

Psychosexual Stages

- Each stage is a fixation
- Erogenous Zone – part of the body that has strong pleasure
- Resolve conflict between pleasure seeking/plain avoidance and reality
 - 0-18 months → oral
 - 18-36 months → anal
 - 3-6 years → phallic
 - 6 years-puberty → latency
 - puberty on → genital

Psychosexual Aspects

- Oedipus Complex – a boy's sexual desire toward his mother and feelings of jealousy and hatred for the rival father (causing guilt and fear)
- Electra Complex – "girl version" but Freud's thoughts were unclear
 - If you cannot resolve conflict, then fixate
- Identification – process where children incorporate parent's values into superegos, leading to gender identity
- Defense Mechanism – ego helps through distorting reality
- Repression – cornerstone of psychoanalytic theory; basic defense mechanism that banishes anxiety-arousing thoughts, feelings, and memories from consciousness
 - Repression is why we do not remember our childhood lust for the opposite sex parent
- Regression – defense mechanism in which an individual faced with anxiety retreats to a more infantile psychosexual stage, where some psychic energy remains fixated
 - A five year old regressing to thumb-sucking on the first day of kindergarten
- Reaction Formation – defense mechanism by which the ego unconsciously switches unacceptable impulses into their opposites; people may express feelings that are the opposite of their anxiety-arousing unconscious feelings
- Projection – defense mechanism by which people disguise their own threatening impulse by attributing them to others
 - A boy accuses his girlfriend of cheating because he has thought about another girl

- Rationalization – defense mechanism that offers self-justifying explanations in place of real, more threatening, unconscious reasons for one's actions
 - I do not need to vote because one voter does not make a difference
- Displacement – defense mechanism that shifts sexual or aggressive impulses toward a more acceptable or less threatening object or person; as when redirecting anger toward a safer outlet
 - A guy is angry at his boss, so he punches a wall
- Free Association – a method of exploring the “chain of thought” leading into unconscious, thereby “discovering” the source of internal conflicts
 - Person relaxes and says whatever comes to mind, no matter how trivial or embarrassing

Psychosexual Tests

- Projective Tests – people are thought to reveal their true feelings and thoughts when describing ambiguous stimuli; use ambiguous stimuli and ask subject to describe each stimulus; descriptions reveal key aspects of personality
 - Thematic Apperception Test (TAT)
 - Rorschach Inkblot Test – the most widely used projective test; set of 10 inkblots by Hermann Rorschach; identify people's inner feelings by analyzing their interpretations of the blots
 - Subjective, not reliable, not valid

Freud's Lasting Impact

- Childhood is important
- People develop in stages
- The unconscious mind

Criticisms

- Ideas are not testable, nor do they predict behavior
- Observations are not scientific
- Over-reliance on case studies of disturbed individuals
- Biased against women
- It is not all about sex

- First five years are not as important as later in life
- Ego and conscious thought are more important in id
- Too much emphasis on biology and the pleasure organs
- Not enough social or culture aspects