

## Field for Dissertations

### **Personal goals, goal conflicts, and well-being of adolescents**

State of research: Personal goals are of high importance to the individual and represent what he/she wants to achieve within the next months or years. Personal goals give direction to own development. Research on personal goals focused mainly on adulthood. Central research topics were the role of personal goals in developmental regulation (e.g., Heckhausen, 1999), the validation of telic theories of well-being (e.g., Brunstein, 1993), and the regulatory consequences of intergoal relations such as interference and facilitation (Riediger & Freund, 2004). As adolescence provides increasing opportunities for self-direction, adolescents need competencies for developing and regulating personal goals. Although the importance of personal goals for the self-development in adolescence is evident, very few studies have addressed personal goals in adolescents (Nurmi, 1991; Stöber, 2003). Analyzing the role of – eventually conflicting – personal goals within self-directed development of adolescents still waits to be addressed in a comprehensive research attempt.

Research questions: How do competencies of developing and regulating personal goals emerge during adolescence? How are personal goals related to developmental tasks? Are telic theories of well-being valid for adolescents? Which goal conflicts do adolescents experience and how are they related to personal achievements and experiences? Do contents of personal goals of privileged and unprivileged adolescents differ? Are challenging personal goals a protective resource for unprivileged adolescents?

Method: interview study on personal goals of adolescents, short-term longitudinal study on adolescents (approx. three to six months in order to observe goal attainment and its consequences in personal goals of the subjects), appropriate data from the longitudinal study of the RS (e.g. ideographical-nomothetical assessment of personal goals; assessment of intergoal relations)