

State of Mind

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ABSTRACT

Sigmund **Freud** emphasized the importance of the unconscious mind, and a primary assumption of **Freudian theory** is that the unconscious mind governs behavior to a greater degree than people suspect. Indeed, the goal of psychoanalysis is to make the unconscious **Psychoanalytic theory** is a method of investigating and treating personality disorders and is used in psychotherapy. Included in this **theory** is the idea that things that happen to people during childhood can contribute to the way they later function as adults conscious.

Keywords : Id, Ego, Superego, Subconscious mind

1. Introduction

Freud is best known for his theories of the unconscious mind, especially involving the mechanism of repression; his redefinition of sexual desire as mobile and directed towards a wide variety of objects; and his therapeutic technique, especially his understanding of transference in the therapeutic relationship and Freud experimented with hypnosis with his most hysterical and neurotic patients, but he eventually gave up the practice. One theory is that he did so because he was not very good at it. He switched to putting his patients on a couch and encouraging them to say whatever came into their minds, a practice termed free association. The presumed value of his 40s, Freud "had numerous psychosomatic disorders as well as exaggerated fears of dying and other phobias." [3] During this time, Freud was involved in the task of exploring his own dreams, memories and the dynamics of his personality development. During this self-analysis, he came to realize the hostility he felt towards his father (Jacob Freud) and "he also recalled his childhood sexual feelings for his mother (Amalia Freud), who was attractive, warm, and protective, "earn as sources of insight into unconscious desires.

Freud's lexicon has become embedded within the vocabulary of western society. Words he introduced through his theories are now used by everyday people, such as anal (personality), libido, denial, repression, cathartic, Freudian slip, and neurotic. Freud believed that when we explain our own behavior to ourselves or others (conscious mental activity) we rarely give a true account of our motivation. This is not because we are deliberately lying. Whilst human beings are great deceivers of others, they are even more adept at self-deception. Our rationalizations of our conduct are therefore disguising the real reasons. Freud's life work was dominated by his attempts to find ways of penetrating this often subtle and elaborate camouflage that obscures the hidden structure and processes of personality.

Freud was the founding father of psychoanalysis, a method for treating mental illness and also a theory which explains human behavior. Psychoanalysis is often known as the talking cure. Typically Freud would encourage his patients to talk freely (on his famous couch) regarding their symptoms, and to describe exactly what was on their mind.

2. The Unconscious Mind

Freud (1900, 1905) developed a topographical model of the mind, whereby he described the features of the mind's structure and function. Freud used the analogy of an iceberg to describe the three levels of the mind. On the surface is consciousness, which consists of those thoughts that are the focus of our attention now, and this is seen as the tip of the iceberg. The preconscious consists of all which can be retrieved from memory. The third and most significant region is the unconscious. Here lie the processes that are the real cause of most behavior. Like an iceberg, the most important part of the mind is the part you cannot see.

The unconscious mind acts as a repository, a 'cauldron' of primitive wishes and impulse kept at bay and mediated by the preconscious area. For example, Freud (1915) found that some events and desires were often too frightening or painful for his patients to acknowledge, and believed such information was locked away in the unconscious mind. This can happen through the process of repression.

Sigmund Freud emphasized the importance of the unconscious mind, and a primary assumption of Freudian theory is that the unconscious mind governs behavior to a greater degree than people suspect. Indeed, the goal of psychoanalysis is to make the unconscious conscious. Freud (1923) later developed a more structural model of the mind comprising the entities id, ego and superego (what Freud called "the psychic apparatus"). These are not physical areas within the brain, but rather hypothetical conceptualizations of important mental functions.

Freud assumed the id operated at an unconscious level according to the pleasure principle (gratification from satisfying basic instincts). The id comprises two kinds of biological instincts (or drives) which Freud called Eros and Thanatos. Eros, or life instinct, helps the individual to survive; it directs life-sustaining activities such as respiration, eating and sex (Freud, 1925). The energy created by the life instincts is known as libido.

In contrast, Thanatos or death instinct, is viewed as a set of destructive forces present in all human beings (Freud, 1920). When this energy is directed outward onto others, it is expressed as aggression and violence. Freud believed that Eros is stronger than Thanatos, thus enabling people to survive rather than self-destruct. The ego develops from the id during infancy. The ego's goal is to satisfy the demands of the id in a safe a socially acceptable way. In contrast to the id the ego follows the reality principle as it operates in both the conscious and unconscious mind.

The superego develops during early childhood (when the child identifies with the same sex parent) and is responsible for ensuring moral standards are followed. The superego operates on the morality principle and motivates us to behave in a socially responsible and acceptable manner. The basic dilemma of all human existence is that each element of the psychic apparatus makes demands upon us that are incompatible with the other two. Inner conflict is inevitable.

For example, the superego can make a person feel guilty if rules are not followed. When there is conflict between the goals of the id and superego, the ego must act as a referee and mediate this conflict. The ego can deploy various defense mechanisms (Freud, 1894, 1896) to prevent it from becoming overwhelmed by anxiety. Freud (1900) considered dreams to be the *royal road to the unconscious* as it is. In dreams that the ego's defenses are lowered so that some of the repressed material comes through to awareness, albeit in distorted form. Dreams perform important functions for the unconscious mind and serve as valuable clues to how the unconscious mind operates.

On 24 July 1895, Freud had his own dream that was to form the basis of his theory. He had been worried about a patient, Irma, who was not doing as well in treatment as he had hoped. Freud in fact blamed himself for this, and was feeling guilty. Freud dreamed that he met Irma at a party and examined her. He then saw a chemical formula for a drug that another doctor had given Irma flash before his eyes and realized that her condition was caused by a dirty syringe used by the other doctor. Freud's guilt was thus relieved.

Freud interpreted this dream as wish-fulfillment. He had wished that Irma's poor condition was not his fault and the dream had fulfilled this wish by informing him that another doctor was at fault. Based on this dream, Freud (1900) went on to propose that a major function of dreams was the fulfillment of wishes. Freud distinguished between the manifest content of a dream (what the dreamer remembers) and the latent content, the symbolic meaning of the dream (i.e. the underlying wish). The manifest content is often based on the events of the day.

If you know very little about psychology, and you have heard of just one psychologist, the chances are that this is Sigmund Freud, the founder of the psychodynamic approach to psychology and psychoanalysis. If Freud represents your layperson's idea of psychology, then you probably have an image of a patient lying on a couch talking about their deepest and darkest secrets. In deliberate contrast to behavioral psychology, psychodynamic psychology ignores the trappings of science and instead focuses on trying to get inside the head of individuals in order to make sense of their relationships, experiences and how they see the world.

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 personalities. Freud's psychoanalysis was the original psychodynamic theory, but the psychodynamic approach as a whole includes all theories that were based on his ideas, e.g. Jung (1964), Adler (1927) and Erikson (1950). The words psychodynamic and psychoanalytic are often confused. Remember that Freud's theories were psychoanalytic, whereas the term 'psychodynamic' refers to both his theories and those of his followers. Freud's psychoanalysis is both a theory and a therapy.

Sigmund Freud (writing between the 1890s and the 1930s) developed a collection of theories which have formed the basis of the psychodynamic approach to psychology. His theories are clinically derived - i.e. based on what his patients told him during therapy. The psychodynamic therapist would usually be treating the patient for depression or anxiety related disorders.

3. Psychodynamic Approach Assumptions

- * Our behavior and feelings are powerfully affected by unconscious motives.
- * Our behavior and feelings as adults (including psychological problems) are rooted in our childhood experiences.
- * All behavior has a cause (usually unconscious), even slips of the tongue. Therefore all behavior is determined.
- * Personality is made up of three parts (i.e. tripartite): the id, ego and super-ego.
- * Behavior is motivated by two instinctual drives: Eros (life instinct) and Thanatos (the aggressive drive & death instinct). Both these drives come from the "id".
- * Personality is shaped as the drives are modified by different conflicts at different times in childhood.

4. CONCLUSION

In 1930, Freud was awarded the Goethe Prize by the city of Frankfurt, in recognition of his exceptional qualities as a writer in the German language. His mother died the same year, at the age of ninety-five. In 1933, The goal of Freudian therapy, or psychoanalysis was to bring to consciousness repressed thoughts and feelings. According to some of his successors, including his daughter Anna Freud, the goal of therapy is to allow the patient to develop a stronger ego; according to others, notably Jacques Lacan, the goal of therapy is to lead the analyst to a full acknowledgement of his or her inability to satisfy the most basic desires as Hitler and the Nazis seized power in Germany, Freud's books were burnt publicly by the Nazis. Classically, the bringing of unconscious thoughts and feelings to consciousness is brought about by encouraging the patient to talk in free association and to talk about dreams. Another important element of psychoanalysis is a relative lack of direct involvement on the part of the analyst, which is meant to encourage the patient to project thoughts and feelings onto the analyst. Through this process, transference, the patient can reenact and resolve repressed conflicts, especially childhood conflicts with parents, which he called the "royal road to the unconscious", provided the best access to our unconscious life and the best illustration of its "logic", which was different from the logic of conscious thought. Freud developed his first topology of the psyche in *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1899) in which he proposed the argument that the unconscious exists and described a method for gaining access to it. The preconscious was described as a layer

between conscious and unconscious thought—that which we could access with a little effort. Thus for Freud, the ideals of the Enlightenment, positivism and rationalism, could be achieved through understanding, transforming, and mastering the unconscious, rather than through denying or repressing it(or about) parents.

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