# Stages of Carol Gilligan

Minor Concept Summary: Stages of Carol Gilligan

ED 304: Psych and Human Development

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Carol Gilligan is an American developmental psychologist who has focused her research on moral development in girls and women. Her theory of moral development challenges Kohlberg's moral development theory by introducing a feministic approach by arguing that a woman's moral development is rooted in a different set of values and priorities. She proposed that women tend to prioritize care, empathy, and maintaining relationships when making moral decisions. There are three main stages and two transitional stages in Gilligan's moral developmental theory: Pre-conventional, Conventional, and Post-conventional.

**Pre-conventional**: The pre-conventional stage is focused on a woman's self and needs for survival. A woman in this stage only cares about her interests and will choose her own needs without considering others.

Transition 1: During this first transition from Gilligans pre-conventional stage to her conventional stage, a woman starts realizing that she has a responsibility to others and that her previous actions were kind of selfish.

**Conventional**: In the conventional stage, a woman is focused on her responsibilities towards others rather than herself. This means that she will put the needs of her community and others in her life before her own. A good example of this would be a mother who self-sacrifices for her children.

Transition 2: This transition from the conventional stage to the post-conventional stage is when a woman starts to realize that she needs to and can't just focus on those around her. A woman in this transition realizes that she needs to find a balance between the two.

**Post-conventional**: The post-conventional stage is the last in Carol Gilligan's moral development theory and is the highest stage of moral development. A woman in this stage has learned to master the balance between her needs and others because she sees herself and everyone else as interdependent. A woman now realizes that she has the ultimate choice to care for others because she is now in control of her life. (Carol Gilligan noted that some women might never reach this final stage)

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