to leave so he can vomit his nervousness from his body.

“When you put it that way . . .”

“What other way to put it is there? I’ll be home in three weeks for the fall parade. Think of all the mischief you can get into and store up to tell me about when I’m home.”

She *hmp*ed again, but her lips twitched this time. “I’ll miss you, you know.”

“I do know, and I’ll miss you.”

Dad slips him 50 bucks “just because,” and his parents turn toward the waiting elevator. He almost forgets his anxiety when his mother turns to him halfway down the hall and calls back, “Don’t forget, son—always wear a condom!”

He closes the door and shakes his head. “Really, Mom?”

“Hey, can I come out now?”

“Rachel, God, I forgot you were in there for just a minute. Of course. I’m sorry!” he says to the girl he met at an orientation event a couple nights before.

She slips from his bathroom, a cute smile on her face when she asks, “You do have the condoms, don’t you?”

Zack laughs and says, “I do, but you’re going to have to excuse me for a minute.” In the bathroom, he washes his face with cool water and does some deep breathing. It’s longer than he wants to be gone when he seeks Rachel out in his living room, but he feels more in command of himself and less under the control of his nerves.

“Rachel?”

“In here.”

14 Socioemotional Development in Emerging/Early Adulthood

Zack thinks for some weeks about how best to have the conversations he needs to have. There are three, but they're mostly the same conversations. His dad, never a go-between for him, will be the least likely to complain. Because of this, Zack decides to have one conversation instead of many. He can talk to everyone at once, rip the Band-Aid off quickly, and let everyone come at him with all their complaints.

He has them over to his apartment off campus before final exams in December. It's an inconvenience for his parents, who'll be seeing him in a few days anyway. He admits to a certain amount of cowardliness with Amy, his current girlfriend, too. She'll be leaving to visit her own parents after exams, sparing him from long heart-to-hearts.

His mother hands him her coat when she gets there, and he takes it along with his dad's. He doesn't have a coat closet. He barely has a closet. The coats are thrown across his bed along with Amy's. She's been there helping him with dinner, and he's done a pretty good job of not letting on that there's anything to let on about.

"Mom," he hugs her tight. "Dad." They shake hands and hug.

"Dr. and Mrs. Park, it's so nice to see you again," Amy tells them as they come into the tiny living room. "Can I get you something to drink? Zack has red and white wine and, if I'm not mistaken, a couple beers in the fridge. I don't think there's any liquor, but I know there's green tea and maybe even some jasmine."

Mom shoots him a look to say that she understands Amy's nervousness but she should be calmer anyway. Zack gives her a tight smile. His mother's anxiety is legendary, but his isn't much less so.

"White wine would be lovely, Amy. Thank you," Mom tells her. "Joseph?"

Dad says he'll get a beer but for Amy not to wait on him. Everyone starts to relax slowly, and Zack opens his own beer at last when the roast beef is on the table, and he calls everyone to sit down from the eight feet or so away where they sit on the sofa chatting. He waits until dessert, a plum pudding he made from *halmeoni's* recipe and strong black coffee, to drop his bombshell.

"You might've guessed I've brought you all here for a reason." When Amy looks at him with big eyes, he realizes too late that the reason she's guessed is very much the opposite of his real reason. Nothing to do now but pull the Band-Aid for both of them, although he feels doubly bad for her. "I have some news, and since it affects each of you, I thought maybe I could share it like this instead of one by one."

"Good news, I hope," Mom says lightly as she eats another bite of her dessert.

"Well," Zack says, "I think so. I hope everyone else will, too."

Amy sits up straight in her chair. "You got in to medical school!" she shouts.

"You applied to medical school?" his parents ask at the same time.

Looking first at Amy and then at his parents, he says, "Yes and yes."

Everyone reacts well, but he expected that at this point.

"That's great!"

"Wonderful!"

"I had no idea . . . so proud."

Zack waits for them to realize he's not talking. Mom turns to him first. "What is it?"

"It's not close. In fact, it's quite far away."

Mom goes white, but Amy frowns and looks at him. "I thought you were applying to State."

"I did, and I got in. I got into both med schools in the state."

"Then I don't understand," she says, and the color of her face tells Zack she's not sad; she's angry. His hands start to sweat, but he goes on anyway.

"I want to go to the other school. It has a better reputation. I'll get a better education, and my chances of getting a better internship when I'm finished are ten times better."

Dad nods and finally speaks. "Sounds like you've thought a lot about this."

"I have actually."

"What do you want to do when you're finished?"

"Come home. Practice with you."

"I don't understand why you have to go so far away to be able to do that," Mom says. She was always going to be the hard one, Zack knows.

"I don't, Mom. I want to." Across from Mom, Amy sits, lips pressed together, eyes dark. He's not going to fight with her. They had a talk last week about her postgraduation plans, and she wants to go as far in the opposite direction to study business. He supports that decision of hers. They have to support each other, he thinks, or they don't work. "Please try to understand," he says, taking his mom's hand.

"I'm proud of you," she replies.

"I figured that." Risking a glance across the table, he asks, "Amy?"

She shrugs. "We already planned to be five hours apart. What's a few more when you're talking about an airplane?"

Zack has no illusions. Mom likes Amy well enough now, but she doesn't see her as daughter-in-law material. Amy hasn't ever mentioned marriage either. Thinking about continuing a long long-distance relationship signifies a greater commitment to him, though, and he knows they'll have to talk about where they're headed before spring rolls around. For now, he's happy to have won the somewhat grudging support of these important people in his life.

"Thank you. All of you. This is really important for me."

15 Physical and Cognitive Development in Middle Adulthood

Zack didn't appreciate—didn't know how to appreciate—the work his dad did before he started the work he does every day, not until he starts his own medical school education. He both loves and hates the long hours, the grueling coursework and somewhat less-than-uplifting motivation of the professors. His internship is ridiculously arcane. Then he finishes, and he's ready to join his father's practice, which becomes Park and Park. Everything has been worth it.

Although it alternately amuses and dismays his mother, Zack refuses to settle down. Mom asks, "Didn't your father and I show you a good marriage?"

"No," he tells her, "you showed me a wonderful marriage. Think of it this way, Mom. I just haven't found a woman as perfect as you."

Until he does—Rachel Siegel brings her two-year-old daughter Dalia into the practice for a sore throat. Rachel is new in town, having moved into a small house on Main Street after her divorce from Dalia's father. Zack sees her as she checks out after seeing his father, eyes meeting across a not-so-crowded lobby. He fell—hard. Suddenly the slight belly his long hours and fried food habit create embarrass him. Although his dad has warned him—as if he doesn't know already—of the dangers of trans fats and a sedentary lifestyle—Zack loves bad foods and working long hours. Each year, his cholesterol climbs a bit, and his body mass index creeps toward the unhealthy range. He knows that, as one of the only two community physicians in their town, his stress levels are high, increasing his allostatic load and creating a vector for later ill health. It doesn't help that he's never had his anxiety treated, and he should have, he knows. The least he can do is stop eating poorly.

His dad watches Zack watching Rachel Siegel when she brings little Dalia in for a follow-up appointment. They haven't had a date yet, but Zack talks about her at least once each day. His dad doesn't care one way or the other if Zack ever gets married—unlike Rebecca—but if Rachel gives Zack some impetus for eating better? Well, there's nothing wrong with that, Joseph thinks.

**16 Socioemotional
Development
in Middle
Adulthood**

"Is it always about food with your family?"

Zack laughs at Rachel but nods at the same time. "Yes. Always."

They share a second bowl of spiced rice pudding at the kitchen table, their position just right to see Dalia sitting on his mom's lap for a Bible story. Zack's dad is outside trimming the lawn he mowed before dinner. He can't believe how domestic their quiet little life has become since getting married. Rachel works at the local television station as an advertising rep, selling what they call "major accounts," while Dalia goes to daycare Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays. Zack spends Tuesdays through Fridays at the practice, spending Monday at home with Dalia and taking care of household chores. Dad spends Mondays through Thursdays at the practice, using Fridays for the same thing.

Although both women are strong in their Jewish faith, Rachel is different from Zack's mom. Rachel is business suits and high heels, bold lipstick, and garage bands. Rebecca uncustomarily doesn't judge. She adores her daughter-in-law and her new granddaughter, who calls her Nonna and would spend every minute with her if she could.

"Do you think," Rachel asks, "that your mom's disappointed she doesn't yet have grandchildren of her own?"

"Well, no." Zack licks his spoon and puts it on the table. "She does. Have a grandchild of her own, that is."

Raising a brow, Rachel looks at him archly. "Oh? Since you're an only child, is there something you wish to tell me?"

He nods at Mom and Dalia. "Blood is blood, and love is love. Sometimes the two intersect but not always. That's okay. Why? Do you worry she's not happy with Dalia?"

"Not at all," Rachel rushes to say. "It's only, I worry Rachel would be—I don't know—downgraded if we had another baby."

"Honestly, I've never seen Mom like this with anyone. I'm sure she'd love any baby you gave her, but Rachel, Dalia needs never worry about Mom's affections. You don't either. Besides, between Mom and me, we've got enough worry for the rest of the family."

She exhales and smiles, and on the sigh says, “Good.” The word makes Zack look at her. “What?”

“What, what? What was that for?” he asks.

“Nothing.” She holds a hand on the air boy scout style. “Nothing at all. Yet. Ask me in another seven months, Dr. Park.”

“Really?” Heart thumping, he reaches to kiss her.

“Really.” She sighs again. “I think we’re probably a bit too old for this, but what the hell, right? Dalia’ll have someone to boss around, and maybe I can get you to eat a little better.”

He laughs. “Maybe.”

17 Physical and Cognitive Development in Late Adulthood

Zack often wonders what it is about Jewish women that makes them so much heartier than their counterparts. The synagogue is filled with little old ladies but far fewer little old men. Asian men, on the other hand, seem to hold their own. His parents live well past an age when he expected to lose them, for which he’s grateful, entering his own early to late adulthood before losing his mother to a series of small strokes in her late 80s before his father from a clearly broken heart the year after. Although he misses them dearly, he finds it difficult to mourn the courageous, productive lives of the people who raised him.

Rachel hounds him daily about his eating habits, only grown poorer with age. Her concern only fuels his anxiety, which is already sky high, and that in turn makes him eat worse for comfort. He likes foods his health doesn’t like. It’s a terrible cycle, and in his 60s he finds himself on beta blockers and cholesterol-lowering drugs, both of which annoy his wife but do little to deter his twice-weekly trips to the burger joint around the corner from the practice that’s now Park and Stiegel since Dalia finished medical school and joined him.

Zack reacted more negatively to Dalia’s plans than he wanted to. He’s a modern man, or likes to think he is, and he should support his daughter’s career choice whatever that might be. It bothered him as much as it did her and Rachel when he wanted her to do something slightly more feminine. Both Rachel and Dalia pointed out that Rachel’s career isn’t precisely girly. After prayer and soul searching, Zack realized both how honorable the choice was and how honored he should be by Dalia’s choice. Now he works beside his lovely daughter every day of the week and couldn’t be happier—living proof, he thinks, that old dogs can learn new tricks.

18 Socioemotional Development in Late Adulthood

“Dad?”

Zack looks at Dalia as she enters the practice. Her face says things are not well.

“Hi, darling.”

“I’ve got bad news, Dad. I really don’t want to tell you this, but James Albert passed away.”

Zack thinks for a minute. Dalia has to mean someone Zack doesn’t know very well. He can’t mean his old friend from the Kindergarten playground who he kept in touch with all throughout college and even later when they could—not that James Albert surely.

“Dad?”

"Huh? I don't—Not my friend James the engineer?"

"Yes, Dad. I'm sorry. I know this is unexpected."

Zack thought about that. "It is. It's very unexpected. We're both so young!"

That makes Dalia smile. He always likes making her smile. "Dad."

"I don't know what to feel. James. Damn, it always seemed like he'd live forever." Like he always feels he'll live forever himself. "Are there arrangements?"

"I'm not sure. His daughter Anna called me earlier. She said she'll let me know."

"Good. That's good. You'll let me know?"

"Yes, Dad. Of course." She reaches and pats Zack's knee. "I'm really sorry, Dad."

Zack feels himself nodding. Me, too, he thinks.

**19 Experience
With Death and
Dying**

Zack pens letters to both his children. Funeral details have existed in his will since his was 35, and he sees no need to change those now. These are different sorts of letters. He wants Dalia to know how much he's loved her from the beginning and how much practicing with her for nearly 20 years has meant to him. He tells her to retire early, sell the practice, and live. Travel, enjoy her husband, and do all the things she's put off for however long it's been. Inside the envelope, he tucks the diamond engagement ring he gave Rachel before they were married. Some things don't need to wait for probate, he thinks. He wants Joe to know how proud he is that he struck off on his own course, that he didn't follow blindly in his dad's and grandfather's footsteps, that he loves his career and his place in it. He tells him it's okay to retire, too, and live a little along the way. He reminds his son that he, too, found love later in life, that when it's meant to be he'll find the perfect man and not to worry about it so much. He tells Joe not to settle, to live the life he wants, and to be true to himself. Inside Joe's envelope, he tucks the plain platinum wedding band he gave Rachel the day they wed. Now his children have some portion of their mother that was a demonstration of their father's love for her. He's not sure what that means, only that he wants to do it.

He doesn't feel well. He hasn't felt well in a number of weeks. High blood pressure, he's sure—probably artery blockage. It's his own fault, and worrying won't change this one. There's no reason to drain the health care system. He's old, and he's ready to go. He misses Rachel and doesn't want to be mortal without her any longer. The children will understand. He's sure of it. Leaving the letters and a copy of his will on the kitchen table, he takes some time off work to read and be quiet with himself before the heart attack he knows is coming. He's made a point of checking in with Dalia every morning. So, when he doesn't, she sends a nurse from the practice to check on him. He hasn't been gone long, long enough that when the ambulance arrives, they telephone Dalia immediately to ask her to come to the hospital, but they arrive without lights and sirens.

Zack is buried in the family plot near the synagogue. His children and grandchildren (Dalia's children) are in attendance as well as many members of the synagogue and the community who knew him through the practice or through his worship. He was 77 when he died.

Case Discussion Questions

1. During her pregnancy with Zack, his mother Rebecca chooses to discontinue use of Paxil for OCD, but she is haphazard about attending therapy and her support group. Contrast this decision with Zack's optimal case outcome in which Rebecca also discontinues use of Paxil but consistently attends therapy and a support group. What impact might Rebecca's choice in this case have on Zack's life's trajectory across any and all domains (biological, cognitive, and socioemotional)?
2. In middle childhood, Zack experiences a high degree of anxiety over an event during which he's expected to light the menorah for the first time on his own. When Rebecca offers to assist him, he tries to let her know how scared he is. How does this compare to Zack's optimal case outcome in which Rebecca makes this offer and Zack accepts? What in Zack's background might explain his differing reactions to her offer?
3. When he's middle age, in both the optimal case and this case, Zack marries a divorced single mother named Rachel, who has a toddler named Dalia. After some time together, the two have a second child, a son called Joe. This is in sharp contrast to the negative outcomes case in which Zack has no children at all. In fact, the woman he chooses to marry leaves him before he can ask her because she's become too frustrated by the blunt edges of his Asperger's syndrome, and Zack never dates again. What aspects of optimal-case and moderate-case Zack allow him to find, court, and win the heart of Rachel, when negative-case Zack manages only one girlfriend across his lifespan? Is this a predefined outcome for Zack?
4. Consider Zack's optimal case outcomes at the end of his life and Erikson's integrity-versus-despair stage of psychosocial development. How does this case compare to that one? Consider all of Zack's life events. How do you think those contributed to any differences in Zack's end-of-life outcomes and his sense of integrity versus despair?

10. Moderate Outcomes: Bliss McCallen

2 Biological and Environmental Foundations

Misty, who used to use her paychecks to buy clothes and gas for her car, now saves as much as she can for baby things. Her mother isn't thrilled to have a new baby arriving, but she's at least supportive emotionally, which is what Misty needs. Despite the stares and gossip, she manages to finish her junior year of high school as her belly grows.

Just after summer break starts, Misty spends a Saturday when she's not at Dairy Queen hanging out at McDonald's with some friends. She runs into Cody, the baby's father, while she's there. He's a little kinder this time than when she told him she was having his baby. He asks her to have dinner with him, and she gives him a skeptical look. He nods and tells her he understands, but he's got a good job in a factory now. He moved into his own apartment a few months before, and he even bought a secondhand crib. "Just in case," he says.

Over dinner, Misty agrees to seeing him weekly so that she feels comfortable having him around when the baby's born. He helps her decorate a corner of her bedroom for the baby, and she helps him decorate the second bedroom at his apartment. Before the baby arrives, they both feel like it's important for her to know both of her parents and to be able to see them both all the time. Misty agrees to move in with Cody. She'll stay in the baby's room, and they move her bed from her mom's house into the bedroom there. She knows it's not ideal, but with the baby due so soon, Misty decides not to return to high school for her senior year.

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| 3 | Prenatal Development, Birth, and the Newborn Experience | <p>With no school to get in the way and few work hours so late in the pregnancy, Misty finds herself partying a lot more than she did when she still lived at home with Mary Jo. At first, Cody doesn't think much about it. He has friends over a lot, especially the ones who let him crash on their floors when he was essentially homeless. They're fun guys, and they like to drink a little and listen to some music—no big deal if Misty wants to hang out with them. It's only after she starts asking when they'll be coming over that he gets concerned. He asked her to move in because he thought that was best for the baby, but what she's doing now certainly doesn't look like it's best for the baby. He decides to talk to her.</p> <p>The first conversation goes poorly. They argue, and Misty goes back to her mom for a few days. Apparently, Mary Jo doesn't let Misty do whatever she wants, though, and tired of the restraints, Misty comes back to Cody and says she'll calm down. It lasts for about a week, and then she's back at it. Tired of the whole affair, Cody asks his friends to keep a low profile until the baby gets there "just to let Misty get some rest." They look at him like they get the white lie, but they also do what he asks.</p> <p>Too little too late—Misty goes into labor several weeks early, and Bliss is born small and with significant vulnerabilities. Cody will always wonder if she would've been healthier if Misty hadn't been so reckless during her pregnancy.</p> |
| 4 | Physical Development in Infancy and Toddlerhood | <p>Over the summer, Bliss bonds with Misty, who continues to work at Dairy Queen after she recovers from childbirth. Her mom, Cody's, and people in their apartment building provide her with patchwork daycare while she works. She could get an actual daycare supplement from the government, but she doesn't earn enough money at Dairy Queen to pay what the supplement doesn't cover. Dropping out of high school was maybe not her brightest idea, but she can't change that now.</p> <p>Bliss isn't quite a live baby doll, especially during those overnight feedings or messy diapers, but Misty knows all the way down to her toes that of all the options available to her when she got pregnant, she chose the right one for herself. She works as much as possible to help Cody with the bills and save for being more independent. While she works, she thinks and occasionally makes notes about how to rectify the mistake of dropping out of school. There's an online option she might be able to enroll in. She could also do a GED. Cody just got his GED, and it seems to already be paying off. There's something appealing about having her diploma. She decides to call the principal at her school and ask about it.</p> |
| 5 | Cognitive Development in Infancy and Toddlerhood | <p>Misty has a love-hate relationship with the realities of modern motherhood. She loves Bliss. She loves that she has the ability to work and save money and help take care of her daughter. She loves that she has people like her mom and Cody's to help take care of Bliss so that she can feel safe about leaving her baby when she works. She wishes she wouldn't miss so many of Bliss's firsts in the first year of her life. She misses Bliss's first word (<i>mama</i>), her first time counting to three on her pudgy little fingers (she counts backward starting at her pinky), her first attempt to "read" (holding the book upside down like so many kids). She doesn't like it, but she understands the necessity. She does, however, worry. Is Bliss getting what she needs because she isn't in a professional daycare? It seems like it. She can count well, and she knows her ABCs. She knows her name and those of all the people closest to her. Misty has to hope she's doing okay. She has no barometer other than her mom, who says Bliss is "smart as a whip."</p> |

One thing Misty does like is seeing Bliss's face when she gets home from a shift at Dairy Queen because Bliss is always happy to see her. Just as Misty is close to completing her high school diploma online, Bliss starts holding her arms open and saying, "Mama!" when she comes home. It may not make up for missing all the firsts, but it is heartwarming all the same.

6 Socioemotional Development in Infancy and Toddlerhood

Bliss keeps Misty and Cody busy. Misty also has to keep her schedule at Dairy Queen, and Cody has his factory job. It's obvious that Bliss is over the moon in love with Cody. As much as she lights up when he comes in the apartment, Cody works long hours and often comes home tired and irritable. Misty can see on his face that he doesn't want to spare time for either of them. Her feelings are hurt on behalf of Bliss, who's still too little to understand.

Bliss, right now, is a happy, affectionate little girl even though their family is just the three of them, Bliss, Misty, and Cody, with visits from her grandparents. Sometimes Misty gets impatient with her, usually when she's trying to get ready for work or if she's doing homework. Mary Jo didn't finish high school after Misty was born, and Misty understands better now why that was. She tries not to yell, and she never touches Bliss in anger, but it's hard not to be annoyed.

"Bliss!" she snaps one day, trying to get her uniform for work out of the dryer. "Stop! I have to get dressed."

Bliss, 18 months old, lifts her arms and begins to cry, fat tears falling down her face. She repeats, "Mama, mama, mama, mama . . ." over and over, but Misty doesn't pick her up. When Misty walks past her to get to the bathroom, Bliss's volume grows louder, and Misty feels guilty. Half dressed for work, she goes back to Bliss and picks her up.

"I'm sorry. Mama's sorry. I didn't mean to yell, baby, but I'm in a hurry. Want to sit in the bathroom and play with your dolly while I put on my makeup?" Bliss nods, and together they pass a few minutes while Misty finishes getting ready for work.

Most days are easier, but every now and then, they repeat the scene. Bliss wants attention when Misty needs to study for a test or take a shower. It's so important for her to have patience because each day she feels more and more like Cody lives annoyed with them. He's even started to yell at them for the littlest things. Fortunately, Bliss seems to be remain happy most of the time. Misty tells herself she can love and protect Bliss while she finishes school and tries to save money for them to move out.

7 Physical and Cognitive Development in Early Childhood

"Bliss, please sit down."

Mrs. Anderson stands over her with *that look*, the look that says she really, really likes you but she's running out of patience. Bliss considers whether or not she could push her further and decides no—that's probably not the best idea. Finding her desk, she sits and takes out her homework. Mrs. Anderson always checks homework first, and Bliss has been working so hard on her handwriting (which is awful). She hopes this will be the day her teacher praises her efforts. Last week, she missed two math problems that she actually worked correctly but Mrs. Anderson couldn't read well enough to know that. Bliss is trying to be much more careful now.

"What did you get for number four in the reading homework?" Sonia asks, leaning over from her desk on the next row.

Bliss checks. "Red noses," she whispers back. When Sonia frowns at her own paper, Bliss giggles. She knows that's one she got right because Mama helped.

At the front of the room, Mrs. Anderson clears her throat and all the children get quiet. “I’m coming around now to check your homework. After that, we’ll do math groups B and C and reading groups A and D in your circles. Once I check your homework, move quietly to where you’re supposed to be, please.”

Bliss claps under her desk. She’s in reading group A, which means she’s starting there today. She loves reading. Also, Sonia’s in her reading group. She gets to do the thing she likes best in school with the friend she likes best. This is going to be a great day!

Bliss gets off the bus after school and walks through the parking lot to their apartment. It’s a daily routine. One of her grandmas watches her after school, and she mostly does her homework in front of the Disney Channel while she eats cookies with milk. It’s not exciting.

Today, she gets her homework ready on the floor and waits for Grandma Mary Jo to bring her snack. When she sits the plate and glass on the coffee table, Grandma asks, “Bliss, did Mama put your prescription somewhere new this month? I can’t find it to give you your pill.”

Bliss has attention deficit disorder (ADD) and takes Ritalin to help her stay focused. She looks up and shakes her head. “No, Grandma.”

Grandma frowns. “Well, it’s not in the cabinet where it’s supposed to be.”

Shrugging, Bliss picks up a cookie and turns on the TV. “Daddy probably took them. He does that sometimes.”

8 Socioemotional Development in Early Childhood

Bliss, who attends a Headstart program in her town, has three best friends. Sonia Herman has the prettiest pink hair bows in all of her class, and Lila Lewis is the best speller in all of the class. Jamal Jones plays hide and seek better than anyone else and is probably the best reader. The four of them play together on the playground almost every day—at least when Bliss doesn’t miss recess because her ADD gets her in trouble, and Bliss makes them promise to be best friends forever. Lila has the same color hair and wears the same tennis shoes Bliss does, so she knows they’ll be friends forever.

Sometimes, only Lila and Sonia play with her—not because Jamal doesn’t like *her* but because he doesn’t like to be the only boy in a group of girls. Bliss thinks this is stupid, but Sonia kind of agrees with him. It seems funny to her that there are boy things and girl things at all. One day, she’s going to put one of Sonia’s hair bows in Jamal’s afro. That’ll teach him about girl things, she thinks.

9 Physical and Cognitive Development in Middle and Late Childhood

Just before preschool starts, Bliss sees the pediatrician for her 4-year checkup. For a while, she’s been on Dr. Stoddard’s radar due to slow growth, which she tells Mama and Dad isn’t terribly uncommon in low-income children. Bliss is also somewhat irritable sometimes, and Mama tells her that she’s wondered if Bliss has attention deficit disorder or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.

“I really don’t think so,” Dr. Stoddard tells her, “although that’s a common default these days.”

“What do you think it is then?”

As Dr. Stoddard continues to examine Bliss, eliciting occasional giggles from the girl, she tells Mama, “There’s a complex of factors that cluster together in low-income kids. I think that’s what we’re seeing here.”

Bliss isn't sure what "a complex of factors" means, but Mama says, "Okay," and, "What can I do? I can't poof us into the middle class." Bliss doesn't know what "middle class" is either, but it sounds nice.

Dr. Stoddard smiles. "No, unfortunately most people can't, but wouldn't it be wonderful if we could? For Bliss, what we're looking for are a couple tiny tweaks in her world. Read to her at night or whenever is convenient for you."

"I really don't see her that much," Mama says, and Bliss nods. That's true.

"I'm sure she'd love the time with you."

"Okay," Mama says replies, unconvinced. "What else?"

"Mostly time. If you and her dad can give her little chores around the house, that would be great. Make sure she knows that your job is to keep her healthy and safe."

"I don't understand how this changes her health." Bliss doesn't either, but she likes the idea of helping Dad at home.

"Neither do we, but it does. I promise."

Bliss leaves a few minutes later, and when she eats her peanut butter and jelly sandwich with potato chips for dinner, she asks Dad if she can help him clean up the kitchen. He gives her a funny look but lets her. She feels like a big girl.

**10 Socioemotional
Development
in Middle and
Late Childhood**

When Bliss is in the third grade, her mom starts dating a man named Steve. Bliss isn't sure what dating is, but it seems to involve a lot of eating fancy food and kissing. Other than that, she isn't sure. She asks Sonia about it, and she says her mom and dad have date nights, so she'll see what she can find out. One time, Bliss's mom doesn't come home after she leaves for dinner and a movie with Steve. Bliss, who sleeps in the same room as her mom, wakes up in the morning, and she's scared to be alone. She wakes up her dad and tells him that Mama isn't there. Dad gives her a little look, half worried and half mad, and tells her to go watch cartoons on television.

Mama comes back pretty soon, and she brings donuts with her. Dad still seems mad, but they wait until Bliss takes her bath to fight. Bliss can hear their voices, but she doesn't know what words they're saying. Bliss cries a little. She loves them both and doesn't like it when anyone fights. She tries to talk to Mama about it later that night when it's time for bed.

"Why was Dad mad today?"

Mama looks at her like she might cry. "Because Mama didn't come home last night."

"Why didn't you come home?"

"After Steve and I went on our date, it got very late, and I stayed at his place instead of driving back here."

"Sometimes Dad goes to work really early on Saturday mornings. What if today he had to work early? I would be all alone."

Mama looks at her and smiles. "I would never leave you all alone, baby."

"But you kinda did. You didn't tell me or Dad you weren't coming home. That's the same thing really."

Mama stopped smiling. “I didn’t know I wasn’t coming home until I didn’t come home.”

Bliss looks at Mama and starts to cry. “I don’t even like Steve anyway.” She doesn’t either. She likes the way things used to be when it was just her, Mama and Dad, and Grandma.

Bliss is nine when she decides to start ignoring whatever person her mom dates. What does it have to do with her as long as Grandma or some babysitter is with her? Mama doesn’t listen when she says she doesn’t like any of them anyway, so she might as well ignore them . . . and Mama. She starts spending more time on the playground even though Jamal is probably going to move away soon, and she doesn’t have any other friends to play with. It doesn’t matter much anyway. She spends most of her time with Dad. If her mom wants to go off with other men when Bliss is with her, she won’t care.

11 Physical and Cognitive Development in Adolescence

Across the street from the bus stop where Bliss lives, a billboard advertises a “gentlemen’s club.” Bliss knows what that is. The advertisement shows a girl in an outfit kind of like a bikini (*kind of*, Bliss always thinks) standing in a thing kind of like a woman-sized birdcage (*kind of*, she reminds herself, thinking of the metaphors). She can’t tell if the girl looks older than her years because of her lifestyle or if she’s meant to look younger than she is and just can’t quite pull it off. Either way, Bliss thinks, is tragic.

“That’s what happens to girls who aren’t quite smart enough or pretty enough or anything enough to get out of places like this,” Keisha Rayne says to her one day while they wait for the bus.

“What’s what happens?” Bliss asks, not sure how literally to take the statement.

“Get trapped by circumstance,” Keisha says, nodding toward the birdcage. “Sad but true.”

Bliss doesn’t want to get trapped, but she figures by the time a girl figures out it’s happened it’s too late to avoid it.

“Stupid is as stupid does,” she says to Keisha, “or something like that.”

“Something like that,” Keisha echoes as the bus pulls to a stop, cutting off their view to the billboard. “You and me, girl? We don’t have the luxury of being stupid, not even for a minute.”

“I better do better in school then,” Bliss jokes.

“Yeah, you better,” Keisha says, and Bliss has the feeling she isn’t joking at all.

12 Socioemotional Development in Adolescence

“Dad?” Bliss calls from her bedroom at Cody’s house—*her* bedroom. She doesn’t have to share space in this apartment—luxury of luxuries.

“What is it, Bliss?”

“Can I go out with Hunter Lyon Saturday night?”

Dad scowls at her darkly. He’s made it clear he doesn’t like her going out when he has her—not because he doesn’t like her going out but because he doesn’t want her going down the same path he and Mama did.

“Bliss . . .” he starts, but she holds up a hand.

"I know it's not what you prefer," she says, "but hear me out. First, it's Hunter, and you actually like Hunter. Second, it's not an all-evening date, which I know is kinda taboo. There's some barbeque tasting downtown that only goes from four to eight. We thought we might go right when the thing started, and Hunter could drop me off early, like six or seven."

She watches him consider the request and finally nod. "I guess, but two hours tops. Promise?"

She crosses her heart with an index finger before going back to the phone. "Cross my heart," she tells him and means it. She'll only be gone for two hours, but she has no intention of going to the barbeque festival.

Hunter Lyon talked her out of her virginity six months before. It wasn't pretty or enjoyable in the back cab of his 4x4 Chevy, but she loves him and that's that. It's easier to find time to be together when she's at Mama's apartment than Dad's, but she still manages pretty well, well enough that Hunter keeps coming around anyway. That's good enough for her.

"Thanks, Dad," she says and drops a kiss on his cheek. Speaking into the phone, she says, "Yep, I can go. Four to six, you think? . . . Perfect!"

When she leaves the room, Cody sends an email to Misty. It's short; they don't talk much at all. The words say what he needs to anyway.

"I'm worried about Bliss. You've really turned your life around, Misty. Could you maybe talk to her? Please?"

13 Physical and Cognitive Development in Emerging/Early Adulthood

Bliss graduates from high school with decent but not stellar grades and extracurricular achievements. Because of the local labor market, her high school counselor, and time, she decides to get her certified nursing assistant's license (CNA). Attending the same community college her mom didn't manage to finish, she takes the 12-week program and completes it in the top third of her class.

She takes a job in a local family practice clinic, where she's assigned to work with a small, perpetually happy Pilipino man, Dr. Luis Vilar. Bliss likes Dr. Vilar so much; she respects his gentleness with patients and his firm guidance with them regarding their health. By working alongside Dr. Vilar, Bliss learns to be compassionately resolute, and because she interfaces with patients first and for longer periods of time than he does, it's Bliss who builds and maintains his patient list. They become a good team, and she figures out that it's self-nurturing to have a place and purpose in life. By the time she's 22, Bliss earns more money than her mother does at 38, and she moves out of the family apartment into a studio of her own in a revitalized area downtown.

14 Socioemotional Development in Emerging/Early Adulthood

On a blustery Monday, not a special day at all, Bliss clears the trash from Dr. Vilar's three exam rooms near the end of the day. As she carries the trash bags to the chute used by the entire practice, she runs into Rick, a guy who works in the lab downstairs. They know one another by name but not any better than that.

"Hey, Rick," Bliss says with a wave. "Late night?"

"Yeah, we got backed up today, and backed up or no, we have to get results out to the doctors."

"Ouch. That's gotta hurt sometimes."

Rick nods. "It does, but it's okay. Most of the time, I've got great hours. Plus, I'm the guy with the magic touch."

"Magic touch?" Bliss asks, intrigued.

"Heh. Yep. Any patient who's a tough stick for drawing blood? The other lab techs call me. I can get it on the first try every time, and the patients almost never feel a thing."

Bliss is impressed. "How'd you get so good?"

Rick gives her a suspicious look. "I'm leery about giving away my secrets."

"Hey!" she complains. "I do the occasional stick, too."

"Very true. Okay then." He leans in conspiratorially. "I practice every day with an orange."

"An orange?" Bliss's sense of wonder dims. "And this orange lets you know when the pain is unbearable?"

"Ha and ha," he says. "I'll show you sometime."

Bliss decides she likes Rick. He's funny and attractive. Clearly their career values are similar. On impulse, she nods and says, "You could show me over a pizza tonight if you aren't busy."

Rick stares at her for a second, shocked, she thinks, and then recovers. "Happily," he agrees.

15 Physical and Cognitive Development in Middle Adulthood

Bliss continues to work for Dr. Vilar throughout her career. The stability allows her to get to know patients who stay with Dr. Vilar for long years. Some of them she sees from infancy through heading off to college. She feels blessed to have the opportunity she has, especially after the start she got. From a teenage mom and a dad who sold her ADD meds on the street to this, meaningful employment in a place where she enjoys every day—okay, almost every day—of a job and where she feels useful.

After she's been with Dr. Vilar for almost 20 years, he asks her to develop and present a CNA annual training. He wants the staff to remain fresh beyond what they do day to day. Bliss is delighted to help. She spends a lot of time researching current best practices and also how to deliver professional development courses. She even asks Dr. Vilar to send her to a train-the-trainer event coming to their town, and he agrees. When the time comes to start her course in the office, she isn't nervous at all. Her coworkers seem to like what she shares, and their evaluations of what they learned are good. Dr. Vilar is happy and gives her a bonus. He also asks her to plan on providing the training every year.

16 Socioemotional Development in Middle Adulthood

Bliss and Rick eventually marry. She waits much longer than he wants to, but she's never seen a healthy relationship. She wants to make sure everything is just right. Once she's ready, they have a quiet city hall ceremony with their parents in attendance (and Dr. Vilar). Bliss wears a white suit with a skirt, and Rick wears his best suit with a new tie. They have a nice lunch afterward, and the happy couple spends a lovely weekend honeymoon away at the Biltmore Hotel in Asheville, North Carolina. Their daughter Alice is conceived during the weekend and born when Bliss is 33, six months after the death of Mary Jo, Bliss's grandmother. She's treasured and half spoiled by her parents, and Bliss makes sure she sees both Misty and Cody as much as she can. Rick's parents live several hours away, and making the trip is difficult. It's important to both of them that Alice knows all of her grandparents, so they try to see his parents at least once every three or four months.

Alice keeps them busy, but it's a busy-ness Bliss welcomes. Her mother's harried lifestyle when she herself was small stays with Bliss always, and she wishes now that Misty had known the sort of relationship with her that she now has with Alice. If wishes had wings, she thinks.

17 Physical and Cognitive Development in Late Adulthood

In the end, it's Dr. Vilar who makes Bliss sit with him in his office on a rainy Tuesday afternoon. She hasn't said anything to anyone, and Rick didn't call the doctor. Still, he knows as he always knows everything.

"Bliss, we have to run some tests. You know that, don't you?"

"No," she says, pushing back hard.

"Yes, we do. You had the heart attack last year and really haven't gotten back up to speed since then, but I'm worried about other things, too."

Narrowing her eyes, Bliss asks, "Like what?"

"Diabetes for one. I'd like to do a calcium test to see about possible plaque buildup in your arteries."

"And?" She knows, but she's going to make him say it.

"And I think we need to run some cognitive tests."

"I don't have Alzheimer's," she states flatly.

"I didn't say that. I just want to run some tests."

Bliss agrees, and with Rick by her side the entire time, she allows Dr. Vilar to subject her to a battery of mental exercises. At the end of all testing and analysis, Dr. Vilar refers her to a geriatric neurologist but gives them the bad news himself: Bliss is in the early stages of senile dementia. She also may have Parkinson's disease. As expected, Dr. Vilar explains that she is a prime candidate for these ailments given her birth and early life experiences. She was poor and lived in a state of frequent chaos and poverty, all of which contribute to later life outcomes such as the ones she's seeing.

Saddened by these results but determined to live the rest of her life as healthy and happy as she can, Bliss makes an appointment with the neurologist and goes home with Rick.

18 Socioemotional Development in Late Adulthood

"Where's Alice?"

Rick looks at her and then turns away quickly—code for Alice isn't coming. She wants to yell that it's her birthday and her daughter should be there for cake and candles and silly hats, especially because it's probably the last birthday she'll have—or at least the last one I'll remember, Bliss thinks, certainly the last one where I'll be able to feed myself.

"I'm sorry, sweetheart," Rick tells her, "but she has a work thing and—"

"It's okay. Some things are better just the two of us, right?"

"Right," he agrees, smiling and bending over to kiss her cheek.

But her birthday had never been one of those occasions.

It's the dementia of course and the Parkinson's. Alice, who no doubt loves Bliss to bits as she always has, doesn't know how to cope. The tremors are embarrassing.

Bliss knows that. They embarrass her! She knows it bothers Alice, too, that she repeats stories over and over. Bliss doesn't mean to, of course, but sometimes it's hard to remember what she's actually told people. The past is an easy place to dwell these days; it's safe. Yesterdays don't trick her with things she forgets, like when to take her medication or if she's already taken it.

So, she understands even if Alice's distance makes her sad. She'd never say so. She'd never hurt her daughter.

"Dinner?" Rick asks.

"Red Lobster?"

"Honey, it's your birthday. If you want Red Lobster, that's what we'll have."

She squeezes his hand. "Thank you. You're very good to me."

Rick is good to her. He's always been good to her. She wishes she weren't going to be such a burden to him now in their later years. Dementia? Parkinson's? How cliché. He tells her all the time that she would be happy to care for him if the roles were reversed, and he's right. He doesn't deserve this, she thinks. When she has a bad day—a day of self-pity and depression—she wonders why she made it this far at all. What purpose is there in making it out of poverty and the projects if she's only going to die early with no idea who she is and causing her husband so much stress? There's none as far as she can see.

She calls Alice on the telephone after the cake and champagne she's not supposed to drink—a tiny sip to celebrate.

"Happy birthday, Mom," Alice says, a bright note of love in her voice.

"Thank you, Alice." She won't tell her how much she misses her. She won't make her feel guilty.

"I love you, Mom."

"I love you, too."

19 Experience With Death and Dying

Bliss ages well beyond the point she wants to if she were asked. Rick passes away—stress according to Bliss—when he's 74, leaving Bliss to herself. Alice has a long talk with her after Rick's funeral.

Bliss doesn't want to move to Alice's house. She wants to be in the city she's always lived in. Alice is too far away. Alice tells her that she cannot live alone anymore. Both her Alzheimer's and Parkinson's are too advanced. She has Medicare, and that will help pay for some assistance at least for a while. Bliss and Alice agree that they'll hire a home health nurse to take care of her during the day and a skilled sitter to work overnight. It will be expensive, but she has enough coverage to pay for most of it, and when Bliss is too far along for this to work, she can move into an assisted living facility.

Although challenging on a number of fronts, their plan works for several years. When Bliss is nearing her 80th birthday, her nurse Sally arrives for work to find her on the floor crying. She's fallen, and her hip is broken. Sally calls an ambulance, and Bliss is taken in and goes straight to surgery, which is successful. She has a difficult recovery, however, and when she's moved to inpatient rehab as the first step to going home, she falls ill with a virus running through the facility. Unable to tolerate sitting more than a little while at a time each day, the virus encourages fluid to collect in her lungs. She manages to avoid pneumonia, but she doesn't recover. Bliss passes away in the rehab facility at age 79.

Case Discussion Questions

1. During her pregnancy, Bliss's mother Misty decides to drop out of high school before her senior year. She gets the unexpected offer from Bliss's father to move in with him, and she does this, intending to raise their daughter together but not as a couple. Compare this to Bliss's optimal case outcome in which Misty continues to live with her mother and completes her senior year of high school. How do you think Bliss's life trajectory might be altered for good or ill across any and all domains (biological, cognitive, and socioemotional)? Why?
2. In Bliss's infancy and toddlerhood, Misty occasionally loses her temper and snaps at the baby. She becomes frustrated with herself then because she knows she needs to get them moved away from Cody, who is angry with them and a little scary to Misty now. Contrast Misty's reasoning for why she needs to hold her temper with her reasoning in Bliss's optimal case outcome in which Misty is aware of how much of her life she's given away to keep her baby and how some of what she feels is just normal parenting.
3. In early adulthood, Bliss meets a lab employee of the medical practice where she works. She likes him, and they seem to have a lot in common, leading her to decide they should go on a date. This is different than the optimal case outcome in she meets the son of her employer and begins dating him almost immediately. What factors in Bliss's history led to this different path for her? Why?
4. Consider Bliss's optimal case outcomes at the end of her life and Erikson's integrity-versus-despair stage of psychosocial development. How does this case compare to that one? Consider all of Bliss's life events. How do you think those contributed to any differences in Bliss's end-of-life outcomes and her sense of integrity versus despair?

11. Moderate Outcomes: Poppy Bell

2	Biological and Environmental Foundations	Poppy parents are all well educated. Wendy has had two healthy, normal pregnancies before Poppy, and she's familiar with pregnancies dos, such as eating well and exercising, and also with don'ts, such as drinking or being around people who smoke. The biggest challenge Wendy faces is stress—stress from not knowing when or if Brian will be at home, whether or not Sam will want anything to do with the baby, and whether Clover and Leaf will act out in anger because they feel she's to blame for all the turmoil. She is, and her obstetrician warns her not to let stress get the better of her. She doesn't want Poppy's developing fetal brain bathed in serotonin or an excess of corticosteroids passing the blood-brain barrier. Wendy tries to spend the first and last 15 minutes of each day in meditation hoping that will help as her doctor assures her it will. She isn't always successful, however, as Brian doesn't see the value or find himself in a place where he wants to help her with much of anything, and Clover and Leaf need so much so often that sometimes she can't carve out the time. As much as she can, she does.
3	Prenatal Development, Birth, and the Newborn Experience	<p>"She's squidgy," Leaf says, bending over his new baby sister.</p> <p>"And wrinkly like an old man," Clover adds.</p> <p>Wendy agrees somewhat. "She's both of those things a little, but she won't stay that way. Give her a couple days, and she'll look just like both of you did," she promised.</p> <p>Clover gives her a funny look. "Why does Poppy have two daddies? I only have one daddy."</p>

She says this as if Poppy is somehow better equipped in the father department. The question makes Wendy smile and want to cry simultaneously. She's grateful Brian isn't there when Clover asks it.

"Well, sweetie, because both your daddy and Uncle Sam are her daddies."

Don't ask, she prays.

"I know that, but *why*?"

"Because Mommy and Uncle Sam made a baby together last year, and that baby became Poppy."

"And you and Daddy made me and Leaf?" Clover looks like she might put the puzzle together all by herself. Wendy hopes not.

"Yes, we did." Answer what they ask, but don't volunteer information.

"And you didn't want to make Poppy with Daddy?"

Wendy sighs. "It wasn't like that. I didn't decide not to make Poppy with Daddy or to make Poppy with Uncle Sam. She just got made."

Leaf leans over his baby sister again. "Will Uncle Sam be our daddy now, too? Will we have two daddies like Poppy?"

Damn cystic fibrosis, Wendy thinks. There but for prenatal testing go I.

"No, Leaf. You and Clover still have your daddy. Poppy may have two daddies, but she may not have Uncle Sam as her daddy, either. We'll just have to see."

Phrasing things is so complicated. She doesn't want to say "just one daddy" because that will make Clover and Leaf feel shortchanged. Every sentence is a possible minefield.

If nothing else, the children seem fascinated with their baby sister. That's something. Wendy has ten weeks off from work thanks to the well-timed spring break plus her maternity leave. For the moment, Sam is being incredibly attentive and loving to Poppy, and Brian is doing his best. She understands why this is different for him than their earlier two, but she hopes things will change in time for all their sakes.

4 **Physical Development in Infancy and Toddlerhood**

In her infancy, Poppy is a quiet, sweet baby. She is doted on by her brother and sister, who take her everywhere. Clover and Leaf encourage many of her firsts, such as crawling and walking, and they spare Wendy the challenge of teaching Poppy to eat with a fork and spoon. When Poppy starts walking three weeks after she begins crawling, Wendy says it's because she can't stand to be left out of her brother and sister's fun.

Once she's walking, Poppy becomes a hider. Wendy often finds herself unable to find Poppy at the worst times, like when she's working the children like an assembly line through their baths or when Sam comes by for a visit or, worst of all, when she needs to leave for work. Hide and seek is a game, and although having Poppy play hide and seek at awful times would make Wendy mad, this isn't hide and seek. Poppy just hides. Wendy generally enlists Clover's help finding her sister, Clover who seems to be the Poppy Whisperer.

"Clover?" Wendy calls one snowy morning on the way to the family SUV. She needs to drop Poppy at daycare before going to the K-8 school where she and Brian both teach. He's gone on ahead of her.

"I know," the eight-year old says happily. "Go find my sister."

"Please." Turning her attention to Leaf, Wendy points to the backseat. "All right, cowboy, into the saddle."

Clover finds Poppy standing in the bathtub she shares with her brother and sister. She's got the shower curtain closed, and with her winter coat and Wellies on, Poppy is so cute that Clover has to overcome the urge to turn on the shower.

"Poppy," she says, trying to sound stern but not hateful. She's not mad at all. "Why are you hiding in here? Mom's going to be mad."

"Shh," Poppy answers, holding a finger to her lips. "Duh walls're loud."

"The walls are loud?" Clover asks, making sure she understands.

"Yeth," Poppy says. "Bad wallth."

Clover nods. "Yes, bad, bad walls. You're right, Poppy. Bad walls to be loud, so let's go outside with Mom, and you won't have to hear the loud walls, okay?"

Poppy looks skeptical, and Clover knows why. Mom and Dad had another fight this morning, their words seeping through the walls between all the upstairs rooms. Poppy's right; the walls are loud, and Clover knows how much Poppy hates yelling. She wants to say something to Mom about that . . . after they escape her wrath.

"Okay," Poppy agrees.

She holds out her hand, and Clover takes it to help her climb over the side of the bathtub. Together, they troop down the stairs and back outside where Mom is getting Leaf buckled into his car seat. Mom turns around and sees both of them, and her eyes get that relieved look Clover knows means she probably won't yell in the car—probably. Personally, she doesn't know why Mom has such a hard time finding Poppy when she hides. She only has maybe five or six places she goes. It's not that hard. Clover thinks Mom's maybe a little bit lazy, even though Mom says she's busy.

"Ready?" Mom asks when they're all in their seats.

"Ready," they all say, Poppy just a second behind Clover and Leaf.

Mom laughs and pulls out of the driveway. Another day begins, Clover thinks, wondering if her dad is giving a math test today. She can't remember.

5 Cognitive Development in Infancy and Toddlerhood

Sam knows that Wendy and Brian are struggling to make their marriage work. His portion of blame in that troubles him, but he knows he isn't solely responsible. He also finds himself unable to apologize for Poppy, the child he never thought he'd have and without whom his life would be incomplete. He couldn't have guessed how many holes in a heart a child could fill.

After a series of brief, painful family court appearances, he has a visitation schedule so he can see Poppy on a regular timetable. It's not nearly enough. From his perspective, it's a pretty strict and punitive amount of visitation. Brian, Poppy's legal father, can't quite forgive Wendy and Sam for their affair (understandable, Sam thinks), but he also wants Poppy to know Sam as one of her fathers. Even so, he's not going to give Sam come-and-go access to her. He also wants Sam to pay what they all agree is fair child support each month. They all try to make the court appearances as painless as possible, but none of it can be.

Sam's favorite outings with Poppy are when he takes her on nature hikes at some of the preserves where he does geological surveys for the Fish and Wildlife program for the state, his employer.

"Dat one?" she asks with almost each step.

"Long leaf pine," he replies each time she points to the same tree.

"Dat one?"

"Golden maple, Poppy."

"Dat one?"

"That's a Poppy."

She jumps up and down, clapping her hands in glee. "Pop-pee!"

"That's right. Poppy, just like you."

Sam makes a mental note to toss some poppy seeds around a couple parks where folks are unlikely to notice his subterfuge. His daughter won't always be so easy to please. He'll take advantage of her easy nature as long as he can.

6 Socioemotional Development in Infancy and Toddlerhood

Wendy keeps close watch on all three of her children. Although it's clear Clover and Leaf adore Poppy, it's equally clear they're growing increasingly jealous of the attention Sam gives her. She understands and wishes she could magically make everything better for everyone. The opportunity for Poppy to bond well with Sam will pass if they don't spend enough time together while she's small, and all of Poppy's parents want her to have a strong bond with him. At the same time, Clover and Leaf are very much aware that Poppy's getting special treatment right now, and they may already have figured out that she always will. So far, no one's taking anything out on her, except Brian occasionally when he ignores her during his adolescent temper tantrums. As months pass, these grow worse. Brian seems to ruminate on the affair as Poppy grows, and the more he thinks about it, the angrier he grows. This makes him withdraw from all of them in ever-increasing degrees until all three children and Wendy feel frozen out of his love.

7 Physical and Cognitive Development in Early Childhood

On a balmy Wednesday evening in April, Sam, Wendy, and Brian sit on the Bells' deck with cold beers all around and some hors d'oeuvres. Wendy, who feels she knows both men well enough to navigate the conversation, speaks slowly, mindful of the outcome. They're talking about what's best for Poppy.

"I just don't understand the need," Sam's complaining. "Poppy's been in a pretty ordinary daycare all along. Why go to such an extreme opposite for preschool?"

Wendy mediates. "Clover and Leaf both attended The Goddard. It was perfect for them. I—" She pauses and glances at Brian. "We just want Poppy to have the same opportunities her siblings had."

Brian jumps in with more than a bit of anger, "If it's about money, we're not asking you to pay any more each month."

"But it's not." Sam rolls the beer can between his hands. "I just don't know why it's necessary."

Wendy holds up a hand before Brian can point out that Sam isn't the parent who works in a school. "Why don't you go visit the school? Take a tour. Then visit a couple preschools. Either or both of us will go with you, or you can go by yourself—whatever you're most comfortable with."

With obvious irritation, Sam admits the logic of Wendy's suggestion, and she smiles in relief. "I can do that."

Beside Wendy, Brian nods. "Fine. I'll go ahead and put the deposit down at The Goddard. That'll hold her place, and we can get it back if you just feel that strongly she shouldn't go after you do your round robin of preschools."

"Thank you for your patience," Sam says.

After Sam leaves, Wendy clears their mess from the deck, ignoring Brian as long as she can. She only wants what's best for Poppy, that's true, but thinking back it was Brian who chose The Goddard for Clover and Leaf. Who's to say that is the right choice for Poppy? Who's to say that was the right choice for Clover and Leaf? Brian thinks he is; that's clear. Wendy wonders if maybe she should spend some time looking at other schools, too. She works in a public school. So does Brian! They should be open to possibilities other than the most expensive private preschool in the county.

She passes Brian between their bed and the master bathroom. Pausing mid step, she says, "I'm going to look at a few options, too. Not with Sam, just to make sure we really are making the best choice."

The look on his face tells her what he thinks of this idea, and he isn't happy. They don't speak again that night, and Brian sleeps in the den with a pillow and a blanket he pulls from the closet. The next morning, he's gone before she gets up, leaving no note. She has no idea how long he'll stay away—she never does—or if he'll speak to the children in the interim. Single parenting is hard. Unexpected, recurrent single parenting sucks.

**8 Socioemotional
Development
in Early
Childhood**

"Clover? Are you awake, Clover?" Poppy cracks the door to her sister's room and whispers, waiting for a response before she tries again. "Clover? It's Poppy."

Clover pulls the quilt over her head and groans. "I know who it is, Poppy. I'm 12, not stupid."

"Are you sleeping?"

"I was."

"Sorry." Poppy is sorry to wake Clover up, but now that she is awake, Poppy slips into the room and closes the door behind her. She climbs into the bed, ignoring Clover's attempts to kick her out. Snuggling under the quilt, she puts her head on the pillow beside Clover's. "Daddy's not here."

Clover turns away from her and says, "I wonder why."

"Do you know? Why? Why is Daddy gone again?" Clover breathes in and out a lot of times but doesn't answer her. After a minute, Poppy loses patience. "Clover? Why is he?"

"He and Mom are having trouble," she says, and her voice sounds a little funny, like maybe she's mad.

"Because of me," Poppy says, and she knows that's the reason even if Clover doesn't say it.

Clover turns enough to look at her. "Yeah, because of you."

"Because Sam is my daddy, too?"

Clover nods. "Yeah. That. Look, Poppy, it's not your fault that it's your fault. I get that."

"I'm sorry." Poppy sniffs back tears and a runny nose. "I'm going to make a Pop-Tart. Do you want one?"

"No."

"Okay. I'll ask Leaf."

Clover makes an ugly laugh. "Don't bother. He definitely won't want one if Dad's gone again."

Poppy climbs from the bed and swipes at her cheeks, wet with tears. She doesn't want Clover to know she's crying. "Okay. I'll, I'll see you."

"See you," Clover says, but she doesn't turn around again.

9 Physical and Cognitive Development in Middle and Late Childhood

In third grade, Poppy fails math, as much as a single subject can be failed in primary school. Miss Deering, her teacher, spends many hours with her in class, before class, after class, and meeting with her parents, but everyone is confused. Poppy's prior grades and scores on standardized math assessments indicate she should be completing work with flying colors, but she simply is not. It's Sam who voices the possibility no one's willing to contemplate.

The K-8 school at which both Wendy and Brian work is small, and in the upper elementary and middle grades, subject-specific teachers may cover an entire grade. Poppy's father Brian is the only math teacher for both the fourth and fifth grades. When Poppy leaves fourth grade, Brian will be her math teacher. Sam suggests that maybe she doesn't want to be in Brian's class. Offended, Brian reacts with hostile denial, but Wendy admits there may be merit to the idea. Brian has been out of the house more than in it lately, and she knows Clover and Leaf blame their sister for Brian's absence. The isolation at home hurts Poppy more than it might because she's always been so loved by both her brother and sister. She's not sure what the solution is. Transfer Brian to third grade for two years? Hardly. He isn't qualified cross-categorically, and he would divorce her if she suggested it.

"Poppy," she asks that night at bedtime, "how do you feel about homeschooling?"

Poppy looks at her as if she's just returned from Mars. "Homeschooling? Are you serious? That's the worst idea I've ever heard. I want to be at school with Clover and Leaf and all my friends."

"And having Dad next year for math?"

Wendy watches Poppy pale. Her narrow shoulders shrug under her nightgown. "I don't know," she says softly.

"You can't stay in school, Poppy," she exaggerates, "if you don't pass math, and you can't stay in school if you don't take math with Dad next year. So, you tell me what you want to do."

"I don't want to be in class with Dad. He hates me."

"Oh, Poppy." Wendy pulls her into her arms. "Dad doesn't hate you. He really doesn't."

"Do you promise?"

Wendy thinks back to her own childhood, when a parent's promise was all she needed to feel better. She nods. "I promise. Dad loves you very much, sweetie. Both of your dads do."

"Then why doesn't he ever sleep here anymore, and why does Clover blame me?"

"Those are harder questions, Poppy, and we will talk about them, but right now I need *your* promise that your math grades are going to look better in the future."

Poppy nods. "I promise."

Poppy, much to her own surprise, squeaks by fourth and fifth grade math. Dad treats her like a regular student at school—thank God. He tries to help her on things she doesn't understand at home, but the truth is she doesn't like working with him. His impatience makes her a little afraid, and she doesn't like it when he gets frustrated.

She overhears her mom and dad arguing before dinner one night about how much Poppy looks like her father—Sam—and how much that bothers her dad—Brian—every time he looks at her. Clover walks by while they're fighting and gives Poppy an ugly look. She hates Poppy for being the bomb that blew up her happy pre-Poppy family. When Poppy wins the seventh grade science fair demonstrating classical conditioning with a parakeet, a project she completes with her father—Sam's—help, she's so proud. She also senses the loosening of the last binds in her parents' marriage.

**10 Socioemotional
Development
in Middle and
Late Childhood**

Wendy remembers when she thought of Clover as the Poppy Whisperer. Those days are gone. Clover is gone, along with Leaf and Brian. And Poppy wanders the house like ghost. Although the divorce will be formal enough in a few months, custody isn't, at least not for now. All three parents manage to agree without much debate that the children should be able to choose their dwellings and change their minds and not worry about judges or guilt. For now, Clover and Leaf are living with Brian, but Wendy suspects this is as much because they want a break from Poppy as it is because they want to live with their dad. She misses them more than she can say, and when she thinks about it for more than seconds at a time, she can't help crying. The questions that follow are inevitable.

"Mom? Why are you crying?"

Wendy doesn't believe in lying to children so much as it's possible not to do so. "Just a little sad, Poppy. Nothing for you to worry about."

"Do you miss my brother and sister?"

"I do, yes." Wendy kneels and looks into Poppy's face at her level.

"Me, too."

They hug, and Wendy struggles for composure until Poppy releases her and wanders away to find some quiet activity to occupy her time. Wendy never knows what she does anymore. She probably should.

Poppy is so excited. Her dads—both of them—and her brother *and* her sister—who is her favorite person in the world—are coming over for Thanksgiving dinner. She and Mom started cooking yesterday. They made a cake and two pies. Clover likes pumpkin pie, and Leaf likes apple. So does their dad, the one she shares with them. She likes cake best, and so does her other dad. Mom likes all sweets. They already boiled eggs they'll devil today; Mom says she needs to let Poppy touch them with her magic wand, and they'll be ready (haha). When she gets up Thanksgiving morning, Mom already has the turkey in the oven. Poppy puts a tiny apron on, and Mom hands her a bag of carrots and a vegetable peeler.

"Get to it."

"Okay!"

"You're chipper this morning."

"I love Thanksgiving," Poppy reminds her mom.

Mom laughs back. "I know. Now, let's get busy so we have food to eat when everyone gets here."

"Yes, ma'am."

They work together for hours. Mom tells her just before lunch to go get a bath and put on something nicer than her Scooby Doo pajamas. Poppy wants to know who doesn't like Scooby Doo, but she's shooed from the kitchen and sent on her way. Once she's clean, she's allowed to set the table with the good china (she personally thinks they should use the good china every day) and put ice water in glasses all around the table. The doorbell rings at exactly two minutes before they're all supposed to arrive, and Poppy skids into the hallway to answer it, almost crashing into the windows beside the door when she can't stop.

"Clover!" she yells when she throws the door open.

Her sister glances in her direction for a second. "Hey."

Their dad and Leaf come in the house, and Clover pauses only long enough to not come in with Poppy's other dad. She goes straight to the stairs and heads for her room. Poppy decides to say hi to everyone and then go see Clover for a few minutes.

"Hi, Dad," she says, hugging Sam. "I'm really glad you came."

"I'm really glad you invited me, sweet pea."

Poppy stops in the hallway and looks up at him, hands on her hips. "Really? My real name is the name of a flower, and now my nickname will be the name of a flower? Puh-lease."

He laughs and hugs her again. "Fair enough. Let's go check on everyone else, shall we?"

"Will you? I want to go upstairs with Clover. I'll come right back."

"Okay. Run along then. I'll tell the others where you are."

"Thanks, Dad." Taking off down the hallway in her slick shoes, Poppy slides onto the bottom stair and runs headlong up them. At the top, she turns left and then right into Clover's room. She's glad Clover didn't close the door so she doesn't feel like she absolutely had to knock. Even so, she stops right inside the door and clears her throat the way she's seen grown-ups do. "Clover?"

"Go away, Poppy."

"You used to never tell me to go away," she whispers.

"Yeah, well, you used to *not* be the reason Mom and Dad got a divorce and I have to live with Dad."

Confused, Poppy says, "But you don't have to live with Dad! They said we could live where we wanted."

"Right," Clover says, sitting up and looking at her like she wanted to make her disappear with her eyes. "And where I want live is where you *don't* live. Got it?"

Poppy stares. “Got it,” she whispers.

Poppy leaves Clover then. Walking to her own room, she thinks about her sister. Clover is graduating from high school in a few months and then going to college. She doesn’t want her to leave home mad at her. Poppy doesn’t know where Clover wants to live—with Mom or with Dad—but she’s sure it isn’t with Sam. If Poppy lives with Sam, then Clover can live wherever she wants to. Drying the tears she doesn’t want any of her parents to notice, she walks downstairs slowly and asks to speak to her dad before talking to all of her parents. She hopes she doesn’t break her mom’s heart, but she has to fix Clover’s if she can.

Back downstairs, she tries to speak casually to all the parents about changing the living arrangements. Dad—her biological dad—is okay with it, but her other dad is mad. He likes having Clover and Leaf. Mom is unhappy, too. She wants all of them.

“Well, you can’t have all of us!” Poppy yells. “No one can. At least this way, each of you has one of us. That’s kind of fair.”

She backs out of the room as the three adults start shouting about who gets which kid and whose fault this is or that is. “Ask Clover,” Poppy whispers on her way out the door. “She knows.”

11 Physical and Cognitive Development in Adolescence

Poppy’s ambivalence about living with Sam troubles her. She finds it painful that her dad is so understanding about her feelings, too. Her relationship with Clover is definitely better now that her sister lives with Mom again. Leaf still lives with their dad. He seems to view both Poppy and their mom as being at fault in his broken home and doesn’t want much to do with either of them. Poppy misses them all. She misses her old life.

At the same time, she loves having her other dad so much of the time, and she’s able to appreciate how much she missed not being with him more when she was little. He treats her like she matters and lets her go to either of her other houses anytime she asks for as long as she asks. She’s pretty sure he’s a saint walking around disguised as a man.

When she’s 15 and staying with Mom for a few days (Clover visits Dad), she gets sick—in bed, vomiting, doesn’t know what’s up or down sick. Mom tries to get her to eat, but she can’t. She pushes the food away.

“Take it out,” she whispers. “Throw up.”

“Okay, honey. I’m going.” Mom leaves and returns. The smell of food is gone. “Can you tell me anything, Poppy? I’m really worried.”

“Head,” she whispers again. It’s all she can manage.

After a pause, Mom says, “It’s only 3:30 p.m. I think we should go to Dr. Lamb’s. I know you think you can’t get out of bed, but you can. Let’s just get in the car and go. Come along, honey, I’ll help you.”

The walk downstairs, out into the sun, and the drive to the doctor’s office are all excruciating. Once, Mom has to pause at a green light so Poppy can lean out her door and vomit. She’s shivering and begging God to die by the time they get to Dr. Lamb’s, the family’s general practitioner. Fortunately for Poppy, it’s late in the day, and Dr. Lamb doesn’t have many patients waiting. The nurse takes her to a room where she can lie down to wait in the dark, and she doesn’t even care how long it is that she waits. The room is cool, and there’s no noise from anywhere until Dr. Lamb arrives with her mother. It takes less than a minute for the doctor to softly say, “Migraine,” which Poppy’s pretty sure she could’ve diagnosed herself.

She leaves and returns with the nurse. “Jamie will give you a shot, Poppy. It’s going to hurt, but I think you probably won’t even register the pain. In a few minutes, the migraine will start to wear off, but you might feel a little nauseous. If that’s the case, ask, and Jamie will give you something for that. I’m giving your mom some prescriptions for the next time this happens.”

Next time?

Everything Dr. Lamb says is true. The shot does hurt; she kind of knows that but finds she can’t care. The shot is also magic, like ambrosia. In almost no time her shoulders become less tense as the pain ebbs. She keeps waiting for the headache to return, but it doesn’t. Nausea takes its place.

“Throw up,” she whispers to Mom, still in a roadkill state.

Mom leaves and returns with the nurse, who lifts her head and gives her a pill and a small paper cup of water. The pill doesn’t work as fast as the shot, but it doesn’t take long. Once she feels like she can open her eyes and speak without dying, Poppy asks for the doctor.

Dr. Lamb returns, nodding and smiling as she gives Poppy the once-over. “Looking better.”

“Thanks,” Poppy says softly, “to you.”

“You had a question,” Dr. Lamb said.

“You said ‘next time’ when you were in here before. Why do you think this will happen again? I haven’t had a bad headache before.”

Dr. Lamb sighs. “The best predictor of a migraine, Poppy, is a migraine. I hope you never do have another one, but after today don’t you want to be prepared?”

She agrees that seems sensible and leaves with Mom soon after speaking to Dr. Lamb. On the ride home, Mom reaches across the seat of the car and touches her knee.

“You’ve got too much stress,” she says.

Poppy looks out the window. “I don’t have too much stress.”

“You always take on too much. Like the divorce. Leaf. I know you blame yourself, but none of it is your fault. If you carry around all that guilt, it’s going to start hurting you at some point.”

Poppy, truly angry for maybe the first time, turns to look at Mom. “Not my fault? Those are just words, Mom. The same words you and Dad keep saying because you think somehow saying them makes me believe them? Everyone’s actions—including the divorce but especially the isolation of my brother and sister—tell the true story. Say one thing; do another. My whole life is an ongoing remake of *Gaslight*.”

“Poppy!”

“Just take me to Dad’s. He can fill the prescriptions.”

“If that’s what you really want.”

She knows she hurt her mom’s feelings, and part of her feels bad about that—not a big enough part. “It is.”

**12 Socioemotional
Development in
Adolescence**

Poppy begins working a part-time job at the local supermarket and begins dating almost without the notice of her parents. Clover, 22, and Leaf, 20, are off at college, and her parents are all busy with their careers. No one cares what she does with most of her time. Her bio-dad always wants to meet whatever new guy she's going out with *before* she goes out with him. It's all pretty low key though. She's pretty sure she could bring home her English teacher—Mr. Apple is so hot—and no one would notice—not that she'd actually date her English teacher because, ew, gross.

She starts dating Harry at the beginning of junior year. For Poppy, this means a reasonable amount of time to be asked to homecoming. She's not one of those girls who gets a new guy at the beginning of October and then feels that's an auto-invite to the biggest event of the football season. You have to ease into that one. Harry—well, two and a half months is reasonable, respectable. There's one problem with Harry; she's definitely not going to have her first major event requiring pictures and all that entails if it involves the parental units—all three of them. If her mom had been successful in keeping Poppy's parentage from her dads, she would've been among the 1 to 3 percent of kids raised in the world by fathers who didn't sire them and didn't know they didn't. She'd checked. Does she really want to get into all that with Harry and, more importantly, Harry's parents? It bears thinking about.

"What's there to think about?" Harry asks her when she puts him off about homecoming. "You get a dress. I get a suit or something else *suitable*. You see what I did there?"

Poppy laughs. "Yes, I see."

"We become beautiful, takes some pictures with everyone else down by the river, then eat a bunch of food, go the dance, and drink a bunch of bad not-spiked-punch while we dance poorly, leave, eat some more, then go home. Sounds simple to me."

"I wish it were that simple."

"What's not? Do you already have a date? Like a date you made back in February or something?" For a second he looks serious. "I'm not really serious, but tell me if you do."

"I don't," she assures him. "Can we just take pictures with your parents?"

Harry frowns. "That's most unexpected. You don't want yours there? Not even one of them? I know they don't live together, so maybe you don't want to make things awkward by having them together for pictures, but you don't want either of them there?"

No time like the present.

"I'm pretty sure I don't want *any* of them there," she corrects.

It's almost worth it just to see his face try to puzzle out her words.

"That's what I asked."

"No, it's almost what you asked. You asked don't I want either of my parents there when we take pictures, and 'either' implies two. I have three."

"Oh." She gives him another minute or so to work this out. "So, like you have two same-sex parents and a surrogate or something?"

“Or something, but it’s a little more exotic than that.” Poppy can’t believe she’s made it this far without being the complete gossip of her high school. Maybe it’s true that everyone has their own problems and isn’t concerned with anyone else’s. Dang. Teenagers are a selfish bunch. “I have parents, a mom and dad, who were married when Mom got pregnant with me. I was baby number three, if it matters.”

“Okay . . .” Harry says. “So, how does that get you to three unless maybe one of them got remarried and you consider that person your parent also. But that’s not so uncommon, right?”

“No, I don’t think it is, but that’s also not my story. When Mom got pregnant with me, she was having an affair with Dad’s good friend, who as it turns out is my biological father. It’s alternately polite and messy and unpleasant and pretty healthy. I don’t know. I don’t tell people, although my friends tend to know my Mom and at least one of my dads.”

Harry looks at her. “That’s nuts.”

“Little bit. Anyway, now you see why I asked if we could just have your parents there.”

“Yeah, now I see., Harry agrees as he glances at his watch. “Hey, I forgot I’m supposed to pick up a prescription for my mom at the pharmacy. We can talk about this later, right?”

Poppy nods. “Sure. You know where to find me.”

He does, too, which is why she’s a little wrecked that he doesn’t call or come by later—or at all. Her relationship ends without any notification at all, and she figures it’s got to be because she told him about her family. She’d always thought Harry was pretty unconcerned about social norms—guess not. She thinks maybe it’s time to not date for a little while.

13 Physical and Cognitive Development in Emerging/Early Adulthood

Poppy telephones each of her parents from her bio-dad’s house. She doesn’t want to have the coming conversation, but the uptick in migraines tells her it’s time. Once she gets it out of the way, she’ll go back to the monthly headache she gets with her period and the handful that always follow her attempts to reconnect with Clover or Leaf. Her dad—with whom she still lives—agrees to let her have her other parents over to dinner so they can all talk. She knows she can always count on his support.

At 5:45 p.m., she orders two pizzas, vegetarian for her mom and herself and all the meats for her dads. Pizza is easy to order and easy to clean up. She pulls out paper plates, a bottle of wine for Mom, and a couple beers. She gets herself a cream soda and waits. Mom and Dad arrive together, which she knew would happen. Dad told her he’d pick up Mom on his way over from his house. Her bio-dad comes in carrying the pizza, having met the delivery lady in the driveway.

“Did you tip her well?” Poppy asks.

He gives her the evil eye and sighs. “Yes, Poppy, I tipped her well. You’ll break me just in tipping.”

“The service industry is the working poor in this country,” she reminds him, taking the boxes and throwing them on the table where her other parents wait. “Dig in, everyone. I don’t know about you, but I’m starved.” The statement isn’t quite true. She’s too nervous to be hungry, but she can eat. The smell of pizza makes everyone hungry so far as she knows.

Her dads open their beers, and she pours her mom's wine. Her parents comment on the little luxuries being afforded them, and she smiles. After their second slice, she says, "You might've guessed there's more to this dinner than pizza and the pleasure of one another's company."

Dad, not her bio-dad, says, "I hope so," making everyone else frown.

Poppy bites back tears. Nodding, she rushes on. "I asked you to come over because I have some things to say to you and wanted to get through it all just the once."

Her bio-dad clears away the pizza boxes, and Poppy reaches behind herself for the folder she's been waiting to pull out. There are several paper-clipped stacks inside. She lays them one at a time except for the last two on the table. She closes the folder with the others still inside.

"These are acceptance packages from Arizona State, Georgia Tech, Tufts, Cornell, and Virginia Tech," she tells them. It's ridiculously difficult to keep the pride from her voice.

All three of her parents stare slack-jawed at the stacks of paper and then at her. Mom speaks first. Poppy expected that.

"Oh, honey. I didn't even know you were applying anywhere. This is amazing. What validation for all your hard work! I'm so proud of you."

"Yes," her dads agree. "So proud of you, sweetheart."

"Thanks. I just wanted to show you my options."

"They're all far away," Mom says, but she doesn't sound like she's complaining. "Were they specific choices?"

"Yes, they were. I'm going to study ergonomics, and these are some of the best schools for that."

"So, which lucky school did you choose?" her bio-dad asks.

"Oh, none of those." She puts away the papers and the folder. "I'm going up north. West Point, if you're really interested. It won't cost you a penny, and yes, I'll have activity duty responsibilities when I'm finished. Please just say you're happy for me or something."

Poppy waits. Clover and Leaf both went to college, but her parents are too busy arguing over who will pay for her tuition to even ask what she wants. It's okay, she thinks. She's done it on her own. Now, they just need to acknowledge the fact.

**14 Socioemotional
Development in
Emerging/Early
Adulthood**

Poppy sits at one of the four small tables in the room dedicated to student clubs in the wing where psychology is housed at West Point. Her roommate and best friend Colleen Pierce sits adjacent to her as they plan the annual spring Psi Chi induction. She's participated in several events honoring cadets for this accomplishment or that achievement, but Psi Chi is close to her heart. The national honor society for psychology, while thriving, had a fairly defunct chapter at the United States Military Academy until a future ergonomist and future counselor decided to revive it last fall. Now they're days away from inducting the first group of cadets in more than six years.

"I still can't believe the registrar gave us all the names of cadets who qualify," Colleen says with a wide grin.

Poppy looks over the list and thinks about her classmates. “Well, when you think about requirements, it’s really down to majors who have enough psych credits, right? I mean who here isn’t going to have the GPA? All we really needed was faculty sponsorship.”

On cue, Major Wolfe sticks his greying head into the doorway, and they stand. Wolfe is the new Psi Chi faculty sponsor, for which both cadets are immensely grateful. “Bell, Pierce, how go the plans?”

“Almost finalized, Major Wolfe. Thank you again for supporting us,” Colleen answers with a dimpled smile. She almost looks feminine when she smiles, but Poppy knows what lurks behind the benign façade. Colleen puts most of the male second-year cadets to shame in their physical training.

“Excellent.” Major Wolfe turns to go. “Remember to let me know if you need anything.”

“Thank you, sir,” they both say before resuming their seats once he’s gone.

“That man,” Colleen whispers, “could make me forget I’m gay.”

Poppy snorts in laughter. “That man,” she rejoins, “is inappropriately named. He shouldn’t be Major Wolfe, but Major Fox, because he is one major fox.”

Colleen rolls her eyes. “Like he’s never heard that one before.”

“I never said I was a creative genius.”

“Good thing,” Colleen says, laughing, “or I’d have to call you out for false advertising.”

Poppy stares at the empty doorway. “Do’ya think he’s married?”

“Major Wolfe?” Geez, you do have some daddy issues, don’t you? Not that it’s terribly unexpected given your—ah—childhood situation.”

“Har-dee-har, Anna Freud.”

One week later, in a club room in Cullum Hall, Major Wolfe stands between Colleen (announcing cadet names at the podium) and Poppy (handing shaking hands and snapping photos). As each cadet walks past Colleen, Major Wolfe hands him or her a folder with a certificate recognizing the cadet as a lifetime member of Psi Chi, after which he shakes the cadet’s hand and smiles in a roguish way for Poppy’s camera—17 times. It’s wonderful!

The adjoining club room holds the usual array of social niceties, passed by plebes hopeful of induction next spring. Once all cadets have their certificates, Poppy thanks Major Wolfe and the assembled guests and then directs them to the reception next door. The string quartet she’d wrangled from friends she knew casually plays in a corner, and she barely needs to do anything at all for the evening to continue on its path to success.

“We did it,” Colleen breathes in her ear.

“We did!” Poppy grabs a flute of sparkling grape juice. “I’m so proud of the whole event. Aren’t you?”

“I am actually. I’m glad we did it.”

"Me, too." Beaming, she sips the drink, pinkened by the raspberries she suggested be dropped in the bottoms of all the glasses, and watches everyone chatting, eating, and enjoying the night they'd made. She never even notices Colleen slipping away to speak to someone across the room or the arrival of Major Wolfe.

"Poppy, hi."

She looks around from her lazy watching of the crowd. "Sir. Good evening. Thank you for your participation tonight."

He shifts the plate of cake and psi-shaped breadsticks into his other hand and smiles at her. "The pleasure was entirely mine."

"I promise," she tells him earnestly, "that the club will do a fund-raiser quickly to pay back the seed money."

Major Wolfe waves away the concern. "Just be proud of yourselves."

She can feel herself blush, which annoys her. Compliments annoy her because she never knows quite what to do with them. Self-deprecate as usual, she supposes. "Thanks, but it's not like I'm off fighting a war or anything."

"It takes real leadership to engage a group of other leaders to pull off something like this."

"I—uh . . . thank you, sir."

"Poppy, you have three months until you graduate?"

"I do, yes."

"Would you consider having dinner with me at that time? And possibly not calling me 'sir' then?"

She feels a smile break across her face. "Yes. Sir."

15 Physical and Cognitive Development in Middle Adulthood

Poppy's five-year service requirement as a result of attending West Point turns into ten years. Once she realizes she doesn't want to quit until she makes captain and that making captain will take her at least eight years, well, re-upping is the only real option open to her. It's fine. For the first five years, she and Aiden Wolfe (who knew it would be so easy to fall in love in the end?) manage their long-distance relationship pretty well. She doesn't have any say in where she goes, and they both know this is both the job and the life if they choose it. It's hard, harder than anything Poppy's ever done, she thinks. Losing Clover's affection might've been worse, but she never lets herself think about that at all.

After she reenlists, she has a slight amount of say in where she goes. She gets to prioritize a handful of tours, always with the acknowledgement that she could end up somewhere else entirely. Knowing this and knowing what she wants to do with her career, Wolfe agrees to a reversible vasectomy just before she does her first tour in Afghanistan. It's not that they don't both like kids; they do. They just don't see kids of their own in their future, and they're both okay with that.

Working in Afghanistan gives Poppy new purpose, a direction focusing her so completely on the now that she sees nothing other than the job and the distance between when she sees Wolfe and when she'

He'll see him again. Over a noisy, crackling phone line, she tries to talk to him about it.

"We're patrolling in the hills, protecting a school," she yells.

"Did you say school? It's hard to hear you."

"Yes! A school for girls! Aiden, I need you to be here. I need you to help me on this project. Can you get some time?"

He manages four days, during which she shows him the school, the photos she's taken of it from every angle, and tells him her idea. She's the integrative person, the one to make the product work in conjunction with the persons using it. She needs Wolfe's psychological expertise to bring it to life first.

"Can we do it?"

He nods. "If we can get the materials, we can do it. Let me talk to my CO."

"Thank you." She hugs him tightly. "How long do we have left?"

Aiden checks his watch. "Seventeen hours until my chopper leaves. What do you have in mind?"

"Wanna get hitched? Chaplain's on duty. I already checked."

He doesn't look scared or angry—possibly a little amused—which helps her relax.

"Think we need a marriage license for some period of time?" he asks.

Poppy shakes her head. "No. Not here. Just someone to recognize the ceremony and two witnesses." She squints at him. "You're sure?"

"I'm sure, and the sooner we get it done, the sooner we can design your cloak of invisibility for the girls' school."

"That's true," she agrees. "Just let me brush my teeth or something."

Aiden grabs her hand and pulls her from the barracks. "You're a rock star, Bell. Leave everything for ten minutes and come make us the Bell-Wolfe's, would you?"

"I will," she says, and she says it again a few minutes later in front of the army chaplain, a first lieutenant, and a green beret—best day of her life.

16 Socioemotional Development in Middle Adulthood

It isn't perfect, but it's awfully close.

Poppy and Wolfe, wearing dress uniforms, appear for the unveiling, oxymoronic at best, of their brainchild. She wears a hijab in deference to the Afghani officials who will be present. The demonstration is partial; she and Aiden plan to show how the cloaking mechanism works on a small segment of one wall inside the building being used for the ceremonial event. Military proprietary contracts as well as simple security preclude them doing a live demonstration on any real schools.

After prolonged introductions and much bowing and bestowing of honors backward and forward between leaders of both militaries, Poppy explains to the room how she came to think of the idea and the barest bones of Aiden's design. Every couple sentences, she pauses and allows the translator to catch up. She tells the small room of people that she envisioned a tool that would essentially drop like a net over any portion of the school—all four outer walls of the school she's protecting, for instance—with hundreds of tiny, cup-shaped mirrors attached to the web. The cups, facing outward, would reflect back to a viewer anything from the surrounding environment—sand, shrubbery, or mountains—while obscuring the structure behind the net.

As she explains, Aiden moves into position and, at the appropriate pause, drops the small net of sample materials over the wall. The room of people draws a collective breath as the wall disappears and the room seems to take on a larger, open space to the left of their seating area. As far as small demonstrations go, it's a success. They answer questions from the gallery, one of which comes from a small Afghan woman Poppy is surprised to learn is from America originally. Recently arrived to help with the same school, she has many questions about the cloaking tool, and Poppy makes an appointment to sit with her—Aminah Mohammed, she says her name is—the following week.

Waiting for Aminah, Poppy's attention is stolen by a major in her unit. He's playing with a dirty child of indeterminate age and sex. She asks the store's proprietor about the boy—she thinks he's a boy—when he brings her coffee and learns that four-year-old Ismail was found wandering two days before after his village was bombed and his mother killed. His father fights with the Americans, she's told, but no one has seen him in months. Poppy hands the proprietor all the money she has and tells him to feed Ismail. Aminah arrives moments after the child receives a plate of stew, and Poppy shakes her head at the woman's look of understanding.

"The embassy is making short work of adoptions to Western families," Aminah tells her.

"He's a lovely boy," Poppy says, "but I'm clearly in no position to adopt any child, much less one living in an international war zone."

"No? My mistake. I thought for sure you had the look."

Poppy finds herself wanting to hide entirely inside her hijab. Maybe these women were onto something. "The look? What look?"

"The wounded mother look. The I've-see-you-and-now-you're-mine look." Aminah shrugs. "It happens and to far more stalwart souls than yours. What's his name?"

"Ismail," she says.

"I love that name."

Poppy nods. "Me, too."

The adoption takes three months, at the end of which she wrangles a six-day furlough to take Ismail to the States. She calls Clover before she leaves Afghanistan, although they haven't talked in years.

"I'm bringing my son to you," she says without preamble. "I need you to keep him safe until I can come for him. It's not long. A few months."

Without hesitation, Clover says, "Okay."

17 Physical and Cognitive Development in Late Adulthood

"*Ahbk ya amy*," Ismail tells Poppy, leaning over her bed and kissing her cheek.

Poppy gives her son the evil eye. "If you loved me, you'd bring me a pad of paper and some pencils.

"It's because I love you that I don't do that," he counters. "Now sleep. You're sick."

"I have a cold!" she yells as he closes the door behind him, leaving her alone to think thoughts she can't use productively. It's the worst sort of day she can have, an unproductive one, and her son knows it. Maybe he'll at least bring her soup—or whiskey. Whiskey is an acceptable substitute.

If she can't keep busy, she misses Aiden, and that's too much to ask of her. She tries to think of going home with Ismail instead, of that long-ago visit from Afghanistan to see him settled and safe.

She makes it out of Afghanistan and returns home with a terrified but beautiful Ismail in tow. Her sister has a three-year-old son, and she knows Clover will guard her new nephew with her life. She visits the grave of her biological father, who'd died the previous year when she was in the Middle East and couldn't get home, and on her last day, she visits her mom and dad. Mom, as always, seems so frail and guilt ridden. Poppy hugs her and tells her she's forgiven. She and her dad do their awkward dance, and even though she suspects she won't see him again, it's the best she has.

"You should go meet your grandson," she says as she leaves. "He needs family now."

She returns to Afghanistan, detouring to Syria to spend a two-day furlough with Aiden, who's teaching a short course on a Navy air force carrier. The missile strikes the base where he's having dinner hours after she leaves. All 31 soldiers and sailors inside when the missile hits die, including Aiden. She tries mourning by throwing herself into her work in Afghanistan. Aminah is a wonderful friend and colleague, but it's never the same again. When her tour's up, she returns home, finishes her last year stateside, and gets out.

Poppy does an array of ergonomics contract jobs after her stint in the military. Mostly, she works for Defense, making enough money to buy a small house in Alexandria and raise Ismail on her own without worrying about going bankrupt. Now, here he is bullying her into bed when he knows what her memories do to her if she's idle. She finds it's like choosing a photo album to peruse. She can pick her first date with Aiden, their wedding, the day she first saw Ismail or the day she brought him home, the last day she spent with Aiden, or the day she returned home for good without him. She understands mourning. People mourn losses every day. But she and Aiden weren't even married a decade, and they'd never lived together in all the years they were wed. It doesn't seem fair.

"*Umi?*" Ismail asks, sticking his head back in the door.

"Yes, love?"

"I know you said it's just a migraine, but do you want to go to the doctor?"

Poppy shakes her head. "No, Ismail. Just find my medicine, if you would. I'll be fine."

"Promise?"

"I do, yes."

But the headaches come so often now and hurt so badly. She doesn't want to complain or be a burden, so she keeps it to herself except when the pain is so bad she just can't.

**18 Socioemotional
Development in
Late Adulthood**

Poppy occasionally attends prayer circle at the local mosque with her daughter-in-law Shalini, of whom she is fond, and some days she even forgets she's old, widowed, and nearly irrelevant.

"Don't say those things," Ismail chides whenever she says them aloud.

"It's true," she reminds him without any rancor.

"I'm glad you come with us, Ma," Shalini says, always with a gentle hand squeeze. "I don't like to think of you at home alone."

"I don't mind being alone," Poppy says truthfully.

Alone means she has time to sit in silence and think of her life, her loves, and even her losses. She might have a year or a decade left. No matter, she's loved and only wistful for Aiden, who so would've loved all of this.

"I miss you every day, Aiden," she tells him before going to sleep at night.

"Hopefully, it won't be too long now."

**19 Experience
With Death and
Dying**

As Poppy slides into her mid-60s, she continues to enjoy her solitude. She loves Ismail, Shalini, and the grandchildren, but they're no longer small toddlers needing bedtime stories or boo-boo kisses from Granny. She's tired, so tired. The days seem so long without Aiden and without fruitful work. Her doctor tells her at every checkup that she's depressed, a diagnosis Poppy rejects out of hand. She's not depressed; she's getting old. The doctor reminds her those two aren't mutually exclusive. The only physical ailment that plagues her are the near-constant migraines. She has a series of excruciating headaches that nearly make her call Ismail and ask to go to the doctor. She takes a shot of fast-acting triptans instead and goes to bed. Ismail finds her a few hours later, ill. At the hospital, the family learns Poppy has a large, inoperable brain tumor that's finally reached end-stage. Hospice is called, and she passes away a few days later.

Case Discussion Questions

1. In Poppy's infancy, the three parents, Wendy and Brian together and then Sam, attend a series of family court sessions after which a judge rules on visitation and child support for Sam. He's granted what he considers to be rather strict visitation, but he willingly pays the child support the court has ordered. Contrast this case to Poppy's optimal case in which the court is not involved and Sam has a liberal visitation schedule and an agreed-upon reasonable child support payment. How might Poppy's future outcomes be altered in this case across any and all domains (biological, cognitive, and socioemotional)? Why?
2. In early childhood, Wendy and Brian argue with Sam about where Poppy should attend preschool. After discussing the situation, Wendy thinks maybe she'll look at some alternatives like Sam is. In this case, Brian reacts poorly, sleeping on the sofa and leaving the house in the morning for an undetermined amount of time before anyone else gets up. Compare this to the optimal case in which he also sleeps on the couch but doesn't leave. What in Poppy's prior life experiences suggests these are typical Brian behaviors, and how do you expect Poppy to develop across any and all domains (biological, cognitive, and socioemotional) as you consider these factors?
3. In middle adulthood, Poppy is serving overseas in Afghanistan. She is involved with her former mentor from West Point, Major Wolfe, and on a brief furlough, the two are married by an Army chaplain. From all appearances, Poppy is happy, as is Aiden Wolfe. Compare this outcome to the optimal case in which Poppy is also serving overseas and also marries during a short furlough but marries Nick, a fellow West Point cadet and soldier. Is there a reason to expect the outcome in this case? What theory would best support this outcome?

4. Consider Poppy's optimal case outcomes at the end of her life and Erikson's integrity-versus-despair stage of psychosocial development. How does this case compare to that one? Consider all of Poppy's life events. How do you think those contributed to any differences in Poppy's end-of-life outcomes and her sense of integrity versus despair?

12. Moderate Outcomes: Aminah Mohammed

2 Biological and Environmental Foundations

Aminah, conceived when Munya is just barely 22, is a mystery to her parents. Both decide not to learn the sex of their coming child, just as they chose with Navi. Riad, who wed Munya in an arranged ceremony five years before and has grown to love her deeply, doesn't hold that his wife should bear only boys into the world. He does believe it's better for her to be at home raising whatever children they have than it is for her to be, say, in one of his convenience stores cashing out sales. It's just not an equitable trade for her time, the \$8 he pays a high school kid to do that job versus the invaluable job she does raising children. If Munya wants to know Aminah's sex, she doesn't want to know enough to go against Riad. She's a peaceful, agreeable woman who generally lets others have their wishes because it makes her happy to do so and not out of any sense of duty. The baby will come out the same regardless of sex and will eat, cry, and sleep the same, too. She can wait.

What cannot wait, Ms. Abbas scolds her, is Munya's need to control her morning sickness. It wasn't like this with Navi. The first trimester passing of nausea and occasional vomiting proves a myth, and Munya continues to feel wretched well past the halfway point of her pregnancy. She can barely tolerate any food at all, which Ms. Abbas worries over. Eventually, she prescribes a medicine to help with nausea and tells Riad to bring home a case of Gatorade from one of the stores. Munya improves after that, but Ms. Abbas remains concerned. Playing with Navi on the floor of their apartment, Munya waves off her worries. She feels her child moving with clockwork regularity. There's no trouble; she's sure of it.

3 Prenatal Development, Birth, and the Newborn Experience

When Munya is 36 weeks pregnant, she feels her labor begin. Having Navi so recently, she waits just a bit to make certain this isn't false labor, and when she knows her child will be born in the next day, she telephones Riad at the store where he's working that day. Riad calls Ms. Abbas, who arrives within half an hour and checks Munya's progress. She tells Munya that, yes, her baby will be born in the next eight or ten hours probably and, settling her on the birthing mat, makes lunch for Naveed and tea for herself.

Riad arrives and sits in the living room to wait with Navi. They play games, watch television, and assured by Ms. Abbas that the baby won't be born soon, go out for a quick dinner. Riad bathes his son and puts him to bed on the sofa beside him when they return. Two local women he recognizes as being part of Munya's prayer circle and close friends of hers have arrived by this time and are in attendance in the bedroom, where Munya struggles to deliver their baby. Ms. Abbas comes into the living room to tell him that Munya is fine, and his child should be arriving soon.

It seems to take forever, but Aminah is delivered just before dawn. She is small, 5.4 pounds, although she's technically full term, and she seems frail to her parents. The midwife is concerned about some difficulty the baby has breathing just after she's born. Ms. Abbas gives her a little oxygen from a portable machine and suggests it's probably best to have Dr. Ramanujan, the local pediatrician for almost everyone's children, check her out thoroughly then rather than in the morning.

Ms. Abbas removes the soiled linens from the birthing mat and helps Munya into her own bed. She checks Munya over and waits with her for the pediatrician, who examines Aminah closely. He tells Munya and Riad that the baby is fine. He'd like to see her first thing the next day, but that's common. Encouraging them not to worry and to get some rest, he thanks Ms. Abbas, and the two professionals leave together.

4 Physical Development in Infancy and Toddlerhood

Munya holds Aminah while an active Navi plays at her feet. Dr. Ramanujan, whose pediatric practice is run from the first floor of his two-story home, speaks to Navi now and then while examining the baby. Munya strokes her head and asks the worried questions she committed to memory before coming.

"Ms. Abbas said she was 'small for date,' you remember?"

Dr. Ramanujan nods. "I do, but do you remember when we talked about that the day Aminah was born?"

"Yes. I just don't understand. I read about this condition, small for date, and I don't know why my Aminah was born so. I didn't have any of the risk factors I read about."

Dr. Ramanujan raises one eyebrow at her. Riad does the same sometimes, and he usually follows the expression with a comical rebuke of some sort. So does the doctor. "My patients," he says, "always reading, reading, reading. Why don't you read a good novel? Or the *New York Times*? Don't read about illness and disease. Please. You make my job so much harder when you do."

They both laugh.

"But then why?" Munya pushes. She's assertive regarding the children's health.

"Well," he says, "she was just on that line between full term and premature. A few days earlier and we would've said she was preterm and a healthy weight for her gestational age. These are the best definitions and guidelines we have, Mrs. Mohammed, but they're not as specific as we like to believe. For instance, does it make sense to you that on one day, Aminah is premature and of good size and the next day is not premature and of insufficient size? We draw a line, and 98 percent of the time it works."

"I see," Munya says, nodding. She thinks she does, too.

"Good, because this little girl is happy and healthy. I'd like for her to have fewer colds during rainy periods, but this isn't unusual for small babies, particularly ones with respiratory concerns at birth. *But* she's hitting all her milestones and shows nothing to worry about that I can see. Shall we make her cry now with a couple vaccinations?"

Munya laughs. "Yes. I think that would be good for both of them. Then I can take Navi for an ice cream and put this little one down for a long nap." She looks at Dr. Ramanujan in complete gratitude. "Thank you."

"That's what I'm here for," he replies.

5 Cognitive Development in Infancy and Toddlerhood

Munya stands at the stove cooking. Dinner takes a long time. They're eating lemon-garlic steak, eggplant, and rice tonight, and she likes a tender steak. She doesn't want to overcook or end up steaming it. Keeping focused on this delicate task is a challenge with little miss distraction at her feet. Glancing down, she laughs at Aminah, sitting in front of the children's cabinet full of plastic bowls and cups. She has two cups, one in each hand, banging them together like some musical instrument and singing along with her own song.

"Pretty," Munya tells her, and Aminah looks up and smiles. She scoots on her diapered bottom and bangs some more. "Don't get carried away there."

Navi runs into the kitchen, sliding on his socks. "What's pretty?"

"Aminah's music," she says, pointing with a spoon.

On his knees, Navi walks to his sister and holds out a hand. "Can I play?"

Aminah hands him a cup and gets another from the cabinet. Together, they sit and sing while Munya returns to cooking. She thinks back over Aminah's short life. It's hard for her to remember when her baby went from a smiling, inquisitive but largely passive recipient of her world to this interactive model, learning and squirreling away that knowledge for future use. Glancing back at Navi and Aminah, she smiles again. If they were any cuter, she might die of baby overload.

6 Socioemotional Development in Infancy and Toddlerhood

Riad, who works hard to have no favorite child, is beloved by Aminah. Although Munya has no trouble with the baby ever and Aminah responds rapidly and with pleasure to any overtures Navi makes, she absolutely shines when Riad returns home each night. Munya jokes that if they opened the big dictionary on the bookshelf and turned to the entry for "daddy's girl," it would read simply *Aminah Mohammed*. Navi displays no jealousy. Munya believes this is because the baby is passed so frequently among them when Riad is home. Aminah also self-soothes better than her brother did, lying in her basket in whatever room Munya is in, babbling to herself or sucking her thumb. She shows no hesitation with strangers, even when Munya and Riad leave her with a sitter for weekly prayers. They would send her to the nursery at the mosque, but she's too prone to catching any respiratory ailments floating around. Munya, always striving to be a good mother and wife, loves the family she's building and can't help smiling whenever she sees either child but particularly when she catches sight of them together.

7 Physical and Cognitive Development in Early Childhood

Aminah is four the first time she gets into trouble with her parents. The unfairness of it makes her even more angry because it's all Naveen's fault, Naveen who took her abacus and told her she didn't need it because she was a girl. First, *wrong*. Second, so what if she hit him? He's *wrong*. She uses the abacus as well as he does, and he's six. They're both sent to their rooms by *úmi*, Mommy, and told to wait for *baba*, Daddy, to get home. That's fine, Aminah thinks, let's just wait for *baba*.

She hears him come in and sits quietly to listen to him talk to *úmi*. She doesn't say much. Navi took the abacus, and Aminah hit him. Yes, that's the story. *Baba* doesn't come to her right away. *Úmi* calls for her to eat, and she sits at the table with *baba*, while Navi has a talk with *úmi*. Then everyone switches places.

"Your mother tells me you hit your brother today, *hubibi*," *baba* says to her, sitting on the edge of her bed where she's laying. He holds her hand, so she thinks maybe she's not in too much trouble.

Aminah nods. "Yes, *baba*, but—"

He holds up a hand. "I know what Naveen did and what he said to you."

"He was mean!"

"Those were not nice words, and he shouldn't have taken your abacus."

Aminah risks a glance at his face. "Can I have it back?"

Baba moves his head side to side, thinking about it. "I should bring you a new one. Yours is probably best left in your brother's coarse boy hands now."

"Okay?" Aminah isn't finished. "What about what Navi said? He said I didn't need it because I was a girl! That's so mean, *baba!*"

"I understand he hurt your feelings," he says, "and I will have a talk with your brother about that."

"Good. He's afraid of you. At least a little," she adds quickly, not wanting to hurt his feelings.

"I want Naveen to be reminded that ours is a family where girls are not only allowed but expected to excel in those tasks set before them. Your mother, she is very bright and very eager to be a good wife and mother. It's one of the things I love best about her."

Aminah's smile slips. "You don't think Navi was wrong?" she whispers.

He does his head thing again and says, "I think it's always wrong to hurt someone's feelings."

"I've heard other boys at the mosque say the same thing." Aminah, indignant, frowns at him. "I think they're *wrong*, too."

"I know you feel that way, *hubibi*. But not so fast. You still did a very bad thing. What does the Quran say? You know this well."

Aminah says softly, "Compete with one another in doing good."

"Yes," her father says, "and is striking your brother in anger doing good?"

"No," she replies, shaking her head, "but he—"

"Aminah," *baba* warns, "this isn't about Naveen, and he will be dealt with. This is only about you."

"Okay, *baba*."

"Good. Thank you, *hubibi*. Now, how shall we settle the matter?"

"I can give up rice pudding for the week?" Aminah whispers. She loves rice pudding, and *úmi's* is the best.

Baba shakes his head. "No, I think not. I prefer not to punish you. In this house, we don't hit, and we don't act in anger. I would rather you think of a positive—good, I mean—way to make this right, as will Naveen," he promised.

"Okay. Can I think about it tonight?"

"Sure." Standing, he bends to kiss her head. "I love you, *hubibi*."

"I love you, too, *baba*."

In the morning, Aminah and Navi sit in the kitchen discussing their bargain. When *baba* enters for his morning coffee, Aminah tells him proudly, "I'm going to make Navi's bed for one week to say I'm sorry for hitting him, and to say sorry for taking my abacus he's going to teach me the parts of the *abjad* I don't already know so I can write the whole Arabic alphabet."

Baba nods. "I think those sounds like excellent compensations. Good. No more mischief. Your mother doesn't need the hassle."

"Yes, *baba*," they promise, and the world resumes its turning for the Mohammed household.

8 Socioemotional Development in Early Childhood

Aminah's day, fairly structured, includes lots of time with úmi helping her learn things she'll need to know for Kindergarten. They do math worksheets, spelling, read storybooks, color, and craft. Some things they do only on certain days (Monday is music day), and some things they do every day (math and prayers). Aminah has lots of breaks in between things, too. Úmi has to clean the house, and she has Aminah help with chores so she learns how to keep house as well as how to read and write. Úmi also has to walk to get Navi from school (Aminah goes with her), and she and úmi make dinner together for the family before *baba* comes home. Her favorite part of most days is going to the big city park two blocks from their apartment. When the weather is nice, they go every day for a little while before walking to Navi's school.

At the park, Aminah gets to play with lots of other children, including girls, which are woefully lacking in her apartment building. They have so much fun! The park has beautiful trees to climb or dance under, and there's a tree fort built around one of them that all the children like to play in when they can find space. There are two spinny things one of the moms calls a witch's hat. Aminah loves those; she can stand and hold on while úmi or someone else starts it spinning. Sometimes she goes so fast that she gets dizzy.

On quiet days, some of the children like to play school. Aminah is always the teacher. Sometimes she plays both the teacher *and* a mother. On a warm day just before Navi's school gets out for summer, a new girl comes to the park with her mother. She calls herself Samira Saab, and Aminah asks her to play school with some of the other kids. Samira shakes her head no and runs away to the tree fort. Following, Aminah climbs up behind her and asks why she doesn't want to play. She promises that all the children are nice and she never plays a mean teacher. Refusing still, Samira explains that she isn't allowed to do things like read and write, and she doesn't want to get into trouble. Aminah doesn't know how to feel about Samira's announcement or how to respond. Backing down the tree fort's ladder, she returns to her friends, but she asks her parents about it at dinner.

"Did you see her mom didn't speak to Mrs. Ali either? Why?"

Baba says, "I can only guess, Aminah, but Mrs. Ali doesn't wear the hijab. If your new friend Samira has such restrictions imposed on her, then Mrs. Ali is probably of very strict behavior code. I don't know this name, Munya. Saab, you said, Aminah?" She nods. "They must go to the old mosque just outside the city."

"Probably," úmi agrees. "Do you understand why I wear the hijab, Aminah?"

"Because the Quran tells you to cover your head?"

Her mother smiles but shakes her head. "Actually, no, it doesn't, and actually Islam isn't the only religion in which women choose to cover their heads. The important thing for you to understand, and you—" she says, turning to Navi for a second and then back to Aminah, "is that I do choose to wear it. All women of Islam choose whether or not to cover their heads and how. Mrs. Ali doesn't. That's her choice."

"But I thought the Quran—" Aminah says and stops.

"No, *hubibi*. The Quran only tells us to be modest of dress, and how we choose to do that is up to us. What do you see Mrs. Ali wear every day?"

This one was easy. Aminah says, "Long sleeves and long pants or skirts. She doesn't cover her head or hands, but everything else is covered. She probably covers more than you do!" she adds, thinking hard about it.

"She might," her mother says. "So, you see, the head is important, but it isn't the only way to be modest. Clearly, this is an important point for Mrs. Saab, and it's a less important one for Mrs. Ali. Most of us? We just choose. I like the hijab. It makes me freer to be me in so many ways, but you may choose differently."

"I don't think so," Aminah says seriously.

"Well, I hope not, but we have a long time to see about that." Úmi points her fork at Aminah's plate. "Now, finish your peas, please."

9 Physical and Cognitive Development in Middle and Late Childhood

In elementary school, Aminah is allowed more responsibility at home. Some of this she wishes she could shirk (who really gets excited about cleaning bathrooms?), but some of it she enjoys (being in the kitchen with *úmi* is always fun). She even gets to cook the entire family meal two nights every week and breakfast on Saturdays. The best part is when her mother smiles her approval at what Aminah prepares and serves. Every week, she plans her meals carefully and adds the ingredients she needs to the family shopping list. Her father gives her quiet approval, but although this is generous and pleasurable, it's really *úmi* she wants to please.

"*Úmi*?"

"Aminah?" her mother replies when she slips into the kitchen late at night. She's interrupted her mother's tea, that's clear. "Can I help?"

"Maybe. I wanted to ask a favor."

"Go ahead. I make no promises, but I think you know that, if it's within my power, I'll try to make whatever it is happen."

"I know." Aminah sits at the table across from her mother. It never occurred to her that Munya could age, but a handful of grey hairs thread their way through the long, black ponytail. She stares a minute, wanting this picture of *úmi* to be the one she never forgets. Her mom is so beautiful. "Ah, sorry. I want to know if you care if I plant a garden."

Úmi laughs. "And where do you plan to plant it? We're in a third-floor walk-up, and there's no dirt anywhere around us."

"I did think about that before coming to you, you know. I thought maybe I could use the landing on the fire escape. Just a couple planters. Maybe a few hanging pots for vines like beans and stuff and rail boxes for everything in between. I think, if I stagger the seeding just right, I can have a really good cycle of crops over several months." She paused and drew breath. "It really wouldn't be a *garden*, if I'm honest. Just a handful of plants to see if I can."

Úmi raises her brows and says, "You've thought a lot about this."

"I really have," she says, proud of herself. "What do you think?"

"I assume," her mother says, "that you've already considered plants and seeds."

"Of course. I'll talk to *baba* about what can be exchanged from his store with Mr. Nejem at the home improvement store."

Her mother nodded. "Nejem may also have some plants or seeds available. I'm sure we can cut the costs in half, and I'd like to see what you can do with this, Aminah."

Beaming, she jumps up from the table and runs to the other side. She throws her arms around *úmi* and squeezes. "Thank you. Thank you so much. This is going to be great!"

10 Socioemotional Development in Middle and Late Childhood

Aminah sits in the middle of her little garden. It's Saturday, and she has a new library book to read. She likes sitting outside when she's not helping *úmi* with chores or cooking. Everyone in the family agrees that the garden is her special place, and she finds it's pretty easy to be alone there when she wants to be.

Mr. Nejem cut all the lumber for her, and Naveen collected it from Mr. Najem's store when she was ready to put everything together. Using borrowed power tools (her mother frowned) and a castoff pair of plastic safety glasses, Aminah constructed her planters and filled each one with a careful blend of soil before tucking seeds and tender plants inside. It will take a season or two for her work to reward her, but even now, sitting with her book on an old floor pillow, she loves what she's made.

The quiet is perfect for the first half hour, after which Samira Saab wanders by. Craning her neck up to the Mohammad's landing, she stops and points at Aminah's work. "What is all of that?"

"I built a garden," Aminah replies after carefully closing her book and setting it aside. "Why?"

This is the silliest question Aminah's ever heard. "Because I wanted to. Why are you walking down the street?"

"Because my mother needs milk from your father's store."

Oh. Maybe hers was the silliest question.

"Sorry." She gestures to the fire escape ladder. "Climb up if you want. I'm not doing much today."

"Maybe next time," Samira says, but her face tells Aminah she does want to stay.

Aminah nods. "Sure. Anytime."

Samira walks away in the direction of one of *baba's* stores, and Aminah picks up her book again. She glances down the street where Samira has disappeared and feels a tug. It seems like they're on opposite sides of an invisible line, and if one of them could just cross over, they could be good friends. Like Samira said, maybe next time.

Aminah's studying for her last test in elementary school when her father comes home early on a Thursday. *Baba* never comes home early. She can hear the lowered voices of her parents talking in the kitchen and carefully cracks her bedroom door to listen. Across the hall, Navi looks at her through a similar crack in his door. The conversation comes to her in disjointed sentences, but the significance is easy to understand.

"The bank turned us down for the mortgage," *baba* says quietly.

Úmi replies in a voice Aminah recognizes as confused and a little disbelieving. Bad things don't happen to them. "I don't understand, Riad. How is that even possible? With the money we have saved, we could buy the house outright. Your credit is perfect, and you have exemplary business records for how many years?"

"Enough years," he says.

"What did they say? Did they give a reason?"

Aminah closes her door. She's heard all she needs to, and her father will never say they've been the target of discrimination even if they have been. The only thing that matters is that they're not going to move into the house her parents want to buy.

It's like the one day when she went to school and someone had slipped a note inside her locker. When she found it, she didn't understand why the person had written "TERRORIST" in black magic marker. The guidance counselor tried to explain it to her but only confused her more. The principal said he would try to find the person responsible, but only when her dad came to the school to meet with the principal did Aminah feel like anything would get done. At home, her mother explained to her about the World Trade Center attack and how easy it is to put all people of a certain type into a basket.

"Remember when Samira Saab's mother wouldn't speak to Mrs. Ali because she didn't wear a hijab?" Aminah nodded. "Same thing. Some Muslim women think 'no hijab, no morals,' when that's obviously not true. Mrs. Ali is as pious as any woman you could meet."

Aminah thought that made a little sense.

"And think of all the followers of Islam," *baba* added. "Many people think Muslims look like we look, and they do—that's true—but only maybe 25 percent, yes? Just as many are African, and even more are from the Southern Asian nations. If everyone's looking at us, they're really not learning much about Islam, are they?"

"That's sad," Aminah remembers saying.

"It is," her mother agreed.

Her principal didn't make any effort, even though he assured her father he would, to find the jerk who left the note in Aminah's locker. The boy was caught only because he bragged about it in the gym locker room, and Navi heard him and told the teacher. Listening to her parents talk about the house they aren't buying anymore, Aminah is reminded of that incident and learning the lessons of how easy it is to pigeonhole people. Everyone does it, but it's easy to feel like you're the only target when you actively are a target. She thinks about Mrs. Ali, who is whispered about behind her back because she doesn't cover her head, and she wonders if people who aren't Muslim know that the Torah and the Gospels of Jesus are two of Islam's four holy books.

11 Physical and Cognitive Development in Adolescence

"Samira," Aminah breathes, sliding into the booth at the back of the desolate coffee house. They always meet here instead of the trendier Starbucks or Panera, where Samira might be recognized, which could lead to her mother finding out. Here, at Mr. Kader's shop that he artfully named Qahua (coffee), they can meet in obscurity, and Mr. Kader is a long-standing supplier of Aminah's father. It's unlikely he will tattle. "I'm glad you're here. I thought maybe you wouldn't come."

Samira laughs. "You always think I won't come, and I'm always here when you arrive."

"Very true," she agrees, reaching for the notebook Samira secrets with her to their semi-weekly rendezvous. "Where did we leave off last time?"

"You were teaching me basic algebra, I think. I've also finished reading two of the books you leant me, shorter ones, but I finished."

"That's great!"

Aminah and Samira started meeting on Mondays and Thursdays so that Aminah could teach Samira how to read and write, but Samira is so clever and quick that they moved beyond the basics sooner than either expected. Instead of quitting, they decide to risk the wrath of Samira's parents to keep going. Aminah wants to get Samira caught up with her own level by the time she starts high school next year, and she thinks she can if they both work hard.

- 12 Socioemotional Development in Adolescence**
- "Baba, úmi,"* Aminah says, entering the kitchen and laying kisses on her parents' cheeks. "Good morning."
- "Good morning, *hubibi*," baba replies. As Aminah prepares her breakfast, *baba* looks at her, squinting. "There's something different about you this morning. What is it?"
- "She's wearing the hijab, Riad," *úmi* tells him.
- "Ah! So you are." He picks up the travel mug of coffee her mother fixes for him every morning. "Good day, ladies."
- "Bye, *baba*."
- "Good-bye, darling," *úmi* says. Then she turns to Aminah. "Why today, sweetheart?"
- Aminah fingers the edges of the deep blue hijab she bought herself a couple weeks before from Mrs. Nejem's tailoring shop. At least half the girls her age already wear the hijab to school and the mosque. "Why not today?"
- "Good point." Her mother smiles. "That color is nice on you."
- "Thank you, *úmi*." Finishing her breakfast, she grabs her backpack and heads out the door for school feeling confident and secure in who she is. She'll get stared at, but so do girls with pimples. It'll be okay.
- Only, it isn't okay. Navi, who's already at university, isn't there to protect her when the stares of classmates who never cared for her anyway become whispers and then, by lunchtime, taunts. After school, as she waits for *baba* to pick her up and take her home, a boy from her chemistry class walks past her on his way to the parking lot. Steering himself close to her, his shoulder slams into hers, and she nearly falls. Quick tears form in her eyes, and she turns her face into the edge of her *hijab* so no one can see. When *baba* arrives, she walks slowly and with as much dignity as she can to the car. Inside, she watches the traffic on the roads through her window and answers her father's questions in quiet, quick syllables. *It'll get better*, she tells herself. *Hatred burns itself out like gasoline on a fire*. She would rise from the ashes.
- 13 Physical and Cognitive Development in Emerging/Early Adulthood**
- Aminah wants to go away to college. *Baba* doesn't want her to go to college. "Your husband will surely let you attend classes once you're married, as I did your mother until Navi was born," he points out.
- She rolls her eyes.
- "Navi went to college, and my grades are as good as his."
- Úmi* smiles and sets a pot of tea to steep on the table between them. "She has a point, Riad, and times are different now."
- So, they compromise.
- Aminah goes to college, but she doesn't leave home. Her parents agree that the local state university campus offers sound education, and when she marries, Aminah can continue classes there if her husband chooses for her to do so.
- "What if I don't want to get married?" she asks.
- Baba* says, "That's nonnegotiable, *hubibi*."
- "Okay, okay. It was just a question. Do you have candidates in mind?"

Her father tells her about three sons of business acquaintances and members of the mosque he favors, one of whom Aminah favors as well. She has objections to none and leaves her parents to make final decisions. She's always known she'll be married by 19 or 20, and although she might prefer it otherwise, she doesn't disagree with her culture's customs. She knows too many marriages that were arranged and are loving and affectionate, marriages like her parents,' to ever complain.

With thoughts of marriage planning pushed to the back of her mind, Aminah concentrates on school. She graduates from high school and begins her studies at university, performing well in all her courses but doing exceptional work in science-based ones. After a year of indecision, she selects agricultural science as her major and throws herself completely into her studies. The campus is large, and she's no longer "the girl in the hijab"; she's a student spending too many hours in the library and eating bad vending machine food in between classes. When she stays late, *baba* comes in the car to bring her home, and despite a couple social clock interruptions along the way (like getting married), she receives her degree in four and a half years, walking across the stage with a belly ripe with her first child.

14 Socioemotional Development in Emerging/Early Adulthood

When she's 20, Aminah marries Yusef El-Amin in a traditional contracted ceremony at the mosque. If they hadn't gone to high school together and she hadn't grown vegetables on the fire escape landing above his for ten years, they might not know one another nor see one another at their own wedding. As it is, they do know one another well and share a fondness that her parents feel offers benefits to the match. *Baba* agrees to a rather elaborate ceremony and reception, for which Aminah is grateful. He's a good father, and he works hard to blend their traditions with those of their adopted land. She had wanted a beautiful dress; thanks to *baba* she has one.

Yusef, like most of the mosque's men, is progressive. He encourages Aminah to begin college, and he's in favor of their use of birth control until she decides she wants a child. This gift of bodily autonomy, so rare in her culture, is the first jewel in the crown of her marriage. She believes in her marrow there will be many more and is happy to begin honoring her marriage with them. She's so grateful that she decides she wants a child right away. If any of the women in the prayer circle wonder that she doesn't conceive right away—or at all—in the first year, no one speaks of it, and Aminah keeps her own counsel. What lies beneath the marriage blanket is between a man and his wife.

Six months or so into her marriage, Aminah seeks out her mother after prayers one evening. This makes twice she's come to the mosque and hasn't seen Samira, who is faithful as the lamb. Touching her mother's shoulder, Aminah whispers in her ear, "*Úmi*, have you seen Samira Saab? It's been three weeks or more since I've seen her. Her mother's here, but I haven't seen Samira nor heard anything about her. Usually the women gossip, at least a little . . ."

Úmi clucks her tongue and steers Aminah to a bench beneath a live oak dancing in a light breeze. "I didn't tell you before, darling, because I wasn't sure. *Baba* only learned last night to be certain. Samira's gone."

"Gone?" Alarm causes Aminah to flush. She feels the heat below the surface of her skin. "What is 'gone,' mother? I don't understand."

"Her family sent her to stay with relatives in Afghanistan. I believe they live near your Aunt Hannah."

"In Kabul?" This is madness. "Why did they send her away, and why there?"

Úmi shrugs. "Aminah, *hubibi*, you have to calm down. The Saabs' business is not our concern."

"But Mama, you know she didn't do anything wrong. Someone has to help her. We have to bring her back, or she's going to die over there."

"Ah, child, don't be so dramatic," her mother says, drawing her close. "We mustn't look too closely sometimes. You know that. Come along. Let's have a sweet before Yusef takes you home, no?"

"No," she says as she pulls away. "*Úmi*, it's when we want to look away that we *must* look more closely. If you won't help me, I'll find someone who will."

Aminah left her mother and went in search of her husband. She was, technically, of the El-Amins now, and Yusef's family was as well off as her own and had more relatives left in Afghanistan. If her parents wouldn't help Samira, maybe her new family would.

15 Physical and Cognitive Development in Middle Adulthood

Just as Aminah begins her maternity leave with their second son, a White House initiative from the First Lady's office rolls out. She wants to encourage better, healthier school lunch options for children nationally, and part of that will be sustainable gardening at the local level. Aminah sits in the rocker Yusef sent for from his grandmother's house in Kandahar when Avi was born four years before and nurses little Farouq. Avi, such a good boy, sits at his *úmi*'s feet with a pot of lotion, massaging each toe one by one. Aminah smiles at him. Who says only women can serve?

Rereading the article about the First Lady's school lunch agenda, Aminah has an idea. When Farouq's head falls off her breast and he's fast asleep as well as sated, she lays him gently in his Moses basket and sends Avi to play in the living room. "*Úmi* will be there in just a minute," she promises him. Digging around in the directories they keep in the drawer that will never be cleaned out, she finds the telephone number for the elementary school she and Navi once attended. It surprises her to learn, once the receptionist answers, that her old principal retired a decade ago, and she wonders if adult children always believe the people from their childhoods remain forever fixed as they were—probably.

A young woman, Martha Holmes, is the new principal, and Aminah asks to speak to her. They discuss the new initiative, and Aminah explains to the principal some ideas she has for sustainable gardening at the elementary school. She tells her she'd like to work on this project with the school if there's going to be money for it, and Ms. Holmes promises to get back to her, which she does the following day. She asks Aminah how she would feel about being the project manager for sustainable gardening for the city school district. Aminah agrees to take the job without even asking the salary, but she tells Holmes it may be some time before she can begin. She needs to complete her maternity leave and then provide an appropriate notice at her current position for the county.

Nine months into the new job, with Avi in Kindergarten at the elementary school where she's working two days each week and Farouq nearly walking, Aminah loves what she's doing. She has almost everything she's ever wanted. Her family are all close by and healthy. Her husband is wonderful, kind, passionate, and successful. Her children are the most beautiful in the state at least, even if she is a little bit biased. If she wants any one thing, it's to know what happened to Samira all those years ago. She tries not to dwell on that.

After a particularly grubby day at the elementary school, Aminah puts the boys in a warm bath to get clean while she fixes dinner, which entails telephoning Yusef at work and asking him to bring home takeout from Mr. Sultan's. Then she pours a glass of wine and turns on the radio just loud enough to hear but soft enough that the children are louder still. When she hears the car door slam, she moves to the front door to help Yusef inside with the food and his briefcase. Yusef isn't at the door. A policeman is—no, a policeman and a policewoman. Not once in all her life have the police stood on her doorstep.

"Mrs. El-Amin?"

"Yes," she says, straining still to hear the boys upstairs. "Can I help you? Is something wrong?"

The policewoman steps forward. She has red hair and freckles. For a half-second, Aminah thinks how out of place she looks in their neighborhood and wonders if this is how she looks anywhere else.

"Mrs. El-Amin," the woman whose nametag proclaims her to be Officer Agnes Lane says, "Officer Harding and I are here because there's been an accident."

No, her parents. One of them? Naveen maybe or one of his kids.

"An accident?" she echoes, listening to her own voice waver.

"Yes, ma'am. I'm terribly sorry. There was a hit and run accident on Lux and 9th—" Lux and 9th? That's where Mr. Sultan's takeaway is. No, it can't be Yusef. It can't be. "—and pushed into the electricity post. I'm sorry, Mrs. El-Amin, but he died at the scene."

Aminah shakes her head to clear it. "Died? Who did you say?"

"Your husband, ma'am. Mr. El-Amin."

"No," she says quietly, shaking her head. "That's not possible. I just spoke to Yusef 15 minutes ago. Less even. I asked him to get takeaway and—"

"Ma'am, is there someone we can call for you?"

"No. No, thank you." The man, Officer Harding, she thinks, looks toward the hallway where Farouq is squealing with his brother. "My children," she whispers, "in the bath." She turns back to Officer Lane. "Yusef?" she asks. "Are you sure? Are you positive it was my husband Yusef?"

"Yes, ma'am. I'm sure. I'm terribly sorry. Please allow me to call someone," Officer Lane repeats, but Aminah shakes her head.

"I'll do it." She looks at both of them. "Hit and run, you said?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"Who? Do you know who did this?" It wouldn't be anyone in their community. Hit? Sure. But no run. They're too small and too close to keep those sorts of secrets. They don't have many visitors either.

"Sorry, ma'am, we don't, but we're checking all possible leads."

Officer Harding steps forward and looks down at her. He doesn't remove his hat even though Officer Lane has held hers the entire time since Aminah opened the door.

"Important for you to understand, Mrs. El-Amin, that hit and runs don't get solved very often. No witnesses, no evidence, the cases just go cold."

He's telling her they're not even going to try. Officer Lane shoots him a look, but Aminah understands hierarchies. Officer Lane is a small, young woman to Officer Harding's tall, experienced man. He'd get his lieutenant's signoff and file the report before the younger woman ever got her jacket off.

"Thank you, Officer Harding. I understand." She does, and she will be at the station every day until something's done about her husband's death or until they arrest her for trying. "If you don't mind," she says, turning back to the woman, "I need to call my husband's parents now, and I need to get my children out of the bath."

"Of course." Officer Lane hands her a business card. "If you need anything—" she says.

"Thank you," and as she closes the door, holding herself together by the web of her grief alone, Aminah thinks she might actually telephone the woman. But first—family.

**16 Socioemotional
Development
in Middle
Adulthood**

Aminah buries Yusef quietly in the traditions of Islam. She wraps his body, a body she loved for far too brief a time, in the burial shroud she embroidered before and after classes during their engagement. The edges have bluebells and yellow daisies, and among the leaves she's stitched the tiniest of crosses and hearts to send her beloved to the paradise. In the quiet of a house devoid even of the children her mother takes so she can be alone with her grief, she writes Yusef's eulogy. When they reach the mosque, she doesn't want to deliver it. She stands before his casket and touches her fingers to her lips. then to the polished wood and says, "The Quran beseeches us to compete with one another in doing good. Yusef, my beloved, set the bar against which we all measured ourselves. In only ten years he became my everything. Allah—may He be glorified—will place balm on our grief. Let us pray Yusef is now accepted into *Jannat al Firdus*, where his sins will be forgiven and he will find himself in the company of the prophets. Ameen." The actual eulogy she slips into the wooden box that holds their silver after she returns home. It's enough that she wrote it.

When Aminah can make the arrangements, she sells the house in which she lived her whole marriage with Yusef. She and the boys move home to her father's house. No one questions her decision, and she's welcomed with open arms. Navi, her wonderful brother, becomes a surrogate father for her sons. Although he has his own family to provide and care for, he makes as much time as he can to be with her children, to show them the ways of their people, to teach them how to be kind and pious and peace loving. Watching them, Aminah realizes Naveen is a better Muslim than she is. All she feels is anger and impatience at a world that can take away her husband, her future, her safety.

Úmi, older and slower than Aminah remembers, appreciates the help at home. Fortunately for Aminah, this keeps her busy enough that she doesn't dwell on her losses constantly, only nearly so. She tries to enjoy her mother's company, but the most she can muster is a tempered gladness that she is back in the arms of the woman who taught her to be a woman and a wife. Joy, she feels, is beyond her except with the occasional snatches she grabs with the boys. She has had joy, though, and that, she figures, will be enough.

**17 Physical and
Cognitive
Development in
Late Adulthood**

When Aminah approaches her 65th birthday, she takes stock of the years since she moved home. There isn't much to consider. She raised her children. She cared for her aging parents and buried them when they passed. She spent her days in motherly pursuits and agreed to take a small apartment near Navi's house once Avi and Farouq finish college. She becomes a doting grandmother.

Looking back, Aminah considers whether or not she should've remarried. She could've. Navi or *baba* would've seen to it easily, and the boys would've had a father. It was pointless, though, she acknowledges. She loved—loves—Yusef, and having done so she can't see a picture that allowed her a successful second marriage. She's all right with this even though she's often lonely.

"It's your fault," Navi chides. "So much happens with the women in the mosque. They've got bake sales, rummage sales, and volunteer drives of every kind. You could be busy with people you like. You could, if you wanted."

Aminah shrugs. "Maybe," she says, and even though she's blowing him off, she's also thinking about the suggestion. She has friends in her prayer circle. Maybe she should be more involved. Maybe it's time to move outside the sphere of her protracted mourning for Yusef.

**18 Socioemotional
Development in
Late Adulthood**

At 67, Aminah makes a pilgrimage to the Prophet's Mosque in Medina. Everyone she knows who goes on pilgrimage chooses Mecca (who wouldn't, right?), but her father always wanted to visit Medina. He never got the chance, and Aminah decides to do this thing for him after all the many things he did for her.

It is a beautiful trip. She's not wild about the flights and tries to sleep through most of them. Once she arrives at her hotel and rests, everything begins to fall into place. She hires a guide who takes her to sites in the city that tourists always want to see: the markets, a tea shop, and a small farm with a delightful history of supplying soldiers with olives and bread. After two days of such luxuries, Aminah asks her guide to take her to the Prophet's Mosque, where she prays in the women's room and feels herself closer to all things holy than she ever has. Now she has one more regret to add to the others; she wishes her father had made this trip.

"I love you, *baba*," she whispers as she leaves the mosque, "but it's time to go home."

**19 Experience
With Death and
Dying**

At home in the States, Aminah spends another quiet year in contemplation. She continues to volunteer with the prayer circle, but ultimately, she finds herself more and more reclusive, reading old Agatha Christie mysteries and drinking tea while a tinny radio plays jazz in the background.

Naveen visits several times each week, and he always collects her before he attends mosque. She's glad of her brother and his attentions. Often, they share lunch and reminisce about their childhood and the good fortune they had enjoyed with the parents they had. Other times, they regress, going to a carnival or circus and eating cotton candy and funnel cakes, refusing to acknowledge their advancing age.

It's after one such outing that Aminah returns home tired. She thanks Navi and brews a cup of tea before curling up in bed with a book. When she doesn't answer the telephone the next morning, Navi stops by, concerned. He finds that she's passed away overnight of what the medical examiner eventually says were natural causes. She's 69 years old.

Case Discussion Questions

1. When Amina is born, she suffers for a brief time from lack of oxygen, and the midwife notices she's slightly cyanotic. Aminah is given oxygen from a portable tank, after which she pinks up nicely. She is still small and a bit frail but no longer so worrisome. Contrast this with Aminah's optimal case outcome in which she's still small but comes into the world with no concerning oxygen deprivation. How might this case put Aminah on a different path across any and all domains (biological, cognitive, and socioemotional)?
2. In early childhood, Aminah has an altercation with her brother. Naveen steals her abacus, and she hits him in retaliation. During a talk with her father Riad later, Aminah tries to stress that Naveen's gender assumptions about girls and math are wrong. While Riad agrees that Naveen needs to be talked to, he alludes this is because he stole the abacus and not because he believes wrongly. Compare this to Aminah's optimal case outcomes in which Riad obviously underscores Aminah's own beliefs that being a daughter has nothing to do with her abilities in any subject or activity. What does Riad's conversation in this case tell Aminah, and how does that change her life's trajectory across any and all domains (biological, cognitive, and socioemotional)?
3. In middle childhood, Aminah builds and plants a small garden on the fire escape landing outside her family's apartment. She's proud of the work she's done and enjoys using the food in her cooking. Contrast this outcome with Aminah's optimal case outcome in which she builds a three-story fire escape garden using their fire escape and those of two neighbors beneath them. What are her motivational differences, and how might her future be predicted from these differences?
4. Consider Aminah's optimal case outcomes at the end of her life and Erikson's integrity-versus-despair stage of psychosocial development. How does this case compare to that one? Consider all of Aminah's life events. How do you think those contributed to any differences in Aminah's end-of-life outcomes and her sense of integrity versus despair?

Digital Appendix C

ALTERNATE CASES WITH UNDESIRABLE OUTCOMES

1. Undesirable Outcomes: Jamal Jones

2 Biological and Environmental Foundations

“Oh Jamal, you’re never going to know your daddy. I didn’t either, and I turned out okay,” Neka whispers with a smile to her growing abdomen as she brushes her teeth before work. Neka’s statement holds true, and Jamal will never know the biological history of his own father. However, he will interact throughout his life with other biological family members, from his Uncle Malik to his mother to his two older brothers, Kiyun and Keyon. His smile will reflect a gap between his front teeth, similar to his shy, older brother Kiyun’s and the smile of his mother. In fact, this is the same smile Kiyun will show when he greets and holds baby brother Jamal for the first time.

Despite his closeness from the start with Kiyun, as a small child Jamal’s dimples and his bubbly personality will reflect that of his heavy-set older brother Keyon. As an infant Jamal is warm, friendly, and a bit tenacious and he laughs regularly.

The Jones family lives in a low-income housing unit in an urban environment. Because of this the Joneses are close to several neighboring families: the Lewis family, the Milsteins, and the Washburnes. Growing up Jamal can hear the arguments that occur between his teenage neighbor Avi Milstein and his mother, Krista. He spends time as a child with Ms. Lewis, his mother’s close friend and support.

“Mom, I’m hungry,” is a phrase Jamal will learn to repeat early on from his brothers, as Jamal and his family have few resources to spare during his childhood. Jamal’s family only rarely enjoys a dinner out together at Kiyun and Keyun’s favorite restaurant, McDonald’s. These and his other biological and environmental factors will increase Neka’s, prenatal stress levels. Biologically speaking, this means that greater-than-ideal amounts of corticosteroids will pass the blood-brain barrier during her pregnancy with Jamal.

Neka’s preeclampsia, the cause of her needed bed rest, puts Jamal at risk for a number of negative outcomes including preterm birth or being small for date, both of which would have cascading effects.

3 Prenatal Development, Birth, and the Newborn Experience

Because she has no money to spare, Neka is obligated to find a replacement job for the second position she lost as soon as she can. This means she spends only one of the doctor’s recommended two weeks of bed rest, but the doctor doesn’t understand her choice between doing the right thing for her body and making sure she can feed the children she has (and herself).

Jamal is born prematurely due to Neka’s preeclampsia and potentially suffers negative health outcomes. Jamal is at increased risk for respiratory ailments such as respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) and for neonatal death from sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS). Neka is undernourished as well and has a difficult recovery period after the delivery.

Jamal is frequently sick, and the pediatrician wants him to wear a breathing monitor at night when he sleeps. Neka can't afford the monitor but worries about his respiratory problems.

Most nights, she puts Jamal in bed with her so she can watch over him, so she isn't sleeping as much as she should. She thinks this is a small price to pay for him being okay. She also asks his oldest brother to help out watching Jamal when she goes back to work. A neighbor keeps Jamal and his older brother during the day when the oldest is at the local elementary school, but she wants them all together as soon as he's home from school. She worries about Jamal being around other children too much and getting sick again. Malik helps out as much as he can, but the doctor bills are expensive, and it takes a lot to feed three growing boys.

4 Physical Development in Infancy and Toddlerhood

Going back to work at two jobs so soon after Jamal is born tears at Neka, but she knows it's a necessary evil. It was the same with the older boys, and they're doing fine, she tells herself. She and Jamal have bonded well, and he is a happy baby boy. He even seems to be getting sick a lot less often. He's still staying with Ms. Lewis, who watches children in her home. This saves Neka money and also allows Jamal to be in a safe, comfortable setting with other children he already knows. His older brother, Neka's middle son Kiyun, also stays at this home, too, while Jamal's oldest brother Keyon attends the local elementary school. At least twice a week Uncle Malik joins the family for dinner.

"Uncle Malik, cheeseburgers are your favorite food! You always bring them when you come over. They're mine too, but Mom says I need to eat more apples," Keyon states thoughtfully. Looking at Jamal, who is at his mother's feet, he continues, "When can Jamal even eat cheeseburgers like us? All he ever has is milk, French fries, and the boring scrambled eggs mom usually makes!"

"Keyon! Where are your manners? And say thank-you to your uncle for bringing over anything at all for dinner!" Neka chides.

She scoops Jamal up in her arms, moving him to his seat at the small kitchen table as Keyon apologizes, "Sorry, Uncle Malik. Sorry, Mom. Fries and burgers are good too." He sits and eats quietly after that, and Kiyun looks between his older brother's face and the two adults, worried because he doesn't know what's wrong.

Neka turns to her brother, "Malik, thanks for bringing over burgers again. Lately this kid is always on the move. We really need a baby gate so I can keep him away from the stairs. I'm noticing that he's super curious about them, especially when his brothers run up and down." Fourteen-month-old Jamal gleefully reaches for a handful of French fries as he watches his family gather around the dinner table.

Chewing on the fries, Jamal pumps his legs against Neka's thighs and hums under his breath, while everyone else eats their dinner. Malik tells Neka he'll drop by the store and see about a baby gate the next day.

5 Cognitive Development in Infancy and Toddlerhood

Jamal first called Neka *Momma*. Now he can say *fy* for fries and *Key* and *Kie* for his brothers. He can also say *dog* quite well. Ms. Lewis, who takes care of him when Neka works, has a small dog he likes to play with.

With the near-constant presence of his brothers, Neka, and Uncle Malik around him, Jamal will learn more words every day. With two talkative older brothers always speaking for him, his opportunities for speech are often limited, but he seems to pay attention when others are talking. The pediatrician tells Neka not to worry until there's something to be worried about.

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| 6 | Socioemotional Development in Infancy and Toddlerhood | <p>Neka notices that going to work has become a particular challenge. Most days now Jamal has a crying jag that lasts from the minute she starts to edge for the door until she can no longer hear him as she walks down the hallway away from Ms. Lewis's door. She went through the same thing with Keyon and Kiyun, so she knows this is perfectly normal. Jamal's dealing with separation anxiety. She also knows he stops crying before she even gets to the car. Knowing these things doesn't make it any easier to leave him. Jamal sometimes frets when she gets back after work. The older boys didn't do that, and she wonders if there's something she's not doing right. Of course, he also has days when he doesn't seem to even notice her leaving. She's worried and decides she'll ask the pediatrician at his next checkup.</p> |
| 7 | Physical and Cognitive Development in Early Childhood | <p>When Jamal approaches preschool age, Neka applies for him to start at the nearby Headstart Pre-K program. Both of his brothers, Kiyun and Keyon attended the school, but for some reason Jamal isn't accepted into the program. The director explains to Neka that they've had decreases in funding and that even though Jamal faces economic challenges, they aren't worse than a lot of the applicants and many of those have other hurdles to overcome that Jamal doesn't. Neka is worried about his school readiness.</p> <p>Jamal continues to stay with Ms. Wilson while Neka works. She helps Jamal learn to draw, write his letters, count to ten on his fingers, understand colors (his favorite is green), and describe shapes. Neka knows it's not what he would've gotten at the Headstart school, but she also knows it's better than nothing.</p> |
| 8 | Socioemotional Development in Early Childhood | <p>Now that Kiyun has started elementary school, Jamal spends all day alone at Ms. Wilson with barely any friends. He does get to play with Zuri, one of Ms. Wilson's other charges and a good friend of his. They're the same age, and Ms. Wilson is teaching them both to read, write, and count. Some stuff he does better than she does, but some stuff Zuri does better. Having someone else there with him while his brother is gone is probably the best thing about Zuri. He would be lonely without her. He misses Kiyun.</p> |
| 9 | Physical and Cognitive Development in Middle and Late Childhood | <p>Jamal hates elementary school. He's the smallest kid in his class, smaller even than most of the girls, and he's poor. At his school, you can be small or you can be poor, but you can't be both. His older brother's always stepping in and stopping the bullies from beating him up. It'll be even worse after the eye screening that's coming up. He knows he's going to have to get glasses. He'll be tormented then. Plus, it'll make his mom cry because she won't know how to pay for the glasses. Mostly, Jamal wishes he'd never been born.</p> |
| 10 | Socioemotional Development in Middle and Late Childhood | <p>By the end of elementary school, Jamal is a short, skinny black kid in glasses and jeans handed down by both of his older brothers. If his mom would let him be homeschooled, he would do that. Four days out of five it seems like he gets bullied, and his brother is no longer at the school with him to protect him. In the last few months of school, he decides no one asks to be a victim and no one gets to be a victim without giving people permission to make him one. He rummages through his oldest brother's dresser drawers until he finds what he's looking for, an old Swiss Army knife. Feeling safer, he starts carrying it with him every day even though it's against school policy, and he's pretty sure he wouldn't use it anyway.</p> |

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| 11 Physical and Cognitive Development in Adolescence | <p>Jamal works his way through middle school with the old Swiss Army knife as protection. He hasn't used it, but more than a few times he felt like he should pull it out. He feels better in 8th grade when he gains four inches almost overnight, and his voice drops in pitch. He is suddenly bigger than both his brothers and sounds more like a man than any of the kids who bully him. It doesn't stop them from bullying, but it does give him a couple extra feet between him and their taunts. At school, he is so worried from class to class and hallway to hallway that he can't keep his mind on his lesson, and he can't manage his homework anymore either because he doesn't learn much in school. The smartest boy in class becomes the kid trying to make it through one more day, and each day he hates himself a little bit more.</p> |
| 12 Socioemotional Development in Adolescence | <p>Jamal makes it to high school. He's not sure how. With his oldest brother gone from home and their middle brother busy with work and school, it's up to Jamal to take care of himself. He does his best in school. Sometimes, it's hard, and he falls behind (or falls asleep in class because he works so much). But he doesn't make trouble, and if trouble finds him, he ducks his head and hopes for the best.</p> <p>The bullies he faced in elementary school have become grown-up tormenters, and the Swiss Army knife no longer makes him feel safe. He seeks out a guy he's heard about in their neighborhood and buys a small handgun. He doesn't tell anyone he's bought it, but he feels a lot better having it.</p> <p>Sometimes, he has the feeling that Uncle Malik or maybe Kiyun knows he has the gun, but then he convinces himself that's just paranoia. For sure, if Uncle Malik knew, he'd ask Jamal about it, and he wouldn't beat around the bush either. If Kiyun knew, Jamal isn't sure what his brother would do, but he is pretty sure he wouldn't be silent. Keeping silent himself, he goes to school, work, and home like always and keeps as low a profile as he can.</p> |
| 13 Physical and Cognitive Development in Emerging/Early Adulthood | <p>He's not entirely sure how, but Jamal manages to make it through high school alive. Graduation is a bonus. His older brother Keyon knows how hard it's been, but he also knows that Jamal is super smart. He keeps track of stuff like money and who knows what, when, and where. As soon as school is over, Keyon introduces him to friends Jamal hasn't met before, and he figures out why pretty fast. His mom would never allow guys like that where they live. But Jamal also knows that if he's going to live past 20, he needs more than a part-time job pumping gas or running a paper route. To make sure he is okay, they have Jamal take some stuff—a little cash and some beer is all—from the convenience store where he works. The owner likes him and never even suspects, and for the first time in a long time, Jamal feels like part of a family that can protect him.</p> |
| 14 Socioemotional Development in Emerging/Early Adulthood | <p>Jamal spends several years in a variety of roles for his new gang until it isn't new anymore. Keyon has risen to the level of lieutenant, the right hand to their jefe. Weird as it seems, Jamal's proud of his brother. On a slow night, he and Keyon cruise through the old neighborhood, pick up a bag of burgers, and decide to visit their mom. They haven't seen Neka in a while. As they pull out of the McDonald's parking lot, a dual-muffler De Ville pulls alongside their Impala, and the window rolls down. Jamal has just enough time to recognize one of his long-ago school bullies before the semiautomatic rifle unloads into their front seat.</p> <p>Neither Jamal nor Keyon survives the shooting.</p> |

15	Physical and Cognitive Development in Middle Adulthood	N/A
16	Socioemotional Development in Middle Adulthood	N/A
17	Physical and Cognitive Development in Late Adulthood	N/A
18	Socioemotional Development in Late Adulthood	N/A
19	Experience With Death and Dying	N/A

Case Discussion Questions

1. During Neka's pregnancy, Neka doesn't have the luxury of spending an entire two weeks on bed rest as the doctor recommends, much as she'd like to. She takes one week off and loses one of her jobs when she does so. With the loss of income, Jamal is born prematurely; he's frequently sick and has difficulty sleeping at night, requiring Neka to opt for co-sleeping or no sleeping. Contrast this with Jamal's optimal case in which Neka's brother helps with bills, and she's able to find a new job quickly. No one suffers lack of nutrition, and Jamal is born healthy. How does Neka's choice to return to work quickly contribute to Jamal's rocky start at birth? How might Neka's life circumstances leave her with feeling essentially choiceless in the situation (i.e., she did the best she could with what she had)?
2. In middle childhood, Jamal tires of being bullied at school. To feel safe, he begins carrying a Swiss Army knife with him when he leaves home in the morning. How does this one choice potentially affect Jamal's life trajectory across any and all domains (biological, cognitive, and socioemotional)?
3. In early adulthood, Jamal begins running with a gang to which his brother Keyon belongs. Both he and his brother are killed in a shooting in middle adulthood. What factors in this case led to this outcome? Why?
4. Consider Jamal's optimal case outcomes at the end of his life and Erikson's integrity-versus-despair stage of psychosocial development. How does this case compare to that one? Consider all of Jamal's life events. How do you think those contributed to any differences in Jamal's end-of-life outcomes and his sense of integrity versus despair?

2. Undesirable Outcomes: Naomi Rowe

2 Biological and Environmental Foundations

Alicia and Justin spend time decorating the second bedroom in their modest-but-comfortable apartment off base before Justin gets his orders to deploy. This gives him the opportunity to participate in as much of the pre-birth nesting as he can. They also spend hours recording Justin reading baby books and taking pictures to make into photo albums so that their baby will know the sound of Daddy's voice and the look of Daddy's face when he finally returns home.

Once Justin leaves, Alicia faces several long, lonely months of pregnancy without him. As her belly grows, she rocks in the chair they put in the nursery and talks to their developing daughter. "Oh, Naomi, it's going to be so long before you meet your daddy. I wish he could be there when you're born to hold you and see you take your first breath. He's going to miss all of your first firsts . . . rolling over, sitting up, first steps." Alicia sheds a few tears at the thought.

Because the Rowe's live modestly and Justin works for the Army, they have good health care and access to excellent foods like fresh produce and free-range beef and chicken. Alicia can see her midwife whenever she wants to, and she doesn't have to worry about having money for tests or prenatal medications. Her husband, however, is gone. Not only is he gone; he's very gone and isn't coming back for 24 months. Sometimes the loneliness is overwhelming. Sometimes the thought of having a child when she still feels like a child at 22 and raising that child for two years by herself feels overwhelming. There are days when Alicia wishes she didn't have to go anywhere or see anyone. These and other biological and environmental factors may increase her prenatal stress levels. Biologically speaking, this means that greater-than-ideal amounts of corticosteroids will pass the blood-brain barrier during her pregnancy with Naomi. If she's depressed, Naomi may also experience an excess of serotonin production during her prenatal development. Either or both of these may have long-term consequences for her development across all domains.

3 Prenatal Development, Birth, and the Newborn Experience

"Alicia," Justin's mother says a few weeks before Naomi's due date, "I have a treat for us today. Get dressed, and I'll pick you up in an hour." Alicia doesn't want to go anywhere. Her back aches, and she misses Justin. His mother's only being nice, and she doesn't want to hurt her feelings. So, she gets dressed, brushes her teeth, and gets in the car when her mother-in-law Sarah arrives.

They spend a lovely day at the spa, where Alicia is treated to a special suite of services just for pregnant women. She gets tired and asks to go home before the pedicure, but she thanks Sarah and admits it was nice to get out for a little while.

Naomi is born without complications at 38 weeks. She is healthy and scores highly on her one- and five-minute APGARS. This is due, in large part, to the excellent care Alicia took of herself during her pregnancy and the extras afforded to her from Justin's job, like TriCare insurance and on-demand medical care.

Naomi will grow accustomed to the stories of her birth, stories told by her mom and by her Grandma Sarah and Grandpa Joe. They all had their own versions, but they start and end the same. Mom called Grandma Sarah to say her back hurt so badly that she couldn't sleep, and her grandparents took Mom to the hospital. In the end, only Mom was in the room with the midwife when Naomi was born. She was tired and wanted privacy, but her Grandma Sarah came in just after she was born and rocked her while her mom slept—three generations of Rowe women alone together.

4 Physical Development in Infancy and Toddlerhood

Naomi spends her first months at home alone with Alicia. She is a happy, easy baby. In the beginning weeks, Alicia is happy for the quiet. She lets her mother-in-law Sarah take Naomi to give her a break several days each week. She uses the time to enjoy the quiet and think about Justin. After a few months pass, Alicia begins to experience postpartum depression. She becomes easily irritated and impatient with Naomi. Soon, she begins sleeping as much as she can, even bringing Naomi into the bed as much as she can. She feels her bond with Naomi weakening, and even though she wants that to change, she gives up trying to make things better.

At Naomi's one-year checkup, the pediatrician asks a series of routine questions about Naomi's behavior and about her interactions with Alicia. Noting Alicia's soft and somewhat sad responses, the pediatrician puts her hand on Alicia's arm. "Alicia, what's bothering you?"

With no warning, Alicia starts crying. She hugs Naomi, and then she says, "It'll be okay. It's nothing."

"Hmm," the doctor says.

Alicia shakes her head. "Really it is. I've just been a little blue lately."

"Sounds like postpartum depression to me," the pediatrician tells her and, seeing Alicia's confusion, adds, "the baby blues. Don't worry. It's very common. I'm going to ask that you call your midwife and make an appointment for this week. Can you do that?"

Alicia nods. "Sure," she says, but she doesn't know if she actually will call. She doesn't know if she thinks it will help.

When Alicia leaves Naomi's checkup—with a perfect report on Naomi—she feels torn. Maybe she'll wait a few more weeks to see what happens. She can always call later if she doesn't feel better.

Naomi continues to have an active and stimulating infancy in spite of her mom's depression. Sarah and Joe are involved in her life and buy her a number of educational toys, and eventually Sarah joins a Mommy and Me playgroup she takes Naomi to twice each week. She's not the only grandmother there, and being around other children offers Naomi the opportunity to learn new words and practice communicating with others. Naomi's outside so often that blue becomes her favorite color (because she loves the bigness of the sky so much), and she develops a fascination for how the natural world operates, like how flowers grow and why butterflies like flower gardens.

5 Cognitive Development in Infancy and Toddlerhood

Most of the time, Sarah takes Naomi to story time at the library or to play with other children in the park, but sometimes Alicia takes her. Naomi likes it when Grandma Sarah takes her because she always gets ice cream for a treat on the way home. Mommy taking her is the best, though, because she gets on the ground and plays with Naomi in the sandbox building sandcastles and making up stories when they play. Naomi's favorite stories are the ones when Mommy starts by saying there's a poor, trapped prince in the high tower of the castle, and Princess Naomi must ride on her valiant steed to rescue him. Naomi isn't quite sure what a valiant steed is, but it sounds fun.

When they play *The Princess Saves the Prince*, Mommy does silly things. She makes Naomi run around the sandbox counting to funny numbers like 11 or 13, or she makes Naomi figure out a riddle like what letter comes between H and J in the alphabet. When Naomi can get the right answer, then she saves the prince! She's a good rescuer. Other children at the park try to figure out Mommy's riddles, too. Sometimes, they're faster than she is (but Mommy always lets Princess Naomi do the rescuing anyway), but mostly Naomi figures out the answers first. Mommy says she's clever. Naomi isn't sure, but she thinks that word means she's smart.

6 Socioemotional Development in Infancy and Toddlerhood

Alicia and Naomi have a difficult time during Alicia's postpartum depression, and Naomi's attachment process with her mother is interrupted. Eventually, Alicia tries therapy, although it takes Naomi several more weeks to be sure Alicia is happier again. By the time she's 18 months old, Naomi has biweekly playdates with her "friends," usually at a public park or story time at the public library, and Alicia takes her more often than Grandma Sarah now. Naomi prefers the park.

Just before her second birthday, her mother makes fish sticks and tater tots for dinner one night. Naomi has two fish sticks in her mouth and is singing her ABCs around them when the door to their apartment opens. Sometimes Grandma Sarah and Grandpa Joe come over for a surprise, and she turns around in her chair to wave to them. It isn't her grandparents. In the doorway stands a man she doesn't know. He looks sort of familiar, but she doesn't know him. "Mommy!" she calls to Alicia, who's in the bedroom folding clothes. "Mommy!"

Alicia calls back to her, "Coming. Just a minute, sweetheart!"

The man comes into the apartment and closes the door. "Naomi?" he asks.

Naomi isn't certain about the man, but she nods and swallows her fish sticks. "Yes."

"Naomi," he says as he get on his knees, "it's Daddy."

She climbs off her chair and walks over to him. He does look a little like the pictures in her room. She pokes at his arm and takes off his hat. Without his hat, he looks more like the picture. "Daddy?"

"Yes, it's Daddy. Can I hug you?"

"Yes, Daddy."

While Naomi gets her first hug from her Daddy, who seems to be happy but is crying, Mommy comes back into the room. She yells, "Oh! Justin!" Daddy stands up still holding Naomi and hugs Mommy, too. "Why didn't you tell me you were coming today?"

"I wanted to surprise my girls," Daddy said.

Naomi pulls on his ear. "Want some fish sticks, Daddy?"

7 Physical and Cognitive Development in Early Childhood

Naomi is so excited for preschool. Her father took her shopping for new tennis shoes and to visit the school where she would spend part of every day with her friends learning to read and write. Grandma Sarah bought her a new blue book bag with white stripes online, and her mom is going to pack Naomi's lunches in a matching lunchbox. She's going to have so much fun! Justin goes to Naomi's first parent-teacher conference. The conference is student led, and Naomi goes through a folder of work she selected to show her parents while her teacher tells him how she's doing in different tasks. She is especially proud when her teacher tells her dad how well she's doing writing her ABCs. Naomi works hard at writing.

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| 8 | Socioemotional Development in Early Childhood | <p>Naomi sits at the table with her father during the parent-teacher conference while her teacher tells him that she has something called “good leadership potential.” Her teacher says she likes to help her friends in the class, and Naomi nods. This is true. Then her teacher says that sometimes Naomi can talk a little loudly or a little too much and not give other children a chance to speak in class. She frowns. She doesn’t think she does this. Daddy looks at her with a funny face. Naomi can tell he isn’t angry, but he’s probably going to give her a Big Talk on the way home. He promised her an ice cream after they met the teacher. Maybe she can get the Big Talk <i>while</i> she gets the ice cream.</p> |
| 9 | Physical and Cognitive Development in Middle and Late Childhood | <p>In elementary school, Naomi does pretty well academically. She also shows a talent for soccer, and her father signs her up to play on the community rec team. She gets new cleats, her own ball, and a team jersey. She loves playing on a team with other girls and looks forward to her Wednesday afternoon practices and Saturday games. Her dad tells her that as long as she’s doing well in school, she can play as much soccer as she wants. Pretty soon, Naomi’s playing in all her spare hours. Someone always has to chase her down in the park close to where they live so she can come home to eat and do her homework. “Girl, you and that ball’ll be the death of me,” Mommy scolds, but Naomi has the feeling that she isn’t mad. Sometimes she wonders if her mom even cares, especially when Daddy is away with the Army.</p> <p>By the end of elementary school, Naomi is a star on her community league soccer team. She loves playing. Sometimes, when she’s alone on the field near her apartment and she’s practicing dribbling, she thinks about learning to play when she was little. She misses her dad and how they took that Saturday to pick out her cleats and a brand-new ball. She still practices with the same ball, even though it’s a little smaller than regulation, and calls it her lucky ball because her dad bought it for her. If she had her choice, she would go to school on the soccer field!</p> <p>She likes school okay, and she does okay in most of her classes. It’s hard to focus sometimes because she misses her dad and she wants to play soccer. She hurries through her homework every day so she can go outside and play, and her mom doesn’t stop her. Naomi’s pretty sure that’s because her mom wants to be alone. She’s sad when her dad goes away with the Army, and she doesn’t want to be bothered with Naomi, or that’s how Naomi sees it. When her dad’s home, she sits at the table to do her homework, but he only checks it sometimes. Then she’s out the door with her ball and doesn’t come back until dinnertime.</p> |
| 10 | Socioemotional Development in Middle and Late Childhood | <p>When Naomi is in the second grade, her father is deployed again. He has to go away sometimes but usually only for a month or so. Her mom explains that this is because she and Daddy decided it would be better if Naomi lived as much as she could in one place. So, she and Mommy don’t follow Daddy all the time when he goes different places in the United States (a place she’s learning about in school). But when he leaves for a long time a long way away, she knows, because he takes her out for a special Daddy-Naomi dinner and explains why he’s going away and where he’ll be. He’s going to a base on the other side of the world in a country called Turkey. Naomi laughs and tells him that’s a silly name for a country. Daddy agrees. Then he explains how important Turkey is to a lot of different people from other countries right now, and she tries to understand. She feels bad for the children he tells her about, the ones living there in big tents and warehouses because they had to run away from their own houses in another country, but she’s not sure why other kids get to have Daddy before she does. That doesn’t seem fair at all.</p> |

“Will you send me pictures?”

“All the time, Stella.”

She likes it when he calls her “star” because she feels special. “I wish you didn’t have to go, Daddy.”

“I know you’ll take care of Mommy when I’m gone, and I’ll be back before you know it,” Daddy says, but Naomi is pretty sure that last part isn’t true. She’s *very* unsure about helping take care of Mommy. She always gets so sad when Daddy isn’t home, and Naomi feels like anything she does to try to help her makes things worse. But she nods and agrees to make them both feel better.

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| 11 | Physical and Cognitive Development in Adolescence | <p>Naomi sits in the bleachers beside the soccer field. She should be practicing, but Bradley Carter’s there again. He’s there a lot, sitting all alone and watching her. It used to be annoying, but sometimes she sits with him now and talks. He’s pretty cute, and she figures she can flirt a little without worrying about soccer or getting into college.</p> <p>Her parents seem to always be asking her if she likes someone. She tells them no, and maybe she’ll keep telling them no. It’s not like she and Bradley are going out. She figures she’ll tell them when there’s something to tell them.</p> |
| 12 | Socioemotional Development in Adolescence | <p>Erica and Sydney are Naomi’s best friends. Sydney is white, but Erica’s also mixed, like Naomi and Naomi’s mom. It’s not like being racial is all that uncommon, but that doesn’t make it any easier. When she hangs out with Sydney and her friends, she can’t be white enough. When she hangs out with Erica, they can’t seem to be black enough. She’s starting to understand why her mom says she’s black, but she loves her dad and her grandparents so much. She doesn’t want to forget that she’s half white. Eventually, she figures she’ll have to choose one or the other. That makes her sadder than it seems like it should.</p> <p>She wishes she could talk to her mom about it, but she doesn’t like to bring up anything that could make her mom sad. Her mom has enough problems with depression without Naomi’s help. At least Bradley Cooper is mixed, too. They’ve been dating for a while. She makes him work for sex, but in their senior year of high school, they finally have intercourse.</p> |
| 13 | Physical and Cognitive Development in Emerging/Early Adulthood | <p>Naomi and Bradley make several trips in his car ferrying boxes from her parents’ place to the tiny attic apartment they’ll share off-campus at the local state college. Once Naomi stopped playing soccer in high school, she knew she wouldn’t have a scholarship to a big school, but she has enough money through her dad’s veteran’s benefits to go to the local school without incurring too much debt. She’s a little worried about how well she’ll do, but she’s going to throw herself into her studies and hope for the best.</p> |
| 14 | Socioemotional Development in Emerging/Early Adulthood | <p>Naomi and Bradley attend school and work part-time jobs for a couple years. They’re both doing well and seem happy. Although Naomi is reluctant to disrupt the peace and routine, she knows there’s no choice. On a rainy Saturday morning, she takes the coffee he hands her across their secondhand kitchen table with a quick thanks and tells him they need to talk. She sees the look of fear on his face and rushes to reassure him.</p> <p>“No, babe. Not that kind of talk.”</p> |

"Thank God. What is it then?"

"Brad, I'm pregnant."

Twenty years old and pregnant—she can see the look on his face. This is an end to everything they've worked toward and planned.

"It's okay. It's okay. Don't worry about it. I'll move home and figure it out."

Part of her is disappointed when he doesn't even argue with her.

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| 15 | Physical and Cognitive Development in Middle Adulthood | Naomi is in her middle 20s before she graduates from college, already entering middle adulthood. She knows she's fortunate to get a good job working for her local Department of Environmental Resources, and when she starts working, she does so with a good attitude and a lot of hope. As she works, she faces a number of physical and psychological stressors that accompany her single parenthood and take an extra toll on her body. Even though she's aware of these difficulties and consequences, it's hard to find the time or money necessary to relieve herself of them. |
| 16 | Socioemotional Development in Middle Adulthood | <p>Naomi's daughter Claire is 11 when Bradley shows back up in Naomi's life. Although she's annoyed and protective of Claire's feelings, she remembers what it was like whenever her dad went away. She arranges a dinner in the small house she and Claire share and prepares Claire to meet her father. Things go as well as they can, and Naomi works out a visitation schedule for her daughter and Bradley. She isn't interested in anything more—with Bradley or anyone else—and uses the time when Claire is away with Bradley to do some of the things she never has time to do. She rediscovers her love of reading and growing things. She also catches up on a little sleep when she can.</p> <p>Naomi's sense of never having enough time and of social isolation gets worse when her mom dies. Alicia had been quietly ailing for some time, and during her last winter she caught the flu and never recovered. Naomi misses her mother terribly, but she thinks about her childhood and coping with her mother's depression. She doesn't want that for her own child and tries to work through her grief quietly and in ways that don't disrupt her life. She finds it helpful, too, that her dad spends more time with them now, eating dinner at the house they bought across town two or three nights each week. Seeing her dad so much keeps her connected to her mom in positive not sad ways.</p> |
| 17 | Physical and Cognitive Development in Late Adulthood | <p>Naomi makes time to visit the doctor every year, a leftover habit from once being an athlete, she tells herself—general checkup, PAP smear, mammogram. Every year, she crosses her fingers for good results but is glad to get them anyway. She doesn't have time to get seriously ill. What would happen to Claire? She couldn't possibly go live with Bradley full time. The doctor always tells her the same thing: she's in good health for someone her age, particularly for someone who's juggled the stressors she has.</p> <p>After one checkup, she receives a callback that something looks suspicious on her mammogram and the doctor would like to do a needle biopsy. She doesn't tell Claire, who will only worry needlessly. She'll tell her when there's something to tell her. She goes alone to the biopsy, which hurts far more than she's told it will, and afterward she takes the rest of the day off work. She doesn't feel well. When the office calls two days later, she isn't surprised but is concerned to learn that she'll need a lumpectomy. She tells Claire and schedules her surgery.</p> |

When Naomi's tumor is biopsied, the oncologist describes it as Stage III breast cancer and recommends a course of radiation and chemotherapy. She tells Naomi the survival rate for a woman with her type of breast cancer caught at her stage is 72 percent. Naomi agrees to the doctor's recommendations, and as the treatments progress, she examines the burns on her breast and her bald head while thanking God that the cancer was caught early enough that she has a decent chance of survival. She isn't ready to die.

It takes five clear mammograms, but her oncologist finally pronounces Naomi cancer free. Grateful and hopeful for her future, Naomi takes the best care of herself that she can. It's hard. She's worried about her medical bills, and Claire will go to college soon. But she does the best she can. She's alive and cancer free, and that's so much better than the alternative.

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| 18 Socioemotional Development in Late Adulthood | <p>When Naomi is ready to retire, she and her dad have a long conversation about who should move where. She thinks Justin shouldn't live alone any longer, and she's happy to have him at home with her or to move back home with him. She doesn't think he wants to move into an assisted living facility, and she's right. Ultimately, she moves home, and even though she feels a little bit like a girl coming back to her childhood and her parents, she knows this is best for both of them. She hopes that when the time comes, Claire will be there for her like she's trying to be there for her dad.</p> |
| 19 Experience With Death and Dying | <p>Justin passes two years after Naomi retires, giving Naomi a large blow. He dies of a heart attack, and Claire supports her grieving the best she can. It's a terrible time for Naomi. Other than her daughter and her grandchildren, she feels entirely alone. She spends the next several years isolated other than occasional visits from Claire and the kids, and she passes away from a heart attack at age 74.</p> |

Case Discussion Questions

- During early childhood, Naomi attends a parent-teacher conference with her father Justin. Her mother Alicia doesn't attend with them. The teacher tells him, among many positive things, that Naomi sometimes talks too much, and Naomi can tell from her father's face that he's not especially happy to hear this. She can tell that's not unhappy either but that she'll probably have to endure what she thinks of as the Big Talk later. In Naomi's optimal case outcome, her mother Alicia makes the same face, but Naomi can tell that her mother isn't angry and, similarly, she might get talked to later. What in Naomi's past might create the conditions for the differences between a unified parental unit in the optimal case and Justin alone in this case while simultaneously providing Naomi with security in even her parents' displeasure? How might this case set Naomi up for potential life outcomes that are different from or similar to her optimal case outcomes?
- In adolescence, Naomi struggles with her biracial identity, feeling not white enough for her white friends and not black enough for her black friends. She wants to talk to her mom about it but worries that doing so might trigger another bout of depression in Alicia. Contrast this with Naomi's optimal case outcome in which Naomi and Alicia have a lengthy conversation in which each is vulnerable with the other about their experiences being biracial in their teenage years. How does this moment in Naomi's life illustrate her relationship with her mother and the divergent paths life took for her in this case?

3. In middle adulthood, Naomi has a steady job at the Department of Environmental Services, a place she's worked since graduating college. She's a single mother to a child she conceived in college but whose father isn't in either of their lives from her birth until Naomi's middle years. She's never married or even dated, and although the disruption is initially annoying, she allows the visitation and tries to use her new free time to do things she hasn't in a while, such as read and sleep. Contrast this productive period of Naomi's life with her optimal case outcome in which she leaves the Department of Agriculture, her initial post-college employer, in her middle years to pursue her own business, marries the man who fathered her child in this case, and has the same daughter and a son with him. In what ways would we expect Naomi's life to be somewhat less fulfilling across any and all domains (biological, cognitive, and socioemotional) in this case?
4. Consider Naomi's optimal case outcomes at the end of her life and Erikson's integrity-versus-despair stage of psychosocial development. How does this case compare to that one? Consider all of Naomi's life events. How do you think those contributed to any differences in Naomi's end-of-life outcomes and her sense of integrity versus despair?

3. Undesirable Outcomes: James Albert

2 Biological and Environmental Foundations

Rosslyn and Joss spend a lot of time together in the evenings looking at the budget. They assess how much money they have saved, how much they need to pay their bills (and what they can cut), and how much Rosslyn can contribute. Then they look at the big-ticket item. Joss can choose to continue his insurance through his employer for up to 18 months, but he has to bear the full cost of doing so. It's a lot of money. They run some scenarios through the marketplace to see what the best option is for them. Rosslyn's supplement isn't a lot, but it might be better to use that and some savings to buy a cheaper plan.

In the end, they decide to cut back on all nonessentials—Joss assures Rosslyn that pistachio ice cream is an essential—and buy an insurance plan through the marketplace. Because Joss is unemployed and Rosslyn is pregnant, they're eligible for some discounts. The plan ends up being a lot less expensive than paying Joss's employer to continue his old plan. Joss is also going to try hard to get a job as fast as he can even if it's a step down from his last one. The insurance, a less-than-ideal job—both are temporary stop-gap measures just to tide them over. Besides, they have each other.

Cutting back means a number of things for Rosslyn (and James) during the remainder of her pregnancy. She's used to buying whatever food she wants to buy at the grocery store. Their hamburgers are made with free-range beef, and every Sunday she roasts a free-range chicken. They eat organic vegetables, high-end dairy, and bakery-fresh bread. Joss doesn't tell her what to buy, but they decide that the grocery bill needs to be cut—in half. Rosslyn doesn't want to sacrifice all quality, but she knows a lot of her choices have to change. She decides good meat and dairy from the grocery store are the most important. Learning to bake her own bread, she begins buying vegetables from the local growers at the weekend farmers market. It takes her a couple weeks, but eventually she cuts the food bill almost by half. Joss is impressed, and they agree that her bread is better than the bakery's anyway.

What really hurts are the changes they make at the house. They turn the air-conditioner up to 74 and the heat back to 67. Such small changes, Joss thinks, but—wow—they make a difference in comfort levels. In January, he looks at Rosslyn curled up in the corner of the sofa with wool socks, a book, and hot cocoa. She's not complaining, so neither does he. It's hard, though, he thinks as he goes to the kitchen for another cup of coffee—anything to feel warmer. It's been four months. Two more months until the baby gets there, and Joss is no closer to a new job. He needs to find something soon because they're going to need new, expensive essentials like diapers, vaccinations, car seats, and baby food. To be fair, Rosslyn said she'd make the baby food, but with no job, Joss is looking more and more like a stay-at-home dad, and that means he needs to be learning some of this stuff. Even if he does stay home, there's not enough money. The baby's going to have to eat something. Joss can't make baby food from air. He hopes the kid looks like Rosslyn. He'll learn to stretch a dollar further if the baby has her blue eyes instead of his green ones and her curly brown hair. He sincerely hopes he doesn't pass along a gene for the receding hairline that seems to be so prevalent in his family.

Rosslyn looks at him over her book and says, "I hope he has your red hair."

"Me, too," Joss agrees. "I was just thinking that."

"Really?"

"No. Of course not. I hope he looks just like you. Go back to your book, silly."

3 Prenatal Development, Birth, and the Newborn Experience

Rosslyn tries to take good care of herself during the pregnancy. She attends the first scheduled prenatal appointment after she and Joss change insurance plans, but as she sits in the waiting room, the financial consultant for the doctor's office asks to see her. She's told that the doctor doesn't accept that particular plan. The doctor will continue to treat Rosslyn, but she'll have to pay for her appointments and then file for insurance reimbursement after each appointment. She's not sure what to do in the moment without talking to Joss but says okay just to get this appointment out of the way.

After a long talk at home over barbeque and mashed potatoes, she and Joss decide to look for a doctor who will take their new insurance. There's a month until Rosslyn's next appointment, and with no job at the moment, Joss can do some calling around. She loves Dr. Gibson, but they can't stop eating or paying the mortgage. Three of four days of calls convinces them that they made a big mistake trying to save money. No one will take their new insurance. Rosslyn starts getting her prenatal care at the local women's health clinic. After only one or two visits, she's sure her care is as good as it was with Dr. Gibson. Her new doctor, Dr. Ward, is a young woman about her own age, and she's aware of Rosslyn and her needs. Joss also thinks he's found a way to make the hospital take the insurance when Rosslyn delivers the baby and goes to work on that. If not, they'll be opting for a home birth, a running joke between them but not far off from the truth.

In her 39th week, Rosslyn feels ill at work. Her back aches badly. She's irritable and tired. She also wants to pee all morning long. After lunch, she tells her boss she needs to go home and rest, which is exactly what she does. An hour or so after lying down, she realizes no position is comfortable and reaches for the telephone. Joss is with his mother helping her paint the shutters, but it's probably nothing anyway. She dials the number for the doctor, not caring for once if she wastes money.

"Women's Community Health," the receptionist says when she answers the phone. Her cheery voice comforts Rosslyn.

"This is Rosslyn Albert, I'm a patient of Dr. Ward. I'm—"

"Of course, Mrs. Albert. Let me get Dr. Ward for you."

"Rosslyn?" Dr. Ward asks, coming on the line a minute later. "What's going on?"

"I don't know. I just feel really bad. My back hurts, and I can't stop going to the bathroom and—"

"Ah. I see. Is Joss home?"

"No, but I can call him."

"I think you should do that. Unless he can get home pretty quickly, I'd suggest that you have him meet you at the hospital. Come on in, and I'll meet you over there soon."

"Really?"

"Really. Are you ready to meet your baby?"

Rosslyn thinks how long it's been since she's seen her toes. "So ready."

"Good. I'll see you in a little while."

An hour or so after arriving at the hospital, checking herself in, and climbing mostly undressed into the hospital bed, Dr. Ward arrives to check her out. Yes, she is definitely in labor. She tells the doctor that it doesn't feel nearly as terrible as she was led to believe it would.

"It will," she tells her just before she breaks her water.

Half an hour later, Joss and all the parents arrive at one time, and Rosslyn realizes Dr. Ward was right. As Joss bends down to kiss her, she whispers, "Get. Me. Drugs."

Some uncounted amount of time later, an anesthesiologist administers an epidural, and Rosslyn's told she still has several hours of labor before she'll transition into the second stage and be ready to push her baby into the world. When James is born—a healthy, beautiful nine-pound baby she delivered vaginally to Dr. Ward's awed surprise—seven hours later, Rosslyn forgets about her earlier boredom. All the months of waiting, the sacrificing, and the worrying were absolutely worth it. His first lusty cries as he greets the world please the doctor and call to her. She raises his arms, and the nurse hands him to her. As she strokes his cheek, he turns his head to root and finds her breast, and then he nurses while Joss tickles his feet. James flexes them and then curls his toes. They laugh. She puts a finger to his palm, and he grasps hold of her finger and holds on so tightly she thinks he'll never let go. All the clichés are not cliché at all. He is perfect.

**4 Physical
Development
in Infancy and
Toddlerhood**

In the first few weeks of his life, James is at home with Joss and Rosslyn, both of whom care for him equally. They share all duties except breast-feeding, and Rosslyn jokes that she knows Joss would do that, too, if he could. Joss—not joking—agrees. It's a magical time for the little family of three. James is an easy baby, going to bed without fuss in the cradle kept at the end of his parents' bed, nursing quietly at night, and falling back to sleep when he's finished.

At the end of Rosslyn's six weeks' maternity leave, she reluctantly returns to work. Before Joss lost his job, they'd discussed the possibility of Rosslyn taking advantage of the federal Family Medical Leave Act and staying with James another six weeks, but the leave is unpaid. They can't do that now. Although she cries from the moment she gets out of bed until the moment she gets to work, Rosslyn returns to work on the seventh Monday after James is born. She calls home every hour and manages to leave work two hours early. When she gets home, James is sitting on Joss's lap, sucking his father's thumb and drooling all over Joss's hand and his own shirt. Joss is using his other hand to look at job ads. She kisses them both.

"Everything go okay?" she asks.

"Since you asked an hour ago? Just fine."

"I'm sorry, but it's so hard to leave him."

"I know, Roz. We missed you, too. Didn't we, James?" he asks, smiling when the baby hears his name and looks up at his father with shining eyes.

When James registers Rosslyn's presence, he furrows his brow and reaches for her. Joss lifts him in the air under his armpits and hands him over to his waiting mother.

"Rosslyn, this kid needs some toys other than stuffed animals. I mean, I knew before that babies put things in their mouths, but all you gotta do is watch him closely to see that he's doing more than shoving things in there. He's *examining* them. He needs stuff he can feel and compare, like those books with fur and sandpaper and rubber and whatever."

"I know what you mean. Maybe we can go shopping when I get paid again. We can probably buy one or two things then."

"Great. I think he'll enjoy that."

5 Cognitive Development in Infancy and Toddlerhood

Rosslyn reads bedtime stories to James most nights. They received a few books as baby gifts, and they also buy copies of some of their own childhood favorites when they have a few dollars now and again. This is their end-of-the-day quiet time together, and with a dim light and lots of cuddling, they make the most of it.

James clearly indicates favorite stories from time to time. Rosslyn will often indulge him by reading an extra book to accommodate his preference but not allow him to dictate an entire evening.

By the time James is a year old, he babbles along with Rosslyn as they read his favorite stories, often using the same cadence and rhythm she does, even if he doesn't use words. When a story contains one of the ten or 12 words he knows, he shouts it out just after Rosslyn speaks the word; he's proud of himself. By the time he's two years old, James can "read" one or two of his shorter storybooks by having memorized their content. He knows the words, their meanings, and their place in the book based on tying the words to the images on their pages. Even if not all the words are intelligible when his parents hear them, he knows them. His spoken vocabulary is exponentially larger than it was just one year before, and his receptive vocabulary contains enough words now that he understands most of the stories his mother reads to him.

6 Socioemotional Development in Infancy and Toddlerhood

James spends his days being cared for at home by Joss while Rosslyn works. In the beginning, he doesn't notice the change, but the longer his mother is gone, the crankier he gets. He doesn't want to drink the milk Rosslyn pumped and bottled the night before and fusses loudly when Joss tries to give it to him. Eventually, he gives up and calls Rosslyn.

"Roz, I don't know what to do. He's starved and won't eat. He just keeps crying."

"I can't leave work right now," she tells him. "It's my first day back, Joss. Get creative if he doesn't want the bottle, okay?"

She doesn't mean to snap at him, but sometimes she doesn't understand the lack of creativity.

"Okay. I'll figure it out. We'll see you when you get home."

Over her first week back, Joss and James fall into a routine, and Joss figures out that he can feed the baby breastmilk from a small spoon. It takes forever, but at least the baby eats, and as soon as Rosslyn gets home, he nurses like a madman.

The pediatrician is pleased at James's three-month checkup. Dr. Morris squeezes James's fat legs and makes him giggle while he drools around his first tooth.

"He looks just great."

"But he only sips at pumped breastmilk during the day when I'm at work," Rosslyn worries. "Won't he get dehydrated?"

"Unlikely. Many babies who're exclusively breastfed save it up for those hours. I've seen babies of working mothers who don't start any food until they're ready for table food, and they never take a bottle. They just wait it out at day care. Trust him, Rosslyn. If he gets really hungry or thirsty, he'll take the bottle."

Reassured, Rosslyn reworks her schedule at work so she can take an extra 15 minutes at lunch. Some days she has a few extra minutes to go home and feed James at midday. She feels better about that, and he does seem to be thriving. James smiles and reaches for her as soon as she walks through the door. "Little weirdo," she whispers. "Ready to eat?"

7 Physical and Cognitive Development in Early Childhood

James is tall for his age. A little thin, Dr. Morris said at his last checkup, but healthy as a horse, whatever that means. Sometimes, adults say things he doesn't understand and he has to ask Mom or Dad what they mean. Why is a horse healthier than a boy? Because it only eats apples and not ice cream? If that's the case, James thinks, he'll keep the lesser status of healthy as a boy, thank you.

He's doing great in preschool, at least he thinks so. He knows all of his letters and how to write his name. The class is working on how to read some simple books, but it's hard for James because he knows all the books by heart. They've all been read to him a million times by his Mom or Dad, so he can't tell if he's reading or remembering. It's frustrating. Sometimes, he gets mad when he's frustrated. Mom calls it "temper." He's not sure what that means either except that when she uses the word, she seems to be mad, too, so it shouldn't be too bad.

Today, he's working on a practice letter sheet, tracing over the dotted letters to make his teacher happy. His best friend Zack is sitting beside him. Jack's already finished and has his head bent over his paper drawing funny lines in the margins. James likes Zack. They like to play the same things and are exactly the same size. They also have birthdays one week apart. That's pretty cool. Zack wears a little hat on his head. He told James it's called a *kippah*, and because he's Jewish he wears it all the time.

"Even in the bath?" James asks one day.

"Not in the bath," Zack laughs. "That would be dumb."

James likes the lines Zack draws. They're something Zack says is *Hebrew*, which sounds exotic. "What's that?" he whispers today.

"Letters," Zack whispers back. "I'm trying to remember how to write all the Hebrew letters that are like the English ones we're writing."

James is amazed. "You mean Hebrew is a *language*?"

"Of course. It's the language Jewish people speak."

That's cool, too. Like Zack's *kippah*. "How do you say 'friend' in Hebrew?" he asks Zack.

"*Yedida*."

"*Yedida*. That sounds funny. I like it."

Zack smiles at him. Zack is his *yedida*.

8 Socioemotional Development in Early Childhood

James's friend Zack looks funny. It's not just the hat. He's half Korean, and almost everyone else in their class is plain white. Sometimes, other kids call Zack names, and it makes James mad. He and Zack share a lot of things like food in their lunch boxes—Zack's Korean grandmother sends delicious *manju* that James particularly likes, and James always shares his mom's chocolate chip cookies.

One day on the playground, James takes turns on the big slide with other kids in his class, landing with a *whoosh!* in leaves that crackle at the bottom. Laughing with his friends, he doesn't hear Zack at first, but when he does, Zack is calling for help. James looks for the teacher, but she's not outside with them. He wipes the leaves off his butt, rushes to the circle of boys around Zack, and asks what's going on.

"Nothing," Zack says, but James can see he's been crying.

A big boy named Keith pushes Zack and says, "Liar! Tell 'em why you're crying, gook!"

James doesn't know or care what a "gook" is because he can tell it's bad. Zack's face gets red, and he bites his lip. James turns to Keith and pushes him back. He kicks him, and then he pushes him again. "You better not say that again!"

"Make me stop!" Keith yells.

"Okay." James shoves Keith as hard as he can until Keith falls down, and then he falls on top of him, wrestling with the bully and trying to hit him until the shadow of Miss Thompson falls over them.

"Mr. Albert, Mr. Meadows," she says with that voice none of the kids like, "what exactly is going on here?"

"He started it," James grunts, still trying to punch Keith.

"Did not!" Keith yells back.

"Both of you, get up now!" She claps her hands once sharply. "We're going inside to have a long talk. We're going to talk with Zack, too, and anyone else who saw what the two of you did. Then I'm calling your parents to come pick you up."

James knows he did the right thing taking up for Zack, but he thinks maybe his parents won't see it that way. Even though it makes him mad, he can't stop himself from crying a little bit.

9 Physical and Cognitive Development in Middle and Late Childhood

James's parents shove food at him all the time, but he's still skinny. Dr. Morris finally tells his mom not to worry, and that's a big relief for James. He can only eat so much spaghetti and meatballs! Dr. Morris says he'll probably just be tall and thin like Dad. Dad jokes that James can use that to get a basketball scholarship to college. James hates basketball, but his dad doesn't seem to get that.

What James does like is school. He just has a hard time showing that. He likes drawing, and all his school worksheets have little drawings in the margins. His mother complains about his doodles, and his teachers tell her he seems unfocused. His doodling seems to prove that to her, and she nags him about it. Dad says, "As long as you're not goofing off, I don't care when and where you draw," except that everyone seems to think he *is* goofing off, and he doesn't know how to show them he's not. Sometimes, when his parents are mad at him, they tell him they don't want to see any doodles on his papers anymore. He tries to do better, but then he starts drawing again without even thinking about it.

10 Socioemotional Development in Middle and Late Childhood

In third grade, James's friend Zack forms a club that meets during recess on the playground. The club has three members and is called Words Can Hurt. They spend their time thinking of ways to stop bullying. After a few weeks, Zack convinces James to join. James is skeptical because he doesn't like bullies but finds a good shove and a threat are usually pretty effective at stopping bullies from doing bad stuff. The club has specific rules, like everyone's ideas are as good as everyone else's, and there's no leader in the group because everyone is equally important.

Their teacher Mr. Miller asks them if they'd like their club to become an official club at the school. James doesn't understand what this means, and Mr. Miller explains that the four boys would teach other students the principles of Words Can Hurt, and those students would train other students, and those would train . . . And James understands after that. Their teacher says that he and other teachers would think of students who would be good peer leaders and good candidates for messages about bullying, and the group could meet during lunch as often as they wanted to.

James is excited even if he's a little unsure. He likes being part of something that's good, and he hopes that maybe working with his friends and Mr. Miller will help *him* figure out how to stop bullying without fighting. One day, he asks Mr. Miller, "Did you know that hitting to stop hitting seems a lot like bullying?"

Mr. Miller nods. "I did know that. Did you figure that out yourself?" James tells him he did. "That's good, James. I'm glad you've decided there's a way to deal with bullying that doesn't require more bullying. I'm proud of all you."

In late elementary school, James rushes through his homework to get to the dinner table on time. Dad grilled burgers, and that's his favorite. Once they finish, his mom doesn't tell him to start clearing the table right away like she usually does. James wants to know what's going on.

"Something seems weird with you two."

"Noticed that, did you?" Dad asks. "Actually, Mom and I wanted to talk to you now that dinner's over."

Suspicious, James looks at them. "Did I do something bad?"

"Not at all," his mom tells him, laughing.

“Okay . . . what’s up?”

“We’re having a baby, James,” Mom says. “You’re going to be a big brother.”

His dad looks at him with concern. “How do you feel about that?”

James thinks about it. He knows a girl, Katie, who got a baby sister a few months ago. She’s told them all the horrible things about it, like smelly diapers and how her sister cries all the time. But she also shows them lots of cute pictures of her sister.

“I think it’s great,” James says even though he’s not perfectly sure that’s correct. His parents smile and reach to squeeze his hands.

“Oh, James,” his mom says, “I’m so glad you’re happy. We hoped you would be.”

11 Physical and Cognitive Development in Adolescence

James works his way through middle school in a revolving state of annoyance (pimples, cracking voice, and longer, skinnier legs), elation (Sally smiles at him most days between English and French), and depression (some days Sally *doesn’t* smile at him).

Most days he has no idea what to think. He eats the oatmeal his dad fixes for breakfast and tries to decide WWHD on those days. WWHD is What Would Heinz Do? It’s a thing they learned in a class where you’re supposed to decide if an old guy should steal a drug to cure his dying wife. James is still unsure if there’s a right answer, but when he has thousand-mile-an-hour days, he likes to think about the situation. Some days, he thinks it’s yes. Some days, he thinks it’s no. One thing he knows for sure is that it’s a hard question! Like, shouldn’t the wife live if she can, even if helping her live means the guy goes to jail? But would she want to live while she’s sick and old and stuff if he’s in jail? Mostly, James thinks that if he were Heinz, he’d beat up anyone who got in the way of saving his wife’s life.

It’s no easier with Words Can Hurt since he stopped helping with the club and the curriculum. When he was a kid, he wanted to punch everyone who bullied Zack or one of the girls on the playground or basically anyone else. It was hard not to. That’s one of the challenges they faced when they talked through their Words Can Hurt lessons. There’s no “good” pushing, shoving, hitting, and stuff. There may be *necessary* violence sometimes, but there’s none that’s good. He’s never gotten to where he wants to punch people any less. Sometimes he wants to do it really bad. That, he figures, made him a poor Words Can Hurt peer mentor, and he dropped out.

He and Zack still eat lunch together some days. They both usually get pizza and fries, like today, when Zack sits down with his tray and says, “Hey, you going to ask Sally to the eighth grade formal?”

“What? Where did that come from?” he asks.

“I heard that she turned down Trevor Martin because she’s waiting for you to ask her.”

James acknowledges this might make a difference. “Maybe.”

12 Socioemotional Development in Adolescence

James has a significant problem. He wants to have sex, but he doesn’t want to have sex. He knows girls like him, and he’s had opportunities to have sex. Most of those times, he even thinks about it way before he knows he can do it with a particular girl, but between the beginning of a date and a girl’s indication that they can engage in sex, he realizes he doesn’t want to. He wonders what’s wrong with him. He thinks he’s probably pretty weird and figures he’s probably better to get it over with like everyone else.

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| 13 | Physical and Cognitive Development in Emerging/Early Adulthood | <p>"College or work," James's dad tells him as James prepares to graduate from high school.</p> <p>"I don't know what I want to do."</p> <p>"Then work for a year, and figure it out. Doing nothing isn't an option."</p> <p>Frustrated and a little angry, James counters, "But it's too late for me to apply anywhere to school."</p> <p>"I'd tell you that's your fault," Dad says, "except that gets us nowhere. There's still the local college. They'll accept applications for another month or so. What do you want to do?"</p> <p>"I don't want to go there!" James yells.</p> <p>His mother chooses this moment to speak but only says, "Don't yell at your father."</p> <p>"James," Dad reminds him for the 10,000th time, "you've had a number of opportunities to plan for the fall. You can get a job, or you can apply to the local college and live at home for a year. I want to know before your grandparents arrive for graduation what it's going to be."</p> <p>James, already an adult by law, wonders why he has to tell his parents anything anymore.</p> |
| 14 | Socioemotional Development in Emerging/Early Adulthood | <p>For two years, James takes classes off and on at the local college near his parents' house. They let him live at home without paying rent as long as he's in class and making good grades. He does pretty well. Because he doesn't plan to finish college there, he focuses on taking the transfer core classes he'll have to have at any school. It works pretty well for him, and his parents don't give him too much trouble while he's still at home.</p> <p>When James transfers to a large state university, he majors in business because it's easy and, as his dad says, "marketable." He lives on campus and shares a room with a track runner who asks as he moves in, "Hey, look at you. Play basketball?" James hates him from the start, but he makes the best of it. After five semesters, he graduates with a 2.35 GPA (good enough, he thinks) and moves back home. His parents give him six months to find a job and either start paying rent or find a place to live. Annoyed as he is by the demand, he hears from enough friends that this is pretty common and tries not to complain.</p> |
| 15 | Physical and Cognitive Development in Middle Adulthood | <p>James signs the lease on his first apartment a few weeks after he graduates from college. He's gotten a job as an assistant to the associate manager of a shipping company. The money's pretty good, and he has insurance. He doesn't plan to be there forever, but it's not bad to start. More than that, he can see the relief in his parents' faces when he starts packing his things to move.</p> <p>He hasn't tried to find a roommate. The apartment is pretty small, and the rent is low. He'd rather be in a low-rent place than have to break in a new roommate after the last one went so <i>well</i>. Besides, he's close to work, close to his parents, and close to his favorite bar. What's not to love about living there?</p> <p>It takes him about three years to find what James considers to be a job good enough to leave the one he has. When he takes a new job, he's the assistant manager for distribution at a fast-food chain. It's not glamorous, but there's more responsibility and more pay. The insurance isn't quite as good, but the trade-off is worth it.</p> |

Plus, during his training, he meets another new assistant manager. Pam is the assistant manager of quality control, and even though they went to high school together, they only barely remember each other. They start hanging out some after training, and once they're both on the job full time, James asks Pam to have lunch a few times. Apparently tired of James's pace, Pam asks him to dinner after a few months of waiting.

James spends another couple years dating Pam before they discuss living together. Pam tells him that she loves him, but she's not really interested. She's almost 30, and if they're just playing around, she'd rather they not see each other anymore. With a lot of tears, Pam breaks up with James, who spends six months sulking before he finally asks her to marry him.

**16 Socioemotional
Development
in Middle
Adulthood**

"James." Pam pours a glass of wine and sits at the kitchen table. The lights are off other than the dim one over the stove. The kids are in bed. "James, we have to talk."

James figures he knows what that means. "What's wrong?"

She looks at him like he should know. "Are you happy with your job?" she asks.

"What? I don't understand the question."

"Are you happy? With your job, with our life, with *me*?"

Suspicious, James watches her. "I'm happy. Everything is going along like we planned, right?"

"Is it? James, are you seeing someone?"

Sitting still, James thinks about her words. "Where is this coming from?"

"I was picking up the dry cleaning yesterday, and I saw you at the coffee shop with that woman. Are you having an affair?"

He lets out a breath. "No, I'm not having an affair with that woman, Pam. She's the vice president of operations for Chop House restaurants. I was on a job interview. I didn't want to tell you until I saw how things were looking."

Pam lets out a breath, too, and she nods her head. "Good."

"But, Pam, how could you think that? Is that the kind of marriage we have, where you see me having a coffee and assume I'm having an affair?"

Stacey drinks the last of her wine. Setting the glass carefully on the table, she looks at him and says, "I don't know. I didn't think about that, James."

"Well, that's what I'm thinking about."

"I don't understand," she says over her empty glass.

"How was it so easy for you to go right there? If I saw you with a man, I would assume something innocent until I knew better. Pam, this bothers me."

"Aren't you making too much of this? God, James, seriously."

"I don't know. Maybe? I'm just telling you that it bothers me. I'm going to go to sleep. Maybe I'll feel better in the morning."

Pam sighs. "Okay."

"I'll sleep on the couch tonight."

"James . . ."

Walking to her, James kisses her cheek. "Good night, Pam."

Sitting awake on the sofa with a book, James hears his five-year-old son when he wakes from a bad dream. Going to him before Jimmy can wake Pam, James gathers the boy in his arms and says, “Rough night for you, too? Come here, little man. We’ll get through it together.” He grabs Jimmy and one of Jimmy’s favorite books, and together the two of them sit side by side reading on the sofa until they fall asleep.

17 Physical and Cognitive Development in Late Adulthood

When James is in his 50s, his dad suffers a single, fatal heart attack. Two years later, his mom has a series of small strokes that leave her bedridden until she, too, passes away. Although active due to his work and still fit for his age, as enters his later years, James becomes increasingly concerned about his own cardiovascular health. He begins having an annual checkup with a general practitioner, and for the first time in his life takes up jogging. He jogs a mile each morning and, if not particularly graceful or enthusiastic, feels like he’s doing his part to keep himself heart healthy. He doesn’t eat fried food (much) and steers clear of as much sugar as he can. He does have a fondness for cake.

His son Jimmy, has married and given him grandchildren who are doting. One grandson runs with him a time or two a week whenever he has time.

James is trying to ward off getting old, but he is definitely getting old. All the years of bills of lading and other small print have taken their toll. He wears glasses he’s pretty well blind without. Even though he tells himself he eats well enough, he knows pretty much every day he could do better. Hopefully, he can at least keep himself from heart attack, stroke, or diabetes. He’s trying.

A few times each year, his path crosses Pam’s. They tried for a year or two after Pam’s bombshell conversation, but James couldn’t get past the allegation of cheating. He found he was angry with her more than he was happy. They divorced when Jimmy was in elementary school, and now when he sees her, he’s able to be genial and polite for their son’s sake. It’s been better this way even if he has been lonely over the years.

18 Socioemotional Development in Late Adulthood

James fusses with the nurse who wants to check his eyesight. He tells the man that he can see as well as he could the last time the man checked, which makes the nurse laugh. They have a good relationship, he and the nurse at the assisted living facility where James moved a couple years before. James gets along with most people there except a couple of the long timers who lost their senses of humor somewhere between glucose checks and prostate exams. Life is life, and if you want to hold onto it, you do what the nurse wants. The way James sees things, the nurse has the worse end of the deal—literally.

He also has a few friends at the home. A couple, old geezers like himself, has kids here and there they don’t see much either. One or two, also like James, has a doting grandchild, and they agree to share those young ones when they come around, like a communal bowl of children to keep the sun coming up as long as they can.

In between, they play poker, betting on pudding cups, butterscotch candy, and contraband chewing gum (gets in the dentures).

It’s not the worst life, and at least he’s done managing restaurant deliveries.

19 Experience With Death and Dying

James took periodic good care of his health over the past several decades. He could’ve done better, but he certainly could’ve done worse. As he ages at the assisted living facility, he takes a little more time than some of the other residents, but eventually he develops type II diabetes. Some couple of years after that, he develops congestive heart failure, a condition he lives with for another year or two. James suffers a heart attack when he’s 69 years old. He dies at the assisted care facility, leaving his son, daughter-in-law, and grandson behind.

Case Discussion Questions

1. During James's infancy, Joss, who still hasn't found a job, stays at home with James, while Rosslyn goes back to work after her maternity leave. This relieves the financial burden of daycare from the family, but it also creates complications when James refuses to drink a bottle of breastmilk Rosslyn left for him. How does James's early childcare situation have the potential to impact him across any and all domains (biological, cognitive, and socioemotional) as he grows?
2. In middle childhood, James's parents are annoyed by his persistent doodling in the margins of his school papers, a behavior that seems to also annoy his teachers. Joss and Rosslyn tell James not to draw in his margins. Sometimes they even punish him for drawing when he shouldn't. How does this parental perspective potentially change James's outcomes across any and all domains (biological, cognitive, and socioemotional) as he grows specifically compared to the optimal case in which James is encouraged to draw whenever and wherever he wants?
3. In early adulthood, James hasn't made a decision about college or getting a job, and his father tells him he has to do one or the other. Looking back at James's childhood, what event(s) may have occurred that explain the difference across any and all domains (biological, cognitive, and socioemotional) between the optimal case in which James's parents and little sister take him to his dorm even though "he doesn't really need it" and he has a clear direction ahead of himself (architectural engineering) and this one?
4. Consider James's optimal case outcomes at the end of his life and Erikson's integrity-versus-despair stage of psychosocial development. How does this case compare to that one? Consider all of James's life events. How do you think those contributed to any differences in James's end-of-life outcomes and his sense of integrity versus despair?

4. Undesirable Outcomes: Riley Everett

2 Biological and Environmental Foundations

Prenatal examination and history taking uncover that Kari may have used meth for as many as nine weeks during her pregnancy before her arrest. This would've allowed for her drug use to affect her growing baby. During the 12th week of her pregnancy, decreased utero-placental blood flow and increased fetal blood pressure are detected. Kari's physical health is quite poor but stabilized by the prison doctors. Riley, named for Mason's beloved grandmother, whose maiden name was Riley, enters the world eight weeks early, small and highly reactive. She's removed from Kari's immediate care as soon as she can be and taken to the prison neonatal intensive care unit, where she's watched over by pediatric nursing specialists. She's not ill enough to remove from the prison but does require significant early care. It's difficult to know in the early days what may or may not be developmentally compromised in her due to Kari's drug use, but externally, she looks pretty good. Physically, she's missing the fifth finger on her left hand, but that appears to be her only deformity. The doctors tell Mason that much is a waiting game and give him some educational material on meth use during pregnancy as well as information on support groups local to his area. Mason takes her home two months after she's born once the doctors tell him she's able to be cared for outside the prison hospital.

3 Prenatal Development, Birth, and the Newborn Experience

Riley is a lovely baby. She isn't round and fat like so many babies Mason's seen. Okay, most of those are on television shows, so he probably doesn't know much about babies at all, but Riley's different. She's long and kind of skinny. The nurse practitioner he takes her to at the country health center says that might be genetic (Mason's sort of thin himself, and so is Kari, but she's a meth addict, so who knows about her?), or it might be a result of Kari's drug use. It might be a combination of both, and they may never know. It doesn't seem to be impacting her health; he's reassured. All of her is long, though, her neck, her legs, her arms, her toes, and her fingers.

"Musician's fingers," his mother tells him while she rocks Riley after dinner one night. "Mark my words."

Mason grunts at his mother. "You're just mad that I quit piano in fifth grade."

"You played so well."

"I played 'Mary Had a Little Lamb,' Mom. Let's not exaggerate."

She laughs. "Okay. So maybe you weren't Mozart." Riley burps, and his mother shifts her to her shoulder. "What a good girl. Give Granny another one like that." She looks at Mason. "You have to go back to work soon."

"I know." He sighs. "I don't want to. I don't think she's ready to be left with a stranger. She still gets so upset all the time. How do I tell a babysitter or whoever to keep the lights dim because Riley's sensitive to rooms that are too bright or to play music when she's cranky because that seems to soothe her?"

"Why would you want to?"

"I just said I didn't!"

His mother cradles Riley again. "Remember that party we had last month?"

"What? Your retirement party?"

She smiles. "One and the same. Look, your dad keeps the blinds closed all day 'cause of his glaucoma, and you can't just play any music for this girl. She has taste, Mason. Leave her with me. Save yourself the money and the worry. Riley and her Granny'll have a grand ol' time while Daddy's at work. Won't we, sweetheart?"

Relieved to know his daughter will be safe, loved, and understood, he admits that he's sure they will.

4 Physical Development in Infancy and Toddlerhood

Unlike Riley's mother Kari, Mason never used any drugs of any type. He never smoked. He did drink with fair regularity but not after he brings Riley home. He has to put any spare pennies he has toward her care, and even if he didn't, he figures she deserves a substance-free upbringing given how her little life started out. If someone offers him a beer at dinner, he accepts, but he doesn't buy it anymore, and he's completely done with the bar scene.

The clarity of winning custody of his baby and keeping her life as pure and innocent as it can be pays off. He tells himself it does anyway. The pediatrician keeps telling him how great his baby dragon's doing at every checkup. She's growing slowly but eating well, and she meets all the important milestones the doctor asks about even if some of them are slightly delayed. She sits up and crawls on time, walks, and runs, although maybe she walks a few weeks later than average. The pediatrician reminds him that "average" is a word for a reason. Riley doesn't like sleeping alone, and lots of nights Mason moves her cradle into his room, which the doctor says is fine as long as they're both getting enough rest.

Riley's remains sensitive to light and to overstimulation, but his mom notices her reaction to music early on. She's easily calmed by music as long as it's the right music. She likes classical, particularly sonatas for piano and violin. Those seem to be at just the right pitch to soothe her irritability.

By age two, she's caught up with her toddler peers in gross motor skills but lags a bit in fine motor skills. Socially, she is easily irritated and shy. Mason understands this may never change and arranges her world to be as soothing as it can be.

5 Cognitive Development in Infancy and Toddlerhood

Mason carefully watches Riley's development in the first year or so. He's worried that she isn't speaking much, although she does say *dada* near the end of her first year. The pediatrician assures him that this is a good sign and that she almost certainly knows more words than she says. Mason hopes so because that's pretty much all she says.

He's more heartened by her babbling than anything. The pediatrician tells him that counts as language, too, and when she finally starts speaking in two- and three-word combinations, he's delighted.

For Christmas the year Riley is two, Mason buys her a small electronic keyboard. She likes the music he and his mother play for her so much that he thinks maybe she'll like banging on the keys. Once she opens the box, he pops in the batteries he has waiting and turns it on for her. Pretty soon, she's pressing individual notes, happily lost on the floor among the wrapping paper and boxes. The electric keyboard becomes the one toy that follows Riley through all stages of her childhood development.

6 Socioemotional Development in Infancy and Toddlerhood

The time commitment between two jobs and a newborn gets to Mason some days, but he powers through it. Mom helps, of course, and he knows it will get better in time. As exhausted as he is most days of the week and most months of the year, he makes it work.

Mom's still looking after Riley, for which he's so glad. His beautiful girl gets so anxious it scares him sometimes. She's such an affectionate child with her family, openly loving and giving without any reservations, but she's openly anxious and scared around strangers. He hopes she'll become more comfortable with other people in the future. She'll have to go to preschool eventually, kindergarten, even high school one day. He makes a mental note to talk to the pediatrician about it at her next checkup.

7 Physical and Cognitive Development in Early Childhood

Mason and Riley try a month or two at preschool, but Riley is too easily upset by the lights, and the noises of the other children unbalance her easily overstimulated nervous system. She also is frequently frustrated by her difficulty working on writing, coloring, and other fine motor skills due to her missing finger. The pediatrician assures him that she will adjust in time, but the preschool teacher doesn't have the time with a class full of children to work with Riley one-on-one to help her.

Mason's mother returns to watching her, and life settles back into its normal routine, but Mason reaches out to the pediatrician. He's worried about what will happen when it's time for Riley to start Kindergarten. The pediatrician agrees and refers them to a sensory expert. On the day Mason makes the appointment with the sensory doctor, Dr. Gupta, he receives a certified letter in the mail; Kari Simmons, Riley's mother, is petitioning for visitation rights. As far as Mason is concerned, this is just about as bad as it could get for his little girl.

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| <p>8 Socioemotional Development in Early Childhood</p> | <p>After spending a lot of money he doesn't have, money he borrowed from his parents, Mason loses his battle in family court to keep Kari from seeing Riley. So far, he's kept Riley in the dark about the whole affair, but now he has to tell his daughter that the mother she's never known and who's responsible for all her struggles so far in her short life will become part of that life for the foreseeable future. The thought makes his chest tight. If there's any silver lining, the judge orders Kari to start paying Mason child support, including back support for the past four years. If she doesn't do so, she goes back to prison.</p> <p>To Mason's relief, Riley adjusts reasonably well to seeing Kari. The judge had ordered a graduated visitation scale, beginning with supervised visitation in a public location for three hours. Mason and a social worker would be present the entire time. After a few weeks, Kari would be able to take Riley for a couple of hours on her own, later, an overnight, and finally, a weekend. If the process goes smoothly, Kari can earn regular overnight visitation. Mason worries less over what Riley would do than how Kari would handle her limitations. Mostly, he worries that Kari will become frustrated over Riley's sensitivity to light and noise and her tendency to overstimulation. Over the first few months, she seems to do okay, and even he is forced to admit that having two parents improves Riley's reactivity. He also has to admit that the extra money definitely helps with Riley's needs, things like her new biweekly appointments at the sensory center.</p> |
| <p>9 Physical and Cognitive Development in Middle and Late Childhood</p> | <p>Riley, who isn't a <i>bad</i> student, is sometimes mistaken for one. She doesn't talk to many people, and she doesn't always do what she's told. She means to, every time, but it's hard sometimes. The lights in the classrooms are so bright, and everything around her is loud. She seems to be a magnet for bullies, too. Eventually, Riley figures out that the only way to get by is to push back. This gets her in trouble more than once, even though she tries to be good.</p> <p>Her teachers try to help her with her schoolwork, but often she doesn't understand the lessons. When this happens, the teachers send work home for Mom and Daddy to help with. Daddy spends a lot of time helping her with all her worksheets when she's with him. He and Mom have a lot of arguments about her homework because Mom doesn't help at all. She asks Riley if she's done her work, and after Riley figured out that Mom wasn't going to check, she just says, "Yes." Daddy tells her mom that she doesn't want to "face her responsibility for Riley's problems." Riley doesn't know what her problems are, but this makes her sad.</p> <p>She works hard at the beginning of elementary school, but by the end, she doesn't care that much. No matter what she does, she keeps moving on from grade to grade each year feeling more and more uncertain about what the teachers are teaching. If she worried about starting Kindergarten, she doesn't think much at all about middle school.</p> |
| <p>10 Socioemotional Development in Middle and Late Childhood</p> | <p>Riley has one or two friends now. They eat together at lunch and play together on the playground. Her best friend is Jasmine, and Jasmine is small and has short, black hair with bangs. She wears glasses and likes country music. Sometimes they get mad at each other. Jasmine gets mad easily, Riley thinks, but Jasmine thinks Riley is "prickly" and acts like a porcupine a lot—or maybe a turtle. That might be it. They have fights a lot, then make up, then have a fight again, and do the whole thing over and over.</p> |

Daddy tries to help. He's talked to Riley about how to be a good friend (maybe he should talk to Jasmine, she thinks), and she hears him when he talks to her teachers and the doctor. Mostly, they all say the same thing: Riley is sweet but shy, and she doesn't handle upset well. Daddy always looks either annoyed or like someone's telling a joke when they say that. Riley knows it's because he knows this about her already. She tries *so hard* to be good, but sometimes it's all too much.

She tries talking to Mom once about Jasmine, but that conversation leaves Riley's tummy feeling funny in a bad way.

"My friend Jasmine doesn't seem to like me sometimes," she tells Mom over a slightly burnt frozen pizza one night.

Mom looks at her and frowns. "Why not, sugar?"

"I don't know. We fight a lot."

"Do you try to be a good friend?"

"Yes." Riley thinks hard. "Well, mostly."

"Then, if this Jasmine doesn't want to play nice—"

Mom says some bad words after that, and Riley figures she'll save talking to Mom for things about boys.

11 Physical and Cognitive Development in Adolescence

Riley's progress through elementary school teaches her two things. First, she's never going to be an athlete. Second, she's never going to be a scholar.

Maybe she learns a third thing: if you're not an athlete or a scholar, then you're getting bullied. She learns to push back, which she thinks is a good thing, but the teachers do not. She gets tired of explaining herself to her dad. Fortunately, her mom gets it. "Don't be a bully, Riley, but don't let yourself get beat up either." Exactly—that's all she says. Why doesn't anyone get that?

Sometimes, after she goes to bed, she has trouble falling asleep. She tries counting sheep (dumb), humming (annoying), and lots of other things, but none of them works. Her mind races around like a little hamster in a cage. During the day, she's super tired, but she can't help it as much as she wants to. When she talks to her dad, he says they'll tell the doctor at her checkup, which scares Riley a little. So, she talks to her mom, who tells her taking medicine isn't all that bad. She tells Riley that sometimes she takes medicine, too, to help her relax, and would Riley like to try that? Riley says no, thank you, but in her head, she wonders if her mom's medicine is better than the doctor's. She also wonders if this is one of those things she shouldn't tell her dad about her mom, like the time she spent the weekend at her mom's apartment and woke up on Saturday to two men at the kitchen table drinking beer and pinching her mom in funny places while they laughed.

Her dad does take her for a checkup just before sixth grade starts, and her doctor tells Dad that she's a little pale and a little thin. After a few questions Riley answers as well as she can, the doctor tells her dad that Riley can have meds for her anxiety and that it might be a good idea. Riley doesn't want to take drugs right now. She thinks about the medicine her mom offered her and doesn't know what to do. Shrugging, she says, "Okay," to the doctor, feeling like this is maybe the better option. She does want to sleep better.

She thinks about asking the doctor about her period—or lack of one. She's been concerned because girls she knows have started theirs, and she hasn't, but when she asked her mom, Mom said it wasn't a big deal, and it would happen when it was supposed to happen. Then she narrowed her eyes and asked Riley if she'd had sex with a boy. Riley doesn't talk to anyone, boys or girls, so she got really mad at that question. Now she worries the doctor will ask her the same thing, so she keeps quiet. She leaves the doctor with a tetanus booster and her last HPV vaccine. She's still not sure about that one, but she's not sure about a lot of the shots she gets at the doctor's.

After the doctor, her dad takes her to the pharmacy to get her prescription filled—Lexapro. Great, Riley thinks to herself, whatever.

Once that's out of the way, he takes her to Mom's. Riley's supposed to be spending the night there, but she isn't in the mood.

"Can I just stay for dinner?" she asks Dad.

"Ah . . . I'm not sure, Riley. Why?"

She thinks maybe he has plans and doesn't want her to come home. "Never mind," she says. "It's no big deal."

"Riley, I don't mind asking your mom if you can come home, but I have to have a reason to tell her."

Turning her head away from him, she says, "I just want to sleep in my own bed tonight. I think the shots made me feel bad."

"That I can probably sell. Come on. Let's get to the door and see what we can agree to, eh?"

Feeling better, wanted at least, Riley nods and follows him up the porch steps to her weird mom.

12 Socioemotional Development in Adolescence

Riley is dimly aware that she's supposed to be involved socially as she moves through middle school and high school. Other students go to weekend parties and football games. They do sleepovers and rafting trips.

She does none of this. Even though she wants to sometimes—usually after a weekend with Mom, when she's sure her mom puts something in her hot chocolate "just to loosen you up a little"—but only sometimes. Most often, she wants to be invisible. If she's invisible, no one notices her. If no one notices her, no one makes fun of her. Every day is an exercise in being a shadow everyone walks past without thinking about it.

13 Physical and Cognitive Development in Emerging/Early Adulthood

Riley hears her dad park his truck behind the house. Any second, he'll walk into the kitchen and call out for her. It's the same every day and has been as long as she can remember. There might not be any other constant in her life, she thinks.

"Hello, the house!" he hollers.

"Hey, Dad!" she calls back from her usual perch in the living room. She likes the corner of the sofa that faces the fireplace. She feels safe there somehow. "Tough day?" she asks as he comes in the room.

"Not really. Same ol' same ol.' You?"

"Not really." Not until now, she thinks as she dreads telling him what she's been putting off for a while. "Can we talk?"

"Of course. Is something bothering you?"

"No." She laughs a little. "But something might be bothering you when we're done."

"I don't understand."

"Dad, I've decided not to go to college right now. Actually, I've been thinking that I might not go at all. College isn't for everyone," she points out, giving him a look to remind him that he never went either.

"No, that's very true, but what's brought all this on?"

"Come on, Dad. You know I've struggled all through school. It's not that I'm stupid, but there are so many obstacles to my doing well, and I'm just not a person who works very well to overcome them."

"You're lazy," he says.

Stung, Riley shrugs. "Maybe. I'm still not going to college right now."

"And maybe not ever."

"And maybe not ever," she confirms. "I'm truly sorry if that disappoints you."

"So what do you plan to do?"

"I've already done it," Riley tells him with a small amount of pride. "I've got a full-time job as an administrative assistant in a dentist's office. I'll be answering phones, filing, stuff like that. Benefits and everything."

"That's a lot more than I had at your age." Dad looks at her, lost between a frown and confusion. "Okay, but if you're living here then you'll be paying your own way."

Riley gets up from the sofa and walks to his chair. She pats his shoulder, which is as close as she comes to casual physical intimacy. "Thanks, Dad. I wouldn't have it any other way."

14 **Socioemotional Development in Emerging/Early Adulthood**

Riley, who has been working for the local dentist since she was 18 years old, is now 25 and has been promoted twice. As the dentist's office manager, she is responsible for three employees, including the new administrative assistant, billing clerk, and receptionist. To her surprise, and secretly everyone else's, she's good in the role.

In her 10th year with the office, she's performing well, dating a radiology technician named Justin in the physician's office next door, and responsible for onboarding new employees. She trains the incoming dental hygienist, a newly graduated young man who was a former high school football star, flirts with her. She gently rebuffs him, but he persists. Working late one night, she encounters the dental hygienist as she's locking up, and he corners her in the otherwise empty office. Scared, but still in control, Riley points to the security camera in the ceiling of the room and asks him if he wants an audience to his harassment. He lets her go but threatens her with violence if she tells anyone.

Riley telephones the dentist on the way to the police station, and he meets her there. She also telephones her father. The dental hygienist is arrested (and fired) and charged with attempted rape as well as two lesser offenses. Ultimately, he accepts a plea arrangement with the prosecution's office and is sent to prison.

During the judicial process, an assistant in the prosecutor's office begins to take obvious notice of Riley, who pretends not to notice him back. She's been alone and a loner most of her life and isn't sure she ever wants to change that. Once the case is adjudicated, however, Mark asks her out, and they begin dating.

15	Physical and Cognitive Development in Middle Adulthood	<p>Riley and Justin Battle date for five or six years before she finally agrees to marry him. She's not entirely certain when she says yes that she should say yes, but she's tired of saying no and seeing the look on his face when she does.</p> <p>As they begin the process of planning a meticulous wedding around their two jobs, her mother's constant and ill-advised meddling, and Riley's Granny's failing health, Riley can't help feeling run down. After a few weeks, she wonders if she might be pregnant—please, God, no—and quietly and secretly buys a home pregnancy test—negative. Feeling relieved, she throws it away without worrying whether or not Justin sees it now that she knows the answer. However, she still doesn't understand the fatigue or the sudden headaches.</p> <p>She mentions the headaches to her boss, the dentist, one morning, who makes an appointment for her with a friend of his for that afternoon.</p> <p>"Just to be thorough," the dentist says.</p> <p>"Okay. Thanks," Riley tells him before heading away from the office for the scheduled MRI.</p> <p>In the parking lot, she gathers her keys, purse, sunglasses, and patience before opening the car door. The sun is so bright, and she's reminded of childhood and never being able to tolerate bright lights. This is like that times 500. Walking quickly, she heads to the office door, sensing the sun move behind clouds just before she gets there, but then everything goes black just before she loses her balance.</p> <p>Riley falls and loses consciousness due to a large aneurysm in her brain that suddenly bursts. She dies instantly at age 36.</p>
16	Socioemotional Development in Middle Adulthood	N/A
17	Physical and Cognitive Development in Late Adulthood	N/A
18	Socioemotional Development in Late Adulthood	N/A
19	Experience With Death and Dying	N/A

Case Discussion Questions

1. In early childhood, Riley, who is spending her preschool year with her father Mason's mother due to sensory integration problems, faces the additional challenge of a court petition by her mother, who wants to be able to visit Riley. Given what you know in this case about Riley's developmental hurdles, her relationship with Mason and her grandparents, and the future ahead of her, how do you think the

introduction of Kari into her life will alter her life's trajectory across any and all domains (biological, cognitive, and socioemotional)? Why?

2. In early adulthood, Riley faces college decisions. Mason has struggled with bills as long as she's been alive and has done everything for her. She chooses to postpone college and get a full-time job as an administrative assistant. Compare this to Riley's optimal case, where she goes away to college to study music. Clearly, her outcomes are altered. What specific events in Riley's past led to the divergence in these decisions? How so?
3. In middle adulthood, Riley agrees to marry the man she's been dating. During wedding planning, she suffers a ruptured aneurysm and passes away at the age of 36, compared to her optimal outcome, where she lives another three and a half decades. What factors in this case led to Riley's outcome in middle adulthood? Why?
4. Consider Riley's optimal case outcomes at the end of her life and Erikson's integrity-versus-despair stage of psychosocial development. How does this case compare to that one? Consider all of Riley's life events. How do you think those contributed to any differences in Riley's end-of-life outcomes and her sense of integrity versus despair?

5. Undesirable Outcomes: Leonardo Ramirez

2 Biological and Environmental Foundations

After speaking to a couple women at her church who comment on the rash, Alicia decides to keep working and watch the rash. Hopefully it will go away, and she won't miss work for nothing. If it doesn't go away, she can always go to the clinic later.

Hector watches Alicia as works in the orchard. He's never had a baby before, and he doesn't know how to judge everything that's happening. He loves living in America, but his English is poor. Alicia learned English in high school and gets by in the community much better than he does. He has to trust that her growing belly and early evening fatigue are normal. She tells him they are. He's worried about the one thing he has zero control over and all the blame for. His *abuela*, his father's mother, would fall into the darkest valleys of despair when Hector was a boy. He remembers how he felt visiting, her still, silent body with its bony shoulders sitting on a hard chair. His mama told him such things could be passed in the blood, and he worries he will have passed the darkness on to his own child, even if he himself doesn't have those moments. He wants the baby to be born so he has more control over how his child is protected. Until then, he thinks with a smile, he'll watch Alicia and her growing belly with pride and excited anticipation.

3 Prenatal Development, Birth, and the Newborn Experience

Alicia calls the nurse midwife who will deliver Leonardo twice with Braxton-Hicks contractions believing she's in labor. The midwife examines her and sends her home with assurances that many first-time mothers make the mistake of confusing Braxton-Hicks for labor. The third time, there's no confusion. The pain brings Alicia to her knees, and Hector helps her to the car before rushing her to the hospital.

After 15 long, loud, sweating hours of labor, Alicia pushes Leonardo into the world. His fat, round face is squished and squinting in the lights of the room, but he lets out a lusty cry that makes Alicia reach for him. Moments later, he's cradled at her breast, nursing happily while Hector looks on smiling at them both. The hospital sends an interpreter into the room to translate as Leonardo is weighed, measured, poked, and prodded. The Ramirezes are told he looks great, and as long as he and Alicia are doing well, they can go home the following day.

"Do you feel better now?" Alicia asks him later when the three of them are alone.

"What do you mean? How better?"

"Now that the baby is born and you see he's healthy?" she says, reminding him of his concerns.

"Oh, yes, that. I guess. I just worry about all the other things that might happen."

Alicia laughs. "Ah, Hector, don't. We live in the land of opportunity where anything is possible if you dream it and work hard, and our son is an American citizen. Relax and be happy."

He looks at both of them and nods. "You're right. You're right, Alicia." He knows she is, too, but he still worries, a worry that's well founded. Before releasing mom and baby, Hector and Alicia are informed that Leonardo has partial hearing loss in one ear. Alicia knows this may be because of the rash she had early in her pregnancy, but she can't turn back the clock now.

They ask if the hearing loss will get better or worse, and the doctor says both are unlikely. Because it's only affecting one ear and isn't full loss in that ear, they'll get some resources for Leonardo, but they should expect him to do well as he grows.

4 Physical Development in Infancy and Toddlerhood

Alicia isn't able to take a proper maternity leave from work. She misses a few days, and when her postpartum lochia slows, she returns to the farm with baby Leonardo tucked securely against her in a cotton sling tied to her back. In this way, she can nurse him when he's hungry, pause when it's necessary to change him, and continue to work her normal hours. The farm owner who pays them isn't around often, but she doesn't worry about him often anyway. Other women have brought newborns with them from time to time, and she and Hector aren't quite able yet to pay the woman in their neighborhood who watches most of the babies. Alicia thinks that maybe when Leonardo wants to be crawling and becomes more difficult to keep off the ground while she works, then it will be time to find another arrangement. She already misses more work than she's comfortable with. Leo's doctor appointments, her own clinic appointments . . . it's all during work hours. She worries.

The baby's transition occurs sooner than either she or Hector is ready for. Leo, who is a big boy with strong, sturdy legs and a sure gait from the moment he starts walking at ten months, loves being beside both of them during the daytime, but it's quickly evident that he won't tolerate being confined to the sling any longer.

"Down!" he yowls, kicking against Alicia's sides. When she doesn't respond appropriately, he tries a different tactic. "¡Aba'ol!" He can't quite say *abajo* yet, but he's gotten his point across before. Still, no response other than a laugh from *Mamá*. He continues the assaultive demonstrations until his foot lands a solid kick to her kidney.

Alicia pulls the pay-as-you-go cell phone from her pocket and calls her cousin Luci, who works at a local discount store. Luci has papers, which is why she has a job with a regular paycheck. Alicia can only dream of such luxuries. But today is Tuesday, Luci's day off. *Gracias del Señor*.

"Heylo," Luci says when she answers. This makes Alicia smile, her cousin's heavily accented English.

"Hola, Luci. ¿Puedes venir por Leo por favor? No le gusta la honda hoy."

"Sí, por supuesto. Necesito diez minutos."

"Claro. Gracias, Luci."

Alicia shoves the phone in her pocket before someone sees her talking and begins to sing to Leonardo. Sometimes this calms him—sometimes not. Today seems like a rowdy day. With Luci on the way to get Leonardo, though, things would ease. Her cousin would be there in ten minutes. She could endure anything for ten minutes, even the increasing ferocity of Leonardo's kicks into her hips and sides.

"Easy, baby," she soothes, but he wants to be down on the ground exploring. She can't blame him. If she were newly crawling and cruising and had the world—literally—at her feet, that's where she would want to be, too. A friend of her cousin's got work as a housekeeper in the rich neighborhood next to their own poor one. The friend is undocumented, too, but she says the lady she works for is nice. Luci's friend, Jasmin, doesn't get any more money than Alicia does, but she's allowed to take her daughter to work with her as long as nothing is broken. Alicia dreams about a job like that, one where she can help feed her family but where she doesn't have to worry about childcare or carrying a growing and heavy Leonardo on her back for the next four years until he starts school. She makes a reminder in her head to ask Luci about Jasmin's job and if there might be another one like it.

On her back, Leonardo is drooling onto her neck. She hears him babbling, but his lilting voice begins picking up speed and excitement while she works down the row of corn she's planting. "Loo-loo! Loo-loo!" he calls, and Alicia looks up. Luci is walking toward them. Alicia breathes out in relief even while Leonardo's kicking revs up into marathons of excitement. "Loo! Loo-loo!"

Arriving at Alicia's side, Luci laughs at Leonardo. "Leo! You're so adorable. Why does *Mamá* say you're bad, eh?"

"Not bad," Alicia corrects her, "just impossible to keep on my back."

"*Veo*," Luci agrees. *I see*. "*Vaya* then, monster, come with me." She holds out her hands and wiggles her fingers, and Leonardo *hees* with excitement and comes close to jumping out of the sling altogether. Alicia quickly unknots the fabric and sets him on the ground.

"Thank you," she says. "He needs to be down, but I can't really do that here."

"I know." Bending, Luci scoops Leonardo into her arms. "Is your car unlocked? I need the car seat."

"*Sí*. You know where we park, ¿*nó*?"

"*Sí*." She waves Leonard's hand. "Tell *Mamá* '*adios*,' Leo."

"*I-o*," he singsongs, making Alicia smile. She reaches to kiss his cheek before making shooing motions with her hands. "Now, go before I get into trouble!"

Except, today *el jefe* is watching from his truck on the farm pathway. Alicia doesn't know this while she's talking to Luci, and even though Luci was there and gone quickly, the transfer had been noticed. She'd known that some of her absences were noticed, too. That afternoon, the boss gives her the money she earned for the day. He also tells her she can't come back; he needs more reliable workers.

5 Cognitive Development in Infancy and Toddlerhood

Because Leonardo is around English and Spanish speakers all day every day, Spanish at home and in their neighborhood and English at his mom's new housekeeping job, he hears both languages consistently. It makes Hector laugh when Leonardo's first word is *mamá*, and he asks Alicia says in Spanish, "What language do you think he's speaking in?" Alicia has no idea, but Hector loves his little boy's voice in whichever tongue he'll consider native. Sometime between 14 and 15 months, Hector notices that it isn't either-or with their son. There are words he uses that are clearly English and others that are just as clearly Spanish.

Leonardo's bilingual abilities astonish his parents. Neither knew it was possible to be born and grow up knowing two languages. As Leonardo continues to learn new words in English and Spanish, Alicia and Hector have many long conversations about what's best for him. They live in America, and English is the most-used language of the country. It's the language used most often internationally, Alicia says when she argues they should force Leonardo into speaking only English. They're also concerned that learning to speak will already be challenging for Leonardo because of his partial hearing loss.

Hector argues that learning both languages doesn't seem to hurt their son's language development. Plus, he lays between them softly, if they force Leonardo to speak only English, how will Hector be able to communicate meaningfully with his son? Alicia, who doesn't speak fluent English, speaks enough to at least have a relationship with Leonardo no matter what they decide. Hector does not. When Alicia tries to explain how important it will be for Leonardo to fit in with his friends at school and elsewhere, Hector asks her, "Did you love your father?"

"Of course," she says, angry at the question.

"How close do you think your relationship would've been if you couldn't speak to him and have him understand you or the other way around?"

"Hector—"

"No! No 'Hector,'" he says flatly. "I should be able to talk to my son."

6 Socioemotional Development in Infancy and Toddlerhood

Like many toddlers in their small community, Leonardo's world expands by degrees until most families in the streets where they live consider him theirs. Everyone helps raise everyone else's kids, and this is a world where old prejudices die in the face of new and necessary alliances. Hector and Alicia's families are from Guadalajara in Jalisco, Mexico, but they live beside Juan and Lili from *Juayúa*, El Salvador. In another lifetime, neither family would've associated with the other, but now they're friends; they're family in this new world. So it is in the whole neighborhood where *Mexicano* and *Salvadoreño*, *Columbino* and *Boliviano*, where all their blended nationalities become Latino. This is in part necessity and in part because *los Americanos* call them so. Hector isn't sure he cares so long as they all trust each other and look after one another. Leonardo doesn't care either.

His favorite house after his own is Loo-loo's, *Mamá's* cousin Luci's. Luci doesn't have any children for him to play with, but she always has churros. Leonardo loves churros, and *Mamá* doesn't feed him many. His next favorite house is *Tía* Consuela's. She's very, very old, and lots of people call her Granny. *Mamá* calls her *Tía*, though, and so does Leonardo. She doesn't walk, and her hair is white, like snow, and all the other children in the neighborhood are there lots because their *mamás* y *papás* come to take care of her. When Leonardo is at *Tía* Consuela's with his *mamá* or *papá*, he always has someone to play with, and someone has always brought *pupusas* or tamales, which are his favorite things to eat after churros. Sometimes he even gets to go back to his friends' houses because their *mamás* y *papas* say to his that he is *un ángel*.

Tía Consuela's is probably the best place to go other than home or Loo-loo's, but he wouldn't want to spend the night. He likes to sleep in his own bed after his own *mamá* sings him songs from her own home when she was little. He doesn't always understand—or even hear well—the words, but he can feel the rhythm in his body. In that way, it becomes part of his bones. When she turns out the light, he sticks his thumb in his mouth, closes his eyes, and wonders if he'll ever get to see Mexico for himself. It sounds beautiful.

7 Physical and Cognitive Development in Early Childhood

"*No tiene sentido para mí,*" Hector says, shaking his head.

Alicia looks at Leonardo's preschool teacher. He attends a program called Headstart, and the teacher is nice. "My husband says what you say, it makes no sense to him. I'm sorry. He doesn't mean—"

"No, no," Mrs. Clifton says, waving her hand. "Please don't apologize. You're advocating for your child, you and your husband both, and this is great for Leonardo. Let me try explaining a different way."

"Thank you," Alicia tells her.

"The important thing to know is that Leonardo will do better in school—now and when he starts elementary school—if you and your husband continue to speak to him in Spanish at home. You can speak in English, too. That's okay. But research tells us that children who continue to learn their families' native languages do better at learning English than children who are forced to learn only English."

"Ah." Alicia turns to Hector around her growing belly and quickly translates. The smile that lights his face changes the atmosphere in the room. He gives Alicia an I-told-you-so look, and she scowls at him but with love. "Okay."

"Okay?" Mrs. Clifton asks. "Good. Leonardo's English is very good. So is his Spanish. He's a very smart boy, and he's a sweet boy, too. He's looking forward to being a big brother."

Alicia puts a hand on her belly. "I hope so. He has to share his room, so I hope he loves the baby."

"No doubt he will." Mrs. Clifton closes Leonardo's folder and stands up. "Really, all I have to say right now is to keep doing what you're doing."

After they leave the conference, Alicia walks to their third-hand car in silence.

"*Que pasa?*" Hector asks, even though he knows what's wrong. Alicia's upset that the teacher said Leonardo should keep speaking Spanish.

"*Nada. Esta bien,*" she says. *Nothing. It's okay.*

"Alicia, are you *angry?*" he asks in Spanish. "The teacher wants what's best for Leonardo, and so do you. I know you do. Why do you want him to speak only English so much?"

"Because I want him to be American!" she yells.

Hector is confused. "Leo can't be American and speak Spanish, too?"

"*Tu no entiendes,*" she condemns before getting into the car. *You don't understand.*

Well, that's true enough, he thinks, and this is far from over.

- 8 Socioemotional Development in Early Childhood** When Leonardo transitions from preschool to elementary school, he tries hard to make friends. He spends most of his time on the playground with a couple of boys from his neighborhood, Latino boys like himself, and an Asian boy no one likes much. Most of the time they're all trying to not get bullied, and there seems to be some safety in hanging out together. Maybe they'll be friends if they make it to third grade.
- In his neighborhood, Leonardo watches some of the older boys. There seem to be two types: mean boys and boys who grow up to be like their fathers. Leonardo will be one of the latter. He doesn't want to be a mean boy and doesn't know why the fathers let the mean boys stay in the neighborhood where they make fights and break things, and their *mamás* cry. *Papá* says it's because *Cuidamos a los que son nuestros. We take care of our own*, he says, but Leonardo isn't sure what that means other than the mean boys get to live near him and keep being mean. He'll never be a mean boy, he promises his *mamá*.
- 9 Physical and Cognitive Development in Middle and Late Childhood** Leonardo's years in elementary school are a blur of red haze from bullying, trying to escape bullying, and anxiety as he anticipates the next painful event. He does well enough in his classes to cause his parents no worries even if he doesn't win any major achievement awards. Sometimes, when the parents of one of his neighborhood friends has to come to school for a meeting, he acts like an interpreter for them. Most of his friends don't speak Spanish or at least don't speak it fluently anymore. Their parents think it's better if they speak only English. Only Leonardo's parents and a few others in the neighborhood speak both Spanish and English at home. So, he helps teachers and parents communicate when he can, which helps his friends (usually, unless they've done something bad, which is almost never). He likes doing this even when his friends get into trouble. He doesn't want any of them becoming like the rough kids in their neighborhood, and he likes that his *mamá* can talk to the school teachers without needing help. If he can help his friends and their parents, he wants to do that.
- 10 Socioemotional Development in Middle and Late Childhood** "Lo siento, m'hijo."
- Leonardo shrugs off his father's apology. "*Está bien.*" *It's okay.*
- Papá* caught him looking at a set of Legos® while they shopped at the big discount store. They're buying things *Mamá* needs to help with *Señora* Valerio's daughter's *Quinceañera*. *Masa*, ingredients for *horchata*, *chiles anchos*, and several large chickens. Fortunately, these are dead. *Papá* tells him stories about killing chickens in the dooryard when he was growing up as a boy. The thought makes Leonardo shudder.
- Papá* doesn't drop the subject. "I know you don't get so many things as your friends get sometimes," he says in Spanish.
- "It's not a big deal, *Papá*. I have what I need."
- Leonardo decides this isn't the time to bring up working around the neighborhood in the summer. He's thinking about mowing lawns or walking dogs. He'll even walk the old people around the block so they get sun and exercise. They can talk about it later, though. *Papá* worries so much whether or not Leonardo frets about money. He doesn't want *Papá* to feel bad because he talks about working in the summer. It's hard to explain. Sometimes it's hard to understand even when he thinks about it. It would be nice to make a little money of his own, but he doesn't *need* anything, just like he told *Papá*. Their family is happy, and he likes being at home with them. His *mamá* smiles and sings while she fixes dinner, and *Papá* dances with her around the kitchen, making her splash salsa on the walls. He has friends whose parents barely talk and who barely talk to their parents. Leonardo figures he might be poor, but he likes that better than he would a rich, silent house.

That doesn't mean he doesn't want stuff. He does—a Coke or a candy bar, not big things. A couple times he's been at the store with *Mamá* and Ínigo and thought about pocketing a Hershey bar. He thinks no one's going to notice, and he wouldn't make a habit of it. He hasn't stolen anything yet, but he makes secret plans in his head. Maybe one day he will—something small.

11 Physical and Cognitive Development in Adolescence

By middle school, Leo finds himself navigating the complex subculture of the *barrio* while trying to keep his head above water in his mostly white but fairly poor school. The kids in the neighborhood he used to think of as mean boys have all grown up and moved away, but more grew into their shoes. There always seems to be a supply of children from his world who don't make it through school, who get pregnant or get arrested, or who get kicked out of their houses and turn to the streets. Leo watches them with a wary, dawning comprehension. The line between success and defeat in their world is the bleeding edge of a razor. Even if he cuts himself, he wants to end up on the right side of it. Some things he does without thinking. He hangs out with the neighborhood girls his age—everyone does, he tells himself—after school. What else is he going to do? He starts spending some time with the rough kids, too. Not much, but he wants to know how to tell which are the bad kids and which are killing time. Leo isn't a bad kid, not one of the mean boys. He's part of the fabric of his neighborhood. As he gets a little older, he spends more time with the kids on the street. They like him, and they don't shove him around like all the kids at school. There's something to be said for that. They also don't care if he lifts a candy bar now and again. Maybe he judged a little too harshly when he was a little boy, he thinks.

12 Socioemotional Development in Adolescence

In his freshman year of high school, Leo gets his first serious girlfriend. Maria lives two doors down from him, and her parents immigrated three or four years before his did. Their mothers are close friends, which both helps and hinders their budding romance. They're happy to see their children dating, but they also speak frequently enough to keep tabs on Leo and Maria's whereabouts *all the time*.

Leo thinks it's probably easier to be a street thug.

Maria's brother hangs out with a gang; Leo knows because he sees Carlos with some of the other big guys a lot. He hasn't told Maria yet, but he feels wrong keeping it from her. Eventually, it all comes tumbling out.

"You what?" she asks.

"I've seen Carlos on the street a lot," he tells her again.

She shakes her head. "It's not true. You saw someone else."

"Maria, we've both lived on this same street our whole lives. I think I know who Carlos is!"

"When did you see him? I mean, how do you see him so much?"

The moment of truth. "Maria . . ."

"Are you being for real, Leonardo? You, too? I thought you were different."

He nods. "We all want to be, don't we? I'm sorry, Maria."

"Yeah, me, too."

13 Physical and Cognitive Development in Emerging/Early Adulthood

When Leo and Maria graduate from high school, their paths diverge. Maria gets married to a guy a couple years older than they are when she finds out she's pregnant, and Leo gets a job restocking shelves at a discount home improvement store. The money's pretty good. With it, he's able to help out his family with their expenses so that *Papá*, who's aging quickly from the years on the farm, can work somewhat fewer hours. He also gets to keep an eye on *Ínigo*. His little brother is smarter than Leo ever was in school, and Leo wants him to go to college in a few years. *Ínigo*, on the other hand, likes to run with a fast crowd in *el barrio*. This troubles Leo. He wants to stay close to home for a while, see if he can keep *Ínigo* on the right path, and take care of his parents a little, too. Leo knows there's some hypocrisy in his efforts because he's more deeply embedded every day with the crowds *Ínigo* prefers. Do as I say and not as I do or something like that. He expects better of his little brother, and if being on the streets keeps *Ínigo* off them, well, that's okay. He's taking care of his folks, and he's watching out for his kid brother. He doesn't see the first thing wrong in either of those things.

14 Socioemotional Development in Emerging/Early Adulthood

Since he and Maria broke up, Leo's spent time with a number of girls. Days exist when he doesn't want to count the number of girls. He hopes no one ever asks. He hasn't slept with all of them, not that there'd be anything wrong with that. He's thought a lot of things were love that ended up being something well short of it. Well, maybe a couple times were better than others, he thinks, as he looks at Regina Parredes. Regina lives in the same neighborhood he does, always has, and she's climbing out of her car in the evening while he hangs out on the curb. He likes watching her walk to her front door. Her mother and his like to say they're crib buddies, but that makes Leo a little uncomfortable. Regina makes Leo a little uncomfortable whenever he sees her since they broke up a few months ago.

She turns halfway up her drive and waves him over. Without thinking, he crosses the street and walks up her drive.

"Hey," she says.

"Hey."

"Are you going to Luci's anniversary party?" she asks, referring to *Mamá's* cousin's party to celebrate her tenth wedding anniversary. She's married a *gringo* no one liked at first but now everyone believes is Mexican adopted out at birth. Ricky's a good guy. "I'm making *Mamá's* *tamales*."

Señora Parredes's *tamales* are known throughout *el barrio* as probably the best in North America outside of Mexico. Leo stuffs himself on them whenever he gets a chance. The chance to see Regina and eat the Parredes's *tamales* is a temptation too great for any man short of a saint.

"Then I'll be there."

"Leonardo?" she asks as they near his beat-up, old Chevy.

"Hmm?"

"Tell me why you're hanging out on the street with these losers instead of going to school and getting a degree in something. You know you're better than those guys."

He smiles at her. "Tell me why you're so beautiful."

She shakes her head and half turns from him. "Charmer, but that's not an answer."

"I guess it's not. You know how it is, Regina."

"I know it doesn't have to be."

He looks at her in earnest. "Why did we break up?"

"Probably because you're hanging out with those losers."

"Point taken. If I promise to reform, can I take you to the party? You'll need help carrying the *tamales*."

"If this is a date, yes," she teases.

"It is."

As she finishes turning, she yells over her shoulder, "Wear a tie!"

15 Physical and Cognitive Development in Middle Adulthood

Leo, having kept a close eye on Ínigo as his little brother grew up, is the loudest to cheer him across the stage when he graduates from college. The whole family's there, *Mamá y Papá*, Luci and her husband Ricky, and Regina—Gina—to whom Leo is now engaged. After a celebratory dinner Leo's parents pay for, something he knows is a matter of pride for *Papá*, they disburse to various locations. Leo takes Gina on a walk around a nearby park before they make the long drive home. While they stroll away their dinner, Gina takes his hand. He squeezes hers, and when she clears her throat, he turns to look at her in curiosity.

"Yes?" he asks.

"Did you have your hearing checked like we talked about?"

He nods. "I did."

"And?" she prompts when he doesn't say anymore.

"And it's not good news. I've lost 85 percent of the hearing in my bad ear. No change in the other, which is good. He gives me another five years max until I'm completely deaf in the one."

"Do you think maybe it's time to move out of that apartment?"

Startled by the nonsequitur, he looks at her. "What? Why?"

"Because you've got six roommates, and you're all middle-aged listening to music too loud and screaming and hollering at soccer games on the television three times a week. Leo, living there isn't helping your hearing at all."

"Maybe not," he tells her, "but I don't want to live alone, and you won't live with me. I think I'll stay put for a while longer."

16 Socioemotional Development in Middle Adulthood

As Leo watches all his old girlfriends get married, start families, and send children off to college, he realizes there are choices he made—for good reasons he reminds himself—that lead to real loneliness. As his hearing continues to worsen, so does his isolation. His and Ínigo's father's passes away, and this brings Leo back into the land of the living for the time it takes to support Alicia through making the arrangements and attending the funeral. He tries to be a good son, but that always meant making sure Ínigo could have the best life possible. Leo never realized he would end up with no life at all. But didn't he? Didn't he choose to run with the wild kids to keep Ínigo from doing that himself? He made choices, and they left him mostly deaf and alone.

Mourning his father, he convinces Alicia to move into a smaller house with him so he can take care of her, and he looks for a more stable job than the freelance electrical work he's been doing. He can't become a new person at his age, but he can do better. He's going to try.

17 Physical and Cognitive Development in Late Adulthood

Leo knows not all things remain the same for all time. The world doesn't work that way. Despite this, he doesn't expect to wake up one morning when he's 65 and find out he's mostly deaf. The knowledge saddens him even though he's known most of his life he would reach this point.

Mamá is ancient by this time, and he moves closer to her so he can check in every day. Both of them miss his dad so much that they make a jolly pair. Leo doesn't mind. He figures this is what life is, and he hasn't had a bad one. He's also made sure his brother can have a better one.

18 Socioemotional Development in Late Adulthood

"Leonardo?" Ínigo asks one afternoon while they watch a race together in Leo's living room.

"Hmm?" He's tired, barely keeping his eyes open.

"Have you ever felt like you were in between two worlds, America and Mexico? Like you were supposed to be one or the other or both, but you were never quite either?"

Leo nodded. "Every day of my life, I think. I'm sorry if you did."

"*Está bien.*" Ínigo sighs. "I owe everything I have to you. Don't let me complain more than 15 seconds in any one week period."

"You're my brother. You can tell me anything."

19 Experience With Death and Dying

Leo and Ínigo have dinner once each week, and they rotate which house they eat at. It's a nice system and makes sure that neither of them will be dead more than six days without someone noticing since Ínigo's wife passed away several years before.

On the Saturday evening before Ínigo's due for Sunday brunch, Leo feels awful. He's hot and sweaty, and he feels like he can hear his blood *swooshing* through his veins whenever he sits still. Hour by hour he decides not to go to the hospital but reserves the ability to call 9–1–1. By the time he's ready to call, he can't lift his arms. Leo dies alone on his sofa, his head turned toward the telephone he can't reach. He's 69 years old.

Case Discussion Questions

1. During her pregnancy with Leonardo, his mother Alicia chooses not to visit a women's clinic and have a doctor look at a rash she's developed, which happens to be Rubella (i.e., German Measles). Instead, she opts to continue working at the farm so she doesn't risk losing her job. Contrast this decision with Leonardo's optimal case and moderate case outcomes in which Alicia does see a doctor. What might be the biggest impact of Alicia's choice in this case on Leonardo's life's trajectory across any and all domains (biological, cognitive, and socioemotional)?
2. In middle childhood, Leonardo makes a plan to steal a small item from a store. He hasn't stolen anything yet, but he actively considers the theft and wants to do so soon. He isn't angry at his parents for having little, but he wants to take some action of his own to have more. Consider Leonardo's optimal case outcome in which his father Hector discusses with him that Hector knows Leonardo does without

many things other children have and Leonardo assures him he doesn't care (and really doesn't). How can Leonardo's action in this case, based on jealousy of other children, be expected to alter his life's trajectory across any and all domains (biological, cognitive, and socioemotional) compared to his optimal outcomes?

3. In early adulthood, Leonardo spends increasing amounts of time with the rough young men of *el barrio* principally in an effort to keep Ínigo from doing so. He wants to protect his brother's future and is willing to give up his own to do so. Contrast this case with Leonardo's optimal case outcome in which Leonardo also takes action to protect Ínigo from running with the neighborhood gang. What life circumstances in Leonardo's past set up the divergent behaviors he chooses to protect his brother? You may draw from any developmental domain (biological, cognitive, or socioemotional).
4. Consider Leonardo's optimal case outcomes at the end of his life and Erikson's integrity-versus-despair stage of psychosocial development. How does this case compare to that one? Consider all of Leonardo's life events. How do you think those contributed to any differences in Leonardo's end-of-life outcomes and his sense of integrity versus despair?

6. Undesirable Outcomes: London Dannel

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| <p>2</p> <p>Biological and Environmental Foundations</p> | <p>All of Laura's prenatal appointments show a perfectly healthy, normally developing baby. She and Doug are thrilled, as are London's brother and sister to be. Max and Chelsea spend many hours helping their mom and dad redecorate Chelsea's room because the baby will share a room with her after he or she is born. Everyone agrees that it's a good idea to be surprised whether the baby is a boy or a girl, like the best birthday surprise, Max says, and Laura laughs, saying he's right. Even though they don't find out the baby's sex, Laura and Doug are glad when prenatal testing confirms a healthy baby with no chromosomal abnormalities. They decide at that point not to screen for additional genetic problems, even though they could do so. Their insurance will cover it, and Laura's graduate work in biogenetics informs their choices about the information they could gain from such testing. They know, however, they will love and raise their new baby regardless of any potential difficulties and decide the stress of knowing about looming problems would be bad for Laura's health and, subsequently, the baby's.</p> |
| <p>3</p> <p>Prenatal Development, Birth, and the Newborn Experience</p> | <p>London is so small when the fetal surgeon delivers her. The emergency room team allows Doug to be in the room through the cesarean, but as soon as the baby is born, he's swept away and told to wait for London in the NICU. Laura will be a while, he's told; her injuries were severe, and she will be several hours yet in surgery. It doesn't take long for the pediatric team to get to the NICU, and Doug is allowed to be right there while London is assessed. He's painfully aware of the difference in size between her and Max and Chelsea, both of whom went a couple days past their due dates.</p> <p>"Fourteen and three-quarters inches long," the nurse says softly to a waiting assistant recording vital statistics. "Big for a 27-week baby. That's good. Hey, Dad, do we have a name yet?"</p> <p>Doug sniffs. They said she was big. That's a good sign. "Uh, yeah. London. Her name is London."</p> <p>"London. That's nice. London, you're a big girl to be so small. We like to see that." She turns to the assistant and says, "Two-point-two pounds."</p> |

"Wow!" A new face appears and looks impressed by the number that Doug can't compute other than to compare with Max's six-eight and Chelsea's seven-four. The newcomer holds out his hand, and Doug shakes it. "Mr. Dannel, I'm Dr. Sanchez, the NICU attending. I'm just popping in to take a look at—"

"London," the nurse supplies.

"London." He looks at the nurse. "What've we got?"

"Fourteen and three-quarters inches, two-point-two pounds, three and six APGARS. Good lung sounds, strong heart, and she's hungry. She's voided already. So, let's get her something to eat and see what happens."

Dr. Sanchez nods and smiles. "Good." Then he lifts London, who fits in a single hand like a kitten, and turns her this way and that, inspecting. "Dad, she's got good muscle tone, good color, and she's breathing well without help right now. I want to put her in an isolette with oxygen and a feeding tube. Let's see if we can keep her stable for a couple weeks and step up her feeding from there."

"Can I touch her?" Doug ventures, having been scared to ask before.

Dr. Sanchez looks at the nurse and assistant. "Dad hasn't held her yet?"

"We've been here all of five minutes but no."

Seconds later, London is cradled in his hands as the nurse explains how to do a thing she calls "kangaroo care," cuddling a naked London against his own bare chest.

"As much as she can tolerate as much as you can be here every day."

Gazing down at his daughter, Doug feels a swell of love and protection. "I think we can manage that." A nurse shows him to a rocking chair, and as he sits, he asks, "Can someone please check on my wife?"

"Of course," Dr. Sanchez assures him.

But Doug sees the look on his face. He feels like Dr. Sanchez has already checked on his wife and doesn't want to tell him what he knows, a feeling confirmed as fact when the lead surgeon arrives in the NICU a few minutes later.

Dr. Alt brings a chair nearer to the rocking chair where Doug holds London and leans forward. Bracing his elbows on his knees, he clasps his hands and takes a deep breath.

"Don't tell me you did everything you could," Doug whispers.

Shaking his head, Dr. Alt says, "Doug, we really did. She had the best surgical team working on her, but these were injuries that no one could survive without miracle intervention."

He looks down at London sleeping against his chest. Maybe God only gives one to a person at a time, and London was his for the accident. Turning his attention back to Dr. Alt, he doesn't attempt to hide his tears. "Are you sure?"

"Doug."

"Maybe there's something you didn't try."

"Doug, I'm so sorry."

For a long time, Dr. Alt sits beside him. They don't speak, and no one interrupts them even when checking on London. Doug thinks he's now the father of three motherless children. His lovely wife, his dream girl, is gone, and his heart is broken.

**4 Physical
Development
in Infancy and
Toddlerhood**

During the first weeks of London's life, Doug struggles to be everywhere at once. There's one of him and three children he has to take care of on his own. London needs him as much as he can be with her. Max needs taking to and from preschool, and Chelsea needs taking to and from daycare. He can't cope alone. Biting the bullet, he calls Laura's mother and his own and asks them to take turns staying for a while. Doug desperately needs someone now, and this seems to benefit everyone. Neither grandmother will be overburdened (or have her feelings hurt by not being asked). The kids will enjoy seeing both of them. He'll get the help he needs. He almost cries from relief when his mom tells him she'll be around by noon the next day. Laura's mother agrees to come in a week.

With immediate concerns in Mom's capable hands, he passes many hours every day rocking London, doing the kangaroo care the nurse showed him when she was first brought to the NICU. He tries hard to be home for dinner every night. Max and Chelsea, so happy once about their baby sister, are now struggling with the loss of their mom. It breaks his heart to watch, and he believes he owes it to them to help them through their grief process as much as he can.

"Try to think of your gains as much as your losses if you can," his mom says, reaching squeezing his hand.

"I know."

"Laura wouldn't want you to let sadness settle over the house."

"I miss her."

She smiles at him sadly. "You always will."

Over the next several months, London improves daily. He takes her home when she's five weeks old. She's met the established goals of a whopping five pounds and a consistent eating and elimination schedule. She's also sleeping without any respiratory concerns, but Dr. Sanchez is sending her home with a breathing monitor she'll have to wear anytime he can't see her directly, like when he puts her to bed or when she's in the car seat, to make sure she doesn't stop breathing for more than a second or two. He'll bring the monitor back weekly for several months to have the data in its memory read. Dr. Sanchez will be able to tell if London suffers from sleep apnea or other sleep and respiratory problems and, if not, will give his little wonder a clean bill of health.

At six months, this is precisely what she gets. Dr. Sanchez has a long conversation with Doug while London sits on his lap and chews his stethoscope.

"You know she looks great. She's looked great if I'm honest since the minute I saw her. A 27-week baby can come with a host of problems, but you had a good surgical team who got her out and up here fast, and Laura clearly took excellent care of herself during the prenatal period before the accident. London had the best odds possible. So, let's talk about what you've seen and what you'll see moving forward."

Doug nods. "Please," he says. "She's so different from Max and Chelsea."

Dr. Sanchez chuckles. "Yes, she would be."

He spends a few minutes explaining the growth Doug's seen, both physically and also in terms of London's abilities. "Some of what you'll have seen you likely saw in her brother and sister and at the same times, particularly reflexive changes, social interactions, those sorts of things."

"Yes," Doug says, "but she's still small. She rolled over 'on time,' I guess you'd say, but she isn't sitting up yet or getting on her knees."

"Not to worry," Dr. Sanchez tells him. "You're right. She's small, but she's showing every sign she'll get to those soon. What you're seeing are very typical preemie patterns. Some things she'll do at just about the proper age plus the extra nine to 12 weeks she needed to gestate. That is, you'll hardly notice the difference between her and her siblings. Other things, she'll need to catch up with her peers in size before she'll catch up in skills."

"Will she?" Doug asks. "Catch up in size?"

"She should. There's no guarantee, but she should. Often preemies will by two or three, and then you'll begin to see that skill gap close. Your biggest concern will be respiratory problems. Asthma, flu, and the like. So, keep a good eye on her, make sure all five of you get flu shots every year, and don't delay going to the pediatrician if you're concerned about something. I'm not worried at all about her development."

Relieved on all fronts, Doug leaves Dr. Sanchez's office a half hour later, after which he and London pick up Max and Chelsea. Then he takes everyone for an impromptu ice cream cone at Dairy Queen.

5 Cognitive Development in Infancy and Toddlerhood

Doug watches London's development like a hawk, always on the lookout for something to be wrong. The first thing he notices is that London doesn't speak like Max and Chelsea did. By her first birthday, she says *no* and *dada* and *mah* for Max and *chessy* for Chelsea. She doesn't say anything else. At her 12-month checkup, Doug raises the concern with the children's pediatrician.

Dr. Adams, in the middle of looking inside London's ears at the time, says, "Well, she's got a brain in here," which makes Doug laugh. "Seriously, Doug," the doctor tells him after she finishes the brief physical exam, "I understand your concerns, and we'll always keep a close eye on what might be considered delays of any sort with London."

"But . . . ?"

"But she doesn't have any other signs of cognitive problems. My guess, if I had to hazard one, is that she isn't speaking because she either doesn't get a chance to or because she doesn't need to. There are three people in your house other than London, all of whom are used to filling the quiet. She also has two siblings who are each at an age when they're likely to speak *for* her. When London needs to speak or wants to speak, London will speak."

"You're sure?" Doug asks, hopeful but not convinced.

"One hundred percent? No, but pretty close. I'm not due to see her again until 18 months, but if you're still concerned in three months, make an appointment, and we'll see how she's doing."

"Thanks. I feel a little better." He nods toward London's chart. "She's still small."

"She's pretty small," Dr. Adams agrees. "I'd like to see her put on some weight. You say she eats well. Why don't we try a daily protein supplement? I'll write you a prescription. You can put it in her bottle and, when she stops taking one, in her cup of milk at breakfast."

"Okay." The need for any supplement scares Doug, but he doesn't say anything.

"Now, any colds or other respiratory issues lately?"

“Lately?” Doug laughs. “When doesn’t she have a cold?”

Dr. Adams shakes her head. “I don’t like that. Let’s go ahead and get you in with an ear, nose, and throat specialist. Just to take a peak. If that doesn’t tell us anything, we’ll look at an internist maybe.”

“Is it that bad?” Doug asks, more scared now than ever.

“Probably not, but I don’t like to take chances with preemies.”

“As her father, I appreciate that,” Doug quips.

They both smile, and Dr. Adams holds out her hand.

“It’s my pleasure.” She tousles London’s sparse blond hair. “I’ll see you soon, missy.”

London waves backward. “Bye-bye.”

“See?” Dr. Adams says on the way out the door. “No one’s here taking up her airwaves. “Go home, Doug. She knows what she’s doing, and soon you won’t be able to shut her up. My nurse will call with the referral appointment.”

6 Socioemotional Development in Infancy and Toddlerhood

As a toddler, London is a mercurial child. She understands in the wordless way children always understand things that she misses something important in her life: her mother. From time to time, that influences her mood and interactions with others. She is, overall, a sweet and loving child, but she can also be willful and demanding, behaviors that try Doug’s patience and make him wonder what’s going to happen when she starts school.

“Can you tell Daddy what’s wrong?” he ventures after one particularly unpleasant afternoon.

London nods. “I sad.”

Surprised, Doug sits with her on the floor and looks at her on her own level. “Why are you sad, angel?”

London shrugs. These are the things she doesn’t have words for. “I sad,” she tells him again because that’s all she has to give him.

He wonders if he should play 20—200?—questions with her or if there’s a better approach. She may not know why she’s sad, but if she’s using the word appropriately, then she’s sad a lot. Doug holds out his arms, and London crawls into his lap.

“Can Daddy help?” he asks.

London shrugs against him. He takes this as a maybe and pulls out the little photo album they keep just for her. It has photographs of himself, Laura all the way through the pregnancy with London so they can talk about London growing in her belly, and Max and Chelsea, too. She loves her picture book.

London turns the pages slowly, pointing to each picture and saying names or other words of things she associates with each image. When she reaches the first picture of Laura, she pauses, points, and says, “Mommy. Sad.”

- 7 Physical and Cognitive Development in Early Childhood**
- “Doug, hi.” Miranda Thompson, London’s preschool teacher at Sunrise, shakes his hand. They’re on a first-name basis since Chelsea had been in her class only two years before and had just moved on to Kindergarten that year.
- Doug pulls one of the tiny chairs away from the moon-shaped table in the center of the room. “This is exciting, London’s first parent-teacher meeting. Before we get started, please tell me she behaves while she’s here.”
- Ms. Thompson laughs a little. “Well . . .” she hedges. Doug groans, and the teacher hurries to reassure him. “Oh, it’s not as bad as all that. London is outgoing and eager to please. I’m sure you know this about her. She’s also doing well with numbers and anything technological I put in her hands.”
- “That’s awesome!” he says. “What’s the catch then?”
- “I have a little trouble getting her to focus during story time,” the teacher admits, “and she’s quite clumsy on the playground and often just in general. I have to watch her carefully when she climbs the ladder for the big slide or when she’s on the monkey bars. Again, I’m sure you know this about her.”
- Doug agrees. “But I hoped being around other children might help with that,” he says. The teacher smiles gently. “She’s around other children at home, too, and Max and Chelsea are probably a little more invested in London’s success than her peers here are.”
- Doug frowns. “You’re concerned?”
- “I am a little,” she admits. I’d like to refer London for testing now while she’s young. If there’s any concern after a developmental screen, then she can get some occupational therapy and hopefully correct whatever issue she may have, and if she has none, the screen will determine that, too.”
- The recommendation makes sense to Doug. He nods quickly. “Okay. Okay, let’s do it.
- 8 Socioemotional Development in Early Childhood**
- Finishing her first year of preschool, London evidences big social gains. She doesn’t bully her sister and brother much anymore (or her dad), and she’s frequently helpful at home, doing tasks such as taking silverware to the table while Max and Chelsea lay plates for mealtimes or putting a fresh bag in the trashcan after her dad takes the trash outside to the big can in the garage. She likes helping even if she isn’t allowed to take the plates to the table ever. Chelsea says it’s because she’s too clumsy and would drop and break them. She’s not being mean; Chelsea isn’t. London probably would break them all. She’s not good at doing things where she has to be super careful, and she’s broken things before—usually at least one time a week. So, she doesn’t carry the plates.
- Probably the best times she has at home are playing with Max and Chelsea. Max is seven now, and he has friends on their street who come over sometimes. Then he doesn’t play with either London or Chelsea, but when they all play together it’s the best. They teach each other everything. One day, London tells Max that a friend of hers at preschool said London was weird for liking computers because she’s a girl. Max tells her that’s stupid, that girls and boys can do all the same things—except peeing. Girls can’t do that standing up like boys can, but she shouldn’t care because it’s kind of hard anyway.

9 Physical and Cognitive Development in Middle and Late Childhood

London likes elementary school a lot better than preschool. Kindergarten was scary, but every other grade is fun. She's good at lots of subjects, like math and science, and she isn't bad at anything. Well, she's not good at physical education (PE), but no one conquers everything. At least that's what her dad tells her. In second grade, they have to run a mile in PE, and London gets a couple minutes into the job when she starts to feel like her chest is on fire. It's hard to breathe, and her eyes water until she can't see. She stops running, even though Coach Parker yells at her. Dad has to pick her up at school that day, but because of work and her brother and sister, London can't see the doctor. It's too late. She goes a couple days later (after spending two days on the couch with a babysitter watching Dr. Phil). The doctor listens to London breathe and then tells Dad, "Asthma," but London doesn't know what that means. She also says this isn't unexpected because London was "born so early." She gives Dad a bunch of papers for medicine and gives London a paper that says she doesn't have to run a mile for a while. That's not terrible, even though she doesn't want to be "the sick kid" either. After a few weeks of figuring out how to use the new inhaler the doctor gives her and learning to trust the sense she has of when it's okay to run and when it's not, she finally finishes the mile, and Coach Parker gives her a secret cookie for congratulations. Finishing feels like the biggest accomplishment London's ever managed.

In fourth grade, the elementary school wins something called "a grant," and even though London isn't sure what that is, she knows what it means. Every kid gets a brand-new tablet computer for the rest of the time they're in the elementary school. London is stoked! There are so many papers she and her dad have to sign, but she doesn't care. As soon as the tablet is in her hands, she figures out how to download a developer app and starts creating little programs of her own. She starts small, building a world traveling app based on live cams all across the globe. Want to visit sub-Saharan Africa? Choose the Africam. That one is no more than a collection of cams sitting behind a frame with a menu. She builds an adjunct app that allows a person to control the frame like a television with a "remote" app for a smartphone. She thinks it's a cute package even if it isn't terribly sophisticated. By the time fifth grade starts, London has a small cottage industry going, and her dad helps her set up an online payment system. Charging less than a dollar per app, she starts saving for long-term dreams like a car and college or maybe funding a scientist's cure for asthma. So far, she's made \$11.88. Her dad warns her to keep herself on the right side of the law, which she doesn't get, but okay. He says he doesn't have time to bail her out of jail between work, Max's ball games, and all the kid ferrying he does. If only she could make an app to give parents more time . . .

10 Socioemotional Development in Middle and Late Childhood

"Dad!"

Max calls for Doug, and London gives him an evil look, daring him to tattle. When she hears their dad's footsteps nearing the stairs, she leans against the doorway to Max's room and puts a hand over her chest, pretending to cough through an oncoming asthma attack. Max rolls his eyes.

"Oh, come on," he complains. "How dumb do you think he is?"

"Oh, come on," Dad says as his head appears at the top of the stairs. "How dumb do you think I am?"

London stands up straight and points at Max. "He started it!"

"Did not!"

"Yes. You. Did." London looks at Dad. "All I did was ask to use his laptop to write some SQL code, and Mr. High and Mighty has to birth a baby cow all over the—"

"Enough, London," Dad says, interrupting.

"But—"

"No buts." He looks at Max and smiles. "We'll figure this out. Your laptop is safe." To London, he says, "Come along downstairs, and let's have a talk about personal property and maybe creativity in trying to dupe your father. Fake asthma? Really?"

"I just wanted to borrow it for a few minutes."

"Right," Dad agrees as they enter the kitchen. He hands London his own laptop from work. "The keyword in all of that was 'borrow.' It's his laptop, and if he says 'no,' that's okay. Life isn't going to be a string of yeses, London."

"Well, that's dumber than fake asthma," she says, meaning this entirely. Dad laughs again, and London can't help smiling a little. "Imagine how happy everyone would be if everyone else always said yes."

Dad looks at her like she's a little, green alien and then says, "Tell me when you find that utopia."

London knows kids at school who compete with each other for best attendance awards or spelling bee contests. London codes. Her competition is always boys, which annoys her sometimes. She tries to get some of her female friends to get involved in computers with her, but most aren't interested. Even her teachers encourage her to do things like enter spelling bees or work harder on multiplication. There's a million-word book challenge; why doesn't she enter that? She doesn't know why coding is such a big thing with everyone. She can't change their minds, which means she sneaks around and does what she wants to in hiding, but she's not sure how that's fair at all.

**11 Physical and
Cognitive
Development in
Adolescence**

Although Dr. Sanchez, the attending pediatric doctor in the NICU when London was born, as well as London's childhood pediatrician told her parents that she would most likely catch up with her peers in size in the first few years of life, she remains thin and wiry through adolescence. Her height, slightly above average, is similar to her brother and sister, but her narrow frame gives her an androgynous appearance. This is emphasized by the short, blond pixie haircut she wears.

She still takes asthma medicine in the mornings and keeps a rescue inhaler in her book bag. Endurance activities will never be part of her repertoire. She's okay with that. If she does too much physically, she usually ends up sick again anyway.

She spends enough time on homework to get it done and carves out hidden spaces for writing computer programs. She's taught herself basic programming languages and a couple advanced languages as well. Her most enjoyable hours now are creating novel human-machine interactions. She'd love to win a science fair with what she can do, but she's lost her bravery at telling anyone what she does. Her teachers don't encourage her passion, and her dad's too busy to tell them to shove it. He would; she's sure of it. She just doesn't have it in her to ask. London just codes in the closet and enjoys the pleasure of her own private achievements.

12 Socioemotional Development in Adolescence

Much to Doug's dismay, London begins "dating" in middle school, coming home many days with a new "boyfriend" to talk about. They can barely keep up. Chelsea helps because she knows many of the boys London goes on about and is often friends with their older siblings. No one seems to hold her attention for long. Rather, no one seems to successfully compete with a computer for London's attention.

In tenth grade, London attends her first homecoming dance with a date. Doug and Chelsea take her shopping for a dress, all of which London rejects either on the hanger or without exiting the dressing room. She sends a text to her best friend Maggie Summerfield after she, Chelsea, and her dad leave the third department store.

"I just want to wear pants," she types.

Maggie responds almost instantly as London knows she will. "Like jeans or something nice?"

"Nice. Like a suit or a tux or something."

"Wear that. Isn't that the point? If you like it . . ."

London turns to her Dad. "Can we look at tuxes maybe?"

Dad looks shocked, and London can see Chelsea biting her lip. "A tux?" Dad asks.

"Yes, Dad, a tux. I'd rather wear one of those than a frou frou dress."

"I—" He doesn't look like he knows what to say.

London looks at her sister. "Help, please?"

Chelsea, who's recovered by now, puts a hand on Dad's arm. "When did you ever care what any of us wore?"

"Did Max ever ask to wear a dress?" he asks.

"Dad!" Chelsea yells. "London's wearing pants right now. I expect better of you."

London does, too, but she doesn't say it.

"I'll get whatever you want," Dad says softly, "but I don't understand at all."

London attends the homecoming dance with a group of friends including the boyfriend of the week. She and Charles dance and drink a weird ginger ale punch and try to pretend that his parents aren't chaperones. Everyone has a great time. The DJ plays some oldies song that's all angsty and slow, and she and Charles slow dance without getting close. She spies Maggie across the way dancing with their friend Ben and rolls her eyes. Maggie returns the look, and they both smile. Maggie looks great, London thinks. She's wearing a dress London tried on and hated, but it's perfect on her closest friend.

After the song, she disentangles herself from Charles' clutches. "I need to go to the bathroom," she tells him, and is happy to see Maggie touching up her lipstick when she gets there.

"Tux is the bomb," Maggie says. "I'm so glad you wore it."

Grimacing, London fixes her hair in the mirror. "Me, too. Thanks for helping me decide. My dad was *not* happy with the suggestion. Oh well."

Maggie turns and puts a hip on the old porcelain sink beside her. "I always want you to do what makes you happy."

"I know."

Before London can thank her again, Maggie takes a step forward and kisses her.

"Like that," Maggie says.

"But I—"

"And I."

"Can I do that again?" London asks her.

"I'm kind of hoping you do."

**13 Physical and
Cognitive
Development in
Emerging/Early
Adulthood**

"London?"

London looks up from the suitcases she's packing. The countdown to college has reached hours instead of days.

"Dad?"

Dad sits at the desk on the wall under her window and steeples his fingers but doesn't say anything for a long minute.

"Dad?" she repeats. "What's bothering you?"

He smiles and lowers his hands to his lap. "I just wanted to make sure I had a few words with you now that you're off to college."

"Is this the fiscal, academic, or sexual responsibility talk?"

Dad looks shocked, and she lifts a shoulder.

"More of the latter, sort of," he says. "And this is serious."

"All ears, Dad."

"I don't have any concerns about your ability to go to school and do well academically. I hope I've taught you to be very careful with money. I've only just finished paying off the medical bills from the day you were born and—"

"I know all of this. No credit cards, no extra loans, low-key job on campus and spend as little as I can."

"Right."

"So?" she asks, mildly curious. "The sex? If this is about safe sex, sex ed covered that ages ago."

"I know. Look, London, this isn't easy for me. More than a quarter of young women are sexually assaulted while they're in college, sweetheart. As a man, I can attest that some of those assaults aren't necessarily intentional, but that doesn't make them any less damaging. Kids mess up every day. Every day. I want you to be aware and smart and on guard even while you have fun."

She frowns, can feel her face making the unhappy shape, while she thinks about her dad's words. She's still in the closet—about her sexuality and about coming out. It's just easier to leave things that way for now. "Okay, Dad."

"I'm not trying to scare you. I just want to make sure you're aware."

"I will be. I promise." They smile at each other, and she walks across the room to hug him. "You've been the best mom and dad anyone could ask for, you know that?"

- 14 Socioemotional Development in Emerging/Early Adulthood** London works diligently and takes several semesters' overload to finish college a year early. She gets a teaching degree—high school English—and doesn't date at all while she's there. Afterward, she gets a job close enough to Dad to be there if he needs her (or vice versa) but far enough away to be alone for the first time in her life, which she very much wants.
- Over the early years of her career, she loves teaching. She enjoys the children she gets to spend time with them every day (and enjoys getting rid of them and having new ones every year). She likes her little apartment. She likes not dating. Not dating is definitely preferable than meeting the expectations of others. If she misses anything, it's coding—and Maggie. Some days she misses Maggie.
- 15 Physical and Cognitive Development in Middle Adulthood** Although London wouldn't classify herself as lonely—she has friends, after all—she does feel like she's growing soft. Her job is soft. Her after-work activities are soft (she reads to make good teaching decisions for the next term). Even her exercise is soft because her respiratory system doesn't let her go hard core with aerobic activities. Some days—not many, but they exist—she wonders if she made the right decisions. Did she get the right degree? Should she have come out of the closet? Should she still? They're ridiculous questions, of course. It's much too late to change her life course now.
- 16 Socioemotional Development in Middle Adulthood** In her 30s, London begins attending a trivia night at a local pizza joint with her English teammates at school. Trivia is held on Thursdays, and they show up an hour early to have a pizza before the game begins. It's a night they all look forward to each week, and the only weeks she misses in all her time going are the weeks that her parents pass. Trivia nights invariably end the same way. They walk to their cars together, dispersing slowly with happy farewells until the next morning. One or two have boyfriends or husbands pick them up each week. London always leaves alone.
- After one such night, she walks out with Sharon, the teacher whose room is directly beside hers at work, and Sharon breaks routine. Pausing mid step, she turns to London, saying, "Please don't take offense, but I have a proposition."
- London lifts a brow. Sharon is decidedly heterosexual, so it isn't anything intimate. "Yes?"
- "My sister's Irish Setter just had a litter of pups. They're so beautiful. I think you should look at them, consider getting one."
- London smiles, uncertain, but then she feels her smile fade. A dog was the one thing she and her siblings always wanted that they could never have. Dad didn't mind; he said he was too busy as the single parent of three kids. She might like a dog.
- She looks at Sharon. "Do you have pictures?"
- A week later, she's the proud owner of a little ball of red fluff she names Rowan.
- 17 Physical and Cognitive Development in Late Adulthood** London lives a quiet, enjoyable life, made even more enjoyable after adopting Rowan. Theirs is a peaceful, loving companionship, marked by long, daily walks taken slowly to accommodate London's diminishing lung capacity, the daily crossword completed with Rowan laying at London's feet, and the grudging acceptance that a walker is in the near future. When London begins using the walker, Rowan is careful to stay close to her and nose stray articles on the floor out of her way. People sometimes joke that they're the original odd couple, but London knows nothing could be further from the truth. They're perfect for each other.

18 Socioemotional Development in Late Adulthood

"Happy birthday, dear London, Happy birthday to you!"

London tears at the sound of her book club friends and the restaurant staff singing. It's her 80th birthday, and 80 years ago no one in her life would've believed this day would ever come. She's glad it has, even though she's lived through her parents passing. Some days it feels like only she and her siblings are left alive, even though that's clearly melodramatic thinking.

Smiling, she looks at her friends. "Thank you all. Thanks so much. This cake looks delicious."

"Marzipan, you know. Someone said it's your favorite."

London nods. "Someone is right. Shall we eat?"

19 Experience With Death and Dying

London's next-door neighbor knocks on her door. The younger woman's concerned when Rowan barks at her several times as she comes and goes from her own house. She knows London and Rowan, and the setter doesn't bark at anyone. She hasn't seen London in a couple days, and she hasn't seen Rowan outside. With the barking at the window, Sarah McGill is concerned enough to knock—no answer. She waits an hour or so and tries again—no answer. Finally, she telephones the police, who enter the house and find that London has recently passed away.

"So sad," Sarah McGill remarks, "to die alone and with no one knowing."

Case Discussion Questions

1. In her earliest hours, London's mother Laura passes away as a result of the accident that caused London's premature birth. Compared to London's optimal case in which Laura has extensive surgery but recovers fully, how does this early outcome alter London's life trajectory across any and all domains (biological, cognitive, and socioemotional)?
2. In middle childhood, London experiences an asthmatic emergency during PE at school one day. Because her mother passed away, her father Doug is called to get her from school. Doug, however, is delayed, and London can't see the doctor by the time he arrives. Her appointment is, in fact, delayed for a couple of days. Compare Doug's delayed collection of London at school to Laura picking her up in the optimal case. What differences would we expect in London's outcomes based on this circumstance alone?
3. From middle childhood through adolescence, London frequently finds herself in the position of either hiding or defending both her love of coding and her sexuality. Occasionally someone like her sister Chelsea will stand up for her, but often no one is around to do so. Compare the outcomes in this case to those in London's optimal case when Laura is actively unsurprised, sardonic, and buoyantly supportive of London's needs and preferences. How do the differences you note suggest differences in London's future across any and all domains (biological, cognitive, and socioemotional)? Why?
4. Consider London's optimal case outcomes at the end of her life and Erikson's integrity-versus-despair stage of psychosocial development. How does this case compare to that one? Consider all of London's life events. How do you think those contributed to any differences in London's end-of-life outcomes and her sense of integrity versus despair?

7. Undesirable Outcomes: Edward Archer

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|---|--|--|
| 2 | Biological and Environmental Foundations | Edward's adoption records will be sealed, and if Brendon and Jared ever meet his mother, it will be only briefly when their baby is born. They know nothing about their baby's development other than what the adoption agency has told them: Mom doesn't smoke, drink, or use any drugs; she's healthy; no negative results have come of any prenatal testing. If anything arises, they'll be informed. |
| 3 | Prenatal Development, Birth, and the Newborn Experience | <p>Edward's prenatal development, to the best of Jared and Brendon's knowledge, is both normal and well supported medically. Mom has proper prenatal care and remains healthy throughout the pregnancy. Sometime several months into waiting for their baby, they receive separate calls on their phones: the baby is going to be born, would they like to come to the hospital?</p> <p>They would.</p> <p>The soon-to-be fathers wait in nervous anticipation in the hospital waiting room until a nurse and a social worker approach in the early hours of the morning. The nurse looks at Brendon, while the social worker looks at Jared.</p> <p>"Mr. North and Mr. Archer?"</p> <p>The nurse smiles in their direction. The baby is born, and he's doing great. His APGARs were excellent, 8 and 10. They've got him in the nursery for a few minutes doing initial vital statistics and getting him cleaned up.</p> <p>"That's great," Jared says for both of them. "How's the mother?"</p> <p>"Good," the nurse assures him. "She had a long labor, but she's doing well."</p> <p>Brendon practically bounces on the balls of his feet. "When can we see him? Our baby."</p> <p>The nurse wavers. "It's going to be a bit, I'm afraid. I really can't say more."</p> <p>They have to wait for the social worker to tell them the birth mother isn't sure about the adoption anymore. Too scared to be angry, Jared and Brendon wait in the family waiting room until dawn, hands clasped together, until the social worker returns with a look of relief on her face.</p> <p>"Would you like to see your son?" she asks.</p> <p>Jared stands and nods. "Yes, please."</p> <p>The new fathers take turns holding him in the hospital nursery only a minute or so later. He's long and has a crop of dark curls. When he begins to fuss, Brendon hums a lullaby to him, and he quietsens. Their family, full of love before, is complete now.</p> |
| 4 | Physical Development in Infancy and Toddlerhood | <p>Edward, a chubby and affectionate baby, loses much of his dark hair shortly after birth. This is replaced with fine, brown curls. His eyes, the dark blue of most infants when they're born, are now a rich chocolate, and his fair skin has a mole or two on his back. His fathers think he's perfect, and the pediatrician assures them he is.</p> <p>If Edward has any troubles at all, it's only that he doesn't like to sleep alone in his nursery. At school, Jared asks all the teachers who are parents—mostly mothers—if they've ever had this trouble and listens to their advice, from "let him cry it out" (which sounds demonic) to "just tuck him in bed with you and Brendon" (which sounds like a recipe for infanticide). Batting it back and forth and losing sleep in the meantime, he and Brendon decide to move Edward's crib into their room for a while. Like magic, their baby becomes somnolent at eight p.m. every night and doesn't wake until seven in the morning.</p> |

Even when they oversleep, one of Edward's dads takes time to cuddle him while he takes his morning bottle. They know parents—Jared's sister is one of them—who change the diaper and sit the baby in the car seat with a bottle propped on a pillow so they can multitask in the mornings before work. Jared and Brendon want Edward to feel loved and wanted from the beginning, and so they hold him. He eats almost constantly, but they become adept at multitasking *while* holding him, a feat of which they are both quite proud. Within a few months, Edward sits on the bathroom counter in front of Brendon playing patty cake with himself in the mirror while Brendon brushes his hair and fixes his tie.

"Bay-beeee," he drools, pointing at his own reflection.

Brendon wipes Edward's chin with a washcloth and scoops him into his arms, passing him to Jared as he walks into the closet for his shoes.

"Baby," Jared croons. "Such a smart boy."

Edward squeals, and both dads laugh with him.

Sliding his jacket on, Brendon holds out his arms. "Ready," he says. "It's my day. You'll remember to pick him up?"

Jared rolls his eyes. "Like I'd forget."

They kiss quickly among a flurry of I love yous, and Brendon rushes from the house with Edward clapping and drooling on his freshly dry-cleaned blazer.

"It's a good thing you're cute," he mutters as he opens the back door on his Volkswagen and bends to tuck the baby in his car seat.

5 Cognitive Development in Infancy and Toddlerhood

Edward's crib is returned to the nursery when he's eight months old, and he makes no fuss over the transition. Brendon and Jared take turns reading his bedtime stories—classics and modern favorites both—before tucking him in together. He's such a good-natured boy that it's hard to leave him, which they do like clockwork at 7:50 p.m. nightly.

When Edward is ten months old, Jared notices that he's babbling along with his dads when they read to him. His rhythm and cadence is the same as theirs even if the words are unintelligible. Jared praises his son and begins to spend time pointing to basic objects in the stories. "What's that, Edward?" he asks, and often Edward responds with a sound that nearly resembles the picture in question.

Although he isn't yet walking without holding onto furniture (or his dads' pants legs), Edward does his best to keep up with his cousins when they visit family. At his grandma and grandpa's house, he has two cousins who are not much older than he is, and at Granny Sue's house, he has three cousins, but Greg is five and isn't interested in babies. Edward and his cousins "play" near each other in happy harmony for long stretches of time even if they don't interact much. When he's at home after visiting, Edward uses spoons, bananas, and sometimes a shoe to pretend he's talking to his cousins or his grandparents. " 'Lo! 'Lo!" he yells and laughs when one of his dads pretends to talk back. Soon, this becomes his favorite game at home.

6 Socioemotional Development in Infancy and Toddlerhood

At 13 months, Edward's favorite game is peekaboo. He plays with anyone who will sit with him long enough. His conversational skills are improving, and he appears to understand the rudiments of dialogue: I say something, and then you respond. Much of the time, Jared and Brendon have no idea what he says, but Edward clearly infuses his babbling with tone and inflection and a great deal of enthusiasm. Dinnertime conversation is everyone's favorite time of the day.

Edward clearly loves his dads. He is openly affectionate and behaves as any normal, securely attached child does when left at or collected from daycare. That is, he fusses for a few minutes when he's left and is delighted when he's picked up. His best friend, however, is the family's English Mastiff, who was brought into the family as a puppy only a few months after Edward's arrival. The rate of Duke's growth quickly outpaced Edward's, but he's gentle with the toddler. Downtime often finds Edward laying on the floor with his head resting on Duke's side. For his part, Duke is a reserved but formidable guard dog, standing between Edward and anything new to their lives, including trash that blows in their direction in the park. Once satisfied a new person is harmless, Duke relaxes and licks Edward's head as if to say, "Mine. Be careful with him," and he lies down to observe once more. Brendon hopes Edward never gets it in his head to try and ride the poor beast.

If any event mars this joyful age for Edward's dads, it's the unexpected and unwanted appearance of the baby's biological mother. Jared and Brendon always knew it was possible she'd turn up because she'd wavered on giving him up when he was born. They aren't sure how she found them because the adoption record is sealed, but Jared says to Brendon one evening that private investigators can probably dig up anything these days. When they ask Ginny Ellis what—precisely—she wants, she says she isn't sure, but she knows she wants to have some role in Edward's life. Edward's dads aren't comforted by her lack of consideration for *their* role in his life.

7 Physical and Cognitive Development in Early Childhood

Edward, who at his five-year checkup is in the 60th percentile for height and 65th for weight, appears completely normal, average, without any discerning or concerning characteristics. Brendon and Jared are relieved. Over the past five years, they've talked about the possibility of genetic testing for Edward. It's expensive, but they can afford it. Such testing would tell them what sort of potential illnesses loom in Edward's future. After the checkup, they put away the idea for good. He's a healthy, normal kid, and anything that might happen now could happen to any parent. They'll take what comes, which they would've done anyway.

One thing they do is begin a process they've both dreaded and anticipated for all of their time with Edward. After the birthday party and all the gifts, after a couple days of routine, Brendon calls Edward to the table on a Saturday morning and sits him down. Jared joins them with two mugs of coffee and a tall glass of chocolate milk. Edward eyes the chocolate milk with suspicion. This is a treat.

"Dad and I want to talk to you," Jared begins, and Edward's eyes flick back and forth between them.

"Did I do something wrong?"

"No, son, nothing like that."

"Is someone sick? Granny Sue?" he asks, his tone elevating in pitch. Brendon's mother had been sick over the winter but was, as far as Edward knew, improving.

"Granny Sue's fine. Everyone's fine," Brendon says, patting his hand. "Nothing's wrong, bud. We just want to tell you a couple things. We waited until you were a big boy, and now you are."

Edward nods at that. He *is* a big boy, five years old. He'll go to Kindergarten in September. "What do you want to tell me, Daddy?"

"Do you remember when you had your birthday party and your cousins and friends came to help you celebrate?" Jared asks.

"Uh-huh," Edward answers, paying more attention to his chocolate milk than the question.

"Did you notice anything different about the parents of the other children than your parents?"

Edward scrunches his eyes to think. Maybe there was one difference. "Ben's daddy was without anyone else. Ben doesn't have another daddy *or* a mommy."

Jared sighs while Brendon chuckles. Edward recognizes mommies then and doesn't count them any differently than second daddies. Brendon doesn't know if that makes things easier or harder.

"Well, that's very true," Jared agrees.

"Is that what you mean?"

"Not exactly." Jared points to Brendon. "One daddy." Then he points to himself. "Two daddies."

"I got two daddies. So?"

"But most of your friends only have one daddy," Jared ventures.

"Right, but they have a mommy so that's okay."

"That's also very true," Jared tells him. "I wanted to ask you about the mommies. Do you ever wonder why you have two daddies instead of a daddy and a mommy or maybe just why you don't have a mommy?"

Edward shrugs. "No," he whispers, and both dads know he isn't telling the truth.

"Edward?" Brendon prompts.

"Sometimes I wonder why I don't have a mommy, but I know I'm super special because I have two daddies."

"Bud, you are on point today," Jared says and raises his hand for a high five. Edward stretches upward until their palms touch before pulling his glass back to his mouth. "That's what we wanted to talk about . . . your mommy, not having two dads."

"Okay." Edward looks at both of them. "Do I have a mommy?"

Jared nods, and so does Brendon. "You do. She grew you in her tummy just like other mommies, and then she gave birth to you on your birthday."

"Where is she? What's her name?"

Jared and Brendon are prepared for these questions. Brendon ruffles Edward's hair and starts talking while Jared warms their coffee.

"Ginny Ellis."

"That's a pretty name," Edward says.

"I think so, too. Son, when you were born, you were adopted."

"I was a dopted what?"

He and Jared look at each other, momentarily confused. When they figure out Edward's misunderstanding, they smile, careful not to laugh and make him feel silly.

"Oh, no, Edward. Dad and I *adopted* you. You weren't a thing called 'dopted.'"

"What does that mean? 'Dopted.'"

"It means that your mommy loved you so much that she wanted you to come live with me and dad so you could have the very best life you could have."

"My mommy didn't want to live here, too?"

"The most important thing for her was making sure you had a good home with good parents."

"Like you and Dad!" he shouts, holding his hands above his head Superman-style.

"Like me and Dad."

Jared sits at the table again and catches Edward's eye. "Do you have any questions about your mommy right now?"

"No. I don't think so. Maybe. Is she pretty?" he asks, giggling.

"You might be able to see for yourself. Ginny would like the opportunity to meet you, but Dad and I aren't sure what to do about that. What do you think?"

Edward tilts his head to the side and puts a finger in the dimple on his cheek. Slowly, he straightens his head and shrugs. "I don't know. Maybe. Can I think about it?"

Jared nods. "Of course you can. "Anything else?" Jared asks.

"No. Can I play with Duke now?"

"Yes, you may. If you decide you want to talk about your mommy again, that's always okay with both me and Daddy."

"Okay." Edward slides from his chair and runs to the doorway calling after the dog. As they hear the thumps of large, heavy feet, he turns and runs back to the table. "Sorry! Forgot!" He kisses both dads so quickly that they don't register much more than air and then bolts from the room to find his dog.

Jared looks at Brendon and blows out a short burst of air. "Not bad at all."

"Nah," Brendon says. "We've got this."

8 Socioemotional Development in Early Childhood

Jared's sister Beth babysits for the two dads routinely so they can have a biweekly date night. They return the favor on off weeks. One Saturday night, Jared runs inside to collect a drowsy and heavy Edward, and Beth stops him at the door as he leaves.

"Jared, did you know Edward's favorite toy is a stuffed pink pig?"

Jared, who knows where this is headed, looks at her and whispers over Edward's ear, "Pigs are pink."

Narrowing her eyes, Beth says, "You know what I mean."

"I do, and I'm torn between amusement and annoyance. Do you really think his pink pig is going to make him gay?"

"No but—"

"What? The pink pig plus being raised by gay dads might?"

She lifts her shoulders. "Well?"

Jared fights to keep the irritation out of his voice. "I could remind you that his favorite pastime is wrestling with a 150-pound dog."

"Mine might've been, too, if I'd had Duke as a child!"

"What's good for the goose really isn't good for the gander." Jared paused. "I love you, and I know you're only thinking of what's best for Edward. So, I'm going easy on you here. It's also cold. I want to get him home. Thanks for watching him tonight."

"Hey," Beth calls as he's walking down the front steps to the car.

Jared stops and turns. "Yeah?"

"What were you and Brendon celebrating anyway? It's not your birthday or his, and it's not your anniversary."

Smiling, he shifted the heavy weight of little boy in his arms. "I thought I told you. We reached a settlement with Ginny, Edward's biological mom. Now we can stop worrying about her constant showing up and telephoning."

"That's great news!" Beth says. "Well worth celebrating."

"I'll say."

"Jared," she adds as he starts back toward the car, "I'm sorry. You're right, and I was stupid."

"You're forgiven," he calls over his shoulder.

9 Physical and Cognitive Development in Middle and Late Childhood

In elementary school, Edward applies himself diligently to all his subjects even though he doesn't particularly love any of them. He's aware that his dad works at the high school a couple miles away and all the teachers at all the schools know each other. He works hard because there's no other way to be the kid of a school staff member.

In fifth grade, his math class does a unit on statistics, which dismays both his dads. "Statistics? Really?" This comes from the father who spends his daytime hours predicting who will buy what and why.

"It's not that different from advertising, Dad," he tells him. "Want me to show you?"

"God, no. Just keep making As, and we're good."

The teacher has assigned a month-long stock market project, and Edward spends hours after school with Duke covering his bed, mapping out strategy, buying his imaginary stocks, and building a portfolio. He makes and loses a year's worth of the family's income before finally beating his other classmates for most diversified portfolio, best profit-loss ratio, and most earned. Finally, he thinks, here's something he's good at: making money. If only it were real.

The worst thing happens to Edward in sixth grade. He finds out he needs glasses. This, of course, is a legacy of his unknown genetics. His biological mom tells him that his biological dad wears glasses, so maybe that's where he gets it.

"Can't I have laser surgery?" he begs his dads. "Contacts?"

"No, not yet, not either," they both tell him.

"But *why*? Glasses are the kiss of death!"

"You better not be having any kisses," Dad tells him.

Edward stares at himself in the mirror. "I don't think you have to worry about that now."

His biological mom agrees. When he complains about getting glasses on one of her visitation days, she laments that he'll be a nerd at school now and won't stand a chance of getting a girlfriend. She promises to talk to his dads about at least getting him contacts. Edward doesn't point out that his biological dad was able to get her even though he wore glasses, and he can imagine how well his dads will take her suggestions about contacts—not.

10 Socioemotional Development in Middle and Late Childhood

Elementary school brings a dawning awareness for Edward that his family is different from the norm. He has two parents, which he hears is a good thing, but he has two fathers, which he learns makes him odd if not exactly a social pariah. He has cousins at the school, and they help stick up for him when kids on the playground push him around or make fun. He tries hard not to push back. He likes his family, and although he's happy to defend it, he'd rather people not care one way or the other.

In sixth grade, a boy named John loses his dad in a car accident. It's terrible. No one else in the grade has had a parent die before. Edward doesn't know how that would feel, but when he tries to imagine it, he gets cold and sad inside. John is one of the boys who made fun of Edward for having two dads, but he figures that doesn't matter when your dad dies. Edward asks his dad to drive him to John's house after the funeral, and he goes to the door and asks for John. They talk only for a few minutes. Edward tells him how sorry he is about the accident, and John asks him if he wants to come inside and have some potato casserole. Waving his dad off, Edward goes inside with John, and they spend a few hours playing video games and talking about school. Every now and then, John sneaks downstairs and gets some cookies or something else for them to eat. At the end of the day, Edward's dad comes back for him. He and John share a fist bump, and Edward figures he can ride his bike back over the next day to check on him.

Edward tosses Duke's lead onto the washing machine when he comes in the back door. It's cold outside! In the kitchen, he puts hot chocolate in the microwave just as the phone starts to ring. Looking at Caller ID, he sees Bridgewood Adoption Agency scrolling across the screen. His dad—man, high school makes you gray fast—rushes into the room in his socks, and Edward hands him the receiver.

"Something you want to tell me?" he asks.

Dad shakes his head. "Not yet. Maybe. Hopefully." He presses the talk button. "Hello? This is Jared North."

Edward grabs his hot chocolate when the microwave dings and wanders into the den with Duke. "Hear that, buddy? We're going to get a brother or sister."

11 Physical and Cognitive Development in Adolescence

"Dude, let me hold her. It's my turn!"

"Shh," Edward admonishes, but he hands over the tightly swaddled bundle of baby sister to John. "Damn, she's cute, huh?"

"Yeah." John bounces Valerie up and down slowly in his arms as he wanders around the den, Duke at his heels protecting the family's newest charge. "Is she, like, all loud and stuff?"

Edward shrugs. "Sometimes but not much. She sleeps in my dads' room right now, and they pretty much take care of everything she needs. She just sleeps and smiles when I have her unless she needs a clean diaper. I'm pretty good at that."

John looks at her face, sleepy and content since Edward gave her a bottle a few minutes ago. "I don't know . . . Coach Denver acts like seeing a newborn is all the birth control we need, but she kinda makes me feel funny, like—"

"*I know*," Edward agrees. "My dad says it's because we're 'in puberty,' and our biology says it's time to make babies."

"Can we fast forward until we're on the other side of it? Because all I'm getting from 'puberty,' " John says with emphasis on the word, "is acne and a voice that cracks whenever I try to talk to Sarah Jane Williams."

"I'll look for the Tardis," Edward promised. "Meanwhile, maybe I'll take that one back so you can set up the Playstation?"

**12 Socioemotional
Development in
Adolescence**

Edward spends his spare time play-recreating the work he did for the stock market assignment in elementary school. He tracks a number of individual stocks and creates his own imaginary portfolio. His friends love it. They call it Edward's Fantasy Finance. What they don't know is that he's been saving birthday and Christmas money since sixth grade until he has enough to create a real portfolio, which he does as soon as he has enough to meet the minimum threshold. His dads sign for him to open the account because he's underage.

He tells his best friend John, who borrows \$100 from his dad and gives it to Edward to invest. John tells a couple other friends, who give him another \$100. In a couple months, Edward doubles their money, and John returns his dad's original \$100 while leaving the rest invested with Edward. Edward's dads call him Alex P. Keaton, which he doesn't understand at all but makes them both laugh when they say it. He'd try to figure it out, but he's too busy making money and trying to get a girl (*any girl*) to notice him. His biological mom spends more time than he does at this endeavor. Sometimes, Edward feels like finding a girlfriend for him means more to her than it does to him. Sometimes, he wishes she'd stop. He wants to figure out who he likes on his own, and then he'd like to get that person's attention (if he can) on his own. He tries talking to her and getting his dads to talk to her, but she doesn't get it. He knows she's trying to help, but it's still annoying.

**13 Physical and
Cognitive
Development in
Emerging/Early
Adulthood**

"You're sure?" Brendon asks Edward on the eve of his 18th birthday.

"Of course. I wouldn't ask if I weren't." He looks from one dad to the other. "Were you looking forward to the empty nest? It's not like Valerie's off to college already. You've got her another nine years."

Brendon frowns at him and shakes his head. "What are you talking about, the empty nest? You're welcome to be here as long as you need. I just want to make sure you're happy with this choice. Living on campus is a big part of college."

Edward shrugs. "Yeah, but those are things I don't care about. 'Course, if you want to spend more money . . ."

Both dads laugh. They know how seriously this soon-to-be economics major takes money.

Jared throws up his hands. "Fine. You can stay here, but if your grades fall—"

"They won't. I promise."

Edward pursues his college degree for three and a half years, finishing a semester early despite John and other friends' best efforts to drag him to Friday night football and after parties. He loves his friends, but he has dreams, too. The spring semester after graduation, he and his girlfriend visit the three campuses where he's been accepted to business school. Jennifer will finish in May with the rest of their classmates, and he has plans for them, but first he has to decide among Harvard, Duke, and the University of South Carolina. They like all three campuses, and all three offer Edward good packages. The only school he truly falls in love with is South Carolina, and with Jennifer's unqualified support, he accepts their offer.

Back at home, Jennifer's parents, his dads, Valerie, his best friend John, and his biological mom take him out to celebrate. Every step he's wanted to take, he's made happen. Looking at his dads' faces around the table, he knows these are the people who made it possible. He smiles at Ginny, who smiles back. Earlier, she told him how proud she was of him and how proud she knew his dads must be. "They did such a good job raising you," she said.

Thinking about it, Edward knows she was right. It's his dads who deserve all the credit.

**14 Socioemotional
Development in
Emerging/Early
Adulthood**

Jennifer sits on Edward's bed while he sorts through his closet. He has 18 years' worth of mostly junk to get rid of as he prepares for his move to Columbia, South Carolina. A few months remain before he goes, but 18 years probably get the better of mere months, he thinks. On his bed, Jennifer flips through a box of old photographs that cover Edward: The Awkward Years. She laughs when she comes upon a picture of him with shaggy hair, braces, and a pimple that needed its own zip code. He keeps sorting, half holding his breath as she works her way to the bottom of the box. He knows when she gets there, because she grows quiet, eventually asking, "Ed, what's this?"

He pokes his head from the closet and says, "What's what?" although he knows.

"This," she replies, holding a small box on the air.

"Oh, that? Nothing much. You can look if you want." He returns to the closet.

He counts the seconds. One . . . two . . . three . . . four . . .

"Edward?"

He joins her on the bed. "Jennifer." Kissing her cheek, he makes his appeal. "I'm pretty sure I can't do much without you anymore, and I'm very sure whatever I do I don't do well unless your hand is in it. Don't make me go to Columbia alone. Marry me."

She laughs and takes the ring from the box. "I have to marry you, don't I? Who's going to explain advanced calculus to you so you can finish your MBA? Besides, who'll cook for me when you're gone?" she asks, referring to Edward's hobby of amateur gourmet cooking.

"Good point," Edward agrees. "Whatever it takes for you to say yes, I'll take it. You really have no idea how anxious I am." He is, too. Every time he thinks about starting graduate school and the money he'll owe if he fails and how stupid he'll feel if he fails, he comes close to a panic attack.

"Well, we can't have that," she says, soothing him, "so, I suppose that's a yes then."

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| <p>15 Physical and Cognitive Development in Middle Adulthood</p> | <p>Jared suffers a heart attack during Valerie's junior year of college. Cardiologists find significant blockage in one artery and perform an angioplasty. Jared is warned off a long list of his favorite foods and put on a diet regimen. Brendon tries to help, but tensions run high in the household due to Brendon and Valerie's attempts to become healthier for Jared and Jared's irritation at the required changes to his lifestyle. Valerie complains to Edward and Jennifer, who now have a toddler of their own.</p> <p>Jared passes away the following year after a second heart attack despite everyone's attempts to make the necessary changes to keep him well. Edward, mourning deeply and watching the devastation run through his family, calls Ginny, his biological mother. He asks her about her family history of all sorts of diseases and illness. He also asks what she knows about his biological father's family. It looks like, if he suffers any major ailments as he ages, it will be because he makes poor lifestyle choices.</p> |
| <p>16 Socioemotional Development in Middle Adulthood</p> | <p>When Edward returns home from work a night shortly before their oldest child Eddie leaves for college, Jennifer waits for him at the kitchen table. She has a glass of water and a half-eaten chocolate bar in front of her as well as an opened envelope. He has no idea what he's done wrong, but it's clearly something.</p> <p>"Babe," he says, laying a kiss on her cheek as he drops his briefcase in a chair. "How was your day?"</p> <p>"Good. Jim," she says, indicating a junior lawyer at the firm where she's a partner now, "got a new client that's pretty interesting. Nothing else really except this." She waves the letter.</p> <p>"What is that?"</p> <p>"It's from Harrington," their bank, she means. "Why didn't you tell me you were divesting your retirement account? That seems like the sort of decision husbands and wives make together."</p> <p>"We didn't talk about it?" he asks, knowing they didn't. He meant to, but ultimately, he thought the money was his and so he should be able to reinvest it as he saw fit. Looking at her now, he realizes the tax penalty isn't the only penalty he's going to pay.</p> <p>"We did not."</p> <p>"I made a 28 percent return on that money within seven months, Jen."</p> <p>"It was a huge gamble, and you should've told me."</p> <p>Edward knows he has no choice but to capitulate. She's probably right. "You're right," he says and tries to keep the placating tone out of his voice.</p> <p>"Do you mean that?"</p> <p>"I do." Taking her hand, he gives her his most sincere smile, and says, "I should've made certain we were together on this. I just wanted to make sure we had enough when the nest was empty and we decided it was time to do all the things we keep talking about doing . . . Alaskan cruises, Mexican summers, taking our honeymoon again . . ."</p> <p>She smiles at that. "Okay, but Ed, this really was a huge gamble. Please let's talk before doing something so risky next time."</p> <p>"I promise."</p> |

Edward tries to keep his promise, but Jennifer is busy and she should trust him. Marriage is about trust. She's known him long enough to put faith in his financial ability. None of that matters, however, when she finds records of the next transaction. Furious, she packs a suitcase and moves into a hotel without a conversation, leaving him only a note. A year of back-and-forth conversation leads nowhere, and in his 40s, Edward is a divorced investment banker who misses his wife and still tells people he's married. In his heart he is. For the longest time, he doesn't date, doesn't consider marrying again, and spends his free time taking care of Brendon and his little sister Valerie. After a few years, Valerie convinces him to go on a blind date with a woman she knows from work. Her name is Nadia Chase, and Edward finds himself smitten from the moment they meet. Although both opt to live independently rather than settling down in a second marriage (for both of them), Edward deeply enjoys their relationship and is grateful for it and for Valerie's persistence.

17 Physical and Cognitive Development in Late Adulthood

Brendon, who has lived in a small condo near Edward for nearly 20 years, passes away in relatively good health but of advanced age when Edward is 60. The loss rocks him, and he finds the ensuing depression unexpected and difficult to work through. Nadia suggests he seek the advice of his physician, which he does, and the doctor recommends a low dosage of an antidepressant. The medicine seems to help. Although Edward's mourning process lasts a considerable amount of time, he faces it squarely. At the doctor's suggestion, he begins taking a short jog in the mornings. He doesn't know if the antidepressants or the jogging will help him live as long as his dad did, but he's not ready to die quite yet.

18 Socioemotional Development in Late Adulthood

On Edward's 75th birthday, he receives a telephone call. His youngest daughter Mary brings the phone to him with a brief shake of her head; she doesn't know who the caller is. Taking the phone, Edward puts it to his ear, expecting maybe to hear one of John's children. His best friend of more than 50 years died two years before, leaving a gaping hole in his own life. He's wrong though; the voice is female and unknown.

"Mr. Archer?"

"Yes. This is Edward Archer. Who's this?"

"This is Elena Brantley, Mr. North. I understand it's your birthday. Felicitations."

"Thank you. Do I know you, Ms. Brantley?" Edward, innately suspicious, wonders who the woman is and how she knows it's his birthday. He's certain he knows no Elena Brantley.

"No, you don't, but I'd like for us to know one another. That's why I've called. I hoped I could come see you one day this week. I'll be close to where you live thought maybe you would enjoy a visit. My name is Elena Brantley, but that's my married name. My maiden name is Ellis."

Edward's eyes widen. "Ellis? My mother's last name was Ellis."

"I know," she says. "Ginny Ellis?"

Suspicious now, Edward says, "Yes. Who is this again?"

"Elena Brantley. Edward, my mother was Ginny Ellis."

Edward sits quietly without speaking for a moment. This declaration if true would make Elena Brantley his sister. He has a sister. Valerie is his sister. Does he want another? Perhaps not. He might not even like this woman, this Elena Brantley. But he might. He and Valerie both might. He wonders why Ginny never mentioned another child.

"I knew her," he says slowly, "Ginny. Did you?"

"No," Elena tells him. "I didn't. I only learned after she passed away that she was my mother. It's taken me all this time, the time since then, to find out she had another child and to find you."

"I see," he says at last. "This is a shock."

"I'm sure it is. If I've upset you—"

"Not at all. When would you like to get together?"

"Wednesday or Thursday maybe? I'll be passing through Johnsonville on my way to visit my children. I believe that's quite close to you."

"It is," Edward confirms. "There's a barbeque place just off the highway at exit 94. We could meet there Thursday at 12:30 p.m. if that's convenient."

"Sure. I'll look forward to it."

Edward and Nadia meet Elena Brantley, a warm and generous 60-something who resembles Edward in coloring and stature but not much else. They like her, but Edward feels no immediate affinity or sibling bond.

Elena shows Edward the small cache of information she's put together on their mother Ginny. Sent into foster care when she was days old, Elena never knew Ginny, but she sought her out as a teenager. The records were sealed, and she was able to find out her birth mother's information only after she passed away.

Nadia turns the photographs around and looks at them closely. "She was lovely," she says and smiles.

"Yes, she really was." A wistful tone enters Elena's voice. "Days come and go when I wish she'd cared more, but then I remind myself she cared enough to let us go."

The statement made Edward think. "Do you think there are more of us? Brothers and sisters?"

"No." Elena shook her head. "I've checked hospital records and birth records. It's just the two of us."

"You were adopted, too?" he asks.

"Yes, I was. To really wonderful parents. I couldn't have asked for them to be more wonderful."

"Same here. You'll have to come for the holidays then. If you want to," he adds. "I have another sister. Her name is Valerie. My dads adopted her when she was an infant, too, and I'm sure she'd love to meet you."

They make a plan for December, after which Edward says good-bye to Elena and see her off to her children. Edward hadn't known what to expect or what he wanted from this meeting, but he goes home feeling very satisfied and somehow lighter. Jennifer rides the whole way with her hand in his.

**19 Experience
With Death and
Dying**

After meeting Elena, Edward decides he's done all he needed to do in life. He's been loved by good parents—even Ginny—and he's cared for sisters and friends. He's made money and given money and stopped caring about money. Almost every day, he spends morning to bedtime alone. He's lonely and depressed. He knows he is, but he's disinterested in changing his situation. All he hopes is that it's all over soon.

It's not. He suffers several more months of reclusive loneliness. Valerie urges him to see the doctor, to get a prescription, or even to start therapy, but he resists all her efforts to cheer him. He wants to be left alone. Who knew it takes so long to die from old age and loneliness? Surprising, he thinks. He begins keeping a daily diary to have something to do. He's found mid-entry, pen in hand at 77. The medical examiner gives the cause of death as heart attack but tells the family Edward was predominantly old and ready to go.

Case Discussion Questions

1. During Edward's toddlerhood, his biological mother contacts his adoptive fathers. She would like the chance to meet Edward despite the fact that the adoption was sealed and she was the one who decided to put him up for adoption. How does this (potential) introduction of a third parent into Edward's life alter his life's trajectory? Do Jared and Brendon have any reason to distrust Ginny, and would their reactions possibly alter Edward's life trajectory across any and all domains (biological, cognitive, and socioemotional)?
2. In his young adulthood, Edward elects to go to college at home, which he also does in the optimal case. What circumstances are different in his college years between these two case outcomes across any and all domains (biological, cognitive, and socioemotional)? Why?
3. In middle adulthood, Edward and his wife divorce. What behaviors on Edward's part contribute to this outcome, contrasted with the optimal case, and what conditions across any and all domains (biological, cognitive, and socioemotional) may be related to his subsequent decision not to remarry?
4. Consider Edward's optimal case outcomes at the end of his life and Erikson's integrity-versus-despair stage of psychosocial development. How does this case compare to that one? Consider all of Edward's life events. How do you think those contributed to any differences in Edward's end-of-life outcomes and his sense of integrity versus despair?

8. Undesirable Outcomes: Aiza Morris

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| <p>2 Biological and Environmental Foundations</p> | <p>Trina, who is 35 when Aiza is conceived, has few prenatal issues. She's fit, healthy, and has all the advantages financial resources can offer. However, she is also technically of advanced maternal age, and her ob-gyn keeps close tabs on her for any negative effects she and Aiza may experience because of this. Aiza's moms, on the other hand, live believing that 40 is the new 30. Although Trina requires in vitro fertilization (IVF) for conception because she and Kristy rely on sperm donation, they opt for only minimal preimplantation testing on the embryo. Their IVF isn't an opportunity to create a perfect baby but, rather, the opportunity to create a baby. The rest they leave up to Trina's diet, exercise, and the care of her capable doctor. They're moderately surprised, therefore, but not devastated when they learn Aiza will be born with Down's syndrome. After discussions they have only because they feel they should have them, Kristy gathers what information is readily available at the hospital on parenting Down's children and makes an appointment with a specialist. Loving a special needs child as they do their first child will be easy, but there's no reason to be ill prepared, they think.</p> |
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3 Prenatal Development, Birth, and the Newborn Experience

Trina delivers Aiza with Kristy by her side and Devon jumping up and down at the head of the hospital bed. As Aiza crowns, Devon peeks where the obstetrician sits on her stool, prepared to catch the baby, and he makes a face of extreme disgust, causing all in the room to laugh. Afterward, he keeps his feet near Trina's head but bounces in anticipation until they hear Aiza's first lusty cries.

"There she is!" Kristy says in completely unnecessary announcement. "Look at our girl."

Already crying from the abrupt drop in hormones, Trina holds out her arms. "Let me have her." Demand met, Kristy cuts the cord and quickly wraps their new daughter in a swath of hospital blanket before handing her to Trina, who tucks Aiza close to her body and stares at her. "Ah, you are a beauty, aren't you?"

Devon disagrees.

"She's dirty, and she's bleeding."

Kristy laughs. "Oh, no. Sweetie, she's not bleeding. She's just got a little blood on her from being born. The nurses will get her all cleaned up in a just a few minutes."

"I can hold her?" he asks, still working on grammatical structure in his tender toddler years.

"Yes, baby," Trina tells him. "Let Mommy sit you on the bed, and you can hold your baby sister."

"Just for a couple minutes, okay?" the doctor says. "Your sister needs to be checked out by her doctor pretty soon."

Of course she would to make sure there weren't underlying problems associated with the Down's that needed addressing right away. Trina decides to think about that when they're forced to. Right now, she wants Devon to enjoy his baby sister.

4 Physical Development in Infancy and Toddlerhood

"Dis li'uhl piggy went 'oo market, dis li'uhl piggy went 'ome . . ."

Devon holds his baby sister on his lap and sings to her. He has to reach a long way to touch the tips of her toes, and she wiggles as he sings.

His mom hands him a bottle and asks, "Do you want feed Aiza, Devon?"

"Me do it!" he yells. Mommy bends down and helps him start feeding his baby sister. When everything is okay, she stands and starts working on dinner. "She's eating," he giggles, so happy he can help.

"She is," Mommy says. "You're a big helper, Devon."

"Me like helping."

5 Cognitive Development in Infancy and Toddlerhood

Aiza lays on her back and grabs her toes. Rolling back and forth, she sings to herself. Although her moms don't understand her gibberish, Devon tells them she's singing real words. They believe him. Thus far, they know she can say *mama* and *ma* to refer to the two of them, and *Deh* for Devon. Aside from their names, Aiza seems content to let Devon speak for both of them or to grunt her way into understanding with her moms. The pediatrician says this isn't abnormal, and they'll all keep an eye on her language development.

- 6 Socioemotional Development in Infancy and Toddlerhood**
- When Aiza turns a year old, Trina decides she's ready to return to full-time legal practice. After the first three months, she started corresponding with the office electronically and by cell phone, consulting on low-profile cases and providing needed information on cases that hadn't closed when she left to have Aiza. Occasionally she and Aiza traveled together to the office for an hour or two. Now, she's ready for full-time practice again. Devon, in preschool and without the need for full-time care, is less a concern than their Aiza. After a lot of conversation, Kristy and Trina decide the best answer is to find an inclusive preschool that cares specifically for special needs children, where they can enroll Aiza three days each week. Trina will take Fridays off unless she has to be in court, which is unlikely. Kristy will continue to take her normal Wednesdays off. With a preschool they feel good about the rest of the week, Aiza will be cared for all day, and Devon can continue his preschool day at St. Andrews uninterrupted.
- The moms spend a few weeks looking at preschools they've secured through word of mouth from friends and coworkers. By the deadline Trina's given herself for returning to work, they've settled on a small, well-staffed facility specializing in a variety of special needs, not just Down's, and they feel good about their choice. Secure in the children's well-being, Trina dresses in a smart suit, kisses her wife and baby, and snaps her fingers at Devon. "Come along, babe. Time to go."
- 7 Physical and Cognitive Development in Early Childhood**
- In second grade at the special needs school where her moms enrolled her, Aiza hates everyone. This is challenging, because Aiza generally hates no one. But no one at school is nice to her. The kid with autism—Jarod—isn't nice to anyone, and even Cindy, who also has Down's like she does, is what her mom calls a loof. Aiza hasn't ever seen a loof before, but she knows that's how Cindy acts because she behaves the way Mom describes loofs.
- "I want to go real school," she says one night at dinner.
- "You do go to real school," Mom says, but Mama looks at her and squints her eyes.
- "What do you mean by 'real school,' Aiza?"
- "Like Devon. I want to go to school with Devon. I don't like the weird kids."
- Devon laughs and throws a biscuit at her face. "You're one of the weird kids. You know that, right?"
- "Devon!" Mom yells.
- "I know that!" Aiza yells.
- "Good, 'cause all the kids at my school'll call you bad names if you come there."
- "That's okay. At least I wouldn't have to deal with the loofs." Both her moms hold their forks away from their mouths and stare at her. "What?" she asks. "Can I just go to Devon's school? Please? I'll even let you pack salad for my lunch."
- "We'll see," they tell her, which is code for "we want to talk about it when you're not around."
- "Thanks!" Aiza picks up the biscuit Devon threw and starts putting butter on it.

- 8 Socioemotional Development in Early Childhood** Weekday evenings are predictable in the Morris household. Trina and Kristy work together fixing dinner. Neither is an outstanding cook, but they both prepare passable meals. No one's died yet anyway, they joke a few times a week. Monday and Tuesday, Devon helps while Aiza takes care of other household tasks like taking out the trash and cleaning the litterbox. On Thursday and Friday, the children switch. The moms are intent on allowing both Devon and Aiza to find their own paths, particularly whether they want traditional or atypical gender identities and the roles that go with them. However, they're also determined to make sure both can do all chores around a house and don't expect any division of labor based on body parts. The family doesn't talk about it unless one of the kids brings it up, but it's important for Trina and Kristy.
- The only chore Aiza pushes back on is the litterbox. "It's so gross!" she complains. To be fair, her brother does, too.
- When Aiza exerts her will, Kristy (the bad cop) approaches the situation with loving firmness. Aiza learns there are boundaries, that if a chore is on her list, it's pretty much non-negotiable, but she also learns that her mom is ready and willing to listen to her concerns. When Aiza says she doesn't like "dirty" chores, Kristy points out that she doesn't mind taking out the trash. Faced with her own inconsistency, Aiza agrees that maybe the litterbox isn't *so bad* a couple days each week. She also admits that she doesn't like doing it after Devon because her brother doesn't do such a good job. *That*, Kristy tells her, is a legitimate complaint, and she will have a talk with Devon to correct that problem right away.
- 9 Physical and Cognitive Development in Middle and Late Childhood** Thank goodness Mom and Mama let her change schools! Even Devon was wrong. No one calls her bad names at St. Andrews. Best of all, she likes school now. When Devon moves to the upper school and she's still in the lower school, she misses seeing him every day, but it's not a big deal. She has friends—*normal* friends—and she keeps busy. Science is the best class. They never would've gotten to dissect a worm at her old school!
- 10 Socioemotional Development in Middle and Late Childhood** Aiza still doesn't like one girl at St. Andrews. Her name is Amanda Tate, and Aiza tries to like her, even though she's pretty mean. She never calls Aiza bad names, but she calls other girls mean things. She's one of those people she hears her moms talk about who like other people to feel bad.
- Amanda sneaks up behind Aiza at the upper school open house for rising seventh graders. Aiza's moms are talking to Ms. Eddleman, who will be her homeroom teacher in a few months—and Amanda's.
- "Morris," Amanda whispers.
- "Hi, Amanda," Aiza says when she turns around and faces Amanda. She sees Devon coming toward her in the hallway and waves. She's not scared of Amanda, but it's always nice to have her brother around. When Devon joins them, he looks at the door.
- "Ms. Eddleman? Sorry, Aiza."
- "I'll live," she assures him. "Besides, Amanda and I will have Ms. Eddleman together, so it will be extra fun!"

He looks at Amanda. “Slumming, Amanda?”

Aiza watches as Amanda’s face gets red. She doesn’t say anything back to Devon, because their moms return and say it’s time to go. As Aiza walks away, she glances back at Amanda.

“See you Monday, Amanda!”

Just because she doesn’t like Amanda doesn’t mean she can’t be nice. That’s a perk of Down’s. Everyone expects you to be happy and nice all the time and somehow incapable of sarcasm. Aiza’s capable of sarcasm, and Amanda might have to find that out soon.

11 Physical and Cognitive Development in Adolescence

When she’s 14, Aiza sits between her moms while they talk with her doctor. She’s just had her annual checkup, and they always spend a few minutes at the end hearing things about her that the doctor thinks are important. Sitting still while other people talk *about* her *in front of* her makes her feel awkward.

“I just want to double check a few things,” the doctor tells her moms.

“Of course,” they both says to her, and Aiza nods with them.

“Sure!” she says, too.

“No drugs?”

“No drugs,” she confirms. Her moms tell the doctor the same thing.

“No drugs,” they say. “No alcohol either. We keep a close watch on everything with Devon and his friends in and out of the house.”

The doctor is smiling now. “Sure. I remember those days,” she says to both of Aiza’s moms. “What about sex?”

Aiza laughs. “*No sex*,” she assures her.

“Good again.” Dr. Bennett nods. “I know you all may feel like these are nonsensical questions for Aiza, but I assure you they aren’t. She’s at an increased risk of peer pressure and being taken advantage of, particularly being mainstreamed.”

Mama speaks up. “Should we reconsider–”

But the doctor shakes her head. “Not at all. Aiza’s very bright and very happy at St. Andrews. As long as she stays happy, I think it’s a good place for her. I just want you to be aware and keep the lines of communication open.”

Both her moms nod. “We can do that,” Mama says.

12 Socioemotional Development in Adolescence

In the upper school at St. Andrews, Aiza navigates a complex social maze. She’s in school with what are predominantly wealthy white kids, and she knows she’s one of them. She also goes to school with mostly “normal” kids, and she knows she is not one of them. Most of her friends aren’t special needs; they’re ordinary kids like Devon. She almost never thinks about her challenges unless someone mentions them, but when she’s reminded of her Down’s, it makes her sad. She doesn’t care that she’s not like everyone else, but she doesn’t know why people think that’s such a bad thing.

In 10th grade, she meets Marc Pagano. She and Mom are shopping for groceries on Saturday, and the boy who puts their food into the bags smiles at her. When she smiles back, he talks to her. When she talks back, he tells her his name is Marc, and she introduces herself as Aiza. She's aware of Mom watching her. Later, Mom says that the boy from the store is cute, and Aiza agrees. At dinner, Devon teases her, and she rolls her eyes at him, but she hears Mom telling Mama that Marc has Down's, too, and he seems like a nice boy. Aiza doesn't care that he has Down's. She likes his nice blue eyes.

Aiza starts dating Marc a few months after they first meet. The following year, he takes her to her junior prom. Trina helps her shop for a dress. They go to three different stores, and Aiza loves all the dresses she puts on. Finally, Mom tells her she has to decide.

"Do you think Marc should help me choose?" she asks Mom.

Mom shakes her head. "No, honey. I think you should pick the dress you like best."

"But I love them *all*!"

Mom laughs. "Do you want to know the one I like?"

"Yes."

"I like this pale yellow one with the tiny, little, embroidered roses at the hem."

"I do, too," Aiza agrees. "It's really pretty. Can I have yellow shoes to match?"

"Of course."

Aiza's mom purchases the dress and arranges for the shoes. She wants to show Marc her dress so badly! She gives him the tiny swatch of fabric that comes with the dress instead, instructing him how to order his bowtie. Devon promises to help, and Aiza is so happy that she almost doesn't care that both her moms have separate talks with her about sex and how to say no and not to drink anything other than the punch at the dance. She rolls her eyes (her favorite nonverbal message to tell grown-ups that she gets it already) and promises to be a good girl. It's even more mortifying when Marc comes over for dinner the week before the prom, and they have the same talk with him! She almost can't wait to be a grown-up so she can live her own life without her moms always being so overprotective. It's not like she's stupid because she has Down's.

**13 Physical and
Cognitive
Development in
Emerging/Early
Adulthood**

"Hi, Mama."

Mama kisses the top of her head when she walks into the kitchen. Aiza's at the table working on her accounting homework. She likes math. This is her third semester taking continuing education classes at the local community college. She takes two every semester in accounting or personal finance. She wants to learn to help people with their taxes or personal budgeting so that she can start making her own money. She and Marc have a goal. When they're both earning \$15,000 per year, they're going to apply to live in the assisted living facility in town that's just for grown-ups with special needs. If they get approved, then they're going to get married. First, she has to get the education she needs to make money.

"What're you working on? Homework?"

"Yep," she says. "This is a fun chapter. We're doing profit and loss statements."

Mama makes a funny face. "If you say so," she says, "although I think I'd rather have a tooth filled."

Aiza scrunches her face. "Is that sarcasm?"

"It is indeed. You're getting better."

"I guess so."

Mama opens a beer at the counter and asks her, "Will you be at home for dinner tonight?"

Aiza shakes her head. "No. If I can finish this homework, Marc and I are seeing a movie."

"And if you don't?"

"There is no don't, Mama. You know that."

Mama touches her shoulder on the way to the refrigerator. "Yes, I do."

**14 Socioemotional
Development in
Emerging/Early
Adulthood**

"Do you like it, Marc?" Aiza asks when they tour the assisted living facility.

"I like it. Do you like it?"

"Yes."

They follow the residence director from room to room, and they interrupt to ask questions of their own, while their parents pepper the director with more questions than Aiza could believe even existed. At the end of the tour, she and Marc sign papers agreeing to live in the house for six months. If they still like it then, they can make arrangements to stay. Their parents have to sign a lot of papers, too, but Aiza's used to that.

"I want to buy curtains," she whispers to Marc while, her moms finish up with the director.

"Yellow ones?" he asks, knowing that's her favorite color.

"Of course!" She turns in a circle looking at the kitchen and living rooms. "And maybe a cute picture for over there."

"I thought we could put a wedding picture there," Marc says.

Aiza frowns. "Whose wedding picture? Devon's?" she asks because her brother was recently married.

"No, silly," Marc says, laughing. "Ours!"

"Are we getting married?"

"Married?"

Four heads turn in their direction, the three moms' and the residence director's. Marc's dad isn't there because he divorced Marc's mom a long time ago.

"Yes," Marc says to them all. "I want Aiza to marry me."

"Well, that puts a new spin on things," Mama says.

"Can I have another dress?" Aiza asks.

Mom comes and puts her arms around her. "Oh, honey, if you're going to get married, you can have whatever dress you want."

"I want to get married. Marc and I love each other, and I know how to be a good wife," she asserts.

"You do?" Mom asks. "How's that?"

She smiles at her and at Mom. "I watched the two of you."

Every now and then, Aiza and Marc talk about buying their own house or even about renting a small apartment, but their moms always talk them into staying at the assisted living facility. Aiza admits she likes their house there, and it's an affordable place to live with lots of nice things like a swimming pool and a health clinic. She knows they're right. They also talk about making a baby sometimes, but even though Aiza understands she probably wouldn't have a baby with Down's syndrome, she worries what will happen to a baby after she and Marc pass away. It's easier and, she thinks, better if it's just the two of them. Besides, Devon has babies, and she loves being an aunt. She's a good aunt, too. She always has hidden candies and ice cream when her niece and nephew visit, and they never tell their parents when she and Marc get them hotdogs—a forbidden food for sure!—for dinner. If she misses having a baby, it's a tiny thing she hardly understands, and she and Marc have so much fun together that it's okay.

15 Physical and Cognitive Development in Middle Adulthood

As Aiza moves into middle age, she compares herself to an old clock. Parts of her start to slow down and not work well. She wishes it weren't so, but it is. Marc notices it first when she starts asking him to repeat everything he says at least once. After a trip to the doctor, she learns she has developed conductive hearing loss and will eventually—not even all that far in the future—need hearing aids. She's already suffering from arthritis, as is Marc. She takes medicine for that. Marc has an accelerated joint condition causing him serious distress. Some days, he uses a cane to walk. Both of them know this is common for people with Down's syndrome, but it still annoys Aiza when Devon talks about "getting old" because he needs glasses.

16 Socioemotional Development in Middle Adulthood

Aiza and Marc continue to live in their little house in the assisted living community. In the years they've been there, Aiza taught herself to sew, and she's made several sets of curtains for the windows, tablecloths, napkins, and other linens. Some of the napkins and pillowcases she's embroidered like her long-ago prom dress. She likes the tiny needlework and the way what she does makes everything beautiful.

She works for a small accounting firm helping with corporate taxes all year and personal tax returns at the end of the year. She loves her job, especially because her boss doesn't care that she doesn't hear well. Marc is now a department supervisor at the grocery store. Between them, they make enough money to pay for their expenses and save a little for retirement. Both Aiza and Marc know they don't need to worry about retirement, but it's nice to feel "normal" by working and saving like other people.

When Aiza is in her late 30s, her mom Trina passes away from a stress-related heart attack. Aiza is devastated. She's never lost anyone before, at least not unexpectedly. When her grandparents died, they were old and even if no one knew exactly when they would pass away, no one was surprised when it happened either. But Mom? Aiza cries for days. Marc is so upset that he almost sends her home to Kristy because he thinks she will be happier there. In the end, Devon comes to stay for a day or two and helps Marc help Aiza. No one knows what to do, but they cling together until the worst of the early days passes. When Aiza goes back to work, she thanks her boss for the time off and gets back to working hard. She thinks, as life slowly returns to normal, that she's glad she and Marc never had children. She doesn't want anyone to ever be this sad about her dying.

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| <p>17 Physical and Cognitive Development in Late Adulthood</p> | <p>As Aiza moves into late adulthood, she loses Kristy to old age. Two years later, she loses Marc, who isn't yet old but has lived beyond what's typical for a man with Down's syndrome. She feels alone.</p> <p>A year after Marc's death, Aiza's doctor tells her that she's depressed. This isn't shocking to Aiza, who has many sad days now. The doctor gives her some medicine to help, and it seems to for a while. When she starts forgetting little things—like where she means to go when she puts on her shoes or what show she means to watch when she turns on the television—she gets sad again and returns to the doctor.</p> <p>The doctor subjects Aiza to a large number of tests. These aren't blood tests or X-rays but tests like she used to take at St. Andrews. The doctor says they'll help him figure out why she's forgetting so many things, and that makes her feel a little better. When she's all through, the doctor tells her that he has good news; she doesn't have Alzheimer's disease. Aiza isn't sure what Alzheimer's disease is, but she's glad she doesn't have it. The doctor tells her that what she does have is some short-term memory loss, which is causing her trouble with remembering things <i>right now</i> but not so much things <i>before</i> or even so much some things <i>in the future</i>. This, he says, is annoying but not necessarily overly troublesome. Then he gives her a big book of puzzles to work on and tells her that will help her memory. At this point, she'll try just about anything.</p> |
| <p>18 Socioemotional Development in Late Adulthood</p> | <p>Aiza's memory continues to challenge her—both her day-to-day living and also her patience. To her way of thinking, it's enough that she's made a pretty good life with Down's syndrome, that she's coped with conductive hearing loss for more than 30 years, and that she's suffered arthritis longer than most people are alive. She's completely annoyed by what she views as the overkill of adding memory to the mix.</p> <p>Her doctor seems somewhat amused when she tries to discuss her feelings, but he's firm with her, too. Aiza's been a lucky woman, living much longer than the average woman with Down's, and she's still in good overall health. Part of her wants to be annoyed with him, too, for reminding her of these things, but she can't. She knows he's right. In so many ways, she's had a charmed life. Her moms wanted her so much that they spent a gazillion dollars to make her and then again kept her growing in Mom's tummy even when they knew she would have Down's syndrome. She'd read a lot about babies with Down's, and she knows that many moms choose not to have their babies. That means that her moms spent a lot of money to have a baby with Down's syndrome, even if they didn't mean to. Her brother always took care of her, and they had the best example of how to be a good husband or wife the whole time they grew up. And Marc—she knew she was so lucky to meet him and to have their parents support their marriage and everything they wanted to do. They'd both been healthy for longer than they should've been. She doesn't want her body to break down. She doesn't want to get old. She doesn't want to die either.</p> |
| <p>19 Experience With Death and Dying</p> | <p>In her early 70s, Aiza contracts this flu. It's an odd thing to happen because she always gets the flu shot. Well, the doctor tells her it's not 100 percent perfect at protecting people. Still, she thinks, it should do better than this. She feels terrible.</p> <p>After several days at home alone feeling awful, she takes herself to the doctor. A quick examination tells him that she has the flu and also is likely suffering from pneumonia. After an X-ray, pneumonia is confirmed. The doctor is taking no unnecessary risks and sends Aiza to a nearby hospital for a few days.</p> |

In the hospital, Aiza enjoys the first few days of attention by hospital staff, food being brought to her, and all-day television in bed without feeling guilty. Pretty soon, she starts getting bored. Then she develops a cough that threatens her plans to get out of the hospital. Her doctor comes by and consults with the heart doctor. They tell her she's developed something called congestive heart failure, and she'll need to stay in the hospital even longer.

"You just don't want me to go home because you like me so much," she teases.

Inside, she's depressed. She wants to go home. She misses her photos of Marc and the pillow on her bed.

"Aiza," her doctor assures her, "as soon as you're well enough, we'll send you home."

Only she isn't well enough, not at any time after she first falls ill. While Aiza waits to get better and go home, her doctor watches her condition deteriorate despite his best efforts to reverse the course of her illness. To his great dismay, Aiza passes away one month after entering the hospital due to complications from pneumonia and congestive heart failure. She's 72.

Case Discussion Questions

1. Aiza is born, as expected, with Trisomy 21, Down's syndrome. Compare this birth outcome with Aiza's optimal case outcome. What impact might Aiza's birth in this case have on her life's trajectory across any and all domains (biological, cognitive, and socioemotional)?
2. In early adulthood, Aiza attends a local community college where she takes continuing education classes in personal finance and accounting. She wants to use these skills to possibly get a job in a tax accountant's office one day. This is a different life choice than Aiza's optimal case outcome in which she attends university, also locally, where she gets to explore ideas about using emergent technologies to shape a better world. What in Aiza's background would explain the divergence in these two paths? What can we assume with some certainty about her future, comparing each these two outcomes?
3. In her 30s, Aiza is married to Marc, who also has Down's syndrome. They live modestly in a special needs assisted living community. Compare this outcome to that of Aiza's optimal case in which she marries Dale, her once high school boyfriend, and the two opt to not have children. What factors in her childhood led to this divergence in mid-life choices? How would you expect this difference to manifest in subsequent periods of her development?
4. Consider Aiza's optimal case outcomes at the end of her life and Erikson's integrity-versus-despair stage of psychosocial development. How does this case compare to that one? Consider all of Aiza's life events. How do you think those contributed to any differences in Aiza's end-of-life outcomes and her sense of integrity versus despair?

9. Undesirable Outcomes: Zack Park

2 Biological and Environmental Foundations

Rebecca and Joseph meet with Rebecca's psychiatrist together. They've decided there are too many drawbacks to Rebecca stopping the meds for the duration of the pregnancy and need guidance on what to do and expect now. In the waiting room, Joseph flips through an issue of *GQ*, while she tries to remember the keys to Chopin. She hasn't played piano since seventh grade, but trying to remember is soothing. She moves her fingers on her knees and hopes Joseph doesn't think she's crazy.

"You're not crazy."

"I'm a little crazy," she whispers.

"Okay, maybe a little, but life would get boring without a little crazy."

"Mrs. Park?"

The receptionist has appeared without Rebecca noticing—score one for Joseph. Score all of them for Joseph. She loves him.

They enter Dr. Wen's office and sit on the sofa across the room from his desk. It's just homier, Rebecca thinks every time she comes here. The desk is so . . . *clinical*. Dr. Wen joins them and shakes her hand and then Joseph's.

"Rebecca! You look great. Pregnancy agrees with you."

"Thank you." She taps her knees again. "You've spoken with my OB, I think?"

"Yep." Dr. Wen nods. "Dr. Lucas and I conferred about your case. You know, this isn't all that uncommon, women needing to decide what to do about an SSRI or other psychotropic med during pregnancy."

"It's not?"

"Not at all. Now, unlike some, you've got a little higher dosage of Paxil, and you've been on Paxil for a lot longer than many."

"Yeah."

Joseph clears his throat to ask, "What exactly does that mean?"

"It means that Rebecca really isn't accustomed to coping with her illness without medication. She's dealing with significant debilitation without treatment."

"That's why I'm here," Rebecca says, reminding both men that she, the patient, is in the room. "We've decided that I'm going to continue the meds."

Dr. Wen looks surprised. "You are?"

"Yes. I don't think there's any behavioral regimen that can do for me what Paxil can, and I don't think I can successfully get through a pregnancy without help. Women *do* take SSRIs during pregnancy, right?"

"Well," Dr. Wen hedges.

"Well?" Joseph prods.

"It's a mixed bag of news. SSRIs are probably the best class of mood drugs to take during pregnancy if one must take anything. Low doses are associated with low, low incidence of birth defects."

"That's good," Rebecca says.

“Yes. If we can lower your dose at all, we can further reduce risks. You will face some postpartum risks, like hemorrhage, and we’ll watch for that. Babies tend to be a little smaller when born to moms on SSRIs, too.”

“Okay. I need to cook this one a little longer, and I need to stay away from aspirin.”

Dr. Wen frowns at her. “Rebecca, Paxil will be your one drug pass. We’re going to need you to stay away from everything else unless critically needed. There’s also the fact that Paxil is the one SSRI that’s known to be associated with a slight increase in the risk of fetal heart defect.”

“We see,” Joseph says quietly. “Doc, you know Rebecca.”

“I do.”

“What’s the risk of serotonin flooding if she comes off the meds? And what about hormones like stress hormones?”

“Guys, those are also risks. Big ones, I’d say.”

“Then I think I’m doing the right thing,” Rebecca reasserts. “I really do.”

“Okay,” Dr. Wen says, “then let’s map out a game plan.”

3 Prenatal Development, Birth, and the Newborn Experience

Joseph continues to work throughout Rebecca’s pregnancy. With a small but bustling medical practice he’s attempting to grow, it’s important he be in the office as much as possible. It’s also important for the practice he wants to grow because he’s practicing community-based general care. His clients are often uninsured or underinsured, and to assist with drain on health care systems like emergency room visits, he likes to be as accessible as possible. This leaves Rebecca alone much of the day and, often, at night, too.

Thanks to the suggestions of her obstetrician Dr. Lucas and psychiatrist Dr. Wen, she’s begun seeing a psychotherapist twice a month. Ms. Ivers has a master’s in counseling and a postgraduate certificate in applied behavioral analysis. She’s highly regarded in the therapeutic community, and she has room in her client list to begin seeing Rebecca right away. From the start, the two hit it off. Ms. Ivers understands Rebecca’s choice not to stop taking Paxil and supports her decision to get some therapeutic help to learn coping strategies. Coordinated care, Joseph calls it, and Rebecca knows how important he thinks it is.

In their third session, Rebecca rolls her eyes at herself and half laughs. “I kept taking Paxil to make sure my anxiety remained at a manageable level,” she tells Ms. Ivers.

“Right?”

“Well, but now I’m more anxious than ever about what harm I might be doing to the baby.”

“Ah. I see.”

“Should I have just stopped taking it?”

“Rebecca, I can’t make that decision for you. I wish there were a definite choice. We’re going to have to see what we can do for you now, though. Some meditative activities, some exercise, other options. We need to bring your anxiety levels down.”

She nods. “Thank you. I’m so worried.”

“Our goal is to keep you as even keeled as possible for as much of your pregnancy as possible. We can do this. Let’s try the one-day-at-a-time plan. I’d also like to see you keeping a daily log of your activities and how you feel throughout the day. If you’ll start that tomorrow, tonight even, then when you return we can have a talk about it. Just be sure to bring the log with you.”

“Good. Okay.” Rebecca breathes deeply again. “Good. I think we can do this. Thank you.”

“I think we can, too, Rebecca. Keep the faith, and call me whenever you need to.”

Rebecca uses the rest of her pregnancy and the log Ms. Ivers asks her to keep as the springboard for a memoir. As a writer, she likes the idea of sudden memoir—autobiography written as it’s happening—and the log forms the backbone of that for her. She wonders why women don’t talk about mental illness and pregnancy and wonders if doing so might help others. She hopes so anyway.

As she finishes a draft of the section on the second trimester, left behind weeks ago now, she feels a wave of complete exhaustion. Her back aches, and she wishes Joseph were home to give her a massage. Texting him, she says only *Tired and cranky. Come home soon, please.*

He does, but when he gets there, he takes a careful inventory of her pale face and constant stretching of her back then asks her a series of questions. Deciding she’s in labor, he gathers her overnight bag for the hospital and calls Dr. Lucas who meets them there.

As expected, it’s a long labor, nearly 12 hours. Most first labors are, Joseph reassures her as she breathes and crunches ice chips. She transitions in the 13th hour, and within 30 minutes of pushing delivers their beautiful son Zachary. Holding him, touching him, and seeing his perfect, little face—such a politic combination of both their genes—Rebecca knows the everything was worth it. Joseph takes a hundred pictures of them in the first hour, and she’s never been happier in her life.

4 Physical Development in Infancy and Toddlerhood

As they did with the decision to keep using Paxil during the pregnancy, Rebecca and Joseph have discussed what to do once their baby is born. Rebecca feels like the psychotherapy with Ms. Ivers helped her make it through the pregnancy and mostly sane. (No one’s perfect.) They’ve taken to heart the words of Rebecca’s obstetrician, who gives them information about newborns, their temperaments, and how temperament can change some if Mom is high strung or even the opposite. Joseph and Rebecca both know that she’s more than “high strung,” and they worry that she might affect the baby’s early temperament, which is already likely to be more than a little reactive. For these reasons as well as Rebecca’s own mental health, they’ve made the decision that she’ll continue her meds, and Zack will be formula fed.

Joseph worries that Rebecca will feel guilty that she isn’t breast-feeding Zack, but nothing could be further from the truth. When Zack wakes at 2:45 a.m. in the morning—every morning—Rebecca pats Joseph’s butt and says, “Give him his bottle, won’t you?” And there are as many nights that he gets home and she’s feeding him a bottle while cooking dinner as there are nights that she hands him the spatula and rocks Zack in the old rocker in the kitchen while Joseph cooks. Of course, Joseph’s *halmeoni*, his grandmother, gets her share of baby feeding, too, and that’s maybe the biggest perk aside from Rebecca’s meds to Zack being a bottle-fed baby.

Joseph returns from his practice late on a Thursday, afraid he's missed dinner. Coming through the door, he smells the delicious scent of his wife's meatball soup. Moments later he sees her standing in the doorway, Zack lying still on her shoulder. Rebecca laughs at her messy predicament and raises her eyebrows at Joseph. She points to the kitchen.

"*Halmeoni*," she says. "I found her like that when I brought Zack down after his nap. Joe, she's a wonderful treasure in our lives."

Curious, he peeks over Rebecca's shoulder. His grandmother sat at the kitchen table polishing Rebecca's silver candlesticks to be lit before the Shabbat meal the next day. The family has brass candlesticks that need less upkeep, but *halmeoni* knows Rebecca loves these. Even though she isn't Jewish, Joseph's grandmother appreciates the culture and traditions Rebecca embraces and wants their son to grow into in his home.

"Joe, I love our family."

"Of course you do." He squeezes her shoulder and kisses Zack's head. "We are the perfect family." Moving away from her, he steps into the kitchen and speaks to *halmeoni*. "*Insa, halmeoni. oneul halu eo ttaes-eo?*" Did you have a good day?

She smiles and nods. "*Dang-yeonhaji jagiya. hwanjaneun eottaess ni? sesang-eul dasi gu haessni?*" Of course, darling. How were your patients? Did you save the world again?

Rebecca joins them, smiling like Joseph's grandmother. "Save the world? *Halmeoni*, Joe is the world. Our world. Right, Zackie?"

5 Cognitive Development in Infancy and Toddlerhood

At 15 months, Zack is a slender, dark-headed, quiet boy. *Halmeoni* is his favorite person, but she may be edged out in his affections by Felix, the family cat. Felix, in repeated shows of extraordinary patience, allows Zack to pull his tail (and his whiskers), poke in his ears, and on occasion eat a pellet or two of his food.

No longer taking a bottle, Zack spends a good portion of each evening on the kitchen floor with Felix while one of his parents or his grandmother make dinner. When Mommy and Daddy talk and *halmeoni* cooks, Zack cruises around the table between his parents and waits for his grandmother to pass him a treat from the cooking food. Accomplishing these tasks, he starts to count his steps: *one, hana, two, du, three, se, four, ne . . .*

"Zack?" Daddy calls to him, and he looks at her.

"Mmm . . ." He blows bubbles looking at him.

"Did you just count in Korean and English? *Hangug-eolo mid-eul su iss-eoyo, jagi?*"

"Mmm . . ." He blows more bubbles and nods his head.

"That's good!" Daddy says.

"Is good boy, Zack," *halmeoni* says.

Zack reaches for more food, and she gives him a piece of cucumber.

"*Hana, du, se, ne . . .*"

"Good boy!" they clap, and Zack claps, too.

- 6 Socioemotional Development in Infancy and Toddlerhood**
- As Zack approaches his second birthday, Rebecca carries him to the pediatrician for a checkup. The vaccinations worry her—what about autism? She doesn’t care what the pediatrician says about research or at least she doesn’t care much—but she dutifully submits to each and every one. She understands her fears are irrational, and look how beautiful this child of hers is!
- “He really is,” Dr. Greysmith agrees when Rebecca comments. “How’s his temperament?”
- Rebecca bites her lip. “I don’t know. Some days, he seems like any other kid. He plays pat-a-cake and peekaboo, or he sits and pretends to read.”
- Dr. Greysmith glances at her. “And other days?”
- “It’s like he just isn’t there with me. He doesn’t cry or get frustrated. He just . . . sort of checks out.”
- Dr. Greysmith makes some notations on a chart. “Good weight-to-height ratio. He’s in the 65th percentile for both. He’s meeting all developmental milestones as expected.” She flashes a huge smile at Zack when he laughs and claps to show off. Then she looks at Rebecca. “How long do these ‘checking out’ periods last? A few minutes, an hour, more?”
- “No,” Rebecca corrects, “I mean all day, sometimes a little longer.”
- “I see. Okay then. I’m going to ask you to come back in next week, let Clara make an appointment for you.”
- “What’s wrong?” Rebecca could feel her anxiety rising like smoke from a fire.
- “Let’s just say nothing. I’d like to spend a little more time with him than I can today. All right? Now, any other questions for me?”
- “Only one. He’s speaking, of course. Pretty much what the books say to expect. But he’s speaking almost everything in both English and Korean.”
- “Both are spoken in the home if I remember correctly?”
- “Right, but will that confuse him?”
- Dr. Greysmith shakes her head. “Shouldn’t. Do you plan to introduce Hebrew?”
- “I do unless you tell me that’s just too much.”
- “I shouldn’t think so. I’ll be interested to see how our little guy progresses in that domain.” They stand, and Rebecca hoists Zack onto her hip. At the door, Dr. Greysmith says, “Don’t forget to stop at Clara’s desk.”
- 7 Physical and Cognitive Development in Early Childhood**
- Zack’s used to other kids looking at him funny in school. He wears a *kippah*, and not many Jewish boys do anymore. If that’s not bad enough, he’s clearly Asian-American and wearing a *kippah*. He’s not sure why anyone cares, but it makes him nervous. Mom and Dad say that’s because—as if the *kippah* and being an Asian-American Jew weren’t enough—he has something called Asperger’s syndrome. Unfortunately, this isn’t something like a cold or even the flu. He can’t get rid of it with rest and kisses from Mom, and that’s the part that sucks.
- Zack does have one friend. His name is James, and (so far) he doesn’t care that Zack looks funny or has some weird disease or whatever it is. He doesn’t even care when Zack says stupid things because of it. James is a good friend.

"What are you making for the science fair?" James asks.

"I don't know. My dad wants me to do Mt. Vesuvius, but why would I want to do something that represents an earthly formation responsible for killing thousands of people over history? What about you?"

"No idea. At. All."

"So, a volcano, too?"

James laughs and they take their Pop-Tarts and orange juice from the food lady in the school cafeteria.

"Probably," James admits. He looks at Zack and says, "I bet it's cool being you. You don't get upset about the things that don't matter."

Zack says, "It must be cool being *you*. You know what the important things are.

8 Socioemotional Development in Early Childhood

"Is it time?" Zack asks Mom.

She nods and touches his head. "It's time, sweetheart."

She looks at him like this is a good thing. Maybe one day she'll understand why some things aren't good no matter how much you want them to be.

"Mom, I've never been in charge of lighting the menorah candles before. Not ever. Now you want me to do it in front of people. Thanks."

"Zack, it's going to be fine. I promise. Your grandparents love you. All of them." She sighs and pulls him into a hug. "Would you feel better if we did it together? You and I?"

"I would feel better if the menorah melted into a big puddle of bronze goo."

Mom sighs. "Zack."

"You asked."

"So I did," she agreed. "I'm not going to make you do it. I'm not going to tell you you should do it. When you're ready, it'll be fine, and if you're never ready, that's fine, too."

"Thanks, Mom."

"Part of the job description."

9 Physical and Cognitive Development in Middle and Late Childhood

Zack is nearing the end of elementary school. He can speak, read, and write in English, Korean, and Hebrew now, and his best (only) friend James is interested in Hebrew. Zack teaches him a little bit here and there when he can, but for Zack, this is his people's language and where his whole culture comes from. His teachers try to talk to him about his language "fluidity," they call it, and his parents are called to school all the time about testing him. They always say no, and Zack always ignores what his teachers say about him being special. He has enough liabilities at school as it is.

10 Socioemotional Development in Middle and Late Childhood

Two days every week after school, Zack's dad picks him up after school and takes him to his office. This lets his mom take care of things like shopping and taking *halmeoni* to her own doctor's appointments or meeting with people about the books she writes. His dad is a doctor. Zack thinks that's pretty cool, and his dad lets him pretty much keep to himself. It's not like he needs someone to watch him every second anymore. He does his homework and labors through his dad quizzing him once each week on spelling words and social studies terms before they go home. That part is tiresome, but it's worth it to get to look at Dad's medical books and some of his supplies when he's finished.

Dad takes him home those two days every week, and Mom and *halmeoni* call out to them when the door opens, “Do we hear our two handsome men coming home?”

Dad always calls back, “Yes, you do! Do we hear our beautiful women calling to us?” Zack tries to understand the banter, but it mostly annoys him. So, he takes his things upstairs until it’s time to eat. Then he washes his hands and joins his family for dinner. After they eat, Zack walks the dog to the corner and back on his leash three times while Mom and *halmeoni* clean the dishes. Before bedtime, he sits at the table with Mom, and she teaches him some of the prayers from the Talmud or from the tiny prayer book she’s kept for him since he was born. Zack nibbles on a cookie while they study, and when she’s happy with what he’s done, he asks, “Can I take my shower now? I got a new book today and want to read some before I go to sleep.”

Telling each of his family members good night in turn, he goes to the bathroom, takes his shower, and burrows in bed with his new novel.

In fifth grade art class, Zack’s teacher has students work the whole year on a family project. They can use any materials they want as long as they complete a “This Is My Family” composition by the time the annual school art walk comes around in April. Zack chooses clay, and he’s pretty stoked. For months and months, he works on each individual member of his family. For Dad and *halmeoni* and himself, he uses a toothpick to carefully pull the eyes into just the right slant, rounded on top and kind of flat on the bottom. Each time he works on the project, he thinks about all the years of school when kids bullied him for looking different. He’d like to make something about that. Quietly he works on a small sculpture that contains conjoined figures of all the weird and bullied kids he knows, including himself. Some are like him because they look different or have a disability. Some have problems that aren’t so easy to see, but they’re there just the same.

It’s March when the art teacher takes Zack’s finished sculpture to the local pottery to studio to be fired. Zack thinks that a funny word for finishing his project. When he gets it back, it’s shiny and white. The teacher says that’s what porcelain looks like when it’s all finished. He loves it, and so does his teacher when they talk about it. For the first time since starting school, Zack feels purposeful and not freakish.

11 Physical and Cognitive Development in Adolescence

Zack’s 13 when his dear *halmeoni* passes away. Nothing’s wrong with her; she’s just old, and she dies. Dad gets sad for a long time. Zack is sad, too, but he doesn’t want to talk to his dad about it. That feels unfair. He doesn’t say anything and tries to focus on his schoolwork. It’s his last year of middle school, and he’s taking algebra with his friend James. It’s a high school class, and they have to do well or they’ll start high school with bad marks on their report cards. Fortunately, Zack has all the reason in the world to bury himself in work. He likes math, and no one at home seems to think anything’s weird about him studying all the time.

His dad still takes him to the medical office on Mondays and Thursdays after school, and he still loves hanging out with his dad and reading all the books he can in there. Sometimes, he and Dad sit in the exam room Zack plays in, and his dad asks him questions about symptoms to see if Zack can correctly guess a diagnosis. He never misses.

One day, his dad surprises him by asking, “What would you do if a woman came in complaining of pain in her upper back and unusual fatigue?”

“Send her to see you,” Zack says with heavy sarcasm.

Dad laughs, and so does Zack. Then Zack realizes that he actually has to start thinking about what he will do when he graduates from high school. He's not ready for that, and the thought makes him anxious.

**12 Socioemotional
Development in
Adolescence**

"Big day," Dad says, standing in Zack's bedroom doorway.

"Mmm-hmm," Zack agrees, feigning nonchalance. He's so nervous; he feels like Mom with all her little rituals to keep her anxiety under control—not that he'd tell his dad that.

"Need some help with your tie?"

Zack shakes his head. "No, thanks. I'll be down in a minute," he says, hoping to nudge his father politely from the room. It seems to work, and he has a few minutes to himself before both parents call him downstairs.

"Zack, it's time to leave!"

"Coming," he whispers, then repeats himself more loudly, "coming!"

It's Shabbat following his 13th birthday, and although Zack relaxed his math studies a bit to prepare for his bar mitzvah, he's still terrified.

Mom says having the ceremony on Shabbat is nice. Other members of the temple can come and see him become a man. Zack laughs at that. He's 13 and feels more like a baby than a man, but he loves his religion and its customs. Beyond that, he wants to get through the ceremony without peeing his pants or throwing up on the Torah. He likes being wrapped in the blessings of his synagogue, even if he is scared witless.

He completes the first reading, on the Torah, and sees that Rabbi Stein is pleased. Moving on, he takes a deep breath in and out and says, "We are very fortunate. Our life comes from God, and that life is a gift. Gods gives us even more than that. How empty our lives would be without the wisdom to live them properly. This is like the gift of an advanced technology—or better still a small child—without any information on how to use it or care for it. You would be frustrated, yes? Our lives could be like that. So frustrating and seemingly pointless. But we have the Torah, which is like an instruction manual for our lives. Through its teachings, we have the keys to unlock the full richness of God's gift."

When he finishes, he glances first at the rabbi and then at his mom, who is beaming with pride. He knows this ceremony is the event that signifies his becoming a man and not the study that has made him a man, but with nearly everyone in the synagogue watching him, it feels awful and terrifying anyway. For the next while, he closes his eyes now and again as he reads, trying to forget all the people and remember who he is and what he's doing. It doesn't work well, but he muddles through the best he can.

Afterward, his parents throw him a posh party at the country club. The menu is kosher because so many of their friends from the synagogue will come by, but Mom made sure to include some of his favorites. There's a cool bagel station, with all different kinds of bagels on sticks standing up on the table, and a candy station with his name on all the candy wrappers, macaroni and cheese with different veggie toppings, and a cool burger station, too. Mom and Dad compromise on the party. She got "elegant" decorations, and he got "fun." Zack doesn't care as long as some of his friends came, which they do.

"I really don't get the whole 'I'm a man now' thing," his friend Marybeth from school says on a break between dances.

"Me either," James admits, even though he and James have talked about it more than once.

"It's a liturgical and semantic distinction based on—"

"Stop!" they yell, putting their hands over their ears. "No lecturing today."

James and Marybeth are referring to Zack's tendency to sound like something his mom calls an "encyclopedia." He'd had to look that one up old-school like. They make fun of him, his friends, but only in kindness. They don't really make fun of him.

Marybeth points to a boy across the room, "Who's that, Zack?"

"Eric. He's from my synagogue."

"Introduce me?"

"Okay. Sure." He starts across the floor and stops halfway wondering where Marybeth is. He turns around and gives her a funny look.

"Oh, Zack. I'm not coming with you," she says, laughing.

This makes no sense. "Then how do I introduce you?"

James touches her arm. "Let me handle this. Zack," he says looking at him, "you say to Eric, 'Hey, I've got some friends I'd like to introduce you to,' and then you bring him over here."

"I do?"

"Yes."

"That doesn't seem very efficient."

"Zack!" they both yell.

"Going . . ."

13 Physical and Cognitive Development in Emerging/Early Adulthood

Zack's mom hugs him for the 100th time. When she draws away, he hears her soft *hmp* as his dad says, "Zack, are you ready?"

"Yep, I'm not ready," he says, hefting the last suitcase.

"How can you take him so far from home?" Mom asks Dad.

"Mom," Zack reminds her with a smile, "I'll be an hour and a half away. Ninety minutes. Five thousand four hundred seconds. Huh," Zack pauses. "When you count seconds, it doesn't sound so bad."

"Not so bad." She *hmp*s again, but her lips twitch this time. "I'll miss you, you know."

"I know. This is commonly referred to as 'the empty nest' syndrome. Parents, particularly mothers feels emotions of loss and separation when—"

"Zack," Mom says, sighing.

"Besides, you and Dad can now have unhindered intercourse without fear of someone just walking into the room."

"And on that note," Dad says, "Let's get going, buddy."

Dad slips him 50 bucks 'just because,' and he stows the suitcase in the trunk of the car.

He leans over and kisses Mom. "Good-bye. I love you. You've been a good mother."

She laughs, and this is a nice sound. It always is a nice sound. "I love you, too. Be good and careful please."

"Yes, ma'am."

"Come along, son. Clock's ticking."

He gets in the car, and they are off.

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| <p>14 Socioemotional Development in Emerging/Early Adulthood</p> | <p>Zack returns home as soon as he graduates from college. His mom and dad help him find an apartment and figure out how to manage the paperwork. He's taken a job at a social media firm in town where he'll get to manage all outgoing social posts for a handful of business clients. Mom and Dad say there's irony in that, but he's not quite sure what that means.</p> <p>When he's been on the job for a few months and buys his first piece of furniture (a chair to eat on while he watches television), he meets a young woman who works in the office beside his. She does contract work for an attorney, and Zack thinks she's pretty, maybe prettier than Mom or Marybeth. Her name is Gal Isaacs, and she thinks Zack is as funny as he thinks she is pretty.</p> |
| <p>15 Physical and Cognitive Development in Middle Adulthood</p> | <p>Zack works for the media firm for several years without a raise. He knows he's lucky to not lose his job from time to time because he lacks the ability to capture certain social nuances in how people say things (and how he says things). His employer likes him, though, and after a while, he starts getting raises based on his performance as an employee, performance that's more than always getting the words just right. He's honest, loyal, and always on time. In four years, he takes only one day off, the day his family buries his mother. Company commitment like that, his boss says, should be rewarded.</p> <p>Zack loves his job. He loves feeling valued and not being ridiculed. When he's made fun of now, it's gently and when he's in the room, and it's because someone is pointing out a flaw in his in-the-moment interpretation of events. Zack feels like that's endearing, and he starts making new friends. This is helpful when he starts dating Gal because he has real people to ask how to do things right or better or at all.</p> |
| <p>16 Socioemotional Development in Middle Adulthood</p> | <p>Zack is almost ready to ask Gal to marry him. He hasn't bought a ring yet, but he's shopping for one on his lunch breaks at Smith and Vickers Jewelers. The right one will jump out at him; he knows it will. Once it does, he'll plan an elaborate dinner at Gal's favorite restaurant, and he'll propose as they make their quiet walk back to her place. He would never propose at the restaurant. He knows Gal well enough to know she would hate that, and even if she wouldn't, he would never be able to make it through such a public display of emotion.</p> <p>He finds the ring on a Tuesday, picks it up on Wednesday, and makes reservations at Castillo's for Friday. Zack doesn't get excited about many things, but he's excited about dinner on Saturday. On Thursday, Gal arrives at his place after work with takeout Chinese food in a bag. It must've been a bad day because she knows how he feels about Asian food from American restaurants.</p> |

"Thanks," he says as he opens a drawer in the kitchen. "Chopsticks?"

She usually likes chopsticks.

"No, thanks. Just a fork."

Gal attacks her lo mein with ferocity, and Zack picks at a plate of bean curd. At least it's spicy, he thinks. When she's ready to open her fortune cookie, she sets the carton of noodles to the side.

"An unexpected relationship will become permanent," she reads, a little frown between her brows. Zack is amazed at the prescience of the message. Gal looks at him. "What does yours say?"

"To have great friends, you must first learn to be a great friend."

"So weird," she says.

"Why?" Zack asks.

"Because they both seem so apropos in the moment." Setting the cookie aside, Gal looks at him. "Zack, I am so sorry to tell you this, but I don't want to see you anymore."

Puzzled because he can't think of any reason for this, Zack asks, "Why?"

"You are so sweet and so caring, and I do love you."

"But? Even I understand that's coming."

"But," she whispers, "some of the peculiarities that make you so special a person make this relationship too difficult to for me. Like, I feel guilty if I'm even mildly sarcastic with you. You don't get sarcasm, and it feels mean after a while to say something sarcastically when you don't get it."

Zack frowns. "So, don't say sarcastic things."

"That's not the point. Sarcasm is an example. It's not the problem."

"I see." He doesn't, but that is his whole life. "Okay. I think I'd like it if you left now."

Gal smiles and kisses his cheek as she walks to the door. "See? Like that. Take care, Zack."

17 Physical and Cognitive Development in Late Adulthood

Zack moves into his parents' old house after his dad passes. He doesn't want to sell it, and there's nothing else to do with it then. He's fortunate that his parents live well past an age when they should have, for which he's grateful, entering his own early-late adulthood before losing his mother to a series of small strokes in her late 80s before his father from a clearly broken heart the year after.

He sometimes wonders what it would be like if he'd dated someone after Gal, but he never tried. Zack's always been aware of the fact that he's unaware of so much. Gal loved him, and if that relationship broke because of his weirdness, he didn't see that any other would do better. He's become the nutty old man who lives alone and watches game shows after work. Except for going to synagogue, that's all he does. It's not a wild and crazy life, but he feels good about it. He walks almost every day to and from the park, and he doesn't eat bad foods. The only aspect of life that doesn't serve him well is being alone, and that's hardly something to change now.

- 18 Socioemotional Development in Late Adulthood**
- “Uncle Zack?”
- Zack listens to the voice and takes one second to place it. It’s the daughter of his old friend James. “Anna?”
- “Hi, Uncle Zack. I’m so sorry to call you out of the blue like this, but I wanted you to be the first to know. Dad passed away.”
- Zack thinks for a minute—not James Albert surely.
- “Uncle Zack?”
- “Not your father? Not James Albert?”
- “Yes, Uncle Zack. I’m so sorry. It was unexpected for us, too.”
- Zack thinks about that. “But we’re both so young!”
- Anna chuckles. He can hear it over the phone. “Uncle Zack.”
- “Anna, I’m sorry for you. I don’t know what to feel. James. I guess I thought he’d live forever.” Like he always feels he’ll live forever himself. “Are there arrangements?”
- “Not yet. Soon I’ll know what we’re doing. I’ll let you know?”
- “Please, Anna.”
- “Yes, of course. I’m really so sorry to just call out of the blue with this.”
- Zack feels himself nodding. Me, too, he thinks.
- 19 Experience With Death and Dying**
- Zack leaves detailed instructions for his funeral in his will. Simple cremation, and the town can do what it wants to with his ashes. He isn’t sentimental. He arranges for the sale of everything he owns and proceeds added to his meagre savings, all of which he wants donated to the national autism research group.
- He doesn’t feel well. He hasn’t felt well in a number of weeks. He has no idea what’s wrong, although of course his dad would’ve. Thinking of Dad makes Zack consider seeing a doctor, an idea he rejects as soon as he has it. Who’s left to stick around for? No parents, wife, siblings, or children—his best friend has passed. Zack has no one in his tribe anymore and decides to wait for the end quietly, with a case of A & W root beer, which he loves beyond what could be considered good for him. Too late for that, he figures. Eventually, Zack passes away in his sleep due to age, complications from cardio-pulmonary disease, and isolation.
- Zack is buried in the family plot near the synagogue. A few members of the synagogue who knew him through the years attend his service. He was 77 when he died.

Case Discussion Questions

1. During her pregnancy with Zack, his mother Rebecca choose not to discontinue use of Paxil for obsessive compulsive disorder. Contrast this decision with Zack’s optimal case outcome in which Rebecca discontinues use of Paxil and consistently attends therapy and a support group. What impact might Rebecca’s choice in this case have on Zack’s life’s trajectory across any and all domains (biological, cognitive, and socioemotional)?

2. In middle childhood, Zack experiences a high degree of anxiety over an event during which he's expected to light the menorah for the first time on his own. When he expresses his concerns, Rebecca assures him he doesn't have to do it if he doesn't want to. How does this compare to Zack's optimal case outcome in which Rebecca makes an offer to light the candles with him? How do both of these outcomes reflect the past developmental periods Zack's gone through?
3. When he's middle aged in both the optimal case and this case, Zack marries a divorced single mother named Rachel, who has a toddler named Dalia. After some time together, the two have a second child, a son called Joe. This is in sharp contrast to the negative outcomes case in which Zack has no children at all. In fact, the woman he chooses to marry leaves him before he can ask her because she's become too frustrated by the blunt edges of his Asperger's syndrome, and Zack never dates again. What aspects of optimal case Zack and moderate case Zack allow him to find, court, and win the heart of Rachel, when negative case Zack manages only one girlfriend across his lifespan? Is this a predefined outcome for Zack?
4. Consider Zack's optimal case outcomes at the end of his life and Erikson's integrity-versus-despair stage of psychosocial development. How does this case compare to that one? Consider all of Zack's life events. How do you think those contributed to any differences in Zack's end-of-life outcomes and his sense of integrity versus despair?

10. Undesirable Outcomes: Bliss McCallen

2 Biological and Environmental Foundations

Bliss, who used to use her paychecks to buy clothes and gas for her car, now saves as much as she can for baby things. Her mother isn't thrilled to have a new baby arriving, but she's at least supportive emotionally, which is what Misty needs. Despite the stares and gossip, she manages to finish her junior year of high school as her belly grows, and just after summer break starts, Misty spends a Saturday when she's not at Dairy Queen decorating a corner of her bedroom for the baby. She's having a girl, and even though she knows it shouldn't matter, she's kind of glad. She puts up a white crib she bought for \$10 at Goodwill and covered the mattress she spent \$27 to buy new at Walmart with sheets a girlfriend gave her at a small baby shower engineered by the Spanish club. The sheets are white with little pink and blue sheep jumping over fences all over. She likes them.

There isn't room for other furniture, like a changing table or a dresser. Misty cleans out two drawers in her own secondhand dresser to make room for the baby's clothes. Her mom bought a two-high white cubby thing Misty puts together and sticks at the end of the crib. She puts diapers and wipes in the cubbies and, as weird as it seems, a fancy mirrored tray like rich ladies might use on top. She bought that at Goodwill when she got the crib, and she uses it to hold all the stuff for keeping up with her baby's necessities: baby powder, diaper cream, baby lotion, and sunscreen. Silly, she knows, but it seems nice to give her baby something fancy to start off life with.

Just before the baby's born, she has a sit-down with her supervisor at Dairy Queen. It's not ideal, she tells him, but the baby's coming soon. She's decided not to go back to high school, and she hopes he'll give her more hours once she has the baby. He tells her that's probably something he can arrange.

3 Prenatal Development, Birth, and the Newborn Experience

With no school to get in the way and few work hours so late in the pregnancy, Misty finds herself annoying and annoyed by her mother. She complains about her feet swelling when she works and her back aching after she sleeps on her old, cheap mattress. As each week passes, she's more and more tired, and finally, Mary Jo snaps, "You know, I did do this with you, and I'm pretty sure I didn't complain more than a dozen times each day."

Misty glares at her. She gives her the evil eye every single time she makes some comment about how awful Misty's being. Her mom doesn't understand how hard everything is now. It's all different than it was when her mom was pregnant. Sometimes, she wishes she'd gone back to high school and faced all the social condemnation. At least she'd be kept busy and could sit most of the day.

Bliss is born in the predawn of a late June morning. Misty labors for six hours—not long, she thinks, although it feels like forever—before her obstetrician suggests that a cesarean section seems more appropriate than continuing the way they've been going. Misty, who is slim and isn't progressing in her labor despite being fully dilated and effaced, wants to keep trying, but her mom overrules her. Twenty minutes later, Bliss is in her arms, tiny and perfect. The doctor tells Misty that Bliss's presentation during all of Misty's pushing was transverse with her shoulder coming out first instead of her head.

"I probably couldn't have delivered her vaginally no matter what?" Misty asks.

"Probably not, and I know you're disappointed," Dr. King tells her.

"No, it's all right. I'm just glad she's okay."

"She's much more than okay. You did great. So did she. Now get some rest."

"Thanks, Dr. King," Misty tells her.

"Yes, thank you," Mary Jo echoes.

Dr. King smiles and leaves, saying she'll be back in a little while to check in again.

Misty closes her eyes. When she gets out, she'll have to figure out what she can do to help herself—like signing up for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP)—but right now, all she wants is to rest.

4 Physical Development in Infancy and Toddlerhood

Over the summer, Bliss bonds with Misty, who continues to work at Dairy Queen after she recovers from childbirth. Her mom and people in their apartment building provide her with patchwork daycare while she works. She could get an actual daycare supplement from the government, but she doesn't earn enough money at Dairy Queen to pay what the supplement doesn't cover. Dropping out of high school was maybe not her brightest idea, but she can't change that now.

Bliss isn't quite a live baby doll, especially during those overnight feedings or messy diapers, but Misty knows all the way down to her toes that of all the options available to her when she got pregnant, she chose the right one for herself. She works as much as possible to help Mama with the bills and to save for being more independent. While she works, she thinks and occasionally makes notes about how to rectify the mistake of dropping out of school. There's an online option she might be able to enroll in. She could do a GED. There's something appealing about having her diploma though. She decides to call the principal at her school and ask about it.

- 5 Cognitive Development in Infancy and Toddlerhood**
- Misty has a love-hate relationship with the realities of modern motherhood. She loves Bliss. She loves that she has the ability to work, save money, and help take care of her daughter. She loves that she has people like her mom to help take care of Bliss so that she can feel safe about leaving her baby when she works. She wishes she wouldn't miss so many of Bliss's firsts in the first year of her life. She misses Bliss's first word (*mama*), her first time counting to three on her pudgy, little fingers (she counts backward starting at her pinky), and her first attempt to "read" (holding the book upside-down like so many kids). She doesn't like it, but she understands the necessity. She does, however, worry. Is Bliss getting what she needs because she isn't in a professional daycare? It seems like it. She can count well, and she knows her ABCs. She knows her name and those of all the people closest to her. Misty has to hope she's doing okay. She has no barometer other than her mom, who says Bliss is "smart as a whip."
- One thing Misty does like is seeing Bliss's face when she gets home from a shift at Dairy Queen because Bliss is always happy to see her. Just as Misty is close to completing her high school diploma online, Bliss starts holding her arms open and saying, "Mama!" when she comes home. It may not make up for missing all the firsts, but it is heartwarming all the same.
- 6 Socioemotional Development in Infancy and Toddlerhood**
- Misty thinks about Cody only now and then. Bliss keeps her so busy (*so busy*), and she has to keep her schedule at Dairy Queen. When he happens to cross her mind, she usually thinks, "Go away!" She's not even upset that he isn't around, although she realizes that she will one day be upset for Bliss that he hasn't been. They meet with Mrs. Lowell, the social worker, once each quarter, and Mrs. Lowell reminds her that she's supposed to be pursuing child support from Cody to receive any benefits from the state or county. Misty reminds Mrs. Lowell that she's given her all the information on Cody that she has. If Mrs. Lowell wants to pursue child support for Bliss, Misty will happily take it (even though she's not sure that's true; she doesn't want Cody showing up on her doorstep demanding all sorts of rights).
- Bliss, right now, is a happy, affectionate little girl even though their family is just the three of them: Bliss, Misty, and Mary Jo. Sometimes, Misty gets impatient with her, usually when she's trying to get ready for work.
- "Bliss!" she snaps one day, trying to get her uniform for work out of the dryer. "Stop! I have to get dressed."
- Bliss, 18 months old, lifts her arms and begins to cry, fat tears falling down her face. She repeats, "Mama, mama, mama, mama . . ." over and over, but Misty doesn't pick her up. When Misty walks past her to get to the bathroom, Bliss's volume grows louder, and Misty feels guilty. Half dressed for work, she goes back to Bliss and picks her up.
- "I'm sorry. Mama's sorry. I didn't mean to yell, baby, but I'm in a hurry. Want to sit in the bathroom and play with your dolly while I put on my makeup?" Bliss nods, and together they pass a few minutes while Misty finishes getting ready for work.
- Most days are easier, but every now and then, they repeat the scene. Bliss wants attention when Misty needs to study for a test or take a shower. Forget dating. Everything is baby, school, work, baby, lather, rinse, repeat. In the back of Misty's head is her mom's voice, "I told you so." Mary Jo hardly needs to say it out loud. Fortunately, Bliss seems to be happy most of the time. Misty tells herself that losing her temper every now and then is okay—surely all parents do it. Surely the occasional harsh word isn't as bad as all the many, many times Misty and Bliss are mistaken for sisters when they're out in public. "No," Misty corrects, "I'm her mom." People get judgy then, staring and raising brows, sometimes sniffing and turning away. Misty doesn't care. She loves her baby and does the best she can.

Except the one time—Misty can admit the one time was bad. She and Bliss were shopping in a discount store when Bliss started losing it. Tired and cranky, she had a tantrum when Misty wouldn't give her a toy or candy or something. Misty, embarrassed and irritated that Bliss wouldn't be quiet, yelled at her. Some woman she didn't know approached them and told Misty not to behave that way, that she was being abusive. She wasn't. She was yelling and probably shouldn't, but she definitely wasn't abusive. Thinking back on that horrifying day, Misty blushes in remembered embarrassment—never again, not in public, not in private, nowhere.

**7 Physical and
Cognitive
Development
in Early
Childhood**

"Bliss, please sit down."

Mrs. Anderson stands over her with *that look*, the look that says she really, really likes you but she's running out of patience. Bliss considers whether or not she could push her further and decides no—that's probably not the best idea. Finding her desk, she sits and takes out her homework. Mrs. Anderson always checks homework first, and Bliss has been working so hard on her handwriting (which is awful). She doesn't know why she works so hard. Her teacher isn't ever going to praise her efforts. Last week, Bliss missed two math problems that she actually worked correctly but Mrs. Anderson couldn't read well enough to know that.

"What did you get for number four in the reading homework?" Sonia asks, leaning over from her desk on the next row.

Bliss looks at her paper. Red noses. "Shh." She tells Sonia. "Do your own work."

It's not like Sonia is her friend or anything.

At the front of the room, Mrs. Anderson clears her throat, and all the children get quiet. "I'm coming around now to check your homework. After that, we'll do math groups B and C and reading groups A and D in your circles. Once I check your homework, move quietly to where you're supposed to be please."

Bliss clasps her hands under her desk. She's in reading group A, which means she's starting there today. She likes reading, but Sonia's in her reading group. That makes the start to her day just about half and half good and bad.

Bliss gets off the bus after school and walks through the confined space of the housing complex to get to their apartment. Her daily routine is disrupted when she finds Mama there instead of one of her grandmas who usually watch her in the afternoon.

"Mama, why are you here?" she asks.

Misty smiles. She takes Bliss's book bag and hangs it on the little peg inside the door. "We're going on a little trip, sweetheart," she answers.

For some time, Misty's been concerned about what she considers an emotional detachment in Bliss. She's made an appointment with the pediatrician, and they're going now to discuss Bliss's symptoms and if there might be anything pathological happening.

"She just seems to keep everyone at an emotional distance," Misty explains to the doctor. "I'm not sure why. I mean, she doesn't have the ideal childhood. We're not rich, and she doesn't know her dad. Still, we always lived in the same place, and she's got clothes and plenty of food. I just don't know what's wrong."

The pediatrician examines Bliss, who had listened to Mama and understood most of what she said. When the doctor finishes, she says, “Misty, Bliss looks good. She’s physically sound, although there may be parts of her neurologic composition we can’t be certain of just now. My recommendation is that we get you some in-home occupational therapy services.”

“OT?” Misty echoes.

“Yes. Let’s try that for a couple months or so and see how Bliss gets on. If you don’t see an improvement, then we’ll talk about next steps.”

Misty nods. “Thank you. Thank you so much.”

8 Socioemotional Development in Early Childhood

Bliss, who attends a Headstart program in her town, doesn’t have any friends. Sometimes, the teachers makes all the children play together at recess, and they have a stupid way of calling *everyone* friends. That’s so dumb. Friends means you like each other, and no one likes Bliss. She doesn’t like much of anyone else either.

If she had her way, she’d be allowed to do whatever she wanted to in preschool, even play by herself. Actually, if she could do whatever she wanted to, she wouldn’t go to preschool at all.

9 Physical and Cognitive Development in Middle and Late Childhood

“What did you get for number four in the reading homework?” Sonia asks, leaning over from her desk on the next row.

Bliss checks. “Red noses,” she whispers back. When Sonia frowns at her own paper, Bliss giggles. She knows that’s one she got right because Mama helped.

At the front of the room, Mrs. Anderson clears her throat, and all the children get quiet. “I’m coming around now to check your homework. After that, we’ll do math groups B and C and reading groups A and D in your circles. Once I check your homework, move quietly to where you’re supposed to be please.”

Bliss claps under her desk. She’s in reading group A, which means she’s starting there today. She loves reading. Also, Sonia’s in her reading group. She gets to do the thing she likes best in school with the friend she likes best. This is going to be a great day!

Bliss gets off the bus after school and walks through the parking lot to their apartment. It’s a daily routine. One of her grandmas watches her after school, and she mostly does her homework in front of the Disney Channel while she eats cookies with milk. It’s not exciting.

Today, she gets her homework ready on the floor and waits for Grandma Mary Jo to bring her snack. When she sits the plate and glass on the coffee table, Grandma asks, “Bliss, did Mama put your prescription somewhere new this month? I can’t find it to give you your pill.”

Bliss has attention deficit disorder and takes Ritalin to help her stay “focused.” She looks up and shakes her head. “No, Grandma.”

Grandma frowns. “Well, it’s not in the cabinet where it’s supposed to be.”

Shrugging, Bliss picks up a cookie and turns on the TV.

**10 Socioemotional
Development
in Middle and
Late Childhood**

When Bliss is in the third grade, her mom starts dating a man named Steve. Bliss isn't sure what dating is, but it seems to involve a lot of eating fancy food and kissing. Other than that, she isn't sure. One time, Bliss's mom doesn't come home after she leaves for dinner and a movie with Steve. Bliss, who sleeps in the same room as her mom, wakes up in the morning, and she's scared to be alone. She wakes up Grandma and tells her that Mama isn't there. Grandma gives her a little look, half worried and half mad, and tells her to go watch cartoons on television.

Mama comes back pretty soon, and she brings donuts with her. Grandma still seems mad, but they wait until Bliss takes her bath to fight. Bliss can hear their voices, but she doesn't know what words they're saying. Bliss cries a little. She loves them both and doesn't like it when anyone fights. She tries to talk to Mama about it later that night when it's time for bed.

"Why was Grandma mad today?"

Mama looks at her like she might cry. "Because Mama didn't come home last night."

"Why didn't you come home?"

"After Steve and I went on our date, it got very late, and I stayed at his place instead of driving back here."

"Sometimes Grandma goes to work really early on Saturday mornings. What if today she had to work early? I would be all alone."

Mama looks at her and smiles. "I would never leave you all alone, baby."

"But you kinda did. You didn't tell me or Grandma you weren't coming home. That's the same thing really."

Mama stopped smiling. "I didn't know I wasn't coming home until I didn't come home."

Bliss looks at Mama and starts to cry. "I don't even like Steve anyway." She doesn't either. She likes the way things used to be when it was just her, Mama, and Grandma.

Bliss is nine when she decides to start ignoring whatever person her mom dates. What does it have to do with her as long as Grandma or some babysitter is with her? Mama doesn't listen when she says she doesn't like any of them anyway, so she might as well ignore them . . . and Mama. She starts spending more time on the playground even though she doesn't have any friends to play with.

It's on the playground that the nice man starts talking to her.

"Hello. Is your name Bliss McCallen?"

Bliss has been taught about talking to strange men. She twists the chains of the swing she's sitting in and puts her back to the man.

"It's okay, Bliss. I don't want to frighten you. I just wanted to know if you *are* you."

Without turning back, she nods her head.

"I thought so." She hears the grass and leaves behind her crunching as the man moves. "I'm going to sit down behind you a little ways back. I'm not here to scare you or hurt you, and you can keep looking the other way if you want. I'm not going to touch you or anything else, Bliss."

"You just want to talk to me?" she asks, not believing him.

"That's all. I promise."

"Don't try to give me candy or anything," she warns him as she turns around in her swing, "because it won't make me go with you."

The man laughs, but he seems happy, not scary. "I'm glad to hear that!"

"You are? You're a funny kidnapper."

"That's because I'm not a kidnapper."

Bliss frowns at him. "What are you?"

"My name is Cody, and if you're really Bliss McCallen, then I'm your dad."

Of all the things this stranger might've said, Bliss thinks this is the most unexpected. Sure, she thinks about her dad sometimes. What fatherless child doesn't? But she doesn't dream about meeting him much. Now, here he is. She wonders . . .

"Are you really?"

"I really am."

"Enough to, like, come to my house and see Mama?"

The man—Cody—laughs. "Well, I'm sure your mama doesn't really want to see me, but I will, yes. I knew coming here that I'd have to, you know, to be able to see you."

Bliss isn't sure what the safest way to do this is. He seems like he could be her father, but people lie. She knows that, too. "Will you stay here?" she asks him. "I should go get my mom and bring her back here with me."

"Sure. That's just fine, Bliss, and hey?"

"Yeah?"

"I'm really glad to meet you, sweetheart."

She grins and runs off on fast legs. It's 168 steps to her door, fewer when she's running. It takes her less than a minute to get there, and she rushes through the unlocked door with a clamor of noise.

"Mama! Come 'ere, Mama! I've got great news!"

11 Physical and Cognitive Development in Adolescence

Across the street from the bus stop where Bliss lives, a billboard advertises a "gentlemen's club." Bliss knows what that is. The advertisement shows a girl in an outfit kind of like a bikini (*kind of*, Bliss always thinks) standing in a thing kind of like a woman-sized birdcage (*kind of*, she reminds herself, thinking of the metaphors). She can't tell if the girl looks older than her years because of her lifestyle or if she's meant to look younger than she is and just can't quite pull it off. Either way, Bliss thinks, is tragic.

"That's what happens to girls who aren't quite smart enough or pretty enough or anything enough to get out of places like this," Keisha Rayne says to her one day while they wait for the bus.

"What's what happens?" Bliss asks, not sure how literally to take the statement.

"Get trapped by circumstance," Keisha says, nodding toward the birdcage. "Sad but true."

Bliss doesn't want to get trapped, but she figures by the time a girl figures out it's happened, it's too late to avoid it.

“Stupid is as stupid does,” she says to Keisha, “or something like that.”

“Something like that,” Keisha echoes as the bus pulls to a stop, cutting off their view to the billboard. “You and me, girl? We don’t have the luxury of being stupid, not even for a minute.”

Bliss hears what Keisha says, and the only thing she can think is *I better stop failing my classes and skipping whenever I can.*

**12 Socioemotional
Development in
Adolescence**

“Dad?” Bliss calls from her bedroom at Cody’s house—*her* bedroom. She doesn’t have to share space in this apartment—luxury of luxuries.

“What is it, Bliss?”

“Can I go out with Hunter Lyon Saturday night?”

Dad scowls at her darkly. He’s made it clear he doesn’t like her going out when he has her—not because he doesn’t like her going out but because he doesn’t want her going down the same path he and Mama did.

“Bliss . . .” he starts, but she holds up a hand.

“I know it’s not what you prefer,” she says, “but hear me out. First, it’s Hunter, and you actually like Hunter. Second, it’s not an all-evening date, which I know is kinda taboo. There’s some barbeque tasting downtown that only goes from four to eight. We thought we might go right when the thing started, and Hunter could drop me off early, like six or seven.”

She watches him consider the request and finally nod. “I guess, but two hours tops. Promise?”

She crosses her heart with an index finger before going back to the phone. “Cross my heart,” she tells him and means it. She’ll only be gone for two hours, but she has no intention of going to the barbeque festival.

Hunter Lyon talked her out of her virginity six months before. It wasn’t pretty or enjoyable in the back cab of his 4x4 Chevy, but she loves him and that’s that. Lying to her parents kills her, but after this last date, there will be no more lies. She’ll come clean with everyone. She needs to tell Hunter first that he’s going to be a father. He deserves to hear that before anyone else.

“Thanks, Dad,” she says and drops a kiss on his cheek. Speaking into the phone, she says, “Yep, I can go. Four to six, you think? . . . Perfect!”

Things are far from perfect, but she’s so used to keeping up appearances by this point that she doesn’t know any other way to do things.

**13 Physical and
Cognitive
Development in
Emerging/Early
Adulthood**

Bliss graduates from high school with decent but not stellar grades and extracurricular achievements. Because of the local labor market, her high school counselor, and time, she decides to get her certified nursing assistant’s license (CNA). Attending the same community college her mom didn’t manage to finish, she takes the 12-week program and almost completes it. She has difficulty with two modules, dosing and intake interviewing. Frustrated and perfectly content to admit defeat, Bliss drops out of the program and moves in with Misty. Neither Misty nor Mary Jo works for Dairy Queen any longer. Misty works for a local chop house, a significant step up, and Bliss also steps up, bartending at the city’s only country club. Bliss soon learns to discriminate between well and call drinks, and her mother is around to help her with the baby.

- 14 Socioemotional Development in Emerging/Early Adulthood** Bliss meets a lot of guys bartending. They come in after they get off work to have a beer on the way home—those are generally married, and she leaves them alone—or on the way to dinner with the guys—those are a little more viable—or to watch the game on the big screen in the bar. She likes the ones who stay. They're fun and funny, and they flirt with her in that harmless way that makes her feel young again. The rub is that she *is* young, but she lives like she isn't. So, feeling young even for a couple hours is nice. Now and then, she goes on a date with someone she meets at the bar. None of these dates ever leads to anything, and she hasn't yet allowed any man to meet her kid. It's something to occupy her time and make her feel like she didn't give up everything to have Hunter's baby. Who knows? Maybe she did. Some days, she wonders if this is how her mom felt when she had her.
- 15 Physical and Cognitive Development in Middle Adulthood** Bliss picks up a second bartending job when she's 35. She has a knack for it, both mixing and listening as it turns out, and she manages to land a job working one day each week for an exclusive club. The money's good, and it doesn't interfere with her regular job.
- She starts thinking about challenges as her 40th birthday approaches. Bartending isn't a career, and even though she understands she's never going to have a career, she'd like to do *something* at least a little special. One of her customers at the club gives her a brochure she picked up at a resort on the coast detailing the requirements for entering a create-your-own-cocktail contest. Bliss decides to enter. First place comes with a substantial monetary prize, and although she'd enjoy the cash, Bliss is interested in seeing if she can rise to the challenge.
- She works for months at home, mixing, tasting, and writing down recipes. When she thinks she has a few good ones and has researched to make sure they don't already exist, she starts trying them out at the club. She gets customers to rank them, and when she has a clear winner, she names it and enters the contest.
- The trip to the contest site and the three days of competition and corresponding revelry are so much fun. Bliss can't remember ever having so much fun. In the end, she takes away second place, which gives her \$5,000 cash and her drink featured in the next cocktail book the sponsoring publisher will put out. Things could be much worse.
- 16 Socioemotional Development in Middle Adulthood** Bliss is in her 30s when she meets Andy, a driver for a national delivery company. She likes him immediately. He's a watch-the-game-in-the-bar guy who drinks American beer but not too much, tips well, and doesn't flirt in that sleazy way. He's also attractive. She waits until he's been in four or five times before she agrees to go out with him. She waits six months after they start dating to introduce him to her daughter. Andy is smitten with both of them. Although he's told her before that he doesn't want children, he quickly amends his statement after their first "family" picnic. He professes his love for Bliss and asks her to marry him and allow him to adopt her daughter. Bliss, unable to believe she could ever be this happy, says yes and agrees that they don't need other children. The one is enough for both of them, just like Andy says.
- 17 Physical and Cognitive Development in Late Adulthood** Andy, who's worked in a chemical plant for his whole career, saves money so vociferously that Bliss complains his frugality stretches to stinginess some days. She's glad of it, though, when he suggests she stop working well before he does. "You've had a tough life from the get," he says, "and we can afford for you to take it easy now."

She's worried about Addy and college, but he smothers her concerns in a bevy of kisses. At last she gives in. The best part of retirement? Saturday sleep-ins with a late brunch and the newspaper. She'd always opened the club bar on Saturdays. Now, she gets to enjoy the lazy mornings with Andy. It's perfect.

Only a couple years into retirement, Addy graduates from college. She moves away to start her first job, and Bliss gets to enjoy lazy Saturdays *and* the empty nest.

It's the second Saturday in June and Bliss is 62 when Andy pours their coffee and brings it to the table. Bliss already has the paper open. She lifts her cheek for a kiss and thanks him. She hasn't felt well in a few weeks, and today is the worst yet. She didn't want to get out of bed at all, but if she didn't Andy would worry. This is better.

"Okay?" he asks, and she nods.

"Perfect."

Glancing at the paper, her eyes have trouble focusing on the words of the article she'd been reading a moment before. Maybe she should go back to bed. A cold or something could be coming on. She's tired and she feels cold.

18 Socioemotional Development in Late Adulthood

When Bliss falls from her chair at the kitchen table, Andy tries to catch her, but he's too far away. He reaches her in seconds and tries to tell if she's conscious; she isn't. He calls 9-1-1 and leaves the call live while he waits for paramedics. The entire time, he does half right CPR. Somehow, he knows it's too late, that it was too late before she fell, but he keeps trying. So do the paramedics when they arrive. He's told much later at the hospital that Bliss suffered a major cardiac infarction and could not have survived; there was no hope at any point. Andy wonders if this is meant to make him feel better.

19 Experience With Death and Dying

Bliss's heart attack and subsequent death is unexpected and rapid. It's possible she knew she was ill, but the evidence suggests she had no idea just how ill.

Case Discussion Questions

1. During her pregnancy, Bliss's mother Misty decides to drop out of high school before her senior year. She plans to continue living with her mom but to work more hours once the baby is born. She doesn't think she can do everything, like work and mother and go to school. Compare this to Bliss's optimal case outcome in which Misty continues to live with her mother and completes her senior of high school. How do you think Bliss's life trajectory might be altered for good or ill across any and all domains (biological, cognitive, and socioemotional)? Why?
2. In Bliss's infancy and toddlerhood, Misty occasionally loses her temper and snaps at the baby. One day, she loses her temper and in public. A stranger speaks to her about it. How does this situation potentially alter Bliss's childhood across any and all domains (biological, cognitive, and socioemotional)? Why?
3. In early adulthood, Bliss has dates with many men she meets in her job as a bartender. This is different than the optimal case outcome in which Riley, working in the same medical practice, meets the son of her employee and begins dating him almost immediately. What factors in Bliss's history led to this different path for her? Why?
4. Consider Bliss's optimal case outcomes at the end of her life and Erikson's integrity-versus-despair stage of psychosocial development. How does this case compare to that one? Consider all of Bliss's life events. How do you think those contributed to any differences in Bliss's end-of-life outcomes and her sense of integrity versus despair?

11. Undesirable Outcomes: Poppy Bell

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>2 Biological and Environmental Foundations</p> | <p>Poppy parents are all well educated. Wendy has had two healthy, normal pregnancies before Poppy, and she's familiar with pregnancy dos such as eating well and exercising and also with don'ts such as drinking or being around people who smoke. The biggest challenge Wendy faces is stress—stress from not knowing when or if Brian will be at home, whether or not Sam will want anything to do with the baby, and when Clover and Leaf will act out in anger because they feel she's to blame for all the turmoil. She is, and her obstetrician warns her not to let stress get the better of her. She doesn't want Poppy's developing fetal brain bathed in serotonin or an excess of corticosteroids passing the blood-brain barrier. Wendy tries to spend the first and last 15 minutes of each day in meditation hoping that will help, as her doctor assures her it will. She isn't always successful, however, as Brian doesn't see the value or find himself in a place where he wants to help her with much of anything, and Clover and Leaf need so much so often that sometimes she can't carve out the time. As much as she can, she does.</p> |
| <p>3 Prenatal Development, Birth, and the Newborn Experience</p> | <p>"She's squidgy," Leaf says, bending over his new baby sister.</p> <p>"And wrinkly like an old man," Clover adds.</p> <p>Wendy agrees somewhat. "She's both of those things a little, but she won't stay that way. Give her a couple days, and she'll look just like both of you did," she promised.</p> <p>Clover gives her a funny look. "Why does Poppy have two daddies? I only have one daddy."</p> <p>She says this as if Poppy is somehow better equipped in the father department. The question makes Wendy smile and want to cry simultaneously. She's grateful Brian isn't there when Clover asks it.</p> <p>"Well, sweetie, because both your daddy and Uncle Sam are her daddies."</p> <p><i>Don't ask</i>, she prays.</p> <p>"I know that, but <i>why</i>?"</p> <p>"Because Mommy and Uncle Sam made a baby together last year, and that baby became Poppy."</p> <p>"And you and Daddy made me and Leaf?" Clover looks like she might put the puzzle together all by herself. Wendy hopes not.</p> <p>"Yes, we did." Answer what they ask, but don't volunteer information.</p> <p>"And you didn't want to make Poppy with Daddy?"</p> <p>Wendy sighs. "It wasn't like that. I didn't decide not to make Poppy with Daddy or to make Poppy with Uncle Sam. She just got made."</p> <p>Leaf leans over his baby sister again. "Will Uncle Sam be our daddy now, too? Will we have two daddies like Poppy?"</p> <p>Damn cystic fibrosis, Wendy thinks. There but for prenatal testing go I.</p> <p>"No, Leaf. You and Clover still have your daddy. Poppy may have two daddies, but she may not have Uncle Sam as her daddy, either. We'll just have to see."</p> |

Phrasing things is so complicated. She doesn't want to say "just one daddy," because that will make Clover and Leaf feel shortchanged. Every sentence is a possible minefield.

If nothing else, the children seem fascinated with their baby sister. That's something. Wendy has ten weeks off from work thanks to the well-timed spring break plus her maternity leave. For the moment, both dads are doing their best. Sam is hesitant. He's clearly besotted by Poppy but just as clearly loathe to upset the balance of Wendy and Brian's family. Brian's just hurt and lost, and Wendy doesn't know how to make things better.

4 Physical Development in Infancy and Toddlerhood

In her infancy, Poppy is a quiet, sweet baby. She is doted on by her brother and sister, who take her everywhere. Clover and Leaf encourage many of her firsts, such as crawling and walking, and they spare Wendy the challenge of teaching Poppy to eat with a fork and spoon. When Poppy starts walking three weeks after she begins crawling, Wendy says it's because she can't stand to be left out of her brother and sister's fun.

Once she's walking, Poppy becomes a hider. Wendy often finds herself unable to find Poppy at the worst times, like when she's working the children like an assembly line through their baths or when Sam comes by for a visit or, worst of all, when she needs to leave for work. Hide and seek is a game, and although having Poppy play hide and seek at awful times would make Wendy mad, this isn't hide and seek. Poppy just hides. Wendy generally enlists Clover's help finding her sister, Clover who seems to be the Poppy Whisperer.

"Clover?" Wendy calls one snowy morning on the way to the family SUV. She needs to drop Poppy at daycare before going on to the K-8 school where she and Brian both teach. He's gone on ahead of her.

"I know," the eight-year-old says happily, "go find my sister."

"Please." Turning her attention to Leaf, Wendy points to the backseat. "All right, cowboy, into the saddle."

Clover finds Poppy standing in the bathtub she shares with her brother and sister. She's got the shower curtain closed, and with her winter coat and Wellies on, Poppy is so cute that Clover has to overcome the urge to turn on the shower.

"Poppy," she says, trying to sound stern but not hateful. She's not mad at all. "Why are you hiding in here? Mom's going to be mad."

"Shh," Poppy answers, holding a finger to her lips. "Duh walls're loud."

"The walls are loud?" Clover asks, making sure she understands.

"Yeth," Poppy says. "Bad wallth."

Clover nods. "Yes, bad, bad walls. You're right, Poppy. Bad walls to be loud, so let's go outside with Mom, and you won't have to hear the loud walls, okay?"

Poppy looks skeptical, and Clover knows why. Mom and Dad had another fight this morning, their words seeping through the walls between all the upstairs rooms. Poppy's right; the walls are loud, and Clover knows how much Poppy hates yelling. She wants to say something to Mom about that . . . after they escape her wrath.

"Okay," Poppy agrees.

She holds out her hand, and Clover takes it to help her climb over the side of the bathtub. Together, they troop down the stairs and back outside where Mom is getting Leaf buckled into his car seat. Mom turns around and sees both of them, and her eyes get that relieved look Clover knows means she probably won't yell in the car—probably. Personally, she doesn't know why Mom has such a hard time finding Poppy when she hides. She only has maybe five or six places she goes. It's not that hard. Clover thinks Mom's maybe a little bit lazy even though Mom says she's busy.

"Ready?" Mom asks when they're all in their seats.

"Ready," they all say, Poppy just a second behind Clover and Leaf.

Mom laughs and pulls out of the driveway. Another day begins, Clover thinks, wondering if her dad is giving a math test today. She can't remember.

**5 Cognitive
Development
in Infancy and
Toddlerhood**

Sam knows that Wendy and Brian are struggling to make their marriage work. His portion of blame in that troubles him, but he knows he isn't solely responsible. He also finds himself unable to apologize for Poppy, the child he never thought he'd have and without whom his life would be incomplete. He couldn't have guessed how many holes in a heart a child could fill.

After a series of brief, painful family court appearances, he has a visitation schedule so he can see Poppy on a regular timetable. It's not nearly enough. From his perspective, it's a pretty strict and punitive amount of visitation. Brian, Poppy's legal father, can't quite forgive Wendy and Sam for their affair (understandable, Sam thinks), but he also wants Poppy to know Sam as one of her fathers. Even so, he's not going to give Sam come-and-go access to her. He also wants Sam to pay what they all agree is fair child support each month. They all try to make the court appearances as painless as possible, but none of it can be. The worst of it—for Sam—is that he's lost Wendy, and Brian now comes and goes from the house, shortchanging all three kids of father time when he, Sam, would give them everything if he could.

Sam's favorite outings with Poppy are when he takes her on nature hikes at some of the preserves where he does geological surveys for the Fish and Wildlife program for the state, his employer.

"Dat one?" she asks with almost each step.

"Long leaf pine," he replies each time she points to the same tree.

"Dat one?"

"Golden maple, Poppy."

"Dat one?"

"That's a Poppy."

She jumps up and down, clapping her hands in glee. "Pop-pee!"

"That's right. Poppy, just like you."

Sam makes a mental note to toss some poppy seeds around a couple parks where folks are unlikely to notice his subterfuge. His daughter won't always be so easy to please. He'll take advantage of her easy nature as long as he can.

- 6 Socioemotional Development in Infancy and Toddlerhood** Wendy keeps close watch on all three of her children. Although it's clear Clover and Leaf adore Poppy, it's equally clear they're growing increasingly jealous of the attention Sam gives her. When Sam notices, he shifts his behavior to include Clover and Leaf in as much of his activities and attentions as possible, a change under which all three children seem to do well for a time. Wendy doesn't know how long their precarious emotional balance will last, but she'll do what she can to keep everyone as safe and loved as she can for as long as she can.
- 7 Physical and Cognitive Development in Early Childhood** On a balmy Wednesday evening in April, Sam, Wendy, and Brian sit on the Bells' deck with cold beers all around and some hors d'oeuvres. Wendy, who feels she knows both men well enough to navigate the conversation, speaks slowly, mindful of the outcome. They're talking about what's best for Poppy.
- "I just don't understand the need," Sam's complaining. "Poppy's been in a pretty ordinary daycare all along. Why go to such an extreme opposite for preschool?"
- Wendy mediates. "Clover and Leaf both attended The Goddard. It was perfect for them. I—" She pauses and glances at Brian. "We just want Poppy to have the same opportunities her siblings had."
- Brian jumps in with more than a bit of anger, "If it's about money, we're not asking you to pay any more each month."
- "But it's not." Sam rolls the beer can between his hands. "I just don't know why it's necessary."
- Wendy held up a hand before Brian could point out that Sam wasn't the parent who works in a school. "Why don't you go visit the school? Take a tour. Then visit a couple preschools. Either or both of us will go with you, or you can go by yourself. Whatever you're most comfortable with."
- With obvious irritation, Sam admits the logic of Wendy's suggestion, and she smiles in relief. "I can do that."
- Beside Wendy, Brian nods. "Fine. I'll go ahead and put the deposit down at The Goddard. That'll hold her place, and we can get it back if you just feel that strongly she shouldn't go after you do your round robin of preschools."
- "Thank you for your patience," Sam says.
- After Sam leaves, Wendy clears their mess from the deck, ignoring Brian as long as she can. She only wants what's best for Poppy, that's true, but thinking back it was Brian who chose The Goddard for Clover and Leaf. Who's to say that is the right choice for Poppy? Who's to say that was the right choice for Clover and Leaf? Brian thinks he is; that's clear. Wendy wonders if maybe she should spend some time looking at other schools, too. She works in a public school. So does Brian! They should be open to possibilities other than the most expensive private preschool in the county.
- She passes Brian between their bed and the master bathroom. Pausing mid step, she almost says, "I'm going to look at a few options, too. Not with Sam, just to make sure we really are making the best choice." Instead, she continues to the bathroom. As much as she wants to talk to him about other options, she's more afraid of his reaction than she is of finding an alternative to The Goddard.

- 8 Socioemotional Development in Early Childhood**
- “Clover? Are you awake, Clover?” Poppy cracks the door to her sister’s room and whispers, waiting for a response before she tries again. “Clover? It’s Poppy.”
- Clover pulls the quilt over her head and groans. “I know who it is, Poppy. I’m 12, not stupid.”
- “Are you sleeping?”
- “I was.”
- “Sorry.” Poppy is sorry to wake Clover up, but now that she is awake, Poppy slips into the room and closes the door behind her. She climbs into the bed, ignoring Clover’s attempts to kick her out. Snuggling under the quilt, she puts her head on the pillow beside Clover’s. “Daddy’s not here.”
- Clover turns away from her and says, “I wonder why.”
- “Do you know? Why? Why is Daddy gone again?” Clover breathes in and out a lot of times but doesn’t answer her. After a minute, Poppy loses patience. “Clover? Why is he?”
- “He and Mom are having trouble,” she says, and her voice sounds a little funny, like maybe she’s mad.
- “Because of me,” Poppy says, and she knows that’s the reason even if Clover doesn’t say it.
- Clover turns enough to look at her. “Yeah, because of you.”
- “Because Sam is my daddy, too?”
- Clover nods. “Yeah. That. You can’t change anything about the situation, but yeah, it’s all because of you.”
- “I’m sorry.” Poppy sniffs back tears and a runny nose. “I’m going to make a Pop-Tart. Do you want one?”
- “No.”
- “Okay. I’ll ask Leaf.”
- Clover makes an ugly laugh. “Don’t bother. He definitely won’t want one if Dad’s gone again.”
- Poppy climbs from the bed and swipes at her cheeks, wet with tears. She doesn’t want Clover to know she’s crying. “Okay. I’ll—I’ll see you.”
- “See you,” Clover says, but she doesn’t turn around again.

- 9 Physical and Cognitive Development in Middle and Late Childhood**
- In third grade, Poppy fails math, as much as a single subject can be failed in primary school. Miss Deering, her teacher, spends many hours with her in class, before class, after class, and meeting with her parents, but everyone is confused. Poppy’s prior grades and scores on standardized math assessments indicate she should be completing work with flying colors, but she simply is not. It’s Sam who voices the possibility no one’s willing to contemplate.
- The K–8 school at which both Wendy and Brian work is small, and in the upper elementary and middle grades, subject-specific teachers may cover an entire grade. Poppy’s father Brian is the only math teacher for both the fourth and fifth grades. When Poppy leaves fourth grade, Brian will be her math teacher. Sam suggests that maybe she doesn’t want to be in Brian’s class. Offended, Brian reacts with hostile denial, but Wendy admits there may be merit to the idea.

Brian has been out of the house more than in it lately, and she knows Clover and Leaf blame their sister for Brian's absence. The isolation at home hurts Poppy more than it might because she's always been so loved by both her brother and sister. She's not sure what the solution is. Transfer Brian to third grade for two years? Hardly. He isn't qualified cross-categorically, and he would divorce her if she suggested it.

"Poppy," she asks that night at bedtime, "how do you feel about homeschooling?"

Poppy looks at her as if she's just returned from Mars. "Homeschooling? Are you serious? That's the worst idea I've ever heard. I want to be at school with Clover and Leaf and all my friends."

"And having Dad next year for math?"

Wendy watches Poppy pale. Her narrow shoulders shrug under her nightgown. "I don't know," she says softly.

"You can't stay in school, Poppy," she exaggerates, "if you don't pass math, and you can't stay in school if you don't take math with Dad next year. So, you tell me what you want to do."

"I don't want to be in class with Dad. He hates me."

"Oh, Poppy." Wendy pulls her into her arms. "Dad doesn't hate you. He really doesn't."

"Do you promise?"

Wendy thinks back to her own childhood, when a parent's promise was all she needed to feel better. She nods. "I promise. Dad loves you very much, sweetie. Both of your dads do."

"Then why doesn't he ever sleep here anymore, and why does Clover blame me?"

"Those are harder questions, Poppy, and we will talk about them, but right now I need *your* promise that your math grades are going to look better in the future."

Poppy nods. "I promise."

Poppy, to everyone's dismay, refuses to go to math in fourth grade when she would be entering her dad's class. She sits rigid at the cafeteria table with her feet crossed around the chair where she's sitting. If they try to pick her up, she'll scream. They don't try. Dad comes to talk to her, but she zips her lips together and shakes her head. She won't tell him how afraid she is of him letting everyone know that he doesn't love her. That day, he lets her stay in the nurse's room, but they have an argument about the event on the way home.

"You don't have a choice, Poppy," he says.

"I do, too!"

"No. You do not. You're coming to class tomorrow, or you will not leave your room until the end of the school year."

Glaring at him, she crosses her arms over her chest. "Fine," she whispers, devastated.

She overhears her mom and dad arguing before dinner one night about how much Poppy looks like her father—Sam—and how much that bothers her dad—Brian—every time he looks at her. Clover walks by while they're fighting and gives Poppy an ugly look. She hates Poppy for being the bomb that blew up her happy pre-Poppy family. When Poppy wins the seventh grade science fair demonstrating classical conditioning with a parakeet, a project she completes with her father—Sam's—help, she's so proud. She also senses the loosening of the last binds in her parents' marriage.

**10 Socioemotional
Development
in Middle and
Late Childhood**

Wendy remembers when she thought of Clover as the Poppy Whisperer. Those days are gone. Clover is gone, along with Leaf and Brian. And Poppy wanders the house like ghost. Although the divorce will be formal enough in a few months, custody isn't, at least not for now. All three parents manage to agree without much debate that the children should be able to choose their dwellings and change their minds and not worry about judges or guilt. For now, Clover and Leaf are living with Brian, but Wendy suspects this is as much because they want a break from Poppy as it is because they want to live with their dad. She misses them more than she can say, and when she thinks about it for more than seconds at a time, she can't help crying. The questions that follow are inevitable.

"Mom? Why are you crying?"

Wendy doesn't believe in lying to children so much as it's possible not to do so.

"Just a little sad, Poppy. Nothing for you to worry about."

"Do you miss my brother and sister?"

"I do, yes." Wendy kneels and looks into Poppy's face at her level.

"Me, too."

They hug, and Wendy struggles for composure until Poppy releases her and wanders away to find some quiet activity to occupy her time. Wendy never knows anymore. She probably should.

Poppy is excited. It's Thanksgiving, and she and her mom started cooking yesterday. They made a cake and two pies. Clover likes pumpkin pie, and Leaf likes apple. Poppy hopes they'll stop by for dessert after their dinner. She likes cake best, and Mom likes all sweets. They already boiled eggs they'll devil today; Mom says she needs to let Poppy touch them with her magic wand, and they'll be ready (haha). When she gets up Thanksgiving morning, Mom already has the turkey in the oven. Poppy puts a tiny apron on, and Mom hands her a bag of carrots and a vegetable peeler.

"Get to it."

"Okay!"

"You're chipper this morning."

"I love Thanksgiving," Poppy reminds her mom.

Mom laughs back. "I know. Now, let's get busy so we have food to eat when you and I sit down."

"Yes, ma'am."

They work together for hours. Mom tells her just before lunch to go get a bath and put on something nicer than her Scooby Doo pajamas. Poppy wants to know who doesn't like Scooby Doo, but she's shooed from the kitchen and sent on her way. Once she's clean, she's allowed to set the table with the good china (she personally thinks they should use the good china every day) and put ice water in glasses on the table. Her mom sets a bottle of hot apple cider on the table and places two tiny glass vases beside their plates. Each has a sprig of holly in it. Poppy smiles.

"It's beautiful."

"It is," Mom agrees. "Are you sad it's just the two of us?"

"No," she says, shaking her head. "I like big Thanksgivings, but I like being just you and me, too. This is nice. Are you ready to eat?"

Mom puts her hand on her tummy and acts melodramatic. "Starved!"

"Let's eat then!"

11 Physical and Cognitive Development in Adolescence

Poppy's ambivalence about living with Sam troubles her. She finds it painful that her dad is so understanding about her feelings, too. Her relationship with Clover is definitely better now that her sister lives with Mom again. Leaf still lives with their dad. He seems to view both Poppy and their mom as being at fault in his broken home and doesn't want much to do with either of them. Poppy misses them all. She misses her old life.

At the same time, she loves having her other dad so much of the time, and she's able to appreciate how much she missed not being with him more when she was little. He treats her like she matters and lets her go to either of her other houses anytime she asks for as long as she asks. She's pretty sure he's a saint walking around disguised as a man.

When she's 15 and staying with Mom for a few days (Clover visits Dad), she gets sick. In bed, vomiting, doesn't know what's up or down sick. Mom tries to get her to eat but she can't. She pushes the food away.

"Take it out," she whispers. "Throw up."

"Okay, honey. I'm going." Mom leaves and returns. The smell of food is gone. "Can you tell me anything, Poppy? I'm really worried."

"Head," she whispers again. It's all she can manage.

After a pause, Mom says, "It's only 3:30. I think we should go to Dr. Lamb's. I know you think you can't get out of bed, but you can. Let's just get in the car and go. Come along, honey, I'll help you."

The walk downstairs, out into the sun, and the drive to the doctor's office are all excruciating. Once, Mom has to pause at a green light so Poppy can lean out her door and vomit. She's shivering and begging God to die by the time they get to Dr. Lamb's, the family's general practitioner. Fortunately for Poppy, it's late in the day, and Dr. Lamb doesn't have many patients waiting. The nurse takes her to a room where she can lie down to wait in the dark, and she doesn't even care how long it is that she waits. The room is cool, and there's no noise from anywhere until Dr. Lamb arrives with her mother. It takes less than a minute for the doctor to softly say, "Migraine," which Poppy's pretty sure she could've diagnosed herself.

She leaves and returns with the nurse. “Jamie will give you a shot, Poppy. It’s going to hurt, but I think you probably won’t even register the pain. In a few minutes, the migraine will start to wear off, but you might feel a little nauseous. If that’s the case, ask, and Jamie will give you something for that. I’m giving your mom some prescriptions for the next time this happens.”

Next time?

Everything Dr. Lamb says is true. The shot does hurt; she kind of knows that but finds she can’t care. The shot is also magic, like ambrosia. In almost no time her shoulders become less tense as the pain ebbs. She keeps waiting for the headache to return, but it doesn’t. Nausea takes its place.

“Throw up,” she whispers to Mom, still in a roadkill state.

Mom leaves and returns with the nurse, who lifts her head and gives her a pill and a small paper cup of water. The pill doesn’t work as fast as the shot, but it doesn’t take long. Once she feels like she can open her eyes and speak without dying, Poppy asks for the doctor.

Dr. Lamb returns, nodding and smiling as she gives Poppy the once-over. “Looking better.”

“Thanks,” Poppy says softly, “to you.”

“You had a question,” Dr. Lamb said.

“You said ‘next time’ when you were in here before. Why do you think this will happen again? I haven’t had a bad headache before.”

Dr. Lamb sighs. “The best predictor of a migraine, Poppy, is a migraine. I hope you never do have another one, but after today don’t you want to be prepared?”

She agrees that seems sensible and leaves with Mom soon after speaking to Dr. Lamb. On the ride home, Mom reaches across the seat of the car and touches her knee.

“You’ve got too much stress,” she says.

Poppy looks out the window. “I don’t have too much stress.”

“You always take on too much. Like the divorce. Leaf. I know you blame yourself, but none of it is your fault. If you carry around all that guilt, it’s going to start hurting you at some point.”

Poppy, truly angry for maybe the first time, turns to look at Mom. “Not my fault? Those are just words, Mom. The same words you and Dad keep saying because you think somehow saying them makes me believe them? Everyone’s actions—including the divorce, but especially the isolation of my brother and sister—tell the true story. Say one thing; do another. My whole life is an ongoing remake of *Gaslight*.”

“Poppy!”

“Just take me to Dad’s. He can fill the prescriptions.”

“If that’s what you really want.”

She knows she hurt her mom’s feelings, and part of her feels bad about that—not a big enough part. “It is.”

**12 Socioemotional
Development in
Adolescence**

Poppy begins working a part-time job at the local supermarket and begins dating almost without the notice of her parents. Clover, 22, and Leaf, 20, are off at college, and her parents are all busy with their careers. No one cares what she does with most of her time. Her bio-dad always wants to meet whatever new guy she's going out with *before* she goes out with him. It's all pretty low key though. She's pretty sure she could bring home her English teacher—Mr. Apple is so hot—and no one would notice—not that she'd actually date her English teacher because, ew, gross.

She starts dating Harry at the beginning of junior year. For Poppy, this means a reasonable amount of time to be asked to homecoming. She's not one of those girls who gets a new guy at the beginning of October and then feels like that's an auto-invite to the biggest event of the football season. You have to ease into that one. Harry—well, two and a half months is reasonable, respectable. There's one problem with Harry; she's definitely not going to have her first major event requiring pictures and all that entails if it involves the parental units—all three of them. If her mom had been successful in keeping Poppy's parentage from her dads, she would've been among the 1 to 3 percent of kids raised in the world by fathers who didn't sire them and didn't know they didn't. She'd checked. Does she want to get into all that with Harry and, more importantly Harry's parents? It bears thinking about.

"What's there to think about?" Harry asks her when she puts him off about homecoming. "You get a dress. I get a suit or something else *suited*. You see what I did there?"

Poppy laughs. "Yes, I see."

"We become beautiful, take some pictures with everyone else down by the river, then eat a bunch of food, go the dance, drink a bunch of bad not-spiked punch while we dance poorly, leave, eat some more, then go home. Sounds simple to me."

"I wish it were that simple."

"What's not? Do you already have a date? Like a date you made back in February or something?" For a second he looks serious. "I'm not really serious, but tell me if you do."

"I don't," she assures him. "Can we just take pictures with your parents?"

Harry frowns. "That's most unexpected. You don't want yours there? Not even one of them? I know they don't live together, so maybe you don't want to make things awkward by having them together for pictures, but you don't want either of them there?"

No time like the present.

"I'm pretty sure I don't want *any* of them there," she corrects.

It's almost worth it just to see his face try to puzzle out her words.

"That's what I asked."

"No, it's almost what you asked. You asked don't I want either of my parents there when we take pictures, and 'either' implies two. I have three."

"Oh." She gives him another minute or so to work this out. "So, like you have two same-sex parents and a surrogate or something?"

"Or something, but it's a little more exotic than that." Poppy can't believe she's made it this far without being the complete gossip of her high school. Maybe it's true that everyone has their own problems and isn't concerned with anyone else's. Dang. Teenagers are a selfish bunch. "I have parents, a mom and dad, who were married when Mom got pregnant with me. I was baby number three, if it matters."

"Okay . . ." Harry says. "So, how does that get you to three unless maybe one of them got remarried and you consider that person your parent also. But that's not so uncommon, right?"

"No, I don't think it is, but that's also not my story. When Mom got pregnant with me, she was having an affair with Dad's good friend, who as it turns out is my biological father. It's alternately polite and messy and unpleasant and pretty healthy. I don't know. I don't tell people really, although my friends tend to know my Mom and at least one of my dads."

Harry looks at her. "That's nuts."

"Little bit. Anyway, now you see why I asked if we could just have your parents there."

"Yeah, now I see., Harry agrees as he glances at his watch. "Hey, I forgot I'm supposed to pick up a prescription for my mom at the pharmacy. We can talk about this later, right?"

Poppy nods. "Sure. You know where to find me."

He does, too, which is why she's a little wrecked that he doesn't call or come by later—or at all. Her relationship ends without any notification at all, and she figures it's got to be because she told him about her family. She'd always thought Harry was pretty unconcerned about social norms—guess not. She thinks maybe it's time to not date for a little while.

This becomes easier than she would've estimated. Apparently, Harry feels it's his duty to make sure the whole high school knows about her situation—like spreading her news will save the rest of the boys who might ask her out. It works. She goes from ordinary high school junior to social pariah in 24 hours.

13 Physical and Cognitive Development in Emerging/Early Adulthood

Poppy telephones each of her parents from her bio-dad's house. She doesn't want to have the coming conversation, but the uptick in migraines tells her it's time. Once she gets it out of the way, she'll go back to the monthly headache she gets with her period and the handful that always follow her attempts to reconnect with Clover or Leaf. Her dad—with whom she still lives—agrees to let her have her other parents over to dinner so they can all talk. She knows she can always count on his support.

At 5:45 p.m., she orders two pizzas, vegetarian for her Mom and herself and all the meats for her dads. Pizza is easy to order and easy to clean up. She pulls out paper plates, a bottle of wine for Mom, and a couple beers. She gets herself a cream soda and waits. Mom and Dad arrive together, which she knew would happen. Dad told her he'd pick up Mom on his way over from his house. Her bio-dad comes in carrying the pizza, having met the delivery lady in the driveway.

"Did you tip her well?" Poppy asks.

He gives her the evil eye and sighs. "Yes, Poppy, I tipped her well. You'll break me just in tipping."

"The service industry is the working poor in this country," she reminds him, taking the boxes and throwing them on the table where her other parents wait. "Dig in, everyone. I don't know about you, but I'm starved." The statement isn't quite true. She's too nervous to be hungry, but she can eat. The smell of pizza makes everyone hungry so far as she knows.

Her dads open their beers, and she pours her mom's wine. Her parents comment on the little luxuries being afforded them, and she smiles. After their second slice, she says, "You might've guessed there's more to this dinner than pizza and the pleasure of one another's company."

Dad, not her bio-dad, says, "I hope so," making everyone else frown.

Poppy bites back tears. Nodding, she rushes on. "I asked you to come over because I have some things to say to you and wanted to get through it all just the once."

Her bio-dad clears away the pizza boxes, and Poppy reaches behind herself for the folder she's been waiting to pull out. There are several paper-clipped stacks inside. She lays them one at a time except for the last two on the table. She closes the folder with the others still inside.

"These are acceptance packages from Arizona State, Georgia Tech, Tufts, Cornell, and Virginia Tech," she tells them. It's ridiculously difficult to keep the pride from her voice.

All three of her parents stare slack-jawed at the stacks of paper and then at her. Mom speaks first. Poppy expected that.

"Oh, honey. I didn't even know you were applying anywhere."

Poppy looks at her with a raised brow. "Mother, I'm aware of what a social disappointment I am."

"No!" Mom rushes to say, "I'm so proud of you."

"Yes," her dads agree. "So proud of you, sweetheart."

"I'm sure. Thanks. I just wanted to show you my options."

"They're all far away," Mom says, but she doesn't sound like she's complaining. "Were they specific choices?"

"Yes, they were. I'm going to study ergonomics, and these are some of the best schools for that."

"So, which lucky school did you choose?" her bio-dad asks.

"Oh, none of those." She puts away the papers and the folder. "I'm going up north. West Point if you're really interested. It won't cost you a penny, and yes, I'll have activity duty responsibilities when I'm finished. Please just say you're happy for me or something."

Poppy waits. Clover and Leaf both went to college, but her parents are too busy arguing over who will pay for her tuition to even ask what she wants. It's okay, she thinks. She's done it on her own. Now, they just need to acknowledge the fact.

- 14 Socioemotional Development in Emerging/Early Adulthood**
- Poppy sits at one of the four small tables in the room dedicated to student study in the wing where psychology is housed at West Point. Her roommate and best friend Colleen Pierce sits adjacent to her as they cram for an upcoming midterm. Three more months, and she'll be done—done entirely with West Point. If she can make an A in this one class where she's borderline A/B, then she'll graduate with a perfect 4.0.
- Poppy looks over the list of terms they have to know. "Quiz me on these?"
- "Sure." Colleen takes the paper from her and leans back in her chair. "Fundamental attribution error."
- "The tendency to over-attribute the negative behavior of another to enduring, internal dispositional factors and under-attribute those behaviors to internal or situational factors."
- "Word." Colleen glances at the back of the paper and then back at the front. "Self-handicapping."
- "That thing you do when you intentionally go to a late movie the night before you have an early exam."
- "Nicely done, cadet," Major Wolfe says, sticking his greying head into the doorway. Poppy and Colleen stand. Wolfe is the faculty member giving the test for which they're studying. "Bell, Pierce, how goes the studying?"
- "Brilliantly," Colleen answers with a dimpled smile. She almost looks feminine when she smiles, but Poppy knows what lurks behind the benign façade. Colleen puts most of the male fourth-year cadets to shame in their physical training.
- "Excellent." Major Wolfe turns to go. "Remember to let me know if you need anything."
- "Thank you, sir," they both say before resuming their seats once he's gone.
- "That man," Colleen whispers, "could make me forget I'm gay."
- Poppy snorts in laughter. "That man," she rejoins, "is inappropriately named. He shouldn't be Major Wolfe but Major Fox because he is one major fox."
- Colleen rolls her eyes. "Like he's never heard that one before."
- "I never said I was a creative genius."
- "Good thing," Colleen says, laughing, "or I'd have to call you out for false advertising."
- Poppy stares at the empty doorway. "Do'ya think he's married?"
- "Major Wolfe?" Geez, you do have some daddy issues, don't you? Not that it's terribly unexpected given your—ah—childhood situation."
- "Har-dee-har, Anna Freud." Poppy straightens in her chair. "I don't have time to think about any guy. I have to get out of this place with the best grades I can. Things to do and places to go, you know?"
- 15 Physical and Cognitive Development in Middle Adulthood**
- Poppy's five-year service requirement as a result of attending West Point turns into ten years. Once she realizes she doesn't want to quit until she makes captain and that making captain will take her at least eight years, well, re-upping is the only real option open to her. It's fine. For the first five years, she and Aiden Wolfe (who knew it would be so easy to fall in love in the end?) manage a long-distance relationship pretty well. She doesn't have any say in where she goes, and they both know this is both the job and the life if they choose it. It's hard, harder than anything Poppy's ever done, she thinks. Losing Clover's affection might've been worse, but she never lets herself think about that at all.

After she reenlists, she has a slight amount of say in where she goes. She gets to prioritize a handful of tours, always with the acknowledgement that she could end up somewhere else entirely. Knowing this and knowing what she wants to do with her career, Wolfe agrees to a reversible vasectomy just before she does her first tour in Afghanistan. It's not that they don't both like kids; they do. They just don't see kids of their own in their future, and they're both okay with that.

Working in Afghanistan gives Poppy new purpose, a direction focusing her so completely on the now that she sees nothing other than the job and the distance between when she sees Wolfe and when she'll see him again. Over a noisy, crackling phone line, she tries to talk to him about it.

"We're patrolling in the hills, protecting a school," she yells.

"Did you say school? It's hard to hear you."

"Yes! A school for girls! Aiden, I need you to be here. I need you to help me on this project. Can you get some time?"

He manages four days, during which she shows him the school, the photos she's taken of it from every angle, and tells him her idea. She's the integrative person, the one to make the product work in conjunction with the persons using it. She needs Wolfe's psychological expertise to bring it to life first.

"Can we do it?"

He nods. "If we can get the materials, we can do it. Let me talk to my CO."

"Thank you." She hugs him tightly. "How long do we have left?"

Aiden checks his watch. "Seventeen hours until my chopper leaves. What do you have in mind?"

"Wanna get hitched? Chaplain's on duty. I already checked."

He doesn't look scared or angry—possibly a little amused, which helps her relax. "Think we need a marriage license for some period of time?" he asks.

Poppy shakes her head. "No. Not here. Just someone to recognize the ceremony and two witnesses." She squints at him. "You're sure?"

"I'm sure, and the sooner we get it done, the sooner we can design your cloak of invisibility for the girls' school."

"That's true," she agrees. "Just let me brush my teeth or something."

Aiden grabs her hand and pulls her from the barracks. "You're a rock star, Bell. Leave everything for ten minutes and come make us the Bell-Wolfe's, would you?"

"I will," she says, and she says it again a few minutes later in front of the army chaplain, a first lieutenant, and a green beret—best day of her life.

After Aiden returns to New York to continue working on their project, Poppy returns to the village. She wants additional pictures of the girls' school and plans to see if she can rent a drone to take a few aerial shots. Wearing her Army-issued hijab, she stands in the electronics store haggling over the rental cost when a handheld grenade is rolled into the store next door, a restaurant where American soldiers are meeting with Afghan soldiers to discuss the troop drawdown. Both buildings on either side suffer major damages and loss of life. Poppy, 28 years old and two years shy of making captain, dies along with seven of her fellow soldiers.

16 Socioemotional Development in Middle Adulthood N/A

17 Physical and Cognitive Development in Late Adulthood N/A

18 Socioemotional Development in Late Adulthood N/A

19 Experience With Death and Dying N/A

Case Discussion Questions

1. In Poppy's infancy, the three parents, Wendy and Brian together and then Sam, attend a series of family court sessions after which a judge rules on visitation and child support for Sam. He's granted what he considers to be rather strict visitation, but he willingly pays the child support the court has ordered. He also notes with derision that Brian has begun living away from the house as much as he lives at it, which Sam believes harms all three children. Contrast this case to Poppy's optimal case in which the court is not involved and Sam has a liberal visitation schedule and an agreed-upon reasonable child support payment. How might Poppy's future outcomes be altered in this case across any and all domains (biological, cognitive, and socioemotional)? Why?
2. In early childhood, Wendy and Brian argue with Sam about where Poppy should attend preschool. After discussing the situation, Wendy thinks maybe she'll look at some alternatives like Sam is. In this case, Wendy wants to tell Brian her thoughts and intentions but holds back, fearful of his response. Compare this to the optimal case in which she tells him and he reacts poorly by sleeping on the couch but doesn't do anything else. What in Poppy's prior life experiences suggests these are typical Brian behaviors, and how do you expect Poppy to develop across any and all domains (biological, cognitive, and socioemotional) as you consider these factors?
3. In middle adulthood, Poppy is serving overseas in Afghanistan. She is involved with her former mentor from West Point, Major Wolfe, and on a brief furlough, the two are married by an Army chaplain. From all appearances, Poppy is happy, as is Aiden Wolfe. Her husband returns to West Point, and Poppy is killed in action while reviewing a school in the village in which she's stationed. Why is this not an unexpected outcome compared to the optimal outcome? Is anything in Poppy's past a precursor to this early death?
4. Consider Poppy's optimal case outcomes at the end of her life and Erikson's integrity-versus-despair stage of psychosocial development. How does this case compare to that one? Consider all of Poppy's life events. How do you think those contributed to any differences in Poppy's end-of-life outcomes and her sense of integrity versus despair?

12. Undesirable Outcomes: Aminah Mohammed

2 Biological and Environmental Foundations

Aminah, conceived when Munya is just barely 22, is a mystery to her parents. Both decide not to learn the sex of their coming child, as they chose with Navi. Riad, who wed Munya in an arranged ceremony five years before and has grown to love her deeply, doesn't hold that his wife should bear only boys into the world. He does believe it's better for her to be at home raising whatever children they have than it is for her to be, say, in one of his convenience stores cashing out sales. It's not an equitable trade for her time, the \$8 he pays a high school kid to do that job versus the invaluable job she does raising children. If Munya wants to know Aminah's sex, she doesn't want to know enough to go against Riad. She's a peaceful, agreeable woman who generally lets others have their wishes because it makes her happy to do so and not out of any sense of duty. The baby will come out the same regardless of sex and will eat, cry, and sleep the same, too. She can wait.

What cannot wait, Ms. Abbas scolds her, is Munya's need to control her morning sickness. It wasn't like this with Navi. The first trimester passing of nausea and occasional vomiting proves a myth, and Munya continues to feel wretched well past the halfway point of her pregnancy. She can barely tolerate any food at all, which Ms. Abbas worries over. Eventually, she prescribes a medicine to help with nausea and tells Riad to bring home a case of Gatorade from one of the stores. Munya improves after that, but Ms. Abbas remains concerned. Playing with Navi on the floor of their apartment, Munya waves off her worries. She feels her child moving with clockwork regularity. There's no trouble; she's sure of it.

3 Prenatal Development, Birth, and the Newborn Experience

When Munya is 36 weeks pregnant, she feels her labor begin. Having Navi so recently, she waits a bit to make certain this isn't false labor, and when she knows her child will be born in the next day, she telephones Riad at the store where he's working. Riad calls Ms. Abbas, who arrives within half an hour and checks Munya's progress. She tells Munya that, yes, her baby will be born in the next eight or ten hours probably and, settling her on the birthing mat, makes lunch for Naveed and tea for herself.

Riad arrives and sits in the living room to wait with Navi. They play games and watch television and, assured by Ms. Abbas that the baby won't be born soon, go out for a quick dinner. Riad bathes his son and puts him to bed on the sofa beside him when they return. Two local women he recognizes as being part of Munya's prayer circle and close friends of hers have arrived by this time and are in attendance in the bedroom, where Munya struggles to deliver their baby. Ms. Abbas comes into the living room to tell him that Munya is fine, and his child should be arriving soon.

It seems to take forever, but Aminah is delivered just before dawn. She is small, 5.4 pounds although she's technically full term, and she seems frail to her parents. The midwife is concerned that she appears slightly cyanotic, which could indicate low oxygen saturation. She suggests it may be best to take the baby to the hospital to be checked out by Dr. Ramanujan, the local pediatrician for almost everyone's children, rather than waiting until the morning. Ms. Abbas removes the soiled linens from the birthing mat and helps Munya clean up and dress. The Mohammeds drive to the hospital, meeting the midwife there, and Ms. Abbas eases the transition for Aminah, speaking to Dr. Ramanujan briefly before taking her leave. The pediatrician tells Riad and Munya a few minutes later that Aminah looks healthy, but her oxygen levels are low. He'd like to keep her in the hospital, where she can be given oxygen as needed and can be monitored closely. They can expect to take her home in a couple of days.

4 Physical Development in Infancy and Toddlerhood

Munya holds Aminah while an active Navi plays at her feet. Dr. Ramanujan, whose pediatric practice is run from the first floor of his two-story home, speaks to Navi now and then while examining the baby. Munya strokes her head and asks the worried questions she committed to memory before coming.

“Ms. Abbas said she was ‘small for date,’ you remember?”

Dr. Ramanujan nods. “I do, but do you remember when we talked about that the day Aminah was born?”

“Yes. I just don’t understand. I read about this condition, small for date, and I don’t know why my Aminah was born so. I didn’t have any of the risk factors I read about.”

Dr. Ramanujan raises one eyebrow at her. Riad does the same sometimes, and he usually follows the expression with a comical rebuke of some sort. So does the doctor. “My patients,” he says, “always reading, reading, reading. Why don’t you read a good novel? Or the *New York Times*? Don’t read about illness and disease. Please. You make my job so much harder when you do.”

They both laugh.

“But then why?” Munya pushes. She’s assertive regarding the children’s health.

“Well,” he says, “she was just on that line between full term and premature. A few days earlier and we would’ve said she was preterm and a healthy weight for her gestational age. These are the best definitions and guidelines we have, Mrs. Mohammed, but they’re not as specific as we like to believe. For instance, does it make sense to you that on one day, Aminah is premature and of good size and the next day is not premature and of insufficient size? We draw a line, and 98 percent of the time, it works.”

“I see,” Munya says, nodding. She thinks she does, too.

“Good, because this little girl is happy, and she’s recovered so well from her bout of RSV last winter.”

Munya remembers that trip to the hospital and poor little Aminah’s cough and lethargic little body so hot with fever. She’d been terrified. “Yes,” she agreed, “she’s much better.”

“She’s also hitting all her milestones and shows nothing to worry about that I can see. Shall we make her cry now with a couple vaccinations?”

Munya laughs. “Yes. I think that would be good for both of them. Then I can take Navi for an ice cream and put this little one down for a long nap.” She looks at Dr. Ramanujan in complete gratitude. “Thank you.”

“That’s what I’m here for,” he replies.

5 Cognitive Development in Infancy and Toddlerhood

Munya stands at the stove cooking. Dinner takes a long time. They’re eating lemon-garlic steak, eggplant, and rice tonight, and she likes a tender steak. She doesn’t want to overcook or end up steaming it. Keeping focused on this delicate task is a challenge with little miss distraction at her feet. Glancing down, she laughs at Aminah, sitting in front of the children’s cabinet full of plastic bowls and cups. She has two cups, one in each hand, banging them together like some musical instrument and singing along with her own song.

"Pretty," Munya tells her, and Aminah looks up and smiles. She scoots on her diapered bottom and bangs some more. "Don't get carried away there."

Navi runs into the kitchen, sliding on his socks. "What's pretty?"

"Aminah's music," she says, pointing with a spoon.

On his knees, Navi walks to his sister and holds out a hand. "Can I play?"

Aminah hands him a cup and gets another from the cabinet. Together, they sit and sing while Munya returns to cooking. She thinks back over Aminah's short life. It's hard for her to remember when her baby went from a smiling, inquisitive but largely passive recipient of her world to this interactive model, learning and squirreling away that knowledge for future use. Glancing back at Navi and Aminah, she smiles again. If they were any cuter, she might die of baby overload. Turning away, she keeps smiling, and she tries hard to forget how frail Aminah still seems, how tiny.

6 Socioemotional Development in Infancy and Toddlerhood

Riad, who works hard to have no favorite child, is beloved by Aminah. Although Munya has no trouble with the baby ever and Aminah responds rapidly and with pleasure to any overtures Navi makes, she absolutely shines when Riad returns home each night. Munya jokes that if they opened the big dictionary on the bookshelf and turned to the entry for "daddy's girl," it would read simply *Aminah Mohammed*. Navi displays no jealousy. Munya believes this is because the baby is passed so frequently among them when Riad is home. Aminah shows little hesitance with strangers, not yet anyway, even when Munya and Riad leave her with a sitter for weekly prayers. They would send her to the nursery at the mosque, but she's too prone to catching any respiratory ailments floating around. Munya, always striving to be a good mother and wife, loves the family she's building and can't help smiling whenever she sees either child but particularly when she catches sight of them together.

7 Physical and Cognitive Development in Early Childhood

Aminah is four the first time she gets into trouble with her parents. The unfairness of it makes her even more angry because it's all Naveen's fault, Naveen who took her abacus and told her she didn't need it because she was a girl. First, *wrong*. Second, so what if she hit him? He's *wrong*. She uses the abacus as well as he does, and he's six. They're both sent to their rooms by *úmi*, mommy, and told to wait for *baba*, daddy, to get home. That's fine, Aminah thinks, let's wait for *baba*.

She hears him come in and sits quietly to listen to him talk to *úmi*. She doesn't say much. Navi took the abacus, and Aminah hit him. Yes, that's the story. *Baba* doesn't come to her right away. *Úmi* calls for her to eat, and she sits at the table with *baba* while Navi has a talk with *úmi*. Then everyone switches places.

"Your mother tells me you hit your brother today, *hubibi*," *baba* says to her, sitting on the edge of her bed where she's laying. He holds her hand, so she thinks maybe she's not in too much trouble.

Aminah nods. "Yes, *baba*, but—"

He holds up a hand. "I know what Naveen did and what he said to you."

"He was mean!"

"Those were not nice words, and he shouldn't have taken your abacus."

Aminah risks a glance at his face. "Can I have it back?"

Baba moves his head side to side, thinking about it. "I should bring you a new one. Yours is probably best left in your brother's coarse boy hands now."

"Okay?" Aminah isn't finished. "What about what Navi said? He said I didn't need it because I was a girl! That's so mean, *baba!*"

"I understand he hurt your feelings," he says, "and I will have a talk with your brother about that."

"Good. He's afraid of you. At least a little," she adds quickly, not wanting to hurt his feelings.

"I want Naveen to be reminded that ours is a family where girls are not only allowed but expected to excel in those tasks set before them. Your mother, she is bright and eager to be a good wife and mother. It's one of the things I love best about her."

Aminah's smile slips. "You don't think Navi was wrong?" she whispers.

He does his head thing again and says, "I think it's always wrong to hurt someone's feelings."

"I've heard other boys at the mosque say the same thing." Aminah, indignant, frowns at him. "I think they're *wrong*, too."

"I know you feel that way, *hubibi*. But not so fast. You still did a very bad thing. What does the Quran say? You know this well."

Aminah says softly, "Compete with one another in doing good."

"Yes," her father says, "and is striking your brother in anger doing good?"

"No," she replies, shaking her head, "but he—"

"Aminah," *baba* warns, "this isn't about Naveen, and he will be dealt with. This is only about you."

"Okay, *baba*."

"Good. Thank you, *hubibi*. Now, how shall we settle the matter?"

"I can give up rice pudding for the week?" Aminah whispers. She loves rice pudding, and *úmi's* is the best.

Baba shakes his head. "No, I think not. I prefer not to punish you. In this house, we don't hit, and we don't act in anger. I would rather you think of a positive—good, I mean—way to make this right, as will Naveen," he promises.

"Okay. Can I think about it tonight?"

"Sure." Standing, he bends to kiss her head. "I love you, *hubibi*."

"I love you, too, *baba*."

In the morning, Aminah and Navi sit in the kitchen discussing their bargain. When *baba* enters for his morning coffee, Aminah tells him proudly, "I'm going to make Navi's bed for one week to say I'm sorry for hitting him, and to say sorry for taking my abacus, he's going to teach me the parts of the *abjad* I don't already know so I can write the whole Arabic alphabet."

Baba nods. "I think those sounds like excellent compensations. Good. No more mischief. Your mother doesn't need the hassle."

"Yes, *baba*," they promise, and the world resumes its turning for the Mohammed household.

8 Socioemotional Development in Early Childhood

Aminah's day, fairly structured, includes lots of time with *úmi* helping her learn things she'll need to know for Kindergarten. They do math worksheets and spelling, read storybooks, color, and craft. Some things they do only on certain days (Monday is music day), and some things they do every day (math and prayers). Aminah has lots of breaks in between things, too. *Úmi* has to clean the house, and she has Aminah help with chores so she learns how to keep house as well as how to read and write. *Úmi* also has to walk to get Navi from school (Aminah goes with her), and she and *úmi* make dinner together for the family before *baba* comes home. Her favorite part of most days is going to the big city park two blocks from their apartment. When the weather is nice, they go every day for a little while before walking to Navi's school.

At the park, Aminah gets to play with lots of other children, including girls, who are woefully lacking in her apartment building. They have so much fun! The park has beautiful trees to climb or dance under, and there's a tree fort built around one of them that all the children like to play in when they can find space. There are two spinny things one of the moms calls a witch's hat. Aminah loves those; she can stand and hold on while *úmi* or someone else starts it spinning. Sometimes she goes so fast that she gets dizzy.

On quiet days, some of the children like to play school. Aminah is always the teacher. Sometimes she plays both the teacher *and* a mother. On a warm day just before Navi's school gets out for summer, a new girl comes to the park with her mother. She calls herself Samira Saab, and Aminah asks her to play school with some of the other kids. Samira shakes her head no and runs away to the tree fort. Following, Aminah climbs up behind her and asks why she doesn't want to play. She promises that all the children are nice, and she never plays a mean teacher. Refusing still, Samira explains that she isn't allowed to do things like read and write, and she doesn't want to get into trouble. Aminah doesn't know how to feel about Samira's announcement or how to respond. Backing down the tree fort's ladder, she returns to her friends, but she asks her parents about it at dinner.

"Did you see her mom didn't speak to Mrs. Ali either? Why?"

Baba says, "I can only guess, Aminah, but Mrs. Ali doesn't wear the hijab. If your new friend Samira has such restrictions imposed on her, then Mrs. Ali is probably of very strict behavior code. I don't know this name, Munya. Saab, you said, Aminah?" She nods. "They must go to the old mosque just outside the city."

"Probably," *úmi* agrees. "Do you understand why I wear the hijab, Aminah?"

"Because the Quran tells you to cover your head?"

Her mother smiles but shakes her head. "Actually, no, it doesn't, and actually Islam isn't the only religion where women choose to cover their heads. The important thing for you to understand, and you—" she says, turning to Navi for a second and then back to Aminah, "is that I do choose to wear it. All women of Islam choose whether or not to cover their heads and how. Mrs. Ali doesn't. That's her choice."

"But I thought the Quran—" Aminah says and stops.

"No, *hubibi*. The Quran only tells us to be modest of dress, and how we choose to do that is up to us. What do you see Mrs. Ali wear every day?"

This one was easy. Aminah says, "Long sleeves and long pants or skirts. She doesn't cover her head or hands, but everything else is covered. She probably covers more than you do!" she adds, thinking hard about it.

“She might,” her mother says. “So, you see, the head is important, but it isn’t the only way to be modest. Clearly, this is a very important point for Mrs. Saab, and it’s a less important one for Mrs. Ali. Most of us? We just choose. I like the hijab. It makes me freer to be me in so many ways, but you may choose differently.”

“I don’t think so,” Aminah says seriously.

“Well, I hope not, but we have a long time to see about that.” *Úmi* points her fork at Aminah’s plate. “Now, finish your peas, please.”

9 Physical and Cognitive Development in Middle and Late Childhood

In elementary school, Aminah is allowed more responsibility at home. Some of this she wishes she could shirk (who really gets excited about cleaning bathrooms?), but some of it she enjoys (being in the kitchen with *úmi* is always fun). She even gets to cook the entire family meal two nights every week and breakfast on Saturdays. The best part is when her mother smiles her approval at what Aminah prepares and serves. Every week, she plans her meals carefully and adds the ingredients she needs to the family shopping list. Her father gives her quiet approval, but although this is generous and pleasurable, it’s *úmi* she wants to please.

Now and again, she has friends over after school. She likes these days because she can show off in the kitchen. This is boastful, she knows, but she hasn’t got a single friend who can make some of what she can. They’re always impressed. Her best friend Karen wants to learn how to make some of the more exotic dishes, and Aminah starts showing her the ingredients and steps in their spare time. They wear little aprons *úmi* made for her the year before and always make a bigger mess in the kitchen than Aminah intends. Fortunately, she’s also good at cleaning up. If she weren’t, her mother wouldn’t let her in the kitchen ever.

Once Karen learns to make a dish or two almost as good as Aminah can, they decide to host a dinner party for both sets of parents and their three siblings, Navi and Karen’s two sisters. Aminah is so excited! They handwrite the invitations, plan the menu, and write, “Save the date!” on both families’ calendars. It’s going to be the social event of the season!

Thank goodness for Karen, too, Aminah thinks. School is otherwise almost unbearable between the stupid bullies and the teachers who once had Navi and believe her whole family is somehow not even American. After begging and pleading for months, *úmi* and *baba* agree to let her homeschool the next year. That’s no more fun than ordinary school, clustering with a bunch of neighborhood kids who are all in some way too sick or too scared to go to school. After two months, she returns to school, determined to tough it out.

10 Socioemotional Development in Middle and Late Childhood

Aminah sits in the middle of her little garden. It’s Saturday, and she has a new library book to read. She likes sitting outside when she’s not helping *úmi* with chores or cooking. Everyone in the family agrees that the garden is her special place, and she finds it’s pretty easy to be alone there when she wants to be.

Mr. Nejem cut all the lumber for her, and Naveen collected it from Mr. Najem’s store when she was ready to put everything together. Using borrowed power tools (her mother frowned) and a castoff pair of plastic safety glasses, Aminah constructed her planters and filled each one with a careful blend of soil before tucking seeds and tender plants inside. It will take a season or two for her work to reward her, but even now, sitting with her book on an old floor pillow, she loves what she’s made.

The quiet is perfect for the first half hour, after which Samira Saab wanders by. Craning her neck up to the Mohammad's landing, she stops and points at Aminah's work. "What is all of that?"

"I built a garden," Aminah replies after carefully closing her book and setting it aside. "Why?"

This is the silliest question Aminah's ever heard. "Because I wanted to. Why are you walking down the street?"

"Because my mother needs milk from your father's store."

Oh, maybe hers was the silliest question.

"Sorry." She gestures to the fire escape ladder. "Climb up if you want. I'm not doing much today."

"Maybe next time," Samira says, but her face tells Aminah she does want to stay.

Aminah nods. "Sure. Anytime."

Samira walks away in the direction of one of *baba's* stores, and Aminah picks up her book again. She glances down the street where Samira has disappeared and feels a tug. It seems like they're on opposite sides of an invisible line, and if one of them could cross over, they could be good friends. Like Samira said, maybe next time.

Aminah's studying for her last test in elementary school when her father comes home early on a Thursday. *Baba* never comes home early. She can hear the lowered voices of her parents talking in the kitchen and carefully cracks her bedroom door to listen. Across the hall, Navi looks at her through a similar crack in his door. The conversation comes to her in disjointed sentences, but the significance is easy to understand.

"The bank turned us down for the mortgage," *baba* says quietly.

Úmi replies in a voice Aminah recognizes as confused and a little disbelieving. Bad things don't happen to them. "I don't understand, Riad. How is that even possible? With the money we have saved we could buy the house outright. Your credit is perfect, and you have exemplary business records for how many years?"

"Enough years," he says.

"What did they say? Did they give a reason?"

Aminah closes her door. She's heard all she needs to, and her father will never say they've been the target of discrimination even if they have been. The only thing that matters is that they're not going to move into the house her parents want to buy. It's like the one day she went to school and someone had slipped a note inside her locker. When she found it, she didn't understand why the person had written "TERRORIST" in black magic marker. The guidance counselor tried to explain it to her but only confused her more. The principal said he would try to find the person responsible, but only when her dad came to the school to meet with the principal did Aminah feel like anything would get done. At home, her mother explained to her about the World Trade Center attack and how easy it is to put all people of a certain type into a basket.

"Remember when Samira Saab's mother wouldn't speak to Mrs. Ali because she didn't wear a hijab?" Aminah nodded. "Same thing. Some Muslim women think 'no hijab, no morals' when that's obviously not true. Mrs. Ali is as pious as any woman you could meet."

Aminah thought that made a little sense.

“And think of all the followers of Islam,” *baba* added. “Many people think Muslims look like we look, and they do; that’s true, but only maybe 25 percent, yes? Just as many are African, and even more are from the Southern Asian nations. If everyone’s looking at us, they’re really not learning much about Islam, are they?”

“That’s sad,” Aminah remembers saying.

“It is,” her mother agreed.

Her principal didn’t make any effort, even though he assured her father he would, to find the jerk who left the note in Aminah’s locker. The boy was caught only because he bragged about it in the gym locker room, and Navi heard him and told the teacher. When the principal called her into his office to update her on the situation, Aminah lost her temper and complained that he didn’t care about her “situation” because he didn’t care about people like her, meaning Muslims. That earned her two days of in-school suspension.

Listening to her parents talk about the house they aren’t buying anymore, Aminah is reminded of that incident and learning the lessons of how easy it is to pigeonhole people. Everyone does it, but it’s easy to feel like you’re the only target when you actively are a target. She thinks about Mrs. Ali, who is whispered about behind her back because she doesn’t cover her head, and she wonders if people who aren’t Muslim know that the Torah and the Gospels of Jesus are two of Islam’s four holy books.

11 Physical and Cognitive Development in Adolescence

“Samira,” Aminah breathes, sliding into the booth at the back of the desolate coffee house. They always meet here instead of the trendier Starbucks or Panera where Samira might be recognized, which could lead to her mother finding out. Here, at Mr. Kader’s shop that he artfully named Qahua (coffee), they can meet in obscurity, and Mr. Kader is a long-standing supplier of Aminah’s father. It’s unlikely he will tattle. “I’m glad you’re here. I thought maybe you wouldn’t come.”

Samira laughs. “You always think I won’t come, and I’m always here when you arrive.”

“Very true,” she agrees, reaching for the notebook Samira secrets with her to their semi-weekly rendezvous. “Where did we leave off last time?”

“You were teaching me basic algebra, I think. I’ve also finished reading two of the books you lent me, shorter ones, but I finished.”

“That’s great!”

Aminah and Samira started meeting on Mondays and Thursdays so that Aminah could teach Samira how to read and write, but Samira is so clever and quick that they moved beyond the basics sooner than either expected. Instead of quitting, they decide to risk the wrath of Samira’s parents to keep going. Aminah wants to get Samira caught up with her own level by the time she starts high school next year, and she thinks she can if they both work hard.

12 Socioemotional Development in Adolescence

“*Baba, úmi*,” Aminah says, entering the kitchen and laying kisses on her parents’ cheeks. “Good morning.”

“Good morning, *hubibi*,” *baba* replies. As Aminah prepares her breakfast, *baba* looks at her, squinting. “There’s something different about you this morning. What is it?”

“She’s wearing the hijab, *Riad*,” *úmi* tells him.

"Ah! So you are." He picks up the travel mug of coffee her mother fixes for him every morning. "Good day, ladies."

"Bye, *baba*."

"Goodbye, darling," *úmi* says. Then she turns to Aminah. "Why today, sweetheart?"

Aminah fingers the edges of the deep blue hijab she bought herself a couple weeks before from Mrs. Nejem's tailoring shop. At least half the girls her age already wear the hijab to school and the mosque. "Why not today?"

"Good point." Her mother smiles. "That color is nice on you."

"Thank you, *úmi*." Finishing her breakfast, she grabs her backpack and heads out the door for school feeling confident and secure in who she is. She'll get stared at, but so do girls with pimples. It'll be okay.

Only, it isn't okay. Navi, who's already at university, isn't there to protect her when the stares of classmates who never cared for her anyway become whispers and then, by lunchtime, taunts. After school, as she waits for *baba* to pick her up and take her home, a boy from her chemistry class walks past her on his way to the parking lot. Steering himself close to her, his shoulder slams into hers, and she nearly falls. Quick tears form in her eyes, and she turns her face into the edge of her *hijab* so no one can see. When *baba* arrives, she walks slowly and with as much dignity as she can to the car. Inside, she watches the traffic on the roads through her window and answers her father's questions in quiet, quick syllables. *It'll get better*, she tells herself. *Hatred burns itself out like gasoline on a fire*. She would rise from the ashes.

13 Physical and Cognitive Development in Emerging/Early Adulthood

Aminah wants to go away to college. *Baba* doesn't want her to go. "Your husband will surely let you attend classes once you're married, as I did your mother until Navi was born," he points out.

She rolls her eyes.

"Navi went to college, and my grades are as good as his."

Úmi smiles and touches her hand. "Aminah, darling."

"What if I don't want to get married?" she yells, aware no one's mentioned marriage but that it's the 2,000-pound elephant in the room.

Baba says, "That's nonnegotiable, *hubibi*."

"Do you have candidates in mind?" she asks through gritted teeth.

Her father tells her about three sons of business acquaintances and members of the mosque he favors, one of whom Aminah favors well enough. She leaves her parents to make final decisions. She's always known she'll be married by 19 or 20, and although she might prefer it otherwise, she won't disagree with her culture's customs. She knows too many marriages that were arranged and are loving and affectionate, marriages like her parents' to ever complain.

With thoughts of marriage planning to keep her occupied, Aminah tries to enjoy the femininity of it all. Dress shopping is a pleasure with *úmi*, and she adores cake tasting. Is there a thing as too much cake? She doesn't think so. She knows her groom to be, a boy she went to high school with, and they're friendly enough. He's also smart, attractive, and kind. This last is the most important to Aminah. She wants a kind father for her children. By the time she travels with her family for Navi's college graduation, she's a wife with her own household to maintain that's close to her husband's parents' house, and she has a nicely rounded belly thanks to her growing child.

**14 Socioemotional
Development in
Emerging/Early
Adulthood**

When she's 20, Aminah marries Yusef El-Amin in a traditional contracted ceremony at the mosque. If they hadn't gone to high school together and she hadn't grown vegetables on the fire escape landing above his for ten years, they might not know one another nor see one another at their own wedding. As it is, they do know one another well and share a fondness that her parents feel offers benefits to the match. *Baba* agrees to a rather elaborate ceremony and reception, for which Aminah is grateful. He's a good father, and he works hard to blend their traditions with those of their adopted land. She had wanted a beautiful dress; thanks to *baba* she has one.

Yusef, like most of the mosque's men, is progressive. He encourages Aminah to begin college, and he's in favor of their use of birth control until she decides she wants a child. This gift of bodily autonomy, so rare in her culture, is the first jewel in the crown of her marriage. She believes in her marrow there will be many more and is happy to begin honoring her marriage with them. She's so grateful that she decides she wants a child right away. If any of the women in the prayer circle wonder that she doesn't conceive right away—or at all—in the first year, no one speaks of it, and Aminah keeps her own counsel. What lies beneath the marriage blanket is between a man and his wife.

Six months or so into her marriage, Aminah seeks out her mother after prayers one evening. This makes twice she's come to the mosque and hasn't seen Samira, who is faithful as the lamb. Touching her mother's shoulder, Aminah whispers in her ear, "*Úmi*, have you seen Samira Saab? It's been three weeks or more since I've seen her. Her mother's here, but I haven't seen Samira nor heard anything about her. Usually the women gossip, at least a little . . ."

Úmi clucks her tongue and steers Aminah to a bench beneath a live oak dancing in a light breeze. "I didn't tell you before, darling, because I wasn't sure. *Baba* only learned last night to be certain. Samira's gone."

"Gone?" Alarm causes Aminah to flush. She feels the heat just below the surface of her skin. "What is 'gone,' mother? I don't understand."

"Her family sent her to stay with relatives in Afghanistan. I believe they live near your Aunt Hannah."

"In Kabul?" This is madness. "Why did they send her away, and why there?"

Úmi shrugs. "Aminah, *hubibi*, you have to calm down. The Saabs' business is not our concern."

"But Mama, you know she didn't do anything wrong. Someone has to help her. We have to bring her back, or she's going to die over there."

"Ah, child, don't be so dramatic," her mother says, drawing her close. "We mustn't look too closely sometimes. You know that. Come along. Let's have a sweet before Yusef takes you home, no?"

"No," she says as she pulls away. "*Úmi*, it's when we want to look away that we *must* look more closely. If you won't help me, I'll find someone who will."

Aminah left her mother and went in search of her husband. She was, technically, of the El-Amins now, and Yusef's family was as well off as her own and had more relatives left in Afghanistan. If her parents wouldn't help Samira, maybe her new family would.

**15 Physical and
Cognitive
Development
in Middle
Adulthood**

Just as Aminah begins her maternity leave with their second son, a White House initiative from the First Lady's office rolls out. She wants to encourage better, healthier school lunch options for children nationally, and part of that will be sustainable gardening at the local level. Aminah sits in the rocker Yusef sent for from his grandmother's house in Kandahar when Avi was born four years before and nurses little Farouq. Avi, such a good boy, sits at his *umi's* feet with a pot of lotion, massaging each toe one by one. Aminah smiles at him. Who says only women can serve?

Rereading the article about the First Lady's school lunch agenda, Aminah has an idea. When Farouq's head falls off her breast and he's fast asleep as well as sated, she lays him gently in his Moses basket and sends Avi to play in the living room. "*Umi* will be there in just a minute," she promises him. Digging around in the directories they keep in the drawer that will never be cleaned out, she finds the telephone number for the elementary school she and Navi once attended. It surprises her to learn, once the receptionist answers, that her old principal retired a decade ago, and she wonders if adult children always believe the people from their childhoods remain forever fixed as they were—probably.

A young woman, Martha Holmes, is the new principal, and Aminah asks to speak to her. They discuss the new initiative, and Aminah explains to the principal some ideas she has for sustainable gardening at the elementary school. She tells her she'd like to work on this project with the school if there's going to be money for it, and Ms. Holmes promises to get back to her, which she does the following day. She asks Aminah how she would feel about being the project manager for sustainable gardening for the city school district. Aminah agrees to take the job without even asking the salary, but she tells Holmes it may be some time before she can begin. She needs to complete her maternity leave and then provide an appropriate notice at her current position for the county.

Nine months into the new job, with Avi in Kindergarten at the elementary school where she's working two days each week and Farouq nearly walking, Aminah loves what she's doing. She has almost everything she's ever wanted. Her family are all close by and healthy. Her husband is wonderful, kind, passionate, and successful. Her children are the most beautiful in the state at least, even if she is a little bit biased. If she wants any one thing, it's to know what happened to Samira all those years ago. She tries not to dwell on that.

After a particularly grubby day at the elementary school, Aminah puts the boys in a warm bath to get clean while she fixes dinner, which entails telephoning Yusef at work and asking him to bring home takeout from Mr. Sultan's. Then she pours a glass of wine and turns on the radio just loud enough to hear but soft enough that the children are louder still. When she hears the car door slam, she moves to the front door to help Yusef inside with the food and his briefcase. Yusef isn't at the door. A policeman is—no, a policeman and a policewoman. Not once in all her life have the police stood on her doorstep.

"Mrs. El-Amin?"

"Yes," she says, straining still to hear the boys upstairs. "Can I help you? Is something wrong?"

The policewoman steps forward. She has red hair and freckles. For a half second, Aminah thinks how out of place she looks in their neighborhood and wonders if this is how she looks anywhere else.

"Mrs. El-Amin," the woman whose nametag proclaims her to be Officer Agnes Lane says, "Officer Harding and I are here because there's been an accident."

No, her parents. One of them? Naveen maybe or one of his kids.

"An accident?" she echoes, listening to her own voice waver.

"Yes, ma'am. I'm terribly sorry. There was a hit and run accident on Lux and 9th—" Lux and 9th? That's where Mr. Sultan's takeaway is. No, it can't be Yusef. It can't be. "—and pushed into the electricity post. I'm sorry, Mrs. El-Amin, but he died at the scene."

Aminah shakes her head to clear it. "Died? Who did you say?"

"Your husband, ma'am. Mr. El-Amin."

"No," she says quietly, shaking her head. "That's not possible. I just spoke to Yusef 15 minutes ago. Less even. I asked him to get takeaway and—"

"Ma'am, is there someone we can call for you?"

"No. No, thank you." The man, Officer Harding, she thinks, looks toward the hallway where Farouq is squealing with his brother. "My children," she whispers, "in the bath." She turns back to Officer Lane. "Yusef?" she asks. "Are you sure? Are you positive it was my husband Yusef?"

"Yes, ma'am. I'm sure. I'm terribly sorry. Please allow me to call someone," Officer Lane repeats, but Aminah shakes her head.

"I'll do it." She looks at both of them. "Hit and run, you said?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"Who? Do you know who did this?" It wouldn't be anyone in their community. Hit? Sure. But no run. They're too small and too close to keep those sorts of secrets. They don't have many visitors either.

"Sorry, ma'am, we don't, but we're checking all possible leads."

Officer Harding steps forward and looks down at her. He doesn't remove his hat even though Officer Lane has held hers the entire time since Aminah opened the door.

"Important for you to understand, Mrs. El-Amin, that hit and runs don't get solved very often. No witnesses, no evidence, the cases just go cold."

He's telling her they're not even going to try. Officer Lane shoots him a look, but Aminah understands hierarchies. Officer Lane is a small, young woman to Officer Harding's tall, experienced man. He'd get his lieutenant's signoff and file the report before the younger woman ever got her jacket off.

"Thank you, Officer Harding. I understand." She does, and she will be at the station every day until something's done about her husband's death or until they arrest her for trying. "If you don't mind," she says, turning back to the woman, "I need to call my husband's parents now, and I need to get my children out of the bath."

"Of course." Officer Lane hands her a business card. "If you need anything—" she says.

"Thank you," and as she closes the door, holding herself together by the web of her grief alone, she thinks she might actually telephone the woman. But first—family.

**16 Socioemotional
Development
in Middle
Adulthood**

Aminah buries Yusef quietly in the traditions of Islam. She wraps his body, a body she loved for far too brief a time, in the burial shroud she embroidered before and after classes during their engagement. The edges have bluebells and yellow daisies, and among the leaves she's stitched the tiniest of crosses and hearts to send her beloved to the paradise. In the quiet of a house devoid even of the children her mother takes so she can be alone with her grief, she writes Yusef's eulogy. When they reach the mosque, she doesn't want to deliver it. She stands before his casket and touches her fingers to her lips then to the polished wood and says, "The Quran beseeches us to compete with one another in doing good. Yusef, my beloved, set the bar against which we all measured ourselves. In only ten years he became my everything. Allah—may He be glorified—will place balm on our grief. Let us pray Yusef is now accepted into *Jannat al Firdus*, where his sins will be forgiven and he will find himself in the company of the prophets. Ameen." The actual eulogy she slips into the wooden box that holds their silver after she returns home. It's enough that she wrote it.

When Aminah can make the arrangements, she sells the house in which she lived her whole marriage with Yusef. She and the boys move home to her father's house. No one questions her decision, and she's welcomed with open arms. Navi, her wonderful brother, becomes a surrogate father for her sons. Although he has his own family to provide and care for, he makes as much time as he can to be with her children, to show them the ways of their people, to teach them how to be kind and pious and peace loving. Watching them, Aminah realizes Naveen is a better Muslim than she is. All she feels is anger and impatience at a world that can take away her husband, her future, and her safety.

Úmi, older and slower than Aminah remembers, appreciates the help at home. Fortunately for Aminah, this keeps her busy enough that she doesn't dwell on her losses constantly, only nearly so. She tries to enjoy her mother's company, but the most she can muster is a tempered gladness that she is back in the arms of the woman who taught her to be a woman and a wife. Joy she feels is beyond her except with the occasional snatches she grabs with the boys. She has had joy, though, and that she figures will be enough.

**17 Physical and
Cognitive
Development in
Late Adulthood**

When Aminah approaches her 65th birthday, she takes stock of the years since she started moving home. There isn't much to consider. She raised her children. She cared for her aging parents and buried them when they passed. She spent her days in motherly pursuits and agreed to take a small apartment near Navi's house once Avi and Farouq finish college. She becomes a doting grandmother.

Looking back, Aminah considers whether or not she should've remarried. She could've. Navi or *baba* would've seen to it easily, and the boys would've had a father. It was pointless though, she acknowledges. She loved—loves—Yusef, and having done so she can't see a picture that allowed her a successful second marriage. She's all right with this even though she's often lonely.

"It's your fault," Navi chides. "So much happens with the women in the mosque. They've got bake sales, rummage sales, and volunteer drives of every kind. You could be busy with people you like. You could, if you wanted."

Aminah shrugs. "Maybe," she says, and even though she's blowing him off, she's also thinking about the suggestion. She has friends in her prayer circle. Maybe she should be more involved. Maybe it's time to move outside the sphere of her protracted mourning for Yusef.

Her second activity with the women of the mosque is to assist with a 5K they're holding in the early spring. Aminah has so much fun and decides she wants to *run* the race the next year. A day or so later, she wakes up unwell. It must be a cold, she tells herself, realizing it's been a while since she's been ill with a cold even though she's terribly prone to them. This one is persistent, and two weeks later, she sees her doctor. It's not a cold but pneumonia, a large spot on her left lung. Hospitalized, she annoys the staff and her brother by asking hourly when she can go home. (This is what she gets for volunteering, she thinks.) Navi sends for the boys, and a day after Farouq arrives (Avi came the day before), Aminah realizes she's actually very ill. As those closest to her gather round, she tells them she loves them and closes her eyes for a little nap.

Aminah Mohammed passes away at age 65 from complications due to pneumonia.

18 Socioemotional Development in Late Adulthood N/A

19 Experience With Death and Dying N/A

Case Discussion Questions

1. When Amina is born, she suffers for a brief time from lack of oxygen, and the midwife notices she's slightly cyanotic. Aminah is taken to the hospital, where she rebounds quickly. She stays in the hospital for a couple days. Contrast this with Aminah's optimal case outcome in which she's still small but comes into the world with no concerning oxygen deprivation. How might this case put Aminah on a different path across any and all domains (biological, cognitive, and socioemotional)?
2. In early childhood, Aminah has an altercation with her brother. Naveen steals her abacus, and she hits him in retaliation. During a talk with her father Riad later, Aminah tries to stress that Naveen's gender assumptions about girls and math are wrong. Although Riad agrees that Naveen needs to be talked to, he also implies Aminah that she should be concerning herself with more gender-appropriate activities. Compare this to Aminah's optimal case outcomes in which Riad obviously underscores Aminah's own beliefs that being a daughter has nothing to do with her abilities in any subject or activity. What does Riad's conversation in this case tell Aminah, and how does that change her life's trajectory across any and all domains (biological, cognitive, and socioemotional)?
3. In middle childhood, Aminah enjoys teaching her Caucasian friend Karen to cook traditional Afghan dishes and sharing those dishes jointly between her parents and Karen's. She loves being in charge of her parents' kitchen and growing herbs and vegetables on their small fire escape landing. Contrast this outcome with Aminah's optimal case outcome in which she builds a three-story fire escape garden using their fire escape and those of two neighbors beneath them. What are her motivational differences, and how might her future be predicted from these differences?
4. Consider Aminah's optimal case outcomes at the end of her life and Erikson's integrity-versus-despair stage of psychosocial development. How does this case compare to that one? Consider all of Aminah's life events. How do you think those contributed to any differences in Aminah's end-of-life outcomes and her sense of integrity versus despair?