



## The Family Life Cycle (Stages and Goals)

1. The single young adult between families
  - Achieving emotional and financial independence
  - Accepting parent-offspring separation
  
2. The newly married couple: joining of two families
  - Forming a new marital system
  - Realigning relationships with family and friends
  
3. The family with young children
  - Adapting to parenting roles
  - Making room for children in marital system
  - Managing relationships with family of origin
  
4. The family with adolescents
  - Adjusting to children leaving family
  - Focusing on midlife marital issues
  
5. Launching children and moving on
  - Re-establishing couple relationship
  - Managing relationships with children and grandchildren
  - Dealing with aging and disability of selves and previous generation
  
6. The family in later life
  - Facing physical decline and disability
  - Dealing with multiple losses
  - Facing mortality

Source: Adapted from Betty Carter and Monica McGoldrick, eds. (1980). *The Family Life Cycle: A Framework for Family Therapy* (New York: Gardner Press), p. 15, 17