

ASSIGNMENT 7

THE CLASS REUNION

Please answer one question from each section applying the theory of Early Adulthood to the case study.

Thank you,



Case 1: The Class Reunion

Marissa just received an invitation to attend her 10th class reunion. At the age of 28, she felt good about her master's degree in family policy and her career in child and family advocacy in a large city. She liked city life and the opportunities to meet many different people. She often went out on the weekends with friends to the opening of an art exhibit, a concert, or to try out a new restaurant or bar. Her favorite event was the singles gallery hop, which was held the first Thursday of each month. It was a crowd of older "twenty somethings," all of whom were employed and well educated and who enjoyed the art and sipping red wines, while exploring new dating possibilities.

Her friends in the city were all single. Most of them had graduate degrees. They were a support system for each other. They talked about everything: relationships, work, education, and the possibility of marriage and a family down the road. However, none of them were ready to settle down. They were all enjoying singlehood in the city and they were all very career oriented.

Growing up in a small, rural, farming community, Marissa had limited opportunities to meet different people or attend cultural events. Marissa knew all of her classmates in high school and was excited to learn what her friends had accomplished in ten years. Her parents and siblings still lived in the same community. Yet, she rarely visits except during holidays and special family events when the large extended family gathers. She enjoys these visits but is often ready to return to the city after a day or two.

The night of her high school class reunion, Marissa was nervous, as she got ready in the same bathroom that she used to get ready in everyday before school, ten years earlier. The same country blue and mauve floral print wallpaper hung on the walls. It was as if she were 16 again trying to make sure her hair and makeup were perfect, and her clothes were just right. Why did she care so much about what these people thought? She had not seen many of them in ten years and probably would not see them again until the next high school reunion. She never felt this nervous when she went out with her friends in the city.

That night at Marissa's high school reunion she discovered that many of her high school friends were married, owned homes, and had children. She felt uncomfortable talking about her life which seemed so unsettled in comparison. As the evening went along, Marissa began to worry about her life and her goals for forming a close relationship, having children, and how to fit these goals in with her career and her love of city life. Prior to her reunion, Marissa felt good about her life and accomplishments. After the reunion, she felt unsure. She could not wait to get back to the city to discuss her weekend and her feelings with her city friends. The minute she was in the car on the way home, she called her friends and said, "Let's meet for dinner tonight, I need to talk."



Developmental Analysis Questions

1. In what ways does Marissa's comparison of her life to that of her high school peers reflect the life stage of early adulthood and its related developmental tasks?
2. How might a group who graduated from high school together differ ten years later with respect to the timing of entry into important life roles? What factors might account for these differences?



Contextual Analysis Questions

1. How might this case example differ if Marissa lived in a small, rural, farming community and attended her high school reunion in a large city?
2. What might be the age-graded expectations of Marissa's family, her city friends, and her friends from high school? How might they differ? And how do these differences contribute to Marissa's sense of uncertainty about her life?
3. What do you think Marissa's classmates might be thinking about Marissa's lifestyle? What factors might lead someone who is living in Marissa's home community to feel trapped in their life and envious of Marissa?



Psychosocial Analysis Questions

1. What are some of the dilemmas that Marissa is facing in terms of her desire for an intimate relationship and children?
2. In what ways might Marissa's family and city friends fulfill a need for intimacy? In what ways might these relationships foster a sense of isolation?
3. What is there about the event of a ten year high school reunion, where you return to a setting as an adult and interact with people you knew as an adolescent, which is likely to produce emotional conflicts?