

STAGES OF A PERSON'S LIFE

As I think about human life in general, I see a pattern in the lives of most people. Each life is divided into roughly six stages.

1. **Childhood** (0-14 = 14 years) – Infancy, kindergarten, and grades 1-8 in elementary school; being directed by parents, pastors, and schoolteachers
2. **Youth** (14-22 = 8 years) – grades 9-12 in high school and grades 13-16 in college; being guided by parents, pastors, and schoolteachers
3. **Early Adulthood** (22-43 = 21 years) – Apprentice years; getting training and experience in managing marriage, family, church, and job

The mid-point (Age 42-44) - The approximate time for a mid-life course-correction. It is usually called a crisis, but, in fact, it is often a blessing.

4. **Late Adulthood** (43-65 = 22 years) – Productive years; putting one's learning and experience to work directing, teaching, and counseling others.
5. **Elderly** (65-80 = 15 years) – Reflective years; taking stock of one's life, counseling others, and coping with the beginning of surely physical and perhaps mental decline. Productivity diminishes.
6. **Oldster** (80-end) – Waning years; coping with severe decline and ultimately death. Productivity diminishes further.

Obviously, there are no fixed borders between these stages; they can occur earlier or later than I have indicated. Nonetheless, they are useful in tracking a person's progress through life and in giving a person some insight into what to expect.

Regarding the demarcation between *Young Adult* and *Mature Adult*, it is often the least obvious. Nonetheless, countless biographies note a change in course in their subjects' lives that occurred near the mid-point of their adulthood - that is, between 42 and 44 years old.