Journal of Language and Literature
Vol. 22 No. 1, April 2022, pp. 42-52
DOI: 10.24071/joll.v22i1.3463
Available at https://e-journal.usd.ac.id/index.php/JOLL/index

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

Trauma, Love, and Identity Development in Rowling's *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*

You-shuan Shiong[1] & Ya-huei Wang[1, 2]*
a0906623016@gmail.com; yhuei@csmu.edu.tw
[1] Department of Applied Foreign Languages, Chung-Shan Medical University, TAIWAN
[2]Department of Medical Education, Chung Shan Medical University Hospital, TAIWAN

Abstract

Persons in the stage of adolescence are eager to know who they are. They are curious about their unique characteristics and identities and how they can start to bring about the self-realization that provides a gateway to adulthood by exploring those characteristics and identities. In this process of self-exploration, adolescents who receive encouragement as they search for an authentic identity, though they sometimes have conflicts with parents and others, are likely to develop a secure ego-identity and a strong sense of independence and self-control. By contrast, adolescents who fail to receive encouragement during the process of identity exploration, for whatever reason, may remain unsure about who they are, and hence feel insecure and confused about themselves as well as their future. The present study uses the fictional character Harry Potter to explore these issues in greater depth, mainly focusing on his early adolescent years—that is, when he is 11-13 years old. The study demonstrates that Harry Potter can manage to resolve conflicting ideas and thereby lay the foundations for a healthy ego-identity despite difficult circumstances. The study uses Erikson's and other psychologists' understanding of the importance of self-exploration in adolescence as an interpretive lens to examine the dynamics of trauma, love, and self-realization in Rowling's Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*. More specifically, it considers how family love (or the lack thereof), mentorship, and friendship in adolescence impact Harry's mental and physical behaviors and influence the development of his identity.*

Article information

Received: 18 June 2021

Revised: 29 December 2021

Accepted: 11 January 2022

Keywords: *adolescence; identity development; love; racism; self-realization*

Introduction

According to Erikson (1963 and 1993), as an individual's personality development course, ego development is a continuous process of individualized, self-seeking psychological development. Erikson thinks that a person's personality keeps expanding

throughout his/her life. Nonetheless, Freud (1950) regards that personality has been well established by puberty. Based on Freud's psychosexual theory of development, personality develops through a series of internal psychological conflicts between inborn instincts (id) and social expectations (superego) during the five psychosexual stages: the oral, anal, phallic, latent, and genital stages. At each stage, a child would encounter conflicts between inborn drives and social expectations and manage to balance these two to reach a mature personality (Freud, 1950).

Unlike Freud focusing on the psychosexual perspective for ego development, Erickson (1963 & 1993) goes beyond Freud's instinctual and psychosexual perspectives, thinking that ego development should include the process of socialization. Hence, instead of using the psychosexual perspective, Erickson sees personality and ego development from the psychosocial perspective. Moreover, Erikson's complex social pattern deviates from the Freudian matrix of the triad of child, mother, and father. Erikson (1963 & 1993) questions the oedipal formulation of the struggle and instead sees a power struggle in the socio-cultural reality of the family. As a basic unit of social structure, the family has played an important role in facilitating adolescent ego development.

In addition, Erikson (1963 & 1993) believes that personality development unfolds in a series of eight stages, each including two conflicting ideas: trust vs. mistrust, autonomy vs. shame/doubt, initiative vs. guilt, industry vs. inferiority, identity vs. role confusion, intimacy vs. isolation, generativity vs. stagnation, and integrity vs. despair. During each stage of psychological development, persons have to resolve these conflicts in order to develop the competencies needed to manage tasks set before them. Those who successfully manage the conflicts will achieve positive self-identities, enjoying confidence and self-esteem; however, those failing to manage the conflicts will have negative self-identities, experiencing low self-esteem, feelings of rejection, and a sense of inferiority (Adler, 2013; Erikson, 1963 & 1993). According to Adler (2013), those who lack parents' attention would experience inferiority and inadequacy while beginning to interact with the world. Hence, to lead a positive identity, proper nurturing and care should be given to children on their way to growing up. Those receiving appropriate nurturing and care would have more courage to face tough challenges and tasks (Adler, 2013).

Though Erikson's ego development covers the whole human life span, with eight psychosocial stages, he places great emphasis upon the psychosocial task of adolescence: identity vs. confusion (the fifth stage). This stage is essential for adolescents to integrate their conflicts and fears to establish a reciprocal relationship with society in the process of ego identity formation (Côté & Levine, 2002; Erikson, 1963; 1993). During adolescence, teenagers may become confused about their self-identity and self-role. If teenagers have good interactions with their families and broader social networks, they are likely to have a positive mindset when seeking out their self-realization and identity; otherwise, they may lose their way, failing to reach self-realization (Erikson, 1963 & 1993).

Because dealing with conflicts has been a turning point in identity development (Gilleard & Higgs, 2016; Hitlin, Brown, & Elder, 2006), it is necessary to investigate how teenagers, during adolescence, learn to adapt their behaviors to reconcile themselves to a situation or a circumstance even though it is unpleasant. Hence, to realize how teenagers deal with conflicts to seek a positive identity successfully, the present study uses the fictional character Harry Potter to explore these issues in greater depth, mainly focusing on his early adolescent years—that is, when he is 11-13 years old. The study argues that Rowling's character demonstrates how a person in his early adolescence can, despite difficult circumstances, manage to resolve conflicting ideas and thereby lay foundations for a healthy ego-identity.

Methodology

This study mainly uses Erickson's (1963 and 1993) theory of identity development to

engage in a latent-content analysis (Babbie, 1995) of *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*, in both its novel and screenplay versions (Rowling, 1999; Kloves, 2003). Rowling's (1999) narrative centers on thirteen-year-old Harry, a wizard surviving his parents' murder at the hands of Lord Voldemort, an evil wizard, and his third year at Hogwarts, a wizarding and witching school. By examining the hidden or underlying meaning in the novel and film versions of Rowling's story, the study attempts to demonstrate how the confrontation of conflicts may serve as a crucial turning point in Harry's initiation of identity development, and how family love and other social interactions may bring a positive impact on Harry's mental and physical behaviors. Using the psychosocial development approach, the study would examine how family love (or the lack thereof), mentorship, and friendship in adolescence impact Harry's mental and physical behaviors, and in that way, influence the development of his identity.

Results and Discussion

Family Love

Family environment has been a key socializing space where adolescents link a connection to the outside world and social relationships (Berzonsky, 2003 & 2004; Marcia , 1980). Hence, those brought up in a supportive family atmosphere would lead to positive identity development and self-confidence, resolute, and empathetic. However, those being brought up in a family with no love, attention, or warmth may deter their self-identification process or lead to a negative identity development, as Harry in *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*.

Research has shown that children who receive warmth and affection from their parents have higher self-esteem, better academic achievement, and better communication with parents and others (Basak and Ghosh, 2008). Conversely, those who fail to get affection, attention, or intimacy from their parents are likely to feel more alienated and experience lower self-esteem, in ways that can lead to psychological problems or antisocial behaviors, such as experiencing and acting upon feelings of emotional stress, anxiety, aggression, or hostility (Ansbacher and Ansbacher, 1956; Erikson, 1993). Children are attached to and, ideally, have a close connection with parents from birth. Hence, initially, during identity development, children will intensely identify with their parents (Erikson, 1993).

Harry's parents died when he was an infant, and after his parents' death, Harry has no choice but to live with his "Muggle" uncle Vernon Dursley and the Dursley family. Like other Muggles, the Dursleys are not born to wizards or witches and have no magic abilities. No one cares about Harry in the Dursley family, whose members show cruelty toward him. For instance, one rainy day, after Harry's uncle Vernon and aunt Petunia return home and unceremoniously hand him a wet umbrella, as if he were a servant, Vernon is unwilling to sign a permission form for Harry's visit to Hogsmeade village. He sneers, "And why should I do that?" (Rowling, 1999, p. 13). Facing his rude, unyielding uncle, all that Harry can do is to choose his words calmly and carefully—in a manner that, by appeasing him, will allow Harry to get his way. He affirms that if his uncle signs the form, he'll "'act like a Mug—like I'm normal and everything'" (p. 14). Coincidentally, Vernon's sinister sister, Aunt Marge, comes for a visit. Glaring at Harry, she speaks to him in an extremely rude tone. In the screenplay, this scene is rendered as follows:

> *Aunt Marge: So. Still here, are you?*
> *Harry: Yes.*
> *Aunt Marge: Don't say "yes" in that ungrateful tone. Damn good of my brother to keep you, if you ask me. It'd have been straight to an orphanage if he'd been dumped on my doorstep. (Kloves, 2003, p. 4-5)*

Although he almost bursts out with the remark that it would be better to "live in an orphanage than with the Dursleys" (Rowling, 1999, p. 16), given what it has been like to live under the Dursleys' roof and eat at their table, all Harry can do is try not to lose his temper over Aunt Marge's cruel words. Nonetheless, having been raised up in a cold, verbally abusive environment, marked by harsh sarcasm and even bullying, and being forced to live in a dark

cupboard underneath the stairs, Harry definitely experiences a sense of inferiority and low self-esteem, not to mention insecurity about his abilities.

Family rapport and positive communication are positively related to the facilitation of adolescent identity development (Arnett, 2000; Erikson, 1964, 1968). Moreover, those who receive family warmth, companionship, intimacy, and desirable social relationships would positively resolve their psychosocial identity (Mallory, 1989). Markstrom et al. (1997) also declared that moratorium would negatively impact ego development. While Harry lives with the Dursley family, Aunt Marge shows great disdain toward the orphaned Harry because she has no blood relationship with him. Conversely, she showers attention and affection on her nephew, Dudley. She coos over him—"'Is that my Dudders! Hm? Is that my neffy poo? Come and say hello to your Auntie Marge'" (p. 5)—and then gives her nephew a big hug and many kisses. At the same time, Vernon again treats Harry like a servant, ordering him to take Aunt Marge's suitcase upstairs. Thus, though Dudley and Harry live under the same roof, they receive very different treatments. Without experiencing attention, affection, or even any warmth in the Dursley family, Harry cannot reach a successful resolution of psychosocial development (Erikson, 1985; Markstrom et al. (1997). Inevitably, Harry's unfair and discriminative treatment causes trauma and leads to a sense of inferiority.

Sense of Inferiority

Between the ages of six and twelve, children begin to compare themselves with their siblings and peers (Erikson, 1993). While drawing these comparisons in such domains as sports, school performance, family love, etc., they may develop a sense of accomplishment. However, children growing up in a negative home environment or school environment may instead develop a sense of inferiority, which can accompany them throughout their lives if they are unable to manage those feelings by coming to terms with what caused them.

An orphan, Harry has been ill-treated by Vernon and Petunia, his uncle and aunt. In contrast with his cousin, Dudley, who "had spent most of the summer in the kitchen," with his "piggy little eyes" fixed on a television screen and "his five chins wobbling as he ate continually" (Rowling, 1999, p. 11), Harry is "rather small and skinny for his age" (p. 4). Indeed, after his parents' death, Harry has never experienced love and affection, not even from his uncle and aunt, who devote all their love and affection to their son Dudley. Thus, all the family photographs show "a large blond boy [i.e., Dudley] riding his first bicycle, on a carousel at the fair, playing a computer game with his father, being hugged and kissed by his mother" (p. 19). Though he lives with the Dursleys, Harry has been made invisible in the house from which he feels alienated. Moreover, he is subjected to even more humiliation from Uncle Vernon, who implies that Harry is a hopeless kid when he refers to St. Brutus School as "a first-rate institution for hopeless cases," ignoring Harry's hurt frown (p. 16).

Living under the Dursleys' roof, Harry not only has to suffer humiliation at the hands of his aunt and uncle but also deal with sarcastic and offensive words from the family's relatives. Aunt Marge is one of the cruelest of these relatives.

> *Aunt Marge: Still. Mustn't blame yourself for how this one's turned out, Vernon. It all comes down to blood. Bad blood will out. What is it the boy's father did, Petunia?*
> *Aunt Petunia: Nothing. That is... he didn't work. He was--unemployed.*
> *Aunt Marge: Of course. And a drunk, I expect— (Kloves, 2003, p. 6*)

Without caring about Harry's feelings, and even though Harry tries to defend his dead father against her harsh criticism, Aunt Marge continues to berate Harry. Her next target is Harry's mother. Harry has managed to keep himself in check up to this point, but her insulting remarks about his mother are too much for him.

> *Aunt Marge: Quiet, Vernon. It doesn't matter about the father. In the end it comes down to the mother. You see it all the time with dogs. If there's something wrong with the bitch, there'll be something wrong with the pup.... (Kloves, 2003, p. 6)*

In a fit of rage, Harry, exercising his power as a wizard, pours his anger into Aunt Marge's body, causing it to fill with gas. As a result, she begins to inflate "like a monstrous balloon," flying out of the door and floating away into the sky (Rowling, 1999, p. 20).

According to Erikson (1963 and 1993), persons raised as children in an unwelcoming atmosphere, lacking family love, warmth, and intimate connections, are likely to develop a negative or pessimistic mental attitude. Not experiencing love or affection, and enduring constant humiliation, Harry considers himself to be inferior to his cousin Dudley; he has also remained aloof from others and uninterested in social activities. Harry's aggressive behaviors may correspond to those described in Adler's study of how children's aggressive and antisocial behaviors can be stimulated by a sense of inferiority (Ansbacher and Ansbacher, 1956). For Adler, experiences of being rejected and humiliated may cause children to compensate by becoming aggressive, as a way of protecting themselves from being hurt. Having been marginalized and mistreated in the Dursleys' house, Harry cannot maintain a healthy and secure attachment with them; this situation leads to an identity crisis for Harry, thereby increasing the risk of emotional and behavioral problems (Provenzano and Richard, 2006).

While adolescents work through the stages of identity development to reach self-realization, it is important to have parents accompany them through the stages, to let them know what love, or affection, is. Unfortunately, if the adolescents experience violence, humiliation, or mistreatment, they may attempt to escape the recurrent painful experiences and hence choose to run away from home (Schaffner, 1999). A house without love and care makes Harry feel unhappy and insecure. After taking action against Aunt Marge because of her humiliating criticisms of his parents, Harry feels that he no longer belongs to the family or their house. Running out of the house, he remarks to Uncle Vernon: "Anywhere's better than here" (Rowling, 1999, p. 20). At this point, he decides that having nowhere to go is better than staying in a place where he is not loved or wanted. With no parents with him, Harry has difficulties enjoying family warmth and intimacy (Ree, 2011). Moreover, being verbally and even physically abused and humiliated, Harry finally chooses to run away from the Dursleys' house as a last resort to escape from being orally and physically abused.

Adolescence and Self-realization

Adolescence refers to the transitional stage between childhood and adulthood between ages thirteen and nineteen. In Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban (1999), Harry is a thirteen-year-old boy and is thus in early adolescence. Adolescents like Harry want to know who they are and what potentials they may have. Otherwise, using Erikson's terms again may fail to achieve self-identity and instead experience an identity crisis (Erikson, 1968 and 1994). To navigate this stage, teenagers have to develop their logical thinking to realize who they are and where their abilities lie. Moreover, to resolve any potential identity crisis, they have to establish their own identities apart from their parents and make sound choices for their future.

It is known that adolescents' social milieu, involving the families, the peers, and the societies where they live or whom they interact with, plays a crucial role in their identity formation and self-realization (Fang, 2019). Self-realization here refers to the process of adolescents' realization of their full potential and how they are conceptualized with reference to the outside world to reach social cohesion (Jung, 2016; Rusu, 2019). Being totally neglected by the Dursleys, and growing up without being loved, Harry falls into an isolated and insecure situation, which is unfavorable to his attempts to initiate his identity development and reach his self-realization. Furthermore, even though he is curious about his parents, Harry has been forbidden to ask about them under the Dursleys' roof: "Don't ask questions—that was

the first rule for a quiet life with the Dursleys" (Rowling, 1997, p. 20). All Harry knows about his parents is that they lost their lives in a car crash. However, in exploring their self-identity, persons in early adolescence, like Harry, should have opportunities to learn from their parents before then going on to establish independent ego identities. Without any connection with his parents or his past, Harry struggles with issues of self-identification and self-realization. When he reaches his eleventh birthday, Harry finally learns about his identity as a wizard and discovers that his parents, while attempting to protect him, were killed by Voldemort, an evil wizard.

Having made these discoveries about his parents and his past, in order to complete the process of identity development, Harry must strike out on his own. With the assistance of Hagrid, Harry is invited to Hogwarts school, and there he initiates his identity development, a journey to discover his potential and to know who he is. According to Erikson, social interaction and relationships play a crucial role in individuals' psychological development; indeed, for Erikson, peers are the most important agent in resolving identity crises, and in helping manage the difficulties persons encounter as they go through the process of self-identification and self-realization (Erikson, 1994). Learning about his family history enables Harry to leave the Dursleys' house and transition to the Hogwarts School to initiate his identity development. At Hogwarts, Harry makes many friends, who provide him with the unconditional love he needs to regain his self-confidence and further realize his potential.

Love as a Form of Positive Social Interaction Needed for Identity Development

Family, especially parents, play an important role to adolescents' identity development (Trost, et al., 2020). Parental support and positive parenting styles will positively impact their identity development (Chang, et al., 2004). Moreover, if children experience support from peer groups, they will have a strong sense of belonging to a community; such belonging affords security and enables them to prepare for their future (Erikson, 1994; Marcia, 1980). Although Harry has no experience of family love after his parent's death, with Hagrid's help he goes to Hogwarts to see the outside world, participating on sports teams, acquire knowledge and skills, and making friends. Through these social interactions and activities, he learns to get along with peers, teachers, and others, in ways that are beneficial for his identity development. The formation of these friendships at the onset of adolescence significantly helps Harry know about himself and build self-identity. Receiving love from his peers and his teachers, he feels secure and hence can manage the conflicts involving role-confusion, among other challenges, that he will go on to confront.

While Harry is running away from the Dursleys' house, Harry's friend Ron Weasley wishes him a happy birthday, as if to say that Harry's real birth coincides with his departure from the house. Ron proves to be a great help in facilitating Harry's identity development. When Harry finds himself in difficult situations, Ron seeks to cheer him up and helpful advice. Moreover, just as Harry's mother was willing to sacrifice her life for her son, Ron is ready to sacrifice himself for his and Harry's friendship. Thus, while Ron, Harry, and Hermione are searching for the Philosopher's Stone, so as not to let the stone fall into evil hands, Ron, who is good at chess, knows that the only way to enable Harry and Hermione to keep going is to sacrifice himself, by letting the White Queen take him and destroy him. With Harry and Hermione shouting "No!" Ron insists on performing this selfless act, saying, "That's chess!. . You've got to make some sacrifices!" (Rowling, 1997, p. 205). Like Harry's parents, Ron has a great capacity for love and is ready to sacrifice himself for Harry's sake when necessary.

In stark contrast to the Dursleys, not only Ron Weasley but also the entire Weasley family welcomes Harry, giving him a chance to experience family love for the first time since his parents' death (Khan, 2016). They also provide Harry with a refuge, small but cozy; again, the love and warmth he receives from the Weasleys contrast sharply with the

Dursleys' cold house. In addition, at Hogwarts, Harry enjoys the love and support of Ron and Hermione, his best friends, while Dumbledore, the headmaster of the Hogwarts wizarding school, and Professor Lupin serve as father figures. The loving, supportive environment provided by his peers and teachers affords positive social interactions that facilitate Harry's identity development and ensure that he has the freedom to make good choices for the future.

Hence, at Hogwarts, Harry experiences love and happiness, which allow him to confront and overcome his identity crisis. These positive social interactions also help Harry become compassionate and kind to the people around him and learn what sacrificial love is.

Discrimination as a Form of Negative Social Interaction that Hinders Identity Development

Although Harry has good friends and positive mentors at Hogwarts, there are also antagonists at the school. Many of them demonstrate the kinds of bias associated with racial or class discrimination. Harry has to overcome these antagonists to reach the integrity of self-afforded by a strong ego-identity.

Racial and class discrimination involves a set social ideology based on prejudice. According to this prejudice, certain ethnic groups or socioeconomic classes are inherently superior to others, leading the members of favored groups to look down on and mistreat the members of other, disfavored groups (Stangor, 2009; Zarate, 2009). As Tyson (2011) indicates, those sharing the cultural values of the groups that are deemed superior tend to view groups with different cultural values as others—that is, as strange, subordinate, or inferior. In the present context, the prejudice at issue mainly involves blood composition and turns on questions of whether a person has a pure wizard blood lineage, in contrast with half-bloods, Muggle-borns, and Muggles.

Harry is subjected to what amounts to racial discrimination while he stays with the Dursleys, who are all Muggles. Uncle Vernon disparages Harry's wizard origins, saying to his sister that "these people's minds work in strange ways, Petunia, they're not like you and me" (Rowling, 1997, p. 42). Being Muggles, the Dursleys express intolerance toward wizards and witches, whom they call "freaks"; they are therefore ashamed to have a wizard in the family. For this reason, although he knows about Harry's wizard origins and his parents' being murdered, Uncle Vernon keeps these facts from Harry. Even after Harry enters Hogwarts, the Dursleys try to lock up his schoolbooks, to prevent him from studying magic during the summer.

While being subjected to racial discrimination at the Dursleys' house, Harry, like best friends Ron and Hermione, also encounter prejudice at Hogwarts. Lucius Malfoy and his son, Draco, consider their pure wizard blood superior to Muggle blood; hence they look down on Ron's father, a wizard who nonetheless associates with Muggles. The Malfoy family takes pride in their "pure" blood lineage, thinking their origins make them superior to the witches and wizards who are Muggles or half-bloods. At one point, when Harry unexpectedly encounters the Malfoys on the way to a bookstore, Lucius starts insulting Hermione because she is a Muggle-born, a child of two non-magical parents. It is thus all the more ironic that Hermione turns out to be, at Hogwarts, "the cleverest witch of her age" (Rowling, 1999, p. 255). Yet Draco, feeling that his blood purity makes him superior to Hermione, humiliates her in front of others, saying: "No one asked your opinion, you filthy little mud-blood! filthy little Mudblood" (Rowling, 1998, p. 112). This discriminatory attitude promotes hatred and hostility, which are antithetical to healthy identity development.

Along the same lines, whereas Harry accepts his half-blood parentage, Voldemort, the evil wizard, is unwilling to embrace his own half-blood lineage. Having been abandoned by his parents, Voldemort retains a feeling of hatred toward them; furthermore, because of the shame he feels when he learns that his father was not a wizard, he changes his name to Tom Riddle to hide his origin. Not being able to face his past or family

background, Voldemort is unsuccessful in his own attempts to establish an identity apart from his parents; instead, he adopts a kind of counter-identity to prevent any connection with his parents. In contrast to Voldemort, Harry is proud of his own half-blood parentage, willing to accept that his father was a pure-blood wizard while his mother was a Muggle.

How a Positive Mindset Can Help Conquer Fear and Discrimination

Erikson (1994) describes adolescence as a transitional period filling the gap between childhood and adulthood. If adolescents have enjoyed a sense of security during childhood, they will be better positioned to develop a strong sense of ego-identity, leading to autonomy in adulthood. In other words, those with a strong ego identity can successfully manage fear, pressure, and anxiety and establish a positive mindset through their values, attitudes, and actions. In turn, with this mindset, persons develop a stronger adversity quotient, the form of intelligence needed to face difficulties and obstacles and overcome them (Stoltz, 1996).

Adolescents who receive encouragement in seeking for identity develop a secure ego-identity and a strong sense of independence and self-control. However, suppose they do not receive encouragement during the process of identity exploration. In that case, adolescents may remain unsure about who they are, and feel insecure and confused about themselves well as their future (Erikson, 1994 Marcia, 1980). With no parents, Harry finds the process of identity exploration difficult in his early adolescent years, raising the possibility that he may experience an identity crisis. The death of his parents prevents Harry from experiencing parental love and thereby gaining a sense of security. Moreover, the abuse he receives from his aunt and uncle presents Harry with further difficulties as he tries to move through the psychosocial stages of personality development. Fortunately, after entering Hogwarts, with the help of supportive friends and teachers, Harry is finally in a position to start resolving the conflicts in his adolescence, and to learn to love and trust others. When he is being humiliated and silenced by the Dursleys, Harry experiences shame, a sense of inferiority, and self-doubt about himself; but ultimately he is able to face the reality of his parents' murder, and to use a positive mindset to overcome fear and trauma and move toward the future. With a positive mindset and high adversity quotient helping him establish a strong ego-identity, Harry successfully navigates the conflicts, struggles, and crises that arise in the psychosocial stages through which he passes.

Because of his status as a "half-blood," Harry has faced prejudice and discrimination from the Dursley family and later the Malfoys; discrimination of this sort can cause a sense of inferiority if a person lacks the strong ego-identity needed to overcome it. Moreover, Harry's fear of Voldemort and of Dementors, and the trauma of knowing that his parents were murdered for his sake, represent severe threats to his attempt to establish a healthy-ego identity. It is fortunate that at Hogwarts Harry has friends and teachers who help him learn how to conquer his inner fear.

The great secret of overcoming fear is choosing a positive mindset and thereby changing one's mental attitude. Byrne emphasizes the importance of thinking about what we want and instilling our ideas with as much positive emotion as possible. She claims that this combination of thought and feeling helps people achieve their desires (Byrne, 2006). Byrne's account of how thoughts become things emphasizes the power of thought. It suggests that all problems can be solved through positive thinking and faith. Insofar as holding on to happy memories helps foster a positive mindset, thoughts informed by positive memories will bring positive consequences, further affecting a person's body and mind.

Hence Harry uses a positive mindset to confront the shape-shifting Boggarts, viewing the creatures as funny shapes that he can laugh at. By using the word "ridiculous" in referring to them, Harry can easily repel the Boggarts. In addition, while confronting Dementors, Harry uses an incantation taught him by his Patronus, or magical guardian. As his Patronus

tells him, the incantation "'will work only if you are concentrating, with all your might, on a single, very happy memory'" (Rowling, 1999, p. 172).

Here, whereas a Dementor is a kind of visualized fear, a Patronus symbolizes a positive mindset that people can choose, in part by using a happy memory to let "thoughts become things." Indeed, the only way to defeat a Dementor, a fear, is to conjure a Patronus—that is, to use a positive mindset to overcome the fear. As Lupin tells Harry, "'The Patronus is a kind of positive force, a projection of the very things that the Dementor feeds upon—hope, happiness, the desire to survive–but it cannot feel despair, as real humans can, so the Dementors can't hurt it'" (p. 171). Thus, while confronting Dementors, Harry turns the trauma of his beloved parents' death into knowledge about sacrificial love, which assumes the form of a happy memory. With this happy memory supporting his positive mindset, Harry can finally defeat his enemies, the Dementors, and overcome the trauma of losing his parents.

Conquering Fear through Love

Among all the positive emotions, love is the one that has the most powerful magic when it comes to conquering fear. Just as Harry's parents' love for their son gave them the power to conquer their fear of death, so the love Harry has for his parents and for Sirius empowers him to have a positive mindset, which in turn enables him to conjure a Patronus in order to defeat more than one-hundred Dementors. Through feeling loved, Harry can develop a healthy ego-identity, and by experiencing love, he knows how to love others, and gains the confidence to fight through adversity on their (as well as his own) behalf. The scar on Harry's forehead symbolizes sacrificial love, by virtue of which Harry becomes strong enough to survive abuse from the Dursleys and to overcome a potential identity crisis. In actuality, it is not the scar on Harry's forehead that repels Voldemort; it is, rather, the power of sacrificial love that it symbolizes. This willingness to give one's life for someone else explains why Voldemort, who does not know what love is, fails to touch Harry. As Dumbledore says to Harry:

> *"Your mother died to save you...to have been loved so deeply, even though the person who loved us is gone, will give us some protection forever. It is in your very skin. Quirrell, full of hatred, greed and ambition, sharing his soul with Voldemort, could not touch you for this reason. It was agony to touch a person marked by something so good." (Rowling, 1997, p. 216)*

In short, with love from his parents, peers, and teachers to support him, Harry is able to develop a stronger mental attitude and higher adversity quotient as he works to resolve conflicts and crises in the process of self-exploration, resulting in a positive ego-identity. In contrast to Voldemort's lack of empathy and morality, and his inability to love, Harry prevents Lupin and Sirius from taking revenge on Pettigrew for murdering Harry's parents. Not killing Pettigrew does not mean that Harry forgives him for murdering his parents; rather, as Harry says, "'I'm doing it because—I don't reckon my dad would've wanted them to become killers — just for you'" (Rowling, 1999, p. 271). As Strimel (2004) notes, Harry's moral sense and empathy will not allow anyone to kill anyone else, since by killing, even for revenge, Lupin and Sirius themselves become murderers.

Conclusion

For reasons illuminated by Erikson's psychological model, Harry could have become another Voldemort, if he grew up to become a person lacking qualities and abilities such as empathy, logical thinking, and compassion—qualities and abilities associated with a strong ego-identity. Although he lost his parents when he was an infant and was humiliated by the Dursleys in his childhood, Harry finds encouragement with the help of his parents' sacrificial love for him and the love and support he receives from his peers and teachers while searching for his identity. Moreover, attending Hogwarts School allows Harry to leave a negative environment and strike out on his own to discover the world and initiate his journey toward developing an identity. Harry manages to use a positive mindset to turn the trauma of his parent's

death into sacrificial love, and this happy memory, in turn, empowers him to face the future. Moreover, by accepting reality and establishing an identity apart from his parents, Harry can overcome trauma and achieve autonomy, finally establishing a strong, secure ego-identity.

References

Adler, A. (2013). *Understanding human nature* . London, UK: Routledge.

Ansbacher, H. L., & Ansbacher, R. R. (Eds.). (1956). *The individual psychology of Alfred Adler: A systematic presentation in selections from his writings*. New York: Harper & Row.

Arnett, J. (2000). Emerging adulthood: A theory of development from the late teens through the twenties. *American Psychologist*, *55*, 469-480.

Babbie, E. (1995). *The practice of social research*. Belmont: Wadsworth Publishing Company.

Basak, R., & Ghosh, A. (2008). Ego-identity status and its relationship with self-esteem in a group of late adolescents. *Journal of the Indian Academy of Applied Psychology, 34*(2), 337–344.

Berzonsky, M. D., Macek, P., & Nurmi, J.-E. (2003). Interrelationships Among Identity Process, Content, and Structure: A Cross-Cultural Investigation. *Journal of Adolescent Research, 18*(2), 112–130. https://doi.org/10.1177/0743558402250344.

Berzonsky, M. D. (2004). Identity style, parental authority, and identity commitment. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 33*(3), 213–220. https://doi.org/10.1023/B:JOYO.0000025320.89778.29.

Byrne, R. (2006). *The secret*. New York: Atria Books.

Chang, L., Lansford, J. E., Schwartz, D., Farver, J. M. (2004). Marital quality, maternal depressed affect, harsh parenting, and child externalising in Hong Kong Chinese families. *International Journal of Behavioral Development*, *28*(4), 311–8.

Côté, J. E., & Levine, C. G. (2002). *Identity formation, agency, and culture: A social psychological synthesis.* Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers.

Erikson, E. H. (1963 & 1993). Childhood and society. New York: W. W. Norton.

Erikson, E. H. (1964). *Insight and responsibility*. New York: Norton.

Erikson, Erik H. (1968 & 1994). *Identity: Youth and crisis*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company.

Erikson, E. H. (1985). *The life cycle completed*. New York: Norton.

Fang, X. (2019). Helping adolescents develop self-realization using art therapy. *Life Research*, *2*(2), 59-63.

Freud, S. (1950). The ego and the ed. London: Hogarth.

Gilleard C, Higgs P. (2016). Connecting life span development with the sociology of the life course: a new direction. *Sociology*. , *50*(2), 301-315.

Hitlin, S. Brown, J. S., & Elder, G. H. (2006). Racial self-categorization in adolescence: Multiracial development and social pathways. *Child Development*, *77*, 1298–1308.

Jung, C. G. (2016). *Psihologie și alchimie—Opere Complete* (Vol. 12, pp. 199-214). Bucuresti, Romania: Editura TREI.

Khan, U. (2016). Psychological study of identity crisis in adolescence in J. K. Rowling's *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*. *Toward Excellence*, *8*(1), 1-17.

Kloves, S. (2003). *Harry Potter and the prisoner of Azkaban*. Burbank. CA: Warner Brothers Pictures.

Lyubansky, M. (2006). Harry Potter and the word that shall not be named. In *The psychology of Harry Potter: An unauthorized examination of the boy who lived*, edited by N. Mulholland, and N. Dallas, pp. 233-248. Texas: BenBella Books.

Mallory, M. E. (1989). Q-sort definition of ego identity status. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, *18*, 399–412. doi:10.1007/BF02139257.

Marcia, J. E. (1980). Identity in Adolescence. In J. Adelson (Ed.), *Handbook of adolescent psychology*. New York: Wiley.

Markstrom, C., Sabino, V., Turner, B., & Berman, R. (1997). The Psychosocial Inventory of Ego Strengths: Development and validation of a new Eriksonian measure. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, *26*, 705–732.

Provenzano, D. M., & Heyman, R. E. (2006). Harry Potter and the resilience to adversity. In The psychology of Harry Potter––An unauthorized examination of the boy who lived, edited by Mulholland, Neil, pp. 105-119. Dallas: Benbella Books Inc.

Rowling, J. K. (1997). Harry Potter and the philosopher's stone. U.K.: Bloomsbury.

Rowling, J. K. (1998). Harry Potter and the chamber of secrets. U.K.: Bloomsbury.

Rowling, J. K. (1999). Harry Potter and the prisoner of Azkaban. U.K.: Bloomsbury.

Rees, G. (2011). *Still Running 3: Early Findings from Our Third National Survey of Young Runaways*, London: The Children's Society.

Rusu, M. (2019). The Process of Self-Realization—From the Humanist Psychology Perspective. *Psychology*, *10*, 1095-1115. https://doi.org/10.4236/psych.2019.108071.

Schaffner, L. (1999). *Teenage runaways: Broken hearts and bad attitudes*. Hawthorne Press, New York, ISBN: 0789005506.

Stangor, C. (2009). The study of stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination within social psychology: A quick history of theory and research. In Handbook of prejudice, stereotyping and discrimination, edited by Todd Nelson, pp. 1-22. New York: Taylor & Francis.

Stoltz, P. G. (1996). *Adversity quotient: Turning obstacles into opportunities*. Canada: John Wiley & Sons Inc.

Strimel, C. B. (2004). The politics of terror: Rereading Harry Potter. *Children's Literature in Education*, *35*(1): 35-52.

Trost, K., Eichas, K., Ferrer-Wreder, L., Galanti, M. R. (2020). The study of family context: examining its role for identity coherence and adolescent adjustment for Swedish adolescents. *The Journal of Early Adolescence*, 40(2), 165-196. doi:10.1177/0272431619833479.

Tyson, L. (2011). Critical theory today: A user friendly guide. New York: Routledge.

Zarate, M. (2009). Racism in the 21st century. In *Handbook of prejudice, stereotyping and discrimination*, edited by Todd Nelson, pp. 387-406. New York: Taylor & Francis.