

UNIT SIX

PERSONALITY

Learning Outcomes

•After completion of this chapter, you will be able to:

- Define personality
- Discuss the natures of psychoanalytic theory
- Identify the structures of personality
- Explain psychological defense mechanisms
- Explain the essence of the trait theory of personality
- Discuss the five factor model of personality
- Explain the essence of humanistic theory of personality

Defining Some Terms

- **Personality:** A person's unique and relatively stable behavior patterns; the consistency of who you are, have been, and will become
- **Character:** Personal characteristics that have been judged or evaluated
- **Temperament:** Hereditary aspects of personality, including sensitivity, moods, irritability, and adaptability
- **Personality Trait:** Stable qualities that a person shows in most situations
- **Personality Type:** People who have several traits in common

6.1. Meaning of Personality

- Personality has been defined in many different ways, but psychologists generally view personality as :-the unique pattern of enduring

thoughts,

feelings, and

actions that characterize

a person.

What is personality?

Personality- can be defined as the distinctive and characteristic patterns of thought, emotion, and behavior that make up an individual's personal style of interacting with the physical and social environment.

Cont.....

- **Personality** is the pattern of enduring characteristics that produce consistency and individuality in a given person.
- **Personality** encompasses the behaviors that make each of us unique and that differentiate us from others.
- It is also personality that leads us to act consistently in different situations and over extended periods of time.

6.2. Theories of Personality

- ❖ **Psychoanalytic Theory**
- ❖ **Trait Theory**
- ❖ **Humanistic Theory**

6.2.1. The psychoanalytic theory of personality

- Sigmund Freud, an Austrian physician, developed **psychoanalytic theory** in the early 1900s.
- According to Freud's theory, conscious experience is only a small part of our psychological makeup and experience.
- He argued that much of our behavior is motivated by the **unconscious**, a part of the personality that contains the memories, knowledge, beliefs, feelings, urges, drives, and instincts of which the individual is not aware.

Conti....

- According to Freud, personality is formed within ourselves, arising from basic **inborn needs, drives, and characteristics.**
 - Psychodynamic Theories: Focus on the inner workings of personality, especially internal conflicts and struggles
- He argued that people are in constant conflict between their biological urges (drives) and the need to tame them.

STRUCTURING PERSONALITY

- In Freud's view, personality has three parts which serve a different function and develop at different times:

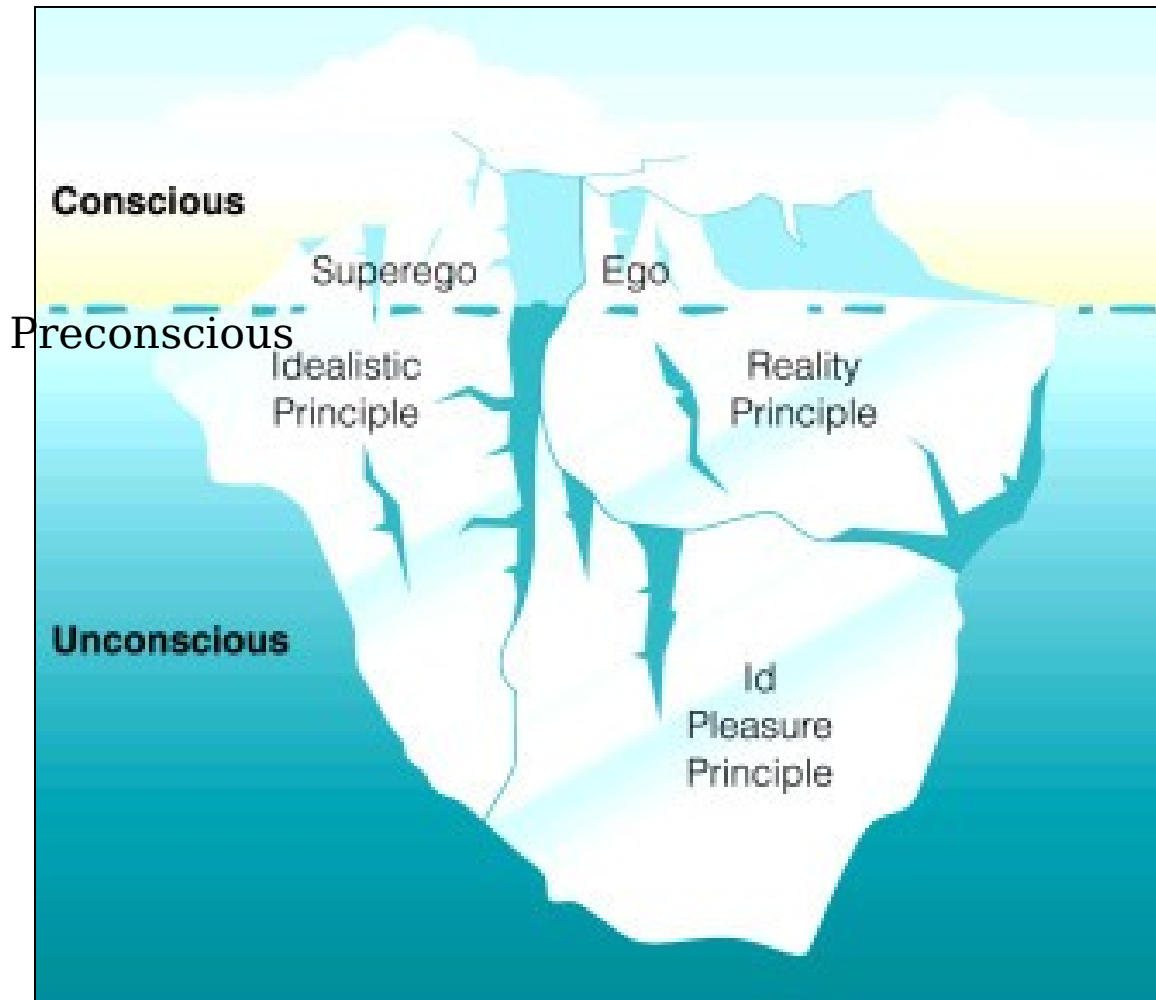
I. Id

II. Ego

III. Superego

- ❖ According to Freud, the way these three parts of personality interact with one another determines the personality of an individual.

Psychoanalytic Personality Structure



- Freud's "iceberg" idea of the mind's structure
- Abstract concepts for understanding the mind's conflicts between pleasure-seeking and social restraint

Freud's Psychoanalysis: The ID

Operates according to the *pleasure principle*

- Present from birth
- the inborn part of personality whose purpose is to immediately reduce tensions relating to
 - Primitive impulses.
 - basic needs and wants e.g. hunger, sex, aggression
 - 2 competing instincts:
 - Life (sexual) - libido
 - Death (aggressive)
- Unconscious

Freud's Psychoanalysis: The Ego

Operates according to the *reality principle*

- Arises in first 3 years of life
- Mediates between ID and Superego
- Rational part of mind
 - you can't always get what you want
- Floats between all 3 levels of consciousness

Freud's Psychoanalysis: The Superego

Moral Conscience

- Develops around age 5
 - *When the child learns the rules, customs, and expectations of society*
- Stores and enforces rules
 - Inner voice that tells you not to do something or that what you did was wrong
- Two parts of superego:
 - **Ego Ideal** = a kind of measuring device. It is the sum of all the correct and acceptable b/hr the child learned from parents and others in the society.
 - **Conscience** = is part of personality that makes people pride when they do the right thing and guilt, when they do the wrong thing.

Con''t...

- For Freud, our personality is the outcome of the continual battle for dominance among the id, the ego, and the superego.
- This constant conflict between them is managed by psychological defense mechanisms.
- Defense mechanisms are unconscious tactics that either prevent threatening material from surfacing or disguise it when it does.

Freud's Psychoanalysis: Defense mechanisms

➤ Defense mechanism reduce/redirect anxiety by distorting reality

1. Denial:- Most primitive; refusing to believe, denying reality.

- claiming and believing that something which is actually true is false.

2. Repression : - pushing unacceptable and anxiety-producing thoughts into the unconscious; involves intentional forgetting but **not** consciously done; repressed material can be memories or unacceptable impulses.

3. Projection :- attributing one's own unacceptable feelings or beliefs to others;

Example :- An employee at a store, tempted to steal some merchandise, suspects that other employees are stealing.

Conti....

4. Rationalization : -Giving socially acceptable reasons for one's unacceptable b/hr.

5. Reaction Formation: a defense mechanism that involves a tendency to act in a manner opposite to one's true feelings.

- Impulses are repressed and the opposite behavior is exaggerated.

- **6. Regression**: involves reverting to immature behaviors that have relieved anxiety in the past.

- acting in ways characteristic of earlier life stages of personality

Example: a girl/a boy who has just entered school may go back to sucking her/his thumb or wetting the bed

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7. Displacement: -expressing feelings toward a person who is less threatening than the person who is the true target of those feelings.

Example:- A husband, angry at the way his boss treated him, screams at his children.

8. Sublimation: substitute socially acceptable behavior for unacceptable impulses.

Playing video games instead of getting in a fight.
An aggressive person who loves playing football.

6.2.2. The trait theory of personality

- Trait Theory – see personality as a combination of stable internal characteristics that people display consistently over time and across situations.
- They seek to measure the relative strength of many personality characteristics that they believe are present in everyone.

The trait approach to personality makes three main assumptions:

1. Personality traits are relatively stable, and therefore predictable over time.
2. Personality traits are relatively stable across situations.
3. People differ in how much of a particular personality trait they possess; no two people are

the “Big Five” Personality theory

- Openness to Experience
- Conscientious
- Extroversion
- Agreeableness
- Neuroticism

The five-factor model / the Big Five theory (OCEAN)

1. Openness to experience:- refers to a person's willingness to try new things and be open to new experiences

- Open = Curiosity, imaginative, creative

2. Conscientiousness :- refers the tendency to control impulse and act in socially acceptable ways

- Conscientious = Responsible, persevering, self-disciplined
- Impulsive = Quick to give up, fickle, careless

3. Extroversion:- divided into two personality types

- Extravert = Outgoing - talkative, sociable
- Introvert = Shy - silent, reclusive, cautious

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4. Agreeableness:- refers to the basic emotional style of a person, who may be easygoing, friendly and pleasant (at the high end of the scale) or grumpy, crabby and hard to get along with (at the low end).

5. Neuroticism:- refers to emotional instability or stability.

- Neurotic = anxious, impulsive, worrier, emotionally negative
- Emotionally stable = calm

6.2.3. Humanistic theory of personality

(Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow)

- Emphasize people's inherent goodness and their tendency to move toward higher levels of functioning instead of seeing people as controlled by the unconscious, unseen forces.

Humanistic Theories: Focus on private, subjective experience and personal growth

- Humans are free and basically good.
- Humans are inner-directed.
- Everyone has the potential for healthy growth.
- Health growth involves Self actualization:
- Given the right environmental conditions, we can reach our full potential

Carl Rogers and Self-Concept

- Rogers believed that human beings are always striving towards achieving their goals.
- Difficult life experience may temporarily block our ability to reach our potentials, with the right support, we all have the ability to achieve our goals.
- This striving for fulfillment is called **self-actualizing tendency**.
- An important tool in human self-actualization is the development of an image of oneself or the **self-concept**.
- **Self-concept**: the idea or perception of ourselves or the mental image one has of oneself.

components of the self-concept

1. The real self (one's actual perception of characteristics, traits, and abilities that form the basis of the striving for self-actualization) and

2. The ideal self (the perception of what one should be or would like to be). It comes from the significant others in one life. e.g. From parents.

➤ Rogers believed that when the real self and the ideal self are very close or similar to each other, people feel competent and capable, but when there is a mismatch between the real and ideal

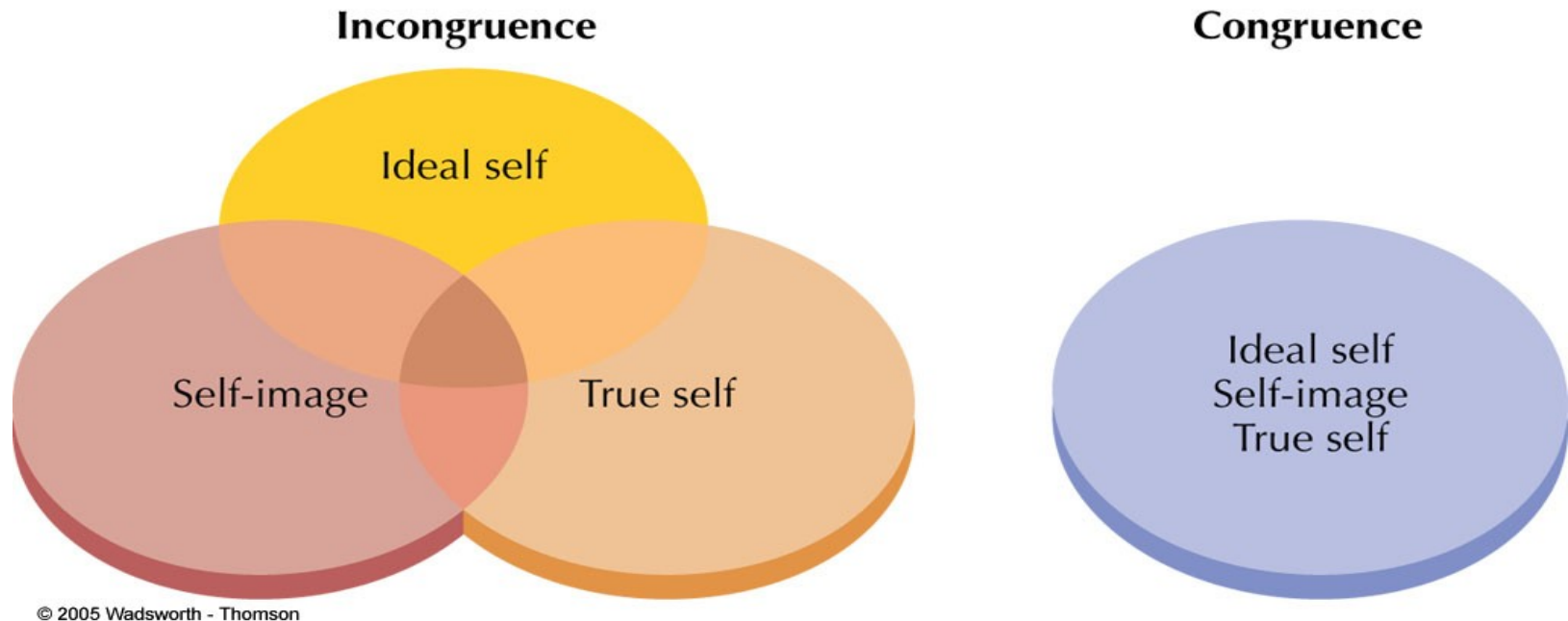
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- **Conditional and Unconditional Positive Regard**-Rogers defined **positive regard** as warmth, affection, love, and respect that comes from the significant others (parents, admired adults, friends, and teachers) in people's experience.
- Positive is vital to people's ability to cope with stress and to strive to achieve self-actualization.
- Rogers believed that **unconditioned positive regard**, or love, affection and respect with no strings attached, is necessary for people to be able to explore fully all that they can achieve and become.
- **Conditional positive regard**, which is love, affection, respect, and warmth that depend or seem to depend on doing what those people want.

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- **Fully Functioning:** in the process of self actualization activity a person exploring potentials and abilities and experiencing a match between real and ideal selves.
- To become fully functioning, a person needs unconditional positive regard.
- Self actualization and to be fully functioning are related concepts.
- Self-actualization is a goal that people are always striving to reach, according to Maslow (1987).
- In Rogers's view, only a person who is fully functioning is capable of reaching the goal of self-actualization.
- To be fully functioning is a necessary step in the process of self-actualization.

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Incongruence occurs when there is a mismatch between any of these three entities: the **ideal self** (the person you would like to be), **self-image** (the person you think you are), and **the true self** (the person you actually are). Self-esteem suffers when there is a large difference between one's ideal self and self-image. Anxiety and defensiveness are common when the self-image does not match the true self.