

# THEORIES OF HUMAN BEHAVIOUR IN SOCIAL WORK



How individuals develop cognitive functioning and learn through acting on their environment.

- Imitation & reaction to stimulate and shape behavioral learning.
- Knowledge is constructed by children through physically and mentally acting on objects.
- Intelligence is an evolutionary, biological adaptation to environment.
- Cognitive structures enable adaptation and organization.



- Behavioral interventions such as classical or operant conditioning, positive or negative reinforcement.

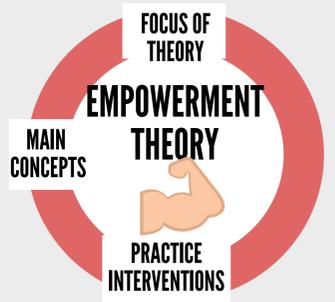
- Time-limited, problem-focused interventions.

- Cognitive reframing of automatic thoughts about presenting problems to facilitate change.



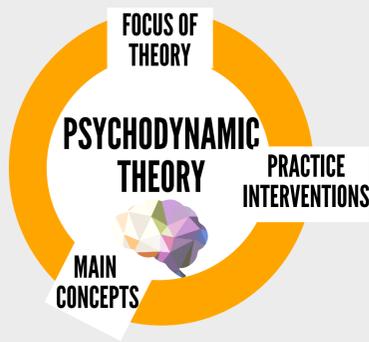
How people manage to gain more control over their lives, either by themselves or with the help of others

- Power over one's life is an innate requirement of human psycho-social well-being. Powerless people will attempt to regain power (often in dysfunctional ways).
- Powerlessness is contra-indicated for psycho-social well-being.
- Power/powerlessness is behaviourally, emotionally psychologically and cognitively manifested.



- First, analyse where power and powerlessness lie in relation to the issue and events.
- Then work with the individual to apply knowledge and skills in functional way and work with other systems to respond appropriately.

How inner energies and external forces interact to impact emotional development.



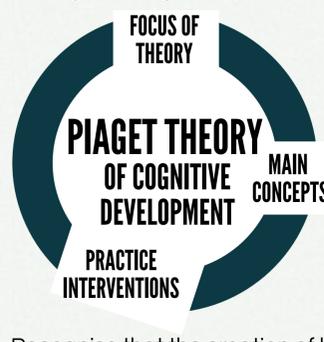
Ego supportive treatment:

- Clarification, education, & support of adaptive functioning.
- Empathy & attention to affects and emotions.
- Understanding of ego defense mechanisms & underscoring of ego strengths.
- Establishing, building, & using the treatment relationship to facilitate change.

- Unconscious and conscious mental activity motivate human behaviour
- Ego-related functions mediate between individual and environment
- Ego defense mechanisms protect individuals from becoming overwhelmed by unacceptable impulses and threats



How children go through a series of 4 key stages of cognitive development



- Stages of cognitive development: (1) sensori-motor, (2) pre operational, (3) concrete operational, (4) formal operational.
- Recognition that children's thinking process and conclusions are qualitatively different to those of most adults.
- Presence of a logical relationship between the 'wrong' answer children arrive at and the thinking process used - 'internal logic'.

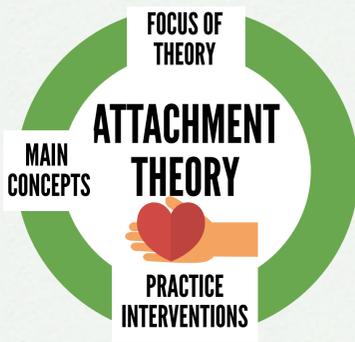
- Recognise that the creation of knowledge and intelligence is an inherently active process.
- Provide a rich and supportive environment for the child to grow and learn.
- Peg lessons to the child's cognitive level



## CONTINUED...

Our ability to give and to receive love/compassion/empathy from others.

- Innate human drive to form a primary attachment with another person(s).
- Attachment relationship is qualitatively different from all other relationships-emotive intensity.
- Types of attachment relationships: secure attachment, insecure ambivalent, insecure avoidance, insecure disorganized/disorientated.



- Recognise that maltreated children are much more likely to exhibit insecure attachment patterns



Life is divided into 8 stages where a socio-developmental 'crisis' occurs.

How our personality develops in a series of 8 stages.

Erikson's Stage Theory in its Final Version			
Age	Conflict	Resolution or "Virtue"	Culmination in old age
Infancy (0-1 year)	Basic trust vs. mistrust	Hope	Appreciation of interdependence and relatedness
Early childhood (1-3 years)	Autonomy vs. shame	Will	Acceptance of the cycle of life, from integration to disintegration
Play age (3-6 years)	Initiative vs. guilt	Purpose	Humor; empathy; resilience
School age (6-12 years)	Industry vs. inferiority	Competence	Humility; acceptance of the course of one's life and unfulfilled hopes
Adolescence (12-19 years)	Identity vs. Confusion	Fidelity	Sense of complexity of life; merging of sensory, logical and aesthetic perception
Early adulthood (20-25 years)	Intimacy vs. isolation	Love	Sense of the complexity of relationships; value of tenderness and loving freely
Adulthood (26-64 years)	Generativity vs. stagnation	Care	Caritas, caring for others, and agape, empathy and concern
Old age (65-death)	Integrity vs. Despair	Wisdom	Existential identity; a sense of integrity strong enough to withstand physical disintegration



- Resolution of each 'crisis' stage enables the individual to move forward to the next stage.
- Completing each stage successfully ("mastery of a stage") helps in the development of ego identity.

- Apply stages of development to lifespan of the individual to understand them.

How the concept of 'loss' has significant explanatory power in relation to human experiences.



- Desire to attach is the primary psychological directive of the human state.
- Ascription of meaning to attachment objects/and the loss of the object is the central organizing principle of life.
- Symbolic meaning is the more powerful motivating force in attachment and loss reactions.

- Identify the meaning of the 'love object' and find alternative 'love objects' and structures of meaning.

- Assess the structure of meaning in the person's life and rebuild new structures of meaning - purpose, attachment, regularity, conceptual coherence.



- Symptoms of depression and distress abate. Person begins to respond to people around in a more normal manner.
- Person begins to invest emotional energy in the present or in planning the future.
- Final stage of grieving ends when the person returns to an active life in the present.

- Characterised by expressions of despair and futility, listlessness, withdrawal, generalised lack of interest in others and the surrounding.

- Person often cannot be comforted.



- The loss can no longer be denied. First emotional response is anger.

- Anger may be directionless or directed at a person or object thought to be responsible for the loss.

- Guilt, blaming others and recriminations are common.

- Person attempt to regain control and to prevent the finality of the loss.

- Person may "resolve to do better" from now on.

- Person may try to bargain with whomever they thought to have the power over the situation.

- Children may believe that certain ways of thinking or behaving would prevent the loss.