

sense and which do not have these four characteristics, will be discussed in Chapter Eleven. They were, by and large, more concerned with the dynamics of development than the modern conceptions have been.

In the next chapter the stages of ego development will be described in detail. The sources of those descriptions will be given in subsequent chapters, so that Chapter Two is in a sense a conclusion rather than an introduction. But it is needed now to give substance to the conception and a framework for the discussion. The changes it describes are the sort of thing that ego development denotes in this book; it is a pointing or denotative definition of our domain.

If every datum in the next chapter were a separate discovery, the mass of details would be overwhelming and incomprehensible. But most people do not find them so. Rather, readers experience a shock of recognition, remembering children or recognizing adults of their acquaintance. In describing the stages of ego development I seek, like Socrates, to call forth what you already almost know.

Stages of Ego Development

Chapter Two

In Ego Development by
Steve Loevinger, (1976)
Lantern Press, Books

Ego development is at once a developmental sequence and a dimension of individual differences in any age cohort, but this description does not suffice as a definition, for mental age can also be described so. In lieu of a logical definition, this chapter will present impressionistic descriptions of the stages, pieced together from many sources, as will be evident from Chapter Five, then refined and corrected by empirical work, to be sketched in Chapter Nine. A rigorous or final description of each stage is not possible, for methodological reasons that will be discussed in Chapter Eight.

The question most often asked—What age does each stage correspond to?—I shall not answer. For one thing, there are two different answers, since the average stage for a given age is not the same as the average age for a given stage. More importantly, to describe the progress of average children would be to slip

back into a classical child psychology study of socialization. That would defeat the purpose of this book. In principle, I seek to describe every stage in a way that applies to a wide range of ages (granted, of course, that the earliest stages are rare after childhood and that the highest stages are impossible in childhood and rare even in adolescence). What I seek to describe is what persons of each stage have in common, whatever their age. This attempt requires excluding age-specific contingencies (such as, "This behavior pattern indicates Stage X if the subject is a small child, but not if he is over fifteen").

In describing the stages abstractly with minimal reference to age-specific elements such as entering school, puberty, courtship, marriage, and so on, a series of questions is opened up: What is the earliest possible age for transition to a given stage? The latest possible age? The optimal age? What conditions other than age are necessary for a given transition to take place? What conditions are favorable, though not necessary? What conditions inhibit or prohibit a given transition? Only a conception that is, in the first instance, independent of age permits asking such questions, which are more meaningful than the question of average ages.

A word about terminology: these stages should be referred to by name or by code symbol, not by a number. Several authors have numbered their stages. That practice invariably leads either to a terminological impasse when further stages are identified or to cutting off new insights arbitrarily. The conception presented here has grown during our research from a four-point to a ten-point scale, and I do not foreclose further evolution. Only confusion can result from referring to the "third stage," for example. That could mean any of several stages, since the first stage can be counted as one, as two, or not counted at all, since it does not enter our research. Moreover, what we call a *transition* someone else might call a *stage*. Even if such difficulties were arbitrarily resolved by a fixed numbering scheme in the present volume, others might assign a different numbering scheme to our stages.

While referring to stages by name avoids the difficulties of numbering them, it has its own hazards. Because I dislike neo-

logisms, I have taken as the name for each stage a term from common speech, the name of some broad human function or characteristic. No such function arises all at once in one stage and perishes in the passage to the next. Impulsiveness, self-protection, conformity, and so on are terms that apply more or less to everyone. People differ with respect to such characteristics; those differences are related to but not identical with differences in ego level. Though stage names suggest characteristics that are usually at a maximum at that stage, nothing less than the total pattern defines a stage. An attempt to reason about ego development by a rigid interpretation of stage names can lead to disastrous errors. There is no substitute for grasping what Polanyi (1958, 1966) has called the "tacit component." While the tacit component cannot, by definition, be made fully explicit, and the possibilities for misunderstanding can therefore never be eliminated, progress lies in making as much explicit as possible.

In this book, capital letters will be used to distinguish the names of stages and types of people who can be classed in those stages. Where the same words are used for general human characteristics, whether of people at the corresponding stage or of people at other stages, lowercase letters will be used. (Arbitrary code symbols used in our research laboratory are given following the stage names in the next section.)

Descriptions of Stages

Presocial Stage (I-1). The baby at birth cannot be said to have an ego. His first task is to learn to differentiate himself from his surroundings, which becomes the "construction of reality," the realization that there is a stable world of objects. Aspects of the process have been referred to as achievement of *object constancy* and of *conservation of objects*. In the process, the baby constructs a self differentiated from the outer world. The child who remains at the stage where self is undifferentiated from the world of inanimate objects long past its appropriate time is referred to as *autistic*.

Symbiotic Stage (I-1). Even after he has a grasp of the

stability of the world of objects, the baby retains a symbiotic relation with his mother, or whoever plays that part in his life (Mahler, 1968). The process of differentiating self from non-self is significantly advanced as the baby emerges from that symbiosis. Language plays a large part in consolidating the baby's sense of being a separate person. Partly for that reason, the remnants of the Presocial and Symbiotic stages do not appear to be accessible by means of language in later life, as remnants of all later stages are.

Impulsive Stage (I-2). The child's own impulses help him to affirm his separate identity. The emphatic "No!" and the later "Do it by self" are evidences. The child's impulses are curbed at first by constraint, later also by immediate rewards and punishments. Punishment is perceived as retaliatory or as immanent in things. The child's need for other people is strong but demanding and dependent; others are seen and valued in terms of what they can give him. He tends to class people as good or bad, not as a truly moral judgment but as a value judgment. Good and bad at times are confounded with "nice-to-me" versus "mean-to-me" or even with clean and pure versus dirty and nasty, reminiscent of what Ferenczi (1925) called "sphincter morality." The child is preoccupied with bodily impulses, particularly (age-appropriate) sexual and aggressive ones. Emotions may be intense, but they are almost physiological. The vocabulary of older children of this stage to describe their emotions is limited to terms like *mad*, *upset*, *sick*, *high*, *turned on*, and *hot*.

The child's orientation at this stage is almost exclusively to the present rather than to past or future. Although he may, if he is sufficiently intelligent, understand physical causation, he lacks a sense of psychological causation. Motive, cause, and logical justification are confounded.

A child who remains too long at the Impulsive Stage may be called *uncontrollable* or *incorrigible*. He himself is likely to see his troubles as located in a place rather than in a situation, much less in himself; thus he will often run away or run home. Superstitious ideas are probably common.

Self-Protective Stage (Delta Δ). The first step towards self-

control of impulses is taken when the child learns to anticipate immediate, short-term rewards and punishments. Controls are at first fragile, and there is a corresponding vulnerability and guardedness, hence we term the stage Self-Protective. The child at this stage understands that there are rules, something not at all clear to the Impulsive child. His main rule is, however, "Don't get caught." While he uses rules for his own satisfaction and advantage, that is a step forward from the external constraint necessary to contain the impulsiveness of the previous stage.

The Self-Protective person has the notion of blame, but he externalizes it to other people or to circumstances. Somebody "gets into trouble" because he runs around with "the wrong people." Self-criticism is not characteristic. If he acknowledges responsibility for doing wrong, he is likely to blame it on some part of himself for which he disclaims responsibility, "my eyes" or "my figure." This tendency may help explain the imaginary companion some children have. Getting caught defines an action as wrong.

The small child's pleasure in rituals is an aspect of this stage. An older child or adult who remains here may become opportunistic, deceptive, and preoccupied with control and advantage in his relations with other people. For such a person, life is a zero-sum game; what one person gains, someone else has to lose. There is a more or less opportunistic hedonism. Work is perceived as onerous. The good life is the easy life with lots of money and nice things.

Conformist Stage (I-3). A momentous step is taken when the child starts to identify his own welfare with that of the group, usually his family for the small child and the peer group for an older child. In order for this step to take place or to be consolidated, there must be a strong element of trust. The child who feels that he lives among enemies lacks that trust. He may not become Conformist, taking instead the malignant version of the Self-Protective course, that is, opportunism, exploitativeness, deception, and ridicule of others. Perhaps that is one route to a more or less permanent "identification with the aggressor" (A. Freud, 1936).

The Conformist obeys the rules just because they are the group-accepted rules, not primarily because he fears punishment. Disapproval is a potent sanction for him. His moral code defines actions as right or wrong according to compliance with rules rather than according to consequences, which are crucial at higher stages. Conformists do not distinguish obligatory rules from norms of conduct, as we see when they condemn unusual dress or hair styles as immoral or as signs of immorality.

In addition to *being* conformist and to *approving* of conformity, the person at this stage tends to *perceive* himself and others as conforming to socially approved norms. While he observes group differences, he is insensitive to individual differences. The groups are defined in terms of obvious external characteristics, beginning with sex, age, race, nationality, and the like. Within groups so defined, he sees everyone as being pretty much alike, or at least he thinks they ought to be. Psychometricians call this phenomenon *social desirability*: people are what they ought to be, which is whatever is socially approved. The Conformist's views of people and of situations involving people are conceptually simple, admitting few contingencies or exceptions.

While the Conformist likes and trusts other people within his own group, he may define that group narrowly and reject any or all outgroups. He is particularly prone to stereotyped conception of sex roles; usually those will be conventional ones, but the same kind of rigid adherence to stereotyped norms can occur in unconventional groups. Conformity and conventionality are not the same. Outwardly conventional people can occur at any ego level except the lowest ones, just as outwardly unconventional people can be strict conformists in terms of the norms of their own group.

The Conformist values niceness, helpfulness, and cooperation with others, as compared to the more competitive orientation of the Self-Protective person. However, he sees behavior in terms of its externals rather than in terms of feelings, in contrast to persons at higher levels. Inner life he sees in banal terms such as *happy*, *sad*, *glad*, *joy*, *sorrow*, and *love and understanding*. He is given to clichés, particularly moralistic ones. His con-

cern for the externals of life takes the form of interest in appearance, in social acceptance and reputation, and in material things. Belonging makes him feel secure.

Self-Aware Level: Transition from Conformist to Conscientious Stage (1-3/4). The transition from the Conformist to the Conscientious Stage is the easiest transition to study, since it is probably the modal level for adults in our society. Leaving open the question of whether this is a stage in itself or a transition between stages or whether there is no real difference between those two possibilities, we shall refer to it as a *level* rather than as a *stage*. Many characteristics of the Conformist Stage hold also for the transitional level; it can be called the Conscientious-Conformist Level. It is transitional only in a theoretical sense, for it appears to be a stable position in mature life.

Two salient differences from the Conformist Stage are an increase in self-awareness and the appreciation of multiple possibilities in situations. A factor in moving out of the Conformist Stage is awareness of oneself as not always living up to the idealized portrait set by social norms. The growing awareness of inner life is, however, still couched in banalities, often in terms of vague "feelings." Typically the feelings have some reference to the relation of the individual to other persons or to the group, such as *lonely*, *embarrassed*, *homesick*, *self-confident*, and most often, *self-conscious*. Consciousness of self is a prerequisite to the replacement of group standards by self-evaluated ones, characteristic of the next stage.

Where the Conformist lives in a conceptually simple world with the same thing right always and for everyone, the person in the Self-Aware Level sees alternatives. Exceptions and contingencies are allowed for, though still in terms of stereotypic and demographic categories like age, sex, marital status, and race, rather than in terms of individual differences in traits and needs. Perception of alternatives and exceptions paves the way for the true conceptual complexity of the next stage. For example, at this level a person might say that people should not have children unless they are married, or unless they are old enough. At the next stage, they are more likely to say unless they really want children, or unless the parents really love each other.

While the Conformist hardly perceives individual differences in traits, and the person at the Conscientious Stage may command a fairly elaborate catalogue of traits, in the transitional level one typically finds a kind of pseudotrait conception. Pseudotraits partake of the nature of moods, norms, or virtues, such as those mentioned in the Boy Scout oath. Norms are the most interesting, since they reveal the transitional nature of these conceptions, midway between the group stereotypes of the Conformist and the appreciation for individual differences at higher levels.

A trait adjective common at this level, at least among women, is "feminine." Different people cherish different connotations to the term: passive, seductive, manipulative, intrusive, narcissistic, esthetic, and many others. Those alternatives are closer to being true trait terms, and they are concepts more characteristic of the next higher, or Conscientious, stage.

Conscientious Stage (1-4). Precisely where one first finds signs of conscience depends on what is called *conscience*. A child at the Impulsive Stage does more labeling of people as *good* and *bad* than do those at higher stages, but the connotations are not clearly moral. The notion of blame is evident at the Self-Protective Stage, but rarely does the person blame himself. Occasionally one will find total self-rejection at the lowest levels, but without a corresponding sense of responsibility for actions or their consequences. (Self-rejection may occur in depressed persons of any level; what is characteristic for low ego levels appears to be similar reactions without the overall depression.) A Conformist feels guilty if he breaks the rules; moreover, he classifies actions, not just people, as right and wrong. Although self-criticism is not characteristic for the Conformist, one could say he has a conscience because he has guilt feelings. At the Conscientious Stage, the major elements of an adult conscience are present. They include long-term, self-evaluated goals and ideals, differentiated self-criticism, and a sense of responsibility. Only a few persons as young as thirteen or fourteen years reach this stage.

The internalization of rules is completed at the Conscientious Stage. Where the Self-Protective person obeys rules in

order to avoid getting into trouble and the Conformist obeys rules because the group sanctions them, the Conscientious person evaluates and chooses the rules for himself. He may even feel compelled to break the law on account of his own code, a fact recognized in the status of the "conscientious objector." Thus rules are no longer absolutes, the same for everyone all the time; rather, exceptions and contingencies are recognized. A person at this stage is less likely than the Conformist to feel guilty for having broken a rule, but more likely to feel guilty if what he does hurts another person, even though it may conform to the rules.

At this stage a person is his brother's keeper; he feels responsible for other people, at times to the extent of feeling obliged to shape another's life or to prevent him from making errors. Along with the concepts of responsibility and obligations go the correlative concepts of privileges, rights, and fairness. All of them imply a sense of choice rather than being a pawn of fate. The Conscientious person sees himself as the origin of his own destiny.

He aspires to achievement, *ad astra per aspera*, in contrast to the feeling at lower stages that work is intrinsically onerous, but he may object to some work as being routine, boring, or trivial. Achievement for him is measured primarily by his own standards, rather than mainly by recognition or by competitive advantage, as at lower levels.

An aspect of the characteristic conceptual complexity is that distinctions are made between, say, moral standards and social manners or between moral and esthetic standards. Things are not just classed as "right" and "wrong." A Conscientious person thinks in terms of polarities, but more complex and differentiated ones: trivial versus important, love versus lust, dependent versus independent, inner life versus outward appearances.

A rich and differentiated inner life characterizes the Conscientious person. He experiences in himself and observes in others a variety of cognitively shaded emotions. Behavior is seen not just in terms of actions but in terms of patterns, hence of traits and motives. His descriptions of himself and others are

more vivid and realistic than those of persons at lower levels. With the deepened understanding of other people's viewpoints, mutuality in interpersonal relations becomes possible. The ability to see matters from other people's view is a connecting link between his deeper interpersonal relations and his more mature conscience. Contributing to a more mature conscience are the longer time perspective and the tendency to look at things in a broader social context; these characteristics are even more salient at higher stages.

Individualistic Level: Transition from Conscientious to Autonomous Stages (I-4/5). The transition from the Conscientious to the Autonomous Stage is marked by a heightened sense of individuality and a concern for emotional dependence. The problem of dependence and independence is a recurrent one throughout development. What characterizes this level is the awareness that it is an emotional rather than a purely pragmatic problem, that one can remain emotionally dependent on others even when no longer physically or financially dependent. To proceed beyond the Conscientious Stage a person must become more tolerant of himself and of others. This toleration grows out of the recognition of individual differences and of complexities of circumstances at the Conscientious Stage. The next step, not only to accept but to cherish individuality, marks the Autonomous Stage.

Relations with other people, which become more intensive as the person grows from the Conformist to the Conscientious Stage, are now seen as partly antagonistic to the striving for achievement and the sometimes excessive moralism and responsibility for self and others at the Conscientious Stage. Moralism begins to be replaced by an awareness of inner conflict. At this level, however, the conflict, for example, over marriage versus career for a woman, is likely to be seen as only partly internal. If only society or one's husband were more helpful and accommodating, there need be no conflict. That conflict is part of the human condition is not recognized until the Autonomous Stage. Increased ability to tolerate paradox and contradiction leads to greater conceptual complexity, shown by awareness of the discrepancies between inner reality and outward appearances,

between psychological and physiological responses, between process and outcome. Psychological causality and psychological development, which are notions that do not occur spontaneously below the Conscientious Stage, are natural modes of thought to persons in the Individualistic Level.

Autonomous Stage (I-5). A distinctive mark of the Autonomous Stage is the capacity to acknowledge and to cope with inner conflict, that is, conflicting needs, conflicting duties, and the conflict between needs and duties. Probably the Autonomous person does not have more conflict than others; rather he has the courage (and whatever other qualities it takes) to acknowledge and deal with conflict rather than ignoring it or projecting it onto the environment. Where the Conscientious person tends to construe the world in terms of polar opposites, the Autonomous person partly transcends those polarities, seeing reality as complex and multifaceted. He is able to unite and integrate ideas that appear as incompatible alternatives to those at lower stages; there is a high toleration for ambiguity (Frenkel-Brunswick, 1949). Conceptual complexity is an outstanding sign of both the Autonomous and the Integrated stages.

The Autonomous Stage is so named partly because the person at that point recognizes other people's need for autonomy, partly because it is marked by some freeing of the person from oppressive demands of conscience in the preceding stage. A crucial instance can be the willingness to let one's children make their own mistakes. The Autonomous person, however, typically recognizes the limitations to autonomy, that emotional interdependence is inevitable. He will often cherish personal ties as among his most precious values.

Where the Conscientious person is aware of others as having motives, the Autonomous person sees himself and others as having motives that have developed as a result of past experiences. The interest in development thus represents a further complication of psychological causation. Self-fulfillment becomes a frequent goal, partly supplanting achievement. Many persons have some conception of role or office at this stage, recognizing that they function differently in different roles or that different offices have different requirements. The person at this

Table 1. Some Milestones of Ego Development

Stage	Code	Impulse Control	Character Development	Interpersonal Style	Preoccupations	Cognitive Style
Presocial	1-1	Symbiotic	Autistic			
Impulsive	1-2	Impulsive, fear of retaliation	Receiving, dependent, exploitative	Bodily feelings, especially sexual and aggressive	Self-protective, trouble, wishes, things, advance, control	Secretotyping, conceptual confusion
Self-Protective	△	Fear of being caught, externalizing blame, opportunistic	Wary, manipulative, exploitative	Self-protective, trouble, wishes, things, advance, control	Self-protective, trouble, wishes, things, advance, control	Conceptual simplicity, stereotypes, clichés
Conformist	1-3	Conformity to external rules, shame, guilt for breaking rules	Belonging, superficial niceness	Appearance, social acceptability, banal feelings, behavior	Adjustment, problems, reasons, opportunities	Multiplicity
Conscientious-Conformist	1-3/4	Differentiation of norms, goals	Aware of self in relation to group, helping	Adjustment, problems, reasons, opportunities	Adjustment, problems, reasons, opportunities	
Conscientious	1-4	Self-evaluated standards, self-criticism, guilt for consequences, long-term goals and ideals	Intensive, responsible, mutual, concern for communication	Differentiated feelings, motives for behavior, self-respect, achievement, traits, expression	Differentiated feelings, motives for behavior, self-respect, achievement, traits, expression	Conceptual complexity, idea of patterning
Individualistic	1-4/5	Add: Respect for individuality	Add: Dependence as an emotional problem	Add: Development, social problems, differentiation of inner life from outer	Add: Distinction of process and outcome	
Autonomous	1-5	Add: Coping with conflicting inner needs, toleration	Add: Respect for autonomy, interdependence	Vividly conveyed feelings, integration of physiological and psychological causation of behavior, role conception, self-fulfillment, self in social context		Increased conceptual complexity, complex patterns, toleration for ambiguity, broad scope, objectivity
Integrated	1-6	Add: Reconciling inner conflicts, renunciation of unattainable	Add: Cherishing of individuality	Add: Identity		

NOTE: "Add" means in addition to the description applying to the previous level.

(continued on next page)

stage expresses his feelings vividly and convincingly, including sensual experiences, poignant sorrows, and existential humor, the humor intrinsic to the paradoxes of life. Sexual relations are enjoyed, or sometimes just accepted, as a physical experience in the context of a mutual relation. The Autonomous person takes a broad view of his life as a whole. He aspires to be realistic and objective about himself and others. He holds to broad, abstract social ideals, such as justice.

Integrated Stage (I-6). We call the highest stage Integrated, implying some transcending of the conflicts of the Autonomous Stage. It is the hardest stage to describe for several reasons. Because it is rare, one is hard put to find instances to study. Moreover, the psychologist trying to study this stage must acknowledge his own limitations as a potential hindrance to comprehension. The higher the stage studied, the more it is likely to exceed his own and thus to stretch his capacity. For the most part, the description of the Autonomous Stage holds also for the Integrated Stage. A new element is consolidation of a sense of identity. Probably the best description of this stage is that of Maslow's Self-Actualizing person (Chapter Six).

To telescope the whole sequence of ego development in terms of describing the lowest and highest levels is to miss the spirit of the exposition. Growth does not proceed by a straight line from one low level to another higher level. There are many way stations, and they are all important as stages of life and as illuminations of the conception. In some sense, moreover, there is no highest stage but only an opening to new possibilities.

Conclusions

What changes during the course of ego development is a complexly interwoven fabric of impulse control, character, interpersonal relations, conscious preoccupations, and cognitive complexity, among other things. Table 1 presents a somewhat arbitrary condensation of the preceding discussion. To interpret it as indicating four separate dimensions of ego development is a mistake. There is just one dimension. The four descriptive columns display four facets of a single coherent process. Such, at

least, is the conception intended. Other authors have depicted essentially the same dimension with major stress on one or another facet (Chapter Five). Most have also implicated other facets in their exposition, but details differ. One might ask, why not get together and agree on a definition of ego development? Authors cannot be forced to adjudicate their differences, nor would a concept arrived at by committee be superior or more true to nature. Frequently it is suggested that differences would be settled by empirical research. To some extent this research is taking place, despite many methodological difficulties. What has not been done, what perhaps cannot be done, and what may not even be meaningful is what is most often suggested: to measure separately the four facets displayed in Table 1 and then correlate them, to prove that they are indeed aspects of a single process. The problems of measuring ego development and of discrepancies between general description and individual cases will be discussed in chapters Eight and Nine.

Discussion of facets reveals one reason this dimension should be called *ego development* rather than *moral development*, *development of cognitive complexity*, or *development of capacity for interpersonal relations*. All of those are involved. Nothing less than the ego encompasses so wide a scope.

Some critics assert that the description of stages of ego development is so ordered as to be a rationalization of society's scheme of values. That criticism does not hold. All societies are built on conformity and value conformity in the individual; perhaps that is how it must be. Persons driven to nonconformity by conscience are punished as harshly or more harshly by society as those incapable of conformity because of uncontrolled impulsiveness or those who choose nonconformity out of opportunism and self-interest. All nations appear to operate at the Self-Protective level. International relations are conducted as a zero-sum game, and perhaps no regime could survive that did not operate on that principle.

Another criticism is that the stages of ego development are ordered in accord with increasing approval by the writer. The answer to this charge will become evident gradually. There is, for one thing, substantial agreement among authors. Moreover,

there are other lines of evidence to support the ordering. While I alone have written this chapter, the ordering of stages has come from work that has been intimately collaborative (Loevinger and Wessler, 1970). Ruthless mutual criticism by persons of diverse backgrounds and dispositions, many of them skilled clinicians, has helped to divest the conception of personal idiosyncrasies. Kohlberg (1971) has answered at length a similar criticism of his work.

Some persons believe that society ought to favor arrangements that will lead more people to stages above Conformity. Society, they may propose, should reward the Conscientious and Autonomous persons as it now rewards the Conformist and often the opportunist. But that proposal is, or leads to, paradox. For the essence of the Conscientious Stage is to be at least partially liberated from socially imposed rewards and punishments. How can one manipulate rewards so as to free a person from responding to them and being shaped by them? That, indeed, is the question a parent or teacher faces who aspires to encourage moral development. How people liberate themselves from the dominion of external rewards and punishments is a central mystery of human development and one of the lures that leads us to our subject matter.

While the criticisms that the sequence of stages merely encodes either my own values or those of society will not hold, two questions lie behind those criticisms. What determines the direction of growth? And how do we discover the sequence? We will return to those questions from various viewpoints. In the next chapter we will see how far we can get by examining the concept of development in relation to personality.

Chapter Three

Concept of Development in Personality Theory

by Augusto Blasi

The theory of ego development presented in this volume assumes a specific understanding of development, built on the metaphor of organism and using structure as a key concept. Over past thirty years the organismic notion of development has been well defined, thanks mainly to Heinz Werner and Jean Piaget, and has gained increasing acceptance, especially among those interested in cognitive processes. The structural approach to developmental psychology is the context for the remainder of the book. The first part of this chapter analyzes the structural conception of development, contrasting it with a conception that relies on an empiricist view of science and a mechanistic view of persons, familiar ground for those acquainted with earlier developmental psychology. The second part explores the implications of the structural concept of development when it is transferred from the cognitive domain to the domain of personality.