

PGL Assignment Part B

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Video 1

Approach to personal growth

In this video, we understand the key phases/types of personal growth

- **Open Expansion:** In this, we work on different things, hear new ideas meet different people, and take everything that we can find. We go in no particular direction and are open to a whole new ideas. We can view everything as new with opportunity and not focus time or resources in any particular area. In this phase, while we are exploring and learning new things, we may not be moving in a direction.
- **Forward Expansion:** This is after the open expansion phase. We divert our attention and focus in a particular area or a set of areas that interest us. We don't move very fast as we are still exploring and trying to widen our horizon but we are trying to move in a particular direction
- **Forward Focus:** here we narrow down our focus to just one or a few areas and that interests us and try to move fast in that direction. We focus on the thing that we really want to do and move as quickly as possible
- **Narrow Focus:** We are reducing distractions in life, and narrow down our focus a lot into the single thing that we want.

Open and forward expansions are the times when we don't have a particular direction and are trying to explore new areas whereas by contrast we are in forward or narrow focus if we have the idea or the project we are working on and want to focus full energy towards that.

Going back to open or forward expansion anytime is very easy whereas going into forward or narrow focus takes a bit of time

Video 2

Do These Two Things Every Day

This video talks about connecting short term actions with long term visions and different types of short term actions

There are 2 categories we can put short term actions into

- Investment actions: There are actions that may not show the award right away but get us to the lifestyle that we desire. These could be things like studying a course on personal development that may not look very useful right now but the lesson it gives will help a lot in the life that comes ahead. It may help us make a switch to a new path one day.
- Immediate actions: Things we do right now that reflect how we will be spending our time during our ideal day. This can be as simple as reading a small book or meditating. There are the things that we can do right now and thus called immediate actions.

We should think about both actions on a daily basis. We should try to split our day between both these actions half and half. If we have a lot of lifestyle goals, we should more time into investment actions than immediate ones. Both these actions will help in personal and professional development.

Video 3

One Small Change That Creates Massive Results

This video tries to tackle the habit of procrastinating things and not accomplishing the tasks that are important. Often by saying that “I am going to do something”, we feel good enough to not actually do the thing that we want to. The easiest way to mitigate this is to take the thing that we say we are going to do, then take a very small part of that and complete that. This helps us in starting the thing. Just doing this small thing accomplishes a lot more than simply saying that we will do it in the future. Then keep on repeating this small thing regularly (maybe every day). Then we can slowly keep on increasing the small piece to bigger and bigger parts until we reach our goal. By starting small we can be a person of action, as opposed to just saying that we are going to do that action.

Video 4

Defense Mechanisms

The brain often creates defense mechanisms that allow us to avoid dealing with bad situations at least temporarily. The bad situation can be a failure, insecurity, or basically anything that makes us feel bad. The theory of defense mechanisms was coined by Sigmund Freud in which it is said that humans will do anything to seek pleasure and avoid pain. We often are not aware and subconsciously act via defense mechanisms. There are different types of defense mechanisms

- Denial: It is a process of refusing to receive or acknowledge bad information and situation
- Repression: We are aware of the bad situation but instead of outright denying about it, we refuse to think and do something about it.
- Displacement: It is the process of targeting an unrelated subject during a bad situation. Sometimes it is not possible or a bad idea to target the right cause of the bad situation.
- Projection: We take feelings that we are uncomfortable with and project them onto someone or something else. This is often a subtle defense mechanism but sometimes obvious when a person is angry.
- Reaction Formation: A person does not want to acknowledge or come out with their feelings so they take every action that tries to prove that they are opposite of what they say to make themselves feel completely different. This is majorly to avoid confrontation or admit true feelings.
- Regression: It is a method of regressing (going back) to the childhood emotions as a way to push the responsibilities away and reverting back to a child-like state where we can express feelings in an immature way. It is rarely shown to work
- Rationalization: This process involves using false reasoning to get what we want.
- Sublimation: When someone is unable to accomplish something, they put their energy into constructive activities that might help them achieve their goals in the future. These are some of the productive defense mechanisms and are often useful.
- Compensation: People use compensation to overcome their perceived shortcomings. They try to display traits in order to come across as a thing they are insecure about. Rather than going about and trying to accomplish what we desire, we start pretending that we have already accomplished what we desire

Defense mechanisms are not always unhealthy but in the long run, can hinder progress and prevent us from achieving that we want to.

Video 5

Self Awareness

Self-awareness is the ability to see ourselves clearly. It is the ability to see who we are, how others see us, and how we fit in the world. There is evidence that people who are self-aware, perform better and are more confident. While most people feel they are self-aware, in reality very less percentage of people actually are. Contrary to the common belief, people who introspect are less satisfied with their job and relationships. Self-analysis can trap us in a mental hell. Often while introspecting we end up inventing answers that feel true but are often not. It often leads us away from true conclusions.

Asking questions like what can make this better rather than “why this happened” will go a long way in developing our personality. Asking these questions helps us answer what we want in life and help us in pursuing our goals. Why questions often trap us in the past and what questions help us move forward in life. It helps us to learn, grow and make a better future

Video 6

What is personality

Personality is described in different ways by different people and scientists still have a lot of questions debates on different aspects of human personalities and what makes us who we are. To quote a top personality psychologist, "Personality is a pattern of relatively permanent traits and unique characteristics that give both consistency and individuality to a persons behaviors"

Traits are characteristics that set us apart from other people. Traits only influence the behaviors but don't dictate it. Traits are usually measured on a scale and are often related to psychological mechanisms. The mechanisms are based in these traits and determine the processes of personality like the input, decision rules, and the output that we give in a situation.

A lot of personality is understanding the similarity and differences between different people and how they act in given situations.

Personality can come from a variety of sources. One of them is genetics where we inherit personalities from our families. The other is the environment. The place, people, culture and situations we grow up around, go a long way in determining our behaviors

There are a ton of unanswered questions that studying personality psychology can help us answer. Some of them are:

- Freedom vs determinism: This is asking if we really choose our behavior and do we change it if required
- Heredity or environment: What influences our personality traits more?
- Universal or unique: Are all humans are unique or are we more or less the same?
- Proactive vs reactive

This can help us predict the future behavior of people and guide people away from negative personalities. Data scientists look at massive data to predict both the course of the population as a whole and individual groups of people.

While there are some attempts at a unifying theory that can predict personality there does not exist one yet that fully works for all situations.

Big 5 major personality traits are:

- Openness
- Conscientiousness
- Extraversion
- Agreeableness
- Neuroticism

A lot of these traits can be predicted by existing models and new strides are being made every year. Being able to predict these traits accurately will be a game-changer and will affect us in a lot of unimaginable ways.

Video 7

Emotional Intelligence

In this video, Daniel Goleman talks about different aspects of emotional intelligence and how our brains handle it. He talks about the trends, the variety of emotional intelligence in different places, and the differences between men and women.

Emotional Intelligence refers to how well we handle ourselves. There are 4 domains to this:

- Self-awareness: Knowing what we are feeling, why we are feeling that. It's a moral compass that we can use to hold ourselves accountable for our actions.
- Self-management: Handling your distressing emotions and effective ways so that they don't damage and cripple us. Combining positive emotions to get involved and enthused about what we are doing and aligning our actions with our passions
- Empathy: Knowing what other person is feeling and putting that into a skilled relationship.

The brain shapes itself according to the emotional intelligence and experiences. This can help mitigate all kinds of anti-social behaviors. It helps us manage our emotions and pay more attention to the tasks that matter to us.

While the IQ has been steadily going up from the past 100 years, there is not much evidence that emotional intelligence is also going up among the humans. In fact indicators point toward actions that signify more emotional abuse

Emotional Intelligence is a range of abilities. Women are better than men in empathy and social skills. Men tend to be better on self-confidence and managing distressing emotions. However there is no difference between men and women among the top 10% leaders. As people develop, they pick up skills in different areas as they need.

While emotional intelligence is universal and fundamentals are the same everywhere, it looks different in different places

Video 8

Transactional Analysis

Transactional analysis is a way to understand how we are related and communicate with other people. Transactional analysis is a theoretical structure that puts forward the notion that our actions are not based on other persons behavior but are based on our state of mind. Here we analyze how we interact with other people. This is based on the understanding that we have 3 ego states: parent, adult, child, and that we are constantly shifting through these 3 states.

Parent ego state is influenced by how our parents were in our childhood. This can be further divided into 2 main parts, critical/controlling parents (who try to control, others) and nurturing parents(when we want to care and help others)

Child ego state is also divided into adaptive (who obeys the instructions every time and might be shy) and spontaneous/free (what do what they want to do)

Adult state: here we analyze each situation as it comes and respond to each with flavors and mixture of maturity, respect and compromise

The state we often respond in depends on the state the other person is in. Most transactions are in complementary mode where the opposites align. The opposite are crossed transactions that do not align and force one of the person to shift their ego state. Complementary transactions are very stable. Usually, in most cases the cross transactions cause people to change their ego states so that they can form new complementary transactions.

This framework is useful to find out which ego state and we and the other person are in and change our behavior according to the situations