

Self-Awareness

“Becoming a person means that the individual moves toward being, knowingly and acceptingly, the process which [s]he inwardly and actually is.” –Carl Rogers

Development of our “Self-Image”

- Early emotional experiences influence our concept of “Who I am”
- Because we are influenced by all of our experiences, self-image is not a singular concept but rather an array of understanding.

Significant Others

- The important people in our lives (not just a single important person)
- Significant others in our lives convey messages about us that we interpret as important
- From all this information, we construct a mental “blueprint” of who we are and what we are capable of

To ponder and discuss

- Who are the significant others in your life today?
- Who were the significant others in your childhood?
- To whom are you a significant other?

Social Comparison

- The process in which individuals evaluate their thoughts, feelings, behaviors, and abilities in relation to other people.
- Social comparison allows us a way to decide if we are the same or different, inferior or superior relative to others

Social Comparison

- Our interpretation of sameness or difference relative to others will influence our sense of belonging or isolation
- Our interpretation of inferiority or superiority relative to others will influence our sense of capability and worth

Freud's Personality Structure

- Id—According to Freud, the source of instinctual energy, which works on the pleasure principle (seeking immediate pleasure) and is concerned with immediate gratification.
- Superego—In Freud's theory, the part of the personality that incorporates parental and societal standards of morality

Freud's Personality Structure

- Ego—In Freud's theory, the rational part of the psyche that deals with reality by controlling the id while also satisfying the superego; (from the Latin *ego* meaning *I*)
- Reality principle—According to Freud, the principle on which the conscious ego operates as it tries to meet the demands of the id and the superego and the realities of the environment.

Alfred Adler—Individual Psychology

- Our goals in life provide the source of our motivation—to obtain security and overcome feelings of inferiority
- Inferiority Complex—feelings of inferiority develop from early childhood experiences of helplessness and incompetence
- Birth order and family constellation are important concepts for Adlerian Psychology

Erikson's Psychosocial Theory

- **Psychosocial Stages—Erikson's theory that individuals pass through eight developmental stages, each involving a crisis that must be successfully resolved.**

Erikson's Stages 1 & 2

- **Trust vs. Mistrust (0-1)**—Infants learn to trust that their needs will be met by the world, especially by the mother; if not, mistrust develops
- **Autonomy vs. Shame and Doubt (1-3)**—Toddlers learn to exercise will, to make choices, to control themselves, if not, they become uncertain and doubt that they can do things by themselves

Erikson's Stages 3 & 4

- **Initiative vs. Guilt (3-6)—Preschool children learn to initiate activities and enjoy their accomplishments, if not, they feel guilty for their attempts at independence**
- **Industry vs. inferiority (6-12)—Elementary school age children develop a sense of industry and learn productive skills their culture requires, if not, they feel inferior**

Erikson's Stages 5 & 6

- **Identity vs. Role Confusion (12-20)—**
Adolescents develop a coherent sense of self and their role in society or they face identity and role confusion
- **Intimacy vs. Isolation (20-30)—**
Young adults form intimate connections with others; if not, they face isolation and consequent self-absorption

Erikson's Stages 7 & 8

- **Generativity vs. Stagnation (30-65)**—Middle-aged adults develop concern for establishing, guiding, and influencing the next generation; if not, they experience stagnation (a sense of lifelessness)
- **Ego Integrity vs. Despair (65+)**—Older people enter a period of reflection and life review. They either achieve a sense of integrity for the lives they've lived and accept death, or yield to despair that their lives cannot be relived

Stages of Adult Development

- **Levinson (1986) studied adult development and presented eight additional stages of adult development**

Levinson's Stages

- **Identify formation (18-22)**
- **Getting established (22-28)**
- **Wavering and doubt (28-32)**
- **Getting Settled (32-40)**
- **Mid-life transition or crisis (40-45)**
- **Commitment to tasks (45-50)**
- **Questioning and modification (50-55)**
- **Facing retirement and fulfillment**

Trait Theories

- Trait—A relatively stable and consistent characteristic that can be used to describe someone
- Five-Factor Model (FFM)—Trait theory that explains personality in terms of a Big Five model—openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism

Carl Rogers

- “The father of humanistic psychology”
- Humans strive toward ***Self Actualization*** (becoming their own best self)
- ***Unconditional Positive Regard***—Love that is given freely and which does not depend on any specific behaviors or traits
- This type of acceptance leads to unimpaired growth and development

Viktor Frankl

- Our task as humans is to create meaning or purpose in our lives
- Freedom and responsibility lead to *existential anxiety*
- The significance of our existence is never fixed once and for all

Virginia Satir

- **Interpersonal relations—what happens inside and between people—is the picture of the individual worth**
- **A person who appreciates his/her own self-worth will be better able to respect the self-worth of others**
- **Self-worth is learned through our interactions**

Satir—Growth

- **Human beings change and grow through**
 - **Communication of feelings—all feelings are okay**
 - **Belief that a person is able to change**
 - **Full use of the senses—see freely, touch freely, hear freely, etc.**

Thoughts and Environment

- Our thoughts influence our feelings and behaviors
- Self-talk—the internal dialogue I have with myself—messages I give myself about who I am
- Positive thinking—how do we convey our worldview to ourselves—“Is the glass half-full or half-empty?”

Cognitive and Social Learning

- Focus on the interaction between the individual and the environment
- It is not what happens to us but rather what we think about what happens to us that matters most
- Reciprocal Determinism—the interacting influences between person, behavior and environment

The Self

- **According to Rogers, the Self:**
 - Is organized and consistent
 - Includes one's perceptions of all that comprises "I" or "me"
 - Includes the relationship among I or me and other people and features of life, as well as the value and importance of these relationships
 - Is available to consciousness but it is not always conscious at any given moment
 - The shape of the self is constantly changing, yet always recognizable

The Personal Self-Image

- The part of the self that includes physical, behavioral and psychological characteristics that establish uniqueness, it includes racial/ethnic identity, age, and status—who you THINK you are

The “Real Self”

- **In order to discover one’s Real Self, one must separate what is real from the Personal Self-Image**
- **One cannot really discover the Real Self until one is ready to accept the possibility that everything you believe about yourself at this point may be wrong.**

Self-Esteem

- **The overall evaluation of oneself**
- **How we evaluate ourselves is a crucial element in our psychological adjustment**
- **Positive self-esteem effects our physical well-being as well as our likelihood for success**

Improving Self-Esteem

- **Recognize that you are in control of your self-image**
- **Be able to accept all parts of your physical appearance now**
- **Affirm your strengths**
- **List your faults**
- **Listen to your Inner Voice**

Improving Self-Esteem

- **Make the Growth Choice rather than the Fear Choice**
- **Shed perfectionistic demands**
- **Become more synergistic**
- **Do not overburden yourself with work**
- **Keep a diary**
- **Keep a sense of humor**

Daily Practices for the Real You

- Living consciously
- Self-acceptance
- Self-responsibility
- Self-assertiveness
- Living purposefully
- Personal integrity