The theory of Erik Erikson’s stages of psychosocial development\(^1\) has caught my attention as I continued to understand on how to help our child with global delay case. In the process of reflection my thoughts shifted from my own stage of development to my other two siblings. I am not a classroom teacher and so my context is my family learning.

Learning does not begin in school. Here’s a video presentation that revealed learning actually begins at gestation period\(^2\). Fetal origin concept states that our health and wellbeing throughout our lives is crucially affected by the 9 months we spend inside the womb. The mother passes biological information of the outside world from the air she breathes, food and drinks consumed, chemicals she is exposed to and even the emotions she feels are shared in some fashion with her baby. What the fetus received in the uterus is critical to its survival. The baby is born into the world not as a clean slate.

Then the diagram above showed the continuity of how infants are exposed to learning at an early stage. “During the first year of life, if the infant receives consistent, predictable and reliable care, they develop a sense of trust which will affect future relationships and they will be able to feel secure even when threatened. Success in this stage will lead to the virtue of hope. Inconsistent, unpredictable and unreliable care given to the infant will lead to mistrust and development of fear, anxiety and lack of confidence in their abilities to influence events of their world. In the early childhood stage, skills are discovered and children began to assert their independence and autonomy. Parents must exercise patience to support when the child fails, encourages them and not criticize. Success in this stage will lead to the virtue of will. If children are criticized, overly controlled and not given the opportunity to assert themselves, they begin to feel inadequate in their ability to survive and may then become dependent upon others, lack self-esteem and feel a sense of shame and doubt. Then the stage which is
the play age, (I am focusing on the first three stages for these were critical foundational moments when my children were mostly at home under parental care). These are particularly lively, rapid developing years in a child’s life. Central to this stage is play as it provides opportunity to explore their interpersonal skills through initiating activities. They make up games and feel secure to lead others and make decisions. If this tendency is squelched by criticism and control, children develop a sense of guilt and feel like a nuisance to others and will therefore remain a follower, lacking in self-initiative. The forcefulness of the child’s aggressive behavior can be misunderstood by the parents. They tend to punish and restrict their children initiatives. It is in this stage also that children knowledge grows and they ask a lot of questions. If it is regarded as trivial, nuisance and embarrassing or other aspects of their behavior as threatening can result to guilt that would make the child slow to interact with others and inhibit their creativity.

Basing from the aforementioned premises, I had two difficult pregnancies- one resulted to a global delay in the growth of our middle child. She has been the constant focus of our attention and thank God we are seeing progress in her development. I have written much about our homeschooling in my previous essays found in my e-portfoliol. Our approach is an example of differentiation catered to her needs. Lately, I have to let go further as I have to spend time on some other things which this course is one of it. She is carrying out our study routines well and noticed more drawings in expressing her learning. Below is a picture of Geuelry at home. We are training our children in the way they should go, so that when they grow, they will not depart from it.

Our first child is said to have a lot of skills, talent and excellent grades that could make her confident but I think we have constraint her self-esteem (value) by our strict discipline, protective love and strong control resulting to her relational dysfunction. I have been once in her position though equipped professionally but my self-worth was shattered for many reasons. My deep encounter with God’s reality has healed my brokenness and enabled me to stand on my feet again. Each day is beautiful with assorted challenges to face and with God’s indwelling presence in our hearts- nothing is impossible! This may sound too good to be true, but it is indeed true. The experience with our youngest (boy) was
completely different—happy pregnancy, less restricted upbringing and supportive encouragement. Evidently, we observed a strong, confident, independent, and sociable person who can withstand whatever uncertainties of life that may come his way. However we do not trust on these physical attributes alone but above all our faith in God through Christ where our identity is now established and rooted. I am sharing here a musical piece entitled “Who Am I”.

In conclusion, there are many factors that shape up one’s identity. It is a great task and big responsibility for the teachers to know their learner individually and then taking into consideration different backgrounds—social, emotional, intellectual, economic orientation, belief system and physical conditions. I wonder if this is doable. I am also interested to know how others are coping up smartly. Perhaps collaborative effort for differentiated programs will ease the burden for teachers. It is exciting to watch the emergence of a multicultural classroom and its role in children’s learning. This will help expose social and cultural misconceptions which several countries in the world are still enslaved and practicing.
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