The Big Five

- **Traits** – Relatively stable patterns of thought, feeling, or behavior that characterize an individual
- **States** – Temporary patterns of thought, feeling or behavior
- **Big Five** – Five crucial dimensions of personality determined through factor analyses of trait terms: extroversion, neuroticism (emotional instability), agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness to experience (OCEAN)
- **Extraversion** – Energetic approach toward the social and physical world
- **Neuroticism** – Prone to negative emotion (opposite of emotional stability)
- **Agreeableness** – Trusting and easygoing approach to others
- **Conscientiousness** – Organized, efficient, and disciplined approach to life
- **Openness to Experience** – Unconventionally, intellectual curiosity, and interest in new ideas, foods, and activities
- **Self-Report Data** – Data supplied by the research participant describing him/herself rather than that collected by the experimenter
- **Informant Data** – Data about a person derived from others who know the person well
- **Q-sort** – Set of 100 brief descriptions that a rater sorts into a predetermined number of piles, corresponding to the degree to which they describe a person
- **Big Five is well established in many cultures but there is room for debate if it’s universal**

The Consistency Controversy

- **Personality Paradox** – The idea that people seem to behave much less consistently than a trait conception would predict
- **Power of the situation** makes behavior depend on the setting we are in than on who we are
- **Other scenarios**, especially weak situations, make behavior reflect the interaction of the situation with the personality
- **People are consistent with how they act with certain types of situations**
- **Behavioral Data** – Data about a person based on direct observation of that person’s actions or behavior
- **Self-Monitoring Scale** – A personality measure that seeks to determine the degree to which a person alters or adjusts their behavior in order to act appropriately in a new circumstance
- **Low self monitors** are who they are no matter the situation
- **High self monitors** change their attitude depending on the situation

Traits and Biology

- **Temperament** – A person’s characteristic level of reactivity and energy; often thought to be genetically based
- **Physiological Data** – Data about a person derived from measurement of biological structures and processes
- **Hans Eysenck’s theory of extraversion/introversion** states that the introverts react more strongly than extraverts to external stimuli to the point where it’s overstimulation
- **Sensation Seeking** – A predisposition to seek novel experiences, look for thrills and adventure, and be highly susceptible to boredom
  - Neurotransmitter systems are underreactive (chronically underaroused)
  - More likely to use dopamine releasing drugs
- **Inhibited Temperament** – A personality style associated with introversion and neuroticism, and characterized by a fear of novelty that is evident early in life
  - Associated with overreactive brain
    - Low threshold for activity in the amygdala
  - Inhibited people show stronger amygdala responses to unfamiliar faces than uninhibited people do
Traits and the Environment

- **National Character** – The idea that people in different cultures have different personalities
- Family might not effect personality traits so much according to separated twin studies
- Birth order may have a major impact on personality
  - Later-borns are more rebellious and first-borns are more open to new experiences
- Within-family factors are more important than between-family factors
- Gender plays a major role in personality
- The gender difference stereotype with personalities is much overstated

Psychoanalysis: Theory and Practice

- Psychodynamic approach – Need to revise understanding both of personality and of self-knowledge and shift to an understanding that parallels a more modern approach in which nothing is quite what it seems
  - To understand a person is to understand the hidden psychological forces (dynamics)
- Freud founded psychoanalysis
- **Hysteric** (conversion disorder) – An older term for a group of presumably psychogenic disorders that included a wide variety of physical and mental symptoms
- **Psychogenic symptoms** – Symptoms believed to result from some psychological cause rather than from tissue damage
- Glove anesthesia – No feeling of the hand but feeling above the wrist
  - Does not conform to normal neurological thought
    - Must be a psychological cause
- Freud believed that troubling memories couldn’t be locked away but needed to be expressed, and the compromise was through physical symptoms
- **Free Association** – Method used in psychoanalytic therapy in which the patient is to say anything that comes to her mind, no matter how apparently trivial, unrelated, or embarrassing
- **Repression** – In psychoanalytic theory, a mechanism of defense by means of which thoughts, impulses, or memories that give rise to anxiety are pushed out of consciousness
- **Psychoanalysis** – A theory of human personality development formulated by Freud, based on assertions about unconscious conflict and early psychosexual development; also the method of therapy that draws heavily on this theory
- **Id** – In Freud’s theory, a term for the most primitive reactions of human personality, consisting of blind striving for immediate biological satisfaction regardless of cost
  - Pleasure principle
- **Ego** – In Freud’s theory, a set of reactions that try to reconcile the id’s blind pleasure strivings with the demands of reality
  - Reality principle
- **Superego** – In Freud’s theory, reaction patterns that emerge from within the ego, represent the internalized rules of society, and come to control the ego by punishment with guilt
  - Internalized code of conduct

Psychological Defenses and Development

- **Defense Mechanism** – A collective term for a number of reactions that try to ward off or lessen anxiety by various unconscious means
- **Displacement** – A redirection of an impulse from a channel that is blocked into another, more available outlet
- **Reaction Formation** – A mechanism of defense in which a forbidden impulse is turned into its opposite
- **Rationalization** – A mechanism of defense by means of which unacceptable thoughts or impulses are reinterpreted in more acceptable and less anxiety-arousing terms
• Projection – A mechanism of defense in which various forbidden thoughts and impulses are attributed to another person rather than the self
• Stages of Psychosexual Development – The sequence of four developmental stages from infancy through the attainment of adult sexuality that is considered universal in psychoanalytic theory: the oral stage, the anal stage, the phallic stage, and the genital stage
• Oedipus complex – Pivotal point in psychosexual development and different for both sexes
  o Around 3-4, the phallic stage begins for boys and seeks an external object
    ▪ Turns to mother but obstacle is the father so he wants the father dead
    ▪ Boy becomes jealous of father
    ▪ Eventually finds solution by giving up on mother and relying on genital pleasure until he’s older
• Electra complex – Equivalent of Oedipus complex for females
• Penis Envy – The wish for a penis that is assumed to ensue normally in females as part of the Electra Complex
  o Attempt for woman to achieve penis substitute – a child

The Empirical Basis of Freud’s Claims

• Freud believed in the psychopathology of everyday life, such as a Freudian slip
• Freud believed in the interpretation of dreams since they were based on wish fulfillment
• Latent content – Actual wishes and concerns that the dream is constructed to express
• Manifest content – Defense mechanisms take over to create symbolic disguises
• Collective Unconscious – A set of primordial stories and images, hypothesized by Carl Jung to be shared by all of humanity, and which he proposed underlie and shape our perceptions and desires
• Archetypes – According to Jung, the stories and images that constitute our collective unconscious

Psychodynamic Formulations after Freud

• Ego Psychology – A school of psychodynamic thought that emphasizes the skills and adaptive capacities of the ego
• Life Data – Data about a person concerning concrete, real-world outcomes
• Object Relations – A school of psychodynamic thought that emphasizes the real relations an individual has with others
• The primary attachment figure (typically mother) powerfully shapes a child
• Mental representations of self and other are referred to as internal working models
• Attachment theory states that childhood personalities typically stay until adulthood

Phenomenology and Self-Actualization

• Humanistic approach – Both trait theorists and psychodynamic theorists have lost sight of what is truly human about human begins – humans want to feel free to choose and determine their own lives
• Phenomenology – The study of individuals’ own unique, first-person, conscious experience
• Construal – The way an individual makes sense of the world around him
• Maslow believed self-actualizers were realistically oriented, accepted themselves and others, were spontaneous, cared more about problems they were working on than about themselves, had intimate relations with few people rather than superficial ones with many, and had democratic values

The Self

• William James distinguish the “I” and “me”
  o “I” is the self that thinks, acts, feels, and behaves
  o “Me” is the set of physical and psychological attributes and features that define who you are as a person
Andrew Rosen

- **Self Theory** – Carl Rogers’ theory of personality, which emphasizes the individual’s active attempts to satisfy his needs in a manner that is consistent with his self image

- **Self-Schema** – An organized body of knowledge about the self and that shapes one’s behaviors, perceptions, and emotions

- **Personal Myths** – The personal narratives or stories that provide a person with a sense of direction and meaning

- **Actual Selves** – Self-schema for whom one is at the moment

- **Possible Selves** – Self-schema for whom one may be in the future; these include the ideal self and the ought self
  - Ideal self – what someone wants to be
  - Ought self – what someone thinks he should be

- **Promotion Focus** – An orientation to actively pursue valued goals thought to arise when we compare our actual self to our ideal self

- **Prevention Focus** – An orientation to avoid doing harm thought to arise when we compare our actual self to our ought self

- **Self-Esteem** – The relative balance of positive and negative judgments about oneself

- People in western cultures view themselves as different and superior than others
  - When recollecting past memories, one is more likely to showcase positive features and ignore negative ones
  - People find traits to be ambiguous, and they interpret them to put themselves in the best light

- Collectivist cultures have people that describe themselves based on membership values

- Western cultures have people that describe themselves based on personal characteristics

- Collectivist cultures have people that would prefer to be more ordinary so that they can have social harmony

**Positive Psychology**

- **Positive Psychology** – A research movement that emphasizes factors that make people psychologically healthy, happy, or able to cope well with their life circumstances

- Happiness set point – A level that appears to be heavily influenced by genetics and is remarkably stable

- Adaption – The process through which we grow accustomed to any stimulus or state to which we are continually exposed
  - People tend to return to their happiness set point after change (positive or negative)

- Flow – Positive state of highly immersed and intrinsically rewarding condition that is evident in such people as painters, chess players, dancers, etc.
  - Found by Csikszentmihalyi
  - Also occurs when the challenge is just right (not too high to cause anxiety or too low for boredom)

- **Character Strengths** – Personal characteristics that contribute to a person’s happiness without diminishing the happiness of others
  - Are valued in their own right rather than a means to an end
  - Are trait-like and show variation across people
  - Are measurable
  - Are evident across cultures

- 6 Clusters of character strengths – Wisdom/knowledge, Courage, Humanitarian concerns, Justice, Temperance, and Transcendence

- Optimism and resilience are two other important positive traits

**Origins of the Social-Cognitive Approach**

- Behavioral tradition – Focuses on reward, punishment, and observational learning

- Cognitive view – Focuses on the individual as a thinking being

- **Outcome Expectations** – A set of beliefs, drawn from experience, about what the consequences of certain actions are likely to be
• **Self-Efficacy** – The sense a person has about what things he can plausibly accomplish
• **Personal Constructs** – The dimensions used by a person to organize his or her experience
• **Role Construct Repertory Test** – Asks people to list three key individuals in their life and how two of them were different from the third. Then it asks them to do the same thing for ideas, traits, objects, etc. to find how a person makes sense of the world developed by George Kelly
• **Cognitive-Affective Personality System (CAPS)** – Five key qualities on which people can differ by Walter Mischel
  o **Encodings** – Set of construals by which the person interprets the inner and outer experiences
  o **Expectations and beliefs** – Outcome expectations and sense of self-efficacy
  o **Affects** – Emotional responses to situations
  o **Goals and values** – Set of outcomes that are considered desirable
  o **Competencies and self-regulatory plans** – Way an individual regulates her own behavior by various self-imposed goals and strategies
• **Entity view** – Abilities are relatively fixed and unlikely to change
• **Incremental view** – Abilities can change and grown in response to learning and new experiences

**Key Social-Cognitive Concepts**

• Control, attributional style, and self-control are the key concepts for social cognition
• A person’s well-being through aging may be strongly influenced by whether there is a high or low degree of control in overall routine and environment
• Having too many choices can be detrimental
• Control beliefs are forward looking and attributional beliefs are referring to the past
• People tend to offer dispositional attributions (internal factors) for their own successes but situational ones (external factors) for their failures
• **Self-Handicapping** – A self-protective strategy of arranges for an obstacle to one’s own performance, so that failure can be attributed to the obstacle instead of one’s own limitations
• **Attributional style** – The way a person typically explains the things that happen in his or her life
• Attributional-style questionnaires (ASQs) can help determine the attributional style by presenting multiple situations and asking what may be the cause of them
• People that have depression typically attribute unfortunate events to internal, global, and stable states
• **Self-Control** – The ability to pursue a goal while adequately managing internal conflicts about it, or to delay pursuing a goal because of other considerations or constraints
• **Willpower** – The ability to control oneself
• In Mischel’s study, he had young children have to wait for a preferred dessert. They didn’t have the willpower to do so if they had to think about eating it or just stared at it but they were able to when thinking about something distracting
• Ability to delay gratification correlates to academic and social success at an older age
• Social cognitive theorists differ from trait theorists in that social-cognitive theorists stress the role of the situation and how the individual understands and deals with it. Social-cognitive theorists place a greater emphasis on the role played by learning in shaping personality
• Social-cognitive theorists emphasize cognitive processes such as construal and beliefs
• Psychodynamic theorists emphasize unconscious impulses and defenses