



# Personality Traits/ Dispositional Traits

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# Personality Traits

- ✦ **Personality traits** are "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.
- ✦ " A trait is what we call a characteristic way in which an individual perceives, feels, believes, or acts.
- ✦ **trait:** An identifying characteristic, habit, or trend.
- ✦ Traits are characteristic ways of behaving, such as extraversion–introversion:

# Personality Traits

- ✦ A trait is a dimension of personality used to categorize people according to the degree to which they manifest a particular characteristics.
- ✦ The trait approach to personality is built on two important assumptions

# Personality Traits

- ✦ Firstly, trait psychologists assume that personality characteristics are relatively stable over time.
- ✦ The second assumption underlying the trait approach is that personality characteristics are stable across situations.

# HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

- ✚ The concept of personality has been studied for at least 2,000 years, beginning with Hippocrates in 370 BCE. Hippocrates theorized that personality traits and human behaviors are based on four separate temperaments associated with four fluids (“humors”) of the body: choleric temperament (yellow bile from the liver), melancholic temperament (black bile from the kidneys), sanguine temperament (red blood from the heart), and phlegmatic temperament (white phlegm from the lungs)



# HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

Centuries later, the influential Greek physician and philosopher Galen built on Hippocrates's theory, suggesting that both diseases and personality differences could be explained by imbalances in the humors and that each person exhibits one of the four temperaments. For example, the choleric person is passionate, ambitious, and bold; the melancholic person is reserved, anxious, and unhappy; the sanguine person is joyful, eager, and optimistic; and the phlegmatic person is calm, reliable, and thoughtful.



# HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

- ✚ In 1780, Franz Gall, a German physician, proposed that the distances between bumps on the skull reveal a person's personality traits, character, and mental abilities. According to Gall, measuring these distances revealed the sizes of the brain areas underneath, providing information that could be used to determine whether a person was friendly, prideful, murderous, kind, good with languages, and so on.

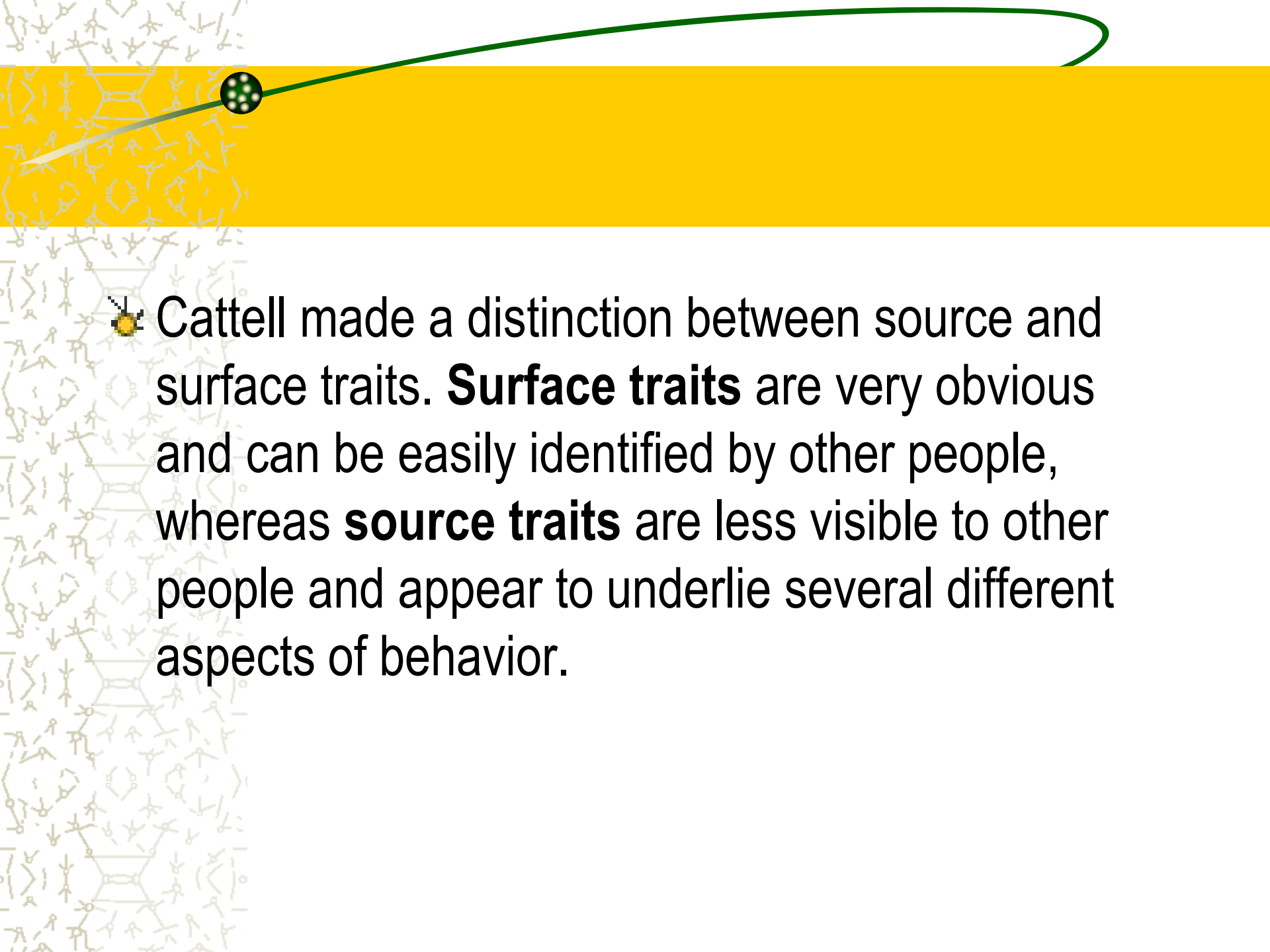
# Key Points

- ✦ Gordon Allport organized traits into a hierarchy of three levels: cardinal traits, central traits, and secondary traits.
- ✦ Using a statistical process known as factor analysis, Raymond Cattell generated sixteen dimensions of human personality traits, known as the 16PF.





# Raymond Cattell (1905–1998)

✦ In an effort to make Allport's list of 4,500 traits more manageable, Raymond Cattell took the list and removed all the synonyms, reducing the number down to 171. However, saying that a trait is either present or absent does not accurately reflect a person's uniqueness, because (according to trait theorists) all of our personalities are actually made up of the same traits; we differ only in the degree to which each trait is expressed.



• Cattell made a distinction between source and surface traits. **Surface traits** are very obvious and can be easily identified by other people, whereas **source traits** are less visible to other people and appear to underlie several different aspects of behavior.

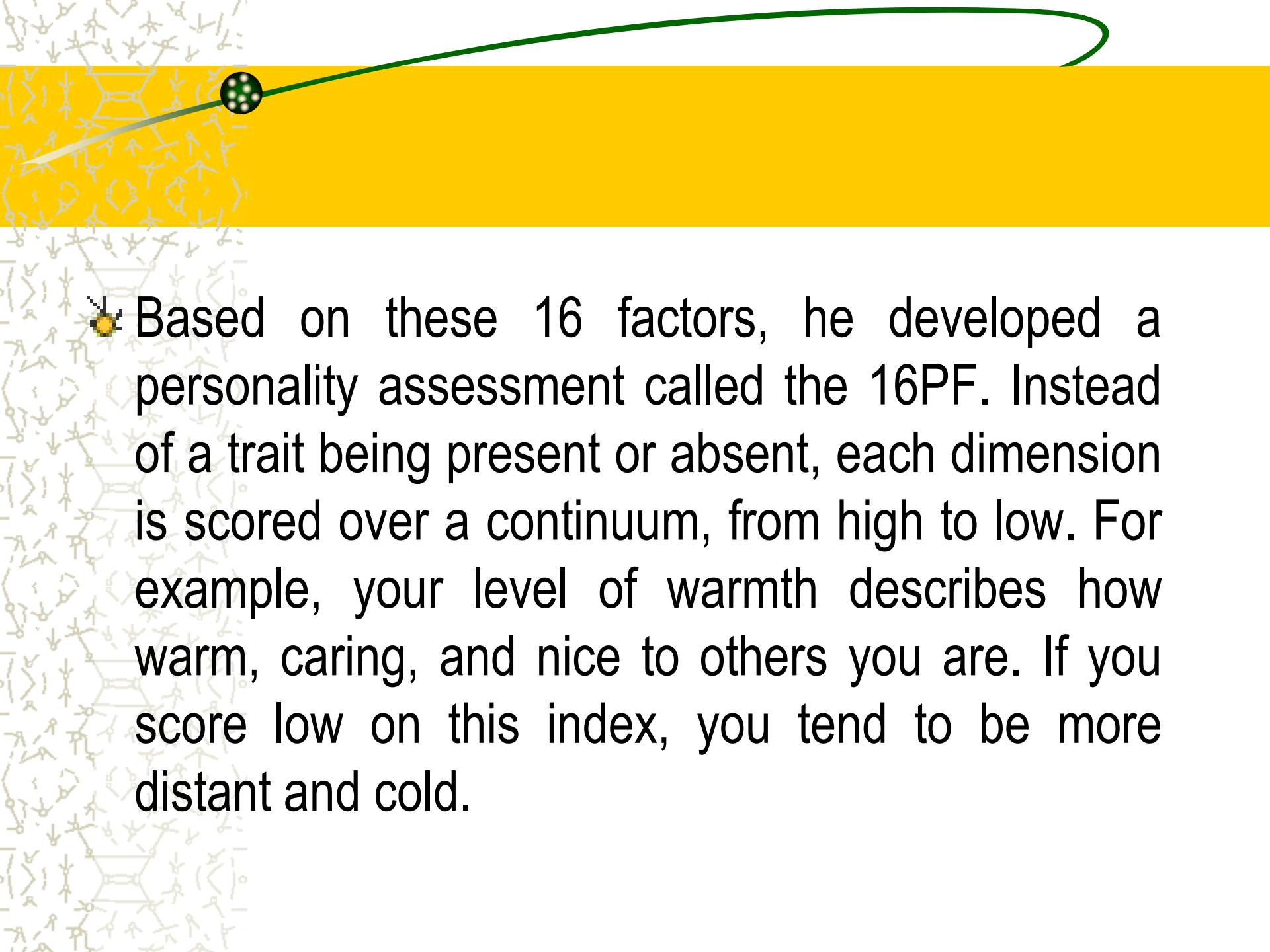
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- ✦ Cattell collected data from a range of people through three different sources of data.
  - ✦ **L-data** -The first type of data was *life data*, which involves collecting information from an individual's natural everyday life behaviors. this is life record data such as school grades, absence from work, etc.
  - ✦ **Q-data** - this was a questionnaire designed to rate an individual's personality (known as the 16PF) . *Experimental data* involves measuring reactions to standardized experimental situations.
  - ✦ **T-data** - this is data from objective tests designed to 'tap' into a personality construct. *Questionnaire data* involves gathering responses based on introspection by an individual about his or her own behavior and feelings.



✦ Cattell analyzed the T-data and Q-data using a mathematical technique called factor analysis to look at which types of behavior tended to be grouped together in the same people. He identified 16 personality traits / factors common to all people. Using this data, Cattell performed factor analysis to generate sixteen dimensions of human personality traits: *abstractedness, warmth, apprehension, emotional stability, liveliness, openness to change, perfectionism, privateness, intelligence, rule consciousness, tension, sensitivity, social boldness, self-reliance, vigilance, and dominance.*

Cattell regarded source traits are more important in describing personality than surface traits

Factor	Low Score	High Score
Warmth	cold, selfish	supportive, comforting
Intellect	Instinctive, unstable	cerebral, analytical
Emotional Stability	Irritable, moody	level headed, calm
Aggressiveness	Modest, docile	controlling, tough
Liveliness	somber, restrained	wild, fun loving
Dutifulness	untraditional, rebellious	conformity, traditional
Social Assertiveness	shy, withdrawn	uninhibited, bold
Sensitivity	coarse, tough	touchy, soft
Paranoia	trusting, easy going	wary, suspicious
Abstractness	practical, regular	strange, imaginative
Introversion	open, friendly	private, quiet
Anxiety	confident, self-assured	fearful, self-doubting
Open-mindedness	close-minded, set-in-ways	curious, self-exploratory
Independence	outgoing, social	loner, crave solitude
Perfectionism	Disorganized, messy	orderly, thorough
Tension	relaxed, cool	stressed, unsatisfied



✦ Based on these 16 factors, he developed a personality assessment called the 16PF. Instead of a trait being present or absent, each dimension is scored over a continuum, from high to low. For example, your level of warmth describes how warm, caring, and nice to others you are. If you score low on this index, you tend to be more distant and cold.