UNIIT 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.

Personality - A relatively stable set of characteristics that influences an individual's behavior

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

Freud's Psychoanalytic Theory of Personality: Mapping the Unconscious Mind

- 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.

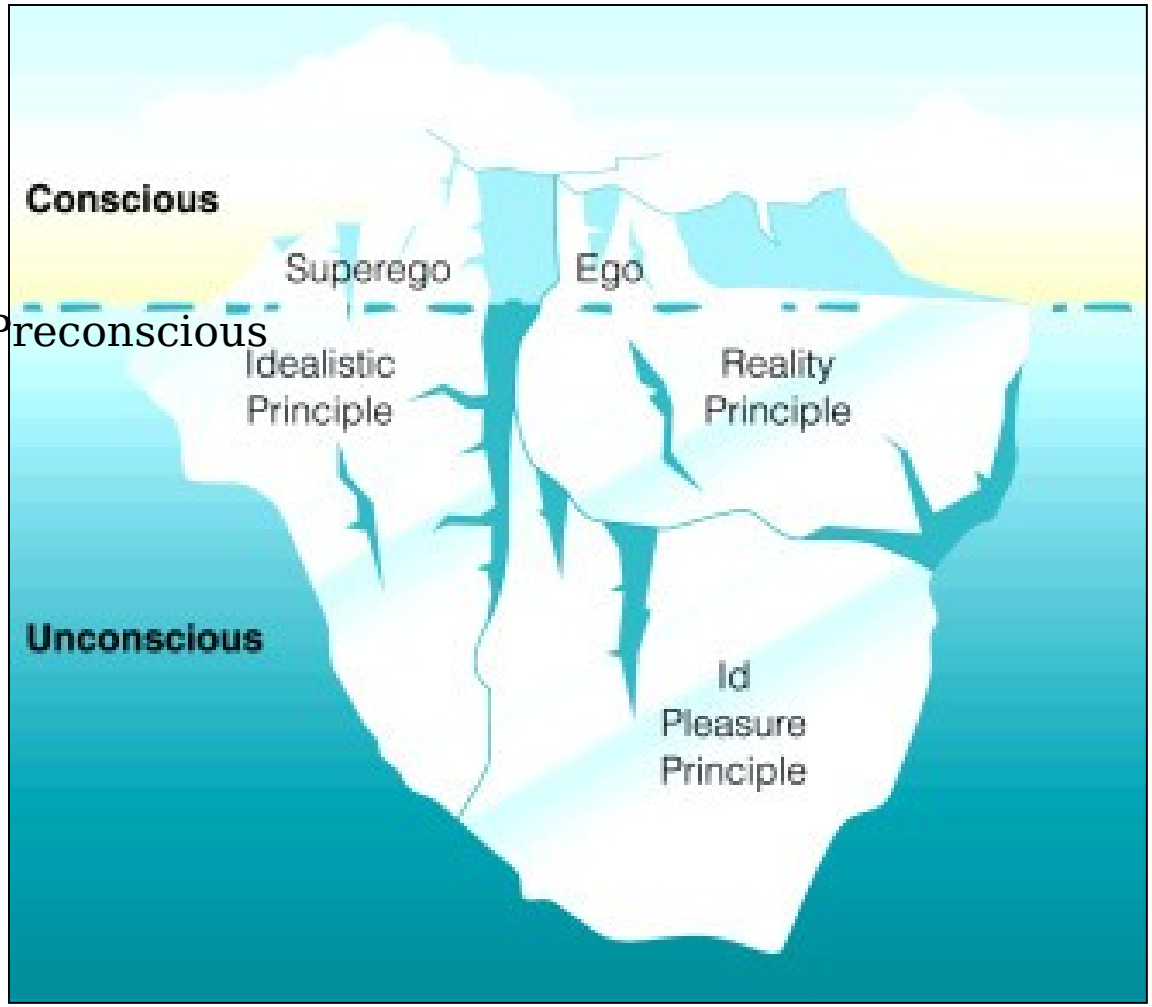
STRUCTURING PERSONALITY

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

I. **Id** - Unconscious
II. **Ego** - unconscious, preconscious, conscious
III. **Superego** - unconscious, preconscious, conscious

- ❖ 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 unorganized, 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
  - *At end of Phallic Stage*
- Stores and enforces rules
  - Inner voice that tells you not to do something or that what you did was wrong
- 2 subsystems:
  - Ego Ideal = parents approve/value
  - Conscience = parents disapproval

Freud's Psychoanalysis: Defense mechanisms

- Defense mechanism reduce/redirect anxiety by distorting reality

1. **Denial:-** Most primitive; refusing to believe, denying reality; usually occurs with death and illness.

- 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 : -Justifying personal actions by giving “rational” but false reasons for them

5. Reaction Formation: Impulses are repressed and the opposite behavior is exaggerated.

- replacing an anxiety-producing feeling with its exact opposite, typically going overboard; repressed thoughts appear as mirror opposites.

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

Cont....

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.

Trait Theory - understand individuals by breaking down behavior patterns into observable traits

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 exactly alike on all traits. The result is an endless variety of unique personalities.

the “Big Five” Personality Factors

- 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
- Resistant = Conforming, predictable

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

- Extroversion = Outgoing – talkative, sociable, adventurous
- Introversion = Shy – silent, reclusive, cautious

Cont....

4. Agreeableness:-refers to the basic emotional style of a person.

- Agreeable = Good-natured, cooperative, secure
- Antagonistic = Irritable, abrasive, suspicious, jealous

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

- Neurotic = anxious, impulsive, worrier, emotionally negative
- Emotionally stable = only has those feelings when the circumstances dictate

6.2.3. Humanistic theory of personality

(Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow)

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

Cont....

Congruence :- this is displayed by fully functioning people and is a harmony between the image they project to others and their true feelings or wishes.

- To become fully functioning we need:
- Unconditional positive regard
- A situation in which the acceptance and love one receives from significant others is unqualified, no strings attached

Cont.....

- **Fully Functioning Person**: Lives in harmony with his/her deepest feelings and impulses
- **Self**: Flexible and changing perception of one's identity
- **Self-Image**: Total subjective perception of your body and personality
- **Incongruence**: Exists when there is a discrepancy between one's experiences and self-image
- **Positive Self-Regard**: Thinking of oneself as a good, lovable, worthwhile person
- **Unconditional Positive Regard**: Unshakable love and approval

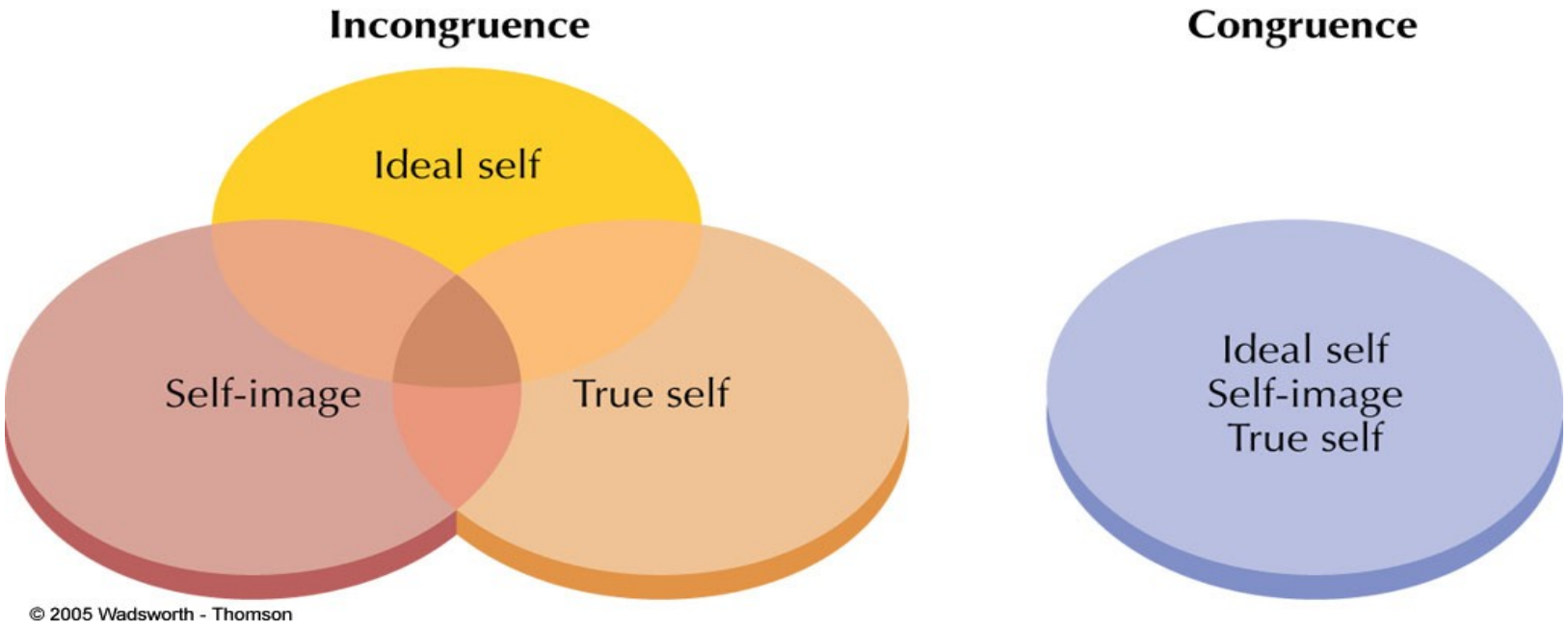
components of the self-concept

Self-concept: our image or perception of ourselves.

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). e.g. From parents.

Cont.....



Incongruence occurs when there is a mismatch between any of these three entities: the **ideal self** (the person you would like to be),
s**elf-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.