

The slide features a decorative background with a repeating pattern of stylized human figures in a light gray color. A prominent yellow banner is positioned horizontally across the middle of the slide. A green curved line starts from the right side of the banner, loops back to the left, and ends at a black circular icon containing five white dots. The main title is centered on the yellow banner.

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)

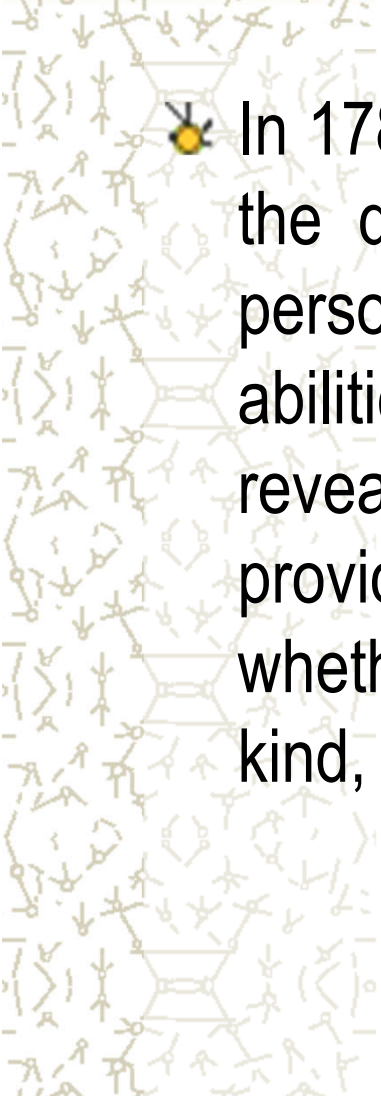


HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

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.




Gordon Allport (1897–1967)


✿ Gordon Allport was one of the first modern trait theorists. Allport and Henry worked through two of the most comprehensive dictionaries of the English language available and extracted around 18,000 personality-describing words. From this list they reduced the number of words to approximately 4,500 personality-describing adjectives which they considered to describe observable and relatively permanent personality traits.

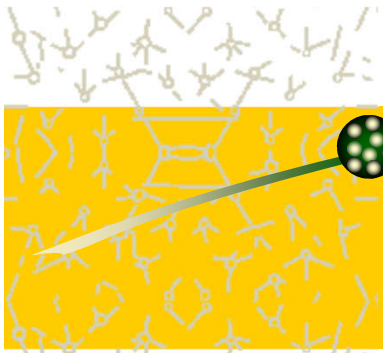


✦ Allport's theory of personality emphasizes the uniqueness of the individual and the internal cognitive and motivational processes that influence behaviour. For example, intelligence, temperament, habits, skills, attitudes, and traits.

✦ Allport (1937) believes that personality is biologically determined at birth, and shaped by a person's environmental experience.



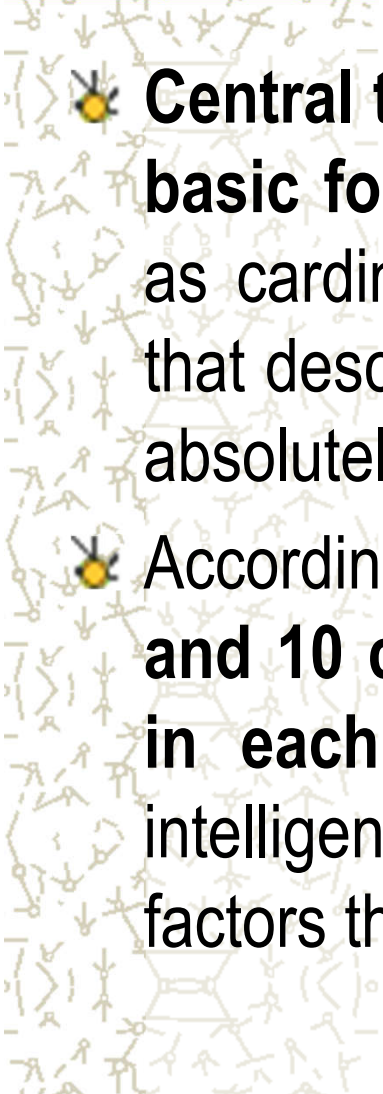
 **According to Allport, these traits are influenced by our childhood experiences, our current environment, and the interaction between them.** In the Allport era, psychologists believed that personality traits could be shaped by past and current forces. Allport believed that personality was composed of three types of traits: cardinal, central, and secondary.



✦ *Cardinal traits* dominate and shape an individual's behavior. They stand at the top of the hierarchy and are collectively known as the individual's *master control*. Cardinal traits are powerful, but few people have personalities dominated by a single trait. Instead, our personalities are typically composed of multiple traits.


✦ **People with such personalities are known for these traits and their names are often associated with these qualities.**

✦ Cardinal Traits: Traits that dominate an individual's whole life, often to the point that the person becomes known specifically for these traits. Freudian, narcissism.



✦ **Central traits are the general characteristics that form the basic foundations of personality.** They aren't as dominant as cardinal traits. Central traits are the main characteristics that describe another person. They're important traits, but not absolutely dominant.

✦ According to Allport's theory, **each person has between 5 and 10 central traits. They're present to varying degrees in each person.** These include common traits such as intelligence, shyness, and honesty. Central traits are the main factors that determine most of our behaviors.



✦ **Secondary traits are sometimes related to attitudes or preferences.** They're dispositions that are significantly less generalized and relevant. They're only seen in certain situations or under specific circumstances.

✦ **Secondary Traits:** These are the traits that are sometimes related to attitudes or preferences and often appear only in certain situations or under specific circumstances. Some examples would be getting anxious when speaking to a group or impatient while waiting in line.



Trait Approach to Personality


✦ Allport identified two Approaches

1. Nomothetic Approach
2. Idiographic Approach



Nomothetic Approach

- ✦ The term “nomothetic” comes from the Greek word “nomos” meaning “law”.
- ✦ Psychologists who adopt this approach are mainly concerned with studying what we share with others (i.e. similarities between people).
- ✦ Therefore, the nomothetic approach involves establishing laws or generalizations that apply to all people.




✿ Each person in a study using the nomothetic approach is tested to see how his or her score for the given trait compares with the scores of others participants.

✿ Allport referred to these traits that apply to everyone as common traits.



The Idiographic Approach

- ✦ The term “idiographic” comes from the Greek word “idios” meaning “own” or “private”. Psychologists interested in this aspect of experience want to discover what makes each of us unique.
- ✦ No general laws are possible because of chance, free will and the uniqueness of individuals.




✿ At the other extreme Gordon Allport found over 18,000 separate terms describing personal characteristics.


✿ Whilst some of these are common traits (that could be investigated nomothetically) the majority, in Allport's view, referred to more or less unique dispositions based on life experiences peculiar to ourselves.





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

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✦ 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.