PERSONALITY TRAITS, SITUATION, AND BEHAVIOR: THE BIG FIVE PERSONALITIES

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Class Hours: Mon 01:30-04:15 PM

OUTLINE

- Levels of Individuality
- Eysenck's PEN Model
- Lexical Hypothesis
- Factor Analysis
- The Big Five

LEVELS OF INDIVIDUALITY (MCADAMS & PALS, 2006)

- Levels of Personality

  - Level 1: Dispositional Traits

    - "Lisa is high in E"

  - Level 2: Characteristic Adaptations such as motives and goals

    - "Lisa strives for power and recognition in her career"

  - Level 3: Identity and Life Stories/Narrative

    - "Lisa sees herself as a heroine who travels to exotic places, climbs to the top of her career, but suffers tragedies such as failed love and lost children along the way"

Level 3

Level 2

Level 1
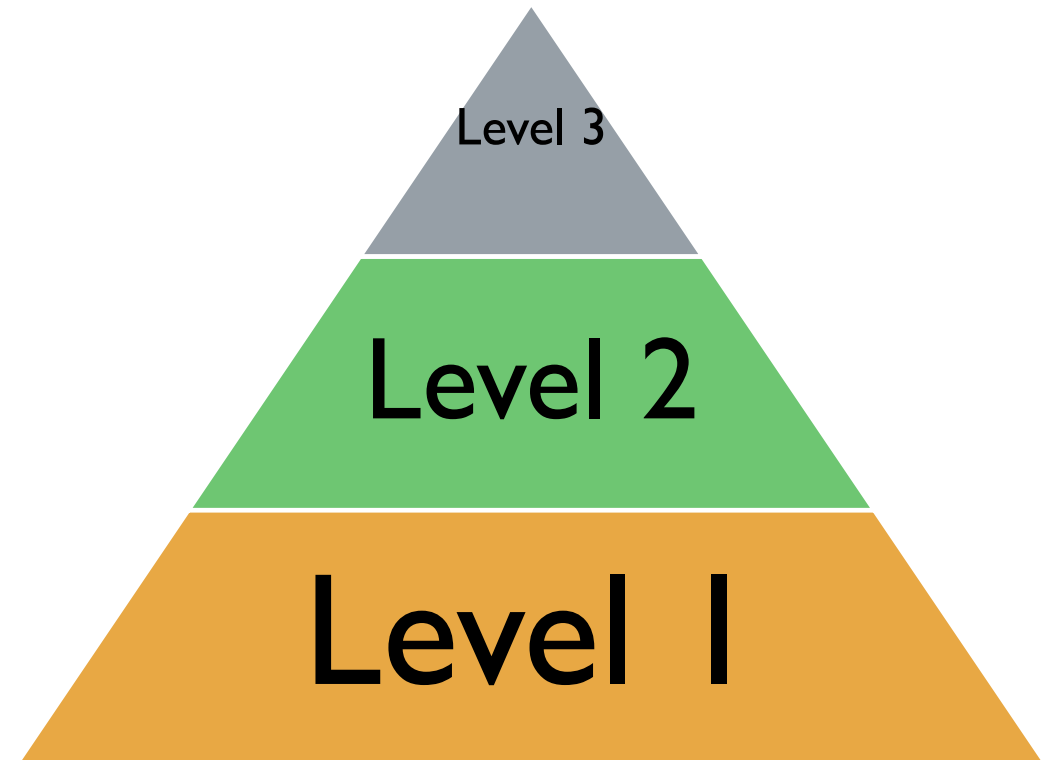
ANOTHER SPIN ON THE TRAIT APPROACH

- Approaches to the study of personality can be seen as approaches to questions about human nature

- The trait approach emphasizes the great variability in certain human characteristics

  - Costa & McCrae (2003, p. 23)

    "Are people basically selfish? Some are, some aren't."

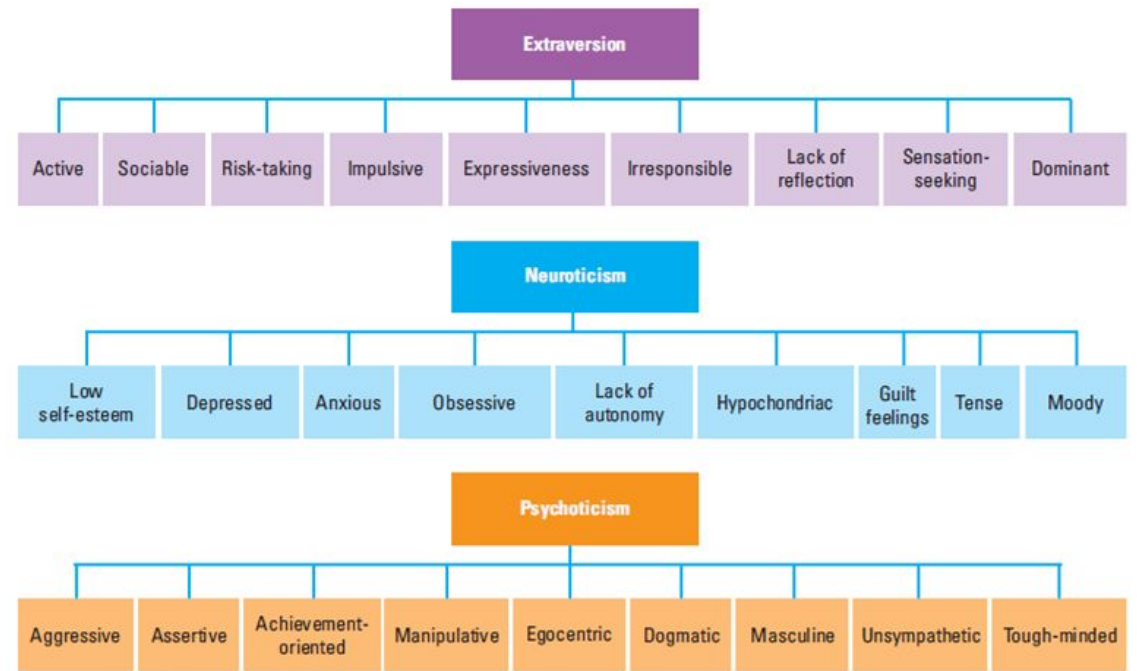   "Are human beings intrinsically creative? Some are, some aren't."

SEARCH FOR THE BASIC UNITS OF PERSONALITY

"In any science, taxonomy precedes causal analysis; we must analyze and classify the entities in our field of study before we can frame meaningful theories concerning their behavior. The astronomer classifies stars, the chemist elements, the zoologist animals, the botanist plants; the student of personality must do likewise for traits" (Eysenck, 1991, p. 7).
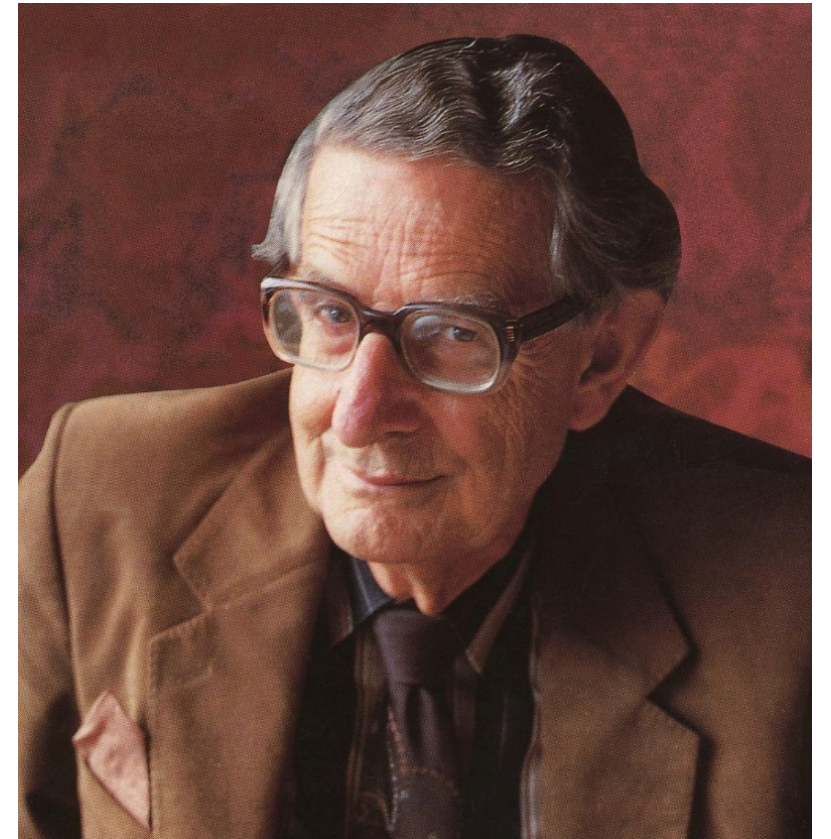
HANS J. EYSENCK (P-E-N) MODEL

- Three Dimensions of Personality (PEN)

  - Extraversion: outgoing; likes being around people (sociable); enjoy excitement (hedonic)

  - Neuroticism: greater reaction to stress: emotional instability (touchy, restless, moody, anxious)

  - Psychoticism: psychological detachment from others

    - High P scores: loners, shows overt hostility to others including loved ones, enjoys danger, disregards social conventions; enjoys making fools of others (can be cruel); viewed as peculiar

Extraversion

| Active | Sociable | Risk-taking | Impulsive | Expressiveness | Irresponsible | Lack of reflection | Sensation-seeking | Dominant |

Neuroticism

| Low self-esteem | Depressed | Anxious | Obsessive | Lack of autonomy | Hypochondriac | Guilt feelings | Tense | Moody |

Psychoticism

| Aggressive | Assertive | Achievement-oriented | Manipulative | Egocentric | Dogmatic | Masculine | Unsympathetic | Tough-minded |

LEXICAL HYPOTHESIS

- The most important personality dimensions are encoded in everyday language

  - "Those personality differences that are most salient and socially relevant in people's lives will eventually become encoded into their language; the more important such a difference, the more likely is it to become expressed as a single word" (Goldberg, 1992).

- Classic Work by Allport & Odbert (1936)

  - How many trait words are in the English language?

  - Well over 17,500!

EXPLORATORY FACTOR ANALYSIS

- Observation: People who are nervous are also fearful and tense. What is going on?

- The goal is to identify underlying factors that are responsible for these associations. The factors are sometimes called *latent traits*.

- Bottom-up process: Data → Factors

EXPLORATORY FACTOR ANALYSIS

12 items testing three underlying dimensions of personality
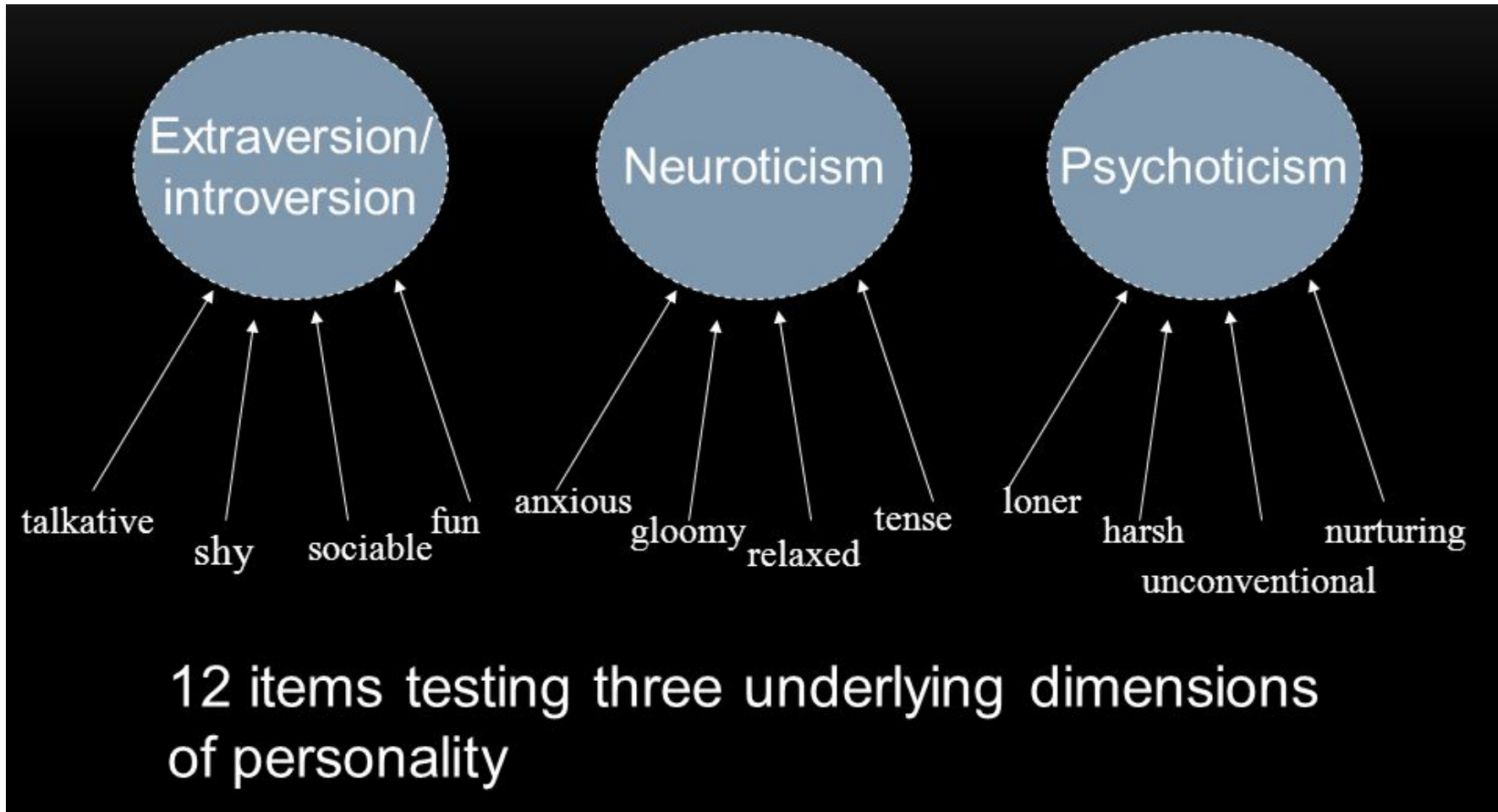
GENERAL STEPS OF AN EXPLORATORY FACTOR ANALYSIS

1. Collect observations on a large sample of individuals

2. Correlate the items

3. Extract factors

4. Examine factor loadings

5. Label factors

This is a statistical process that also requires the judgment of the researcher (are they grouped in a meaningful way, not only statistically significant!).

STEP 1: GIVE ITEMS

- Question: How accurately does each trait describe you (1 = *Extremely inaccurate* to 7 = *Extremely accurate*)?

  - Hard-Working
  - Industrious
  - Conscientious
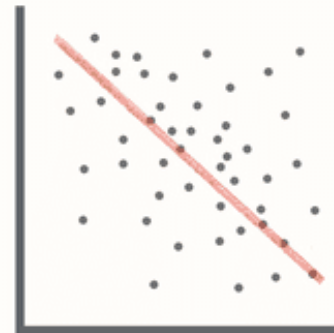 - Meticulous
  - Mild
  - Brainy
  - Intelligent
  - And so on…

I see myself as someone who…	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Can't choose
a. …is reserved	1	2	3	4	5	8
b. …is generally trusting	1	2	3	4	5	8
c. …does a thorough job	1	2	3	4	5	8
d. …is relaxed, handles stress well	1	2	3	4	5	8
e. …has an active imagination	1	2	3	4	5	8
f. …is outgoing, sociable	1	2	3	4	5	8
g. …tends to find fault with others	1	2	3	4	5	8
h. …tends to be lazy	1	2	3	4	5	8
i. …gets nervous easily	1	2	3	4	5	8
j. …has few artistic interests	1	2	3	4	5	8

RECALL THE CORRELATION COEFFICIENT

- Measures the strength of linear association between two variables

- Range between -1 and 1

- Pay attention to the sign (positive or negative) and size (e.g., .3 or .5) of the correlation coefficient
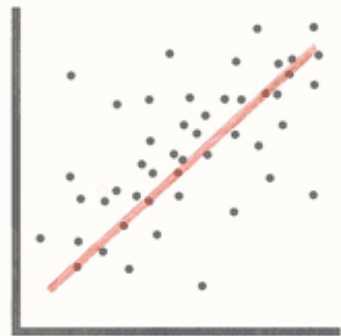
Positive Correlation   Negative Correlation   No Correlation
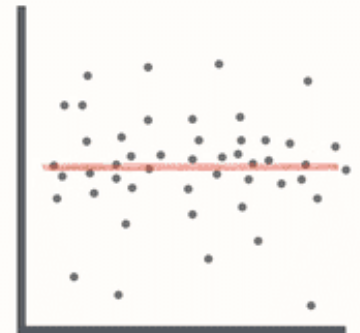
STEP 2: CORRELATE ITEMS

- Hard-working and Industrious: .54

- Hard-working and Conscientious: .47

- Hard-working and Intelligent: .14

- Compassionate and Tender-hearted: .59

- All of the correlations are printed on the correlation matrix

CORRELATION MATRIX

Correlations Among 12 Trait Adjectives

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. Hard-Working											
2. Industrious	.54										
3. Conscientious	.47	.47									
4. Meticulous	.38	.35	.41								
5. Compassionate	.24	.12	.21	.16							
6. Tender-Hearted	.16	.06	.17	.14	.59						
7. Loving	.21	.12	.19	.15	.42	.51					
8. Mild	.08	.01	.10	.14	.24	.40	.25				
9. Brainy	.15	.20	.12	.12	.08	.09	.10	-.06			
10. Knowledgeable	.19	.25	.18	.12	.05	.01	.07	.01	.45		
11. Wise	.22	.21	.25	.22	.14	.13	.15	.07	.38	.38	
12. Intelligent	.14	.21	.17	.09	.03	.00	.10	-.13	.62	.48	.39

STEP 3: EXTRACT THE FACTORS: SORTING TRAITS INTO GROUPS

Conscientiousness
Hard-Working
Industrious
Meticulous

Compassionate
Tender-Hearted
Loving
Mild

Brainy
Knowledgeable
Wise
Intelligent
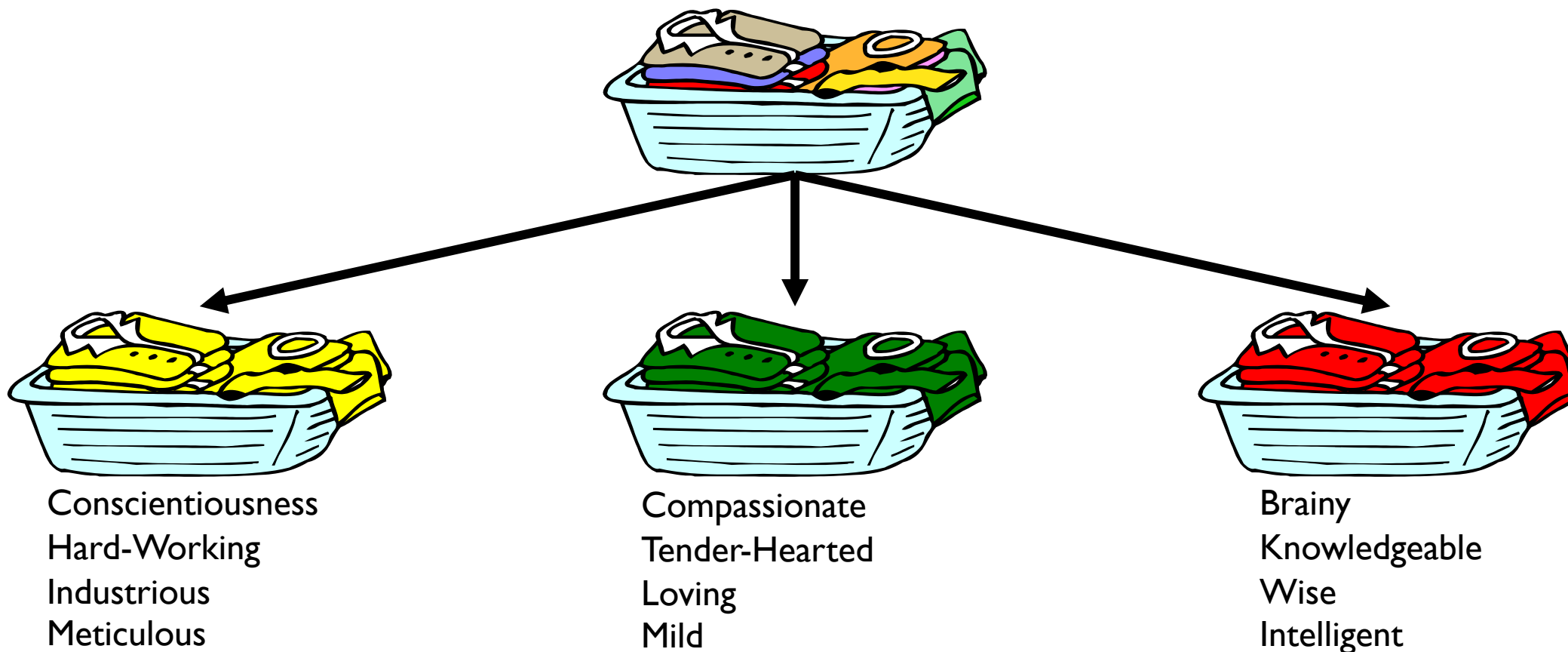
STEP 4: EXAMINE FACTOR LOADINGS

	Factor1	Factor 2	Factor 3
Hard-Working	.12	.77	.14
Industrious	.19	.78	-.03
Conscientious	.11	.78	.14
Meticulous	.05	.68	.13
Compassionate	.07	.15	.76
Tender-Hearted	.04	.05	.86
Loving	.13	.12	.71
Mild	-.12	.05	.60
Brainy	.82	.04	.03
Knowledgeable	.73	.15	-.02
Wise	.62	.21	.15
Intelligent	.84	.07	-.06

STEPS 5 +

- Step 5: Label factors

- Repeat the process: Collect more data and see if the results come out similar.

- Evaluate generalizability

THE FIVE FACTORS

- Extraversion (talkative, energetic, outgoing)

- Agreeableness (helpful, trusting, cooperative)

- Conscientiousness (reliable, hardworking, dependable)

- Neuroticism (anxious, tense, moody)

- Openness to experience (curious about intellectual and artistic matters, values artistic experiences, has an active imagination)

REMEMBER OCEAN!

OPENNESS

CONSCIENTIOUSNESS

THE BIG FIVE

NEUROTICISM

EXTRAVERSION

AGREEABLENESS
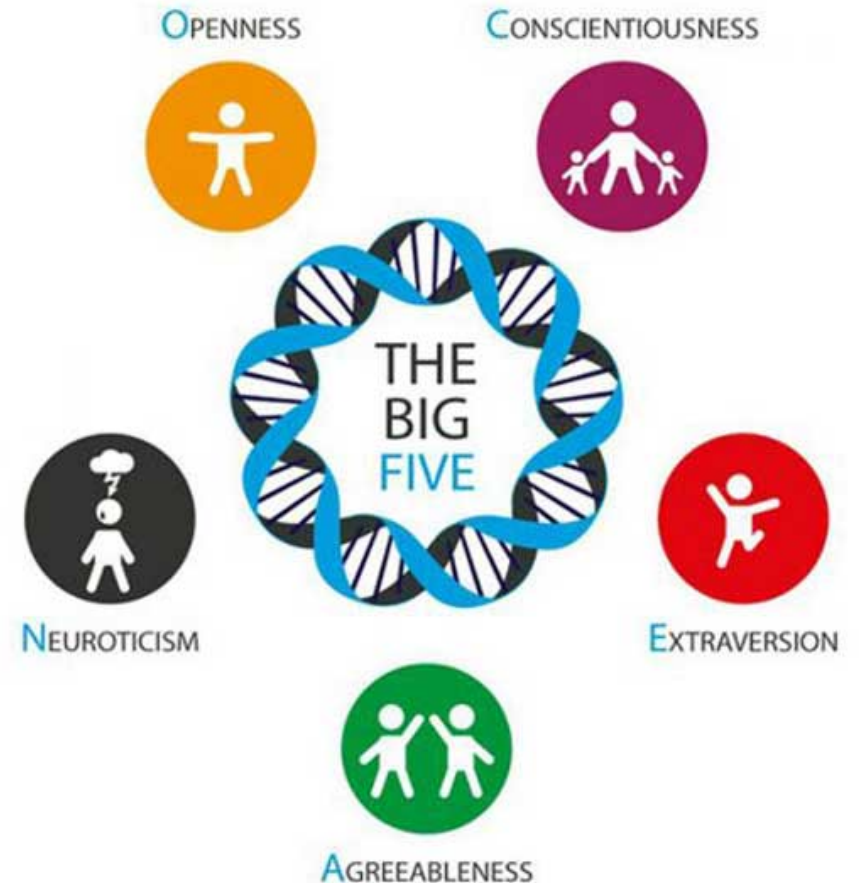
FIVE ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS ABOUT A STRANGER…

- 1. Is she active and dominant OR passive and submissive? (E)

- 2. Is she warm and pleasant OR cold and distant? (A)

- 3. Is she responsible and conscientious OR undependable and negligent? (C)

- 4. Is she emotionally unpredictable OR emotionally stable? (N)

- 5. Is she curious OR more conventional? (O)

THE FIVE FACTORS

TRAITS ASSOCIATED WITH EACH OF THE BIG FIVE

Extraversion	Agreeableness	Conscientiousness	Neuroticism	Openness/Intellect
Positive Correlates				
Talkative	Sympathetic	Organized	Tense	Wide interests
Assertive	Kind	Thorough	Anxious	Imaginative
Energetic	Appreciative	Planful	Nervous	Intelligent
Outgoing	Affectionate	Efficient	Moody	Insightful
Dominant	Softhearted	Responsible	Worrying	Curious
Enthusiastic	Warm		Touchy	Sophisticated
Negative Correlates				
Quiet	Fault-finding	Careless	Stable	Commonplace
Reserved	Cold	Disorderly	Calm	Narrow interests
Shy	Unfriendly	Frivolous	Contented	Simple
Silent	Quarrelsome	Irresponsible	Unemotional	Shallow
Withdrawn	Hard-hearted	Slipshod		Unintelligent

Note: These items were correlated with total factor scores in ratings by psychologists of 140 men and 140 women studied at the University of California, Berkeley.

Source: Adapted from John & Srivastava (1999), Table 2, p. 113.

THE FIVE FACTORS

LIFE OUTCOMES ASSOCIATED WITH PERSONALITY TRAITS

	Individual Outcomes	Interpersonal Outcomes	Institutional Outcomes
Extraversion	Happiness Gratitude Longevity Psychological health	Peer acceptance Success in dating and relationships Attractiveness Status	Occupational satisfaction Community involvement Leadership
Agreeableness	Religious involvement Forgiveness Humor Heart health, longevity Psychological health	Peer acceptance Dating satisfaction	Social interests Job attainment Avoidance of criminal behavior
Conscientiousness	Religious beliefs Good health habits, longevity Avoidance of drug abuse	Family satisfaction Dating satisfaction	Job performance Occupational success Political conservatism Avoidance of criminal behavior
Neuroticism	Unhappiness Poor coping	Poor family relations	Occupational dissatisfaction Criminal behavior
Openness	Forgiveness, inspiration Substance abuse		Artistic interests Political liberalism

Source: Adapted from Ozer & Benet-Martínez (2006), p. 415.

ADVANTAGES OF THE BIG FIVE

- Offers a working taxonomy of broad personality traits

  - Organize scattered findings under one scheme

  - Use the Big five to predict important life outcomes

  - Use the Big five to study personality development

- Caveat: Not all personality psychologists embrace the big five approach

THE BIG FIVE AND OTHER APPROACHES

	Extra	Agree	Cons	Neuro	Open
Eysenck	Extraversion	Psychoticism		Neuroticism	
Tellegen	Positive Emotionality (Agentic and Communal)		Constraint	Negative Emotionality	Absorption
Rothbart & Bates	Extraversion/ Surgency		Effortful Control	Negative Affectivity	
Wiggins	Dominance	Nurturance	Same	Same	Same

SOME CONCERNS WITH THE BIG FIVE

- Are the Big Five really separate dimensions of personality?

- Why Five?
  - We believe it is simply an empirical fact, like the fact that there are seven continents on earth or eight American presidents from Virginia (McCrae & John, 1992, p.194).
  - HEXACO model: adds "Honesty-Humility" to the Big 5
    - Sincerity/fairness/greed avoidance/modesty/arrogance/egoism

- Are the Big Five clearly linked to separate psychobiological systems?

- There is more to personality psychology than just the Big Five.

NEXT CLASS

- Read Chapter 5 of the textbook
  - Personality Judgment