

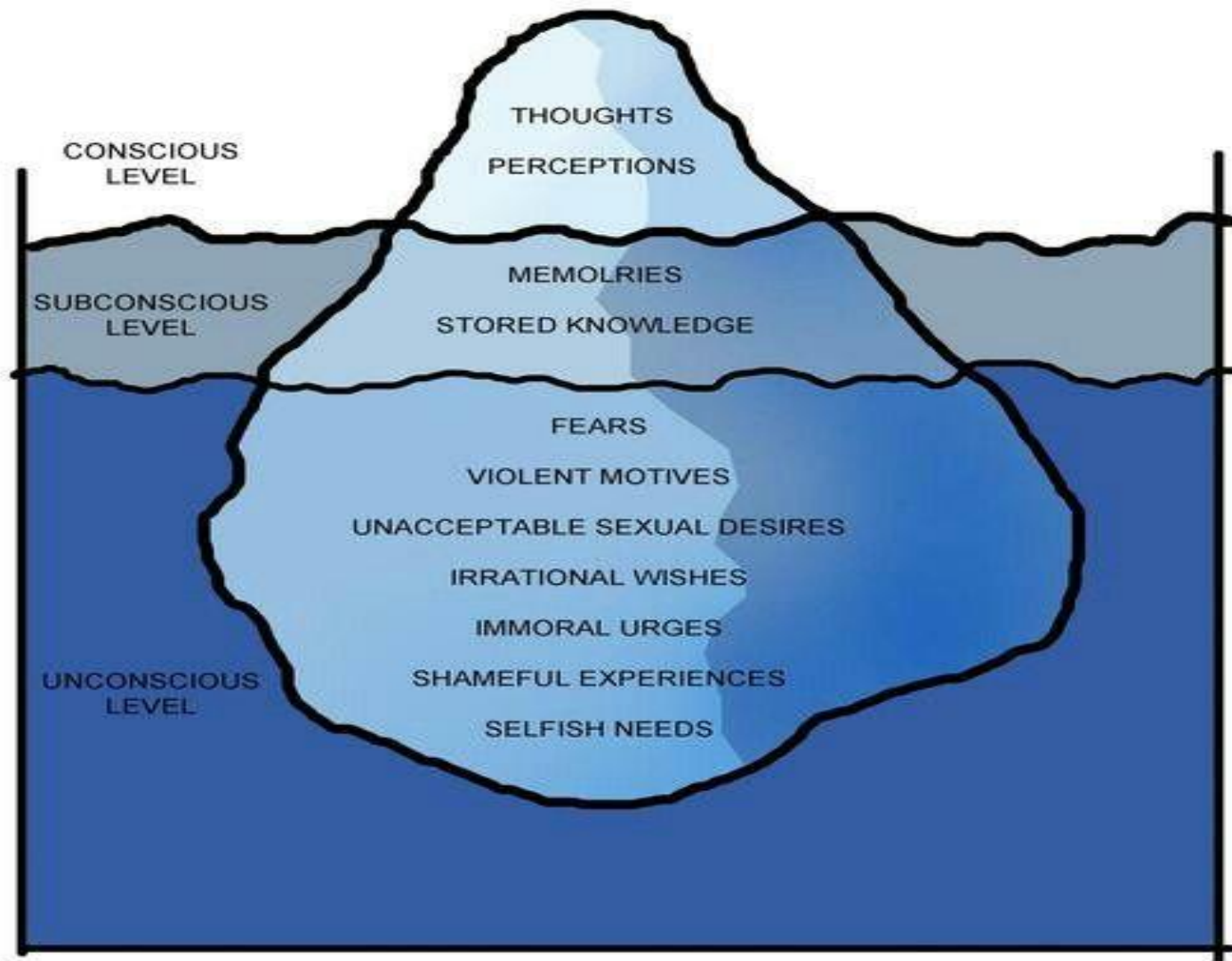
Sigmund Freud: Founded the theory of Psychoanalysis

- Based in the assumption that **our lives are primarily driven by our Unconscious selves of which we have no awareness.** The Unconscious is vastly larger and more powerful than the Conscious portion of our lives.
- **Conflict emerges** as our conscious self attempts to balance the **wisdom of the conscious self** with the **instincts and pure desires of the unconscious self.**
- **Change occurs** as the **Unconscious is revealed to the conscious self, enabling the conscious self to have more control in life and less driven by the Unconscious.**
- Psychoanalysis has been very successful in helping people **reduce depression and anxiety** in their lives. It does, however, take a long time to get to **the root of the unconscious problems and gain more control over one's life.**
- **The goals of psychoanalysis** stated by Freud are **to render the Unconscious into a revealed state in consciousness.** However, Freud realized that only a relatively small portion of the Unconscious could ever be brought into the conscious state.

The root of a person's psychological problems

- Originates from infancy and throughout childhood. **Conflicts emerge in adult life attempting adjustments to the (primary processes of) the Unconscious and instinctual life** (conflicts developed in infancy and childhood) **as they are contradicted by the Conscious life** (or secondary processes).
- **Personality and the ability to adjust to life** is given and determined by **results of conflict resolution** in infancy and childhood **when the child initially becomes conscious and has to adjust to his own unconscious feelings.**
- The role of the therapist in Psychoanalysis is to act as a catalyst and facilitator in causing the client to face their unconscious and conscious fears in order for the client to live their life more in control.
- This technique is predominantly conducted by **talk therapy**. Clients **use language to access** their unconscious life.
- **Inkblot tests** are sometimes used to encourage the client to reveal unconscious thoughts.
- **The counselor identifies defense mechanisms** to help the client maintain **focus on the fears the client has unconsciously.**
- Transference is also a very important technique in helping the client reveal the root of their internal conflicts. The client will often unconsciously transfer the subjects from within their unconscious and project them onto the therapist.

Freud's View of the Human Mind: The Mental Iceberg



Mechanism	Description	Example
Repression	Repression is an unconscious mechanism employed by the ego to keep disturbing or threatening thoughts from becoming conscious.	During the Oedipus complex aggressive thoughts about the same sex parents are repressed
Denial	Denial involves blocking external events from awareness. If some situation is just too much to handle, the person just refuses to experience it.	For example, smokers may refuse to admit to themselves that smoking is bad for their health.
Projection	This involves individuals attributing their own unacceptable thoughts, feeling and motives to another person.	You might hate someone, but your superego tells you that such hatred is unacceptable. You can 'solve' the problem by believing that they hate you.
Displacement	Satisfying an impulse (e.g. aggression) with a substitute object.	Someone who is frustrated by his or her boss at work may go home and kick the dog,
Regression	This is a movement back in psychological time when one is faced with stress.	A child may begin to suck their thumb again or wet the bed when they need to spend some time in the hospital.
Sublimation	Satisfying an impulse (e.g. aggression) with a substitute object. In a socially acceptable way.	Sport is an example of putting our emotions (e.g. aggression) into something constructive.

Denial

Anna Freud (1936) proposed denial involves blocking external events from awareness. If some situation is just too much to handle, the person just refuses to experience it.

This is a primitive and dangerous defense - no one disregards reality and gets away with it for long! It can operate by itself or, more commonly, in combination with other, more subtle mechanisms that support it.

For example, smokers may refuse to admit to themselves that smoking is bad for their health.

Identification with the Aggressor

A focus on negative or feared traits. I.e., if you are afraid of someone, you can practically conquer that fear by becoming more like them.

An extreme example of this is the Stockholm Syndrome, where hostages identify with the terrorists. E.g., Patty Hearst and the Symbionese Liberation Army.

Patty was abused and raped by her captors, yet she joined their movement and even took part in one of their bank robberies. At her trial, she was acquitted because she was a victim suffering from Stockholm Syndrome.

Repression

This was the first defense mechanism that Freud discovered, and arguably the most important. Repression is an unconscious mechanism employed by the ego to keep thoughts that are often repressed are those that would result in feelings of guilt from the superego. For example, in the Oedipus complex, aggressive thoughts about the same sex parents are repressed.

This is not a very successful defense in the long term since it involves forcing disturbing wishes, ideas or memories into the unconscious, where, although hidden, they will create anxiety.

Projection

This involves individuals attributing their own thoughts, feeling, and motives to another person (A. Freud, 1936). Thoughts most commonly projected onto another are the ones that would cause guilt such as aggressive and sexual fantasies or thoughts.

For instance, you might hate someone, but your superego tells you that such hatred is unacceptable. You can 'solve' the problem by believing that they hate you.

Displacement

Displacement is the redirection of an impulse (usually aggression) onto a powerless substitute target (A. Freud, 1936). The target can be a person or an object that can serve as a symbolic substitute. Someone who feels uncomfortable with their sexual desire for a real person may substitute a fetish.

Someone who is frustrated by his or her superiors may go home and kick the dog, beat up a family member, or engage in cross-burnings.

Sublimation

This is similar to displacement, but takes place when we manage to displace our emotions into a constructive rather than destructive activity (A. Freud, 1936). This might, for example, be artistic.

Many great artists and musicians have had unhappy lives and have used the medium of art or music to express themselves. Sport is another example of putting our emotions (e.g., aggression) into something constructive.

For example, fixation at the oral stage of development may later lead to seeking oral pleasure as an adult through sucking one's thumb, pen or cigarette. Also, fixation during the anal stage may cause a person to sublimate their desire to handle faeces with an enjoyment of pottery. Sublimation for Freud was the cornerstone of civilized life, arts and science are all sublimated sexuality.

Regression

This is a movement back in psychological time when one is faced with stress (A. Freud, 1936). When we are troubled or frightened, our behaviors often become more childish or primitive.

A child may begin to suck their thumb again or wet the bed when they need to spend some time in the hospital. Teenagers may giggle uncontrollably when introduced into a social situation involving the opposite sex.

Rationalization

Rationalization is the cognitive distortion of "the facts" to make an event or an impulse less threatening (A. Freud, 1936). We do it often enough on a fairly conscious level when we provide ourselves with excuses.

But for many people, with sensitive egos, making excuses comes so easy that they never are truly aware of it. In other words, many of us are quite prepared to believe our lies

Reaction Formation

This is where a person goes beyond denial and behaves in the opposite way to which he or she thinks or feels (A. Freud, 1936). By using the reaction formation, the id is satisfied while keeping the ego in ignorance of the true motives.

Conscious feelings are the opposite of the unconscious. Love - hate. Shame - disgust and moralizing are reaction formation against sexuality. Usually, a reaction formation is marked by showiness and compulsiveness.

For example, Freud claimed that men who are prejudice against homosexuals are making a defense against their own homosexual feelings by adopting a harsh anti-homosexual attitude which helps convince them of their heterosexuality. Other examples include:

- * The dutiful daughter who loves her mother is reacting to her Oedipus hatred of her mother.
- * Anal fixation usually leads to meanness, but occasionally a person will react against this (unconsciously) leading to over-generosity.