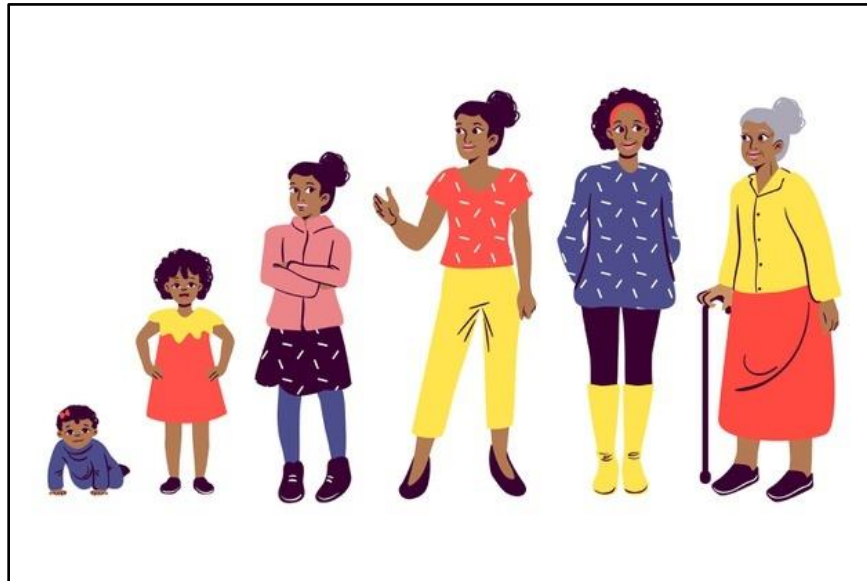


Adulthood

Book Review: Becoming an Adult



The Juanita Center ^{LLC}
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Foreword

Early exposure to alcohol and drug abuse, emotional abuse, and neglect all can contribute to the hindrance of the adulting process—also known as emotional maturity. This delayed emotional development is reflected in behavior that is not considered age appropriate by societal norms. Conversely, emotional maturation is exhibited in behavioral responses that reflect impulse control, resilience, resourcefulness, effective communication, conflict resolution, decision making, interpersonal effectiveness, dealing with loss, discerning one's life purpose, and an array of other skills that may be addressed in this article.

Adulting is about embracing and effectively dealing with Change.

Awareness ≠ Change

External |and/or| Internal Motivation + Awareness + $\frac{Skills}{Confidence}$ = Adulting

I like to embrace the Concept of

CRISIS

Conflict **Opportunity**

For Growth

Foreword: By G. Raymond McCullough

Adulthood: What Exactly is It?

Adulthood is the process of becoming you. A unique person with unique ideas, desires, and dreams; with unique hardships and anxieties that yield a story unlike any other. Adulthood is a state of mind that ignites the drive to do, to sustain, and to forge a person that can traverse the canyon of life.

It's certain that who can be considered an adult has changed over time and will continue to change. By the end of WWII and for the next 50 years, adulthood had been strictly demarcated in five ways: 1) to finish your education, 2) to attain a job, 3) to leave home, 4) to marry, and finally, 5) to have children. Today, the landscape has changed. The markers for adulthood have changed. Firstly, education is continuous. It is now acceptable to return to school 10 years into a career, to return as a senior on the cusp of retirement, or on your own time with modern education options. Second, is the ability to hold multiple jobs simultaneously. The modern job market allows you to make money via mobile applications, to live and work a continent away, or to run a potential global business from your bedroom. New

technological and socio-cultural developments have changed the concept of work and what it means to *have* a job. Thirdly, work, as traditionally defined, has undergone a definite transformation. Today, high earning, self-employed social influencers can make hundreds of thousands, if not millions of dollars per year—all this financial gain for playing into the desires and fantasies of what others wished they could aspire. Leaving home has proved to be less necessary than decades prior. Many adulthood responsibilities can be taken care of from the safety and comfort of home. Whether that be ordering groceries, mobile banking, or building a career. Finally, as for having children? There's less pressure to build a family than decades prior. A popular slang term **DINK** (Dual Income No Kids) has emerged as a signifying idea that you don't need kids to have a happy life.

Adulthood should be as exciting as it is intimidating. The freedom that comes with adulthood may leave you feeling uneasy, but with freedom comes possibilities. To be faced with many possibilities and create your own path

requires courage. To be an adult means to explore the possibilities. Adulting is an experience everyone should look forward to with cautious enthusiasm.

Adulting: Fending for Yourself

“With freedom comes great responsibility” (Eleanor Roosevelt), and responsibility in adulthood means **fending** for yourself. To build your life with hard work and determination, to try again after failure, and to somehow survive and strive in an environment that is as wild as it is structured.

With age comes the realization that friends, family, siblings, and those in your corner may not always be there to help or offer support when things get tough. Fending means taking active steps to get things done without external help. It is the ability to make hard decisions decisively, whether failure or success awaits you. It means being responsible and accountable if things go wrong. It means being objective in determining what you can and cannot accomplish. It means being able to clearly identify what you are capable of and what you aren't, and to seek out the necessary resources

to solve whatever problem you might encounter.

The nine basic rules of fending that every adult, whether seasoned or budding should consider: 1) Care and maintain your body like a car you'll have for the rest of your life. 2) Understand that necessities require money, and in turn, realize that it is necessary to work to pay the bills. 3) That no one can satisfy your wants and needs but you. 4) The importance of hard work. Whether that be for yourself or someone else. 5) Make decisions. The better educated you are about your potential decision, the better the result. 6) Get along with others. Take time to develop your interpersonal skills. 7) Take care of what belongs to you. 8) Respond to queries promptly and show up when you make a commitment. 9) Plan for your future. Make time to think about where you are currently, and where you want to be in the future.

Fending is the defining aspect of adulting. Your personal affairs are yours alone and no one else but you is responsible for how they are handled. Be an Admiral, take charge, be pragmatic and your affairs will seemingly resolve themselves. Fending is

ultimately the scariest, yet potentially most rewarding bet you can ever make on yourself.

Perfection: An Impediment
to Being an Adult

Perfection is all but a fantasy—at least for those here on Planet Earth. Instead of perfection, consider that simply managing life is the greatest and most intense responsibility faced by any adult. The common phrase “*no one is perfect*” may be referred to excessively, but that doesn’t make it any less true. Whether you believe perfection is real or not, for the typical person, the pursuit of perfection is the greatest detriment to consistently getting things done.

The wisest understand that failure is important for growth, as well as an important part of self-education. There is no time for the pursuit of perfection in a life that is over as quickly as it started, for perfection as a goal is as untenable as it is undefinable. The vast array of failed endeavors you’ll encounter is reason

enough to live and to try while confronting fear. The unfortunate may happen regardless of the precautions we undertake. Life will inevitably spiral out of control at one point or another on its own accord and pleasure—whether we like it or not. To pursue a perfect life is a type of oxymoron. As the pursuit of perfection will more often only lead to failure, the most practical course of action is to make mistakes, don’t worry about being perfect, and keep moving forward.

Use periods of failure to reflect. Seek out the opinions of others as to why something did or didn’t work out. In a world obsessed with growth, the greatest growth hormone is feedback. Revel in it whenever you can and be more vulnerable to it. The more open you are, the faster you can grow and the stronger you can become. The stronger you become the better you can handle failure. Don’t focus on being perfect, focus on growing.

Consider these five hacks to develop a growth mindset

Thought	Alternate Thought
I am Perfect	I am trying to be better.
I am Smart	When I work hard at things, it pays off.
I can't	I can take the first step and see what happens.
I suck	I haven't learned how to do this yet.

Learn and Grow More Effectively

Developing effective communication skills
Finding a mentor
Giving everything your best effort
Asking for help/building a network
Understanding that facing challenges is a part of growth
Accepting when you are wrong and apologize
Being responsible and dealing with personal affairs

The lesson is: *get comfortable with being uncomfortable and get comfortable being imperfect, it's the fastest and most efficient way to grow.*



Developing Your Character

The work of any great writer, artist, or musician carries with it a unique ID—a piece of their character which is inseparable from their work. Each person is swayed by the sound, colors, and landscapes this unique ID evokes in a plethora of ways. You may not be as renowned, but your personal character is important, and it continues to build even as you read this article. Character determines our perception of the world.

Our character determines how others perceive and interact with us. Our character determines how we respond to the world and dictates what we get and what we give. Therefore, it is integral that self-improvement be a conscious, long-term commitment. Whether that is developing empathy for the less fortunate or overcoming bias and prejudice, whether implicit or explicit. To aid in developing your character, read over the following guide to character building.

Sweet Ten

developed by G. Raymond McCullough

- 1. Gain clarity on who you are, what's important to you, and what type of person you wish to be
- 2. Develop a life driven by purpose
- 3. Become assertive
- 4. Develop patience
- 5. Engage in self-care
- 6. Know when to detach
- 7. Forgive and let go when you can
- 8. Develop compassion
- 9. Cultivate empathy
- 10. Be mindful

How to Get Unstuck

Adulthood means moving yourself when seemingly you can't, don't want to, or don't feel like it. To be an effective adult is to know how to get unstuck when responsibility comes calling. Don't assume that there is a definitive recipe for getting unstuck because there isn't. Some steps may work better for some than for others. The non-negotiable part of getting unstuck is the need to take steps, steps in

any direction. The process of taking active steps, rather than hovering or refusing to decide, is key. The actual effort needed to get moving may not seem worth it initially, but the more momentum you gain, the less fuel you'll need to sustain this awesome trajectory. To paraphrase Newton's 1st law - any object at rest tends to stay at rest, any object in motion tends to stay in motion.

Here are **Fourteen Steps** that can help move your life forward.

- 1. Take time to be alone with yourself.
- 2. Turn inward. Pay attention to your feelings of discomfort.
- 3. Learn how to regulate your emotions.
- 4. When with others, be present.
- 5. Take action, do something different, and start anywhere.
- 6. Don't bolt at the first sign of a problem.
- 7. Evaluate those options you've been keeping open.
- 8. Form your own options.
- 9. Share with those with whom you feel safe.
- 10. Change your relationship with your parents.
- 11. Be ready to fail and try again.
- 12. Accept your lack of control.
- 13. Have a sense of urgency.
- 14. Begin to cultivate that deep sense of who you are, no matter what.

Developing Your Interpersonal Skills

The world is made up of many people (obviously) of many different backgrounds, of many different creeds and religions, and of many different individual stories. One could claim that the world is not made up of people but is people. Most things you'll ever want to do, or places you'll want to go, or dreams you'll want to pursue may well be dependent on another with whom you share no personal relationship. For the functioning adult, the development of interpersonal relationship skills is important. Frequently throughout your adulthood you will find your fate out of your hands and in the hands of another. The outcome could be determined by how masterfully you navigate this brief but meaningful relationship.

Like any other skill that needs building, you do so by practicing, and through trial and error (failure). Unlike playing an instrument or being a programmer, it's much more difficult to measure interpersonal outcomes. Direct feedback is not something you receive after socializing, and it's mostly up to you to gauge how well things went. Here are some ideas you can use to develop your

interpersonal skills. 1) Put yourself in a social situation that feels new and uncomfortable. Getting out of your social comfort zone is a great way to exercise your interpersonal skills. Like a muscle, social skills need to be exercised to grow. 2) Establish relations with a wide variety of people with different interests and different backgrounds. Developing the ability to build relationships with the unfamiliar can be incredibly useful in moments where relationships can last all but a few minutes, for example, with a potential client, a customer, or a salesman. In the same way these individuals try to garner your trust, you too can use your growing interpersonal skills to sway situations in your favor. Don't forget, people can be your biggest headache, but also your greatest lifeline.

Managing Your Money in Adulthood

Effectively managing money is synonymous with being a responsible adult. In fact, some would say managing your money is **the** most important part of being an adult. Money can define relationships, your future, and of course your security. Admittedly, many people recognize this fact, but feel overwhelmed in figuring out how and in what ways to

go about managing their personal finances. Yes, it can seem daunting, and that's why it is important to start from simplicity and build from there.

Remember these key tenets: "*save and invest all potential spent money;*" never underestimate the power of compound interest; and understand the link between delayed gratification and success.

The four criteria of responsible personal finance are: 1) your ability to make money (legitimately); 2) the way in which you spend money; 3) your purpose in borrowing money; and 4) the intent with which you save money. As an aside, be sure to pay yourself first. This means any extra money goes towards investments, education, then food, and so on and so forth. If you follow this hierarchy consistently any troubles you currently have with money will surely, albeit slowly, transform into a strong financial foundation. There's never a bad time to start cultivating a more positive relationship with money. A relationship that will not only define *your* adulthood with yourself, but your relations with many others as well.

Adhering to the principles above can greatly simplify your relationship with money that, in turn, allows you to be a more responsible adult.

Taking Care of Yourself

We live like we do today because we aren't mindful of tomorrow. If we want to be an adult, we need to be mindful of the things we do and don't do, the things we say, and people we interact with, and how we care for ourselves. Getting caught up in the daily routine is understandable. There are things that can't wait to be done that need doing. But despite all our obligations, it's imperative you do not forgo the adult responsibility of taking care of yourself...taking **good** care of yourself.

The first step in taking care of yourself is owning your situation. You need to understand how you function and why. Then, without judgement, consciously acknowledge and embrace yourself as you are now. Only through acceptance can you embark on a life that you want for yourself. The next step is to seek out those who are living a similar experience, either online or in a physical setting. It's

often advantageous to swap ideas and tips; by doing so we can gain a better understanding of our situations to grow. Be mindful to identify any suffering. Suffering, in this case, is defined as physical fatigue; feeling overwhelmed with worry, thoughts of rumination, self-criticism, analysis paralysis, and unhealthy self-doubt can be the best indicators of when to reach out for help

and allot time for self-care. Maintaining good mental health is averting a situation where you have to claw your way out of a mental or emotional hole. Remember, the opposite of languishing is flourishing. Ask for help. Vulnerability is the gateway to all the good stuff in life. Resilience is our capacity to keep going, despite major setbacks.

G Raymond's Methods to Aid in Enhancing Well-Being

- 1. Remember to breathe.
- 2. Practice sleep hygiene.
- 3. Practice meditation and mindfulness.
- 4. Drink plenty of water.
- 5. Keep your body in motion.
- 6. Eat whole foods.
- 7. Claim and own your independence.
- 8. Understand the relationship between your thoughts, feelings, and behavior.
- 9. Limit social media; engage in life actively.
- 10. Ask for what you need.
- 11. Monitor your health and get regular check-ups if needed.
- 12. Consider coaching/mentor relationships and/or counseling if necessary.
- 13. Hang out with people that support healthy habits.
- 14. Laugh.
- 15. Practice Gratitude.
- 16. Forgive and **Let Go**.

Managing Challenges in Adulthood

One of the most important skills of adulthood is managing a crisis. Before reaching adulthood any crisis you might have faced was most likely managed by a parent, or another person of close authority. In adulthood these pillars of stability will ultimately need to be supplanted by your own knowledge. It's important to build skills to manage emotional, physical, and potentially life changing challenges.

Some are more skilled at this than others. The hot head will find themselves in a predicament because they can't cope. The cool-headed individual is aware of the challenge, they are matter of fact, and are mindful about how to deal with it within a process, even if it hurts in the near term. It's important to know how to cope if you want to be able to deal with a crisis effectively. This is where understanding the grief and loss process is very important. Typically characterized in these 5 stages: Denial, Anger, Bargaining, Depression, Acceptance.

When you encounter a crisis, remember DABDA, and contemplate how it fits in with what you are experiencing.

1. Denial - *the refusal to believe the news is real.*
2. Anger - *you start to feel lit.*
3. Bargaining - *you try to turn this thing around to avoid the thing causing grief.*
4. Depression - *your pleadings have gone unheeded, and you fall into a deep sadness.*
5. Acceptance - *you accept that thing has happened, and you cannot change it.*

DABDA can only help identify the crisis as it unfolds. When you do encounter tragedy characterized by loss, don't panic. It's impossible to go through life without experiencing loss. Be prepared. Be resilient, and you *will* thrive.

Adulthood Superpowers

"With great power comes great responsibility" - The Peter Parker Principle [Spider-Man]. Adulthood can be scary, especially for the newly initiated. Much like when Peter Parker was bitten and bestowed new powers, he was thrust into a world of responsibility whether or not he was ready. Seems like a good analogy for adulthood for many people. But Peter Parker didn't just take on the

responsibility of Spider-Man, he gained some impressive new powers to help navigate this unfamiliar new world of responsibility. You too can smoothly navigate adulthood by taking advantage of three important adulting superpowers afforded to everyone. It only takes a little bit of time, concentration, and dedication to develop. 1) Mindfulness, 2) Kindness, and 3) Gratitude—these are the superpowers you can employ to manage the scary world of responsibility that comes with being an adult.

Mindfulness is the ability to know yourself and to deploy your self-intention. Consider the following a roadmap to mindfulness and a departure away from self-defeating patterns of feeling, thinking, and behaving.

1. Get Quiet.
2. Notice your thoughts.
3. Take an inventory of your body.
4. Jot your observations down.
5. Practice daily.
6. Seek to better understand the relationship between your thoughts, feelings and behavior.
7. Practice impulse control.
8. Be mindful of 1-7 ↑

Kindness is helping people. Kindness is seeing what you can do for other individuals in the moment, no matter if they are relatives or strangers. Kindness and being kind lifts your spirit. Here are some ways you can practice kindness.

1. Ask your partner, friend, or co-worker, “what can I do to make today better for you”?
2. Listen to a senior’s story.
3. Greet new people.
4. When a stranger is lost, help them find their way.
5. When someone can’t find a grocery item, tell them where it is.
6. When someone drops something, run over, pick it up, and hand it back.
7. Pay someone's tab.
8. Know whether to fix it or listen.
9. Be an ally.
10. Talk to a teenager.

Gratitude is an awareness of the good things that happen to you. It is about developing the practice of noticing and expressing what you are grateful for. Expressing gratitude helps ground your spirit and promotes feelings of contentment and humility. When offering

gratitude, note the big and important things:

1. Life, health, friends, partners, good, etc.
2. Our existence
3. The existence of those close to you
4. The specific things loved ones and colleagues do for us
5. The work of a person whose advice or expertise we rely upon
6. The qualities of an opponent
7. The experience of having the right way

8. The material things we possess
9. The small things whenever they happen
10. Nature

Consistently put these superpowers to use and you will feel not only more like an adult, but a much more rounded, calm, grounded, and stable person. You might start out feeling like Peter Parker, but there's a Spider-Man in everyone, you included.

Afterword

After reading this article you might be thinking, “can’t I go back to being a child when life seemed so simple and care-free”, **or** “I’m so glad to be free from that hell called childhood and adolescence”, **or** “I’m glad I read this article because now I have an idea of what steps I can take to be an adult that is empowered by my choices”, **or** none of the aforementioned. In any case, the hope is that this article provides you with, at a minimum, food for thought and/or a more substantial roadmap map for living your best life as an Adult. Hence, Julie Haims’ book *Your Turn* summarizes her work with these 13 Rules for Adulting:

1. Decide that you want to become an adult.
2. Know that you can fend for yourself and commit to doing it.
3. Focus not on being perfect, but on continually learning and growing.
4. Construct good character.
5. Figure out who you are and what you want to do with this life.
6. Look at places where you are stuck and work on them.
7. Build good relationships with other humans.
8. Be responsible with your money.
9. Take good care of your body and mind.
10. Trust that you can and will survive the terrible things that may happen.
11. Make things better in the world, *somehow*.
12. Be mindful, kind, and grateful whenever possible.
13. Keep going.