Personality

A composite of the ways in which individuals relate to others and adapt to the demands placed on them by the environment.
The Psychodynamic Perspective

• Personality is the relatively stable constellation of psychological characteristics and behavioral patterns that account for our individuality and consistency over time.
• Psychoanalytic theory is the belief that a dynamic struggle takes place within the human psyche (mind) between unconscious forces that shapes our personality and behavior.
Sigmund Freud – Psychoanalytic Theory

- Freud believed we are endowed with both a ____________ instinct as well as a ____________ instinct that has as its purpose the preservation of the species.

- Freud’s theory of personality can be represented in terms of four major concepts: 1) Levels of consciousness, 2) Structure of personality, 3) Defense mechanisms, and 4) Stages of psychosexual development.
Levels of Consciousness

- Freud represented the human mind as consisting of three levels of consciousness: the conscious, the preconscious, and the unconscious.
- The *conscious mind* represents our present awareness - what we are thinking or feeling at any given moment in time. The *preconscious mind* holds information we have stored from past experience or learning. The *unconscious mind* contains our primitive sexual and aggressive impulses as well as memories of troubling emotional experiences.
The Structure of Personality

• Freud argued that personality consists of three mental entities called the id, ego, and superego. The Id operates only in the unconscious and it is the only psychic structure present at ______________. It contains our basic animal drives or instinctual impulses, including hunger, thirst, elimination, sex, and aggression. It also operates on the Pleasure principle which seeks instant gratification without regard to social rules or customs.
As the id soon finds it must cope with frustration and learns to delay gratification. At this point, a second part of the mind forms during the first year of life that is responsible for organizing ways to handle delays of gratification, called the ego. The ego seeks to satisfy instinctual demands in ways that are practical and socially acceptable. Operating in this mode is called the reality principle – operating in a practical and acceptable way that satisfies basic needs. The ego seek ways to satisfy the demands of the id without incurring social disapproval.
• The superego is our internal moral guardian or conscience. By 3 to 5 years of age, it splits off from the ego and develops by internalizing the moral teachings of parents or other significant figures. Our behavior is then a product of the dynamic struggles among the id, the ego, and the superego. Part of the ego rises to the level of consciousness, but much of the ego operates below the surface of consciousness, where it employs strategies called defense mechanisms to prevent awareness of unacceptable sexual or aggressive impulses or wishes.
Defense Mechanisms

According to Freud, the ego uses defense mechanisms to prevent the anxiety that would result if troubling desires and memories residing in the unconscious were fully realized in conscious awareness. The major defense mechanism - ________________ - involves the ejection of threatening desires from awareness into the depths of the unconscious. In Freud’s view, slips of the tongue may reveal underlying motives and wishes kept hidden by repression.
Stages of Personality Development

- According to Freud, personality develops through five psychosexual stages of development.
- Psychological conflicts which often arise from receiving too much or too little gratification, can lead to the development of fixations – personality traits characteristic of a particular stage of psychosexual developments, resulting from either excessive or inadequate gratification at that stage.
• Oral Stage – This stage spans the period of birth through about 12 to 18 months of age. This is the first stage of psychosexual development, during which the infant seeks sexual gratification through oral stimulation. Too much gratification at this stage may lead to oral fixations in adulthood such as smoking, or overeating. Too little gratification, may lead to a clinging dependence, a pessimistic outlook etc..

• Anal Stage - This stage occurs by about the age of 18 months thru about age 3. During this stage, sexual gratification is centered on processes of elimination (retention and release of bowel contents). Anal fixations reflect either too harsh or too lenient toilet training.
• Training that is too harsh may lead to traits associated with “anal-retentive personality” such as perfectionism and extreme needs for self-control, orderliness, and neatness. Extremely lax training may lead to “anal-expulsive personality” such as messiness, lack of self-discipline, and carelessness.

• Phallic Stage – This stage spans the ages of 3 to 6, where the erogenous zone shifts to the phallic region—the penis in males and the clitoris in females. The core conflict at this stage is the Oedipus complex, which involves the development of incestuous desires for the parent of the opposite sex that lead to rivalry with the parent of the same sex. The female version is termed the Electra complex.
• Identification with the parent of the same sex leads to the development of gender-based behaviors.
• Castration anxiety is the fear that their father will retaliate against their sexual desires for their mother by removing the organ that has become the primary erogenous zone.
• Penis envy, according to Freud, leads girls to feel inferior or inadequate in relation to boys and to unconsciously blame their mother for bringing them into the world so ill-equipped.
• Latency Stage spans the years between about 6 to 12 years. It is named because of the belief that sexual impulses remain latent (dormant) yielding to a time when the child’s psychological energies are focused on other pursuits such as school and play activities, and acquiring skills.

• Genital Stage is the final stage of psychosexual development from about puberty to adulthood, where there is the forsaken incestuous desires for the parent of the opposite sex that give rise to yearnings for more appropriate sexual partners of the opposite gender.
Other Psychodynamic Approaches

- **Carl Jung: Analytical Psychology** – Jung shared with Freud the beliefs that unconscious conflicts influence human behavior and that defense mechanisms distort or disguise people’s underlying motives. However, he placed greater emphasis on the present than on infantile or childhood experience, and he emphasized conscious processes, such as self-awareness and pursuit of self-directed goals, more than unconscious processes. Jung also believed that people possess both a personal unconscious, which consists of repressed memories and impulses, and a collective unconscious, or repository of accumulated ideas and images in the unconscious mind.
• The collective unconscious contains primitive images called *archetypes* that reflect the ancestral or universal experiences of humans.

• **Alfred Adler: Individual Psychology** – Called his theory individual psychology because of its emphasis on the unique potential of each individual. He believed that conscious experience plays a greater role in our personalities than Freud had believed. The *creative self* is what he called the part of the personality that is aware of itself and organizes goal-seeking behavior. Feelings of inferiority – inferiority complex, lead to a desire to compensate, called the *drive for superiority* or will-to-power.
Karen Horney: Horney accepted Freud’s belief that unconscious conflicts shape personality, but she focused less on sexual and aggressive drives and more on the roles of social and cultural forces. Horney also felt that when parents are harsh or uncaring, children may develop a deep-seated form of anxiety she called basic anxiety, which is associated with the feeling of being isolated and helpless in a potentially hostile world. Also, she believed that children could develop a deep form of resentment toward their parents, which she labeled basic hostility. Horney raised the possibility that men may experience “womb envy” over the obvious physiological superiority of women with respect to their biological capacity for creating and bringing life into the world.
The Trait Perspective

• Trait theorists look within the personality to explain behavior. They believe that personality consists of a distinctive set of relatively stable or enduring characteristics or dispositions called traits.

• **Gordon Allport**: A Hierarchy of Traits – Dr. Allport argued that personality traits are physical entities embedded in the brain that come to influence our behavior. He believed that traits are inherited but are also influenced by experience. At the highest level of his hierarchy of traits are cardinal traits, which are pervasive characteristics that influence a person’s behavior in most situations.
• More common but less wide-reaching traits are *central traits*, the basic building blocks of personality that influence behavior in many situations. Examples of central traits are characteristics such as competitiveness, generosity, arrogance etc. At a more superficial level are *secondary traits*, such as preferences for particular styles of clothing or types of music.
• **Raymond Cattell**: Mapping the Personality

He believed that there are two basic levels of traits: Surface traits and Source traits.

Surface traits are personality traits that lie on the surface of one's personality that can be gleaned from the observations of behavior.

Source traits are those traits at a deep level of personality that are not apparent in observed behavior but must be inferred based on underlying relationships among surface traits.
Hans Eysenck: A Simpler Model – Eysenck model describes personality using three major traits: 1) Introversion-Extraversion; 2) Neuroticism; and 3) Psychoticism. Introversion-Extraversion describes people that are introverted as being solitary, reserved, and unsociable, whereas those who are extraverted are outgoing, friendly, and people-oriented. Neuroticism are people who tend to be tense, anxious, restless, and moody. Persons who are low on neuroticism tend to be relaxed, calm, stable, and even-tempered. Psychoticism—persons who score high on this scale are perceived as cold, hostile, and insensitive. Those who score low on this scale, are described as warm, sensitive, and concerned about others.
The Five-Factor Model of Personality

• The Five-Factor Model is the most widely adopted trait model of personality in use today. The Five traits are: 1) Neuroticism- Prone to anxiety vs. being relaxed; 2) Extraversion- Outgoing, friendly vs. solitary, shy; 3) Openness- Imaginative, curious vs. conforming, practical; 4) Agreeableness- Sensitive, concerned with other’s feelings and needs, vs. cold, suspicious, hostile; and 5) Conscientiousness- Reliable, self-disciplined, vs. disorganized, unreliable, and careless.
The Genetic Basis of Traits

• Research suggests that genetics accounts for between 40 and 60 percent of the variability with the remaining variability accounted for by environmental factors such as early learning experiences.

• THE SOCIAL-COGNITIVE PERSPECTIVE – Proponents of this approach argue that to explain behavior we need to take into account cognitive and social aspects of behavior, not just the rewards and punishments of their environment. They believe that humans act upon their environment in pursuing their goals, not just reach to it.
• **Julian Rotter**: The Locus of Control – believed that explaining and predicing one’s behavior involved knowing an individual’s reinforcement history as well as the person’s expectancies and subjective values. *Expectancies* are your personal predictions of the outcomes of your behavior, e.g., students who hold a positive expectancy about schoolwork believe that studying will improve their chances of getting a good grade. *Subjective value* is the worth you place on desired outcomes.
• Locus of control in Rotter’s theory, refers to one’s general expectancies about whether one’s efforts can bring about desired outcomes or reinforcements.

• Albert Bandura: Reciprocal Determinism- holds that cognitions, behaviors, and environmental factors influence each other. Bandura also distinguished between two types of expectancies: outcome expectations and efficacy expectations. Outcome expectations are predictions of the outcomes of behavior. Efficacy expectations are predictions about your personal ability to perform the behaviors you set out to accomplish.
• **Walter Mischel**: Situation VS. Person Variables- Mischel argued that behavior is influenced by both situation variables (environmental factors) and person variables or internal personal factors.

• **THE HUMANISTIC PERSPECTIVE**- argued that conscious choice and personal freedom are central features of what it means to be a human being.
• Carl Rogers believed that each of us possesses an inner drive that leads us to strive toward self-actualization—toward realizing our own unique potentials. He also believed that the self is the center of the human experience. Therefore, he named his theory of personality as self-theory. Self is the executive part of your personality that organizes how you relate to the world.

• Unconditional positive regard refers to valuing another person as having intrinsic worth, regardless of the person’s behavior at the particular time.

• Conditional positive regards is when you value a person only when that person’s behavior meets certain expectations or standards.
• Self-ideals- is the idealized sense of how or what we should be.
• Abraham Maslow- believed in an innate human drive toward self-actualization- becoming all that we are capable of being. Self-actualization is a key element of personality and human motivation.
• Personality tests are structured tests that use formal methods of assessing personality; e.g., MMPI (Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory).
Projective tests are tests in which ambiguous test materials are used to elicit responses that are believed to reveal a person’s unconscious needs, drives, and motives; e.g., Rorschach test, TAT.

BUILDING SELF-ESTEEM: Acquire competencies- become good at something; set realistic, achievable goals etc.

THE END
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