



Re-positioning Human Development Through Transformation of the Ego: Psycho-Social and Theological Perspectives (with special reference to Erik. H Erikson and James E. *Loder*).

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Abstract

Environment affects ego that shapes the nature, personality and character of an individual to a great extent. Environment influences human wholistically and hence environment is important for the development of an integrated ego. Erik H. Erikson has established life-cycle theory of human development in a normal scale from 0-18 months to 95 years and above. His theory states that every human under goes crisis from one stage to the other and unresolves crisis leads to either mal-adaptive or malignant tenancies. On the other James E. Loder, a polymath theologian states that, more that what happen from one stage to another stage, what happens in between the stages holds greater importance. Loder holds human spirit very importantly and states that life gives chance to reposition human development, leaving behind all unresolve crisis and start life afresh provided the intervention of the Divine Spirit.

Where is the meeting point of Erikson and Loder?

INTRODUCTION

Erikson¹ has highlighted human development on the normal scale but has added a caveat - namely, some great men and women of the world veer away from so-called normal development. He called such people *homo-religiosus*. Loder, on the contrary, goes beyond

Erikson and says that *homo-religiosus* is *normal* provided we understand reality² not just as two- or three-dimensional (self and the lived world, or self, lived world, and void) but as four dimensional (self, lived world, void, and the Holy).³ In the process of human development, stage transitions are more significant than the stages because growth takes through conflict resolution that follows the transformational logic: conflict-in-context, interlude for scanning, intuitive insight felt with imagination force, release of energy and repatterning, and verification-coherence and congruence.⁴ From this point of view we will try to understand Erikson's human development on a normal scale after which we will look into Loder's interpretation of human development from a theological perspective.

1. UNDERSTANDING HUMAN DEVELOPMENT ON A NORMAL SCALE.

Erikson's psycho-social theory is based on an epigenetic plan, the crisis unfolding as the self and the social environment are in interaction influencing resolution that arises at every stage of life. In relation to the nature against nurture debate, Erikson states that nurture has marginal control over nature where contextual settings can influence an individual. Erikson states that growth happens through a resolution of a conflict,

¹ "Erik Erikson," *Erikson Institute*, accessed November 18, 2021, <https://www.erikson.edu/about/history/erikerikson/>. Erik H. Erikson is one of the most influential psycho-analyst of the 20th Century. Erikson was born in 1902 in Frankfurt, Germany. Erikson coined the word 'Identity Crisis' and developed human life-cycle.

² Loder, *The Transforming Moment*, 67–91. "Loder's understanding of reality is four-fold. When the Divine Spirit intersects the human plane, the dimensions of reality are four-fold: self, lived world, void and the Holy. Self is the awareness of freedom, choice, belief, conscience, imagination of intuition and human spirit which is the dynamic basis for choice. This human spirit is groundless and becomes truly self when it is grounded transparently in the Spiritual Presence of Christ. The lived world is the second dimension of human existence and it designates the universal human tendency to create and compose one's external realities into a coherent and livable whole. The void is the third basic dimension of human existence. It is the irreversible gulf towards emptiness experienced from birth to death in the many faces of loneliness, nothingness, meaninglessness, despair, and death. This void appears to be the nature of evil; one can be tormented by it or engulfed by it when the self and the lived world collapse. The Holy is the fourth dimension of human existence and refers to God who is separate from the world, human and the profane, and has the quality to draw and at the same time terrifying. In its mystery when the Holy is brought into interaction with the three-dimensional reality of the self, lived world and the void has the power to transform the above three dimensions."

³ James E. Loder, *The Transforming Moment*, 2 Edition. (Colorado Springs: Helmers & Howard Publishers, 1989), 67–91.

⁴ James E. Loder, *The Logic of the Spirit: Human Development in Theological Perspective*, 1st edition. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1998), 35–65.

explained as syntonic and dystonic keys on a scale. For example, in infancy the conflict is between trust (syntonic) vs

mistrust (dystonic). The resolution requires the syntonic to have marginal control over the dystonic for resolution of the conflict. That is, if trust is in marginal control over mistrust, then one develops the strength of hope. However, this is not always the case as when the child seeks a resolution the stress may be more trust (syntonic) leading to a maladaptive tendency of sensory distortion (gullibility). The resolution may also go more in the direction of mistrust (dystonic) leading to a malignant tendency of withdrawal.

Syntonic tendency has Marginal control over dystonic tendency

Maladaptive tendency Syntonic tendency < Conflict > Dystonic tendency Malignant tendency

In other words, Erikson explains the role of syntonic/ maladaptive and dystonic/ malignant tendencies in normal human development. He uses the term syntonic and dystonic to explain the contrary disposition and effects in every stage. Syntonic supports growth and expansion, offers goals, celebrates self-respect and commitment of the very finest. Syntonic qualities sustain an individual when challenged by more dystonic elements. Dystonic is a form of challenges in the life of an individual. In other words, Syntonic is the life force and dystonic is the death force. Both these syntonic and dystonic elements are required for a

healthy balanced outcome in human development. To note, in course of our life span, circumstances may place the dystonic in a more dominant position.⁵ Thus, throughout childhood, an individual goes through a crisis or conflict. Too much attention or leaning towards one side of the crisis will lead the child either towards maladaptive or malignant

tendencies and this will hamper the child from developing in the area of his/her basic strength. Balance in every crisis will develop virtue and strength in the child. Thus, balance must be achieved between the

⁵ Erik H. Erikson and Joan M. Erikson, *The Life Cycle Completed (Extended Version): A Review*, Extended Version edition. (W. W. Norton & Company, 1998), 106.

conflicts. Nevertheless, nature gives opportunity to every individual to correct or re-position their life during teens. Every stage is important but for Loder, even what happens in-between the stages remains very important. Because what happens in-between stages gives rise to the next stage which will influence the overall growth and development of the individual more. Erikson on this later developed 8 stages of human development, and Joan Erikson, in agreement with Erikson has added the 9th, the last stage.

Let us look again at the first 4 stages in Erikson’s understanding of human development juxtaposed with Freud’s understanding.

1.1. Understanding Human Development on a Normal Scale Chart ⁶

| Stages | Psychosexual stages and modes | Basic sympathetic / syntonic/ maladaptive tendency | Psychosocial Crises | Corepathology basic antipathies/ dystonic/ malignant tendency | Basic Strength |
|------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|---|----------------|
| 0-18 months Infancy | Oralrespiratory, sensorykinesthetic | Sensory distortion (poor judgment false sense | Basic Trust vs. Basic Mistrust | Withdrawal (inability to respond to positive emotions) | Hope |

| | | | | | |
|--|-----------------------|--|--|--|--|
| | (incorporative modes) | e of trust & faulty appreciation/ reality) | | | |
|--|-----------------------|--|--|--|--|

⁶ Ibid., 32, 33, 105–114.

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|---|---|---|---------------------------|---|------------|
| 18 months to 3 years Early Childhood | Anal-rectal, muscular (retentive/eliminative) | Shamelessness and Willfulness (interact without consideration of their abilities/mindfulness of others) | Autonomy vs. Shame, doubt | Compulsion (over manipulate themselves, obsessed by their own repetitiveness) | Will |
| 3-6 years Play Age | Infantile-Genital, Locomotor (intrusive, inclusive) | Ruthlessness (exploitative, uncaring and dispassionate.) | Initiative vs. Guilt | Inhibition (personal feeling of fear or embarrassment) | Purpose |
| 6/7/11/12 years School Age | Latency | Virtuosity (skillful and | Industry vs. Inferiority | Inertia (Unwillingness to take | Competence |

| | | | | | |
|--|--|-----------------------|--|--|--|
| | | fluent in many areas) | | action. Lack of motivation as a result of inhibition play) | |
|--|--|-----------------------|--|--|--|

| | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|----------|
| 12-19 years Adolescence | Puberty | Fanaticism (overzealous) | Identity vs. Role Confusion | Role Repudiation (lack of confidence and covering one's weaknesses, in the state of diffident.) | Fidelity |
| 20-30 years Young Adulthood | Genitality | Promiscuity (loose living) | Intimacy vs. Isolation | Exclusivity (excluding oneself from relationship commitment s.) | Love |

| | | | | | |
|---|--|--|------------------------------------|--|---------------|
| <p>35-65 Adulthood</p> | <p>Procreativity</p> | <p>Overextension (using one word for more than one object)</p> | <p>Generativity vs. Stagnation</p> | <p>Rejectivity (unwilling to include specific persons or groups on one's generative concern/ one does not care to care for them)</p> | <p>Care</p> |
| <p>65 + Old Age</p> | <p>Generalization of Sensual Modes</p> | <p>Presumption</p> | <p>Integrity vs. Despair</p> | <p>Disdain (reaction to feeling being finished, confused, helpless)</p> | <p>Wisdom</p> |
| <p>80's and 90's The Ninth Stage</p> | <p>Dystonic elements controls over</p> | <p>Age of Incapabilities</p> | <p>Basic mistrust vs. Trust.</p> | | |

| | | | | | |
|--|-----------------------|--|---|--|--|
| | syntonic elements. | | Shame and doubt vs Autonomy. Guilt vs. Initiative. Identity Confusion vs. Identity. Isolation vs. Intimacy. Stagnation vs. Generativity. Despair and disgust vs. Integrity ⁷ . | | |
|--|-----------------------|--|---|--|--|

Each stage has its conflict with any potential for growth. On either side of the conflict lies a danger -- a maladaptive tendency or a malignant tendency. Growth means developing strength by overcoming the conflict by the syntonic note of the conflict being in a guiding position over the dystonic note. As already stated in the later part, nature gives an opportunity

⁷ Ibid., 32, 33, 105–114.

or second chance to every individual to correct, to re-position their life during their teens -- say, between early to late teens. In relevance to the development of the ego we will understand Erikson's theory of development in detail from infancy to Adolescence (stages 1-5)

Coming to Erikson's stages, the first stage of human development (0-18 months) concerns the infant's experiences of the world around him/ her -- typically their immediate physical and social environment composed of their care givers, others in the family and home, and significant others. At this stage an infant cannot survive without basic trust.⁸ At this stage, nurture and care through touch and face to face communication by the care giver play a vital role. The caregiver represents conviction and nurturing with meaning.⁹

At this stage, the infant experiences conflict between *trust and mistrust*. A caregiver (could be the mother, foster parents or any primary figure who takes care of the child) needs to be sensitive and responsive to the infant's unique needs and evoke a strong sense of personal worth. This enables the infant to develop physically, mentally and emotionally. An infant that is fed and cared for without being over-protected or over-indulged, and experiences the warmth and comfort of touch in a dependable and predictable manner, learns to develop social trust, which forms the fundamental building blocks in the development of a sense of identity that is particularly important in later life.

The main virtue that is developed by a healthy resolution to the crisis at this stage is the virtue of *hope* which is manifested by a deep faith and basic conception that everything will be alright, the possession of an inner calm and healthy grounding. The secondary strength to be derived is identified as "drive", which allows the individual to take reasonable risks and demonstrate inner resolve and determination, when faced with uncertainty. On the other hand,

over-indulgence of the infant may result negatively in a *maladaptation*, which in this stage is "sensory distortion," depicted by the infant's false sense of trust and faulty appreciation of reality. The potential negative outcome or *malignancy* brought about by unsatisfactory and insecure social relationships, such as

⁸ Erik H. Erikson and Joan M. Erikson, *The Life Cycle Completed*, Extended Version edition. (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1998), 106.

⁹ Erik H. Erikson, *Childhood and Society*, Reissue edition. (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1993), 249.

those in which the infant is abused, neglected or handled roughly, or in which his needs are ignored, is “withdrawal” by the infant. Withdrawal may be demonstrated through a limited set of emotions experienced by the child, usually limited to fear, anger, distress and lethargy and an inability to respond to positive emotions. Thus, every infant needs this primary connection during the first year of life. If basic trust is not enhanced, the negativity associated with separation and pain of birth begins to surface in later life.¹⁰

In the second stage (18 months to 3 years), the toddler struggles between autonomy and shame and doubt. The child develops self-awareness and struggles for personal control, and establishes a wider circle including the outer world apart from their family, as they begin to experience socializing outside their home.¹¹ As the child matures physically, cognitively and mentally, the toddler strives to become partially independent of the adults, whom they have become attached to. They explore and learn new skills, and learn to exercise will and do things for themselves. They strive to expand their boundaries by doing things, such as dressing up, eating and using the potty by themselves. Being equipped with some degree of trust and a budding self-awareness, the toddler now begins to pay more heed to his own judgment rather than that of his/ her caregivers. This is also a crucial stage because they learn to let go or to hold on. Thus, outer control from the care giver needs to be assuring, and to reaffirm their basic trust to develop balanced autonomy.

Parents’ attitudes, encouragement and patience are crucial in shaping the child’s success towards healthy autonomy as he advances through this stage. Competence in language development leads to greater *autonomy* and self-confidence, as the child becomes more proficient at making his needs, preferences and decisions known to others.

Shame and doubt occupy a necessary place at this stage as unlimited autonomy is not at all healthy or productive. Shame and doubt are siblings. They are subjective weaknesses and later they will be dominated by the will of others. Shame says ‘I am weak’¹¹ and doubt develops and grows when there is too much of shaming in the context of nurturing. Moreover, too much shaming will eventually force the individual to wish for invisibility, even to the point of running away from his/ her inner voice.¹² Guided correction and encouragement will channel the child’s ego positively, as they begin to learn new skills. Attacking the child’s

¹⁰ Loder, *The Logic of the Spirit*, 87. ¹¹ *Ibid.*, 133.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 162.

¹², 253–255.

being (ego) and not their actions lead to greater damage in their personality development. Enhancing their being while correcting their actions will encourage them to comply with rules, expectations and essential limits.

The virtue that is developed at this stage is *will* with the secondary strength of *self-control*.

Parents and caregivers who perceive their children's assertions of will and self-control as a healthy striving toward independence rather than as stubbornness and defiance will help their children become self-reliant, self-disciplined and responsible individuals, who have the confidence to decide for themselves and exercise sound judgment.

Moreover, when a child is less disciplined with regard to mindfulness about others, autonomy becomes excessive. Maladaptation can be described as a kind of shameless willfulness that characterizes the child's interactions and leads him/ her to engage in behaviour without consideration of his own abilities and consequences to self and others. Compulsion, on the other hand, is observed when the child tends to aim for utter perfection in everything he does and in his extreme reactions toward mistakes and failures. This occurs in a child when

their being is hurt and when they feel that they are loved with conditions (when they obey, when they do well, when they achieve their care giver's expectations). Therefore, at this stage, the child struggles between love and hatred, co-operation and purposeful freedom of self-expression and suppression. Healthy environment enables children to develop self-control without losing their self-esteem.¹³

In the third stage, (3/4-6 years) the ego of the pre-school child struggles between *initiative* and *guilt*. Balance between these two crises will lead to purposefulness as they move into the next stage. Initiative as the term implies is a desire to tackle new tasks, plan and join in activities with peers, make up games, and discover the things that they can do with the supervision of adults. Children at this age assert themselves more frequently, and develop strong sense of purposefulness.

On the other hand, overindulgence towards initiative will develop ruthlessness in the child. On the one hand, being threatened, criticized and punished excessively by adults can lead to the development of a sense

¹³ Ibid., 253–254.

of guilt among children. Guilt is based on the internalization of values, especially through parents and caregivers. Guilt says, *I am not good*.¹⁴ When equilibrium is maintained between the two conflicts, the virtue of purpose will develop in the child. Success in this stage leads to the virtue of *purpose*, which is shown by the child's style of decision-making, working with and leading others, initiating projects and ideas, and courage to instigate activities. Children also mature with direction, develop firm aims and goals, and being able to take initiative and appropriate risks.¹⁵

In the fourth stage (6/7-12 years), as the child enters school life, the child faces the conflict between *industry* and *inferiority*, as he steps to the entrance into life. According to Erikson,

school can be anywhere -- in the paddy field, forest or formal school.¹⁶ Balance between love and discipline, will lead the children to discover their unique abilities, and build values of responsibility and commitment. Overindulging or criticism will develop either virtuosity or inertia. In other words, as the child's experience of the world expands, overindulging in these experiences without discipline will cause the child to tend towards narrow virtuosity. On the other hand, experiencing an excessive amount of failure and criticism will cause the child to develop inertia. The risk at this stage is creating a feeling of inadequacy and inferiority in the child. Thus, when equilibrium is maintained between these conflicting pressures, the child develops the virtue of *competence*.¹⁷ Therefore, we learn from Erikson that the goal of human development is hope, will, purpose, competence, fidelity, love, care, and wisdom, among which the last three are the strongest. The context of developing virtues may differ, based on the sociocultural context; but the virtues in different stages remain constant. In his further study, Erikson found that normal human development also develops -- with a caveat that some religious people of the world have veered away from so-called normal development -- when the stages intersect with spiritual convictions. These are called *homo-religiosus*. We will discuss this further as we turn to consider Loder and his approach to the human and Divine Spirit.¹⁸

¹⁴ Loder, *The Logic of the Spirit*, 162. Ibid.

¹⁵ , 255–258.

¹⁶ Ibid., 258.

¹⁷ Ibid., 260.

¹⁸ Loder, *The Logic of the Spirit*, 231–232.

The main virtue that emerges when the conflict is resolved is *competence*. It is displayed by making things and creating results, applying skills and processes productively and having the sense of being capable. Gradually, the individual will develop the capacity to utilize process and method in the quest of fulfilling ideas or goals, understand designated tasks, demonstrating confidence that is enough to enable them to seek and respond to challenges and learning through their interaction with the environment.¹⁹ Unfortunately, if the child grows without resolving the crisis, there is a tendency that he/ she may become conformist. There is also a possibility that they will be exploited of their skills as they feel less worth without associating worth with work²⁰

As the child enters teenage years, the fifth stage (12 to 19 years) they struggle over confusion between *Identity and role*. It is also the time when nature gives a second chance to humankind to rework their unresolved childhood crises. During this stage, adolescents search for a sense of self and personal identity, through an intense exploration of personal values, beliefs and goals. For instance, who we think we are against, who others may think we are, or trying to be what others think we are.²¹ Adolescents become more independent, and begin to look at the future in terms of career, relationships, families, housing, and the like. The individual wants to belong to a society and fit in. This is a major stage of development, where the child has to learn the roles s/he will occupy as an adult. It is during this stage that the adolescent re-examines their identity and tries to find out exactly who he or she is. Erikson suggests that two identities are involved: the sexual and the occupational.²²

During this stage, the adolescent may feel uncomfortable about their body for a while until they can adapt and grow together with the changes. Success in this stage will lead to the virtue of *fidelity* (being faithful to one's duty and responsibilities, loyal to partner in a relationship). Fidelity involves being able to commit one's self to others on the basis of accepting others, even when there may be ideological differences; besides,

¹⁹, 260.

²⁰ Ibid., 261.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Erikson and Erikson, *The Life Cycle Completed (Extended Version)*, 109–110.

in later years it matures into faith. There is a strong connection between development of infantile basic trust and the developing of fidelity in the adolescence stage.

This stage is an evolving one and thus, adolescents explore possibilities and begin to form their own identity, based upon the outcome of their explorations. Failure to establish a sense of identity within society (growing up without purpose or goal in life) can lead to role confusion.

Role confusion involves the individual not being sure about themselves or their place in society. If the child has successfully overcome the crisis between industry and inferiority in the previous stages, he/ she can successfully conquer the crisis at this stage too.²³ According to Erikson, during this stage, sometimes some individual truncate from normal human development towards existential quest which he means as *homo-religiosus*.²⁴ Erikson claims that the essence of *homo-religiosus* can be experienced only by some special people Like Martin Luther the reformer or Gandhiji. But Loder states that, to thirst and to seek for the Divine spirit is already instilled in the human spirit. Through conflictual situation and when the human spirit is open to the Divine Spirit, human spirit intersects with the Divine Spirit. This intersection is also known as the convictional experience. Convictional experience is important because it give human development another chance to re-position life track. It is thus important in this adolescent stage to create platform for adolescent to express their crisis. Platforms such as spiritual development camping where they can keep in touch with their feelings and ponder on existential questions.

²³ Erikson and Erikson, *The Life Cycle Completed*, 72–76.

²⁴ Magis Center, "Common Elements in Cross-Cultural Religious Expression – Part 3 (II.A: God's Presence to Our Consciousness).," May 4, 2017, 5. *Homo-religiosus* always believes in the existence of the absolute reality, the sacred which transcends this world, thereby sanctifying it and making it real. Perry Lefevre, "Erikson's Young Man Luther: A Contribution to the Scientific Study of Religion," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 2, no. 2 (1963): 248. Erikson's understanding of *homo-religiosus* is based on the shaping of an individual through religion, and the impact of religion on the individual and on culture. According to Erikson, sociological and psychological factors - in other words, the environment in which an individual has been bred – influences the development of an individual's ideology. Erikson tries to understand the theological expression of the religious man (Luther) through the parallel lenses of pathology and the conflict and relationship between Luther's neurosis and creativity of his human spirit.

In this stage, pressuring someone into an identity can result in rebellion in the form of establishing a negative identity, and in addition to this, a feeling of unhappiness. Sometimes

parents put pressure on the child with expectations that the child cannot meet. At this stage, adolescents need guidance and priorities in their activities that suit their identity rather than forcing and imposing on them what they are not.

As we have understood from the above description, from psychological perspectives, over the course of a life time human development becomes stagnant from the point of crisis. In other words, when a person moves from one stage to another without resolving the crises, human development becomes stagnant. In other words, when the unresolved crisis is carried over from one stage to another stage the crisis become a huge burden for the individual to move on. In order to reposition the human development above all these crises, an outlet is required to release the accumulated crises. From Erikson's perspective we have understood that it is important to resolve crisis in every stage. On the other hand, for Loder, the transition between the stages holds great importance. For every individual life gives second change to reposition their life through the transformation of the ego. We will look further the importance of ego and the process of ego transformation in the following section.

2. TRANSFORMATION OF THE EGO IN HUMAN DEVELOPMENT:

LODERIAN UNDERSTANDING

As Human beings are wired from birth to long for a Divine presence there has to be a channel for the intersection. According to Loder, when the human spirit embraces the Divine Spirit transformation of the ego takes place. Ego transforms when the crises are resolved through the power of the Divine Spirit. According to Loder, the upheaval of the ego takes place from birth to middlecence (middle age) on towards senescence (adolescence). During this period ego development and personality is on the side of total transformation and recentering beyond the ego drive. Each conflict phase in life or upheaval points an individual away from partial, inadequate, adaptational solutions towards knowing and being known by God the Author.²⁵ When the Divine Spirit interacts with the spiritual cry of the human spirit (conversion), there

²⁵ Loder, *The Logic of the Spirit*, 232. ²⁷ Ibid.

is a total transformation, time is also transformed and human development is immersed in eternity.²⁷ In other words, unpleasant life experiences, and upheavals of psychological and spiritual conflict transform, transfigure and awaken the intrinsic longing for God through the intervention of the Divine Spirit upon the human spirit.

Loder states that life gives a second chance to redeem or recorrect any destructive life or unpleasant past when the Divine spirit intersect with the human spirit. Any individual, family, society or culture can experience transformation when they are open to the act of Divine Spirit to transform the existing pattern that drives their family and social life. These act of transformation follows a process. Loder has stated five steps of the logic of transformation for the transformation of the ego which is applicable both in individual and social level. Let us discuss Loder's logic or dynamics of transformation.

2.1. Understanding Loder's logic of transformation

Loder's²⁶ theory of the Logic of Transformation will be elaborated in order to understand how transformation takes place. Transformational dynamic transcends ego and cognitive development. The sense of nothingness which is instilled from birth departs when the ego finds its ground Author, which is the Divine Spirit.²⁹ These dynamics of transformation enables individuals and society to understand and channel the human spirit towards transformation. The process of transformational logic will also be helpful as a pointer to lead

the human development of the Aos towards transformation. There are five steps in the Logic of transformation which may be elaborated as follows.

2.1.1. Conflict:

When the ego/ human spirit experience painful situations, conflictual situation or crisis, the struggle can lead to transformation of life as well as perspectives. During a conflictual situation, while searching

²⁶ Ray S Anderson, "Redemptive Transformation in Practical Theology. Essay in Honor of James E. Loder Jr," *Journal of Family Ministry* 19, no. 3 (2005): 94–95. James Edwin Loder Jr. was the professor of philosophy of Christian Education at Princeton Theological Seminary. He is recognized for developing in-depth foundational theory in the department of Christian Education. He creatively emphasized on human development in which the human spirit interacts with the transformation dynamic of the Divine Spirit. Loder's own transformational experience is the basis of his practical theology of human development, grounded in an ontological life of Spirit –to-Spirit interaction. Loder is recognized in the world of scholarship for his curriculum development. ²⁹ Loder, *The Logic of the Spirit*, 104.

for a solution it awakens the human spirit through struggles to find an answer. Conflictual situation could be personal, social, cultural, emotional, mental or physical. Resolving conflictual situation leads to liberation and further transformation. In order to find resolution, conflictual situation leads to the second stage.

2.1.2. Interlude for scanning:

In order to find resolution to the conflict, brain storming as well as having existential questions takes place. It could be digging deeper into the latent forces that have created the conflict: spiritual, mental, emotional and physical. It is like opening every door in search for an answer to solve the conflict. In this phase, individual, community or society reflect back deeply on the causes of the conflict and solution for the conflict.

Finding a solution during utter conflict leads to third step.

2.1.3. Insight:

When there is a breakthrough in the midst of deep conflict, insight takes place. The psychic energy bound with excitement cannot be contained within when insight takes place. According to Loder, this moment is a *Kairotic* moment (moment of truth) in other words, the moment of transformation taking place in the conflictual situation. It could be restoration of forgiveness, void, anger, mistrust, confusion and life upheavals. When insight or convictional experience takes on human development, society, culture and all forms of life sets up a new context which continues to the fourth step.

2.1.4. Release:

When conflictual situation comes to a point of understanding and resolving, there is a moment of releasing bounded negative energy. One experiences a deep sense of joy and meaning to life while resolving the conflict. Such as, relocating life, perspective or intentions when one experiences release of bounded energy. This leads to the next stage which is interpretation.

2.1.5. Interpretation:

Interpretation is when confirmation takes place. Testing out the resolution experienced. The individual tries to live life based on the convictional experience. Their Christian frame of mind, their attitude, the inner joy, giving out love with integrity. In other words, the individual goes out into the world with a new

frame of mind. The resolved human spirit searches deeper into the source of insight and the underlying foundation.²⁷

Transformation may happen chronologically but it may not happen necessarily as well. Transformation may jump from one stage to another as well. But the most important factor is the first stage, a conflictual context. Transformation begins at conflictual stage. It is in this stage, the human spirit seeks for a strength beyond their strength to find solution. A question to ponder why is it necessary for the ego to be transformed?

3. THEOLOGICAL IMPLICATION AND APPLICATION

In human development when the ego begins to emerge, the human spirit experience conflict and attempts to free. The moment human beings are born, they tend to die too because the human ego struggles for survival. This is when human spirit begins to have spiritual thirst and lookout to commune with the Divine spirit. It is the reality of death that draws the human spirit closer to God. This is when the Divine Spirit gives a new birth to the

human ego. The human spirit now seeks after God and God's purpose. The union of the human spirit with the divine spirit generates profound spiritual experience allowing the human spirit to build strong personal integrity. This personal integrity bypasses conflicted human ego. To experience this personal integrity a strong faith foundation needs to be established within the human ego. Faith foundation paves the way for human ego to long and thirst for the Spiritual union. When the reality is established in Christ, the human ego or the human spirit can overcome being defensive, develops the courage to forgive as well as to love enemies and at the same time rejoice in the face of persecution.²⁸ If human development moves in normal scale alone, will the human spirit face uncertainties without hope? When human development moves in the normal scale alone, the emptiness that the human spirit carries wanders helplessly. The inner integrity finds its rest, hope and purpose in that one Triune God alone. This one God is the centrifugal force that drives all source of

²⁷ James E. Loder, Andrew Root, and Ajit A. Prasad, *Educational Ministry in the Logic of the Spirit*, ed. Dana R. Wright (Cascade Books, an Imprint of Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2018), 268.

²⁸ Loder, *The Logic of the Spirit*, 73.

internal and external life. In the following paragraph we will try to understand the power of the Divine Spirit in the face of crisis in normal human development scale.

Every human being enters into the world and follows the path of normal human development in their own socio-cultural settings. The human spirit is unknown of the existence of the Triune God yet the Divine spirit holds the human spirit with grace and redemption preserving the lifetime of the human spirit within its biological, psychological and socio-cultural contexts. In the span of a lifetime, in normal human development the human spirit face threats and crisis as they move from one stage to another stage. This crisis gives rise to existential questions which connects the universality of human and the divine spirit. According to Loder, the human spirit does not experience existential questions simply. When a deep process of intensification takes place within the ego it illuminates existential

questions. During this period, the grace and redemption of Christ that is present latently encourages the human spirit to engage within the Divine Spirit during existential crisis. This is where Spiritual axis come to a point of reference in re-constructing and re-positioning human development to start life again in grace and redemption. Human spirit thrives and longs for the face that never goes away from infancy. As much as the human spirit is present, the Divine Spirit is also very much present. The human spirit needs to summon the Divine Spirit for transformation and to summon the Divine Spirit there is a need for convictional experience and existential questions serves as a window for convictional experience. We have addressed in detail the aspect of human spirit, the central point of reference for ego. If we are wondering what is human spirit? human spirit is the genius within us which transforms our medium such as art, thoughts, science, intelligence. Fulfilment of the human spirit can render success or meaning but it cannot guarantee that it would also provide inner peace and convictional experiences. Then, what happens when human spirit summons the Divine Spirit- the Creator Spirit? The Creator Spirit transforms the person and the human spirit no longer dwells in his/ her genius alone but expands without limit through the Creative Spirit.²⁹ An infant as young as 18 months develops their ego underlying no and creates their world of comfort at the same time underlying yes also exist with their primal force. Though the human spirit as the image of God is fragmented as they

²⁹ Ibid., 110.

grow up the primal force of yes resist any forms of oppression, injustice and inequality. Though the ego grows out in fragments as human grow, a fragment of transformational character retains which longs for the face that will never go away. The face of God. To enhance and nurture this fragment of transformational character it is important to create a source which will provide a healthy foundation of human freedom during the developing period of a toddler. This early period is important because it will determine as a strong psychological foundation of the sense of 'I'.

For the human spirit to be transformed, the 'I' has to be transformed. If the 'I' is transformed, it will help the human spirit to re-socialize and re-position their life as spoken in the preceding paragraph. Moreover, the power of the Divine spirit on human spirit will empower the ego to re-channel any obsession in life.

Conclusion

The face of the care giver in infancy plays a very important role because that face establishes the central force of the ego. An infant develops ego before learning language and hence healthy development of the ego is important to win over crisis in every stage. Erikson has explained the root cause of developing malignant and mal-adaptive in the course of developing. While on the other hand Loder takes us deeper with hope and new life that there is life beyond crises and that human development can be re-positioned. Loder's, five-fold logic of transformation can be also applicable for designing curriculum. More than this, in the hands of a therapist, the logic of transformation will be also useful as a pattern of healing during counselling process. In the hands of an analyst, this logic of transformation would help in the transformation of society and culture. Human development is thus beyond physical development. Human development caters to the wholistic development: spirit, emotion and mind.

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