

PERSONALITY I

CONSIDER THE PHRASE BELOW....

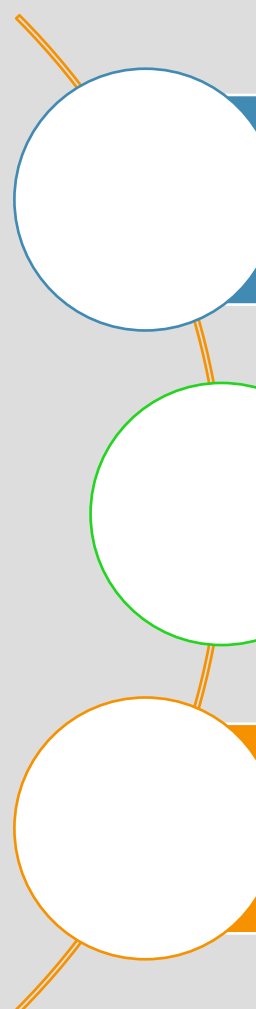
“I don’t know what he see’s in him;
he has no personality whatsoever?”

Can an
individual
have no
personality?

Can you
visualise
someone
who is
described
as having
no
personality?

What would this
individual be
like?

YOUR DESCRIPTIONS



Your descriptions of 'no personality' does not mean they have no personality – they just mean that the individual doesn't have the personal characteristics we usually think of as someone who has 'personality'.

Thus, you are simply implying a certain sort of person.

This then raises the issue of **WHAT IS PERSONALITY?**

LAY (GENERAL PUBLIC) DEFINITIONS OF PERSONALITY

Personality related to Social Attractiveness.

- Physical Appearance

Personality also judged in a social context.

- How they interact with others.

Stereotyping also involved.

- Small man syndrome, Fiery temper (Red Hair etc).

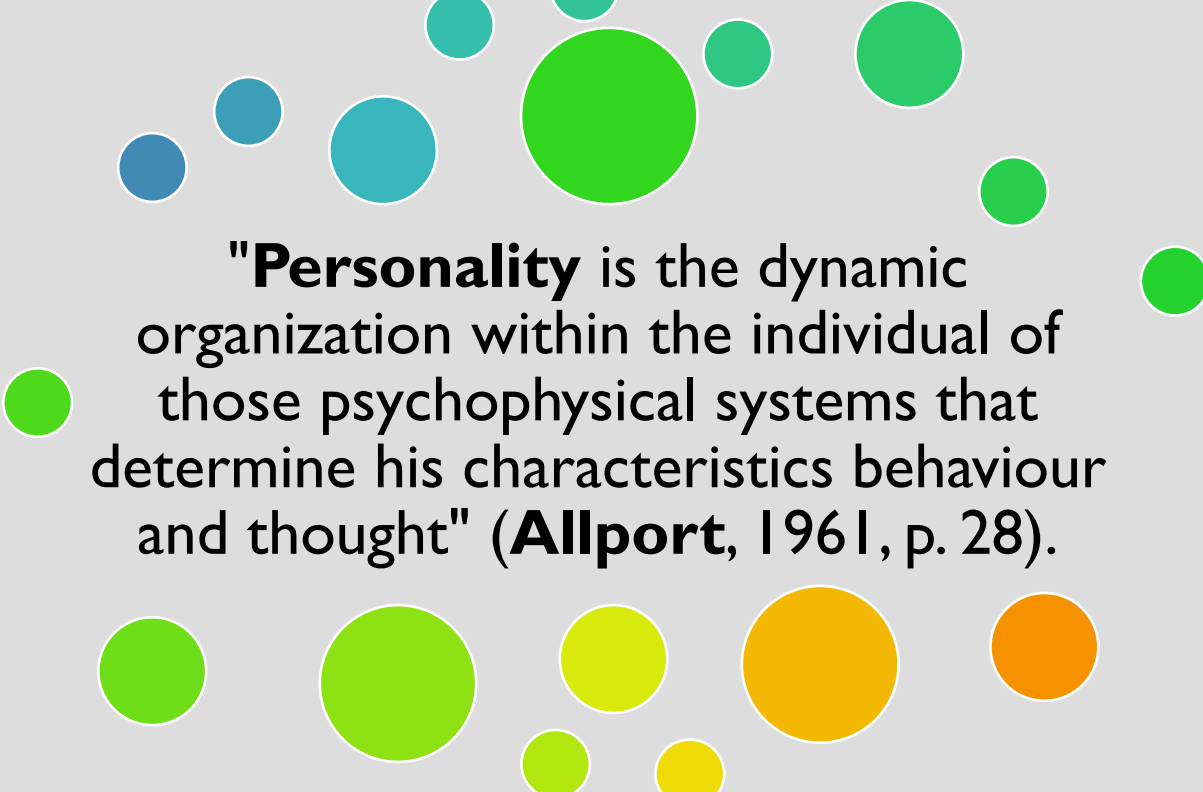
Only in social situations?

Problems with defining personality.

Needs to embrace individual differences, genetics, culture and the internal process.

Personality describes a Psychological Construct

Mental concept that influences mind-body interaction.



"**Personality** is the dynamic organization within the individual of those psychophysical systems that determine his characteristic behaviour and thought" (**Allport**, 1961, p. 28).

Determinative

- personality is something and does something
- not merely mask we wear, nor is it simply behaviour.
- traits are not just predictors of behaviour, they actually determine (cause) behaviour.
- Allport felt these were actually physical (tangible) although he didn't know how they related to the neural systems.

Dynamic organization

- we need to integrate all parts of our personality into a whole.
- subject to change, not static, but growing and changing

Criticisms: the theme of unity isn't shared by everyone. Learning theorists focus on discrete units of behaviour.

Psychophysical Systems

- Allport argued that biology influences our personality development.
- temperament, constitutes an inherited biological foundation for personality.

There is some evidence that this might be the case. The temperaments of young children tend to be consistent into adulthood.

APPROACHES TO STUDYING PERSONALITY: IDIOGRAPHIC VS NOMOTHETIC.

Idiographic approach.

- Focus on individual – describes variables in terms of the individual.
- Qualitative – case studies.
- Cannot make generalisations.

Nomothetic approach.

- Finite set of variables that can describe personality.
- Look at cultural, gender, age norms for Variables.
- Quantitative in measure – questionnaires.
- Superficial understanding of one person.

Approach	Contributors	Key terms
Psychodynamic	Freud, Adler, Jung, Horney, Erikson, & Bowlby	Unconscious conflicts, inferiority feelings, defense mechanisms, complexes, psychosocial crises, internal working models
Trait theory	Allport, Cattell, Eysenck, Costa & McCrae	Types vs. traits, trait domains vs. latent traits, factor analysis
Cognitive/social learning	Mischel, Bandura, Carver, & Scheier	Plans, self-efficacy, self-regulation
Humanistic/existential/narrative	Maslow, Rogers, Kelly, Frankl, & McAdams	Self-actualization, personal constructs, meaning of life, life story
Evolutionary psychology	Alexander, Hamilton, Pinker, Buss, Cosmides, & Toobey.	Adaptations, inclusive fitness, life history theory, differential reproduction, modularity of mind

TRAIT THEORIES

Define personality as identifiable patterns of behaviour

Describe traits, not explains them.

Stable = Consistent behaviour

Individual trait theories differ in terms of whether or not they believe that all individuals possess the same traits.

ALLPORT

Allport felt that...

- traits are highly individualized or unique (don't have the same traits).
- disagreed with theorists who asserted that one or a few instincts motivate all people (sexual drives, striving for superiority).
- that our personalities develop as a function of learning to adapt to social situations while trying to achieve our needs.
- our personality was made up of traits.
- if you know a person's traits, you can provide a description of their personality.

What are traits???

A trait is a consistent, long-lasting tendency in behaviour. E.g., shyness, hostility

Can we all be described by the same traits?

INDIVIDUAL VS. COMMON TRAITS

Individual traits --
possessed by only
one person.

Common traits--
possessed by all people
to a varying extent.

How do we
know what
traits a person
possesses?

We can infer them
from language
(Dictionary Study).

Personal
Traits
(artistic,
assertive).



Descriptive of
Temporary
Moods or
Activities
(alarmed,
ashamed)



Weighted Terms
- Social or
Character
Judgments of
Personal
Conduct, or
Designating
influence on
others (adorable,
agreeable).



Miscellaneous:
Designations of
Physique,
Capacities, and
Developmental
Conditions;
Metaphorical and
Doubtful Terms
(alone).

Allport & Odbert
identified **17,953**
trait names, from
the dictionary (4.5%
of total words).

ALLPORT'S PERSONAL DISPOSITION THEORY

Allport suggested that each individual has a unique set of personality traits called individual dispositions

Cardinal trait is a trait so dominant that a person's entire life revolves around it

A **Cardinal trait** is a single characteristic that directs most of a person's activities. It is so pervasive that it dominates just about everything that a person does. E.g., A person so power-hungry that they are solely driven by that need for control.

Central traits are qualities that characterize a person's daily interactions

Central traits are the major characteristics of an individual. These usually number from 5 to 10 in any one person (e.g., honesty, sociability). These are rather pervasive & effect many behaviours. We can use a small number of adjectives to describe someone.

Secondary traits are characteristics that are exhibited in specific situations

Secondary traits are characteristics that effect behaviour in fewer situations & are less influential than the above. A preference for ice cream or dislike of modern art would be considered a secondary trait.

Allport identified more than 4,000 words to describe personality traits. While this approach was good at identifying different types of traits, it is **unwieldy and difficult to infer meaning**. Many were highly similar, making it difficult to distinguish some traits from others.

Cattell

FA - looks for trends and to see which elements are the most influential or important.

CATTELL

Personality – the characteristics of the individual that allow prediction of how they will behave in a given situation

Ability traits; Temperament
traits; Dynamic traits

Constitutional
traits

Environmental-
mold traits

Life Data (L-data): Information about an individual's everyday behaviours and their **behavioural patterns**. This included things such as the grades they received in school, their marital status, social interactions, and more.

Experimental Data (T-data): Recorded reactions to standardized experiments in a lab setting, designed to test study participant's **response to certain situations**.

Questionnaire Data (Q-data): Responses to questions about the participant's behaviour and feelings. This data was introspection based and provided a deeper look at the person's personality that is not always clear through behavioural data.

Cattell's 16 Personality Factor has never been entirely replicated – difficult to understand.

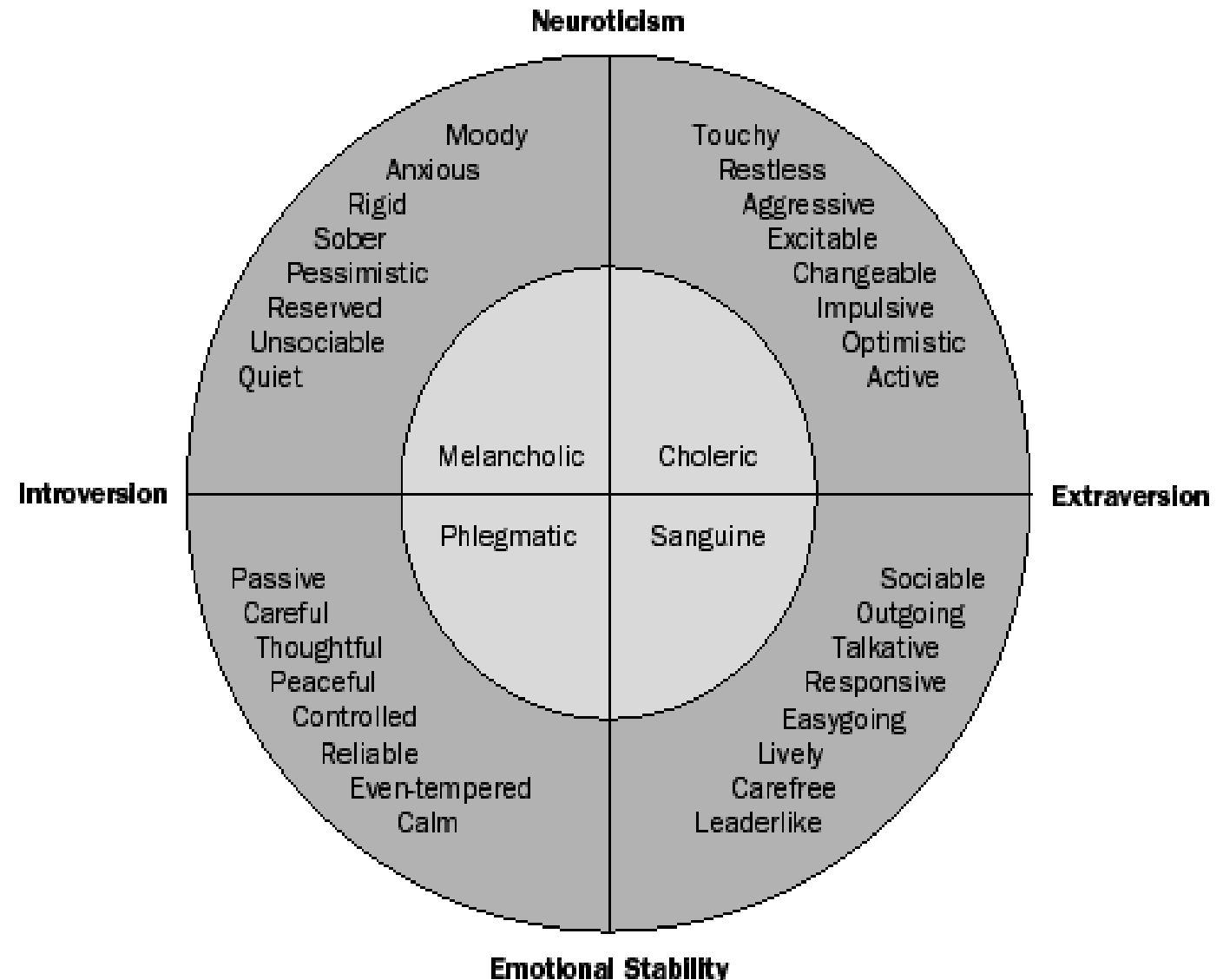
- 1. Abstractedness:** Imaginative versus practical
- 2. Apprehension:** Worried versus confident
- 3. Dominance:** Forceful versus submissive
- 4. Emotional Stability:** Calm versus high-strung
- 5. Liveliness:** Spontaneous versus restrained
- 6. Openness to Change:** Flexible versus attached to the familiar
- 7. Perfectionism:** Controlled versus undisciplined
- 8. Privateness:** Discreet versus open
- 9. Reasoning:** Abstract versus concrete
- 10. Rule-Consciousness:** Conforming versus non-conforming
- 11. Self-Reliance:** Self-sufficient versus dependent
- 12. Sensitivity:** Tender-hearted versus tough-minded.
- 13. Social Boldness:** Uninhibited versus shy
- 14. Tension:** Inpatient versus relaxed
- 15. Vigilance:** Suspicious versus trusting
- 16. Warmth:** Outgoing versus reserved

EYSENCK

Hans Eysenck (1916–97) was a contemporary of Cattell and also used factor analysis to classify personality traits we all possess to differing degrees.

But Eysenck (1967) began with a theory of personality which he based on **two supertraits** – extraversion–introversion and neuroticism–stability.

Four personality types can be derived from the traits associated with Eysenck's two major personality dimensions of extraversion and neuroticism.



EYSENCK

Highly extraverted - sociable and outgoing, and crave excitement and the company of others.

Highly introverted - quiet and introspective; prefer time alone and to be cautious in the way they plan their lives.

Highly neurotic - anxious, moody and vulnerable, whereas people who are low on neuroticism tend to be stable, calm and even-tempered.

A further supertrait identified by Eysenck (1982) is **psychoticism**. People scoring high on psychoticism are described as: 'egocentric, aggressive, impersonal, cold, lacking in empathy, impulsive, lacking in concern for others and generally unconcerned about the rights and welfare of other people'.

Like Cattell, Eysenck developed a questionnaire designed to measure his supertraits – the Eysenck Personality Questionnaire, or EPQ (Eysenck & Eysenck, 1975).

He also developed a theory of the biological basis of personality.

<https://www.simplypsychology.org/eysenck-inventory.pdf>

EVALUATION

Twin studies can be used to see if personality is genetic. However, the findings are conflicting and inconclusive.

Shields (1976) found that monozygotic (identical) twins were significantly more alike on the Introvert – Extrovert (E) and Psychoticism (P) dimensions than dizygotic (non-identical) twins.

Loehlin, Willerman, and Horn (1988) found that only 50% of the variations of scores on personality dimensions are due to inherited traits. This suggests that social factors are also important.

One good element of Eysenck's theory is that it takes into account both **nature and nurture**. Eysenck's theory argues strongly that biological predispositions towards certain personality traits combined with conditioning and socialisation during childhood in order to create our personality.

This interactionist approach may therefore be much **more valid than either a biological or environmental theory alone**. It also links nicely with the diathesis stress model of behaviour which argues for a biological predisposition combining with an environmental trigger for a particular behaviour.

THE BIG FIVE MODEL

In scoring and analyzing the Revised NEO Personality Inventory (NEO-PI-R), six particular facets are considered within each of the Big Five factors (Costa & McCrae, 1992a).

NEUROTICISM	EXTRAVERSION	OPENNESS	AGREEABLENESS	CONSCIENTIOUSNESS
anxiety	warmth	fantasy	trust	competence
angry hostility	gregariousness	aesthetics	straightforwardness	order
depression	assertiveness	feelings	altruism	dutifulness
self-consciousness	activity	actions	compliance	achievement striving
impulsiveness	excitement seeking	ideas	modesty	self-discipline
vulnerability	positive emotions	values	tender-mindedness	deliberation

EVALUATION

Big Five test suggests that your personality will remain the same in real world situations.

Tests claim to measure intensities to the Five big factors

Limited options from a multiple choice questionnaire

Applicants will answer questions to make them more appealing and to ensure their success

Results of tests fail to build a definitive personality profile

It cannot possibly capture all of the variation in human personality

The dimensions are much too broad

COGNITIVE THEORIES: KELLY

Based on how individuals perceive and interpret people and things in their environments.

We interpret and organize the events and social relationships of our lives in a system or patterns called **constructs**.

A **construct** is a person's unique way of looking at life,

On the basis of this pattern, we make predictions about ourselves and about other people and events. And we use these predictions to formulate our response and guide our actions.

According to George Kelly, personality is composed of the various mental constructs through which each person views reality.

He believed that each person was much like a scientist.

Just like scientists, we want to understand the world around us, make predictions about what will happen next, and create theories to explain events.

PERSONAL CONSTRUCT

How it works...

You meet someone new – you make judgements on their friendliness (friendly/unfriendly – personal construct)

Within the friendly/unfriendly **superordinate construct** you will have some **subordinate constructs** that you use to judge the person.

What these are will vary between individuals and will reflect your personality and interests.

So, you might have a subordinate construct of chatty/quiet, and you make a decision here and so on through the relevant subordinate constructs in your system of personal constructs

KELLY'S CONSTRUCT THEORY



Personal Construct:

An intellectual hypothesis which we devise and use to interpret, explain, give meaning or predict life events.



Constructive alternativism:

The assumption that all people are capable of changing or replacing our present interpretation of events. In other words, we can always change our mind. We are not controlled by our constructs but we are free to revise and replace them with other alternatives.



Every Person as a Scientist:

Kelly believed that each of us, like the scientist, attempts to predict and control events. We formulate hypothesis about the environment and test them against the reality of daily life. In other words we observe the events of our life (the facts and data of our experiences) and interpret them in our own way.

PERSONAL CONSTRUCT

Kelly emphasises that people are future-oriented. We identify goals and use our personal constructs to interpret current events and then to make behavioural choices to help in the achievement of these goals.

If our work strategies are unsuccessful we may change our interpretation of events, which will involve changes in the personal constructs we are using.

A lot of the time we are trying to anticipate future events. If we do A now, and then in the future B and C will occur.

This is known as the **fundamental postulate** of his theory ‘a person’s processes are psychologically channelized by the ways in which one anticipates events.

This is an important concept. According to Kelly our motivation to act comes from our future aims, not from our past learning or early experiences or innate drives.

COROLLARIES

When using personal construct, we are organising our experiences in terms of similarities and contrasts.

Constructs must consist of at least three elements, two of which are similar and one which contrasts with the third element. Kelly expanded on the fundamental postulate with 11 corollaries

Describing how the interpretative processes operate to allow us to create our personal constructs.

CIRCUMSPECTION-PRE-EMPTION-CONTROL (CPC) CYCLE.

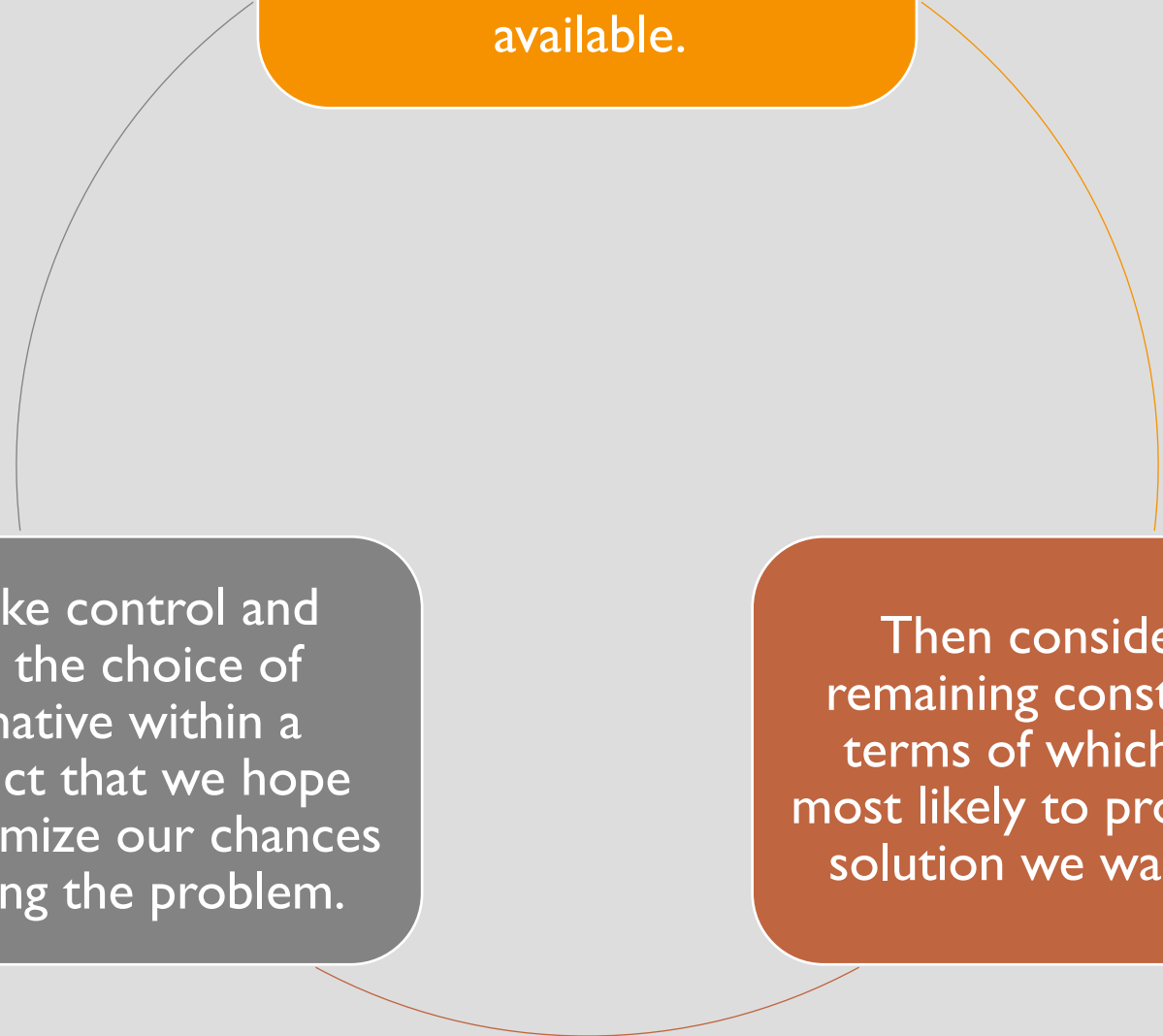
For Kelly, your personal construct system is in essence your personality.

Your construct system determines how you construe the world and ultimately how you behave.

The pre-emptive stage - weed out the constructs that are less likely to succeed = reducing the number of constructs available.

We take control and make the choice of alternative within a construct that we hope will maximize our chances of solving the problem.

Then consider the remaining constructs in terms of which one is most likely to produce the solution we want them



EVALUATION

Elicitation of a grid makes the subject reflect on a problem, and helps clarify the mind.

Grids can be analysed to find patterns or associations for further investigation.

The technique is relatively efficient.

The structure is not imposed as in a questionnaire, but represents the subject's own construction. This gives it theoretical integrity.

The elements can be anything which is identifiable as a domain object, be it verbal token, visual image, sound, smell, event or whatever. It can escape the influence of labels.

There are problems generating a representative sample set of elements. i.e, are the elements selected sufficient to capture the relevant properties of the domain, Eg, weather and light are outside the range of convenience of the construct tall v. short.

Sometimes not all the elements in the triad are equally representative. When one element is salient, compared to the other two, the relevant distinction may be exemplar/non-exemplar.

Are people that insightful – introspection?

Not all constructs are equal and the investigator must attempt to ascertain which are truly relevant.

ROLE CONSTRUCTS REPERTORY TEST

Rep Grid

The theory was based on research with students.

The best way of obtaining an individual's perception of their world was simply to ask them by about it

Have a go yourself

https://www.bbc.co.uk/radio4/science/kellys_grid.pdf

The assessment a technique that Kelly is best known for what is the role constructs repertory test

REFERENCES

- Allport, G.W. (1937). *Personality: A psychological interpretation*. New York: H. Holt and. Company.
- Cattell, R. B. (1965). *The scientific analysis of personality*. Baltimore: Penguin Books.
- Costa, P.T., & McCrae, R. R. (1985). *The NEO personality inventory*.
- Costa Jr, P.T., & McCrae, R. R. (2008). *The Revised NEO Personality Inventory (NEO-PI-R)*.
- Eysenck, H. J. (1966). *Personality and experimental psychology*. Bulletin of the British Psychological Society.
- Eysenck, H. J. (1967). *The biological basis of personality* (Vol. 689). Transaction publishers.
- Eysenck, H. J. (1982). *Personality, genetics, and behavior: Selected papers*.
- Kelly, G.A. (1977). Personal construct theory and the psychotherapeutic interview. *Cognitive therapy and research*, 1(4), 355-362.
- Marsden, D., & Littler, D. (2000). Repertory grid technique—An interpretive research framework. *European Journal of Marketing*, 34(7), 816-834.
- Winter, D. (2013). *Personal construct psychology in clinical practice: Theory, research and applications*. Routledge.
- Bannister, D., & Fransella, F. (2019). *Inquiring man: The psychology of personal constructs*. Routledge.