

**Figure 1. Adult Life Stages**

Stage	Key Issues	Self-Image	Goal Focus	Relationships	Community
<b>Autonomy / Tentative Choices</b>  (18 - 26)	Autonomy vs. Dependence  Tentative vs. Lasting Choices	Developing sense of personhood as separate from parents and childhood peer groups	Defining self as an individual and establishing an initial life style	Testing out new relationships (e.g., love interests, peer groups, and friends)	Realigning focus from family of origin to new peers and groups
<b>Young Adult Transition</b>  (27-31)	Turmoil vs. Certainty  Settling Down vs. Keeping Things Open	Questioning sense of self and who/what we want to become	Re-assessing initial life style and making more permanent choices/ commitments	Sorting out and deciding which relationships will become more permanent	Re-thinking and evaluating commitments and connections
<b>Making Commitments</b>  (32-40)	Master vs. Apprentice  Permanent vs. Tentative Choices	Firming up/establishing a more permanent sense of self and who/what we want to become	Deciding a life direction and defining/ aggressively pursuing a dream of what we want to accomplish in life	Making more permanent commitments to love relationships, friends, and peers	Establishing more permanent connections and community ties/ responsibilities
<b>Mid-Life Transition</b>  (41-48)	Resolving Key Polarities  Immortality vs. Mortality  Constructive vs. Destructive	Re-examining realities of projected ego and image vs. true self and struggling to define/accept true self	Questioning the dream whether or not it was achieved and developing a more mature sense of what is really important	Recognizing/ acknowledging one's own negative, as well as positive, impact on relationships and correcting course for deeper, more authentic connections	Disengaging from group and cultural pressures/norms to re-evaluate and restructure priorities

	Nurturing vs. Aggressive				
<b>Leaving a Legacy</b>  (49-65)	Contribution vs. Personal Benefit  Other vs. Self Centered  Social vs. Independent Accomplishments	Letting go of earlier inaccurate ego images and accepting oneself as a worthwhile being with weaknesses as well as strengths	Making the best of the time one has left to help others and leave a positive legacy	Settling into more realistic and rewarding relationships based on recognizing/ forgiving each other's imperfections as human and helping each other grow	Re-engagement on a deeper, more objective, less driven and more productive, level with family, friends, and society
<b>Spiritual Denouement</b>  (66 and beyond)	Hope vs. Despair  Survival of Spirit vs. Mortality  Surrender vs. Control	Accepting self as dependent on a wisdom greater than one's own, recognizing that wisdom as benevolent, and submitting one's self and life to that wisdom's will	Tying things up and completing the development of the person/spiritual being we want to become	Accepting others and recognizing/ respecting humankind's diversity as part of a greater wisdom's plan	Recognizing that life is only part of a larger, more enduring spiritual community and helping others understand that