

CHAPTER 1 WHAT IS PERSONALITY PSYCHOLOGY?

CHAPTER OUTLINE

- Introduction: What is Personality Psychology?
- Defining Personality
 - Why Use the Word *Personality* as a Concept?
 - A Working Definition
 - Two Fundamental Themes in Personality Psychology
- Theory in Personality Psychology
 - What Do Theories Do?
 - The Role of Research in Evaluating Theories
 - What Else Makes a Theory Good?
- Perspectives on Personality
 - Perspectives to Be Examined Here
 - Perspectives Reconsidered
- Organization within Chapters
 - Assessment
 - Problems in Behavior, and Behavior Change
- Summary: What is Personality Psychology?

CHAPTER SUMMARY

Personality is a hard concept to define. Thinking about how people use the concept, however, suggests three reasons for its use. People use it to convey a sense of consistency or continuity within

a person, to convey the sense that the person is the origin of behavior, and to convey the sense that the essence of a person can be summarized or captured in a few salient qualities.

The field of personality addresses two fundamental themes. One is the existence of differences among people. The other is how best to conceptualize intrapersonal functioning—the processes that take place within all persons, giving form and continuity to behavior.

Much of this book deals with theories. Theories are summary statements, sets of principles that pertain to certain classes of events. Theories have two purposes: to explain things that are known and to predict possibilities that haven't yet been examined. One way to evaluate the worth of a theory is to ask whether research supports its predictions. Scientific psychology has a continuing cycle between theory and research, as theories are tested, modified on the basis of results, and tested again.

Theories can be evaluated on grounds other than research, though. For example, a theory shouldn't be based on a single kind of information. Theories benefit from being parsimonious—having relatively few fewer assumptions (or concepts). People also tend to favor theories that fit

well with their intuitions and personal world view.

The theories described in this book derive from several perspectives, or viewpoints, on human nature. Each theory chapter focuses on assumptions about the nature of personality within a particular theoretical framework. Also included are a discussion of assessment from the viewpoint of the theory under discussion, and a discussion of problems in behavior and how they can be remedied.

KEY TERMS

Individual differences: Differences in personality from one person to another.

Intrapersonal functioning: Psychological processes that take place within the person.

Parsimony: The quality of requiring few assumptions; simplicity.

Personality: A dynamic organization inside the person of psychophysical systems that create the person's characteristic patterns of behavior, thoughts, and feelings.

Theory: A summary statement, a principle or set of principles about a class of events.

TEST ITEMS

Multiple Choice

1. When laypersons use the term *personality*, they generally refer to _____, whereas when personality psychologists use the term, they generally refer to
 - a. generic ideas about things everyone has in common; specific traits of particular people.
 - b. specific traits of particular people; concrete concepts about personality.
 - c. concrete concepts about personality; specific traits of particular people.
 - d. specific traits of particular people; abstract concepts about personality

Answer: D

Topic/Concept: Defining Personality

LO #/Text: 1.1: Identify three reasons for using the concept of personality

Skill Level: Understand

Difficulty Level: Moderate

2. The term *personality* conveys a sense of _____ about an individual's qualities.
 - a. diversity
 - b. consistency
 - c. complexity

d. inevitability

Answer: B

Topic/Concept: Defining Personality

LO #/Text: 1.1: Identify three reasons for using the concept of personality

Skill Level: Understand

Difficulty Level: Easy

3. In the study of personality, *consistency* involves looking for continuity across

- a. cultures.
- b. different people.
- c. situations that are relatively different from each other.
- d. generations.

Answer: C

Topic/Concept: Defining Personality

LO #/Text: 1.1: Identify three reasons for using the concept of personality

Skill Level: Apply

Difficulty Level: Moderate

4. One reason people use the term *personality* is to convey

- a. that no other person will behave in the same manner as another.
- b. that a person's actions in a situation have nothing to do with genetics.
- c. that a person's actions in a situation are determined by genetics.
- d. that a causal force within a person is influencing their behavior.

Answer: D

Topic/Concept: Defining Personality

LO #/Text: 1.1: Identify three reasons for using the concept of personality

Skill Level: Apply

Difficulty Level: Moderate

5. The personality concept does NOT help us

- a. understand the behavior of others.
- b. predict how people will behave in certain situations.
- c. understand our own behavior.
- d. understand things most people have in common.

Answer: D

Topic/Concept: Defining Personality

LO #/Text: 1.1: Identify three reasons for using the concept of personality

Skill Level: Apply
Difficulty Level: Moderate

6. The term *personality* describes a sense of
- personal distinctiveness.
 - internal conflict.
 - morality.
 - common humanity.

Answer: A

Topic/Concept: Defining Personality

LO #/Text: 1.1: Identify three reasons for using the concept of personality

Skill Level: Understand

Difficulty Level: Easy

7. Which of the following did Allport say about personality?
- It's simply an accumulation of bits and pieces.
 - It is not inextricably tied to the physical body.
 - It is a causal force that determines behavior.
 - It is generally displayed in just one way.

Answer: C

Topic/Concept: Defining Personality

LO #/Text: 1.1: Identify three reasons for using the concept of personality

Skill Level: Apply

Difficulty Level: Moderate

8. Allport's definition of personality includes all of the following points EXCEPT the idea that personality
- has organization.
 - is a causal force.
 - shows up in patterns.
 - is a purely psychological concept.

Answer: D

Topic/Concept: Defining Personality

LO #/Text: 1.1: Identify three reasons for using the concept of personality

Skill Level: Apply

Difficulty Level: Moderate

9. No two personalities are exactly alike. This is captured by the notion of
- genetic differences.
 - differences in socialization.
 - individual differences.
 - common humanity.

Answer: C

Topic/Concept: Defining Personality

LO #/Text: 1.1: Identify three reasons for using the concept of personality

Skill Level: Understand

Difficulty Level: Easy

10. *Intrapersonal functioning* describes

- the dynamic organization of systems within the person.
- the interactions between individuals within society.
- individual differences in behavior.
- the degree of consistency of an individual's behavior across settings.

Answer: A

Topic/Concept: Defining Personality

LO #/Text: 1.1: Identify three reasons for using the concept of personality

Skill Level: Understand

Difficulty Level: Easy

11. The idea that our behavior at a given time stems from the motives we hold at that time emphasizes the concept of

- individual differences.
- internal consistency.
- intrapersonal functioning.
- personal distinctiveness.

Answer: C

Topic/Concept: Defining Personality

LO #/Text: 1.1: Identify three reasons for using the concept of personality

Skill Level: Apply

Difficulty Level: Moderate

12. A *theory* is a

- scientifically proven set of facts.
- set of ideas that are not supported by scientific data.

- c. summary statement about events.
- d. layperson's speculation about a phenomenon.

Answer: C

Topic/Concept: Theory in Personality Psychology

LO #/Text: 1.2: Indicate the two functions that any theory should serve

Skill Level: Apply

Difficulty Level: Moderate

13. The two basic functions of theories are to

- a. explain and modify behavior.
- b. describe and modify behavior.
- c. describe and explain behavior.
- d. explain and predict behavior.

Answer: D

Topic/Concept: Theory in Personality Psychology

LO #/Text: 1.2: Indicate the two functions that any theory should serve

Skill Level: Understand

Difficulty Level: Easy

14. A good personality theory should be

- a. abstract.
- b. testable.
- c. correct.
- d. all-encompassing.

Answer: B

Topic/Concept: Theory in Personality Psychology

LO #/Text: 1.2: Indicate the two functions that any theory should serve

Skill Level: Apply

Difficulty Level: Moderate

15. The broader a theory is,

- a. the more likely it is to be ambiguous.
- b. the more likely it is to be correct.
- c. the more likely it is to make clear predictions.
- d. the more likely it is to deny scientific facts.

Answer: A

Topic/Concept: Theory in Personality Psychology

LO #/Text: 1.2: Indicate the two functions that any theory should serve
Skill Level: Understand
Difficulty Level: Easy

16. In characterizing Freud's ideas about testability, it is most accurate to say that he
- insisted his theoretical ideas be supported by research.
 - preferred his theoretical ideas be supported by research but recognized that some of them were untestable.
 - was not interested in whether or not his theoretical ideas were supported by research.
 - was very interested in if his ideas were supported in others' research.

Answer: C

Topic/Concept: Theory in Personality Psychology

LO #/Text: 1.2: Indicate the two functions that any theory should serve

Skill Level: Analyze

Difficulty Level: Moderate

17. Which of the following is NOT a legitimate criticism of a psychological theory?
- It is too parsimonious.
 - It is based on laboratory animals in artificial settings.
 - It is based on the theorists' experiences conducting therapy.
 - It does not stimulate enthusiasm.

Answer: A

Topic/Concept: Theory in Personality Psychology

LO #/Text: 1.2: Indicate the two functions that any theory should serve

Skill Level: Analyze

Difficulty Level: Moderate

18. Which of the following criteria should NOT be applied to a psychological theory?
- It should be parsimonious.
 - It should "feel" right.
 - It should be testable.
 - It should have many assumptions.

Answer: D

Topic/Concept: Theory in Personality Psychology

LO #/Text: 1.2: Indicate the two functions that any theory should serve

Skill Level: Analyze

Difficulty Level: Moderate

19. A theory is parsimonious if it
- a. can predict behavior accurately.
 - b. contains few assumptions.
 - c. is testable.
 - d. is able to stimulate research.

Answer: B

Topic/Concept: Theory in Personality Psychology

LO #/Text: 1.2: Indicate the two functions that any theory should serve

Skill Level: Apply

Difficulty Level: Moderate

20. According to the trait perspective, _____ is a major focus.
- a. what traits are most important
 - b. how many traits are important
 - c. how trait differences are expressed in behavior
 - d. all of these answers are correct

Answer: D

Topic/Concept: Perspectives on Personality

LO #/Text: 1.3: Summarize the main themes of the 10 theoretical perspectives on personality to be discussed in this text

Skill Level: Understand

Difficulty Level: Easy

21. The motive perspective on personality suggests that
- a. differences in the balance of motives are the primary determinant of behavior.
 - b. overall strength of motivation is the primary determinant of behavior.
 - c. motives are not deeply embedded in the person.
 - d. motives are exclusively genetic.

Answer: A

Topic/Concept: Perspectives on Personality

LO #/Text: 1.3: Summarize the main themes of the 10 theoretical perspectives on personality to be discussed in this text

Skill Level: Apply

Difficulty Level: Moderate

22. The inheritance and evolution perspective

- a. is the only biological perspective on personality.
- b. could suggest that aspects of personality exist because they were adaptive millennia ago.
- c. emphasizes how a parent's social experiences will influence his or her child's personality.
- d. all of these answers are correct.

Answer: B

Topic/Concept: Perspectives on Personality

LO #/Text: 1.3: Summarize the main themes of the 10 theoretical perspectives on personality to be discussed in this text

Skill Level: Apply

Difficulty Level: Moderate

23. According to the biological process perspective,

- a. personality is purely genetic.
- b. all nervous systems function the same way.
- c. nervous system processes, but not hormonal processes, influence personality.
- d. both nervous system and hormonal processes influence personality.

Answer: D

Topic/Concept: Perspectives on Personality

LO #/Text: 1.3: Summarize the main themes of the 10 theoretical perspectives on personality to be discussed in this text

Skill Level: Apply

Difficulty Level: Moderate

24. The view that human nature incorporates a set of internal pressures that compete and conflict with each other reflects the

- a. trait perspective.
- b. dispositional perspective.
- c. psychoanalytic perspective.
- d. learning perspective.

Answer: C

Topic/Concept: Perspectives on Personality

LO #/Text: 1.3: Summarize the main themes of the 10 theoretical perspectives on personality to be discussed in this text

Skill Level: Apply

Difficulty Level: Moderate

25. Which of the following perspectives is most closely aligned with the psychoanalytic perspective?

- a. The meta-theoretical perspective
- b. The dispositional perspective
- c. The phenomenological perspective
- d. The psychosocial perspective

Answer: D

Topic/Concept: Perspectives on Personality

LO #/Text: 1.3: Summarize the main themes of the 10 theoretical perspectives on personality to be discussed in this text

Skill Level: Apply

Difficulty Level: Moderate

26. The social learning perspective emphasizes

- a. constancy in personality.
- b. change in personality.
- c. school and peer influences on personality, but not family influences.
- d. parental influences but not peer influences.

Answer: B

Topic/Concept: Perspectives on Personality

LO #/Text: 1.3: Summarize the main themes of the 10 theoretical perspectives on personality to be discussed in this text

Skill Level: Analyze

Difficulty Level: Moderate

27. According to the organismic perspective on personality,

- a. sex drive has a primary influence on personality.
- b. people do not have free will.
- c. every person has the potential to grow into a person of value.
- d. environment is less important than biology.

Answer: C

Topic/Concept: Perspectives on Personality

LO #/Text: 1.3: Summarize the main themes of the 10 theoretical perspectives on personality to be discussed in this text

Skill Level: Apply

Difficulty Level: Moderate

28. The cognitive perspective suggests that

- a. mental organization influences how people think but not how they behave.
- b. human nature involves deriving meaning from experiences.
- c. personality does not exist.
- d. all of these answers are correct.

Answer: B

Topic/Concept: Perspectives on Personality

LO #/Text: 1.3: Summarize the main themes of the 10 theoretical perspectives on personality to be discussed in this text

Skill Level: Analyze

Difficulty Level: Moderate

29. Which of the following is an assumption of the self-regulation perspective?

- a. People are complex.
- b. Personality is organized.
- c. People synthesize and move toward goals.
- d. All of these answers are correct.

Answer: D

Topic/Concept: Perspectives on Personality

LO #/Text: 1.3: Summarize the main themes of the 10 theoretical perspectives on personality to be discussed in this text

Skill Level: Apply

Difficulty Level: Moderate

30. Newer theories in personality psychology tend to _____ than older theories.

- a. explain more aspects of personality
- b. explain fewer aspects of personality
- c. rely more on case studies
- d. be less parsimonious

Answer: B

Topic/Concept: Perspectives on Personality

LO #/Text: 1.3: Summarize the main themes of the 10 theoretical perspectives on personality to be discussed in this text

Skill Level: Analyze

Difficulty Level: Moderate

31. Accurate assessment of personality is necessary

- a. to conduct valid research on personality.
- b. for making smart hiring decisions.
- c. for treating mental illness.
- d. all of these answers are correct.

Answer: D

Topic/Concept: Organization within Chapters

LO #/Text: 1.4: Outline reasons as to why assessment of personality, behavioral problems, and behavior change are important

Skill Level: Understand

Difficulty Level: Easy

True and False

1. When we describe personality, we reduce a large amount of information to a smaller set.

Answer: T

Topic/Concept: Defining Personality

LO #/Text: 1.1: Identify three reasons for using the concept of personality

Skill Level: Understand

Difficulty Level: Easy

2. Psychologists typically use the term *personality* to refer to specific characteristics of specific persons.

Answer: F

Topic/Concept: Defining Personality

LO #/Text: 1.1: Identify three reasons for using the concept of personality

Skill Level: Apply

Difficulty Level: Moderate

3. When psychologists use the term *personality*, they are likely referring to an abstraction.

Answer: T

Topic/Concept: Defining Personality

LO #/Text: 1.1: Identify three reasons for using the concept of personality

Skill Level: Apply

Difficulty Level: Moderate

4. Personality psychologists generally agree on a single definition of *personality*.

Answer: F

Topic/Concept: Defining Personality

LO #/Text: 1.1: Identify three reasons for using the concept of personality

Skill Level: Understand

Difficulty Level: Easy

5. One reason to use the term *personality* is to communicate continuity in personal qualities.

Answer: T

Topic/Concept: Defining Personality

LO #/Text: 1.1: Identify three reasons for using the concept of personality

Skill Level: Understand

Difficulty Level: Easy

6. *Personality* refers to consistency across similar situations but not consistency across very different situations.

Answer: F

Topic/Concept: Defining Personality

LO #/Text: 1.1: Identify three reasons for using the concept of personality

Skill Level: Apply

Difficulty Level: Moderate

7. One reason to use the term *personality* is to suggest that a person's behavior is caused by internal forces.

Answer: T

Topic/Concept: Defining Personality

LO #/Text: 1.1: Identify three reasons for using the concept of personality

Skill Level: Understand

Difficulty Level: Easy

8. The term *personality* suggests that a few characteristics can summarize what a person is like.

Answer: T

Topic/Concept: Defining Personality

LO #/Text: 1.1: Identify three reasons for using the concept of personality

Skill Level: Understand

Difficulty Level: Easy

9. According to Allport, personality has little to do with the physical body.

Answer: F

Topic/Concept: Defining Personality

LO #/Text: 1.1: Identify three reasons for using the concept of personality

Skill Level: Analyze

Difficulty Level: Moderate

10. Identical twins have identical personalities, even if they try to conceal this.

Answer: F

Topic/Concept: Defining Personality

LO #/Text: 1.1: Identify three reasons for using the concept of personality

Skill Level: Apply

Difficulty Level: Moderate

11. Two core themes in personality psychology are individual differences and social functioning.

Answer: F

Topic/Concept: Defining Personality

LO #/Text: 1.1: Identify three reasons for using the concept of personality

Skill Level: Apply

Difficulty Level: Moderate

12. The concept of intrapersonal functioning describes the dynamic processes that occur within the individual.

Answer: T

Topic/Concept: Defining Personality

LO #/Text: 1.1: Identify three reasons for using the concept of personality

Skill Level: Understand

Difficulty Level: Easy

13. Although they differ in other ways, all personality theories give equal emphasis to individual differences and intrapersonal functioning.

Answer: F

Topic/Concept: Defining Personality

LO #/Text: 1.1: Identify three reasons for using the concept of personality

Skill Level: Apply

Difficulty Level: Moderate

14. Theories must explain complex phenomena more complex than, for example, the behavior of individual nerve cells.

Answer: F

Topic/Concept: Theory in Personality Psychology

LO #/Text: 1.2: Indicate the two functions that any theory should serve

Skill Level: Apply

Difficulty Level: Moderate

15. A good theory needs to generate novel predictions.

Answer: T

Topic/Concept: Theory in Personality Psychology

LO #/Text: 1.2: Indicate the two functions that any theory should serve

Skill Level: Understand

Difficulty Level: Easy

16. Because personality is a broad construct, personality theories must be broad and complex.

Answer: T

Topic/Concept: Theory in Personality Psychology

LO #/Text: 1.2: Indicate the two functions that any theory should serve

Skill Level: Apply

Difficulty Level: Moderate

17. The explanatory aspect of personality theories is subtler than the predictive aspect.

Answer: F

Topic/Concept: Theory in Personality Psychology

LO #/Text: 1.2: Indicate the two functions that any theory should serve

Skill Level: Apply

Difficulty Level: Moderate

18. The fewer things a theory has to account for, the more likely it is to be ambiguous.

Answer: F

Topic/Concept: Theory in Personality Psychology

LO #/Text: 1.2: Indicate the two functions that any theory should serve

Skill Level: Apply

Difficulty Level: Moderate

19. A theory is sufficient if it provides an explanation for known facts; it need not allow you to make new predictions.

Answer: F

Topic/Concept: Theory in Personality Psychology

LO #/Text: 1.2: Indicate the two functions that any theory should serve

Skill Level: Apply

Difficulty Level: Moderate

20. Most personality theories have some ambiguity, making it unclear exactly what their predictions should be.

Answer: T

Topic/Concept: Theory in Personality Psychology

LO #/Text: 1.2: Indicate the two functions that any theory should serve

Skill Level: Analyze

Difficulty Level: Moderate

21. Theories should be open to the possibility of being disconfirmed as well as to the possibility of being supported.

Answer: T

Topic/Concept: Theory in Personality Psychology

LO #/Text: 1.2: Indicate the two functions that any theory should serve

Skill Level: Apply

Difficulty Level: Moderate

22. Results from psychological research often fail to fully support predictions.

Answer: T

Topic/Concept: Theory in Personality Psychology

LO #/Text: 1.2: Indicate the two functions that any theory should serve

Skill Level: Understand

Difficulty Level: Easy

23. Good theories should contain as many assumptions as possible.

Answer: F

Topic/Concept: Theory in Personality Psychology

LO #/Text: 1.2: Indicate the two functions that any theory should serve

Skill Level: Apply

Difficulty Level: Moderate

24. Personality psychologists only use objective information when evaluating theories.

Answer: F

Topic/Concept: Theory in Personality Psychology

LO #/Text: 1.2: Indicate the two functions that any theory should serve

Skill Level: Analyze

Difficulty Level: Moderate

25. The trait perspective suggests human nature is a set of relatively permanent qualities embedded in a person.

Answer: T

Topic/Concept: Perspectives on Personality

LO #/Text: 1.3: Summarize the main themes of the 10 theoretical perspectives on personality to be discussed in this text

Skill Level: Apply

Difficulty Level: Moderate

26. The motive perspective on personality argues that motivations are constant across contexts.

Answer: F

Topic/Concept: Perspectives on Personality

LO #/Text: 1.3: Summarize the main themes of the 10 theoretical perspectives on personality to be discussed in this text

Skill Level: Apply

Difficulty Level: Moderate

27. The inheritance and evolution perspective argues that many aspects of personality exist because they were adaptive for humans that existed millennia ago.

Answer: T

Topic/Concept: Perspectives on Personality

LO #/Text: 1.3: Summarize the main themes of the 10 theoretical perspectives on personality to be discussed in this text

Skill Level: Understand

Difficulty Level: Easy

28. According to the biological processes perspective, nervous-system functioning is important in determining personality, but hormonal functioning is not because hormone levels fluctuate so rapidly.

Answer: F

Topic/Concept: Perspectives on Personality

LO #/Text: 1.3: Summarize the main themes of the 10 theoretical perspectives on personality

to be discussed in this text
Skill Level: Analyze
Difficulty Level: Moderate

29. Sigmund Freud is most closely associated with the biological process perspective.

Answer: F
Topic/Concept: Perspectives on Personality
LO #/Text: 1.3: Summarize the main themes of the 10 theoretical perspectives on personality to be discussed in this text
Skill Level: Apply
Difficulty Level: Moderate

30. The psychosocial perspective is historically linked to the psychoanalytic perspective.

Answer: T
Topic/Concept: Perspectives on Personality
LO #/Text: 1.3: Summarize the main themes of the 10 theoretical perspectives on personality to be discussed in this text
Skill Level: Understand
Difficulty Level: Easy

31. The social learning perspective on personality emphasizes constancy rather than change.

Answer: F
Topic/Concept: Perspectives on Personality
LO #/Text: 1.3: Summarize the main themes of the 10 theoretical perspectives on personality to be discussed in this text
Skill Level: Apply
Difficulty Level: Moderate

32. The belief that people tend naturally toward self-perfection is one of the roots of the self-actualization perspective.

Answer: T
Topic/Concept: Perspectives on Personality
LO #/Text: 1.3: Summarize the main themes of the 10 theoretical perspectives on personality to be discussed in this text
Skill Level: Understand
Difficulty Level: Easy

33. The cognitive perspective on personality focuses on the notion that self-actualization is a fundamental part of human nature.

Answer: F

Topic/Concept: Perspectives on Personality

LO #/Text: 1.3: Summarize the main themes of the 10 theoretical perspectives on personality to be discussed in this text

Skill Level: Apply

Difficulty Level: Moderate

34. Each perspective on personality generally begins with a different conception of human nature.

Answer: T

Topic/Concept: Perspectives on Personality

LO #/Text: 1.3: Summarize the main themes of the 10 theoretical perspectives on personality to be discussed in this text

Skill Level: Understand

Difficulty Level: Easy

35. Newer personality theories tend to be aimed at all aspects of personality whereas older theories tended to focus on more specific aspects of personality.

Answer: F

Topic/Concept: Perspectives on Personality

LO #/Text: 1.3: Summarize the main themes of the 10 theoretical perspectives on personality to be discussed in this text

Skill Level: Analyze

Difficulty Level: Difficult

36. If a particular theory does not cover the entire domain of personality, it is not a valuable contribution to the field.

Answer: F

Topic/Concept: Perspectives on Personality

LO #/Text: 1.3: Summarize the main themes of the 10 theoretical perspectives on personality to be discussed in this text

Skill Level: Apply

Difficulty Level: Moderate

37. Assessment techniques often differ from one theoretical approach to another.

Answer: T

Topic/Concept: Organization within Chapters

LO #/Text: 1.4: Outline reasons as to why assessment of personality, behavioral problems,

and behavior change are important
Skill Level: Understand
Difficulty Level: Easy

38. Assessment techniques are an important part of applied psychology.

Answer: T
Topic/Concept: Organization within Chapters
LO #/Text: 1.4: Outline reasons as to why assessment of personality, behavioral problems, and behavior change are important
Skill Level: Understand
Difficulty Level: Easy

39. Each theoretical perspective suggests different things about normal behavior, but similar things about abnormal behavior.

Answer: F
Topic/Concept: Organization within Chapters
LO #/Text: 1.4: Outline reasons as to why assessment of personality, behavioral problems, and behavior change are important
Skill Level: Analyze
Difficulty Level: Difficult

40. Each theoretical perspective suggests different ways to promote behavior change.

Answer: T
Topic/Concept: Organization within Chapters
LO #/Text: 1.4: Outline reasons as to why assessment of personality, behavioral problems, and behavior change are important
Skill Level: Understand
Difficulty Level: Easy

Short Essay

1. Allport's definition of *personality* emphasizes several elements. Identify three of the Ideas it contains.

Sample Answer:

Personality has organization; it is not just a collection of bits and pieces.
Personality has processes; it is active.
Personality is a psychological concept, inextricably tied to the physical body.
Personality is a causal force; it helps determine how an individual relates to the world.
Personality appears in patterns, recurrences, and consistencies.

Personality is displayed in many ways, through behaviors, thoughts and feelings.

Topic/Concept: Defining Personality

LO #/Text: 1.1: Identify three reasons for using the concept of personality

Skill Level: Understand

Difficulty Level: Moderate

2. Define the term *theory* and identify a theory's two basic purposes or functions.

Sample Answer:

A theory is a type of summary statement, a general principle or set of principles pertaining to a class of events. Two basic purposes are: (1) explain the set of phenomena the theory addresses and (2) predict new information.

Topic/Concept: Theory in Personality Psychology

LO #/Text: 1.2: Indicate the two functions that any theory should serve

Skill Level: Understand

Difficulty Level: Moderate

3. Identify and briefly discuss the characteristics of a good theory.

Sample Answer:

Generally, a good theory explains and predicts behavior. In addition, the following questions should be answered affirmatively: (1) Is the theory stimulating? (2) Is the theory parsimonious? (3) Does the theory feel reasonable or sensible? Finally, a theory should not be based on too narrow a set of information.

Topic/Concept: Theory in Personality Psychology

LO #/Text: 1.2: Indicate the two functions that any theory should serve

Skill Level: Understand

Difficulty Level: Moderate

4. Name four of the broad perspectives and describe the fundamental assumption of each.

Sample Answer:

Trait perspective—People have relatively stable characteristics that are displayed across contexts.

Motive perspective—Motives are the key element underlying behavior.

Inheritance and evolution perspective—Human nature is deeply rooted in genes.

Biological process perspective—Personality reflects the functioning of the body and brain.

Psychoanalytic perspective—Personality is formed by the dynamics of competing internal forces.

Psychosocial perspective—Relationships with others and the way in which they play out are the most important aspect of human nature.

Social learning perspective—Behavior changes as a function of experience.

Self-actualization (or self-determination or organismic) perspective—Every person has the potential to develop into a valuable human being.

Cognitive perspective—Human beings derive meaning from experiences.

Self-regulation perspective—People are complex systems similar to homeostatic systems that are self-regulating.

Topic/Concept: Perspectives on Personality

LO #/Text: 1.3: Summarize the main themes of the 10 theoretical perspectives on personality to be discussed in this text

Skill Level: Understand

Difficulty Level: Moderate

5. Identify three ways in which personality psychologists use assessment.

Sample Answer:

- (1) To portray personalities of specific persons
- (2) To study personality variables and their influence on behavior
- (3) To use in applied psychology, e.g., as a basis for hiring decisions or to diagnose psychopathology.

Topic/Concept: Organization within Chapters

LO #/Text: 1.4: Outline reasons as to why assessment of personality, behavioral problems, and behavior change are important

Skill Level: Understand

Difficulty Level: Moderate

CLASS DEMONSTRATION 1-1

Purpose: To have students think about their everyday use of the term *personality* and how it fits the ideas of personality researchers.

Exercise: Have students complete the following stem on a piece of paper: “I use the term *personality* to refer to...” After students have time to write down their answers, collect the completions and randomly select a few to read and analyze aloud in class.

Results: This exercise should demonstrate that students use the term *personality* in much the same manner as do personality psychologists: i.e., to refer to the individual differences that give

rise to human uniqueness; to capture a sense the consistency in people's behavior across time and situations; and to acknowledge that behavior often seems to be motivated internally, by something about the person, rather than by aspects of the situation in which the person is embedded.

PRIMARY SOURCES

Allport, G. W. (1961). *Pattern and growth in personality*. New York: Holt, Rinehart, & Winston.

Maddi, S. R. (1980). *Personality theories: A comparative analysis*. Homewood, IL: Dorsey Press.