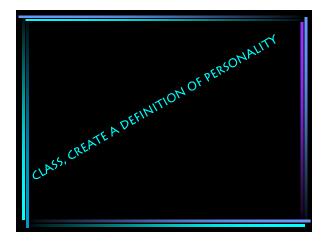
# The Definition of Personality and Other Important Issues

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### What is Personality?

- Comes from Greek PERSONA
- Small part of Psychology
- Still at formulation stage of theory

   Differences depend on theoretical orientation



### Definition of Personality

• Personality:

 the organized totality of the qualities, traits, and behaviors that characterize a person's individuality, which together with his or her physical attributes, the person is recognized as unique

Personality Traits

 relatively enduring styles of thinking, feeling, and acting

### **One Dichotomy**

- Public Personality
  - the public, social stimulus, of organized behavioral characteristics of a person that are visible to other people and make an impression on them
- Private Personality
  - the private central core of a person that includes motives, attitudes, interests, beliefs, fantasies, cognitive styles and other mental processes

### Personality Disorder

#### DSM

#### personality traits

 enduring patterns of perceiving, relating to, and thinking about the environment and oneself that are exhibited in a wide range of social and personal contexts

#### Personality disorder

 an enduring pattern of inner experience and behavior that deviates markedly from the expectations of the individual's culture and is manifested in at least two of the following areas: cognition, affectivity, interpersonal functioning, or impulse control

### Personality Disorder

- This enduring pattern is inflexible and pervasive
- Stable and traced back to adolescence
- Not the result of another disorder, drugs, or medical condition

### **Personality Science**

 An integrated and interdisciplinary study of the development and causes of individual differences and intraindividual coherence in behavior, affect, and cognition

### Personality Assessment

- Goal:
  - Identification of global, stable tendencies, or enduring traits
- Two Lines of Thinking:
  - Personality assessment is the assessment of persons
  - Personality assessment assesses qualities that the person has

### **Evidence Based Assessment**

- Empirically Validated Assessment (EVA)
- Uses psychometrically strong measures to evaluate the outcome of treatments provided by psychologists
- EVA helps the many purposes of assessment

#### **Evidence Based Assessment**

### Purposes of Assessment

- describe current functioning
- confirm, refute, or modify impressions formed by clinicians through less structured interactions with clients
- identify therapeutic needs and highlight issues likely to emerge in treatment
- aid in the differential diagnosis of emotional, behavioral, and cognitive disorders

### **Evidence Based Assessment**

- monitor treatment over time to ascertain success of interventions or to identify new issues that need to be addressed
- managing risk, including minimizing potential legal liabilities and identifying bad treatment reactions
- provide skilled empathic assessment feedback
- Using these purposes, all assessors should be able to provide a rationale for their services and the costs of such services

#### **Evidence Based Assessment**

- Assessments that have evidence that is supportive for one of these purposes are not necessarily supportive for the other
- Psychologists do not always practice EVA
- Assessment is underused and undervalued in clinical practice
- Assessment itself is changing

### **Questionable Practices**

- Mandated testing of clients on a fixed schedule regardless of whether the assessment is clinically warranted
- Guidelines that insist all clients receive assessment
- Habitual testing using large testing batteries

### When to Assess

- Pretreatment evaluation
  - When the goal is to describe current functioning or help with clinical impressions identify treatment needs, et.
- Therapeutic impact will be greatest when:

### Validity of Psychological Assessment

- The correlations between tests and behaviors of interest typically range from .15 to .30
- Relationship between reliability and validity
- Psychological tests have varying degrees of validity
  - No different than medical tets

## Validity of Psychological Assessment

- There appears to be no superior or inferior method of assessment

   Projective tests have the same
  - psychometric properties as objective tests
- Psychological tests generate large effect sizes

#### So, what should you know?

#### • Take home messages:

- Work on integrating assessment into diagnosis and intervention
- Learn a number of different methods of behavioral assessment
- Use scientifically sound measures
- Assess context
- Obtain multiple forms and sources of info
- Use caution when drawing inferences about a variable's stability and cross-situational generalizablity
- Work to find the appropriate test for the situation

## Psych. Testing vs. Psych. Assessment

- Psych Testing
  - Straightforward process wherein a particular scale is administered to obtain a specific score

 Psych Assessment - Concerned with the clinician who takes a variety of test scores, generally obtained from a variety of methods, considers the data in the context of history, referral info, and observed behavior to answer the referral question.

### **Formal Assessment**

- Generally, Psychological Assessment
- Other sources of clinical info
  - Interviews and observations
  - Self- and informant-ratings
- Formal Assessment circumvents problems with interviews
  - Can measure what we want to look at
  - Provide quantifiable information

### **Formal Assessment**

- Standardized
- Normed
- Can use psychometric info to select tests

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