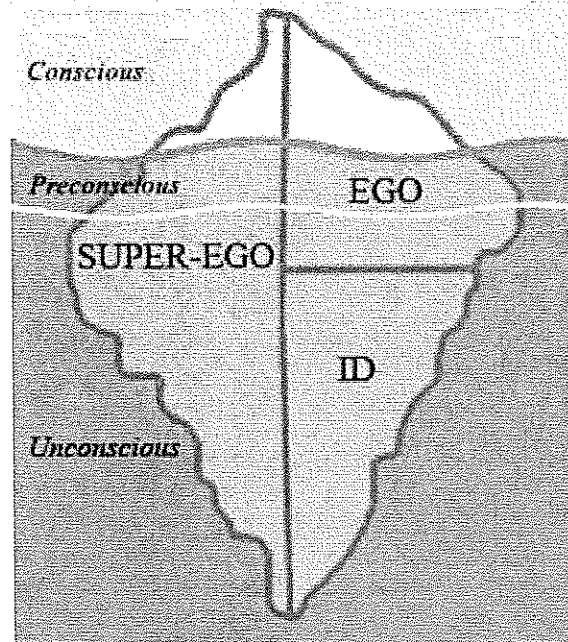


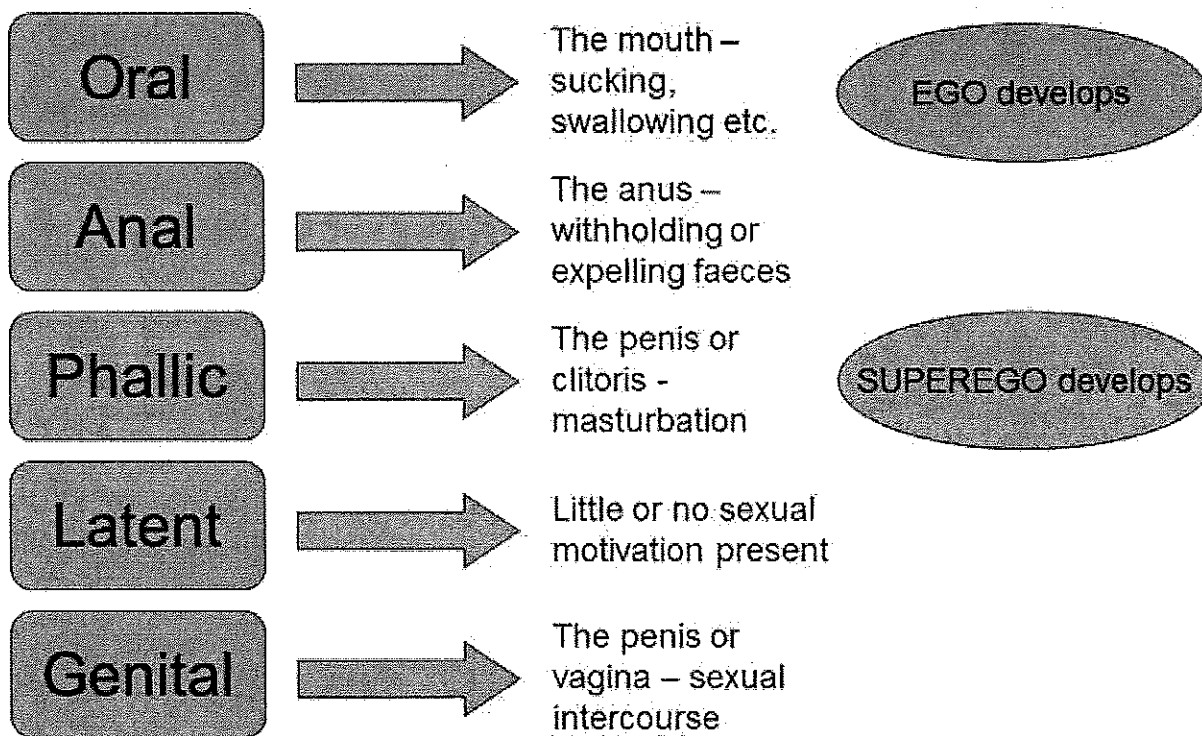
MODULE 55 FREUD'S PSYCHOANALYTIC PERSPECTIVE: EXPLORING THE UNCONSCIOUS

PSYCHOANALYTIC THEORY'S CORE IDEAS

- Sigmund Freud was a product of his times. His Victorian era was a time of tremendous discovery and scientific advancement, but it is also known today as a time of sexual repression and male dominance.
- Freud studied nervous disorders that then lead him down the path of seeing patients who had no nerve damage yet was unable to move their limbs. Freud speculated that lost feelings in the limbs might be caused by fear of touching one's genitals... **FREE ASSOCIATION** is psychoanalysis, a method of exploring the unconscious in which the person relaxes and says whatever comes to mind, no matter how trivial or embarrassing.
- **PSYCHOANALYSIS** is Freud's theory of personality that attributes thoughts and actions to unconscious motives and conflicts; the techniques used in treating psychological disorders by seeking to expose and interpret unconscious tensions.
- Our conscious awareness is like the part of an iceberg that floats above the surface. Beneath our awareness is the larger **UNCONSCIOUS** mind with its thoughts, wishes, feelings, and memories.
- Some of these thoughts we store temporarily in a preconscious area, from which we can retrieve them into conscious awareness. Repress is what Freud believed you forcibly block from our consciousness because they would be too unsettling to acknowledge.
- The remembered content of dreams (manifest content) he believed to be censored expression of the dreamer's unconscious wishes (the dream's latent content).
- To understand the mind's dynamics during this conflict, Freud proposed three interacting systems: the id, ego, and superego.
- The **ID** is the unconscious psychic energy constantly strives to satisfy basic drives to survive, reproduce, and aggress. The id operates on the pleasure principle: it seeks immediate gratification. You are born with the id.
- As the ego develops, the young child responds to the real world. The **EGO**, operating on the reality principle, seeks to gratify the id's impulses in realistic ways that will bring long-term pleasure.
- Around age 4 or 5, Freud theorized, a child's ego recognizes the demands of the newly emerging **SUPEREGO**, the voice of our moral compass (conscience) that forces the ego to consider not only the real but the ideal. How we ought to behave.



- Because the superego's demands often oppose the id's, the ego struggles to reconcile the two.
- Freud concluded that children pass through a series of **PSYCHOSEXUAL STAGES**, during which the id's pleasure-seeking energies focus on distinct pleasure-sensitive areas of the body called erogenous zones.



- Freud believed that during the phallic stage, that boys seek genital stimulation and they develop both unconscious sexual desires for their mother and jealousy and hatred for their father, whom they consider a rival, known as the **OEDIPUS COMPLEX**. The parallel for girls is the **ELECTRA COMPLEX**.
- **IDENTIFICATION** is the process by which, according to Freud, children incorporate their parents' values into their developing superegos. Freud believed that identification with the same-sex parent provides what psychologists now call our gender identity, or sense of being male or female.
- At any point in the oral, anal, or phallic stages, strong conflict could lock, or **FIXATE**, the person's pleasure-seeking energies in that stage.
- Freud proposed that the ego protects itself with **DEFENSE MECHANISMS**, or tactics that reduce or redirect anxiety by distorting reality.
- The defense mechanism, **REPRESSION**, banishes anxiety-arousing wishes and feelings from consciousness. According to Freud, repression underlies all the other defense mechanisms. Repression is shown through dreams or as slips of the tongue (Freudian slips).

EVALUATING FREUD'S PSYCHOANALYTIC PERSPECTIVE

- Critics doubt that infants' neural networks are mature enough to sustain as much emotional trauma as Freud assumed. Some think Freud overestimated parental influence and underestimated peer influence. They also doubt that conscience and gender identity form as the child resolves the Oedipus complex at age 5 or 6.
- Researchers find little support for Freud's idea that defense mechanisms disguise sexual and aggressive impulses.
- Freud's theory rests on few objective observations, and parts of it offer few testable hypotheses. Theories are to ensure predictability after being tested and Freud's theories cannot ensure predictability.
- Freud's idea of repression is by far more opposite than what he entailed. The common reality is that high stress and associated stress hormones enhance memory. These flashbacks are "seared onto the soul."

Mechanism	Description	Example
Repression	Repression is an unconscious mechanism employed by the ego to keep disturbing or threatening thoughts from becoming conscious.	During the Oedipus complex aggressive thoughts about the same sex parents are repressed
Denial	Denial involves blocking external events from awareness. If some situation is just too much to handle, the person just refuses to experience it.	For example, smokers may refuse to admit to themselves that smoking is bad for their health.
Projection	This involves individuals attributing their own unacceptable thoughts, feeling and motives to another person.	You might hate someone, but your superego tells you that such hatred is unacceptable. You can 'solve' the problem by believing that they hate you.
Displacement	Satisfying an impulse (e.g. aggression) with a substitute object.	Someone who is frustrated by his or her boss at work may go home and kick the dog,
Regression	This is a movement back in psychological time when one is faced with stress.	A child may begin to suck their thumb again or wet the bed when they need to spend some time in the hospital.
Sublimation	Satisfying an impulse (e.g. aggression) with a substitute object. In a socially acceptable way.	Sport is an example of putting our emotions (e.g. aggression) into something constructive.

BE ABLE TO ANSWER: How does today's psychological science assess Freud's theory?

PRACTICE FRQ: Name what Freud believed to be the 3 parts of the mind and describe the role of each.