

2017-03-20

What is Personality?

- **Personality** = an individual's patterns of thinking, feeling, and acting
- Four perspectives
 1. **Psychoanalytic** = unconscious processes determine personality
 - *e.g.*
 - * Anal retentive
 - * Orally fixated
 2. **Humanistic** = personality is determined by self and fleshed out by self actualization
 3. **Social cognitive** = personality is determined by beliefs about one's self
 - *e.g.**
 - * Insecurity
 - * Belonging
 4. **Trait** = personality is determined by the presence of different types of traits

Psychoanalytic Perspective

- Essential premise is that psychosexual development is integral to our proper functioning
 - If something goes awry at some stage, you may develop a problem with that stage
- Techniques to discover psychosexual problems
 - **Free association** = the process of unearthing unconscious associations between ideas
 - * Basically, patient begins chaining ideas as they come to mind
 - Thought to be indicative of unconscious **resistance**
 - **Dream interpretation** = the process of understanding **latent meaning** in dreams
 - **Hypnosis** = inducing a mental state where the unconscious motivations and desires can be seen easier
- **Unconscious** = a storage space for **repressed impulses**
 - **Repressed impulses** = taboo thoughts, wishes, feelings, or memories
 - Is not available to the conscious mind; can only be seen indirectly

- **Preconscious** = a storage space for knowledge that can be invoked but not consciously so
 - Must be brought to memory by some stimulus
 - *e.g.*
 - * Events of the day so far
 - * Latent knowledge
- Three parts of personality
 1. **Id** = the element that composes our primal element of personality
 - **Pleasure principle** = the heuristic that immediate pleasurable is the most desirable good
 - At birth, the mind is only composed of the id
 - Sources of energy
 - * *Eros* = life instinct, perpetuate life
 - * *Thanatos* = risky, aggressive, self-destructive drive
 - **Libido** = roughly synonymous with “sex drive”
 2. **Superego** = the element that composes our moral intuition and aspirations
 - Moral intuitions are mostly inherited from observation and imitation
 - It has the power to generate *anxiety*
 - **Morality principle** = the heuristic that adherence to a code is the most desirable good
 3. **Ego** = the element that composes our conscious mind
 - Essential role is to balance the id and superego
 - **Reality principle** = the heuristic that external restrictions should be reconciled for maximum value
- **Psychosexual stages** = stages of development where the id focuses on one type of sensory pleasure