PERSONALITY

Development & theories

Outline

- Definition of personality
- Normal Personality development
- Approaches to the study of personality
- Theories of personality development

Personality - definition

The **unique** pattern of **enduring psychological and behavioural characteristics** by which each person can be compared and contrasted with other people

Normal development

0-6 months: rolls over, smiles and laughs, passes objects hand to hand, places objects in the mouth, vocalises syllables.

6-12 months: crawls, sits unsupported, stands with support, finger thumb opposition, shy with strangers.

Normal development cont.

- 1-2 years: walks, runs, 3 word sentences, feeds with spoon, parallel play

- Early infancy: continent, draws figures, asks questions, hops, dress and undress, cooperative play.

- Middle childhood: schooling, peer group activities, developing autonomy.

- Adolescence: increasing independence, autonomy and peer group activities.

Approaches to the study of personality

- Developmental approaches
  - Sigmund Freud's personality theory
  - Piaget's theory of genetic epistemology
  - Erik Erikson's psychosocial theory
  - Kohlberg's theory of moral development
- Trait theories
  - Allport's trait theory (Gordon Allport, 1961)
  - Cattell's Factor-Analytic Approach (Raymond Cattell, 1965)
- Dimensional approach to personality
  - Eysenck's Biological Trait Theory (Hans Eysenck 1990)
  - The "Big-Five" model (Paul Costa & Robert McCrae 1992)

Approaches to the study of personality …

- Genetic basis
- Cognitive – behavioural approach
  - John B Watson
  - B F Skinner
  - Rotter's expectancy theory (Julian Rotter, 1982)
  - Reciprocal determinism (Albert Bandura, 1986)
  - Phenomenological approach (Carl Rogers, 1942 – 1980)
 - Maslow's Humanistic Psychology (Abraham Maslow, 1954 – 1971)

Main theories of personality development

- Genetic theory
- Sigmund Freud's theory of psychosexual development
- Neo-Freudian's
  - Jung, 1916 (Collective unconscious, analytic psychology)
  - Karen Horney, 1937 (womb envy vs penis envy)
  - Object relations theorists: Melanie Klein, Fairburn, Kernberg, Guntrip, Donald Winnicott and Balint
- Piaget (1952): genetic epistemology
- Erik Erikson (1968): stages of psychosocial development
- John Bowlby: Attachment theory
- Lawrence Kohlberg (1971): stages of moral reasoning

Genetic basis of personality traits

- Identical twins tend to be more alike in personality than non-identical twins regardless of whether they are raised together or apart

- 30 % - 60 % of the variability in adult personality traits is due to genetic factors

Sigmund Freud (Austria; 1856 – 1939)
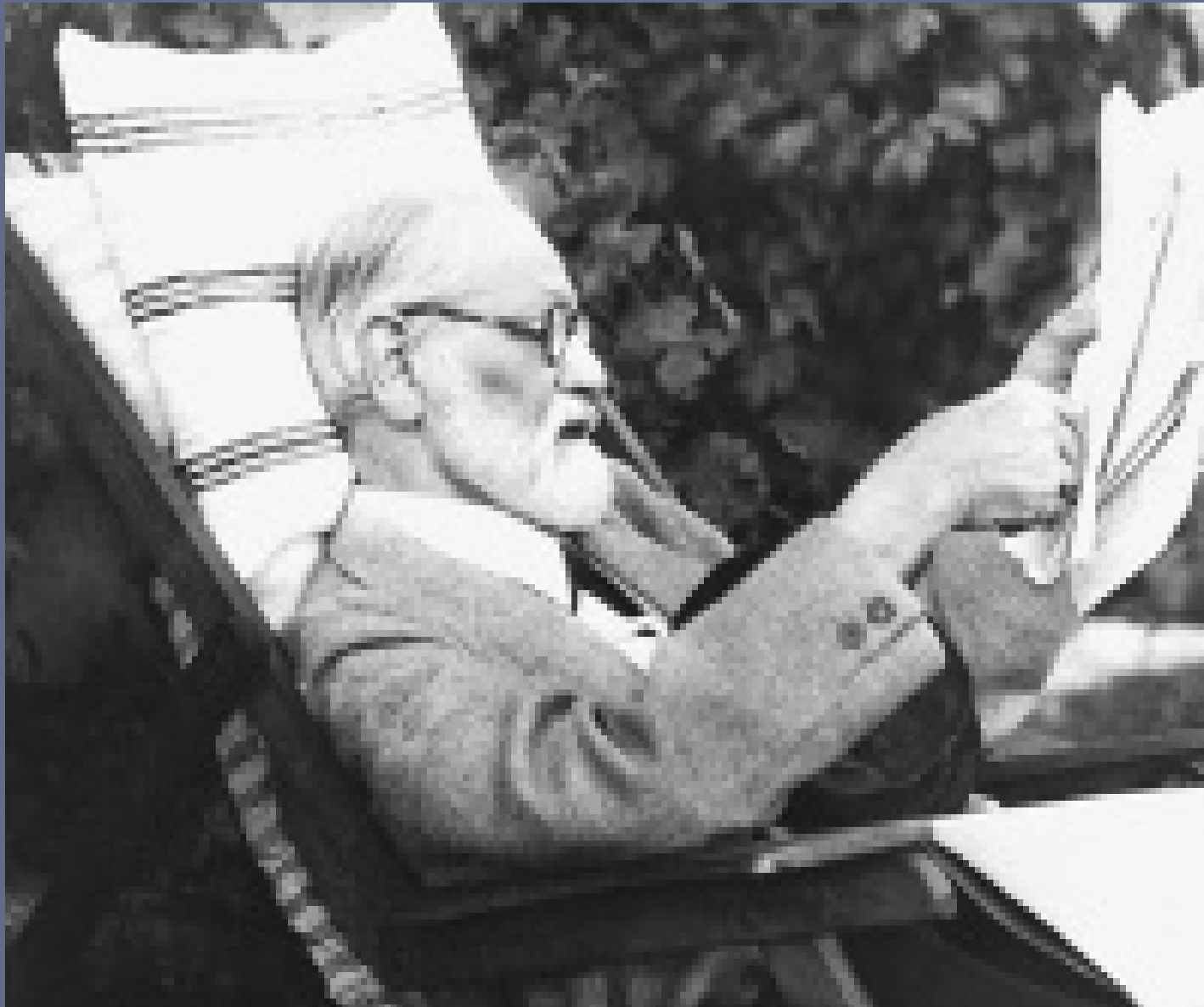
Psychosexual development theory

- Arose from Freud's work with "neurotic subjects"
- Early experience is crucial to later personality development
- Libidinal energies become invested in various body regions

Sigmund Freud's stages of psychosexual development

- Oral (0 -18 months)
- Anal (2 – 4 years)
- Phallic (3 – 6 years)
- Latency (6 years to puberty)
- Genital (puberty onwards)

Libido theory

- oral stage (0-18 months)
    - mother loved as source of nourishment (*Primary Love Object) or hated* (bitten) as a frustrator of need
- anal stage (2-4 years)
    - struggle for control with mother over bodily functions
    - faeces as something created
    - feelings of mastery by withholding

Libido theory cont.

- Phallic stage (3-6 years)
  - *Oedipus complex – fear that the wish to get rid of the rival father will* result in retaliatory castration (*castration anxiety)*
    - resolution by giving up mother, and identifying with father
    - introjection of the castrating father leads to formation of the superego
  - *Electra complex – fear of mother's disapproval over interest in father*
    - phallic preoccupations demonstrate inferiority of clitoris to penis (*penis envy)*
    - girl turns to father to provide missing penis and babies (*penisbaby)*
    - *g*radually resolved by father's continued interest in mother
  - interest in urination
- Latency period (6 years - puberty)
  - energy is diverted into learning social relationships and play
- Genital period (puberty onwards)
  - establish mature heterosexual relationships

Adler's individual psychology (Alfred Adler 1927)

- emphasized the role of social rather than sexual urges

- wrote about sibling position

- believed that it is not the id but rather an innate desire to overcome infantile feelings of helplessness that provides the impetus for the development of personality – *striving for superiority*

- the ways in which each person tries to reach fulfillment constitute personality

- personality is directed not just by the unconsciousness but also by what he called *guiding fictions: conscious ideas, goals, and beliefs that arise primarily from* experiences within the family

Jung's Analytic Psychology (Carl Jung 1916)

- argued that libido was not just a sexual instinct but a more general life force that includes an innate drive for creativity, for growth-oriented resolution of conflicts, and for the productive blending of basic impulses with real-world demands

- suggested that people develop, over time, differing degrees of *introversion or extraversion*

Karen Horney (1937)

- challenged the view that women's lack of a penis caused them to feel inferior to men
- argued that it is men who envy women since they cannot bear children – she called this 'womb envy'

Psychosocial theory: Erickson (Sweden; 1833-1887)

- emphasised the importance of the ego (or executive function of the mental apparatus) in personality development.

- while Freud's five stages take development up to about 12 years of age, Erickson lists eight stages which cover the entire life -span.

- Successful completion (resolution of a conflict/task) results in a favourable result (virtue)

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Erik Erickson's eight ages of man

Stage	Task	Virtue
0-1 years	trust vs. mistrust	Hope
1-2 years	autonomy vs. doubt	Will
3-6 years	initiative vs. inadequacy	purpose
6-puberty	industry vs. inferiority	Confidence
Adolescence	identity vs. confusion	Fidelity
Early adulthood	intimacy vs. isolation	Love
Late adulthood	generativity vs. stagnation	Care
Old age	integrity vs. despair	Wisdom

Erickson's stages of psychosocial development

- Year 1 *Trust vs. Mistrust*
  - Infants learn that their needs will be met by their mother
  - or they learn to mistrust the world
- Year 2 *Autonomy vs. Shame and Doubt*
  - Children learn to make choices and exercise self-control
  - or they become uncertain and doubt their own abilities

- Year 3-5 *Initiative vs. Guilt*
  - Children learn to initiate activities and enjoy their accomplishments
  - or they feel guilty for their attempts at independence
- Year 6 through puberty *Industry vs. Inferiority*
  - Children develop a sense of industry and curiosity
  - Or they lose interest and feel inferior

Erickson's stages of psychosexual development ...

- Adolescence *Identity vs. Role Confusion*
  - Adolescents come to see themselves as unique and integrated
  - - or they become confused about what they want out of life
- Early Adulthood *Intimacy vs. Isolation*
  - Young people learn to commit themselves to another person
  - or they develop a sense of isolation in the world
- Middle Age *Generativity vs. Stagnation*
  - Adults are willing to have and care for children, and devote themselves to their work
  - or they become self centred and inactive
- Old Age *Integrity vs. Despair*
  - Older people enter a period of reflection and are able to face death with acceptance and dignity
  - or they are in despair for their failures and unaccomplished goals

The Trait Approach

- *Traits are the inclinations or tendencies that help to direct how a person usually* thinks and behaves
- a *type is a discrete category*
- Type theories include:
  - Hippocrates (sanguine, phlegmatic, melancholic, choleric)
  - William Sheldon – *physiognomy*
- Myers-Briggs personality test based on Jung's 16 personality types
- validity is questionable

Trait approach …

- the trait theories make 3 basic assumptions:
  - personality traits are relatively stable and therefore predictable over time
  - personality traits are relatively stable across diverse situations, and they can explain why people act in predictable ways in many different settings
  - people differ with regard to how much of a particular trait they possess – the result is an endless variety of unique personalities
- trait psychologists use a **nomothetic approach, assuming that there are a number of** traits that are common to all people

Eysenck's Biological Trait Theory (Hans Eysenck 1990)

- uses a **dimensional approach to personality**
- concluded that personality can be described in terms of three basic factors or dimensions (P, E, and N):
  - **Psychoticism - people scoring highly show such attributes as cruelty,** hostility, coldness, oddness, and rejection of social customs
  - **Introversion-Extraversion (the most reliable of the dimensions)**
  - **Emotionality-Stability (a.k.a. Neuroticism) - high scorers exhibit** characteristics such as moodiness, restlessness, worry, anxiety
- The *Eysenck Personality Inventory can predict people's key characteristics*

The "Big-Five" model (Paul Costa & Robert McCrae, 1992)

Dimension	Defining descriptors
Openness	to experience artistic, curious, imaginative, insightful, original, wide interests, unusual thought processes, intellectual interests
Conscientiousness	Efficient, organized, planful, reliable, thorough, dependable, ethical, productive
Extraversion	active, assertive, energetic, outgoing, talkative, gregarious
Agreeableness	appreciative, forgiving, generous, kind, trusting, non-critical, warm, compassionate, considerate
Neuroticism	anxious, self-pitying, tense, emotionally unstable,

The Cognitive-Behavioural approach

- view personality as the array of behaviours that people acquire through learning and display in particular situations

- often called the *social learning approach - it views personality as the sum total of* the behaviours and cognitive habits that develop as people learn through experience in the social world

- John B. Watson used research on classical conditioning to support his claim that all human behaviour is determined by learning

- B. F. Skinner emphasized the importance of operant conditioning – through *functional analysis he sought to understand behaviour in terms of its function in* obtaining rewards or avoiding punishment

Rotter's Expectancy theory (Julian Rotter 1982)

- argued that learning creates cognitive expectancies that guide behaviour
- suggested that a person's decision to engage in a behaviour is determined by:
    - what the person expects to happen following the behaviour
    - the value the person places on the outcome
- behaviour is therefore influenced by a cognitive *expectation that they will obtain a* particular reward
- some people (**internals**) *are likely to expect events to be controlled by their own* efforts
- others (**externals**) *tend to expect events to be determined by external forces over* which they have no control. When externals succeed, they are likely to believe that it was due to chance or luck

Characteristics of internals (Rotter, 1982)

- tend to get better grades and to score higher on standardized academic tests

- less likely to smoke

- work harder at staying healthy

- more likely to exercise

- more likely to wear seat belts

- if they are hospitalized, internals are more cooperative patients, and are released sooner

Object-relations theory

- Developed by Melanie Klein, Ronald Fairburn and Donald Winnicott

- Object refers to "that towards which an instinct or impulse is directed"

- People operate in an interpersonal world of subjective relationships
  - The first object relations is with the breast and the feeding experience
  - The experinces become internalised (introjected) and may affect the way people behave later in life

Object-relations theory …

- Klein postulated that as the infant child develops it passes through stages and develops certain defense mechanisms to deal with the situation. These may be revisited in later life
  - Paranoid schizoid position (first 3 months). Splittting helps bring order, projection and introjection also occur
  - Depressive position (4 -6 months). Defenses – regression to previous position or manic defense. Healthy development results from reparation

Object relations (Winnicott)

- Primary maternal preoccupation
- Primary experiences of safety, security and oneness with the mother
- Transitional zone:
  - children's development occurs in a zone between reality and fantasy called transitional zone; play is an important aspect of development
- Transitional object or phenomena:
  - a soft toy or any such object that help in transition from ideal objects of fantasy to real objects which are not as reliable as those in fantasy; serve as buffers against loss; a mother contact but remain under control of the child
- Goodenoughmother: refers to the concept that a mother need not be perfect but goodenough to provide growth sustaining environment (holding)
- Theory of multiple self organisation: parental control and imposition can lead to development of a false self different from the real self

Piaget' theory and terms (Switzerland; 1896 – 1980)

- theory of genetic epistemology
- thought develops through action upon the environment
- operation: a basic logical process, including reversibility
- schema: an organized pattern of behaviour or understanding
- assimilation: handling new information using existing schemata
- accommodation: schema needs to change or be superseded before new information can be handled

Piaget's sensorimotor stage birth - 2 years

- infants discover aspects of the world through their sensory impressions, motor activities, and coordination of the two *mental representations*

  - *object permanence*

  - *primary circular reactions (from 2-5 months) – repeated voluntary motor activity* with little apparent purpose

  - *secondary circular reactions (5-9 months) – as above, but purposeful behaviour is* more apparent

  - *tertiary circular reactions (12-18 months) – include the creation of novel behaviour* patterns and the purposeful quest for novel experiences

Piaget's Preoperational stage (stage of animism and precausal logic) 2-7 years

- children can think in images and *symbols*
- acquire language
- play games of pretend
- unable to make general, logical statements
- rules are inviolate
- development of certain thought processes e.g.: **egocentricism:** use of a 'collective monologue'
- **syncretism:** everything is interconnected · animism: everything has feelings and thoughts, e.g. car hurts itself when in a crash

Preoperational stage (stage of animism and precausal logic) 2-7 years ...

- **finalism:** everything has a purpose; a marble rolls downhill "cos it's going home"
- **creationism:** rivers are there to make the countryside pretty (teleological approach)
- **Artificialism**
- **authoritarian morality:** wrongdoing should be punished according to degree of damage caused, rather than motive
- **precausal reasoning:** i.e. non-scientific predominance of 'magical thinking'

Stage of Concrete Operations 7-11 years

- understanding of logical principles that apply to external objects
- *conservation of length & volume*
- *Reversibility*
- sort objects into categories – *classification*
- can appreciate the perspective of another viewer - child is able to abandon
- egocentricism

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Stage of Formal Operations over 11 years

- can think logically about abstractions e.g. justice able to hold competing hypotheses in mind simultaneously and explore the consequences of each - **hypothetico-deductive thinking**

- able to think about thinking - **reflective/ recursive thinking**

- able to reason about purely verbal or logical statements and argue from various different premises without having to feel committed to them - **interpropositional logic**

- allows for idealism

Criticisms to Piaget's theory

- Only 1/3 of mid-adolescents have reached the stage of pre-operational thought
- Only 1/10 are capable of formal operational thinking
- Most people reach cognitive maturity in Piagetian terms by age 25
- In one study, only 1/5 of adults had reached maturity
- Overestimation of the amount of heterogeneity within the overall field of intelligence

Epigenesis

- Development is not predetermined, but the result of interaction between individual and environment
- There are many possible developmental pathways
- Stages are not superseded or arrested at
- Environmental trauma continues throughout the life cycle

John Bowlby's Attachment theory

- Developed by Bowlby (1988) (England; 1907-1990) and **Ainsworth (USA; 1913-1999),**

- the dominant current theory in the study of infant and toddler behaviour and in the field of infant mental health diagnosis and treatment.

- states that the clinging behaviour which young children display towards their parents is normal and biologically determined, has particular characteristics, and is especially important in psychosocial development

- relationship with mother provides a template for relationships in later life, and the quality of that relationship will govern the quality of subsequent close relationships

- **attachment behaviour** refers to what you actually see, i.e. the separation anxiety shown by the child at separation from his or her attachment figure

- attachment behaviour appears around 6-7 months

The attachment figure

- She or he does not have to be related by blood - does not have to be biological mother
- little or no relationship with events during the neonatal period
- Feeding is not the crucial issue and it has more to do with comfort and play
- Harsh physical treatment is compatible with the development of attachment to the abuser
- The amount of time spent with the [baby] isn't crucial - what matters is the intensity of social interactions
- After the first attachment (usually the mother) a few other attachments are likely to be formed (particularly with the other parent) but they do not have the intensity of the first one

The attachment behaviour

- Can be observed using the "The Strange Situation" paradigm (Ainsworth, 1969)
- Normal attachment behaviour comprises:
    - crying when mother leaves the room
    - calling for her or crawling after her
    - clinging hard when anxious, fearful, tired or in pain
    - talking and playing more in her company
    - using her as a secure base from which to explore

The 3 stages of attachment behaviour

- Protest
- Despair
- Detachment

Other characteristics of the attachment behaviour

- evident in toddlers between 6 months and 3 years (peak around 12-24 months)
- may be less selective when the child is reared in a large or extended family
- many children form two or more attachments simultaneously
- separation anxiety is less evident - the child still feels secure even though the person changes
- abate gradually after the age of 3

Stranger anxiety and transitional objects

- **stranger anxiety -** a shyness of strange people which promotes clinging to the attachment figure

- compatible with the formation of a secure attachment

- **transitional objects:**
    - do not indicate insecurity

Disappearance of the attachment behaviour

Depends on 3 variables:

- the temperament (personality) of the child
- the way that the mother handles the child
- what experiences the child has of actual or threatened separations

Factors influencing adequate resolution of separation anxiety

- sensitively responsive to the child's needs and providing a sense of security
- The child continues to feel insecure and anxious if
  - the mother responds to clinging by pushing the child away or if she uses threats of abandonment as coercions (*persecutory mothering - failure to remove anxiety by* attachment behaviour), or
  - her health and constancy are threatened in the child's eyes

The resolution of separation anxiety

- Depends on the child developing an *internal representation of a good mother*

- A failure to develop affectional bonds may result in a lack of **basic trust with** resulting shallowness, suspicion and selfishness in future relationships

- The whole process is echoed in late adolescence and adult life by falling in love, which is sometimes called **pair bonding**

Abnormalities of attachment formation

- Absent or attenuated attachment
- Avoidant (or anxious –avoidant) attachment
- Ambivalent (or anxious- ambivalent attachment

Absent or attenuated attachments

- failure of attachment behaviour due to:
  - Autism
  - emotionally cold or rejecting parents
  - institutional rearing
  - child is unable to differentiate between familiar and unfamiliar adults in seeking comfort and attention
  - the relationship is superficial and easily broken by separation without any anxiety

- long term outcome is poor:
  - difficulty forming and sustaining close relationships
  - difficulty learning social rules
  - propensity in adult life to aggressive, promiscuous, or feckless behaviour
  - attention-seeking behaviour

Avoidant (or anxious- avoidant) attachment

- child has formed a selective attachment but it is insecure
- separation behaviour is muted; on her return he is indifferent to her presence and even actively avoids her greeting
- may behave aggressively toward her
- generally, mothers do not feel emotionally close to their child - the child
- keeps mother at a distance and seems to strive for emotional self-sufficiency prematurely
- the child dislikes cuddles and intimacies, even though the parents are
- loving and affectionate
- prognosis is generally good as long as the parents can accept their
- child's individuality
- no strong link with aggressive behaviour
- however, the pattern arises on account of harshness or rejection on the
- parent's part and carries an association with future antisocial behaviour

ambivalent (or anxious-ambivalent) attachment

- child is chronically clingy and ambivalent to the mother, being actively cross with her following the briefest separations

- usually due to a combination of child's temperament and mother's state of mind or personality (e.g. post-natal depression/immature and unable to separate her own needs from the child's)

- likely to predispose to emotional disorder in childhood (e.g. *school refusal) and may precede disorders in adolescence and adult life, such* as *agoraphobia*

Effects of maternal deprivation

- Poor growth
- Developmental language delay
- Indiscriminate affection seeking
- Shallow relationship
- Enuresis
- Aggression
- Lack of empathy
- Social disinhibition
- Attention-seeking and overactivity in school

Kohlberg's stages of moral reasoning

- Lawrence Kohlberg (1971) found that the reasons given for moral choices change systematically and consistently with age
- He proposed that moral reasoning develops in six stages, which are age-independent

Kohlberg's stages of moral reasoning

Level	Age	stage	Orientation	What is right?	Should Heinz steal a life-saving drug for his wife
Preconventional	Up to age 7	1	Punishment	Obeying and avoiding punishment from a superior authority	No – he will be jailed
		2	Reward	Making a fair exchange, a good deal	Yes – his wife will repay him later
Conventional	Up to age 13	3	Good-boy/good girl	Pleasing others and getting their approval	Yes – he loves his wife and she and the rest of the family will approve
		4	Authority	Doing your duty, following rules and social order	Yes – he has a duty to care for her Or no – because stealing is illegal
Post-conventional	Up to and including adulthood	5	Social contract	Respecting rules and laws but recognising that they might have limits	Yes – because life is more important than property
		6	Ethical principle	Following universal ethical principles such as justice, reciprocity, equality, and respect for human life and rights	Yes – because of the principles of preserving and respecting life

Limitations of Kohlberg's stages

- Studies in 27 cultures showed that people do tend to make upward progress through the stages, without reversals although stages 5 and 6 did not always appear, stages 1 and 4 did, and thus appear universal

- However, there are moral judgements made in some cultures that simply do not fit into the stages e.g. importance to the community

The Phenomenological Approach

- maintains that the way people perceive and interpret the world forms their personality and guides their behaviour

- focuses on mental qualities that set humans apart: self awareness, creativity, planning, decision making, and responsibility

- also called the *humanistic view of personality*

- the primary human motivator is an innate drive towards growth that prompts people to fulfill their unique and natural potential

Reciprocal Determinism (Albert Bandura 1986)

- personality is shaped by *reciprocal determinism - behaviour tends to affect their* environment, which in turn affects cognitions, which may affect behaviour, and so on

- **self-efficacy is the learned expectation of success, the belief that you can** successfully perform a behaviour regardless of past failures or current obstacles

- self-efficacy interacts with expectancies about the outcome of behaviour in general,

- and the result of this interplay helps to shape a person's psychological well-being: