

# CHAPTER

# 14

## Personality

### IN THIS CHAPTER

**Summary:** “You’ve got a great personality” is a statement you probably like to hear about yourself. **Personality** is a unique pattern of consistent feelings, thoughts, and behaviors that originate within the individual. Because personality is unique to an individual, controlled experiments cannot be used to study it; thus, cause and effect relationships cannot be established. Psychologists use two different research methods to better understand personality. The **idiographic method** focuses on understanding the unique aspects of each individual’s personality relying on data primarily from case studies that often include interviews and naturalistic observations. The **nomothetic method** focuses on variables at the group level, identifying universal trait dimensions or relationships between different aspects of personality. Data for nomothetic studies is gathered primarily from tests, surveys, and observations. Correlations between traits or types of behavior can yield information about aspects of personality that apply to people in general. Nomothetic studies do not tell us about a particular individual. Most psychologists agree that our behavior results from the interaction of personal characteristics and environmental situations. Psychologists take different approaches to understanding and describing the origin and nature of personality.

This chapter examines theories and approaches of personality that are biological/evolutionary, psychoanalytic/psychodynamic, humanistic, cognitive, trait, and behaviorist; and techniques psychologists use to measure personality.

### KEY IDEA

#### Key Ideas

- ✦ Biological/evolutionary theories of personality
- ✦ Psychoanalytic/psychodynamic theories of personality
- ✦ Humanistic theories of personality
- ✦ Behavioral theory—operant conditioning

- ✧ Cognitive theories of personality
  - ✧ Trait theories of personality
  - ✧ Assessment techniques
  - ✧ Self-concept and self-esteem
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## Personality Theories and Approaches

### Biological and Evolutionary Personality Theories

To what extent is our personality determined by our heredity? Thousands of years ago, Greek physician and philosopher Hippocrates attributed personality to our biology. About 500 years later, Greek physician Galen claimed that a person's temperament depends on relative quantities of four humors, or fluids, in the body—blood and cheerfulness, phlegm and calmness, black bile and depression, yellow bile and irritability. In about 1800, seeking to relate behavior to observable aspects of physical makeup, Gall and Spurzheim related bumps and depressions on the skull to personality traits in their discredited theory of phrenology, and a half century ago, psychologist and physician William Sheldon related physique to temperament. According to his somatotype theory (which can be classified as a biological type theory), the soft, spherical endomorph is likely to be sociable and affectionate; the hard, muscular mesomorph is likely to be aggressive and courageous; and the linear and fragile ectomorph is likely to be restrained and happy to be alone.

Currently, **temperament**, an infant's natural disposition to show a particular mood at a particular intensity for a specific period, is generally considered the hereditary component of personality. According to Jerome Kagan, temperament includes sensitivity, activity levels, prevailing mood, irritability, and adaptability. Twin and adoption studies have been revealing the extent to which family resemblance of behavioral traits results from shared genes and the extent to which the resemblance results from shared environments. Heritability estimates suggest a moderate role of genetic influences (about 50 percent) in explaining individual differences in emotional stability. This indicates that both heredity and environment have about equal roles in determining at least some of our personality characteristics. New behavioral genetics methods may provide better data in the near future.

David Buss, an evolutionary psychologist, attributes the universality of basic personality traits to natural selection because traits such as extraversion and agreeableness ensure physical survival and reproduction of the species.

### Psychodynamic/Psychoanalytic Theories

#### Sigmund Freud

Although **Sigmund Freud** was a Viennese physician who practiced as a neurologist in the late 1800s and early 1900s, he was unable to account for personality in terms of anatomy. He and other psychoanalysts believed that people have an inborn nature that shapes personality. Practicing in the Victorian era (known for self-control of physical drives), and as a result of treating patients suffering from mental disorders, Freud thought that sexual conflicts hidden from awareness caused many of the problems. He developed a psychoanalytic theory to explain human behavior based on his case studies and self-analysis. Freud compared personality to an energy system, with instinctual drives generating psychic energy to power the mind and press for release directly as sexual activity or aggression, or indirectly. Freud described three levels of the mind: the conscious, preconscious, and unconscious. The **conscious** includes everything of which we are aware at a particular moment. Just below the level of conscious awareness, the **preconscious** contains thoughts, memories,

feelings, and images that we can easily recall. Generally inaccessible to our conscious, the largest part of the mind, the **unconscious**, teems with wishes, impulses, memories, and feelings. Threatening thoughts or feelings can be repressed or pushed into the unconscious. Glimpses of the unconscious are revealed through slips of the tongue and dreams.

### Freud's Personality Systems

Freud also described three major systems of personality: the id, the ego, and the superego. We are born with the unconscious **id**, which consists of everything psychological that is inherited, and psychic energy that powers all three systems. The id demands immediate gratification of its desires with driving forces and is guided by the *pleasure principle*, which reduces tension whenever it rises. The id is driven by instincts to avoid pain and obtain pleasure, and is totally irrational and self-centered. The partly conscious and partly unconscious **ego** mediates between our instinctual needs and the conditions of the surrounding environment in order to maintain our life and see that our species lives on. The ego obeys the *reality principle* to prevent the discharge of tension, sometimes using restraining forces, until a need can be satisfied appropriately. The last system of our personality to develop is the partly conscious and partly unconscious **superego**, which is composed of the conscience and the ego-ideal. The conscience punishes us by making us feel guilty, and the ego-ideal rewards us by making us feel proud of ourselves. The ego must check both the id and the superego to govern the personality, as well as engage with the external world. Cartoons sometimes depict a character (ego) with a devil on one shoulder making demands that the character do something impulsive or primitive (id), and with an angel on the other shoulder telling the character to do the right or noble thing (superego); the character decides what to do.

### The Ego and Its Defenses

Sometimes overwhelmed by threats it is unable to control, the ego becomes flooded with anxiety and takes extreme measures to relieve the pressure so that it can continue functioning. These measures, called **defense mechanisms**, operate unconsciously and deny, falsify, or distort reality. Defense mechanisms include repression, regression, rationalization, projection, displacement, reaction formation, and sublimation. The most frequently used and most powerful defense mechanism, **repression**, is the pushing away of threatening thoughts, feelings, and memories into the unconscious mind: unconscious forgetting. **Regression** is the retreat to an earlier level of development characterized by more immature, pleasurable behavior. **Rationalization** is offering socially acceptable reasons for our inappropriate behavior: making unconscious excuses. **Projection** is attributing our own undesirable thoughts, feelings, or actions to others. **Displacement** is shifting unacceptable thoughts, feelings, or actions from a more threatening person or object to another, less threatening person or object. Displacement is sometimes depicted in cartoons with the boss yelling at an employee, then the employee going home and yelling at the kids, and then the kids taking it out on a toy or pet. **Reaction formation** is acting in a manner exactly opposite to our true feelings. Reaction formation is exemplified by the new mother who really wants to be back at work as a highly paid lawyer, but stays home instead, showering all of her attention on her child. **Sublimation** is the redirection of unacceptable sexual or aggressive impulses into more socially acceptable behaviors. For example, home from a date with a sexy man she didn't have sex with, Jan plays her flute.

### Freud's Theory of Psychosexual Development

For Freud, the first five years of life are critical for the formation of personality. In each stage of Freud's theory of psychosexual development, the pleasure center moves to a different

area of sensitivity, or erogenous zone, and an unconscious conflict occurs. Freud believed that if the conflict was not resolved well, **libido** or life energy would become **fixated** at the pleasure center of that stage and became a permanent part of the adult personality. To help prevent fixation, parents need to be sensitive to the young child's needs in each stage, but not overly indulgent.

- Freud named stage 1 (0–1 year) the **oral stage**. During this stage, the infant receives pleasure and nourishment from the mouth and explores the world first by sucking, then later by biting and chewing. Pleasure derived from oral stimulation can lead to adult pleasure in acquiring knowledge or possessions. When the mother weans the child from her breast or the bottle, the conflict develops. If withdrawal causes especially traumatic separation anxiety in the infant, Freud thought it could lead to a fixation; either oral-dependent personality, characterized by gullibility, overeating, and passivity; or oral-aggressive personality, characterized by sarcasm and argumentativeness later in life.
- In stage 2 (1–3 years), the **anal stage**, the child obtains pleasure from defecation at the anus. When the child is being toilet trained, the conflict develops. Freud claimed that very strict and inflexible methods of toilet training may cause the child to hold back feces and become constipated. Generalized to other aspects of behaving, the anal-retentive personality is marked by compulsive cleanliness, orderliness, stinginess, and stubbornness. Alternately, such toilet training may cause the child to become angry and expel feces at inappropriate times, which may generalize to an anal-expulsive personality marked by disorderliness, messiness, and temper tantrums. If a child is praised extravagantly for bowel movements, the child may acquire the concept that producing feces is important, which can generalize to creativity and productivity.
- During stage 3 (3–5 years), the **phallic stage**, the erogenous zone moves to the genital region and stimulation of the genitals becomes a source of pleasure. Masturbation and the fantasy life of the child set the stage for the Oedipus complex. The Oedipus complex is named after the king of Thebes, Oedipus, who, having been abandoned as an infant, killed his father and married his mother without knowing they were his parents. The Oedipus complex (called the Electra complex in girls) is a conflict between the child's sexual desire for the parent of the opposite sex and fear of punishment from the same-sex parent. Resolution of the conflict leads to identification with the same-sex parent. The boy represses his sexual desire for his mother because of *castration anxiety*, fear that his dominant rival—his father—will remove his genitals, and he identifies with his father. Resolution of the Oedipus complex causes the superego to develop and guards against incest and aggression. The girl holds her mother responsible for her castrated condition and experiences *penis envy*, desire for a protruding sex organ that she wants to share with her father. The girl's Electra complex gets modified, and she identifies with her mother to prevent loss of her mother's love. From ages 6 to 12, Freud theorized that sexual feelings are repressed and sublimated during this **latency** period. Girls and boys transform the repressed sexual energy into developing social relationships and learning new tasks. If the child does not meet his or her own expectations or those of others, the child can develop into an adult with feelings of inferiority. Until puberty, the child is primarily narcissistic, obtaining pleasure from his or her own body.
- During adolescence, individuals pass into the final stage of maturity, the **genital stage**. The adolescent develops warm feelings for others, and sexual attraction, group activities, vocational planning, and intimate relationships develop too. This is a smooth period for those lucky enough to have little libido fixated in earlier stages, especially not during the phallic stage, according to Freud.



Critics (including neo-analysts, who were psychoanalysts that disagreed with parts of Freud's theory and developed their own) now discount most of this theory. Some neo-analysts, also called neo-Freudians, were Carl Jung, Alfred Adler, and Karen Horney.

### Carl Jung's Analytic Theory of Personality

A contemporary and colleague of Freud, **Carl Jung** rejected Freud's sex theory. The son of a Swiss pastor, Jung became a psychiatrist. Jung believed that personality is shaped by the cumulative experiences of past generations extending back to our evolutionary past. He studied mythology, religion, ancient symbols and rituals, customs and beliefs of different societies, dreams, and symptoms of mentally ill patients in his search to understand the development of personality. According to Jung's analytic theory of personality, the psyche—or whole personality—consists of interacting systems including the ego, the personal unconscious with its complexes; the collective unconscious with its archetypes, attitudes, and functions; and the self. The ego is the conscious mind, responsible for our feeling of identity and continuity.

The **personal unconscious** is similar to Freud's preconscious and unconscious, a storehouse of all our own past memories, hidden instincts, and urges unique to us. It contains complexes, which are groups of associated, emotional, unconscious thoughts that significantly influence our attitudes, and associations that act as driving forces. The **collective unconscious** is the powerful and influential system of the psyche that contains universal memories and ideas that all people have inherited from our ancestors over the course of evolution. The inherited memories are **archetypes** or common themes found in all cultures, religions, and literature, both ancient and modern. Jung's attitude of extraversion orients the person toward the external, objective world, whereas the attitude of introversion orients the person toward the inner, subjective world.

Jung believed that the goal of personality development was to become individuated to realize the self. **Individuation** is the psychological process by which a person becomes an individual, a unified whole, including conscious and unconscious processes. The self is the middle of personality surrounded by all of the other systems of personality. A person who is individuated is complete, like the mandala of yin and yang, a circle that symbolizes the self with all the opposing forces in harmony.

### Alfred Adler's Individual Psychology

Another contemporary of Freud, **Alfred Adler**, was also a Viennese psychiatrist. While Freud emphasized sex and Jung emphasized ancestral thought patterns, Adler emphasized social interest as the primary determinant of behavior. He made consciousness the center of personality in his individual or ego theory of personality. Adler's self is a personalized, subjective system that interprets and makes meaning from our experiences, trying to fulfill our unique style of life, the system principle by which the individual personality functions. Our creative self constructs our personality out of the raw material of heredity and experience. Adler believed that people *strive for superiority* to be altruistic, cooperative, creative, unique, aware, and interested in social welfare. He thought that we all try to compensate for *inferiority complexes* based on what we see as physical, intellectual, or social inadequacies. Social interest is the inevitable compensation for all of our natural weaknesses. Adler thought that birth order was an important factor controlling personality. He hypothesized that the oldest child (who is prepared for the appearance of a rival) is likely to develop into a responsible, protective person; the middle child is likely to be ambitious and well adjusted; and the youngest child is likely to be spoiled.

### Karen Horney's Psychoanalytic Theory

Although she never studied with Freud, **Karen Horney** is also considered a neo-Freudian. She brought a feminist perspective to psychoanalytic theory and sharply attacked the male bias she saw in Freud's work. Her counterpart to Freud's penis envy in females was the male's womb envy or desire to procreate. She thought that males and females both are envious of attributes of the other sex, but that women were more envious of men's societal status than their penises. Horney proposed that youngsters feel helpless and threatened, and learn to cope by showing affection or hostility toward others, or by withdrawing from relationships. Adults who use all three strategies are healthy, whereas according to her theory, using only one strategy leads to mental illness.

### Humanistic Theory

Unlike the deterministic psychoanalytic theories, **Abraham Maslow's** and **Carl Rogers's** more optimistic humanistic theories of personality stress the importance of our free will in determining who we want to be.

#### Abraham Maslow's Holistic Dynamic Theory

Trained as a behaviorist in the 1920s, Maslow thought that behaviorism could not account for his observations of developing children. He asserted that we are born good and move toward self-actualization as our goal. **Self-actualization** is reaching toward the best person we can be. (See Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs in Chapter 12.) Humanists think that society sometimes causes us to choose goals that lead us away from self-actualization. Self-actualizers who have met their deficiency needs and accept themselves and others have a realistic attitude, are autonomous, independent, creative, democratic, and have a problem-centered rather than self-centered approach to life.

#### Carl Rogers's Self Theory

The key concept of Rogers's self theory is the **self**, an organized, consistent set of beliefs and perceptions about ourselves, which develops in response to our life experiences. Experiences that are inconsistent with our self-concept cause us to feel threatened and anxious. If we are well adjusted, we can adapt by modifying our self-concept. Rogers believed that we are all born with a need for **unconditional positive regard**, for acceptance and love from others independent of how we behave, and positive self-regard from ourselves. When positive regard is not unconditional, conditions of worth dictate behaviors that cause us to approve or disapprove of ourselves. The difference between our **real self**, and what Rogers calls the **ideal self**, or what we think society wants, is called *incongruence*. To become **fully functioning** (Rogers' term for self-actualization), we must learn to accept ourselves (unconditional positive self-regard) and unite the real and ideal selves into one again.

### Behavioral Theory

**B. F. Skinner** was an influential behavioral psychologist of the last half century. He studied biology and psychology at Harvard where he obtained a PhD in psychology. As a result of his observations of and experimental studies with pigeons, rats, people, and a variety of other organisms, Skinner developed his operant conditioning theory. (See Operant Conditioning in Chapter 10.) Skinner maintained that behavior is personality. The environment shapes who we become, and who we become is determined by the contingencies of reinforcement we have experienced. If we change someone's environment, we change his or her personality. Psychoanalysts criticize Skinner's theory for not taking into account emotions, and cognitivists criticize it for ignoring our thinking processes.

## Cognitive and Social Cognitive (Social-Learning) Theories

Both cognitive and social cognitive theories (also called social-learning theories) pay attention to the influence of our thoughts on our behavior, but the cognitive approach stresses the importance of our subjective experiences more than the social cognitive approach.

### George Kelly's Personal Construct Theory

Of the primarily cognitive theories of personality, the personal-construct theory of engineer and psychologist **George Kelly** is the best known. He thought that, like scientists, we all try to make sense of our world by generating, testing, and revising hypotheses about our social reality, called **personal constructs**. We develop personal constructs, for example, when we consider how someone is similar to or different from someone else. Our personal constructs are a set of bipolar categories we use as labels to help us categorize and interpret the world. For example, our personal constructs can include happy/unhappy, energetic/inactive, selfish/generous, etc. We apply our personal constructs to all of the situations we are in, and revise them when they are not accurate. Our pattern of personal constructs determines our personality. Kelly developed a Role Construct Repertory Test to determine the constructs a person uses. People who use few constructs tend to stereotype others. People who use too many tend to have difficulty predicting other people's behavior.

**Albert Bandura, Julian Rotter, and Walter Mischel** blended behavioral and cognitive perspectives into their theories of personality that stress the interaction of thinking with learning experiences in a social environment, now called social cognitive (social-learning) theories. Although he started his career as a strict behaviorist, Albert Bandura thinks that Skinner's operant conditioning theory is inadequate to explain personality.

### Albert Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory

Bandura thinks that we learn more by observational learning than by operant conditioning. He explains behavior using his concept of **reciprocal determinism**, which states that the characteristics of the person, the person's behavior, and the environment all affect one another in two-way causal relationships. The person includes personality characteristics, cognitive processes, and self-regulation skills. The person's behavior includes the nature, frequency, and intensity of actions. The environment includes stimuli from the social or physical environment and reinforcement contingencies. For example, if we are fun-loving, we select environments that we believe will be entertaining, and because we think a particular environment will be entertaining, it may impact both how we act in that environment and how we view it.

According to Bandura, self-efficacy is the major factor in how we regulate our lives. **Self-efficacy** is our belief that we can perform behaviors that are necessary to accomplish tasks, and that we are competent. When we have high self-efficacy, we think that we can master situations and produce positive results. This affects how much we are willing to take risks and try new things. Our self-efficacy can be high in one area and low in another, for example in academics and sports. In North America and Western Europe, our societies foster an independent view of the self characterized by **individualism**, identifying oneself in terms of personal traits with independent, personal goals. Bandura has extended his theory to behavior of the individual in groups.

**Collective efficacy** is our perception that with collaborative effort, our group will obtain its desired outcome. Some recent research studies indicate that high self-efficacy appears to be more beneficial in individualistic societies, such as North American and Western European societies, and high collective efficacy seems to be more beneficial in collectivistic societies, such as Asian societies, for achievement of group goals. Asian countries (including Japan, China, and India) foster an interdependent view of the self

characterized by **collectivism**, primary identification of an individual as a member of a group (family, school, company, community) and goals of the group as one's own goals.

### Julian Rotter's Social-Learning Theory

The key concept of Julian Rotter's social learning theory is **locus of control**, the degree to which we expect that a reinforcement or outcome of our behavior is contingent on our own behavior or personal characteristics, as opposed to the degree to which we expect that a reinforcement or outcome of our behavior is a function of luck or fate, is under the control of others, or is unpredictable. Those with an internal locus of control think they control and are responsible for what happens to them—for example, their hard work gets rewarded. In contrast, those with an external locus of control believe that what happens to them is due to fate, luck, or others—for example, people get promotions because they know the right people. Our locus of control has a major impact upon our personalities because it influences both how we think about ourselves and the actions we take.

### Walter Mischel's Cognitive-Affective Personality System

Walter Mischel studied with Julian Rotter who then was Albert Bandura's colleague. Building on Rotter's and Bandura's theories, Mischel developed a cognitive-affective personality system (CAPS). According to CAPS, interaction among five factors and characteristics of the situation account for our individual differences, as well as differences in our own behavior across different situations. The five factors are: our encoding strategies, our expectancies and beliefs, our goals and values, our feelings, and our personal competencies and self-regulatory processes. We develop unique **behavioral signatures**, consistent ways of responding in similar situations that characterize our personality.

Cognitive and social-learning theories are criticized for overlooking the importance of emotions in our personalities and not recognizing unconscious motivation.

## Trait Theory

Trait and type theorists try to describe basic behaviors that define personality and to create instruments that measure individual differences in order to understand and predict behavior. They assume that we each have relatively stable personality characteristics or dispositional attributes, called traits or types. A **trait** is a relatively permanent characteristic of our personality that can be used to predict our behavior. Although some distinguish between traits and types by considering traits to be continuous dimensions and types to be discontinuous categories into which people fit, this distinction is not always clear. For example, Eysenck's theory can be considered either a trait or type theory because his personality types result from the interactions of trait dimensions. Important trait/type theorists include Gordon Allport, Hans Eysenck, Raymond Cattell, Paul Costa, and Robert McCrae.

### Gordon Allport's Trait Theory

After meeting with Freud when he was beginning his career, Gordon Allport decided that psychoanalysis was too concerned with symbols and unconscious motivations. Allport conducted idiographic research that focused on conscious motivation and personal traits. His trait theory proposed three levels of traits. A **cardinal trait** is a defining characteristic, in a small number of us, that dominates and shapes all of our behavior. Mother Teresa is the most cited example of a person whose life focused on **altruism**—benefiting others, even to her own detriment. A **central trait** is a general characteristic, between 5 and 10 of which shape much of our behavior. For example, cheerfulness and shyness can be central traits. A *secondary trait* is a characteristic apparent in only certain situations. For example, being uncomfortable in confined spaces can be a secondary trait. Our unique pattern of traits determines our behavior.



### Hans Eysenck's Personality Dimensions

Another trait/type theorist, psychologist Hans Eysenck, tried to reduce description of our personalities to three major genetically influenced dimensions, which everyone possesses to varying degrees. He used **factor analysis**, a statistical procedure that identifies common factors among groups of items, to simplify a long list of traits into his three dimensions: **extroversion** (also **extraversion**), **neuroticism**, and **psychoticism**. Extroversion measures our sociability and tendency to pay attention to the external environment, as opposed to our private mental experiences. **Neuroticism** measures our level of instability—how moody, anxious, and unreliable we are—as opposed to stability—how calm, even-tempered, and reliable we are. **Psychoticism** measures our level of tough-mindedness—how hostile, ruthless, and insensitive we are—as opposed to tender-mindedness—how friendly, empathetic, and cooperative we are. Twin studies indicate a hereditary component to these three dimensions.

### Raymond Cattell's 16 Personality Factors

A trait theorist who conducted nomothetic research, Raymond Cattell, wanted to find out how traits are organized and how they are linked. Through the use of surveys and records, Cattell studied features of **surface traits**, visible areas of personality. He found that many surface traits were either absent or present in clusters in people, indicating that they represented a single more basic trait. Using factor analysis, Cattell developed a list of 16 basic traits. He considered these more basic traits **source traits**, underlying personality characteristics. Cattell's *Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire*, also called the 16 PF, yields trait profiles that enable psychologists to get a picture of our personality.

### The Big Five Personality Factors

Many personality psychologists considered Eysenck's three dimensions to be too few to describe personality, but Cattell's 16 to be too many. More recently, trait psychologists Paul Costa and Robert McCrae have developed a five-factor model of personality, nicknamed, "The Big Five." In cross-cultural studies, the same five factors have been identified in trait ratings. The Big Five Theory includes the traits of openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism.

These can be more easily remembered by using their acronym OCEAN, or CANOE.



## Assessment Techniques

Psychologists use a wide variety of techniques to measure personality, including interviews, direct observation and behavioral assessment, projective tests, and personality inventories. Psychologists, human resources specialists, and others use two types of interviews that both involve obtaining information about personal history, personality traits, and current psychological state. *Unstructured interviews* involve informal conversation centered on the individual, whereas *structured interviews* involve the interviewer posing a series of planned questions that the interviewee answers. The person being interviewed not only provides verbal answers, but also nonverbal information with his/her facial expressions, tone of voice, gestures, and posture. Diagnostic interviews, college interviews, and employment interviews are often structured, but can be unstructured. While interviews can supply essential information about personality, they have limitations resulting from the interviewer's preconceptions, attempts at deception by the interviewee, and the halo effect. The **halo effect** is the tendency to generalize a favorable impression to unrelated dimensions of the subject's personality.



## Direct Observation

Have you ever watched the behavior of people as you waited in line or sat in a public place? If so, you were engaging in a process similar to the assessment known as direct observation. Psychologists sometimes look at the behavior of an individual as he or she interacts with others, carries on normal functions, or performs specific tasks in order to identify personality traits or problems. Behaviorists prefer observational techniques. They may use rating scales that list personality traits or behaviors to be evaluated. *Behavioral assessments* record the frequency of specific behaviors in an observation. Though they criticize the subjective nature of other types of assessment, behaviorists also have to make inferences about what they see in another person's behavior. Lab studies have careful controls, but a potential flaw with naturalistic observational studies is the **Hawthorn effect**. When people know that they are being observed, they change their behavior to what they think the observer expects or to make themselves look good.

## Projective Tests

Psychoanalysts use **projective personality tests** that present ambiguous stimuli, such as inkblots or pictures, with the assumption that test takers will project their unconscious thoughts or feelings onto the stimuli. The objective is to uncover deeply hidden unconscious thoughts, feelings, wishes, and needs. The famous Rorschach inkblot test presents 10 bilaterally symmetrical inkblots, asking the person to tell what he or she sees in each one and to indicate the features of the inkblot that prompted the response. The evaluator scores each response based on a rubric, inputs the data into a scoring system, and then uses clinical judgment to prepare a profile of the person's motives and conflicts. Another projective test, the Thematic Apperception Test (TAT) created by Henry Murray and Christiana Morgan, consists of a set of 20 cards (one blank) with people in ambiguous situations. People are shown a number of cards in sequence. Murray thought that people would reveal their need for achievement, sex, power, or affiliation in their answers to requests to tell what is happening in the picture, what led up to it, how the people feel, and how the situation turns out. For example, people who tell stories in which people work hard to accomplish their goals or overcome obstacles indicate a high need for achievement. Because they are unstructured, projective tests often get people to talk about anxiety-provoking situations that they otherwise wouldn't reveal, exposing unconscious conflicts. Although psychoanalysts have delineated ways to interpret the subjective responses on projective tests, other psychologists question the validity and reliability of these assessments.

## Self-Reported Tests

**Self-report methods**, the most common personality assessment techniques, involve the person answering a series of questions, such as a personality questionnaire, or supplying information about himself or herself. Different psychologists and different approaches make use of different self-report methods. Jung's personality types are measured by the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator; Cattell's personality traits are measured by the 16 PF; Rotter's locus of control is measured by the Internal-External Locus of Control Scale; Maslow's self-actualization is measured by the Personal Orientation Inventory; Rogers's congruence between the actual self and ideal self is measured by the Q-sort. The validity of all of these is questioned. Among the best-known, most researched, and most widely used self-report personality tests is the **MMPI-2** (Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory-2), composed of 567 true-false items. The items were originally chosen from among hundreds given to groups of people diagnosed with psychological disorders as well as "normal" people. Items that differentiated between the patient group and the normal group were

included in the test; items that didn't were eliminated. Each item needed to correlate highly with some trait or dimension of personality. The test has 10 clinical scales such as schizophrenia and depression; 15 content scales such as anger and family problems, and validity scales to detect whether or not a person is lying. The tests are scored objectively, usually by computer, and charted as an MMPI-2 profile. Patterns of responses reveal personality dimensions. By comparing someone's profile to the profile of the normal group, psychologists identify abnormalities. Employers sometimes compare the profile of a job applicant to the profile of successful employees in making employment decisions. As well researched and carefully constructed as the MMPI-2 is, its validity is not guaranteed, and some psychologists think peer reports yield more valid information. Two assessments designed to assess personality based on the five-factor model in healthy people have been gaining in popularity: the NEO Personality Inventory (NEO-PI) and the Big Five Questionnaire (BFQ), which is being used in cross-cultural research.

## Self-Concept and Self-Esteem

Our **self-concept** is our overall view of our abilities, behavior, and personality or what we know about ourselves. **Self-esteem** is one part of our self-concept, or how we *evaluate* ourselves. Our self-esteem is affected by our emotions and comes to mean how *worthy* we think we are. The self-concept is immature in youth but broadens and becomes more complex and individualized as we get older. For example, we understand that we can be attractive physically, but that we have strengths and weaknesses in many diverse areas beyond physical and mental abilities. Parents and educators can help children increase their self-worth and raise their self-esteem by highlighting the youngsters' strengths. Low self-esteem can lead to depression when a person thinks he or she is unable to realize his or her hopes, whereas it can lead to anxiety when a person thinks he or she is unable to do what he or she should.