

Theories of Personality

What is it?

Do you have a "good" personality?

Do you have a "lot" of personality?

Most think of it as social attractiveness

Evaluative

Descriptive

Does not consider actual behavior only the effects of the behavior

- Define:
 - Essentially the study of individual difference
 - Predicated on this position
- “The unique organization of characteristics that is typical of an individual's recurrent behaviors.”
- Book—The underlying causes within the person of individual behavior and experience.
- As many definitions as there are personologists.

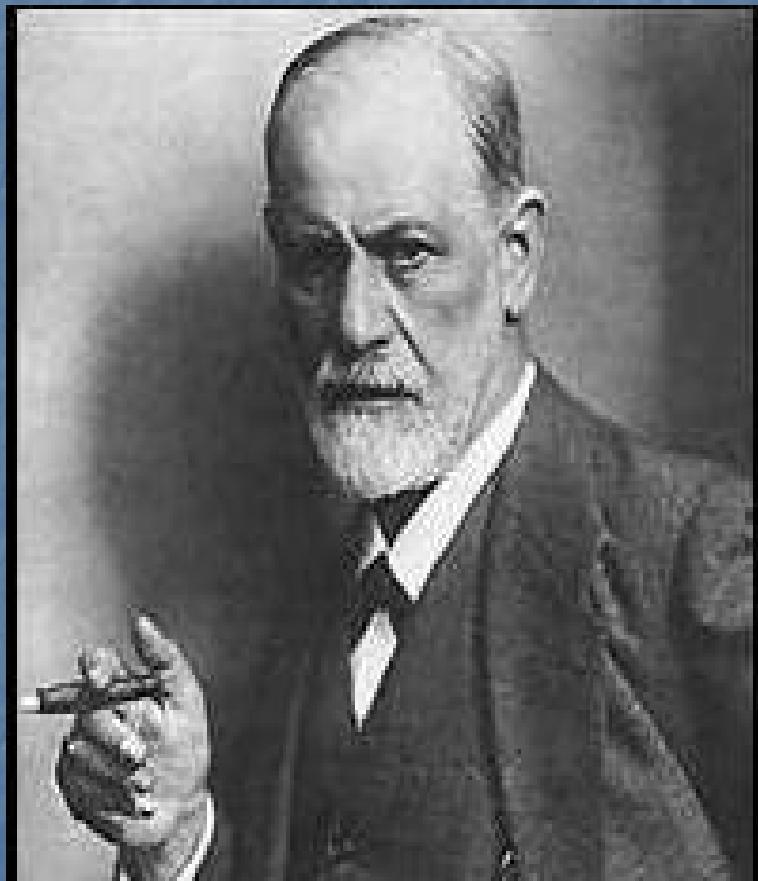
■ How Studied

- **Idiographic—stresses the unique personality. No two people are alike. Must study them individually**
- **Nomothetic—personality is unique but it is not profitable to discuss personality in this way. Rather, they are going to use norms.**
- **We will see different theoretical orientations using different methods to study personality.**

- Theories differ in:
 - Main Theme
 - Aspects of Personality—constructs
 - How constructs are related
 - Development
 - Range of convenience
 - Methods and tools of assessment
 - Hypothesis/empirical

- A theory is basically a set of assumptions about behavior.
- A “good” theory will:
 - Be Logically Related
 - Have Operational Definitions
 - Be of high Usefulness—applied value
 - Have a high degree of Verifiability (Proof—NO!)
 - Show a high degree of comprehensiveness
 - Which theory is the “BEST” theory?
 - None really
 - Should be Eclectic

Sigmund Freud (1856-1939)



- **Background**
 - One of eight
 - Oldest of Mother
 - Mother's "Pet"
 - Wanted to be a teacher-but was Jewish
 - Thus, went into private practice

Major Theme:

- The wanting of satisfaction and the avoidance of pain.
 - To try to maximize instinctual gratification while minimizing punishment and guilt.
 - Hedonistic
 - The Ego is important but the Id is the major impetus
 - Psychoanalysis—emphasizes the content of thought rather than the pure neurological aspects of thought.

- Mind:
 - Conscious
 - Preconscious
 - Unconscious – most of the important aspects of personality are unconscious
 - Repressed
 - Dreams—Royal Road to the Unconscious
 - Manifest content (overt) and Latent content (interpretation)

- **Parapraxes or slips of the tongue**
- **Personality is Irrational according to Freud and he considers all of us to be irrational**
- **Systems of Personality**—Freud developed these late in his life.
 - Interaction of the three Rarely does one take complete control
 - What happens if it does

ID

- Innate/inherited
- Primitive and biological
- Libido – Source is the Id.
 - Psychic energy—not sexual energy
 - Libidinal energy is never lost it is only transformed
- Pleasure Principle-Minimize pleasure—hedonistic

- **Tension reduction**
 - **Reflex action - Automatic reaction/reduces tension immediately**
 - **Primary Process - Rids tension by forming an image**
 - **Wish-fulfillment - Mental image (ID cathexis)/Dreams/Hallucinations.**
Can tell a lot
 - **Has no idea of time. No past and no future, only present moment counts**

- Personality is Basically evil/irrational
- Instincts - inborn psychological representations of an inner somatic source of excitation
 - Psychological representation = wish/motive/food
 - Body excitement = need/nutrition
- Eros – life, pleasure
- Thanatos – death, aggressive

■ Aspects of Instincts

- **Source** - body condition/need, does not change
- **Aim or Pressure** - removal of body condition, does not change, regressive, motivational quality
- **Object** - behavior used to secure satisfaction, can change, seeks homeostasis, reduce tension
- **Impetus** - strength, can change, most variation for satisfaction
- Strives for balance

- Ego
 - Initially develops to control the urges of the Id
 - Develops from Id - displaced energy from Id
 - Libidinal displacements - "X" amount
 - Cathects energy - invests psychic energy in need satisfying objects - Object cathexis. If not satisfying redirects to Ego
 - Id – image of bottle or breast
 - Ego – Food

- Cathexis - Driving force
- As Ego becomes more successful it gets more energy - if fails it loses energy
- Identification - matches mental image with reality
- Reality Principle – Delay gratification until appropriate – mature individuals because it considers consequences
- Secondary Process - Realistic thinking
 - Helps to get the ID real rather than imaginary satisfaction
 - Finds satisfying objects for ID's needs

- Reality testing
- "Executive" of personality
- Ultimate purpose - further Id's aims
- Mostly a Rational system
- Strives for balance
- Defines the "I"— who we think we are
- Strong, independent, and effective when it is able to effectively cooperate with the Id and Superego
 - Is this rational?

- Defense Mechanisms—protect the ego from itself
 - They are not concerned directly with conflict or frustration.
 - How do they function:
 - They protect the Ego from ANXIETY
 - Anxiety signals the Ego there is tension within the personality system that need to be reduced
 - Unconscious
 - Distort, deny, falsify reality

Types of Defense Mechanisms

- **Denial–Primitive–more in childhood**
- **Reaction Formation**
- **Projection**
- **Identification**
- **Displacement**
- **Rationalization–to disguise true motives–little distortion so considered a mature defense**
- **Intellectualization–sour grapes**
- **Sublimation–most desirable–creative individuals**

Superego or Super Ego

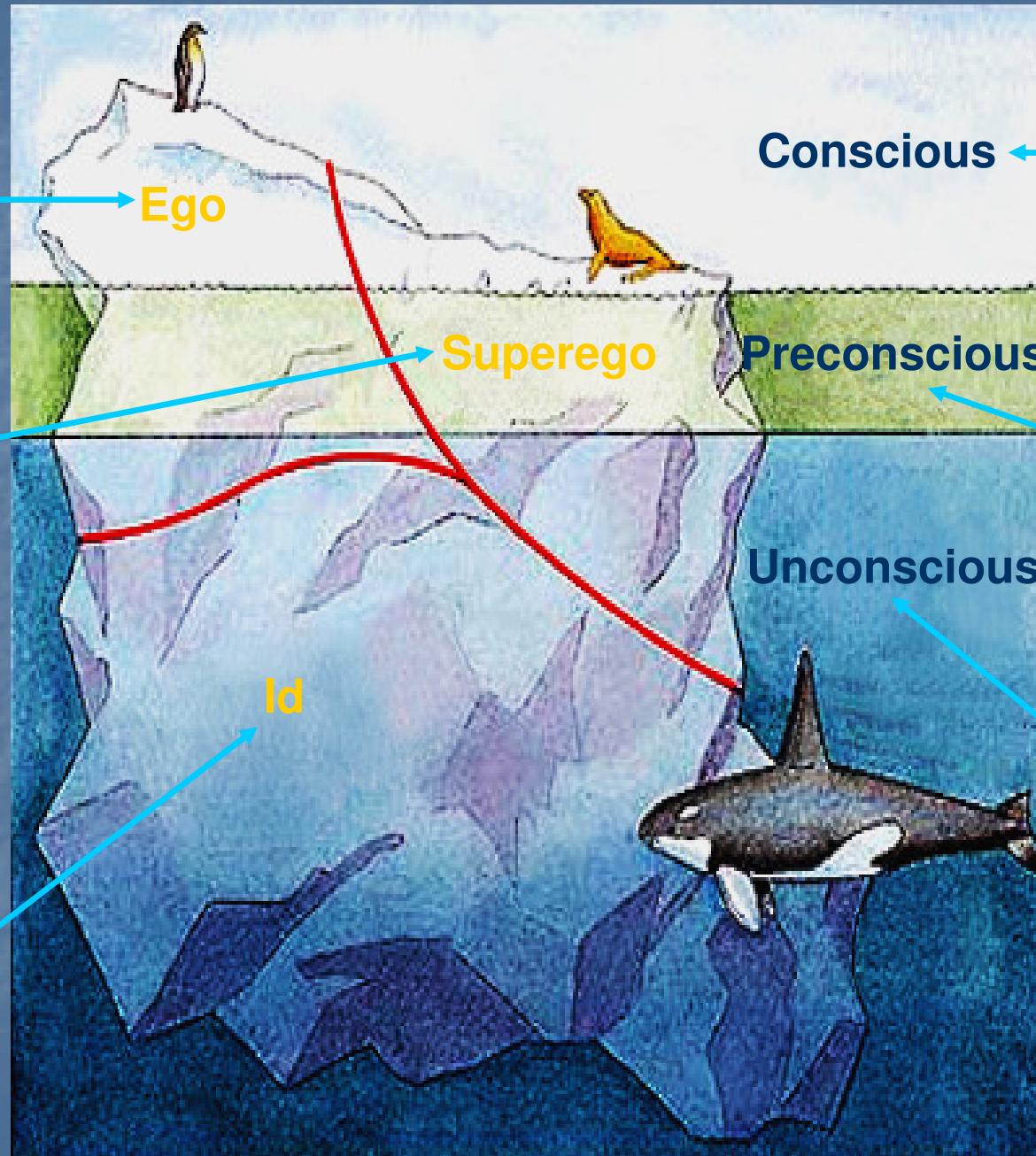
- Values, norms, ethics - "Moral Arm"
 - Develops from Ego
 - Strength and content of Superego primarily determined by our parents
 - Ego Ideal – reinforcements
 - Allows individual to set goals
 - If attains, self-esteem
 - Conscience – punished
 - Demands perfection - Tries to persuade Ego that Perfectionistic goals better than realistic ones

- Similar to Ego - controls Id impulses
- Similar to Id – irrational
- Ego now balances the demands of the Id and the Superego. “I can have one more drink if I ask someone to drive me home.”

Rational,
mediating
dimension
of personality

Moralistic,
judgmental,
perfectionist
dimension of
personality

Irrational,
illogical,
impulsive
dimension of
personality



Information
in your
immediate
awareness

Information
which can
easily be
made
conscious

Thoughts,
feelings,
urges, and other
information
that is difficult
to bring to
conscious
awareness

- **Anxiety**
 - **Tension - needs to be reduced**
 - **Signals Ego danger**
 - **Reaction to an unfamiliar situation**
- **Reality - real dangers - Ego**
- **Neurotic - fear something will be punished – Shame - Id**
- **Moral - conscience – guilt - Superego**

- Psychosexual development (not really)
 - Libidinal energy, progress from autoerotic to more mature agents of pleasure
 - Fixation
 - Overgratification
 - Undergratification

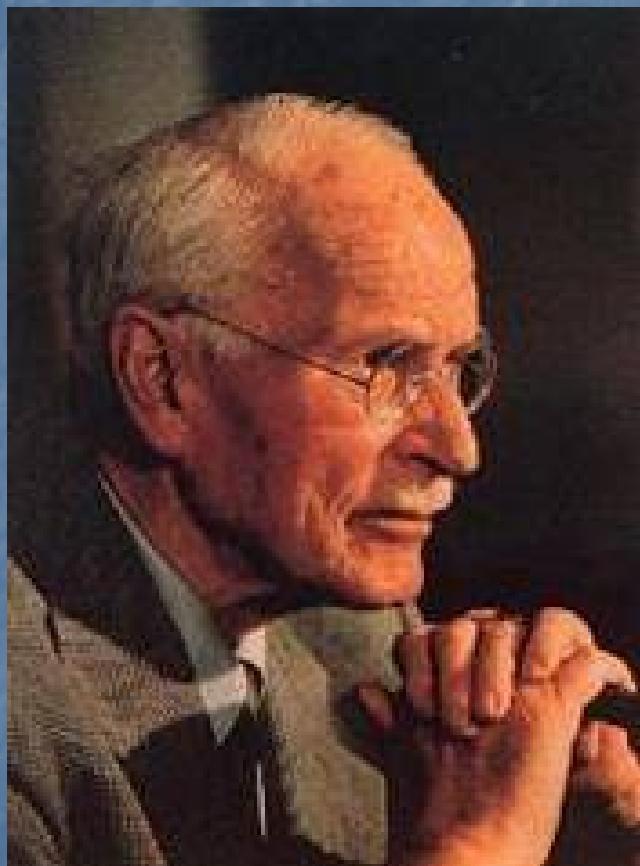
- Oral - birth to 1 year
- Anal - 1 year to 2 years
 - Sad/masochistic behavior
 - Environmental constraints
- Phallic - 2 to 6 years--Sex role identification
 - Oedipus Complex Resolution - castration anxiety - provides the motivation for resolution
 - Electra Complex - Penis envy
- Latency
 - Suspended animation
 - Is Freud wrong here?

- Genital
 - Narcissistic
 - “Lieben und arbeiten”
 - “To love and to work”
 - Descriptive of adult personalities

- Personality is essentially developed by age 6
- Early childhood experiences
- People tend to be highly irrational.
- Defense Mechanisms
 - Abnormal - overuse

- **Very comprehensive theory - most of any we will discuss.**
 - Precise and testable? No
 - Lacks applied value? No
 - Totally lacks value? No
- **Unit of Analysis (data):**
 - Free Association – tool for gaining access into unconscious mind.
 - Dream Analysis
 - Remember, dreams are the “Royal Road to the Unconscious” for Freud

Carl G. Jung (1875-1961)



- **Background**
 - Swiss
 - Clergy Family
 - Dreams shaped his life
 - “Interpretation of Dreams”

- Differ with Freud:
- De-emphasis sexuality especially infantile sexuality
- Greater emphasis on spirituality (mystical and religious).
- Emphasis on cultural universals in our experience

- Main Theme:
 - The tendency toward attainment of selfhood
 - Balance between opposing forces of personality
- Main Aspects:
 - Self—the integrated personality
 - All of the individual's qualities and potentials
 - Conglomeration of all the opposing forces
 - Motivates person to wholeness

- Individuation process-conglomeration of all the processes
- Psyche - thoughts, feelings, behavior, conscious, unconscious
 - Helps us adapt to social and physical environment
 - Strives for wholeness
 - Compensation – relationship of conscious and unconscious
 - Need both

- **Individuation—restoring wholeness to the psyche in adult development—mid life—becoming a fully developed person with all psychic functions developed**
- **Transcendent Function—integration of all opposing aspects of personality into a unified whole.**
 - **The integration of the already differentiate systems of personality**

- Ego:
 - Conscious - individualistic mind
 - Differentiation
 - Gatekeeper - Selective
 - Directs business of everyday life
 - Sense of identity and continuity
- Personal Unconscious:
 - Preconscious and unconscious
 - Defenses
 - Develops out of learning and experience

- **Complexes - a cluster of ideas**
 - **Strong emotional content**
 - **Preoccupied–obsession**
 - **Interferes with normal functioning**
 - **Generally healthy - unhealthy in overuse**
 - **Individualistic**

- **Collective Unconscious:**
 - Most unique contribution to personality theory—most important
 - Communal, species memory—represents accumulated culture of humankind (even subhuman life). Lodged in psyche at birth
 - Due to genetic inheritance
 - Not inherit specific memories/predispositions inherited

- Achieves consciousness through dreams and psychosis
- Includes the archetypes
- Similar for all
- Younger generations have more Collective Unconscious.
- Why?

- **Archetypes:**
 - Dominants/Primordial images - thought forms from past
 - Common experiences
 - Psychic Instincts
 - They have both positive and negative aspects about them
 - Determines, in part, perceptions
 - Psychosis

- **Shadow-animalistic possibilities**
 - Most powerful/dangerous
 - Sexuality/aggression
 - Leads to vitality and passion
 - Freud?
- **Anima - feminine possibility in man**
- **Animus - masculine possibility in women**
 - Help understand opposite sex
 - Freud?

- Persona - Conventional mask adopted in face of social pressures – how society expects us to act
 - Freud?

- **The Great Mother**—ancestral experience of being raised by mothers.
- **The Spiritual Father**—wise old man
- **The Hero**—special forces allows to beat tough opponents
- **The Trickster**—ultimately brings about positive results
- **Mandela**—archetype of order
- **Transformation**—alchemists

- **Synchronicity—meaningful coincidence**
 - Phenomena which seem logically to be coincidental have connections that feel meaningful.
- **Psychic Energy—life energy**
- **Psychic value—cathexed energy in an object**

- **Principle of equivalence** - if value of any aspect of personality increases\decreases will be compensated by opposite shift in another aspect
- **Principle of entropy**—the distribution of energy in the personality seeks an equilibrium or balance
- **Energy never lost, just transferred**

- **Development:**
 - No real stages per se.
 - Causality - influence on behavior from past
 - Teleology - influence on behavior due to the anticipated future
- **Psychological Types**
 - Person's grouping based upon the three major dimensions of personality—eight different psychetypes based one the two attitudes and the four functions.

- Fundamental Attitudes:
 - Introversion (inner world) versus Extraversion (outer world)
- Dominant Functions:
 - Thinking—intellectual and rational versus Feeling—evaluation and rational
 - Sensing—reality and irrational versus Intuition--perception via unconscious processes and irrational

- **Word Association Technique:**
 - Give a word, say the first thing that comes to mind
 - Used to help uncover complexes

Alfred Adler (1870-1937)



- **Background**
 - Health-rickets, pneumonia
 - Older brother-compensation
 - Freud's personal physician

- How he differs from Freud:
 - Fulfillment theorist.
 - Individual Psychology—Unique—focus on the ego.
 - He changed theory as time went on.
- Main basic motive underlying human behavior is the need to overcome inferiority.

- **Main Theme:**
 - Striving toward superiority and perfection.
 - Good for the individual and society.
 - Striving for a goal.
 - The same goal of wanting a perfect society.
 - Going from a felt minus to felt plus situation.
 - Dissatisfaction of the felt minus.
 - Present in infancy.

Main Ideas:

- **Organ Inferiorities**—real physical weaknesses.
- **Aggressive Drive**—fighting or athletic competition
- **Masculine Protest**—males and females have this. Struggle against the constraints of the less socially valued female role.
- **Superiority Striving**—trying to achieving one's best NOT trying to be better than others.
- **Perfection Striving**—final term used. Inherent growth process.
- **Maslow and Rogers used similar ideas.**

- **Inferiority Complex**—when growth process stagnates. Felt Minus
 - All neurotics have an inferiority complex
- **Feelings of Inferiority**—psychological perceptions of weakness or inferiority.
 - Has nothing to do with reality.
 - “I’m not smart—I cannot do well in college.”
 - Can influence the individual greatly.
- **Superiority Complex**—Neurotic—better than others.
 - Exaggerate accomplishments.

- **Compensation**-Attempt to overcome real and/or imagined inferiorities.
 - No legs—becomes a sports announcer.
 - Believe dumb—work all the harder.
 - If compensation does not work ideas become an inferiority complex.
- **Creative Self** – trying to find or create experiences that will lead to fulfillment.
 - Expressing the capacity of exercising free will to transcend the forces acting upon the person
 - It is compensatory—creative way to compensate for feelings of inferiority

- **Fictional Finalisms--Ideals of perfection and superiority.**
 - **Subjective experience rather than objective reality**
 - **Usually are a fiction--“All people are created equal.” Normals can see the fiction but they can still use the finalism to spur or drive their behavior.**
 - **Unique to the individual.**
 - **Helps us to set goals and reach achievements.**
 - **May be conscious or unconscious.**

- **Social Interest—How we take an interest in others.**
 - **Occupational Tasks - vocation, productive.**
 - **Societal Tasks - adapt to others & show an interest in others.**
 - **Love Tasks - relationships between and among the sexes.**

- The three are tasks are highly related.
- Neurotics-strives for self-interests.
- Normals-wants to help advance a perfect society.

- **Style of Life--How we fit into our own particular niche-what we are like.**
 - **Established by age 4 or 5**
 - **All other needs are subordinate to it.**
 - **"The very pattern of each existence as the person creates it."**
 - **Based on unique interrelations of inferiorities.**
 - **The unique way in which a person pursues her/his goals**
 - **Must first develop social interest.**

- First memories—do not have to be accurate—psychological aspects effect memory and that is what is important
 - Can highly influence behavior
 - Key to understanding a person

Mistaken Styles of Life

- **Ruling Type**—want to dominate others
 - Sadistic, tyrannical, delinquent
- **Getting Type**—dependently leans on others
 - Passive, lazy, depressed
- **Avoiding Type**—do not want to deal with problems
 - Isolated, cold
- **Socially Useful Type**—helps others

- **Development--No real stages per se.**
 - **Based on quantitative and qualitative nature of the family.**
- **Family Constellation**
 - **The unique sociological factors of the family and how those factors influence each child.**
 - **Gives each child a particular set of problems with which to cope.**
 - **Only child, first child, absence of parent, etc.**

- **Family Atmosphere**—The unique emotional relationships between the different family members.
 - Cooperative atmosphere of mutual trust and respect leads to constructiveness.
 - Opposite leads to destructiveness.
 - Personal initiative atmosphere leads to activeness.
 - Opposite leads to passiveness.

Styles of Life

Comprised of Fictional Finalisms and Traits.

- **Active-Constructive.** Highly service oriented (this is the Fictional Finalisms for these folks). Positively ambitious. Most positive style of life. Adlerian Ideal
- **Passive-Constructive.** Tend to seek attention (FF). A positive style of life.

- **Active-Destructive.** Hurts others. Spiteful, wants power (FF) over others. Negative.
- **Passive-Destructive.** Lazy, gets power (FF) by being lazy. Negative.