What Is Personality?

- **Personality** is “an individual’s unique constellation of consistent behavioral traits”.

- A **personality trait** is “a durable disposition to behave in a particular way in a variety of situations”.
  - Common personality traits include:
    - honest
    - moody
    - Impulsive
    - friendly
Psychodynamic Perspectives

- **Psychodynamic** theories consist of a group of theories that view personality and behavior in terms of the dynamics of driving forces of personality and development such as desires, anxieties, and defenses.

- All **focus on unconscious mental forces that shape our personalities** and the inevitable clash between conflicting forces (impulses/inhibition; individuals/society)

- Well known psychodynamic theorists include:
  - Freud
  - Jung
  - Adler
  - Erikson
Freud’s Psychoanalytic theory

Based on three main assumptions:

1. Personality is governed by unconscious forces that we cannot control.
2. Childhood experiences play a significant role in determining adult personality.
3. Personality is shaped by the manner in which children cope with sexual urges.
Freud argued that personality is divided into three structures:

1. The **id** is “the primitive, instinctive component of personality that operates according to the **pleasure principle**”.

2. The **ego** is “the decision-making component of personality that operates according to the **reality principle**”.

3. The **superego** is “the moral component of personality that incorporates social standards about what represents right and wrong”.

The id, ego and superego are arranged into different layers of awareness including:

- **Conscious**: Contact with outside world
- **Preconscious**: Material just beneath the surface of awareness
- **Unconscious**: Difficult to retrieve material; well below the surface of awareness
Psychodynamic Perspectives

Freud believed that behavior is the result of ongoing internal conflict among the id, ego and superego.

Conflicts stemming from sexual and aggressive urges are especially significant.

Such conflicts arouse anxiety and we use defense mechanisms – “largely unconscious reactions that protect a person from painful emotions such as anxiety and guilt”.

Personality development:

- Freud believed that the **basic elements of adult personality are in place by age five** and result from the outcome of five **psychosexual stages**.

- In each stage, children must cope with distinct immature sexual urges that influence adult personality.

- **Fixation** results if the child fails to move forward from one stage to another, and is usually caused by excessive gratification, or frustration of needs at a particular stage.
Jung’s Analytical Psychology

Jung also focused on the role of the unconscious in shaping personality—he described an unconscious comprised of two layers:

1. **The personal unconscious** (Mostly Ego, contains one of two attitudes—extroverted or introverted), and
2. **The collective unconscious** – this contains traces of memories, shared by the entire human race, inherited from our ancestors (Four main archetypes- Persona; Shadow; anima/animus; Self)
For Jung, the goal of psychic development is for the individual to discover their wholeness and uniqueness.

The final goal of self realization is to:

- **Individuate**- grow in consciousness about self
- **Transcend**- unite opposing trends in personality
- **Actualize**- Act in concert with true self
Jung’s Typology- The Meyers-Briggs

Jung proposed the existence of two dichotomous pairs of cognitive functions:

- The "rational" (judging) functions: thinking and feeling
- The "irrational" (perceiving) functions: sensing and intuition

Jung went on to suggest that these functions are expressed in either an introverted or extraverted form.
Adler’s Individual Psychology

• Adler believed that the most important human drive is not sexuality, but our drive for superiority.
• Adler stated that we use compensation - “efforts to overcome imagined or real inferiorities by developing one’s abilities”.
• If we are unsuccessful, we may develop an inferiority complex – “exaggerated feelings of weakness and inadequacy”.
• Adler also believed that birth order may contribute to personality.
Psychodynamic theory has also been criticized on the following grounds:

1. **Poor testability** – it is too vague to subject to scientific tests.

2. **Inadequate evidence** – the theories depend too much on case studies of clients whose recollections may have been distorted to fit the theory.

3. **Sexism** – the theories have a male-oriented bias and do not adequately address women’s issues.
ERIK ERIKSON- Psychosocial Developmental Model

Eight stages through which a healthily developing human should pass from infancy to late adulthood

- In each stage the person confronts, and hopefully masters, new challenges.
- Each stage builds on the successful completion of earlier stages.
- The challenges of stages not successfully completed may be expected to reappear as problems in the future.

To Erikson, identity refers to having a relatively clear and stable sense of who one is in the larger society
Infancy: Trust vs. Mistrust (0 to 12-18 months)

Psychosocial Crisis: Trust vs. Mistrust Virtue: Hope

The first stage centers around the infant's basic needs being met by the parents. The infant depends on the parents, especially the mother, for food, sustenance, and comfort. The child's relative understanding of the world and society come from the parents and their interaction with the child. If the parents expose the child to warmth, regularity, and dependable affection, the infant's view of the world will be one of trust. Should the parents fail to provide a secure environment and to meet the child's basic need a sense of mistrust will result.
Psychosocial Crisis: Autonomy vs. Shame, Doubt

As the child gains control over eliminative functions and motor abilities, they begin to explore their surroundings. The parents still provide a strong base of security from which the child can venture out to assert their will. The parents' patience and encouragement helps foster autonomy in the child. Highly restrictive parents, however, are more likely to instill the child with a sense of doubt and reluctance to attempt new challenges.
Preschool: Initiative vs. Guilt (3 to 6 years)

Psychosocial Crisis: Initiative vs. Guilt

Initiative adds to autonomy, the child is learning to master the world around him or her, learning basic skills and principles of physics; things fall to the ground, not up; round things roll, how to zip and tie, count and speak with ease. At this stage the child wants to begin and complete his or her own actions for a purpose.

Guilt is a new emotion and is confusing to the child; he or she may feel guilty over things which are not logically guilt producing, and he or she will feel guilt when his or her initiative does not produce the desired results.
Childhood: Industry vs. Inferiority (6 years to 11)

Psychosocial Crisis: Industry vs. Inferiority

- Ego quality: Competence (Related Elements in Society: division of labor). To bring a productive situation to completion is an aim which gradually supersedes the whims and wishes of play. The fundamentals of technology are developed.

Allen and Marotz (2003) also list some perceptual cognitive developmental traits specific for this age group: Children understand the concepts of space and time, in more logical, practical ways, beginning to grasp, gain better understanding of cause and effect and understand calendar time.
Teenage: Identity vs. Role Confusion (12 to 18 years)

Psychosocial Crisis: Identity vs. Role Confusion
Main Question: "Who am I?"

Young Adulthood: Intimacy vs. Isolation (19 to 34 years)

Main Question: "Am I loved and wanted?"

Erikson also argues that "Intimacy has a counterpart: Distantiation: the readiness to isolate and if necessary, to destroy those forces and people whose essence seems dangerous to our own, and whose territory seems to encroach on the extent of one's intimate relations"
Middle Adulthood: Generativity vs. Stagnation (35 to 65 years)

Psychosocial Crisis: Generativity vs. Stagnation

Generativity is the concern of establishing and guiding the next generation. Socially-valued work and disciplines are expressions of generativity.

Senior: Integrity vs. Despair (65 years onwards)

It is during this time that we contemplate our accomplishments and are able to develop integrity if we see ourselves as leading a successful life. If we see our life as unproductive, feel about past, or feel that we did not accomplish our life goals, we become dissatisfied with life and develop despair, often leading to depression and hopelessness.
Behavioral Perspectives

**Behaviorism** - “is a theoretical orientation based on the premise that scientific psychology should study observable behavior”.

Behavioral theorists view personality “as a collection of response tendencies that are tied to various stimulus situations”.

They focus on personality development, and how children’s response tendencies are shaped by classical conditioning, operant conditioning, and observational learning.
**Pavlov’s Classical Conditioning** is “a type of learning in which a neutral stimulus acquires the capacity to evoke a response that was originally evoked by another stimulus.”

**BEFORE CONDITIONING**
The unconditioned stimulus elicits the unconditioned response, but the neutral stimulus does not.

- **NS Bell**
- **UCS Meat powder**
- **UCR Salivation**
- No response

**DURING CONDITIONING**
The neutral stimulus is paired with the unconditioned stimulus.

- **NS Bell**
- **UCS Meat powder**
- **UCR Salivation**
- Elicits

**AFTER CONDITIONING**
The neutral stimulus alone elicits the response; the neutral stimulus is now a conditioned stimulus, and the response to it is a conditioned response.

- **CS Bell**
- **UCS Meat powder**
- **CR Salivation**
- Elicits

**SUMMARY**
An originally neutral stimulus comes to elicit a response that it did not previously elicit.

- **CS Bell**
- **UCS Meat powder**
- **CR Salivation**
- **UCR**
- Comes to elicit
Skinner’s Operant Conditioning is “a form of learning in which voluntary responses come to be controlled by their consequences.”

**POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT**
Pleasant stimulus presented
- Clowning around
  - Response
- Attention, appreciation
  - Reinforcer

**NEGATIVE REINFORCEMENT**
Aversive stimulus removed
- Calling in sick
  - Response
- Reduced anxiety
  - Reinforcer

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Bandura’s Observational Learning refers to learning which “occurs when an organism’s responding is influenced by the observation of others, who are called models”.

- This behavioral theory is unique in that it involves cognition because it requires that we:
  - pay attention to others’ behavior
  - understand the consequences that follow others’ behavior, and
  - store this information in memory.
Bandura stressed the importance of **self-efficacy** – “one’s belief about one’s ability to perform behaviors that should lead to expected outcomes”.

High self-efficacy is associated with confidence whereas low self-efficacy creates doubt in one’s abilities.

Bandura believed that self-efficacy is one of the most important personality traits because it is tied to success in many endeavors and resistance to stress.
Evaluating the Behavioral Perspectives

Behavioral theory has generated the following important ideas:

1. Classical conditioning can contribute to distressing emotional responses.
2. Operant conditioning helps to explain how personality is shaped by consequences.

However, this perspective has also been criticized for:

1. Neglecting cognitive processes, and
2. Relying too heavily on animal models.
Humanistic Perspectives

Humanism – is “a theoretical orientation that emphasizes the unique qualities of humans, especially their free will and their potential for personal growth”.

This perspective is based on the following ideas:
1. We have an innate drive toward personal growth.
2. We exercise free will to control our actions.
3. We are rational beings driven by conscious, not unconscious, needs.
Rogers’s Person-Centered Theory

- Personality contains only one construct, the self, or **self-concept** – “a collection of beliefs about one’s own nature, unique qualities, and typical behavior”.

- If our ideas about ourselves match our actual experiences, our self-concept is **congruent** with reality.

- However, if our ideas about ourselves do not match reality, this disparity is called **incongruence**.
Maslow’s Theory of Self-Actualization

Human motives are organized into a hierarchy of needs – “a systematic arrangement of needs, according to priority, in which basic needs must be met before less basic needs are aroused” (see Figure 2.16).

- Humans have an innate drive toward personal growth and the greatest need is the need for self-actualization – the fulfillment of one’s potential.
Need for self-actualization: Realization of potential

Aesthetic needs: Order and beauty

Cognitive needs: Knowledge and understanding

Esteem needs: Achievement and gaining of recognition

Belongingness and love needs: Affiliation and acceptance

Safety and security needs: Long-term survival and stability

Physiological needs: Hunger, thirst, and so forth

Regression if lower needs are not being satisfied

Progression if lower needs are satisfied
Characteristics of Self-Actualizing People

- Clear, efficient perception of reality and comfortable relations with it
- Spontaneity, simplicity, and naturalness
- Problem centering (having something outside themselves they “must” do as a mission)
- Detachment and need for privacy
- Autonomy, independence of culture and environment
- Continued freshness of appreciation
- Mystical and peak experiences
- Feelings of kinship and identification with the human race
- Strong friendships, but limited in number
- Democratic character structure
- Ethical discrimination between means and ends, between good and evil
- Philosophical, unhostile sense of humor
- Balance between polarities in personality
Evaluating Humanistic Perspectives

- Humanistic theory is credited with:
  1. Identifying the self-concept as a key element of personality.
  2. Placing an emphasis on a more positive outlook on human behavior and personality.

- However, this perspective has also been criticized for:
  1. Poor testability,
  2. An unrealistic view of human nature, and
  3. Inadequate evidence.
Biological Perspectives

Biological theories make the following assumptions:

1. Personality is largely inherited.
2. Personality is influenced by behavioral genetics.
3. Personality is shaped by the forces of evolution.
Eysenck’s Theory

Eysenck views personality as a “hierarchy of traits.” He placed special emphasis on biological differences that occur along the *extraversion-introversion* dimension.

- **Introverts** have higher levels of physiological arousal causing them to avoid overly stimulating social situations.
- **Extroverts** have lower baseline levels of arousal and, thus, seek stimulation from social situations.
Higher-order traits

Traits
- Sociability
- Impulsiveness
- Activity
- Liveliness
- Excitability

Habitual responses

Specific responses
Behavioral Genetics

A heritability ratio is “an estimate of the proportion of trait variability in a population that is determined by variations in genetic inheritance.

• Results from twin studies suggest that the heritability of personality is close to 50%.
• Results also indicate that shared family environment has little effect on personality.
• Together, this research suggests that biology has a greater influence, than environment, on personality traits.
The Evolutionary Approach

**Evolutionary Psychology** – “examines behavioral processes in terms of their adaptive value for members of a species over the course of many generations”.

- David Buss (1991, 1995, 1997) maintains that the “Big Five” traits are present across a variety of cultures because they had significant adaptive value for humans.
Robert McCrae and Paul Costa (1987, 1997, 1999) state that there are five “higher-order” traits that are known as the “Big Five”:

1. Extraversion (or positive emotionality)
2. Neuroticism (or negative emotionality)
3. Openness to experience
4. Agreeableness
5. Conscientiousness

This is but one of many perspectives on human personality.
Correlation Analysis

A correlation represents a relationship between two variables and does not show cause and effect. This relationship is determined by a statistical analysis of the data that derives a correlation score ranging from +1.00 to -1.00.