


What is Personality?

Chapter 12
Personality and its assessment

CLASS OBJECTIVES

- ❖ What is personality?
- ❖ How does our personality develop?
 - What would Freud say?
 - Other theories of personality

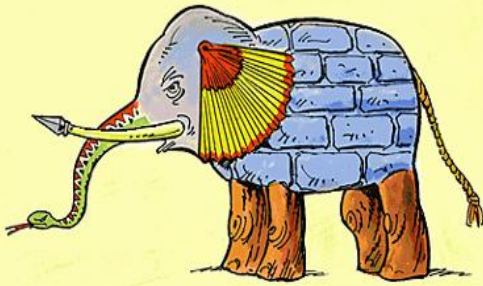


How do you define personality?

How do you define your personality?

- ❖ Fill in the blank... “I am _____”
- ❖ Personality is an individual’s unique collection of consistent behaviors
 - A pattern of relatively permanent traits, dispositions, or characteristics.

Do psychologist’s agree on one explanation for different personalities?



Psychodynamic Theory

- ❖ This is the approach suggests that personality formation is the result of our unconscious processes.
- Three famous psychodynamic theorists:
 - Sigmund Freud
 - Emphasis on people’s sexual motivation
 - Carl Jung
 - Emphasis on cultural unconscious influences
 - Alfred Adler
 - Emphasis on ambition and striving for success

What Freudian language do we hear in our culture?



Freud's Psychoanalytic Theory

■ Human experience takes place on three levels of consciousness

■ Conscious

- (currently aware)

■ Preconscious

- (Easily brought to mind)

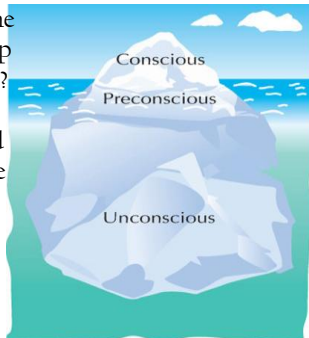
■ Unconscious

- (Beyond normal awareness)

The Three Levels of Consciousness

What part of the iceberg takes up the most space?

Freud believed that part of the mind was the largest



It's all about the conflict...

❖ According to Freud, human personality arises from a conflict between:

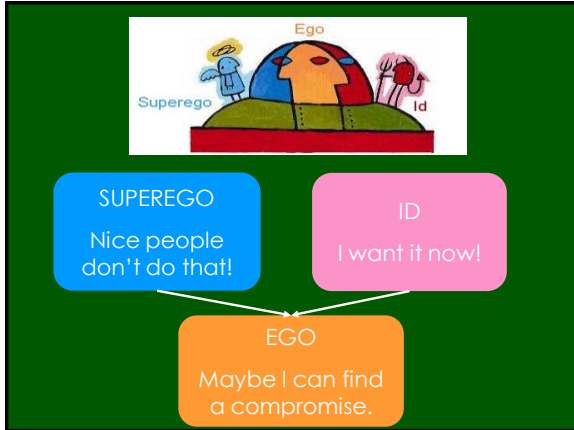
- Our pleasure-seeking biological impulses
- the internalized social restraints to control them.

Freud believed that personality was composed of three mental structures

- Id
- Ego
- Superego

Structures of the Mind (The 3 Conflict Centers)

1. The ID works on the pleasure principle-
 - The ID presses for immediate gratification to relieve tension and discomfort.
 - The ID is demanding, irrational and selfishly seeking pleasure (regardless of reality or morality)
2. The Superego represents all the moral and ideals taught by society
 - The superhero or angel on your shoulder
3. The Ego works on the reality principle
 - The rational decision-making aspect of the personality that keeps the Id in check by delaying gratification.



Freud's Stages of Psychosexual Development

- Freud asserted that the foundation of personality is shaped mostly by early childhood experiences
 - Typically formed by age 5
- Freud believed that sexual energy fuels our daily lives and he proposed that children also have sexual tendencies.
- How we deal with our psychosexual development influences nearly all aspects of our personality

Stage	Conflicts/Experiences	Adult Traits Associated with Problems (especially fixations)
Oral Stage (0-2yrs)	Pleasure derived from stimulation of the mouth-sucking, swallowing, chewing, and biting	Concerns with dependence and independence. Pleasure from eating, drinking, and other oral activities

Can I get stuck in a stage?!

- ❖ Maladaptive behavior in adulthood results from unresolved conflicts from earlier psychosexual stages.
- ❖ At any point, strong conflict can fixate the person's pleasure-seeking energies in that stage.
- ❖ Fixation can occur if:
 - If parents immediately and completely satisfy a child's needs because there is little motivation to move on to the next stage.
 - If parents fail to satisfy the child's needs or do so inconsistently. The child becomes frustrated expends energy trying to have his or her needs gratified

Self Protection

- ❖ A variety of circumstances can cause anxiety and distress at each stage of psychosexual development.
 - Being weaned in the oral stage, toilet training in the anal stage, resolving the *Oedipal Complex or Electra Complex* during the phallic stage
- ❖ To defend itself against the anxiety the ego adopts one or more defense mechanisms to distort reality.

Defense Mechanisms:

Unconscious reactions that protect a person from unpleasant emotions

Defense Mechanism	Definition
Repression	Keeping distressing thoughts and feelings buried in the unconscious

Name that Defense Mechanism!

- ❖ Jennifer, who is very angry with her colleague Susan, ends up befriendng Susan. **Reaction Formation**
- ❖ A student attributed his flunking out of college to the poor quality of teaching there. **Rationalization**
- ❖ Despite overwhelming evidence and a murder conviction, Paul's mother refused to believe that her son could actually take the life of another human being. **Denial**
- ❖ Linda, who has had many extramarital affairs, begins to accuse her husband David of being unfaithful. **Projection**

Evaluating the Psychoanalytic Perspective...

Freud's theory has been sharply criticized

Criticisms of Freud's theories

- ❖ Some objected to his emphasis on sexual urges toward parents and the emphasis that behavior is biologically determined
- ❖ Some stated that his theory does not account for differing cultures

Neo-Freudians

- ❖ Alfred Adler- *Individual psychology*
 - ❖ The most important sources of human motivation is a striving for superiority
- ❖ Carl Jung *Analytical psychology*
 - People are ultimately motivated to attain self-realization or perfection

Carl Jung

- Important aspects of personality development:

- ❖ *Collective unconscious* – a shared storehouse of primitive ideas and images that reside in the unconscious and are inherited from one's ancestors
- ❖ *Archetypes* – the inherited ideas and images that exist within the collective unconscious and are emotionally charged with rich meaning and symbolism

Trait Theories

- ❖ Traits: relatively stable personal characteristics used to describe someone
- ❖ Key Figures:
 - **Early Trait Theorists:** Allport, Cattell, Eysenck
 - **Modern Trait Theorists:** McCrae and Costa--Five-Factor Model (FFM)

Trait Theorists: The Five-Factor Model

- **Openness**- Original and open to new ideas vs. conventional and narrow in interests
- **Conscientiousness**-Responsible and organized vs. irresponsible and careless
- **Extroversion**- Sociable and talkative vs. withdrawn and quiet
- **Agreeableness**-Trusting and good-natured vs. suspicious and ruthless
- **Neuroticism** -Emotionally unstable and moody vs. emotionally stable and easygoing)

Applications to Personality Theory

■ Place a dot on each line to indicate your traits of openness, extroversion, etc.

Then do the same for your ideal romantic partner.

Big Five Traits		Low Scorers	High Scorers
1	Openness	Down-to-earth Uncreative Conventional Uncurious	Imaginative Creative Original Curious
2	Conscientiousness	Negligent Lazy Disorganized Late	Conscientious Hard-working Well-organized Punctual
3	Extroversion	Loner Quiet Passive Reserved	Joiner Talkative Active Affectionate
4	Agreeableness	Suspicious Critical Ruthless Irritable	Trusting Lenient Soft-hearted Good-natured
5	Neuroticism	Calm Even-tempered Comfortable Unemotional	Worried Temperamental Self-conscious Emotional

Next Class

■ What kind of personality do YOU have?

- Personality Assessments
