

Personality

Sociocultural Approaches



What We Will Cover in This Section

- Overview
- Alfred Adler
- Karen Horney
- Eric Erikson



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Overview

- Grew as a reaction to Freud.
- Focus is on external vs. internal events as they influence personality.
- Emphasis on early childhood interactions.
- Look at long term development.
- Less comprehensive than Freud.

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Key Concept: Object Relations

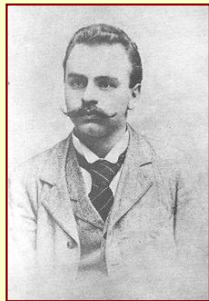
An OBJECT is another person.
The Ego's function is to manage the relationship between the person and other people (Objects).

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Alfred Adler



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Overview

- **Focus on cooperation and integration vs. conflict.**
- **Is future-oriented vs. psychoanalytic present.**
- **Emphasis still on early childhood experiences.**

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Individual Psychology

People are unique and seek harmony both within themselves and in their relationships with others.

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Motivating Principle

- We strive for perfection and harmony in ourselves, relationships with others, and the world around us.
- Striving for perfection focus on physiological and psychological excellence.

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Perfection: Inferiority vs. Superiority

- Start life comparing ourselves with others.
- As infants and children this leads to a general feeling of *inferiority*.
 - Children are helpless with adults.
 - Stimulates a desire to compensate.
 - The desire to compensate is a major motivational element.

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Biological Perfection

- **Organ Inferiority**

Sense that physiologically we do not measure up to others.

- **Compensation**

Development of one organ to make up for weaknesses in others.

- **Overcompensation**

Converting a biological weakness into a strength.

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Psychological Perfection

- **Inferiority Complex.**

Psychological feeling that occurs when a person feels overwhelmed feelings of inadequacy.

- Inferiority can lead to lack of growth and neuroses.

- **Superiority Complex.**

Occurs when a person strives for mastery to the exclusion of others and society.

- Leads to people who are vain, domineering, boastful, or who lack social concerns.

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Perception

- Perceptions determine our world view.
- If we perceive Xy, then we adjust our lives for Xy.
- Individual develops a unique world view based on perceptions.
- The individual develops a unique style consistent with these personal perceptions.

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Adler's Basic Model

Inferiority Feelings
+ Striving for Superiority
Goal Direction and Life Style

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Life Style

Developed through two sources.

- 1. Real or imagined weaknesses.**
- 2. Family constellation.**
 - Birth order.
 - Oldest child.
 - Second child.
 - Youngest child.
 - Family atmosphere.
 - General values, attitudes, and actions of family members, especially parents.

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Mistaken Lifestyles: Overview

Any lifestyle that is not aimed at socially useful goals.

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Mistaken Lifestyles

1. Ruling-dominant type.

Style that focuses on the need to dominate and control others.

2. Getting-leaning type.

Style that expects everything from others and gets all they can from them.

3. Avoiding type.

Style that evades, avoids, or resists problems.

4. Socially useful type.

Confronts problems and attempts to solve them in a socially useful, acceptable way.

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Origins of Mistaken Lifestyles

1. Physical inferiority.

- Stimulates compensation (healthy) or inferiority (unhealthy).

2. Spoiling.

- Child learns to rely on others to satisfy his or her needs.

3. Neglecting.

- Child feels worthless and learns distrust.

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Abnormal (Neurotic) Behavior



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Safeguarding

- **Techniques people use to maintain self-esteem and illusions of superiority.**
 - Used only by neurotics.
 - May be conscious or unconscious.

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Safeguarding: Excuses

- **It was not my fault...**
- **If this would have happened...**
- **If only,...**

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Safeguarding: Aggression

- **Depreciation**
Overvalue own and undervalue others' accomplishments.
 - **Idealization**
Set standards so high that others cannot reach them.
 - **Solicitude**
Seek help from everyone.
- **Accusation**
Blame others for own problems and shortcomings.
- **Self-accusation.**
Hurt or blame self to get attention.

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Safeguarding: Distancing

- **Moving backward.**
Reverting to a more secure, less complicated time of life.
- **Standing still.**
- **Constructing obstacles.**
- **Other elements.**
 - **Experiencing anxiety.**
Amplifies all of these Distancing strategies.
 - **Exclusion tendency.**

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Birth Order

- **Firstborn.**
 - Starts as the focus of attention.
 - Loses power and authority when later siblings are born.
 - May result in
 - Appreciation of power.
 - Resentment.

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Birth Order, Continued

- **Second born.**
 - Develops ambition to catch up.
 - This is the best position.
- **Youngest.**
 - Spoiled by rest in family.
 - Can never be truly independent.
 - Lazy
- **Only child.**
 - Like first born who is never dethroned.
 - Exaggerated sense of superiority.

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Creative Self

- Biology and environment provide the foundation for our personality.
- We can freely choose how to combine and react to these influences.
- Ultimately our personality is self-created.

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Measurement and Assessment

- **First memories.**
Determine the person's first recollections of childhood.



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Issues and Contributions

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Issues.<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Difficult to falsify.– Imprecise definitions.– Overly simplistic. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Contributions.<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Importance of social variables.– Lifestyle.– Inferiority complex. |
|---|--|

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Postview #1*

Individual Differences	Individuals differ in their goals and how they try to achieve them, their "life style".
Adaptation & Adjustment	Health involves love, work, and social interaction. This is the responsibility of the individual. Social interest is required for health.
Cognitive Processes	Conscious experience and thought are important and are generally trustworthy.
Social Influences	Society influences us through social roles including gender roles.

* Adapted from Cloninger, S. (2000). *Theories of Personality 3rd* Upper Saddle River, Prentice Hall

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Postview #2*

Biological Influences	Organ inferiority influences the direction of personality development as the individual attempts to compensate for perceived inferiority.
Child Development	Parents have an important influence and better parenting techniques can be taught. There are clear childrearing guidelines. Relationships with siblings and birth order influence personality.
Adult Development	Adults create and modify their personalities through goal setting.

* Adapted from Cloninger, S. (2000). *Theories of Personality 3rd* Upper Saddle River, Prentice Hall

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Karen Horney



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Overview

- **Freud was wrong about women.**
 - Not all have penis envy.
 - Creation of life and childbirth result in womb envy in men.
 - Differences between men and women are cultural.
- **Focus on early childhood experiences.**
 - Relationship with parents.
 - Culture and economic conditions.

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Key Concept

Attachment.

The emotional connection between the child and the parent, especially the mother.



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Key Elements

- **Attachment.**
 - Child instinctively needs sense of **SAFETY** and **SATISFACTION**.
 - Parent influences these needs.
- **BASIC EVIL**
The parent's behavior undermines the child's sense of security.
 - Indifference
 - Rejection
 - Hostility
 - Humiliation

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Reactions to Basic Evil

- **BASIC HOSTILITY**
Hostile feelings toward parents that need to be repressed.
- **BASIC ANXIETY.**
Generalization of the anxiety or ambivalent feelings toward parents to the whole world.

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Adjustments to Basic Anxiety

1. **Move toward people.**
 - 'Self-effacing solution.'
 - Seek love and admiration.
2. **Move against people.**
 - 'Expansive solution.'
 - Seek mastery over people.
3. **Move away from people.**
 - 'Resignation solution.'
 - Seek freedom from people.

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Moving Toward People

Seen in

1. **Need for affection and approval.**
2. **Need for a partner to run one's life.**
3. **Need to live life within narrow limits.**
4. **Feeling of being weak and helpless.**

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Moving Against People

Seen in...

1. **Need for power and domination over others (with power no one can hurt me).**
2. **Need to exploit others. 'Get them before they get me.'**
3. **Need for recognition and prestige.**
4. **Need for admiration.**
5. **Need for ambition and personal achievement.**

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Moving Away From People

Seen in...

1. **Need for independence and self-sufficiency.**
2. **Need for perfection.**

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Healthy Person

The healthy person uses all three approaches in balance.
The neurotic person uses one approach exclusively.

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Real vs. Ideal Self

• REAL SELF

Self-perception one has at birth.

- This is maintained if basic security and safety needs are met.
- Basic Evil results in moving away from this toward an *IDEALIZED SELF* What I should be.

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Other Approaches to Harmony

1. Blind spots.

Ignoring some aspects of you experience because they are not compatible with your *idealized self*.

2. Compartmentalization.

Having different rules that apply to different parts of your life.

3. Rationalization.

Using excuses to justify one's perceived weaknesses, failures, and inconsistencies.

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Other Approaches to Harmony

4. Excessive Self-control.

Inhibiting emotional expression.

5. Arbitrary Rightness.

Reaction to sense of self-doubt by stating a single, dogmatic, answer to all questions.

6. Elusiveness.

Being indecisive, not being committed to any one thing.

7. Cynicism

Not believe in anything.

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Feminine Psychology

- Freudian psychology held that women felt inferior to men because they did not have a penis.
- Horney reacted to this; men feel that they resent the fact that they cannot create life and develop womb envy.
- Based on this envy men have a need to prove themselves.
- Later, stated that women feel inferior due to culture and male dominated society.

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Measurement and Assessment

- Dream analysis.
- Free association.
- Self-analysis.



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Contributions and Issues

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Contributions<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Shifted focus away from male dominated theories.– First to initiate a feminist view of personality. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Issues<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Measurement. |
|--|---|

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Postview #1*

Individual Differences

Individuals differ in their balance among the three interpersonal orientations. They also have different idealized selves and different ways of dealing with basic anxiety.

Adaptation & Adjustment

Health is involved in balanced interpersonal modes.

Cognitive Processes

Blind spots and other defense mechanisms limit insight. Self-examination can lead to growth.

* Adapted from Cloninger, S. (2000). *Theories of Personality 3rd* Upper Saddle River, Prentice Hall

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Postview #2*

Biological Influences

Biology is not as important as others claim.

Social Influences

Culture shapes our personality, especially through sex roles.

Child Development

Basic anxiety and hostility are fundamental emotions caused by inadequate parental love and care.

Adult Development

Few major changes in personality occur after childhood.

* Adapted from Cloninger, S. (2000). *Theories of Personality 3rd* Upper Saddle River, Prentice Hall

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Eric Erikson



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Overview

- **Not a trained physician or scientist.**
- **Focused on lifetime development.**
- **Development is biologically determined.**
- **Felt that gender played a large role in a person's psychological development.**

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Ego Psychology

- **The Ego has needs of its own that have to be satisfied.**
 - Organize a person's life.
 - Deal with harmonious relationships with the environment.
- **Ego Identity**
 - Consciously experienced sense of self.
 - Developed through social contacts.

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Developmental Processes

- **People proceed through eight developmental stages throughout their lives.**
- **Epigenetic Principle.**
Genetically determined developmental sequence.

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Developmental Processes, Crisis

- **The culmination of one stage that leads to a turning point.**
 - **A positive resolution**
 - Leads to maturation and transition to the next stage.
 - This transition develops one of the latent characteristics (Virtue).
 - This leads to strengthening of the Ego.
 - **A negative resolution leads to developmental limitations.**
- **Influenced by the social environment.**

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Crisis Phases

- 1. Immature phase.**

The crisis is not the focal point of personality development.
- 2. Critical phase.**

The crisis becomes the focal point of personality
- 3. Resolution phase.**

Dealing with the crisis. Leads to normal development if successful. Results in a VIRTUE.

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Ritualizations and Ritualisms

- **Ritualization.**

Culturally approved patterns of behavior that are acquired as a result of the crisis.
- **Ritualism.**



A mechanical, stereotyped ritualization that is followed blindly following the resolution of a crisis.

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Erikson's Psychosocial Stages

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1. Infancy

- **First year.**
- **Crisis: Basic Trust vs. Basic Mistrust**
 - Developed from loving, caring environment.
- **Virtue: Sense of Hope.**
- **Ritualization: Numinous**
 - How to be socially responsive.
- **Ritualism: Idolism**
 - Sense of appreciation is excessive.

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2. Childhood

- **1 – 4 years.**
- **Crisis: Autonomy vs. Shame & Doubt.**
- **Virtue: Will**
 - Capacity to exercise free choice as well as self-restraint.
- **Ritualization: Judiciousness**
 - Learn societies rules.
- **Ritualism: Legalism.**
 - Self-righteous, moralistic evaluation and following rules.

3. Preschool

- **4-5 years.**
- **Crisis: Initiative vs. Guilt**
- **Virtue: Purpose**
 - Capacity to see and develop personal goals.
- **Ritualization: Authenticity.**
 - Develop roles that are 'right' for the child.
- **Ritualism: Impersonation.**
 - Child develops an artificial role.

4. School Age

- **6 to 11 years**
- **Crisis: Industry vs. Inferiority**
- **Virtue: Competence**
 - Sense of capability to do things without feeling inferior.
- **Ritualization: Formality**
 - Learning the appropriate way of doing tasks.
- **Ritualism: Formalism**
 - Over concern with correctness, following procedures blindly.

5. Adolescence

- **12 – 20 years.**
- **Crisis: Identify vs. Role Confusion**
- **Virtue: Fidelity.**
 - Capacity to maintain loyalty.
- **Ritualization: Ideology**
 - Integrated value system used to guide life.
- **Ritualism: Totalism**
 - Commitment to an overly simplistic set of values.

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Adolescence and Identity

- **Identity.**
Recognition of one's full capacity; knowing where one is going; developed sense of purpose.
- **Role Confusion.**
Inability to choose a role in life. Lack of sense of purpose.
- **Negative Identity.**
Roles a person is warned against.

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6. Young Adulthood

- **20 – 24 years**
- **Crisis: Intimacy vs. Isolation.**
- **Virtue: Love**
Capacity for devotion to another.
- **Ritualization: Affiliation**
Capacity to establish productive relationships with other adults.
- **Ritualism: Elitism**
Surrounding oneself solely with like-minded people.

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7. Adulthood

- **25 – 64**
- **Crisis: Generativity vs. Stagnation.**
Concern to for things beyond those generated by love.
- **Virtue: Care.**
- **Ritualization: Generationalism.**
Actively transmitting cultural values to the next generation.
- **Ritualism: Authoritism.**
Use of power for one's own purposes.

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8. Old Age

- **65 onward.**
- **Crisis: Ego Integrity vs. Despair**
Capacity to look back on life and feel fulfilled.
- **Virtue: Wisdom**
Detached ability to look at life when facing death.
- **Ritualization: Integralism**
Integration of life experience.
- **Ritualism: Sapientism**
Pretense of being wise.

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Issues and Contributions

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Issues.<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Moralistic.– Overly optimistic.– Difficult to evaluate.– Simplistic. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Contributions.<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Expanded development to old age.– Focused on healthy people vs. unhealthy. |
|---|--|

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Postview #1*

Individual Differences

Individuals differ in their ego strength. Males and females differ in personality due to biological differences.

Adaptation & Adjustment

A strong ego is essential to mental health. This comes from resolution of the eight developmental stages when the positive strength dominates.

Cognitive Processes

The unconscious is important. Experience is by biology which is expressed in play and symbols.

* Adapted from Cloninger, S. (2000). *Theories of Personality* 3rd Upper Saddle River, Prentice Hall

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Postview #2*

Biological Influences

Biological factors are important determinants of personality. Gender differences are influenced by the "genital apparatus".

Social Influences

Society shapes the way people develop. Cultural institutions continue to support ego strengths.

* Adapted from Cloninger, S. (2000). *Theories of Personality* 3rd Upper Saddle River, Prentice Hall

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Postview #3*

Child Development

Children develop through four stages each of which presents a crisis in which a specific ego strength is developed.

Adult Development

Adolescents and adults develop through four additional stages each of which contributes a particular ego strength.

* Adapted from Cloninger, S. (2000). *Theories of Personality* 3rd Upper Saddle River, Prentice Hall

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