

Clinical Psych Recitation 1: Personality

Personality is enduring patterns, consistent over time, inner experience, and outer behavior.

Freud's theory: Psychodynamic Perspective

- Structure of the mind.
 - o Unconscious (the ID): self-protection, basic drives, and defense mechanisms.
 - o The root of problems in living: the conflict comes when the unconscious and the conscious meet.
- These 3 systems determine the strengths. They conflict with each other and this occurs at an unconscious level.
 - o Id: basic instinctual drives (pleasure principle)
 - o Ego: rational thoughts (reality principle)
 - o Superego: moral limits (our conscience)
- Defense mechanisms:
 - o Repression: keeping thoughts or memories that would be too threatening to acknowledge from awareness.
 - o Denial: refusing to acknowledge external realities or emotions.
 - o Projection: attributing one's own unacknowledged feelings or impulses onto others.
 - o Reaction formation: turning unacceptable feelings or impulses into their opposites.
 - o Sublimation: converting sexual or aggressive impulses into socially acceptable activities.
 - o Rationalization: explaining away actions in a seemingly logical way to avoid uncomfortable feelings, particularly guilt or shame.
- Criticisms toward Freud's theory: there is an excessive focus on conflict, sex, and instincts. It is sexist towards women. It has an exclusive focus on childhood. It was non-parsimonious.
- Contributions from Freud's theory: recognized the unconscious, biology, and instincts influence on psychology. Early childhood experience influences how we grow up and who we become.

Humanistic Theories of Personality: a theory of personality that emphasizes people's potential and highlights each person's consciousness, free will, and other special human qualities. This was a reaction to Freud's theory and it focused on striving for fulfillment and self-improvement and capacity for positive contributions to society.

- Abraham Maslow (Hierarchy of Needs): he believed in self-actualization or the need of humans to fulfill their full potential. Frustration tolerance is built through having one's needs met. Frustration tolerance is decreased when you don't meet your needs.
- Carl Rogers (Client-Centered Therapy):

- Self-concept: a pattern of perception that can be used to characterize an individual and remains consistent over time.
- Unconditional Positive Regard: accepting a person without negative judgment of a person's basic worth.
- Client-Centered Therapy: working with clients to create an atmosphere of openness, honesty, and absence of judgment, regardless of the specific type of psychological problems the person was experiencing. It promotes awareness and personal free will.

Positive Psychology: the study of positive experience and healthy mental functioning. This is focused on questions of life. Things that help:

- Three Good Things: write down 3 good things you enjoyed in the previous day and then why it happened to you.
- Gratitude Letter: write a letter to someone who has positively impact your life about how they bettered you then meet and read this letter to them.
- Discover Character Strengths: discover a trait that is strong for you and then use it every day for a week in service to others.

Genes, Traits, and Personalities

- In behavioral genetics, personality psychologists investigate the correlation between traits in monozygotic and dizygotic twins. The average genetic component of personality is between .40 and .60. Shared environment must be ruled out.
- Traits: relatively stable disposition to behave in a particular and consistent way. Personality can be measured by self-reports or other's reports and factor analysis.
- Costa and McCrae: the Big Five or five-factor model.
 - Openness to Experience: fantasy, aesthetics, feelings, actions, ideas, and values.
 - Conscientiousness: competence, order, achievement striving, self-discipline, and deliberation.
 - Extraversion: warmth, gregariousness, assertiveness, activity, excitement seeking, and positive emotions.
 - Agreeableness: trust, straightforwardness, compliance, modesty, and tender-mindedness.
 - Neuroticism: anxiety, angry hostility, depression, self-consciousness, impulsiveness, and vulnerability.
- Contributions of Trait Theory: traits are measurable and empirically tested. This theory answers questions about heritability and the consistency of personality.
- Limitations of Trait Theory: it is not connected to theoretical assumptions. It relies on self-report measurement. There is a subjectivity of factor analysis. It does not take in to account the environment.

Gender and Culture Differences in personality:

- Gender Differences: women are socially attuned and have emotional intelligence. Men decide based on abstract ideas and aggression.
 - o Social role theory: gender differences are due to the way we are socialized to particular gender role expectations.
- Cultural Differences: collectivist cultures are higher in agreeableness and individualist cultures are high in extroversion and openness. How we describe ourselves plays a role in this.
 - o Collectivists say their social role, job, or family member.
 - o Individualists say personality trait.
- Western Cultures are more independent. There is an emphasis on self as a unique entity. Dispositions explain behavior. Traits are consistent across situations. Individual is responsible for their actions.
- Eastern Cultures are more collectivist. People define themselves as a part of a collective. The self should adjust to meet the norms. Behavior is explained by the context. Connection to others is essential. Uniqueness isn't desired.

Measuring Personality

- Personality inventories:
 - o Self-report: series of answers to a questionnaire that asks people to indicate the extent to which sets of statements or adjectives accurately describe their own behavior or mental states.
 - o Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory: well-researched clinical questionnaire used to assess personality and psychological problems.
- Projective techniques: standard series of ambiguous stimuli designed to elicit unique responses that reveal inner aspects of an individuals' personality.
 - o Rorschach Inkblot Test: individual interpretations of the meaning of a set of unstructured inkblots are analyzed to identify a respondent's inner feelings and interpret his or her personality structure.
 - o Thematic Apperception Test: respondents reveal underlying motives, concerns, and the way they use the social world through the stories they make up about ambiguous pictures of people.