**APPROACHES TO PERSONALITY**

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| **Approach** | **Description** | **Important Names** | **Criticisms** |
| The Trait Approach | This approach assumes that aspects of a personality are relatively stable. Your traits account for why you behave the way you do. (shy, outgoing, optimistic, pessimistic etc.)  **Big Five**   1. **Open-mindedness** 2. **Agreeableness** 3. **Extraversion** 4. **Conscienctiousness** 5. **Neuroticism**   Other tests include the **Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI)** | Gordon Allport, Hans Eysenck | It does not explain where traits come from |
| The Psychoanalytic Approach | All people undergo inner struggles. People are born with biological drives. A person’s behavior is a result of how a person balances their inner drives with the laws, norms and morals that they have been taught. May be assessed with **projective tests** like **TAT** or **Rorschach** | Sigmund Freud, Carl Jung, Alfred Adler, Erik Erikson | Seen as unscientific; strong emphasis on unconscious desires; aren’t people conscious of their decisions? do therapists influence the evidence? |
| The Learning Approach | A person’s behavior is learned. People may have been trained or rewarded for certain behavior and that is where they learned it. | John B. Watson | Doesn’t address the inner workings of the human experiences or the unconscious |
| The Humanistic Approach | Humanists assume that people are aware and responsible for their actions and are free to choose what they want their lives to be. Life is about self-fulfillment | Abraham Maslow | Focuses on only on conscious experience, little to say about the development of traits |
| The Sociocultural Approach | Ethnicity, gender and culture all help to form personality | Carl Rogers | Doesn’t account for how humans behave WITHIN their own culture |

Related Terms:

Self: center of our personality; organization of our thoughts, feelings and actions

Spotlight effect: overestimating how much others notice and evaluate our appearance and performance

Self-esteem: one’s feelings of high or low self-worth

Self-efficacy: one’s sense of competence and effectiveness

Self-serving bias: readiness to perceive oneself favorably

Narcissism-excessive self-love and self absorption