

PSY 152

UNDERSTANDING
PERSONALITY

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Learning Objectives

- Describe Personality
- Psychodynamic perspective.
- Trait Perspective
- Humanistic-Existential Perspective
- Other perspective

Introduction

- ❖ What is “personality”?.

- ❖ The distinct and relatively stable patterns of behavior, thoughts, emotions and feelings that characterize a person throughout life.

- ❖ Two basic concepts

 - ❖ **Consistency**- stability over time and across situations

 - ❖ **Distinctiveness**- differences among people reacting to the same situation

Psychodynamic Perspective

❖ Psychodynamic

- ❖ Perspectives that explain behavior and personality in terms of unconscious energy dynamics within the individual

❖ Psychoanalysis

- ❖ Sigmund Freud 's perspective which emphasizes the importance of unconscious motives and conflicts as forces that determine behavior

Psychodynamic Perspective

❖ Personality Structure

- **Id** – present at birth, represents psychological drive and is fully unconscious

❖ **Pleasure principle**

- ❖ Demands for immediate gratification without needs of others
 - ❖ Basic instincts: sex and aggression
 - ❖ e.g., one may be angry with mother for failing to immediately provides our needs

Psychodynamic Perspective

❖ Personality Structure

❖ **Ego** – self awareness, planning and delay of gratification

❖ Reality principle

- ❖ Consideration of what is practical and possible for gratifying needs.
- ❖ Delays id's urge for immediate gratification
- ❖ e.g., one may need so many items for school but mother don't have money to provide all

Psychodynamic Perspective

❖ Personality Structure

❖ **Superego** – develop in early childhood through socialization (parents and society)

❖ **Moral principle**

❖ Considers what is right or wrong.

❖ Emphasizes moral ideas, conscience, and social standards

Psychodynamic Perspective

❖ Level of Awareness

- ❖ **Conscious** – what you can see (in reality)

- ❖ **Preconscious** – just beneath the surface of awareness; materials easily to be retrieved

 - ❖ E.g., the time you went for class yesterday morning

- ❖ **Unconscious** - Below the surface of awareness; materials are difficult to be retrieved

 - ❖ E.g., traumatic experience in the childhood, hidden feelings of hostility to parents

Psychodynamic Perspective

❖ Anxiety/anxiety

- ❖ Unconscious conflicts among the id, ego, and superego may lead to discomfort and anxiety



❖ Defense mechanism

- ❖ Methods used by the ego to prevent unconscious anxiety or threatening thoughts from entering consciousness

Psychodynamic Perspective

Defense Mechanism	Definition	Examples
Repression	The ejection of anxiety-evoking ideas from awareness	A student forgets that a difficult term paper is due.
Regression	The return, under stress, to a form of behavior characteristic of an earlier stage of development	An adolescent cries when forbidden to use the family car
Rationalization	The use of self-deceiving justifications for unacceptable behavior	A student blames her/his cheating on her teacher's leaving the room during the test
Displacement	The transfer of ideas and impulses from threatening or unsuitable objects to less threatening objects.	A worker picks a fight with his/her spouse after being criticized sharply by her supervisor
Projection	The thrusting of one's own unacceptable impulses onto others so that others are assumed to harbor them	A sexually frustrated person interprets innocent gestures of others as sexual advances
Reaction formation	Assumption of behavior in opposition to one's genuine impulses in order to keep impulses repressed	A person who is angry with a relative behaves in a "sickly sweet" manner toward that relative.
Denial	Refusal to accept the true nature of a threat	Belief that one will not contract COVID-19, though one may not adhere to the precautionary protocols "it can't happened to me"
Sublimation	The channelling of primitive impulse into positive, constructive efforts	A hostile person becomes a tennis star.
Identification	Bolstering self-esteem by forming an imaginary or real alliance with some person or group	An insecure young lady associate herself to a celebrity to boost her self-esteem.

Psychodynamic Perspective

❖ Personality development

❖ Five stages of psychosexual Development

❖ The Oral Stage (first 18 months of life)

❖ Infant's pleasure centers on the **mouth**

❖ E.g., sucking, biting etc. bring sexual gratification



Psychodynamic Perspective

❖ Personality development

❖ Five stages of psychosexual Development

❖ The Anal Stage (Age 1.5 - 3)

❖ Pleasure centers at **anus** or attained through anal activities

❖ Key learned task : toilet training

❖ retaining or elimination of waste products e.g., faeces



❖ Personality development

❖ Five stages of psychosexual Development

❖ The Phallic Stage (Age 3 - 6)

- ❖ Pleasure concentrates on the **genitals**
- ❖ Presence of masturbation

❖ Oedipal crisis

- ❖ **Oedipus complex**- Boys have sexual attachment to mothers and sees fathers as rivals
- ❖ **Electra complex**- girls have sexual attachment to fathers and see mothers as rivals

❖ Resolution-

- ❖ **Identification**: Identifying with adults role models
 - ❖ Boys: model their fathers
 - ❖ Girls: model their mothers

Psychodynamic Perspective

❖ Personality development

❖ Five stages of psychosexual Development

❖ The Latency Stage (Age 6 to puberty)

- ❖ Children repress all sexual impulses
- ❖ Sexual feelings remain unconscious

❖ The Genital Stage (from puberty onwards)

- ❖ Characterized by preferred expression of libido through sexual activities with an adult of the opposite gender.

Psychodynamic Perspective

Sigmund Freud's Psychosexual Stages

Stage	Age range	What happens at this stage?
Oral Stage	0-1 year old	Children derive pleasure from oral activities, including sucking and tasting. They like to put things in their mouth.
Anal Stage	2-3 years old	Children begin potty training.
Phallic Stage	3-6 years old	Boys are more attached to their mother, while girls are more attached to their father.
Latency Stage	6 years old to puberty	Children spend more time and interact mostly with same sex peers.
Genital Stage	Beyond puberty	Individuals are attracted to opposite sex peers.

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Psychodynamic Perspective

- ❖ Insufficient or excessive gratification in any stage could lead to **fixation**
- ❖ **Fixation**- a failure to move forward from one stage to another stage i.e., attachment to objects of an earlier stage.
 - ❖ Oral stage: e.g., smoking, overeating, nail biting
 - ❖ Anal: e.g., orderliness, neatness and cleanliness
 - ❖ Phallic stage: e.g., competition, seductive

Evaluating Psychodynamic Perspective

❖ Strengths

- ❖ Insights with respect to unconsciousness
- ❖ Implications to early childhood development and experiences

❖ Three scientific failings (Weakness)

- ❖ Violating the principle of falsifiability (poor testability)
- ❖ Drawing universal principles from the experiences of a few atypical patients
- ❖ Basing theories of personality development on the retrospective accounts of adults

Traits Perspective

- ❖ How do you describe yourself?
- ❖ How do you describe your friend?
 - ❖ E.g., if you describe your friend as “shy”, you may expect your friend to retire in most social confrontations across many situation
- ❖ **Trait perspective** describes what your personality characteristics are
- ❖ E.g., honest, shyness, friendly, dependable etc.

Traits Perspective

- ❖ **Trait** is a relatively stable aspect of personality that is inferred from behaviour and assumed to give rise to consistent behavior
- ❖ **Fundamental question**
 - ❖ How many personality dimensions or types are sufficient enough to capture all the possible personality characteristics?

Traits Perspective

- ❖ The Big Five Factor Structure Model (Big-Five) (Costa & McCrae)
- ❖ **Extraversion**: warmth, excitement-seeking, positive emotion
- ❖ **Agreeableness**: Trust, helpfulness, modest
- ❖ **Conscientiousness**: competence, order, dutifulness
- ❖ **Neuroticism**: anxiety, hostility, impulsiveness
- ❖ **Openness to experience**: fantasy, feelings, ideas



Humanistic-Existential Perspective

- ❖ **Humanism**-The view that people are capable of free choice, self-fulfilment and ethical behavior
- ❖ **Existentialism**- the view that people are completely free and responsible for their own behavior

Humanistic-Existential Perspective

- ❖ The perspective emphasizes the unique quality of human beings
- ❖ Human beings have potential for personal growth and freedom to choose one's own destiny
- ❖ Humans are largely conscious and rational to control biological urges

Humanistic-Existential Perspective

- ❖ Carl Rogers (1902-1987) Person-Centred Theory
- ❖ **Self-concept**- a collection of beliefs about one's own nature, unique qualities, and typical behavior
- ❖ Rogers views self as inborn or innate which comprises impression of ourselves and evaluation of our qualities
 - ❖ E.g., good-bad, intelligent-unintelligent, tall-short, beautiful –ugly.

Humanistic-Existential Perspective

- ❖ Carl Rogers (1902-1987) Person-Centred Theory
- ❖ **Frame of reference:** One's unique patterning of perceptions and attitudes according to which one evaluates events.
 - ❖ E.g., different people use different set of dimensions in defining ourselves
- ❖ **Psychological congruence-** a fit between one's self-concept and one's behavior, thoughts and feelings.
- ❖ **Ideal self:** a mental image of what we believe we ought to be.
- ❖ **Psychological incongruence:** discrepancy between one's self- concept and the ideal self

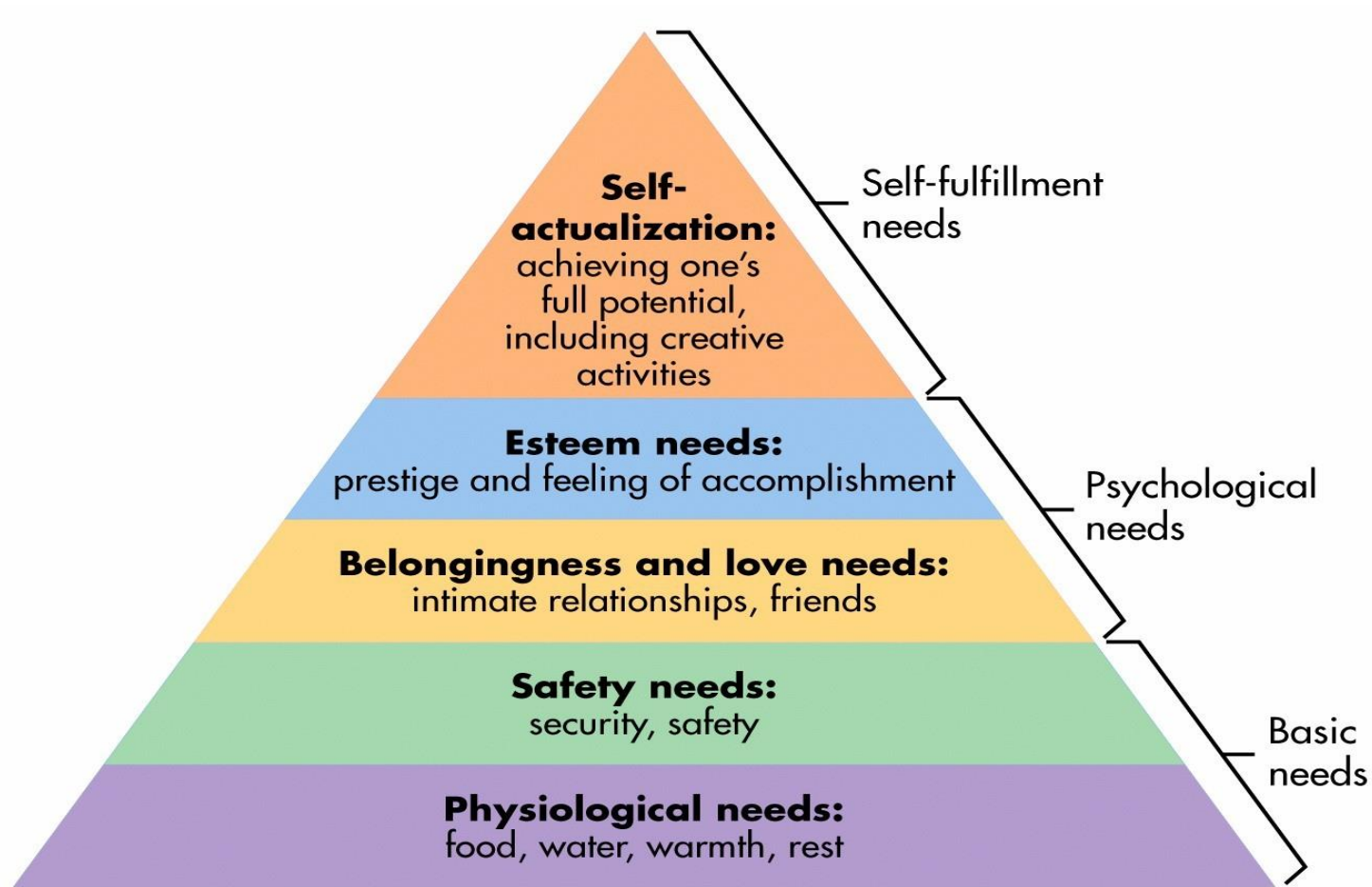
Humanistic-Existential Perspective

- ❖ Carl Rogers (1902-1987) Person-Centred Theory
- ❖ Three major conditions necessary for promoting personal growth
 - ❖ Unconditional positive regard
 - ❖ E.g., the love of parent for a child
 - ❖ Empathy: understand others perspective
 - ❖ Genuineness : be truthful, no lies

Humanistic-Existential Perspective

- ❖ Emphasizes healthy personality development
- ❖ People have growth oriented needs for self-actualisation
- ❖ **Self-actualisation** –innate tendency to strive to realize one's full potentials (Maslow's Hierarchy of needs)

Humanistic-Existential Perspective



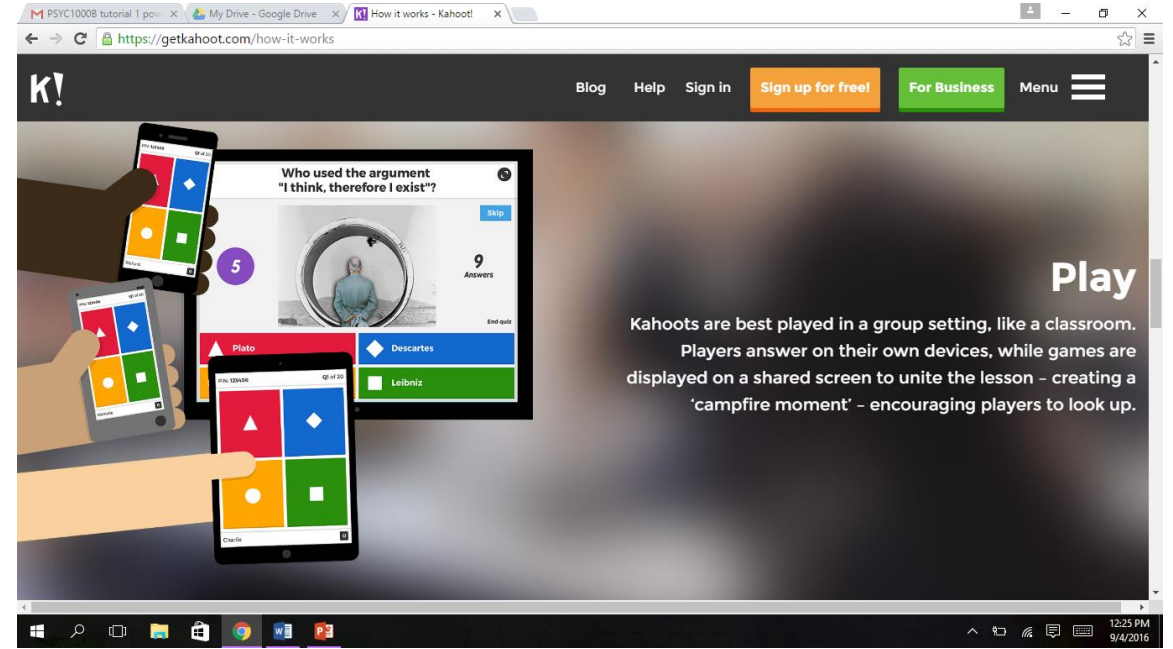
Other Perspective

❖ Cultural influences

- ❖ A program of shared rules that govern the behavior of members of a community or society
- ❖ A set of values, beliefs, and attitudes shared by most members of that community

Other Perspective

- ❖ **Individualist cultures:** focuses on self-autonomous and personal goals are prioritize above group goals.
- ❖ **Collectivist:** focuses on interdependence relationships with others and ingroup goals are prioritized over personal goals



Mini Quiz
