

LESSON 1

INTRODUCTION TO PSYCHOLOGY

WHAT IS PSYCHOLOGY?

The term *psychology* dates back to 1693 (*The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*). Psychology is the science that studies the behavior of humans and animals as they experience the changes and the flow of physical and social events within the environment. The role of the psychologist is to understand and explain behavior.

Perhaps some people would say that psychology is not a science since it is not exact. The hope of the psychologist is that, by studying man's (mankind's) behavior, it might be possible to understand more fully the nature of man: how he learns; what allows him to remember and create; how he communicates; what motivates him to succeed and try new and different activities; how he shows emotion and what causes the changes in the body as the emotion occurs; and how the organism called mankind develops. Psychology as a field of study strives to gain an understanding of the addictive behaviors, such as those caused by alcohol, drugs and even the dependency on other people. The psychologist looks at the altered states of consciousness such as sleep and hypnosis. The scope of psychology is as broad and diverse as the people who study it.

WHY STUDY PSYCHOLOGY?

As we said earlier the focus of psychology is on understanding behavior. To fully understand behavior we first must look at the behaviors and then describe them. From the observations it may be possible to formulate a hypothesis or tentative explanation as to why a particular behavior occurs. From this it may be possible to predict future behaviors and thus control or change future behavior. Several years ago while working in a residential facility for the emotionally handicapped, I was asked to work with a nine-year-old girl. Her problem behavior was that she chewed her fingers until they bled. The goal was to change this behavior. The procedure was to observe the child and chart her behaviors. For example, in a thirty-minute period of observation how many times did the child's fingers touch her face, how often did they touch her mouth and how often were they put in the mouth and actually chewed? (This is an abbreviated description of the observation.) Once the data was gained we could then begin a process of predicting when the behavior occurred, and then slowly change the behavior using various behavioral techniques. The goal was to describe, understand, predict and then change the behavior. To understand the behavior I then asked when it

Psychology is the science that studies the _____
_____ of _____
and _____ as they experience _____.

(behavior, humans, animals, changes)

The role of the psychologist is to _____
_____ and _____
_____.

(understand, explain behavior)

Give six things the psychologists hope to learn by studying man's behavior.

(Compare your answers with the text)

To understand behavior we first must look at the _____
_____ and then _____
them.

(behaviors, describe)

The main goal of behavioral techniques is to _____
_____, _____, _____,
and _____ behavior.

(describe, understand, predict, change)

occurred. Did the chewing behavior occur more when she was with other children or when alone? Did it occur in a stress-producing situation or when sitting quietly watching television? The major question was: were there certain situations in which this behavior occurred more often than in other situations?

Much of psychology is applicable to daily living. How do you motivate a child to spend more time studying? What does one do to stop temper tantrums in children (study of emotion)? Is it normal, developmental behavior for a teenager to rebel? Is it possible to learn to speak if there is damage to the left hemisphere of the brain? How is information from a burnt hand sent to the brain and then reacted to? We are still learning many things about the human body and its behaviors. Psychology as we know it today is a relatively new science, dating back to 1879 and the work of Wilhelm Wundt.

PRELUDE TO THE HISTORY OF PSYCHOLOGY

Dualism

Even though psychology is a relatively new science its origins go back a long way. One of the first contributors to the field was a seventeenth-century French mathematician and philosopher by the name of René Descartes. His writing in the areas of scientific theory and methodology have been an important tool to the sciences. He argued in favor of the concept of *dualism*. The concept of dualism holds that there are two distinctly different substances in the universe: mind, and body or matter. Mind cannot occupy space and matter, and the physical body cannot think. He suggested that there was a connection between the mind and the body which made interaction possible. This connection he named the *pineal*. Another of Descartes' contributions was the concept of the *reflex*. He believed that reflexes did not require the use of the mind but instead were automatic responses.

Empiricism

Empiricism, the pursuit of truth through observation and experience, was suggested by John Locke, an English philosopher. He believed that a baby is born with a mind which needs to be moulded by experience. Simple ideas and experiences are then moulded into more complex form which provides the experience of learning. John Berkeley carried this thought further. He thought that man must learn how to perceive his environment. These two men were trying to add the element of *reason* to the human mind and the way man learns.

Other Contributions

Other contributions were made by such men as Johannes Müller, a German physiologist, who studied the functions of the nervous system, and Paul Broca, who performed an autopsy on the brain of a stroke victim. From

Psychology dates back to _____ and the work of _____.

(1879, Wilhelm Wundt)

One of the first contributors to psychology was a French _____ and _____ named _____. He argued in favor of the _____ of _____.

(mathematician, philosopher, René Descartes, concept, dualism)

MATCH the following:

reflex	mind and body
dualism	connects mind-body
pineal	automatic response

(compare your answers with the text)

Empiricism is the _____ of _____ through _____ and _____.

(pursuit, truth, observation, experience)

John Berkeley thought man must learn how to _____ his _____.

(perceive, environment)

his work Broca learned about the cerebral cortex and the speech centers of the brain. Two German physiologists, Gustav Fritsch and Eduard Hitzig mapped the functions of the brain through the use of electrical stimulation. Ernst Weber, another German, studied human sensations and proposed the idea of the "just-noticeable difference." Gustav Fechner used this principal to study and measure perception. As you have probably noticed, much of the early work was done in Germany, probably because of the excellent university systems available there at the time. During that time in Germany being the "professor" was thought to be a reputable occupation.

HISTORY OF PSYCHOLOGY

Structuralism

Psychology had its beginnings in Germany during the late nineteenth century. In the city of Leipzig a man by the name of Wilhelm Wundt moved psychology into the laboratory. Wundt is considered to be the "father" of psychology. The son of a Lutheran pastor he attended school in Baden, Germany, then went to the University of Tübingen. From there he went to Heidelberg where he studied and later received a degree in medicine. From Heidelberg he went to Zurich and then on to Leipzig where he spent the next forty-six years. In his laboratory Wundt used experimental self-observation to study conscious experience.

Wundt's strong interest in the area of sensory experience led him to the field of psychology. His work was the basis for the school of psychology known as *structuralism*. The structuralists viewed psychology as human experience which could best be studied from the perspective of the experiencing person. They studied the what, how and why of personal experience. For example, looking at an orange, the structuralist would experience the color, shape, texture and weight of the object. A limitation of structuralism is that people experience differently. For example, if four people were to observe an orange, their experiences would be somewhat different. One might describe the color as being yellowish; another might describe it as a red-orange combination; someone else might say it is round; while another might say the shape is oval.

E. B. Titchener, a student of Wundt's in Leipzig, was an American psychologist at Cornell University. He translated much of Wundt's important work and became the leader in the field of structuralism in the United States. The structuralist worked to analyze experience and reduce it to its basic building blocks. Much important work in the field of psychology is based on personal experience and perceptions, even though there are differences in the way people perceive any experience. Psychologists continue to study the differences in people, how they learn, perceive and experience.

Much of the early work was done in the country of _____.

(Germany)

_____ moved psychology into the laboratory. He is considered to be the _____ of _____.

(Wilhelm Wundt, father, psychology)

Wundt used _____ to study _____.

(experimental, self-observation, conscious experience)

Structuralists study the _____, _____, and _____ of personal _____.

(what, how, why, experience)

_____ became the leader in the field of structuralism in the United States.

(Titchener)

Structuralists worked to _____ experience and reduce it to its _____.

(analyze, basic building blocks)

Memory

Hermann Ebbinghaus, a German, was a pioneer in the research on *memory*. He attended the Universities of Bonn, Halle and Berlin. After reading Fechner's "Elemente de Psychophysik" he used nonsense words to measure memory and forgetting. Other contributions made by Ebbinghaus were the principle of variable errors and the graph to show the rate of forgetting. The principle of variable errors, quite simply, is the process by which observations are made at various intervals and the levels of forgetting are then measured and averaged.

Functionalism

William James, an American psychologist and philosopher, helped to broaden the scope of psychology and prepare the way for other points of view within the field. He was a functionalist. *Functionalism* was the first of the major schools of psychology which criticized structuralism. James studied how the mind and behavior function to help man adapt to the environment. James and other functionalists used introspection and experimentation to study the mind. The functionalists emphasized the importance of learning and encouraged psychologists to become involved in improving education. This school of thought promoted the use of psychology in industry.

Behaviorism

Behaviorism, founded by John Broadus Watson, said that psychology "is a purely objective branch of natural science." The goal of behaviorists is to predict and control behavior. Watson was born in Greenville, South Carolina. At the age of fifteen he entered Baptist University, and in 1903 he graduated from Chicago University. He considered behavior to be the result of the interaction of heredity and environment. Later in his life he judged conditioning, or learning, to be more important than heredity. Conditioning is the process by which learning takes place through antecedent events or consequences. Learning will be discussed further in Lesson 2.

Watson observed the interaction between stimuli and responses. From this observation he learned a great deal about the causes of behavior and the process of learning.

Behavior Modification

Two well-known behaviorists, Ivan Pavlov and B. F. Skinner, worked with the concept of *conditioned response*. Their work has led to the form of psychotherapy known as *Behavior Modification*. Pavlov was a Russian who worked with classical conditioning, that is, learning which takes place as a result of antecedent events. This will be discussed further in the lesson on learning. Skinner worked with the learning that occurs as a result of consequences, that is, learning from the results of one's behavior.

Ebbinghaus made a graph to show the _____ of

(rate, forgetting)

James studied how the _____
and _____ function to help man _____
to the _____.

(mind, behavior, adapt, environment)

MATCH the following:

Wundt	memory
Locke	dualism
Descartes	father of psychology
Ebbinghaus	empiricism
Müller	nervous system

(Compare your answers with the text)

The goal of behaviorists is to _____ and
_____ behavior.

(predict, control)

Behaviorist John Broadus Watson considered behavior to be the result of interaction of _____ and _____ . He ultimately decided that _____ is more important than _____ .

(heredity, environment, conditioning, heredity)

Pavlov and Skinner's work in the area of _____ led to psychotherapy known as _____ .

(conditioned response, behavior modification)

Gestalt Psychology

Max Wertheimer was also a major force in the history of psychology. He was one of the originators of *Gestalt* psychology. As a response to the earlier schools of thought the German psychologist thought it was not wise to reduce events to their elements. Instead, he believed that one should observe "the whole." The German word for "the whole" is *Gestalt*, meaning the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. This concept was carried into the field of psychotherapy by Frederick Perls.

Psychoanalysis

The history of psychology would not be complete without mentioning one of the best known and most controversial names in the field, Sigmund Freud. An Austrian neurologist, Freud developed his own theory of human behavior. He believed that we can observe only a small portion of the mental life of a person, and that a vast amount of resources, drives, desires and motives lie at the unconscious level. Freud analyzed his own dreams. He said whatever came into his own mind, and from this he began to learn about the inner world of the unconscious mind. *Psychoanalysis*, Freud's approach, looks for the source of behavior in unconscious motivation, drives and conflict. Carl Jung, Alfred Adler and Otto Rank, referred to as the Neo-Freudians, broke away from Freud because of this deterministic and limited concept of human nature.

The Existential-Humanistic Approach

The *existential-humanistic* approach to psychology brings us into the present. The group who supported this approach objected to the negativism which they saw in psychoanalysis and behaviorism. This approach focuses on the human condition, that is, the freedom to make decisions within limitations: freedom with responsibility. The existential-humanistic perspective considers it important that people become aware of the present time, choose to live in the present and take responsibility for their choices in the present. People such as Carl Rogers, Viktor Frankl, and Abraham Maslow can be considered a part of the humanistic field of psychology.

The existential approach has been regarded by some groups as being self-centred and self-serving. However, a study of the whole aspect of the approach makes it clear that all freedoms come with certain responsibilities and consequences, depending on what circumstances exist at the time.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE HISTORY OF PSYCHOLOGY

Why look at the past from which the field of psychology came? The goal of the authors of this work is not to convince you that any one field of psychology is right.

A German psychologist named _____

_____ believed that one should observe "_____."

(Max Wertheimer, the whole)

The famous Austrian researcher Sigmund Freud analyzed his own _____. Through his research, he learned about the _____ of the _____.

(dreams, inner world, unconscious mind)

Name three men known as Neo-Freudians.

(Compare your answers to the text)

Existential humanists objected to the _____ which they saw in _____ and _____. They called for _____ with _____.

(negativism, psychoanalysis, behaviorism, freedom, responsibility)

Name three men in the humanistic field of psychology.

(Compare your answers with the text)

The existential approach has been regarded by some as _____ and _____.

(self centered, self serving)

Instead, our goal is to present you with the history in order that you might better understand how such a new science has developed up to the present time.

A sequence can be seen as we look at the history and see how what has been learned about perception, learning, addictions, the functioning of the brain, the nervous system and the body has grown over the years. Mysteries still go undiscovered pertaining to the mind, both conscious and unconscious. However, as we look at what is known, we can use it to gain insight into how behavior, learning, memory and emotion occur. From this information we can learn how to effect change.

A difficulty that arises when one studies human experience and the mind is that one mind is studying another. Therefore, the learning which occurs comes from a mind studying and experiencing a similar entity.

WORKERS IN THE FIELD OF PSYCHOLOGY

Who does what within the field of psychology is often misunderstood. For example, what does the psychiatrist do that is different from the psychologist? How does the psychoanalyst compare to the psychotherapist? Each title carries different education and career possibilities.

The Psychiatrist

The *psychiatrist* is a medical doctor with a specialization in psychiatry or in the study of abnormal behavior and psychotherapy. The psychiatrist is able to treat the physical or medical causes of emotional problems, as well as offer counseling for behavioral problems. A patient diagnosed with major depressive episodes may be treated with medications such as Lithium or Norpramin which are prescribed by a physician or psychiatrist. This is done in conjunction with therapy, which may call for the patient to work with a psychologist or counselor as well as make visits to the psychiatrist or physician for medication checks. The medications would need to be prescribed and followed by a physician while the therapist works from the cognitive or behavioral perspective.

The Psychologist

The term *psychologist* dates back to 1727 (*The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*). The psychologist will have either a master's degree or more often a doctorate in psychology. The number of years of training and internship beyond the master's degree depends in many cases on specific requirements of the different licensing bodies or upon state rules and regulations. Psychologists may do psychotherapy, psychological testing (testing of personality, intelligence, ability, interests), research, consultation with business and industry, or they may teach, depending on their area of interest. Some psychologists find a combination of the alternatives to be the most desirable.

There are still mysteries pertaining to the _____,
both _____ and _____.

(*mind, conscious, unconscious*)

Name three types of workers in the field of psychology.

(*Compare your answers with the text*)

Are the following statements true or false?

The psychiatrist is a medical doctor. _____

Psychologists are not allowed to do psychological testing. _____

(*true, false*)

The Psychoanalyst

Another professional working in psychology is the *psychoanalyst*. The psychoanalyst is either a medical doctor or a person with a doctorate with specialized training in Freudian psychoanalysis. The doctorate or master's degree in a related field such as family therapy, counseling or social work would also allow someone to work in the mental health field.

Other Specialists

A variety of other specializations are also available: the drug and alcohol abuse counselor, working mainly with addictions; the vocational counselor who does vocational testing and evaluation; and the psychotherapist whose focus is on private practice.

CAREERS IN PSYCHOLOGY

Students in psychology seem to be intrigued with the mind and how it functions. They have many questions about human behavior and why people do what they do. They also have their own belief system which gives them many answers, some accurate and others not so accurate, regarding human behavior. One question always seems to arise: "What do psychologists do and where do they work?"

The Clinical Psychologist

First, let us look at the clinical psychologist, the professionally trained counselor, and the marriage and family therapist. This group of professionals usually work in private mental health clinics addressing the issues of adjustment problems, abnormal behavior, behavior problems and problems which can be treated on an outpatient basis. Most patients who come for therapy on an outpatient basis are "stuck" in a pattern of behavior that does not meet their needs. Their goal for therapy is to get "unstuck" and learn new behaviors. More information regarding the work of the clinical psychologist is available in Lesson 12, Treatment Methods.

Some psychologists, counselors and family therapists also work at inpatient treatment facilities. Some inpatient programs are designed to address specific problems such as chemical dependence. Other programs are designed to work with the mentally retarded. Still other programs address the needs of the emotionally disturbed. Inpatient programs are usually reserved for more severe or chronic problems or cases in which the patient might be a danger to himself or other people. Professionals from this group might also work in the hospitals as case workers to help terminally-ill patients as well as their families.

The Industrial Psychologist

The industrial psychologists work in business and industry. Their job is to deal with issues associated with

Psychology students are intrigued with the _____
and how it _____.

(mind, functions)

Name at least six problems which workers in psychology address.

(Compare your answers with the text)

Inpatient programs are reserved for cases with more _____ or _____ problems.

(severe, chronic)

The _____ psychologists work in business and industry.

(industrial)

management, training of employees, employee mental health, and industrial productivity. Part of their job is to work with the employees and the companies to find new ways to increase productivity, morale and relationships among people. The industrial psychologist also looks at the whole atmosphere of the industry to see how the atmosphere, the physical as well as the emotional environment, affects production.

The Educational Psychologist

Educational psychologists study how people learn. They look at the problems associated with learning disabilities and other learning problems. They work with teachers to give them information on how better to teach students with special needs. They also are involved in psychological testing and evaluation of students, helping to determine whether or not students are working up to their full potential and whether or not students are working at grade level. Lessons 2 and 3 address the questions of how learning takes place and how learning is committed to memory. These two lessons will be of special interest to readers interested in the field of social psychology.

The Consumer Psychologist

The consumer psychologists look at how and why people buy the products they use. An important question addressed by this group is: What motivates people to buy certain products? Lesson 5 on motivation addresses some of these topics regarding why people are motivated to act or behave in certain ways.

The Sports Psychologist

Especially after watching events such as the Olympics on television, we become aware of the impact of the sports psychologist. Sports psychologists look for ways to improve performance and enhance participation in sports activities. They also address such topics as handling stress and identifying the optimum stress level for creating good performance. They look at the role of emotion and how it affects performance and the effect of distractions upon performance. This field of psychology is presently growing.

The Social Psychologist

The social psychologist looks at the individual in his social environment. At the same time the psychologist looks at the interrelationships between people. How do people act when in groups? What are the group dynamics and the pressures that come from being in a group? What are the pressures involved when someone wants to join a particular group? The social psychologist studies the causes of prejudice and aggression. Lesson 10 should offer the reader a greater understanding of social psychology.

The industrial psychologist helps find new ways to _____ .

(increase productivity)

Educational psychologists look at problems associated with _____ .

(learning disabilities)

The consumer psychologist looks at what motivates people to _____ certain _____ .

(buy, products)

Sports psychologists look for ways to improve _____ and enhance _____ in _____ .

(performance, participation, sports activities)

The social psychologist looks at _____ between _____ . They study the causes of _____ and _____ .

(interrelationships, people, prejudice, aggression)

CONCLUSION

The field of psychology is as broad and diverse as the professionals who work in it. Psychologists study the how, why and what of learning and the mind. The mind is the beautiful and complex creation of God. The study of the human mind can be compared to one computer studying another computer. Only as much can be learned as can be identified and understood by the one who is observing and studying.

We study psychology so that we can better understand, predict and control or change human behavior. When God created people He also gave them the ability to choose their behavior, for better or worse. Thus the role of the psychologist is to better understand why people make some of the choices they make.

The psychologist takes what he or she learns from observations, research and experimentation and applies that information to daily living. Because of the work of psychologists we can know how to teach children more effectively what we want them to learn; we can effect change in business and industry to improve production; we can work toward understanding and improving human relationships and behavior; and we can understand what causes aggression, mental illness and disturbances of conduct. Psychology is the science which opens doors to human understanding, personal growth and knowledge. The Bible makes numerous references to knowledge: knowledge concerning right and wrong, knowledge of God and knowledge of mankind. God created in us a desire to learn, to study and to know.

The field of psychology is _____
and _____.

(broad, diverse)

We study psychology to better _____,
_____, and _____ or change
_____.

(understand, predict, control, human behavior)

The psychologist takes what he or she learns and
applies it to _____.

(daily living)

God created in us a desire to _____, to
_____ and to _____.

(learn, study know)

Home Study Exercise

Basic activity (Levels 1, 2, and 3). Read the study guide and answer the following questions:

1. Define the term "psychology".

2. What is the role of the psychologist?

3. Name six things the psychologist hopes to gain by studying man's behavior.

4. Explain Descartes' concept of *dualism*.

5. What did Descartes believe about "reflex"?

6. Who was Wilhelm Wundt, and what did he contribute to psychology?

7. Explain the view of the structuralists.

8. Explain Ebbinghaus' principle of variable errors.

9. According to behaviorist John Broadus Watson, what is *conditioning*?

10. Discuss the approach of Sigmund Freud to the field of psychology.

11. Discuss the focus of the existential-humanistic approach to psychology.

12. Name three men who are considered a part of the humanistic field of psychology.

13. What is the goal of the authors of this text?

14. What difficulty arises when one studies human experience and the mind?

15. Explain the role and training necessary for each of the following: psychiatrist; psychologist; psychoanalyst.

16. What types of problems do the clinical psychologist, the professionally trained counselor, and marriage and family therapist address?

17. What is the goal of their therapy?

18. Discuss the job of the industrial psychologist.

19. Explain the work of the educational psychologist.

20. What topics do the consumer psychologists address?

21. What is the value of the sports psychologist?

22. Discuss the role of the social psychologist.

Supplementary activity (*Levels 2 and 3*). Read the study guide and the article entitled "Empiricism," pp. 359-361, *Baker Encyclopedia of Psychology* and answer the following questions:

1. What is empiricism?
2. What did the empiricist perspective contribute to psychology?
3. What did the behaviorists believe regarding the motivation for human behavior?

Advanced activity (*Level 3*). Read the following articles in *Baker Encyclopedia of Psychology*: "Psychiatrist," pp. 886-887; "Psychologist," pp. 919-921; and "Psychoanalyst," pp. 892-893. Answer the following questions:

1. What are the reasons for studying psychology?
2. How are a psychiatrist, psychologist and psychoanalyst different in their approach to problems?
3. In what types of work are psychologists involved?

Seminar Discussion

1. Discuss the role of the psychologist.
2. What can the psychologist hope to learn by studying man's behavior?
3. How can psychology be applied to daily living?
4. Discuss the need for psychology in today's society.