

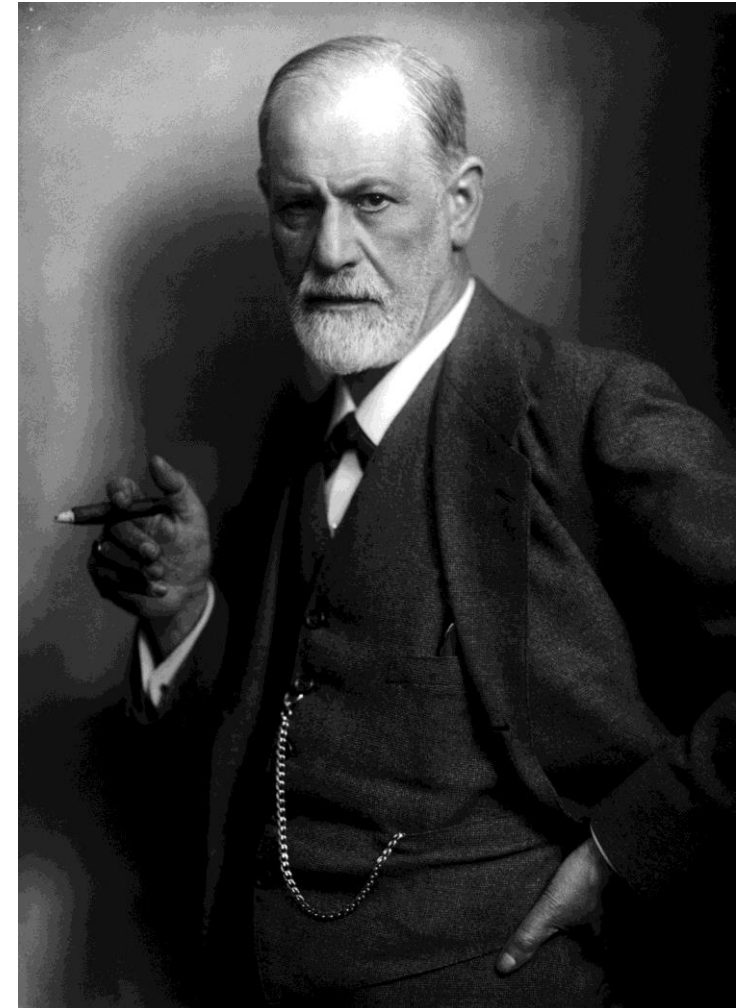
Sigmund Freud & Psychoanalytic Theory

SIUE PSYC 340

Sigmund Freud

Life of Freud

- Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) was an Austrian neurologist who influenced personality theory more than anyone else in psychology's history.
- His system of **psychoanalysis**, established in the late 1800s, was the 1st formal theory of personality and is still the best known today.



Life of Freud

- Born in 1856 in Moravia to Jewish parents of Ukrainian decent
 - Felt hostility and anger toward his father, who was a strict authoritarian
 - Felt a passionate, sexual attachment toward his mother, who was extremely loving
- Was a self-confident, ambitious, and intelligent child with many interests
 - Dreamed of being rich and famous

Life of Freud

- Trained as a physician in Austria and worked as a clinical neurologist
- Experimented with a variety of methods, including hypnosis and cocaine, to find the most effective treatment for nervous system disorders
 - Published a controversial [article](#) about the benefits of cocaine in 1884 and was criticized for contributing to its increased abuse in subsequent decades
 - Eventually developed an [addiction](#) to cocaine

Life of Freud

- Opened his private practice in 1886 in Vienna
 - Initially used hypnosis to treat his patients
 - By 1896, developed his own method, psychoanalysis
- Held a negative attitude toward sex and experienced some unusual symptoms
 - Used dream analysis to psychoanalyze himself
 - Self-diagnosed his symptoms as anxiety neurosis and neurasthenia, a condition characterized by weakness, worry, and disturbances of digestion and circulation

Life of Freud

- Attracted a group of disciples (e.g., Carl Jung and Alfred Adler) after publishing articles and papers and presenting at scientific meetings
- Reached the pinnacle of his success in the 1920s and 1930s
- Emigrated to the United Kingdom in 1938 to escape the Nazi regime
 - Only known [audio recording](#) of him on July 12, 1938 in London
 - Died in 1939 from painful mouth cancer (using physician-assisted suicide)

Freud's Theory

- Needs, like hunger and thirst, create tension that motivates us to reduce this tension and restore balance.
- The energy used to satisfy these needs can be displaced to substitute objects.
 - Our interests, preferences, and attitudes are displacements of energy.
 - Displacement determines personality.

Instincts

- **Instincts:** The basic elements of personality
 - The mental representation of an internal physiological need
 - The exclusive source of energy for motivating behavior and satisfying needs



Instincts

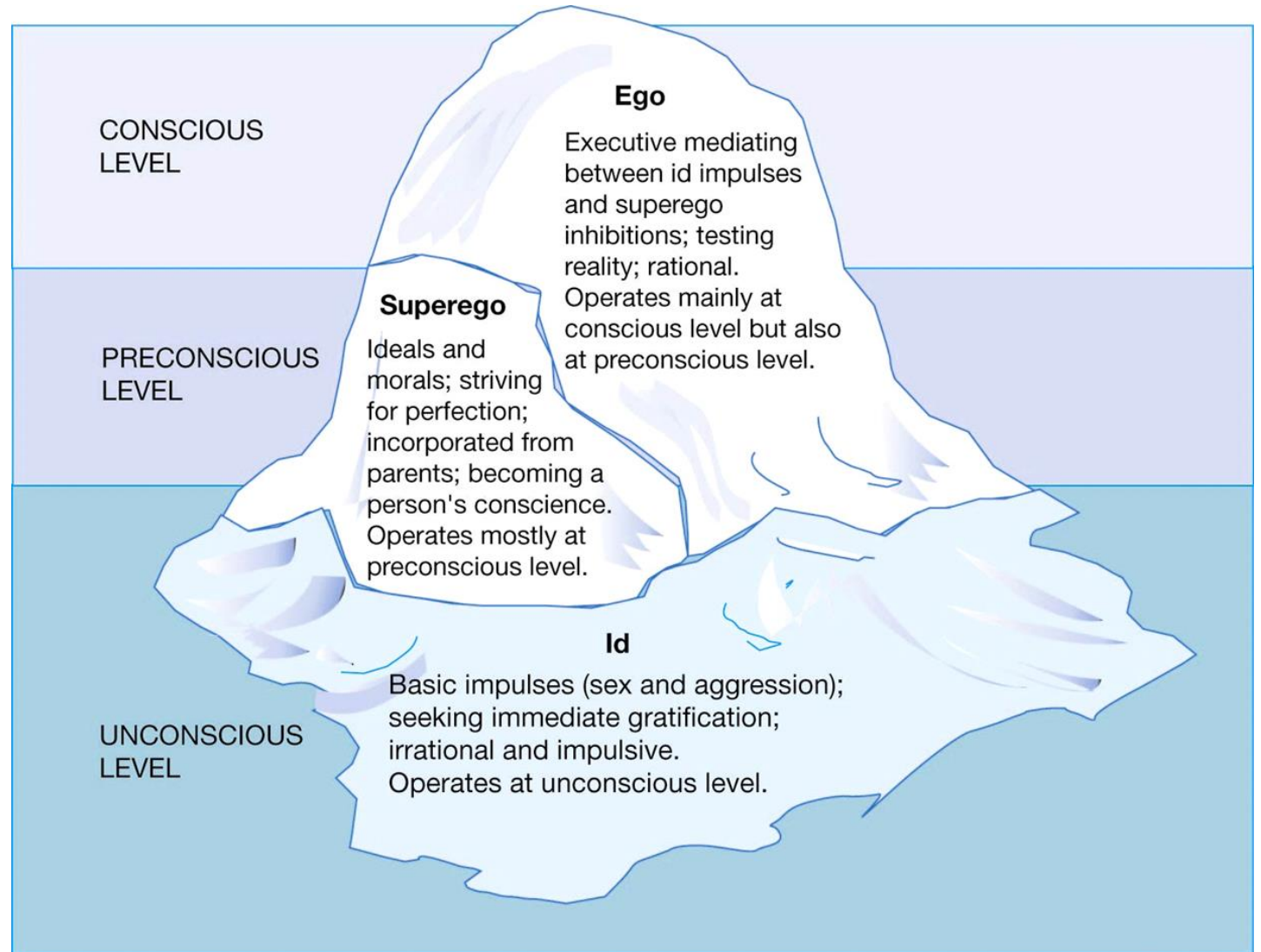
- **Life instincts:** Seek to satisfy the needs for sex, food, water, and air
 - **Libido:** The psychic energy created by the life instincts
 - Drives us toward pleasurable behaviors and thoughts
 - **Cathexis:** The investment of psychic energy in an object or person
- **Death instincts:** The unconscious drive toward decay, destruction, and aggression
 - **Aggressive drive:** The wish to die turned against external objects
 - Compels us to destroy, conquer, and kill

Levels of Personality

- Divided personality into 3 levels and likened it to an iceberg:
 - **Conscious:** Contains the mental processes of which we are aware
 - **Unconscious:** Contains the driving power behind all behaviors and is the repository of forces we cannot see
 - **Preconscious:** Contains memories, perceptions, and thoughts of which we are not aware but that can easily be summoned into consciousness

Structure of Personality

- Identified 3 structures of personality: the id, the ego, and the superego



Structure of Personality

- **Id:** The reservoir for instincts and the libido
 - Corresponds to the unconscious
 - Supplies all the energy for the ego and the superego
 - Functions to maximize pleasure and avoid pain (**pleasure principle**)
 - Has no awareness of reality
 - Attempts to satisfy needs through reflex action and childlike wishful thinking (**primary-process thought**)

Structure of Personality

- **Ego:** The rational master of personality, serving both the id and reality
 - Operates at both the conscious and preconscious levels
 - Functions to provide appropriate constraints on the expression of the id instincts (**reality principle**)
 - Decides when and how the id instincts can best be satisfied
 - Attempts to satisfy needs through mature and rational thought processes (**secondary-process thought**)

Structure of Personality

- **Superego:** Functions as the moral control of the mind
 - Operates at mostly the preconscious level
 - Is relentless in its constant quest for moral perfection
 - Represents the moral and ethical values we acquire in childhood
 - **Conscience:** Contains the behaviors for which we were punished in childhood
 - **Ego-ideal:** Contains the moral or ideal behaviors for which we were praised in childhood

Structure of Personality

- Example:
 - A college student would like to invite two of their attractive friends to go out on a Friday night date (involves the id).
 - However, the student knows that using two friends for one date would likely create conflict (involves the ego).
 - They also know that this behavior might violate social norms (involves the superego).

Anxiety

- **Anxiety:** An objectless fear to a specific object that caused it
 - **Reality/objective anxiety:** A fear of tangible dangers in the real world
 - **Neurotic anxiety:** A fear based on a childhood conflict between the id and the ego
 - **Moral anxiety:** A fear based on a conflict between the id and the superego

Anxiety

- Produced by the constant demands of the id, the ego, and the superego
- Signals a threat to the ego
- Creates tension that motivates behavior
 - Rational responses – Run away from the threatening situation, inhibit the impulsive need that is the source of the danger, or obey the rules of the conscience
 - Nonrational responses – Defense mechanisms

Defense Mechanisms

- **Defense mechanisms:** The nonrational strategies used to defend the ego against anxiety caused by the conflicts of daily life
- Involve denials or distortions of reality
- Operate unconsciously and continuously
- Can influence mental health in a negative way
 - Must be restored or replaced to prevent neurotic or psychotic symptoms

Defense Mechanisms

- **Projection:** Involves attributing a disturbing impulse to someone else
 - E.g., "I don't hate him. He hates me."
 - Considered a "narcissistic" response
- **Denial:** Involves a failure to acknowledge the existence of anxiety-producing threats, events, or information
 - E.g., A terminally ill patient doesn't think about their impending death.
 - Considered a "narcissistic" response

Defense Mechanisms

- **Regression:** Involves a retreat to an earlier, more pleasant period of life
 - E.g., A preschooler acts like and talks like a baby to avoid their chores.
 - Considered an “immature” response
- **Repression:** Involves the involuntary removal of unwanted thoughts, feelings, or impulses from conscious awareness
 - E.g., You can only remember vague details about a traumatic car accident.
 - Considered an “anxious” response

Defense Mechanisms

- **Rationalization:** The reinterpretation of one's behavior to make it seem more rational and acceptable
 - E.g., Despite having multiple drinks every night, a person says they are not an alcoholic because they never drink before 5 PM.
 - Considered an “anxious” response
- **Reaction formation:** Involves the expression of an id impulse that is the opposite of the one that is truly driving the person
 - E.g., A person who feels threatened by sexual longings becomes a crusader against pornography.
 - Considered an “anxious” response

Defense Mechanisms

- **Displacement:** Involves the redirection of id impulses from a threatening or unavailable object toward a substitute
 - E.g., Frustrated with their own boss, a manager yells at the new employee.
 - Considered an “anxious” response
- **Sublimation:** Involves the diversion of id impulses into other channels of more acceptable expression
 - E.g., A graduate student works on their thesis 14 hours a day while their partner is on an extended business trip.
 - Considered a “mature” response

Psychosexual Stages of Development

- Personality develops in stages through which all children pass.
- Each stage is defined by an erogenous zone of the body and involves a conflict that must be resolved before the child can move to the next stage.
- The gratification of id instincts depends on the stimulation of these zones.
- **Fixation:** Occurs when some energy remains invested in one stage (due to excessive frustration or gratification), leaving less energy for the next stages

Psychosexual Stages of Development

Stage	Age	Erogenous Zone	Tasks	Successful Resolution	Adult Fixation
Oral	0-1	Mouth	Sucking, chewing, eating, biting, vocalizing	Weaning	Oral aggression (verbally abusive) or oral passivity (smoking, overeating)
Anal	1-3	Anus	Bowel and bladder control	Toilet training	Anal retention (overly tidy) or anal expulsion (disorganized)
Phallic	3-6	Genitals	Masturbation, Oedipus complex (males), Electra complex (females)	Gender identification	Sexual dysfunction, difficulty with intimate relationships
Latency	6-12	None	Dormant sexual feelings	Social interaction, defense mechanisms	N/A
Genital	12+	Others' genitals	Reproduction, pleasure	Intimate relationships	Frigidity, impotence, difficulty with intimate relationships

Psychosexual Stages of Development

- Boys in the phallic stage have a/an:
 - **Oedipus complex:** Unconscious desire for the mother
 - Desire to replace/destroy the father
 - **Castration anxiety:** Fear that his penis will be cut off by the father
 - Resolve the complex by identifying with the father
- Girls in the phallic stage have a/an:
 - **Electra complex:** Unconscious desire for the father
 - Desire to replace/destroy the mother
 - **Penis envy:** Envy of the male because of penis possession and a sense of loss
 - Can result in a poorly developed superego

Freud's Methods

- **Case study:** An in-depth investigation of a single person or several individual cases of some phenomenon
- **Psychoanalysis:** A kind of “talking cure” that relies on dialogue between the therapist and patient
 - The therapist's goal is to reach the patient's unconscious and create free will.
 - It impacted the field of clinical psychology, subsequent psychological theories and practices, and understanding of personality and motivation.

Freud's Methods

- **Free association:** A method in which a patient says whatever comes to mind
 - **Resistances:** The blockage of painful memories
- **Catharsis:** A method in which a patient expresses emotions in the hopes of reducing symptoms
- **Dream analysis:** A method in which the events of a dream (**manifest content**) are interpreted to identify their hidden symbolic meaning (**latent content**)

Strengths of Freud's Theory

- Modern research supports Freud's notion that:
 - Unconscious forces can influence conscious thought and behavior.
 - Childhood experiences shape adult behavior.
 - Displacement, repression, denial, and projection exist.
 - Dreams reflect emotional concerns.
 - Freudian slips, or casual lapses in speech, happen.

Criticisms of Freud's Theory

- Modern research does NOT support Freud's notion that:
 - Personality develops through five psychosexual stages.
 - Personality is fixed by the age of 5.
 - An Oedipal complex in childhood is related to sexual problems in adulthood.
 - Dreams represent a fulfillment of unconscious desires.
 - Freudian slips reflect unconscious motives or anxieties.

Criticisms of Freud's Theory

- His methods were subjective and did not gather data in a systematic fashion.
- His concepts were loosely defined, and some (e.g., the id, ego, superego, death wish, libido, and anxiety) cannot be tested using the experimental method.
- His views on women are controversial by today's standards (but were widespread in the late 1800s and early 1900s).
- His notes, which were jotted down from memory after therapy sessions, sometimes contradict the published versions of his case studies.