CSP 559: Final Exam

Allyson N. Randolph

Western Illinois University

CSP 559: Final Exam

Three Most Important Concepts I Have Learned about Student Development Theory

Establishing Identity. Chickering describes his theory of seven vectors that contribute to an

individual's identity formation. While all of these vectors contribute to an individual's identity

development, Chickering specifically describes the vector "establishing identity" which builds

on all of the other vectors. I believe that this vector from Chickering's theory relates to nearly all

of the other theories we studied this semester. During high school and college, individuals often

struggle to figure out who they are and their purpose for life. Very often, establishing identity is

one of the most stressful tasks to accomplish and there are so many factors that can influence an

individual's identity. Whether it is race, sexual orientation, learning styles, decision-making

styles, or any other factor, students struggle with who they are and how they fit in to their

environment. Chickering describes one's level of "comfort" with these various aspects of

identity. I do not believe that one can become comfortable with their identity until they are able

to explore all aspects of their identity and develop an appreciation for themselves and others.

College is a time for students to receive the preparation and training for a career, but it is also a

time for students to develop and become comfortable in their own skin. As student affairs

professionals, I believe that we will encounter many situations in which students will struggle

with identity issues and we must be prepared to help them explore who they are and become

satisfied with their own identity.

Challenge and Support. The second concept I enjoyed learning about and find very useful in

my work with students is the notion of "challenge and support" (p.30). Sanford (1966) proposed

three developmental conditions: "readiness, challenge, and support" (p.30). He described the

struggle many student affairs professionals face when trying to establish a balance between

challenge and support. Evans et al (2010) said "if the environment presents to much challenge,

students can regress to earlier, less adaptive modes of behavior; solidify current modes of

behavior; escape the challenge; or ignore the challenge if escape is impossible. If there is too

little challenge in the environment, students may feel safe and satisfied, but they do not develop"

(p.30). While I find the notion of "challenge and support" very important in my work, I have

been struggling tremendously with finding a balance in these two areas. I have tried to view

each student individually and figure out how I can best challenge and support them. On the other

hand, I often find myself too overwhelmed with work that I cannot provide an appropriate

amount of time and effort to challenge students. I also worry that if I challenge a student too

much, it will be a detriment to their development and our relationship. I have not fully come to

terms with the concept of challenge and support yet, but I feel that it is one of the most important

concepts to keep in mind when working with the various theories. Each theory provides

opportunities to challenge and support students, and by using theory as a lens to look at each

situation, I feel that I can determine how to appropriately provide challenge and support to

students.

"Theory must be related to practical situations found in real-life settings" (p. 29). This

quote came from Evans et al (2010), on page 29 of the text. However, throughout the entire text,

theorists and the authors of the text frequently mentioned that theory is not "cookie cutter" and

that we should use theory cautiously in our work with students. Before enrolling in this course, I

assumed that by studying theory, I would find out all the answers for working with students.

When I heard that theory does not provide all of the answers, nor does it provide solutions to

every situation, I was shocked. However, after delving deeper into the theoretical perspectives, I

learned that it is impossible to handle each situation similarly, that use of multiple theories is

usually needed, and that real-life situations are unique in so many ways. The notion that theory

is not "cookie cutter" makes using theory challenging, but it also allows us to get creative and

add a personal touch to our practice.

Introducing Tracy

A) Assumptions Made About Tracy

After reading Tracy's short biography, I have chosen to make some assumptions about

Tracy's identity. I have made these assumptions based on some components of Tracy's story.

First, Tracy's name is common for both a male and female individual. However, because Tracy

feels such immense pressure from his father, I have chosen to label Tracy as a male. I have

found over time that it is very common for young males to feel immense pressure from a father

figure, and this is evident in this story. I have also chosen to label Tracy as homosexual and

white. Kelly is also a name that is commonly used for males and females, so I have decided that

Kelly is also a male. Due to the statement by Tracy that he is in an interracial relationship, Tracy

must be of another race, and I have decided that he is African American. Lastly, Tracy is of

Senior status, and I have chosen to assume that he is around the age of twenty-two. Rather than

label him as a non-traditional student, I have chosen to assume that he is of traditional college

student age.

B) Using Theory to work with Tracy

The following section will use theory to analyze Tracy's current situation. Each theory will

be used in identifying helpful aspects of each theory that can be used to work with Tracy to

further his development. I have chosen only to analyze Tracy's development, however, Kelly is

referenced multiple times in relation to Tracy's development.

Chickering. Arthur Chickering's Theory of Identity Development, as cited in Evans,

Forney, Guido, Patton, and Renn (2010), is very useful in understanding Tracy's development.

This section will analyze Chickering's (Evans et al, 2010) vectors, environmental influences, and

the admonitions in relation to Tracy's story.

The first vector of Chickering's (Evans et al, 2010) that is useful in analyzing Tracy's

development is the vector "Developing Competence". It is evident through Tracy's statements

that he is struggling with developing intellectual and interpersonal competence. Over his time in

college, he has double-majored and gained a lot of knowledge, but has not been able to recognize

how he can use that knowledge for a future profession or for graduate school. He probably has

the skills needed to go into social work, which seems to be his preference, but he states that he

"would get too caught up in the problems of the clients [he works] with". He has not yet gained

the confidence in his intellectual abilities. Secondly, I feel that Tracy is having struggles with

developing interpersonal competence. Tracy talks about his relationships with his family,

particularly his father, and with his partner, Kelly. Chickering's theory maintains that

interpersonal competence deals with skills in communication, leadership, and working with

others. Tracy has encountered many conflicting ideals in his relationship with his father and

with Kelly, and he is struggling to communicate his own values to both parties.

The second vector that is useful in analyzing Tracy is the vector "Managing Emotions".

Tracy blatantly states, "I can get very emotional" while discussing his potential for work in

social work. He obviously shows a lot of care for the people he encounters, but has not been

able to find a balance between that care and the need to separate work from the rest of his life.

Also in relation to this vector, Tracy's entire story demonstrates his inability to manage his

emotions effectively. Tracy experiences a wide range of emotions in his statements, and is

relying heavily on his advisor to help him come up with the answers. In this way, he is taking the appropriate steps and asking the appropriate questions so he can grow and learn how to better manage his emotions.

The vector, "Moving Through Autonomy Toward Interdependence" is very useful in analyzing Tracy's relationship with his parents. First, he feels that his parents would not approve of his relationship with Kelly. Second, he states that he *wants* to go to law school, but his following statement shows that he might only be considering law school because his parents want him to become a lawyer. These two statements show Tracy's need for reassurance and approval from others. He has come to recognize that many of these decisions are his own, but that he wants to gain the approval from other individuals.

The previous vector also relates closely to the next vector, "Developing Mature Interpersonal Relationships". Through my analysis of Tracy, I feel that he is somewhat developed in this area. Tracy shows great concern for others and for creating healthy, lasting relationships. While he does question some aspects of his relationships, such as whether or not to tell his parents about his relationship with Kelly, he is still very aware of how this affects both his parents and Kelly.

One of the vectors that is somewhat difficult to use in analysis of Tracy is the vector, "Establishing Identity". Tracy's story does not provide any aspects of his identity, and that is why I have chosen to make assumptions about his identity. The only aspect of the story that is telling of Tracy's development in this area is his concern with telling his parents about his interracial relationship. This shows that Tracy may not be comfortable with his sexual orientation or his sense of self, related to feedback from others. He has not fully accepted himself and does not provide evidence of high self-esteem, but it is difficult to analyze his identity without asking further questions.

The vector "Developing Purpose", is one of Tracy's most telling struggles. Tracy has not yet developed clear vocational goals nor has he made a commitment to his personal interests. Tracy is heavily reliant on acceptance from his family in relation to his choice of profession. He is aware that he enjoys sociology and history, but has not been able to figure out how those interests can develop into a career.

Another area that I believe Tracy is struggling is in "Developing Integrity". Tracy seems to have a great awareness of his personal values, yet he does not know how to align his values with his actions. In the situation with Kelly, when Kelly asks Tracy to provide him with the exam, Tracy understands that he has a social responsibility to not betray the trust that has been instilled in him. He values honesty, but has not been fully honest with his parents about his relationship with Kelly. This dishonesty with his parents is incongruent with his high values placed on honesty.

The only environmental factor, as described by Chickering (Evans et al, 2010), that I feel plays a large role on Tracy in this analysis is the "Student-Faculty Relationships" factor, in this case it is a student-advisor relationship. Because I do not know the aspects of the other environmental influences, I am not able to relate them to Tracy's experiences. However, Tracy provides evidence that he is very close to his advisor, and has known her (in this case, myself) for a long time. This shows that Tracy sees her as accessible and interested in his personal development. In his final statement, Tracy says, "I know you can't decide for me, but please help me". Through this, Tracy has acknowledged that the advisor is a source of knowledge, but not the person who needs to make his decisions for him. This relationship is extremely important because Tracy is relying on his advisor to help him through these struggles, but realizes that the final authority rests within himself.

In working with Tracy in this situation, I would rely heavily on the admonitions to understand Tracy more fully. In particular, it is important to recognize that, while theory is useful in understanding Tracy, he is unique and very different from other students ("Recognition and Respect for Individual Differences"). I would strive to analyze these differences and his background and challenge him to see how certain aspects of his identity shape his experiences. I would also acknowledge the "Cyclical Nature of Learning and Development". I would assume that Tracy is recycling through some of the vectors as more complex issues come up. As an advisor who has worked with him for multiple years, I cannot discount the fact that Tracy has been successful in developing in some vectors, but that he might continue to struggle with them.

Using Chickering's theory to understand Tracy is very useful, and can be used to help understand where he is in many vectors of development. However, I would use caution in making too many assumptions, but use my analysis of Tracy to challenge him to think about his personal development and show that I will support him through these challenges.

Schlossberg. Tracy is obviously going through a few transitions. That is why Nancy Schlossberg's (as cited in Evans et al, 2010) is useful in helping Tracy work through those transitions. The four S's, self, support, strategies, and situation, can be seen in some of Tracy's statements, however, some areas are lacking.

In examining Tracy's *situation*, the biggest transition going on in his life right now is his upcoming graduation. He is a senior in college and it is time for him to move on. This will involve a role change depending on whether he decides to go to graduate school, get a job, or do something else. Either way, he will no longer be a full-time undergraduate college student in the capacity that he currently is in. His situation is also affected by the multiple sources of stress going on in his life, from his relationship with Kelly to his struggle with his parents.

Next, it is important for Tracy to consider himself in his transition. Some of his personal and demographic characteristics are unknown, like his socioeconomic status, and state of health. However, he seems to have some psychological resources to help him cope. He seems to have a strong commitment to his personal values and he shows some maturity as he deals with many sources of stress. However, more information about Tracy would be helpful in challenging to look at himself in this situation.

Support is very important as Tracy's transitions and Tracy seems to have multiple sources of support. He seems close to his family and his partner, and he seems to be reliant on his advisor to support him. However, in his transition, he may lose the full support of his advisor and other support systems on his campus. He will have to learn how to find new support systems or work more effectively with the support systems he currently has. Teaching Tracy where and how he can find good support systems would be helpful in aiding Tracy.

The last S in Schlossberg's (Evans et al, 2010) theory is *strategies*. This is related to the ways in which individuals cope with their transition, including information seeking, direct action, inhibition of action, and intrapsychic behavior. From my analysis of Tracy, he seems to be inhibiting his actions by not choosing what he wants to do after graduation. As an advisor, I would help Tracy recognize his options for after graduation and then help him come up with a plan for how he might make a decision.

Hopefully, by helping Tracy recognize aspects of himself, his supports, the nature of the situation, and strategies for coping, he can move into the transition stage and eventually move out of the transition.

Perry. Evans et al (2010) describe William Perry's Theory of Intellectual and Ethical Development. Tracy's statements show that he might be in the *dualistic* position for making

meaning. He expects his advisor to help him discover the answers for all of his issues. He wants

to know the answers for his relationship with his partner, for his future career, and for his

relationship with his parents. However, in showing Tracy that I do not have all of the answers,

he may encounter *disequilibrium* and be able to move forward into the *multiplistic* viewpoint.

   Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, and Tarule. Belenky et al's (as cited in Evans et al,

2010) has not been tested on men, but some aspects of the theory can be used to assist the

advisor in working with Tracy. In particular, the perspective of *silence* is found in the

relationship between Tracy and his father. Tracy has become subject to the authority his father

holds, and he does not feel comfortable sharing his interracial relationship with him. His father

has clearly stated that "people should stick to their own kind when it comes to relationships", and

this leaves Tracy feeling silenced.

   The statements Tracy has made to his advisor shows that he might be in *received*

knowing. While he states that his advisor cannot make all of the decisions for him, he is heavily

reliant on the advisor's input. This is stated both at the beginning and the end of Tracy's

statements. He repeatedly states that he needs the advisor's help, and this shows that he might

not be able to create knowledge of his own, rather, that he needs the advisor to impart her

knowledge on him.

   As an advisor to Tracy, I would play the role of "teacher as midwife" (Evans et al, 2010,

p.124). I would help Tracy create ideas of his own by asking questions and making statements

that cause him to think critically about his situation. I would also question Tracy's reliance on

authority and help him recognize how authority affects his decision making.

   Baxter Magolda. Baxter Magolda's theory, as cited in Evans et al (2010), is useful in

how students construct "knowing".   She addresses gender in her theory, which might be helpful

in analyzing certain students. Tracy is most likely in Baxter Magolda's second stage,

transitional knowing. This can be determined by analyzing his reliance on others to provide him

with the information needed to make decisions. Tracy's statement, "I know you can't decide for

me, but please help me", shows that he is not expecting his advisor to make all of the decisions

for him. However, he knows that he does not have all the answers and needs to engage in

dialogue with is advisor to gain an understanding of his situation and the factors involved.

Within the *transitional knowing* stage, Baxter Magolda references two patterns within the

stage—*interpersonal knowing* and *impersonal knowing.* Since I do not know how the advisor

chooses to engage in dialogue with this student, and how the student reacts to that dialogue, I am

unable to determine which pattern best suits Tracy. However, since I have assumed that Tracy is

a male student, it is likely that he might prefer the *impersonal knowing* pattern in this stage. In

that case, it might be helpful for me, as the advisor, to engage in serious discussion, or debate,

that forces Tracy to think and come up with solutions that make the most sense logically.

Kohlberg. Lawrence Kohlberg, as cited in Evans et al (2010), developed a theory that

focuses on moral reasoning. Kohlberg's theory has six stages, one of which is *interpersonally*

normative morality. This stage defines moral reasoning as "meeting the expectations of those to

whom one is close and carrying out appropriate, acceptable social roles" (Evans et al, 2010,

p.104). It is extremely evident that Tracy is in this stage as he tries to negotiate his personal

values with the need to meet the expectations of others. For instance, he does not want to tell his

parents about his interracial relationship, for fear of rejection, but he knows that he is hurting

Kelly by neglecting to share this information with his parents. Similarly, Kelly wants Tracy to

steal a copy of the exam for him, but Tracy does not want to betray the trust of his professor, nor

does he want to upset Tracy. He also feels like a hypocrite by placing such high values on honesty, but not sharing his relationship with his parents.

Tracy has also been forced to think in a higher stage of moral development because he has encountered disequilibrium, when someone has shown reasoning different from Tracy's, in this case, Kelly. Kelly has asked Tracy to steal a copy of the exam for him and Tracy questions how Kelly could ask him do to that. Obviously, Kelly's moral reasoning is very different from Tracy's, and it forces Tracy to think about how they differ. This alone will help Tracy develop morally as he tries to negotiate this issue.

As an advisor to Tracy, I would do my best to undergo "perspective taking" (Evans et al, 2010, p.102). Through this, I would try to understand exactly where Tracy is coming from and combine my knowledge with my ability to reason. I would also try to expose Tracy to "higher-stage thinking" (Evans et al, 2010, p.102) and push him to think in the *social system morality* stage where right is defined by following rules and laws as long as they are aligned with human rights.

Gilligan. Gilligan (as cited in Evans et al, 2010) has also proposed a theory for moral development, however, this theory is centered around women's development. Gilligan bases women's thinking in the lines of care, keeping in mind women's relationships. While Tracy is not a female, he does exhibit some characteristics of Gilligan's theory. However, as Tracy's advisor, I would be weary to use Gilligan's theory to assess his moral development since it has not been tested on male students. Because Tracy has made the decision not to tell his parents about his relationship, and because he will not steal a copy of the test for Kelly, I feel that he might be exhibiting some characteristics of an individual in the *first transition: from selfishness to responsibility.* Tracy is demonstrating many characteristics of *Level 1* of Gilligan's theory,

where he is concerned mainly with his individual survival. He does not want his parents to be mad at him, nor does he want his professor to see him in a negative light. However, by showing concern for Kelly's feelings, he is demonstrating his transition towards social responsibility.

Kolb. David Kolb (as cited in Evans et al, 2010) developed a theory of learning styles. By analyzing certain aspects of Tracy's story, I am able to decipher his learning style using Kolb's theory. Tracy shows great concern for the individuals in his life, demonstrating *concrete experience.* However, he also seems to reflect greatly on his experiences, as seen in his considerations of his future career and his analysis of his values. This demonstrates *reflective observation.* Keeping this in mind, it is very likely that Tracy is a *diverger,* according to Kolb's theory.

However, in advising Tracy, it is important for me to remember that learning styles are not fixed and individuals may experience learning style preferences in different contexts. From my interpretations though, I would approach Tracy by providing support and counsel to him, as well as challenging to him to see different perspectives.

Sue and Sue. Sue and Sue's theory (as cited in Evans et al, 2010) of racial identity development focuses specifically on minority identities. Therefore, this theory is not useful in helping Tracy recognize his own development, but it might be useful in helping him recognize aspects of Kelly's development. By asking him questions about Kelly, or by describing aspects of minority populations to Tracy, he might be able to better understand Kelly, or might feel obligated to have deeper, more meaningful discussions with Kelly about their relationship.

Rowe, Bennett, and Atkinson. The situation Tracy is in regarding his interracial relationship and his relationship with his parents is very telling of his development as a white male. Rowe, Bennett, and Atkinson (as cited in Evans et al, 2010) describes their theory of the

White Racial Consciousness Model. This model can help explain the role of Tracy's attitude toward his own race and other racial groups. Tracy is able to understand that his father's statement about interracial relationships is wrong, but he does not take direct action to address the issue. This shows that Tracy might be in the *achieved racial consciousness* category, particularly the *conflictive* attitude of this category. Tracy seems to be opposed to his fathers statement, but does not believe that action should be taken to reduce this discrimination.

Cass. Vivienne Cass (as cited in Evans et al, 2010) created a model of Sexual Orientation Identity Formation. While Tracy's story does not allude to many aspects of his sexual identity, some assumptions can be made using Cass's model. For instance, I have labeled Tracy as a homosexual individual. Since he is in a relationship, more than likely, he has progressed through Cass's stages to ultimately be in *Stage 4: Identity Acceptance.* Tracy may be in a further stage, but he does not demonstrate any qualities that might help me determine this. While developing a homosexual identity is sometimes a difficult and stressful situation for individuals, Tracy does not seem to be currently struggling with his homosexual identity. Working with his other struggles would be of greater priority for me, but it is important to understand that he might be in one of Cass's stages and this might affect his growth in other areas.

D'Augelli. Similarly, D'Augelli (as cited in Evans et al, 2010) has also developed a model of lesbian, gay, and bisexual development. D'Augelli recognizes that development is not linear and many environmental characteristics may impact one's development. According to D'Augelli's model, it seems as if Tracy has been able to develop a personal gay identity status, as well as develop a gay intimacy status with Kelly. I am unable to tell if he has entered a LGB community or if he has come out to his parents. However, the fact that Tracy does not feel comfortable sharing his relationship with his parents may be impacted by his gay identity. This

may be a very stressful time for Tracy, and as his advisor, I would challenge him to open up

about this struggle so that I can provide him with support and guidance for becoming a gay

offspring. Also, as Tracy goes through a transition after graduation, I would encourage him to

find a supportive social network that accepts his identity and can provide guidance for him

through his transition.

C) Modifications Based on Alterations of Tracy's Identity

At the beginning of this report, I made many assumptions about Tracy's identity.

Many of the theories I used to analyze Tracy's story are dependent on aspects individual's

identity and may be different depending on the person's race, gender, age, and/or sexual

orientation. Other theories, however, are not dependent on aspects of an individual's identity. In

this case, I have noted that the theory has provided the same analysis of the student as stated

previously.

Chickering. Chickering's theory is not one that is dependent on race, age, sexual

orientation, or gender. Therefore, I would use Chickering's theory in the same way as mentioned

above to understand Tracy. The only change that *might* be different would be the level to which

Tracy has developed purpose and integrity if he/she was a nontraditional student. In this case, I

would assume that Tracy has reflected a lot on his/her purpose as a college student and made the

big decision to return to school. Aside from that, a nontraditional student might be at a higher

level of integrity because of the extensive life experiences he/she might have had.

Schlossberg. Schlossberg's theory can be used to understand many aspects of an individuals

transition. For instance, a nontraditional student would undergo a much different transition than

a traditional student. In this case, the 4 S's may vary drastically in relation to the student's life.

The *situation* could vary depending on if the person chose to go back to school, whether they lost

their job and needed to go back to school, went through a divorce, or many other things. They

also may not have gone to college before at all, so they do not have previous experience with this

type of transition. Because of a nontraditional student's age, the *self* could also play a large role

in the transition. They may be much older than other students on campus and may struggle to fit

in or develop a social identity on campus. One huge difference may be the *supports* in place for

a nontraditional student. They may be married with a partner, still living at home with their

parents, have children, or have a full time job. In this case, they may have more supports than

other students, but may struggle to negotiate those supports. If he/she is a parent, the individual

may also serve as a large support to the family and may not recognize the need for personal

supports for himself/herself. Lastly, the strategies used for coping may differ for nontraditional

students, however, strategies used for coping are dependent on individual preferences rather than

demographics.

Perry. Perry's Theory of Intellectual and Ethical development is another theory that is not

based on demographic characteristics, rather on an individual's preferences and states of mind

for developing intellectually and ethically. Therefore, my analysis of Tracy through Perry's lens

would remain the same no matter what race, gender, sexual orientation, or age.

Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, and Tarule. Belenky et al's theory is one based on the

experiences of women. Although I assumed Tracy was a male, I still used Belenky et al's theory

to understand him. While I would be weary to use this theory too much with a male student, it

could still be useful. However, if Tracy was a female student, I would make the same

assumption that Tracy might be in the *received knowing stage* and might be *silenced*, particularly

by the male authority figure in her life, her father. However, these situations can be very

contextual and Tracy may demonstrate different ways of knowing depending on the situation.

Baxter Magolda. Baxter Magolda also uses gender to discuss the different ways individuals know things. If Tracy is a female, her ways of knowing might differ from if she was a male. I would still assume that Tracy might be in the *transitional knowing* stage, but as a female, might prefer *interpersonal knowing* rather than *impersonal knowing.* In this case, Tracy might prefer to interact with her advisor to gather ideas for how to solve some of her problems. She also might want evaluation and feedback for the thoughts she has. She might also display personal judgements, as she does in providing her story when she says, "How could Kelly ask me to do that?".   As her advisor, I would make sure to share my thoughts with her and allow her to make her own judgments, but challenge her to see her problems in a different way.

Kohlberg. Kohlberg's theory is also one that is not greatly affected by personal demographics. Therefore, my understanding of Tracy would remain the same no matter what his/her identity.

Gilligan. Gilligan's theory of moral development is based on women's development. In my previous analysis, I used Gilligan hesitantly to understand Tracy as a male. However, some of the same understandings can be gained by using Gilligan's theory in its appropriate manner, for women. Because Tracy has made the decision not to tell her parents about his relationship, and because she will not steal a copy of the test for Kelly, I feel that she may be in the *first transition: from selfishness to responsibility.* Tracy is demonstrating many characteristics of *Level 1* of Gilligan's theory, where she is concerned mainly with her individual survival. She does not want to upset her parents or Kelly, and therefore chooses not to take action for fear of upsetting someone else.

Kolb. Once again, Kolb's theory is one that is not greatly affected when trying to understand individuals of differing races, gender, sexual orientations, or ages. Because of Tracy's ability to

reflect on his/her experiences, but also has a preferences to consider his/her feelings and the feelings of others, it is likely that Tracy is a *diverger.*

Sue and Sue. Whereas I could not use Sue and Sue's theory to understand Tracy as a white male, I can use the racial and cultural identity development model to understand Tracy as a minority male or female. Tracy, as a minority, has recognized that he/she is in an interracial relationship, therefore, recognizing his/her minority status. Tracy's story does not provide many details about his/her minority identity development, but some inferences can be made from small details. For instance, Tracy's father may be in the *resistance and immersion* stage and does not want Tracy to enter into a relationship with a white individual. However, Tracy may be further developed and recognize the knowledge and experiences of others and integrate them with their own. In this case, Tracy would be in the *synergistic articlulation and awareness* stage. It is likely that because of his/her intimate relationship with Kelly, a white individual, Tracy may be open to other cultures and races and may respect aspects of both races.

Rowe, Bennett, and Atkinson. It was easy to utilize Rowe, Bennett, and Atkinson's model of white racial consciousness to analyze Tracy as a white individual. However, when changing the race of Tracy, it is not longer applicable.

Cass and D'Augelli. Lastly, my original assumption of Tracy was that he was a gay man. If I alter Tracy's identity, he is no longer gay, and Cass and D'Augelli's theories are no longer useful in understanding Tracy. Therefore, this theory will not be further utilized to analyze other identities that Tracy may assume.

D) How I Would Respond to Tracy

After using the many theories to understand Tracy, I offer the ways in which I would help Tracy, as his advisor. First, I would do my best to remember that although the theories are

helpful in understanding Tracy, they are not guidelines for how to advise Tracy. I need to

consider his actions, responses, and preferences while working with him. Some of the main

topics to address with Tracy are his relationship with his parents, his relationship with Kelly, his

values and personal integrity, and his transition after graduation.

The first step I would take is to *listen* to everything Tracy has to say. I would then help

Tracy break down the many issues shown in his statement and figure out what each of those

means to him. I would encounter each issue separately and challenge Tracy to accept

responsibility for figuring out how he should approach each issue. However, I would be sure to

offer input when Tracy needs it and support throughout the entire discussion.

In regards to Tracy's transition after graduation, I would encourage him to come up with a

list of his various options and develop a comprehensive list of pros and cons for each option.

This might force Tracy to think about the meaning and feelings associate with each option and

cater to his diverging learning style.

In relation to his relationship with Kelly, I would encourage him to think about how Kelly

might feel about his relationship with his parents. I would also encourage him to talk to Kelly

about this situation and see if he can offer advice for how to tell Tracy's parents. This shows

Tracy that Kelly supports him in this instance and is willing to help him through the discussion

with his parents.

In regards to the situation that Kelly wants Tracy to steal a copy of the exam, there are many

things to discuss with Tracy. First, I would point out that it really seems that Tracy values

honesty, otherwise, he would not be so conflicted in making some of his decisions. I would

discuss how honesty impacts this situation and why he feels it is wrong to steal the exam. If he

can develop a strong reason to not steal the exam, he can present this reasoning to Kelly based on his values.

It is ultimately important to keep in mind aspects of Tracy's identity that may impact his decisions, ways of knowing, and interacting with others. By challenging Tracy to understand himself better, he will be able to understand others better and develop more mature relationships. Hopefully, through this discussion, Tracy will recognize that I am a support to him, but that he also has many other supports in his life, and no matter what transition or issue confronts him, he has the ability and knowledge to make it through.

<div align="center">**Student "Develop"ment**</div>

I would define "development" as the process by which an individual reaches maturity by gaining knowledge and an understanding of himself/herself and the world around him/her. Chapter one of *Student Development in College* (Evans et al, 2010) describes multiple definitions of "development". Sanford (as cited in Evans et al, 2010) describes development as "the organization of increasing complexity". I do not feel that this definition provides great insight into the inner workings of an individual's identity that affect their development and how this development affects the rest of the world. I believe that student development positively affects the individual, the higher education community, and the rest of society.

Chickering discusses the major developmental issues that many college students face. The vectors that Chickering created directly impact the individual and the rest of society. If an individual is able to successfully manage his/her emotions, he might be able to refrain from discriminating others or committing violent acts that may negatively affect society. Similarly, an individual who is able to develop purpose and clear vocational goals may be able to more successfully contribute to society compared to someone who has not developed purpose. An

individual who is able to align their career with their values, interests, and preferences will contribute more fully to the field, acquire more knowledge, and hopefully further the state of that particular career. This helps society gain more knowledge and understanding of specific fields, while the individual is able to enjoy his/her career.

I also believe that development in a moral sense is good for the individual and society at large. No matter what stage of development an individual may be in, it forces interaction with others and serious discussion about moral issues. We never know what is truly right or wrong, but as individuals, we have an obligation to search for the truth and respect human life. An individual who is able to develop morally may gain the personal satisfaction of making the right decisions and having strong moral values. They may also be able to engage in deep discussions with others and influence their level of development. If individuals do not seek to make moral decisions, the world may enter a state of war and chaos where no one knows right from wrong.

In the United States, there is an extensive range of social identities. If we are to work together as one nation and seek to understand one another, it is important that we use theories like Cass's, D'Augelli's, Sue and Sue's, and Rowe, Bennett, and Atkinson's to understand the experiences of others and work together more effectively. In the history of the U.S., various racial groups have been oppressed, while others have held the privilege. As the country becomes more diverse, students will be forced to work together on college campuses and in their future careers. By using these theories as a lens, we can better understand one another and ourselves. In understanding others, and ourselves, we subsequently learn how our own actions affect others and how other's experiences shape their thoughts, actions, and values. This is beneficial because, as we gain more understanding of others, we are able to have more meaningful interactions with others and work together.

Ultimately, development is good for individuals because it leads us to think more complexly about the world around us, and the role we play in this huge system of individuals. By engaging in serious discussions with one another and striving to develop morally, socially, and academically, we are able to understand one another and continually develop the world around us. As individuals develop, higher education develops, and society develops. This keeps the world changing and growing and we are able to develop new and improved ways of working together.

Reference

Evans, N. J., Forney, D. S., Guido, F. M., Patton, L. D., & Renn, K. A. (2010). *Student*

development in college: theory, research, and practice (2nd ed.). San Francisco, CA:

Jossey-Bass.