

# Personality Psychology

can be applied to general psychology, developmental psychology, and abnormal psychology

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## SECTION 1 : Personality Psychology and The Three “Layers” of Personality

Perspective :	Content :	Emergence :	Focus :	Questions :
Social Actor	Temperament , Dispositional Traits	Infancy	Present	How do I act? What do I feel?
Motivated Agent	Personal Goals, Plans, Projects, Values	Middle Childhood	Present and Future	What do I want? What do I value?
Autobiographical Author	Narrative Identity	Emerging Adulthood	Past, Present, and Future	What does my life mean? Who Am I? Who have I been? Who am I becoming?

The **emphasis and focus** of personality psychology is studying the whole person using individual differences in people. They develop ways to classify, categorize, and organize these differences and use the environment and biology to explain them. The main goal is to construct a scientifically credible account of psychological individuality.

**Nomothetic Approach** : Discovering and testing GENERAL principles of laws of behavior.

**Idiographic Approach** : Ignores the general laws of behavior and focuses on the SPECIFIC and INDIVIDUAL patterns of behavior.

Characteristics of the Big Five Traits (O-C-E-A-N) ♦♦ :

**Extraversion** ♦♦ : Sociable, Fun-loving, Affectionate, Friendly, Spontaneous, Talkative 1

(Interpersonal Traits)

**Neuroticism** ♦♦ : Worry, Nervous, High-Strung, Insecure, Self-Pitying, Vulnerable (*Traits of own mental instability*)

**Openness to Experience** ♦♦ : Original, Imaginative, Creative, Broad Interests, Complex, Curious (*Traits regarding approach to life*)

**Agreeableness** ♦♦ : Good Natured, Softhearted, Courteous, Forgiving, Sympathetic, Agreeable (*Interpersonal traits regarding feelings toward others*)

**Conscientiousness** ♦♦ : Conscientious, Careful, Reliable, Well-Organized, Self-Disciplined, Perseverance (*Traits that surround work ethic*)

## SECTION 2 : Motives and Needs (Level 2: Motivated Agents)

**Intrinsic Motivation** ♦♦ : Behavior **not** reinforced by external forces; a full sense of choice (Incentivizing this behavior may have adverse effects)

**Extrinsic Motivation** ♦♦ : Behavior **is forced** by external sources (ex. grades, money, or approval of others)

3 “Needs” of **SDT Self Determination Theory** : ♦♦

1. **Competence** : Need to control the outcomes of events and establish a sense of mastery and effectiveness.
2. **Autonomy** : Need to be independent from external pressure and relate to the world.
3. **Relatedness** : Need to care for others and feel that others are relating to the self in authentic and mutually supporting ways.

3 Characteristics of Environments that Support Self-Determination : ♦♦

1. **Autonomy Support** : Environments that *encourage* choice and innovations in behavior.
2. **Structure** : Environments that provide clear *guidelines* and give the actor feedback on how “well” they are doing.
3. **Interpersonal Involvement** : Degree to which significant people are interested in and *devote time and energy* to a relationship.

Who scores *high* on motive for **Achievement**?♦♦

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- People who have a preference for experiences of doing well and being successful but display low risk-taking.

Who scores *high* on motive for **Affiliation/Intimacy**? ♦♦

- People who present a preference for experiences of warm, close, and communicative interaction with others. Women score consistently and significantly higher than men on the intimacy motive.

Who scores *high* on motive for **Power**? ♦♦

- People who show a mixture of aggression and leadership, typically drawn to professions that involve directing the behavior of others. Among Men, high power motives can be linked to instabile relationships.

Where do Implicit Motives Come from?

- Operant PSE's that measure samples of people's spontaneous narrative thought, revealing less than conscious implicit motives through ambiguous picture cues and open ended responses.

### SECTION 3 : Attachment Theory as Object Relations Model (Level 3: Secret Agent)

#### Fundamental Tenets Of Psychoanalytic Tradition :

- **Intrapsychic Determinism** : Something on the inside of you *determines* your behavior, choices, and moods. However, according to psychoanalytic theory, this happens to be your environment.
- **Priority of Implicit and Unconscious Drives & Motives** : Deep inside, you have memories and motives that can affect bodily functions and moods.
- **Centrality of Unconscious Defenses and Internal Conflict** : Repression arises as a defense mechanism when there are memories and events we do not want to remember that may be harmful to our psyche.
- **Priority of Early Development** : Our parents have an affect on us and how we view ourselves.

Freud's Four "**Classical**" Models of the Psyche :

#### 1. Topographical Model ♦♦

♦♦ **Conscious** : Can be verbalized and thought of logically (ex: where you had your first 3

kiss)

♦♦ **Preconscious** : Contains material that a person is not currently aware of, but could readily enter into awareness (ex: how did your parents interact growing up?)

♦♦ **Unconscious** : Cannot be retrieved and contains repressed elements. It is unconscious for a

reason, profoundly affects our reasoning and is expressed in disguised or symbolic form.

## 2. Structural Model

**ID** : Operates on the pleasure principle. Engages in mental images and fantasies referred to as primary thinking. Source of two instinctual drives : sex and aggression. Generates neurotic anxiety that results from impulses, which if expressed, would be punished in some way.

**EGO** : Operates according to the reality principle. Uses reasoning and intellectual resources to deal with the external world, which is referred to as secondary process thinking. Mediates between the ID and the SUPEREGO in such a way as to ensure that needs are met and survival assured. Generates realistic anxiety which arises from threats in the external world.

**SUPEREGO** : Operates according to the moral principle. Mental Representation of the taboos and moral values of society. Operates through the conscience to inhibit desires that are considered wrong or immoral . Generates moral anxiety which arises from feelings of guilt. Engages in primary process thinking because it does not compromise, it is rigid and relentless.

**3. Psychosexual “Drive” Theory** : Freud all people pass through a series of stages in personality development however the first 3 stages are crucial that the child faces and resolves specific conflicts. The conflicts arise from sexual gratification and through the libido, however, if children fail to face this conflict they may go through FIXATION in the stage.

### ◆◆ Oral Stage : (birth to 18 months)

- Main sources of pleasure and tension reduction are the mouth, lips, and tongue; key conflict is weaning (withdraw from breast or bottle)

### ◆◆ Anal Stage : (18 months to 3 years)

- Child obtains pleasure from expelling feces through toilet training and retaining 4

feces; conflict may arise from a child's inability to self-control

### ◆◆◆ Phallic Stage : (3 to 5 years)

- Child discovers differences in genitalia and sexual desire is directed toward parent of opposite sex ; produces Oedipal and Ectra conflicts (unconscious wish to have the opposite-sex parent to themselves by eliminating same-sex parent)

### ◆◆ Latency Stage : (6 years to puberty)

- Little psychological development occurs; child focuses on learning skills and abilities to succeed as an adult

◆◆ **Genital Stage : (puberty through adult life)**

- Libido is focused on genitals, but not in the manner of self manipulation (ie: phallic stage); no source of specific conflict, this stage is achieved when *conflicts are resolved* in previous stages.

**4. Dynamic Model** - Results of conflict between the id, ego and superego results in coping mechanisms that are primarily carried out by the ego through *defense mechanisms*.

Defense Mechanism	Definition	Example
Repression	Banished thoughts, feelings, and memories from consciousness	EX) Student forgot dreaded final was Sunday even though it is marked on his calendar
Regression	Retreating to an infantile state	EX) Woman gets in a fight with her husband and takes role as dependent child who needs love and indulgence when returning to parents' house
Displacement	Redirecting aggressive impulses from objects of frustration to a safer outlet.	EX) Man gets in a fight with his boss, comes home angry and kicks the dog
Sublimation	Transformation of negative emotions/instincts to a positive action or behavior	EX) When one wants sexual gratification and it is blocked, one may find expression in art as an outlet
Projection	Attributing one's own feelings or impulses on to another person	EX) Accusing a woman of being a gossip and spreading rumors, however, she reveals her own inclinations in this area

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◆◆ Bowlby on **Evolutionary Function Of Attachment** : Bowlby argued that the caregiver-infant attachment bond is a *complex, instinctually guided behavioral system that functions throughout evolution to protect the infant from predators*. Aside from attachment, **Oxytocin**, a hormone in mammals, acts as a neurotransmitter in the brain and is related to the development of close social/attachment bonds.

Describe Ainsworth "**Strange Situation**" Procedure : Series of lab episodes in which the infant, the caregiver, and a "stranger" interact in a comfortable setting and the behaviors of the infant are observed. Ainsworth examines the child's reaction to the parent leaving the scenario as well as the reaction to their "reunion".

◆◆ Names/Characteristics of **Infant Attachment Styles** :

◆◆ : A - Babies > **Insecure attachment**; this pattern is demonstrated through *Avoidance* because they avoid the caregiver upon reunion.

◆◆ : B - Babies > **Secure attachment**; are *mildly* upset by the brief separation of caregiver and entrance of strangers.

◆◆ : C - Babies > **Insecure attachment**; show a mixture of approach and avoidance in reunion episodes representing *Resistance*.

◆◆ : D - Babies > **Disorganized attachment**; demonstrated through *confusion* in presence of caregiver, unable to be calmed during distress, displays heightened levels of *aggression*.

**Attachment Style as a “Working Model”** : A key feature of this notion of **who** his attachment figures are, **where** they may be found, and **how** they may be expected to respond. The working model serves as a mental template of love, determining whether bonds are **secure** and **insecure** and providing trust in his or her surrounds as well as self-confidence to explore the world with enthusiasm.

## SECTION 4 : Becoming an Autobiographical Author

**Components of Life Story Interview** : Life Chapters; Eight Key Episodes; Life Challenge; Main Characters; Future Plot; Personal Ideology; Life Theme.

◆◆ **Reflective Storytelling** : The storyteller spends relatively little time describing what 6

happened in the event and instead focuses on what the event *meant* and how it made them *feel*.

◆◆ **Dramatic Storytelling** : The storyteller makes frequent use of nonverbal signals, employs vivid quotes and dialogue, and attempts to reenact the original event in the telling.

◆◆ **Agency Themes in a Life Story** : Agency refers to the individual's efforts to expand, assert, perfect, and protect the self, to separate the self from others and master their environment. Agency is captured through themes of **dominance** and **extraversion** and reflected in **achievement** and **motivation**.

◆◆◆ **Communion Themes in a Life Story** : Communion refers to the individual's efforts to merge with other people, join together with other in bonds of love, intimacy, friendship, and community. Communion is captured through themes of **agreeableness** and **nurturance** and reflected in **intimacy** and **motivation**.

**Paradigmatic vs Narrative Mode** : {Humans Understand the World in 2 Ways}

- ♦♦ *Paradigmatic Mode* > we seek to comprehend our experience through analysis, logical proof, and empirical observation as well as look for cause-and-effect. - ♦♦ *Narrative Mode* > concerns itself with stories as events are not explained logically. Instead, it deals with human *needs, wants* and *goals* while events are explained as human actors striving to do things over time. (ex: the way a novelist writes, their story the way *they understand it*)

**Pennebaker's Research/Theories on keeping negative events secret :** Research through Pennebaker's experiment has shown that life story-telling can have positive effects on coping and mental health. Even though the participants felt overwhelmed by their emotions and cried during the procedure, 98% said they would do the experiment again.

**Research on disclosing traumatic events :** After 46 healthy undergraduates were assigned to write about their most traumatic experiences for 4 consecutive days, research revealed that participants who disclosed information about both facts and their feelings in the traumatic event had better health during those 6 months than the other participants in the other three groups that did not discuss their feelings. *The health benefits rely on the extent of negative emotion expressed during the storytelling and the extent to which the traumatic event is reconstructed as a well-informed story.*

**How can traumatic moments be most helpful in terms of long-term health benefits? 7**

Over the long haul, the effects of physiological arousal accumulate leading to stress-induced illnesses. The process of actively inhibiting feelings and thoughts about negative events requires excessive psychological work, as in higher heart rate, skin conductance, and blood pressure.

**What does it mean to say a life story is psychological construction?** A life story is a psychological construction because it can be altered depending on the perspective of the narrator. Life stories are grounded in reality, as well as imaginative and creative productions that each of us constructs and reconstructs as we move through our adult years.

**Narrative Identity:** A person's internalized and evolving life story aside from the layer of personality it's related to, but distinct from the broad dispositional traits (The Big Five) and contextualized characteristic adaptations, described in Dan P. McAdams's three-level framework. (ex: negative events turning into positive outcomes)

**Self-Defining Memories:** Recollections of one's life that the person believes to have been especially influential in shaping who he or she is. Self-Defining memories are described to be a "vivid, affectively charged, repetitive, linked to other similar memories, and related to an important *unresolved* theme or enduring concern in an individual's life". The more self-defining memories relevant to attainment of striving the individual recalls, the greater levels of expressed positive affect about their memories.

**Life Stories Of Generative Adults:** Generative adults seek to give back to society in gratitude for the early advantages and blessings they feel they have received.

**Redemptive Sequences vs Contaminative Sequences :**

- *Redemptive Sequences* : A bad or emotionally negative scene turns suddenly good or emotionally positive; suggests hope and commitment.
- *Contaminative Sequences* : The move in narrative from an emotionally positive or good scene to an emotionally negative or bad outcome; suggest despair hopelessness, and the endless repetition of a negative past.

## SECTION 5 : Identity and Intimacy

◆◆ **Martin Luther's fit in the choir relating to Identity** : The fit in the choir symbolizes the low point of Luther's identity struggle - the point in his own life where he felt cut off from all that had previously provided his life with meaning.

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**What questions does one ask when formulating their Identity?** \*Who am I? How do I Fit Into The Adult World?\*

**Identity Statures** : Erik Erikson

- **Identity Achievement** : Most developmentally advanced due to exploration and commitment to well-articulated occupational and ideological goals by relying on their own skills and capacities to meet challenges. Less concerned with winning their parent's love as they value them on balanced and ambivalent terms.
- **Moratorium** : Currently explore identity issues but have not made commitments, however, they may experience an identity crisis due to uncertainty about the present and future. However, they are described as ambivalent in terms of their relationship to their parents.
- **Foreclosure** : Failed to meet identity challenge by failing to explore but makes commitments to positions in childhood. Young person opts for security of childhood roles, beliefs, and expectations to *avoid risk*. (ie: appear to be closer to family members and describe homelife as loving and affectionate)
- **Identity diffusion** : Have yet to enter exploration and have yet to make commitments, appearing to be ambiguous and *withdrawn*.

**Negative Identity** : In moratorium, individual seeks psychological *distance from family, rejecting* old identification and ingrained values/belief, setting up parents or authority figures as the "enemy". Represents everything the young person *does not want to be*.

**Relationship between Intimacy Status and Identity Status** : A person may be unable to be "truly" intimate with others until he or she has made considerable progress in addressing the identity issue.

**Virtues Associated with Identity and Intimacy** :

**Identity** = *Authenticity* **Intimacy** = *Love*

## SECTION 6 : Generativity

### Four Types of Generativity :

1. **Biological-** Begetting, bearing, and nursing offspring {*Generative Object= Infant*}
2. **Parental-** Nurturing and discipling offspring, initiating them into family traditions {*Generative Object= Child*}

3. **Technical-** Teaching skills (the body of culture) to successors, implicitly passing 9

on symbol system in which skills are embedded {*Generative Objects= Apprentice and the skill*}

4. **Cultural-** Creating, renovating, and conserving a symbol system (the mind of a culture) and passing it on to the successor {*Generative Object= the discipline, the culture*}

**The Motivation Source of Generativity in the McAdams Model :** The personal and societal goal of providing for the next generation. Also identified as the desire to invest in one's substance in forms of life and work that *outlives the self*.

### 7 Features of Generativity : C-A-N-N-B-I-C-C

Motivation for Goal	Explanation
1. Cultural Demand	Developmental expectations / societal opportunities
2. Inner Desire	Symbolic Immortality (agency) / Need to be Needed (communion)
3. Concern	For the Next Generation
4. Belief	In the Species
5. Commitment	Goals / Decisions
6. Action	Creating / Maintaining / Offering
7. Narration	The Generativity script within the personal life story

### Define Generativity; What does Erikson think must be *necessary* to be Generative?

- Generativity is a biological drive to reproduce oneself, an instinctual need to care for and be needed by others, a philosophical urge or transcendence and symbolic immortality, a developmental sign of maturity and mental health in adulthood, and a social demand to create a

productive niche in society. Erikson argues being good and caring parents as well as activity in community involvement can generate generativity.

Conflict of Erikson's stage of **Ego Integrity** vs **Despair** : The conflict of the stage of Ego Integrity vs Despair is due to adults being preoccupied with looking back and either accepting or rejecting one's life as it was, however, in order to have integrity, the person must graciously accept their life as a whole, including its faults.

**Virtue Associated with Generativity** : *Care*

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**What is the *Paradox of Generativity* ?** With an openness to unanticipated change, we can end up in bad-and non-generative-waters.

**What do *Generative Parents Look Like* ?** ♦♦ Parents who not only identify as parental influences in the children's lives but act as teachers and role models, however, hold an authoritative approach.

