

Mental Health

(414 Edu.)

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Chapter 1

Introduction



What is mental health?



Mental health affects how we think, feel and act. It also affects our everyday life, such as work, relationships and study.

Looking after our social and emotional wellbeing is as important as keeping our body healthy. When we're feeling emotionally healthy we can be fully present with our family, friends and community.

Mental health definition

Mental health is a state of mental well-being that enables people to cope with the stresses of life, realize their abilities, learn well and work well, and contribute to their

community. It is an integral component of health and well-being that underpins our individual and collective abilities to make decisions, build relationships and shape the world we live in.

The mental health continuum

It can be hard to talk about mental health. Maybe your family and friends feel uncomfortable talking about it. Maybe you don't know where to start or how it relates to you.

We've developed the mental health continuum to help you talk about social and emotional wellbeing. It will give you the words to describe how you're feeling, and to ask how others are feeling. It can also help you decide what steps to take to look after your mental health right now.



Why a mental health continuum?

Our mental health can change gradually over time. We might start to feel unsettled, but move back to feeling healthy in a few days. Or we might move from feeling unsettled to really struggling. This is when we may need to seek professional support.

Many of us will experience a mental health crisis in our lives, but we don't stay in crisis. We'll move beyond the crisis into a period of healing and then another healthy period when we've recovered.

On this page we explain what each of these periods looks like and what you can do to maintain or improve your mental health.

Concepts in mental health

Mental health is a state of mental well-being that enables people to cope with the stresses of life, realize their abilities, learn well and work well, and contribute to their

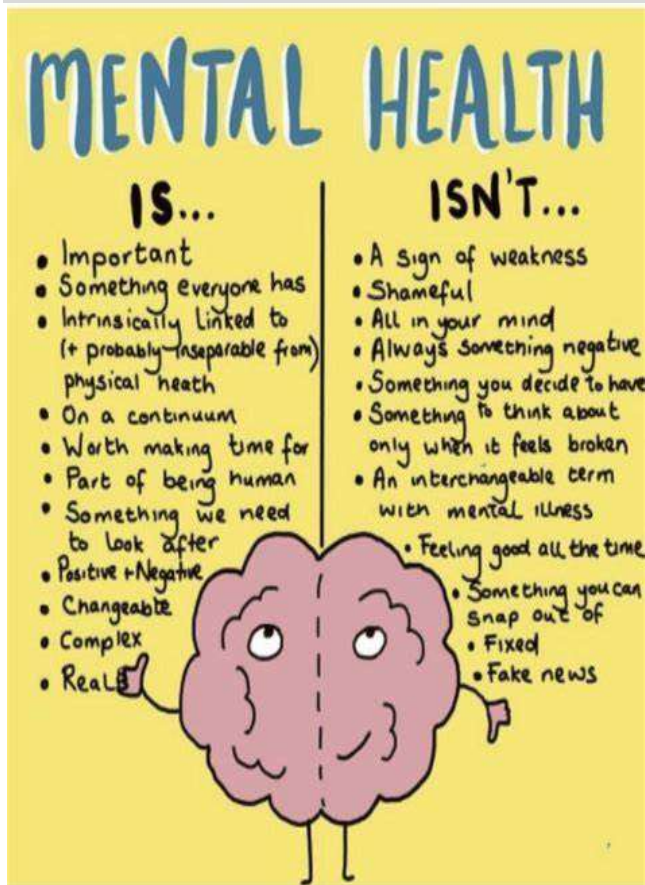
community. It is an integral component of health and well-being that underpins our individual and collective abilities to make decisions, build relationships and shape the world we live in. Mental health is a basic human right. And it is crucial to personal, community and socio-economic development.

Mental health is more than the absence of mental disorders. It exists on a complex continuum, which is experienced differently from one person to the next, with varying degrees of difficulty and distress and potentially very different social and clinical outcomes.

Mental health conditions include mental disorders and psychosocial disabilities as well as other mental states associated with significant distress, impairment in functioning, or risk of self-harm. People with mental health conditions are more likely to experience lower

levels of mental well-being, but this is not always or necessarily the case.

Determinants of mental health



Throughout our lives, multiple individual, social and structural determinants may combine to protect

or undermine our mental health and shift our position on the mental health continuum.

Individual psychological and biological factors such as emotional skills, substance use and genetics can make people more vulnerable to mental health problems.

Exposure to unfavorable social, economic, geopolitical and environmental circumstances – including poverty, violence, inequality and environmental deprivation – also increases people’s risk of experiencing mental health conditions.

Risks can manifest themselves at all stages of life, but those that occur during developmentally sensitive periods, especially early childhood, are particularly detrimental. For example, harsh parenting and physical punishment is known to undermine child health and bullying

is a leading risk factor for mental health conditions.

Protective factors similarly occur throughout our lives and serve to strengthen resilience. They include our individual social and emotional skills and attributes as well as positive social interactions, quality education, decent work, safe neighborhoods and community cohesion, among others.

Mental health risks and protective factors can be found in society at different scales. Local threats heighten risk for individuals, families and communities. Global threats heighten risk for whole populations and include economic downturns, disease outbreaks, humanitarian emergencies and forced displacement and the growing climate crisis.

Each single risk and protective factor has only limited predictive strength. Most people do not develop a mental health condition despite

exposure to a risk factor and many people with no known risk factor still develop a mental health condition. Nonetheless, the interacting determinants of mental health serve to enhance or undermine mental health.

Mental health promotion and prevention

Promotion and prevention interventions work by identifying the individual, social and structural determinants of mental health, and then intervening to reduce risks, build resilience and establish supportive environments for mental health. Interventions can be designed for individuals, specific groups or whole populations.

Reshaping the determinants of mental health often requires action beyond the health sector and so promotion and prevention programmes should involve the education, labour, justice, transport, environment, housing, and welfare sectors. The health sector can contribute significantly by embedding

promotion and prevention efforts within health services; and by advocating, initiating and, where appropriate, facilitating collaboration and coordination.

Suicide prevention is a global priority and included in the Sustainable Development Goals. Much progress can be achieved by limiting access to means, responsible media reporting, social and emotional learning for adolescents and early intervention. Banning highly hazardous pesticides is a particularly inexpensive and cost-effective intervention for reducing suicide rates.

Promoting child and adolescent mental health is another priority and can be achieved by policies and laws that promote and protect mental health, supporting caregivers to provide nurturing care, implementing school-based programmes and improving the quality of community

and online environments. School-based social and emotional learning programmes are among the most effective promotion strategies for countries at all income levels.

Promoting and protecting mental health at work is a growing area of interest and can be supported through legislation and regulation, organizational strategies, manager training and interventions for workers.

Mental health care and treatment

In the context of national efforts to strengthen mental health, it is vital to not only protect and promote the mental well-being of all, but also to address the needs of people with mental health conditions.

This should be done through community-based mental health care, which is more accessible and acceptable than institutional care, helps prevent human rights violations and delivers better recovery outcomes

for people with mental health conditions. Community-based mental health care should be provided through a network of interrelated services that comprise:

- mental health services that are integrated in general health care, typically in general hospitals and through task-sharing with non-specialist care providers in primary health care;
- community mental health services that may involve community mental health centers and teams, psychosocial rehabilitation, peer support services and supported living services; and
- services that deliver mental health care in social services and non-health settings, such as child protection, school health services, and prisons.

The vast care gap for common mental health conditions such as

depression and anxiety means countries must also find innovative ways to diversify and scale up care for these conditions, for example through non-specialist psychological counselling or digital self-help.

History of Mental Health

A paper in the World Psychiatry journal states that mental health officially emerged as its own field of study in 1946 during the International Health Conference.

It was during this conference that the World Health Organization (WHO) was founded. The WHO Constitutions stated that mental "well-being" is an integral part of overall health, even in the absence of psychiatric illness.

Before mental health, "mental hygiene" was a term used in the 19th and 20th centuries to refer to the impact that mental processes have on overall health.

A mental hygiene movement had formed in the United States in 1908. Its goal was to advocate for people who were "mentally sick," or people who had psychiatric conditions, in a more humane way as historically, people with mental illnesses were abused, neglected, and lacked adequate care.

Though [stigma](#) surrounding mental illness still exists, more and more people have realized the importance of receiving treatment—like [psychotherapy](#)—for maintenance of their mental well-being, regardless of whether they have a mental illness.

Additionally, an abundance of research has found that positive mental health is linked with improved quality of life, including better productivity, closer social connections, higher educational achievement, and improved relationships.

Mental health refers not only to emotional well-being but also to how people think and behave. There are a number of different factors that have been found to influence mental health.

Major Approaches in mental health

Psychological perspectives are different ways of thinking about and explaining human behavior. Psychologists utilize a variety of perspectives when studying how people think, feel, and behave.

Some researchers focus more on one specific school of thought, such as the biological perspective, while others take a more eclectic approach that incorporates multiple points of view.

No single perspective is "better" than another. Instead, each simply emphasizes different aspects of human behavior.

This article explores seven of the major perspectives in psychology, where these perspectives originated,

and how they attempt to explain psychological issues. It also provides examples of key ideas from each psychological perspective.

Major Perspectives

The early years of psychology were dominated by a succession of these different schools of thought. If you have taken a psychology course, you might remember learning about [structuralism](#), [functionalism](#), psychoanalysis, behaviorism, and humanism—all of which are different schools of psychological thought.

As psychology has grown, the number and variety of topics psychologists investigate have also expanded. Since the early 1960s, the [field of psychology](#) has flourished. It continues to grow rapidly, as has the depth and breadth of subjects studied by psychologists.

Mental health Perspectives Today

Few psychologists identify their outlook according to a particular

school of thought. While there are still some pure behaviorists or psychoanalysts, the majority of psychologists today categorize their work according to their specialty area and perspective.

Purpose of Psychological Perspectives

Why are there so many different perspectives in psychology? It is important to remember that every topic in psychology can be looked at in many ways. For example, let's consider the subject of aggression.

- A professional who emphasizes a **biological perspective** would look at how the brain and nervous system impact aggressive behavior.
- A professional who stresses a **behavioral perspective** would look at how environmental variables [reinforce](#) aggressive actions.

- A professional who utilizes a **cross-cultural approach** might consider how cultural and social influences contribute to aggressive or violent behavior.

Here are seven of the major perspectives in [modern psychology](#).

1. The Psychodynamic Perspective

Psychoanalytic Theory

- This theory is based off **Sigmund Freud's** ideas
- **Psychoanalysis:** attributes thoughts and actions to unconscious motives and conflicts
- Freud says your personality is based off unconscious tensions you can't controll!



The psychodynamic perspective originated with the work of [Sigmund Freud](#). This view of psychology and human behavior emphasizes the role of the [unconscious mind](#), early childhood experiences, and

interpersonal relationships to explain human behavior, as well as to treat mental illnesses.

Much thanks to Freud's work and influence, psychoanalysis became one of the earliest major forces within psychology. Freud conceived of the mind as being composed of three key elements: the id, the ego, and the superego.

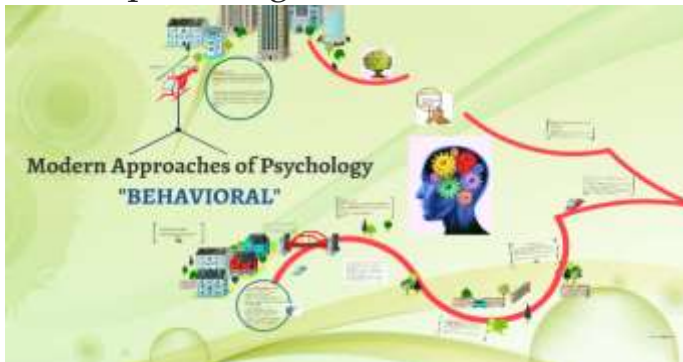
- The **id** is the part of the psyche that includes all the primal and unconscious desires.
- The **ego** is the aspect of the psyche that must deal with the demands of the real world.
- The **superego** is the last part of the psyche to develop and is tasked with managing all of our internalized morals, standards, and ideals.

While the psychodynamic perspective is not as dominant today, it continues to be a useful psychotherapeutic tool.

2. The Behavioral Perspective

Behavioral psychology focuses on learned behaviors. It was founded on the work of psychologists such as Edward Thorndike and John B. Watson. Behaviorism dominated psychology in the early twentieth century but began to lose its hold during the 1950s.

Behaviorism differs from other perspectives because it focuses solely on observable behaviors rather than on emphasizing internal states.



Today, the behavioral perspective is still concerned with how behaviors are learned and reinforced. Behavioral principles are often applied in mental health

settings, where therapists and counselors use these techniques to explain and treat a variety of illnesses.

3. The Cognitive Perspective

During the 1960s, a new perspective known as cognitive psychology emerged.

This area of psychology focuses on mental processes like memory, thinking, problem-solving, language, and decision-making.

Influenced by psychologists such as Jean Piaget and Albert Bandura, the cognitive perspective has grown tremendously in recent decades.

Cognitive Perspective

- Perceptions and thoughts influence behavior
- Subject Matter: Interpretation of mental images, thinking, language

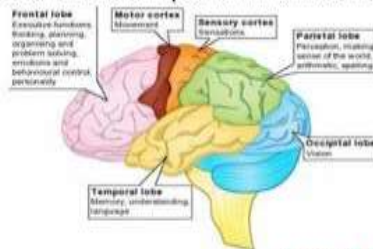


Cognitive psychologists often utilize an information-processing model (comparing the human mind to a computer) to conceptualize how information is acquired, processed, stored, and utilized.

4. The Biological Perspective

The Biological Perspective

- Behaviour is dictated by **Biology**
- Certain parts of the brain perform different functions



Really? Prove it

The study of physiology played a major role in the development of psychology as a separate science. Today, the perspective is known as biological psychology (also called biopsychology or physiological psychology). The point of view emphasizes the physical and biological bases of behavior.

Biological Perspective

- Biological processes influence behavior and mental processes
- Subject matter: Nervous system, glands, hormones, genetic factors



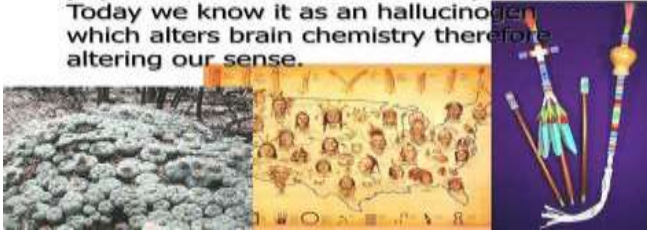
endocrine system are just a few subjects of interest to biological psychologists. Over the last few decades, the perspective has grown significantly with advances in our ability to explore and understand the human brain and nervous system.

Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) and positron emission tomography (PET) scans give researchers tools to observe the brain under a variety of conditions. Scientists can now look at the effects of brain damage, drugs, and disease in ways that were not possible in the past.

5. The Cross-Cultural Perspective

Cross-Cultural Approach

- Southwest native Americans consumed peyote in order to contact the spirit world. Today we know it as an hallucinogen which alters brain chemistry therefore altering our sense.



Cross-cultural psychology is a fairly new perspective that has grown significantly in the last twenty years. Psychologists and researchers in this school of thought look at human behavior across different cultures.

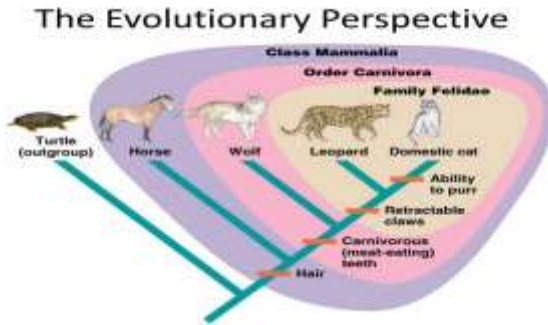
By looking at these differences, we can learn more about how culture influences our thinking and behavior. For example, researchers have looked at how social behaviors differ in individualistic and collectivistic cultures.

- In individualistic cultures (such as the United States) people tend to exert less effort when they are

part of a group — a phenomenon known as [social loafing](#).

- In collectivistic cultures (such as China), people tend to work harder when they are part of a group.

6. The Evolutionary Perspective

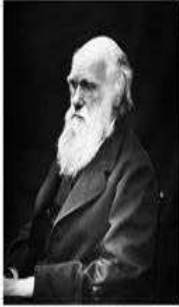



Evolutionary psychology focuses on the study of how the theory of evolution can explain physiological processes. Psychologists who take this perspective apply the basic principles of evolution (like natural selection) to psychological phenomena.

The evolutionary perspective suggests that these mental processes

exist because they serve an evolutionary purpose—meaning that they aid in human survival and reproduction.

EVOLUTIONARY PERSPECTIVE

	
<p>Charles Darwin would say, "It is necessary for man and woman to mate to propagate the species. We have labeled this 'love'."</p>	<p>Similar to Biological, BUT focus is on how people have evolved over time. How do changes help species survive?</p>

7. The Humanistic Perspective

In the 1950s, a school of thought known as humanistic psychology arrived. It was greatly influenced by the work of prominent humanists such as Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow.

Humanistic Approach

How does my own ambition and desire to be the best version of myself affect my behavior?

The **Humanistic** perspective argues that what ultimately drives human behavior is individual choice. All humans naturally strive to grow, develop, and be in control of their own lives and behavior.



After I satisfy my basic needs (like food and safety), I can begin to satisfy enriching needs (like romance and social prestige!)

The humanistic perspective emphasizes the role of motivation in thought and behavior. Concepts such as self-actualization are essential. Psychologists with a humanist perspective focus on what drives humans to grow, change, and develop their personal potential.



Positive psychology

(which focuses on helping people live happier, healthier lives) is a recent movement in psychology with roots in the humanist perspective.

Approach	The explanation	Research Method
Psychodynamic	Childhood experiences and the development of the psyche influence and dictate future behaviors.	Idiographic
Behavioral	Behavior is learned from our experiences; it can be learned through association or reinforcement.	Nomothetic
Humanistic	Humans have an innate desire to reach self-actualisation, and this, in conjunction with personal experiences, drives and motivates human behaviour.	Idiographic
Cognitive	Behaviour results from internal cognitive processes and includes theories such as the information-processing model. Neuroscience stems from cognitive psychology.	Nomothetic

Biological	Inherited genes, evolutionary processes, irregular neurotransmitter activity and disruption/ damage to brain regions/networks	Nomothetic
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The characteristics of a mentally healthy person

A healthy individual is not only physically healthy but also mentally healthy. The modern concept of health extends beyond the proper functioning of the body. It includes a sound, efficient mind and controlled emotions. "Health is a state of being hale, sound or whole in body, mind or soul." It means that both body and mind are working efficiently and harmoniously.

Man is an integrated mechanism, a psychosomatic unit (body-mind unit) whose behaviour is determined by both physical and mental factors. It is a normal state of well-being, and in the words of Johns and Webster, "is a positive but relative quality of life".

It is a condition which is characteristic of the average person who meets the demands of life on the basis of his own capacities and limitations. By the word 'relative' we imply that the degree of mental health which an individual enjoys at a time is continuously changing.

It is not mere absence of mental illness that constitutes mental health; on the other hand, it is a positive quality of the individual's daily living. This quality of living is manifest in the behaviour of an individual whose body and mind are working together in the same direction.

His thoughts, feelings and actions function harmoniously towards a common goal means the ability to balance feelings, desires, ambitions and ideals in one's daily living. It means the ability to face and accept realities of life.



Other definitions of mental health refer to such abilities as of making decisions, assuming responsibilities in accordance with one’s capacities of finding satisfaction; success and happiness in the accomplishment of everyday tasks of living effectively with others and showing socially considerate behaviour. Mentally healthy individual or a well-adjusted person possesses or develops in his daily living.

These characteristics can serve as criteria for optimum mental health:

1. He has his own philosophy of life:

A mentally healthy person formulates his own values keeping in view the demands of society. This philosophy guides him in his various activities of life.

2. A proper sense of self-evaluation:

A well-adjusted person knows about his capacities, motives, strong points and limitations. He carefully evaluates his behaviour and accepts his mistakes.

3. With an open mind:

Exercises his wise judgment well as he knows strength and limitations well, he choose those social and individual tasks which are neither too difficult nor too easy. Thus he easily achieves his goal.

4. Emotionally mature:

He is emotionally mature and stable and expresses his emotion, nationally and exercises proper control over them.

5. A balanced self-regarding sentiment:

He has a proper sense of personal respect. He thinks that he is an important member of the social group and can contribute something for its progress and welfare.

6. Socially adjustable:

We are all social beings. This social life reality refers social give and take. A mentally healthy person knows the art of social living and social give and take.

7. A realistic approach:

His approach the various problems of life is realistic. He is not cowed down by imaginary fears or pitfall which may come.

8. Intellectually sound:

He has adequately developed intellectual powers. These enable him to think independently and to take proper decision at the proper time.

9. Emotional maturity:

Emotions like fear, anger, love, etc. are generally seen in our social

life. Such a person has a mature emotional behaviour. He has a control over them and expresses them according to the accepted social norms.

10. Bravery facing failures:

Life is a game of see-saw. If we aim success, we sometimes come across failures as well. A person with perfect mental balance has enough courage and power of tolerance for facing failures in his life.

11. Punctuality:

He has desirable social and healthy habits. He does not forget his commitments and is regular and punctual in performing his duties.

12. National attitudes towards sex:

He has a natural normal attitude towards sex and does not suffer from any sex abnormalities.

13. Self-judgment:

Self-judgment is one of the important characteristics of such a person. He uses it in solving his

problems. He does not depend on the judgment of others.

14. Varied interests:

Various types of interest attract him. These provide him with variety and happiness in life. He performs his daily duties with grace and balance. He enjoys work, takes rest and enjoys recreation.

Thinking Sheet

"Psychological perspectives are different ways of thinking about and explaining human behavior. Psychologists utilize a variety of perspectives when studying how people think, feel, and behave".

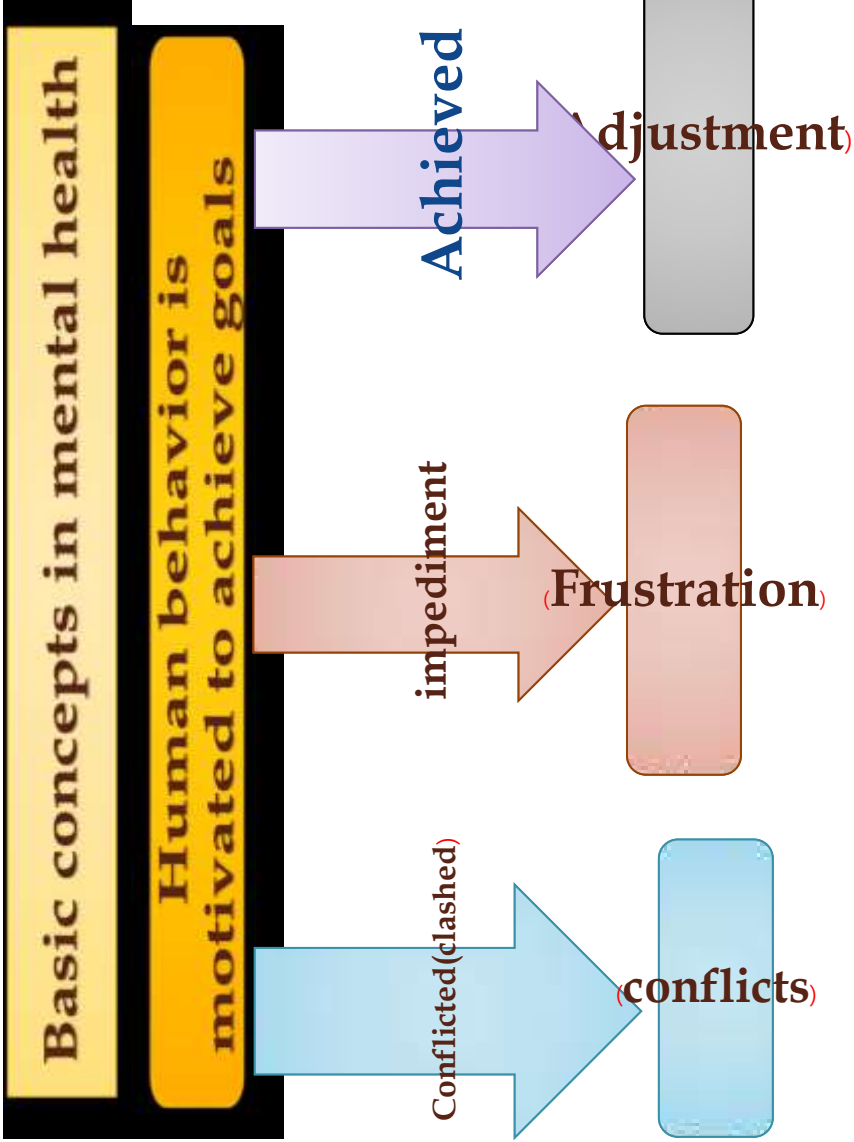
Chapter2

Basic concepts



Basic concepts in mental health

1. Motivation
2. Adjustment
3. Conflict
4. Frustration
5. Defense mechanisms



Motivation

The Driving Force Behind Our Actions



The term motivation describes *why* a person does something. It is the driving force behind human actions. [Motivation](#) is the process that initiates, guides, and maintains goal-oriented behaviors.

For instance, motivation is what helps you lose extra weight, or pushes you to get that promotion at work. In short, motivation causes you to act in a way that gets you closer to your goals. Motivation includes the [biological](#), [emotional](#), [social](#) and [cognitive](#) forces that activate human behavior.

Motivation also involves factors that direct and maintain goal-directed

actions. Although, such motives are rarely directly observable. As a result, we must often infer the reasons why people do the things that they do based on observable behaviors.¹

Learn the types of motivation that exist and how we use them in our everyday lives. And if it feels like you've lost your motivation, do not worry. There are many ways to develop or improve your self-motivation levels.

What Are the Types of Motivation?

The two main types of motivation are frequently described as being either extrinsic or intrinsic.

- **Extrinsic motivation** arises from outside of the individual and often involves external rewards such as trophies, money, social recognition, or praise.
- **Intrinsic motivation** is internal and arises from within the individual, such as doing a complicated crossword puzzle

purely for the gratification of solving a problem.

A Third Type of Motivation

Some research suggests that there is a third type of motivation: family motivation. An example of this type is going to work when you are not motivated to do so internally (no intrinsic motivation), but because it is a means to support your family financially.

Why Motivation Is Important?

Motivation serves as a guiding force for all human behavior. So, understanding how motivation works and the factors that may impact it can be important for several reasons. Understanding motivation can:

- Increase your efficiency as you work toward your goals
- Drive you to take action
- Encourage you to engage in health-oriented behaviors

- Help you avoid unhealthy or maladaptive behaviors, such as risk-taking and addiction
- Help you feel more in control of your life
- Improve your overall well-being and happiness

What Are the Components of Motivation?

If you've ever had a goal (like wanting to lose 20 pounds or run a marathon), you probably already know that simply having the desire to accomplish these things is not enough. You must also be able to persist through obstacles and have the endurance to keep going in spite of difficulties faced.

These different elements or components are needed to get and stay motivated. Researchers have identified three major components of motivation: activation, persistence, and intensity.

- **Activation** is the decision to initiate a behavior. An example of activation would be enrolling in psychology courses in order to earn your degree.
- **Persistence** is the continued effort toward a goal even though obstacles may exist. An example of persistence would be showing up for your psychology class even though you are tired from staying up late the night before.
- **Intensity** is the concentration and vigor that goes into pursuing a goal. For example, one student might coast by without much effort (minimal intensity) while another student studies regularly, participates in classroom discussions, and takes advantage of research opportunities outside of class (greater intensity).

The degree of each of these components of motivation can impact whether you achieve your goal. Strong activation, for example, means that you are more likely to start pursuing a goal. Persistence and intensity will determine if you keep working toward that goal and how much effort you devote to reaching it.

Tips for Improving Your Motivation

All people experience fluctuations in their motivation and willpower. Sometimes you feel fired up and highly driven to reach your goals. Other times, you might feel listless or unsure of what you want or how to achieve it.

If you're feeling low on motivation, there are steps you can take to help increase your drive. Some things you can do to develop or improve your motivation include:

- Adjust your goals to focus on things that really matter to you. Focusing on things that are

highly important to you will help push you through your challenges more than goals based on things that are low in importance.

- If you're tackling something that feels too big or too overwhelming, break it up into smaller, more manageable steps. Then, set your sights on achieving only the first step. Instead of trying to lose 50 pounds, for example, break this goal down into five-pound increments.
- Improve your confidence. Research suggests that there is a connection between confidence and motivation. So, gaining more confidence in yourself and your skills can impact your ability to achieve your goals.
- Remind yourself about what you've achieved in the past and where your strengths lie. This

helps keep self-doubts from limiting your motivation.

- If there are things you feel insecure about, try working on making improvements in those areas so you feel more skilled and capable.

Causes of Low Motivation

There are a few things you should watch for that might hurt or inhibit your motivation levels. These include:

- **All-or-nothing thinking:** If you think that you must be absolutely perfect when trying to reach your goal or there is no point in trying, one small slip-up or relapse can zap your motivation to keep pushing forward.
- **Believing in quick fixes:** It's easy to feel unmotivated if you can't reach your goal immediately but reaching goals often takes time.

- **Thinking that one size fits all:** Just because an approach or method worked for someone else does not mean that it will work for you. If you don't feel motivated to pursue your goals, look for other things that will work better for you.

Theories of Motivation

Throughout history, psychologists have proposed different theories to explain what motivates human behavior. The following are some of the major theories of motivation.

Instincts: The instinct theory of motivation suggests that behaviors are motivated by instincts, which are fixed and inborn patterns of behavior. Psychologists such as William James, Sigmund Freud, and William McDougal have proposed several basic human drives that motivate behavior. They include biological instincts that are

important for an organism's survival—such as fear, cleanliness, and love.

Drives and Needs: Many behaviors such as eating, drinking, and sleeping are motivated by biology. We have a biological need for food, water, and sleep. Therefore, we are motivated to eat, drink, and sleep. The drive reduction theory of motivation suggests that people have these basic biological drives, and our behaviors are motivated by the need to fulfill these drives.

Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs is another motivation theory based on a desire to fulfill basic physiological needs. Once those needs are met, it expands to our other needs, such as those related to safety and security, social needs, self-esteem, and self-actualization.

Arousal Levels: The arousal theory of motivation suggests that people are motivated to engage in behaviors

that help them maintain their optimal level of arousal. A person with low arousal needs might pursue relaxing activities such as reading a book, while those with high arousal needs might be motivated to engage in exciting, thrill-seeking behaviors such as motorcycle racing.

The Bottom Line: Psychologists have proposed many different theories of motivation. The reality is that there are numerous different forces that guide and direct our motivations.

Understanding motivation is important in many areas of life beyond psychology, from parenting to the workplace. You may want to set the best goals and establish the right reward systems to motivate others as well as to increase your own motivation.

Knowledge of motivating factors (and how to manipulate them) is used in marketing and other aspects

of industrial psychology. It's an area where there are many myths, and everyone can benefit from knowing what works with motivation and what doesn't.

Adjustment



Adjustment, in psychology, the behavioral process by which humans and other animals maintain an equilibrium among their various needs or between their needs and the obstacles of their environments. A sequence of adjustment begins when a need is felt and ends when it is satisfied. Hungry people, for example,

are stimulated by their physiological state to seek food. When they eat, they reduce the stimulating condition that impelled them to activity, and they are thereby adjusted to this particular need.

In general, the adjustment process involves four parts: (1) a need or motive in the form of a strong persistent stimulus, (2) the thwarting or nonfulfillment of this need, (3) varied activity, or exploratory behaviour accompanied by problem solving, and (4) some response that removes or at least reduces the initiating stimulus and completes the adjustment.

Social and cultural adjustments are similar to physiological adjustments. People strive to be comfortable in their surroundings and to have their psychological needs (such as love or affirmation) met through the social networks they inhabit. When needs arise, especially in new or changed surroundings, they

impel interpersonal activity meant to satisfy those needs. In this way, people increase their familiarity and comfort with their environments, and they come to expect that their needs will be met in the future through their social networks. Ongoing difficulties in social and cultural adjustment may be accompanied by anxiety or depression.

Conflict



What is Conflict?

Conflict is any disagreement between two or more people have different interests, values, goals, and understanding conflict arises. It may

be in a person, within people, within groups, or within organizations.

In other words, conflict refers to all kinds of opposition or antagonistic interaction between or among individuals and groups. It exists whenever one party perceives that another party has hampered or is about to hamper, the accomplishment of goals.

Conflicts indicate a scarcity of various things such as understanding, agreement, and compatibility among people in a sharing environment. It can arouse emotions and anxiety, lower satisfaction, and decrease performance.

In organizations, conflicts arise due to various reasons, the one reason is when employees do not get the salary they expected. Similarly, when one employee agrees with the given responsibilities and another is not.

Definitions:

- Conflict involves incompatible behavior; one person interfering, disrupting, or in some other way making another's action less effective.
- Conflict is disagreement among two or more individuals, groups, or organizations.
- Conflict consists of all kinds of opposition or antagonistic interaction. It is based on scarcity of power, resources, or social position and differing value structure.

So, conflict is a process by which a person or assembly senses frustration in the pursuance of some plans, goals, or objectives. It is closely related to change and interpersonal dealings.

Views On Conflict

There are 3 views on the conflict, the traditional view, the human relations view, and the internationalist view. They explained as:

The Traditional View: According to the traditional view, all conflicts are harmful and avoidable. Conflict is viewed negatively and associated with turbulence, agitation, destruction, irrationality, and violence.

The Human Relations View: Behavioral scientists argue that it is a natural and inevitable outcome in any organization and as such should be accepted. Conflicts are bound to arise in organizations because an organization is composed of individuals having different goals, values, and perceptions.

So conflict is unavoidable and need not always be harmful. Under certain conditions, it could lead to more innovative solutions to problems.

The Internationalist View: This is the modern view on conflicts. Here the disagreement is regarded as not only inevitable but also useful. The

internationalists argue that if harmony, peace, and cooperativeness prevail in an organization for a long time, the organization is likely to become non-responsive to innovation and change.

A minimum level of conflict is required to enhance competency and make it critical and creative.

Characteristics of Conflict

The main features of conflicts are mentioned below:

A Series of Events: Conflict rarely emerges as a singular event but rather as a series of interconnected incidents. It tends to evolve over time due to differing opinions, interests, or approaches, ultimately culminating in a noticeable clash between parties.

Misunderstanding: Often, conflicts stem from misunderstandings or misinterpretations of actions, words, or intentions. What one

party perceives may differ from the intended message, leading to discord and tension.

The Inevitability of Conflict: It is an inherent aspect of human interactions, and its occurrence is virtually inevitable in organizations or workplaces. Diverse individuals with unique perspectives and priorities are bound to encounter conflicts due to their distinct needs and aspirations.

Source of Creativity "Paradoxically, conflict can spark creativity and innovation. When individuals or groups engage in conflicting ideas, the clash of viewpoints may lead to the emergence of fresh insights, alternative solutions, and novel approaches to problem-solving.

Opposite of Cooperation: Cooperation and conflict represent opposing forces. While cooperation emphasizes

collaboration, harmony, and shared goals, conflict highlights the divergent interests, disagreements, and tension between the parties involved.

Dynamic Process: Conflict is not static; it is a dynamic process that evolves and changes over time. It may intensify or deescalate, depending on the actions and responses of the involved parties.

Effective conflict management requires recognizing its fluid nature and adapting strategies accordingly.

Catalyst for Growth: Conflict, when managed constructively, can serve as a catalyst for personal and organizational growth. It challenges individuals to reflect on their own perspectives, biases, and communication styles, fostering self-awareness and personal development.

A Test for Relationships: The presence of conflict tests the strength of relationships within an organization or workplace. It reveals the level of trust, respect, and communication existing between parties. By addressing conflict in a healthy manner, relationships can be strengthened and trust can be rebuilt.

A Part of Everyday Life: Conflict permeates various aspects of our lives, including our professional endeavors. Whether it arises from differences in opinions, work styles, or priorities, conflict is an integral part of navigating relationships and achieving collective goals in organizations and workplaces.

Types of Conflict



Intra-Personal Conflict (Within an Individual)

Intra-personal conflict arises inside an individual. It arises due to divergent goals and multiple roles, which the individual is expected to play.

Goal conflicts occur when an individual faces the problem of choosing among competing goals. Role conflicts arise when the expectations of a role are materially different or opposite and the individual can meet one expectation only at the cost of other expectations.

It also occurs due to role ambiguity. Role ambiguity occurs

when an individual is not clear regarding his duties and responsibilities.

Interpersonal Conflict (Between Individuals)

It occurs in a condition when two or more persons interact with one another. Such interaction may take place between peers or seniors and subordinates.

The conflict between them may arise due to the difference in the choices made by them. It is a result of an individual's inability to confirm the norms of the group. The main causes of it are personality differences, perceptions, clash of values and interests, power and status differences, scarcity of resources, etc.

Inter-Group Conflict

It occurs between two or more groups in the organization. Many intergroup conflicts arise for organizational causes rather than interpersonal causes.

The conflict between line and staff, between production and sales department, and between management and unions, are examples of group conflicts. The major reasons for intergroup conflicts are competition for scarce resources, joint decision-making, task interdependence, introduction to change, and incompatible goals.

Inter-Organizational Conflict

Inter-organizational conflict is called when it arises between two organizations. It is a result of business competition. Both conflicting parties generally engage in providing similar types of services or products. Both parties become barriers to each other's success.

Causes of Conflicts

There may be various causes/reasons for conflicts in the organization. The manager has to take the necessary steps to resolve these conflicts. The most causes of conflicts

in the organization are pointed out below:

- Misunderstanding
- Personal Differences
- Information Deficiency
- Goal Differences
- Lack of Role Clarification
- Threat To Status
- Lack of Trust
- Scarce Resources
- Poor Communication
- Organizational Changes

Managing Conflicts



The manager should take careful steps to resolve these organizational conflicts, if not the organizational

goals can not be achieved in time and with the expected resources.

As a manager, you should go for conflict stimulation, prevention, and resolution techniques which are considered the most effective conflict management techniques in the workplace.

Conflict Stimulation Techniques:

Conflict stimulation refers to intentional actions or techniques employed to incite or escalate conflicts within organizations or workplaces. While conflict is generally viewed as disruptive and undesirable, there are instances where controlled conflict can be beneficial for promoting creativity, innovation, and improved decision-making processes.

The following are four techniques commonly used to stimulate conflicts:

1. **Reorganizing:** Restructuring organizational units or departments to introduce changes that create friction and

conflicting interests, disrupting established dynamics.

2. **Communication:** Encouraging open and transparent communication channels to foster diverse opinions and perspectives, leading to clashes and disagreements.
3. **Encouraging Competition:** Introducing performance-based incentives or rewards that fuel conflict as individuals or teams strive to outperform one another.
4. **Bringing in Outsiders:** Engaging external consultants or experts with fresh perspectives that challenge existing norms, leading to conflicts as individuals defend their positions or resist change.

Conflict Prevention Techniques

Conflict prevention techniques in the workplace refer to proactive measures and strategies employed to minimize the occurrence or intensity of conflicts. Rather than allowing conflicts to escalate and disrupt the functioning of the organization, these techniques aim to identify potential sources of conflict and address them before they become major issues.



The following are four common conflict prevention techniques:

1. **Superordinate Goals:** Emphasize shared objectives to encourage collaboration and reduce conflicts arising from competing goals.
2. **Reduce Interdependence:** Restructure workflows or responsibilities to minimize reliance on conflicting parties, reducing potential clashes.

3. **Exchange of Personnel:** Rotate or exchange individuals between conflicting groups to promote understanding and collaboration.
4. **Liaison Group:** Establish a forum for ongoing communication and conflict resolution among representatives from conflicting parties.

Conflict Resolution Techniques

Conflict resolution refers to the process of addressing and resolving conflicts in a constructive and satisfactory manner. It involves finding mutually agreeable solutions that meet the needs and interests of all parties involved.

Here are four common conflict resolution techniques:

1. **Problem-Solving:** This technique focuses on identifying the underlying issues causing the conflict and working

collaboratively to find a solution that satisfies everyone's interests. It promotes open communication, active listening, and the exploration of creative alternatives.

2. **Accommodation:** In this technique, one party willingly yields to the other's needs or preferences to resolve the conflict. It emphasizes maintaining relationships and prioritizing harmony over individual desires.
3. **Compromising:** This technique involves finding a middle ground where each party gives up something to reach a mutually acceptable outcome. It requires negotiation and a willingness to make concessions to reach a fair resolution.
4. **Avoidance:** Sometimes, conflicts can be temporarily set aside or avoided when the timing or

circumstances are not conducive to resolution. While avoidance may not be a long-term solution, it can provide a cooling-off period or allow for further reflection before addressing the conflict.

Frustration

Frustration is a type of emotional reaction to stress. It's common to have this feeling when you encounter daily stressors at home, at school, at work, and in relationships.



For example, you might get frustrated when your partner forgets to take care of an important errand, or you might become frustrated with yourself for how you responded to your partner's mistake.

In many cases, this frustration is short-lived and tends to pass as the situation changes. But sometimes, such as when you find yourself falling short of your goals or aspirations, it can be longer-lasting and take a more serious toll on your health and well-being.

Frustration can affect a person in a variety of ways, including psychologically and physically. Learn more about how to recognize the signs of frustration, what causes it, and what you can do to minimize the harm it might have on your mood, health, and relationships.

Signs of Frustration

Frustration can show up in a number of different ways. While these expressions can vary from one person to the next, some of the common signs of frustration include:

- Anger or losing your temper
- Avoiding the people you are frustrated with

- Experiencing changes in your eating habits
- Feeling annoyed
- Feeling anxious or on edge
- Getting overwhelmed and giving up on tasks
- Having trouble sleeping or experiencing other changes in your sleeping patterns
- Irritability
- Using alcohol, nicotine, or other substances to cope

It is also common for people to engage in physical actions to express feelings of frustration. They might sigh, frown, tap their feet, or engage in other repetitive body movements that express their feelings of annoyance and displeasure.

Causes of Frustration

Frustration tends to happen when your goals or expectations don't pan out. You might be engaging in an action or effort that doesn't work as

expected or produce the results that you wanted.

Common causes of frustrations include:

- Daily hassles
- Finances
- Interpersonal conflicts
- Relationships
- Stressful current world events
- Work-related problems

These sources of frustration can arise from either internal or external causes. Internal frustration involves feeling unhappy with some aspect of yourself, whether it is your efforts or your behaviors.

External frustration involves being stressed by something in your external environment. Getting stuck in traffic when you are in a hurry to get to work is an example of an external cause of frustration.

Effects of Frustration

In addition to the immediate symptoms of frustration such as

irritability and annoyance, it can also have more lasting effects on your health and well-being.

Research suggests that after a frustrating event, people are left with a lingering mixture of emotions including anger, stress, sadness, and rage.

Frustration can also lead to other problems, including:

- **Aggression:** Feelings of anger can lead to aggression that may be directed at yourself or at others.
- **Depression:** Over time, frustration and disappointment can contribute to feelings of sadness and depression.
- **Poor self-esteem:** Frustration may also cause you to lose confidence in yourself, particularly when the sources of your feelings tend to be internal.
- **Unhealthy behaviors:** It isn't uncommon for people to cope

with feelings of frustration in maladaptive ways, such as turning to alcohol, drugs, food, or other behaviors that can negatively impact health.

Stress

Stress and frustration are connected. Both of these feelings act on each other; feeling stressed can cause you to experience frustration, and frustrating situations often generate stress.

Stress can make you feel more emotionally reactive to events that normally wouldn't bother you, and it can reduce your tolerance for frustration. Small failures can seem much worse (and much more frustrating). Chronic stress may cause you to feel like you're not in control of your life, leading to further frustration and even depression.

Managing stress can help you alleviate feelings of frustration, and improving your tolerance for

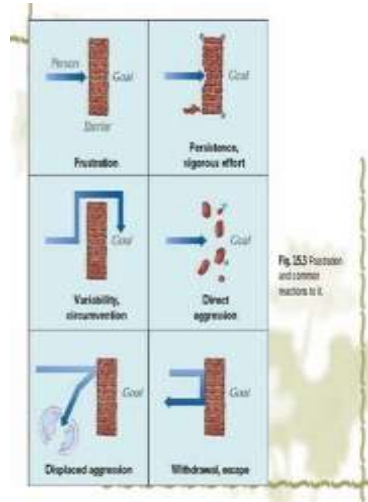
frustration may help lower your stress levels.

Stress and frustration act on each other in a variety of ways. Stress may cause you to feel like you don't have the resources to overcome challenges, and feeling unable to reach your goals is a key component of frustration.

Frustration is a common reaction to a recurring, unresolved stressor. Frustration is often accompanied by aggression, hostility, impulsivity, and defensiveness—and these emotions can generate their own stress if you don't deal with them in a healthy manner.

How to Deal With Frustration

The ability to deal with frustration is known as frustration tolerance. Having a high frustration tolerance indicates that you can cope with challenges successfully, while a low tolerance means that you may feel distressed at small inconveniences.



If you have a low tolerance for frustration, there are strategies you can use to improve the way you respond. Seeking professional treatment is also a good option, especially if you're experiencing an underlying condition or your low tolerance is causing negative consequences in your life.

Feeling stressed, tired, or unsure of yourself in a new situation can reduce your frustration tolerance, as can certain conditions like borderline

personality disorder (BPD), autism, and attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

Improve Your Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence is linked with the ability to deal with frustration. Emotional intelligence is your capacity to notice and evaluate emotions in yourself and others, and your ability to regulate the way you express your feelings.

You can improve your emotional intelligence by:

- Regulating yourself during moments of frustration and waiting for an appropriate moment to express yourself
- Practicing empathy for others, especially people who tend to frustrate you
- Remembering that all emotions are fleeting, including frustration
- Noticing your feelings so you can react appropriately.
-

Distract Yourself

Fixating on the source of your frustration can actually worsen your feelings. Temporarily distracting yourself can give you the space you need to process. Choose an activity that you enjoy, like exercising, doing something creative, listening to music, or watching a movie.

It's important not to let distraction become a pattern of avoidance, however. You should eventually return to the source of your frustration and determine if there are any strategies you can use to solve the problem.

Practice Mindfulness

Mindfulness is the practice of being fully and nonjudgmentally aware of the present, noticing the sights, sounds, and smells around you, as well as the feelings and sensations within you. You can practice mindfulness throughout the day or as a form of meditation.

Staying mindful is a key component of dealing with frustration and stress, as you have to be aware of what you're feeling before you can take steps to address the issue. Mindfulness also encourages you to retain an attitude of acceptance rather than resistance or judgment, and this can have a positive impact on the way you react to frustration.

Use Other Relaxation Techniques

If you find yourself feeling less patient, more frustrated, more emotional, and less able to handle stress, there are several things you can do to feel better. Together with improving your tolerance for frustration, managing your stress is also an important part of maintaining your health.

Stopping your stress response early can help you to respond more calmly, instead of behaving in a way that you might regret.

Quick stress relievers such as breathing exercises or progressive muscle relaxation, for example, can calm you down and help you feel less frustrated and more able to handle what comes. Be prepared with quick stress relievers to use next time you feel overwhelmed.

Change Your Attitude

Much of whether or not we see something as stressful depends on our habitual thought patterns and how we process the world around us. For example, those who see things as under their control tend to be less stressed about what happens to them, as they see that they always have options for change.

Optimism carries health benefits and can lead to an improved sense of well-being. Learning how to develop an optimistic outlook and resilient state of mind may help you feel less stressed.

Change Your Lifestyle

If you feel like you're continually on edge, it's possible that something needs to change in your life. If you cut down on commitments, take good care of your body, and make other healthy lifestyle changes, you'll be dealing with less overall stress and you'll be more effective at managing what you do encounter.

Good nutrition, proper sleep, and regular exercise can work wonders on your stress levels.

Making time for leisure activities and creative expression is vital as well; downtime is not just a luxury, but a necessary aspect of a balanced lifestyle. Creative activities can be stress-relieving for artists and non-artists alike.

Try engaging in regular stress-relieving activities that fit your personality and lifestyle. Those who regularly walk, meditate, or enjoy

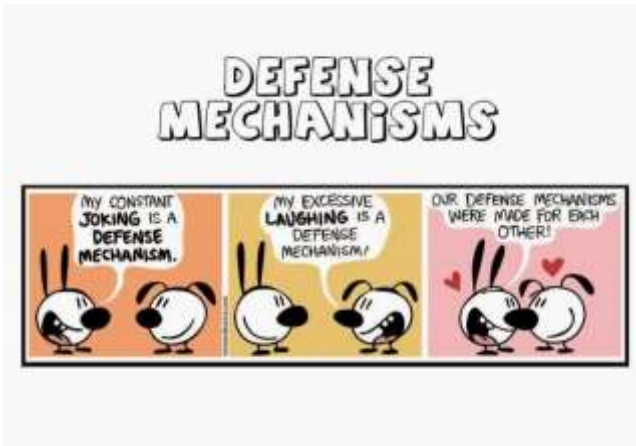
other stress-relief activities tend to feel less stressed in general and less reactive to specific stressors that arise throughout the day.

Draw on Social Support

It's also helpful to have the release and support of sharing your troubles with close friends, family, or loved ones. While it's not healthy to constantly complain, talking to a trusted friend about your frustrations now and then (and returning the favor by being a good listener) can help you process what's going on and enable you to brainstorm solutions.

If you don't have someone you're comfortable sharing your situation with, seeing a therapist or starting a regular journaling practice have benefits as well.

Defense Mechanisms



Defense mechanisms are unconscious strategies whereby people protect themselves from anxious thoughts or feelings.

Defense mechanisms aren't inherently bad—they can allow people to navigate painful experiences or channel their energy more productively. They become problematic, however, when applied too frequently or for too long.

The concept arose from the work of Sigmund Freud and his daughter Anna. Freud's framework has proven nearly impossible to

empirically validate, and his methods are no longer widely used in therapy. Still, his theories spurred the growth of psychology, and some of his ideas—like defense mechanisms—still stand today. Identifying when a patient employs a defense mechanism, such as projection, for instance, can be a helpful catalyst in the therapeutic process.

Schools of therapy other than Freud's psychoanalytic approach, such as cognitive behavioral therapy, observe similar tendencies and behaviors but attribute them to irrational beliefs rather than to the unconscious. The overarching idea that people act out inner conflicts in specific ways is widely accepted.

Theories of Defense Mechanisms

Defense mechanisms are rooted in Freud's theory of personality. According to his model, the mind has three dueling forces: the id (unconscious and primitive urges for

food, comfort, and sex), the superego (a partly conscious drive toward moral and social values), and the ego (a partly conscious force that moderates the id and superego).

Anxiety, in this paradigm, emerges when the needs of the id clash with the needs of the superego. To mitigate the tension, the ego deploys strategies of self-deception to avoid the discomfort. The unacceptable thought or emotion may be denied, for example, or rationalized or projected onto someone else.

Many of Freud's ideas have not stood up to modern scientific scrutiny. But psychological defenses have proven to be an enduring concept, one that researchers and clinicians continue to explore today.

How do psychologists today conceptualize defense mechanisms?

In a testament to the intuitive appeal and potential utility of the idea

of psychological defenses, multiple post-Freudian theorists and researchers independently converged on the same concept. Alfred Adler developed a similar idea of “safeguarding strategies,” while Karen Horney described protective strategies used by children of abusive or neglectful parents. Leon Festinger developed the well-known concept of “cognitive dissonance,” Carl Rogers discussed the process of defense as denial and perceptual distortion, and Albert Bandura conceptualized defenses as “self-exoneration mechanisms.”

The influential psychiatrist George Vaillant organized defenses on a scale of immature to mature, defining them as “unconscious homeostatic mechanisms that reduce the disorganizing effects of sudden stress.” Current discussions of coping mechanisms and emotion

regulation embody the idea of defenses as well.

Why did defense mechanisms evolve?

Like all living systems, human beings have evolved multiple strategies for defending against threats to our survival and physical integrity. The immune system is one example; the fight-or-flight mechanism embedded in our nervous system another. Similar defensive mechanisms have likely evolved to protect and promote the integrity of our psychological architecture—our sense of self, identity, and esteem.

Are defense mechanisms unhealthy?

10 Key Defense Mechanisms

Freud's daughter, Anna Freud, expanded on her father's theory by describing 10 different defense mechanisms used by the ego. When reading through them, consider whether you use any in your own life.

Defense Mechanisms vs. Defence Mechanisms

In the U.S., the term "defense mechanisms" is spelled with an 's' in defense. However, in other areas of the world, it is spelled with a 'c.' If you live in the U.K., for instance, the spelling is "defence mechanisms." So, you may see it spelled either way.

Defense Mechanism	Brief Description	Example
Displacement	Taking feelings out on others	Being angry at your boss but taking it out on your spouse instead
Denial	Denying that something exists	Being the victim of a violent crime, yet denying that the incident occurred
Repression	Unconsciously keeping unpleasant information from your conscious mind	Being abused as a child but not remembering the abuse
Suppression	Consciously keeping unpleasant information from your conscious mind	Being abused as a child but choosing to push it out of your mind
Sublimation	Converting unacceptable	Being upset with your spouse but

	impulses into more acceptable outlets	going for a walk instead of fighting
Projection	Assigning your own unacceptable feelings or qualities to others	Feeling attracted to someone other than your spouse, then fearing that your spouse is cheating on you
Intellectualization	Thinking about stressful things in a clinical way	Losing a close family member and staying busy with making the necessary arrangements instead of feeling sad
Rationalization	Justifying an unacceptable feeling or behavior with logic	Being denied a loan for your dream house, then saying it's a good thing because the house was too big anyway
Regression	Reverting to earlier behaviors	Hugging a teddy bear when you're stressed, like you did when you were a child
Reaction Formation	Replacing an unwanted impulse with its opposite	Being sad about a recent breakup, but acting happy about it

Displacement

Have you ever had a really bad day at work, then went home and took out your frustration on family and friends? If you answered yes, you have experienced the ego defense mechanism of displacement.

Displacement involves taking out our frustrations, feelings, and impulses on people or objects that are less threatening.

Displaced aggression is a common example of this defense mechanism. Rather than express your anger in ways that could lead to negative consequences (like arguing with your boss), you instead express your anger toward a person or object that poses no threat (such as your spouse, children, or pets).

Denial

Denial is probably one of the best-known defense mechanisms. Denial functions to protect the ego from things with which the person cannot cope and is used often to

describe situations in which people seem unable to face reality or admit an obvious truth (e.g., "They're in denial").

Denial is an outright refusal to admit or recognize that something has occurred or is currently occurring. People living with drug or alcohol addiction often deny that they have a problem, while victims of traumatic events may deny that the event ever occurred.

While it may temporarily shield you from anxiety or pain, denial also requires a substantial investment of energy. Because of this, other defenses are used to help keep these unacceptable feelings from conscious awareness.

In many cases, there might be overwhelming evidence that something is true, yet the person will continue to deny its existence or truth because it is too uncomfortable to face.

Denial can involve a flat-out rejection of the existence of a fact or reality. In other cases, it might involve admitting that something is true, but minimizing its importance. Sometimes people will accept reality and the seriousness of the fact, but they will deny their own responsibility and instead blame other people or other outside forces.

Repression

Repression acts to keep information out of conscious awareness. However, these memories don't just disappear; they continue to influence our behavior. For example, a person who has repressed memories of abuse suffered as a child may later have difficulty forming relationships.

Suppression

Sometimes you might repress information consciously by forcing the unwanted information out of your awareness. This is known as suppression. In most cases,

however, this removal of anxiety-provoking memories from awareness is believed to occur unconsciously.

Sublimation

Sublimation is a defense mechanism that allows us to act out unacceptable impulses by converting these behaviors into a more acceptable form. For example, a person experiencing extreme anger might take up kickboxing as a means of venting frustration.

Freud believed that sublimation was a sign of maturity and allows people to function normally in socially acceptable ways.

Projection

Projection is a defense mechanism that involves taking your own unacceptable qualities or feelings and ascribing them to other people. For example, if you have a strong dislike for someone, you might instead believe that they do not like you.

Projection works by allowing the expression of the desire or impulse, but in a way that the ego cannot recognize, therefore reducing anxiety.

Intellectualization

Intellectualization works to reduce anxiety by thinking about events in a cold, clinical way. This defense mechanism allows us to avoid thinking about the stressful, emotional aspect of the situation and instead focus only on the intellectual component.

For example, a person who has just been diagnosed with a terminal illness might focus on learning everything about the disease in order to avoid distress and remain distant from the reality of the situation and their feelings about it.

Rationalization

Rationalization is a defense mechanism that involves explaining an unacceptable behavior or feeling in

a rational or logical manner, avoiding the true reasons for the behavior.

For example, a person who is turned down for a date might rationalize the situation by saying they were not attracted to the other person anyway. A student might rationalize a poor exam score by blaming the instructor rather than admitting their own lack of preparation.

Rationalization not only prevents anxiety, but it may also protect self-esteem and self-concept.

When trying to explain success or failure, people using this defense mechanism tend to attribute achievement to their own qualities and skills while failures are blamed on other people or outside forces.

Regression

When confronted by stressful events, people sometimes abandon coping strategies and revert to patterns of behavior used earlier in development. Anna Freud called this

defense mechanism regression and suggested that people act out behaviors from the stage of psychosexual development in which they are fixated.

For example, an individual fixated at an earlier developmental stage might cry or sulk upon hearing unpleasant news.

According to Freud, behaviors associated with regression can vary greatly depending on the stage at which a person is fixated. For example, an individual fixated at the oral stage might begin eating or smoking excessively, or might become verbally aggressive. A fixation at the anal stage might result in excessive tidiness or messiness.

Reaction Formation

Reaction formation reduces anxiety by taking up the opposite feeling, impulse, or behavior. An example of reaction formation would be treating someone you strongly dislike in an excessively friendly

manner in order to hide your true feelings.

Why do people behave this way? According to Freud, they are using reaction formation as a defense mechanism to hide their true feelings by behaving in the exact opposite manner.

7 Main Defense Mechanisms

This list is sometimes shortened to provide only seven main defense mechanisms, which are denial, displacement, projection, rationalization, reaction formation, repression, and sublimation.

10 Other Common Defense Mechanisms

Since Freud first described the original defense mechanisms, other researchers have continued to describe other methods of reducing anxiety. Some of these defense mechanisms include:

- **Acting out:** Coping with stress by engaging in actions rather than

acknowledging and bearing certain feelings. For example, instead of telling someone that you are angry with them, you might yell at them or throw something against the wall.

- **Aim inhibition:** Accepting a modified form of their original goal. An example of this would be becoming a high school basketball coach rather than a professional athlete.
- **Altruism:** Satisfying internal needs through helping others. For example, someone recovering from substance use might volunteer to help others in recovery as a way to deal with drug cravings.
- **Avoidance:** Refusing to deal with or encounter unpleasant objects or situations. For example, rather than discuss a problem with someone, you might simply start avoiding them

altogether so you don't have to deal with the issue.

- **Compensation:** Overachieving in one area to compensate for failures in another. For example, someone who feels insecure academically might compensate by excelling in athletics.
- **Dissociation:** Becoming separated or removed from your experience. When dealing with something stressful, for example, you might mentally and emotionally disengage yourself from the situation.
- **Fantasy:** Avoiding reality by retreating to a safe place within your mind. When something in your life is causing anxiety, you might retreat to your inner world where the cause of the stress cannot harm you.
- **Humor:** Pointing out the funny or ironic aspects of a situation. An example of this might be

cracking a joke in a stressful or traumatic situation.

- **Passive-aggression:** Indirectly expressing anger. Instead of telling someone that you are upset, for example, you might give them the silent treatment.
- **Undoing:** Trying to make up for what you feel are inappropriate thoughts, feelings, or behaviors. For example, if you hurt someone's feelings, you might offer to do something nice for them to assuage your anxiety or guilt.

While defense mechanisms are often thought of as negative reactions, we all need them to temporarily ease stress and protect self-esteem during critical times, allowing us to focus on what is necessary at the moment.

Some of these defenses can be more helpful than others. For example, utilizing humor to overcome a stressful, anxiety-provoking situation

can actually be an adaptive defense mechanism.

There are many different types of defense mechanisms that can be used to protect the ego from anxiety. Some of these can be healthier and more helpful than others.

How Do Defense Mechanisms Work?

In Sigmund Freud's model of personality, the ego is the aspect of personality that deals with reality. While doing this, the ego also has to cope with the conflicting demands of the id and the superego.

- **The id**: The part of the personality that seeks to fulfill all wants, needs, and impulses. The id is the most basic, primal part of our personalities and does not consider things such as social appropriateness, morality, or even the reality of fulfilling our wants and needs.
- **The superego**: The part of the personality that tries to get the ego to act in an idealistic and moral

manner. The superego is made up of all the internalized morals and values we acquire from our parents, other family members, religious influences, and society.

To deal with anxiety, Freud believed that defense mechanisms helped shield the ego from the conflicts created by the id, superego, and reality. So what happens when the ego cannot deal with the demands of our desires, the constraints of reality, and our own moral standards?

According to Freud, anxiety is an unpleasant inner state that people seek to avoid. Anxiety acts as a signal to the ego that things are not going the way they should. As a result, the ego employs some sort of defense mechanism to help reduce these feelings of anxiety.

Types of Anxiety

Not all types of anxiety are created equal. Nor do these anxieties stem from the same sources. Freud identified three types of anxiety:

- **Moral anxiety:** A fear of violating our own moral principles
- **Neurotic anxiety:** The unconscious worry that we will lose control of the id's urges, resulting in punishment for inappropriate behavior
- **Reality anxiety:** Fear of real-world events. The cause of this anxiety is usually easily identified. For example, a person might fear a dog bite when they are near a menacing dog. The most common way of reducing this anxiety is to avoid the threatening object.

Although we may knowingly use coping mechanisms to manage anxiety, in many cases, these defenses work unconsciously to distort reality.

Coping With Unhealthy Defense Mechanisms

While all defense mechanisms can be unhealthy, they can also be adaptive and allow us to function normally. For example, altruism, humor, sublimation, and suppression

are four mature defense mechanisms that signal higher adaptiveness.

At the same time, problems can arise when defense mechanisms are overused in an attempt to avoid dealing with problems. To keep this from happening to you, here are a few ways to cope with unhealthy defenses.

- **Develop greater self-awareness.** [Self-awareness](#) helps you identify when you may be using one or more defense mechanisms too often. Once you take this step, you know where you need to make changes.
- **Learn effective coping skills.** If you have an unhealthy defense mechanism, learning new coping skills can help you better deal with uncomfortable emotions. [Coping skills](#) include meditation, establishing healthy boundaries, and asking for support.
- **Seek mental health therapy.** [Psychoanalytic](#)

therapy can help you uncover your unconscious defense mechanisms and find better, healthier ways of coping with anxiety and distress.

Thinking Sheet

" Human behavior is motivated to achieve goals" In light of your studies and available resources, prepare a research project that includes:(**adjustment; motivations; frustration; conflict; defense mechanisms**) its definition, functions, types and how to employ (or deal with) it in the classroom.

Chapter3

Personality



Personality



How Personality Impacts Our Daily Lives

- Personality Characteristics
- How Personality Develops
- Impact of Personality

Personality describes the unique patterns of thoughts, feelings, and behaviors that distinguish a person from others. A product of both biology and environment, it remains fairly consistent throughout life.

Examples of personality can be found in how we describe other people's traits. For instance, "She is generous, caring, and

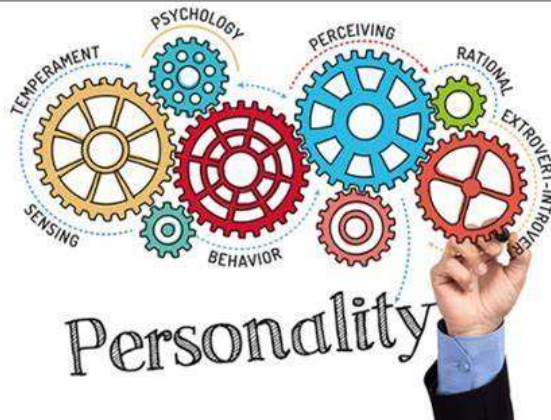
a bit of a perfectionist," or "They are loyal and protective of their friends."

The word "personality" stems from the Latin word *persona*, which refers to a theatrical mask worn by performers to play roles or disguise their identities.

Although there are many definitions of personality, most focus on the pattern of behaviors and characteristics that can help predict and explain a person's behavior.

Explanations for personality can focus on a variety of influences, ranging from genetic effects to the role of the environment and experience in shaping an individual's personality.

Personality Characteristics



What exactly makes up a personality? Traits and patterns of thought and [emotion](#) play important roles, and so do these fundamental characteristics of personality:

- **Consistency:** There is generally a recognizable order and regularity to behaviors. Essentially, people act in the same way or in similar ways in a variety of situations.
- **Both psychological and physiological:** Personality is a psychological construct, but research suggests that it is also influenced by biological processes and needs.
- **Affects behaviors and actions:** Personality not only influences how we move and respond in our environment, but it also *causes* us to act in certain ways.
- **Multiple expressions:** Personality is

displayed in more than just behavior. It can also be seen in our thoughts, feelings, close relationships, and other social interactions.

How Personality Develops

There are a number of theories about personality, and different schools of thought in psychology influence many of these theories. Some theories describe how personalities are expressed, and others focus more on how personality develops.

Morphological (body type) theories

Related to the biochemical theories are those that distinguish types of personalities on the basis of body shape (somatotype). Such a morphological theory was developed by the German psychiatrist Ernst Kretschmer. In his book *Physique and Character*, first published in 1921, he wrote that among his patients a frail, rather weak (asthenic) body build as well as a muscular (athletic) physique

were frequently characteristic of schizophrenic patients, while a short, rotund (pyknic) build was often found among manic-depressive patients. Kretschmer extended his findings and assertions in a theory that related body build and personality in all people and wrote that slim and delicate physiques are associated with introversion, while those with rounded heavier and shorter bodies tend to be cyclothymic—that is, moody but often extroverted and jovial.

Despite early hopes that body types might be useful in classifying personality characteristics or in identifying psychiatric syndromes, the relations observed by Kretschmer were not found to be strongly supported by empirical studies. In the 1930s more elaborate studies by William H. Sheldon in the United States developed a system for assigning a three-digit somatotype

number to people, each digit with a range from 1 to 7. Each of the three digits applies to one of Sheldon's three components of body build: the first to the soft, round endomorph, the second to the square, muscular mesomorph; and the third to the linear, fine-boned ectomorph. Thus, an extreme endomorph would be 711, an extreme ectomorph 117, and an average person 444. Sheldon then developed a 20-item list of traits that differentiated three separate categories of behaviours or temperaments.

Also during the 1930s, personality studies began to consider the broader social context in which a person lived. The American anthropologist Margaret Mead studied the patterns of cooperation and competition in 13 primitive societies and was able to document wide variations in those behaviours in different societies. In

her book *Sex and Temperament in Three Primitive Societies* (1935), she showed that masculinity is not necessarily expressed through aggressiveness and that femininity is not necessarily expressed through passivity and acquiescence. These demonstrated variations raised questions about the relative roles of biology, learning, and cultural pressures in personality characteristics.

Personality Types



Type theories suggest that there are a limited number of personality

types that are related to biological influences.

One theory suggests there are four types of personality. They are:

- **Type A**: Perfectionist, impatient, competitive, work-obsessed, achievement-oriented, aggressive, stressed
- **Type B**: Low stress, even-tempered, flexible, creative, adaptable to change, patient, tendency to procrastinate
- **Type C**: Highly conscientious, perfectionist, struggles to reveal emotions (positive and negative)
- **Type D**: Worrying, sad, irritable, pessimistic, negative self-talk, avoidance of social situations, lack of self-confidence, fear of rejection, appears gloomy, hopeless

There are other popular theories of personality types such as the Myers-Briggs theory. The [Myers-Briggs Personality Type Indicator](#) identifies a

personality based on where someone is on four continuums: introversion-extraversion, sensing-intuition, thinking-feeling, and judging-perceiving.

After taking a Myers-Briggs personality test, you are assigned one of 16 personality types. Examples of these personality types are:

- **ISTJ**: Introverted, sensing, thinking, and judging. People with this personality type are logical and organized; they also tend to be judgmental.
- **INFP**: Introverted, intuitive, feeling, and perceiving. They tend to be idealists and sensitive to their feelings.
- **ESTJ**: Extroverted, sensing, thinking, and judging. They tend to be assertive and concerned with following the rules.
- **ENFJ**: Extroverted, intuitive, feeling, and judging. They are

known as "givers" for being warm and loyal; they may also be overprotective.

Personality Traits

Trait theories tend to view personality as the result of internal characteristics that are genetically based and include:

- **Agreeable:** Cares about others, feels empathy, enjoys helping others
- **Conscientiousness:** High levels of thoughtfulness, good impulse control, goal-directed behaviors
- **Eager-to-please:** Accommodating, passive, and [conforming](#)
- **Extraversion:** Excitability, sociability, talkativeness, assertiveness, and high amounts of emotional expressiveness
- **Introversion:** Quiet, reserved
- **Neuroticism:** Experiences stress and dramatic shifts in mood, feels anxious, worries about

different things, gets upset easily, struggles to bounce back after stressful events

- **Openness:** Very creative, open to trying new things, focuses on tackling new challenges.

Psychodynamic Theories

Psychodynamic theories of personality are heavily influenced by the work of Sigmund Freud and emphasize the influence of the unconscious mind on personality. Psychodynamic theories include Sigmund Freud's psychosexual stage theory and Erik Erikson's stages of psychosocial development.

Behavioral Theories

Behavioral theories suggest that personality is a result of interaction between the individual and the environment. Behavioral theorists study observable and measurable behaviors, often ignoring the role of internal thoughts and feelings.

Behavioral theorists include [B.F. Skinner](#) and [John B. Watson](#).

Humanist

Humanist theories emphasize the importance of free will and individual experience in developing a personality. Humanist theorists include [Carl Rogers](#) and [Abraham Maslow](#).

Impact of Personality

Research on personality can yield fascinating insights into [how personality develops and changes](#) over the course of a lifetime. This research can also have important practical applications in the real world.

For example, people can use a [personality assessment](#) (also called a personality test or personality quiz) to learn more about themselves and their unique strengths, weaknesses, and preferences. Some assessments might look at how people rank on specific traits, such as whether they are high

in [extroversion](#), conscientiousness, or openness.

Other assessments might measure how specific aspects of personality change over time. Some assessments give people insight into how their personality affects many areas of their lives, including career, relationships, personal growth, and more.

Understanding your personality type can help you determine what career you might enjoy, how well you might perform in certain job roles, or how effective a form of [psychotherapy](#) could be for you.

Personality type can also have an impact on your health, including how often you visit the doctor and how you cope with stress. Researchers have found that certain personality characteristics may be linked to illness and health behaviors.

It is often challenging to live with a personality disorder, but there

are treatment options such as therapy and medication that can help

Modern trends in personality studies Sex differences

Despite the physical differences between males and females the finding of behavioral differences between the sexes is controversial. Behaviours associated with sex roles depend heavily on the social and cultural context, and studies of stereotypic male and female roles are therefore understandably ambiguous. Yet some findings indicate small but consistent differences. While there are no differences in measured IQ, itself regarded as a culture-bound assessment, females do better than males on verbal tasks. Girls generally begin to speak earlier than boys and have fewer language problems in school and in the course of maturation. Males generally exhibit greater skill in understanding spatial relations and in solving problems that

involve mathematical reasoning. Beginning at the toddler stage, the activity level of males is generally higher than that of females. A related finding is that boys are more likely to be irritable and aggressive than girls and more often behave like bullies.

Men usually outscore women in antisocial personality disorders, which consist of persistent lying, stealing, vandalism, and fighting, although these differences do not appear until after about the age of three. A study by the American anthropologists Beatrice B. Whiting and Carolyn P. Edwards found that males were consistently more aggressive than females in seven cultures, suggesting that there is a predisposition in males to respond aggressively to provocative situations, although how and whether the attacking response occurs depends on the social and cultural setting.

Aggression

Humans are perhaps the only species of animal that does not have an internal inhibition against slaughtering other members of the species. It has been theorized that man, like other animals, is motivated by an aggressive drive, which has significant survival value, but lacks internal inhibitions against killing his fellow men. Inhibitions, therefore, must be imposed externally by society. Social learning theorists emphasize the decisive effects of situations in triggering and controlling aggression. They account for the poor predictability of aggressive behaviour in man by noting that the environmental context is generally unpredictable. Yet research has shown that an aggressive act is most likely to be produced by a person with a history of aggressive behaviour.

Genetic aspects

While social learning theorists emphasize the active shaping of personality by external social influences, experimental evidence has accumulated that genetic factors play a prominent role, if not in the transmission of specific behaviour patterns, then in the readiness of people to respond to environmental pressures in particular ways. In observations of animals, it is commonplace to find in different breeds of dogs wide divergences in behaviour that are attributed to genetic differences: some are friendly, others aggressive; some are timid, others bold (of course there may also be wide variations within a given breed). Among human infants observed in a neonatal nursery, there are also clearly observable differences in activity, passivity, fussiness, cuddliness, and responsiveness. These patterns, which some authorities say may be genetically influenced, shape

the ways in which the infant will interact with the environment and can be considered an expression of personality.

In systematic studies of humans, studies of twins and adopted children have been used to try to evaluate environmental and genetic factors as determinants of a number of behaviour patterns. These studies have shown that genetic factors account for about 50 percent of the range of differences found in a given population. Most of the remaining differences are attributable not to the environment that is common to members of a family but to the environment that is unique to each member of the family or that results from interactions of family members with one another. In the United States, behaviour geneticists such as Robert Plomin report that, in behaviours describable as sociability, impulsiveness, altruism, aggression,

and emotional sensitivity, the similarities among monozygotic (identical) twins is twice that among dizygotic (fraternal) twins, with the common environment contributing practically nothing to the similarities. Similar findings are reported for twins reared together or separately.

The study of the genetic aspects of personality is a relatively new undertaking. Almost all populations studied have been from industrialized Western nations whose rearing environments are more nearly alike than different. It is known that the more homogeneous the environment, the stronger the genetic contribution will appear. As with the psychology of traits, cross-cultural studies are required to test the validity of the claims of behaviour genetics.

Cognitive controls and styles

Psychologists have long been aware that people differ in the consistent way in which they receive

and respond to information. Some make careful distinctions between stimuli, whereas others blur distinctions, and some may typically prefer to make broad categories, whereas others prefer narrow ones for grouping objects. These consistencies in an individual seem to be fairly stable across time and even across situations. They have been referred to as cognitive controls. Combinations of several cognitive controls within a person have been referred to as cognitive style, of which there can be numerous variations.

Cognitive control studies explore constraints within a person that limit the influence of both environment and motivation, and as such they are expressions of personality. In the 1940s and '50s several studies explored the extent to which personal needs or drives determine what one perceives. In one study, children from rich and poor families were asked to

adjust a circle of light to the size of several coins of increasing value and to the size of cardboard disks. All of the children overestimated the size of the coins, although not of the neutral disks, but the poor children overestimated the sizes more than did the rich children. The assumption that need influences such judgments has been widely held. Even Shakespeare, in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, noted, "Or in the night, imagining some fear, / how easy is a bush supposed a bear." But there are limits to the distorting power of drives, and the experimental demonstration of the influence of motives has been difficult to confirm, perhaps because the formal components of cognition—the workings. Investigators of cognitive controls examine the psychological limits on the distorting effects of needs and of external reality. For example, in estimating the size of a disk, some people are more exact than

others, and the extent to which a need can distort size judgments will consequently be limited by the perceiver's preference for strict or relaxed standards of comparison.

The American psychologists George S. Klein and Herman Witkin in the 1940s and '50s were able to show that several cognitive controls were relatively stable over a class of situations and intentions. For example, the psychologists found a stable tendency in some people to blur distinctions between successively appearing stimuli so that elements tended to lose their individuality (leveling) and an equally stable tendency in other individuals to highlight differences (sharpening). This organizing principle is apparent in judgments of the size of a series of objects, as well as in memory, where it may manifest itself in a blurring of elements in the recall of a story.

Another much studied cognitive control is called field dependence-field independence. It pertains to the extent to which people are influenced by inner (field-independent) or environmental (field-dependent) cues in orienting themselves in space and the extent to which they make fine differentiations in the environment.

The more field-independent people are, the greater is their ability to articulate a field. There are no general intellectual capacity differences between field-dependent and field-independent people, but there is a tendency for field-dependent people to favour careers that include working with other people, such as teaching or social work. Field-independent people are more often found in careers that involve abstract issues such as mathematics. Cultural differences have also been found. Some Eskimo live and hunt in an environment with

little variation, and a high degree of articulation of the field (field independence) would favour survival; some farmers of Sierra Leone, however, who inhabit an area of lush vegetation and many varieties of shape, require less differentiation of the field.

Thinking Sheet

"Personality describes the unique patterns of thoughts, feelings, and behaviors that distinguish a person from others. A product of both biology and environment, it remains fairly consistent throughout life".

Chapter4

Personality Disorders

PERSONALITY DISORDERS



Personality Disorders



Personality disorders are a group of a 10 mental health conditions that involve long-lasting, disruptive patterns of thinking, behavior, mood and relating to others. People with personality disorders often don't realize their thoughts and behaviors are problematic.

What is a personality disorder?

A personality disorder is a mental health condition that involves

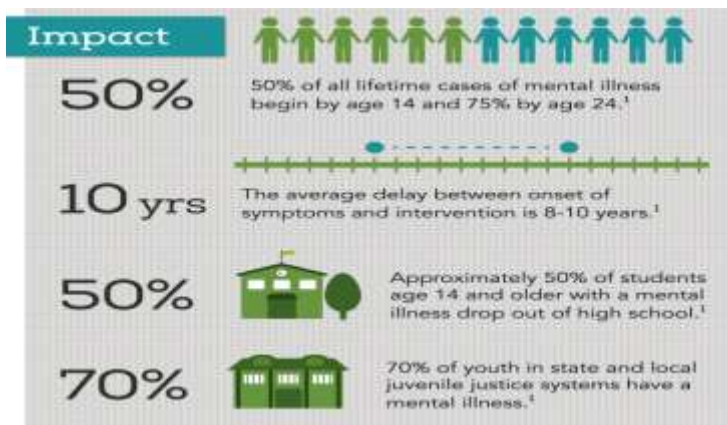
long-lasting, all-encompassing, disruptive patterns of thinking, behavior, mood and relating to others. These patterns cause a person significant distress and/or impair their ability to function.

There are 10 types of personality disorders, each with different characteristics and symptoms.

Personality is vital to defining who we are as individuals. It involves a unique blend of traits – including attitudes, thoughts and behaviors – as well as how we express these traits in our interactions with others and with the world around us.

Personality disorders may cause distorted perceptions of reality, abnormal behaviors and distress across various aspects of life, including work, relationships and social functioning. Additionally, people with a personality disorder may not recognize their troubling

behaviors or the negative effect they have on others.



What are the types of personality disorders?

The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5), which is the standard reference publication for recognized mental illnesses, organizes the 10 types of personality disorders into three main clusters (categories). Each cluster has different symptoms in common.

Cluster A personality disorders

Cluster A personality disorders involve unusual and eccentric thinking or behaviors. These include:

- **Paranoid personality disorder:**
The main feature of this condition is paranoia, which is a relentless mistrust and suspicion of others without adequate reason for suspicion. People with paranoid personality disorder often believe others are trying to demean, harm or threaten them.
- **Schizoid personality disorder:**
This condition is marked by a consistent pattern of detachment from and general disinterest in interpersonal relationships. People with schizoid personality disorder have a limited range of emotions when interacting with others.
- **Schizotypal personality disorder:** People with this

condition display a consistent pattern of intense discomfort with and limited need for close relationships. Relationships may be hindered by their distorted views of reality, superstitions and unusual behaviors.

Cluster B personality disorders

Cluster B personality disorders involve dramatic and erratic behaviors. People with these types of conditions display intense, unstable emotions and impulsive behaviors. Cluster B personality disorders include:

- **Antisocial personality disorder (ASPD)**: People with ASPD show a lack of respect toward others and don't follow socially accepted norms or rules. People with ASPD may break the law or cause physical or emotional harm to others around them. They may refuse to take responsibility for their behaviors and/or display disregard for the

negative consequences of their actions.

- **Borderline personality disorder (BPD)**: This condition is marked by difficulty with emotional regulation, resulting in low self-esteem, mood swings, impulsive behaviors and subsequent relationship difficulties.
- **Histrionic personality disorder**: This condition is marked by intense, unstable emotions and a distorted self-image. For people with histrionic personality disorder, their self-esteem depends on the approval of others and doesn't come from a true feeling of self-worth. They have an overwhelming desire to be noticed by others, and may display dramatic and/or inappropriate behaviors to get attention.
- **Narcissistic personality disorder**: This condition involves a consistent pattern of

perceived superiority and grandiosity, an excessive need for praise and admiration and a lack of empathy for others. These thoughts and behaviors often stem from low self-esteem and a lack of self-confidence.

Cluster C personality disorders

Cluster C personality disorders involve severe anxiety and fear. They include:

- **Avoidant personality disorder:** People with this condition have chronic feelings of inadequacy and are highly sensitive to being negatively judged by others. Though they would like to interact with others, they tend to avoid social interaction due to the intense fear of being rejected.
- **Dependent personality disorder:** This condition is marked by a constant and excessive need to be cared for by someone else. It also involves

submissiveness, a need for constant reassurance and the inability to make decisions. People with dependent personality disorder often become very close to another person and spend great effort trying to please that person. They tend to display passive and clinging behavior and have a fear of separation.

- **Obsessive-compulsive personality disorder (OCPD):**
This condition is marked by a consistent and extreme need for orderliness, perfectionism and control (with no room for flexibility) that ultimately slows or interferes with completing a task. It can also interfere with relationships.

This is a separate condition from obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD), which is classified as an anxiety disorder. While people

with OCD usually are aware that OCD is causing their behavior and accept they need to change, people with OCPD usually have little, if any, self-awareness of their behaviors.

People might have mixed symptoms of more than one personality disorder.

Who do personality disorders affect?

Anyone can have a personality disorder. But different types of personality disorders affect people differently.

Most personality disorders begin in the teen years when your personality further develops and matures. As a result, almost all people diagnosed with personality disorders are above the age of 18. One exception to this is antisocial personality disorder – approximately 80% of people with this disorder will have started to show symptoms by the age of 11.

Antisocial personality disorders are more likely to affect people assigned male at birth. Borderline, histrionic and dependent personality disorders are more likely to affect people assigned female at birth.

How common are personality disorders?

Approximately 9% of adults in the U.S. have some type of personality disorder, and about 6% of the global population has a personality disorder. Borderline personality disorder (BPD) and antisocial personality disorder are the most frequently diagnosed personality disorders.

Symptoms and Causes

What causes personality disorders?

Personality disorders are among the least understood mental health conditions. Scientists are still trying to figure out the cause of them.

So far, they believe the following factors may contribute to the development of personality disorders:

- **Genetics:** Scientists have identified a malfunctioning gene that may be a factor in obsessive-compulsive personality disorder. Researchers are also exploring genetic links to aggression, anxiety and fear, which are traits that can play a role in personality disorders.
- **Brain changes:** Researchers have identified subtle brain differences in people with certain personality disorders. For example, findings in studies on paranoid personality disorder point to altered amygdala functioning. The amygdala is the part of your brain that's involved with processing fearful and threatening stimuli. In a study on schizotypal personality disorder, researchers found a

volumetric decrease in the frontal lobe of their brain.

- Childhood trauma: One study revealed a link between childhood traumas and the development of personality disorders. People with borderline personality disorder, for example, had especially high rates of childhood sexual trauma. People with borderline and antisocial personality disorders have issues with intimacy and trust, both of which may be related to childhood abuse and trauma.
- Verbal abuse: In one study, people who experienced verbal abuse as children were three times as likely to have borderline, narcissistic, obsessive-compulsive or paranoid personality disorders in adulthood.

- **Cultural factors:** Cultural factors may also play a role in the development of personality disorders, as demonstrated by the varying rates of personality disorders between different countries. For example, there are remarkably low cases of antisocial personality disorders in Taiwan, China and Japan, along with significantly higher rates of cluster C personality disorders.

What are the symptoms of personality disorders?

Each of the 10 types of personality disorders has its own specific signs and symptoms.

But, in general, personality disorders involve problems with:

- **Identity and a sense of self:** People with a personality disorder generally lack a clear or stable image of themselves, and how they see themselves often

changes depending on the situation or the people they're with. Their self-esteem may be unrealistically high or low.

- **Relationships**: People with a personality disorder struggle to form close, stable relationships with others due to their problematic beliefs and behaviors. They may lack empathy or respect for others, be emotionally detached or be overly needy of attention and care.

Another distinguishing sign of personality disorders is that most people who have one often have little to no insight or self-awareness of how their thoughts and behaviors are problematic.

How do you know if someone has a personality disorder?

You can't know for sure if someone has a personality disorder

unless they receive a professional, medical diagnosis.

It's important to understand the difference between personality types and personality disorders. A person who is shy or likes to spend time alone doesn't necessarily have an avoidant or schizoid personality disorder.

The difference between personality style and a personality disorder can often be determined by assessing how the person's personality affects different parts of their life, including:

- Work.
- Relationships.
- Feelings/emotions.
- Self-identity.
- Awareness of reality.
- Behavior and impulse control.

Some general signs of people with a personality disorder include:

- Their behavior is inconsistent, frustrating and confusing to

loved ones and other people they interact with.

- They may have issues understanding realistic and acceptable ways to treat others and behave around them.
- They may be unaware of how their behaviors cause problems for themselves and/or others.
- If they're a parent, their parenting style may be detached, overemotional, abusive or irresponsible. This can sometimes lead to physical, emotional or mental issues in their children.

Diagnosis and Tests

How are personality disorders diagnosed?

Personality disorders can be difficult to diagnose since most people with a personality disorder don't think there's a problem with their behavior or way of thinking.

Because of this, people with a personality disorder typically don't seek help or a diagnosis for their condition. Instead, their loved ones or a social agency may refer them to a mental health professional because their behavior causes difficulty for others.

When they do seek help, it's often due to conditions such as anxiety, depression or substance use, or because of the problems created by their personality disorder, such as divorce or unemployment, not the disorder itself.

Healthcare providers base the diagnosis of a specific personality disorder on criteria provided in the American Psychiatric Association's *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*.

When a mental health professional, like a psychologist or psychiatrist, suspects someone might have a personality disorder, they often ask

broad, general questions that won't create a defensive response or hostile environment. They ask questions that will shed light on:

- Past history.
- Relationships
- Previous work history.
- Reality testing.
- Impulse control.

Because a person suspected of having a personality disorder may lack insight into their behaviors, mental health professionals often work with the person's family, friends and/or parole officers to collect more insight about their behaviors and history.

Personality disorders are generally underdiagnosed because providers sometimes focus on the symptoms of anxiety or depression, which are much more common in the general population than personality disorders. These symptoms may overshadow the

features of any underlying personality disorder.

Management and Treatment How are personality disorders treated?

Personality disorders are some of the most difficult disorders to treat in psychiatry. This is mainly because people with personality disorders don't think their behavior is problematic, so they don't often seek treatment.

And even if a person with a personality disorder seeks treatment, modern medicine is still lacking in available treatment options – there are no medications currently approved to treat any personality disorder. But there are medications that can help with symptoms of anxiety and depression, which are common in people with a personality disorder.

But psychotherapy (talk therapy) can help manage personality

disorders. Psychotherapy is a term for a variety of treatment techniques that aim to help you identify and change troubling emotions, thoughts and behaviors. Working with a mental health professional, like a psychologist or psychiatrist, can provide support, education and guidance to you and your family.

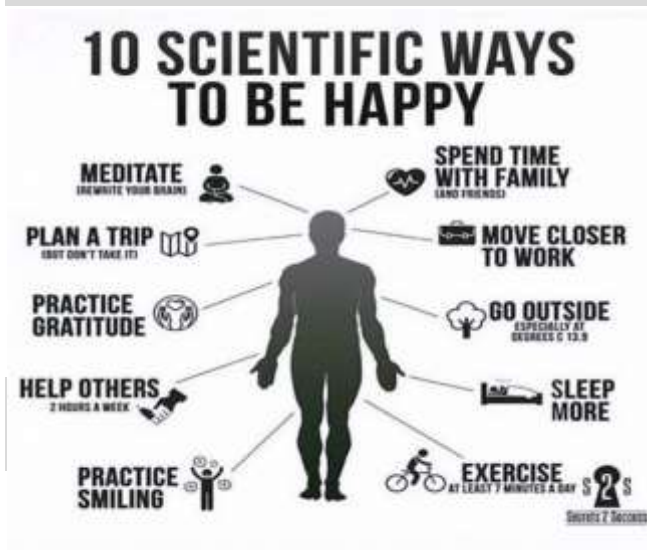
The main goals of psychotherapy for treating personality disorders include:

- Reducing immediate distress, such as anxiety and depression.
- Helping the person understand that their problems are internal and not caused by other people or situations.
- Decreasing unhealthy and socially undesirable behavior.
- Modifying the personality traits that are causing difficulties.

There are several different types of psychotherapy, and each personality disorder requires different types.

For example, studies show that dialectical behavior therapy (DBT) is effective for treating those with borderline personality disorder, and people with histrionic personality disorder often benefit from cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT).

Prevention



but many of the related problems might be lessened with treatment. Seeking help as soon as symptoms appear can help decrease the

disruption to the person's life, family and friendships.

Outlook / Prognosis

What is the prognosis (outlook) for personality disorders?

Since people with personality disorders often don't seek proper medical attention, the overall prognosis for personality disorders is poor.

Untreated personality disorders may result in:

- Poor relationships.
- Occupational difficulties.
- Impaired social functioning.

Studies show that personality disorders are associated with elevated rates of:

- Unemployment.
- Divorce.
- Domestic abuse.
- Substance use.
- Homelessness.
- Crime (especially antisocial personality disorder).

In addition, people with personality disorders are more likely to visit the emergency room (ER), experience traumatic accidents and have early deaths by suicide.

Although the outlook is dire, studies show that collaborative care management can greatly improve outcomes for people with personality disorders if they stay committed to treatment.

If you know someone who has or may have a personality disorder, try to persuade them to seek treatment. It's also important to educate yourself about the nature of the specific personality disorder so you can better understand what to expect.

A note from Cleveland Clinic

It's important to remember that personality disorders are mental health conditions. As with all mental health conditions, seeking help as soon as symptoms appear can help

decrease the disruptions to your life. Mental health professionals can offer treatment plans that can help you manage your thoughts and behaviors. The family members of people with personality disorders often experience stress, depression, grief and isolation. It's important to take care of your mental health and seek help if you're experiencing these symptoms.

Overview

People have unique personalities made up of a complex combination of different traits. Personality traits affect how people understand and relate to the world around them, as well as how they see themselves.

Ideally, people's personality traits allow them to flexibly adapt to their changing environment in ways that lead to more healthy relationships with others and better coping strategies. When people have personality traits that are less

adaptive, this leads to inflexibility and unhealthy coping. For example, they may manage stress by drinking or misusing drugs, have a hard time managing their anger, and find it hard to trust and connect with others.

Personality forms early in life. It is shaped through a blend of your:

- **Genes** – Your parents may pass down some personality traits to you. Sometimes these traits are called your temperament.
- **Environment** – This includes your surroundings, events that have happened to you and around you, and relationships and patterns of interactions with family members and others.

A personality disorder is a mental health condition where people have a lifelong pattern of seeing themselves and reacting to others in ways that cause problems. People with personality disorders often have a hard time understanding emotions

and tolerating distress. And they act impulsively. This makes it hard for them to relate to others, causing serious issues, and affecting their family life, social activities, work and school performance, and overall quality of life.

Risk factors

Although the specific causes of personality disorders are not known, some factors seem to increase the risk of having one:

- **Specific personality traits.** This includes always trying to stay away from harm, or the opposite – a strong need to seek out new activities that get the adrenaline pumping. It also includes poor impulse control.
- **Early life experiences.** This includes a home environment that is not stable, predictable or supportive. It also includes a history of trauma – physical

neglect or abuse, emotional neglect or abuse, or sexual abuse.

Complications

Personality disorders can seriously disrupt your life and the lives of those who care about you. They may cause issues in relationships, work or school. And they can lead to social isolation, other mental health issues with addictions, as well as occupational and legal issues.

What causes personality disorders?

Research suggests that genetics, abuse and other factors contribute to the development of obsessive-compulsive, narcissistic or other personality disorders.

In the past, some believed that people with personality disorders were just lazy or even evil. But new research has begun to explore such potential causes as genetics, parenting and peer influences:

- **Genetics.** Researchers are beginning to identify some possible genetic factors behind personality disorders.
 - a. One team, for instance, has identified a malfunctioing gene that may be a factor in obsessive-compulsive disorder.
 - b. Other researchers are exploring genetic links to aggression, anxiety and fear – traits that can play a role in personality disorders.
- **Childhood trauma.** Findings from one of the largest studies of personality disorders, the Collaborative Longitudinal Personality Disorders Study, offer clues about the role of childhood experiences.
 - . One study found a link between the number and type of childhood traumas and the development of personality disorders. People with borderline personality disorder, for example, had especially high rates of childhood sexual trauma.

- **Verbal abuse.** Even verbal abuse can have an impact. In a study of 793 mothers and children, researchers asked mothers if they had screamed at their children, told them they didn't love them or threatened to send them away. Children who had experienced such verbal abuse were three times as likely as other children to have borderline, narcissistic, obsessive-compulsive or paranoid personality disorders in adulthood.
- **High reactivity.** Sensitivity to light, noise, texture and other stimuli may also play a role.
 - . Overly sensitive children, who have what researchers call "high reactivity," are more likely to develop shy, timid or anxious personalities.
 - a. However, high reactivity's role is still far from clear-cut. Twenty percent of infants are highly reactive, but less than 10 percent go on to develop social phobias.

- **Peers.** Certain factors can help prevent children from developing personality disorders.
 - Even a single strong relationship with a relative, teacher or friend can offset negative influences, say psychologists.

Thinking Sheet

A personality disorder is a mental health condition that involves long-lasting, all-encompassing, disruptive patterns of thinking, behavior, mood and relating to others. These patterns cause a person significant distress and/or impair their ability to function.

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