

## CHAPTER 2

# Self and Personality

CBSE Class 12 · Psychology · Chapter 2

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### WHAT THIS CHAPTER DOES

**A** Define self, self-concept, self-esteem, self-efficacy, self-regulation.

**B** Map the 5 approaches to personality + their theorists.

Boards prep that builds confidence, not anxiety.

## TODAY'S MISSION

# Today's mission

- 1 Define self, self-concept, self-esteem, self-efficacy, self-regulation.
- 2 Map the 5 approaches to personality + their theorists.
- 3 Nail Freud's id/ego/superego + defence mechanisms + the Big Five.
- 4 Distinguish self-report from projective assessment + score 7/8.

## WHY THIS MATTERS

# Why this chapter matters

- 1 6-8 marks every CBSE board paper — second-heaviest chapter in the paper.
- 2 Foundation for clinical, counselling and organisational psychology.
- 3 Practical: understanding personality differences in study, work and relationships.

TOPIC

**A**

# The concept of self

**THEOREM · LOAD-BEARING RESULT**

# What is the self?

“ The SELF is the totality of a person's conscious experiences, ideas, thoughts and feelings about themselves. It has a dual status: **SELF AS SUBJECT** (the 'I' that actively knows — 'I am a dancer') and **SELF AS OBJECT** (the 'me' that is known and acted upon — 'I am someone who gets hurt easily').

## STATEMENT

The self develops in layers: the **BIOLOGICAL** self (early bodily awareness — 'I am hungry'), the **PERSONAL** self (oriented to personal freedom, achievement, responsibility) and the

## WHY THIS MATTERS

- How we define the self shapes motivation, self-regulation and well-being
- A clear, positive self is linked to confidence and resilience.

## WATCH OUT FOR

**NOTE** Self as SUBJECT ('I') vs self as OBJECT ('me') — keep the knower-versus-known distinction straight.

**WORKED EXAMPLE**

# Four key self-constructs

- 1** SELF-CONCEPT — the descriptive picture of who you are: your beliefs about your attributes and competencies ('I am tall, studious, shy'). Can be global or domain-specific.
- 2** SELF-ESTEEM — the evaluative value-judgement of your own worth ('I value myself highly / poorly'). Domains: academic, social, physical, etc.
- 3** SELF-EFFICACY — (Bandura) belief in your capacity to perform a SPECIFIC task or handle a situation. High self-efficacy → attempt harder tasks, persist longer.
- 4** SELF-REGULATION — the ability to organise and monitor your own behaviour; resisting temptation and delaying gratification ('will-power'). Techniques: observation, self-instruction, self-reinforcement.

TOPIC

**B**

# Culture and the self

**THEOREM · LOAD-BEARING RESULT**

# Western vs Indian notions of the self

“ The WESTERN (individualistic) self is INDEPENDENT — a bounded, autonomous 'I' clearly separated from others and from nature; self-assertion and uniqueness are valued. The INDIAN (collectivist) self is INTERDEPENDENT — its boundary is SHIFTING and POROUS; the self is defined through relationships, family, community and the cosmos.

**STATEMENT**

In the Western view there is a sharp self-other and human-nature dichotomy; in the Indian view the boundary between self and other is fluid, the larger self (atman) is continuous with others, and

**WHY THIS MATTERS**

- Culture shapes what counts as a 'healthy' self — autonomy in the West, harmonious connectedness in India
- Both are valid frameworks.

**WATCH OUT FOR**

**NOTE** Don't equate Indian collectivism with 'having no self'. It is a DIFFERENT, relational organisation of the self, not its absence.

TOPIC

C

# Concept of personality + Type approaches

**THEOREM · LOAD-BEARING RESULT**

# What is personality?

PERSONALITY is the characteristic, relatively **STABLE** and **ENDURING** pattern of thinking, feeling and behaving that makes a person unique and that is fairly **CONSISTENT** across situations and time.

**STATEMENT**

Five major approaches explain it: **TYPE** (discrete categories), **TRAIT** (continuous dimensions), **PSYCHODYNAMIC** (unconscious forces — Freud), **BEHAVIOURAL**

**WHY THIS MATTERS**

- A clear definition separates personality (stable, internal, characteristic) from passing moods or one-off acts.

**WATCH OUT FOR**

**NOTE** Personality is consistent but **NOT** rigidly fixed — it can change with experience, therapy and major life events.

TOPIC

# Sorting people into categories

## HIPPOCRATES — FOUR HUMOURS

The ancient Greek physician Hippocrates proposed that personality and temperament depend on the balance of four bodily fluids or 'humours': blood (SANGUINE — cheerful, sociable), black bile (MELANCHOLIC — sad, brooding), yellow bile (CHOLERIC —

## SHELDON — SOMATOTYPES

William Sheldon linked BODY BUILD to temperament, defining three somatotypes: the ENDOMORPH (soft, round, fat — sociable, relaxed, food-loving), the MESOMORPH (strong, muscular, athletic — energetic, assertive, courageous) and the ECTOMORPH (thin, long,

## FRIEDMAN & ROSENMAN — TYPE A / B

Cardiologists Meyer Friedman and Ray Rosenman distinguished TYPE A personalities — competitive, impatient, time-pressured, hostile, high-achieving — from TYPE B personalities — relaxed, patient, easy-going, non-competitive. Type A was linked to higher risk of coronary

## INDIAN TRIGUNA

The classical Indian (Samkhya / Ayurvedic) approach classifies personality by the dominance of three GUNAS or qualities present in everyone in differing proportions: SATTVA (purity, cleanliness, truthfulness, wisdom, self-control, detachment), RAJAS (intense activity, desire

TOPIC

**D**

# Trait approaches

TOPIC

# Placing people on continuous dimensions

## ALLPORT — CARDINAL / CENTRAL / SECONDARY

Gordon Allport defined a TRAIT as a relatively stable, enduring predisposition to behave in a consistent way, and arranged traits by their influence on the person. A CARDINAL trait is so dominant it governs the whole personality and the person becomes known for it (Gandhian

## CATTELL — 16 SOURCE TRAITS (16PF)

Raymond Cattell used FACTOR ANALYSIS to reduce the surface traits people show to 16 underlying SOURCE TRAITS — the basic, stable building blocks of personality (warmth, reasoning, emotional stability, dominance, liveliness, etc.). He built the 16 Personality Factor

## EYSENCK — PEN DIMENSIONS

Hans Eysenck argued personality reduces to a few biologically-based DIMENSIONS, each a continuum. Originally two: EXTRAVERSION-introversion (sociable/outgoing vs quiet/reserved, rooted in cortical arousal) and NEUROTICISM-emotional stability (anxious/moody

## BIG FIVE — OCEAN

The FIVE-FACTOR MODEL (Costa & McCrae), recalled as OCEAN, is the most empirically robust trait model: OPENNESS to experience (imaginative, curious vs conventional), CONSCIENTIOUSNESS (organised, dependable vs careless), EXTRAVERSION (sociable, assertive vs

TOPIC

**E**

# Freud's psychodynamic approach

**THEOREM · LOAD-BEARING RESULT**

# Structure of personality (Freud)



Sigmund Freud proposed that personality is energised by the **LIBIDO** (life instinct) and organised into **THREE** interacting structures: the **ID**, the **EGO** and the **SUPEREGO**, most of whose workings lie in the **UNCONSCIOUS**.

## STATEMENT

**ID** — present at birth, the reservoir of instinctual drives, runs on the **PLEASURE PRINCIPLE** (immediate gratification). **EGO** — the rational executive, runs on the **REALITY PRINCIPLE** (delays

## WHY THIS MATTERS

- Freud was first to systematically argue that much of behaviour is driven by **UNCONSCIOUS** forces and early-childhood experience — foundational for clinical psychology.

## WATCH OUT FOR

**NOTE** Match each structure to its principle: **ID**-pleasure, **EGO**-reality, **SUPEREGO**-morality. They are psychological structures, not brain parts.

**WORKED EXAMPLE**

# Defence mechanisms + psychosexual stages

- 1** DEFENCE MECHANISMS protect the ego from anxiety by distorting reality unconsciously: REPRESSION (burying threatening thoughts), PROJECTION (attributing own impulses to others), DENIAL (refusing a painful reality), REACTION FORMATION (acting the opposite of a forbidden impulse).
- 2** More mechanisms: RATIONALISATION (inventing acceptable reasons), REGRESSION (reverting to childish behaviour), DISPLACEMENT (redirecting an impulse onto a safer target), SUBLIMATION (channelling impulses into socially valued activity — art, sport).
- 3** PSYCHOSEXUAL STAGES — libido focuses on a body zone at each stage: ORAL (0-1, mouth) → ANAL (1-3, toilet training) → PHALLIC (3-6, Oedipus/Electra complex) → LATENCY (6-puberty, dormant) → GENITAL (puberty onward, mature sexuality).
- 4** Fixation at any stage (over- or under-gratification) leaves a lasting mark on adult personality — e.g. an 'oral' personality that is dependent or talkative.

TOPIC

# Beyond Freud

## JUNG — ANALYTICAL PSYCHOLOGY

Carl Jung broke from Freud and emphasised the COLLECTIVE UNCONSCIOUS — a layer of the mind shared by all humanity, containing inherited ARCHETYPES (universal symbolic images such as the hero, the mother, the shadow, the persona, the anima/animus). Jung also coined

## ADLER & HORNEY

Alfred Adler founded INDIVIDUAL psychology, arguing that the master motive is overcoming feelings of INFERIORITY: a normal INFERIORITY COMPLEX in childhood drives STRIVING FOR SUPERIORITY, while excessive inferiority produces maladjustment. Karen Horney challenged Freud's male bias

## ERIKSON — PSYCHOSOCIAL STAGES

Erik Erikson extended Freud across the WHOLE life span with EIGHT PSYCHOSOCIAL stages, each posing a crisis to resolve: trust vs mistrust, autonomy vs shame, initiative vs guilt, industry vs inferiority, IDENTITY vs role-confusion (adolescence — the most cited), intimacy vs

## BEHAVIOURAL APPROACH

The BEHAVIOURAL approach (Skinner, Pavlov, Watson) rejects unconscious structures entirely and treats personality as nothing more than LEARNED RESPONSE PATTERNS — stable habits acquired through classical and operant CONDITIONING and reinforcement. Personality is the sum of

TOPIC

**F**

# Humanistic approach

**THEOREM · LOAD-BEARING RESULT**

# Rogers and Maslow — the growth view

“ The HUMANISTIC approach views personality positively, emphasising free will, conscious experience and the innate drive toward growth and SELF-ACTUALISATION (realising one's full potential), in deliberate contrast to Freud's pessimism and the behaviourists' determinism.

## STATEMENT

Carl ROGERS distinguished the **REAL SELF** (who you actually are) from the **IDEAL SELF** (who you wish to be); a large gap causes maladjustment. Growth requires **UNCONDITIONAL**

## WHY THIS MATTERS

- The humanistic view reframed personality around human potential and well-being, and underpins client-centred counselling and positive psychology.

## WATCH OUT FOR

**NOTE** Congruence between the real self and ideal self signals adjustment; a wide gap signals distress — keep the two 'selves' straight.

TOPIC

**G**

# Assessment of personality

## TOPIC

# Three families of methods

### SELF-REPORT (OBJECTIVE) MEASURES

SELF-REPORT inventories present standardised statements that the person rates as true/false or on a scale; scoring is OBJECTIVE against a fixed key. The MMPI (Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory) screens for clinical/psychopathological

### PROJECTIVE TECHNIQUES

PROJECTIVE techniques present AMBIGUOUS stimuli so the person PROJECTS unconscious motives and conflicts; interpretation is subjective and qualitative. The RORSCHACH INKBLOT TEST (Rorschach, 1921) uses TEN inkblots and asks what each might be. The TAT (Morgan &

### BEHAVIOURAL ANALYSIS

BEHAVIOURAL methods assess personality through what a person actually DOES rather than what they say about themselves. The INTERVIEW gathers information through structured or unstructured face-to-face questioning. OBSERVATION (naturalistic or

### CHOOSING A METHOD

No single method is complete, so psychologists TRIANGULATE — combining objective self-report (for breadth and standardisation), projective tests (for unconscious depth) and behavioural analysis (for real-world action). Self-report is reliable but vulnerable to faking:

## TOPIC

# id / ego / superego as 'parts of the brain'

### TRAP → TRUTH

× **MISTAKE** The id, ego and superego are three physical parts of the brain.

✓ **CORRECT** They are HYPOTHETICAL psychological STRUCTURES, not brain regions. ID = unconscious reservoir of instinctual drives, runs on the PLEASURE PRINCIPLE (immediate gratification). EGO = rational executive, runs on the REALITY PRINCIPLE (delays gratification, mediates). SUPEREGO = internalised moral standards / conscience (the MORALITY PRINCIPLE). Personality = the dynamic balance among the three.

TOPIC

# Big Five vs 16PF count

TRAP → TRUTH

× **MISTAKE** Cattell proposed the Big Five.

✓ **CORRECT** CATTELL identified 16 SOURCE TRAITS (the 16PF questionnaire). The BIG FIVE / OCEAN model (Costa & McCrae) is a SEPARATE, LATER five-factor framework: Openness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness, Neuroticism. Don't attribute the Big Five to Cattell or the 16 factors to Costa & McCrae.

## TOPIC

# Type vs trait

## TRAP → TRUTH

× **MISTAKE** Type and trait approaches are the same thing.

✓ **CORRECT** TYPE approaches sort people into DISCRETE CATEGORIES (e.g. Type A vs Type B; endomorph/mesomorph/ectomorph; the three gunas). TRAIT approaches place people on CONTINUOUS DIMENSIONS (e.g. high-to-low extraversion). Types are boxes; traits are sliders. The trait approach is generally considered more scientific because real people fall on continua, not into boxes.

## TOPIC

# Projective tests are 'objective'

### TRAP → TRUTH

- × **MISTAKE** Projective techniques like the Rorschach give objective, clear-cut scores.
- ✓ **CORRECT** PROJECTIVE techniques present AMBIGUOUS stimuli (inkblots, vague pictures) on the assumption that the person PROJECTS their unconscious onto them. They are deliberately UNSTRUCTURED, interpretation is SUBJECTIVE, and reliability/validity are debated. The 'objective' label belongs to SELF-REPORT measures (MMPI, 16PF) with fixed scoring keys.

## TOPIC

# Self-esteem = self-concept

### TRAP → TRUTH

× **MISTAKE** Self-concept and self-esteem mean the same thing.

✓ **CORRECT** SELF-CONCEPT is the DESCRIPTIVE picture you hold of yourself ('I am tall, studious, shy') — the sum of beliefs about your attributes. SELF-ESTEEM is the EVALUATIVE judgement of your own worth ('I value myself highly/poorly'). Concept = description; esteem = value judgement. SELF-EFFICACY (Bandura) is a third, distinct idea: belief in your capacity to succeed at a SPECIFIC task.

TOPIC

# Rorschach vs TAT

## TRAP → TRUTH

× **MISTAKE** The Rorschach and the TAT are the same projective test.

✓ **CORRECT** RORSCHACH (Hermann Rorschach, 1921) = TEN INKBLOTS (5 black-and-white, 2 black-and-red, 3 coloured); the person says what each could be. TAT (Thematic Apperception Test; Morgan & Murray, 1935) = a set of AMBIGUOUS PICTURE CARDS about which the person tells a STORY. Inkblots vs story-telling pictures — don't swap them.

## TOPIC

# Western self = Indian self

### TRAP → TRUTH

- × **MISTAKE** The Western and Indian notions of the self are essentially the same.
- ✓ **CORRECT** The WESTERN self is largely INDIVIDUALISTIC / INDEPENDENT — a bounded, autonomous 'I' clearly separated from others and from nature. The INDIAN (collectivist / interdependent) self has a SHIFTING, POROUS boundary — the self is defined through relationships, family, community and even the cosmos, and the larger self (atman) is continuous with others. Self-restraint and harmony are valued over self-assertion.

TOPPER TEMPLATE · MARK-BY-MARK

# 5-mark: 'Explain Freud's structure of personality (id, ego, superego) and any three defence

**1** **SETUP**  
0.5 m

Sigmund Freud's PSYCHODYNAMIC theory holds that personality arises from the dynamic interaction of THREE structures operating largely in the UNCONSCIOUS, energised by the libido (life instinct).

**2** **ID**  
1 m

ID — the most primitive structure, present from birth, the reservoir of instinctual drives (sex, aggression). It operates on the PLEASURE PRINCIPLE: it demands immediate gratification with no regard for reality or morality. It is entirely UNCONSCIOUS.

**3** **EGO**  
1 m

EGO — the rational, executive structure that develops to deal with the real world. It operates on the REALITY PRINCIPLE: it postpones gratification until a realistic, socially acceptable outlet is found. The ego mediates between the demands of the id, the superego, and external reality.

**4** **SUPEREGO**  
1 m

SUPEREGO — the moral arm of personality, the internalised standards of parents and society (conscience + ego-ideal). It operates on the MORALITY PRINCIPLE, striving for perfection and producing guilt when standards are violated. Personality = the balance Freud's ego maintains among id, superego and reality.

**5** **THREE DEFENCE MECHANISMS**  
1.5 m

When the ego is overwhelmed by anxiety it uses DEFENCE MECHANISMS that distort reality unconsciously: (1) REPRESSION — pushing anxiety-provoking thoughts into the unconscious (forgetting a traumatic event); (2) PROJECTION — attributing one's own unacceptable impulses to others ('he hates me' when I hate him); (3) DENIAL — refusing to accept a painful reality (a patient insisting a terminal diagnosis is wrong). Others: reaction formation, rationalisation, regression, displacement, sublimation.

TOPPER TEMPLATE · MARK-BY-MARK

# 5-mark: 'Describe the five-factor (Big Five / OCEAN) model of personality.'

**1** **SETUP**  
0.5 m

The FIVE-FACTOR MODEL (Costa & McCrae), commonly recalled by the acronym OCEAN, holds that personality can be described along FIVE broad, continuous dimensions on which every person can be placed.

**2** **O + C**  
1 m

OPENNESS to experience — imaginative, curious, original, interested in variety vs conventional and routine-bound. CONSCIENTIOUSNESS — organised, responsible, dependable, achievement-striving vs careless and impulsive.

**3** **E + A**  
1 m

EXTRAVERSION — sociable, talkative, assertive, energised by others vs introverted, reserved, quiet. AGREEABLENESS — warm, cooperative, trusting, helpful vs hostile, competitive, suspicious.

**4** **N**  
1 m

NEUROTICISM (emotional instability) — anxious, moody, tense, easily upset vs calm, secure, emotionally stable. The opposite pole is sometimes called 'emotional stability'.

**5** **SIGNIFICANCE + COMPARISON**  
1.5 m

Each factor is a CONTINUUM, not a category, so the model is a TRAIT (not type) approach. The Big Five emerged from the 'lexical hypothesis' and factor analysis, and is the most empirically robust and cross-culturally replicated trait model, building on the earlier work of Allport, Cattell (16 factors) and Eysenck (extraversion-neuroticism-psychoticism).

TOPPER TEMPLATE · MARK-BY-MARK

# 5-mark: 'What are projective techniques? Describe the Rorschach and the TAT.'

**1** **DEFINE PROJECTIVE TECHNIQUES**

1 m

PROJECTIVE techniques assess personality by presenting AMBIGUOUS or UNSTRUCTURED stimuli; the assumption is that the person PROJECTS their own unconscious motives, conflicts and feelings onto the stimulus. The stimulus, instructions and responses are all relatively open-ended; interpretation is largely SUBJECTIVE and qualitative.

**2** **RORSCHACH INKBLOT TEST**

1.5 m

The RORSCHACH INKBLOT TEST (Hermann Rorschach, 1921) uses TEN inkblot cards — five black-and-white, two with black and red, three multicoloured. They are shown one at a time and the person reports what each blot might be. Responses are scored on location, determinants (form, colour, movement), content and originality to infer personality.

**3** **TAT**

1.5 m

The THEMATIC APPERCEPTION TEST (Morgan & Murray, 1935) uses a series of black-and-white PICTURE CARDS depicting ambiguous social situations. The person tells a STORY about each card — what is happening, what led up to it, what the characters feel, and how it ends. The themes that recur reveal needs, motives and conflicts. (The Indian adaptation is Uma Chowdhary's TAT.)

**4** **OTHER EXAMPLES + CRITIQUE**

1 m

Other projective tests: Rosenzweig's Picture-Frustration Study, the Sentence Completion Test, and the Draw-a-Person Test. Projective tests are valued for accessing the UNCONSCIOUS but criticised for LOW reliability and validity and dependence on the examiner's skill, unlike objective self-report inventories.

## PYQ PATTERNS

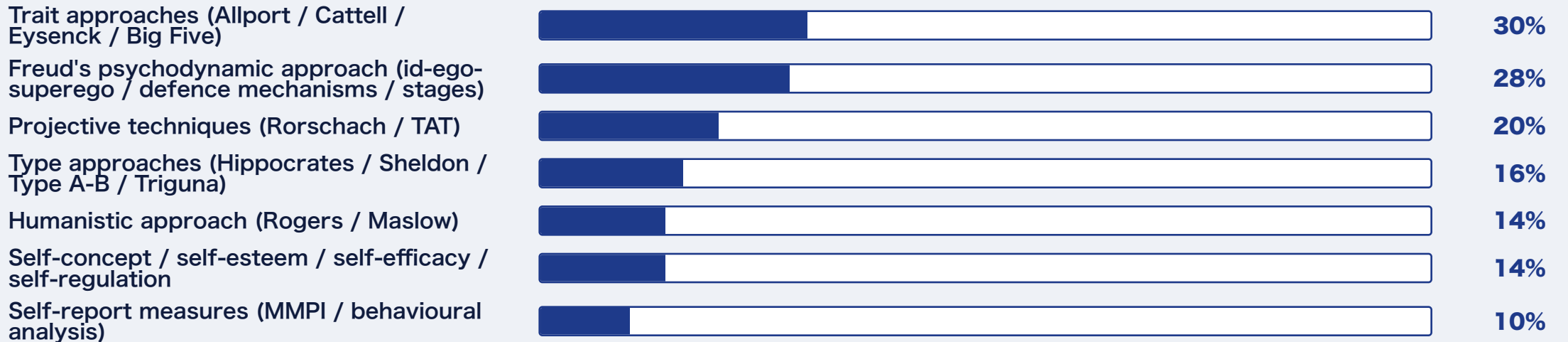
# Top PYQ patterns to drill

#1	Explain Freud's structure of personality (id, ego, superego). Add defence mechanisms. (5 marks)	Annual
#2	Describe the Big Five (OCEAN) factors of personality. (5 marks)	2019, 2021, 2023, 2024
#3	Explain projective techniques. Describe the Rorschach and TAT. (5 marks)	Most years
#4	Distinguish self-concept from self-esteem; define self-efficacy and self-regulation. (3 marks)	Annual
#5	What is the Indian (Triguna) approach to personality? (3 marks)	2018, 2022, 2024

## MARKS DISTRIBUTION

# 10-year marks distribution

### 10-YEAR PYQ MARKS DISTRIBUTION



**RECAP · MEMORISE THESE**

# Recap

**1** Self — Self-concept (description) · self-esteem (value) · self-efficacy (Bandura, task-belief) · self-regulation. Western = independent; Indian = interdependent/porous.

**2** Approaches — Type (Hippocrates/Sheldon/Type A-B/Triguna) · Trait (Allport/Cattell-16PF/Eysenck-PEN/Big-Five-OCEAN) · Psychodynamic (Freud id-ego-superego) · Behavioural · Humanistic (Rogers/Maslow).

**3** Assessment — Self-report objective (MMPI, 16PF, EPQ) · Projective (Rorschach 10 inkblots, TAT story cards) · Behavioural analysis (interview, observation, nomination, ratings).

**WHAT'S NEXT**

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# What's next

- Chapter 3 — Meeting Life Challenges (stress + coping).
- Sit the 15-MCQ Quick Drill.
- Then the full Board-Pattern Paper — 26 marks.

# You've mapped the self and every theory of personality.

Freud + OCEAN + projective tests — now prove it.

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