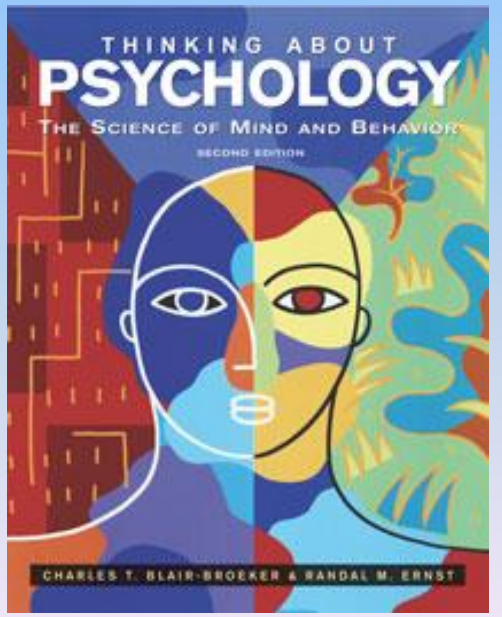
Thinking About Psychology: The Science of Mind and Behavior 2e



Charles T. Blair-Broeker

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Developmental Domain

Personality Chapter

Module 17

Psychodynamic and Humanistic Perspectives on Personality

Personality

- Individual's characteristic pattern of thinking, feeling, and acting

The Psychodynamic Perspective

Sigmund Freud (1856-1939)

- Founder of psychoanalysis
- Proposed the first complete theory of personality
- A person's thoughts and behaviors emerge from tension generated by unconscious motives and unresolved childhood conflicts.

Psychoanalysis

- Freud's theory of personality
- Also a therapeutic technique that attempts to provide insight into one's thoughts and actions
- Does so by exposing and interpreting the underlying unconscious motives and conflicts

Psychodynamic Perspective

- View of personality that retains some aspects of Freudian theory but rejects other aspects
- Retains the importance of the unconscious thought processes
- Less likely to see unresolved childhood conflicts as a source of personality development

The Psychodynamic Perspective: Freud's View of the Mind

Free Association

- Method of exploring the unconscious in which the person person relaxes and says whatever comes to mind, no matter how trivial or embarrassing

Conscious Mind

- The thoughts and feelings one is currently aware of

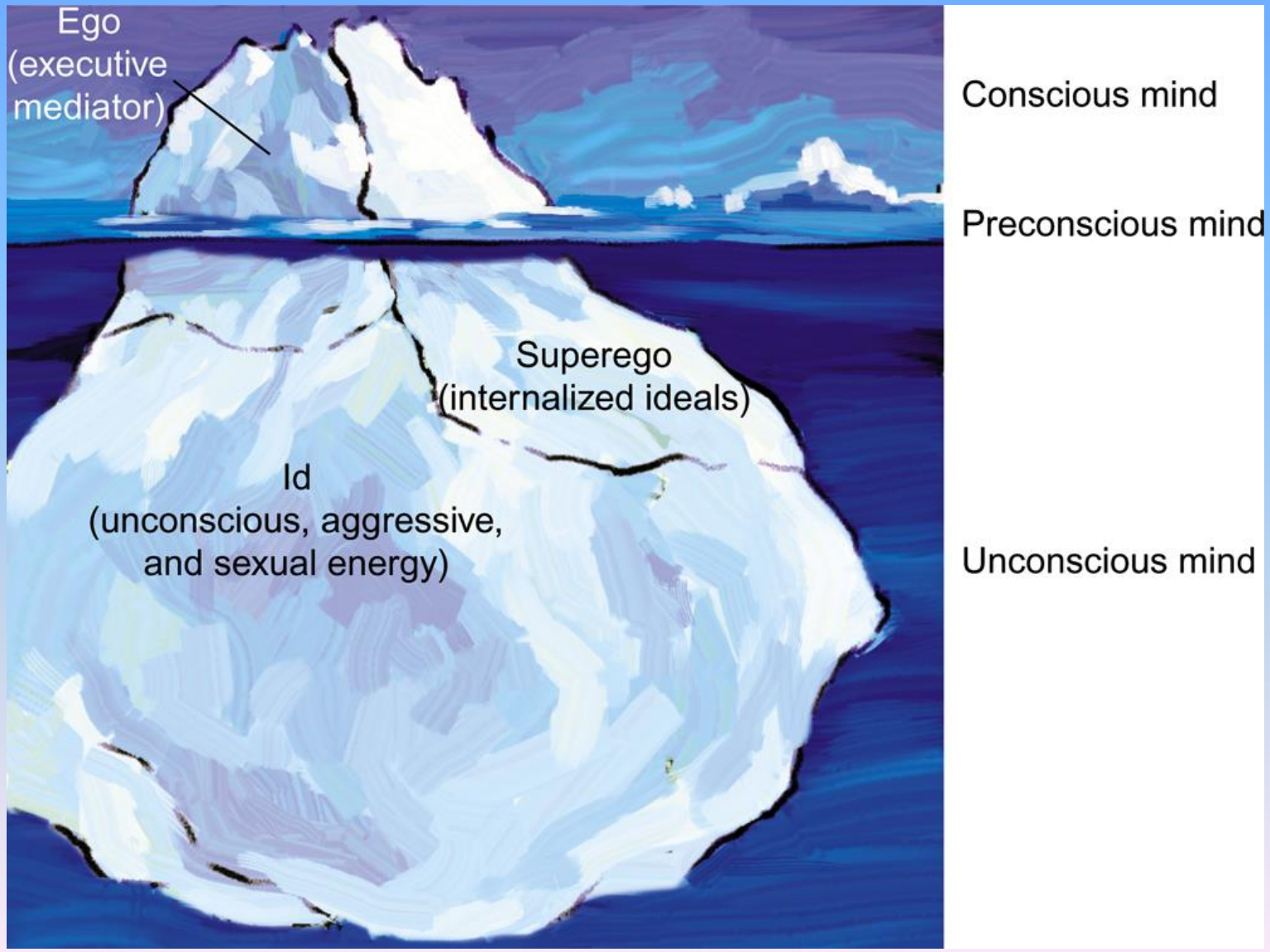
Preconscious Mind

- Region of the mind holding information that is not conscious but is retrievable into conscious awareness
- Holds thoughts and memories not in one's current awareness but can easily be retrieved

Unconscious Mind

- Region of the mind that is a reservoir of mostly unacceptable thoughts, wishes, feelings, and memories

The Mind According to Freud



The Psychodynamic Perspective: The Id, Ego, and Superego

Freud's Concept of the "Id"

- The part of personality that consists of *unconscious*, psychic energy
- Strives to satisfy basic sexual and aggressive drives
- Operates on the "*pleasure principle*" - demanding immediate gratification
- Is present from birth

Freud's Concept of the "Superego"

- The part of personality that consists of internalized ideals and standards
- One's conscience; focuses on what the person "should" do
- Operates on the *morality principle* – seeking to enforce ethical conduct

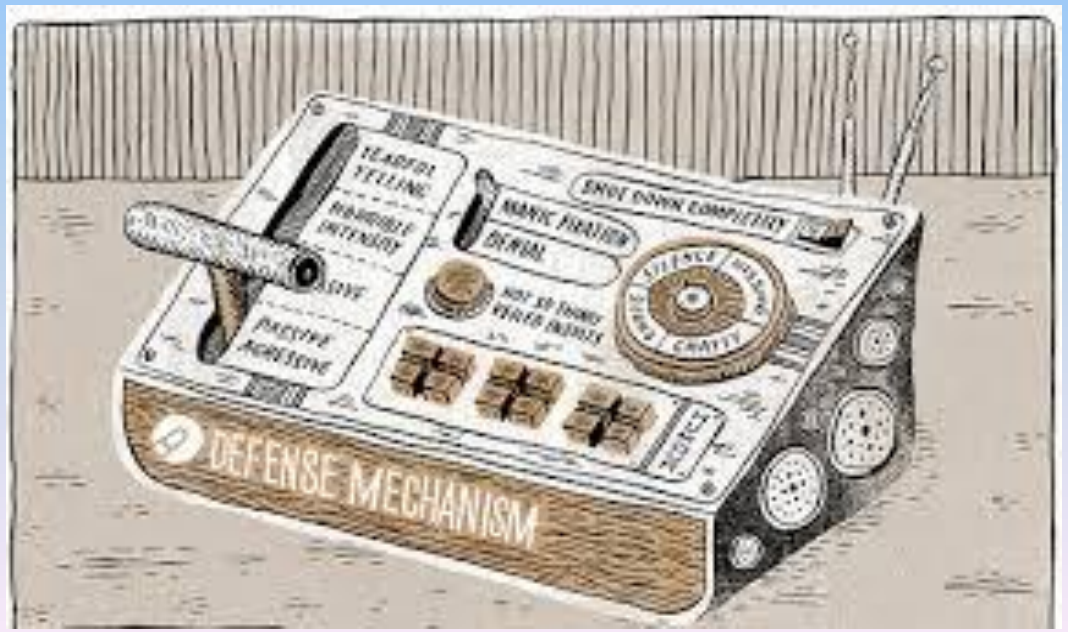
Freud's Concept of the "Ego"

- Largely conscious, "executive" part of personality that mediates among the demands of the id, superego, and reality
- Operates on the *reality principle* - satisfying the id's desires in ways that will realistically bring pleasure rather than pain

The Psychodynamic Perspective: Defense Mechanisms

Defense Mechanisms

- In psychoanalytic theory, the ego's *protective* methods of *reducing anxiety* by unconsciously *distorting reality*



Repression

- Puts anxiety-arousing thoughts, feelings, and memories into the unconscious mind
- The basis for all other defense mechanisms

Repression

- Repression is a defence mechanism which causes the person to forget an event. A child whose parent was killed in a car crash may grow up with no memory of this event because they have simply pushed this into the unconscious and aren't aware of it at all.

Regression

- Retreating from a threatening situation by reverting to a pattern of behavior characteristic of an earlier stage of development

Denial

- Lets an anxious person refuse to admit that something unpleasant is happening

Reaction Formation

- Thinking or behaving in a way that is the opposite of your own unacceptable thoughts and feelings

EXAMPLE OF REACTION FORMATION

- ACTING LIKE YOU HATE SOMEONE YOU REALLY HAVE A CRUSH ON.

Projection

- Transferring one's own unacceptable thoughts, motives, or personal qualities to others.

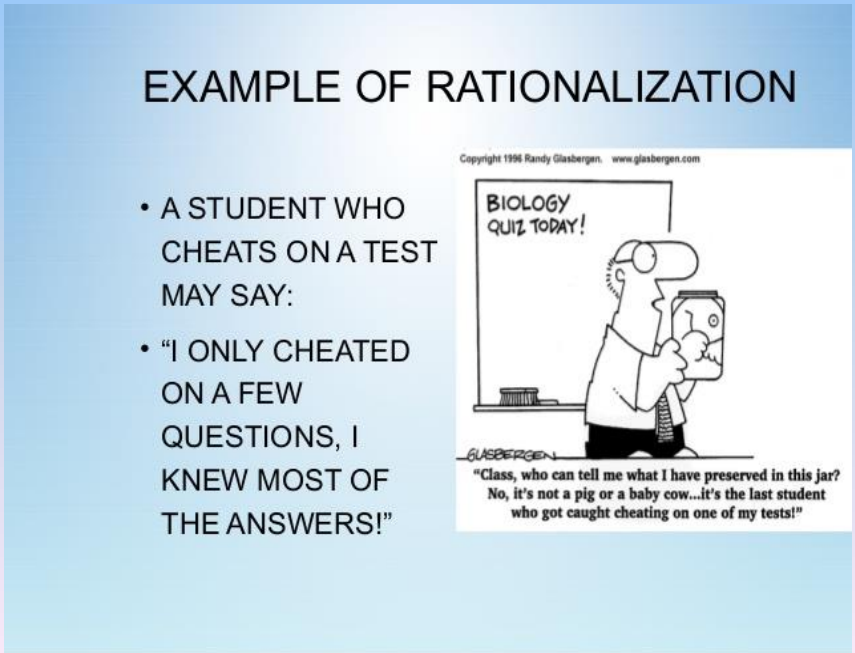
- For example, you feel dislike for a coach, and then insist that she dislikes you

Displacement

- Redirecting anger and other unacceptable impulses toward a less threatening object or person

Rationalization

- Displaces real, anxiety-provoking explanations with more comforting justifications for one's actions



Defense Mechanisms

Table 17.1

Seven Defense Mechanisms

Repression	anxiety is reduced by	banishing provoking thoughts (that could reemerge dreams).
Regression	anxiety is reduced by	moving back to a previous psychosexual stage.
Denial	anxiety is reduced by	refusing to admit that something unpleasant has happened.
Reaction formation	anxiety is reduced by	making unacceptable impulses look like opposites.
Projection	anxiety is reduced by	attributing threatening impulses to others.
Rationalization	anxiety is reduced by	self-explaining things in a way that hides the behavior's actual reason.
Displacement	anxiety is reduced by	diverting aggressive feelings to an acceptable object.

The Psychodynamic Perspective: Freud's Psychosexual Stages

Psychosexual Stages

- In Freudian theory, the childhood stages of development during which the id's pleasure seeking energies focus on different parts of the body
- The stages include: oral, anal, phallic, latency, and genital
- A person can become "fixated" or *stuck at a stage, leading to problems as an adult*

Freud's Stages of Development

Table 17.2

Freud's Psychosexual Stages

Stage	Focus
Oral (1–18 months)	Pleasure centers on the mouth—sucking, biting, chewing

Oral Stage

- Pleasure comes from chewing, biting, and sucking.
- Weaning can be a conflict at this stage.
- If someone gets stuck in this stage then they may develop an *oral fixation* later in life – i.e. smoking or always needing to be chewing gum

Freud's Stages of Development

Table 17.2

Freud's Psychosexual Stages

Stage	Focus
Oral (1–18 months)	Pleasure centers on the mouth—sucking, biting, chewing
Anal (18–36 months)	Pleasure focuses on bowel and bladder function; coping with demands for control

Anal Stage

- Gratification comes from bowel and bladders functions.
- Potty training can be a conflict at this stage.
- Someone who gets stuck in this stage may become *anal retentive* (a person who needs everything neat, perfect, and in its proper place)

Freud's Stages of Development

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Oral (1–18 months)	Pleasure centers on the mouth—sucking, biting, chewing
Anal (18–36 months)	Pleasure focuses on bowel and bladder function; coping with demands for control
Phallic (3–6 years)	Pleasure zone is the genitals; coping with incestuous feelings

Phallic Stage

- The pleasure zone shifts to the genitals.
- Boys cope with incestuous feelings toward their mother and rival feelings toward their dad (known as the Oedipus conflict).
- Name based on the Greek tragedy *Oedipus Rex* in which the main character unknowingly kills his father and marries his mother
- *Electra complex* is female version

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Latency (6 years to puberty)	Dormant sexual feelings

Latency Stage

- Sexual feelings are dormant.
- Child identifies with and tries to mimic the same sex parent to learn gender identity.
- Instead of fearing or feeling need to compete with the same-sex parent, the child tries to “buddy up” to mom or dad

Freud's Stages of Development

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Latency (6 years to puberty)	Dormant sexual feelings
Genital (puberty on)	Maturation of sexual interests

Genital Stage

- Begins at puberty with the maturation of sexual interests

The Psychodynamic Perspective: Neo-Freudians

Neo-Freudians

- Followers of Freud's theories but developed theories of their own in areas where they disagreed with Freud
- Include Adler, Jung, and Horney

Alfred Adler (1870-1937)

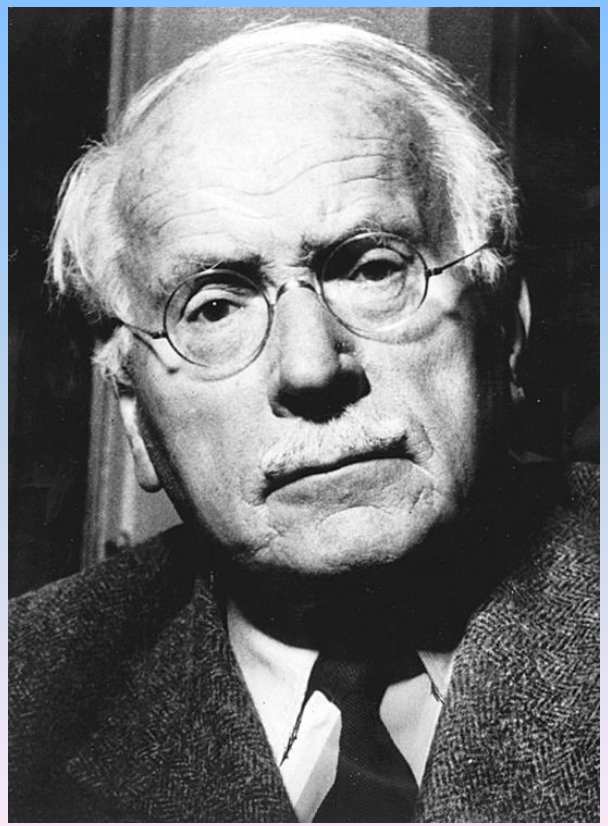
- Neo-Freudian who thought social tensions were more important than sexual tensions in the development of personality
- Believed psychological problems were the result of feelings of inferiority

Inferiority Complex

- According to Adler, a condition that comes from being unable to compensate for normal inferiority feelings

Carl Jung (Yoong)(1875-1961)

- Neo-Freudian who believed that humans share a collective unconscious



Collective Unconscious

- Jung's concept of a shared, inherited reservoir of memory traces from our ancestors
- Information everyone knows from birth
- Archetypes – universal symbols found in stories, myths, and art

Karen Horney (HORN-eye)(1885-1952)

- Neo-Freudian who found psychoanalysis negatively biased toward women
- Believed cultural/social variables are the foundation of personality development
- Believed basic anxiety is the helplessness and isolation people feel in a potentially hostile world brought on by the competitiveness of today's society

The Psychodynamic Perspective: Assessing Personality

Projective Tests

- Personality tests that provide ambiguous stimuli to trigger projection of one's inner thoughts and feelings
- Include:
  - Thematic Apperception Test (TAT)
  - Rorschach Inkblot Test

Thematic Apperception Test (TAT)

- Projective test in which people express their inner feelings and interests through the stories they make up about ambiguous scenes
- The person makes up a story of a picture they are shown

Rorschach Inkblot Test

- Personality test that seeks to identify people's inner feelings by analyzing their interpretations of 10 inkblots
- Most widely used personality test

The Psychodynamic Perspective: Evaluating the Perspective

Updating Freud's Theory

- Most psychodynamic psychologists agree:
  - Sex is not the basis of personality.
  - People do not "fixate" at various stages of development.
  - Much of a person's mental life is unconscious.
  - People struggle with inner conflicts, and childhood experiences shape us.

The Humanistic Perspective

Humanistic Psychology

- Perspective that focuses on the study of conscious experience, the individual's freedom to choose, and capacity for personal growth
- Studies fulfilled and healthy individuals rather than troubled people

The Humanistic Perspective: Abraham Maslow and Self-Actualization

Abraham Maslow (1908-1970)

- Humanistic psychologist who proposed the hierarchy of needs
- Believed self-actualization is the ultimate psychological need

Hierarchy of Needs

- Maslow's pyramid of human needs, beginning at the base with physiological needs, proceeding through safety needs and then to psychological needs
- Higher-level needs won't become active until lower-level needs have been satisfied.

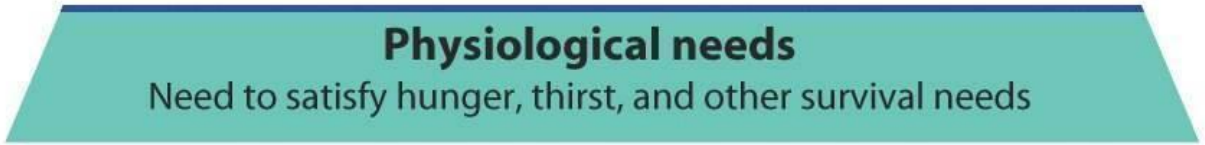
Self-Actualization

- According to Maslow, the ultimate psychological need
- Arises after basic physical and psychological needs are met and self-esteem is achieved
- The motivation to fulfill potential

Self-Actualization

- Characteristics include:
  - Self aware and self accepting
  - Open, spontaneous, loving, and caring
  - Not paralyzed by other's opinions
  - Focused on a particular task
  - Involved in few deep relationships
  - Have been moved to peak experiences

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs



Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

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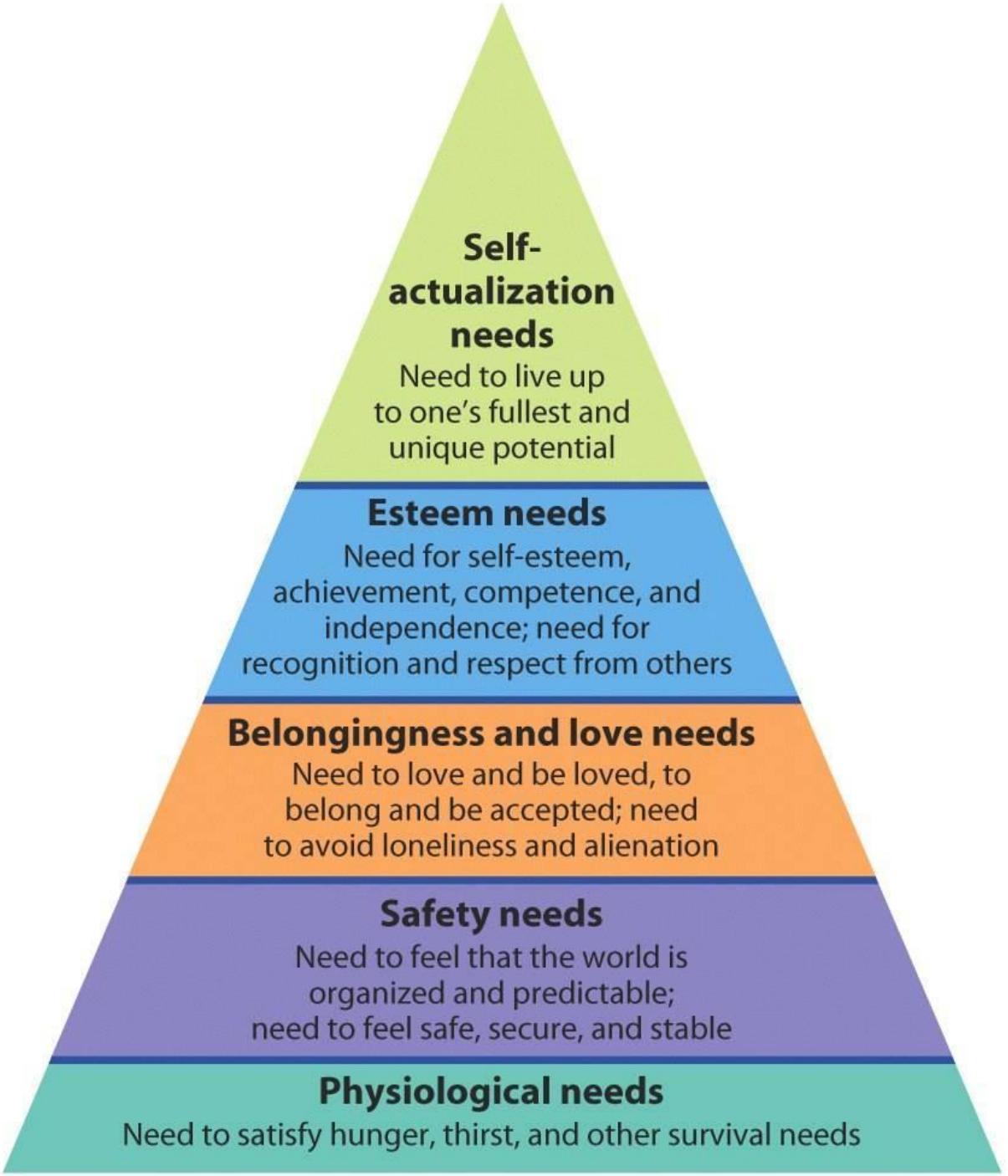
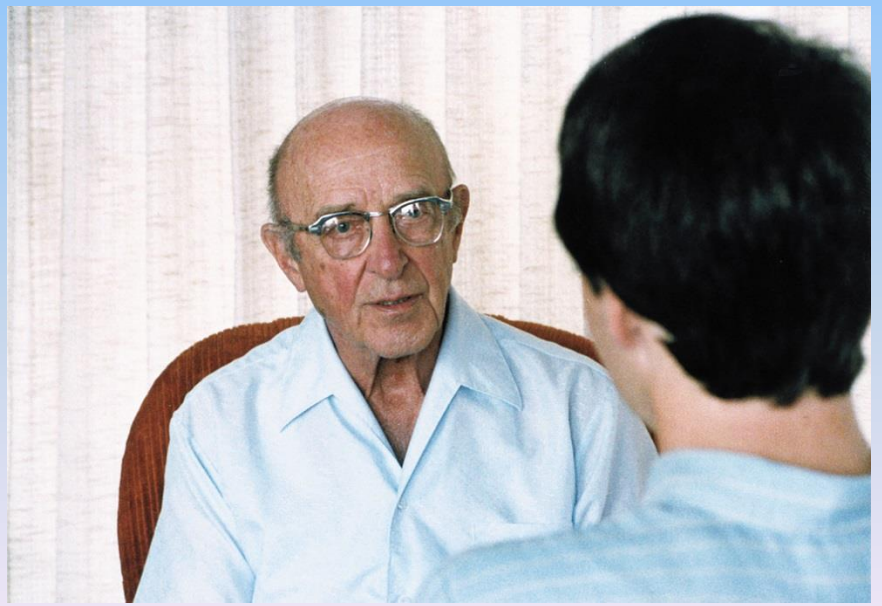


The Humanistic Perspective: Carl Rogers and the Person-Centered Approach

Carl Rogers (1902-1987)

- Humanistic psychologist who stressed the importance of acceptance, genuineness, and empathy in fostering human growth



Unconditional Positive Regard

- According to Rogers, an attitude of total acceptance toward another person

Genuineness

- Freely expressing one's feelings and not being afraid to disclose details about oneself

Empathy

- Sharing thoughts and understanding
- Listening and reflecting the other person’s feelings

The Humanistic Perspective: Assessing Personality and the Self

Humanistic Measures

- Humanistic measures of personality center on evaluating a person's self concept--all of our thought and feelings about ourselves
- Answer the question "Who Am I?"

The Humanistic Perspective: Evaluating the Perspective

Evaluating Humanism

- Humanism has influenced therapy, child-rearing, and the workplace
- Laid the foundation for positive psychology

The End