

Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung: Theories of the Human Mind

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Human behavior has always served to be a requirement for us to understand who we are as an individual and by extension, a collective. We are all born via similar means yet we are not clones of each other, we differ in a multitude of ways starting from nature vs nurture to how we all perceive a stimulus differently. Sought-after questions such as why some people seek attention or understand motivations and traits of a person. As a response, personality psychology has become a beacon in providing theories through scientific studies and examining the results. Notable psychologists such as Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung are pioneers of the field that provided insight into the human psyche and it has left an imprint that can be seen in the world today. The purpose of this paper is to examine theories from Freud and Jung regarding personality, compare them and lastly provide my own critique. With this purpose, the goal is to provide better understanding to each psychologist's views and contributions.

Similar to a person's genetic makeup, personality is the defining characteristics and behavior that are founded upon internal drives and emotional patterns. As reviewed earlier, personality psychology examines the human personality and provides possible explanations to the variations among individuals. Unanimously named as the "Father of Psychoanalysis" by other psychologists, Freud is well known for his ideas in psychosexual development, the unconscious mind and lastly dreams. Starting with the basic foundation of the human mind which consist of the conscious which refers to the ideas that we are aware of, preconscious which is in the midpoint of the conscious and unconscious which contains information that regulated to the back but it can be retrieved quickly, and unconscious is the lowest level of personality as it retains experiences that can be regarded as inappropriate or traumatic so the mind represses

these memories as a response. Freud built upon these three concepts, coined as the Id, Ego and Superego and how they relate to personality.

Expanding on this concept, the Id houses our powerful aggression and sexual instincts that are assumed to be innate since the age of conception. Alone, the Id is unregulated and instinctively follows its own satisfaction without the concerns of others. The ego was formed in response to the unchecked Id. The role of the ego is to regulate the Id by finding more appropriate and realistic ways to release their impulses. Lastly is the superego, which is deemed as the conscious inner voice. This is usually the last to develop as it is composed of values that were instilled by external factors, such as parents or society that teach what is right and wrong. As such, it affects how others look at us. If we want to fit into a group or receive positive attention, we would avoid actions that are detrimental to our image. Its role in regards to the id and the ego, it stops unattractive impulses from being displayed and influences the ego to find moralistic goals rather than realistic. It is important to note all three can work in unison when the individual is in an environment. For example, a teacher is in the middle of a lesson and they are hungry for pizza. The response of the Id would be leaving the class during the lesson and eating pizza, the ego will try to direct this urge by thinking about eating pizza while the superego would wait until break time to purchase and eat the food.

On to Freud's next theory which is psychosexual development. This theory consists of several stages that are correlated with pleasure and the development of personality over the course of childhood. It is suggested that once an individual experiences conflict within each stage and is able to resolve that conflict in a healthy fashion, it will help build a healthy personality. However, if that person is unable to cope

and resolve that conflict, they will experience a fixation and remain at that stage while exhibiting negative behaviors. Starting at the first stage, known as oral, revolves around receiving positive stimulation from having food or objects in their mouths. This stage is initially vital in the development of an infant as it establishes trust and dependency from the caregivers. However as they grow up, they must learn to resolve their dependency which will create conflict. Overindulgence or smoothing during this stage will lead this person to be highly reliant on others and unable to accomplish goals on their own. The next stage is anal, where there is pleasure derived from retaining or excreting feces. Behavior expressed at this stage would be instances of a toddler expressing their own independence and decision making. Positive reinforcement during toilet training increases the chances for success at this stage as it will grow their capabilities and encourage their autonomy. Behaviors after negative interventions can range from stubbornness and defiance to orderly and obsessive personality. The third stage is phallic, which popularized the term oedipal complex for boys, electra complex or penis envy for girls. At this stage, the child develops sexual urges for their opposite sex parent and also hostility for their same sex parent. For young boys at this stage, they develop feelings for their mother, however the fear of their father and castration is strong enough to transform these urges into socially accepted channels and positive outside relationships. However Freud believed that girls experience penis envy instead, this obsession progresses as they get older to the point where they look forward to having a male offspring and live vicariously through them. Last stage is genital, it occurs as the sexual organs reach maturity and tensions grow. The goal at this stage is to successfully find a partner to love and grow healthy relationships. An individual who

successfully passed the previous stages will have a higher chance of developing healthier opposite sex relationships while those who did not will have trouble in this area.

The final theory that aimed to understand human behavior are dreams and their interpretation. Dreams are experienced by many and Freud believed they play a role in learning about the unconscious desires of a person. The dreams that a person experiences, are thought to be wishes that cannot be fulfilled due the conflicting nature of the person's ideal self.

Sigmund Freud sought to understand the human mind and challenged notions that did not align with his theories. His contributions to psychology as a whole elicited both positive followers and negative criticisms. Delving into the criticisms, it is important to understand that his theory of psychosexual development were both difficult to test consistently and these findings were founded on past recollections from his adult patients and not on children. A statistical study by Charles Barnes in 1952 sought to investigate the characteristics of oral, anal and phallic stages popularized by Freud by administering questionnaires to a group of male college students. Results revealed that as a whole none of the characteristics were apparent and do not support this theory. Proponents of his dream interpretations may hold some truths as restrained desires can be expressed through dreams.

Carl Jung shared many common beliefs with Freud, to the point that they were close colleagues and Freud believed that Jung would continue expanding on his established theories. However, Jung pioneered his own interpretation on the human mind, which were the psyche, archetypes and self-realization. The psyche is the total

personality that consists of energy flowing throughout the body. This energy can express itself in various forms and behaviors, careful balance of this energy is the goal of individuation and self-actualization. Similar to Freud, Jung had also believed in the ego but also the personal unconscious and collective unconscious. The ego in Jung's case represents "the center of field of consciousness which contains our conscious awareness of existing and a continuing sense of personal identity." (Hopwood) It has the role of containing our consciousness, feelings and past memories. The personal unconscious houses forgotten memories that are either unpleasant or lack a strong impression to remember. The collective unconscious is the storehouse of innate instincts cultivated from prehistoric times. These instincts or behaviors are known as archetypes and can be divided into subcategories: persona, shadow, anima and animus and lastly the self. The persona is the image we present to people in order to protect ourselves. A point to consider regarding persona is that the persona can hinder the progression of attaining individuality because we hide and lose ourselves in the personality we created for others. The shadow represents the dark side of ourselves that can not be shown as they are immoral and self destructive. Anima and Animus are the qualities of the male and female in the opposite sex. Meaning men will have some feminine qualities and women will have masculine qualities. These qualities serve to enrich and unify a person's personality if they are in an environment that encourages displaying these behaviors. However if they are in a culture that enforces traditional gender roles, it will lead to the suppression or lacking in key aspects of personality. The self is the combination of the consciousness and unconsciousness of the individual. Jung believed that the inability to resolve internal conflicts with the help of the ego, can

lead to psychological issues. As such, the ultimate goal of the self is to find balance and resolve internal strife. Self-Realization by Jung can be considered as the peak of human nature fulfillment. It is difficult to attain as the individual must understand themselves and learn to adapt to external and internal forces that will impede growth.

Reviewing Carl Jung's ideas on the human psyche, there is a reliance on internal energy as the proponent to what fuels behavior. To scientifically assess this idea, would be difficult as spirituality and science rarely coexist in the same spaces. The validity and reliability to test these concepts are not possible as they yield unpredictable results. Following his theories, there are a considerable number of factors that can provide explanation for an undesired behavior which supports the unpredictable nature of the human mind.

Carl Jung and Sigmund Freud shared many theories regarding the development and the composition of the mind. What set them apart, are the areas they believed took precedence over another. When reviewing both psychologist's beliefs, there are key differences in the subject of the unconscious mind and motivations. Freud believed that the unconscious mind stores all of our repressed memories and inappropriate urges. He also believed that these repressed behaviors act as fuel for our motivations. Compared to Jung who believed in the personal and collective unconsciousness which holds information that can be recalled and behaviors that can be traced back to earlier times. The pursuit for self-realization and psyche energy serves as the motivation for behaviors to be exhibited.

When discussing the reasons for why specific behaviors are either expressed or suppressed, many have postulated different theories of varying explanations. Carl Jung

and Sigmund Freud provided contributions to this unexplored area of psychology. Their theories advanced the concept of interpreting these behaviors and gave rise to other psychologists to expand. Legitimate criticisms for both theorists can be considered as they are vague and difficult to test. However it can serve as a basis to be improved upon as more research expands further into the human psyche.

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