

Most problems we face as adults are not adult problems.

They are unfinished business from childhood.

In several decades of working in the mental health field, I've learned that when people look for help, the most common areas are: relationships, career, and personal performance. Specifically, they are issues like self-esteem, fears of being abandoned, insecurities, dependencies, being controlled by others, and never getting to the point of deciding who we want to be when we grow up.

What I've found most useful is to look at the groupings of client issues as related to specific challenges we all began facing in childhood. Master them all and we have all the capabilities that we envisioned when we were little. Fail to master the fundamental four cornerstones and we continue having these same problems for the remainder of our lives.

One key factor is that they come to us in sequence, and demand that we incorporate the vital skills at each stage because they are required in order to tackle the next one successfully. It's like in grade school, we had to learn how to read in order to be able to write. And we need them both when it comes to learning arithmetic. Sequential building blocks, when it comes to skill acquisition.

Likewise, we need connection issues resolved before we can work on becoming autonomous. Insecurities, fears about having enough, and low self-esteem must be resolved in order to cut the cord and begin living autonomously on our own terms. Without autonomy, we never think for ourselves, needing continual help from parental types like counselors, talk show hosts, ministers, peers, and experts all too willing to do our thinking for us. For a price. And we have to pay that price because our thinkers never get fully turned on. How's that for a simple explanation for why adults have so much trouble agreeing on anything? And it also explains why trying to manage, counsel, or otherwise use the mind to heal the mind doesn't work.

As obnoxious as our first attempts at gaining personal power were to our parents, we really do need to learn how to get what we want from others. The only clean way is to ask for what we want from those who have it. Otherwise we learn control games, intimidation tactics, entitlement, seduction, cons, and playing victim.

But accommodations like these are ultimately unsuccessful in pursuit of gaining enough personal power to take on the fourth challenge—to decide who we are as individuals. Unique. Valued. Self motivated. Independent. Having no need for others to tell us what to think, how to manage our lives, or how to behave. In other words, having our own identity.

Once again, the fundamental four challenges are: connection, autonomy, personal power, and identity. Each requires mastery of the preceding ones for completion. When we live by deciding who we are as human beings as well as spiritual beings having a human experience, we get to do what gurus like Wayne Dyer, Neale Donald Walsch, and Eckhart Tolle say we are capable of doing. But they don't seem to realize that most of us have not developed sufficient developmental capabilities to make it happen. It's like they're telling us how to do advanced calculus before we've mastered reading, adding and subtraction.

So how many of us made it all the way to being real grownups? Experts say it's about 14%. The rest of us are still working to get there. Playing dress up grownups, just like we did back when we were raiding our parents closets, trying on shoes way too big, experimenting with lipstick, and trying on

daddy's military uniform.

Meanwhile the push to continue growing to become fully functional never allows us to stop—until we get there. And the master plan requires that we continue growing throughout our Earthly existence. Becoming a grownup is just one of the major milestones along the way from birth to grave.

Want to know how well you've done so far at mastering the foundational challenges? Take this free test: <http://doihaftagrowup.com/ebook/index.php> You get a score right away that will indicate how well you mastered these crucial skills.

Gary Robertson recently published a book on the subject of becoming grown up: DO I HAFTA GROW UP? THE ADULT GUIDE TO UNFINISHED BUSINESS OF CHILDHOOD. It is available at <http://doihaftagrowup.com>.

His experts page is located here: http://www.selfgrowth.com/experts/gary_robertson.html

Sample chapters can be previewed at <http://stores.lulu.com/store.php?fAcctID=3757641>