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## PSYCHOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIPS IN THE FAMILY LIFE CYCLE

**Annotation.** *The family circle method is a process that allows individuals to draw a schematic diagram of their family system. It is closely allied with family systems theory and family medicine philosophy. The method is readily understandable with brief instructions. Individuals can create a family circle drawing in as little as two or three minutes. Once instructions are given, the presence of the physician is not required during the drawing. Family circle drawings will often illustrate, in graphic form, patterns of closeness and distance, of power and decision making, of family alliances and boundaries. The drawings provide at a glance an overview of the family system as seen by the person who does the drawing. The drawings are a rich source of information concerning family dynamics and are useful for setting goals for changes in the family system.*

**Annotatsiya.** *Oila siklidagi doira diagramasi – bu shaxslarga o‘z oila tizimining sxematik diagrammasini chizish imkonini beruvchi jarayon. U oila tizimlari nazariyasi va oilaviy tibbiyot falsafasi bilan chambarchas bog‘liq. Qisqacha ko‘rsatmalar bilan shaxslar ikki yoki uch daqiqada oilaviy doira chizmasini yaratishi mumkin. Ko‘rsatmalar berilgandan so‘ng chizish paytida shifokor mavjudligi talab qilinmaydi. Oilaviy doiralar rasmlari ko‘pincha grafik shaklda yaqinlik va masofa, kuch va qaror qabul qilish, oilaviy va chegaralarni aks ettiradi. Chizmalar bir qarashda chizilgan odam ko‘rgan oilaviy tizim haqida umumiy ma‘lumot beradi. Chizmalar oila dinamikasiga oid boy ma‘lumot manbai bo‘lib, oila tizimidagi o‘zgarishlar uchun maqsadlarni belgilashda foydalidir.*

**Аннотация.** *Круговая диаграмма в семейном цикле-это процесс, который позволяет людям нарисовать принципиальную схему своей семейной системы. Он тесно связан с теорией семейных систем и философией семейной медицины. Понятно с краткой инструкцией. люди могут нарисовать семейный круг за две или три минуты. После того, как указания даны, присутствие врача при рисовании не требуется. Картины семейных кругов часто изображают близость и расстояние, власть и принятие решений, семью и границы в графической форме. Рисунки дают обзор семейной системы, которую видит нарисованный человек с первого взгляда. Рисунки являются богатым источником информации о семейной динамике и полезны для постановки целей изменений в семейной системе.*

**Keywords:** *family, life, circle, raising kids, siblings, behavior, dynamics, adult, elderly, relationships, parents.*

**Tayanch soʻzlar:** *oila, hayot, doira, farzand tarbiyasi, aka-uka, xulq-atvor, dinamika, kattalar, qariyatlar, munosabatlar, ota-onalar.*

**Ключевые слова:** *семья, жизнь, круг, воспитание детей, братья и сестры, поведение, динамика, взрослые, пожилые люди, отношения, родители.*

**Introduction.** The family life cycle is conventionally represented as a sequence of stages typical of many adults, moving from independence from the family of origin, through forming one's own family unit, raising kids, and becoming grandparents. Of course, many people do not follow the traditional sequence or pattern shown in this conventional family cycle. It can be useful to broaden our definition of family life so it includes all varieties of domestic arrangement. If we do, "family" encompasses most of our activities in adult life other than work, friendships, and me-time. For many people, close friends are considered part of family. We know that some families involve intimate relationships and children, but there are also other important facets.

**Main part.** Family life revolves around the home. An important aspect of life for every adult is where they live and who lives with them. Another aspect is "home-making"—cooking, cleaning, and maintenance. Who does what Family life also involves doing things together and enjoying a sense of community. For most adults in most cultures, the primary organizing factor in their lives is family, hence, the phrase "family life." Much of development during adulthood revolves around where a person finds themselves in the family life cycle, in terms of moving through a sequence of finding a partner, forming a household family unit, and having or not having and raising children. Family life cycle patterns differ across cultures and subcultures, and shift with historical time. The overarching objective or task of the family life cycle is to create the life that fits and works for the individual, that is consistent with their personal characteristics and preferences, the life they want. Successful navigation of the family life cycle means finding a life that is personally meaningful and fulfilling for you and that works for the rest of your family (however constituted) as well. When families have more than one child, the relationships between siblings cultivate a new dynamic in the family system. Siblings spend a considerable amount of time with each other and offer a unique relationship that is not found with same-age peers or with adults. Siblings play an important role in the development of social skills. Cooperative and pretend play interactions

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between younger and older siblings can teach empathy, sharing, and cooperation <sup>1</sup>(Pike, Coldwell, & Dunn, 2005), as well as, negotiation and conflict resolution <sup>2</sup>(Abuhatoum & Howe, 2013). However, the quality of sibling relationships is often mediated by the quality of the parent-child relationship and the psychological adjustment of the child<sup>3</sup> (Pike et al., 2005). For instance, more negative interactions between siblings have been reported in families where parents had poor patterns of communication with their children<sup>4</sup> (Brody, Stoneman, & McCoy, 1994). Children who have emotional and behavioral problems are also more likely to have negative interactions with their siblings. However, the psychological adjustment of the child can sometimes be a reflection of the parent-child relationship. Thus, when examining the quality of sibling interactions, it is often difficult to tease out the separate effect of adjustment from the effect of the parent-child relationship.

While parents want positive interactions between their children, conflicts are going to arise, and some confrontations can be the impetus for growth in children's social and cognitive skills. The sources of conflict between siblings often depend on their respective ages<sup>5</sup>. Dunn and Munn (1987) revealed that over half of all sibling conflicts in early childhood were disputes about property rights. By middle childhood this starts shifting toward control over social situations, such as what games to play, disagreements about facts or opinions, or rude behavior<sup>6</sup> (Howe, Rinaldi, Jennings, & Petrakos, 2002). Researchers have also found that the strategies children use to deal with conflict change with age, but this is also tempered by the nature of the conflict. Abuhatoum and Howe (2013) found that coercive strategies (e.g., threats) were more common when the dispute centered on property rights, while reasoning was more

<sup>1</sup> AARP. (2009). The divorce experience: A study of divorce at midlife and beyond. Washington, DC: AARP

<sup>2</sup> Ahlborg, T. Misvaer, N., & Möller, A. (2009). Perception of marital quality by parents with small children: A follow-up study when the firstborn is 4 years old. *Journal of Family Nursing*, 15, 237–263.

<sup>3</sup> Allendorf, K. (2013). Schemas of marital change: From arranged marriages to eloping for love // *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 75. pp. 453-469.

<sup>4</sup> Alterovitz S.S. & Mendelsohn G.A. (2013). Relationship goals of middle-aged, young-old, and old-old Internet daters: An analysis of online personal ads // *Journal of Aging Studies*, 27. pp. 159–165.

<sup>5</sup> Anderson, E.R. & Greene, S.M. (2011). "My child and I are a package deal": Balancing adult and child concerns in repartnering after divorce // *Journal of Family Psychology*, 25(5), 741-750.

<sup>6</sup> Loudon, D.L. and Bitta A.J. Della, *Consumer Behavior*, Fourth Edition, 2002, Tata McGraw-Hill, New Delhi.

likely to be used by older siblings and in disputes regarding control over the social situation. However, younger siblings also use reasoning, frequently bringing up the concern of legitimacy (e.g. “You’re not the boss”) when in conflict with an older sibling. This is a very common strategy used by younger siblings and is possibly an adaptive strategy in order for younger siblings to assert their autonomy<sup>7</sup> (Abuhatoum & Howe, 2013). A number of researchers have found that children who can use non-coercive strategies are more likely to have a successful resolution, whereby a compromise is reached and neither child feels slighted<sup>8</sup> (Ram & Ross, 2008; Abuhatoum & Howe, 2013). Not surprisingly, friendly relationships with siblings often lead to more positive interactions with peers. The reverse is also true. A child can also learn to get along with a sibling, with, as the song says, “a little help from my friends” (Kramer & Gottman, 1992). Sibling relationships are one of the longest-lasting bonds in people’s lives. Yet, there is little research on the nature of sibling relationships in adulthood (Aquilino, 2006). What is known is that the nature of these relationships change as adults have a choice as to whether they will create or maintain a close bond and continue to be a part of the life of a sibling. Siblings must make the same reappraisal of each other as adults, as parents have to with their adult children. Research has shown a decline in the frequency of interactions between siblings during early adulthood, as presumably peers, romantic relationships, and children become more central to the lives of young adults<sup>9</sup>. Aquilino (2006) suggests that the task in early adulthood may be to maintain enough of a bond so that there will be a foundation for this relationship in later life. Those who are successful can often move away from the “older-younger” sibling conflicts of childhood, toward a more egalitarian relationship between two adults. Siblings that were close to each other in childhood are typically close in adulthood<sup>10</sup>. (Dunn, 1984, 2007), and in fact, it is unusual for siblings to develop closeness for the first time in adulthood.

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<sup>7</sup> DeGarmo D.S. (2004). Ready to take a chance again: Transitions into dating among divorced parents // *Journal of Divorce and Remarriage*, 40, 61-75.

<sup>8</sup> Aquilino, W. (1991). Predicting parents’ experiences with coresidence adult children. *Journal of Family Issues*, 12(3), 323-342.

<sup>9</sup> Arai, Y., Sugiura, M., Miura, H., Washio, M., & Kudo, K. (2000). Undue concern for other’s opinions deters caregivers of impaired elderly from using public services in rural Japan. *International Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry*, 15(10), 961-968.

<sup>10</sup> Beach, S. R., Schulz, R., Yee, J. L., & Jackson, S. (2000). Negative and positive health effects of caring for a disabled spouse: Longitudinal findings from the caregiver health effects study. *Psychology and Aging*, 15(2), 259-271.

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Overall, the majority of adult sibling relationships are close<sup>11</sup>. (Cicirelli, 2009). The empty nest, or post-parental period refers to the time period when children are grown up and have left home<sup>12</sup> (Dennerstein, Dudley & Guthrie, 2002). For most parents this occurs during midlife. This time is recognized as a “normative event” as parents are aware that their children will become adults and eventually leave home (Mitchell & Lovegreen, 2009). The empty nest creates complex emotions, both positive and negative, for many parents. Some theorists suggest this is a time of role loss for parents, others suggest it is one of role strain relief (Bouchard, 2013). The role loss hypothesis predicts that when people lose an important role in their life they experience a decrease in emotional well-being. It is from this perspective that the concept of the empty nest syndrome emerged, which refers to great emotional distress experienced by parents, typically mothers, after children have left home. The empty nest syndrome is linked to the absence of alternative roles for the parent in which they could establish their identity (Borland, 1982). In Bouchard's (2013) review of the research, she found that few parents reported loneliness or a big sense of loss once all their children had left home. In contrast, the role stress relief hypothesis suggests that the empty nest period should lead to more positive changes for parents, as the responsibility of raising children has been lifted. The role strain relief hypothesis was supported by many studies in Bouchard's (2013) review. A consistent finding throughout the research literature is that raising children has a negative impact on the quality of marital relationships<sup>13</sup> (Ahlborg, Misvaer, & Möller, 2009; Bouchard, 2013). Most studies report that marital satisfaction often increases during the launching phase of the empty nest period, and that this satisfaction endures long after the last child has left home (Gorchoff, John, & Helson, 2008). However, most of the research on the post-parental period has been with American parents. A number of studies in China suggest that empty-nesters, especially in more rural areas of China, report greater loneliness and depression than their counterparts with children still at home (Wu et al., 2010). Family support for the elderly by their children is a cherished Chinese tradition (Wong & Leung, 2012). The fact that children move

<sup>11</sup> Bengtson, V. L. (2001). Families, intergenerational relationships, and kinkeeping in midlife. In N. M. Putney (Author) & M. E. Lachman (Ed.), *Handbook of midlife development* (pp. 528-579). New York: Wiley.

<sup>12</sup> Benokraitis, N. V. (2005). *Marriages and families: Changes, choices, and constraints* (5th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.

<sup>13</sup> Benokraitis, N. V. (2005). *Marriages and families: Changes, choices, and constraints* (5th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.

from the rural communities to the larger cities for education and employment may explain the more negative reaction of Chinese parents compared to American samples. The loss of an adult child in a rural region may mean a loss of family income and support for aging parents. Empty-nesters in urban regions of China did not report the same degree of distress (Suetal., 2012), suggesting that it not so much the event of children leaving, but the additional hardships this may place on aging parents. nearly adulthood the parent-child relationship transitions by necessity toward a relationship between two adults. This involves a reappraisal of the relationship by both parents and young adults. One of the biggest challenges for parents, especially during emerging adulthood, is coming to terms with the adult status of their children. Aquilino (2006) suggests that parents who are reluctant or unable to do so may hinder young adults' identity development. This problem becomes more pronounced when young adults still reside with their parents and are financially dependent on them. Arnett (2004) reported that leaving home often helped promote psychological growth and independence in early adulthood. Many older adults provide financial assistance and or housing to adult children. At this point in history, there is more support going from the older parent to the younger adult children than in the other direction (Fingerman & Birditt, 2011). In addition to providing for their own children, many elders are raising their grandchildren. Consistent with socioemotional selectivity theory, older adults seek, and are helped by, their adult children providing emotional support (Lang & Schütze, 2002). Lang and Schütze, as part of the Berlin Aging Study (BASE), surveyed adult children (mean age 54) and their aging parents (mean age 84). They found that the adult children of older parents who provided emotional support, such as showing tenderness toward their parent, cheering the parent up when he or she was sad, tended to report greater life satisfaction. In contrast, older adults whose children provided informational support, such as providing advice to the parent, reported less life satisfaction<sup>14</sup>. Lang and Schütze found that older adults wanted their relationship with their children to be more emotionally meaningful, but they did not want their children telling them what to do. Daughters and adult children who were younger, tended to provide such support more than sons and adult children who were older. Lang and Schütze also found that adult children who were more autonomous rather than

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<sup>14</sup> Birditt, K.S., & Antonucci, T.C. (2012). Till death do us part: Contexts and implications of marriage, divorce, and remarriage across adulthood. *Research in Human Development*, 9(2), 103-105.

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emotionally dependent on their parents, had more emotionally meaningful relationships with their parents, from both the parents' and adult children's point of view. So far, we have considered the impact that adult children who have returned home or have yet to leave the nest have on the lives of middle-aged parents. What about the effect on parents who have adult children dealing with personal problems, such as alcoholism, chronic health concerns, mental health issues, trouble with the law, poor social relationships, or academic or job-related problems, even if they are not living at home? The life course perspective proposes the idea of linked lives<sup>15</sup> (Greenfield & Marks, 2006), which is the notion that people in important relationships, such as children and parents, mutually influence each other's developmental pathways. You have read about the effects that parents have on their children's development, but this relationship is bidirectional. The problems faced by children, even when those children are adults, influence the lives of their parents. Greenfield and Marks found in their study of middle-aged parents and their adult children, those parents whose children were dealing with personal problems reported more negative affect, lower self-acceptance, poorer parent-child interactions, and more family relationship stress. The more problems the adult children were facing, the worse the lives and emotional health of their parents, with single parents faring the worst.

**Description and solution of a scientific problem.** Stages in family life cycle not everyone passes through these stages smoothly. situations such as severe illness, financial problems, or the death of a loved one can have an effect on how well you pass through the stages. fortunately, if you miss skills in one stage, you can learn them in later stages. the stages of the family life cycle are: independent coupling or marriage parenting: babies through adolescents. it has many sub stages. child bearing family from the birth of the first child until that child is 2 years old family with preschoolers - when the oldest child is between the ages of 2 and 6 years family with school children- when the oldest child is between the ages of 6 and 13 years parenting adolescents - when the oldest child is between the ages of 14 to 20 years empty nest - launching adult children retirement or senior years. Independence is the most critical stage of the family life cycle. As you enter young adulthood, you begin to separate emotionally from your family. During this stage, you strive to become fully able to support yourself emotionally, physically, socially,

<sup>15</sup> Borland, D.C. (1982). A cohort analysis approach to the empty-nest syndrome among three ethnic groups of women: A theoretical position. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 44, 117–129.

and financially. You begin to develop unique qualities and characteristics that define your individual identity. Intimacy is a vital skill to develop during your independent, young adult years. Intimacy is the ability to develop and maintain close relationships that can endure hard times and other challenges. In an intimate relationship, you learn about: Commitment. Commonality or similarity. Compatibility. Attachment. Dependence on another person who is not in your family. Shared emotion in a relationship. You also learn who you are outside of your identity within your family. Your ability to develop an intimate relationship depends on how successful you were at developing your individual identity earlier in life. Exploring interests and career goals is part of developing independence. To live successfully away from your family, you must develop financial and emotional independence. You also begin to be responsible for your own health in this stage, becoming responsible for your nutritional, physical, and medical needs<sup>16</sup>. Developing healthy habits at this time such as good nutrition, regular exercise, and safe sex practices is important for lifelong good health and happiness. You learn new aspects of independence throughout your lifetime. Even when you have moved on to another stage of life, such as coupling, you continue to learn independence within the context of that stage. During the independence stage, you hope to learn to see yourself as a separate person in relation to your original family parents, siblings, and extended family members. Develop intimate peer relationships outside the family. Establish yourself in your work or career.

**Summary.** The emotional and intellectual stages you pass through from childhood to your retirement years as a member of a family are called the family life cycle. In each stage, you face challenges in your family life that allow you to build or gain new skills. Gaining these skills helps you work through the changes that nearly every family goes through. Not everyone passes through these stages smoothly. Situations such as severe illness, financial problems, or the death of a loved one can have an effect on how well you pass through the stages. Fortunately, if you miss skills in one stage, you can learn them in later stages.

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<sup>16</sup> Boucard, G. (2013). How do parents reaction when their children leave home: An integrative review Journal of Adult Development, 21, 69-79

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