

PERSONALITY PSYCHOLOGY

STUDY MATERIAL

VI SEMESTER (CUCBCSS)

CORE COURSE : CPY6B02

For

BSc

COUNSELLING PSYCHOLOGY

(2014 Admission onwards)



UNIVERSITY OF CALICUT

SCHOOL OF DISTANCE EDUCATION

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MODULE 1: PSYCHOANALYTIC APPROACH

Introduction

As a human being each one of us shows certain specific patterns of thinking, feeling and acting. They represent who we are and provide the basis of our interaction with other individuals. In everyday life we often find people who are called “aggressive”, “jolly”, “happy” and so on. These are impressions of people which we carry with us and use while interacting with them. It is in this sense that we frequently employ the word ‘personality’. The study of personality has also attracted the attention of psychologists and they have developed various theories of personality. Also, they have developed certain tools to assess people’s personality. The personality related information is used in selecting people for various jobs, giving guidance to people in the need of psychological help, and mapping their potential. Thus the study of personality contributes to different areas of human behaviour. This chapter will help you learn about different aspects of personality. Contributions of Neo Freudians in brief: Jung, Adler, Horney, Erich Fromm. Every one of us shares many things with others. However, apart from commonalities we also find that people are different in the way they appear and behave. The study of personality deals with the issue of human individuality. It has attracted the attention of common man as well as academic psychologists.

Concept of Personality

The term personality is used in a number of ways including the apparent features of a person. However, psychologists use it to refer to the characteristic pattern of thinking, feeling and acting. By characteristic pattern we mean the consistent and distinctive ways our ideas, feelings and actions are organized. When we talk about personality we usually refer to the totality or whole of the person. Thus, the enduring pattern expressed by the person in various situations is the hall mark of personality. Interestingly the theories of personality go beyond the literal meaning of “personality” which stands for large masks used by actors in ancient Greek drama. Contrary to this the personality theorists view ‘personality’ as the essence of the person. It is a person’s “true” inner nature. The unique impression that a person makes on others is equally important in understanding personality. However the concept of personality has been defined by psychologists in many ways and it is the theoretical perspective or position which directs our attention to particular aspects of personality.

Allport (1961) personality is the -dynamic organization within the individual of those psycho-physical systems that determine his unique adjustment to his environment. It means that personality- resides within the individual and these systems are woven into an organization.

Personality is not static but dynamic, the organizational pattern determines the kind and degree of adjustment of the individual to his environment, and this adjustment-pattern is unique to the individual.

Personality is the more or less stable and enduring organisation of a person's character, temperament, intellect, and physique that determine his unique adjustment to his environment...

Personality usually refers to the distinctive patterns of behaviour (including thoughts and emotions) that characterize each individual's adaptations to the situations of his life or her life.

Personality is usually defined as individual's unique and relatively stable patterns of behaviour, thoughts and emotions. (Baron, 1993).

Understanding personality has proved to be a difficult and challenging task. It's so complex that no single theory is able to cover the total personality. The different theories approach the structure and functioning of personality from different positions. There are many theories of personality each provides different answers about the way they treat the issues about personality functioning. In particular, they provide different explanations about the role of conscious/unconscious factors, determinism/freedom in functioning, role of early experience, role of genetic factors, uniqueness/universality etc. In the present lesson you will learn about four major theoretical perspectives of personality. They include psychoanalytic, trait, humanistic and social-cognitive perspectives.

THE PSYCHOANALYTIC PERSPECTIVE

Founded by Sigmund Freud, this theory emphasizes the influence of the unconscious, the importance of sexual and aggressive instincts, and early childhood experience on a person. This theory has been very influential not only in psychology but also in literary circles, art, psychiatry and films. Many of Freud's ideas have become part and parcel of every day usage. Freud started his career as a neurologist. His theory developed in the course of his observations of his patients, as well as, self-analysis. He used free association to help his patients recover forgotten memories.

Freud discovered that mind is like an iceberg and we have limited conscious awareness. Freud proposed that psychological forces operate at three levels of awareness:

- **Conscious level:** The thoughts, feelings, and sensations that one is aware of at the present moment.
- **Preconscious level:** It contains information of which one is not currently aware, however, they can easily enter conscious mind.
- **Unconscious level:** It consists of thought, feelings, wishes, drives etc. of which we are not aware. It, however, influences our conscious level of activity. Freud thought that unconscious material often seeks to push through to the conscious level in a disguised

manner. It may be in a distorted manner and or it may take a symbolic form. Interpretation of dreams and free association were used for analysis of the three levels of awareness.

Personality Structure

Freud believed that human personality emerges due to a conflict between our aggressive and pleasure seeking biological impulses and the internalized social restraints against them. Thus, personality arises in the course of our effort to resolve the conflicts. To this end he proposed three structures which interact with each other: Id, Ego and Super Ego. Let us learn about these structures:

Id: It is the unconscious, irrational part of personality. It is the primitive part immune to morality and demands of the external world. It operates on the pleasure principle. It seeks immediate satisfaction.

Ego: It is involved with the workings of the real world. It operates on the reality principle. It is the conscious, and rational part of personality that regulates thoughts and behaviors. It teaches the person to balance demands of external world and needs of the person.

Super Ego: It is the internal representation of parental and societal values. It works as the voice of conscience, that compels the ego to consider not only the real but also the ideal. It judges one's behaviors as right or wrong, good or bad. Failing up to moral ideals bring about the shame, guilt, inferiority and anxiety in the person.

Personality Development

On the basis of case-history of patients, Freud reached at a conclusion that personality development occurs through a sequence of psychosexual stages. In these stages the Id's pleasure seeking tendency focuses on different areas of body.

Psychogenetic model of development

Freud (1900/1953) proposed that child development proceeds through a series of stages related to physical development, and that adult personality is influenced by how crises are resolved at each stage. Each stage is named after an erogenous zone, or area of the body that can experience pleasure from the environment. Excessive gratification or frustration at any one stage can result in the fixation of libido and subsequent disruption to normal personality development.

1. **Oral stage (birth to 18 months)** At the beginning of this stage children are highly dependent on their mothers and derive pleasure from sucking and swallowing. Freud suggested that children who become fixated at this early oral stage derive pleasure in adulthood from activities such as overeating, smoking, drinking and kissing. He referred to such people as oral-incorporative or oral-ingestive. Later in the oral stage, children begin to cut teeth and experience pleasure from biting and chewing. Fixation at this later part of the stage results in

chewing objects and nail-biting in adulthood, as well as being sarcastic and critical. Freud called those fixated at this level oral-aggressive or oral-sadistic.

2. Anal stage (18 months to three years) At this stage pleasure is gained from the expulsion and retention of faeces. This is also a stage at which children start to explore their environment but experience control and discipline from their parents. According to Freud, fixation at this stage may result in people being messy and generous – anal expulsive characters, or being mean and orderly – anal-retentive characters.
3. Phallic stage (three to five years) It is at the phallic stage that children discover pleasure from touching their genitals. They also become aware that they are in competition with siblings and their father for their mother's attention.

Freud believed that boys become increasingly attached to their mother at this stage and resent the presence of their father. These feelings produce anxiety or fear of punishment from the father – or castration anxiety. In order to protect themselves against this anxiety, boys identify with their fathers. Freud called boys' desire for their mother the Oedipus complex, because of the similarity to the ancient Greek play in which Oedipus unwittingly kills his father and marries his mother.

Freud argued for a rather different process in girls. He believed that girls reject their mother at the phallic stage, owing to resentment that they have been born without a penis. They then feel increasing attraction to their father, who has the penis they lack. Penis envy is not resolved until women have a male child, thereby symbolically obtaining a penis. This process was also named after an ancient Greek play – Electra. In Greek mythology, Electra was famous for her devotion to her father, and sought revenge against her mother for her father's death. Fixation at the phallic phase and failure to resolve the Electra or Oedipus complex was viewed as the cause of sexual and/or relationship difficulties in later life.

4. Latency stage (six to twelve years) According to Freud, personality is formed by the end of the phallic stage, and sexual impulses are rechanneled during the latency period into activities such as sport, learning and social activities.
5. Genital stage (13 years to adult) As young people approach the age of reproductive ability, they begin to focus their libido, or sexual energy, towards the opposite sex. If the earlier psychosexual stages have been successfully negotiated, the individual should now begin to form positive relationships with others.

Table1 shows these stages.

Stages	Focus of activity
Oral (0-18 months)	Pleasure centers in the mouth and leads to activities of sucking and biting etc.
Anal (18-36 months)	Pleasure centers on bowel and bladder elimination
Phallic (4 to 6 years)	Pleasure centre is genitals Touching and fondling of genitals give pleasure
Latency (7 to 11 years)	Children repress their sexual impulses and channelize them into socially acceptable activities such as sports, arts.
Genital (From the onset of puberty)	Pleasure zone is the genital. Maturation of sexual interests

Defense Mechanisms

The Ego has to perform a difficult duty of mediating between the instinctual demands of Id and moral position of Super Ego. The Ego tries to solve the problem and if a realistic solution or compromise is not possible it indulges in distorting thoughts or perception of reality through certain processes called defense mechanisms. To defend or safeguard ourselves, we use technique called defense mechanism. These are also called Adjustment Mechanisms. Some of the key mechanisms are given below:

Defining Defense Mechanism Freud proposed the structural hypothesis, which divides the mind into three forces – id, ego, and super-ego. He believed that both normal and abnormal behavior result from interactions among the id, ego, and super-ego, among which the ego tends to distort or simply deny a reality that would arouse unbearable anxiety. Freud called this tactic a defense mechanism, and as long as it works, the anxiety will be experienced unconsciously.

Freud's assumption about human behaviour Freudian theory assumes that abnormal behavior stems from events in the individual's past and that it occurs in response to unconscious and uncontrollable impulses.

Is defense mechanism indispensable to human life? Freud believed that both normal and abnormal behavior result from interactions among the id, ego, and superego. At times, either the id or the superego will threaten to overwhelm the ego's control, resulting in unacceptable feelings or behavior. In response to this threat, the person experiences anxiety. Most anxiety is not experienced

consciously but is held in check by defense mechanism. Though often adaptive, overuse of defense mechanism may interfere with thought processes and everyday functioning.

A healthy adult has the ego strength to balance conflicting demands by the id, and the superego. When the ego experiences too much conflict, it is weakened. This produces rigid behavior patterns, called neurosis. In extreme cases, the ego collapses and adaptive functioning ceases, a condition known as psychosis. Accordingly, defense mechanism is indispensable for people to prevent such psychosis.

Types of defense mechanism and examples

1. primary defense mechanism repression ; unacceptable id impulses are pushed down into the unconscious and thereby robbed of their power to disturb us consciously. (e.g., a girl who is sexually attracted to her father will simply remove this intolerable thought from her consciousness. It may come up in her dreams, but in disguised form; and once she wakes up, the dreams, too, are likely to be repressed).
- denial ; Whereas repression is the refusal to recognize an internal reality or source of anxiety, such as a taboo impulse, denial is the refusal to acknowledge an external source of anxiety. (e.g., a woman who has been diagnosed as terminally ill may go on planning a lengthy trip to be taken when she is well again). It is usually resorted to by children or by people facing a very serious threat (e.g., terminal illness or the death of a loved one)
2. secondary defense mechanism
- projection ; unacceptable impulses are first repressed, then attributed to others. thus, an internal threat is converted into an external threat. (e.g., a man whose self-esteem is threatened by his own preoccupation with money may accuse others of being money-hungry). This relieves his own moral anxiety and simultaneously enables him to throw the guilt onto others.
- displacement : It involves a transfer of emotion. However, what is switched is not the source but the object of the emotion. Afraid to display or even to experience certain feelings against whoever has aroused them, the person repress the feelings. Then, when the opportunity arises, he or she transfers them to a safer object and releases them. (e.g., a man may spend the day suffering humiliations at work for which he cannot retaliate; then he goes home, discovers that his son has failed to take out the trash, and on that pretext gives the boy a terrible dressing down).
- rationalization : proving one's behavior is justifiable, rational and thus worthy of self and social approval. (e.g., we need t make ourselves "looks good.")
- reaction formation : a person who engages in reaction formation represses the feelings that are arousing anxiety and then vehemently professes exactly the opposite. (e.g., someone who

claims to be disgusted by sexual promiscuity may be demonstrating a reaction formation against his or her own sexual impulses).

- sublimation : the transformation and expression of sexual or aggressive energy into more socially acceptable forms, differs from all other defense mechanism in that it can be truly constructive. (e.g., The skill of a great surgeon may represent a sublimation of aggressive impulses). regression : Unable to deal with its anxiety, the ego simply abandons the scene of the conflict, reverting to an earlier, less threatening stage. (e.g, a regressed adult may be reduced to a babbling, helpless creature who has to be fed and toileted like a baby).

A healthy adult has the ego strength to balance conflicting demands by the id, and the superego. When the ego experiences too much conflict, it is weakened. This produces rigid behavior pattern, called neurosis. And, in extreme cases the ego collapses and adaptive functioning ceases, a condition known as psychosis, and thus becomes an abnormal behavior. Freud's daughter, Anna, defined many of the defense mechanism such as repression, denial, displacement, rationalization, isolation, reaction formation and so forth.

What's wrong with 'abnormal' person? It has been found to be quite difficult to distinguish between a normal and abnormal person. In this direction a number of view points have been advanced. However, in contemporary psychology, the standard for distinguishing between 'normal' and 'abnormal' runs as follows;

(1) Subjective standard Social norms(value): A person violating his social norms is seen as abnormal. But they can differ widely between cultures. Statistical Rarity(fact): Abnormality is any substantial deviation from statistically calculated average(e.g., Stanford-Binet IQ test). But, in this case, a person whose I.Q. is above or below this average is to be considered as abnormal. Personal discomfort(fact): If people are content or feel comfort with his lives, they are normal, while people distressed over them are abnormal. But it makes people the judges of their own normality, rather than subjecting them to the judgment of the society or diagnostician. Maladaptive Behavior(fact or value): If people are able to meet the demands of their everyday lives (e.g., hold down a job, deal with friends and family, pay the bills on time, and the like.), they are normal, if not, abnormal. But adaptation depends on time and surroundings. If a person with the fear of flying has a job that requires long-distance travel, his behavior could be considered maladaptive unlike ordinary people.

(2) Objective standard – A combined standard(facts and values) However much dispute surrounds the definition of abnormal behavior, it should be rest on a combined standard, putting facts and values together that most societies identify the same categories of behavior as indicative of mental disorder(abnormality). Maher and Maher point out there are four basic categories. 1. Behavior that is harmful to the self or that is harmful to others without serving the interests of the self. 2. Poor reality contact – for example, beliefs that most people do not hold or sensory

perceptions of things that most people do not perceive. 3. Emotional reactions inappropriate to the person's situation. 4. Erratic behavior – that is, behavior that shifts unpredictably.

Topographic model of the psyche

Freud (1905/53b) argued that the mind is divided into the conscious, the preconscious and the unconscious.

According to Freud, the conscious is the part of the mind that holds everything you are currently aware of. The preconscious contains everything you could become aware of but are not currently thinking about. The unconscious is the part of the mind that we cannot usually become aware of. Freud saw the unconscious as holding all the urges, thoughts and feelings that might cause us anxiety, conflict and pain. Although we are unaware of them, these urges, thoughts and feelings are considered by Freud to exert an influence on our actions.

Structural model of the psyche

Alongside the three levels of consciousness, Freud (1923/62, 1933) developed a structural model of personality involving what he called the id, the ego and the superego.

According to Freud, the id functions in the unconscious and is closely tied to instinctual and biological processes. It is the primitive core from which the ego and the superego develop. As the source of energy and impulse it has two drives:

Eros – a drive for life, love, growth and self preservation

Thanatos – a drive for aggression and death

These drives, or instincts, are represented psychologically as wishes that need to be satisfied. External or internal stimulation creates tension, which the id seeks to reduce immediately. This is called the 'pleasure principle' – the idea that all needs have to be satisfied immediately, avoiding pain and seeking pleasure, regardless of external conditions. The id is directly linked to bodily experience and cannot deal effectively with reality. As such it is limited to two forms of response – reflex responses to simple stimuli (e.g. crying with pain), or primary process thinking (hallucinatory images of desired objects), which provides a basic discharge of tension.

According to Freud, primary process thinking does not actually meet the fundamental need of the organism – just as dreaming of water does not satisfy thirst – so a second structure, the ego, focuses on ensuring the id's impulses are expressed effectively in the context of the real world. The ego, as a source of rationality, conforms to the 'reality principle' – delaying the discharge of energy from the id until an appropriate object or activity can be found. The ego engages in secondary process thinking. It takes executive action on the part of the ego to decide which actions are appropriate, which id impulses will be satisfied, how and when. But the ego has no moral sense, only practical sense. It is a third structure, the superego, which, according to Freud, provides moral guidance, embodying parental and societal values.

The superego has two sub-systems:

- conscience, or images of what is right and what deserves punishment – this is the basis for guilt; and
- ego ideal, or images of what is rewarded or approved of – this is the basis for pride.

Violation of superego standards can generate anxiety over loss of parental love, which is experienced as guilt. By the same token, Freud viewed a ‘weak’ superego as the cause of self-indulgence and criminality.

According to Freud, the ego mediates between id impulses, superego directives and the real world. Conflicts in this process can lead to three types of anxiety:

- neurotic anxiety – that the id will get out of control;
- moral anxiety – that past or future behaviour is immoral; or
- reality anxiety – about objective dangers in the environment.

When anxiety cannot be dealt with by realistic methods, the ego calls upon various defence mechanisms to release the tension.

Defence mechanisms deny, alter or falsify reality. As they operate unconsciously, they are not immediately obvious to us or to other people. Defence mechanisms include:

- displacement – substituting an acceptable behaviour for an anxiety-inducing one;
- projection – projecting the threatening thing on to others;
- reaction formation – creating an attitude opposite to the one that you hold;
- intellectualization – transforming emotional or affective drives into rational intentions; and
- Regression – reverting to modes of behaviour from childhood in order to avoid conflict.

Jung’s Analytical Theory—The Structure and the Dynamics of Personality Characteristics

Carl Jung (1875–1961) was one of the first prominent analysts to break away from Freud. Jung worked with Freud in the early stages of his career, and was viewed by him as the disciple who would carry on the Freudian tradition. But Jung saw humans as being guided as much by aims and aspirations as by sex and aggression. To distinguish his approach from classic psychoanalysis, Jung named it analytical psychology (1951). A basic assumption of his theory is that personality consists of competing forces and structures within the individual that must be balanced. Unlike Freud, he emphasized conflicts between opposing forces within the individual, rather than between the individual and the demands of society, or between the individual and reality.

Carl Jung whispered that people are very intricate beings who possess a diversity of opposing qualities, such as introversion and extraversion, masculinity and femininity, and rational and irrational drives.

Biography of Carl Jung

Carl Jung was born in Switzerland in 1875, the oldest surviving child of an idealistic Protestant minister and his wife. Jung's early experience with parents (who were quite opposite of each other) almost certainly influenced his own theory of personality. Soon after getting his medical degree he became acquainted with Freud's writings and eventually with Freud himself. Not long after he traveled with Freud to the United States, Jung became disenchanted with Freud's pansexual theories, broke with Freud, and began his own approach to theory and therapy, which he described analytical psychology. From a critical midlife crisis, throughout which he almost lost touch with reality, Jung appeared to become one of the leading thinkers of the 20th century. He died in 1961 at age 85.

Levels of the Psyche

Jung saw the human psyche as being divided into a conscious and an unconscious level, with the latter further subdivided into a personal and a communal unconscious.

- **Conscious:** Images sensed through the ego are said to be conscious. The ego therefore represents the conscious side of personality, and in the psychologically mature individual, the ego is secondary to the self.
- **Personal Unconscious:** The unconscious refers to those psychic images not sensed through the ego. Some unconscious processes flow from our personal experiences, but others stem from our ancestors' experiences with universal themes. Jung divided the unconscious into the personal unconscious, which contains the complexes (emotionally toned groups of related ideas) and the communal unconscious, or ideas that are beyond our personal experiences and that originate from the repeated experiences of our ancestors.
- **Communal Unconscious:** Communal unconscious images are not inherited ideas, but rather they refer to our innate tendency to react in a scrupulous method whenever our personal experiences stimulate an inherited predisposition toward action. Contents of the communal unconscious are described archetypes.
- **Archetypes:** Jung whispered that archetypes originate through the repeated experiences of our ancestors and that they are expressed in certain types of dreams, fantasies, delusions, and hallucinations. Many archetypes acquire their own personality, and Jung recognized these through name. One is the persona-the side of our personality that we show to others. Another is the shadow-the dark side of personality. To reach full psychological maturity, Jung whispered, we necessity first realize or accept our shadow. A second hurdle in achieving maturity is for men to accept their anima, or feminine side, and for women to embrace their animus, or masculine disposition. Other archetypes contain the great mother (the archetype of nourishment and destruction); the wise old man (the archetype of wisdom and meaning); and the hero, (the image we have of a conqueror who

vanquishes evil, but who has a single fatal flaw). The most comprehensive archetype is the self; that is, the image we have of fulfillment, completion, or perfection. The ultimate in psychological maturity is self-realization, which is symbolized through the mandala, or perfect geometric figure.

Dynamics of Personality

Jung whispered that the dynamic principles that apply to physical energy also apply to psychic energy. These forces contain causality and teleology as well as progression and regression.

- **Causality and Teleology:** Jung accepted a middle position flanked by the philosophical issues of causality and teleology. In other words, humans are motivated both through their past experiences and through their expectations of the future.
- **Progression and Regression:** To achieve self-realization, people necessity adapt to both their external and internal worlds. Progression involves version to the outside world and the forward flow of psychic energy, whereas regression refers to version to the inner world and the backward flow of psychic energy. Jung whispered that the backward step is essential to a person's forward movement toward selfrealization.

Psychological Types

Eight basic psychological types emerge from the union of two attitudes and four functions.

- **Attitudes:** Attitudes are predispositions to act or react in a characteristic manner. The two basic attitudes are introversion, which refers to people's subjective perceptions, and extraversion, which designates an orientation toward the objective world. Extraverts are influenced more through the real world than through their subjective perception, whereas introverts rely on their individualized view of things. Introverts and extraverts often mistrust and misunderstand one another.
- **Functions:** The two attitudes or extroversion and introversion can combine with four basic functions to form eight general personality types. The four functions are (1) thinking, or recognizing the meaning of stimuli; (2) feeling, or placing a value on something; (3) sensation, or taking in sensory stimuli; and (4) intuition, or perceiving elementary data that are beyond our awareness. Jung referred to thinking and feeling as rational functions and to sensation and intuition as irrational functions.

Development of Personality

Almost unique among personality theorists was Jung's emphasis on the second half of life. Jung saw middle and old age as times when people may acquire the skill to attain self-realization.

- **Stages of Development:** Jung divided development into four broad stages: (1) childhood, which lasts from birth until adolescence; (2) youth, the period from

puberty until middle life, which is a time for extraverted development and for being grounded to the real world of schooling, occupation, courtship, marriage, and family; (3) middle life, which is a time from in relation to the 35 or 40 until old age when people should be adopting an introverted attitude; and (4) old age, which is a time for psychological rebirth, self-realization, and preparation for death.

- **Self-Realization:** Self-realization, or individuation, involves a psychological rebirth and an integration of several parts of the psyche into a unified or whole individual. Self-realization represents the highest level of human development.

Jung's Methods of Investigation

Jung used the word association test, dreams, and active imagination throughout the process of psychotherapy, and all these methods contributed to his theory of personality. **Word Association Test:** Jung used the word association test early in his career to uncover complexes embedded in the personal unconscious. The technique requires a patient to utter the first word that comes to mind after the examiner reads a incentive word. Unusual responses indicate a intricate

Dream Analysis: Jung whispered that dreams may have both a cause and a purpose and therefore can be useful in explaining past events and in making decisions in relation to the future. "Big dreams" and "typical dreams," both of which come from the communal unconscious, have meanings that lie beyond the experiences of a single individual.

Active Imagination: Jung also used active imagination to arrive at communal images. This technique requires the patient to concentrate on a single image until that image begins to appear in a different form. Eventually, the patient should see figures that represent archetypes and other communal unconscious images.

Psychotherapy: The goal of Jungian therapy is to help neurotic patients become healthy and to move healthy people in the direction of self-realization. Jung was eclectic in his choice of therapeutic techniques and treated old people differently than the young.

Critique of Jung

Although Jung measured himself a scientist, several of his writings have more of a philosophical than a psychological flavor. As a scientific theory, it rates average on its skill to generate research, but very low on its skill to withstand falsification. It is in relation to the average on its skill to organize knowledge but low on each of the other criteria of a useful theory.

ADLER'S INDIVIDUAL PSYCHOLOGY

An original member of Freud's psychoanalytic group, Alfred Adler broke from that group and advocated a theory of personality that was almost diametrically opposed to that of Freud.

Whereas Freud's view of humanity was pessimistic and rooted in biology, Adler's view was optimistic, idealistic, and rooted in family experiences.

Biography of Alfred Adler

Alfred Adler was born in 1870 in a town close to Vienna, a second son of middle-class Jewish parents. Like Freud, Adler was a physician, and in 1902, he became a charter member of Freud's organization. Though, personal and professional differences flanked by the two men led to Adler's departure from the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society in 1911. Adler soon founded his own group, the Society for Individual Psychology. Adler's strengths were his energetic oral presentations and his insightful skill to understand family dynamics. He was not a gifted writer, a limitation that may have prevented individual psychology from attaining a world recognition equal to Freud's psychoanalysis.

Introduction to Adlerian Theory

Although Adler's individual psychology is both intricate and comprehensive, its main tenets can be stated in simple form.

▪ Striving for Success or Superiority

The sole dynamic force behind people's actions is the striving for success or superiority.

- The Final Goal: The final goal of either success or superiority toward which all people strive unifies personality and creates all behavior meaningful.
- The Striving Force as Compensation: Because people are born with small, inferior bodies, they feel inferior and effort to overcome these feelings through their natural tendency to move toward completion. The striving force can take one of two courses: personal gain (superiority) or community benefit (success).
- Striving for Personal Superiority: Psychologically unhealthy individuals strive for personal superiority with little concern for other people. Although they may appear to be interested in other people, their basic motivation is personal benefit.
- Striving for Success: In contrast, psychologically healthy people strive for the success of all humanity, but they do so without losing their personal identity.

▪ Subjective Perceptions

People's subjective view of the world-not reality-shapes their behavior.

- Fictionalism: Fictions are people's expectations of the future. Adler held that fictions guide behavior, because people act as if these fictions are true. Adler accentuated teleology over causality, or explanations of behavior in conditions of future goals rather than past causes.

- **Organ Inferiorities:** Adler whispered that all humans are "blessed" with organ inferiorities, which stimulate subjective feelings of inferiority and move people toward perfection or completion.

- **Unity and Self-Consistency of Personality**

Adler whispered that all behaviors are directed toward a single purpose. When seen in the light of that sole purpose, seemingly contradictory behaviors

- **Organ Dialect:** People often use a physical disorder to express style of life, a condition Adler described organ dialect.
- **Conscious and Unconscious:** Conscious and unconscious processes are unified and operate to achieve a single goal. The part of our goal that we do not clearly understand is unconscious; the part of our goal that we fail to fully comprehend is conscious.

- **Social Interest**

Human behavior has value to the extent that it is motivated through social interest, that is, a feeling of oneness with all of humanity.

- **Origins of Social Interest:** Although social interest exists as potentiality in all people, it necessity be fostered in a social environment. Adler whispered that the parent-child relationship can be so strong that it negates the effects of heredity.
- **Importance of Social Interest:** According to Adler, social interest is "the sole criterion of human values," and the worthiness of all one's actions necessity be seen through this standard. Without social interest, societies could not exist; individuals in antiquity could not have survived without cooperating with others to protect themselves from danger. Even today, an infant's helplessness predisposes it toward a nurturing person.

- **Style of Life**

The manner of a person's striving is described style of life, a pattern that is relatively well set through 4 or 5 years of age. Though, Adler whispered that healthy individuals are marked through flexible behavior and that they have some limited skill to change their style of life.

- **Creative Power**

Style of life is partially a product of heredity and environment-the building blocks of personality-but ultimately style of life is shaped through people's creative power, that is, through their skill to freely choose a course of action.

- **Abnormal Development**

Creative power is not limited to healthy people; unhealthy individuals also make their own personalities. Therefore, each of us is free to choose either a useful or a useless style of life.

- **General Description:** The most significant factor in abnormal development is lack of social interest. In addition, people with a useless style of life tend to (1) set their goals too high, (2) have a dogmatic style of life, and (3) live in their own private world.
- **External Factors in Maladjustment:** Adler listed three factors that relate to abnormal development: (1) exaggerated physical deficiencies, which do not through themselves cause abnormal development, but which may contribute to it through generating subjective and exaggerated feelings of inferiority; (2) a pampered style of life, which contributes to an overriding drive to establish a permanent parasitic relationship with the mother or a mother substitute; and (3) a neglected style of life, which leads to distrust of other people.
- **Safeguarding Tendencies:** Both normal and neurotic people make symptoms as a means of protecting their fragile self-esteem. These safeguarding tendencies maintain a neurotic style of life and protect a person from public disgrace. The three principal safeguarding tendencies are (1) excuses, which allow people to preserve their inflated sense of personal worth; (2) aggression, which may take the form of depreciating others' accomplishments, accusing others of being responsible for one's own failures, or self-accusation; and (3) withdrawal, which can be expressed through psychologically moving backward, standing still, hesitating, or constructing obstacles.
- **Masculine Protest:** Both men and women sometimes overemphasize the desirability of being manly, a condition Adler described the masculine protest. The regularly found inferior status of women is not based on physiology but on historical developments and social learning.

Applications of Individual Psychology

Adler applied the principles of individual psychology to family constellation, early recollections, dreams, and psychotherapy.

- **Family Constellation:** Adler whispered that people's perception of how they fit into their family is related to their style of life. He claimed that firstborns are likely to have strong feelings of power and superiority, to be overprotective, and to have more than their share of anxiety. Second-born children are likely to have strong social interest, provided they do not get trapped trying to overcome their older sibling. Youngest children are likely to be pampered and to lack independence, whereas only children have some of the characteristics of both the oldest and the youngest child.
- **Early Recollections:** A more reliable method of determining style of life is to ask people for their earliest recollections. Adler whispered that early memories are templates on which people project their current style of life. These recollections need not be accurate

accounts of early events; they have psychological importance because they reflect a person's current view of the world.

- Dreams: Adler whispered that dreams can give clues to solving future problems. Though, dreams are disguised to deceive the dreamer and usually necessity be interpreted through another person.
- Psychotherapy: The goal of Adlerian therapy is to make a relationship flanked by therapist and patient that fosters social interest. To ensure that the patient's social interest will eventually generalize to other relationships, the therapist adopts both a maternal and a paternal role.

Critique of Adler

Individual psychology rates high on its skill to generate research, organize data, and guide the practitioner. It receives a moderate rating on parsimony, but because it lacks operational definitions, it rates low on internal consistency. It also rates low on falsification because several of its related research findings can be explained through other theories.

ERICH FROMM

Erich Fromm's humanistic psychoanalysis looks at people from the perspective of psychology, history, and anthropology. Influenced through Freud and Horney, Fromm urbanized a more culturally oriented theory than Freud's and a much broader theory than Horney's.

Biography of Erich Fromm

Erich Fromm was born in Germany in 1900, the only child of orthodox Jewish parents. A thoughtful young man, Fromm was influenced through the bible, Freud, and Marx, as well as through socialist ideology. After getting his Ph.D., Fromm began studying psychoanalysis and became an analyst through being analyzed through Hanns Sachs, a student of Freud. In 1934, Fromm moved to the United States and began a psychoanalytic practice in New York, where he also resumed his friendship with Karen Horney, whom he had recognized in Germany. Much of his later years were spent in Mexico and Switzerland. He died in 1980.

Fromm's Basic Assumptions

Fromm whispered that humans have been torn apart from their prehistoric union with nature and left with no powerful instincts to adapt to a changing world. But because humans have acquired the skill to cause, they can think in relation to their isolated condition-a situation Fromm described the human dilemma.

Human Needs

According to Fromm, our human dilemma cannot be solved through satisfying our animal needs. It can only be addressed through fulfilling our uniquely human needs, an

accomplishment that moves us toward a reunion with the natural world. Fromm recognized five of these distinctively human or existential needs.

- **Relatedness:** First is relatedness, which can take the form of (1) submission, (2) power, and (3) love. Love, or the skill to unite with another while retaining one's own individuality and integrity, is the only relatedness need that can solve our basic human dilemma.
- **Transcendence:** Being thrown into the world without their consent, humans have to transcend their nature through destroying or creating people or things. Humans can destroy through malignant aggression, or killing for reasons other than survival, but they can also make and care in relation to their creations.
- **Rootedness:** Rootedness is the need to establish roots and to feel at home again in the world. Productively, rootedness enables us to grow beyond the security of our mother and establish ties with the outside world. With the nonproductive strategy, we become fixated and afraid to move beyond the security and safety of our mother or a mother substitute.
- **Sense of Identity:** The fourth human need is for a sense of identity, or an awareness of ourselves as a separate person. The drive for a sense of identity is expressed nonproductively as conventionality to a group and productively as individuality.
- **Frame of Orientation:** Through frame of orientation, Fromm meant a road map or constant philosophy through which we find our method through the world. This need is expressed nonproductively as a striving for irrational goals and productively as movement toward rational goals.

The Burden of Freedom

As the only animal possessing self-awareness, humans are what Fromm described the "freaks of the universe." Historically, as people gained more political freedom, they began to experience more isolation from others and from the world and to feel free from the security of a permanent place in the world. As a result, freedom becomes a burden, and people experience basic anxiety, or a feeling of being alone in the world.

- **Mechanisms of Escape:** To reduce the frightening sense of isolation and aloneness, people may adopt one of three mechanisms of escape: (1) authoritarianism, or the tendency to provide up one's independence and to unite with a powerful partner; (2) destructiveness, an escape mechanism aimed at doing absent with other people or things; and (3) conventionality, or surrendering of one's individuality in order to meet the wishes of others.

- Positive Freedom: The human dilemma can only be solved through positive freedom, which is the spontaneous activity of the whole, integrated personality, and which is achieved when a person becomes reunited with others.

Character Orientations

People relate to the world through acquiring and using things (assimilation) and through relating to self and others (socialization), and they can do so either nonproductively or productively.

- Nonproductive Orientations: Fromm recognized four nonproductive strategies that fail to move people closer to positive freedom and selfrealization. People with a receptive orientation consider that the source of all good lies outside themselves and that the only method they can relate to the world is to receive things, including love, knowledge, and material objects. People with an exploitative orientation also consider that the source of good lies outside themselves, but they aggressively take what they want rather than passively getting it. Hoarding characters try to save what they have already obtained, including their opinions, feelings, and material possessions. People with a marketing orientation see themselves as commodities and value themselves against the criterion of their skill to sell themselves. They have fewer positive qualities than the other orientations because they are essentially empty.
- The Productive Orientation: Psychologically healthy people work toward positive freedom through productive work, love, and reasoning. Productive love necessitates a passionate love of all life and is described biophilia.

Personality Disorders

Unhealthy people have nonproductive methods of working, reasoning, and especially loving. Fromm recognized three major personality disorders: (1) necrophilia, or the love of death and the hatred of all humanity; (2) malignant narcissism, or a belief that everything belonging to one's self is of great value and anything belonging to others is worthless; and incestuous symbiosis, or an extreme dependence on one's mother or mother surrogate.

Psychotherapy

The goal of Fromm's psychotherapy was to work toward satisfaction of the basic human needs of relatedness, transcendence, rootedness, a sense of identity, and a frame of orientation. The therapist tries to accomplish this through shared communication in which the therapist is simply a human being rather than a scientist.

Critique of Fromm

The strength of Fromm's theory is his lucid writings on a broad range of human issues. As a scientific theory, though, Fromm's theory rates very low on its skill to generate research and to lend

itself to falsification; it rates low on usefulness to the practitioner, internal consistency, and parsimony. Because it is quite broad in scope, Fromm's theory rates high on organizing existing knowledge.

Karen Horney

Karen Horney (1885–1952) was another disciple of Freud who developed a theory that deviated from basic Freudian principles. Horney adopted a more optimistic view of human life, emphasizing human growth and self-realization. She concentrated on early childhood development, and her work formed the basis of much later work in this area. One of Horney's major contributions was her challenge to Freud's treatment of women. She countered that, in the early part of the twentieth century, women were more likely to be affected by social and cultural oppression than the absence of a penis.

Karen Horney's psychoanalytic social theory assumes that social and cultural circumstances, especially throughout childhood, have a powerful effect on later personality. Like Melanie Klein, Horney accepted several of Freud's observations, but she objected to most of his interpretations, including his notions on feminine psychology.

Biography of Karen Horney

Karen Horney, who was born in Germany in 1885, was one of the first women in that country admitted to medical school. There, she became acquainted with Freudian theory and eventually became a psychoanalyst and a psychiatrist. In her mid-40s, Horney left Germany to settle in the United States, first in Chicago and then in New York. She soon abandoned orthodox psychoanalysis in favor of a more socially oriented theory—one that had a more positive view of feminine development. She died in 1952 at age 67.

Introduction to Psychoanalytic Social Theory

Although Horney's writings deal mostly with neuroses and neurotic personalities, her theories also appropriately suggest much that is appropriate to normal development. She agreed with Freud that early childhood traumas are significant, but she placed distant more emphasis on social factors. Horney and Freud Compared: Horney criticized Freudian theory on at least three accounts: (1) its rigidity toward new ideas, (2) its skewed view of feminine psychology, and (3) its overemphasis on biology and the pleasure principle.

- **The Impact of Culture:** Horney insisted that modern culture is too competitive and that competition leads to hostility and feelings of isolation. These circumstances lead to exaggerated needs for affection and cause people to overvalue love.
- **The Importance of Childhood Experiences:** Neurotic conflict stems largely from childhood traumas, most of which are traced to a lack of genuine love. Children who do

not receive genuine affection feel threatened and adopt rigid behavioral patterns in an effort to gain love.

Basic Hostility and Basic Anxiety

All children need feelings of safety and security, but these can be gained only through love from parents. Unfortunately, parents often neglect, control, reject, or overindulge their children, circumstances that lead to the child's feelings of basic hostility toward parents. If children repress feelings of basic hostility, they will develop feelings of insecurity and a pervasive sense of apprehension described basic anxiety. People can protect themselves from basic anxiety through a number of protective devices, including (1) affection, (2) submissiveness, (3) power, prestige, or possession, and (4) withdrawal. Normal people have the flexibility to use any or all of these approaches, but neurotics are compelled to rely rigidly on only one.

Compulsive Drives

Neurotics are regularly trapped in a vicious circle in which their compulsive need to reduce basic anxiety leads to a diversity of self-defeating behaviors; these behaviors then produce more basic anxiety, and the cycle continues.

- **Neurotic Needs:** Horney recognized 10 categories of neurotic needs that mark neurotics in their effort to reduce basic anxiety. These contain needs (1) for affection and approval, (2) for a powerful partner (3) to restrict one's life within narrow borders, (4) for power, (5) to use others, (6) for social recognition or prestige, (7) for personal admiration, (8) for ambition and personal achievement, (9) for selfsufficiency and independence, and (10) for perfection and unassailability.
- **Neurotic Trends:** Later, Horney grouped these 10 neurotic needs into three basic neurotic trends, which apply to both normal and neurotic individuals in their effort to solve basic conflict. The three neurotic trends are (1) moving toward people, in which compliant people protect themselves against feelings of helplessness through attaching themselves to other people; (2) moving against people, in which aggressive people protect themselves against perceived hostility of others through exploiting others; and (3) moving absent from people, in which detached people protect themselves against feelings of isolation through appearing arrogant and aloof.

Intrapsychic Conflicts

People also experience inner tensions or intrapsychic conflicts that become part of their belief system and take on a life of their own, separate from the interpersonal conflicts that created them.

- **The Idealized Self-Image:** People who do not receive love and affection throughout childhood are blocked in their effort to acquire a stable sense of identity. Feeling

alienated from self, they make an idealized self-image, or an extravagantly positive picture of themselves. Horney recognized three characteristics of the idealized self-image: (1) the neurotic search for glory, or a comprehensive drive toward actualizing the ideal self; (2) neurotic claims, or a belief that they are entitled to special privileges; and (3) neurotic pride, or a false pride based not on reality but on a distorted and idealized view of self.

- **Self-Hatred:** Neurotics dislike themselves because reality always falls short of their idealized view of self. So, they learn self-hatred, which can be expressed as: (1) relentless demands on the self, (2) merciless self-accusation, (3) self-contempt, (4) self-frustration, (5) self-torment or self-torture, and (6) self-destructive actions and impulses.

Feminine Psychology

Horney whispered that psychological differences flanked by men and women are not due to anatomy but to culture and social expectations. Her view of the Oedipus intricate differed markedly from Freud's in that she insisted that any sexual attraction or hostility of child to parent would be the result of learning and not biology.

Psychotherapy

The goal of Horney's psychotherapy was to help patients grow toward selfrealization, provide up their idealized self-image, relinquish their neurotic search for glory, and change self-hatred to self-acceptance. Horney whispered that successful therapy is built on self-analysis and self-understanding.

Critique of Horney

Although Horney painted a vivid portrayal of the neurotic personality, her theory rates very low in generating research and low on its skill to be falsified, to organize data, and to serve as a useful guide to action. Her theory is rated in relation to the average on internal consistency and parsimony.

NATURE OF ANXIETY

Anxiety is an unpleasant state of inner turmoil, often accompanied through nervous behavior, such as pacing back and forth, somatic complaints and rumination. It is the subjectively unpleasant feelings of dread over something unlikely to happen, such as the feeling of imminent death. Anxiety is not the same as fear, which is felt in relation to the something realistically intimidating or dangerous and is an appropriate response to a perceived threat; anxiety is a feeling of fear, worry, and uneasiness, usually generalized and unfocused as an overreaction to a situation that is only subjectively seen as menacing. It is often accompanied through restlessness, fatigue, problems in concentration, and muscular tension. Anxiety is not measured to be a normal reaction to a perceived stressor although several feel it occasionally.

The failings of psychoanalytic theory

Freud was an original thinker who created a comprehensive theory of human behaviour, which had a profound impact on twentieth century society, as well as in areas of human endeavour such as art and literature. Few theorists in any scientific discipline have attained such a degree of fame, and few theoretical concepts have been so fully incorporated into Western culture. Despite this, Karl Popper (1957) declared that psychoanalysis is a pseudoscience because it is inherently untestable. He argued that psychoanalysis is unfalsifiable because the logic of the theory allows for any finding to be explained in different ways. For example, Freud states that aggressive impulses can lead either to aggressive actions or to reaction formations against them. So it is impossible to test definitively any hypotheses about aggressive action.

Freudian psychoanalytic theory presents imprecise concepts and metaphors based on Freud's interpretation of unrecorded therapy sessions, and as such it cannot be thoroughly examined through experimental and scientific methods. Nevertheless, recent developments within cognitive psychology concerning human memory and subliminal perception have reopened the unconscious for serious scientific investigation. For a related consideration from the neuropsychological perspective, see Faulkner and Foster (2002). These authors argue that the effects of brain injury may teach us a considerable amount about the relationship between the conscious and unconscious mind.

MODULE 2: TRAIT THEORIES

Traits

Practically all personality theorists are concerned with traits. After all, traits are what make us who we are; they are the relatively permanent aspects of each of us evidenced by the consistency in our interactions. Knowing this, what makes the trait approach to understanding personality different from the other theories?

First of all, while most theories represent attempts at better understanding the development of personality, trait theorists typically talk very little about development. Second, predicting a person's behavior in a given situation is also not a concern for trait theorists. Third, unlike many other theoretical orientations, trait theorists are interested in the comparison of people through based on not just aspects, but also degrees. And finally, and likely the biggest difference, trait theory does not inherently provide a medium of personality change

Traits are relatively permanent characteristics of personality which compel an individual to behave uniformly crossways different situations. People can be compared through measuring these traits. We call these traits relatively permanent because they change over time. For instance, an introvert person may not remain that introvert after 10 years. Some of the significant traits are (a) Introversion-extraversion; (b) Neuroticismstability (c) Psychoticism

Introversion-extroversion

It is a bipolar trait. People with predominance of introversion are selfcentered. Such people are idealistic, imaginative, shy and secluded. Predominance of thoughtfulness steers them in the world of brooding, fantasy and daydreaming. These people take considerable time in reaching decision and are worried in relation to the future. Such people are theoretical and often are philosophers, poets, scientist and professors.

Extroverts are more inclined to social activities. They are gregarious and social through nature. Such people are realistic, practical, talkative, and active. They show more interest in leadership. Though, very few people are totally extrovert or introvert. Majority of the people fall in flanked by that is, they exhibit some degree of introversion and some degree of extroversion in their behaviour and hence are described Ambiverts. Now the question is why are some people introvert and some extrovert? Are there any physiological correlates of it? Researches reveal that introvert and extroverts differ in cortical excitation level. Extroverts have lower cortical excitation threshold, so, small amount of stimulation is enough to activate them. This fact creates them sensation seeking. On the other hand cortical excitation level of introverts is quite high as a result they remain unaffected through stimulation from external environment.

Neuroticism stability dimension

This too is a bipolar dimension. People high on neuroticism exhibit scrupulous traits and behavioral tendencies. They show lack of emotional control and will power with an added characteristic of slowness in thought process and activity. Even small things perturb them. People with high neuroticism are high on suggestibility and low on sociability. Though, such people are also characterized through increased emotional impulsiveness. Contrary to neuroticism, people high on stability are cool and do not get easily disturbed or perturbed through conflicting issues. They are able to keep themselves under control even in most hard circumstances. They can detach themselves and think over the problem in a balanced manner so as to arrive at a right decision. This quality of them creates them realistic and problem solution oriented. As for the physiological correlates of neuroticism and stability, it is whispered that autonomic nervous system of people with high neuroticism is more reactive. These people are vulnerable to reaction to environmental incentive. Researches reveal that people with high cortical excitation threshold and increased autonomic reactivity show more acute and explicit symptoms of disorders like phobia, anxiety disorder, and obsessivecompulsive disorder.

Psychoticism dimension

People with this trait show lack of concentration power and weak memory. They are also characterized with insensitivity. They are more worried for themselves than for others. Element of cruelty and sensation seeking marks their behaviour and they are unable to protect themselves from danger and dangerous situations.

CATTELL'S FACTOR THEORY

Raymond Cattell and Hans Eysenck have each used factor analysis to identify traits (that is, relatively permanent dispositions of people). Cattell has recognized a large number of personality traits, whereas Eysenck has extracted only three general factors.

Biography of Raymond B. Cattell

Raymond B. Cattell was born in England in 1905, educated at the University of London, but spent most of his professional career in the United States. He held positions at Columbia University, Clark University, Harvard University, and the University of Illinois, where he spent most of his active career. Throughout the last 20 years of his life, he was associated with the Hawaii School of Professional Psychology. He died in 1998, a few weeks short of his 93rd birthday.

Basics of Factor Analysis

Factor analysis is a mathematical procedure for reducing a large number of scores to a few more general variables or factors. Correlations of the original, specific scores with the factors are described factor loadings. Traits generated through factor analysis may be either unipolar (scaled

from zero to some large amount) or bipolar (having two opposing poles, such as introversion and extraversion). For factors to have psychological meaning, the analyst necessarily rotate the axes on which the scores are plotted. Eysenck used an orthogonal rotation whereas Cattell favored an oblique rotation. The oblique rotation procedure ordinarily results in more traits than the orthogonal method.

Introduction to Cattell's Trait Theory

Cattell used an inductive approach to identify traits; that is, he began with a large body of data that he composed with no preconceived hypothesis or theory. P Technique: Cattell's P technique is a correlational procedure that uses measures composed from one person on several different occasions and is his effort to measure individual or unique, rather than common, traits. Cattell also used the dR (differential R) technique, which correlates the scores of a large number of people on several variables obtained at two different occasions. Through combining these two techniques, Cattell has measured both states (temporary circumstances within an individual) and traits (relatively permanent dispositions of an individual).

Media of Observation: Cattell used three different sources of data that enter the correlation matrix: (1) L data, or a person's life record that comes from observations made through others; (2) Q data, which are based on questionnaires; and (3) T data, or information obtained from objective tests.

Source Traits

Source traits refer to the underlying factor or factors responsible for the intercorrelation among surface traits. They can be distinguished from trait indicators, or surface traits.

Personality Traits

Personality traits contain both common traits (shared through several people) and unique traits (peculiar to one individual). Personality traits can also be classified into temperament, motivation (dynamic), and skill.

Temperament Traits:

Temperament traits are concerned with how a person behaves. Of the 35 primary or first-order traits Cattell has recognized, all but one (intelligence) is basically a temperament trait. Of the 23 normal traits, 16 were obtained through Q media and compose Cattell's well-known 16 PF scale. The additional seven factors that create up the 23 normal traits were originally recognized only through L data. Cattell whispered that pathological people have the same 23 normal traits as other people, but, in addition, they exhibit one or more of 12 abnormal

traits. Also, a person's pathology may simply be due to a normal trait that is accepted to an extreme. Second-Order Traits: The 35 primary source traits tend to cluster together, forming eight clearly identifiable second-order traits. The two strongest of the second-order traits might be described extraversion/introversion and anxiety.

Dynamic Traits

In addition to temperament traits, Cattell recognized motivational or dynamic traits, which contain attitudes, ergs, and sems.

Attitudes: An attitude refers to a specific course of action, or desire to act, in response to a given situation. Motivation is usually quite intricate, so that a network of motives, or dynamic lattice, is ordinarily involved with an attitude. In addition, a subsidiation chain, or a intricate set of subgoals, underlies motivation.

Ergs: Ergs are innate drives or motives, such as sex, hunger, loneliness, pity, fear, curiosity, pride, sensuousness, anger, and greed that humans share with other primates.

Sems: Sems are learned or acquired dynamic traits that can satisfy many ergs at the same time. The self-sentiment is the most significant seem in that it integrates the other sems.

The Dynamic Lattice: The dynamic lattice is a intricate network of attitudes, ergs, and sems underlying a person's motivational structure.

Genetic Basis of Traits

Cattell and his colleagues provided estimates of heritability of the several source traits. Heritability is an estimate of the extent to which the variance of a given trait is due to heredity. Cattell has found relatively high heritability values for both fluid intelligence (the skill to adapt to new material) and crystallized intelligence (which depends on prior learning), suggesting that intelligence is due more to heredity than to environment.

Characteristics of each of the factors and sub dimensions of Five Factor theory.

Many psychologists believe that the total number of personality traits can be reduced to five factors, with all other personality traits fitting within these five factors. According to this model, a factor is a larger category that encompasses many smaller personality traits. The five factor model was reached independently by several different psychologists over a number of years.

History and Overview

Investigation into the five factor model started in 1949 when D.W. Fiske was unable to find support for Cattell's expansive 16 factors of personality, but instead found support for only five factors. Research increased in the 1980s and 1990s, offering increasing support for the five factor model. The five factor personality traits show consistency in interviews, self-descriptions, and

observations, as well as across a wide range of participants of different ages and from different cultures. It is the most widely accepted structure among trait theorists and in personality psychology today, and the most accurate approximation of the basic trait dimensions (Funder, 2001).

Because this model was developed independently by different theorists, the names of each of the five factors and what each factor measures- differ according to which theorist is referencing it. Paul Costa's and Robert McCrae's version, however, is the most well-known today and the one called to mind by most psychologists when discussing the five factor model. The acronym OCEAN is often used to recall Costa's and McCrae's five factors, or the Big Five personality traits: Openness to Experience, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Neuroticism.

The Big Five Personality Traits

Openness to Experience (inventive/curious vs. consistent/cautious)

This trait includes appreciation for art, emotion, adventure, unusual ideas, curiosity, and variety of experience. Openness reflects a person's degree of intellectual curiosity, creativity, and preference for novelty and variety. It is also described as the extent to which a person is imaginative or independent; it describes a personal preference for a variety of activities over a strict routine. Those who score high in openness to experience prefer novelty, while those who score low prefer routine.

Conscientiousness (efficient/organized vs. easy-going/careless)

This trait refers to one's tendency toward self-discipline, dutifulness, competence, thoughtfulness, and achievement-striving (such as goal-directed behavior). It is distinct from the moral implications of "having a conscience"; instead, this trait focuses on the amount of deliberate intention and thought a person puts into his or her behavior. Individuals high in conscientiousness prefer planned rather than spontaneous behavior and are often organized, hardworking, and dependable. Individuals who score low in conscientiousness take a morerelaxed approach, are spontaneous, and may be disorganized. Numerous studies have found a positive correlation between conscientiousness and academic success.

Extraversion (outgoing/energetic vs. solitary/reserved)

An individual who scores high on extraversion is characterized by high energy, positive emotions, talkativeness, assertiveness, sociability, and the tendency to seek stimulation in the company of others. Those who score low on extraversion prefer solitude and/or smaller groups, enjoy quiet, prefer activities alone, and avoid large social situations. Not surprisingly, people who

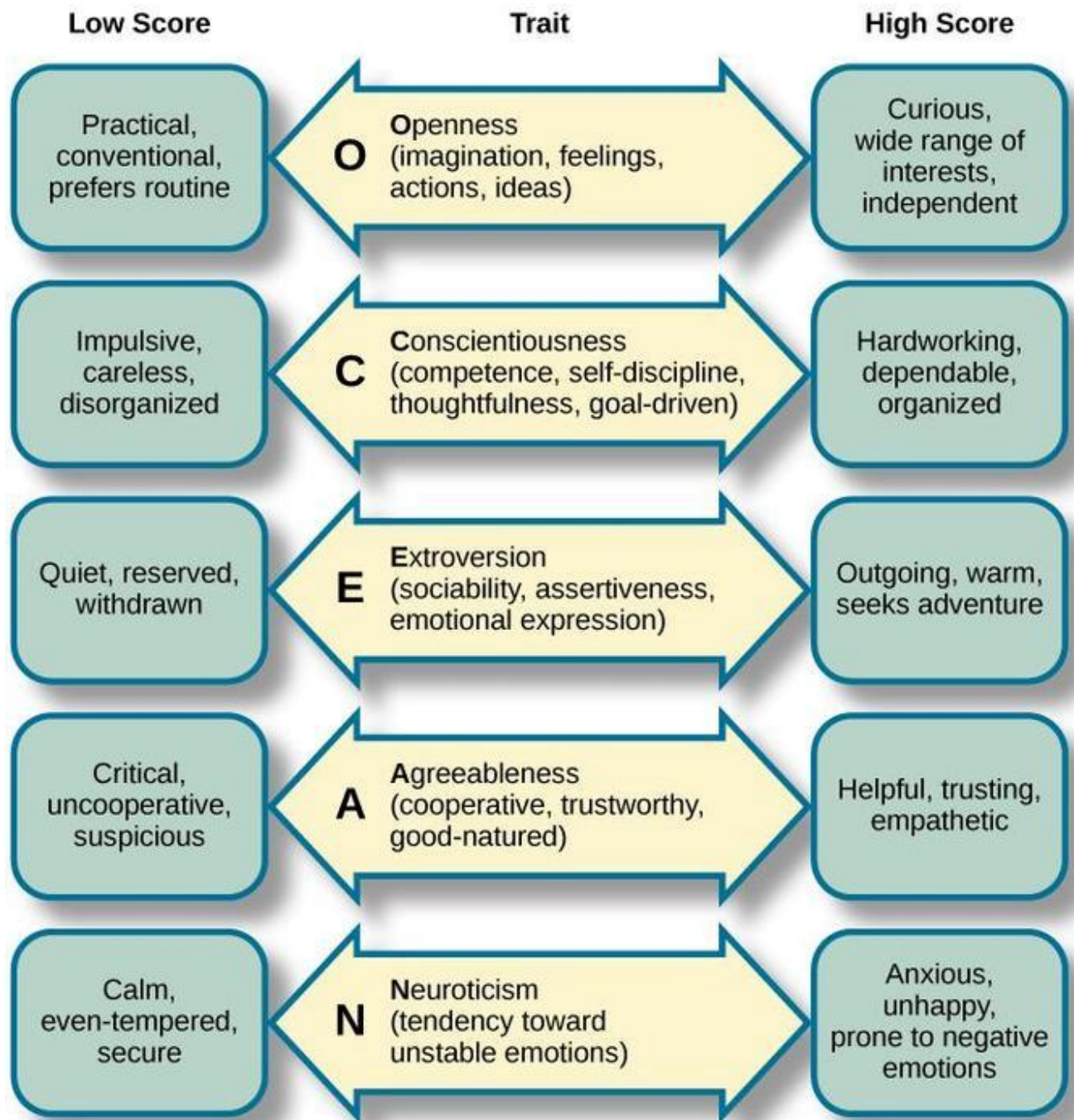
score high on both extroversion and openness are more likely to participate in adventure and risky sports due to their curious and excitement-seeking nature (Tok, 2011).

Agreeableness (friendly/compassionate vs. cold/unkind)

This trait measures one's tendency to be compassionate and cooperative rather than suspicious and antagonistic towards others. It is also a measure of a person's trusting and helpful nature and whether that person is generally well-tempered or not. People who score low on agreeableness tend to be described as rude and uncooperative.

Neuroticism (sensitive/nervous vs. secure/confident)

High neuroticism is characterized by the tendency to experience unpleasant emotions, such as anger, anxiety, depression, or vulnerability. Neuroticism also refers to an individual's degree of emotional stability and impulse control. People high in neuroticism tend to experience emotional instability and are characterized as angry, impulsive, and hostile. Watson and Clark (1984) found that people reporting high levels of neuroticism also tend to report feeling anxious and unhappy. In contrast, people who score low in neuroticism tend to be calm and even-tempered.



It is important to keep in mind that each of the five factors represents a range of possible personality types. For example, an individual is typically somewhere in between the two extremes of "extraverted" and "introverted", and not necessarily completely defined as one or the other. Most people lie somewhere in between the two polar ends of each dimension. It's also important to note that the Big Five traits are relatively stable over our lifespan, but there is some tendency for the traits

to increase or decrease slightly. For example, researchers have found that conscientiousness increases through young adulthood into middle age, as we become better able to manage our personal relationships and careers (Donnellan & Lucas, 2008). Agreeableness also increases with age, peaking between 50 to 70 years (Terracciano, McCrae, Brant, & Costa, 2005). Neuroticism and extroversion tend to decline slightly with age (Donnellan & Lucas; Terracciano et al.).

Criticisms of the Five Factor Model

Critics of the trait approach argue that the patterns of variability over different situations are crucial to determining personality—that averaging over such situations to find an overarching "trait" masks critical differences among individuals.

Critics of the five-factor model in particular argue that the model has limitations as an explanatory or predictive theory and that it does not explain all of human personality. Some psychologists have dissented from the model because they feel it neglects other domains of personality, such as religiosity, manipulateness/ machiavellianism, honesty, sexiness /seductiveness, thriftiness, conservativeness, masculinity/femininity, snobbishness/egotism, sense of humor, and risk-taking/thrill-seeking.

Factor analysis, the statistical method used to identify the dimensional structure of observed variables, lacks a universally recognized basis for choosing among solutions with different numbers of factors. A five-factor solution depends, on some degree, on the interpretation of the analyst. A larger number of factors may, in fact, underlie these five factors; this has led to disputes about the "true" number of factors. Proponents of the five-factor model have responded that although other solutions may be viable in a single dataset, only the five-factor structure consistently replicates across different studies.

Another frequent criticism is that the five-factor model is not based on any underlying theory; it is merely an empirical finding that certain descriptors cluster together under factor analysis. This means that while these five factors do exist, the underlying causes behind them are unknown.

Indian Triguna Personality

With the increasing realization that many of the Western psychological concepts and methods lack relevance to different cultural systems the need for developing indigenous psychologies was recognized all over the world (Kim & Berry, 1973). In recent times more and more researchers have taken active interest in indigenizing and developing indigenous Psychology (Misra & Mohanty, 2000; Paranjpe, 1999; Srivastava, 2002). The structure, nature and evolution of human personality are elaborated in these sources with special reference to the concept of Triguna. More than 40 books have appeared in Indian Psychology (Mathew, 2004).

- Sattva is that element of prakrti which is of the nature of pleasure, and is buoyant of light (laghu), and bright or illuminating (prakasaka)। Pleasure in its various forms ,such as satisfaction, joy, happiness, bliss, contentment, etc. is produced by things in our minds through the operation of the power of sattva inhering in them both.
 - Rajas is the principle of activity in things. It always moves and makes other things move. It is of the nature of pain, and is mobile and stimulating. It helps the elements of sattva and tamas which are inactive and motionless in themselves, to perform their functions.
 - Tamas is the principle of passivity and negativity in things. It is opposed to sattva in being heavy (guru) and in obstructing the manifestation of objects. By obstructing the principle of activity in us it induces sleep, drowsiness, and laziness. It also produces the state of apathy or indifference (visada). Hence it is that sattva, rajas and tamas have been compared respectively to whiteness, redness, and darkness.
-
- The gunas are in the state of both conflict and co-operation with one another.
 - The gunas are in the state of both conflict and co-operation with one another. They always go together and can never be separated from one another. Nor can any one of them produce anything without the help of other two.
 - The nature of things is determined by the predominant guna, while the other others are their in a subordinate position. The classification of objects to in good, bad and indifferent, or into pure, impure and neutral, or into intelligent, active and indolent, has reference to the preponderance of sattva, rajas and tamas respectively.

TRIGUNA AND PERSONALITY PSYCHOLOGY

- The theoretical expositions on triguna and their manifestations in human nature have attracted the attention of Indian psychologists. The concept has been examined theoretically (Boss,1966; Misra et al.,2000; Rao.1971) and empirically (Das,1987,1991;Kapur et al., 1997 ; Marutham ,Balodhi&Misra, 1998 ; Mathew.1995; Mohan & Sandhu,1986;Sebastian & mathew,2002 etc.).Mathew's Poorna Chakra
- It is model of personality and development of consciousness rooted in concept of triguna
- It is the extent to which the qualities of mind vary(sattva) called as stability; rajas called as activation and tamas called as inertia) help differentiate an individual's mind from the other minds.

MODULE 3: HUMANISTIC PERSPECTIVES

Humanistic Theories – Individuality

Humanistic, or phenomenological, theories of personality present a positive and optimistic view of human behaviour. In complete contrast to theories from the psychodynamic tradition, people are viewed as experiencing beings rather than victims of their unconscious motivations and conflicts. So the emphasis here is on individual experiences, relationships and ways of understanding the world. Fundamental to these theories are the beliefs that everyone's experience is unique, and the individual's perception of the world is critical to their understanding and behaviour.

Humanistic theories have formed the basis of many therapeutic procedures on which modern counselling techniques are based.

THE DRIVE TO FULFIL POTENTIAL

Approval and self-actualization

Carl Rogers (1902–87) saw humans as intrinsically good and as having an innate desire for self-improvement. He believed that self-concept is critical to our experience of the world, and that this develops from the child's perceptions of his parents' approval. Rogers believed that all people have a basic need for positive regard – approval and love. How we feel about ourselves is determined by how others react to or approve of us, and we tend to be unhappy if we feel that others are not happy with us. According to Rogers, children develop conditions of worth – criteria for what we must or must not do in order to gain approval. Although this is essential to the socialization of children, Rogers also argued that conditions of worth may interfere with personal development if our sole objective is to gain approval from others.

Experiencing unconditional positive regard – love and affection – enables us to grow and to satisfy our core tendency, which is to fulfil our potential by developing our capacities and talents to the full. This is called self-actualization. Activities that are self-actualizing are perceived as satisfying, says Rogers, whereas activities that are incompatible with self-actualization are frustrating. From a scientific perspective, the tendency to self-actualize is vague and untestable. While we may all have the same capacity to self-actualize, the form that actualization takes will be unique to each individual, making it impossible to establish objective criteria for measurement.

Biography of Carl Rogers

Carl Rogers was born into a devoutly religious family in a Chicago suburb in 1902. After the family moved to a farm close to Chicago, Carl became interested in scientific farming and learned to appreciate the scientific method. When he graduated from the University of Wisconsin, Rogers planned to become a minister, but he gave up that notion and completed a Ph.D. in psychology from Columbia University in 1931. In 1940, after almost a dozen years absent from an academic life working as a clinician, he took a position at Ohio State University.

Later, he held positions at the University of Chicago and the University of Wisconsin. In 1964, he moved to California where he helped found the Center for Studies of the Person. He died in 1987 at age 85.

Person-Centered Theory

Rogers cautiously crafted his person-centered theory of personality to meet his own demands for a structural model that could explain and predict outcomes of client-centered therapy. Though, the theory has implications distant beyond the therapeutic setting.

- **Basic Assumptions:** Person-centered theory rests on two basic assumptions: (1) the formative tendency, which states that all matter, both organic and inorganic, tends to evolve from simpler to more intricate forms, and (2) an actualizing tendency, which suggests that all living things, including humans, tend to move toward completion, or fulfillment of potentials. Though, in order for people (or plants and animals) to become actualized, certain identifiable circumstances necessity be present. For a person, these circumstances contain a relationship with another person who is genuine, or congruent, and who demonstrates complete acceptance and empathy for that person. **The Self and Self-Actualization:** A sense of self or personal identity begins to emerge throughout infancy, and, once established, it allows a person to strive toward self-actualization, which is a subsystem of the actualization tendency and refers to the tendency to actualize the self as perceived in awareness. The self has two subsystems: (1) the selfconcept, which comprises all those characteristics of one's identity that are perceived in awareness, and (2) the ideal self, or our view of our self as we would like to be or aspire to be. Once formed, the self concept tends to resist change, and gaps flanked by it and the ideal self result in incongruence and several levels of psychopathology.
- **Awareness:** People are aware of both their self-concept and their ideal self, although awareness need not be accurate or at a high level. Rogers saw people as having experiences on three levels of awareness: (1) those that are symbolized below the threshold of awareness and are either ignored or denied, that is, subceived, or not allowed into the selfconcept; (2) those that are distorted or reshaped to fit it into an existing self-concept; and (3) those that are constant with the self-concept and therefore are accurately symbolized and freely admitted to the selfstructure. Any experience not constant with the self-concept-even positive experiences-will be distorted or denied.
- **Needs:** The two basic human needs are maintenance and enhancement, but people also need positive regard and self-regard. Maintenance needs contain those for food, air, and safety, but they also contain our tendency to resist change and to maintain our self-concept as it is. Enhancement needs contain needs to grow and to realize one's full human potential. As awareness of self emerges, an infant begins to receive positive

regard from another person—that is, to be loved or accepted. People naturally value those experiences that satisfy their needs for positive regard, but, unfortunately, this value sometimes becomes more powerful than the reward they receive for meeting their organismic needs. This sets up the condition of incongruence, which is experienced when basic organismic needs are denied or distorted in favor of needs to be loved or accepted. As a result of experiences with positive regard, people develop the need for self-regard, which they acquire only after they perceive that someone else cares for them and values them. Once established, though, self-regard becomes autonomous and no longer dependent on another's continuous positive evaluation.

- **Circumstances of Worth:** Most people are not unconditionally accepted. Instead, they receive circumstances of worth; that is, they feel that they are loved and accepted only when and if they meet the circumstances set through others.
- **Psychological Stagnation:** When the organismic self and the selfconcept are at variance with one another, a person may experience incongruence, which comprises vulnerability, threat, defensiveness, and even disorganization. The greater the incongruence flanked by self-concept and the organismic experience, the more vulnerable that person becomes. Anxiety exists whenever the person becomes dimly aware of the discrepancy flanked by organismic experience and selfconcept, whereas threat is experienced whenever the person becomes more clearly aware of this incongruence. To prevent incongruence, people react with defensiveness, typically in the forms of distortion and denial. With distortion, people misinterpret an experience so that it fits into their self-concept; with denial, people refuse to allow the experience into awareness. When people's defenses fail to operate properly, their behavior becomes disorganized or psychotic. With disorganization, people sometimes behave uniformly with their organismic experience and sometimes in accordance with their shattered self-concept.

Psychotherapy

For client-centered psychotherapy to be effective, certain circumstances are necessary: A vulnerable client necessarily have get in touch with of some duration with a counselor who is congruent, and who demonstrates unconditional positive regard and listens with empathy to a client. The client necessarily in turn perceive the congruence, unconditional positive regard, and empathy of the therapist. If these circumstances are present, then the process of therapy will take place and certain predictable outcomes will result.

- **Circumstances:** Three circumstances are crucial to client-centered therapy, and Rogers described them the necessary and enough circumstances for therapeutic growth. The first is counselor congruence, or a therapist whose organismic experiences are matched

through an awareness and through the skill and willingness to openly express these feelings. Congruence is more basic than the other two circumstances because it is a relatively stable characteristic of the therapist, whereas the other two circumstances are limited to a specific therapeutic relationship. Unconditional positive regard exists when the therapist accepts the client without circumstances or qualifications. Empathic listening is the therapist's skill to sense the feelings of a client and also to communicate these perceptions so that the client knows that another person has entered into his or her world of feelings without prejudice, projection, or evaluation.

- Process: Rogers saw the process of therapeutic change as taking place in seven stages: (1) clients are unwilling to communicate anything in relation to the themselves; (2) they discuss only external events and other people; (3) they begin to talk in relation to the themselves, but still as an object; (4) they discuss strong emotions that they have felt in the past; (5) they begin to express present feelings; (6) they freely allow into awareness those experiences that were previously denied or distorted; and (7) they experience irreversible change and growth.
- Outcomes: When client-centered therapy is successful, clients become more congruent, less suspicious, more open to experience, and more realistic. The gap flanked by their ideal self and their true self narrows and, as a consequence, clients experience less physiological and psychological tension. Finally, clients' interpersonal relationships improve because they are more accepting of self and others.

The Person of Tomorrow

Rogers was vitally interested in the psychologically healthy person, described the "fully functioning person" or the "person of tomorrow." Rogers listed seven characteristics of the person of tomorrow. The person of tomorrow (1) is able to adjust to change, (2) is open to experience, (3) is able to live fully in the moment, (4) is able to have harmonious relations with others, (5) is more integrated with no artificial boundaries flanked by conscious and unconscious processes, (6) has a basic trust of human nature, and (7) enjoys a greater richness in life. The factors have implications both for the individual and for society.

Critique of Rogers

Rogers's person-centered theory is one of the most cautiously constructed of all personality theories, and it meets quite well each of the six criteria of a useful theory. It rates very high on internal consistency and parsimony, high on its skill to be falsified and to generate research, and high-average on its skill to organize knowledge and to serve as a guide to the practitioner.

ABRAHAM MASLOW

Abraham Maslow urbanized the Hierarchy of Needs model in the 1940-50's in the USA, and the Hierarchy of Needs theory remains valid even today for understanding human

motivation, management training, and personal development. Indeed, Maslow's ideas nearby the Hierarchy of Needs concerning the responsibility of employers to give a workplace environment that encourages and enables employees to fulfill their own unique potential (self-actualisation) are today more relevant than ever. Maslow took this thought and created his now well-known hierarchy of needs. Beyond the details of air, water, food, and sex, he laid out five broader layers: the physiological needs, the needs for safety and security, the needs for love and belonging, the needs for esteem, and the need to actualize the self, in that order.

Self-actualization

Self-actualization is a term that has been used in several psychology theories, often in slightly different methods. The term was originally introduced through the organismic theorist Kurt Goldstein for the motive to realize one's full potential. Expressing one's creativity, quest for spiritual enlightenment, pursuit of knowledge, and the desire to provide to society are examples of self-actualization. In Goldstein's view, it is the organism's master motive, the only real motive: "the tendency to actualize itself as fully as possible is the basic drive... the drive of self-actualization." Carl Rogers similarly wrote of "the curative force in psychotherapy - man's tendency to actualize himself, to become his potentialities... to express and activate all the capacities of the organism." The concept was brought most fully to prominence in Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory as the final level of psychological development that can be achieved when all basic and mental needs are essentially fulfilled and the "actualization" of the full personal potential takes place, although he adapted this viewpoint later on in life, and saw it more flexibly.

As Abraham Maslow noted, the basic needs of humans necessity be met (e.g. food, shelter, warmth, security, sense of belongingness etc.) before a person can achieve self-actualization - the need to be good, to be fully alive and to find meaning in life. Research shows that when people live lives that are different from their true nature and capabilities, they are less likely to be happy than those whose goals and lives match. For instance, someone who has inherent potential to be a great artist or teacher may never realize his/her talents if their energy is focused on attaining the basic needs of humans.

Maslow's hierarchy of needs

Abraham Maslow's book *Motivation and psychology* started a philosophical revolution out of which grew humanistic psychology. This changed the view of human nature from a negative point of view - man is a conditioned or tension reducing organism- to a more positive view in which man is motivated to realize his full potential. This is reflected in his hierarchy of needs and in his theory of Self-actualization. The term was later used through Abraham Maslow in his article, *A Theory of Human Motivation*, Maslow explicitly defines self-actualization to be "the desire for self-fulfillment, namely the tendency for him [the individual] to become actualized in what he

is potentially. This tendency might be phrased as the desire to become more and more what one is, to become everything that one is capable of becoming." Maslow used the term self-actualization to describe a desire, not a driving force that could lead to realizing one's capabilities. Maslow did not feel that self-actualization determined one's life; rather, he felt that it gave the individual a desire, or motivation to achieve budding ambitions. Maslow's usage of the term is now popular in modern psychology when discussing personality from the humanistic approach.

A basic definition from a typical college textbook defines selfactualization according to Maslow simply as "the full realization of one's potential", and of one's 'true self'. A more explicit definition of self-actualization according to Maslow is "intrinsic growth of what is already in the organism, or more accurately of what is the organism itself...self-actualization is growth-motivated rather than deficiency-motivated." This explanation emphasizes the fact that selfactualization cannot normally be reached until other lower order necessities of Maslow's hierarchy of needs are satisfied. While Goldstein defined selfactualization as a driving force, Maslow uses the term to describe personal growth that takes place once lower order needs have essentially been met, one corollary being that, in his opinion, "self-actualisation...rarely happens...certainly in less than 1% of the adult population." The fact that "most of us function most of the time on a level lower than that of selfactualization" he described the psychopathology of normality. Maslow measured self-actualizing people to possess "an unusual skill to detect the spurious, the fake, and the dishonest in personality, and in general to judge the people correctly and efficiently."

Maslow based his theory partially on his own assumptions or convictions in relation to the human potential and partially on his case studies of historical figures that he whispered to be self-actualized, including Albert Einstein and Henry David Thoreau. Maslow examined the lives of each of these people in order to assess the common qualities that led each to be to become selfactualized. In general he found that these individuals were very accepting of themselves and of their life circumstances; were focused on finding solutions to cultural problems rather than to personal problems; were open to others' opinions and ideas; had strong senses of privacy, autonomy, human values and appreciation of life; and a few intimate friendships rather than several superficial ones. He also whispered that each of these people had somehow supervised to find their core-nature that is unique to them, and is one of the true goals of life.

Maslow's characteristics of self-actualizers

A self-actualizer is a person who is living creatively and fully using his or her potentials. In his studies, Maslow found that self-actualizers share similarities. Whether well-known or unknown, educated or not, rich or poor, self-actualizers tend to fit the following profile.

- Efficient perceptions of reality. Self-actualizers are able to judge situations correctly and honestly. They are very sensitive to the fake and dishonest, and are free to see reality 'as it is'.
- Comfortable acceptance of self, others, nature. Self-actualizers accept their own human nature with all its flaws. The shortcomings of others and the contradictions of the human condition are accepted with humor and tolerance.
- Spontaneity. Maslow's subjects extended their creativity into everyday activities. Actualizers tend to be unusually alive, occupied, and spontaneous.
- Task centering. Most of Maslow's subjects had a mission to fulfill in life or some task or problem beyond themselves (instead of outside of themselves) to pursue. Humanitarians such as Albert Schweitzer and Mother Teresa are measured to have possessed this quality.
- Autonomy. Self-actualizers are free from reliance on external authorities or other people. They tend to be resourceful and independent.
- Sustained freshness of appreciation. The self-actualizer seems to constantly renew appreciation of life's basic goods. A sunset or a flower will be experienced as intensely time after time as it was at first. There is an "innocence of vision", like that of an artist or child.
- Fellowship with humanity. Maslow's subjects felt a deep identification with others and the human situation in general.
- Profound interpersonal relationships. The interpersonal relationships of self-actualizers are marked through deep loving bonds.
- Comfort with solitude. Despite their satisfying relationships with others, self-actualizing persons value solitude and are comfortable being alone.
- Non-hostile sense of humor. This refers to the skill to laugh at oneself.
- Peak experiences. All of Maslow's subjects reported the frequent occurrence of peak experiences (temporary moments of self-actualization). These occasions were marked through feelings of ecstasy, harmony, and deep meaning. Self-actualizers reported feeling at one with the universe, stronger and calmer than ever before, filled with light, beautiful and good, and so forth.

In summary, self-actualizers feel finally themselves, safe, not anxious, accepted, loved, loving, and alive, certainly living a fulfilling life.

Criticism

Maslow early noted his impression that "impulsivity, the unrestrained expression of any whim, the direct seeking for 'kicks' and for non-social and purely private pleasures...is often mislabeled self-actualization." In this sense, "self-actualization" is little more than what Eric Berne described as the game of "Self-Expression"...based on the dogma "Feelings are Good". Broader

criticism from within humanistic psychology of the concept of self-actualization comprises the danger that 'emphasis on the actualizing tendency...can lead to a highly positive view of the human being but one which is strangely non-relational'. According to Fritz Perls there is also the risk of confusing "self-actualizing and self-imageactualizing...the curse of the ideal." Through conflating "the virtue of self-actualization and the reality of self-actualization," the latter becomes merely another measuring rod for the "top dog" - the nagging conscience: "You tell me to do things. You tell me to be - real. You tell me to be self-actualized...I don't have to be that good!" Barry Stevens's remarks: "Abe Maslow was unhappy with what happened with several people when they read what he wrote in relation to the 'selfactualizing people'. What they did with it was very strange. I have received a fair number of letters saying 'I am a self-actualized person'. Maslow said that he necessity have left something out. Fritz (Perls) put it in. He saw that most people actualized a self-concept. This is not self-actualizing."

According to Paul Vitz, this may be linked with the charge that "Rogers and Maslow both transform self-actualization from a descriptive notion into a moral norm."; although if it is indeed as good a reality as they purport, then a certain eagerness in their communication is understandable. In general throughout the early twenty-first-century, "the usefulness of the concepts of self and self-actualization continue to attract discussion and debate." Also, there may also be a common feeling that the possibility of 'selfactualization' is reserved for those people who have been lucky in life and don't have to thrash about for their day-to-day survival in a dead-end job. Notwithstanding, Maslow (2011) suggested that it was very much in relation to the attitude the individual brought to his/her life that might be the crucial catalyst for where one's life and self-growth goes. There are several examples of when people have been in basically the same circumstances, but have turned out very differently, which might indicate that attitude can have an enormous bearing upon one's fate; though, there is always the question: what IS it that creates attitude different from person to person?

MODULE 4

EASTERN AND POSITIVE PERSPECTIVES

Most Eastern psychologies concentrate on the exploration of the function and operation of the mind as well as methods to free the individual from suffering. Since Eastern psychologies are inwardly focused, they may appear to be narcissistic or nihilistic; however, more accurately, they offer “therapy” for everyday living as their teachings are designed to assist the person in working towards optimal functioning and psychological wellbeing. Through inner development, the individual comes to see his or her place in the larger context as a part of the whole, which can lead to improved relationships with self, others, and the environment.

The approaches of Buddhism, Taoism, Vedanta, or Yoga are not easily comparable to religious or philosophical systems as we understand them in the West. For Western psychology, “the psychotherapist has, for the most part, been interested in changing the consciousness of...disturbed individuals. The disciplines of Buddhism and Taoism, are, however, concerned with changing the consciousness of normal, socially adjusted people” (Watts, 1961, p. 16). In the five decades since these words were written, Western psychology has become increasingly interested in aiding “normal” individuals to reach their maximum psychological potential. In the Eastern view, we are all in need of “therapy” (normal or disturbed alike) since few of us are functioning free from the influence of delusions, projections, or uncurbed desires.

Eastern psychologies maintain that, as a result of social and self-conditioning, our ambitions, beliefs, desires, expectations, preconceptions, and views of the nature of reality are illusory. Since we think and act in accordance with these illusions, we invariably suffer; i.e.: experience disappointment, frustration, and pain. However, through the process of meditation and mindfulness, we are able to examine the inner workings of our mind and come to understand the nature of illusion and how it arises. We then come to experience a profound change in attitude and perspective; we begin to see things as they truly are, unfettered by illusions, social mandates, or our own projections. Thus, we come to a more authentic and genuine view of reality.

Eastern concepts of the ego differ from Western concepts. In the West, the ego (regardless of the various ways in which theorists define it) is seen as central to identity and personality. From Eastern perspectives, however, the ego is a social fiction. This illusion becomes apparent during meditation when the practitioner recognizes that there is no “I” that can be identified. There is rather an awareness attaching itself to passing thoughts, judgments, and so on, erroneously assumed to represent the ego. Since these thoughts and judgments are ever-changing, there exists no *permanent* structure that can be called the ego.

Eastern traditions teach that everything is impermanent. Like the breath rises and falls or the seasons come and go, all things are seen as being in a constant process of arising, forming, and

dissolving. For example, in Taoism, *wuwei*, the attitude of noninterference with the nature of things, one learns to live and act in harmony; “going with the flow” of events and situations: not as a passive observer, but as an active participant in life, selecting actions in harmony with nature. Terms such as *nirvana*, *satori*, *realization*, *awakening*, and *enlightenment* denote the highest state of spiritual and psychological development and transcendence. Our illusions and distortions, caused by our belief in a fictional ego, bent on fortification and justification of a self, prevents us from recognizing the underlying harmony and unity that pervades all of life.

Sufism

By nature, man is innocent and inclined to right and predisposed to virtue. This is his true nature, just as the nature of a lamb is to be gentle and of a horse to be swift. But man is caught in the meshes and impediments of

- 1) selfish desires (*hijab al-nafs* = veils or psychic aspects of man's carnal self)
- 2) customs (*hijab-al-rusoom* = influence or influences of man's environment -- social, cultural, political, religious, etc.)
- 3) false teachings and superstition (*hijab-al-marifat*). This may make him 1) unclean; 2) desiring for what is false and forbidden; 3) deflected from the love of his fellow man; and 4) deflected from the pure worship of the one true God.

The path of Islam is simple and easy. It does not depend on complex or difficult-to-understand mysteries or self-mortifications, but on straight and goodly conduct in accordance with man's nature as implanted in him by God, as the Qur'anic verse 30, chapter 30, informs us:

"Therefore set right your face for the obedience of God, being one devoted to Him only: (establish) God's handiwork according to the pattern on which He has made mankind; no change (let there be) in the work (wrought) by God: that is the standard Religion: but most among mankind understand not."

On the other hand, *spiritual perfection* may be most difficult, for it involves *complete surrender* on our part to God in all our 1) affairs, 2) thoughts and 3) desires.

Now, the problem before the spiritual teachers/murshids/shaykhs/sufi masters is to *cure* this crookedness arising out of the three hijabs/impediments referred to in the first paragraph, and restore human nature to what it should be under the Will of God.

The sufi teachers and spiritual adepts teach and train their disciples how to prosper and succeed by following the prescriptions of *tazkiya*, *zikr* and *salat*.

A disciple (i.e., a salik, a 'seeker after God', the traveler on the spiritual path, the pilgrim) has to pass through certain 'stages' (*maqamat*) and experience certain 'states' (*ahwal*) in order to attain his ultimate end.

After cleansing the body, as laid down by the Shariah, (Islamic jurisprudence based on, and derived from, the Qur'an and Prophet Muhammad's Traditions, i.e., records of his sayings, actions, and implied approval of things/acts) there appears to be *four* main stages:

- 1) First, 'Purification of the self' (*tazkiya-e-nafs*). This means cleansing the *sensual self* from its a) morally hateful, b) blameable c) animal propensities and embellishing it with laudable and angelic attributes or qualities. It is also known as the carnal or appetitive soul and is capable of purification.
- 2) Second, 'Cleansing of the heart' (*tazkiya-e-qalb*). This means *erasing* from the heart its a) love for the short-lived world and b) its worry over griefs and sorrows, and establishing in their place an ardent love (*ishq*) for God alone. Heart has the faculty of Divine knowledge/gnosis
- 3) Third, 'Emptying of the Sirr' (*takhliya-e-sirr*) from all thoughts that would divert attention from the remembrance of God.
- 4) Fourth, 'Illumination of the spirit' (*tajliya-e-ruh*). This means filling the spirit with the effulgence of God and the fervour of His Love.

Passing through these disciplines, the sufis make spiritual progress and attain ma'rifat/gnosis and *Reality* is then revealed to them.

There appears some difference of approach among the various Orders of the sufis, but there is *none* in the spiritual concentration required. There may be *diversity* in dealing with the manifold *forms of manifestation*, but they are all one in the realization of the Reality behind them.

The Three Main Sufi Orders

There are three main sufi orders: 1) the Qadiriyya Order, 2) the Naqshbandiyya Order and 3) the Chishtiyya Order.

1. The Qadiriyya Order

- a) The sufis of this Order *emphasize* 1) *the emptying of the 'sirr'* from all thoughts other than God and 2) the purification of self from all i) blameable ii) animal and iii) Satanic qualities.
- b) They maintain that: a) human spirit has come from the 'World of Command' (*Alam-al-Amr*) and b) is capable of *reflecting the Divine effulgence*. But, due to impurities of 'self'/nafs, it does not do so. (For instance, when the mirror becomes rusty it cannot reflect any *form* placed in front of it, but, when the rust is removed, it begins to reflect clearly.

2. The Naqshbandiyya Order

- a) The sufis of this Order lay much *emphasis on contemplation*.
- b) They hold that the human spirit, as such, is devoid of all *forms*, but if you fill it with a form, it will have no room left for other forms.

c) Now, to attain *Reality*, one has to concentrate on *Reality*, uninfluenced by any aspect of the surrounding phenomenal world, and engage all the powers of thought, imagination and perception to accomplish this task.

d) That is why they consider *yaddasht* (constant remembrance) to be the most important *method* in *suluk*. This method means 'concentration upon the *Divine presence* without the aid of words or ideas.'

3. The Chishtiyya Order

a) For the Chishtisufis, the most important requirement is the *love of God*.

b) This is how they explain it.

When a person falls in love with somebody, he keeps on thinking of his beloved *incessantly*, and at every moment, his longing grows more and more intense. Similar is the case of *real love* or the *love of God*.

c) To create this love, the sufis of this Order advise 'loud or vociferous' remembrance of God (*dhikr bilJahr* = vociferous, loud, remembrance). It increases the heat of the heart and in turn *generates* love for God.

d) They also advise listening to Sama under strict conditions.

e) I agree with Dr. Mir Vali-ud-din, the author of a book entitled *Contemplative Disciplines in Sufism*, that it is by *love* alone that the salik (disciple) attains to all the high stages of *suluk* (= the path to God), e.g., 1) self-effacement (= annihilation or Fana), 2) subsistence in God (*baqa*), and 3) the sense of the perpetual presence of God

f) It is love by which selfhood is naughted, human limitations are removed and direct observation of Reality is made possible.

g) For detailed knowledge on this subject, I recommend Dr. Mir Vali-ud-din's *Contemplative Disciplines in Sufism* and *The Quranic Sufism*. Most of my talk today was based on some of the essential points culled from those books.

Zen Buddhism

The Buddha's first sermon after his Enlightenment centered on the Four Noble Truths, which are the foundation of Buddhism. The truths are:

1. The truth of suffering (*dukkha*)
2. The truth of the cause of suffering (*samudaya*)
3. The truth of the end of suffering (*nirhodha*)
4. The truth of the path that frees us from suffering (*magga*)

THE TRUTH OF SUFFERING

The First Noble Truth often is translated as "Life is suffering." Many people new to Buddhism tune out as soon as they hear this.

But the Pali word *dukkha* also refers to anything that is temporary, conditional, or compounded of other things. Even something precious and enjoyable is *dukkha* because it will end.

Related to the nature of life is the nature of self. Are we not also temporary, conditional and compounded of many parts? We can understand that life is impermanent but are we, also, impermanent? The Buddha taught that before we can understand life and death we must understand the self.

THE TRUTH OF THE CAUSE OF SUFFERING

The Second Noble Truth teaches that the cause of suffering is craving or thirst (*tanha*). We continually search for something outside ourselves to make us happy. But no matter how successful we are, we never remain satisfied.

The Buddha taught that this thirst grows from ignorance of the self. We go through life grabbing one thing after another to get a sense of security about ourselves.

We attach not only to physical things but also to ideas and opinions about ourselves and the world around us. Then we grow frustrated when the world doesn't behave the way we think it should and our lives don't conform to our expectations. The Buddha's teachings on karma and rebirth are closely related to the Second Noble Truth.

THE TRUTH OF THE END OF SUFFERING

The Buddha's teachings on the Four Noble Truths are sometimes compared to a physician diagnosing an illness and prescribing a treatment. The first truth tells us what the illness is, and the second truth tells us what causes the illness. The Third Noble Truth holds out hope for a cure.

The Buddha taught that through diligent practice, we can put an end to craving. Ending the hamster-wheel chase after satisfaction is enlightenment (*bodhi*, "awakened"). The enlightened being exists in a state called Nirvana.

THE TRUTH OF THE PATH THAT FREES US FROM SUFFERING

In the Fourth Noble Truth, the Buddha as physician prescribes the treatment for our illness: The Eightfold Path. Unlike in many other religions, in Buddhism, there is no particular benefit to merely believing in a doctrine. Instead, the emphasis is on living the doctrine and walking the path.

The Eightfold Path

According to Vetter, the description of the Buddhist path may initially have been as simple as the term "the middle way". In time, this short description was elaborated, resulting in the

description of the eightfold path. Vetter and Bucknell both note that longer descriptions of "the path" can be found, which can be condensed into the eightfold path.

The Eight Divisions

Eight-fold path illustrated in a dharma wheel.

The eight Buddhist practices in the Noble Eightfold Path are:

- Right View: our actions have consequences; death is not the end, and our actions and beliefs have also consequences after death; the Buddha followed and taught a successful path out of this world and the other world (heaven and underworld/hell) Later on, right view came to explicitly include karma and rebirth, and the importance of the Four Noble Truths, when "insight" became central to Buddhist soteriology.
- Right Resolve: the giving up home and adopting the life of a religious mendicant in order to follow the path; this concept, states Harvey, aims at peaceful renunciation, into an environment of non-sensuality, non-ill-will (to loving kindness), away from cruelty (to compassion).¹ Such an environment aids contemplation of impermanence, suffering, and non-Self.
- Right Speech: no lying, no rude speech, no telling one person what another says about him, speaking that which leads to salvation
- Right Conduct: no killing or injuring, no taking what is not given, no sexual acts.
- Right Livelihood: beg to feed, only possessing what is essential to sustain life
- Right Effort: guard against sensual thoughts; this concept, states Harvey, aims at preventing unwholesome states that disrupt meditation.
- Right Mindfulness: never be absent minded, being conscious of what one is doing; this, states Harvey, encourages the mindfulness about impermanence of body, feeling and mind, as well as to experience the five aggregates (skandhas), the five hindrances, the four True Realities and seven factors of awakening.
- Right samadhi: practicing four stages of meditation (dhy na) culminating into unification of the mind.

Liberation

Following the Noble Eightfold Path leads to liberation in the form of nirvana

Just this noble eightfold path: right view, right aspiration, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, right concentration. That is the ancient path, the ancient road, traveled by the Rightly Self-awakened Ones of former times. I followed that path. Following it, I came to direct knowledge of aging & death, direct knowledge of the origination of aging & death, direct knowledge of the cessation of aging & death, direct knowledge of the path leading to

the cessation of aging & death. I followed that path. Following it, I came to direct knowledge of birth... becoming... clinging... craving... feeling... contact... the six sense media... name-&-form... consciousness, direct knowledge of the origination of consciousness, direct knowledge of the cessation of consciousness, direct knowledge of the path leading to the cessation of consciousness. I followed that path.

Threefold division

The Noble Eightfold Path is sometimes divided into three basic divisions, as follows:

Division	Eightfold Path factors
Moral virtue	3. Right speech
	4. Right action
	5. Right livelihood
Meditation	6. Right effort
	7. Right mindfulness
	8. Right concentration
Insight, wisdom	1. Right view
	2. Right resolve

Positive Psychology

Martin Seligman is a pioneer of Positive Psychology (the term itself was coined by Abraham Maslow), not simply because he has a systematic theory about why happy people are happy, but because he uses the scientific method to explore it. Through the use of exhaustive questionnaires, Seligman found that the most satisfied, upbeat people were those who had discovered and exploited their unique combination of "signature strengths," such as humanity, temperance and persistence. This vision of happiness combines the virtue ethics of Confucius, Mencius and Aristotle with

modern psychological theories of motivation. Seligman's conclusion is that happiness has three dimensions that can be cultivated: the Pleasant Life, the Good Life, and the Meaningful Life.

The Pleasant Life is realised if we learn to savour and appreciate such basic pleasures as companionship, the natural environment and our bodily needs. We can remain pleasantly stuck at this stage or we can go on to experience the Good Life, which is achieved through discovering our unique virtues and strengths, and employing them creatively to enhance our lives. According to modern theories of self-esteem life is only genuinely satisfying if we discover value within ourselves. Yet one of the best ways of discovering this value is by nourishing our unique strengths in contributing to the happiness of our fellow humans. Consequently the final stage is the Meaningful Life, in which we find a deep sense of fulfilment by employing our unique strengths for a purpose greater than ourselves. The genius of Seligman's theory is that it reconciles two conflicting views of human happiness, the individualistic approach, which emphasises that we should take care of ourselves and nurture our own strengths, and the altruistic approach, which tends to downplay individuality and emphasizes sacrifice for the greater purpose.

Some detractors have criticized Positive Psychology as being intentionally oblivious to stark realities. And though Seligman ventures into the area of pleasure and gratification through his research in the area of positive emotion, there is much more to his work beyond this. In his study of the Good Life (cultivating strengths and virtues) and the Meaningful Life (developing meaning and purpose), positive psychology seeks to help people acquire the skills to be able to deal with the stuff of life in ever fuller, deeper ways.

Martin Seligman: A Little Background

Born in 1942, Seligman is credited as the father of Positive Psychology and its efforts to scientifically explore human potential. In *Authentic Happiness* (2002), he explains that his journey towards this new field in psychology started off in a study on learned helplessness in dogs.



During the course of the study, he noticed that, in spite of numerous configurations, some dogs would not quit and did not "learn" helplessness. This intrigued and excited the self-proclaimed pessimist and he drew parallels between dogs and learned

helplessness with depression in humans (Seligman 2002, p. 20-23). This shaped his work and he has since become one of the most often-cited psychologists not only in positive psychology but psychology in general.

A significant moment in Seligman's life was his landmark speech in 1998, at the time of his inauguration as the president of the American Psychological Association (APA) when he declared that psychologists need to study what makes happy people happy! He noted, "The most important thing, the most general thing I learned, was that psychology was half-baked, literally half-baked. We had baked the part about mental illness [...] The other side's unbaked, the side of strength, the side of what we're good at." (Address, Lincoln Summit, Sep. 1999.) In many ways, this signaled the opening of a new perspective for the field of psychology.

One of Seligman's forerunners, Abraham Maslow, helped to call attention to humanistic psychology, which focused on human strengths and potential rather than neuroses and pathologies. Yet, Maslow was an intuitively inspired theorist with little methodologically sound, empirical evidence to support his claims. The next generation of psychologists such as Seligman, Ed Diener and Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi are working to scientifically study the effects of positive emotions and the ways in which they affect health, performance and overall life satisfaction. More importantly for us, their studies have shown that happiness can be taught and learned.

The Three Dimensions of Happiness

According to Seligman, we can experience three kinds of happiness: 1) pleasure and gratification, 2) embodiment of strengths and virtues and 3) meaning and purpose. Each kind of happiness is linked to positive emotion but from his quote, you can see that in his mind there is a progression from the first type of happiness of pleasure/gratification to strengths/virtues and finally meaning/purpose.

The Pleasant Life: Past, Present & Future

Seligman provides a mental "toolkit" to achieve what he calls the pleasant life by enabling people to think constructively about the past, gain optimism and hope for the future and, as a result, gain greater happiness in the present.

Dealing with the Past

Among Seligman's arsenal for combating unhappiness with the past is that which we commonly and curiously find among the wisdom of the ages: gratitude and forgiveness. Seligman refers to American society as a "ventilationist society" that "deem[s] it honest, just and even healthy to express our anger." He notes that this is often seen in the types of therapy used for issues, problems and challenges. In contrast, Seligman extols the East Asian tendency to quietly deal with difficult situations. He cites studies that find that those who refrain from expressing negative

emotions and in turn use different strategies to cope with the stresses of life also tend to be happier (Seligman 2002, p. 69).

Optimism about the Future

When looking to the future, Seligman recommends an outlook of hope and optimism.

Happiness in the Present

After making headway with these strategies for dealing with negative emotions of the past and building hope and optimism for the future, Seligman recommends breaking habituation, savoring experiences and using mindfulness as ways to increase happiness in the present.

The Role of Positive Emotion

Many studies have shown that positive emotions are frequently accompanied by fortunate circumstances (e.g., longer life, health, large social networks, etc). For example, one study observed nuns who were, for the most part, leading virtually identical lifestyles. It seemed that the nuns who expressed positive emotions more intensely and more frequently in their daily journals also happened to outlive many of the nuns who clearly did not. Another study used high school yearbook photos of women to see if the ultimate expression of happiness (a smile) might also be used as an indicator as to how satisfied they might be 20 years later. When surveyed, those who were photographed with genuine, "Duchenne" smiles were more likely to find themselves, in their mid-life, married with families and involved in richer social lives. In short, positive emotions are frequently paired with happy circumstances. And while we might be tempted to assume that happiness causes positive emotions, Seligman wonders, instead, whether positive emotions cause happiness. If so, what does this mean for our life and our happiness?

The Good Life: Embodying the 6 Virtues & Cultivating the 24 Strengths

Virtues

One notable contribution that Seligman has made for Positive Psychology is his cross-cultural study to create an "authoritative classification and measurement system for the human strengths". He and Dr. Christopher Peterson, a top expert in the field of hope and optimism, worked to create a classification system that would help psychologists measure positive psychology's effectiveness. They used good character to measure its efficacy because good character was so consistently and strongly linked to lasting happiness. In order to remain true to their efforts to create a universal classification system, they made a concerted effort to examine and research a wide variety of religious and philosophical texts from all over the world (Seligman 2002, p. 132).

They were surprised to find 6 particular virtues that were valued in almost every culture, valued in their own right (not just as a means to another end) and are attainable.

These 6 core virtues are:

1. wisdom & knowledge

2. courage
3. love & humanity
4. justice
5. temperance
6. spirituality & transcendence

Strengths

For Seligman, the strengths are the "route" through we achieve virtues in our life.

Seligman clarifies the difference between talents and strengths by defining strengths as moral traits that can be developed, learned, and that take effort. Talents, on the other hand, tend to be inherent and can only be cultivated from what exists rather than what develops through effort (Seligman 2002, p. 134). For example, many people consider musical ability as more or less inherent and can only be strengthened. On the other hand, one can cultivate the strength of patience, which can lead to the virtue of temperance.

Seligman provides a detailed classification of the different virtues as well as a strengths survey that is available on his website: www.authentic happiness.org.

Seligman sees the healthy exercise and development of strengths and virtues as a key to the good life – a life in which one uses one's "signature strengths every day in the main realms of your life to bring abundant gratification and authentic happiness." The good life is a place of happiness, good relationships and work, and from this point, Seligman encourages people to go further to seek a meaningful life in the continual quest for happiness (Seligman 2002, p. 161).

The Meaningful Life

Meaning & Flow

Positive emotion alienated from the exercise of character leads to emptiness, inauthenticity, depression and, as we age, to the gnawing realization that we are fidgeting until we die (Seligman 2002, p. 8).

Here Seligman states, rather dismally, that there are no shortcuts to happiness. While the pleasant life might bring more positive emotion to one's life, to foster a deeper more enduring happiness, we need to explore the realm of meaning. Without the application of one's unique strengths and the development of one's virtues towards an end bigger than one's self, one's potential tends to be whittled away by a mundane, inauthentic, empty pursuit of pleasure.

Seligman expands on the work of his contemporary and colleague, Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, in the area of "flow" to explain, in part, what he means by the meaningful life. Investing oneself into creative work creates a greater sense of meaning in life and accordingly, a greater sense of happiness.

Altruism

Seligman goes one step further than Csikszentmihalyi by exploring the experience of flow and the loss of self-consciousness that is involved in acts of altruism and of kindness.

The exercise of kindness is a gratification in contrast to pleasure. As a gratification, it calls on your strengths to rise to an occasion and meet a challenge, particularly in the service of others.



How can we use our strengths and virtues to achieve a meaningful life? One example could be a gifted martial artist who experiences great pleasure in perfecting her skills in karate and winning prizes in tournaments. Yet then she discovers that one autistic child she is teaching shows signs of enormous improvement. This makes her feel so good that she opens a class for children with special needs. Seeing these children overcome their challenges gives her still greater happiness. Finally, she becomes so absorbed in the happiness of these children that she forgets about her own happiness!

This situation enables her to enrich the lives of others while engaging her own strengths and virtues.

- The pleasant life: a life that successfully pursues the positive emotions about the present, past, and future.
- The good life: using your signature strengths to obtain abundant gratification (through activities we like doing) in the main realms of your life.
- The meaningful life: using your signature strengths and virtues in the service of something much larger than you are. (Seligman 2002, p. 249).

Here Seligman succinctly describes his formula for happiness in life.

Character strengths

The creation of a universal language for what is best in people opens the door to a variety of important principles that lay the groundwork for the science of character:

- Character is individualized and idiosyncratic. Each individual has a unique profile of character strengths.

- Character is plural (Peterson & Seligman, 2006). Individuals are not simply honest or kind, brave or wise, humble or fair; rather an individual's character is best understood as a profile of strengths.
- Character strengths have structure, depth, and dimensionality. People are high or low on different strengths of character, and certain profiles are more typical than others.
- Character strengths are elemental. Character strengths are the basic building blocks of goodness in the individual. They are the core parts of the personality that account for us being our best selves. These elements can combine to form complex character strengths.
- Character strengths are shaped by context and expressed in situations. In the social context, one individual might call forth her social intelligence and curiosity; when eating, use self-regulation and prudence; at work, persistence and teamwork; and with family, use love and kindness.
- Character strengths are expressed in degrees. Individuals will likely express their character strengths in different ways and to a greater or lesser extent based on the circumstance they are in. The level or amount of kindness expressed to the person's relationship partner (e.g., offering to cook dinner) differs in scope from that expressed to a homeless person on the street (e.g., giving away \$5); also, the individual might find it very easy to express kindness to fellow employees and very difficult in another work situation, such as while communicating with a supervisor.
- Character strengths are interactive and interdependent. It is likely that in most situations individuals will express a combination of character strengths together (curiosity and creativity) rather than one character strength alone. Therefore, there are dynamics that occur as the strengths interact with one another, as they lead to increases in one another, or as they hinder the expression of one another. Also, character strengths are interdependent - it is difficult to express kindness without some level of humility, or to be perseverant without some degree of self-regulation.
- Character strengths are substantially stable but can and do change. Character strengths are part of an individual's personality, and may change in response to important life events or as a result of deliberate interventions or conscious lifestyle actions.
- Balanced expression of character strengths is critical. Character strengths can easily be overused and underused. Optimal strengths use occurs according to the golden mean of character strengths, originally derived from Aristotle (2000) – the right combination of strengths, expressed to the right degree, and in the right situation.

Character Strengths and Life Satisfaction

Probably the most common variable studied in positive psychology is life satisfaction (happiness). This is true for research on character strengths, which has found a strong connection between character strengths and life satisfaction. Here are some specifics:

Five character strengths show a consistent, robust relationship to life satisfaction: Hope, zest, gratitude, curiosity, and love (Park, Peterson, & Seligman, 2004). This has been replicated a number of times; for example, similar results can be found among Swiss, Germans, and Austrians (Ruch et al., 2007), Croatians (Brdar&Kashdan, 2010), and young Japanese adults (Shimai et al., 2006). The character strengths least related to life satisfaction (weak association) are modesty/humility, creativity, appreciation of beauty & excellence, judgment, and love of learning (Park, Peterson, & Seligman, 2004). Viewed from another angle, it has been found that the strengths of the “heart” (e.g., love, gratitude) are more strongly associated with well-being than are strengths of the “head” (e.g., creativity, judgment, appreciation of beauty and excellence; Park & Peterson, 2008b; Park, Peterson, & Seligman, 2004).

Seligman’s (2002) theory of authentic happiness addresses three pathways to happiness: pleasure, engagement, and meaning. A life orientation that encompasses all three pathways is associated with life satisfaction and might be viewed as “the full life” (Peterson, 2007). While each pathway has been found to be a distinct pathway and to predict happiness, the pursuit of meaning and engagement are more predictive of life satisfaction than the pursuit of pleasure (Peterson, Park, & Seligman, 2005; Vella-Brodrick, Park, & Peterson, 2009). In a study of nations, three groups emerged in a study of 27 nations and routes to happiness: nations high in pleasure and engagement; those high in engagement and meaning; and those low in pleasure, engagement, and meaning. Nations highest in each route were: South Africa (pleasure), Switzerland (engagement), and South Korea (meaning; Park, Peterson, & Ruch, 2009). These findings are interesting to consider in light of those character strengths that correlate highest with each authentic-happiness pathway. The character strengths most associated with the meaning route to happiness are religiousness, gratitude, hope, zest, and curiosity; those most associated with the engagement route to happiness are zest, curiosity, hope, perseverance, and perspective; and those most associated with the pleasure route to happiness are humor, zest, hope, social intelligence, and love (Peterson et al., 2007).

Among youth, the character strengths most related to life satisfaction are love, gratitude, hope, and zest; very young children (ages 3-9) described by their parents as happy are also noted as showing love, hope, and zest (Park & Peterson, 2009b). A parent’s strength of self-regulation is strongly associated with his or her child’s life satisfaction, but not the parent’s own (Park & Peterson, 2006a). A higher total score of all 24 character strengths on the VIA-IS correlates positively with life satisfaction and indicates that strong character is associated with happiness and

the good life (Ruch et al., 2007). Character strength predictors of satisfaction in college were hope, social intelligence, selfregulation, and fairness (Lounsbury et al., 2009).

Character Strengths and Achievement

In terms of achievement in work and school, perseverance appears to be the most robust character strength, emerging in most studies conducted in areas related to life success. Perseverance, love, gratitude, and hope predicted academic achievement in middle school students and college students (Park & Peterson, 2009a). After controlling for IQ, strengths of perseverance, fairness, gratitude, honesty, hope, and perspective predicted GPA (Park & Peterson, 2008a). In another study, those character strengths that predicted GPA in college students were perseverance, love of learning, humor, fairness, and kindness (Lounsbury et al., 2009). Higher hope levels are related to greater scholastic and social competence and to creativity levels (Onwuegbuzie, 1999).

Effective teachers (judged by the gains of their students on standardized tests) are those who are high in social intelligence, zest, and humor in a longitudinal study (reported in Park & Peterson, 2009a). Military performance among West Point cadets was predicted by the character strength of love (Peterson & Park, 2009).
