

Understanding the Self

Theories of the Self

Interactional Theory

- The self is born of interactions with others.
- We understand and evaluate ourselves in terms of how others see us.
- The process is akin to mirrors facing each other.

Theory of the Self contd.

Psychoanalytic Theory

- Comes from Freud's work.
- Pleasure principle (Id) is the seeking of gratification and Reality principle (Ego) is the restraint of social norms.
- The Self lies in the hydraulic tension between the Pleasure principle and the Reality principle.

Theory of the Self Contd.

Sociocultural Theory

- The self is always a situated self, meaning that it is context related.
- The idea of the self is not independent or absolute but rooted in the culture.
- The aspirations and actions of the self are derived from the universe of meanings that surround it.

Theories of the Self contd.

Performative Theory

- We are who we are through the actions we perform and the manner in which we perform them.
- Social life can be seen in terms of dramatic performances in which we perform different roles.
- Each one performs multiple roles (as offspring, as parent, as professional, as citizen etc.).

- The Self has two components: Personality and Identity.
- Personality is the more externalized aspect, whereas identity is the internal sense of who one is.