

PPT On

Id, Ego & Super Ego

The id (or it)

The id is the primitive and instinctive component of personality. It consists of all the inherited (i.e. biological) components of personality present at birth, including the sex (life) instinct – Eros (which contains the libido), and the aggressive (death) instinct

The id is the impulsive (and unconscious) part of our psyche which responds directly and immediately to the instincts.

The personality of the newborn child is all id and only later does it develop an ego and super-ego.

The id remains infantile in its function throughout a person's life, and does not change with time or experience, as it is not in touch with the external world. The id is not affected by reality, logic or the everyday world, as it operates within the unconscious part of the mind.

The id demands immediate satisfaction and when this happens we experience pleasure, when it is denied we experience 'unpleasure' or tension.

On the contrary, it operates on the pleasure principle (Freud, 1920) which is the idea that every wishful impulse should be satisfied immediately, regardless of the consequences. The id engages in primary process thinking, which is primitive, illogical, irrational, and fantasy oriented. This form of process thinking has no comprehension of objective reality, and is selfish and wishful in nature

The Ego (or I)

The ego is '*that part of the id which has been modified by the direct influence of the external world.*'

(Freud [1923], 1961, p. 25)

The ego develops in order to mediate between the unrealistic id and the external real world. It is the decision making component of personality. Ideally the ego works by reason, whereas the id is chaotic and totally unreasonable

Like the id, the ego seeks pleasure (i.e. tension reduction) and avoids pain, but unlike the id the ego is concerned with devising a realistic strategy to obtain pleasure. The ego has no concept of right or wrong; something is good simply if it achieves its end of satisfying without causing harm to itself or to the id.

Freud made the analogy of the id being a horse while the ego is the rider. The ego is *'like a man on horseback, who has to hold in check the superior strength of the horse.'*

(Freud, 1923, p.15)

The ego engages in secondary process thinking, which is rational, realistic, and orientated towards problem solving. If a plan of action does not work, then it is thought through again until a solution is found. This is known as reality testing, and enables the person to control their impulses and demonstrate self-control, via mastery of the ego.

The Superego (or above I)

The superego incorporates the values and morals of society which are learned from one's parents and others. It develops around the age of 3 – 5 during the phallic stage of psychosexual development.

The superego's function is to control the id's impulses, especially those which society forbids, such as sex and aggression. It also has the function of persuading the ego to turn to moralistic goals rather than simply realistic ones and to strive for perfection.

The superego consists of two systems: The conscience and the ideal self. The conscience can punish the ego through causing feelings of guilt. For example, if the ego gives in to the id's demands, the superego may make the person feel bad through guilt.

The ideal self (or ego-ideal) is an imaginary picture of how you ought to be, and represents career aspirations, how to treat other people, and how to behave as a member of society.

Behavior which falls short of the ideal self may be punished by the superego through guilt. The super-ego can also reward us through the ideal self when we behave 'properly' by making us feel proud.

If a person's ideal self is too high a standard, then whatever the person does will represent failure. The ideal self and conscience are largely determined in childhood from parental values and how you were brought up.

THE END

Presented by

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