

Definition Slides

Personality

= an individual's characteristic pattern of thinking, feeling, and acting.



Free Association

= in psychoanalysis, a method of exploring the unconscious in which the person relaxes and says whatever comes to mind, no matter how trivial or embarrassing.



Psychoanalysis

= Freud's theory of personality that attributes thoughts and actions to unconscious motives and conflicts; the techniques used in treating psychological disorders by seeking to expose and interpret unconscious tensions.



Unconscious

= according to Freud, a reservoir of mostly unacceptable thoughts, wishes, feelings, and memories. According to contemporary psychologists, information processing of which we are unaware.



Preconscious

- According to Freud, the part of our mind that is our memories

Id

= a reservoir of unconscious psychic energy that, according to Freud, strives to satisfy basic sexual and aggressive drives. The id operates on the pleasure principle, demanding immediate gratification.



Ego

= the largely conscious, “executive” part of personality that, according to Freud, mediates among the demands of the id, superego, and reality. The ego operates on the reality principle, satisfying the id’s desires in ways that will realistically bring pleasure rather than pain.



Superego

= the part of personality that, according to Freud, represents internalized ideals and provides standards for judgment (the conscience) and for future aspirations.



Psychosexual Stages

= the childhood stages of development, (oral, anal, phallic, latency, genital) during which, according to Freud, the id's pleasure-seeking energies focus on distinct erogenous zones.



Oedipus Complex

= according to Freud, a boy's sexual desires toward his mother and feelings of jealousy and hatred for the rival father.



Identification

= the process by which, according to Freud, children incorporate their parent's values into their developing superegos.



Fixation

= according to Freud, a lingering focus of pleasure-seeking energies at an earlier psychosexual state, in which conflicts were unresolved.



Defense Mechanisms

= in psychoanalytic theory, the ego's protective methods of reducing anxiety by unconsciously distorting reality.



Repression

= in psychoanalytic theory, the basic defense mechanism that banishes anxiety-arousing thoughts, feelings, and memories from consciousness.



Regression

= psychoanalytic defense mechanism in which an individual faced with anxiety retreats to a more infantile psychosexual stage, where some psychic energy remains fixated.



Reaction Formation

= psychoanalytic defense mechanism by which the ego unconsciously switches unacceptable impulse into their opposites. Thus, people may express feelings that are the opposite of their anxiety-arousing unconscious feelings.



Projection

= psychoanalytic defense mechanism by which people disguise their own threatening impulses by attributing them to others.



Rationalization

= psychoanalytic defense mechanism that offers self-justifying explanations in place of the real, more threatening, unconscious reasons for one's actions.



Displacement

= psychoanalytic defense mechanism that shifts sexual or aggressive impulses toward a more acceptable or less threatening object or person, as when redirecting anger toward a safer outlet.



Sublimation

= psychoanalytic defense mechanism by which people re-channel their unacceptable impulses into socially approved activities.



Denial

= psychoanalytic defense mechanism by which people refuse to believe or even to perceive painful realities.



Collective Unconscious

= Carl Jung's concept of a shared, inherited reservoir of memory traces from our species' history.



Projective Test

= a personality test, such as the Rorschach or TAT, that provides ambiguous stimuli designed to trigger projection of one's inner dynamics.



Thematic Apperception Test (TAT)

= a projective test in which people express their inner feelings and interests through the stories they make up about ambiguous scenes.



Rorschach Inkblot Test

= the most widely used projective test, a set of 10 inkblots, designed by Hermann Rorschach; seeks to identify people's inner feelings by analyzing their interpretations of the blots.



Terror-management Theory

= a theory of death-related anxiety; explores people's emotional and behavioral responses to reminders of their impending death.



Self-actualization

= according to Maslow, one of the ultimate psychological needs that arises after basic physical and psychological needs are met and self-esteem is achieved; the motivation to fulfill one's potential.



Unconditional Positive Regard

= according to Rogers, an attitude of total acceptance toward another person.



Self-concept

= all our thoughts and feelings about ourselves, in answer to the question, “Who am I?”



Trait

= a characteristic pattern of behavior or a disposition to feel and act, as assessed by self-report inventories and peer reports.



Personality Inventory

= a questionnaire (often true-false or agree-disagree items) on which people respond to items designed to gauge a wide range of feelings and behaviors; used to assess selected personality traits.



Minnesota Multiphasic

Personality Inventory (MMPI)

= the most widely researched and clinically used of all personality tests. Originally developed to identify emotional disorders (still considered its most appropriate use), this test is now used for many other screening purposes.



Empirically Derived Test

= a test (such as the MMPI) developed by testing a pool of items and then selecting those that discriminate between groups.



Social-cognitive Perspective

= views behavior as influenced by the interaction between people's traits (including their thinking) and their social context.



Reciprocal Determinism

= the interacting influences of behavior, internal cognition, and environment.



Personal Control

= the extent to which people perceive control over their environment rather than feeling helpless.



External Locus of Control

= the perception that chance or outside forces beyond your personal control determine your fate.



Internal Locus of Control

= the perception that you control your own fate.



Positive Psychology

= the scientific study of optimal human functioning; aims to discover and promote strengths and virtues that enable individuals and communities to thrive.



Self

= in contemporary psychology, assumed to be the center of personality, the organizer of our thoughts, feelings, and actions.



Spotlight Effect

= overestimating other's noticing and evaluating our appearance, performance, and blunders (as if we presume a spotlight shines on us).



Self-esteem

= one's feelings of high or low self-worth.



Self-serving Bias

= a readiness to perceive oneself favorably.



Individualism

= giving priority to one's own goals to over group goals and defining one's identity in terms of personal attributes rather than than group identifications



Collectivism

= giving priority to the goals of one's group (often one's extended family or work group) and defining one's identity accordingly.

