

## Chapter 12: Personality

- 1) **What is Personality?**
  - a. Whatever makes for consistency in our behavior
  - b. Whatever is responsible for individual differences in our behavior
- 2) **Three Perspectives on Personality**
  - a. Psychoanalytic: Unconscious conflicts between pleasure seeking impulses and social restraints
  - b. Humanistic: Their conscious feelings about themselves in light of their experiences and needs
  - c. Trait: Their genetically-influenced traits
- 3) **Psychoanalytic Perspective**
  - a. Three guiding premises:
    - i. Unconscious Motivations: People are often unaware of the motives behind their behavior
    - ii. Repression: Unacceptable motives and impulses are kept out of conscious awareness by the use of defense mechanisms
    - iii. Early Childhood Development: Adult personality is shaped by how we resolve psychosexual conflicts in infancy and childhood
- 4) **Freud's Personality Structures**
  - a. The Id:
    - i. A reservoir of unconscious psychic energy that strives to satisfy basic sexual, aggressive, and survival needs (libido)
    - ii. Operates on the "pleasure principle"
  - b. The Ego:
    - i. Balances the demands of the Id, the Superego and reality.
    - ii. Operates in the "reality principle"
  - c. The Superego:
    - i. Represents internalized ideals for how one ought to behave
    - ii. Strives for perfection
- 5) **Defense Mechanisms**
  - a. Defense mechanisms protect the ego and reduce anxiety by unconsciously distorting reality
  - b. Freud identified a number of defense mechanisms such as
    - i. Repression: thoughts and feelings are blocked from the consciousness
    - ii. Regression: retreating to an earlier stage of development
    - iii. Reaction Formation: act the opposite of whatever you're ashamed of
    - iv. Projection: project your own issues onto somebody else
    - v. Rationalization: come up with a good way to justify something bad
    - vi. Displacement: redirect impulses to a safer outlet
- 6) **Freud's Psychosexual Stage**

- a. Oral (0-18 Months)
    - i. Pleasure focused around mouth: sucking, biting, chewing
    - ii. If fixated at this stage, adult personality would be **Orally Fixed**: excessive smoking, eating, nail biting, sarcasm
  - b. Anal (18-36 Months)
    - i. Pleasure is centered around bowel and bladder elimination
    - ii. If fixated at this stage, adult personality could be:
      - 1. **Anally retentive**: orderly, thrifty, stubborn (if parents were strict during this stage)
      - 2. **Anally expulsive**: messy, generous, lots of dirty humor (if parents were not as strict during this stage)
  - c. Phallic (3-6 Years)
    - i. Pleasure centered around the genitals
    - ii. If fixated at this stage, adult personality would be: self-centered, reckless
- 7) **Evaluating Freud's Theory**
- a. Based on observations of a small number of Viennese patients during the Victorian Era
  - b. Research supports SOME of Freud's ideas
    - i. Much of our behavior is unconsciously guided
    - ii. There is truth to some of Freud's defense mechanisms
  - c. Research doesn't support MOST of Freud's ideas
    - i. Personality development is a lifelong process, not confined in childhood
    - ii. Personality isn't linked to difficulties with "psychosexual" activities like weaning and toilet training
- 8) **The Humanistic Perspective**
- a. Focused on how healthy people strive to fulfill their potential
  - b. Focused on people's conscious thoughts about themselves, less of a focus on behavior or unconscious forces
  - c. Abraham Maslow & Carl Rogers
- 9) **Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs**
- a. Self-actualization, esteem, belongingness and love, safety, physiological
- 10) **Carl Rogers View**
- a. People can think of themselves in two ways
    - i. Actual Self: how a person currently thinks and feels about themselves
    - ii. Ideal Self: the kind of person you would ideally like to be
  - b. Self-actualization: is the process by which you become the ideal self
  - c. Others reactions to you are important
    - i. Conditional Positive Regard:
      - 1. When other people's love requires you to meet certain expectations, it is difficult to become your ideal self
    - ii. Unconditional Positive Regard:

1. When others love you unconditionally, you're free to pursue self-actualization

#### 11) Trait Perspective

- a. Describes personality in terms of traits, such as:

#### 12) Factor Analytic Approach

- a. Looks to see which traits tend to correlate together into a cluster
- b. Clusters are formed not only on the basis of statistical analysis, but any preexisting theory

#### 13) Trait Personality Scales

- a. Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI)
- b. Big Five Personality Factors:
  - i. Neuroticism (High: Anxious, Insecure. Low: Calm, Secure) Extraversion (High: Sociable, fun-loving. Low: Introverted) Openness (Creative, Curious. Low: Uncreative, conventional) Agreeableness, Conscientiousness (High: reliable)
- c. Big five traits are roughly 50% inheritable
  - i. Neuroticism and agreeableness are 41% inheritable
  - ii. Openness is 61% inheritable
- d. Upbringing (birth order) shapes personality too
  - i. First borns tend to be more conscientious than later-borns
  - ii. Later borns tend to be more open than first borns

#### 14) Does Personality Change?

- a. Yes but it's more likely to change before the age of 30 than after this age
- b. From late teens to age 30, people tend to become:
  - i. Less extraverted
  - ii. Less open to experience
  - iii. More conscientious and more agreeable
  - iv. Less neurotic (women only)
- c. After age 30, people tend to continue to become
  - i. More agreeable
  - ii. More open to experience (men only)