Lecture Notes:

- **Personality** is an individual's characteristic style of:
    - Behaviour
    - Thought
    - Feeling
- Personality is relatively stable across time and situations.
- The study of personality is the study of both individual differences (**idiographic approach**) and common trends in the population (**nomothetic approach**).
- The study of personality has two components:
    1. Describing Personality:
        a. Asking "What are the characteristics of an individual's personality?"
        b. **Personality Inventory**, which is a self-assessment tool that career counselors and other career development professionals use to help people learn about their personality types. It reveals information about individuals' social traits, motivations, strengths and weaknesses, and attitudes.
    2. Explaining personality:
        a. Asking "Why does an individual have the personality that he does?"
        b. Asking "How does an individual's personality affect her behaviour?"
        c. Personality theories
- We can measure personality by observing the individual's behaviour. This is called a **naturalistic observation**. However, being watched can alter an individual's way of behaving. This is called **demand characteristics**. Furthermore, because there isn't a script or structure to follow, the observer can affect the observation.
- Personality measurements instead usually take one of two forms:
    1. Personality inventories:
        a. Also called personality tests/personality scales
    2. Projective techniques
- Personality inventories is one of the simplest ways to assess personality.
- Personality inventories rely on self-report. These are subjective descriptions of one's own behaviours, thoughts, and feelings and are usually administered in an interview or written questionnaire.
- The **Barnum effect** is when a user can see themselves virtually in any description because they are so general.
- Most online personality tests have weaknesses in **validity** and **reliability**.
- **Reliability** deals with the consistency of the responses/results of a test. If a test has 100% reliability, then every time someone takes the test, he/she should have the same results each time.
  E.g. A blood test has 100% reliability. Each time someone takes it, they will get the same result.
- **Validity** deals if a test actually measuring what it's supposed to measure. A test has high validity if you use different ways of measuring the same item and the results stay the same.
- The **Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI)** is a widely reliable, clinically valid personality test.
- There are no scalar questions on the MMPI.
- Some of the best personality inventories use yes/no or true/false and can't answer questions because there are a lot of questions in general and a lot of questions that ask

the same thing. Furthermore, because there's a lot of questions, it fatigues the test-taker so they can't fake their responses and so that they will automatically answer the questions.
- Some criticisms of personality inventories are:
    - Test administrator can be biased. This is less of an issue with true/false or yes/no questions.
    - The test taker may not know everything about him/herself.
    - The test taker can be biased. Test takers often report socially desirable traits. The MMPI gets around this problem by using **validity scales**.
- **MMPI validity scales** are sets of questions that attempt to mitigate bias.
    E.g.
    The **F-scale** is an example of an MMPI validity scale. (High rates of "true" responses can indicate severe psychopathology or over-reporting) Designed to make sure that the user isn't just continuously answering True or Yes.
    The **Lie-scale** is an example of an MMPI validity scale. (High rates of "false" responses may indicate lying) Designed to make sure that the user isn't just continuously answering False or No.
    The **?-scale** is an example of an MMPI validity scale. (High rates of "I don't know" may indicate an invalid test) Designed to make sure that the user isn't just continuously answering I don't know.
- Aside from measuring personality, personality psychologists also attempt to describe and explain personality. We're going to cover five of them in this chapter:
    1. **Trait Approach:**
        a. The most influential theory and is used by most psychologists.
        b. Heavily focused on biology, while the other four are heavily focused on experience.
        c. The trait approach to personality attempts to describe personalities as a series of **traits**. A trait is a relatively stable disposition to behave in a particular and consistent way.
        d. There are an infinite number of traits, so a list of traits is endless. Researchers that adhere to the trait approach use **factor analysis** to reduce this list to the lowest possible set of traits. They do this by:
            - Having individuals rate themselves on hundreds of traits.
            - Traits that are highly correlated (both positively and negatively) are combined into **factors**.
            - Traits with no correlation to one another are considered parts of separate factors.
        e. Today, most researchers agree upon a **five-factor model of personality**. These **Big Five personality traits** are **openness**, **conscientiousness**, **agreeableness**, **extraversion** and **neuroticism**. You can use the acronym OCEAN to remember them. These factors are not correlated with each other.

Factor	Characteristics of High Scores	Characteristics of Low Scores
Openness	Creative, artistic, curious, imaginative, nonconforming	Conventional, down-to-earth
Conscientiousness	Ambitious, organized, responsible	Unreliable, lazy, casual
Extraversion	Talkative, optimistic, social, affectionate	Reserved, introverted
Agreeableness	Good-natured, trusting, supportive	Rude, uncooperative, hostile
Neuroticism	Worried, insecure, anxiety-prone	Tranquil, secure, emotionally stable

    f.   Personality traits are relatively stable and this stability increases across the lifespan; this is called **differential continuity** or **rank-order stability**. However, what change we do see in an individual tends to occur at a younger age.

    g.   **Mean-level change** is the changing of the mean levels of traits as a population. Typically, across the lifespan, our scores on each of the traits tend to increase. However, around middle-age, some traits, such as openness, will decrease.

    h.   **Intraindividual change**, while rare, can occur after life-changing experiences, including trauma. It is when there is a significant change in a person's personality.

    i.   While personality traits are relatively stable, personality states change across situations.

    j.   Genetics is the largest single factor of where these traits come from.

    k.   The Big Five traits have a **heritability factor** of between 0.35 and 0.49. Heritability factor is the degree to which genetics influence traits. A heritability factor of 0 means that genetics plays no role in a physical/psychological trait. A heritability factor of 1 means that genetics is completely responsible for a trait.

Trait Dimension	Heritability
Openness	0.45
Conscientiousness	0.38
Extraversion	0.49
Agreeableness	0.35
Neuroticism	0.41

    l.   Since traits are so informed by genetics, we begin showing evidence of our personalities in infancy. **Temperament** is an infant's characteristic activity level, mood, attention span, and distractibility. Infants' temperaments are predictive of their adult personalities.

m. Most research that has explored the Big Five has been conducted in **WEIRD**, Western, Educated, Industrialized, Rich, and Democratic, cultures.

n. The prevalence of personality traits does vary from culture to culture. So culture may play a role in determining an individual's personality.

2. **Behaviourist approach:**
   a. **Behaviourism** is the notation that our behaviour is controlled by our past experiences, either by being rewarded for a certain action or by being punished for a certain action.
   b. **Operant conditioning** is when animals repeat actions that they got rewarded for and they avoid doing actions that they got punished for.
   c. Behaviourist personality theorists believe that the same principle applies to human personality.

3. **Social-cognitive approach:**
   a. According to this belief, personality is how a person deals with the situations encountered in daily life. This includes how we construct situations in our own minds and how we respond to those situations.
   b. This is distinct from the trait approach, in which people behave the same way across most situations. This difference is called the **person-situation controversy**. People's behaviour is highly **situation-dependent**, so the situation that a person is in will probably influence their behaviour more.
   c. Social-cognitive theorists argue that we base our behaviour on **personal constructs**, which we use to make sense of our worlds. Personal constructs are mental representations that we use to interpret events. These constructs are based on our experiences and observations.
   d. Another way that our personalities differ from one another is our **outcome expectancies**, which are defined as anticipated consequences (positive or negative) as a result of engaging in a behavior.
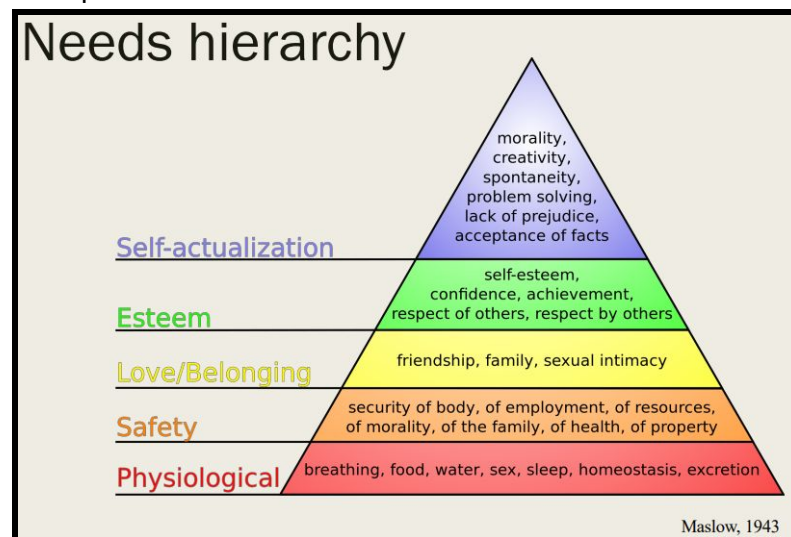
4. **Psychodynamic approach:**
   a. Divides up the conscientiousness into the **id**, the **ego** and the **superego**.
   b. The id is the unconscious, animal desires.
   c. The ego allows us to deal with life's practical demands.
   d. The superego is the internalization of cultural/social rules.
   e. Psychodynamic theory is the personality theory extending from Freud's psychoanalytic approach.
   f. **Personality** is formed by needs, strivings, and desires largely operating outside of awareness, motives that can also produce emotional disorders.
   g. Psychodynamic researchers call the mental processes that are outside our awareness the **dynamic unconscious**, which is an active system encompassing a lifetime of hidden memories, the person's deepest instincts and desires, and the person's inner struggle to control those forces.
   h. Freud believed that our personality is determined by which of these three parts of the unconscious is dominant and he argued that conflicts between the three parts causes anxiety.
   i. To resolve this anxiety, we rely on defence mechanisms.
   j. Within the psychodynamic approach, another way to measure personality is with **projective techniques**, which are tests designed to reveal inner

aspects of individuals' personalities by analysis of their responses to a standard series of ambiguous stimuli. Here, pictures of people, objects, events or abstract stimuli are shown to subjects, who report what they see. The two most famous examples are the **Rorschach inkblot test** and the **Thematic apperception test (TAT)**.

k. The Rorschach inkblot test is a projective technique in which respondents' inner thoughts and feelings are believed to be revealed by analysis of their responses to a set of unstructured inkblots.

l. For TAT, patients are shown a card with an ambiguous scene and are asked to make up a story about this scene.

m. Some criticisms of projective techniques are that results are difficult to interpret and the interpretations are too subjective.

n. Some criticisms of the psychodynamic approach are that there is mixed empirical evidence to support them, it tends to focus on after-the-fact interpretation rather than testable prediction, it rejects free will, it is based on a biased sample and it is unfalsifiable.

5. **Humanistic-existential approach:**

a. Humanistic theories have positive, optimistic view of human nature, believe that humans have free will.

b. Free will separates the humanistic approach from the psychodynamic and the trait approaches.

c. The humanist approach argues that humans seek out a realization of their inner potential.

Needs hierarchy

Self-actualization — morality, creativity, spontaneity, problem solving, lack of prejudice, acceptance of facts

Esteem — self-esteem, confidence, achievement, respect of others, respect by others

Love/Belonging — friendship, family, sexual intimacy

Safety — security of body, of employment, of resources, of morality, of the family, of health, of property

Physiological — breathing, food, water, sex, sleep, homeostasis, excretion

Maslow, 1943

d. Humanists argue that our personality differences arise from environmental constraints against climbing our needs hierarchy.

Textbook Notes:

- **Module 12.1 Contemporary Approaches to Personality:**
- A person's **personality** is their characteristic pattern of thinking, feeling, and behaving that is unique to each individual, and remains relatively consistent over time and situations.
- **The Trait Perspective:**
- There are two broad approaches to personality measurement:

1. **idiographic approach**
2. **nomothetic approach**

- When you try to figure out the people you know very well, you probably intuitively adopt an **idiographic approach**, focusing on creating detailed descriptions of a specific person's unique personality characteristics.
- In contrast, psychologists who take a **nomothetic approach** examine personality in large groups of people, with the aim of making generalizations about personality structure.
- **Early Trait Research:**
- A **personality trait** describes a specific psychological characteristic that makes up part of a person's personality; how that person is "most of the time."
- The **Barnum effect/Forer effect** is a common psychological phenomenon whereby individuals give high accuracy ratings to descriptions of their personality that supposedly are tailored specifically to them, that are in fact vague and general enough to apply to a wide range of people.
- A statistical technique called **factor analysis** is used to group items that people respond to similarly, which are referred to as a factor.
- **The Five Factor Model:**
- Psychologists created the **Five Factor Model (FFM)**, a trait-based theory of personality based on the finding that personality can be described using five major dimensions. This model has become the most popular trait-based approach for academic personality researchers, and has been cited in hundreds of research articles.
- To understand the Big Five traits, consider what characteristics are associated with people high and low on that trait. These are the "kinds of people" described by each trait:
    1. **Openness:**
        a. Individuals high in openness are the dreamers and creative types. They tend to be more open to new things and perspectives that differ from theirs, and new ways of seeing a problem that they had not considered.
        b. Individuals low in openness are the defenders of the system, preferring the conventional, the tried and true.
    2. **Conscientiousness:**
        a. Highly conscientious people are efficient, self-disciplined, and dependable.
        b. Low Cs are the easy-going ones, fun to hang out with, but not so great as collaborators on a project.
    3. **Extraversion:**
        a. Extraverts are the socializers and sensation seekers. They are comfortable in more stimulating environments.
        b. Introverts are the quiet ones. Although they like social contact, introverts also need time for solitary activities.
    4. **Agreeableness:**
        a. Highly agreeable people are warm and friendly people who are easy to like, easy to be friends with, and easy to have as part of your group. They are kind, compassionate, and empathetic, and altruistic.
        b. Highly disagreeable people value being authentic more than pandering to other people's needs, making them more likely to assert their opinions and engage in conflict if necessary.
    5. **Neuroticism:**

        a. People high in neuroticism are often difficult to deal with, as their emotional volatility and general tendency to experience negative emotions makes them not much fun to be around.

        b. People low in neuroticism are mentally healthy people. They tend to be secure and confident, and let go of negative emotions easily.

- **Beyond the Big Five: The Personality of Evil?:**
- Following World War II, such questions were a major focus in personality psychology, as the world wanted to understand the rise of fascism and Hitler's ability to mobilize millions of people to carry out his plans of destruction. Early research suggested that a key personality type, the **authoritarian personality**, was a big piece of the puzzle. Authoritarians were theorized to be rigid and dogmatic in their thinking, to separate their social world into strict categories of Us and Them, and then to believe strongly in the superiority of "Us" and the inferiority of "Them". As a result, authoritarians were more likely to endorse and engage in prejudice and violence, particularly toward people in the "them" category. Although there is some overlap between this construct and other, related personality factors, over the past several decades, personality researchers have discovered important personality traits that extend the Five Factor Model and help to shed light on the problem of human "evil." Three lines of research are particularly important.
- **Honesty–Humility:**
- The **HEXACO model of personality** is a six-factor theory that generally replicates the five factors of the FFM and adds one additional factor: Honesty–Humility.
- Individuals scoring highly on this factor tend to be sincere, honest, and modest, whereas those with low scores are deceitful, greedy, and pompous.
- Thus, the HEXACO model seems to describe "evil" as heavily involving an excessive importance placed on the self, and none placed on the other.
- **The Dark Triad:**
- The **Dark Triad**, machiavellianism, psychopathy, and narcissism, describes a person who is socially destructive, aggressive, dishonest, and likely to commit harm in general.
- **Machiavellianism** is a tendency to use people and to be manipulative and deceitful, lacking respect for others and focusing predominantly on one's own self-interest. Relationships are approached strategically, using other people for how they might be able to provide some sort of benefit to the self.
- **Psychopathy** is a general tendency toward having shallow emotional responses. Individuals scoring high in psychopathy veer toward highly stimulating activities and tend to feel little empathy for others. They often get a thrill out of conflict, exerting control, or even harming others, and feel little remorse for their actions.
- **Narcissism** reflects an egotistical preoccupation with self-image and an excessive sense of self-importance. Narcissists can often be charming, but are difficult to have as relationship partners because they tend to always put themselves first rather than considering their partner's needs.
- **Right-Wing Authoritarianism:**
- **Right-Wing Authoritarianism (RWA)** is a problematic set of personality characteristics that also predisposes people to certain types of violent or anti-social tendencies. RWA involves three key tendencies:
    1. Obeying orders and deferring to the established authorities in a society;
    2. Supporting aggression against those who dissent or differ from the established social order; and

3. Believing strongly in maintaining the existing social order.
- At the centre of the RWA personality is a strong tendency to think in dogmatic terms.
- **Temperaments:**
- In child development studies, researchers have found that infants possess different temperaments right from birth, which also supports the view that the seeds of our personalities are present right from the start.
- Infant temperament can predict the adult personality traits of neuroticism, extraversion, and conscientiousness.
- **Is Personality Stable Over Time?:**
- While there are a number of factors, both behavioural and biological, that make personality stable over time, personality can change, particularly in late adolescence and early adulthood.
- **Personality Traits and States:**
- A **state** is a temporary physical or psychological engagement that influences behaviour.
- There are 4 general aspects of situations that are most likely to influence our behaviour:
    1. Locations (e.g., being at work, school, or home)
    2. Associations (e.g., being with friends, alone, or with family)
    3. Activities (e.g., awake, rushed, studying)
    4. Subjective states (e.g., mad, sick, drunk, happy)
- **The Behaviourist Perspective:**
- Behaviourists thought that what psychologists call personality was an expression of relationships between behaviour, rewards, and punishment.
- Behaviourists avoided referring to personality traits and dispositions, instead focusing on how past experiences predict future behaviours.
- **The Social-Cognitive Perspective:**
- Social-cognitive theorists placed central importance on the role of cognition and the person's inner subjective interpretation of their circumstances.
- According to the social-cognitive theory, personality develops out of the person's interaction with the environment, but where this differs from behaviourism is that the person ends up forming beliefs about their relationship to the environment, especially beliefs about their own actions and the likely consequences that will follow from their choices.
- **Reciprocal determinism** is the idea that behaviour, personal factors and external factors interact to determine one another and our personalities are based on interactions among these 3 aspects.
- **Module 12.2 Cultural and Biological Approaches to Personality:**
- **Universals and Differences Across Cultures: The Big Five:**
- The Five Factor Model of personality centres around five personality dimensions: neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness, and conscientiousness.
- **Personality Structures in Different Cultures:**
- Because the Five Factor Model was originally created by performing a factor analysis of the personality adjectives in the English language, the kinds of questions that are asked on Big Five questionnaires are designed to measure the Big Five factors, and no others. Thus, when the scale is given to people from other cultures, the scale itself brings the biases of Western culture and the English language right along with it.
- **Comparing Personality Traits Between Nations:**

- One important advantage of personality scales that have been translated into different languages is that psychologists can test for personality differences across cultures. One reason for the cultural differences found in personality studies are that people from different cultures have different **response styles**, characteristic ways of responding to questions, and these response styles can be strongly influenced by cultural norms.
- **How Genes Affect Personality:**
- Researchers often use twin studies to separate apart the contributions made by our genes and our environments. Comparing twins who were identical (monozygotic) to twins who were fraternal (dizygotic) allowed researchers to estimate the influence of genetic factors on personality.
- Research on the Big Five personality traits of twins has shown that identical twins show a stronger correlation for each personality trait than do fraternal twins. This implies that the increased similarity in the personalities of identical twins is due to their shared genes.
- Furthermore, research shows that identical twins raised in different households are about as similar to each other as identical twins raised in the same household. In fact, fraternal twins who are raised in the same home are actually more different from each other than identical twins who are raised in completely different families.
- In addition, research has also found that siblings who are adopted and raised in the same household are no more similar in personality than two people picked randomly off the street.
- **Working the Scientific Literacy Model: From Molecules to Personality:**
- Although scientists have not identified a specific gene or genes involved in the expression of specific personality factors, they have discovered genes that code for specific brain chemicals that are related to personality.
- Many of our genes are polymorphic, meaning that there are different versions of the same gene that lead to different physical or behavioural characteristics.
- To study genes and personality, one method is to compare responses on self-report questionnaires of people who have inherited different copies of a specific gene. Another method for studying genes and personality is to conduct experiments and compare the responses of people with different copies of a gene.
- **The Role of Evolution in Personality:**
- Evolutionary psychologists emphasize that our personality structures are built right into our species because they conferred selective advantages to humans possessing certain traits. But the human species is related to other species as well, and so one would expect that we may share at least some aspects of our personalities with other species.
- One compelling argument for the usefulness of the evolutionary perspective on personality is the presence of personality traits in numerous nonhuman species.
- **Why There are So Many Different Personalities: The Evolutionary Explanation:**
- Evolutionary perspectives can help us to understand why humans have evolved the particular personality traits that we have. To the extent that the Big Five traits are built right into our biology, these traits must have been selected for by being adaptive in past evolutionary epochs, helping to promote our survival and reproductive success.
- Individuals high in extraversion would be more likely to rise in social hierarchies, and play leadership and social networking roles in a community. However, extraverts tend to be risk takers and sensation seekers, and it would be desirable to offset these qualities with a healthy proportion of introverts in a group.
- People high in conscientiousness would be reliable and dependable, and others would learn to count on them to get things done, clearly desirable qualities in a mate. However,

the person low in conscientiousness may be an attractive partner to mate with for other reasons.
- People low in neuroticism don't crack under pressure, can keep a level head and could be counted on in crises. However, being high in neuroticism means that they would be more attuned to danger and act as a voice of caution to keep others from making dangerous decisions.
- People high in agreeableness would be the friends who are there for you when you need them, and they would generally help to promote harmony and solidarity as groups work together on larger projects; whereas those low in agreeableness may be useful for providing a critical perspective and ensuring that the group doesn't make rash decisions.
- People high in openness would be imaginative and creative, helping to build bridges between members of different subgroups in the community, and challenging ideas so that the community doesn't rigidify into dogma and closed-mindedness. On the other hand, those low in openness may be useful for preserving traditions and helping to identify a coherent sense of identity within the community.
- **Extraversion and Arousal:**
- Hans Eysenck proposed an **arousal theory of extraversion**, arguing that extraversion is determined by people's threshold for arousal.
- According to this theory, extraverts have a higher threshold for arousal than introverts. One brain system, the **ascending reticular activating system (ARAS)**, plays a central role in controlling this arousal response. Research on Eysenck's ideas has demonstrated that extraverts do have less reactive ARASs compared to introverts.
- Another influential model of the brain–personality relationship describes two major brain systems for processing rewards and punishments: the behavioural activation system and the behavioural inhibition system. The **behavioural activation system (BAS)** is a "GO" system, arousing the person to action in the pursuit of desired goals. This system is responsive to rewards and fairly unresponsive to possible negative consequences; greater BAS activation therefore is associated with greater positive emotional responses and approach motivation. The other system, the **behavioural inhibition system (BIS)**, is more of a "danger" system, motivating the person to action in order to avoid punishments or other negative outcomes. The BIS is therefore associated with greater negative emotional responses and avoidance motivation.
- Several of the Big Five factors are correlated with activation of the BIS/BAS systems. The most consistent finding is that extraversion is especially related to BAS activation, whereas neuroticism is related to BIS activation.
- **Contemporary Research: Images of Personality in the Brain:**
- Extraverts have a larger medial orbitofrontal cortex, and generally show less activation in the amygdala. The medial orbitofrontal cortex is involved in processing reward, which is consistent with extraverts' greater reward sensitivity. The amygdala is involved in processing novelty, danger, and fear, which extraverts tend to pay less attention to.
- Neuroticism is associated with a smaller dorsomedial prefrontal cortex, a smaller hippocampus, and a larger mid-cingulate gyrus. The dorsomedial prefrontal cortex is involved in controlling emotions, the hippocampus in controlling obsessive negative thinking, and the mid-cingulate gyrus in detecting errors and perceiving pain—whether physical or emotional pain. These are the kinds of processes that define highly neurotic people. They have difficulty controlling their emotions, often fall prey to obsessive negative thinking, and are highly sensitive when they make mistakes or feel pain.

- People high in agreeableness show less brain volume in an area called the left superior temporal sulcus, which is activated when one is interpreting another person's actions or intentions. They also show greater volume in an area called the posterior cingulate cortex, which is involved in empathy and perspective-taking. These brain areas match the tendency for people high in agreeableness to be more socially attuned and to have more empathy for others.
- People high in conscientiousness have a larger brain volume in the middle frontal gyrus in the left prefrontal cortex, which is involved in working memory processes and in carrying out actions that you have planned. These functions are implicated in effective self-control, which is a key strength of the highly conscientious person.
- Individuals high in openness to experience have been shown to have greater activation in the dorsolateral prefrontal cortex, which is involved in creativity and intelligence, as well as other brain systems involved in the integration of the self and the environment. These systems reflect the tendencies for people high in openness to be creative, integrative thinkers.
- **Module 12.3 Psychodynamic and Humanistic Approaches to Personality:**
- **Unconscious Processes and Psychodynamics:**
- Freud grounded his theories on a model of consciousness that distinguished between different levels of mental life, most importantly between the conscious mind and the unconscious.
- The **conscious mind** is your current awareness, containing everything you are aware of right now.
- The **unconscious mind** is a much more vast and powerful but inaccessible part of your consciousness, operating without your conscious endorsement or will to influence and guide your behaviours.
- The unconscious mind houses your full lifetime of memories and experiences, including those that you can no longer bring into conscious awareness, such as emotional patterns that were created in early childhood or even infancy. It also contains your preferences and desires, which can influence you in ways that may be obvious, or in ways so subtle that you are not even aware of them.
- **The Structure of Personality:**
- The **id** represents a collection of basic biological drives, including those directed toward sex and aggression. Freud believed the id was fuelled by an energy called libido. The id operates according to the pleasure principle, motivating people to seek out experiences that bring pleasure, with little regard for the appropriateness or consequences of their realization. Because the id represents our basic animal desires, it is present right from birth and is the predominant force controlling our actions in the earliest stages of our lives. The id gets us into trouble though, and increasingly so as we get older and society frowns on some of the unrestrained urges of our lusty animal selves. Because society imposes constraints on our behaviour, the id must be restrained from its animal nature; and that is where the ego and superego come into play.
- The **superego** is comprised of our values and moral standards. Our superego tells us what we ought to do, whereas the id tells us what our animal body wants to do.
- In between the id and the superego is the **ego**, the decision maker. The ego seeks to balance the two forces, operating according to what Freud called the reality principle. The id, ego, and superego are in constant tension, and it is this tension that gives rise to personality in two key ways.

- First, different people's personalities may reflect differences in the relative strengths of their id, ego, and superego. Each person's unique combination of biology (id), upbringing and sociocultural circumstances (superego), and their uniquely personal awareness and will (ego), ends up developing into their personality.
- The second key dynamic that generates much of personality is how one reacts to anxiety. Anxiety plays a huge role in psychodynamic thought, because anxiety is the experiential result of the tension between the id, ego, and superego. When these systems are out of balance, we experience the deprivation of one system as a kind of basic anxiety. According to Freud, the ego engages in anxiety-defence throughout the day.
- **Defence Mechanisms:**
- When the ego is unable to resolve the anxieties that plague it, it uses its **defence mechanisms**, unconscious strategies the ego uses to reduce or avoid anxiety.
- Below is a chart of some defence mechanisms the ego uses:

Defence Mechanism	Definition
Denial	Refusing to acknowledge unpleasant information, particularly about oneself.
Displacement	Transforming an unacceptable impulse into a less unacceptable or neutral behaviour.
Identification	Unconsciously assuming the characteristics of a more powerful person in order to reduce feelings of anxiety or negative feelings about the self.
Projection	Perceiving in other people the qualities that you don't want to admit to possessing yourself.
Rationalization	Attempting to hide one's true motives by providing what seems like a reasonable explanation for unacceptable feelings or behaviours.
Reaction Formation	Altering an impulse that one finds personally unacceptable into its opposite.

Repression	Keeping distressing information out of conscious awareness by burying it in the unconscious.
Sublimation	Transforming unacceptable impulses into socially acceptable or even pro-social alternatives.

- **Personality Development: the Psychosexual Stages:**
- Freud believed that the personality developed as the person learned to channel the energy of the libido into appropriate forms of self-expression. Thus, to Freud, development of the infant and child is ruled by the id, involving the young child struggling to contain and channel sexual urges and feelings. Freud highlighted specific developmental challenges that children faced at different points of their lives, developing a stage theory of psycho-sexual development that tracked the progression children went through as they matured through the various stages.

Stage	Pleasure Focus	Key Dynamics
Oral (0–18 months)	Actions of the mouth—sucking, chewing, swallowing	This stage is about the foundation of the ego. Fixation at this stage represents a basic lack of self-confidence and "ego-strength," leaving the person more dependent on, and therefore vulnerable to external sources of support.
Anal (18–36 months)	Bowel elimination, control	This stage is about the development of a sense of control and competence. Fixation at this stage leads to an "anal retentive" or "anal expulsive" personality, manifesting either as an obsession with cleanliness, order, and control, or as a disorganized person.
Phallic (3–6 years)	Genitals	The key personality challenge is the Oedipus

		complex, through which a person further develops the superego due to the internalization of values from the parents. Fixation at this stage leads to problems with jealousy and obsessions with power and sex.
Latency (6 years until puberty)	External activities	Ideally, this stage is fairly conflict-free. People focus on developing themselves, discovering their interests through sports, arts, and general activities. Fixation at this stage was not considered to be a big concern.
Genital (puberty to adulthood)	Sexual activities with others	Ideally, this stage is also fairly conflict-free. People focus on fully and authentically engaging in the world, provided they are not fixated at earlier stages.

- **Fixation** involves becoming preoccupied with obtaining the pleasure associated with a particular stage as a result of not being able to adequately regulate themselves and satisfy their needs at that stage.
- **Exploring the Unconscious with Projective Tests:**
- One popular approach of developing more standardized techniques for probing the unconscious is to use **projective tests**, personality tests in which ambiguous images are presented to an individual to elicit responses that reflect unconscious desires or conflicts. They are called "projective" because the image can be interpreted in different ways, and the particular interpretation a person chooses is thought to be a projection of her unconscious.
- One of the most familiar projective tests is the **Rorschach inkblot test**, in which people are asked to describe what they see in an inkblot, and psychologists interpret this description using a standardized scoring and interpretation method. Another projective test is the **Thematic Apperception Test (TAT)**, which asks respondents to tell stories about ambiguous pictures involving various interpersonal situations.
- **Alternatives to the Psychodynamic Approach:**
- Carl Jung coined the term **analytical psychology**, which focuses on the role of unconscious archetypes in personality development. In contrast to the Freudian unconscious, Jung believed that there were two main types of the unconscious, a

personal unconscious, which is a vast repository of experiences and patterns absorbed during the person's life, and a **collective unconscious**, which is a separate, non-personal realm of the unconscious that holds the collective memories and mythologies of humankind, stretching deep into our ancestral past.
- Within analytical psychology, archetypes played a central role. **Archetypes** are images and symbols that reflect common patterns of experience across all cultures.
- **The Power of Social Factors:**
- Alfred Adler initially differentiated himself from Freud by arguing for the importance of social dynamics and conscious thoughts, as opposed to sexual and aggressive drives in the unconscious, as determinants of behaviour. He emphasized the **inferiority complex**, the struggle many people have with feelings of inferiority, which stem from experiences of helplessness and powerlessness during childhood.
- Adler described how people strive to compensate for their feelings of inferiority by trying to appear competent and overcompensate for inferior feelings by trying to be or appear superior to others.
- **Humanistic Perspectives:**
- Carl Rogers championed a **person-centred perspective**, founded on the assumption that people are basically good, and given the right environment their personality will develop fully and normally. Rogers believed that people possess immense inner resources for growth and resilience, and a desire for **self-actualization**, which is the drive to grow and fulfill one's potential.

Definitions:
- **Analytical psychology:** Focuses on the role of unconscious archetypes in personality development.
- **Archetypes:** Images and symbols that reflect common "truths" held across cultures, such as universal life experiences or types of people.
- **Arousal theory of extraversion:** Extraversion is determined by people's threshold for arousal.
- **Ascending reticular activating system (ARAS):** Plays a central role in controlling the arousal response.
- **Assortative mating:** Choosing sexual partners who are similar to the individual doing the searching
- **Behavioural activation system (BAS):** A "GO" system, arousing the person to action in the pursuit of desired goals.
- **Behavioural inhibition system (BIS)**: A "danger" system, motivating the person to action in order to avoid punishments or other negative outcomes.
- **Collective unconscious:** A separate, non-personal realm of the unconscious that holds the collective memories and mythologies of humankind, stretching deep into our ancestral past.
- **Conscious mind:** Your current awareness, containing everything you are aware of right now.
- **Dark Triad:** Three traits, Machiavellianism, Psychopathy, and Narcissism, that describes a person who is socially destructive, aggressive, dishonest, and likely to commit harm in general.
- **Defense mechanisms:** Unconscious strategies the ego uses to reduce or avoid anxiety.
- **Ego:** The decision maker, frequently under tension, trying to reconcile the opposing urges of the id and superego.

- **Factor Analysis:** A statistical technique that examines correlations between variables to find clusters of related variables, or "factors".
- **Factor Analysis:** In personality analysis, grouping items that people respond to similarly; for instance, the terms friendly and warm.
- **Five Factor Model (FFM):** A trait-based theory of personality based on the finding that personality can be described using five major dimensions.
- **Fixation:** Becoming preoccupied with obtaining the pleasure associated with a particular Freudian stage as a result of not being able to adequately regulate oneself and satisfy needs at that stage.
- **HEXACO model of personality:** A six-factor theory that generally replicates the factors of the Five Factor Model and adds one additional factor: Honesty–Humility.
- **Humourism:** Explained both physical illnesses and disorders of personality as resulting from imbalances in key fluids in the body.
- **Id:** A collection of basic biological drives, including those directed toward sex and aggression.
- **Idiographic approach:** Creating detailed descriptions of a specific person's unique personality characteristics.
- **Inferiority complex:** The struggle many people have with feelings of inferiority, which stem from experiences of helplessness and powerlessness during childhood.
- **Nomothetic approach:** Examines personality in large groups of people, with the aim of making generalizations about personality structure.
- **Person-centred perspective:** Founded on the assumption that people are basically good, and given the right environment their personality will develop fully and normally.
- **Personal unconscious:** A vast repository of experiences and patterns that are absorbed during the entire experiential unfolding of the person's life.
- **Personality:** A characteristic pattern of thinking, feeling, and behaving that is unique to each individual, and remains relatively consistent over time and situations.
- **Personality trait:** A specific psychological characteristic that makes up part of a person's personality.
- **Phrenology:** The theory that personality characteristics could be assessed by carefully measuring the outer skull.
- **Projective tests:** Personality tests in which ambiguous images are presented to an individual to elicit responses that reflect unconscious desires or conflicts.
- **Reciprocal determinism:** Behaviour, internal (personal) factors, and external (situational) factors interact to determine one another, and our personalities are based on interactions among these three aspects.
- **Response styles:** Characteristic ways of responding to questions.
- **Right-Wing Authoritarianism (RWA):** A problematic set of personality characteristics that also predisposes people to certain types of violent or anti-social tendencies:
    1. Obeying orders and deferring to the established authorities in a society.
    2. Supporting aggression against those who dissent or differ from the established social order.
    3. Believing strongly in maintaining the existing social order.
- **Rorschach inkblot test:** A test in which people are asked to describe what they see on an inkblot, and psychologists interpret this description using a standardized scoring and interpretation method.
- **Self-actualization:** The drive to grow and fulfill one's potential.

- **Serotonin transporter gene:** Gene that codes for proteins residing in the synapses between nerve cells that are responsible for moving serotonin back into cell membranes of recently fired nerve cells for reuse
- **State:** A temporary physical or psychological engagement that influences behaviour.
- **Superego:** Comprised of our values and moral standards.
- **Thematic Apperception Test:** A test in which respondents are asked to tell stories about ambiguous pictures involving various interpersonal situations.
- **Unconscious mind:** A vast and powerful but inaccessible part of your consciousness, operating without your conscious endorsement or will to influence and guide your behaviours.
- **WEIRD:** ("Western, educated, industrialized, rich, democratic") acronym coined by psychologists pointing out that major theories of psychology, including personality, are based on a very limited sample of humanity.