20 PERSONALITY

20.1. The Nature of Personality

A. Personality has been defined as those relatively permanent traits, dispositions, or characteristics of an individual that give some degree of consistency to that individual's behavior.

B. A number of different frameworks have been proposed for understanding personality, six of which are discussed below.

20.2. The Psychodynamic Paradigm

A. Basic ideas

1. The psychodynamic paradigm views each person as a complex system of diverse sources of psychic energy, each of which pushes the person in a somewhat different direction. As a result, the behavior prompted by these multiple sources of energy usually cannot satisfy all of the conflicting psychic drives at once.

2. According to this paradigm, individuals often come into conflict with the society in which they live. For example, internal psychic energy may prompt a person to desire sexual fulfillment in ways that the society prohibits.

3. Biological drives, and especially sexual ones, play a key role in psychodynamic theorizing. Many psychodynamic theorists view their theorizing as inspired by biological models.

4. Another key aspect of these theories is a certain amount of determinism—the idea that our behavior is ruled by forces over which we have little control. Our control is undermined especially by the fact, according to these theorists, that much of our processing of information is unconscious, and thus outside the grasp of awareness. We do not even know a great deal of what is going on in our own minds.

5. This paradigm is based, in large part, upon clinical observation, and hence in the past empirical work has not always yielded to rigorous experimental controls.
B. Organization of the mind

1. Sigmund Freud, widely regarded as the founder of the psychoanalytic paradigm, viewed the mind as existing at two basic levels: the conscious and the unconscious. Freud also suggested the further existence of preconscious thought, of which we are not currently aware, but which can be brought into consciousness fairly easily. Unconscious thought, in contrast, is very difficult to access through conscious processing.

2. Freud suggested three basic structures of the mind. At the most primitive level is the id, which is the unconscious, instinctive source of our impulses, such as sex and aggression; it is therefore also the source of the wishes and fantasies that derive from these impulses.

3. The id functions by means of primary-process thought, a form of thought that is irrational, instinct-driven, and out of touch with reality. We engage in this kind of thought first as infants, and later in dreams. This mode of thought accepts both content and forms that would be unacceptable to us when we are thinking logically.

4. Freud suggested that the primary-process thought in dreams can be interpreted at two levels. The manifest content of a dream is the content of the stream of events as we experience it in the dream. The latent content of a dream consists of the underlying meaning of the dream. Thus, you might dream of seeking refuge from a wild animal, but underlying this dream might be the desire to seek refuge from your own savage impulses.

5. According to Freud, many elements of dreams are symbolic. These symbols serve to protect us from having to deal with contents that might distress us and also wake us up. People also disguise unacceptable thoughts through condensation, whereby several different unacceptable thoughts or impulses are combined into a single dream image.

6. The id, and the dreams to which it gives rise, function by virtue of what Freud called the pleasure principle, meaning that the id relentlessly and heedlessly pursues immediate gratification.

7. The ego, the second basic structure in the organization of the mind, operates on the basis of the reality principle, which stands in sharp contrast to the pleasure principle. The reality principle responds to the real world as we perceive it to be, rather than as we might like it to be.

8. Through the reality principle, the ego mediates between the id and the external world, deciding on the extent to which we can act on our impulses.

9. The ego operates on the basis of secondary-process thought, which is basically rational and based on reality. Through this kind of thought, we make sense of the world and respond in a way that makes sense both to us and to others.

10. The third structure of the mind is the superego, which is the internalized representation of the norms and values of our society. The superego emerges later than the id and the ego, largely through identification with parents.

11. The superego operates by means of the idealistic principle, which guides our actions as dictated by our internalized authority figures. Whereas the ego is largely rational in its thinking, the superego is not. The superego checks whether we are conforming to our internalized moral authority, not whether we are behaving rationally.

12. The superego has two parts, the conscience and the ego ideal. The conscience arises from those experiences in which we were punished for unacceptable behavior, whereas the ego ideal results from those experiences in which we were rewarded for praiseworthy behavior.

C. Defense mechanisms

1. There are nine key defense mechanisms that play an important role in protecting the ego from anxiety-provoking information and situations.

2. These defense mechanisms, shown in Table 20.1, are used when we cannot face up to unpleasant situations that confront us.
TABLE 20.1. Defense Mechanisms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mechanism</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Denial</td>
<td>Denial occurs when our minds prevent us from thinking about unpleasant, unwanted, or threatening situations. It also screens out anxiety-provoking physical sensations in our own bodies.</td>
<td>Families of alcoholics may deny perceiving all the obvious signs of alcoholism surrounding them; adolescents deny that their unusual sex practices may cause them to get sexually transmitted diseases; or someone with a possibly cancerous mole may deny noticing it and therefore not seek medical attention for it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repression</td>
<td>Repression is the internal counterpart to denial; we unknowingly exclude from consciousness any unacceptable and potentially dangerous impulses.</td>
<td>A woman may be afraid of intimate contact with men because she was sexually molested by an uncle as a child. However, she has repressed all memory of the sexual molestation and therefore can neither recall the unhappy episode nor relate it to her fear of sexual intimacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Projection</td>
<td>We attribute our own unacceptable and possibly dangerous thoughts or impulses to another person. Projection allows us to be aware of the thought or impulse but to attribute it to someone else, whereas repression keeps the thought out of consciousness altogether.</td>
<td>People who are titillated by and attracted by pornography may become very active in local antipornography associations because they view people other than themselves as unacceptably attracted to pornography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Displacement</td>
<td>We redirect an impulse away from the person who prompts it and toward another person who is a safe substitute.</td>
<td>A young boy who has been punished by his father would like to lash out vengefully against his father. However, his ego recognizes that he cannot attack such a threatening figure, so instead, he becomes a bully and attacks helpless classmates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sublimation</td>
<td>We redirect socially unacceptable impulses, transforming the psychic energy of unacceptable impulses into acceptable and even admirable behavioral expressions.</td>
<td>A composer or other artist may rechannel sexual energy into creative products that are valued by the society as a whole</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reaction formation</td>
<td>This defense mechanism transforms an unacceptable impulse or thought into its opposite. By unconsciously convincing ourselves that we think or feel exactly the opposite of what we actually do unconsciously think or feel, we protect our positive views of ourselves.</td>
<td>Experiencing the Oedipus complex, a son might hate and envy his father because his father has sexual access to his mother, whom the son desires sexually. However, the son cannot consciously admit desiring her, let alone act on his desire. Instead, the son consciously adores and behaves deferentially and lovingly toward his father, constantly telling himself and others how wonderful his dad is</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rationalization</td>
<td>Through rationalization, we can avoid threatening thoughts and explanations of behavior by replacing them with non-threatening ones.</td>
<td>A woman married to a compulsive gambler may justify (rationalize) her husband's behavior by attributing it to his desire to win a lot of money because of his great concern for the financial well-being of the family</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Continued on overleaf)
TABLE 20.1 (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mechanism</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regression</td>
<td>When we regress, we revert to thinking and behaving in ways that are characteristic of an earlier stage of socioemotional development. In this way, we ward off the anxiety or pain that we are experiencing in our present stage of development.</td>
<td>When a newborn enters the family, older siblings may start acting more like infants to attract the attention that is now being bestowed on the newborn. Adults, too, may revert to babyish or childish behaviors when they do not get what they want.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fixation</td>
<td>Fixation occurs when a person simply stops developing socioemotionally because something prevents the person from advancing to the next stage of socioemotional development. Note that the regressed person has temporarily returned to a previous stage, whereas a fixed person has never progressed to the next stage.</td>
<td>In the anal stage of development, an adult who was fixated at this stage might be extremely neat, tidy, obsessively clean, concerned with details, and meticulous about all aspects of personal appearance; this person also might avoid anxiety by engaging in compulsive behaviors.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nine key defense mechanisms play an important role in protecting the ego from anxiety-provoking information and situations.

D. Freud’s case studies

1. Freud is famous not only for his theory, but for his case studies as well. One was the case of Dora, who experienced many physical ailments, among them coughing fits and other breathing difficulties. Freud concluded that many of her problems were due to an unresolved Electra complex, by which she sexually desired her father.

2. A second case study was that of Little Hans, a 5-year-old boy who was morbidly afraid of horses. Freud eventually concluded that Little Hans’s fear of horses derived from an unresolved Oedipus complex, by which Hans sexually desired his mother.

3. Freud’s case-study approach was both intensive and qualitative. Some have criticized Freud’s use of the method, suggesting that Freud drew too strong conclusions on the basis of too little information.

20.3. Neo-Freudian Views

A. The individual psychology of Alfred Adler

1. Alfred Adler was one among several theorists who are today known as neo-Freudians. These theorists worked within the basic psychodynamic paradigm, but made substantial changes in it. They used Freud as a starting point, but then went beyond his theorizing, in many cases pointedly disagreeing with the man who had been their mentor.

2. Adler suggested that all of us strive for superiority, attempting to become as competent as possible. Unfortunately, we do not always succeed in our striving. If we dwell on our failures we are likely to develop an inferiority complex, organizing our lives around feelings of inferiority.

3. Adler also believed that our actions are largely shaped by our expectations for the future, by the goals we set rather than by our past experiences and development, which had been emphasized by Freud.

B. The analytical psychology of Carl Jung

1. Carl Jung, like Alfred Adler, broke from Freud after originally being his disciple. Like Freud, Jung believed that the mind can be divided into conscious and unconscious parts. However, Jung proposed an elaborate structure for the unconscious that differs from Freud’s.
2. The personal unconscious is the part of the unconscious that comprises both repressed memories and experiences that are perceived below the level of consciousness. Each person's unique personal unconscious derives solely from his or her own experiences.

3. Jung suggested that each person's personal unconscious is organized in terms of complexes, which are clusters of unconscious thought that function as separate units.

4. Jung called the second layer of the unconscious the collective unconscious. This level contains memories and behavioral predispositions inherited from our distant past. According to Jung, people have a common collective unconscious because they have the same distant ancestors.

5. Jung suggested that people tend to interpret and use experiences in similar ways because of the existence of archetypes—inherted tendencies to perceive and act on things in particular ways. Archetypes in the collective unconscious are roughly analogous to complexes in the personal unconscious, except that whereas complexes are individual, archetypes are shared.

6. Jung believed that certain archetypes are particularly important in people's lives, namely, (a) persona—the part of our personality that we show the world; (b) shadow—the darker part of us, the part that embraces what we view as frightening, hateful, and even evil about ourselves; (c) anima—the feminine side of man's personality, which shows tenderness, caring, compassion, and warmth toward others, yet which is largely irrational and based on emotions; (d) animus—the masculine side of a woman's personality; the more rational and logical side of the woman.

C. The ego psychology of Erik Erikson

1. Erik Erikson helped shift the emphasis in psychological thinking from the id to the ego. Unlike Sigmund Freud, Erikson saw the ego as a source of energy in itself, not as dependent on the id for its psychic energy.

2. Erikson viewed the ego as the main fount from which we establish our individual identity, synthesizing the effects of our past and of our anticipated future.

D. The interpersonal theory of Harry Stack Sullivan

1. Harry Stack Sullivan believed that interpersonal relationships are the key to personality. According to his view, the whole construct of personality has no meaning outside a social context.

2. Thus, whereas other neo-Freudian theorists tended to see personality as developing from within, Sullivan emphasized how it also develops from without.

E. The psychoanalytic theory of Karen Horney

1. Karen Horney believed that cultural rather than biological variables are the fundamental basis for the development of the personality.

2. The essential concept in Horney's theory is basic anxiety, a feeling of isolation and helplessness in a world conceived as being potentially hostile, due to the competitiveness of modern culture.

3. Horney believed that we can allay anxiety by showing affection and submissiveness, which move us toward other people; by striving for power, prestige, and possession, which move us away from other people; or by withdrawing from people altogether.

F. The humanistic psychoanalysis of Erich Fromm

1. Erich Fromm suggested that people are often frightened by the idea of freedom, and seek to escape from it in various ways.

2. Through authoritarianism, people give up freedom in exchange for fusing with some authority figure who has a strength they feel they lack. Through destructiveness, they may fight against their anxiety by destroying the people from whom they feel isolated. Through conformity, they abandon their individuality to become like others.
G. Object-relations theory

1. According to object-relations theory, instinctual energy is invested in particular objects, which are mental representations of people such as the mother.

2. In this theory, investments in other people are more than just outlets for the satisfaction of instincts. Some of these object relations provide structure for the self. People who develop successful object relations generally become emotionally stable, whereas those who do not are at risk for mental disorders.

20.4. Psychodynamic Assessment

A. Psychodynamic assessment draws its theoretical bases from psychodynamic theories of personality. Some of the tests that have been used are called projective tests, in that they encourage individuals to project their unconscious or preconscious personality characteristics and conflicts into their responses to the tests.

1). The Rorschach Inkblot Test, originally devised by Hermann Rorschach in 1921, presents examinees with a set of 10 symmetrical inkblots, each printed on a separate card. Five of the blots are in black, white, and shades of gray, the other five in color. Examinees are asked to describe what they see in the inkblots. As the inkblots do not show anything in particular, the responses are taken as indications of a person’s psychological makeup.

2). The Thematic Apperception Test (TAT), created by Henry Murray, consists of a set of pictures of scenes; the individual being tested is asked to characterize what has led up to the scene in the picture, what is happening in the picture, and what will happen. Scoring is in terms of the hero; the hero’s motives, actions, and feelings; the forces in the hero’s environment that act on the hero; the outcomes of the story; the types of environmental stimuli that impinge on people in the story; and the interests and sentiments that appear in the story.

B. Others of the tests are objective tests, meaning that administration of the test follows a uniform, standardized procedure, and the scoring is done in a uniform and standardized way.

1). A well-known example of an objective test of personality is the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI). This test consists of 550 items covering a wide range of topics. Subjects answer each of the items as true or false. The MMPI consists of 10 clinical scales and 4 special (validity) scales. These scales are shown in Table 20.2.

2). Although the MMPI has recently been revised, this test, like all others, must be interpreted with caution. For example, people’s answering what they are like in a paper-and-pencil test does not guarantee that their answers represent what they are really like. At the same time, the MMPI has been widely used as a diagnostic instrument, so that there is a wealth of information available regarding how it can be optimally used.

20.5. Humanistic and Existential Paradigms

Humanistic views are oriented toward humans, human connections with one another, human concerns, and secular human values. Humanists view people as future-oriented and purposeful in their actions. To a large extent, we can create our own lives and determine our own destinies.

A. The self-theory of Carl Rogers

1. One of the most well-known humanist theorists was Carl Rogers, who took a person-centered approach to personality. In Rogers’s self-theory, reality is what the self defines as being reality, not an unknowable objective set of things and events outside the self.

2. The self-concept comprises all aspects of the self that the person perceives, whether or not these perceptions are accurate or are shared by others. In addition, each person has an ideal self, those aspects that the person would like to embody. The greater the correspondence between the real and the ideal self, the happier a person will be.

3. Rogers believed that a self-actualized person who fully reaches his or her potential has five characteristics: (a) constantly growing and evolving; (b) open to experience, avoiding of defensiveness, and accepting experiences as opportunities for learning; (c) trusting of themselves and seeking guidance of others, but realizing
TABLE 20.2. Scales of the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Possible interpretations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Validity Scales</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>Corresponds to number of items left unanswered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lies</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>Lies or is highly conventional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Exaggerates complaints or answers items haphazardly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correction</td>
<td>K</td>
<td>Denies problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical Scales</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypochondriasis</td>
<td>Hs</td>
<td>Has bodily concerns and complaints</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depression</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Is depressed, guilty; has feelings of guilt and helplessness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hysteria</td>
<td>Hy</td>
<td>Reacts to stress by developing physical symptoms; lacks insight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychopathic deviate</td>
<td>Pd</td>
<td>Is immoral, in conflict with the law; has stormy relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masculinity/ femininity</td>
<td>Mf</td>
<td>Shows interests and behavior patterns considered stereotypical of the opposite gender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paranoia</td>
<td>Pa</td>
<td>Is suspicious and resentful, highly cynical about human nature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychasthenia</td>
<td>Pt</td>
<td>Is anxious, worried, high-strung</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schizophrenia</td>
<td>Sc</td>
<td>Is confused, disorganized, disoriented; has bizarre ideas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypomania</td>
<td>Ma</td>
<td>Is energetic, restless, active, easily bored</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social introversion</td>
<td>Si</td>
<td>Is introverted, timid, shy; lacks self-confidence</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

that they have to make their own decisions; (d) having harmonious relations with others and realizing that they do not need to be well-liked by everyone; and (e) living fully in the present rather than dwelling on the past or living only for the future.

B. The holistic-dynamic theory of Abraham Maslow

1. Abraham Maslow also proposed a humanistic theory of personality. Within a hierarchical theory of needs, the highest level is the need for self-actualization.

2. Maslow described self-actualized people as ones who fully use all of their potentials and make the most of who they can be. They have experienced love and have a full sense of their value and self-worth. They have a keen perception of reality and shun phoniness. They are ethical in their dealings with others, and they see problems for what they are rather than only in relation to themselves.

C. The existentialists

Existentialist views are focused on the isolated existence of human individuals in an indifferent (neither divinely nor demonically designed) world. Existentialism implies that each individual is personally responsible for his or her own choices, and must take personal responsibility for the choices made and for their outcomes.

D. The existential psychology of Rollo May

1. Rollo May proposed an existentialist view emphasizing the importance of authenticity and achieving our full potential.

2. At some point, though, each of us must realize the threat to our own existence imposed by death, and realize that, in large measure, it is death that gives meaning to life.
20.6. The Cognitive–Behavioral Paradigm

The cognitive–behavioral paradigm emphasizes how people think, how they behave, and how the two interrelate in the formation and expression of personality.

A. Kurt Lewin’s field theory

An early antecedent of this approach was the field theory of Kurt Lewin, which viewed life as being largely played out on a field, much like a playing field in sports. Lewin suggested that people operate in a life space, which is the sum of all the forces that act on a person at a particular time. This life space can be divided into various regions. Some people have thicker, and other people, thinner boundaries between the regions, as between work and home life.

B. The social-learning theory of Julian Rotter

1. Julian Rotter has suggested that individuals’ perceptions of the environment lead naturally to who they become. In particular, people differ in their perceived locus of control, or where they see control of their lives as coming from. Rotter has distinguished between two main loci of control.

2. Internal people see a strong causal relationship between what they do and the consequences of those actions. Internals tend to take personal responsibility for what happens to them. Taken to an extreme, an internal person would tend to misattribute causality to internal rather than to external sources.

3. External people tend to believe that the causes of behavioral consequences are in the environment. Taken to an extreme, an external would tend to misattribute causality to external rather than to internal causes.

4. Rotter constructed an Internal–External (I–E) Control Scale, which has been widely studied and validated. The scale measures the extent to which people opt for internal versus external views of locus of control.

C. The social-cognitive theory of Albert Bandura

1. Albert Bandura’s theory addresses the interaction between how we think and how we act. His model of reciprocal determinism attributes human functioning to an interaction among behavior, personal, and environmental variables.

2. Bandura places special emphasis on the importance of self-efficacy, that is, our feelings of competence to do things. Feelings of self-efficacy seem actually to lead to our being better able to accomplish that which we wish to accomplish.

D. Other cognitively oriented theories

1. Hazel Markus has underscored in her work the importance of self-schemas, or people’s cognitive frameworks for knowledge about themselves and others. According to this view, personality can be seen as in large part the sum of a person’s schemas and the interactions among them.

2. Nancy Cantor and John Kihlstrom have noted the importance of social intelligence to personal functioning. According to their view, people who are more flexible in their interactions with other people and who are able to see more options for how to interact with others are more highly socially intelligent and more effective in many aspects of their lives.

20.7. The Personal Construct Theory of George Kelly

A. George Kelly proposed a theory of personal constructs—characteristic ways in which we see some things as being similar and other things as being dissimilar.

B. All of our constructs are bipolar, meaning that they are construed in terms of dimensions with opposites at the extremes (such as happy–sad).

C. According to Kelly, we create and use these constructs to help us deal with future events, and in particular, to make sense of the world as we need to confront it.
20.8. The Trait-Based Paradigm

A. Trait theories

Traits are consistent attributes that characterize what a person is like. They are usually viewed as being due to a combination of heredity (nature) and environment (nurture). There are two basic kinds of trait theories.

1. Nomothetic theories postulate that people all share a common set of traits and that people differ only in the extent to which they have each trait.

2. Idiographic theories suggest that each person may have his or her own unique set of traits that is not shared with other people.

B. The factor-analytic theory of Raymond Cattell

1. Raymond Cattell has proposed a nomothetic theory according to which there are 16 primary personality factors. These factors, each corresponding to a trait, are measured by Cattell’s Sixteen Personality-Factor Questionnaire. The scale also measures several other traits that Cattell views as possibly but not certainly identified traits of personality.

2. In his theory, Cattell distinguishes between surface traits and source traits. The former are what we observe in people during our day-to-day interactions with them, whereas the latter are the fundamental sources of individual differences that underlie what we observe.

3. Examples of traits in Cattell’s theory are ego strength (Factor C), submissiveness versus dominance (Factor E), superego strength (Factor G), and naiveté versus shrewdness (Factor N).

C. The theory of Hans Eysenck

1. Hans Eysenck has proposed a nomothetic theory that comprises just three major personality traits.

2. The first trait, extroversion, characterizes people who are sociable, lively, and outgoing. Contrasting with extroverts are introverts, who are more reserved, quiet, and withdrawn. The second trait, neuroticism, characterizes people who are moody, nervous, irritable, and subject to sudden and apparently unpredictable mood swings. In contrast, emotionally stable people tend to be less fretful, more uniform in their behavior, and less subject to sudden mood swings. The third trait, psychoticism, characterizes people who are solitary, uncaring of others, lacking in feeling and empathy, and insensitive; they are often quite detached from other people in their interpersonal relationships.

D. The “big five”

1. The “big-five” theory of personality posits that if one reviews all of the trait studies that have been done, five factors of personality consistently emerge from the analysis.

2. These five factors (or traits) are (a) neuroticism—nervous, emotionally unpredictable, tense, and worried; (b) extroversion—sociable, outgoing, fun-loving, and interested in interacting with other people; (c) openness—imaginative, intelligent, curious, artistic, and aesthetically sensitive; (d) agreeableness—good-natured, easy to get along with, empathetic toward others, and friendly; and (e) conscientiousness—reliable, hard-working, punctual, and concerned about doing things right.

E. Gordon Allport’s idiographic theory of personality

1. Gordon Allport suggested that nomothetic theories do not do justice to the full range of human individuality. He proposed that although there may indeed be traits that are common across individuals, there are also traits that are unique to each individual.

2. Allport suggested three kinds of traits that are unique to individuals. A cardinal trait is a single trait that is so dominant in a person’s personality that almost everything the person does somehow relates back to it. Not everyone has a cardinal trait, but all people do have central traits, which are the most salient traits in people’s dispositions. Each person has roughly 5 to 10 of these traits. Secondary traits are those that have some bearing on behavior, but that are not particularly central to what people do.
20.9. The Interactionist Approach

A. Some theorists have criticized trait approaches as being too centered within the individual. For example, Walter Mischel has argued that situations play a much more important role in people’s behavior than trait theories would indicate, and moreover, that the evidence for interpersonal consistency in personality is fairly meager. Mischel, Nancy Cantor, David Magnusson, and others have argued in particular that it is important to look at person-situation interactions, that is, how a given person functions in a given situation. The underlying idea is that people may respond differently to different situations.

B. Research by Daryl Bem and his colleagues has suggested that people actually differ in the extent to which they are consistent, and that they may be differentially consistent for different traits. Thus, traits can at best help you understand how some of the people act some of the time.

Summary

1. Personality consists of relatively permanent traits, dispositions, or characteristics within an individual that give some measure of consistency to a person’s behavior.

2. Freud’s psychodynamic paradigm of personality stressed the importance of the structure of the mind. Freud proposed three basic structures: the id, the ego, and the superego. The id, guided by the pleasure principle, operates by primary-process thinking, and is largely instinctual, impulsive, and seeking of immediate gratification. The ego, guided by the reality principle, operates by secondary-process thinking, and is more rational in its thinking. The superego is guided by the idealistic principle, and like the id, is not very rational in its thinking.

3. Freud distinguished among a number of defense mechanisms that people use to protect themselves from unacceptable thoughts and impulses. These defense mechanisms include denial, repression, projection, displacement, sublimation, reaction formation, rationalization, regression, and fixation.

4. Freud’s theory was based largely on his case studies of individual patients. Freud also made extensive analyses of dreaming, distinguishing between the manifest content and the latent content of dreams.

5. The neo-Freudians—including Adler, Jung, Erikson, Sullivan, Horney, and Fromm—originally based their theories on Freud’s but then developed theories of their own that stressed the role of the ego and of conscious thinking more than did Freud’s theory. Adler’s theory posited the inferiority complex, Erikson’s the importance of the ego rather than the id, Sullivan’s the importance of interpersonal relations, Horney’s the importance of basic anxiety, and Fromm’s the importance of people’s attempts to escape from freedom.

6. Object-relations theories consider how people conceptualize their relationships with other people.

7. Projective tests require examinees to project their unconscious and preconscious thoughts and impulses into test responses. These tests include the Rorschach Inkblot Test and the Thematic Apperception Test. Objective tests, such as the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory, are uniformly administered and interpreted.

8. Humanistic theories oppose the psychodynamic paradigm by emphasizing individual responsibility and an appreciation of human experience. Existentialist theories suggest that we must each make our own choices, take personal responsibility for these choices, and create the meaning in our own lives.

9. Carl Rogers’s person-centered approach emphasizes the importance of the self-concept, the ideal self, and the relation between the two. The more a person’s self-concept corresponds to his or her ideal self, the better off psychologically the person will be.

10. Abraham Maslow emphasized the importance of self-actualization in the development of a healthy personality.

11. Rollo May, an existentialist theorist, viewed people as trying to ward off a sense of alienation in an uncaring world.
12. The **cognitive-behavioral** paradigm of personality emphasizes the roles of thought, behavior, and their interaction in personality. Kurt Lewin suggested that people live their lives in a **life space** that can have more or less permeable boundaries. Julian Rotter has distinguished between people with an **internal** versus an **external locus of control**. The former tend to attribute causality to themselves; the latter, to the environment. Albert Bandura has emphasized the importance of **self-efficacy** in the achievement of one’s personal goals.

13. **Schema-based** theories of personality are heavily cognitive, emphasizing the individual’s schemas about him- or herself as causes of behavior.

14. George Kelly’s theory of **personal constructs** suggests that people form their own sets of characteristic ways of seeing some things as being similar and other things as being dissimilar. The personal constructs we call upon in given situations determine our behavior in those situations.

15. **Traits** are stable sources of individual differences that characterize a person. Both nature and nurture influence the development of traits.

16. **Nomothetic** trait theories suggest a common set of traits across individuals, whereas **idiographic** trait theories suggest that people may have different sets of traits. The two types of theories need not be mutually exclusive: For example, Gordon Allport proposed that we have both kinds of traits.

17. Among the more well-known nomothetic theories of personality are Raymond Cattell’s, Hans Eysenck’s, and the “**big-five**” theory. Eysenck proposed three basic personality traits: **extroversion**, **neuroticism**, and **psychoticism**. The big-five theory postulates traits of **neuroticism**, **extroversion**, **openness**, **agreeableness**, and **conscientiousness**.

18. Some theorists, such as Walter Mischel, David Magnusson, and Daryl Bem, have emphasized the importance of understanding personality in terms of **person-situation interactions**. In other words, we need to understand how people react in particular situations, rather than trying to paint them in very broad terms. Mischel has been especially critical of trait theories, arguing that the evidence for interpersonal consistency of the kind proposed by trait theories is quite weak.

### Key Terms

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Solved Problems

A. Select the best response option from among the four that are given.

1. Psychodynamic determinism refers to
   A. behavior that is ruled by forces over which we have no control.
   B. behavior that is preconscious in origin.
   C. id impulses that will forever remain unfulfilled.
   D. the delimiting characteristic of the superego.

2. According to Freudian dream terminology, condensation refers to
   A. repressed urges that find disguised outlets for expression.
   B. the bizarre, irrational quality of dreams.
   C. the process whereby unacceptable thoughts or impulses are combined into a single dream image.
   D. the process whereby one thing may stand for another in dream interpretation.

3. Archetypes are
   A. shared, inherited tendencies to perceive and act on things in certain ways.
   B. dark and forbidden instinctual urges.
   C. those parts of the unconscious that are unique to each individual.
   D. clusters of unconscious thought.

4. Rogers’s self-theory assumes that
   A. humans are isolated individuals in an indifferent world.
   B. basic needs must be satisfied before “higher needs” are addressed.
   C. the self is the focal point from which reality is construed.
   D. individuals see problems and difficulties only in terms of themselves.

5. According to Julian Rotter’s social-learning theory, a primary factor that differentiates individuals is in how they
   A. devote the majority of their psychic energy.
   B. create boundaries among the numerous forces that act on their lives.
   C. show their sociability.
   D. view their locus of control.

6. In his personal-construct theory, George Kelly holds that we have a characteristic way of seeing things in terms of how similar or dissimilar they are to each other. We do this, primarily, in order to
   A. reduce cognitive dissonance.
   B. engender feelings of competence in our lives.
   C. make sense of the world as we confront it.
   D. reduce primal anxiety.

7. Idiographic theories of personality suggest that there is(are)
   A. a pool of common attributes that each individual has more or less of.
   B. situational variables, which are more important than personality variables in personality formation.
   C. unique traits among individuals.
   D. shared developmental patterns of personality.

8. The “big five” theory of personality includes all the following factors except
   A. altruism.
   B. neuroticism.
   C. extroversion.
   D. conscientiousness.
9. Interactionist approaches to personality assume that
   A. people show their characteristic traits across similar situations.
   B. neither the situation nor the person alone can be the sole influence on behavior.
   C. individuals show consistent behavioral patterns across situations.
   D. situations ultimately determine how a given individual will act.

B. Answer each of the following questions with the appropriate word or phrase.

10. Adherents of the ______ of personality are concerned with the relationship between how people think and how they act.

11. That part of a dream that deals with events in the dream as we experience them is referred to as the ______ content.

12. Psychodynamic theorists view the mind as organized at two basic levels—the ______ and the ______.

13. Attributes that are consistent in an individual are referred to as ______.

14. According to psychodynamic theory, the ______ mediates between the id and the external world.

15. One defense mechanism, called ______, is characterized by various forbidden thoughts and impulses being attributed to another person rather than to the self.

16. Alfred Adler believed that a primary motivator in our lives is our striving for ______ and competence.

17. Karen Horney has proposed a psychological construct, ______, a condition of isolation and helplessness brought about by a competitive world.

18. ______ theory holds that we invest psychic energy in other individuals who may be mental representations of our primary caregivers.

19. Psychodynamic assessment often involves use of ______, which are designed to assess individuals' personality characteristics and conflicts via their responses to ambiguous test questions.

20. One trait in Eysenck's theory of personality, termed ______, refers to an individual's propensity to be solitary, lacking in feeling, and insensitive.

21. ______, proposed by Kurt Lewin, views personality as resulting from the interaction of the various forces that operate within an individual's life space.

22. The ______ is an objective test that is frequently used as a diagnostic tool to assess personality characteristics of clinical subjects.

23. ______ refers to how feelings of our own competence can affect our performance.

C. Answer T (true) or F (false) to each of the following statements.

24. According to Maslow, the greater the agreement between real and ideal selves, the happier the individual will be.

25. A central tenet of the psychodynamic view of personality is conflict, whereby diverse sources of psychic energy are in opposition to one another.

26. The id uses primary-process thought as a way of reconciling instinctual urges with the demands of the environment.
27. Jung distinguished between the personal and the collective unconscious.

28. Freud used controlled experimental studies to substantiate his theoretical claims.

29. Both Freud and Jung theorized that the mind is divided into unconscious and conscious parts, yet differed in their views as to the structure and constitution of the unconscious.

30. In Jung’s view, the personal unconscious represents aspects of the mind that are inherited by past generations and that are not easily accessible.

31. Erik Erikson believed that our personality comes from our interactions with other people—that is, our personality develops outside ourselves.

32. Murray’s TAT is an example of a widely administered objective test used to differentiate individuals across a given set of personality attributes.

33. Individuals who are socially intelligent are flexible in their interactions with other people, and generally see more options for interacting with them.

34. Existential psychologists underscore people’s ability to create meaning as a fundamental factor contributing to their mental health.

35. Individuals who have an internal locus of control tend to be neurotic and self-centered.

36. Cattell’s Sixteen Personality-Factor Questionnaire uses an idiographic approach to personality assessment.

37. According to Allport, some individuals have cardinal traits, which are so dominant that much of their behavior stems from them.

**Answers**

1. A; 2. C; 3. A; 4. C; 5. D; 6. C; 7. C; 8. A; 9. B; 10. cognitive-behavioral paradigm; 11. manifest; 12. conscious, unconscious; 13. traits; 14. ego; 15. projection; 16. superiority; 17. basic anxiety; 18. Object-relations; 19. projective tests; 20. psychoticism; 21. Field theory; 22. MMPI; 23. Self-efficacy; 24. T; 25. T; 26. F (primary-process thought is a form of thought that is irrational, instinctual, and out of touch with reality); 27. T; 28. F (one criticism of Freud was that he relied too heavily on case studies and did not use controlled experimental studies to validate his theory); 29. T; 30. F (the personal unconscious contains memories and unique experiences, that are below the level of consciousness, but that may become conscious through therapeutic manipulations); 31. F (this statement describes Sullivan’s interpersonal theory. Erikson believed that much of our personality derives from the ego); 32. F (the TAT is a projective test, which is designed to assess individuals’ motivational and other needs); 33. T; 34. T; 35. F (internally oriented individuals believe much of the control of their lives comes from themselves. They need not be and usually are not neurotic); 36. F (Cattell’s theory is nomothetic—that is, it assumes all individuals share common attributes, which they may have to a greater or lesser extent); 37. T.