

Personality

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1. Approaches to personality: type, trait, eclectic, psychodynamic and humanistic
2. Assessment of personality

1 Approaches to personality: type, trait, eclectic, psychodynamic and humanistic

Personality is a person's characteristic, fairly lasting and unique way of thinking, feeling and acting; it is studied through type approaches (a few categories, including India's Vata–Pitta–Kapha and triguna), trait approaches (Allport, Cattell, Eysenck, Big Five), an eclectic mix of the best parts, the psychodynamic view (Freud's id–ego–superego driven by life and death instincts; Erikson's ego psychology) and the humanistic view (Rogers, Maslow), and it is shaped jointly by biological and socio-cultural determinants.

Core facts

- **Characteristics of personality** (NCERT list, in our words): it has **physical and psychological** parts; its expression in behaviour is **fairly unique** to the person; its **main features do not change easily** over time; yet it is **dynamic and adaptive**, so some features shift with inner or outer demands.
- Personality shows itself mainly in **behaviour** (how a person acts across situations).
- **Type approach**: groups people into a small number of categories that share a pattern of behaviour. Oldest approach.
- **Charaka Samhita** (classic text of **Ayurveda**): people are classed by **tridosha**, three humoral elements: **vata, pitta, kapha**; each gives a temperament called **prakriti**. This is a **type** approach.
- **Triguna typology** (Sankhya philosophy, Bhagavad Gita): **sattva, rajas, tamas**; all three are present in everyone in different amounts; the dominant guna gives the type. Also a **type** approach.
- Western types (details in EDU-ID-02): **Hippocrates** (four humours; the four temperaments sanguine, choleric, melancholic, phlegmatic were named from them, later elaborated by Galen); **Kretschmer** (pyknic, asthenic, athletic, dysplastic); **Sheldon** (endomorph, mesomorph, ectomorph); **Jung** (introvert, extravert); **Friedman and Rosenman** (Type A, Type B).
- **Type C** (Morris): co-operative, unassertive, holds back negative feelings; linked in some studies to proneness to **cancer**. **Type D** (Denollet): prone to **depression / distress** (negative mood plus social inhibition).
- **Trait approach**: describes each person by where he or she stands on a set of stable, measurable **traits**. NCERT notes that it is the approach **closest to our everyday way** of describing people ("she is honest, shy, punctual").
- **Gordon Allport**: **cardinal, central** and **secondary** traits. **Raymond Cattell**: **surface** vs **source** traits, **16 PF**, built by **factor analysis**. **Hans Eysenck**: **Extraversion–Introversion, Neuroticism–Emotional stability**, later **Psychoticism–Sociability**; he held these dimensions are **biologically and genetically based**.
- **Big Five (Five-Factor Model)**, **Paul Costa and Robert McCrae**: Openness to experience, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness, Neuroticism (**OCEAN**). Physical development is **not** one of them.

- **Eclectic approach:** chooses the parts of different theories that **best fit** a particular situation or person, instead of following one school.
- **Interactional approach:** behaviour depends on the **situation** as much as on the person (the same student is quiet in class, lively with friends).
- **Psychodynamic approach (Sigmund Freud):** three levels of mind (conscious, preconscious, unconscious) and three structures: **id** (pleasure principle), **ego** (reality principle), **superego** (morality principle).
- **Freud's instincts: life instinct (Eros)**, whose energy is **libido**, and **death instinct** (later called **Thanatos**), the source of aggression. Both are rooted in the **id**, so the **id is energised by the life and death instincts**.
- **Erik Erikson: ego psychology** and **psychosocial** theory; the ego is largely **conscious and rational**; development is **life-long** (eight stages); **ego identity** is central; the **identity crisis** is the mark of **adolescence**. Stages in detail: EDU-DV-04.
- **Humanistic approach: Carl Rogers** (self theory: **self-concept**, real vs ideal self, **unconditional positive regard**, the **fully functioning person**) and **Abraham Maslow** (hierarchy of needs; **self-actualisation**).
- **Determinants: biological** (heredity, physique, nervous system, endocrine glands, temperament) and **socio-cultural** (family, school, peers, culture, social class, media). Personality is the product of both, interacting.

Explained

1. What "personality" means. The word comes from Latin **persona**, the actor's mask. Allport's definition and other definitions are collected in EDU-ID-02. For this exam, remember the four NCERT-style characteristics in Core facts. In "which is NOT a characteristic" items, the wrong option usually says that the main features **change easily** or that personality is **only physical** or **only mental**.

2. The Indian type approaches.

Dosha (prakriti)	Elements	Typical body	Typical temperament
Vata	air and space (ether)	thin, light, dry skin	quick, restless, changeable, anxious when out of balance
Pitta	fire and water	medium build, warm	sharp intellect, ambitious, quick to anger
Kapha	water and earth	heavy, solid	calm, steady, patient, slow, can be sluggish

Guna	Leading qualities
Sattva	cleanliness, truthfulness, sense of duty, detachment, self-discipline, calm
Rajas	intense activity, desire for sense pleasures, restlessness, envy, materialism
Tamas	anger, arrogance, laziness, dullness, depression, helplessness

- Both Indian systems are **type** approaches: they put people into categories by a dominant quality. They are **not** trait or eclectic approaches.
- The gunas are found in every person; one guna dominates and gives the person's nature. A sattvic diet and conduct are said to raise sattva.

3. Type vs trait. A type is a **category** (you are in it or not); a trait is a **dimension** (more or less). Types are simple and easy to talk about but squeeze people into boxes and ignore the middle (most people are ambiverts). Traits give a finer, measurable profile and allow comparison across people, which is why modern tests are trait-based. A short side-by-side table is in EDU-ID-02.

4. The four trait theorists in one view.

Theorist	Key idea	Number	Test
Allport	cardinal, central (5-10), secondary traits; uniqueness	about 18,000 trait words in the dictionary	none standard
Cattell	surface vs source traits; factor analysis	16 source traits	16 PF (1949)
Eysenck	broad, biologically based dimensions	2, then 3 (PEN)	EPI, EPQ
Costa and McCrae	five broad factors found across cultures	5 (OCEAN)	NEO-PI-R

- Eysenck's biological basis:** introverts are thought to have a higher resting level of **cortical arousal**, so they avoid extra stimulation; extraverts seek it. Neuroticism is tied to a reactive **autonomic nervous system / limbic system**. So "Eysenck reduced personality to three dimensions" and "the dimensions are biologically based" are **both true**; the second is a further claim about them, not the reason he reduced personality to three (the 2023 key took "A and R true, R not the explanation").
- Big Five, ends of each factor:** Openness (curious, imaginative vs conventional); Conscientiousness (organised, dependable, self-disciplined vs careless, disorganised); Extraversion (sociable, assertive vs reserved); Agreeableness (warm, trusting, co-operative vs cold, suspicious); Neuroticism (anxious, moody vs emotionally stable).

5. The eclectic and interactional approaches.

- Eclectic** means "selective". No single theory explains the whole person, so the psychologist or counsellor takes the useful concepts from each: traits to describe, psychodynamic ideas to explain inner conflict, learning principles to change habits, humanistic ideas to build the relationship.
- Eysenck** is often given as an example of joining approaches: his **type-trait** hierarchy puts traits under broad types.
- The **interactional (situational) approach** (Walter Mischel's critique, 1968) showed that traits predict behaviour only modestly across situations; behaviour = person × situation. This pushed the field towards combined models.

6. Freud's psychodynamic model.

- Levels:** conscious → preconscious → unconscious (the largest, hidden part; the "iceberg").
- Id:** present at birth, fully unconscious, the store of instinctual energy, works on the **pleasure principle**, wants instant satisfaction.

- **Ego:** grows out of the id, partly conscious, the "executive", works on the **reality principle**, finds realistic ways to satisfy the id within the limits set by the superego and the world.
- **Superego:** the moral arm, formed by taking in parents' and society's values (about 3–6 years); has two parts, the **conscience** (punishes with guilt) and the **ego ideal** (standards to aim at).
- **Instincts: Eros** (life instinct: survival, sex, love; energy = **libido**) and the **death instinct** (urge towards destruction; turned outwards it becomes **aggression**). Freud added the death instinct in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1920).
- **Anxiety** arises when the ego cannot balance the demands; the ego then uses **defence mechanisms** (repression, projection, rationalisation, regression and others; list in EDU-DV-04). The **psychosexual stages** (oral, anal, phallic, latency, genital) are also in EDU-DV-04.
- **Neo-Freudians** kept the idea of unconscious forces but gave more weight to social factors: **Jung** (collective unconscious, archetypes), **Adler** (inferiority complex, striving for superiority), **Karen Horney** (basic anxiety from insecure childhood), **Erich Fromm**, and **Erikson**.

7. Erikson's ego psychology.

- The ego is not just the id's servant; it is an **independent, mainly conscious, rational and adaptive** force that builds a sense of who one is.
- Development runs across the **whole life span** in **eight psychosocial stages**, each a crisis between a positive and negative pole; society and culture shape each crisis.
- **Ego identity** (a stable sense of self) is the central achievement; adolescence (identity vs role confusion) is where the **identity crisis** peaks.
- So a statement that Erikson "stresses unconscious ego processes" is **wrong**; that is closer to Freud.

8. The humanistic approach ("third force", after psychoanalysis and behaviourism).

- **Carl Rogers:** every person has an inborn **actualising tendency**. The **self-concept** is the person's picture of himself. **Real self** vs **ideal self**: a large gap (**incongruence**) brings anxiety; a small gap (**congruence**) brings well-being. Love given only when the child behaves as wanted sets **conditions of worth**; **unconditional positive regard** (acceptance without conditions) lets the child grow into a **fully functioning person**. His therapy: **client-centred (person-centred)**, with empathy, genuineness and unconditional positive regard.
- **Abraham Maslow:** needs in a hierarchy: **physiological** → **safety** → **belongingness and love** → **esteem** → **self-actualisation**. Lower needs must be met, at least partly, before higher ones drive behaviour. Detail of motivation: EDU-LR-05.
- **Self-actualised people** (Maslow studied figures such as Lincoln, Einstein and Eleanor Roosevelt): see reality accurately; accept themselves and others; are spontaneous and natural; are **problem-centred** (devoted to a task outside themselves); are **open to new experience and challenge**; value **some privacy and independence**; have **deep relationships with a few people** and a feeling of kinship with humanity; have a **democratic** outlook; a **philosophical, non-hostile sense of humour**; are **creative**; have **peak experiences**. They are **not** socially withdrawn people.

9. Behavioural and cultural approaches (one line each).

- **Behavioural:** personality is the sum of **learned** responses to stimuli (Pavlov, Skinner); change the reinforcement and you change the behaviour. **Social-cognitive** additions: Bandura (observational learning, **self-efficacy**, reciprocal determinism), Rotter (**locus of control**).

- **Cultural:** personality traits fit the **ecology and economy** of a group (for example, hunting-gathering groups encourage independence and self-reliance; settled farming groups encourage obedience and responsibility).

10. Determinants of personality.

Determinant	How it acts
Heredity	twin and adoption studies show a large genetic share in traits and temperament
Physique and health	body build, looks and illness affect self-image and how others react
Nervous system and glands	thyroid (energy level), adrenals (emergency reactions), pituitary (growth, other glands), gonads
Temperament	inborn emotional style seen from infancy (easy, difficult, slow-to-warm-up children)
Family	first and strongest; parenting style, birth order, home climate
School, teachers, peers	values, competence, social skills, self-esteem
Culture and society	norms, roles, religion, social class, language, mass media
Situations and life events	crises, success and failure shape lasting patterns

- Neither heredity alone nor environment alone decides personality; heredity sets the range and environment decides where in that range the person ends up.

Common traps

✗ "Vata-Pitta-Kapha (Charaka Samhita) is a trait approach." ✓ It is a **type** approach (tridosha → prakriti); so is the triguna typology.

✗ "The type approach is the one closest to everyday experience." ✓ NCERT says the **trait** approach is closest to how we describe people daily.

✗ "A characteristic of personality is that its main features change easily over time." ✓ Main features are **fairly stable**; personality is still dynamic and adaptive.

✗ "Physical development is one of the Big Five." ✓ Big Five = **Openness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness, Neuroticism**.

✗ "Cattell proposed three super-factors." ✓ **Eysenck**: three (PEN); **Cattell**: 16 source traits.

✗ "Eclectic approach = combining type and behaviour." ✓ Eclectic = **choosing the best-fitting parts of different theories** for the situation.

✗ "The ego (or the libido) is energised by the life and death instincts." ✓ The **id** is the seat of both instincts; **libido** is the energy of the life instinct only.

✗ "Erikson stresses unconscious ego processes." ✓ Erikson stresses the **conscious, rational, adaptive** ego; life-long development; identity.

✗ "Self-actualised people like to be socially withdrawn." ✓ They value some privacy but have **deep relationships** and kinship with others; they are open to novelty, challenge and humour.

✗ "Rogers built the hierarchy of needs." ✓ **Maslow** = hierarchy; **Rogers** = self-concept, unconditional positive regard, client-centred therapy.

Quick revision

- Personality: physical + psychological, unique, stable core, dynamic and adaptive; seen in behaviour.
- Type = categories; trait = dimensions; trait approach closest to daily life.
- Charaka Samhita: vata, pitta, kapha (tridosha → prakriti); triguna: sattva, rajas, tamas; both type approaches.
- Allport: cardinal, central, secondary; Cattell: 16 PF, source traits; Eysenck: E, N, P, biologically based.
- Big Five (Costa & McCrae): OCEAN.
- Eclectic = pick the best-fitting parts of many theories.
- Freud: id (pleasure), ego (reality), superego (morality); id holds life (Eros, libido) and death instincts.
- Erikson: ego psychology, conscious ego, life-long, ego identity, adolescent identity crisis.
- Rogers: self-concept, congruence, unconditional positive regard, fully functioning person; Maslow: needs hierarchy, self-actualisation.
- Determinants: heredity, physique, glands, temperament + family, school, peers, culture.

2 Assessment of personality

Personality is assessed for diagnosis, counselling, guidance, placement, selection and training, using three families of methods: self-report inventories (MMPI, 16 PF, EPQ), projective techniques that use ambiguous material (Rorschach, TAT, CAT, sentence completion, word association, draw-a-person) and behavioural methods (observation, interviews, rating scales, nominations, situational tests), each with its own limits.

Core facts

- **Assessment** = using standard methods to describe and predict a person's characteristic behaviour. A fuller list of tests and authors is in EDU-ID-02; this note adds the exam detail.
- **Purposes: diagnosis** (clinical problems), **counselling and guidance**, **placement** and **selection** (jobs, courses), **training**, **research**, and understanding oneself. In the standard textbook list **prognosis is not given** as a purpose (2023 DPO key).
- **Three families: self-report** (person rates himself), **projective** (indirect, ambiguous stimuli), **behavioural analysis** (others observe and rate).
- **First personality inventory: Woodworth Personal Data Sheet** (1917–18), to screen US army recruits for emotional problems in World War I.
- **MMPI: Hathaway and McKinley**, University of Minnesota, **1943**; true / false / cannot say; 10 clinical scales plus validity scales; **MMPI-2** in **1989** (567 items). Built to **diagnose psychiatric disorders**.
- **16 PF: Cattell**, 1949, 16 source traits. **EPQ: Eysenck**, 1975 (E, N, P plus a Lie scale). **NEO-PI-R: Costa and McCrae**, 1992, the Big Five.
- **EPPS (Edwards Personal Preference Schedule): A. L. Edwards**, 1953; **forced-choice** items to cut social desirability; measures **15 needs** from Murray's list.
- **Bell Adjustment Inventory: H. M. Bell** (1934); adjustment in home, health, social and emotional areas.
- **Projective techniques**: term by **L. K. Frank (1939)**; based on Freud's idea of **projection**; the person reads his own needs, conflicts and feelings into unstructured material.
- **Authors to match:**

Test	Author	Year	Material
Rorschach Inkblot Test	Hermann Rorschach (Swiss psychiatrist)	1921	10 inkblot cards
Thematic Apperception Test (TAT)	Christiana Morgan and Henry Murray	1935	30 picture cards + 1 blank
Children's Apperception Test (CAT)	Leopold Bellak (with Sonya Bellak)	1949	10 cards, animal figures

Test	Author	Year	Material
Sentence completion	first used by Hermann Ebbinghaus; Rotter's blank best known	1897; 1950	incomplete sentence stems
Word association test	Francis Galton; made clinical by Carl Jung	1879; about 1904-10	list of stimulus words
Draw-a-Man test	Florence Goodenough	1926	person drawing (first an intelligence measure)
Draw-a-Person (personality)	Karen Machover	1949	drawing of a person, then of the other sex
House-Tree-Person (HTP)	John N. Buck	1948	drawings of a house, a tree, a person
Picture-Frustration Study	Saul Rosenzweig	1945	cartoon frustration scenes
Holtzman Inkblot Technique	Wayne Holtzman	1961	45 blots, two parallel forms

- **Behavioural methods (NCERT list):** interview, observation, behavioural ratings, nominations (peers name who shows a quality), situational tests.
- **Situational test:** the person is placed in a staged real-life situation and watched; e.g. the **situational stress test** and the **Character Education Inquiry of Hartshorne and May (1928)**, which tested children's honesty in tempting situations.
- **Rating scale errors:** **halo effect** (one good or bad feature colours all ratings), **leniency / severity**, **central tendency** (rating everyone average).
- **Main problems with self-reports:** **social desirability** (giving the "nice" answer), **acquiescence** (agreeing with every item), faking, and needing insight and reading skill.

Explained

1. Self-report measures.

- The person answers fixed questions about himself (yes / no / cannot say, true / false, or a 5-point scale). Scoring is **objective** and quick, the test can be given to **groups**, and norms allow comparison. That is why inventories dominate selection and research.
- Three ways of building them: **rational / theory-based** (items written to fit a theory: EPPS from Murray's needs), **empirical criterion keying** (items kept if they separate a patient group from normals, whatever their content: **MMPI**), and **factor-analytic** (items grouped by factor analysis: **16 PF, EPO, NEO**).
- **MMPI scales** include hypochondriasis, depression, hysteria, psychopathic deviate, masculinity-femininity, paranoia, psychasthenia, schizophrenia, hypomania and social introversion. **Validity scales** (L = lie, F = infrequency, K = defensiveness) catch careless or faked answering.

- **Limitations:** answers can be faked; people may lack insight; **social desirability** and **acquiescence** response sets; items may not suit another culture or language without adaptation.

2. Projective techniques: how they work.

- The stimulus is **ambiguous or unstructured**, the task is open, and the person is **not told** what is being measured. Because there is no "right answer", the person's inner world (needs, conflicts, unconscious wishes) is **projected** onto the material.
- They come from the **psychoanalytic** tradition and aim at the **whole personality** and the **unconscious**.
- Scoring and interpretation need **trained experts** and are partly subjective.

3. The main projective tests.

- **Rorschach:** 10 symmetrical blots (5 black-grey, 2 black and red, 3 multicoloured). Two phases: **free association** ("what might this be?") and **inquiry** (where and why). Scored for **location** (whole, detail), **determinants** (form, colour, movement, shading), **content** (human, animal, object) and **popular vs original** answers. John Exner's **Comprehensive System** (1974) standardised scoring.
- **TAT:** pictures of people in unclear situations; the person tells a story: what led up to the scene, what is happening, what the people feel and think, how it ends. Based on Murray's **need–press** theory; the story's hero is taken to stand for the teller. Usually 10 to 20 cards are used, chosen by age and sex. Morgan and Murray described the method in 1935; the standard 31-card set was published in 1943.
- **CAT:** for children about 3 to 10 years; animals in human-like scenes, because children identify more easily with animals.
- **Sentence completion:** e.g. "My father ...", "I feel guilty when ...". Fairly structured, so easier to score; reveals attitudes, fears and conflicts.
- **Word association:** the examiner reads words one by one; the person says the first word that comes to mind; **delay, odd answers or emotional signs** point to "complexes" (Jung).
- **Drawing tests:** Draw-a-Person / HTP read size, placement, details and omissions as clues to self-image and conflicts. Goodenough's Draw-a-Man was first a **non-verbal intelligence** test for children.
- **Picture-Frustration:** shows how a person typically reacts to frustration (aggression turned outwards, inwards, or played down).

4. Self-report vs projective.

Point	Self-report	Projective
Stimulus	clear, structured questions	ambiguous, unstructured
Purpose	known to the person	hidden
Scoring	objective, quick	subjective, needs expertise
Reaches	conscious, admitted traits	unconscious needs and conflicts
Faking	easier	harder
Reliability, validity	usually higher	usually lower

5. Behavioural assessment.

- **Observation:** naturalistic (in real settings) or controlled; the observer records what the person actually does, often using **frequency, duration and intensity** of target behaviours, or an **A-B-C** record (antecedent, behaviour, consequence). Needs a trained observer; the observer's presence can change behaviour.
- **Interview: structured** (fixed questions in fixed order, comparable answers) or **unstructured** (flexible, follows the person's leads, deeper but harder to compare). Used in clinics, counselling and selection; affected by interviewer bias and rapport.
- **Behavioural ratings:** people who know the person well (teachers, supervisors) rate specific traits on a **rating scale** (graphic, numerical or descriptive). Errors: halo, leniency/severity, central tendency, and the **logical error** (assuming two traits go together).
- **Nominations:** peers name who in the group is, for example, the most helpful or the best leader; useful in schools and training groups; may be biased by friendships.
- **Situational tests:** the person is put in a constructed situation and observed. Examples: Hartshorne and May's honesty tests; the **leaderless group discussion** and stress tasks used in officer selection (World War II, later SSB and assessment centres); in-basket exercises.
- **Other sources:** autobiography, case history, and **self-monitoring** diaries.

6. Limitations of personality assessment.

- No single test captures the whole person; good practice uses **several methods together**.
- **Self-reports:** response sets, faking, lack of insight.
- **Projectives:** subjective scoring, low inter-scorer reliability and weak validity, and dependence on the tester's skill.
- **Behavioural methods:** observer bias, halo effect, time and cost, and behaviour seen in one setting may not generalise.
- **Culture:** tests built in one culture may be unfair in another without adaptation and local norms.
- **Ethics:** informed consent, confidentiality and careful reporting of results.

Common traps

✗ "Prognosis is a standard purpose of personality assessment." ✓ The textbook list is **diagnosis, counselling, placement, selection, training**; prognosis was the odd one out in the 2023 key.

✗ "TAT: Jung." ✓ TAT = **Morgan and Murray (1935)**; Jung = word association.

✗ "Draw-a-Person: Ebbinghaus." ✓ Draw-a-Man = **Goodenough (1926)**; Ebbinghaus first used **sentence completion**.

✗ "CAT uses human figures." ✓ CAT (**Bellak**) uses **animal** figures.

✗ "Rorschach has 31 cards." ✓ Rorschach **10** cards; TAT **31** (30 + 1 blank).

✗ "MMPI is a projective test." ✓ MMPI is a **self-report inventory** (Hathaway and McKinley, 1943).

✗ "Projective tests have higher reliability than inventories." ✓ Inventories are usually **more reliable**; projectives are subjective.

✗ "Nominations are self-ratings." ✓ Nominations are **peer** assessments.

✗ "Halo effect = rating everyone average." ✓ Halo = one feature colours all ratings; rating everyone average = **central tendency** error.

✗ "The term projective technique was coined by Freud." ✓ **L. K. Frank (1939)**; Freud gave the defence mechanism of **projection**.

Quick revision

- Purposes: diagnosis, counselling, placement, selection, training, research.
- Families: self-report, projective, behavioural analysis.
- First inventory: Woodworth Personal Data Sheet (WWI); MMPI: Hathaway & McKinley 1943.
- 16 PF Cattell; EPQ Eysenck; NEO-PI-R Costa & McCrae; EPPS Edwards (forced choice).
- Projective: L. K. Frank 1939; ambiguous stimuli, hidden purpose, unconscious.
- Rorschach 1921, 10 cards; TAT Morgan & Murray 1935, 30 + 1 blank; CAT Bellak 1949, animals.
- Sentence completion: Ebbinghaus first, Rotter's blank; word association: Galton, Jung.
- Draw-a-Man: Goodenough 1926; Draw-a-Person: Machover; HTP: Buck; P-F Study: Rosenzweig.
- Behavioural: interview, observation, ratings, nominations, situational tests (Hartshorne & May).
- Limits: social desirability, acquiescence, halo, subjective scoring, culture bias.