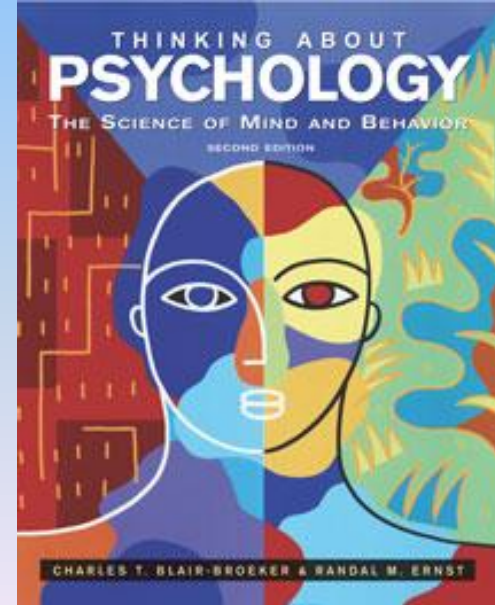


Thinking About Psychology: The Science of Mind and Behavior 2e

Charles T. Blair-Broeker
Randal M. Ernst



Developmental Domain



Personality Chapter



Module 18

Trait and Social-Cognitive Perspectives on Personality

Trait

- Aspects of personality that are relatively consistent

Personality

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

Social-Cognitive Perspective

- Perspective stating that understanding personality involves:
 - considering how people are affected by a particular situation,
 - by what they have learned,
 - by how they think and
 - by how they interact socially

Module 18: Trait and Social-Cognitive Perspectives on Personality

The Trait Perspective

Ancient Greek Traits

- Ancient Greeks classified four personality traits
 - Sanguine (cheerful)
 - Melancholic (depressed)
 - Choleric (irritable)
 - Phlegmatic (unemotional)
- Felt these were caused by humor (body fluids)

Module 18: Trait and Social-Cognitive Perspectives on Personality

The Trait Perspective: Identifying Traits

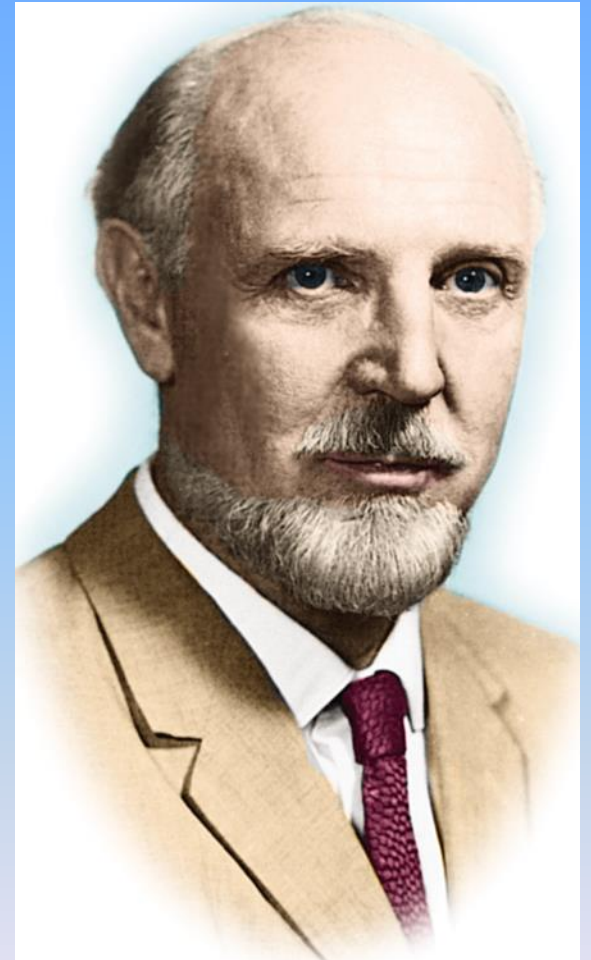
Gordon Allport (1897-1967)

- American psychologist and trait theorist who researched the idea that individual personalities are unique
- Stressed importance of studying mentally healthy people
- Resisted the idea of finding “personality law” that would apply to everyone

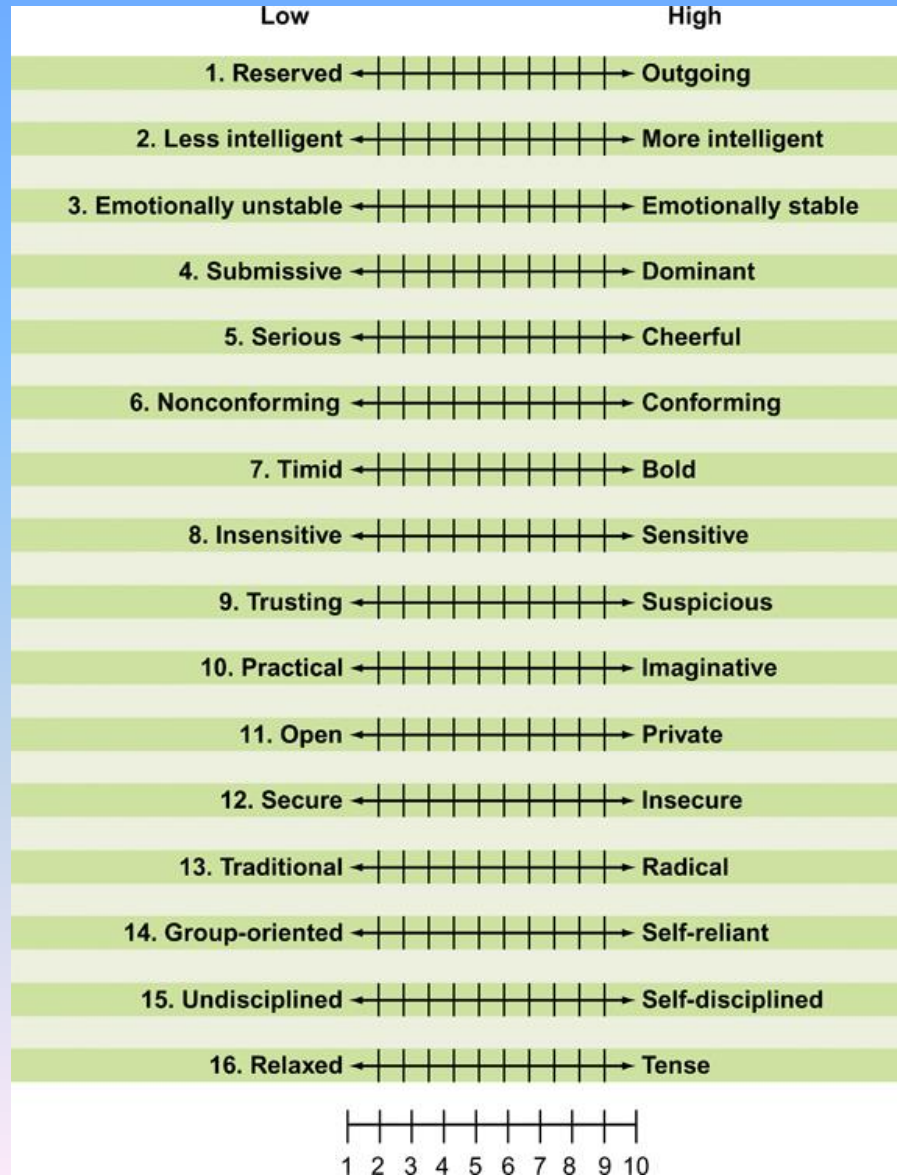


Raymond Cattell (1905-1998)

- English psychologist who researched whether some traits predicted others
- Proposed 16 key personality dimensions or factors to describe personality
- Each factor was measured on a continuum



Cattell's 16 Personality Factors

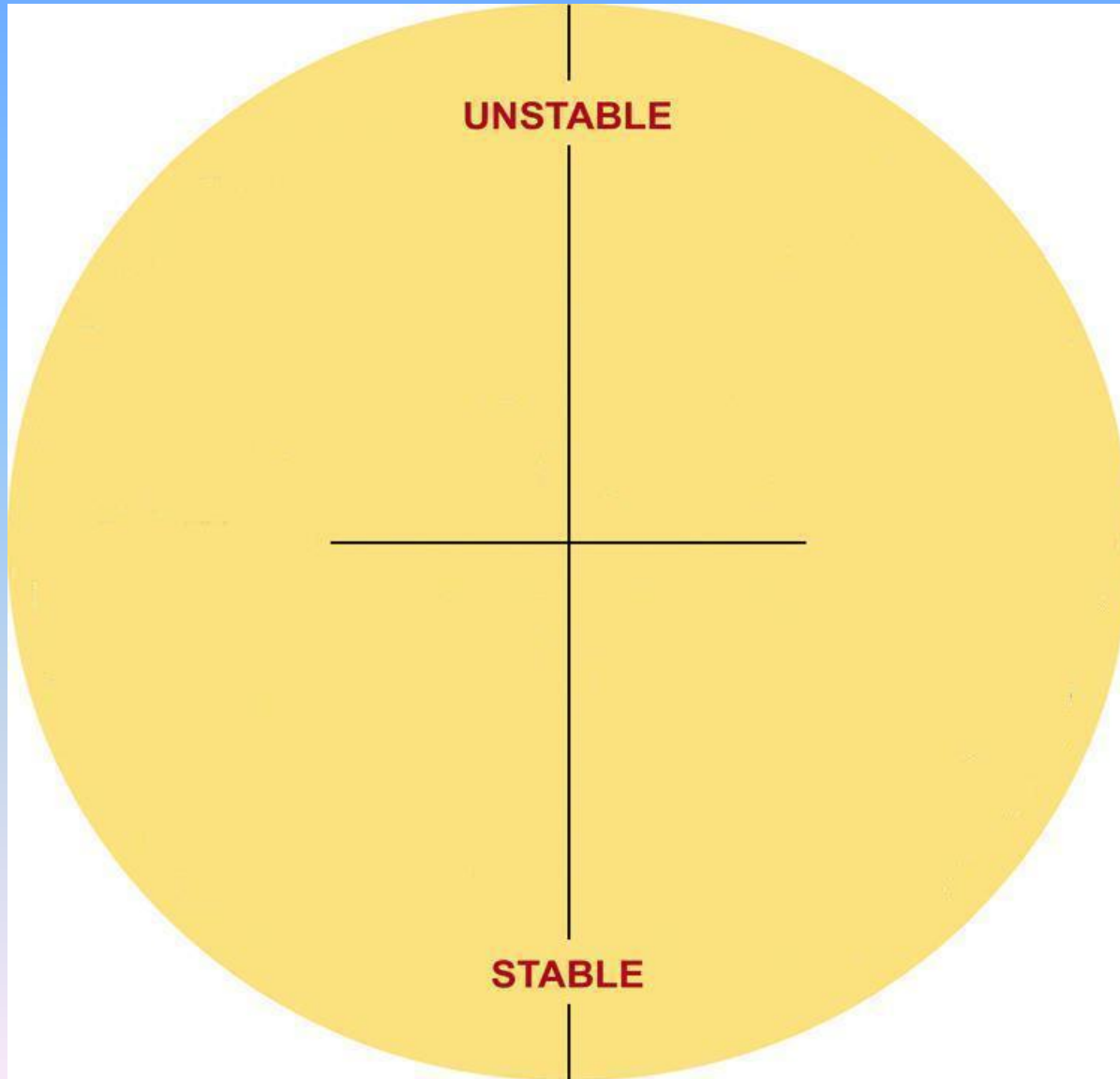


Hans Eysenck (1916-1997)

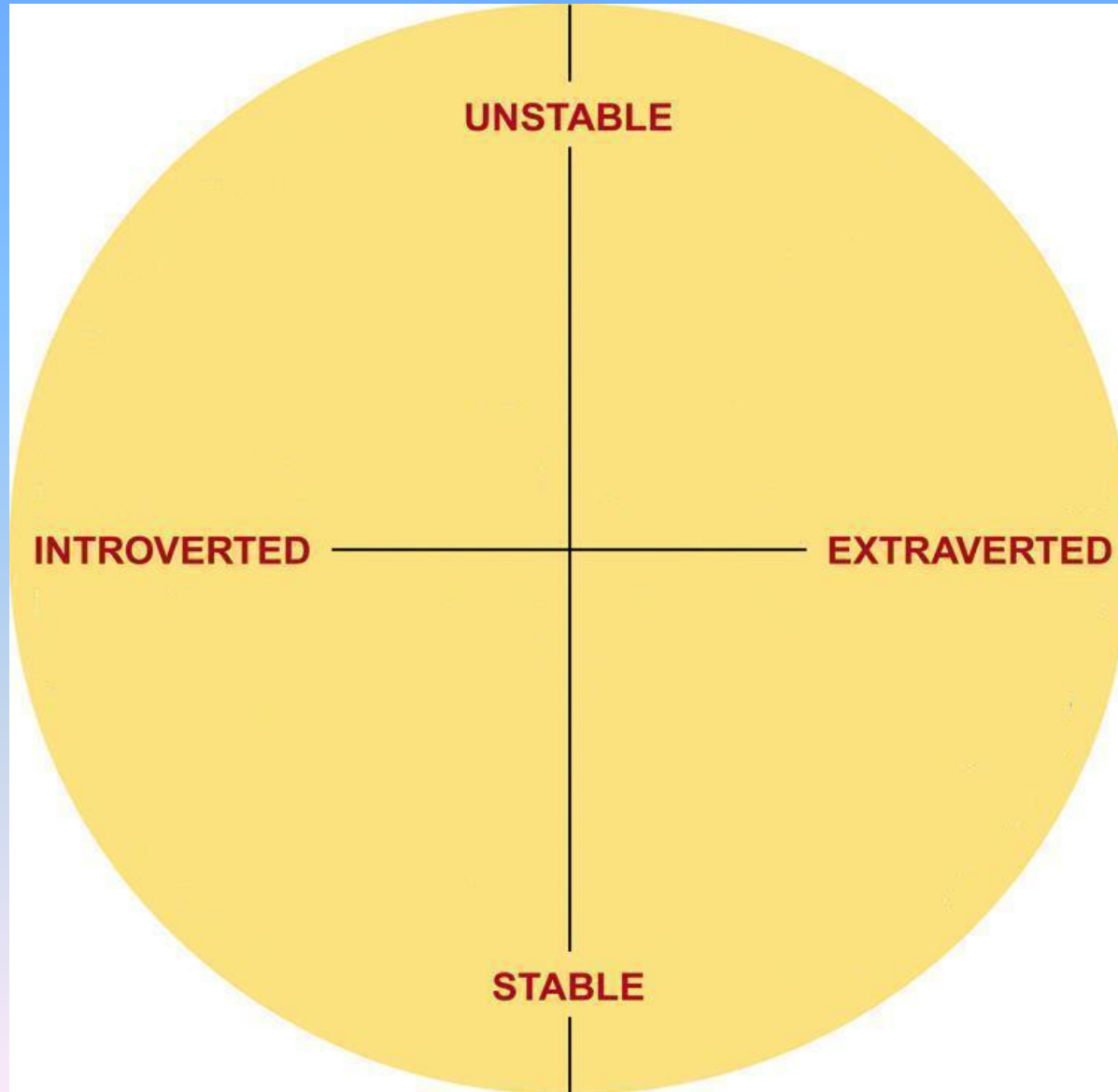
- German psychologist who researched the genetically-influenced dimensions of personality
- Two major dimensions:
 - Introversion/Extraversion
 - Emotionally Unstable/Stable



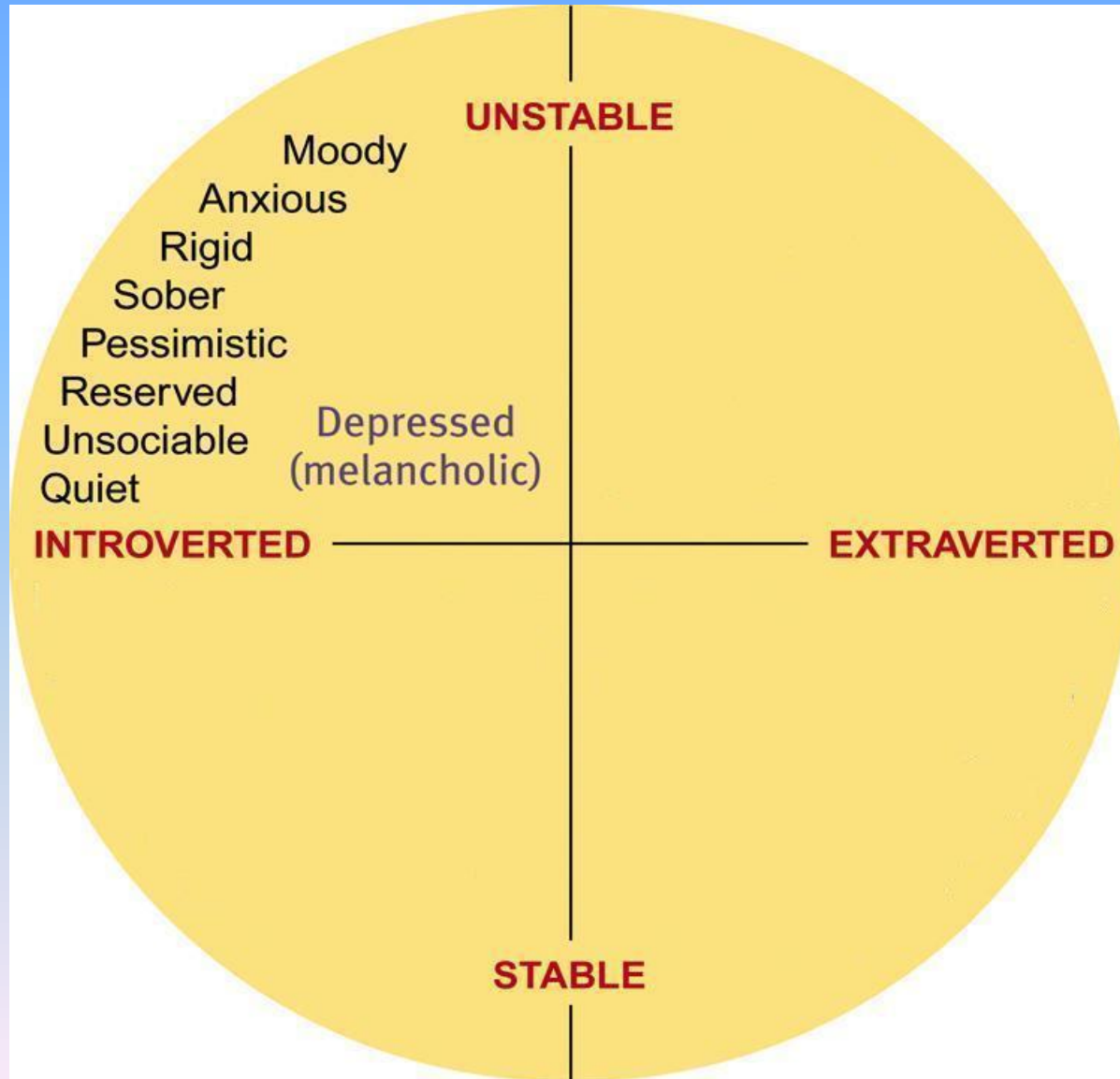
Eysencks' Personality Factors



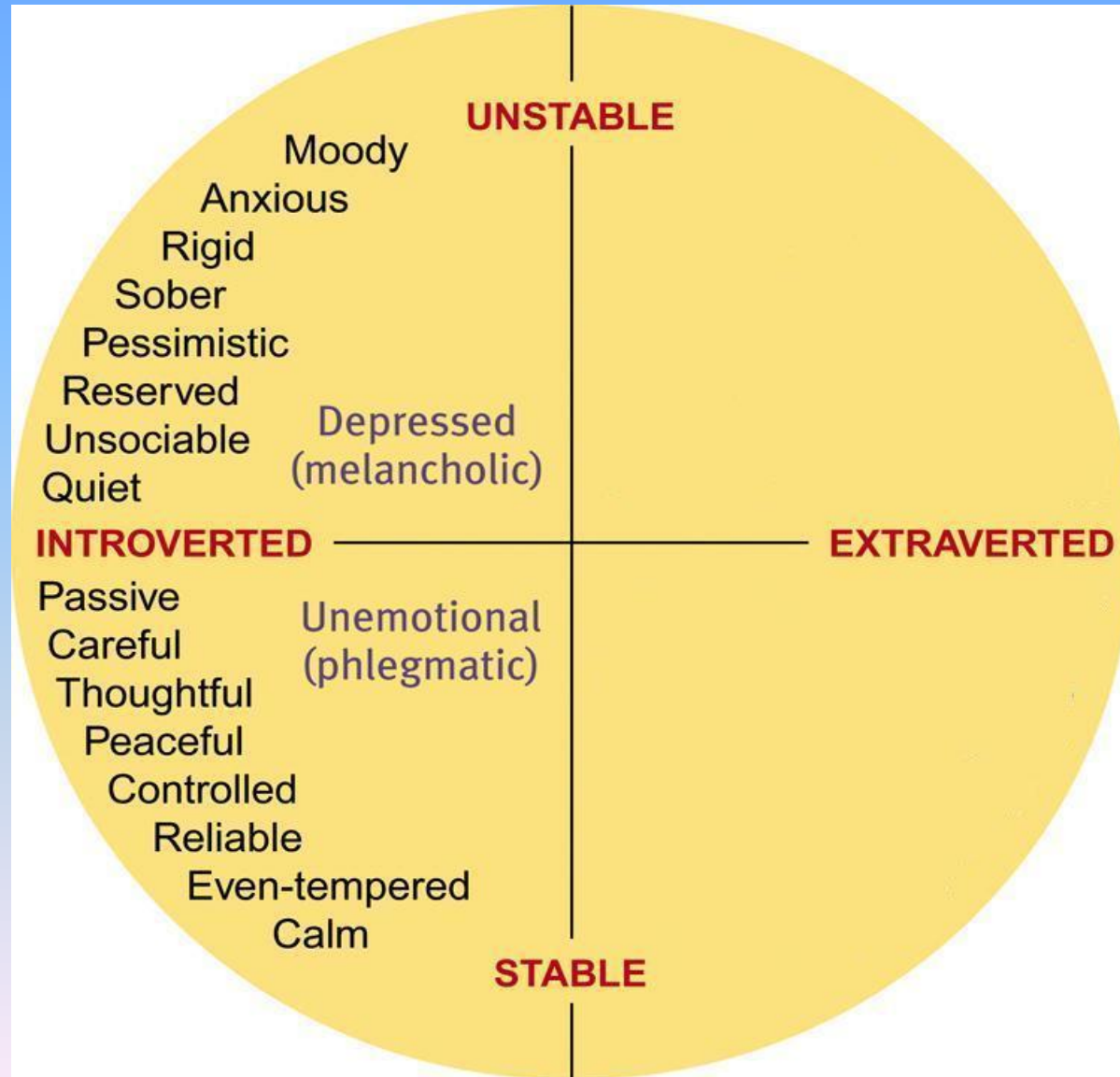
Eysencks' Personality Factors



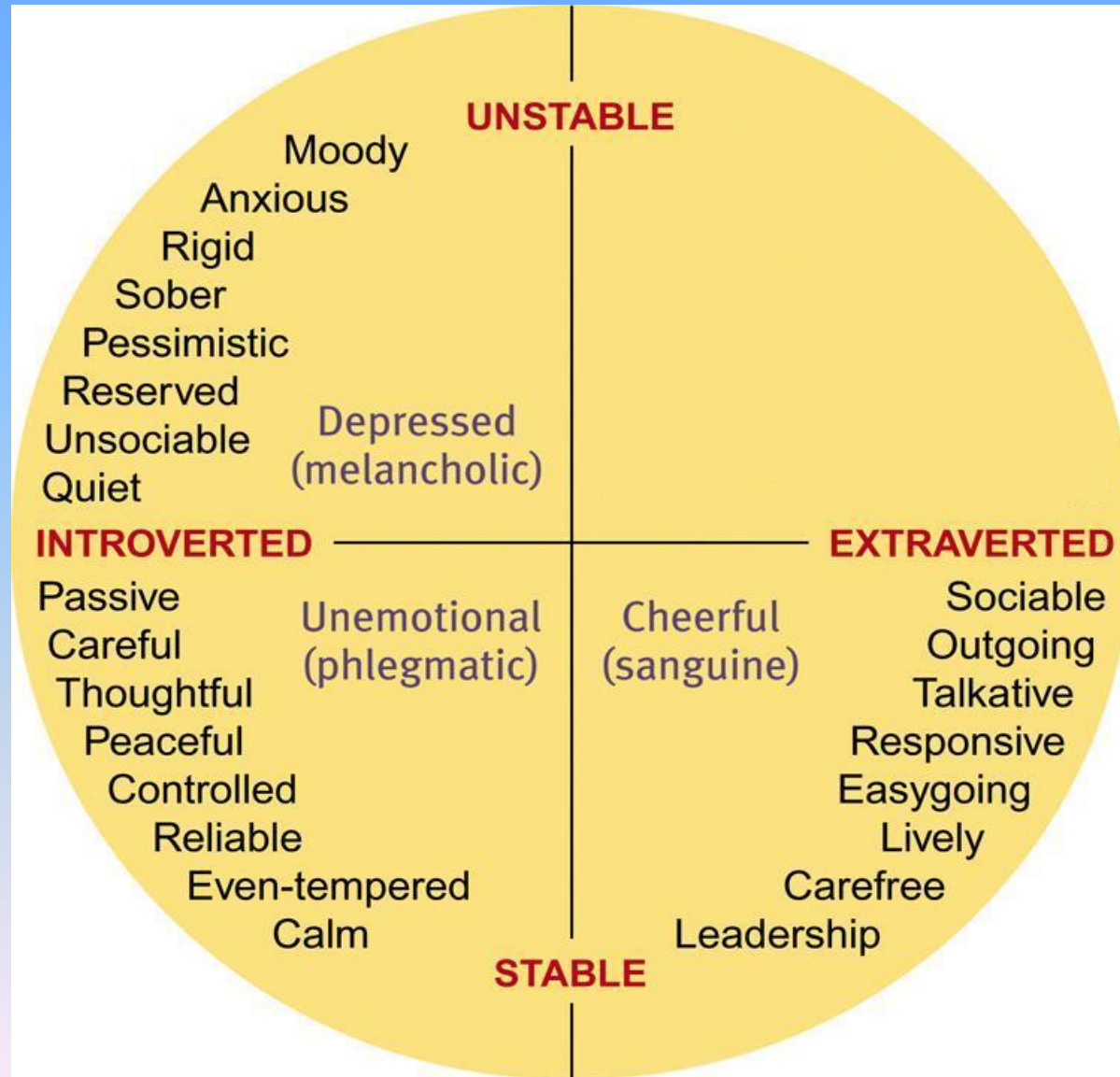
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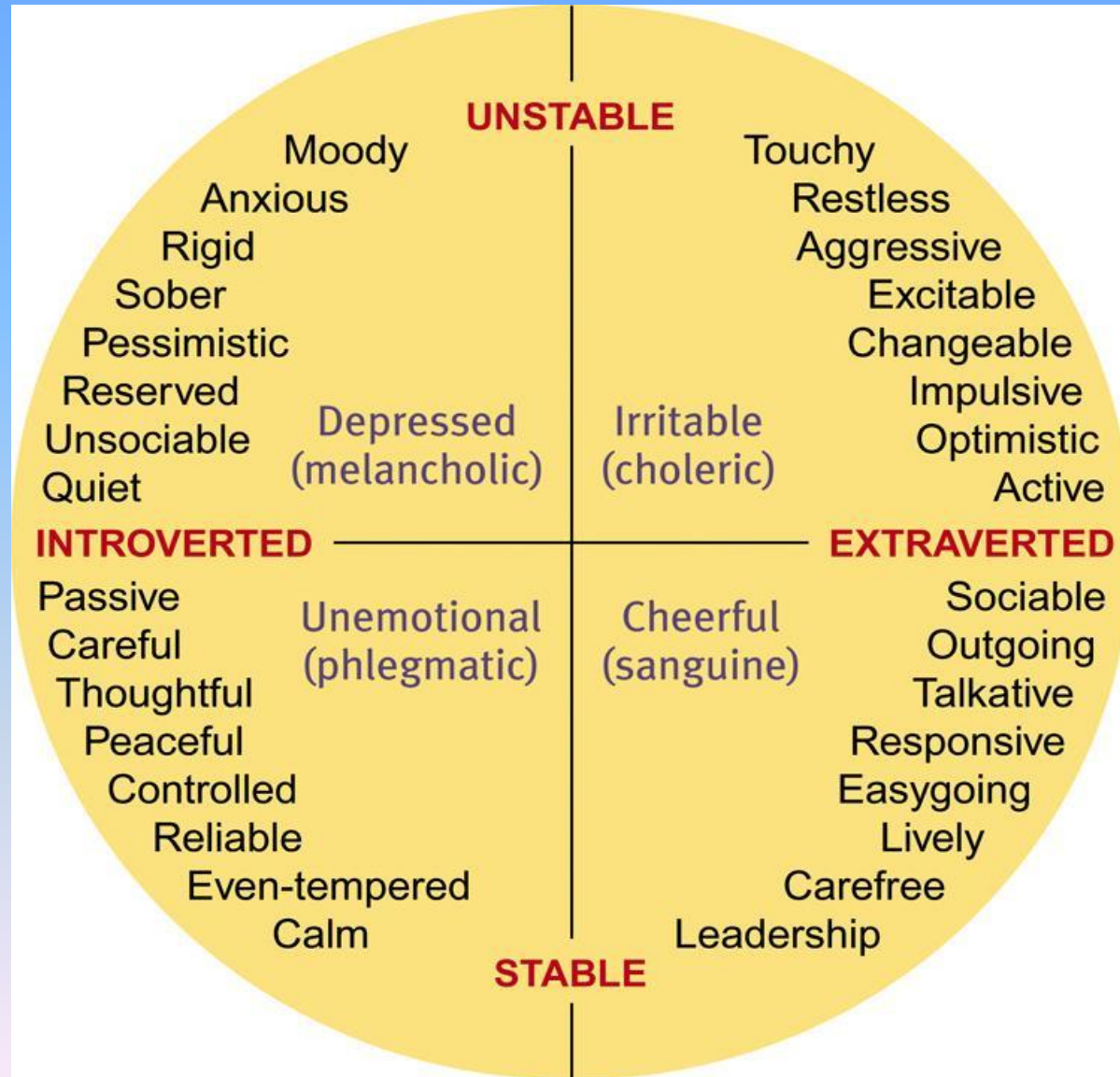
Eysenck's Personality Factors



Eysenck's Personality Factors



Eysenck's Personality Factors



Module 18: Trait and Social-Cognitive Perspectives on Personality

The Trait Perspective: The “Big Five” Traits

The “Big Five” Traits

- Conscientiousness
- Agreeableness
- Neuroticism (emotional stability vs. instability)
- Openness
- Extraversion

The “Big Five” Traits

The “Big Five” Personality Factors

(*Memory tip:* Picturing a CANOE will help you recall these.)

Trait Dimension

Endpoints of the Dimension

The “Big Five” Traits

The “Big Five” Personality Factors

(*Memory tip:* Picturing a CANOE will help you recall these.)

| Trait Dimension | Endpoints of the Dimension | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------|
| C onscientiousness | Organized | ↔ Disorganized |
| | Careful | ↔ Careless |
| | Disciplined | ↔ Impulsive |

The “Big Five” Traits

The “Big Five” Personality Factors

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| | Careful | ↔ | Careless |
| | Disciplined | ↔ | Impulsive |
| A greeableness | Soft-hearted | ↔ | Ruthless |
| | Trusting | ↔ | Suspicious |
| | Helpful | ↔ | Uncooperative |

The “Big Five” Traits

The “Big Five” Personality Factors

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| | Helpful | ↔ | Uncooperative |
| N euroticism (emotional stability vs. instability) | Calm | ↔ | Anxious |
| | Secure | ↔ | Insecure |
| | Self-satisfied | ↔ | Self-pitying |

The “Big Five” Traits

The “Big Five” Personality Factors

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| O penness | Imaginative | ↔ | Practical |
| | Preference for variety | ↔ | Preference for routine |
| | Independent | ↔ | Conforming |

The “Big Five” Traits

The “Big Five” Personality Factors

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| | Preference for variety | ↔ Preference for routine |
| | Independent | ↔ Conforming |
| E xtraversion | Sociable | ↔ Retiring |
| | Fun-loving | ↔ Sober |
| | Affectionate | ↔ Reserved |

Source: Adapted from McCrae & Costa (1986, p. 1002).

Module 18: Trait and Social-Cognitive Perspectives on Personality

The Trait Perspective: Testing for Traits

Personality Inventories

- Questionnaires on which people respond to items designed to gauge a wide range of feelings and behaviors
- Used to assess selected personality traits
- Often true-false, agree-disagree, etc.
types of questions

Validity

- Extent to which a test measures or predicts what it is suppose to test
- Personality inventories offer greater validity than do projective tests (e.g. Rorschach; used by proponents of the humanistic perspective).

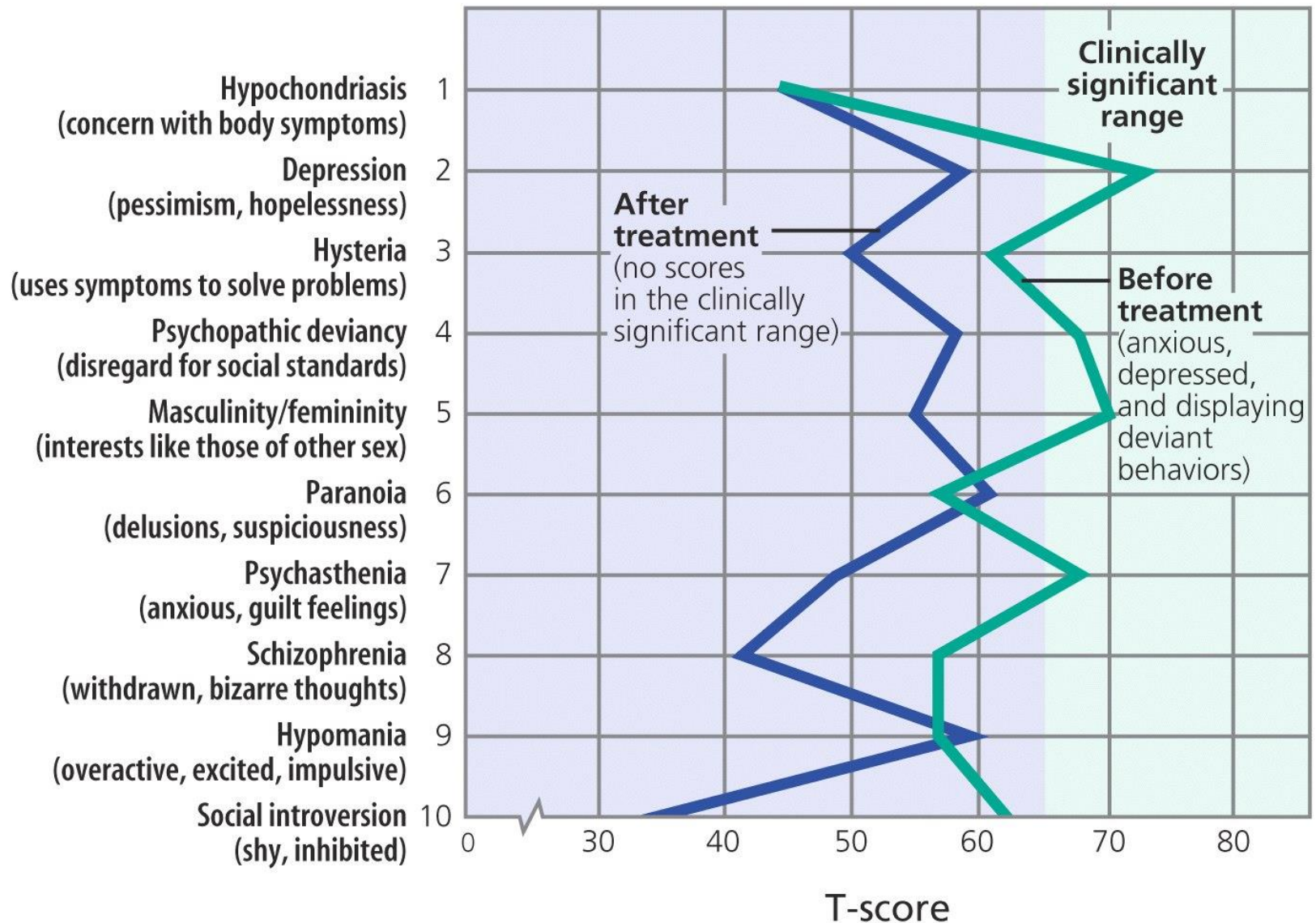
Reliability

- Extent to which a test yields consistent results, regardless of who gives the test or when or where it is given
- Personality inventories are more reliable than projective tests.

MMPI

- Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI)
- Most clinically-used personality test
- Originally designed to assess emotional disorders
- Use for many screening purposes
- 500 total questions

MMPI Scoring Profile



MMPI-2

- Revised and updated version of the MMPI
- Assesses test takers on 10 clinical scales and 15 content scales
- Sometimes the MMPI-2 is not used as it was intended.

Module 18: Trait and Social-Cognitive Perspectives on Personality

The Trait Perspective: Evaluating the Trait Perspective

Evaluating the Trait Perspective

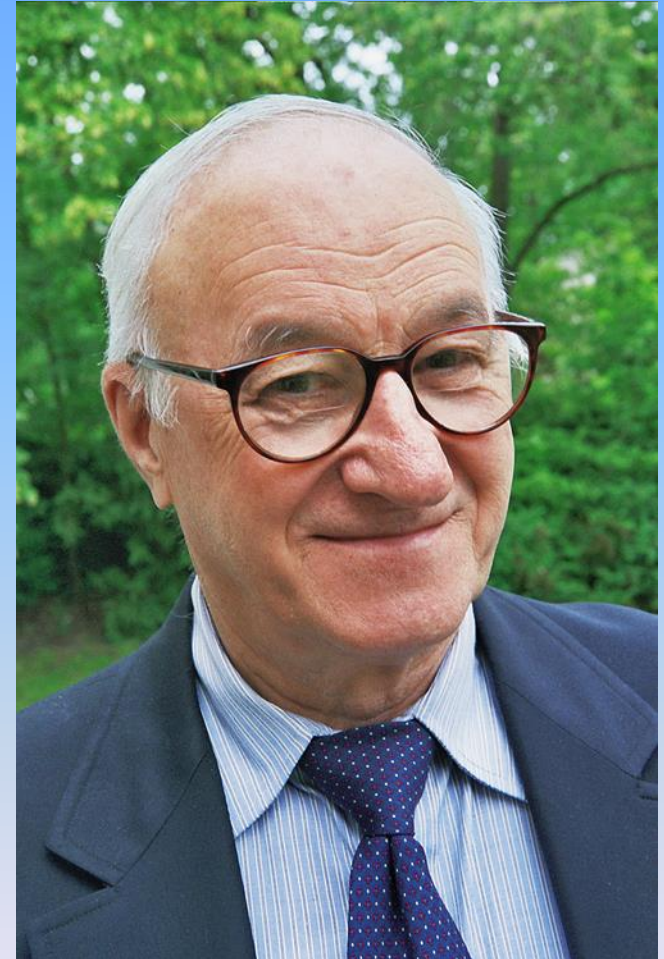
- Does not take into account how the situation influences a person's behavior
- Doesn't explain why the person behaves as they do--just how they behave

Module 18: Trait and Social-Cognitive Perspectives on Personality

The Social-Cognitive Perspective

Albert Bandura (1925-)

- Canadian-American psychologist who developed the social-cognitive perspective
- Believed that to understand personality one must consider the situation and the person's thoughts before, during, and after an event
- People learn by observing and modeling others or through reinforcement



Module 18: Trait and Social-Cognitive Perspectives on Personality

The Social-Cognitive Perspective: Interacting with Our Environment

Reciprocal Determinism: Three Factors Shape Personality

- The mutual influences between personality and environmental factors
- An interaction of three factors:
 - Thoughts or cognitions
 - The environment
 - A person's behaviors

Reciprocal Determinism



Module 18: Trait and Social-Cognitive Perspectives on Personality

The Social-Cognitive Perspective: Personal Control

External Locus of Control

- Perception that chance, or forces beyond a your control, control your fate

Internal Locus of Control

- Perception that you control your own fate

Learned Helplessness

- Hopeless feelings when an animal or human can't avoid repeated bad events
- Martin Seligman studied dogs that were unable to escape a painful stimulus and eventually stopped trying to escape.

Learned Helplessness

Uncontrollable
bad events

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graph TD; A[Uncontrollable bad events] --> B[Perceived lack of control]; B --> C[Generalized helpless behavior];
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The diagram illustrates the process of learned helplessness. It begins with a blue box on the left containing the text 'Uncontrollable bad events'. A blue arrow points from this box to a central orange box containing 'Perceived lack of control'. From this central box, another blue arrow points to a final orange box on the right containing 'Generalized helpless behavior'. The boxes are arranged in a descending staircase pattern from left to right.

Perceived
lack of control

Generalized
helpless behavior

Optimistic Explanatory Style

- When something goes wrong the person explains the problem as:
 - Temporary
 - Not their fault
 - Something limited to this situation

Pessimistic Explanatory Style

- When something goes wrong the person tends to:
 - Blame themselves
 - Catastrophize the event
 - See the problem as beyond their control

Positive Psychology

- Movement in psychology that focuses on the study of optimal human functioning and the factors that allow individuals and communities to thrive
- Lead by Martin Seligman



Module 18: Trait and Social-Cognitive Perspectives on Personality

The Social-Cognitive Perspective: Assessing Behavior in Situations

Assessing Personality

- Social-cognitive perspective would stress putting people into simulated actual conditions to determine how they would behave

Module 18: Trait and Social-Cognitive Perspectives on Personality

The Social-Cognitive Perspective: Evaluating the Perspective

Social-Cognitive View

- Draws on learning and cognitive research
- Fails to consider the influence of emotions and motivation on behavior

The End