<u>Personality</u> is an individual's unique and relatively consistent pattern of thinking, feeling and behaving. There are four basic groups of theorists who try to describe and explain individual similarities and differences.

TABLE 11.5	The Major Personality Perspectives	
Perspective	**Key Theorists**	**Key Themes and Ideas**
Psychoanalytic	Sigmund Freud	Influence of unconscious psychological processes; importance of sexual and aggressive instincts; lasting effects of early childhood experiences
	Carl Jung	The collective unconscious, archetypes, and psychological harmony
	Karen Horney	Importance of parent-child relationship; defending against basic anxiety; womb envy
	Alfred Adler	Striving for superiority, compensating for feelings of inferiority
Humanistic	Carl Rogers	Emphasis on the self-concept, psychological growth, free will, and inherent goodness
	Abraham Maslow	Behavior as motivated by hierarchy of needs and striving for self-actualization; focus on psychologically healthy people
Social cognitive	Albert Bandura	Reciprocal interaction of behavioral, cognitive, and environmental factors; emphasis on conscious thoughts, self-efficacy beliefs, self-regulation, and goal setting
Trait	Raymond Cattell	Emphasis on measuring and describing individual differences; 16 source traits of personality
	Hans Eysenck	Three basic dimensions of personality: introversion—extraversion, neuroticism—emotional stability, and psychoticism
	Robert McCrae and Paul Costa, Jr.	Five-factor model: five basic dimensions of personality: neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness, conscientiousness (use the mnemonic OCEAN)

Freudian Defense Mechanisms

To keep unconscious desires unconscious, (according to Freud, these were sexual and aggressive desires), we need to expend a lot of psychological energy to do this. Neurosis occurs when we are required to expend an excessive amount of energy to repress these desires. Anxiety occurs when the demand of the idealized self (superego) and the impulsive self (id) overwhelm the rational self (ego), anxiety results.

According to Freud, one way for the rational self (ego) to temporarily reduce this anxiety is to distort your thoughts and perception of reality. These deceptions can help you maintain an integrated self while searching for a realistic and acceptable solution for the conflict between the superego and id that produces anxiety (also you also might think of it in terms of humanist theory when your experiences are inconsistent with your self-concept).

The use of defense mechanisms is very common. Many psychologically healthy individuals temporarily use defense mechanisms to deal with stressful events (Chapter 13: Stress, Health and Coping).

However, when defense mechanism delay continually distort "reality" or interfere with our use of more constructive coping strategies, they can be counterproductive and keep us from learning from experience. Why?

The Major Ego Defense Mechanisms

Defense Mechanism	Explanation	Example
Repression	Unacceptable or unpleasant impulses are pushed back into the unconscious	A woman is unable to recall that she was raped
Displacement	The expression of an unwanted feeling or thought is redirected from a more threatening, powerful person to a weaker one	A brother yells at his younger sister after a teacher gives him a bad grade
Sublimation	Diversion of unwanted impulses into socially approved thoughts, feelings, or behaviors	A person with strong feelings of aggression becomes a soldier
Rationalization	A distortion of reality in which a person justifies what happens (also known as sour grapes)	A person who is passed over for an award says she didn't really want it in the first place
Projection	Attributing unwanted impulses and feelings to someone else	A man who is angry at his father acts lovingly to his father but complains that his father is angry with him
Reaction Formation	Thinking or behaving in a way that is the extreme opposite of unacceptable urges or impulses	Threatened by their awakening sexual attraction to girls, adolescent boys often go out of their way to tease and torment adolescent girls
Denial	Refusal to accept or acknowledge an anxiety-producing piece of information	A person who is convicted for DUI three times this year denies that he has a problem with alcohol.
Undoing	A form of unconscious repentance that involves neutralizing or atoning for an unacceptable action or thought with a second action or thought	A woman who gets a tax refund by cheating on her taxes makes a larger than usual donation to the church collection on the following Sunday
Regression	People behave as if they were at an earlier stage of development	A boss has a temper tantrum when an employee makes a mistake

FIGURE 8-7. A classic example of indirect anger or displacement.

FIGURE 9-6. The "born loser" is projecting.

"On the other hand, the daily rate is a lot
cheaper than at the ski lodge."

FIGURE 9-5. The skier's wife is helping him to rational-
ize his accident.

1.   Anne's care broke down. Since she does not have enough money for repairs, she must leave an hour earlier to ride her bicycle or walk to work. Anne commented that she enjoys the exercise and saving the gas and oil money.

2.   Chad had stopped sucking his thumb by the time he was four. At age seven he was told that his parents were divorcing and he would be living with his mother and a "new father." Chad began sucking his thumb again.

3.   Martin was cutting wood and injured his hand with his chain saw. While driving to the emergency room of a local hospital, he recalled the painful shots he received during his last visit. He missed the turn to the hospital and had to ask for directions to find it.

4.   Eric is a big spender. He tips heavily, buys extravagant gifts, and often gambles. When is thrifty wife bought materials to make new kitchen curtains, he accused her of squandering money needlessly. He claimed the old warn curtains were adequate and said she was wasting our money.

5.   Little Suzi was upset when her mother spanked her. She ran to her toy crib and smacked her doll

6.   Jeremy has always been a problem to his other. He never keeps rules and argues with her constantly. In choosing a tattoo, he selected a large heart with "Mom" in the center to show his affection for her.

7.   Whenever Elizabeth is angry she heads for her piano. She has composed several outstanding jazz tunes.

Is homophobia an indicator of latent homosexuality?

Homophobia consists of feelings of fear, discomfort and aversion that some people experience in interacting with gay individuals. Psychoanalytic theorists have argued that homophobia among men may be rooted in anxiety about the possibility of being homosexual. Psychoanalysts argue that homophobia results from <u>repression</u> of one's latent homosexuality and <u>reaction formation</u>, which leads some men to accentuate their masculinity and to be especially hostile towards gays.

The following two groups (heterosexual, highly homophobic men compared with heterosexual, low homophobic men) watched three types of explicit sexually erotic videos and measured their sexual arousal.

<u>Differences in Sexual Arousal to Erotic Videos</u>

	heterosexual activity	Female Homosexual activity	Male Homosexual activity
Heterosexual men			
• High homophobic	No Difference in arousal	No Difference in arousal	Greater arousal by the highly homophobic men
• Low homophobic			

Although the highly homophobic men were physiologically more aroused by video of male homosexual activity, their self-report of sexual arousal was similar to those low in homophobia.

<u>What is the Humanist Perspective?</u>

What are the key ideas in the Humanistic perspective of personality?

- Humanists focus on the healthy individual, not the individual with problems. Freud and the Neo-Freudians (Jung, Horney and Adler) studied people with problems.
- Subjective experiences and perceptions of the self are important for understanding the individual, which helped lead to client-centered therapy.
- Unlike Freud who believed people are motivated by sexual and destructive urges, humanists believe people are innately good.
- Humanists believe people are motivated by the need to grow psychologically. Maslow believed people move towards self-actualization and Rogers believed that people strive to enhance themselves. For example, their view of personality emphasizes human potential and such uniquely human characteristics such as self-awareness and freewill.
  - o Freud saw creativity as sublimation of sexual urges.
  - o Humanists see creativity as a human motive to strive for self-improvement and expression.
- Understanding the social context in which a person lives is important for understanding personality.

Carl Rogers

Rogers was impressed with his clients' drive to grow and develop their potential. People are motivated by the actualization tendency—the innate drive to maintain and enhance the human organism.

Key ideas:
- Self-concept
- Conditional positive regard
- Unconditional positive regard
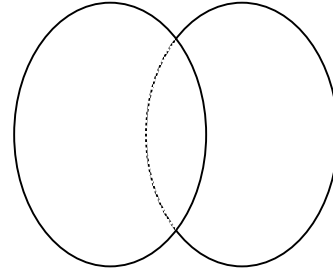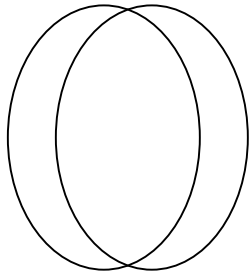- Fully-functional person

The Self-Concept

The set of perceptions and beliefs that you have of yourself. You might think of this as a social identity. You identify yourself by your job, hobby, associations (people you associate with), possessions or religion.

An example someone's self-concept may contain the following:

Beliefs or Attributes	Examples
Interpersonal attributes	I am a student; I'm a brother; I play football
Ascribed attributes	I'm a man; I'm 22 years old; I'm an American; I'm Catholic, Jewish…
Interests and activities	I enjoy music; I like to cook
Self-determination	I can reach my career goals; I'm religious
Social differentiation	I'm from a middle-class family; I'm a Southerner; I'm a Rep/Dem
Self-awareness	I'm a good person; My beliefs fit together well
Internalized beliefs	I'm pro-choice; I'm an environmentalist
Existential aspects	I'm a unique person; I'm attractive

Well adjusted individual	Poorly adjusted individual
A large overlap of personal experience of life and their self-concept	A little overlap of personal experience of life and their self-concept

For example, if your <u>self-concept</u> involves being environmentally conscious,

- o a well adjusted individual would be one where they use less water, recycle, ride their bike to school and work, etc.
- o a poorly adjusted individual doesn't recycle, drives their SUV two blocks to the store, wastes water, doesn't turn off the lights when not in use, etc.

If your <u>self-concept</u> involves being an avid tennis player,

- A well adjusted person would be one who plays tennis.
- A poorly adjusted person would be one who doesn't play tennis.

Carl Rogers believes people are motivated to discover their concept and maintain a consistent <u>self-concept</u>.
- If any of these are threatened, you defend your self-concept against these threats.
- According to Roger's the larger the gap between an individual's self-concept (identity) and reality, the poorer the person's psychological adjustment.
- If your experiences are inconsistent with your self-concept, you can:
    - o change your self-concept,
    - o change your behavior and experiences or
    - o distort reality

When the person's experience is congruent with his/her self-concept, the person becomes psychologically healthy and a <u>fully functional person</u>.

Rogers define a <u>fully functional person</u> as one who has flexible, constantly evolving self-concept. Fully functional people are:
- realistic
- open to new experiences
- capable of changing in response to new experiences
- more likely to be creative
- spontaneous
- enjoy harmonious relations with others
- their sense of self is consistent with their emotions and experiences

When a person feels that they can behave in a way that is consistent with their self-concept, they are psychologically adjusted. They do not feel they expend psychological resources to deny or distort their experiences.

Conditional positive regard: The sense that you will be valued and loved only if you behave in a way that is acceptable to others; conditional love or acceptance. For example, a person may feel uncomfortable if their parents only accept them if they pick a certain religious view or occupation.

- A person is uncomfortable to express their feelings and disagreements for fear of being rejected by someone they look up to—they learn to deny or distort their genuine feelings and can lead to inconsistencies in behavior.
- The self-concept is largely based on the evaluation of others, not your own evaluation. The person perceives behaviors as acceptable only if they meet with the approval of others. The motivations for your attitudes and behavior are external, rather than internal.
- Conditions of worth are created when people not behaviors are evaluated. For example, you are accepted as long as you become a dentist like your father/mother.

Unconditional positive regard: The sense that you will be valued and loved even if you don't conform to the standards or expectations of others; unconditional love or acceptance.
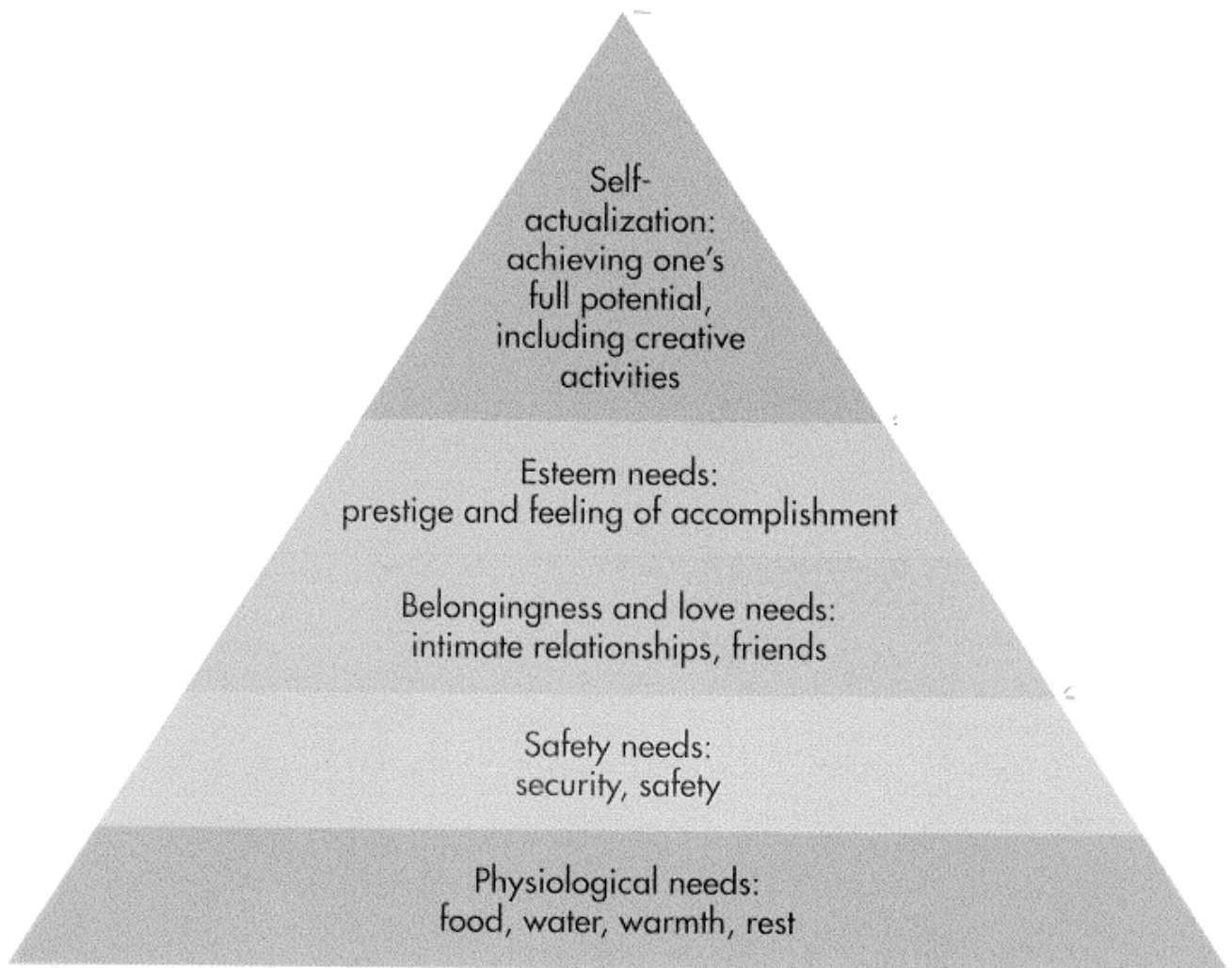
- With unconditional positive regard, a person is comfortable in expressing their feelings and disagreements with others without fear of not being accepted by someone they look up to. For example, you are accepted as a part of the family regardless of what you choose to do as a career.

When your feelings become denied, there is incongruence between your self-concept and the experience of your self-concept. Rogers did not advocate permissive parenting. You can disapprove of a child's behavior, but not reject the child.

You might have responses such as I understand your decision, but I disagree with it. You reject the behavior, but accept the person. Eg. Speeding in a school zone is stupid versus you are stupid driver.

Abraham Maslow

Human motives are arranged in a hierarchy of needs. As a human need, we strive to achieve self-actualization. However, in order to achieve self-actualization, needs at the bottom of the hierarchy must be satisfied first. The social environment has a strong effect on the development of self-actualization. It is difficult for the poor to satisfy self-actualization and esteem needs if safety and physiological needs are not met. Also see chapter 8 (Motivation and Emotion).

Self-actualization: achieving one's full potential, including creative activities

Esteem needs: prestige and feeling of accomplishment

Belongingness and love needs: intimate relationships, friends

Safety needs: security, safety

Physiological needs: food, water, warmth, rest

College men and women who scored higher on a test of self-actualization were:

- more likely to report being truly in love with at least one other person during the past three years than students who scored lower. The latter students reported not having been intimately involved with anyone.
- were less resentful to their former lovers than those who were less actualizing when their relationship had broken up.

Problems and Weaknesses with the Humanist Perspective

(1) Humanistic motives ignore other factors such as incentives, biological factors and situational factors.
(2) Humanistic theories are too optimistic. It has difficulties accounting for destructive behavior.
(3) Humanistic claims, concepts and motives are too vague to be assessed. Like the psychoanalytic perspective, it is based on clinical observations, rather than empirical research.
  • How do you assess when someone is self-actualized?
  • How do you assess a self-concept?
  • How do you assess whether a self-concept is congruent?
(4) If the actualization tendency is universal, then why is it difficult to find people who are self-actualized?

Contributions of the Humanist Perspective

(1) Promoted the scientific study of healthy individuals and creativity.
(2) Subjective experience and self-concept have become important concepts in the understanding of personality.