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Assignment #2: Research Paper

English for the Sciences

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Id, Ego, Superego Influence Personality and Mental Health

Sigmund Freud is the founder of psychoanalysis and made many theories in his time. One of those theoretical concepts is the id, ego, and superego. The theoretical concepts can be associated with one's personality if the id, ego, and superego are at fault. The corrupted ego can "build" one's personality which can correlate with their mental health. One's mental health can be understood from the failure of the ego's responsibility to mediate between the id and superego. If an individual becomes more id-driven or superego-driven it may cause a response to their mental health. Therefore, understanding Freud's concepts of id, ego, and superego are significant in a way to understand the cause of someone's mental health if they do struggle from mental illness and to understand the correlation to their personality.

The id is an individual's primal instincts. The id wants immediate gratification with the main objection to just have its desired fulfilled without considering if those desires are realistic, logical, or even moral. An individual that is id-driven would express themselves too much to where their actions would be inappropriate and/or destructive. Individuals who are id-driven do not see their actions are being inappropriate but see their actions as either "normal" or have a purpose as to why they are acting that way. Society has created its own norms on how one has to act and anything that does not fall into those norms is seen as crazy or disturbed.

Ego is more practical. Ego decides what is rational, realistic, and *controls* how much of the id's urges are allowed to be expressed. The ego acts as the middle man between the id and superego. Every individual has an id, ego, and superego. The only thing that differs from every individual is some individuals become more id-driven or superego-driven. Their ego is not in check to where it balances between the id and/or superego actions. However, Freud explains this concept in a way that the ego's main responsibility is to satisfy all three factors simultaneously; external factors (reality), id, and superego. Since the ego needs to manage all three factors simultaneously it sometimes fails to do so which is when an individual becomes either more id-driven or superego-driven.

Superego is morality. Superego is the collection of moral lessons that an individual has learned from either society or parents, someone/something that holds authority against them. The superego has the highest set of moral requirements that are made for the individual for them to follow through. Basically, the superego is the guidelines/ rule-book the individual has created within themselves (unconsciously) that writes out how they should act/moral lessons. For instance, someone who is more superego-driven can become an extreme perfectionist and believes they have no room to ever make a mistake or fail.

Although all these concepts are theories by Freud, the concepts may be applied to an individual's personality and mental health. To keep in mind, id, ego, and superego are all unconscious or have unconscious aspects. Someone who has their ego unchecked- unable to balance their id and superego- can become id-driven or superego-driven without even realizing

it. Mental illness, in a way, can act in the same way. Someone who is suffering from mental health may not be able to instantly pinpoint it and may not even realize until the way they act “steps out” of society’s norms. Additionally, when the individual does act out of society’s norms they are seen as “crazy” or “not stable,” without taking into consideration their mental health. Freud’s psychoanalysis theories can also be applied to one’s personality. It may be a plausible statement that the id, ego, and superego can impact one’s personality if their ego is left unchecked. “These are sets of a few personality parts expansive enough to collectively describe the total personality. Examples of such sets include the trilogy of mind (motivation, emotion, and cognition), Freud’s structural set (id, ego, superego)... These groups may be of unrecognized importance in understanding human personality” (Mayer, 2010). Mayer states in his articles that Freuds structural set of id, ego, and superego are important concepts to understand someone’s personality that often isn’t recognized. “Sigmund Freud asserted that the human mind could be divided into three significant components—the id, the ego, and the superego—which work together (or come into conflict) to shape personality. Psychoanalysis emphasizes unconscious motivations and the conflicts between primal urges and learned social mores...”(personality, 2020). An individual’s id, ego, and superego play a part in one’s personality because they almost “dictate” the way someone acts. For instance, someone who is more id-driven starts to act in inappropriate and immoral ways that compromise their personality. “the Id is but a shadow of its former self. The classic Id is the primitive member of the psychical triumvirate that horrifies the civilized Ego and the idealistic Superego by bringing us face to face with our unspeakable urges -- murder, rape, incest, and so forth...” (King, 2002). Hurting someones/something, violate/immoral acts and etc is seen as a proper way to act to the individual since their id is

overpowering their ego and superego. Therefore, these acts are *now* part of their personality and affect their mental health.

In a way, the ego is one of the most significant factors to understand. The ego has to satisfy all three components of reality, id, and superego. The ego would more often fail because satisfying all three factors simultaneously is sometimes close to impossible. The id and superego constantly conflict with each other to control behavior and the ego has to mediate which one gets to express itself. “Ego defense mechanisms (or factors), defined by Freud as unconscious resources used by the ego to reduce conflict between the id and superego, are a reflection of how an individual deals with conflict and stress” (Parekh, et al., 2010). However, if the ego does end up failing to mediate between all three factors, an individual could start developing defense mechanisms to deal with the conflict. Someone who is more superego-driven becomes an extreme perfectionist and becomes fearful to step out of their comfort zone. The individual does not act in any other way than what is seen as morally right in the highest form possible. All these aspects start to become part of the individual’s personality and influence their mental health. Anxiety is a common mental illness that many individuals suffer from.

Individuals who do suffer from an unbalanced ego create their own defense mechanisms. Denial can become one of those defense mechanisms.

“These three forces all have different goals (id, pleasure; ego, reality; superego, morality) and continually strive for dominance, resulting in internal conflict. This conflict produces anxiety. The ego, which functions as a mediator between the two extremes of the id and the superego, attempts to reduce this anxiety by using defense mechanisms. Defense mechanisms are indirect ways of dealing or coping with anxiety, such as explaining

problems away or blaming others for problems. Denial is one of many defense mechanisms. It entails ignoring or refusing to believe an unpleasant reality.” (Ogden, 2010)

As stated before, the ego’s responsibility is to constantly have the id and superego in check but often fails because the factors to do so clash with one another. Someone who is in a constant state of always needing/wanting to be perfect may because they are superego-driven could increase their rates of having anxiety. This need/want to always be perfect has become part of one’s personality unconsciously, therefore may cause their mental state to be compromised. Creating defense mechanisms can also be done unconsciously in a way to “defeat” the anxiety that starts to happen or any other mental illness one would be suffering from.

AUDIENCE #1: (High school/Middle school student academic presentation)

In today's Academic Conference, it will be based on Sigmund Freud's theoretical concepts of id, ego, and superego. It is interesting to learn about these concepts because, in a way, it can be used to determine someone's personality or "explain" their personality. One's personality, if influenced by failed mediation of the ego disrupts the individual's personality it may cause a certain response from their mental health as well. Before we dive in more into personality and mental health based on the id, ego, and superego, it is important to understand these concepts themselves and what happens if one is overpowered by the other.

The id acts off of primal instincts and wants immediate gratification. Any desires the id has it wants to be filled without considering if it is logical, realistic, or moral. Ego is the more practical side. Ego controls how much of the urges of the id are allowed to be expressed by deciding what is realistic and rational. Superego is morality. The superego is a collection of moral lessons that have been learned from parents/society. The superego sets the highest moral requirement for the individual to live by. It is important to understand that id, ego, and superego are all unconscious and/or have unconscious factors to them. Another important factor to remember is the ego has a very important responsibility. The ego has to mediate between the id and superego and determine which gets to express itself. However, the ego also has to satisfy all three factors: external factors (reality), id, and superego. The main problem with this is the ego often fails because these three factors conflict with each other. So it is rather impossible to satisfy factors that do not correspond with each other.

Now to understand what happens when the ego is not able to balance all these three factors and what happens when someone becomes either more id-driven or superego-driven. If

an individual becomes more id-driven they would express themselves too freely up to the point where it is inappropriate, destructive, and seen as wrong by society. If someone is more superego-driven they become a crazy perfectionist who lives by the highest moral requirements which makes it hard for an individual to make any mistakes or fail. These aspects make it possible to understand one's personality and even understand if their mental health is/could be compromised. The constant battle between fighting the urges between the id and superego can unconsciously spike anxiety within someone. However, if the ego becomes overpowered by the id and/or superego, the anxiety can make itself more pronounced, causing a response from their mental health.

To put it in easier terms, the id, ego, and superego can compromise one's personality and mental health if the ego does not successfully mediate. It is important to understand these theoretical concepts because it can act as an "explanation" to why one acts a certain way or explain certain things about their personality. Personality also speaks on one's mental health as well. Therefore, if many others are able to understand id, ego, and superego and what happens if the ego does not balance between the two, we would be able to understand mental health through a different lens (even if these are just theories).

AUDIENCE #2: (Poster used in mental health class; an easier way to understand)



The image above can illustrate Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theories of id, ego, and superego. On the left side of the individual's head is the Id saying "I want it now!". This basically explains what the id is. The id wants all its desires fulfilled regardless of thinking if what it wants is radical. On the right side of the individual's head is the superego saying "You can't have it. It's not right." The superego is the highest set of moral requirements the individual has. These moral requirements are set from outside factors such as society or higher authority. In the middle is ego saying "I need to do a bit of planning to get it". This shows that ego is the practical side between the id and superego that mediates between them too. The ego sets realistic/moral standards. The ego also decided how much of the id and superego urges are allowed to be present, which is why it is using the word "planning".

In addition, the ego needs to satisfy all three of these factors. Since the id and superego's urges are often complete opposites of each other they conflict with one another which causes the ego's mediation to fail. If the ego is not able to satisfy all three of these factors, it causes the ego to be overpowered by the id and superego causing the individual to either become id-driven or superego-driven. If an individual becomes either id-driven or superego-driven, their personality traits start to change causing some type of response from their mental health. If one becomes too id-driven their actions are seen as immoral and incredibly unethical. If one becomes too superego-driven they come incredibly idealist. The highest moral levels control their actions.

Mental health and mental illnesses are real serious concepts. Understanding the theoretical concepts of id, ego, and superego can be applied to understand one's personality and therefore understanding, in a way, why they struggle with their mental health (if they were to). For instance, understanding that a person who is id-driven will act on it and their actions will be inappropriate or a person who is superego-driven will not see failing or stepping outside of their moral principles as "normal" and will nevertheless do so. Although these concepts are theoretical, they still apply some type of correlation between one's personality and their mental health and these concepts should be more recognizable.

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