Faith Development

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Pathologizing normal stages of faith development negatively impacts individuals who choose to identify with Jewish faith communities. In this article, I will discuss the merits of a developmental approach to faith, and will demonstrate that a developmental view of faith is consistent with ancient Jewish tradition. I hope that my approach will allow us to reframe the discussion about some of the observed phenomena in the Jewish community that we tend to pathologize, and to approach these phenomena from a different perspective.

In this article I will:

- Introduce Fowler's structural stages of faith development;
- Demonstrate that Fowler's stages are consistent with traditional Jewish sources;
- Discuss an optimal environment in which faith stage development can occur; and
- Give examples of normal faith stage development that are pathologized and discuss the negative impacts that arise as a result.

Fowler's Structural Stages of Faith Development

A classic treatment of faith development commonly taught in pastoral curricula is James Fowler's book, *Stages of Faith*.[1] Fowler's book is based on his own original research, as well as on Jean Piaget's work in the area of cognitive development,[2] Lawrence Kohlberg's work in the area of stages of moral development,[3] and Erik Erikson's work in the area of stages of psychosocial development, [4] as well as the work of numerous others. Readers wanting more information about Fowler's methodology and conclusions are directed to his excellent book. It is worthwhile reading for those who want to understand their own faith journey in a more profound way.

Fowler posits seven structural stages of faith development (see chart below[5]). Individuals progress through these stages over the course of their entire life (well beyond the end of Piaget's cognitive developmental stages) and they do so in a stepwise (or spiral) fashion—first learning and knowing something with what Fowler terms "the logic of rational certainty," and at some later point assimilating this with the "logic of conviction," thus providing a foundation for the next structural stage.[6]

Faith Stage	Description
Stage 0: Primal or Undifferentiated	Characterized by early learning of the safety of their environment (i.e., warm, safe, and secure vs. hurt, neglected, and abused)
Stage 1: Intuitive-Projective	Religion is learned mainly through experiences, stories, images, and the people with whom one comes in contact
Stage 2: Mythic-Literal	Metaphors and symbolic language are often misunderstood and are taken literally
Stage 3: Synthetic-Conventional	Characterized by conformity to authority and the religious development of a personal identity
Stage 4: Individuative-Reflective	As one is able to reflect on one's own beliefs, there is an openness to a new complexity of faith, but this also increases the awareness of conflicts in one's belief
Stage 5: Conjunctive	The individual resolves conflicts from previous stages by a complex understanding of a multidimensional, interdependent "truth" that cannot be explained by any particular statement
Stage 6: Universalizing	The individual would treat any person with compassion as he or she views people as from a universal community, and should be treated with universal principles of love and justice

To address his concern that some readers might find his model judgmental, thinking that later stages are "better" or more "mature," Fowler states that each stage has its own dignity and integrity, and that people at later stages are not inherently more valuable or more spiritual. Additionally, a significant percentage of individuals that Fowler surveyed remained at Stage 3, or even Stage 2, throughout their adult life.

What is important, then, is not that individuals progress through the stages to achieve a higher degree of spirituality; as Fowler states, spirituality can be achieved at any stage. The important observation is that individuals can progress through stages and be at different stages at different points in their life. The same individual's spirituality and outlook may manifest differently at each stage. Fowler's faith stages are a model[7] for understanding human faith in a composite sense, and may in fact not be universal to all individuals or to faiths other than two major Western monotheistic religions represented in his studies (Judaism and Christianity).

Are Fowler's Stages Consistent with Jewish Tradition?

The Mishna in *Avot* 5:24 presents, as Robert Travers Herford writes in his commentary *Pirke Aboth—The Ethics of the Talmud: Sayings of the Fathers*,[8] "the stages in the life" of an individual who follows the Torah. This Mishna, as well as the following two Mishnayot, are redacted beyond the original end of the last chapter of *Avot*.[9] Evidence that it has been moved from its original placement elsewhere in the tractate[10] points to the possibility that the redactors moved it because of its homiletical and representative value of the entire tractate.[11]

For the purpose of the subsequent discussion, please see the chart below, where I present *Avot* 5:24 and my own translation, organized in pairs and numbered as "stages" corresponding to Fowler's stages. In cases where my translation departs from Herford's more conventional translation, I have cited Herford's translation and supported my choice to depart from it in the endnotes.

Stage	***Avot* 5:24**	**My translation**
0	*Ben hameish shanim l'mikra ben eser l'mishna*	Five years is the age to read, ten to study and form an opinion[12]
1	*Ben shlosh esrei l'mitzvot, ben hameish esrei l'talmud*	Thirteen, to be commanded, fifteen, to reason logically[13]
2	*Ben shmoneh esrei l'huppa, ben esrim lirdof*	Eighteen, for marriage, twenty, to pursue
3	*Ben shloshim l'koah, ben arbaim l'binah*	Thirty, for strength, forty, for understanding
4	*Ben hamishim l'eitzah, ben shishim l'ziknah*	Fifty, to advise, sixty, to be aged
5	*Ben shivim l'seivah, ben shmonim ligvurah*	Seventy, to return, eighty, for mastery of self[14]
6	*Ben tish'im lasuah, ben meiah k'ilu met v'avar u'batel min ha'olam*	Ninety, to meditate,[15] one hundred is as if dead, passed away, and nullified from the world

The parallels between *Avot* 5:24 and Fowler's structural stages demonstrate that our sages embraced a stages of faith model, and that Fowler, Piaget, Kohlberg, Erikson, *et al* support observations that our sages made thousands of years ago about human spiritual development. While there are chronological differences between the *Avot* 5:24 epochs and Fowler's stages, what is important is that the text of *Avot* 5:24 outlines the movement of an individual's spiritual life through a progression of stages, each stage having different hallmarks.

In *Avot* 5:24 there are fourteen "ages," or epochs. Pairing the epochs yields seven sets. The first of each set of epochs is a physical activity, or, if you will, an experience. The second of each set of epochs is a spiritual or emotional benchmark, or watershed. These correspond to Fowler's "logic of rational certainty" and "logic of conviction" at each stage.

The epochs of "Being Commanded" and "Logical Reasoning" (ages 13 and 15) correspond to Fowler's Intuitive-Projective stage (Stage 1) where "religion is learned through experiences." Since young children at Stage 0 are not yet capable of learning about religion through experience, there is no reason for them to be obligated to have those experiences except for *hinukh*—to habituate them to those experiences so that they are not totally foreign. Only at Stage 1 do children become obligated to have

religious experiences, since they are now at a stage where they can learn religion through those experiences.

The epochs of “Physical Strength” and “Understanding” (ages 30 and 40) correspond to Fowler’s Synthetic-Conventional stage (Stage 3.) Many, but not all, people at this stage choose to live their lives by “conventional wisdom.” People at this stage typically are well into their career, perhaps settling down and having a family. People who choose to follow this route might feel that their choice is justified because they have reaped the “obvious” rewards of having done so: a family, a sense of financial security, competence at one’s vocation, and a sense of fitting in to a community. The understanding at this stage might be that working hard at a career is rewarding.

The epochs of “Advising” and “Age” (ages 50 and 60) map to Fowler’s Indivituative-Reflective stage (Stage 4). When one has a conventional understanding of how life works, one is tempted to advise or mentor others and suggest that since a particular set of choices worked for them, the same choices ought to work well for others. Of course, people lives their own lives and are often loath to listen to advice. Even when they do, the results are often quite different.[16] One who is in the habit of advising others, only to be disregarded, or to be disappointed that the same choices made by others lead to a different result for them, may feel “aged”—that they are no longer relevant and no longer have any insight to contribute. Individuals at this stage, which is characterized by a sense of conflict generated by the types of feelings described above, sometimes act in ways that appear non-normative and may even profess non-belief and may appear to others at Stage 3 as lapsed in their faith.[17]

The epochs of “Return” and “Self-mastery” (ages 70 and 80) correspond to Fowler’s Conjunctive stage (Stage 5). One has resolved the conflicts in one’s tradition by developing an understanding that can accommodate multiple different “truths” that overlap in some areas and are disjointed in others. This allows an individual to once again find comfort in his or her tradition and return to it. While an individual at this stage may continue to act in ways that might appear non-normative, they no longer profess non-belief. Their behavior is driven by re-embracing one’s belief rather than an appearance of tentative rejection of it due to conflict.

Is There an Optimal Way to Foster Faith Development?

The parallels between *Avot* 5:24 and Fowler’s stages suggest that our sages viewed an individual’s life as a progression of stages, and that a faith stage model is consistent with traditional Jewish thought. A separate, related question is whether faith stage development is a positive value in Judaism. Ought Jewish communities invest time in thinking about how to foster the natural process of faith development?

Fowler asserts that each stage has its own dignity and integrity, and that later stages are not “better” or “more mature” than earlier stages, only different. Individuals can attain and live fully spiritual lives in each stage, although the means by which that might be done differ from stage to stage. In Abraham Maslow’s work *Motivation and Personality*, he elaborates on how one might achieve “self-transcendence” by presenting his Hierarchy of Human Needs.[18] In secular literature, self-transcendence might be termed “spirituality,”[19] and in a traditional Jewish worldview, one might term this concept *temimut*.[20] One important goal of faith in Jewish tradition is striving for a relationship with God that reflects the value of *temimut*. This striving is experienced in different ways at each stage of faith development.

R. Abraham Kook, in his discussion of the purpose of life in his *Ein Ayah*,[21] asserts a similar idea. Rav Kook suggests that the sole purpose of human life is to fulfill a specific personal mission that the

soul was given by God, at a particular moment in history. When God creates a particular human, it is evidence that the moment to fulfill her or his specific mission has arrived.

According to R. Kook, during each of our lives, we each are bid to intuit God's mission for us and execute that mission. To discern that mission, we must each engage in a personal relationship with God. When we do not engage in a relationship with God, we will not be able to discern that mission and our lives will be irrelevant, as if we had never existed.

Rav Kook's framing strongly reinforces the idea that Jewish communities must support individuals[22] in their personal quest for *temimut* (self-transcendence) in their relationships with God. Jewish communities must create emotional and physical spaces that facilitate encounters with God and support individuals during their quest to discern the reason for their existence in this world and fulfill their God-given mission.

Maslow asserts that self-transcendence is impossible to attain unless lower human needs, such as physical, economic, and emotional safety are assured. Many of our values, such as *tzedakah* (charity,) *gemilut hassadim* (acts of kindness,) and *ahavat hinam* (embracing the other) are aimed at assuring that those needs are met to support individuals in their quest for *temimut.* When we, as communities, do not work to provide physical safety, economic safety, and emotional safety we prevent individuals from achieving *temimut*. When we pathologize that which is a normal manifestation of a faith development stage, we deprive individuals of their much-needed emotional safety and self-esteem, and ultimately prevent them from fulfilling the purpose that their Creator has intended for them.

At the end of Fowler's book *Stages of Faith,* he speculates as to how one advances from one faith stage to another. Is it purely a matter of will, or is something else involved? Fowler discusses interventions of what he calls "extraordinary grace," and what our tradition might call in Aramaic *si'yata dishmaya,* or in Hebrew, *hashgaha peratit* (divine assistance.) Fowler concludes that "the question of whether there will be faith on earth is finally God's business." In order to create and support healthy Jewish communities, we need to conduct ourselves in ways that will not interfere with the process of making space to let God into our lives so the important business of faith development can take place. We need to be careful not to interfere with "God's business."

I want to turn to a few practical examples of contemporary issues in the normatively religious Jewish community and analyze whether they are pathologies or whether they are manifestations of normal faith development stages.

Early Childhood Education

Many individuals who have been educated in Jewish schools reach a point in their lives where they go looking in the Pentateuch for the stories that they were taught as children, only to discover that they are nowhere to be found. For example, the midrashic story about Avraham Avinu smashing the idols in his father Terah's workshop is nowhere to be found in the Book of Genesis.[23] Many adults criticize Jewish schools for presenting this material literally, misleading children, and setting them up to be disillusioned with our tradition when they become teenagers or young adults and discover the "truth" about those stories. They treat the teaching of these midrashic Bible stories literally as a pathology.[24]

Based on a faith stages model, a child at Stage 0 or Stage 1 of their faith development is not yet ready to process this midrashic material in any other way. The midrashic material **must be taught** in a literal, engaging way, as if it in fact actually happened, if one expects children to continue to develop their Jewish faith later on in life. Material must be taught differently, depending on the audience and

probable faith stage, with an eye to presenting material in an age- and developmentally appropriate way.

The future of the Jewish people depends on being able to transmit our traditions to our children in a way that is engaging and speaks to where they are in their faith development. Additionally, the disappointment they might experience as teenagers or young adults when they discover that perhaps Midrash is not meant to be entirely or only literal is to be expected, and is part of the normal course of their faith development.

Educators must understand this dynamic, and be mindful that how they present the material depends on the faith stage of the target audience. Students must be given developmentally appropriate information and tools to enable them to grow in understanding of our tradition, and be prepared for the inevitable conflicts they will experience. In the prevalent educational model, students are largely classed by age rather than individual developmental stage, and there is sound social reasoning for this practice. Nevertheless, educators must be aware that developmental stages track only roughly, not exactly, by age. Thought must be given to evaluating the **faith** developmental stage of each student and possibly creating multiple tracks within each cohort to present material in an appropriate way.

“Nonbelieving” Members of Normatively Religious Communities

Another phenomenon of interest is the rise of self-professed non-believers who affiliate with normatively religious communities for purely social reasons.[25] Some view this phenomenon as a pathology and are concerned about the threat it poses to their communities.[26] In considering Fowler’s Stage 3, one can view these self-professed non-believers as a manifestation of a normal faith development stage rather than a pathology. The “authority” in this particular Stage 3 manifestation is peer pressure.

In other communities, this conformity may manifest in less obvious ways—conformity in dress and theology, for example—but it is there, and it is normal. When our communities treat this form of purely social affiliation with a community, or other forms of conformity, as a pathology, rather than the normal developmental faith stage that it is, any corrective interventions taken interfere with the basic human needs these individuals have, such as belonging or self-esteem, and prevent their ability to attain *temimut* (self-transcendence) at that stage.

The Religious Crisis of Stage 4 as a Pathology

An individual at Stage 4 of faith development may experience deep doubts about the fundamental assumptions taken to be true at previous stages of faith, and act in a way perceived by others as rejection of belief or practice. A cursory look at various websites that discuss how normatively religious individuals and Jewish communities “ought to” behave[27] might lead one to the conclusion that one must observe the commandments a particular way: lack of particular beliefs (such as a literal belief in Maimonides’ Thirteen Principles), the choice of a particular synagogue or school, and even what material one chooses to read, are all grounds for exclusion in some normatively religious Jewish communities. Fowler predicts that at least a significant percentage of people will experience Stage 4 at some point in their faith journey, where they question numerous aspects of their faith that are a source of conflict for them. People experiencing Stage 4 may not look or act as members of a normatively

religious Jewish community, yet Fowler and *Avot* 5:24 assert that such behavior is a normal manifestation of faith development, even in a normatively religious community.

Individuals who are at Stage 4 of their faith development and who belong to normatively religious communities that treat Stage 4 as a pathology rather than a normal stage of faith development, and experience criticism of their questions and misgivings as a result may experience a deep sense of loss and shame when they are told that are not normatively religious and that they ought to be excluded from their faith community because of perceived heresy. Treating Stage 4 behaviors as pathological deprives some such individuals of the basic human needs for belonging and self-esteem that they must have in order to achieve *temimut* (self-transcendence) at Stage 4.

The View of Divorce as a Crisis in Normatively Religious Communities

Many people bemoan the high divorce rate in the Modern Orthodox community,[28] and attribute that problem primarily to factors external to the community.[29] While this might be true, one of the many factors driving divorce is how Jewish communities sometimes construe normal faith development stages as pathological.

When two people choose to marry, there is no automatic guarantee that both will progress through faith stages at the same rate, and at the same time, or that either or both of the spouses will progress through faith stages at all. A significant percentage of those surveyed by Fowler in doing his research remained at Stage 3 or even Stage 2 well into mid-life and old age. It is quite likely that spouses may experience significant periods of time where they are at different faith stages. Spouses who are at different structural faith stages, and buy into some of the beliefs about how normatively religious people ought to behave (discussed in the previous section,) may be unable to empathize with their spouse's experience and feelings. When spouses are unable to validate each other and empathize with each other, a serious handicap is introduced into the relationship.

For example, one spouse might be at Stage 3, while the other is deep in the questioning of their faith that often accompanies Stage 4. A spouse who is at Stage 3 might view the questioning Stage 4 spouse as departing from what they thought was a shared vision of their lives together. A spouse who is at Stage 4 might experience the Stage 3 spouse as being unsympathetic or judgmental. When we do not prepare our communities for the almost certain inevitability of differing rates of progression through the faith stages, some of which may present as retrograde progress, we set them up for misery and troubled or failed marriages.

The causes of divorce in any particular marriage are complex. Explicitly or implicitly communicating that various manifestations of faith stage development are pathological introduces yet another handicap into the mix of factors that may lead a couple to divorce. An explicit message that a progression through different faith stages is normal and consistent with Jewish tradition would support individuals and couples and help them view their spouses more kindly and charitably in the eventuality of a faith stage disparity.

Perhaps this is what is meant by the phrase *ezer k'negdo* in Genesis (2:18 and 2:20). Even when one spouse opposes the other ritually or theologically with every fiber of his or her body due to a faith stage disparity, one must still find a way to support the other spouse's spiritual growth. Couples who are unable to grow spiritually together, with all the pain and struggle that might entail, will surely grow apart.

Conclusion

I am hopeful that we can frame future discussions in a way that we can view some of the phenomena presented above as normal as opposed to pathological. We need to give each member of our community space, at whatever faith stage they are, to experience that stage and to attain the convictions of that stage, free from outside interference, free from judgment, and free from any of the messages or behaviors on the part of others that might threaten their physical, emotional, economic, or spiritual safety. As a community, we can afford to be much more "on message" about normal faith development and conduct ourselves in ways that are conducive to individuals attaining *temimut* at whatever faith stage they are, thereby enabling them to fulfill their mission in this world and bring about the ultimate redemption, please God, speedily and in our days.

[1] Fowler, James W. (1981). *Stages of Faith*, Harper & Row.
[2] Piaget worked on cognitive development throughout his career. A significant and representative work is: Piaget, Jean (1952) *The Origins of Intelligence in Children*, International University Press, translated from the French *La naissance de l'intelligence chez l'enfant* (1936.) Piaget's work focuses primarily on the cognitive and intellectual development of children, and asserts that children develop intellectually in a staged fashion, each stage building on the stage before, and consisting of assimilating information and using it to construct or reconstruct a view of reality.
[3] For example, Kohlberg, Lawrence (1976). "Moral stages and moralization: The cognitive-developmental approach," *Moral Development and Behavior: Theory, Research and Social Issues*, Holt, Rinehart and Winston. Kohlberg's work, based on Piaget's work before him, posits six stages of moral development throughout an individual's lifetime (including adulthood.) Each stage builds on the preceding one, and is more effective at responding to moral dilemmas.
[4] Erikson, Erik (1950) *Childhood and Society*, W. W. Norton and Co. Erikson discusses eight stages of social development occurring primarily in childhood, each of which presents unique challenges and builds upon the previous one. Challenges in each stage that are not mastered manifest as problems later on in adult life.
[5] Descriptions of stages in chart are lightly edited versions of the descriptions found in https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James_W._Fowler.
[6] Later critics of Fowler's work (For example, see Day, James "From structuralism to eternity? Re-imaging the psychology of religious development after the cognitive-developmental paradigm," in the 2001 edition of *The International Journal for the Psychology of Religion*) point out that the process is not as simple and monolithic as Fowler presents, and Fowler himself concedes this possibility (see Fowler, James "Faith development theory and the postmodern challenges," also in the 2001 edition of *The International Journal for the Psychology of Religion*).
[7] I will add that Fowler's model is just that: a model—it cannot represent the diversity of how humans grow intellectually, emotionally, and spiritually. Ultimately, the proof of fitness of any particular model is the result one might get based on framing one's understanding of a faith community on that model.
There is a "downside" to the higher-numbered stages. Generally, as an individual progresses to higher-numbered stages, his or her sense of self-preservation is reduced relative to other moral and societal values. An individual at Stage 5 or Stage 6 may feel compelled to speak out or protest some social or moral injustice in an act of self-sacrifice, putting him- or herself, as well as his or her family, and the individuals who support him or her, at great risk for harm.
[8] Different editions number the Mishnayot differently. I am using the numbering that Robert Travers Herford used in his critical edition: Herford, Robert Travers (1962) *Pirke Aboth—The Ethics of the*

Talmud: Sayings of the Fathers, Schoken. Other editions number this Mishna as 5:21.
[9] According to *Tosefot Yom Tov*, a prayer at the end *Avot* 5:23 is evidence that it was the original close of the tractate. *Avot* 5:24 and the subsequent two Mishnayot were later additions, or possibly were moved to the end of the tractate from elsewhere in the tractate. The sixth chapter of *Avot* is an even later addition so that similar material might be studied on all six Shabbatot between Pesah and Shavuot.
[10] The attribution *hu haya omer*—he said—is almost universally agreed to refer not to *Yehuda ben Taima*, the author of *Avot* 5:23 but to *Shemuel HaKatan*, who is quoted in chapter 4.
[11] While not all tractates of the Mishna end with overtly homiletical material, a number do, such as *Berakhot, Yoma, Bava Batra,* and *Kiddushin*. The redactors of the Mishna clearly had some purpose in mind for relocating the Mishna to the end of the tractate.
[12] Herford has "At five years old one is ready for the scripture, at ten years for the Mishna." The Mishna is primarily a collection of legal opinions, generally devoid of the underlying reasoning.
[13] Herford has "At thirteen for the commandments, at fifteen for Talmud " The Talmud is an analysis of the legal opinions and precedents in the Mishna, and additional case law, in an effort to extend halakha to novel cases.
[14] Herford has "At seventy for grey hairs, at eighty for 'labour and sorrow' (Ps. XC 10.)" I have chosen to use the 70-year epoch "activity" *sheevah*—with a shin—"returning"—rather than the more common *seivah*—with a sin—"satiety." Both the *shin* and the *sin* have the same base form and differ only in the placement of a dot to indicate correct pronunciation. See Judges 12 for an example of where variant pronunciation of the same base form is used as a plot device. There is a textual parallel to my usage in an anthology of Midrashim (Julius Eisenstein) known as *Baraita de-Rabbi Pinehas b. Ya'ir* or *Midrash Tadshe*. In that work, seven phases of life are presented. The phase corresponding to Stage 5 is *sin-bet*, commonly pronounced *sav*, grandfather. This usage is a variant spelling as *sav* is usually spelled with a *sameh.* It is as reasonable to argue that the redactors intended my variant with a *shin* as it is to argue that the redactors intended the variant with a *sameh.* Additionally, I have translated the word *gevurah* as self-mastery, basing myself on *Avot* 4:1, a *gibor* is one who has mastery over both his/her good and evil inclinations.
[15] Herford has "At ninety for decrepitude, at one hundred he is as though he were dead, and had passed away and faded from the world." See Genesis 24:63 for an example of the word *suach* in the sense of "to meditate or pray."
[16] For a trivial example, consider whether following "conventional" wisdom in the popular press from a few decades ago about investing in the stock market makes sense today.
[17] A topic of interest in some normatively religious communities is "off-the-*derekh*," or the phenomenon of teenagers and adults who leave and/or reject their traditional Jewish upbringing and observance.
Off-the-*derekh* shares a number of characteristics of Stage 4, including awareness of conflicts in one's faith, as well as being characterized as appearing to have rejected traditional observance or fundamental tenets of faith. Off-the-*derekh* is a complex phenomenon that is worthy of further study to determine whether it is a manifestation of a particular stage, a pathology, or a manifestation of multiple causes.
While off-the-*derekh* seems similar to Fowler's Stage 4, it is understood to happen earlier—late teens or early 20s—than Stage 4, which according to Fowler occurs in the mid-20s to late 30s. It occurs much earlier than *Avot* 5:24's epochs of advising and aging. The rejection of observance of off-the-*derekh* individuals may be more about an experiment with alternate lifestyles or an attempt to cultivate one's own personal space than a formal stage in faith development.
It is also possible that off-the-*derekh* is the result of an individual not having their basic human needs met at any stage of their faith development. Individuals who experience physical, sexual, or emotional abuse, or who are exposed to dysfunctional home or school environments, are deprived of their basic human needs for various forms of safety, and are unable to attain self-transcendence. They may be tempted to go off-the-derekh, finding their faith experience pointless or unfulfilling. In this instance, off-the-*derekh* is not a manifestation of normal Stage 4 faith development at all. Rather, it is a symptom of failure to develop in faith due to external factors that threaten the individual's safety and

deprive them of having a meaningful spiritual life.
More study is needed to determine whether off-the-*derekh* is a manifestation of a single phenomenon, or a conflation of manifestations of multiple phenomena, some normal and others pathological. What is certain is that it is a complex issue, and defies attempts to address it simplistically without understanding its root causes. A study done of self-identified former Orthodox Jews done in 2016 by Nishma Reasearch (http://nishmaresearch.com/assets/pdf/Report_Modern_Orthodox_Survey_of_Those_Who_Have_Left_Nishma_R) identifies a number of reasons respondents gave for why they left Orthodoxy. Some of these reasons, such as "conflicting learnings, intellectual thought" might be manifestations of a Stage 4 experience, others, such as "sexual or physical abuse, domestic violence" may not be particular to a single stage but a manifestation of the deprivation of basic human needs necessary to attain self-transcendence. Further analysis of a possible correlation between the ages of the respondents given and the responses given is a productive line of inquiry.
During the final process of editing this article, I became aware of a survey and serialized discussion of off-the-*derekh* and other similar social phenomena by Rabbi Zvi Grumet. The first installment of three, and the only one available at the time this article was submitted, is at https://www.jewishlinkbwc.com/index.php/features/9713-survey-this-is-not-your-father-s-orthodoxy.
[18] Maslow, Abraham (1954) *Motivation and Personality*, Harper & Brothers.
[19] See for example Cloninger, C.R.; Svrakic, DM; Przybeck, TR (December 1993). "A psychobiological model of temperament and character," *Archives of General Psychiatry.*
[20] See for example Genesis 17:1 where God bids Abram to walk before God and be *tamim*. The word *temimut*, the state of being *tamim*, has multiple connotations. Here I will translate it as completeness or integrity. *Temimut* is an important Jewish value: The verse Genesis 17:1 is traditionally recited at every circumcision of a Jewish male. Also, see for example, Deuteronomy 18:13 for a similar expression of *temimut* as an important Jewish value.
[21] *Ein Ayah* chapter 2:46 on BT *Berakhot* 17a, discussing the meaning of *Rava*'s concluding prayer after the *amida.*
[22] Perhaps there is no way to support such individuals except not to interfere with the natural process of faith development.
[23] An adult at a later structural stage might discover that this material is redacted in the Midrash, and explain that it might be meant factually, and might be meant metaphorically, and that each is a different form of "truth." As children we are taught these stories as if they are true, which implies to a child that the story is factual.
[24] For example, http://www.jewishpress.com/indepth/opinions/shortchanging-our-children-by-teaching-midrashim-literally/2006/05/31/.
[25] In self-identified Modern Orthodox communities this sort of behavior is termed Social Orthodoxy. See, for example, https://www.commentarymagazine.com/articles/the-rise-of-social-orthodoxy-a-personal-account/. This behavior is sometimes termed Orthoprax. See http://www.rationalistjudaism.com/2011/05/orthoprax-vs-off-derech.html for an article that documents, among other things, a rabbinical decisor, or *posek*—a leader of a community of believers—who appears to be observant yet is not a believer himself!
[26] http://www.tabletmag.com/scroll/168889/the-problem-with-social-orthodoxy.
[27] For example, https://cross-currents.com/. In particular, see https://cross-currents.com/2018/01/23/shul-wont-attend/, https://cross-currents.com/2018/01/06/fake-kashrus/, and https://cross-currents.com/2017/12/29/reading-sefer-bereshis-open-orthodox-lens/. For a less strident, yet similar, treatment of members of normatively religious Jewish communities who do not conform to the author's particular view of how a member of a normatively religious community ought to behave, see http://haemtza.blogspot.com/. There is even a book that has been published, Rosenthal, David (2016), *Why Open Orthodoxy is Not Orthodox*, Yad Yosef Publications, that is a collection of evidence about the heresy of individuals and institutions who do not fit the author's view of how a member of a normatively religious community ought to behave. The author runs a Facebook page where he posts additional evidence on an almost daily basis. The online and published literature on determining who ought to be considered a member in good standing of a normatively religious community, and who

ought to be excluded and treated as a heretic, is vast, and the reader is directed to the above representative resources as a starting point and introduction to that literature.

[28] http://www.hakirah.org/Vol%2010%20Mandel.pdf. The author qualifies the divorce rate in the Orthodox community as “alarming.”

[29] See http://www.cjnews.com/culture/jewish-learning/divorce-rates-stigma-remains where a Jewish Federations of Canada—UIA survey asserts that the incidence of Jewish divorce is increasing due to a number of factors, including “shifting social mores, different expectation of marriage, and revamped divorce laws.” The three factors enumerated are all factors external to the community.