

Chapter 18

The Life Cycle Continues

1. Changes During Adolescence
2. Adulthood, Marriage, and Parenthood
3. Health Through the Life Cycle

#OnedayIwokeup #Doppitup

Lesson 1 — Changes During Adolescence

Adolescence is the period between childhood and adulthood — after infancy, the second fastest growth period of your life. **Puberty** can begin as early as ages 8–9 in girls and 9–10 in boys (updated from textbook's 12–18 range).

The Teen Brain — A Work in Progress

■ Prefrontal Cortex	Responsible for planning, reasoning, impulse control. The LAST region to fully mature — not complete until around age 25. Explains why 'I didn't think that through' is such a common adolescent experience.
■ Amygdala	The emotional alarm system. Fully online well before the prefrontal cortex — which is why teen emotions can be intense and fast while the rational part is still under construction.
■ ■ Corpus Callosum	Connects brain hemispheres; involved in creativity and problem-solving; grows significantly during adolescence.
■ Cerebellum	Coordinates movement and also thinking processes; significant development during teen years.

Your brain is unusually PLASTIC right now — especially responsive to experience. Every skill you develop, relationship you build, and habit you form literally shapes the neural connections that will serve you for life.

Lesson 2 — Adulthood, Marriage, and Parenthood

Physical maturity typically arrives in late adolescence. **Emotional maturity** — the ability to face reality honestly, take responsibility, and learn from experience — takes longer and is actively developed through experience and relationships.

Young adulthood (19–40)	Developing intimacy — building close, committed relationships
Middle adulthood (40–65)	Contributing beyond yourself — family, community, society
Late adulthood (65+)	Reflecting on a life lived with meaning and integrity

Teen marriage has a significantly higher divorce rate. The teen years are specifically for identity formation — making a permanent life commitment before that process is complete creates compounded challenges.

Lesson 3 — Health Through the Life Cycle

Middle adulthood brings physical changes — vision/hearing decline, muscle and joint changes, heart disease risk, and menopause in females. But people who built healthy habits in adolescence — exercise, nutrition, not smoking — experience measurably better health outcomes throughout life.

Late adulthood brings the developmental goal of **integrity** — the sense that one's life has been meaningful. Cognitive health benefits from social connection, mental activity, and exercise throughout life. Alzheimer's disease now affects approximately **7 million Americans** (updated from textbook's 4.5 million figure).

Chapter Vocabulary

Lesson 1

Adolescence	The developmental period between childhood and adulthood, marked by puberty and significant physical, cognitive, emotional, and social changes
Puberty	The biological process by which the body develops adult reproductive and secondary sex characteristics
Cognition	The ability to reason, think abstractly, and arrive at solutions; continues developing throughout adolescence

Lesson 2

Physical maturity	The state at which the body and all its organs are fully developed
Emotional maturity	The state at which mental and emotional capabilities are fully developed
Commitment	A promise or pledge to another person; the foundation of marriage and other lasting partnerships
Adoption	The legal process by which a person or couple takes a child of other parents as their own
Unconditional love	Love given without limitations or conditions; a fundamental developmental need of children

Lesson 3

Transitions	Significant life changes that occur at all stages of life and require adjustment
Empty-nest syndrome	The feelings of sadness or disorientation some parents experience when children grow up and leave home
Integrity	In late adulthood, the sense of having lived according to one's values and that the life as a whole has been meaningful