

# **COURSE MATERIAL ( E – CONTENT) OF PSYCHOLOGY**

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## **PSYCHODYNAMIC APPROACH**

### **What Is Psychodynamic Approach**

The psychodynamic approach includes all the theories in psychology that see human functioning based upon the interaction of drives and forces within the person, particularly unconscious, and between the different structures of the personality.

### **SIGMUND FREUD -**

Sigmund Freud (6 May 1856 – 23 September 1939) is considered to be the founder of the psychodynamic approach to psychology, which looks to unconscious drives to explain human behavior. Freud believed that the mind is responsible for both conscious and unconscious decisions that it makes on the basis of psychological drives. The id, ego, and super-ego are three aspects of the mind Freud believed to comprise a person's personality.

### **Organisation Of Personality -**

In Freudian theory, the human mind is structured into two main parts: the conscious and unconscious mind. The conscious mind includes all the things we are aware of or can easily bring into awareness. The unconscious mind, on the other hand, includes all of the things outside of our awareness—all of the wishes, desires, hopes, urges, and memories that lie outside of awareness yet continue to influence behavior. Freud compared the mind to an iceberg. The tip of the iceberg that is actually visible above the water represents just a tiny portion of the mind, while the huge expanse of ice hidden underneath the water represents the much larger unconscious.

### **Structure Of Personality -**

In addition to these two main components of the mind, the Freudian theory also divides human personality up into three major components: the id, ego, and superego. The id is the most primitive part of the personality that is the source of all our most basic urges. This part of the personality is entirely unconscious and serves as the source of all libidinal energy. The ego is the component of personality that is charged with dealing with reality and helps ensure that the demands of the id are satisfied in ways that are realistic, safe, and socially acceptable. The

superego is the part of the personality that holds all of the internalized morals and standards that we acquire from our parents, family, and society at large.

### **Dynamic Of Personality -**

According to Freud psychoanalytic theory, all psychic energy is generated by the libido. Freud suggested that our mental states were influenced by two competing forces: cathexis and anticathexis. Cathexis was described as an investment of mental energy in a person, an idea or an object. If you are hungry, for example, you might create a mental image of a delicious meal that you have been craving. In other cases, the ego might harness some of the id's energy to seek out activities that are related to the desire in order to disperse some of the excess energy from the id. If you can't actually seek out food to appease your hunger, you might instead thumb through a cookbook or browse through your favourite recipe blog. Anticathexis involves the ego blocking the socially unacceptable needs of the id. Repressing urges and desires is one common form of anticathexis, but it involves a significant investment of energy.

Freud also believed that much of human behavior was motivated by two driving instincts: the life instincts and death instincts. The life instincts are those that relate to a basic need for survival, reproduction, and pleasure. They include such things as the need for food, shelter, love, and sex. He also suggested that all humans have an unconscious wish for death, which he referred to as the death instincts. Self-destructive behavior, he believed, was one expression of the death drive. However, he believed that these death instincts were largely tempered by life instincts.

### **Anxiety and defence mechanism -**

Freud noted that a major drive for people is the reduction of tension and the major cause of tension was anxiety. He identified three types of anxiety; reality anxiety, neurotic anxiety, and moral anxiety.

When anxiety occurs, the mind's first response is to seek rational ways of escaping the situation by increasing problem solving efforts and a range of defence mechanisms may be triggered. These are ways that the ego develops to help deal with the id and the superego. Defence mechanisms often appear unconsciously and tend to distort or falsify reality. When the distortion of reality occurs, there is a change in perception which allows for a lessening in anxiety resulting in a reduction of tension one experiences. Sigmund Freud noted a number of ego defences which were noted throughout his work but his daughter, Anna Freud, developed and elaborated on them. The defence mechanisms are as follows:

- Denial is believing that what is true is actually false
- Displacement is taking out impulses on a less threatening target
- Intellectualization is avoiding unacceptable emotions by focusing on the intellectual aspects
- Projection is attributing uncomfortable feelings to others
- Rationalization is creating false but believable justifications
- Reaction Formation is taking the opposite belief because the true belief causes anxiety
- Regression is going back to a previous stage of development

- Repression is pushing uncomfortable thoughts out of conscious awareness
- Suppression is consciously forcing unwanted thoughts out of our awareness
- Sublimation is redirecting 'wrong' urges into socially acceptable actions.

These defences are not under our conscious control and our unconscious will use one or more to protect one's self from stressful situations. They are natural and normal and without these, neurosis develops such as anxiety states, phobias, obsessions, or hysteria.

### **Development Of Personality –**

Freudian theory suggests that as children develop, they progress through a series of psychosexual stages. At each stage, the libido's pleasure-seeking energy is focused on a different part of the body.

The five stages of psychosexual development are:

1. The Oral Stage: The libidinal energies are focused on the mouth.
2. The Anal Stage: The libidinal energies are focused on the anus.
3. The Phallic Stage: The libidinal energies are focused on the penis or clitoris.
4. The Latent Stage: A period of calm in which little libidinal interest is present.
5. The Genital Stage: The libidinal energies are focused on the genitals.

The successful completion of each stage leads to a healthy personality as an adult. If, however, a conflict remains unresolved at any particular stage, the individual might remain fixated or stuck at that particular point of development.