

Key Questions/ Chapter Outline

Core Concepts

Psychology Matters

10.1 What Forces Shape Our Personalities?

Biology, Human Nature, and Personality
The Effects of Nurture: Personality and the Environment
The Effects of Nature: Dispositions and Mental Processes
Social and Cultural Contributions to Personality

- Personality is shaped by the combined forces of biological, situational, and mental processes—all embedded in a sociocultural and developmental context.

Explaining Unusual People and Unusual Behavior

You don't need a theory of personality to explain why people do the expected.

10.2 What Persistent Patterns, or *Dispositions*, Make Up Our Personalities?

Personality and Temperament
Personality as a Composite of Traits
Personality Disorders

- The *dispositional* theories all suggest a small set of personality characteristics, known as temperaments, traits, or types, that provide consistency to the individual's personality over time.

Finding Your Type

When it comes to classifying personality according to types, a little caution may be in order.

10.3 What Mental *Processes* Are at Work within Our Personalities?

Psychodynamic Theories: Emphasis on Motivation and Mental Disorder
Humanistic Theories: Emphasis on Human Potential and Mental Health
Social-Cognitive Theories: Emphasis on Social Learning
Current Trends: The Person in a Social System

- While each of the *process* theories sees different forces at work in personality, all portray personality as the result of both internal mental processes and social interactions.

Using Psychology to Learn Psychology

An external locus of control about grades poses danger for students.

10.4 What "Theories" Do People Use to Understand Themselves and Others?

Implicit Personality Theories
Self-Narratives: The Stories of Our Lives
The Effects of Culture on Our Views of Personality

- Our understanding of ourselves and others is based on implicit theories of personality and our own self-narratives—both of which are influenced by culture.

Developing Your Own Theory of Personality

You'll probably want to be eclectic.

Critical Thinking Applied:

The Person–Situation Controversy

chapter 10

personality: theories of the whole person



The idea that you are a distinct individual, with a *self* that makes you different from everyone else, is an assumption that people growing up in Europe or America rarely question. Nor do most psychologists realize that the concept of the self took root in psychology in no small part because of a woman who struggled all her life to be recognized as a competent scholar by an academic world that dismissed her because of her gender (Calkins, 1906, 1930; DiFebo, 2002).

Mary Calkins came into psychology through the back door. Wellesley College, where she had been teaching languages, recognized her as an outstanding teacher and offered her a job in the emerging new discipline of psychology, provided she could get some training—a practice not unusual at women's colleges at the time, in the late 1800s. But finding a graduate school that would take a woman was not easy. Harvard was an attractive possibility, especially because the legendary William James wanted her to be his student.

There was only one obstacle: Harvard did not accept women students. Its president, Charles Eliot, strongly believed in separate education for men and women, but



Mary Whiton Calkins, the first woman to become president of the American Psychological Association, never received her PhD, although she earned it.

he relented under pressure from James and other members of the psychology department—only under the condition that Calkins attend classes informally and not be eligible for a degree. (Harvard refused to award doctorates to women until 1963.)

By the spring of 1895, Calkins had finished her course work and had completed ground-breaking research on memory, which became her doctoral dissertation, *Association: An Essay Analytic and Experimental*. The rebellious psychology faculty at Harvard held an unauthorized oral defense of her dissertation and petitioned the board of directors to award her a PhD. James praised her performance as “the most brilliant examination for the PhD that we have had at Harvard.” But the directors refused. An incensed William James told Calkins that Harvard’s action was “enough to make dynamiters of you and all women” (Furumoto, 1979, p. 350).

Despite being denied the doctoral degree she had earned, Mary Calkins returned to Wellesley where, as promised, she was welcomed as a teacher of psychology. A productive scholar as well as a teacher, she eventually published over 100 articles and books, including her best-selling text, *An Introduction to Psychology*. In 1902, she pointedly refused the consolation prize of a PhD from Radcliffe College, a women’s institution associated with Harvard. And in 1905, she became the first woman president of the American Psychological Association.

The pattern of persistence and dogged determination seen in Calkins across the 40 years of her professional life illustrates the central idea of this chapter: **Personality** consists of all the psychological qualities and processes that bring continuity to an individual in different situations and at different times. It’s a broad concept that we might also describe as the thread of consistency that runs through our lives (Cervone & Shoda, 1999). And should this thread of personality break, it may leave a personality fraught with the inconsistencies that we see, for example, in bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, and so-called “multiple personality” disorder.

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Multiple personality and split personality are older terms for dissociative identity disorder.

The puzzle facing the psychologist interested in personality requires fitting together all the diverse pieces that make up the individual. It requires an integration of everything we have studied up till now—learning, perception, development, motivation, emotion, and all the rest—in the attempt to understand the individual as a unified whole. In Chapter 1 we named this the *whole-person perspective*.

In some respects, personality is pretty simple because we are all somewhat alike. We generally prefer pleasure to pain, we seek meaning in our lives, and we often judge ourselves by the standards set by the behavior of others. But beyond such obvious similarities, we are also unique individuals—each unlike anyone else. So personality is also the psychology of *individual differences*.

How does a psychologist go about making sense of personality? Let us illustrate using Mary Calkins as the subject of the problem around which this chapter is organized.

PROBLEM: What influences were at work to produce the unique pattern and consistency that we see in the personality of Mary Calkins?

Was her personality shaped primarily by the people and events in her life? Those events were so often beyond her control that we must consider another possibility—that her strength and determination arose from internal traits—from her basic makeup. You may recognize these two broad alternatives as another variation on the nature–nurture question. The answer, of course, lies with both:

Personality The psychological qualities that bring continuity to an individual’s behavior in different situations and at different times.

Experience *and* innate factors shaped Mary Calkins’s personality, just as they shape our own.

In this chapter we will examine several theoretical explanations for personality. As we do so, you will find that some theories place more emphasis on nature and others on nurture. You will also find that particular theories are suited to dealing with particular kinds of issues. For example:

- If what you need is a snapshot of a person’s current personality characteristics—as you might want if you were screening job applicants for your company—a theory of *temperaments, traits, or types* may be your best bet.
- If your goal is to understand someone as a developing, changing being—a friend who asks you for advice, perhaps—you will probably find one of the *psychodynamic, humanistic, or social-cognitive theories* of personality most helpful.
- If you are most interested in how people understand each other—as you might be if you were doing marriage counseling or conflict management—you will want to know the assumptions people make about each other. That is, you will want to know their *implicit theories of personality*.
- And, if you are wondering whether people understand each other in the same ways the world around, you will want to know about the *cross-cultural* work in personality, infused throughout the chapter.

We begin our exploration of personality now with an overview of the forces that have shaped us all.

10.1 KEY QUESTION WHAT FORCES SHAPE OUR PERSONALITIES?

Personality makes us not only human but different from everyone else. Thus, we might think of personality as the “default settings” for our individually unique patterns of motives, emotions, and perceptions, along with our learned schemas for understanding ourselves and our world (see McAdams & Pals, 2006). Personality is also the collective term for the qualities that make us who we are. All of this, in turn, is embedded in the context of our culture, social relationships, and developmental level. In other words, virtually every aspect of our being comes together to form our personality. (See Figure 10.1.) We can capture this idea in our Core Concept for this section.

Personality is shaped by the combined forces of biological, situational, and mental processes—all embedded in a sociocultural and developmental context.

core concept

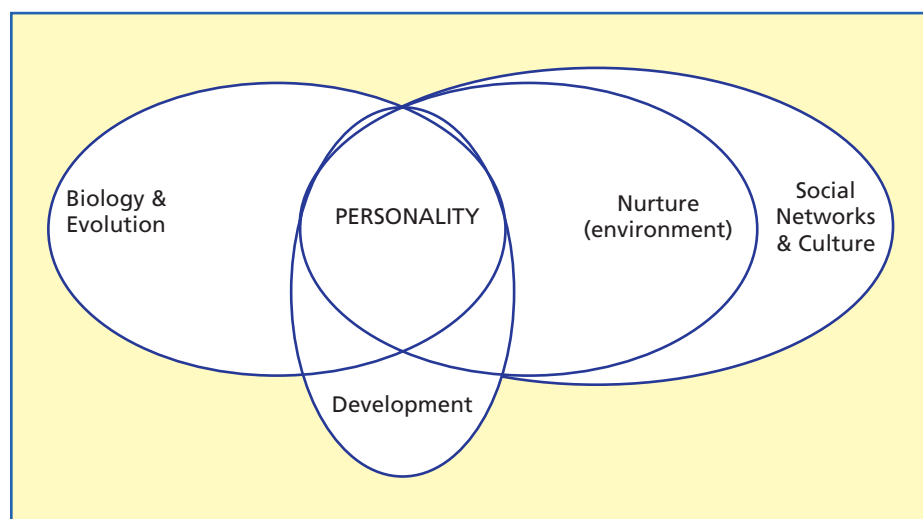


FIGURE 10.1
Personality as the Psychology of the Whole Person

We can think of personality as the intersection of all the psychological characteristics and processes that make us both human and, at the same time, different from everyone else.



William James studied consciousness and was interested in how the mind functions to guide behavior.

Let's look at each of these elements of personality, beginning with an overview of the forces of biology and evolution.

Biology, Human Nature, and Personality

Put two laboratory rats in a cage and electrify the floor with repeated shocks, and the rats will attack each other. We can see much the same thing in humans, who lash out at any convenient target when they feel threatened. Thus, in the early 20th century, the number of lynchings of blacks in the Southern United States rose and fell in a mirror-image response to the state of the economy—particularly the price of cotton. And more recently in the African nation of Rwanda, two groups of Earth's most unhappy people turned on each other in an astounding bloodbath that left perhaps three-quarters of a million people dead.

These are all examples of what Sigmund Freud called *displacement of aggression*. Sometimes we call it *scapegoating*, after the ancient Hebrew ritual of symbolically transferring the sins of the tribe to a goat that was then driven out into the desert to die. Displacement was also what William James was talking about when he suggested that Harvard's refusal to give Mary Calkins the degree she earned was "enough to make dynamiters of you and all women."

Nothing, of course, can justify mayhem, murder, or genocide—but perhaps we can explain them. According to David Barash (2007), human history is the story of those who responded to painful or threatening situations by striking at the nearest target. Those who did had a clear evolutionary advantage over those who just sat and "took it" because they were less likely to be victims the next time around. They were also more likely to breed and pass along this tendency for aggression and displacement to their descendants.

Displacement of aggression is not the only human characteristic that seems to be built into our biology. As we noted above, most people prefer pleasure to pain—often sexual pleasure. The obvious human propensity for sex and aggression fits with Darwin's idea that we come from a long line of ancestors who were driven to survive and reproduce. Sigmund Freud, picking up this "survival of the fittest" notion, argued that everything we do arises from a sex-based survival "instinct" and an "instinct" for defense and aggression. Other great theorists have proposed that personality is based on still other motives that undoubtedly have some basis in biology—particularly social motives. Much like ants and bees, they have pointed out, we humans are "social animals," too.

Which view is right? Modern neuroscience and evolutionary psychology suggest that the search for only a few basic urges behind all human behavior is wrong-headed (McAdams & Pals, 2006). The emerging picture is a far messier one. We (that is, our brains) seem to be collections of "modules," each adapted to a different purpose—which is the reason that we have so many different motives, each operating by different rules, as we saw in the previous chapter. Sex, aggression, hunger, affiliation, thirst, and achievement: Each is simultaneously a separate module in the brain but also a part of the collective entity we call "personality."

The Effects of Nurture: Personality and the Environment

Biology and evolution can't explain everything. Even the geneticists grudgingly admit that heredity accounts for only roughly half our characteristics (Robins, 2005). The rest, broadly speaking, comes from environment, which molds us according to the principles of behavioral conditioning and cognitive learning.

What environments make the most difference? Many personality theorists emphasize early childhood experiences: From this perspective, your own personality owes much to your parents, not just for their genes but for the environment they gave you (assuming you were raised by your parents). At the extreme, children who receive essentially no human contact, as in those abandoned to

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Environment often affects us through *operant conditioning* and *classical conditioning*.

custodial care in the worst of orphanages, emerge as stunted on virtually every measure of physical and mental well-being (Nelson et al., 2007; Spitz, 1946).

There is some dispute over just how persistent the family environment is as we come under the sway of adolescent peer pressures (Harris, 1995). Yet even birth order seems to influence personality throughout our lives, because the environment for each successive child in a family—from the oldest to the youngest—is different. Were you the first child? If so, you are more likely than your later-born siblings to end up in a career that requires use of your intellect, says development theorist J. Frank Sulloway (1996). Or are you the youngest? Chances are that you are more likely to make people laugh than your more sober older siblings. Incidentally, the high-achieving Mary Calkins, as the first-born of five children in her family, fits the pattern. (We should add that no one believes these patterns *always* hold true; they are merely statistical probabilities.)

So important are environmental influences that Walter Michel has suggested that they usually overwhelm all other effects—including any inborn traits. Just think how often during the day you simply respond to environmental dictates, from the ringing of your alarm clock, to the commands of red traffic lights, to the inquiry, “How are you?” So, is Michel right? We will examine this issue, better known as the *person–situation controversy*, in the Critical Thinking section at the end of the chapter.

The Effects of Nature: Dispositions and Mental Processes

Important as the environment is, we still must pass our experiences through a series of internal mental “filters” that represent core elements of personality. Suppose, for example, that you are an outgoing person—an *extravert*—who loves to be with other people. You will interpret your experiences from your extraverted point of view. The introvert–extravert dimension exemplifies the *descriptive* approach to personality, focusing on an individual’s relatively stable *personality characteristics* or **dispositions**. Others that we might call *process theories* go beyond description to explain personality in terms of the internal **personality processes** we have been studying throughout this book: motivation, perception, learning, and development, as well as conscious and unconscious processes. For a complete explanation of personality we seem to need both the *dispositional theories* and *process theories* that we will encounter later in the chapter.

Social and Cultural Contributions to Personality

The very concept of personality theory is a Western (Euro-American) invention, said cross-cultural psychologist Juris Draguns (1979). So it is not surprising that the most comprehensive and influential theories of personality were created by people trained in the framework of the Western social sciences, with a built-in bias toward individualism and a unique “self” (Guisinger & Blatt, 1994; Segall et al., 1999). Other cultures, however, address the problem of differences among people in their own ways. Most of these non-Western perspectives have originated in religion (Walsh, 1984). Hindus, for example, see personality as a union of opposing characteristics (Murphy & Murphy, 1968). The Chinese concept of complementary opposite forces, *yin* and *yang*, provides another variation on this same theme.

But what about the inverse problem? What influence does culture have on personality? We will see that, in a few respects, personality is much the same across cultures. That is, we can describe people all over the world in terms of just a few basic personality traits. For instance, people everywhere vary in their level of anxiety and in their tendency to be outgoing or introverted. But there are also components of personality on which cultures themselves have huge differences. One example involves *individualism* (highly prized in the United States

Disposition Relatively stable personality pattern, including temperaments, traits, and personality types.

Personality process The internal working of the personality, involving motivation, emotion, perception, and learning, as well as unconscious processes.

and other Western countries) versus *collectivism* (a group orientation more valued in Asian societies). People in the United States and other Western countries tend to emphasize **individualism**, which rewards those who stand out from the crowd because of such characteristics as talent, intelligence, or athletic ability. In contrast, people in the more group-oriented cultures of Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East emphasize **collectivism**, which rewards people for fitting in with the group and promoting social harmony.

And *within* any culture, be it individualistic or collectivistic, social relationships have an enormous impact on personality—as we have noted in neglected children and in those forced to grow up in “tough” neighborhoods. To a large extent, who you are is determined by those with whom you interacted while growing up, including not just your parents but your siblings, classmates, teachers, and perhaps the butcher and baker. Thus, your personality is, in part, a creation of other people—so, in the final section of the chapter, we will look more closely at just how these social and cultural factors shape our personalities.



A theory of personality is helpful in understanding unusual personalities.

Individualism The view, common in the Euro-American world, that places a high value on individual achievement and distinction.

Collectivism The view, common in Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East, that values group loyalty and pride over individual distinction.

● PSYCHOLOGY MATTERS

● Explaining Unusual People and Unusual Behavior

● You don't need a theory of personality to explain why people generally get to work on time, sing along at concerts, or spend weekends with their family and friends. That is, you don't need a theory of personality to explain why people do what you would expect them to do. But, when they behave in odd and unexpected ways, a personality theory comes in very handy. A good theory can help you understand interesting and unusual people, such as Mary Calkins, or those whom you read about in the newspaper—perhaps a serial killer, a politician embroiled in scandal, or the antics of your favorite movie star.

● But which approach to personality is best? Unfortunately, we will see that none has the whole truth. Each theory we cover in this chapter can help you see people from a different angle, so you may need to use several perspectives to get the whole-person picture. To give you a preview of coming attractions, let's suppose that you are a counseling psychologist, working at a college counseling center, and a client, a young woman, tells you that she is contemplating suicide. How can your knowledge of personality help you understand her?

● From a purely descriptive point of view, you might assess her personality *traits* and *temperament*. Is she conscientious? Is she outgoing or shy? Anxious? To find out, you might give her one of several personality “tests” that we will talk about in the next section of the chapter. Her profile of traits and temperament may suggest some form of psychological treatment or, perhaps, drug therapy.

● If you decide on a psychological therapy, you will be working with the internal *processes* in her personality and, perhaps, social forces at work in her environment and culture. This is the territory originally staked out by Sigmund Freud and his disciples and, more recently, by experimental psychologists.

● A *psychodynamic theory* would direct your focus toward her motives and emotions, some of which may be unconscious. Is she a hostile person who has turned her hostility on herself? Does she have some unfinished emotional business from an earlier developmental stage, such as guilt for angry feelings toward her parents? Does she have “neurotic” goals? What is the nature of her social relationships?

● In contrast, a *humanistic theory* would emphasize the exploration of her potentialities rather than of her deficiencies. What are her talents? Her hopes and desires? And what obstacles stand between her and her goals? A humanistic theory would also help you explore her unmet needs. Do her suicidal thoughts result from conscious feelings that she is alone, unloved, or not respected?

● A *social-cognitive theory*, with its emphasis on perception and learning, might suggest that her difficulty lies in the way she interprets events. Does she always assume that her best efforts are not good enough? Does she believe that she can

- control the events in her life, or do events control her? A cognitive approach might also alert you to the possibility that her suicidal thoughts reflect a suicidal role model—perhaps a friend or a family member.
- All of these approaches to personality will be explored in detail later in the chapter. For now, here is the take-away message: No one theory has a complete answer to the problem of understanding why people do what they do. The trait and temperament theories can provide a descriptive snapshot of a person’s characteristics, while the “process” theories describe the forces that underlie those characteristics. In the case of the suicidal young woman we described, some combination of both is in order.

Check Your Understanding

- RECALL:** The fact that displacement of aggression is found in humans everywhere, as well as in animals, suggests that it is rooted in _____.
- APPLICATION:** Give an example that shows the influence of nurture on personality.
- ANALYSIS:** What is the distinction between the *dispositional* theories and the *process* theories of personality?
- RECALL:** A person from a collectivist culture is more likely than one from an individualist culture to emphasize _____.
- UNDERSTANDING THE CORE CONCEPT:** What are the major factors that affect the formation of the personality?

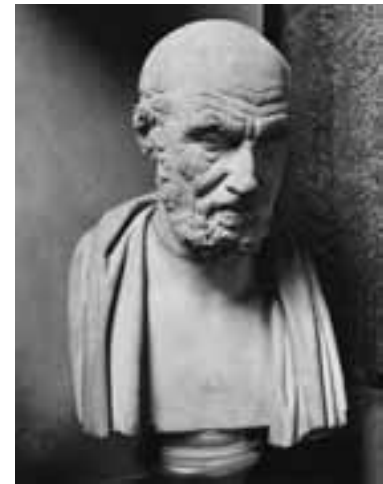
Answers 1. our biological nature 2. An example given in the text involves the influence of birth order on personality. There are many others, including, perhaps, examples from your own experience. And in the news we read of “child soldiers” who are caught in the civil wars of the world’s poorest countries and are trained as hardened killers. 3. The dispositional theories describe personality in terms of characteristics (traits, temperaments, or types), while the process theories describe personality in terms of internal processes (e.g., motivation, learning, or perception) and social interactions. 4. the importance of the group and harmonious relationships within the group 5. Personality is shaped by biology, the environment (situational pressures), mental processes, development, and the sociocultural context.

10.2 KEY QUESTION WHAT PERSISTENT PATTERNS, OR DISPOSITIONS, MAKE UP OUR PERSONALITIES?

Two thousand years before academic psychology appeared, people were classifying each other according to four *temperaments*, based on a theory proposed by the Greek physician Hippocrates (*Hip-POCK-rah-tees*). A person’s temperament, he suggested, resulted from the balance of the four *humors*, or fluids, secreted by the body. (See Figure 10.2.) A *sanguine*, or cheerful, person was characterized by strong, warm blood. A *choleric* temperament, marked by anger, came from yellow bile (called *choler*), believed to flow from the liver. Hippocrates thought that the liver also produced black bile, from which arose a *melancholic*, or depressed, temperament. Finally, if the body’s dominant fluid is phlegm, or mucus, the person will have a *phlegmatic* temperament: cool, aloof, slow, and unemotional. Hippocrates’ biology may have been a little off the mark, but his notion of temperaments established itself as “common sense.” Even today you will occasionally encounter his terms used to describe people’s personalities.

In modern times, other personality classification systems have appeared. The most simplistic ones are just stereotypes: If fat, then jolly; if an engineer, then conservative; if female, then sympathetic. Obviously, these beliefs oversimplify the very complicated problem of understanding the patterns found in personality. Even you may be guilty of such oversimplifications, if you think of people strictly according to categories and stereotypes: college major, gender, ethnicity, and qualities such as honesty, shyness, or sense of humor.

Still, something in human nature seems to encourage us to group people in categories. So, some personality theorists have sought to describe people in terms



Hippocrates was an early contributor to the idea of a mind–body connection. One of his beliefs was that our individual temperament is driven by our predominant body fluid, or humor, and could be either sanguine, choleric, melancholic, or phlegmatic.

Humors Four body fluids—blood, phlegm, black bile, and yellow bile—that, according to an ancient theory, control personality by their relative abundance.

FIGURE 10.2
The Humor Theory

The Humor Theory		
Humors	Source	Temperament
blood	heart	sanguine (cheerful)
cholera (yellow bile)	liver	choleric (angry)
melancholy (black bile)	spleen	melancholy (depressed)
phlegm	brain	phlegmatic (sluggish)

of just a few basic *temperaments*: global dispositions of personality, such as “outgoing” or “shy,” that have a strong biological basis. Others prefer to look for combinations of *traits*, which are generally thought of as multiple dimensions of personality, such as cautious versus reckless or friendly versus unfriendly, which are usually considered more influenced by experience (learning) than are temperaments. Still others classify people according to personality *types*, which are categories, rather than dimensions: You either fit the pattern for a type, or you do not. For example, if introversion is a *trait dimension*, then people can have degrees of introversion. On the other hand, if introversion is a *type*, then people are classified as either being introverted or not.

While each of these approaches is a bit different, our Core Concept indicates that they also have a common meeting ground:

core concept

The *dispositional theories* all suggest a small set of personality characteristics, known as temperaments, traits, or types, that provide consistency to the individual's personality over time.

Because the terms *temperament*, *trait*, and *type* overlap, we will follow the custom of placing them all under the generic heading of a **dispositional theories**. But what makes such theories different from mere stereotypes—the conservative engineer, the macho male, or the dismal economics professor? It's all in the science. A good temperament, trait, or type theory must have a solid scientific base. In that light, let's evaluate each of these approaches to personality, beginning with *temperament*.

Personality and Temperament

Psychologists define *temperament* as the biologically based personality dispositions that are usually apparent in early childhood and that establish the foundation of the personality and the mood of an individual's approach to life (Hogan et al., 1996; Mischel, 1993). When speaking of temperaments, psychologists are usually referring to one or two dominant and long-standing themes, such as shyness or moodiness, that characterize a person's personality, perhaps from birth. Modern psychology has, of course, abandoned the four humors theory of temperament, but it has retained its most basic concept: *Biological dispositions do affect our basic personalities*. In support of this view, psychologists can now point to structures in the brain that are known to regulate fundamental aspects of personality (LeDoux, 2002). You will recall, for example, the case of Phineas Gage, who received an accidental “lobotomy” and thereby demonstrated the role of the frontal lobes in regulating one's basic disposition—an observation confirmed by modern neuroscience.

Dispositional theory A general term that includes the temperament, trait, and type approaches to personality.

Temperament from Transmitters? Biological psychologists now suspect that some individual differences in temperament also arise from the balance of chemi-

cals in the brain, which may, in turn, have a genetic basis (Azar, 2002b; Sapolsky, 1992). In this sense, the theory of humors still lives but in a different guise: Modern biological psychology has replaced the humors with neurotransmitters. So, depression—which characterizes most suicidal people—may result from an imbalance of certain transmitters. Likewise, anxiety, anger, and euphoria may each arise from other neurochemical patterns. As developmental psychologist Jerome Kagan says (in Stavish, 1994), “We all have the same neurotransmitters, but each of us has a slightly different mix” (p. 7). That, says Kagan, is what accounts for many of the temperamental differences among people.

In fact, Kagan runs a fascinating research program focusing on the inherited basis of shyness (Kagan, 2005; Kagan et al., 1994). This program has clearly demonstrated that, on their very first day, newborns already differ in the degree to which they are responsive to stimulation. About 20% of all children are highly responsive and excitable, while approximately twice as many (35 to 40%) remain calm in response to new stimulation. Over their first few months of life, these initial differences manifest themselves in temperamental differences: Most of the excitable children become shy and introverted, while the less excitable ones become extraverted. Although these tendencies change in some children, for most they persist over time, with the majority of children being classified with the same temperament in measurements taken over an 11-year interval.

Tempered with a Bit of Learning? On the other hand, we know that the percentage of shy college-age students—40% or more—is much higher than the percentage of shy children (Zimbardo, 1990). It is thus reasonable to assume that some shyness is inherited, while even more is learned through negative experiences in one’s social life. It is also the case that if a child is withdrawn, startles easily, is unlikely to smile, and is fearful of both strangers and novelty, then that child will create an environment that is not friendly, playful, or supportive. In this way, heredity and environment interact, with initially inherited characteristics becoming amplified—or perhaps muted—over time, because they produce social signals telling others to either approach or stay away.

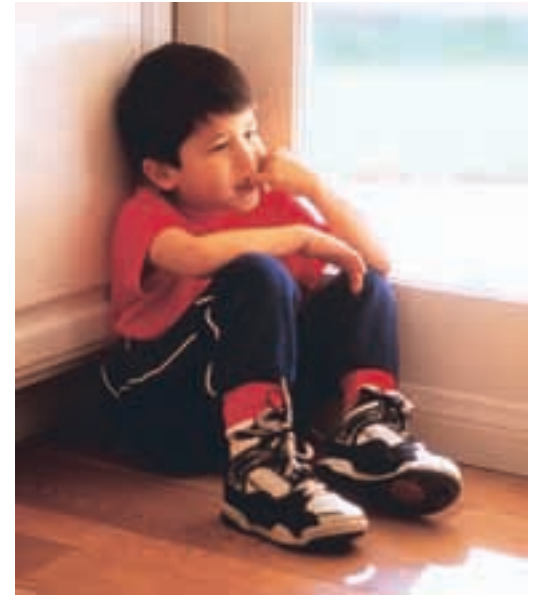
So does biology determine your destiny? An inherited temperament may set the *range* of your responses to some life situations. However, temperament by itself does not fully determine your life experiences (Kagan & Snidman, 1998). Even among your biological relatives, your unique family position, experiences, and sense of self guarantee that your personality pattern is unlike that of anyone else (Bouchard et al., 1990).

Personality as a Composite of Traits

If you were to describe a friend, you will probably use the language of *traits*: moody, cheerful, melancholy, enthusiastic, volatile, friendly, or smart. **Traits** are multiple, stable personality characteristics that are presumed to exist within the individual and guide his or her thoughts and actions under various conditions. We might think of traits as the product of hidden psychological processes—the way our motives, emotions, and cognitions are customarily expressed in behavior (Winter et al., 1998).

How do traits differ from temperament? Think of temperament as the foundation of personality, deeply rooted in our individual biological nature. Then think of traits as a multidimensional structure built on the foundation of temperament but also influenced by experience.

The “Big Five” Traits: The Five-Factor Theory Trait theorists focus primarily on the motivational and emotional components of personality, excluding other attributes such as IQ and creativity. With the mathematical tool of *factor analysis* (which helps them look for relationships, or clusters, among personality test items), investigators have identified five dominant personality factors. Personality theorists



Some shyness is inherited, and some is learned through experience.

Traits Multiple stable personality characteristics that are presumed to exist within the individual and guide his or her thoughts and actions under various conditions.

often call these the *Big Five* (Carver & Scheier, 2008; John & Srivastava, 1999). As yet, we have no universally accepted names for these five factors, although the italicized term in the list below are widely used.

You will note that, although we give each trait a single label, the Big Five traits are really *bipolar dimensions*. That is, they exist on a continuum, with most people falling somewhere between the extremes—near the middle of the continuum—on most of these dimensions. (In parenthesis below, we list the name of the opposite end of the dimension for each trait.)

- *Openness to experience*, also called inquiring intellect, curiosity, independence (at the opposite pole: closed-mindedness, low curiosity, unimaginative).
- *Conscientiousness*, also called dependability, goal-directedness, perseverance, superego strength, prudence, or constraint (at the opposite pole: impulsiveness, carelessness, or irresponsibility).
- *Extraversion*, also called social adaptability, assertiveness, sociability, boldness, or self-confidence (at the opposite pole: introversion, shyness).
- *Agreeableness*, also called warmth and likeability, with those on this end of the continuum taking a prosocial approach to others (at the opposite pole: coldness, negativity, or antagonism).
- *Neuroticism*, also called anxiety or emotionality (at the opposite pole: emotional stability or emotional control).

Here's an aid to remembering these five trait dimensions: Think of the acronym *OCEAN*, standing for Openness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Neuroticism.

As you ponder this **five-factor theory**, it is important to realize that no score is necessarily “good” or “bad.” While our culture tends to value extroversion over introversion, either one can be adaptive, depending on the social and cultural situation. Thus, introversion may be a desirable trait for a writer, while extraversion may be preferred in a sales manager. Similarly, we value conscientiousness, openness, agreeableness, and emotional stability, but scoring on the “lower” end of each of these isn't necessarily a bad thing. For example, for a creative person, the tendency to follow one's own beliefs and not be unduly swayed by others (lower agreeableness) is beneficial. Similarly, too much conscientiousness probably limits one's ability to take advantage of unexpected opportunities, and too much openness could lead a person to be a “Jack (or Jill) of all trades,” and master of none. Rather than making judgments about what traits we “should” possess, it is better to capitalize on the traits we have and find an environment that offers a good fit.

The five-factor theory greatly simplifies a formerly confusing picture. Although debate still continues about the details, a broad coalition of theorists has now concluded that we can describe people with reasonable accuracy on just these five dimensions—quite an achievement, in view of the several hundred trait terms one can find listed in the dictionary (Allport & Odbert, 1936)! Significantly, the five-factor model also seems to have validity across cultures, with several large studies demonstrating that the five-factor model works in more than 50 cultures in Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Americas (McCrae et al., 2005; Schmitt et al., 2007).

Assessing Traits with Personality Inventories If you were a clinical or counseling psychologist, you might want to assess a client's personality on the five factors, using a paper-and-pencil instrument such as the *NEO Personality Inventory* (or *NEO-PI*).¹ This simple but highly respected measure has been used to study

Five-factor theory A trait perspective suggesting that personality is composed of five fundamental personality dimensions (also known as the Big Five): openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism.

¹NEO stands for neuroticism, extraversion, and openness. Conscientiousness and agreeableness were added later, but the name, *NEO Personality Inventory*, was not changed.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree somewhat	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree somewhat	Strongly agree
1. I am a talkative person.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. I often feel shy.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. I am usually full of energy.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. I worry a lot.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. I am inventive.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. I have no artistic interests.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. I like new challenges and experiences.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. I see myself as reliable.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. I like to be with people.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. I can remain calm in difficult situations.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

FIGURE 10.3
Sample Five-Factor Personality Inventory Items

An instrument measuring the Big Five personality traits might ask you to indicate how much you agree or disagree with each statement by checking the circle under the appropriate point on the scale. There are no right or wrong answers.

personality stability across the lifespan and also the relationship of personality characteristics to physical health and various life events. (See Figure 10.3.)

If, however, you want an instrument that measures clinical traits—that is, signs of mental disorder—the *Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory*, usually referred to as the *MMPI-2*, is a good bet. (The “2” means it is a revised form of the original *MMPI*.) Unlike the *NEO-PI*, the *MMPI-2* does not measure the Big Five personality dimensions. Rather, its ten clinical scales (shown in Table 10.1) were developed to assess serious mental problems, such as depression, schizophrenia, and paranoia (Helmes & Reddon, 1993). Its 567 items deal with a variety of attitudes, habits, fears, preferences, physical health, beliefs, and general outlook. We won’t compromise the actual test items, but here are some true-false statements, similar to those on the *MMPI-2*:

- I am often bothered by thoughts about sex.
- Sometimes I like to stir up some excitement.
- If people had not judged me unfairly, I would have been far more successful.

Respondents are asked to indicate whether each statement describes them, and their answers are compared against responses of people clinical populations with known mental disorders. Thus, the scoring is *empirically* based—that is, it is based on scientific data, rather than just opinion.

TABLE 10.1 *MMPI-2* Clinical Scales

Hypochondriasis (Hs): Abnormal concern with bodily functions

Depression (D): Pessimism; hopelessness; slowing of action and thought

Conversion hysteria (Hy): Unconscious use of mental problems to avoid conflicts or responsibility

Psychopathic deviate (Pd): Disregard for social custom; shallow emotions; inability to profit from experience

Masculinity–femininity (Mf): Differences between men and women

Paranoia (Pa): Suspiciousness; delusions of grandeur or persecution

Psychasthenia (Pt): Obsessions; compulsions; fears; low self-esteem; guilt; indecisiveness

Schizophrenia (Sc): Bizarre, unusual thoughts or behavior; withdrawal; hallucinations; delusions

Hypomania (Ma): Emotional excitement; flight of ideas; overactivity

Social introversion (Si): Shyness; disinterest in others; insecurity

MMPI-2 A widely used personality assessment instrument that gives scores on ten important clinical traits. Also called the *Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory*.

People who take personality inventories such as the *MMPI-2* often agonize over their answers to particular questions, concerned that a “wrong” answer might lead to being diagnosed as mentally disturbed. Not to worry! Personality profiles derived from *MMPI-2* responses are *never* based on a single item—or even two or three. Rather, each item merely makes a weighted contribution to one or more of the scales.

Could you fake a good or bad score on the *MMPI-2*? Probably not. The test has four cleverly designed “lie” scales that signal something amiss when they pick up too many unusual responses. Here are some items similar to those on the lie scales:

- Sometimes I put off doing things I know I ought to do.
- On occasion I have passed on some gossip.
- Once in a while, I find a dirty joke amusing.

Too many attempts to make yourself look good or bad will elevate your lie scale scores into the questionable range.

From a scientific standpoint, the *MMPI-2* and the *NEO-PI* are exemplary instruments—for two reasons. First, they have excellent **reliability**. This means that they provide consistent and stable scores. So, when a person takes the same test on two different occasions, the scores are likely to be much the same. In fact, any usable test must have good reliability; otherwise the scores would be erratic and undependable.

Second, the *MMPI-2* and the *NEO-PI* have good **validity**—which means that they actually measure what they were designed to measure—e.g., personality traits or signs of mental disturbance. The *MMPI-2* does a credible job, for example, of identifying depressed or psychotic persons (Greene, 1991)—although it must be used with care in non-Western cultures because it is not clear that its validity holds when the instrument has been translated into other languages (Dana, 1993). Moreover, some observers suggest that some items may have culture-specific content (Golden & Figueroa, 2007). Clinicians should also exercise caution when giving personality inventories to members of ethnic minorities in the United States, because minority groups are not always well represented in the samples used in developing the test (Butcher & Williams, 1992; Graham, 1990).

Evaluating the Temperament and Trait Theories Several criticisms have been leveled at the temperament and trait theories and the tests they have spawned. For one, these theories give us a “snapshot” of personality—a picture that portrays personality as fixed and static, rather than as a dynamic process that can undergo developmental changes, depending on our experience. Another criticism says that they oversimplify our complex natures by describing personality on just a few dimensions. What would we gain, for example, by finding that Mary Calkins scored high on traits such as conscientiousness or and dominance but low on agreeableness? While such judgments might validate our observations, labels leave out important detail.

On the positive side, trait theories give us some ability to *predict* behavior in common situations, such as work settings—to select employees who are well suited to the job and to screen out those who might cause problems. Moreover, the Big Five traits really do predict most of the things that truly matter to most of us, including health, academic success, and success in our interpersonal relationships—and with accuracy comparable to that of many diagnostic tests used in medicine (Robins, 2005).

But in the end, trait theories suffer from one of the same problems as the old instinct theories. Both *describe* behavior with a label but do not *explain* it. For example, we can attribute depression to a depressive trait or an outgoing personality to extraversion without really understanding the behavior. In short, trait theories identify common traits, but they do not tell us much about their source

Reliability An attribute of a psychological test that gives consistent results.

Validity An attribute of a psychological test that actually measures what it is being used to measure.

or how traits interact (McAdams, 1992; Pervin, 1985). Moreover, because most people display a trait only to a moderate degree, we must ask how useful traits are for understanding all but the extreme cases.

Finally, with trait theory we again encounter the problem of the *self-fulfilling prophecy*. When given trait labels, people may be influenced by the expectations implied by those labels, making it difficult for them to change undesirable behavior. A child labeled “shy,” for example, may have to struggle against both the label and the trait.

CONNECTION • CHAPTER 5

The original *self-fulfilling prophecy* in psychology involved an experiment in which students' academic performance was altered by manipulating teachers' expectations.

Personality Disorders

Disorders of personality account for the quirkiest of many historical and public figures, including the much-married King Henry VIII; the late Enron executive Ken Lay, perpetrator of massive financial shenanigans; and the fatal femme Lizzie Borden, who famously dispatched her parents with a hatchet. The **personality disorders** show themselves in chronic patterns of poor judgment, disordered thinking, emotional disturbances, disrupted social relationships, or lack of impulse control. The key element is a maladaptive personality pattern of long standing. Here we consider three of the better known such conditions: *narcissistic personality disorder*, *antisocial personality disorder*, and *borderline personality disorder*.

Narcissistic Personality Disorder If one believes the entertainment tabloids, narcissistic personalities are common in the film and recording industries. People with *narcissistic personality disorder* display an exaggerated sense of self-importance, a need for constant attention or admiration, and often a preoccupation with fantasies of success or power. They may respond inappropriately to criticism or minor defeat, either by acting indifferent or by overreacting. They usually have problems in interpersonal relationships, feel entitled to favors without obligations, exploit others selfishly, and have difficulty understanding how others feel.

Antisocial Personality Disorder Everyone from ruthless executives to serial killers is a candidate for this category, which includes those with a long-standing pattern of irresponsible or harmful behavior. Persons with *antisocial personality disorder* seem to lack conscience or a sense of responsibility to others. Characteristically, their violations of social norms begin early in their lives—disrupting class, getting into fights, and running away from home. This pattern may progress to acts of cruelty and wanton disregard for others, such as abusing animals or setting fires. Other common signs of antisocial personality disorder include chronic lying and stealing. And, even though people with antisocial personalities may frequently find themselves in trouble, they may not experience anxiety, shame, or any other sort of intense emotion. Often, in fact, they can “keep cool” in situations that would arouse and upset normal people. Those who show a violent or criminal pattern of antisocial personality disorder, such as committing murders and other serious crimes, are popularly referred to as “psychopaths” or “sociopaths.”

Although we may expect to find antisocial personalities among street criminals and con artists, they are also well represented among successful politicians and businesspeople who put career, money, and power above everything and everyone (Babiak & Hare, 2006). People with antisocial personalities are often charming and intelligent, and they use these characteristics to their advantage by manipulating others and taking advantage of people's tendency to be trusting. These same characteristics also help them avoid getting caught for long periods of time—and when they do get caught, they are often able to charm, lie, or manipulate their way out of trouble. As many as 3% of the population in the United States may exhibit this pattern, with men being four times more likely to be so diagnosed than women (Regier et al., 1988, 1993).

Borderline Personality Disorder A third form of personality disorder, *borderline personality disorder* manifests itself as instability and impulsivity

Personality disorder Condition involving a chronic, pervasive, inflexible, and maladaptive pattern of thinking, emotion, social relationships, or impulse control.

(Carson et al., 2000; Holmes, 2001). People with this diagnosis have unpredictable moods and stormy interpersonal relationships, often becoming upset and abusive in response to perceived slights. They also have little tolerance for frustration. Their impulsivity may be seen in a tendency for substance abuse, gambling, sexual promiscuity, binge eating, reckless driving, self-mutilation, or suicide attempts. As with the other personality disorders, the treatment outlook for borderline personality disorder is guarded.

● PSYCHOLOGYMATTERS

● Finding Your Type

Do you fancy yourself an introvert or an extravert? Emotionally stable or excitable? Dependable or irresponsible? Modern trait theory assumes that you could fall anywhere between these extremes, while the older notion of **personality types** puts people in distinct categories. Which view—trait or type—more accurately captures human nature? To find out, let's perform a critical examination of the most widely used instrument for assessing personality types, the *Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI)*. Because the *Myers-Briggs* derives from the personality types found in Carl Jung's theory, this discussion will also serve as a bridge to the next section of the chapter, where we will study Jung's theory, as well as other classical theories of personality, in detail.

Uses of the MBTI Chances are you have taken the *Myers-Briggs Type Indicator*, because it is given to some two million people each year, often at self-awareness workshops and team-building business seminars (Druckman & Bjork, 1991). In the business world, consultants commonly use the *MBTI* in management training sessions to convey the message that people have distinct personality patterns that suit them for specific kinds of jobs. In college counseling centers, students may be advised to select a career that fits with their personality type, as revealed on the *MBTI*. It also finds a use in relationship counseling, where couples are taught to accommodate to each other's personality types.

On the Myers-Briggs test, examinees answer a series of questions about how they make judgments, perceive the world, and relate to others (Myers & Myers, 1995). Based on these responses, a scoring system assigns an individual to a four-dimensional personality type, derived from the Jungian dimensions of Introversion-Extraversion, Thinking-Feeling, Sensation-Intuition, and Judgment-Perception.

● What Does Research on the MBTI Tell Us about Personality Types?

Remember that a *reliable* test gives consistent results, as when a person takes the same test repeatedly. Unfortunately, the reliability of the *MBTI* is questionable. One study, for example, found that fewer than half of those tested on the *MBTI* had the same type when retested five weeks later (McCarley & Carskadon, 1983). Another study found a change in at least one of the four type categories in about 75% of respondents (see Druckman & Bjork, 1991). Such results certainly raise questions about the fundamental concept of "type."

A second issue concerns the *validity* of the *Myers-Briggs* test. We have said that a valid test actually measures what it is being used to measure. And again the research on the *MBTI* gives a mixed picture (Druckman & Bjork, 1991). The data fail to show that the *MBTI* truly identifies distinct personality *types* (Furnham et al., 2003). In fact, it is much more consistent with the concept of *traits*—that is, the idea that different people have different degrees of a characteristic—rather than the *type* notion of either having it or not. Thus, the idea that people are distributed all along the introversion-extraversion continuum fits the evidence better than the approach, encouraged by the *Myers-Briggs*, of simply lumping people in one category or the other.

Personality type Similar to a trait, but instead of being a *dimension*, a type is a *category* that is believed to represent a common cluster of personality characteristics.

Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) A widely used personality test based on Jungian types.

As for identifying personality patterns associated with particular occupations, the evidence is also shaky. True enough, people who work with people—entertainers, counselors, managers, and sellers—tend to score higher on extraversion. By comparison, librarians, computer specialists, and physicians number many introverts in their ranks. The danger lies, however, in turning averages into stereotypes. In fact, the data show a diversity of types within occupations. Further, we find a conspicuous lack of evidence documenting a relationship between personality type and occupational success: There is no basis for the idea that having a particular personality type makes you better suited for a particular career. Although proponents of the *MBTI* claim it to be useful in vocational counseling, a review of the literature by a team from the National Academy of Sciences found no relationship between personality type, as revealed by the *MBTI*, and performance on a particular job (Druckman & Bjork, 1991). This report has, however, been hotly disputed by users of the instrument (Pearman, 1991). But overall, we can say that the *Myers-Briggs Type Indicator* has not proved to have the validity or reliability needed as the basis for making important life decisions. Says the National Academy of Sciences Report (Druckman & Bjork, 1991), “Lacking such evidence, it is a curiosity why the instrument is used so widely” (p. 99).

So, what can we conclude on the issue of traits versus types? The fact that people commonly score all along each dimension strongly favors the concept of *traits* that people have in varying amounts, rather than the discrete yes/no categories of *type*. As evolution scholar Stephen Jay Gould remarked, “The world does not come to us in neat little packages” (1996, p. 188).

Check Your Understanding

- RECALL:** Jerome Kagan has suggested that the biological basis for different temperaments may come from each person’s unique mix of _____.
- APPLICATION:** A friend of yours always seems agitated and anxious, even when nothing in the circumstances would provoke such a response. Which one of the Big Five traits seems to describe this characteristic of your friend?
- RECALL:** The *MMPI-2* does not assess conventional traits. Instead, its ten clinical scales assess _____.
- RECALL:** A pattern of stormy relationships and impulsive behavior is characteristic of which personality disorder?
- ANALYSIS:** If you were using a *trait theory*, you would assess people _____; but if you were using a *type theory*, you would assess people _____.
 - clinically / experimentally
 - according to their behavior / according to their mental processes
 - on their positive characteristics / on their negative characteristics
 - on dimensions / in categories
- UNDERSTANDING THE CORE CONCEPT:** Temperament, trait, and type theories describe the differences among people in terms of _____ but not _____.
 - personality characteristics/personality processes
 - mental disorders/mental health
 - nature/nurture
 - conscious processes/unconscious processes

Answers 1. neurotransmitters 2. neuroticism 3. tendencies toward serious mental problems 4. borderline personality disorder 5. d 6. a

10.3 KEY QUESTION

WHAT MENTAL PROCESSES ARE AT WORK WITHIN OUR PERSONALITIES?

On January 31, 2006, Ken Lay and his cohort Jeffrey Skilling were convicted on massive securities fraud charges that involved billions of dollars in illegal “insider” stock trading and the bankruptcy of a company known as Enron. Not only was Enron’s financial meltdown the biggest bankruptcy case in U.S. history, it cost about 20,000 Enron employees their jobs. Many lost their life savings in company stock that Lay encouraged them to buy, even as he was dumping his own.

WHAT MENTAL PROCESSES ARE AT WORK WITHIN OUR PERSONALITIES?

Why did Lay do it? Greed is the obvious answer, along with egotism and not a little ruthlessness. But these traits do little to explain the *why* of Ken Lay. What was going on within the man that channeled his brilliance (he had a PhD in economics and a highly successful career both in government and in the boardroom) into such nasty actions? We will use Lay's case, along with that of Mary Calkins, to illustrate various theories of personality throughout the rest of the chapter.

To understand the psychological forces underlying both Lay's and Calkins's traits, we turn to theories that look at the *processes* that shape people's personalities. Specifically, we will consider three kinds of "process" theories: the *psychodynamic*, the *humanistic*, and the *cognitive theories*. What do they have in common? Our Core Concept says:

core concept

While each of the *process* theories sees different forces at work in personality, all portray personality as the result of both internal mental processes and social interactions.

Although the three viewpoints we will consider in this section of the chapter—the *psychodynamic*, *humanistic*, and *social-cognitive* theories—share some common ground, each emphasizes a different combination of factors. The **psychodynamic theories** call attention to motivation, especially unconscious motives, and the influence of past experiences on our mental health. **Humanistic theories** emphasize consciousness and our present, subjective reality: what we believe is important now and how we think of ourselves in relation to others. And the **social-cognitive theories** describe the influence of learning, perception, and social interaction on behavior.

Psychodynamic Theories: Emphasis on Motivation and Mental Disorder

The psychodynamic approach originated in the late 1800s with a medical puzzle called *hysteria*, now known as *conversion disorder*. In patients with this condition, the physician sees physical symptoms, such as a muscle weakness, loss of sensation in a part of the body, or even a paralysis—but no apparent physical cause, such as nerve damage. The psychological nature of hysteria finally became

Psychodynamic theory A group of theories that originated with Freud. All emphasize motivation—often unconscious motivation—and the influence of the past on the development of mental disorders.

Humanistic theories A group of personality theories that focus on human growth and potential, rather than on mental disorder. All emphasize the functioning of the individual in the present, rather than on the influence of past events.

Social-cognitive theories A group of theories that involve explanations of limited, but important, aspects of personality (e.g., locus of control). All grew out of experimental psychology.



French physician Jean Charcot showed that he could temporarily eliminate symptoms of hysteria in patients who were hypnotized. Young Sigmund Freud found inspiration in Charcot's demonstrations.

apparent when the French physician Jean Charcot (pronounced *Shar-COE*) demonstrated that he could make hysterical symptoms disappear by suggestion—while his patients were in a hypnotic trance.

Freud and Psychoanalysis Hearing of Charcot’s work, the young and curious doctor Sigmund Freud (1856–1939) traveled to Paris to observe Charcot’s renowned hypnotic demonstrations for himself. Inspired by what he saw, Freud returned to Vienna, resolving to try the hypnotic cure on his own patients. But to his dismay, Dr. Freud found that he could not hypnotize many of them deeply enough to duplicate Charcot’s results. Moreover, even the ones who lost their symptoms under hypnosis usually regained them after the trance was lifted. Finally, a frustrated Freud resolved to find another way to understand and treat the mysterious illness. The result was the first comprehensive theory of personality—and still a standard by which all others are compared.

The new approach Freud created became known as **psychoanalysis** or **psychoanalytic theory**. Technically, *psychoanalytic theory* is the term for Freud’s explanation of personality and mental disorder, while *psychoanalysis* refers to his system of treatment for mental disorder. In practice, however, it has always been difficult to separate Freud’s theory from his therapeutic procedures. Thus the term *psychoanalysis* is often used to refer to both (Carver & Scheier, 2008).

As you study Freud’s theory, you may find some points on which you agree and others on which you disagree. We recommend bringing all your critical thinking skills to bear, but at the same time you should maintain a respect for Freud and the task he faced, over 100 years ago, as the first great explainer of human personality.

The Freudian Unconscious At center stage in personality, Freud placed the **unconscious**, the mind’s hidden, seething cauldron of powerful impulses, instincts, motives, and conflicts that energize the personality. We normally have no awareness of this hidden psychic territory, said Freud, because its contents are so threatening and anxiety provoking that the conscious mind refuses to acknowledge its existence, even in the healthiest of us. Only by using the special techniques of psychoanalysis can a therapist find, for example, that a person who had been sexually molested in childhood still holds these festering memories in the unconscious. We glimpse such memories when they attempt to escape from the unconscious, disguised perhaps as a dream or as a symptom of mental disorder, such as depression or a phobia. So, mentally healthy or not, we go about our daily business without knowing the real motives behind our behavior.

Unconscious Drives and Instincts Freud taught that the turbulent processes in the unconscious mind are fueled by psychological energy from our most basic and secret motives, drives, and desires—the mental equivalent of steam in a boiler. Psychoanalytic theory, then, explains how this mental “steam” is transformed and expressed in disguised form in our conscious thoughts and behavior.

The unconscious sex drive, which Freud named *Eros*, after the Greek god of passionate love, could be expressed either directly through sexual activity or indirectly through such releases as joking, work, or creative pursuits. (Perhaps you had never thought of activities like dancing, drawing, cooking, studying, or body building as sexual acts—but Freud did!) The energy produced by *Eros* he termed **libido**, from the Latin word for “lust.” Libidinal energy, in turn, fuels the rest of the personality.

But *Eros* and its libidinal energy did not explain everything that fascinated Freud. Specifically, it did not explain acts of human aggression and destruction. Nor did it explain the symptoms of the war veterans who continued to relive their wartime traumas in nightmares and hallucinations. Such misery could only be accounted for by another drive, which he named *Thanatos* (from the Greek word for “death”). Freud conceived of *Thanatos* as the unconscious “death instinct”

Psychoanalysis A method of treating mental disorders that is based on Sigmund Freud’s psychoanalytic theory. The goal of psychoanalysis is to release unacknowledged conflicts, urges, and memories from the unconscious. (In common usage, the term often refers broadly both to Freud’s psychoanalytic theory and to his psychoanalytic treatment method.)

Psychoanalytic theory Freud’s theory of personality and mental disorder.

Unconscious In Freudian theory, this is the psychic domain of which the individual is not aware but that is the storehouse of repressed impulses, drives, and conflicts unavailable to consciousness.

Libido The Freudian concept of psychic energy that drives individuals to experience sensual pleasure.

CONNECTION • CHAPTER 4

False memory experiments by Elizabeth Loftus and others have raised serious questions about memories of abuse recovered during therapy.



Sigmund Freud is seen here walking with his daughter Anna Freud, who later became a psychoanalyst in her own right.

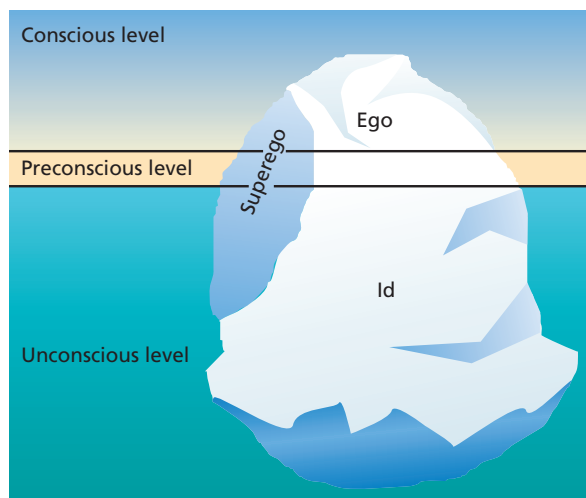


FIGURE 10.4
Freud's Model of the Mind

In another famous metaphor, Freud likened the mind to an iceberg because only a small portion appears “above the surface”—in consciousness. Meanwhile, the vast unconscious mind lurks “beneath the surface” of our awareness.

Id The primitive, unconscious portion of the personality that houses the most basic drives and stores repressed memories.

Superego The mind's storehouse of values, including moral attitudes learned from parents and from society; roughly the same as the common notion of the conscience.

Ego The conscious, rational part of the personality, charged with keeping peace between the superego and the id.

Psychosexual stages Successive, instinctive developmental phases in which pleasure is associated with stimulation of different bodily areas at different times of life.



During the phallic stage, said Freud, a child must resolve feelings of conflict and anxiety by identifying more closely with the same-sex parent.

that drives the aggressive and destructive acts that humans commit against each other and even against themselves. (Think of smoking, compulsive gambling, reckless driving, or drug abuse.) We can guess that Freud would have attributed the unexpected death of Enron executive Ken Lay, shortly after his conviction for fraud and perjury, to a Thanatos that Lay could no longer control.

The Structure of the Personality Freud pictured the personality as a trinity composed of the *ego*, the *id*, and the *superego*, which together form a mind continually at war within itself. He believed that the sexual and aggressive forces of the id wage a continuing battle against the moralistic forces of the superego. The ever-practical ego serves as the moderator of this conflict. (Figure 10.4 represents the three parts of the personality pictorially.)

The Id: Source of Energy for the Personality Freud conceived of the id as the primitive, unconscious reservoir that contains the basic motives, drives, and instinctive desires—including Eros and Thanatos—that energize all three parts of the personality. Like a child, the id always acts on impulse and pushes for immediate gratification—especially sexual, physical, and emotional pleasures—to be experienced here and now without concern for consequences.

The Superego: Conscience and the Ego Ideal By contrast, the superego serves as the mind's parental avatars—virtual “parents” living in the mind—in charge of values and morals learned from parents, teachers, other authority figures, and from society. The **superego** corresponds roughly to our common notion of “conscience.” It develops as the child forms an internal set of rules based on the external rules imposed by parents and other adults. And it is the inner voice of “shoulds” and “should nots.” The superego also includes the *ego ideal*, an individual's view of the kind of person he or she should strive to become. Understandably, the superego frequently opposes id's desires, because the id wants to do only what feels good, while the superego insists on doing only what is right and moral.

The Ego: The Rational Mind Former President Jimmy Carter once famously remarked, “I've looked on a lot of women with lust. I've committed adultery in my heart many times.” In Freudian parlance, that was his *ego*, the conscious, rational portion of the mind, describing how it must resolve conflicts between desires of the id and moral ideals of the superego. The **ego**, like a referee, often must make decisions that satisfy no part of the personality completely, but it keeps the whole out of trouble. Even so, pressures can escalate to the point where the ego cannot find workable compromises. The result can be mental disorder.

The Influence of Early Experience on Personality Development As Freud talked with his patients about their past, he began to understand that personality follows a developmental pattern through childhood and into adulthood. The emerging sexual and aggressive drives propel the child through a series of **psychosexual stages**. In each stage, stimulation of specific body regions is associated with erotic pleasure.

In the *oral stage*, pleasure is associated with the mouth: suckling, crying, spewing. In the *anal stage*, pleasure comes from stimulating parts of the body associated with elimination. Next, in the *phallic stage*, pleasure comes from “immature” sexual expression, such as masturbation. (This also explains the humor popular with the prepubescent set.) Finally, after a quiet period of *latency*, the adult *genital stage* brings maturity and mental well-being to those fortunate enough to resolve the conflicts of earlier stages. (See Table 10.2 on page 448.)

Why such a seemingly bizarre theory of child development? Among the issues that Freud was trying to resolve with his theory of psychosexual development were those of gender identity and gender roles. Why, he wondered, do boys usually develop a masculine identity, even though most boys are raised primarily by their mothers? Why do boys and girls, as they become adults, most often develop a sexual attraction to the opposite sex? And why do some *not* follow this pattern?

Freud's answers to these questions were convoluted and, many psychologists would say, contrived. His psychodynamic perspective ignored the external influence of the different ways that boys and girls are socialized; it also ignored the possibility of differences in genetic programming, about which almost nothing was known in Freud's day. For boys his solution was the **Oedipus complex**, an unconscious conflict that initially drives young males to feel an immature erotic attraction toward their mothers. (You may have heard a little boy say that he wants to marry his mother when he grows up.) As the boy goes through the stages of psychosexual development, resolution of the Oedipal conflict requires him to *displace* (shift) his emerging sexual desires away from his mother, directing them instead to females of his own age. At the same time, he develops an **identification** with his father. In a parallel fashion, Freud theorized that girls develop an attraction to their fathers and so become competitive with their mothers for his affections.

Most psychologists today reject these Freudian assumptions about psychosexual development because they lack scientific support. Yet it is important, however, to remember three things: First, we still don't fully understand how sexual attraction works. Second, Freudian concepts about psychosexual development—strange as they may seem—continue to have a wide impact outside psychology, particularly in literature. And finally: While Freud may have been wrong about the details of psychosexual development, he may have been right about the overall pattern and about the idea of *stages of development* (Bower, 1998b).

For example, Freud may have been right in his assertion that certain difficulties early in life lead to **fixation**, or arrested psychological development. An *oral stage* fixation, caused by a failure to throw off the dependency of the first year of life, may lead to dependency on others in later childhood and adulthood. We may also see an oral fixation, he said, in certain behaviors involving “oral tendencies,” such as overeating, alcoholism, smoking, and talkativeness. Among these diverse problems we find a common theme: using the mouth as the way to connect with what one needs or wants. Similarly, Freud presumed that fixation in the *anal stage* came from problems associated with the second year of life when toilet training is a big issue. Anal fixations, he said, can result in a stubborn, compulsive, stingy, or excessively neat pattern of behavior—all related to the theme of controlling one's body or life. People who swear, especially with “dirty” language, also have anal fixations. In Table 10.2 you will find examples of fixation at other developmental stages.

Ego Defenses In dealing with conflict between the id's impulses and the superego's demand to deny them, Freud said that the ego calls upon a suite of **ego defense mechanisms**. All operate, he said, at the *preconscious level*—just beneath the surface of consciousness. So, under mild pressure from the id we may rely, as President Carter did, on simple ego defenses, such as *fantasy* or *rationalization*. But if unconscious desires become too insistent, the ego may solve the problem by “putting a lid on the id”—that is, by sequestering extreme desires and threatening memories deep in the unconscious mind. Freud called this **repression**. It is this ego defense mechanism, then, that makes people in unhappy relationships “forget” their anniversaries. It makes unhappy employees “forget” important duties. And it makes anxious students “forget” to hand in assignments.

Freud also taught that repression can block access to feelings, as well as memories. So, a child might repress strong feelings of anger toward her father—



“All right, deep down it's a cry for psychiatric help—but at one level it's a stick-up.”

Oedipus complex According to Freud, a largely unconscious process whereby boys displace an erotic attraction toward their mother to females of their own age and, at the same time, identify with their fathers.

Identification The mental process by which an individual tries to become like another person, especially the same-sex parent.

Fixation Occurs when psychosexual development is arrested at an immature stage.

Ego defense mechanism A largely unconscious mental strategy employed to reduce the experience of conflict or anxiety.

Repression An unconscious process that excludes unacceptable thoughts and feelings from awareness and memory.

TABLE 10.2 Freud's Stages of Psychosexual Development

Psychosexual Stage	Later Signs of Problems Beginning at This Stage
Oral Stage (1st year) Desires: Oral stimulation by sucking, eating, crying, babbling Challenge: Overcoming dependency	Smoking Obesity Nail-biting Talkativeness Chewing Dependency Gluttony Gullibility
Anal Stage (approximately 1–3 years) Desires: Anal stimulation by bladder and bowel function Challenge: Toilet training Self-control	Messiness Excessive cleanliness Temper tantrums Stinginess Destructiveness Coldness, distance, aloofness Cruelty
Phallic Stage (approximately 3–6 years) Desires: Stimulation of genitals Challenge: Resolving Oedipus complex, involving erotic attraction to parent of opposite sex and hostility to parent of same sex	Masturbation (not considered abnormal by modern psychology and psychiatry; see Chapter 9) Jealousy Egocentric sex Sexual conquests Problems with parents
Latency (approximately 6 years to puberty) Desires: Repression of sexual and aggressive desires, including those involved in the Oedipus complex Challenge: Consciously: learning modesty and shame Unconsciously: dealing with repressed Oedipal conflict	Excessive modesty Preference for company of same sex Homosexuality (considered by Freud to be a disorder, but not by modern psychology and psychiatry; see Chapter 9)
Genital Stage (puberty and adulthood) Desires: Mature sexual relationships Challenge: Displacing energy into healthy activities Establishing new relationship with parents	(none)

which, if acted on, might incur severe punishment. Likewise, boys repress the erotic Oedipal feelings they have for their mothers. Once repressed, a feeling or a desire can no longer operate consciously. But, said Freud, it is not gone. At an unconscious level, repressed feelings, desires, and memories continue to influence behavior, but in less direct ways, perhaps disguised, as we have seen, in dreams, fantasies, or symptoms of mental disorder.

Always the keen observer of human behavior, Freud proposed many other ego defense mechanisms besides fantasy, rationalization, and repression. Here are some of the most important:

- **Denial.** “I don’t have a problem.” This defense avoids a difficult situation by simply denying that it exists. Denial is a defense frequently seen, for exam-

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Freud developed an elaborate system of dream interpretation.

ple, in alcoholics, child abusers, people who have problems managing anger, and people who engage in risky behavior, such as casual, unprotected sex.

- **Rationalization.** A student who feels stressed by academic pressures may decide to cheat on a test, rationalizing it by saying that “everyone does it.” People using this defense mechanism give socially acceptable reasons for actions that are really based on motives that they believe to be unacceptable.
- **Reaction formation.** We see reaction formation in people who, troubled by their own sexual desires, rail against “dirty books” in the city library or seek laws regulating other people’s sexual behavior. This ego defense mechanism occurs whenever people act exactly in opposition to their unconscious desires.
- **Displacement.** When your boss makes you angry, you may later displace your anger by yelling at your friend or pounding on the wall. More generally, displacement involves shifting your reaction from the real source of your distress to a safer individual or object. Freud would have agreed that Enron executive Ken Lay displaced any feelings of guilt he may have had (along with the blame for the economic collapse he himself had engineered) onto what he characterized as a conspiracy of rogue executives, stock traders, and the hostile media.
- **Regression.** Under stress, some people hide; others cry, throw things, or even wet their pants. That is, they regress back to an earlier developmental stage by adopting immature, juvenile behaviors that were effective ways of dealing with stress when they were younger.
- **Sublimation.** This ego defense mechanism may account for the glory of Rome, the genius of Mozart, and the triumph of the Microsoft empire. In other words, sublimation involves channeling the gratification of sexual or aggressive desires in ways that are acceptable in one’s culture. Freud conjectured that sublimation was responsible for civilization’s major advances.
- **Projection.** We may see projection when two people argue, each accusing the other of causing the problem. Similarly, the neighborhood gossip may call someone a “busybody”; an insecure business executive may see an innocent coworker as a threat; or a person in a committed relationship who is feeling attracted to someone else accuses his or her partner of cheating. More generally, people may use the defense of projection to attribute their own unconscious desires and fears to other people or objects.

This latter concept—projection—led to the development of projective tests, which have found extensive use in clinical psychology for evaluating personality and mental disorders. We take a brief detour at this point to introduce you to these projective techniques.

Projective Tests: Diagnosis by Defense Mechanism What do you see in Figure 10.5? The head of an insect? An MRI scan of the brain? Something else? Ambiguous images such as these are the basis for **projective tests** that psychodynamic clinicians employ to probe their patients’ innermost feelings, motives, conflicts and desires. The assumption is that troubled people will *project* their hidden motives and conflicts onto such images, much as people gazing at the clouds may see objects in them that fit their fantasies.

In the most famous of projective techniques, the **Rorschach Inkblot Technique** (pronounced *ROAR-shock*), the stimuli are merely symmetrical inkblots. The technique calls for showing the images one at a time and asking the respondent, “What do you see? What does this seem to be?” The examiner usually interprets responses psychoanalytically by noting how they might reflect unconscious sexual and aggressive impulses or repressed conflicts (Erdberg, 1990).

How well does the *Rorschach* work? It gets low marks from many psychologists because objective studies of its use in measuring individual differences in

Projective test Personality assessment instrument, such as the Rorschach and TAT, which is based on Freud’s ego defense mechanism of projection.

Rorschach Inkblot Technique A projective test requiring subjects to describe what they see in a series of ten inkblots.

FIGURE 10.5
An Inkblot Similar to Those Used in the Rorschach Test



FIGURE 10.6
Sample Card from the TAT

Thematic Apperception Test (TAT) A projective test requiring subjects to make up stories that explain ambiguous pictures.

Psychic determinism Freud's assumption that all our mental and behavioral responses are caused by unconscious traumas, desires, or conflicts.

personality with consistency and accuracy have been disappointing (Lilienfeld et al., 2000a,b). Moreover, critics claim that the test is based on concepts such as unconscious motivation that are impossible to demonstrate objectively. Despite these criticisms, many clinicians have continued to champion the *Rorschach*, arguing that it can provide unique insights as part of a broader personality assessment (Hibbard, 2003).

By comparison, the *Thematic Apperception Test (TAT)*, developed by Henry Murray, is a projective test that stands on somewhat firmer scientific ground, especially for assessing achievement motivation, as we saw in Chapter 9. The test consists of ambiguous pictures, like the one in Figure 10.6, for which respondents are instructed to generate a story, telling what the characters in the scenes are doing and thinking, what led up to each event, and how each situation might end. According to the projection hypothesis underlying the *TAT*, the respondent first perceives the elements in the picture and then *apperceives* (fills in) personal interpretations and explanations, based on his or her own thoughts, feelings, and needs. The examiner then interprets the responses by looking for

psychological themes, such as aggression, sexual needs, and relationships among people mentioned in the stories.

Psychic Determinism Psychoanalysis literally leaves nothing to accident. According to the principle of **psychic determinism**, all our acts are determined by unconscious memories, desires, and conflicts. So, Freud would have said that being consistently late for a class is intentional (on an unconscious level, of course). Inevitably, the way you feel unconsciously leaks out in your behavior. You just can't help it.

Accordingly, everything a person does potentially has a deep psychological meaning to the Freudian analyst. In therapy, mental symptoms such as fears and

phobias are signs of unconscious difficulties. Similarly, the analyst may catch a glimpse of the unconscious at work in a so-called *Freudian slip*—when “accidental” speech or behavior belies an unconscious conflict or desire. Former President George W. Bush was famous for slips of the tongue, as when intending to emphasize how strongly his party felt about the family, he said instead, “Republicans understand the importance of bondage between a mother and child.” (We hasten to add, in defense of anyone who has committed a speech blunder, that cognitive psychologists today believe that most slips of the tongue are mix-ups in the brain mechanisms we use to produce language and so have no relationship to unconscious intentions.)

The idea of psychic determinism originated in Freud’s work with hysterical patients, when he observed that their physical symptoms often seemed connected to a traumatic event that had been long “forgotten” (repressed). During therapy, a patient who was hysterically “blind” might suddenly recall with horror having seen her parents having intercourse when she was a small child. How could this have produced blindness? Freud would conjecture that, as she became an adult, she anticipated her first sexual encounter, which aroused powerful feelings associated with the upsetting memory of her parents. Thus, the young woman’s blindness could represent an unconscious attempt to “blind” herself both to her parents’ sexuality and to her own erotic feelings.

Evaluating Freud’s Work Whatever your reaction to Freud, you must give him credit for developing the first and still, perhaps, the most comprehensive theory of personality, mental disorder, and psychotherapy. He did so at a time when we had no understanding of genetics and neurotransmitters, no particularly effective treatments for most mental disorders, and no understanding of the influences on gender identity or sexual development. His writing was so incisive and his arguments so compelling that he has had a greater impact than any other theorist on the way all of us think about personality and mental abnormality, whether we realize it or not. He gave us the unconscious, the concept of developmental stages, the notion of defense mechanisms, and the idea that behavior—and even our dreams—may have hidden meanings. And not the least of his contributions was freeing us from the shackles of Victorian sexuality. Even among psychologists, who had largely rejected his ideas in recent years, Freud is enjoying renewed support as one of the keenest observers of human behavior who has ever lived (Solms, 2004). Again and again he saw things that others missed, even if his explanations were sometimes contrived. Nearly everyone would agree that people *do* displace aggression, rationalize their behavior, and see their own shortcomings more easily in others than in themselves.

Freud as Unscientific Nevertheless, Freud still plays to mixed reviews (Azar, 1997; McCullough, 2001). The biggest problem is that many of his concepts, such as “libido,” “anal stage,” or “repression,” are vague, lacking clear operational definitions. In an earlier chapter, we saw this problem in the controversy over recovery of repressed memories. Without credible supporting evidence (which rarely exists), how could one ever determine whether a recovered memory was truly repressed or merely implanted by suggestion? Such difficulties make psychoanalytic theory devilishly difficult to evaluate scientifically.²

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Operational definitions are stated in objective, observable, and measurable terms.

²Because many of Freud’s ideas are not testable, his psychoanalytic theory is not truly a *scientific* theory, as we defined the term in Chapter 1. Here we follow common usage, which nevertheless calls it a theory because it is such a comprehensive explanation for personality and mental disorder. It should be noted, however, that valiant efforts are being made to put Freud’s concepts on a scientific footing (Cramer, 2000).

Retrospective but Not Prospective A second criticism says that Freudian theory is a seductive explanation for the past but a poor predictor of future responses. That is, it may be merely a clever example of *hindsight bias*, in which we have the illusion of seeing things more clearly in retrospect. And by overemphasizing the origins of behavior in childhood, psychoanalysis may compound the problem by directing attention away from the stressors of the present that may be the real causes of mental and behavioral disorders.

Gender Issues A third criticism faults Freud for giving short shrift to women. Particularly aggravating is his portrayal of women as inevitably suffering from “penis envy.” (He thought that women spent their lives unconsciously trying to make up for their biological deficit in this department.) A better explanation is that Freud’s theory simply projects onto women his own attitudes and those of the male-centered world of his time.

Newer Views of the Unconscious A final criticism claims that the unconscious mind is not as smart or purposeful as Freud believed (Loftus & Klinger, 1992). In this newer view, coming out of neuroscience research in emotion, the brain has parallel conscious and unconscious processing pathways, with the unconscious quick to detect emotion-provoking stimuli (think of your “gut” reaction to a shadowy figure approaching you on a dark street), while consciousness acts more deliberately and logically (“OK,” you say to yourself. “Remain calm and act naturally, and maybe he won’t sense that you are scared.”) This new view of an unconscious emotional processing system is much less malign than the unconscious filled with sexual desires and death wishes that Freud had imagined (LeDoux, 1996).

CONNECTION • CHAPTER 9

Emotion-provoking stimuli are processed in two parallel pathways in the brain.

Freud’s Appeal beyond Psychology Despite these objections, Freud’s ideas have found a receptive audience with the public at large (Adler, 2006). Much of his appeal may be explained by his graceful writing and by his emphasis on sexuality, a topic that grabs everyone’s interest—as Freud well knew! As a result, Freudian images and symbols abound in the art and literature of the 20th century. His ideas have had an enormous influence on marketing, as well. For example, advertisers make billions by associating products with sexy models, hinting that the products will bring sexual satisfaction to their owners. They also capitalize on Freud’s destructive instinct by reminding us of threats to our happiness (social rejection, irregularity, untimely death) and then offering products and services to reduce our anxiety and restore hope. Perhaps Freud was right, after all!

How Would Freud Have Seen Mary Calkins? Let us end our discussion of Freud by seeing whether his explanation of personality can give us a useful perspective on Mary Calkins. A psychoanalyst interpreting her sense of purpose and willingness to fight the system might look first to her childhood for experiences that may have shaped her personality.

The Calkins family was especially close (Furumoto, 1979). Mary’s mother, Charlotte Calkins, suffered from deteriorating health, so Mary, as the eldest child, took over many of the duties of running the household—an especially interesting development in view of Freud’s suggestion that girls compete with their mothers for their fathers’ attention. For his part, Mary’s father, the Reverend Wolcott Calkins, was Congregationalist minister who placed a high value on education and personally tutored Mary at a time when education for women was not fashionable.

Another decisive event, which caused Mary great distress, was the death of her younger sister. From a Freudian viewpoint, the sister’s death may have produced a conflict, based on unconscious feelings of *sibling rivalry* for the parents’ affections. A Freudian analyst might suggest that, in her work, Calkins sublimated her sadness or, perhaps, her anger at the necessity of taking on mother’s role and at the prejudices she endured. As is usual with psychoanalysis, of course, these guesses are guided by hindsight—and cannot be either proved or disproved.

The Neo-Freudians Freud was always a controversial and charismatic figure—an image he liked to promote (Sulloway, 1992). And although he attracted many followers, Freud brooked no criticism from any of them concerning the basic principles of psychoanalysis. So, like rebellious children, several of Freud’s equally strong-willed disciples broke away to establish their own systems of personality, mental disorder, and treatment. While these **neo-Freudians** (literally, “new Freudians”) sometimes departed from Freud’s theory, they always retained his *psychodynamic* emphasis. That is, they kept Freud’s idea of personality as a process driven by motivational energy—even as they disagreed about the specific motives that energize personality. And you may disagree, too: Are our motives primarily sexual or social? Conscious or unconscious? Is personality determined by events in the past or by our goals for the future? The next few pages will give you a sense for the divergent paths followed by these neo-Freudians.

Carl Jung: Extending the Unconscious Freud attracted many disciples but none more famous than Carl Jung (pronounced YOONG), a member of the inner circle of colleagues who helped Freud develop and refine psychoanalytic theory during the first decade of the 1900s. For a time, Freud viewed the somewhat younger Jung as his “crown prince” and probable successor. But Freud’s paternal attitude increasingly vexed Jung, who was developing radical theoretical ideas of his own (Carver & Scheier, 2008). Eventually this personality conflict—which Freud interpreted as Jung’s unconscious wish to usurp his fatherly authority—caused a split in their relationship.

For Jung, the break with Freud centered on two issues. First, Jung thought that his mentor had overemphasized sexuality at the expense of other unconscious needs and desires that Jung saw at the heart of personality. In particular, he believed spirituality to be a fundamental human motive, coequal with sexuality. Moreover, he disputed the very structure of the unconscious mind. Jung’s new and expanded vision of the unconscious is Jung’s most famous innovation.

The Collective Unconscious In place of the Freudian id, Jung installed a two-part unconscious, consisting of both a *personal unconscious* and a *collective unconscious*. While the Jungian **personal unconscious** spanned essentially the same territory as the Freudian id, its collective twin was another matter—and wholly a Jungian creation. He saw in the **collective unconscious** a reservoir for instinctive “memories” shared by people everywhere—in much the same way that humans share a common genetic code. These collective memories tie together countless generations of human history and give us the ancient images, called **archetypes**, that appear and reappear in art, literature, and folktales around the world (Jung, 1936/1959). For Jung, the causes of mental disorder include not only repressed traumas and conflicts in the personal unconscious but failure to acknowledge the archetypes we find unacceptable in our collective unconscious.

Among these archetypal memories, Jung identified the *animus* and the *anima*, which represent the masculine and feminine sides of our personalities. Other archetypes give us the universal concepts of *mother*, *father*, *birth*, *death*, the *hero*, the *trickster*, *God*, and the *self*. On the darker side of the self lurks the *shadow* archetype, representing the destructive and aggressive tendencies (similar to Freud’s Thanatos) that we don’t want to acknowledge in our personalities. You can recognize your own shadow archetype at work the next time you feel angry or hostile.

From a Jungian perspective, Enron bad boy Ken Lay let his trickster archetype range out of control. One might also wonder whether he was rebelling against his father, a Baptist minister, whose rules may have felt like a moral straitjacket to the young Ken. And finally, by denying his guilt up to the time of his death, we might wonder whether Lay was denying, even to himself, the shadow in his personality.

Neo-Freudian Literally “new Freudian”; refers to theorists who broke with Freud but whose theories retain a psychodynamic aspect, especially a focus on motivation as the source of energy for the personality.

Personal unconscious Jung’s term for that portion of the unconscious corresponding roughly to the Freudian id.

Collective unconscious Jung’s addition to the unconscious, involving a reservoir for instinctive “memories,” including the archetypes, which exist in all people.

Archetype One of the ancient memory images in the collective unconscious. Archetypes appear and reappear in art, literature, and folktales around the world.



Jungian archetypes abound in art, literature, and film. This photo, from *The Lord of the Rings*, shows Gandalf, who embodies the archetype of magician or trickster. The same archetype is evoked by the coyote in Native American legends and by Merlin in the King Arthur legends.

Personality Types Revisited Jung's *principle of opposites* portrays each personality as a balance between opposing pairs of tendencies or dispositions, which you see in Table 10.3. Jung taught that most people tend to favor one or the other in each pair. The overall pattern of such tendencies, then, was termed a *personality type*, which Jung believed to be a stable and enduring aspect of the individual's personality.

The most famous of these pairs is **introversion** and **extraversion**. Extraverts turn attention outward, on external experience. As a result, extraverts are more in tune with people and things in the world around them than they are with their own inner needs. They tend to be outgoing and unaffected by self-consciousness. Introverts, by contrast, focus on inner experience—their own thoughts and feelings—which makes them seem more shy and less sociable. Jung believed that few people have all pairs of forces in perfect balance. Instead, one or another dominates, giving rise to personality types (Fadiman & Frager, 2001).

Evaluating Jung's Work Like Freud, Jung's influence is now most evident outside of psychology, particularly in literature and the popular press—again because they do not lend themselves to objective observation and testing. In two respects, however, Jung has had a big impact on psychological thinking. First, he challenged Freud and thereby opened the door to a spate of alternative personality theories. Second, his notion of *personality types*, and especially the concepts of *introversion* and *extraversion*, makes Jung not only a psychodynamic theorist but a pillar of the temperament/trait/type approach. And, as we noted earlier, his theory of types underlies the widely used Myers-Briggs test.

Could Jung's theory give us a new perspective on Mary Calkins? He might have suspected that her determination to succeed in the male-dominated world of her day was energized by conflicts between the masculine and feminine sides of her nature, the animus and anima. Another Jungian possibility is that her mother's ill health, which caused her to relinquish much of the maternal role, made Mary deny her own maternal archetype—which may have been why she never married.

Karen Horney: A Feminist Voice in Psychodynamic Psychology Karen Horney (*HORN-eye*) and Anna Freud, Sigmund Freud's daughter, represent virtually the only feminine voices within the early decades of the psychoanalytic movement. In this role Horney disputed the elder Freud's notion of the Oedipus complex and especially his assertion that women must suffer from *penis envy* (Horney, 1939). Instead, said Horney, women want the same opportunities and rights that men enjoy, and many personality differences between males and females result from social roles, not from unconscious urges. She also disputed Freud's contention that personality is determined mainly by early childhood experiences. For Horney, normal growth involves the full development of social relationships and of one's potential. This development, however, may be blocked by a sense of uncertainty and isolation that she called **basic anxiety**. It is this basic anxiety that can lead to adjustment problems and mental disorder.

Neurotic Needs When basic anxiety gets out of control, people become *neurotic*. The neurotic person, said Horney, suffers from “unconscious strivings developed in

Introversion The Jungian dimension that focuses on inner experience—one's own thoughts and feelings—making the introvert less outgoing and sociable than the extravert.

Extraversion The Jungian personality dimension that involves turning one's attention outward, toward others.

Basic anxiety An emotion, proposed by Karen Horney, that gives a sense of uncertainty and loneliness in a hostile world and can lead to maladjustment.

Table 10.3 Jung's Opposing Tendencies in Personality

conscious	←	→	unconscious
extravert	←	→	introvert
rational	←	→	irrational
thinking	←	→	feeling
intuition	←	→	sensation
good	←	→	bad
masculine	←	→	feminine

Table 10.4 Horney's Ten Neurotic Needs

1. Need for affection and approval
2. Need for a partner and dread of being left alone
3. Need to restrict one's life and remain inconspicuous
4. Need for power and control over others
5. Need to exploit others
6. Need for recognition or prestige
7. Need for personal admiration
8. Need for personal achievement
9. Need for self-sufficiency and independence
10. Need for perfection and unassailability

order to cope with life despite fears, helplessness, and isolation” (1942, p. 40). These unconscious strivings manifest themselves in one or more **neurotic needs**, which are normal desires taken to extremes. You can see these neurotic needs listed in Table 10.4.

Horney also identified three common patterns of attitudes and behavior that people use to deal with basic anxiety: They move either *toward others*, *against others*, or *away from others*. Those who neurotically move *toward others* have a pathological need for constant reminders of love and approval. Such persons may need someone to help, to take care of, or for whom to “sacrifice” themselves. Alternatively, they may seek someone on whom they can become dependent. They may end up behaving passively and feeling victimized. In contrast, those who move *against others* earn power and respect by competing or attacking successfully, but they risk being feared and ending up “lonely at the top.” Those who take the third route, moving *away from others* to protect themselves from imagined hurt and rejection, are likely to close themselves off from intimacy and support.

What analysis would Horney have made of Mary Calkins? We suspect that she would have focused on Calkins’s achievements, attempting to determine whether they were the result of a healthy drive to fulfill her potential or a neurotic need for power. Undoubtedly, Horney would have reminded us that society often praises these needs in men and punishes them in women. She would also have pointed out that much of Calkins’s professional identity was shaped by having to deal with the male-centered academic world of her time. In that context, Calkins not only drew on the strength of a supportive family of her childhood but the support of the all-female Wellesley faculty that became the “family” of her adulthood. From this point of view, it is likely that Horney may have seen in Calkins a robust and healthy personality caught in a difficult web of social constraints and contradictions.

Evaluating Horney's Work Neglect engulfed Karen Horney’s ideas during the mid-century (Monte, 1980). Then her 1967 book, *Feminine Psychology*, appeared at just the right time to elevate her among those seeking a feminist perspective within psychology and psychiatry (Horney, 1967). But, having attracted renewed interest, will Horney eventually slip again into oblivion? Her ideas suffer from the same flaw that plagues the other psychodynamic theories: a weak scientific foundation. It awaits someone to translate her concepts into operational terms that can be put to a scientific test.

Other Neo-Freudian Theorists Sigmund Freud’s revolutionary ideas attracted many others to the psychoanalytic movement—many of whom, like Karl Jung, Karen Horney, Erik Erikson, and Alfred Adler, also broke from Freud to develop their own ideas. For the most part, the post-Freudian theorists accepted the notions



Psychoanalyst Karen Horney asserted that personality differences between men and women are largely the result of different social roles, rather than unconscious urges or early childhood experiences. She believed that people are driven more by social motives than sexual motives.

Neurotic needs Signs of neurosis in Horney’s theory, the ten needs are normal desires carried to a neurotic extreme.

of psychic determinism and unconscious motivation. But they did not always agree with Freud on the details, especially about the sex and death instincts or the indelible nature of early life experiences. Broadly speaking, the neo-Freudians made several significant changes in the course of psychoanalysis:

- They put greater emphasis on ego functions, including ego defenses, development of the self, and conscious thought as the major components of the personality—whereas Freud focused primarily on the unconscious.
- They gave social variables (culture, family, and peers) an important role in shaping personality—whereas Freud focused mainly on instinctive urges and unconscious conflicts.
- They extended personality development beyond childhood to include the life span—whereas Freud focused mainly on early childhood experiences.

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Erikson's theory described the development of personality across the life span.

As we saw in Chapter 6, neo-Freudian Erik Erikson proposed an elaborate theory of personality development that unfolded in stages throughout the life span, a conjecture that has recently received support from Sanjay Srivastava and his team (2003) at the University of Oregon. Their data show that personality continues to change well into adulthood, with people in their 20s growing more conscientious and those in their 30s and beyond gaining as they age on measures of agreeableness, warmth, generosity, and helpfulness.

In such ways, then, the post-Freudians broke Freud's monopoly on personality theory and paved the way for the new ideas developed by the humanistic and cognitive theorists.

Humanistic Theories: Emphasis on Human Potential and Mental Health

Neither Freud nor the neo-Freudians had much to say about those of us who are “normal.” With an emphasis on internal conflict and mental disorder, they offered compelling explanations for mental disorders, but they largely failed to provide a usable theory of the healthy personality. And so the humanistic approach stepped in to fill that need.

Humanistic psychologists are an optimistic lot. For them, personality is not driven by unconscious conflicts and defenses against anxiety but rather by needs to adapt, learn, grow, and excel. They have retained the idea of motivation as a central component of personality, but they have accentuated the positive motives, such as love, esteem, and self-actualization. They see mental disorders as stemming from unhealthy *situations*, rather than from unhealthy *individuals*. Once people are freed from negative situations, such as negative self-evaluations (“I’m not smart”) and abusive relationships, the tendency to be healthy should actively guide them to life-enhancing choices.



Maslow considered Eleanor Roosevelt to be a self-actualizing person.

Abraham Maslow and the Healthy Personality Abraham Maslow referred to the humanistic view as psychology's “third force,” to contrast his ideas with the psychoanalytic and behaviorist movements that had dominated psychology during most of his lifetime. He was especially concerned by the Freudian fixation on mental disturbance and maladjustment. Instead, Maslow argued, we need a theory that describes mental health as something more than just the absence of illness. That theoretical need became his life's quest. He sought the ingredients of the healthy personality where no one had ever looked for them before: in people who had lived especially full and productive lives (Maslow, 1968, 1970, 1971).

Self-Actualizers Maslow's subjects included the historical figures Abraham Lincoln and Thomas Jefferson, plus several persons of stature during his own lifetime: Albert Einstein, Albert Schweitzer, and Eleanor Roosevelt. In these individu-

als Maslow found healthy personalities focused on goals beyond their own basic needs. Some, like Lincoln and Roosevelt, were oriented toward the needs of humanity. Others, like Einstein, were oriented toward understanding the natural world. Most became engaged them in causes about which they felt deeply. Maslow called them all **self-actualizing personalities**. He characterized his self-actualizers as creative, full of good humor, and given to spontaneity—but, at the same time, accepting of their own limitations and those of others. In brief, self-actualizers are those who feel free to fulfill their potentialities.

Needs in a Hierarchy Although Maslow was most interested in the healthy, self-actualizing personality, his theory of a *hierarchy of needs* also offers an explanation of maladjustment. As you will recall, Maslow proposed that our needs are arranged in a priority order, from the biological needs to needs for safety, love, esteem, and self-actualization. An unfulfilled “deficiency” need, such as a need for love or esteem, can produce maladjustment, while satisfaction of such needs allows the person to pursue interests that promote growth and fulfillment. Indeed, research shows that people who have low self-esteem may go through life feeling fearful, angry, or depressed, while those who are self-accepting lead far happier lives (Baumeister, 1993; Brown, 1991).

Carl Rogers’s Fully Functioning Person Unlike Maslow, Carl Rogers (1961) was a therapist who often worked with dysfunctional people rather than self-actualizers. Yet he did not overlook the healthy personality, which he called the **fully functioning person**. He described such an individual as having a self-concept that is both *positive* and *congruent* with reality. That is, the fully functioning person has high self-esteem, which is consistent (congruent) with the messages he or she receives from others, who express their approval, friendship, and love. Negative experiences, such as loss of a job or rejection by a lover, can produce *incongruence*, a threat to one’s self-esteem.

The Phenomenal Field: The Person’s Reality Rogers insisted that psychology recognize the importance of perceptions and feelings, which he called the **phenomenal field**. We respond only to this subjective experience, not to an objective reality. That is why a student’s reaction to a grade depends entirely on the student’s perception. Receiving a C may shock a student who is used to receiving As but thrill one who has been failing: Both are reacting to their own subjective phenomenal fields. In Rogers’s system, then, the phenomenal field is part of the personality, as a sort of filter for our experience (see Figure 10.7). It contains our interpretations of both the external and internal worlds, and it also contains the *self*, the humanists’ version of the Freudian ego.

Conditional versus Unconditional Relationships Perhaps it won’t surprise you to hear that Rogers himself had an unhappy and dysfunctional childhood, dominated by the rigid rules of his parents’ strict religious beliefs. So restrictive was this environment that he once remarked that he felt “wicked” when he first tasted a bottle of pop without his parents’ knowledge (Rogers, 1961). Later, from an adult perspective, Rogers concluded that children from homes like his, where parental love is *conditional* (dependent) on good behavior, may grow up with anxiety and a strong sense of guilt that leads to low self-esteem and mental disorder. Instead of guilt-mongers, he believed, we need people who can give us *unconditional positive regard*—love without conditions attached.

Unlike the psychodynamic theorists who focused on sinister motives, Rogers, Maslow, and other humanistic personality theorists believe that our most basic motives are for positive growth. In its healthiest form, self-actualization is a striving to realize one’s potential—to develop fully one’s capacities and talents. (Examples might include Einstein or even Freud.) According to the humanistic

CONNECTION • CHAPTER 9

Maslow’s *hierarchy of needs* claims that motives occur in a priority order.

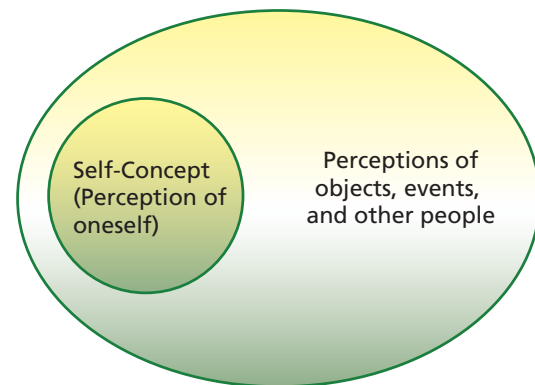


FIGURE 10.7

Rogers’s Phenomenal Field

For Carl Rogers, what we perceive and feel is the only reality. The totality of all our feelings and perceptions he dubbed the *phenomenal field*. Note that the *self-concept* is a perception of oneself and therefore a part of the phenomenal field. In the *fully functioning person*, the self-concept is both positive and *congruent* with the feedback received from others.

Self-actualizing personality A healthy individual who has met his or her basic needs and is free to be creative and fulfill his or her potentialities.

Fully functioning person Carl Rogers’s term for a healthy, self-actualizing individual, who has a self-concept that is both positive and congruent with reality.

Phenomenal field Our psychological reality, composed of one’s perceptions and feelings.

theorists, this innate quest is a constructive, guiding force that moves each person toward positive behaviors and the enhancement of the self.

A Humanistic Perspective on Mary Calkins A humanist trying to understand what drove Mary Calkins would probably begin by asking: How did she see her world—and herself? And what mattered to her? They would be especially interested in her strengths: her intelligence, her nurturing family background, and her supportive circle of colleagues at Wellesley and in the psychology group at Harvard. They would also note that Calkins worked all her life to make psychology the science of the self (by which she meant the whole person, not the fragmented and narrow approach of the structuralists or the “mindless” approach of the behaviorists). In this respect, Mary Calkins might be considered one of the pioneers of humanistic psychology.

CONNECTION • CHAPTER 1

Structuralism sought the “elements” of conscious experience.

Evaluating the Humanistic Theories The upbeat humanistic view of personality brought a welcome change for therapists who had wearied of the dark, pessimistic Freudian perspective, with its emphasis on unspeakable desires and repressed traumas. They liked the humanistic focus on making one’s present and future life more palatable, rather than dredging up painful memories of an unalterable past. They also liked its attention to mental health rather than mental disorder.

Are Humanistic Theories “Self”-Centered? But not everyone jumped on the humanists’ bandwagon. Many critics chided the humanists for their fuzzy concepts: What exactly is “self-actualization,” they asked? Is it an inborn tendency or is it created by one’s culture? And, added the psychoanalysts, the humanistic emphasis on conscious experience does not recognize the power of the unconscious. Finally, cross-cultural psychologists criticized the humanists’ emphasis on the self—as in *self*-concept, *self*-esteem, and *self*-actualization. This “self-centered” picture of personality, they noted, may merely be the viewpoint of observers looking through the lens of an individualistic Western culture (Heine et al., 1999).

We should be clear: No one denies the existence of a self within the personality—that is, some sort of process that distinguishes the individual from everything else. We all distinguish “me” from “thee.” In fact, MRI and PET scans demonstrate the existence of specialized brain modules related to processing thoughts about the self (Heatherston et al., 2004). And even in the collectivistic cultures, the self exists, although the emphasis is on a self embedded in a social context. The real issue, then, is whether the self should be the centerpiece of personality.

Self-Esteem: Cause or Effect? Recently, the whole popular notion of self-esteem as the essential ingredient for mental health has been brought under the lens of research and critical thinking . . . and found questionable. Why is this important? Many programs designed to improve education, combat drug abuse, and discourage teen sex and violence are based on boosting self-esteem. Yet, after a review of the research, psychologist Roy Baumeister and his colleagues (2003) report that low self-esteem causes none of these problems. In fact, studies show that bullies and drug users often have *high* self-esteem. So, rather than focusing on high self-esteem as an end in itself, Baumeister and his colleagues urge promoting positive achievements and prosocial behaviors, with the expectation that self-esteem will follow in their wake.

Positive Psychology: The New Humanism? Recently, a movement known as **positive psychology** has formed to pursue essentially the same goals established by the humanists. The difference is that those allied with positive psychology are more concerned than were most humanists about laying a scientific foundation for their theories, and their effort has produced important work that we will see on happiness, social support, health, and well-being in Chapter 14. Even so, the positive psychology movement itself is limited as an explanation of personality by its restricted focus on desirable aspects of human functioning.

Positive psychology A recent movement within psychology, focusing on desirable aspects of human functioning, as opposed to an emphasis on psychopathology.

So, is there an alternative view that overcomes the problems we have seen in the psychodynamic, humanistic, and the new positive psychology theories? Let's consider the cognitive approach.

Social-Cognitive Theories: Emphasis on Social Learning

To understand why we must put up with those tamper-proof seals on pill bottles, we need to go back a few years to 1982, when someone (the case is still unsolved) slipped cyanide into a batch of Tylenol capsules. The result was seven deaths. And before manufacturers could get those pesky seals in place, several copy-cat attempts to contaminate other drugs occurred. Sales of those drugs plummeted, so observers speculated that the motive was to bankrupt the drug companies.

The personality-related question is this: Can we explain these despicable acts entirely by looking at motives? Social-cognitive theorists answer with a resounding, "No!" We must take learning into account—*social learning* to be more precise. In fact we must take into account the full range of psychological processes, including cognition, motivation, and emotion, as well as the environment (Cervone, 2004). Here we will sample two of these approaches.

Observational Learning and Personality: Bandura's Theory

You don't have to yell "Fire!" in a crowded theater to know what would happen if you did. In Albert Bandura's view, we are driven not just by motivational forces or even by rewards and punishments but by our *expectations* of how our actions might gain us rewards or punishments. And many of those expectations, he notes, don't come from direct experience but from observing what happens to others (Bandura, 1986). Thus, a distinctive feature of the human personality is the ability to foresee the consequences of actions, particularly in what happens to others.

Perhaps this is the most important contribution of Bandura's theory: the idea that we can learn *vicariously*—that is, from others. This *social learning*, or **observational learning**, is the process by which people learn new responses by watching each others' behavior and noting the consequences. That is, others act as *role models* that we either accept or reject, depending on whether they are rewarded or punished for their behavior. So, when Ramon sees Billy hit his brother and get punished for it, Ramon learns through observation that hitting is not a good strategy to adopt. Thus, through observational learning Ramon can see what works and what does not work, without having to go through trial-and-error for himself. In Bandura's view, then, personality is a collection of *learned* behavior patterns, many of which we have borrowed by observational learning.

Through observational learning, children and adults acquire information about their social environment. Likewise, skills, attitudes, and beliefs may be acquired simply by noting what others do and the consequences that follow. In this way, children may learn to say "please" and "thank you," to be quiet in libraries, and to refrain from public nose picking. The down side, of course, is that bad habits can be acquired by observing poor role models, such as a relative with a fear of spiders, or by exposure to TV shows that seem to reward antisocial behaviors, like shooting people, abusing drugs, or putting poison in Tylenol capsules. The point is that people don't always have to try out behaviors themselves in order to learn from experience.

But, says Bandura, personality is not just a repertoire of learned behavior. Understanding the whole person means understanding the continued interaction among behavior, cognition, and the environment. He calls this **reciprocal determinism** (Bandura, 1981, 1999).



As Bandura's theory suggests, children develop a clearer sense of identity by observing how men and women behave in their culture.

Observational learning A form of cognitive learning in which new responses are acquired after watching others' behavior and the consequences of their behavior.

Reciprocal determinism The process in which cognitions, behavior, and the environment mutually influence each other.

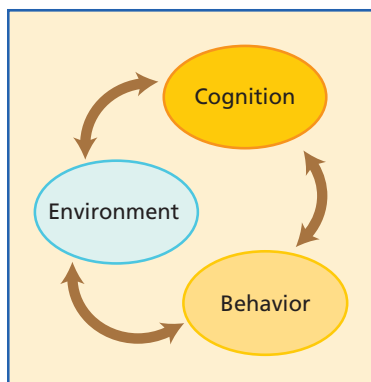


FIGURE 10.8
Reciprocal Determinism

In reciprocal determinism, the individual's cognitions, behavior, and the environment all interact.

How does reciprocal determinism work in real life? If, for example, you like psychology, your interest (a cognition) will probably lead you to spend time in the psychology department on campus (an environment) interacting with students and faculty (social behavior) who share your interest. To the extent that you find this stimulating and rewarding, this activity will reciprocally strengthen your interest in psychology and encourage you to spend more time in the psychology department. Each of the three elements—behavior, cognition, and the environment—reinforces the others. You can see the simple but powerful relationship among these variables in Figure 10.8.

Locus of Control: Rotter's Theory Another cognitive psychologist, Julian Rotter (rhymes with *voter*) has a hybrid theory that we first introduced to you in connection with motivation in Chapter 9. Rotter tells us that our behavior depends on our sense of personal power or **locus of control**. Perceived locus of control, then, acts as a sort of filter through which we see our experiences and as a motive for action or inaction. Thus, Rotter's theory is both a trait theory and a “process” theory that focuses on a single but important dimension of personality.

To illustrate, we ask you this question: When you ride in a car, do you always use a seat belt, or do you think that being hurt or killed in an accident depends on when your “number comes up”? If you always use the belt, you probably have an *internal locus of control* because by doing so you are exerting some control over your fate. On the other hand, if you have the feeling that you have no control over the events in your life, you probably don't buckle up. In that case, you have an *external locus of control*.

Scores on Rotter's *Internal-External Locus of Control Scale* correlate with people's emotions and behavior in many situations (Rotter, 1990). For example, those with an internal locus of control are not only more likely to get good grades, but they also are more likely to exercise and watch their diets than are externals (Balch & Ross, 1975; Findley & Cooper, 1983). As you might expect, externals are more likely to be depressed (Benassi et al., 1988).

Many studies suggest that locus of control is an important characteristic of our personalities. That is, an internal or external disposition seems to be a reliable personality characteristic—although Rotter resists calling this a *trait* because he believes the term conveys the erroneous idea that internality-externality could be fixed and unchangeable. You can capture the flavor of Rotter's *Locus of Control Scale* by following the instructions in the “Do It Yourself!” box.

Locus of control An individual's sense of whether control over his or her life is maternal or external.

DO IT YOURSELF! Finding Your Locus of Control

Julian Rotter (1966) has developed a test that assesses a person's sense of internal or external control over events. The test items consist of pairs of contrasting statements, and subjects must choose one statement with which they most agree from each pair. This format is called a forced choice test. Unlike many other personality tests, the scoring for each item on Rotter's Internal-External Scale is transparent: The test-taker can easily tell in which direction most items are scored. Here are some items from a preliminary version of the test (Rotter, 1971).

You can see which direction you lean by counting up the number of statements with which you agreed in each column. Agreement with those in the left column suggests an internal locus of control.

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1a. Promotions are earned through hard work and persistence. | 1b. Making a lot of money is largely a matter of getting the right breaks. |
| 2a. In my experience I have noticed that there is usually a direct connection between how hard I study and the grades I get. | 2b. Many times the reactions of teachers seem haphazard to me. |
| 3a. If one knows how to deal with people, they are really quite easily led. | 3b. I have little influence over the way other people behave. |
| 4a. People like me can change the course of world affairs if we make ourselves heard. | 4b. It is only wishful thinking to believe that one can really influence what happens in society at large. |
| 5a. I am the master of my fate. | 5b. A great deal that happens to me is probably a matter of chance. |

Evaluating the Social-Cognitive Approach to Personality Critics argue that the cognitive theories generally overemphasize rational information processing and overlook both emotion and unconscious processes as important components of personality. So, for those who feel that emotions and motives are central to the functioning of human personality, the cognitive approaches to personality have a blind spot. However, because emotion and associated unconscious processes have assumed a greater role in cognitive psychology recently, we can anticipate a new generation of cognitive theories of personality that do take these aspects of personality into account (Mischel & Shoda, 1995).

The real strength of the social-cognitive theories is their foundation of solid psychological research—unlike most of the ideas proposed by the Freudians, neo-Freudians, and humanists. You will recall, for example, Bandura’s famous Bobo doll experiment in observational learning, which we discussed in Chapter 6. The price paid for the social-cognitive theories, however, is that they are much less comprehensive than the old and grand theories of personality proposed by Freud and his successors. The payoff, however, has come in the form of both explanations and treatments for a number of mental disorders that often seem to involve observational learning, particularly anxiety-based disorders, such as phobias, and behavior disorders in children.

Finally, we might ask how cognitive psychologist would explain Mary Calkins. One focus would be on how she interpreted the rewards and punishments she experienced in trying to complete her graduate work in psychology and how these interpretations shaped her behavior. A cognitive theorist might note that Calkins obviously had an internal locus of control that was part of a reciprocal interaction with the social support she received at home, at Wellesley, and from her mentors at Harvard—which, in turn, reinforced her determination and hard work. And, they might add, Mary Calkins became a role model for the women who came after her to study psychology.

CONNECTION • CHAPTER 12

Other anxiety disorders include panic disorder and obsessive-compulsive disorder.

Current Trends: The Person in a Social System

Gone are the days when Freud, Jung, Horney, and others were building the grand, sweeping theories of personality that attempted to explain everything we humans do. First the humanistic and later the cognitive theorists arose to point out blind spots in the older psychodynamic theories. Now the emphasis has shifted again, as psychologists have brought elements of the psychodynamic, humanistic, and cognitive perspectives together with new knowledge about the impact of culture, gender, and family dynamics. You should be especially aware of three important new trends in our thinking about personality.

In **family systems theory**, for example, the basic unit of analysis is not the individual but the family (Gilbert, 1992; Mones et al., 2007). This perspective says that personality is shaped by the ways people interacted first in the family and, later, in the peer group. While Freud and others did recognize that parents influence children, the new emphasis is on *interaction*—on the ways that members of the family or the peer group influence each other. This has led to viewing people with psychological problems as individuals embedded in dysfunctional groups, rather than as “sick” persons. This emphasis has also given us a new interpersonal language for personality. We often speak now of *codependence* (instead of *dependent* personalities) and *communication* (instead of mere talk). We also have a heightened awareness of relationships and process (the changes that occur as relationships develop).

A second trend comes from psychology’s increasing awareness of cultural differences, as more and more publications on personality come from psychologists around the world—not just from Europe and America (Quiñones-Vidal et al., 2004). Psychologist Stanley Sue (1991) also reminds us that our own society is becoming ethnically more diverse. No longer can we assume that everyone we meet shares the same cultural experience or the same values.

Family systems theory A perspective on personality and treatment that emphasizes the family, rather than the individual, as the basic unit of analysis.

A third trend comes from an increasing appreciation of gender influences. While we do not know the weights to assign nature and nurture in our attempts to understand gender differences, we do know that males and females often perceive situations differently (Tavris, 1991). We have also seen that males tend to be more physically aggressive than females. And females tend to form close relationships in small, equal-status groups, while males tend to connect in larger groups (teams) organized hierarchically with leaders and followers.

Together these three trends have enlarged our understanding of the forces that shape personality. The new emphasis is on diversity and group processes, rather than on the traits and mental processes of individuals. As a result, the picture of personality has become much more complex—but it is becoming far more realistic.

● PSYCHOLOGYMATTERS

● Using Psychology to Learn Psychology

● Although an internal or external locus of control can be a central feature of your personality, your perceived locus of control can also change from situation to situation. When you are speaking in front of a group you may feel that the situation is beyond your control, yet when you are behind the wheel or on skis you may feel that you are fully the master. And what about your education? Do you have a sense of internal or external control with regard to—say—your grade in psychology?

● An external locus of control about grades poses a danger for the college student because college life is so full of distractions and temptations. If you believe that your grades are largely beyond your control, you can easily be driven by the enticements of the moment and let your studies slide. This attitude can, of course, become a self-fulfilling prophecy that ruins your grades not only in psychology but across the board.

● The following questions will help you assess your own academic locus of control:

- On a test do you often find that, even when you know the material, anxiety wipes the information from your memory?
- Do you often know the material well but perceive that the test is unfair or covers material that the professor did not indicate would be on the test?
- Are you so easily distracted that you can never quite get around to studying?
- Do you believe that some people are born to be good students, and some are not?
- Do you feel that you have no control over the grades you receive?
- Do you feel that you are not smart enough to cope with college-level work?
- Do you feel that success in college is largely a matter of playing up to the professors?

● If you answered “yes” to several of these questions, then you probably have an external locus of control with respect to your college work—an attitude that can hamper your chances of college success. What can be done? Nothing—if you are completely convinced that your success in college is beyond your control. If, however, you are open to the idea of establishing more control over your college experience, here are a few suggestions:

- If you suffer from test anxiety, get help from your counseling center or learning resources center.
- Form a study group among friends taking the same classes or find a tutor at your learning resources center.

- ● Talk to your professors individually: Ask them to give you some pointers on what they consider to be especially important in their classes. (But don't ask, "What's going to be on the test?")
 - ● Go to your college's learning resources center and get an assessment of your strengths and weaknesses and of your interest patterns. Then make a plan to correct your weaknesses (e.g., with tutoring or with remedial classes in your weak areas). At the same time, build on your strengths by selecting a major that capitalizes on your aptitudes and interests.
- We would wish you good luck—but only an externalizer would want that!

Check Your Understanding

1. **RECALL:** What was Sigmund Freud's greatest discovery—and the concept that distinguishes psychoanalysis from the humanistic and social-cognitive theories?
2. **APPLICATION:** Name a type of behavior that, according to the Freudians, is driven by Thanatos?
3. **RECALL:** What is the ego defense mechanism on which the *Rorschach* and *TAT* are based?
4. **APPLICATION:** If you react strongly to angry outbursts in others, you may be struggling with which Jungian archetype?
5. **RECALL:** In contrast with Freud, Karen Horney believed that the forces behind our behaviors are _____.
6. **RECALL:** The humanistic theorists were very different from the psychodynamic theorists because of their emphasis on _____.
7. **APPLICATION:** You try to understand people based on the role models they follow. Which kind of personality theorist are you?
8. **UNDERSTANDING THE CORE CONCEPT:** What do the psychodynamic, humanistic, and cognitive theories of personality have in common?
 - a. They all view personality as largely unconscious.
 - b. They all acknowledge the importance of internal mental processes.
 - c. They all say that men and women have entirely different motives underlying their behaviors.
 - d. They all have a strong basis in psychological research.

Answers: 1. Most psychologists would say that it was Freud's discovery of unconscious mind. 2. Any aggressive or destructive behavior would be correct. 3. projection 4. the shadow archetype 5. social 6. the healthy personality and human potential 7. a social-cognitive theorist 8. b

10.4 KEY QUESTION

WHAT "THEORIES" DO PEOPLE USE TO UNDERSTAND THEMSELVES AND OTHERS?

We have seen how psychologists view personality. But how do ordinary people go about understanding each other? And how do they understand themselves? All of us regularly make assumptions—right or wrong—about other people's personalities, as well as our own. You do so when you go on a date, apply for a job, or form your first impression of a professor or classmate. We might also wonder whether people in other cultures make the same assumptions about personality that we do. These issues are significant because the "folk theories," or *implicit personality theories*, that people use to understand people can support or undermine relationships among individuals—or even among nations. Our Core Concept says:

Our understanding of ourselves and others is based on implicit theories of personality and our own self-narratives—both of which are influenced by culture.

core
concept

Let's look first at the implicit theories we use to understand others, before moving on to consider how we understand ourselves.

Implicit Personality Theories

Think of someone who has been a role model for you. Now think of someone you can't stand to be around. In both cases, you associate those individuals with personal traits: honesty, reliability, sense of humor, generosity, outgoing attitude, aggressiveness, moodiness, pessimism, and so on. Even as a child, you had a rudimentary system for appraising personality. You tried to determine whether new acquaintances would be friend or foe; you worked out ways of dealing with your parents or teachers based on how you read their personalities.

In each case, your judgments were personality assessments reflecting your **implicit personality theory**, your personal explanation of personality that almost certainly relied on connecting people's behavior with the traits you attributed to them. Like the *implicit memories* we studied in Chapter 4, *implicit theories of personality* operate in the background, largely outside of our awareness, where they simplify the task of understanding other people (Fiske & Neuberg, 1990; Macrae et al., 1994).

Most of the time, implicit theories work well enough to make social relationships run smoothly—at least in familiar environments. While our expectations can easily miss the mark in unfamiliar cultures, in more familiar territory our implicit theories of personality help us anticipate people's motives and behavior, allowing us to perform our work, buy our morning mochas, pass our courses, and interact with our friends. In some respects, our implicit theories may not be all that different from the five-factor theory. According to a study in which college students rated the personalities of other students they had observed but didn't know, their impressions agreed remarkably well with scores derived from the *Big Five Inventory* (Mehl et al., 2006). There was one interesting exception: Assertive or argumentative behavior was seen by the raters as a sign of emotional stability in men but as indicating emotional *instability* in women!

Implicit theories can have other blind spots, too. They may err by relying on naive assumptions and stereotypes about traits and physical characteristics (Hochwalder, 1995). So, hefty people may be assumed to be jolly or blondes a little short on intellect. Similarly, we may erroneously assume certain traits always go together—creativity and emotional instability, for example. So, what implicit assumptions would you make about the personality of Ken Lay, knowing only that he was a rich entrepreneur who bilked thousands of their life savings?

Implicit theories may also give bad predictions when people's motives and feelings influence their judgment of others' personalities, as Freud suggested with his concept of *projection*. Accordingly, a person who is feeling angry, happy, or depressed may naïvely assume that other people are feeling the same way, too.

Finally, people's implicit theories may conflict on the issue of whether personality traits are fixed or changeable. As you might expect, those believing in fixed traits are more likely to see others as stereotypes (e.g., “all Italians are alike”) than are those whose implicit theories assumed the malleability of personality (Molden & Dweck, 2006; Levy et al., 1998). And consider the impact that either assumption—personality as fixed or changeable—could have on a teacher's evaluation of a child or a supervisor's performance review of an employee.

Self-Narratives: The Stories of Our Lives

How do you respond when someone says, “Tell me about yourself”? You probably reply with a few sentences about where you are from, what you like to do with your leisure time, and what your occupational goals are. But what do you say when you ask yourself the same question? The “story” that you tell yourself about yourself is what psychologist Dan McAdams calls a **self-narrative**. He claims that the self-narrative is just as important a component of personality as are motives, emotions, or social relationships.

The self-narrative is really a broader conception of the self-concept: It is the story of the self-concept over time: The self-narrative serves as the common

Implicit personality theory A person's set of unquestioned assumptions about personality, used to simplify the task of understanding others.

Self-narrative The “stories” one tells about oneself. Self-narratives help people sense a thread of consistency through their personality over time.

thread that holds the elements of personality together, like beads on a necklace. And, says McAdams, our identity depends on keeping this narrative going throughout our lives, to give us a sense of unity and purpose.

Culture, of course, has a big effect on the self-narrative stories we *want* to tell ourselves. While McAdams hasn't yet done extensive cross-cultural research, he has identified a peculiarly important self-narrative in the American culture. He calls it the **redemptive self**. See if you recognize yourself in some elements of the redemptive self-narrative:

- You have always felt fortunate—not necessarily because of an economic advantage but perhaps because you have a special talent or were singled out for special treatment by a teacher or other nurturing adult.
- At some point you realized that other people are not so fortunate. Through no fault of their own, they experience suffering or disadvantage.
- Because you are advantaged and others are not, you feel a responsibility or a challenge to improve the lives of others in some way.
- Probably in childhood or adolescence, you developed a belief system, perhaps rooted in religion, although not necessarily so, that has since guided your actions, particularly in your efforts to help others.
- You meet unexpected obstacles and overcome them. You have negative experiences but learn and grow from them, and you see a future of continued growth and progress, despite the near-certainty of daunting obstacles ahead.

It's a narrative of hope and "redemption," because good triumphs over evil; hard work and good intentions succeed despite all obstacles.

Not everyone's self-narrative follows exactly this pattern, of course. But McAdams often finds a pattern like this in *generative* adults, a term originally used by developmental psychologist Erik Erikson to describe healthy, productive adults. More specifically, **generativity** refers to adults who are committed to something outside themselves—to the community and to the welfare of future generations. It remains to be seen what narratives characterize healthy adults in other cultures.

The Effects of Culture on Our Views of Personality

As we have seen, Westerners tend to put the *individual* or the *self* at the center of personality. While people the world over do make the assumption of a distinct self, much of the world—especially those in collectivist cultures—assumes that the self is embedded in a larger social network. They further assume that the individual cannot be understood in isolation from others with whom they have some sort of relationship—which brings us to Harry Triandis.

Individualism, Collectivism, and Personality According to Dr. Triandis (1995), cultures differ most fundamentally on the dimension of *individualism* versus *collectivism*. For those raised in the Euro-American tradition, the individual is the basic unit of society, while those raised in many Asian and African cultures emphasize the family or other social groups. In collectivistic cultures people tend to form identities that blend harmoniously with the group, and they expect that others are motivated to do the same. In individualistic cultures, people think of themselves as having a unique identity, independent of their social relationships (Pedersen, 1979). Thus, for Euro-Americans, the self is a whole, while for many Asians and Africans the self is only a part (Cohen & Gunz, 2002).

Let us be clear: Neither the individualistic nor the collectivistic approach is "better." Each has advantages. The collectivist cultures encourage group effort,

Redemptive self A common self-narrative identified by McAdams in generative Americans. The redemptive self involves a sense of being called to overcome obstacles in the effort to help others.

Generativity The process of making a commitment beyond oneself to family, work, society, or future generations. In Erikson's theory, generativity is the developmental challenge of midlife.



Most Asian cultures have a collectivist tradition that affirms the group, rather than the individual, as the fundamental social unit.

CONNECTION • CHAPTER 11

To avoid the fundamental attribution error, social psychologists recommend first looking for a situational explanation for unusual behavior.

CONNECTION • CHAPTER 9

McClelland has found the *need for achievement* to be an important variable predicting employee performance.

typically for the benefit and glory of the group—often a work group or a family group. On the other hand, a person such as Mary Calkins, who challenged society's norms, would be more likely to thrive in an individualistic culture.

Many aspects of peoples' personalities and behavior derive from their culture's position on the individualism versus collectivism spectrum. So, in judging people, Americans and Europeans tend to make the **fundamental attribution error**. This misperception stems from the assumption that other people's actions, especially annoying, clumsy, inappropriate, or otherwise undesirable behaviors, result from their personalities, rather than from the situation. If you come to your psychology class late, other students are likely to assume that you are a "late" or disorganized person—if you are at an American college or university. But, if you arrived late to a psychology class in China or Japan, the students there would be more likely to assume that your behavior had some external cause, such as traffic problems. In general, the fundamental attribution error is less common in group-oriented, *collectivistic* cultures, such as are found in Latin American and Asia (Church et al., 2005; Lillard, 1997).

Cultures also differ on other dimensions, too. For example, when given the choice of competition or cooperation, individualistic Americans characteristically choose to compete (Aronson, 2004; Gallo & McClintock, 1965). And as we saw in Chapter 9, Americans, on the average, also score higher on measures of need for achievement than do people in collectivist cultures.

Other Cultural Differences Here is a short list of other personality-related dimensions on which people differ around the world:

- *Status of different age groups and sexes.* The status of the elderly is higher in many Asian and Native American cultures than in the United States; women have second-class status in many non-Western societies (Segall et al., 1999).
- *Romantic love.* While love and affection occur in all cultures, the assumption that romantic love should be the basis for marriage is a historically recent European invention and is most often found in individualistic cultures (Hatfield & Rapson, 1998; Rosenblatt, 1966).
- *Expression of feelings.* Asian cultures teach people to suppress the expression of intense feelings (Tsai & Uemura, 1988), while Euro-Americans are much more likely to express strong emotions (although there can be pronounced gender differences).
- *Locus of control.* Persons in industrialized nations, such as the United States and Canada, more often have an internal locus of control than do those in developing countries, such as Mexico or China (Berry et al., 1992; Draguns, 1979; Shiraev & Levy, 2004).
- *Thinking versus feeling.* Many cultures (e.g., in Latin America) do not make the strong distinction between thoughts and emotions that Americans do (Fajans, 1985; Lutz, 1988).

Cultures also differ in their views of the ideal personality (Matsumoto, 1996). In the Western psychological tradition, mental health consists of integrating opposite and conflicting parts of the personality. This can be seen especially clearly in Freudian and Jungian theory. By contrast, some Asian psychologies, particularly those associated with Buddhism, seek the opposite: to dissociate consciousness from sensation and from memories of worldly experience (Gardiner et al., 1998; Pedersen, 1979).

Despite these differences, can we say that people are fundamentally the same the world over? On the level of neurons and brain circuits, the answer is certainly "yes." But personality is also locked in the embrace of culture, so a more comprehensive answer would be "no—but perhaps they can be described on some of the same dimensions." In the words of Erika Bourguignon (1979), "It

Fundamental attribution error The dual tendency to overemphasize internal, dispositional causes and minimize external, situational pressures. The FAE is more common in individualistic cultures than in collectivistic cultures.

is one of the major intellectual developments of the twentieth century to call into question the concept of a universal human nature.”

Even though personality and culture are partners in a perpetual dance, we can make this distinction between them:

“Culture” refers to those aspects of a society that all its members share, are familiar with, and pass on to the next generation. “Personality” refers to unique combinations of traits (which all people in a culture know about, even though a given trait does not describe a given person) which differentiate individuals within a culture. (Brislin, 1981, pp. 51–52)

But don’t forget that culture and personality interact. A culture shapes the personalities of the individuals within it, just as individuals can influence a culture. So, your personality is, to a certain extent, a product of your society’s values, attitudes, beliefs, and customs about morality, work, child rearing, aggression, achievement, competition, death, and dozens of other matters important to humans everywhere. In the broadest sense, then, a culture is the “personality” of a society (Benedict, 1934).

PSYCHOLOGY MATTERS

Developing Your Own Theory of Personality

Each of the theories we have examined has its limitations and strengths. Consequently, most psychologists become **eclectic**. That is, they either apply elements of different theories to best fit each situation or person or construct a hybrid theory of personality by borrowing ideas from many perspectives. While an eclectic approach may appear to offer the easiest route, it presents difficulties that arise from fundamental conflicts among theories. To give one example: How could we reconcile Freud’s concept of our behavior being driven by primitive and frightening instincts with humanism’s assumption of the innate goodness of our nature?

It may help to think of a personality theory as a map showing the major pathways through a person’s psychological landscape. As you formulate your own theory, you must decide how to weight the forces that determine which paths we select—the forces of conditioning, motivation and emotion, heredity and environment, individualism and collectivism, cognition, traits, culture, self-concept, and potential. We propose the following questions, which will help you sort out the assumptions in your own theory of personality:

- In your opinion, are people more rational and logical (as the cognitive theories contend), or do they more often act on the basis of feelings and emotions (as the psychodynamic theories argue)?
- Are people usually conscious of the reasons for their behavior, as many of the neo-Freudians claimed? Or, are their actions mainly caused by unconscious needs, desires, and urges (as Freud suggested)?
- What do you see as the basic motives behind human behavior: sex, aggression, power, love, spirituality . . . ?
- Are human motives essentially egocentric and self-serving? Or are they altruistic, unmotivated by the desire for personal gain (as the humanists suggest)?
- When you try to understand another person’s actions, which of the following do you consider to be most important: the person’s inner needs, drives, motives, and emotions (as the psychodynamic theories say); the person’s basic personality characteristics (as the trait and type theories say); or simply the demands of the situation in which the person is embedded?
- Is our basic, inner nature essentially healthy and good (as the humanists see it) or composed of primitive and self-serving desires (as Freud saw it)?

No one has yet found the “right” answers, but the answers you give say a great deal about your own personality.

Eclectic Either switching theories to explain different situations or building one’s own theory of personality from pieces borrowed from many perspectives.

Check Your Understanding

1. **APPLICATION:** Name a country that generally values the achievement of a team or group over that of the individual.
2. **RECALL:** In what important respect have people's implicit theories of personality been found to differ?
3. **RECALL:** McAdams's idea of the redemptive self-narrative is characteristic of American adults who share a characteristic that Erikson called _____.
4. **APPLICATION:** Give an example of the *fundamental attribution error*. In what cultures would you be likely to find people committing the fundamental attribution error?
5. **UNDERSTANDING THE CORE CONCEPT:** People's implicit personality theories involve
 - a. negative, but not positive, characteristics.
 - b. the assumptions that they make about each other's motives, intentions, and behaviors.
 - c. assumptions about themselves that they want to hide from others.
 - d. opinions that they privately hold about others but will not say openly.

Answers 1. China, Japan, India, Mexico, or nearly any country in Asia, Latin America, or the Middle East. 2. People's implicit theories differ on whether personality traits are fixed or changeable. 3. generativity. 4. The fundamental attribution error (FAE) occurs when you attribute a person's behavior to an internal disposition, rather than to external factors. So, for example, you would be committing the FAE when someone trips and drops his books and you attribute it to clumsiness. Research shows the FAE to be more common in individualistic cultures, such as the majority cultures in Europe and the United States. 5. b

Critical Thinking Applied: The Person-Situation Controversy

Cognitive theorist Walter Mischel dropped a scientific bombshell on the personality theorists with evidence suggesting that we behave far less consistently from one situation to another than most had assumed (1968, 1973, 2003). A person who is extraverted at a party can become shy and retiring in class; your “neurotic” friend may become a pillar of strength in a crisis. Like Rosalind, in Shakespeare's *As You Like It*, one person can present different personalities in different situations and to different people. So, Mischel argued, knowledge of the *situation* is more important in predicting behavior than knowing a person's traits. The ensuing tumult within the field has become known as the **person-situation controversy** (Pervin, 1985).

Mischel's argument challenged the very foundations of most personality theories. After all, if people do act inconsistently in different situations, then what good is a theory of personality? Is there no continuity in personality? Critics mounted withering attacks on Mischel's thesis, pointing out that his methods underestimated a thread of consistency across situations (Epstein, 1980). Bem and Allen (1974) have also pointed out that some people behave more consistently than others. Moreover, people are most consistent when others are watching (Kenrick & Stringfield, 1980) and when in familiar situations (Funder, 1983a,b; Funder & Ozer, 1983).

Person-situation controversy A theoretical dispute concerning the relative contribution of personality factors and situational factors in controlling behavior.

While the foundations of personality psychology were shuddering, the person-situation controversy gave a boost to social psychology, where psychologists had always argued the *power of the situation*. As we will see in the next chapter, situations can turn normal college students into liars, lovers, or even cruel tormentors. But where does all this leave us in dealing with the person-situation controversy?

What Is the Issue?

This is *not* an either-or dispute: It's not a question of whether traits *or* situations control behavior. Rather it is a question of which has more influence. All sides of the person-situation debate agree that both the person and the situation have an effect. It's the weighting of the person and the situation that is at issue.

There is a second issue, too. How much does the power of personality traits vary from one situation to another? At the extreme, for a prisoner in solitary confinement, the situation obviously has overwhelming importance. But the more important focus is on ordinary people in their everyday lives: How much power does the situation have vis-à-vis traits? It's not an easy question to answer.

What Critical Thinking Questions Should We Ask?

In defining the issue, we tried to make clear that neither side was making unreasonable or extreme claims, even though Mischel's position came as a shock to the

field of personality. So the critical thinking questions that we must ask are, first, “What does the evidence tell us?” And second, “How we can interpret the evidence?”

People Are Inconsistent Across a wide range of studies, personality traits, as measured by personality tests, typically account for fewer than 10% of all the factors that affect behavior (Digman, 1990)—a small number, indeed! But don’t make the mistake of assuming that the situation accounts for the remaining 90%. Correlations between situations and behaviors can be weak, too, as you can plainly see in different people’s reactions to a joke or events on the evening news.

Moreover, if we look at the same person over time, we may find him or her reacting very differently to the same situation on different occasions. Consider: Do you *always* order the same thing when you go to your favorite restaurant? Or, are you *always* cheerful with your friends? Psychologist William Fleeson urges us to think of personality traits as a sort of average of how the person customarily behaves. (Perhaps you are *usually* cheerful—on the average.)

Even more surprising was what researchers found when they monitored people as they moved from one situation to another. One study had volunteers carry small personal data assistant (PDA) devices and, several times a day, record their situation, their behavior, and their self-assessment on the Big Five traits. The discovery: People’s self-described personality traits change as radically as their behavior when they move from one situation to another (Fleeson, 2004).

The lesson to be learned here is that the majority of factors affecting behavior simply cannot be assigned to the person *or* the situation. Behavior seems to result from an *interaction* of trait and situational variables (Kenrick & Funder, 1988). In fact, Mischel has never suggested that we abandon theories of personality. Rather, he sees behavior as a function of the situation, the individual’s *interpretation* of the situation, and the personality (Mischel, 1990, 2003; Mischel & Shoda, 1995).

It Also Depends on What Kind of Situation Suppose that you are walking leisurely through campus, and you see a crowd gathered around a student who has collapsed on the sidewalk. Will you go for help? Because the cues are not clear, this is a “weak” situation, and your actions

are likely to depend more strongly on your past experience and on such personality variables as independence and extraversion. Walter Mischel has argued that personality variables have their greatest impact on behavior when cues in the situation are *weak* or *ambiguous*.

Now suppose that, one day when you are in your psychology class, a student collapses, apparently unconscious, onto the floor. After a stunned silence, the instructor asks the class to keep their seats and then points at you, demanding loudly, “Use your cell phone to call 911, and get an ambulance here—Now!” What do you do? This is a “strong” situation: Someone is in control, an instructor you already see as an authority figure; that person has told you unambiguously what to do. You are likely to comply—as would most people in that situation. But when situations are strong and clear, there will be less individual variation in response.

What Conclusions Can We Draw?

Which side of the person-situation debate is right? Both are. The difficulty was that that they were right about different things. According to personality psychologist William Fleeson (2004), traits help us understand behavior over long periods of time, when a thread of consistency can be seen in personality—as an individual’s behavior converges on a personal average. Over shorter intervals, and especially in particular situations, a person’s behavior can be highly variable, as we have seen. So, by taking a long view, the trait perspective is right, while on a moment-to-moment basis, the situation perspective wins.

But which side gets the most weight also depends on whether the situation is strong or weak, as Mischel has said. And to further complicate matters, we have to figure culture into the equation as part of the situation: Evidence has emerged that an individual’s personality traits have more influence on behavior in individualistic cultures than in collectivistic cultures (Church et al., 2006). That makes sense, of course, when we think that an individualistic culture places high values on certain traits, such as intelligence (as opposed to hard work). And it also makes sense in light of the finding that people in collectivist cultures are less susceptible to the fundamental attribution error—because they emphasize the power of the situation.

Chapter Summary

10.1 What Forces Shape Our Personalities?

Core Concept 10.1: Personality is shaped by the combined forces of biological, situational, and mental processes—all embedded in a sociocultural and developmental context.

We can think of **personality** as the “default settings” for our unique pattern of motives, emotions, and perceptions, along with our learned schemas for understanding ourselves and our world. Personality also has deep evolutionary roots, as seen in displacement of aggression. Neuroscience suggests that the biology of personality comprises a collection of brain modules, each adapted to a different purpose.

But personality also involves nurture—that is learning driven by the environment, as seen in the effect of family position on personality. The person–situation controversy centers on the relative importance of situations (the environment) as compared with internal traits and mental processes.

The chapter makes an important distinction between personality characteristics, or **dispositions**, and **personality processes**. We need both dispositional theories and process theories for a complete understanding of personality.

Cross-cultural psychologists have complicated the problem of personality by suggesting that personality may not be a universal concept and that Western cultures have a bias toward individualism and a unique self. In fact, all cultures have a tendency either to **individualism** or **collectivism**, both of which leave their imprint on personality. In any culture, however, an individual’s personality is, in part, a creation of interactions with other people.

One does not need a theory of personality for explaining ordinary behavior. A good theory, however, is helpful for explaining unusual behavior and eccentric people. The most common theories can be grouped as follows: *dispositional theories* (trait and temperament theories), and *process theories* (psychodynamic theories, humanistic theories, and social-cognitive theories).

Collectivism (p. 434)

Personality (p. 430)

Dispositions (p. 433)

Personality processes (p. 433)

Individualism (p. 434)

MyPsychLab Resources 10.1:

Explore: Psychodynamic, Behavioral, Trait and Type, Humanistic, and Cognitive Approaches to Personality

10.2 What Persistent Patterns, Or Dispositions, Make Up Our Personalities?

Core Concept 10.2: The *dispositional theories* all suggest a small set of personality characteristics, known as temperaments, traits, or types, that provide consistency to the individual’s personality over time.

Temperament, trait, and type theories are descriptive approaches to personality with a long history stretching back to the humor theory of the ancient Greeks. Modern theories speak of types, traits, and temperaments. In this chapter, we group all three under the heading of **dispositional theories perspectives**.

Temperament refers to innate personality dispositions, which may be tied to factors in the brain and in the genes. Kagan’s work has focused on the inhibited versus uninhibited dimension of temperament. By contrast, traits are thought of as multiple dimensions existing to some degree in each person’s personality. Traits give personality consistency across situations and may be influenced by both heredity and learning. Many psychologists now agree on the Big Five traits, which seem to have validity across cultures. Trait assessment is the

basis for many psychological tests: Some assess common traits, such as the Big Five, while others, such as the *MMPI-2*, assess clinical characteristics. Both the trait and temperament theories do a reasonably good job of describing and predicting behavior, but they offer no explanations for the underlying processes.

Personality disorders involve long-term defects in personality, such as poor judgment, lack of impulse control, and disturbances in thoughts, emotions, or social relationships.

The person–situation controversy, however, has raised questions about the relative contribution of personality traits and situations to behavior. Narcissistic personality disorder involves egocentric needs. Antisocial personality disorder involves irresponsible or harmful behavior. Borderline personality disorder involves impulsivity and instability.

Type theory is exemplified in the controversial and widely used *MBTI*, based on Jung’s personality typology. Research suggests that people’s characteristics, as measured by the *MBTI* or other personality tests, do not fall into neat type categories but are more accurately conceived of on trait dimensions.

Dispositional theories (p. 436)	Personality disorder (p. 441)
Five-factor theory (p. 438)	Personality type (p. 442)
Humors (p. 435)	Reliability (p. 440)
MMPI-2 (p. 439)	Traits (p. 437)
Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) (p. 442)	Validity (p. 440)

MyPsychLab Resources 10.2:

Explore: The Five Factor Model

Explore: Personality Assessment

10.3 What Mental Processes Are At Work Within Our Personalities?

Core Concept 10.3 While each of the *process* theories sees different forces at work in personality, all portray personality as the result of both internal mental processes and social interactions.

The psychodynamic, humanistic, and social-cognitive theories all seek to explain the internal processes and social interactions that shape our personalities. Freud's psychoanalytic theory states that the personality arises out of unconscious desires, conflicts, and memories. None of our thoughts or behaviors happens by accident, according to the principle of **psychic determinism**. Early childhood experiences also have a strong influence on personality, as the child goes through predictable **psychosexual stages** in which conflicts are dealt with unconsciously. Freud believed that the personality consisted of three main structures, the **id** (the reservoir of unconscious desires), the **ego** (the largely conscious part of the mind), and the **superego** (which contains the conscience and the ego ideal). Part of the ego, involving the **ego defense mechanisms**, operates outside of consciousness. One of these defense mechanisms, projection, is the basis for widely used **projective tests**, including the *Rorschach* and the *TAT*.

Freud's theory has been extremely influential. Still, critics fault Freud's work for being scientifically unsound, a poor basis for prediction, and unfair to women. Modern psychology also suggests that the unconscious mind is less clever and purposeful than Freud believed.

Other psychodynamic theories, such as those proposed by Jung and Horney, also assume that personality is a dynamic process that involves strong and often-conflicting motives and emotions. Each of these **neo-Freudians**, however, emphasizes different aspects of personality. Jung proposed a **collective unconscious**, populated by **archetypes**. He also proposed that people fall into certain personality types, characterized especially by tendencies to **introversion** and **extraversion**. Horney, on the other hand, emphasized conscious processes, **basic anxiety**, **neurotic needs**, and feminist issues in personality theory. Some other neo-Freudians,

such as Erikson, also emphasized consciousness, as well as life-long personality development.

The humanistic theories, such as those of Maslow and Rogers, argue that people are naturally driven toward **self-actualization**, but this tendency can be suppressed by unhealthy conditions and perceptions. Maslow proposed a hierarchy of needs, suggesting that when the deficiency needs are met, a person is more likely to pursue self-actualization. Rogers taught that the **fully functioning person** has a positive self-concept that is congruent with reality, while mental disorder arises from incongruence. High self-esteem is more likely which a child comes from a family that provides unconditional positive regard.

The humanistic theories have had considerable impact on psychotherapy, but they have been criticized for being "self"-centered and lacking a strong scientific base. The social-cognitive theories, by contrast, do have a scientific basis, although they are much more limited in scope than are the psychodynamic and humanistic theories. Bandura's social-cognitive theory suggests that personality is shaped by **observational learning**. This occurs in an interaction of cognition, behavior, and the environment known as **reciprocal determinism**. According to Rotter's **locus-of-control theory**, those with an internal locus are more likely to feel they can control events in their lives than those who have an external locus of control.

Modern theories of personality, unlike those of Freud, Jung, Horney, and the other psychodynamic theorists, have not attempted to provide comprehensive explanations for all aspects of personality. In **family systems theory**, for example, emphasis has turned to the individual acting in a social environment. Other emphases include cultural influences on personality, as well as an awareness of gender differences.

Archetype (p. 453)	Family systems theory (p. 461)
Basic anxiety (p. 454)	Fixation (p. 448)
Collective unconscious (p. 453)	Fully functioning person (p. 457)
Ego (p. 446)	Humanistic theories (p. 444)
Ego defense mechanism (p. 448)	Id (p. 446)
Extraversion (p. 454)	Identification (p. 448)

Introversion (p. 454)	Psychodynamic theory (p. 444)
Libido (p. 445)	Psychosexual stages (p. 446)
Locus of control (p. 461)	Reciprocal determinism (p. 459)
Neo-Freudian (p. 453)	Repression (p. 448)
Neurotic needs (p. 455)	Rorschach Inkblot Technique (p. 450)
Observational learning (p. 459)	Self-actualizing personality (p. 457)
Oedipus complex (p. 448)	Social-cognitive theories (p. 444)
Personal unconscious (p. 453)	Superego (p. 446)
Phenomenal field (p. 457)	Thematic Apperception Test (TAT) (p. 450)
Positive psychology (p. 459)	Unconscious (p. 445)
Projective tests (p. 449)	
Psychic determinism (p. 450)	
Psychoanalytic theory (p. 444)	

MyPsychLab Resources 10.3:

Explore: The Id, Ego, and Superego

Explore: Freud's Five Psychosexual Stages of Personality Development

10.4 What "Theories" Do People Use to Understand Themselves And Others?

Core Concept 10.4: Our understanding of ourselves and others is based on implicit theories of personality and our own self-narratives—both of which are influenced by culture.

People everywhere deal with each other on the basis of their **implicit personality theories**, which simplify the task of understanding others. Implicit theories often use the same traits that the five-factor theory does, although some gender biases have been reported. Implicit theories also may rely on naïve assumptions, and they often differ on whether personality is fixed or changeable.

People also have theories about themselves, found in the stories, called **self-narratives**, that they tell about themselves. These stories provide a sense of consistency and purpose in their lives. McAdams finds that **generative** American adults often use a **redemptive self** narrative that involves feeling a need to help others, despite facing daunting obstacles that are finally overcome.

Moreover, cross-cultural psychologists have found that the assumptions people make about personality and behavior vary widely across cultures—depending especially on whether the culture emphasizes individualism or collectivism. Those in individualistic cultures are more prone to the **fundamental attribution error**. There are many other dimensions impinging on personality on which cultures differ, including social status, romantic love, expression of feelings, locus of control, and thinking versus feeling.

Because no single personality theory can describe and explain the whole personality, most psychologists develop their own **eclectic** theories of personality by combining ideas from various perspectives.

Eclectic (p. 467)	Person–situation controversy (p. 468)
Fundamental attribution error (p. 466)	Redemptive self (p. 465)
Generativity (p. 465)	Self-narrative (p. 464)
Implicit personality theory (p. 464)	

Discovering Psychology Viewing Guide



Watch the following video by logging into MyPsychLab (www.mypsychlab.com). After you have watched the video, complete the activities that follow.



PROGRAM 15: THE SELF

PROGRAM REVIEW

- What name did William James give to the part of the self that focuses on the images we create in the mind of others?
 - the material self
 - the spiritual self
 - the social self
 - the outer self
- Gail is a toddler who is gradually separating from her mother. This process is called
 - identification.
 - individuation.
 - self-presentation.
 - self-consciousness.
- In Freudian theory, the part of the person that acts as a police officer restraining drives and passions is called the
 - superego.
 - ego.
 - id.
 - libido.
- Which statement reflects the humanistic view of the self, according to Carl Rogers?
 - Our impulses are in constant conflict with society's demands.
 - We have a capacity for self-direction and self-understanding.
 - We form an image of ourselves that determines what we can do.
 - Our views of ourselves are created by how people react to us.
- When we characterize self-image as a schema, we mean that
 - we use it to organize information about ourselves.
 - other people see us in terms of the image we project.
 - it is a good predictor of performance in specific situations.
 - we rationalize our behavior to fit into an image.
- In Albert Bandura's research, people were given the task of improving production at a model furniture factory. They performed best when they believed that performance
 - depended on their intelligence.
 - related mainly to how confident they felt.
 - would be given a material reward.
 - was based on learning an acquirable skill.
- Which of the following behaviors signal low status in a status transaction?
 - maintaining eye contact
 - using complete sentences
 - moving in slow, smooth way
 - touching one's face or hair
- According to the principles of behavioral confirmation, what reaction do people generally have to a person who is depressed?
 - People sympathetically offer help to the person.
 - People regard the person as inadequate.
 - People act falsely cheerful to make the person happy.
 - People treat a depressed person the same as anybody else.
- What was referred to in the film as a type of psychological genocide?
 - drugs
 - falling emphasis on education
 - prejudice
 - immigration
- What is the relevance of schemas to the self?
 - We try to avoid schemas in constructing our sense of self.

- b. We organize our beliefs about ourselves in terms of schemas.
 - c. Schemas are what makes us individuals.
 - d. Schemas are always negative, since they underlie prejudice.
11. In Teresa Amabile's work on creativity, how did being in a competitive situation affect creativity?
 - a. It reduced creativity.
 - b. It increased creativity.
 - c. Its effects varied depending on the person's innate creativity.
 - d. There was no effect.
 12. According to Hazel Markus, culture is what you
 - a. think.
 - b. see.
 - c. do.
 - d. hate.
 13. The phrase "mutual constitution" refers to which two components, according to Hazel Markus?
 - a. parent and child
 - b. art and scholarship
 - c. religion and society
 - d. self and culture
 14. In which culture are you most likely to find a definition of the person as a part of the group?
 - a. Japanese
 - b. American
 - c. Portugese
 - d. Russian
 15. The high rate of alcoholism among Native Americans was cited as an example of
 - a. individualism.
 - b. the psychological effects of prejudice.
 - c. mutual constitution.
 - d. striving for superiority.
 16. According to William James, which part of the self serves as our inner witness to outside events?
 - a. the material self
 - b. the spiritual self
 - c. the social self
 - d. the outer self
 17. Of the following psychologists, who is considered to be the least optimistic about the human condition?
 - a. Freud
 - b. Adler
 - c. Rogers
 - d. Maslow
 18. Which of the following refers to how capable we believe we are of mastering challenges?
 - a. self-efficacy
 - b. self-handicapping
 - c. confirmatory behavior
 - d. status transaction
 19. Teresa Amabile is to creativity as _____ is to behavioral confirmation.
 - a. Alfred Adler
 - b. Patricia Ryan
 - c. Mark Snyder
 - d. Albert Bandura
 20. Who is credited as being responsible for psychology's return to the self?
 - a. William James
 - b. B. F. Skinner
 - c. Patricia Ryan
 - d. Carl Rogers

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. What are some of the positive and negative aspects of the id, according to Freud?
2. Compare the social skills of your friends and yourself to people who did not grow up with computers and the Internet playing a central role in their lives. Do you see systematic differences in sociability, shyness, and apparent self-concept?

ACTIVITIES

1. How do you recognize extroverts and introverts? Observe people on television, in a public place, or at home. Rate their behavior on a continuum between the opposites of extrovert and introvert. How helpful is the distinction? Do these qualities seem to be a primary dimension of personality?
2. Describe yourself by highlighting your special abilities, admirable qualities, and accomplishments. Write a brief description of your parents, spouse, children, or a close friend. Consider how often you appreciate the positive aspects of your own or another's personality and how often you focus on the negatives. How does your

focus affect your own self-esteem and your relationships?

3. Take some characteristic about yourself that you have never liked (e.g., the tendency to interrupt, or the tendency to become tongue-tied around people of higher status than you). Spend the next month

seeing if you can completely rid yourself of that characteristic. If you are successful, how would you describe the shift? Was it a change in your personality, or was it a change in behavior despite the underlying traits that used to produce it?