

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
-

2017-03-21

Five Psychosexual Stages

1. **Oral** = pleasures are principally derived from oral stimuli
 - Birth to 18 months
2. **Anal** = pleasures come from relief from ending discomfort associated with holding in waste

- 18 months to 36 months
 - 3. **Phallic** = pleasure comes from genitals
 - 3 years to 6 years
 - 4. **Latency** = a period of dormant sexual feelings
 - 6 years to puberty
 - 5. **Genital** = sexual maturation and seeking physical relationships
 - Puberty and after
 - **Oedipus complex** = the propensity for a young boy to experience sexual desire for his mother and hatred for his “rival” father
 - Based on the Greek myth of Oedipus
 - **Electra complex** = the propensity for a young girl to experience sexual desire for her father and hatred for her “rival” mother
 - Sometimes, your best ideas *don't* come while high on coke
 - * Freud loved him some coke
 - **Castration anxiety** = a young boy's fear that the father will castrate him for vying for experiencing sexual desire towards his mother
 - *wat.*
 - **Penis envy** = the effect of women feeling jealous of men for having a penis
 - Don't ask me. Freud was weird
 - **Identification** = the process by which the dominant parent's values bleed into the superego of the child
 - **Fixation** = the effect of having an unresolved conflict during some psychosexual stage
 - Results in a lack of closure—the person fixates on that conflict
 - It's important to note that most of these ideas have been discredited and aren't practiced by modern psychodynamic psychologists
-

2017-03-22

Defense Mechanisms

- **Defense mechanisms** = methods of protection the ego employs to reduce anxiety by distorting perception

- **Repression** = a defense mechanism where anxiety-inducing thoughts are actively fought by the conscious mind
 - Results in those memories being still present, but only to the unconscious
- **Regression** = a defense mechanism where an individual reverts to a psychosexual stage with an unresolved conflict
 - The individual feels less responsibility for their actions
- **Reaction formation** = a defense mechanism where the ego substitutes taboo impulses for their opposites
 - Is a way to avoid situations
 - * For example, hiding an impulse that will lead to conflict with its opposite
- **Projection** = a defense mechanism where taboo impulses will be attributed to others
- **Rationalization** = a defense mechanism where unsavory reasons for one's actions are justified with logic rather than the emotions that *really* drive them
- **Displacement** = a defense mechanism where aggressive or sexual impulses are directed towards a person or object that is less threatening
 - You deal with your anger at your boss by hurting your spouse, etc
- **Sublimation** = a defense mechanism where harmful impulses are directed into a more socially appropriate activity
 - *e.g.*
 - * Lifting weights to deal with anger towards the bourgeoisie
 - *Proletarian gains.*
 - * Writing poetry to deal with inappropriate sexual impulses
- **Denial** = a defense mechanism where the negative impulse is simply ignored
 - Is different from repression in that it can still be accessed by the conscious mind
 - * It just isn't acknowledged
- **Undoing** = a defense mechanism where the guilt for indulging a negative stimulus is counterbalanced with a positive thing