Chapter 12 – Personality

Chapter Summary

Definition of personality

**Personality** is defined as a relatively stable pattern of behavior that the person shows in a wide variety of situations. The word **personality** is used to refer to all the personal characteristics of the person.

Personality types

**Type theories** are based on the idea that there are a certain number of types of people and that everyone falls into one of the type groups. According to **type theories**, the personalities of all the members of each group are very similar.

The ancient Greek physician, **Hippocrates**, wrote that people could be divided into four types based on the four elements that made up the universe: earth, air, fire, and water.

The **Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI)** is based on the ideas of **Carl Jung**. It assumes that people can be divided on the basis of four dimensions: Extraversion-Introversion (E or I), Sensing-Intuition (S or N), Thinking-Feeling (T or F), and Judging-Perceptive (J or P). **Extraverts** enjoy being the center of attention. **Introverts** are shy and withdrawn.

Most psychologists think that type theories don't do a good job of describing people. The problems with type theory have led many psychologists to prefer **trait theory**.

Trait theories

A **trait** is a relatively stable, enduring disposition to behave in a certain way. In **trait theory**, we assume that all people have traits but in different amounts. Unlike **type theories**, **trait theories** don't require us to divide people into groups or assume that members of any group are all alike.

For trait theory to work, we need a list of traits to use in describing people's personalities. **Gordon Allport** listed 17,953 adjectives that could be used to describe a person.

Personality researcher **Raymond B. Cattell** found that, by using a statistical technique called **factor analysis**, he could reduce the list of **personality traits** to a reasonable number. Cattell first developed a list of 35 surface traits. Surface traits are easily observed in the person’s behavior. Later, he used factor analysis to reduce this to 16 basic personality factors called **source traits**. Cattell expressed these source traits as pairs of contrasting traits such as relaxed versus tense, reserved versus outgoing, and trusting versus suspicious.
Using his list of 16 traits, Cattell developed his Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire (16PF), a paper-and-pencil personality test. The results of the 16PF are expressed in a trait profile, a graph showing the person's score on each trait.

Hans Eysenck proposed three traits that could be used to predict human behavior: extraversion (tendency to be outgoing), neuroticism (instability), and psychoticism (tendency toward crime and mental illness).

Modern theorists argue that there are five personality traits that are found reliably in all people. These factors are called the Big Five and the theory is known as the Five-Factor Theory of Personality. The five factors are openness to experience (creativity and imagination), conscientiousness (reliability and responsibility), extraversion (outgoing nature), agreeableness (cooperativeness), and neuroticism (emotional instability).

The Big Five factors have been found in a wide variety of cultures.

Research has confirmed the existence and stability of personality traits. Research evidence shows that people do have traits that strongly influence behavior across situations. One trait that seems to be particularly stable over the years is introversion versus extraversion.

Marvin Minsky, in his book *The Society of Mind* (1986), presents several reasons why stable personality traits would have evolved because they have survival value for humans.

**Heritability of personality**

We use the word “personality” to refer to all the personal characteristics of the person. “Temperament,” on the other hand, refers to a person’s inherited personality characteristics.

Alexander Thomas and his associates, (Thomas, Chess, and Birch) looked at the temperaments of very young babies. They classified some babies’ temperaments soon after they were born as "difficult" or "easy." They concluded that the babies were born this way and had inherited their temperaments.

Some researchers believe that there might be ethnically based differences in temperament that are inherited. Chinese-American babies, for example, seem to be more easily calmed than African- and European-American babies.

Thomas Bouchard and other researchers at the Minnesota Center for Twin and Adoption Research at the University of Minnesota are studying the similarities and differences between identical (monozygotic) twins and fraternal (dizygotic) twins raised together and apart. Their results are leading more and more psychologists to accept the idea that at least some of our personality characteristics may be inherited. Numerous studies seem to be confirming that heredity plays a significant role in personality.

Jerome Kagan and his colleagues have studied how children’s temperaments can vary as a result of variations in the responses of their sympathetic nervous systems. The researchers compared the reactions of the inhibited (shy) children, and uninhibited (non-shy) children. The inhibited children showed significantly more physiological arousal when faced with an unfamiliar person or situation. They found that children who were shy at the age of twenty-one or thirty-one months were still shy at the age of seven-and-a-half years.
Marvin Zuckerman in his 1991 book *Psychobiology of Personality* suggests that specific responses in the brain play an important role in personality. According to Zuckerman, the personality factors extraversion, neuroticism, and psychoticism are determined by the brain’s response to reward, punishment, and arousal. Zuckerman’s research suggests the following relationships:

- **Extraversion** - High sensitivity to reinforcement
- **Neuroticism** - High sensitivity to punishment
- **Psychoticism** - Low sensitivity to punishment; high optimal level of arousal

### Shyness

Phillip Zimbardo, in his 1977 book, *Shyness*, reports on giving the Stanford Shyness Survey to nearly 5000 people. More than 80 percent of the people who took the survey reported that they had been shy at some time in their lives. About 40 percent reported that they were shy at the time they took the survey. For some Asian cultures, as many as 60 percent reported that they were currently shy.

Shyness, according to researchers, is really a combination of at least three separate problems: social anxiety, self-defeating beliefs, and lack of social skills.

### Psychodynamic personality theory

Sigmund Freud’s theory of personality has two major parts. His theory of the mind divides personality into three parts: the id, the ego, and the superego. His developmental theory proposes five psychosexual stages.

The id is the source of all our psychic energy and inherited instincts. It contains the libido, which represents all our sexual and survival instincts. In the id, the life instinct (eros), and the death instinct (thanatos) motivate our behavior. The id is entirely in the unconscious part of the mind. The id is also irrational and is governed by the pleasure principle.

The ego has the job of keeping the id and the superego under control. It is rational and is governed by the reality principle.

The superego contains the ego ideal (the source of pride and satisfaction) and the conscience, (the source of guilt and shame).

Freud believed that in a healthy person the id, ego, and superego were in balance.

The other major part of Freud's concept of personality is his idea of psychosexual stages. According to Freud, each person goes through five stages of psychosexual development: oral, anal, phallic (Oedipal), latency, and genital. For each stage, Freud believed that there was a typical personality and a crucial issue or crisis that parents needed to handle properly. If parents are either too strict or too lenient in dealing with this crisis, the person could become fixated in that stage and retain some of the personality traits that went with that stage for the rest of his or her life.
Neo-Freudian theories

The term neo-Freudian is used to describe personality theorists who began as followers of Freud but who came to disagree with some of his principles.

Carl Jung believed that there was a part of the unconscious that was shared by all people on earth. Jung called this area the collective unconscious. He believed that it contained archetypes, which are universal symbols that appear in the myths, art, and dreams of every culture.

Karen Horney is best known for challenging Freud’s ideas about the personalities of women. For Freud, women were governed by “penis envy” and feelings of inferiority. Horney argued that if anyone is envious, it is men who may feel “womb envy” at not being able to bear and nurse children. Horney also gave us the idea of basic anxiety, which develops from being “isolated and helpless in a potentially hostile world.”

Alfred Adler stressed the concepts of compensation and the drive for superiority and their role in shaping personality. Adler believed that the person’s striving for superiority led him or her to develop a particular style of life or lifestyle.

Evaluation of psychodynamic theories

Most modern psychologists are very critical of Freud's theories. They are vague, complex and difficult to test. They fail the test of falsifiability. They have led to very little research. They are based on Freud's observations of a small number of disturbed people. They rely on the memories of his patients. They put too much emphasis on unconscious processes. Finally, sometimes Freud's ideas were simply wrong.

Although we criticize Freud for not being a very good scientist, there is no denying his powerful influence on psychology and on Western culture.

Behaviorist / learning theories of personality

The unconscious is not part of behaviorist personality theory because behaviorists focus on observable behavior.

Behaviorists J. B. Watson and B.F. Skinner were very skeptical of personality theory. They believed that how you behaved in a given situation was largely due to your learning experiences in similar situations in the past.

Social learning theorists Julian Rotter, Walter Mischel, and Albert Bandura, often disagreed with B.F. Skinner in much the same way that neo-Freudians disagreed with Freud.

Julian Rotter’s most important contribution to social learning theory is his idea of locus of control. People with an internal locus of control (internals) see rewards and punishments as being due mainly to their own actions. People with an external locus of control (externals) see rewards and punishments as beyond their control. There are a number of advantages to being an internal.
Walter Mischel thought that, in explaining behavior, we need both person variables (characteristics of the person such as traits) and situation variables (factors in the immediate environment). Sometimes this is described as the interaction of traits and states.

Albert Bandura suggested that three factors, cognitions, behaviors, and environmental factors interact in complex ways to produce behavior. He called this idea reciprocal determinism.

Humanistic personality theories

Humanistic personality theorists Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers thought that Freud’s view of human nature is far too negative. They also believed that people had free will and could choose how to behave. Both believed in self-actualization, a drive that makes us try to reach our full potential as persons.

Abraham Maslow believed that people progressed through a hierarchy of needs toward self-actualization.

Carl Rogers thought that healthy people had achieved congruence (a match) between the social self (the self we pretend to be) and the true self (who we really are). Rogers thought that unconditional positive regard helped people reach congruence and conditional positive regard interfered with congruence.

Pseudoscientific personality theories

In astrological theory, there are twelve personality types based on the twelve signs of the zodiac. Many well-designed scientific studies have attempted to find a relationship between a person’s sign and his or her personal traits. So far, all have failed.

Graphology experts say that a person’s handwriting reveals his or her personality traits. Phrenologists measure personality by analyzing the bumps on a person’s head. Numerologists do a mathematical analysis of the letters in a person’s name. The Lüscher Color Test measures personality by asking people to select their favorite colors. As with astrology, scientific studies have not shown these techniques to be of any value in measuring personality.

Pseudoscientific personality theories are helped by the Barnum effect, the tendency for people to consider general, flattering descriptions as amazingly accurate in describing them.

Personality assessment

Personality can be measured using direct observation (observing people in public), behavioral assessment (counting specific behaviors), situational testing (observing a person in a specific situation), interviews (asking a series of structured or unstructured questions), rating scales (giving a numeric rating on a list of traits), and by the administration of personality questionnaires (objective paper-and-pencil tests of personality).

Rating scales have three problems: the halo effect (the tendency of raters to underestimate the negative qualities of people with many positive qualities), the horns effect (the tendency of raters to underestimate the positive qualities of people with many negative qualities), and stereotyping (the tendency to assume that all members of a group share certain traits).
**Personality questionnaires**

Much of the scientific research on personality assessment has been done with **objective** paper-and-pencil tests called **personality questionnaires**.

Raymond B. Cattell’s 16PF Test is a **personality questionnaire** that produces a **trait profile** for each person who takes it.

Probably the best known of all personality questionnaires is the **MMPI-2**, the revised version of the **Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory**. The MMPI-2 was developed using empirical construction. It was designed to measure abnormal personality traits and has **10 clinical scales**. The MMPI-2 also has four **validity scales**, which are designed to indicate whether a person’s score is accurate or not.

The Neuroticism Extraversion Openness Personality Inventory, Revised, or **NEO-PI-R**, is probably the most widely used test for measuring personality in **ordinary people**. It measures the "Big Five" personality factors: **Neuroticism**, **extraversion**, **openness to experience**, **agreeableness**, and **conscientiousness**.

**Projective tests**

**Projective tests** of personality are designed to tap into the **unconscious** mind. The “questions” are ambiguous and, for every question, there are an infinite number of possible answers. The idea is that your unconscious will supply the answers and “**project**” them onto the test.

Swiss psychiatrist **Hermann Rorschach** developed the famous **inkblot test** that bears his name.

The other well-known projective test is **Henry Murray's Thematic Apperception Test (TAT)**, in which subjects tell what they see in a series of **ambiguous sketches**.

**Low reliability** has always been a problem with **projective tests**.

**Short Answer Self-Test**

Use the following answers to fill the blanks in this section:

- actualization
- Bandura
- Cattell
- congruence
- conscience
- extraverts
- Five
- graphology
- id
- Kagan
- locus
- personality
- shyness
- temperament
- trait
- type
- unconditional
- zodiac
1. We use the word __________________ to refer to all the personal characteristics of the person.

2. __________ theories are based on the idea that there are a certain number of types of people.

3. _______________ enjoy being the center of attention.

4. A __________ is a relatively stable, enduring disposition to behave in a certain way.

5. Raymond B. ____________ identified 16 source traits.

6. Modern personality theorists often talk about the Big ________________ personality traits.

7. The word _____________ refers to a person’s inherited personality characteristics.

8. Jerome _______________ studied the physiological responses of inhibited (shy) children.

9. ___________ is a combination of social anxiety, self-defeating beliefs, and lack of social skills.

10. According the Freud, the _______________ is governed by the pleasure principle.

11. According the Freud, the _______________ is the source of guilt and shame.

12. Julian Rotter studied the difference between internal and external ____________ of control.

13. Albert ___________ proposed reciprocal determinism.

14. Abraham Maslow believed that people progressed through a hierarchy of needs toward self-______________.

15. Carl Rogers believed that healthy people had achieved ____________ between the social self and the true self.

16. Rogers believed that people should receive ________________ positive regard.

17. Astrological personality theory is based on the twelve signs of the ________________.

18. ________________ experts say that a person’s handwriting reveals his or her personality traits.
Multiple-Choice Practice Test

1. Raymond B. Cattell developed his list of 16 source traits using the technique of _________________.
   a. type analysis  c. primary analysis
   b. chunking  d. factor analysis

2. ________________ is the tendency toward crime and mental illness.
   a. psychoticism  c. introversion
   b. neuroticism  d. extraversion

3. People classified as ________________ are shy and withdrawn.
   a. extraverts  c. archetypes
   b. introverts  d. psychotic

4. We use the word ________________ to refer to all the personal characteristics of the person.
   a. temperament  c. trait
   b. personality  d. conscientiousness

5. Marvin Minsky stressed the survival value of _________________.
   a. stable personality traits  c. shyness
   b. introversion  d. extraversion

6. ________________ and his associates classified babies as "easy" and "difficult."
   a. Alexander Thomas  c. Carl Rogers
   b. Thomas Bouchard  d. Marvin Minsky

7. Which of the following is known for his research with twins?
   a. Alexander Thomas  c. Carl Rogers
   b. Thomas Bouchard  d. Marvin Minsky

8. ________________ studied the physiological reactions of inhibited children.
   b. Raymond B. Cattell  d. Alexander Thomas

9. Philip Zimbardo reported that more than ______________ percent of the people who took his survey reported that they had been shy at some time in their lives.
   a. 80  c. 50
   b. 99  d. 27

10. According to Freud, the ego is
    a. the death instinct  c. governed by the pleasure principle
    b. irrational  d. governed by the reality principle
11. According to Freud, the ___________________ is the source of all our psychic energy and inherited instincts.
   a. id c. superego
   b. ego d. alter-ego

12. In Freud's theory, the _______________ is the source of pride and satisfaction
   a. id c. conscience
   b. ego ideal d. ego

13. The first of Freud's psychosexual stages is the
   a. latency stage c. anal stage
   b. genital stage d. oral stage

14. Which of the following is considered a neo-Freudian personality theorist?
   a. B. F. Skinner c. Karen Horney

15. _______________ proposed the collective unconscious.
   b. Karen Horney d. Carl Jung

16. A(n) ________________ is a universal symbol that appear in the myths, art, and dreams of every culture.
   a. archetype c. fixation
   b. analyth d. extrovert

17. The __________ effect is the tendency of raters to underestimate the negative qualities of people with many positive qualities
   a. horns c. introversion
   b. halo d. extroversion

18. The ______________ has 10 clinical scales.
   a. Rorschach c. TAT
   b. 16PF d. MMPI-2

19. The ______________ is designed to measure the Big Five personality traits.
   a. Rorschach c. NEO-PI-R
   b. 16PF d. MMPI-2

20. Which of the following is a projective test of personality?
   a. Rorschach c. NEO-PI-R
   b. 16PF d. MMPI-2
### Short Answer Self-Test - ANSWERS

1. personality
2. type
3. extraverts
4. trait
5. Cattell
6. Five
7. temperament
8. Kagan
9. shyness
10. id
11. conscience
12. locus
13. Bandura
14. actualization
15. congruence
16. unconditional
17. zodiac
18. graphology

### Multiple-Choice Practice Test - ANSWERS

1. d  
2. a  
3. b  
4. b  
5. a  
6. a  
7. b  
8. c  
9. a  
10. d  
11. a  
12. b  
13. d  
14. c  
15. d  
16. a  
17. b  
18. d  
19. c  
20. a
# Flash Cards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personality</th>
<th>The word for all the personal characteristics of the person</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type Theory</td>
<td>The idea that there are a certain number of types of people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hippocrates</td>
<td>Divided people into earth, air, fire, and water types</td>
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<tr>
<td>MBTI</td>
<td>Myers-Briggs Type Indicator; personality test based on the ideas of Carl Jung</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introvert</td>
<td>Shy and withdrawn person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extravert</td>
<td>Outgoing person who enjoys being the center of attention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trait Theory</td>
<td>The idea that all people have certain characteristics but in different amounts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trait</td>
<td>A relatively stable, enduring disposition to behave in a certain way</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gordon Allport</td>
<td>Listed 17,953 adjectives that could be used to describe a person</td>
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<td>Raymond B. Cattell</td>
<td>Used factor analysis to identify 16 source traits; created the 16PF test</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hans Eysenck</td>
<td>Proposed only 3 traits: extraversion, neuroticism, and psychoticism</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>extraversion</strong></td>
<td>tendency to be outgoing</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>neuroticism</strong></td>
<td>emotional instability</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>psychoticism</strong></td>
<td>tendency to crime and mental illness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Big Five</strong></td>
<td>openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, neuroticism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Marvin Minsky</strong></td>
<td>stressed the survival value of stable personality traits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>temperament</strong></td>
<td>term for a person's inherited personality characteristics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Alexander Thomas</strong></td>
<td>classified babies as &quot;easy&quot; and &quot;difficult&quot; while studying temperament</td>
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<td><strong>Thomas Bouchard</strong></td>
<td>studied identical and fraternal twins at the University of Minnesota</td>
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<td><strong>Jerome Kagan</strong></td>
<td>studied the physiological responses of inhibited (shy) children</td>
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<td><strong>Marvin Zuckerman</strong></td>
<td>studied the brain's response to reward, punishment, and arousal</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Philip Zimbardo</strong></td>
<td>wrote the book <em>Shyness</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>shyness</strong></td>
<td>combination of social anxiety, self-defeating beliefs, and lack of social skills</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>psychodynamic theory</strong></td>
<td>Freud's theory of personality</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>eros</strong></td>
<td>the life instinct</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>thanatos</strong></td>
<td>the death instinct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>id</strong></td>
<td>unconscious source of all psychic energy; irrational; governed by pleasure principle</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>ego</strong></td>
<td>controls id and superego; rational; governed by the reality principle</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>superego</strong></td>
<td>contains conscience and ego ideal</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>conscience</strong></td>
<td>source of guilt and shame</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>ego ideal</strong></td>
<td>source of pride and satisfaction</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>psychosexual stages</strong></td>
<td>Freud's stages: oral, anal, phallic (Oedipal), latency, and genital</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>fixation</strong></td>
<td>getting stuck in a psychosexual stage when parents mishandle crisis</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>neo-Freudians</strong></td>
<td>followers of Freud: Carl Jung, Karen Horney, Alfred Adler</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Carl Jung</strong></td>
<td>proposed collective unconscious and archetypes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Theorist</td>
<td>Contribution</td>
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<tr>
<td>Karen Horney</td>
<td>Suggested womb envy instead of penis envy and proposed basic anxiety</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alfred Adler</td>
<td>Proposed compensation, drive for superiority, and style of life (lifestyle)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watson and Skinner</td>
<td>Thought personality was learned</td>
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<tr>
<td>Julian Rotter</td>
<td>Proposed internal and external locus of control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal locus of control</td>
<td>Seeing reinforcing and punishing events as being due mainly to one's own actions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External locus of control</td>
<td>Seeing reinforcing and punishing events as beyond one's control</td>
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<tr>
<td>Walter Mischel</td>
<td>Proposed person variables and situation variables (states and traits)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person variables</td>
<td>Characteristics of a person, such as traits, that influence behavior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situation variables</td>
<td>Factors in the immediate environment that influence behavior</td>
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<tr>
<td>Albert Bandura</td>
<td>Proposed reciprocal determinism and modeling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanistic theorists</td>
<td>Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers; free will; positive view of human nature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abraham Maslow</td>
<td>Proposed hierarchy of needs with self-actualization at the top</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Carl Rogers</strong></td>
<td>stressed congruence between true self and social self; unconditional positive regard</td>
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<tr>
<td>social self</td>
<td>the self that we pretend to be in social situations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>true self</td>
<td>the person we really are</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>astrological theory</td>
<td>twelve personality types based on the signs of the zodiac</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>graphology</td>
<td>idea that personality is revealed by one's handwriting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>phrenology</td>
<td>idea that personality is revealed by the bumps on one's head</td>
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<tr>
<td>numerology</td>
<td>mathematical analysis of personality based on letters in a person's name</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lüscher Color Test</td>
<td>measures personality by asking about one's favorite colors</td>
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<tr>
<td>Barnum effect</td>
<td>tendency to see general, flattering personality description as very accurate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>direct observation</td>
<td>observing people in natural settings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>behavioral assessment</td>
<td>counting specific behaviors</td>
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<tr>
<td>situational testing</td>
<td>putting people in specific situations to test their reactions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interview</strong></td>
<td>asking questions in person; may be structured or unstructured</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Rating Scale</strong></td>
<td>rating people on a list of traits using a numeric scale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Personality Questionnaire</strong></td>
<td>objective paper-and-pencil personality test</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>16PF</strong></td>
<td>Raymond B. Cattell's personality test; produces a trait profile</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>MMPI-2</strong></td>
<td>test of abnormal personality traits; has 10 clinical scales, 4 validity scales</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>NEO-PI-R</strong></td>
<td>modern personality test designed to measure the Big Five personality traits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Projective Tests</strong></td>
<td>personality tests designed to measure the unconscious; lack reliability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hermann Rorschach</strong></td>
<td>developed the famous inkblot projective test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Henry Murray</strong></td>
<td>developed the TAT; projective test that asks people to respond to sketches</td>
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</tbody>
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