

## Personality

Personality is broadly described as the characteristic patterns of thoughts, feelings, and behaviors that make a person unique.

Personality psychologists are interested in the unique characteristics of individuals and similarities among groups of people.

## Characteristics of Personality

Personality is organized and consistent. We tend to express certain aspects of our personality in different situations, and our responses are generally stable.

Although personality is generally stable, it can be influenced by the environment. For example, while your personality might make you shy in social situations, an emergency might lead you to take on a more outspoken and take-charge approach.

Personality causes behaviors to happen. You react to the people and objects in your environment based on your personality. From your personal preferences to your career choice, every aspect of your life is affected by your personality.

## Approaches to study personality

Psychoanalytic approach- Freud

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Conscious- Unconscious

Structure of personality- id, ego, super ego

Psycho-sexual stages of development

Ego defense mechanisms- repression, rationalization, sublimation, projection, displacement

Highly critiqued for excessive focus on unconscious.

# Carl Jung's Theory of Personality

## Core Concepts:

### Ego

Conscious mind the Center of consciousness

Characterized by one dominant attitude (introversion/extraversion) -

Characterized by functions: Thinking , Feeling, Sensing , Intuiting

### Personal Unconscious

Similar to Freud's conception of preconscious and unconscious -Contains memories that can be recalled as well as those that have been repressed

### Collective Unconsciousness

Psychological residue of man's ancestral past

Reservoir of mankind's experiences as species

Accumulated memories of mankind's experiences seen in themes and symbols in cultures

Parallels in myths, fairy tales, literature, art, etc. -Dreams -Déjà vu experiences -Near death experiences

## Archetypes:

Inherited predisposition to experience things in certain ways more like an emotion Jung described them as "thought-forms" Organizing principle (similar to Freud's conception of instincts) for our behavior Collected deposits of mankind's repeated experiences' with events such as birth, death, mother, father, evil, etc.

Main archetypes   Persona: public personality (mask) worn to win society's approval Our instinctual knowledge that we have to act certain way in society Way we present ourselves The good impression we hope to make starts as archetype, but becomes farther removed from collective unconscious Starts as comprised of attitudes taken from social class, occupation, ethnic heritage, religion, etc.

Shadow -Lower, animal side of our behavior -Represents socially unacceptable behaviors -Derives from pre-human, animal past—when we were not self-conscious -Dark side evil we are capable of ,Shadow is amoral

Anima/Animus -Anima -female archetype in males Animus-male archetype in females -Spirit of opposite sex in us -Trace of mankind's experience of living with opposite sex -Societal stereotypes and expectations cause us to develop only half of our potential

## **Humanistic theories -Abraham Maslow**

**Assumptions:** Human nature is basically good, not evil. Normal human development involves the actualization of this inherent goodness, has no mental illness

A 'fully functional person' is satisfied in basic needs, fully exploited talents, motivated by values

**Characteristics of Self-actualizing persons :** Superior perception of reality

*Increased acceptance of self, of others, and of nature, Increased freedom*

*Increased detachment and desire for privacy,*

*Greater freshness of appreciation and richness of emotional reaction.*

*Increased autonomy and resistance to conformity*

*Higher frequency of peak experiences,*

*Improved interpersonal experiences,*

*More democratic character structure,*

*High levels of creativity.*

## Trait Theories of personality

Trait: a characteristic pattern of behavior, or a disposition to feel and act, as assessed by self-report inventories and peer reports.

Trait theories - endeavor to describe the characteristics that make up human personality. They don't try to explain behavior, only describe it.

Types: Surface traits: aspects of personality that can easily be seen by other people in the outward actions of a person. Source traits: the more basic traits that underlie the surface traits, forming the core of personality. Example: Introversion - dimension of personality in which people tend to withdraw from excessive stimulation.

### Gordon Allport's Trait Theory

### Raymond Cattell's Sixteen Personality Factors

### Eysenck's Three Dimensions of Personality

### The Five-Factor Theory of Personality

## Gordon Allport's Trait Theory

In 1936, psychologist Gordon Allport found that one English-language dictionary alone contained more than 4,000 words describing different personality traits.

Cardinal Traits: Traits that dominate an individual's whole life, often to the point that the person becomes known specifically for these traits. People with such personalities often become so known for these traits that their names are often synonymous with these qualities. Ex: short tempered, calm and composed etc.

Central Traits: The general characteristics that form the basic foundations of personality. These central traits, while not as dominating as cardinal traits, are the major characteristics you might use to describe another person. Terms such as intelligent, honest, shy and anxious are considered central traits.

Secondary Traits: Traits that are sometimes related to attitudes or preferences and often appear only in certain situations or under specific circumstances. Some examples would be getting anxious when speaking to a group or impatient while waiting in line.

## Raymond Cattell's Sixteen Personality Factor

Trait theorist Raymond Cattell reduced the number of main personality traits from Allport's initial list of over 4,000 down to 171, mostly by eliminating uncommon traits and combining common characteristics.

Next, Cattell rated a large sample of individuals for these 171 different traits.

Then, using a statistical technique known as factor analysis, he identified closely related terms and eventually reduced his list to just 16 key personality traits.

These 16 traits are the source of all human personality. The widely used personality assessments known as the Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire was based on these traits.

## Eysenck's Three Dimensions of Personality

British psychologist Hans Eysenck developed a model of personality based upon just three universal traits:

**Introversion/Extraversion:** Introversion involves directing attention on inner experiences, while extraversion relates to focusing attention outward on other people and the environment. So, a person high in introversion might be quiet and reserved, while an individual high in extraversion might be sociable and outgoing.

**Neuroticism/Emotional Stability:** This dimension of Eysenck's trait theory is related to moodiness versus even-temperedness. Neuroticism refers to an individual's tendency to become upset or emotional, while stability refers to the tendency to remain emotionally constant.

**Psychoticism:** Later, after studying individuals suffering from mental illness, Eysenck added a personality dimension he called psychoticism to his trait theory. Individuals who are high on this trait tend to have difficulty dealing with reality and may be antisocial, hostile, non-empathetic and manipulative.

## The Big Five-Factor Theory of Personality

Both Cattell's and Eysenck's theory have been the subject of considerable research, which has led some theorists to believe that Cattell focused on too many traits, while Eysenck focused on too few.

"Big Five" theory emerged. This five-factor model of personality represents five core traits that interact to form human personality. While researchers often disagree about the exact labels for each dimension, the following are described most commonly:

**Extraversion**-ranges from *sociable, talkative, fun-loving* at one end to *sober, reserved, cautious* at the other.

**Agreeableness**-ranges from *good-natured, cooperative, trusting* to *irritable, suspicious & uncooperative*

**Conscientiousness**-ranges from *well-organized, careful, responsible* to *disorganized, careless, unscrupulous*

**Neuroticism**-from *poised, calm, composed* to *nervous, anxious, excitable*

**Openness**-from *imaginative, sensitive, intellectual* to *down-to-earth, insensitive, crude*