

# Personality and the Trait, Humanistic, and Social Cognitive Perspectives



# The Humanistic Perspective

- The two founders of the Humanistic Perspective are Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers.
- The Humanistic Perspective focuses on the growth potential of healthy people. They focus on the power of free will and how people view themselves as a whole in pursuit of growth.



Maslow



Rogers

# Maslow's Main Idea

- Maslow differed from Freud since he believed we are all born good and we naturally move towards self-actualization unless society gets in the way.
  - **Self Actualization**: ultimate goal in hierarchy of needs; meet one's potential.



# Carl Rogers' Person Centered Approach

- Believed all humans have potential for growth; they just need a climate that has:
  - Genuineness (truthful/sincere)
  - Acceptance (unconditional positive regard)
  - Empathy (try to understand others)
- **Unconditional Positive Regard:** attitude of total acceptance towards another person.

# Carl Roger's Idea of Self Actualization (Self Acceptance)

- Rogers believed the key to self-actualization, a term he called becoming fully-functioning, was to learn to accept ourselves and unite our ideas of the real self and the ideal self.
- When we lack unconditional positive regard it leads to **incongruence**: perceived difference between real and ideal self.

# Humanistic Perspective's Central Concept to Understanding Personality

- **Self-Concept**: all thoughts and feelings about ourselves: “Who am I?”
- Related terms to understand Self Concept:
  - **Self Esteem**: feelings of self-worth.
  - **Self-Serving Bias**: a readiness to perceive oneself favorably. People accept credit for their achievements but blame others or the situation for their failures.
    - Survey Question: Who is most likely to go to heaven? Who beats out Princess Diana, Gandhi, MLK Jr., and Mother Theresa?

# Criticism of Humanist Perspective

- Maslow's concepts are vague and might just be his own values.
- Too much focus on individual?
- Ignores human capacity for evil.

# The Trait Perspective

- The father of the trait perspective of personality is **Gordon Allport**.
- The trait perspective looks to **DESCRIBE** personality in terms of fundamental **traits**: patterns of behavior or disposition to feel or act as assessed by self-reported inventories or peer reports.
- It focuses on describing and measuring the numerous ways in which people differ from each other.





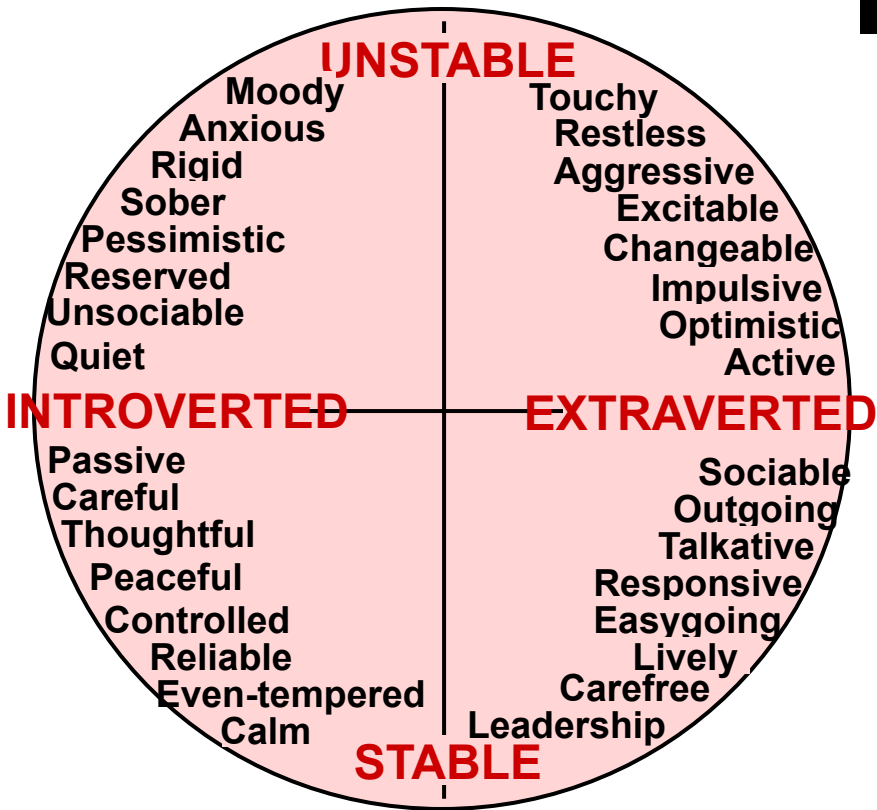
# Method used For Measuring Personality for Trait Perspective

- **Personality Inventory:** a questionnaire that is usually true/false in which people respond to items designed to gauge a wide range of feelings and behaviors; used to assess selected personality traits.
- Weakness of This Measuring Device?

# Example of Personality Inventory (Trait Perspective)

- **Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI)**: most widely used personality test. Purpose was to identify emotional disorders but is also now used for screening purposes for employment.
- Test is an example of being an **empirically derived test**: having pool of test questions that discriminate between groups. (Ex: Looking for differences in answers between a clinically depressed group and a normal group)

# Eynsenck' s 2 Dimensions of Personality (Trait Perspective)



- Through factor analysis, Hans Eynsencks reduced the dimensions of personality down to two. They were introverted (keep to yourself) / extroverted (outgoing) and stable/unstable.

# The Big Five Personality Traits Are Measured in A Inventory Called the NEO PI-R (Trait Perspective)

1. **Openness (to experience):** measures factors of active imagination, preference for variety, and intellectual curiosity within people.
2. **Conscientiousness:** measures self discipline, carefulness, need for achievement, and degree by which people think before acting.
3. **Extraversion:** measures social interaction and how assertive people are.
4. **Agreeableness:** measures how empathetic, considerate, friendly, and helpful people are.
5. **Neuroticism:** measures people's tendencies to experience negative emotional states like stress and anxiety.

# Big Five Assessment

# Scoring Your “Big 5” Personality Test

## **EXTRAVERSION**

- Reverse the numbers in front of 6, 21 & 31

$$1 = 5$$

$$2 = 4$$

$$3 = 3$$

$$4 = 2$$

$$5 = 1$$

Now add all of the numbers for items:

1, 6, 11, 16, 21, 26, 31 & 36

Scores can range from 8 to 40, with higher scores reflecting greater extraversion,

# Scoring Your “Big 5” Personality Test

## **AGREEABLENESS**

- Reverse the numbers in front of 2, 12, 27 & 37

$$1 = 5$$

$$2 = 4$$

$$3 = 3$$

$$4 = 2$$

$$5 = 1$$

Now add all of the numbers for items:

2, 7, 12, 17, 22, 27, 32, 37 & 42

Scores can range from 9 to 45, with higher scores reflecting greater extraversion,

# Scoring Your “Big 5” Personality Test

## **CONSCIENTIOUSNESS**

- Reverse the numbers in front of 8, 18, 23 & 43

$$1 = 5$$

$$2 = 4$$

$$3 = 3$$

$$4 = 2$$

$$5 = 1$$

Now add all of the numbers for items:

3, 8, 13, 18, 23, 28, 33, 38 & 43

Scores can range from 9 to 45, with higher scores reflecting greater conscientiousness



# Scoring Your “Big 5” Personality Test

## **NEUROTICISM**

- Reverse the numbers in front of 9, 24 & 34

$$1 = 5$$

$$2 = 4$$

$$3 = 3$$

$$4 = 2$$

$$5 = 1$$

Now add all of the numbers for items:

4, 9, 14, 19, 24, 29, 34 & 39

Scores can range from 8 to 40, with higher scores reflecting greater emotional stability.

# Scoring Your “Big 5” Personality Test

## **OPENNESS**

- Reverse the numbers in front of 35 & 41

$$1 = 5$$

$$2 = 4$$

$$3 = 3$$

$$4 = 2$$

$$5 = 1$$

Now add all of the numbers for items:

5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 41 & 44

Scores can range from 10 - 50, with higher scores reflecting greater openness

# Personality Traits of US Presidents

(Myers Notes)

# **Major Weakness of the Trait Perspective?**

# Individualism vs. Collectivism

- **Individualism**

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

- **Collectivism**

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

# Value Differences

TABLE 14.3

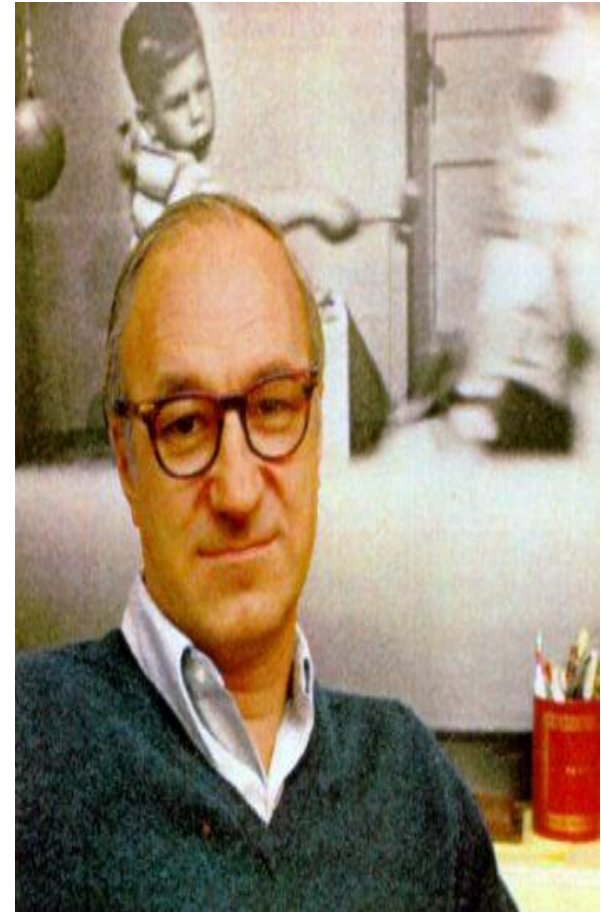
## VALUE CONTRASTS BETWEEN INDIVIDUALISM AND COLLECTIVISM

Concept	Individualism	Collectivism
Self	Independent (identity from individual traits)	Interdependent (identity from belonging)
Life task	Discover and express one's uniqueness	Maintain connections, fit in
What matters	Me — personal achievement and fulfillment; rights and liberties; self-esteem	We — group goals and solidarity; social responsibilities and relationships
Coping method	Change reality	Accommodate to reality
Morality	Defined by individuals (self-based)	Defined by social networks (duty-based)
Relationships	Many, often temporary or casual; confrontation acceptable	Few, close and enduring; harmony valued
Attributing behavior	Behavior reflects one's personality and attitudes	Behavior reflects social norms and roles

Sources: Adapted from Thomas Schoeneman (1994) and Harry Triandis (1994).

# Social Cognitive Perspective

- Father of Social Cognitive Perspective is Albert Bandura.
- Social Cognitive Perspective: emphasizes the importance of external events (society) and how we interpret them (cognition).



# Personality is Made Up of Interlocking Forces

- **Reciprocal Determinism:** is the idea that environment influences personality **AND** personality influences the environment.
- Same environment can have completely different effects on different people because of how they interpret and react to external events.
  - Ex. My parents are liberal. I identify with my parents. I therefore choose a more liberal college to attend. This makes me even more liberal. I leave school and I take a job working for liberal causes. Can you see how my environment affects me and how I have an affect on my environment?



# Reciprocal Determinism

- “Shawshank Redemption” clip

# Self –Efficacy

(NOT IN YOUR BOOK!)

A person's belief in his/her ability to succeed in a specific situation.

These beliefs influence how people feel, think and behave.

# Self –Efficacy

## (NOT IN YOUR BOOK!)

People with a strong sense of self-efficacy:

- View challenging problems as tasks to be mastered.
- Develop deeper interest in the activities in which they participate.
- Form a stronger sense of commitment to their interests and activities.
- Recover quickly from setbacks and disappointments.

People with a weak sense of self-efficacy:

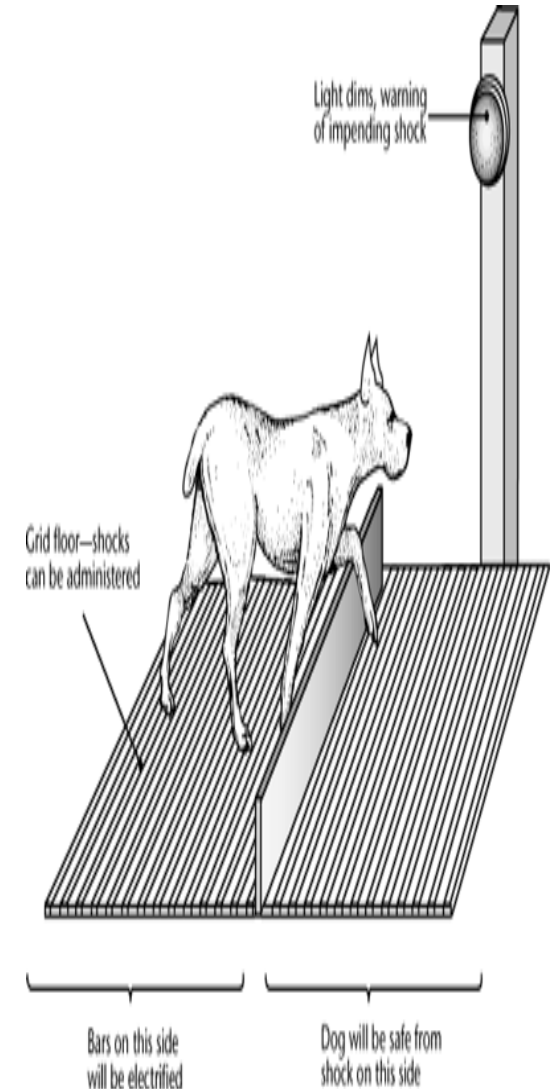
- Avoid challenging tasks.
- Believe that difficult tasks and situations are beyond their capabilities.
- Focus on personal failings and negative outcomes.
- Quickly lose confidence in personal abilities (Bandura, 1994).

# Julius Rotter's Theory of Personal Control and Locus of Control

- **Internal Locus of Control:** idea that one controls their own destiny. Achievement is highest under this level. Ex: Hard work gets rewarded.
- **External Locus of Control:** idea that one's fate is outside of their personal control and determined by luck. Ex: People get promotions b/c they know right people.

# External Locus of Control Can Lead to Learned Helplessness

- **Learned Helplessness:** hopelessness and passive resignation an animal or human learns when unable to avoid repeated aversive events.
- Ex: Dog being uncontrollably shocked for period; will not later escape when time arrives.



# Learned Helplessness

- “Schindler’s List” clip

# Evaluating the Social Cognitive Perspective

- Most widely accepted approach by current psychologists since it takes aspects from learning and cognition.
- Criticized by some because it fails to consider possible unconscious motives and focuses too much on environment not enough on inner traits.

# Know Summary of Perspectives:

**TABLE 14.4**

## **THE FOUR PERSPECTIVES ON PERSONALITY**

<b>Perspective</b>	<b>Explanation of Behavior</b>	<b>Assessment Techniques</b>	<b>Evaluation</b>
Psychoanalytic	Unconscious conflicts between pleasure-seeking impulses and social restraints	Projective tests aimed at revealing unconscious motivations	A speculative, hard-to-test theory with enormous cultural impact
Trait	Expressing biologically influenced dispositions, such as extraversion or introversion	Personality inventories that assess the strengths of different traits	A descriptive approach criticized as sometimes underestimating the variability of behavior from situation to situation
Humanistic	Processing conscious feelings about oneself in the light of one's experiences and needs	Questionnaire assessments of self-concept	A theory that reinvigorated contemporary interest in the self; criticized as subjective and sometimes naively self-centered and optimistic
Social-cognitive	Reciprocal influences between people and their situations, colored by perceptions of control	Correlational and experimental studies of people's feelings of control	An interactive theory that integrates research on learning, cognition, and social behavior; criticized as underestimating the importance of emotions and enduring traits