

# 16. Personality

## Objectives

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- Define personality and its place in psychology and as a field of study
- Distinguish between the psychoanalytic, trait, behavioral, humanistic, and sociocultural approaches to personality
- Explain other theories of personality

## Vocabulary

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archetypes	inferiority complex	pleasure principle	type
collectivism	moral	preconscious	unconditional
defense mechanisms	morality principle	reality principle	positive regard
ego	overcompensation	self-concept	unconscious
id	persona	superego	
individualism	personality	trait	

## Background

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It is difficult to go through life without wondering “Why is he or she like that?” or “Why are people so different from each other?” Through the ages, theorists have tried to provide insights into the mysteries of human personality, but a definitive answer remains elusive even to modern researchers.

In this chapter, students explore five approaches that theorists believe shed light on personality. The chapter begins by asking, “What is personality?” and then introduces the five basic approaches to personality—the psychoanalytic, trait, behavioral, humanistic, and sociocultural approaches—that it will present.

In the psychoanalytical section, students learn about the theories of Sigmund Freud, including the id, ego, superego, and defense mechanisms. Next, they encounter Neo-Freudians—Adler, Horney, Jung, and Erikson—and review their core theories and how they differ from Freud. The chapter’s evaluation of psychoanalysis discusses various criticisms of Freud’s work.

Students move on to learn about other approaches, such as the trait approach, the behavioral approach, the humanistic approach, and the sociocultural approach. They review summaries and evaluations of trait theorists such as Allport, Cattell, and Eysenck and of behaviorists such as Watson, Skinner, and Bandura. Next, they read about important humanists such as Maslow and Rogers and learn that all of the preceding personality theories aren’t fully applicable from a sociocultural perspective. Interesting boxed features, tables, and graphic organizers help to clarify personality theories being presented.

The chapter ends by reviewing other theories of personality and the idea of personalities having sets of traits, or types. These will be discussed in the next chapter.

### Further Resources

- Hall, Calvin S. *A Primer of Freudian Psychology*. New York: Meridian, 1999.
- Liebert, R., and M. Spiegler. *Personality: Strategies and Issues*. Pacific Grove, Calif.: Brooks-Cole, 1990.

## For Discussion

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### Review

1. How can personality be studied?
2. According to Freud, what are the three systems that take part in the conflict between a person's inner drives and external restraints? What are the principles on which these operate?
3. How does the trait approach differ from the behavioral approach to understanding personality?
4. How does the humanistic approach differ from the sociocultural approach?

### Critical Thinking

1. Do you agree with Freud's assertion that each of us has an id, ego, and superego? Why or why not?
2. Why do people use defense mechanisms? Which of these have you used?
3. Use the Big Five Personality Traits list to describe your personality. Can this theory predict your behavior?
4. Do you agree with Watson that you can make a person anything you wanted by controlling his or her environment? Do you believe that you are a product of your environment?
5. How important are ethnicity, culture, and gender in your personality?

## Activities

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### 1. Analysis

Create a fictitious personal history for a "patient" and ask the students to count off from one to five. Assign each student group one of the five personality theories and have them "analyze" the fictitious patient. What should the "patient" be aware of from each theory of personality?

### 2. Interviews: Mental Health Professionals

Have students telephone mental health agencies, therapists, and medical schools in your area and find out what school or schools of personality theory they subscribe to. If possible, interview individual practitioners to learn more about ways in which the theory is applied.

### 3. Internet: Personality Research

Have students use search engines to research a personality theorist that interests them. Find details on the theorist's life, training, career, and beliefs. Ask students to print out useful sites and report their findings to the class.

### 4. Special Sources: Primary Sources

Have students use the library to research and write reports on the handling of mental disorders throughout history. Discuss their findings in class.

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As you read Chapter 16, write an answer to each question below.

1. How would Freud and the neo-Freudians view the role of childhood experiences in forming personality?

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2. What are Allport's three classifying traits?

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3. In the behavioral approach, what are the five behavior and internal factors of personality?

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4. Describe the three "other" theories of personality presented in the chapter.

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5. What is a personality type?

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Name \_\_\_\_\_

## 16. Personality

Find the best answer for each item. Then circle that answer.

1. Which term refers to the mental state in which a person's thoughts are geared toward their inability to succeed?
  - a. rationalization
  - b. inferiority complex
  - c. superiority complex
  - d. self-incrimination
2. Which is the trait wherein one works for the goals of a group?
  - a. collectivism
  - b. groupism
  - c. the other complex
  - d. the worker complex
3. Which term describes the acts of people who are fanatical in their drive for perfection?
  - a. perfectionism
  - b. fanaticism
  - c. overindulgence
  - d. overcompensation
4. Which of these is Freud's term for the cognitive and perceptual processes that are in touch with reality?
  - a. id
  - b. superego
  - c. ego
  - d. trait
5. Which is the term for a trait wherein one works for personal and individual goals?
  - a. individualism
  - b. personalize
  - c. goal complex
  - d. self-actualization
6. Which term is the principle on which the super-ego acts, a combination of conscience and moral self-image?
  - a. conscience principle
  - b. image principle
  - c. morality principle
  - d. super morality
7. What is Jung's term for the image of ourselves that we present to others?
  - a. persona
  - b. personality
  - c. archetype
  - d. front
8. What is Jung's term for the universal forms that we encounter in our lives?
  - a. personalities
  - b. types
  - c. archetypes
  - d. stereotypes
9. What is Freud's term for the part of the unconscious mind containing biological and sexual drives?
  - a. superego
  - b. ego
  - c. id
  - d. all of the above
10. Which term describes a drive to satisfy needs and avoid pain?
  - a. pleasure principle
  - b. defense mechanism
  - c. unconscious
  - d. reality principle

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## 16. Personality

Read each description, and write the letter of the correct term on the line.

1. Hippocrates, an ancient Greek physician, believed that personality was due to \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. behavioral factors
  - b. environment
  - c. childhood experiences
  - d. body fluids
2. Freud believed that everyone was born with these biological drives: \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. hunger and thirst
  - b. love and anger
  - c. sex and aggression
  - d. envy and deceit
3. The pleasure principle holds that the id, if unchecked, would \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. be unsatisfied
  - b. satisfy itself
  - c. give pleasure to others
  - d. resist pleasure
4. The chapter defines personality as \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. relatively stable patterns of thinking, feeling, and acting that an individual possesses
  - b. the acts of fanatical perfectionists
  - c. combining conscience and moral image
  - d. devices used to avoid pain
5. A refusal of something that is upsetting is a defense mechanism called \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. projection
  - b. sublimation
  - c. repression
  - d. denial
6. For Jung, having a healthy personality required being in touch with \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. one's ego
  - b. archetypes
  - c. one's inner child
  - d. other personalities
7. Cattell believed that individuals' traits came from \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. secondary traits from the id
  - b. behavior traits from relationships
  - c. clusters of traits from a source trait
  - d. cardinal traits from the ego
8. Eysnck believed that traits should be categorized in these dimensions: \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. introversion-extroversion
  - b. emotional stability-instability
  - c. *a* and *b*
  - d. neither *a* nor *b*
9. \_\_\_\_\_ believed that self-actualization is the goal of every individual.
 

a. Maslow	c. Bandura
b. Skinner	d. Horney
10. Roger's term for the self-respect that comes from a parent's unconditional regard is \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. self-esteem
  - b. self-regard
  - c. self-centered
  - d. self-imposed

### Essay Question

Which personality theory or combination of theories seems most realistic to you? Why?