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## UNIT- II

### **Self from a Developmental Perspective:**

#### **STRUCTURE:**

- Objectives
- Ideas of William James
- M.Lewis
- Mead
- Cooley
- Robert Kegan
- Carl Rogers
- Refocus

#### **Objectives:**

After reading the various topics of this unit, you would be able to:

- Understand self from a developmental perspective.
- Understand the various theoretical perspectives of self.
- Differentiate between various approaches to the study of self.

### **William James' Theory of Self**

William James was an American philosopher, Psychologist, and a leading thinker of the late nineteenth century, one of the most influential philosophers of the United States. James' theory of the self, divided a person's mental picture or components of self into two categories: the "Me" and the "I". The "Me" can be thought of as a separate object or individual a person refers to when describing their personal experiences; while the "I" is the self that knows who they are and

what they have done in their life. Both concepts can be used in the statements like; "I know it was me who ate the cookie." He called the "Me" part of self the "empirical me" and the "I" part "the pure Ego". For James, the "I" part of self was the thinking self, which could not be further divided. He linked this part of the self to the soul of a person, or what is now thought of as the mind. Educational theorists have been inspired in various ways by James's theory of self, and have developed various applications to curriculum, teaching theory and practice.

**Pure Ego:** It is what James refers to as the "I" self. For James, the pure ego is what provides the thread of continuity between our past, present, and future selves. The pure ego's understanding of consistent individual identity arises from a continual stream of consciousness. James believed that the pure ego was similar to what we think of as the soul, or the mind. The pure ego was not a substance and therefore could not be examined by science.

James further divided the "Me" part of self into: a material, a social, and a spiritual self, as below.

- **Material self:**

The material self consists of things that a person have or entities/institutions that a person belongs to. Thus, things like the body, family, clothes, money, and such make up the material self. For James, the core of the material self was the body. Second to the body, James felt a person's clothes were important to the material self. He believed a person's clothes were one way they expressed who they felt they were; or clothes were a way to show status, thus they contribute to form and maintain one's self-image. Money and family are critical parts of the material self. James felt that if one lost a family member, a part of who they are was lost also. Money figured in one's material self in a similar way. If a person had significant money and then lost it, who they were as a person changed as well.

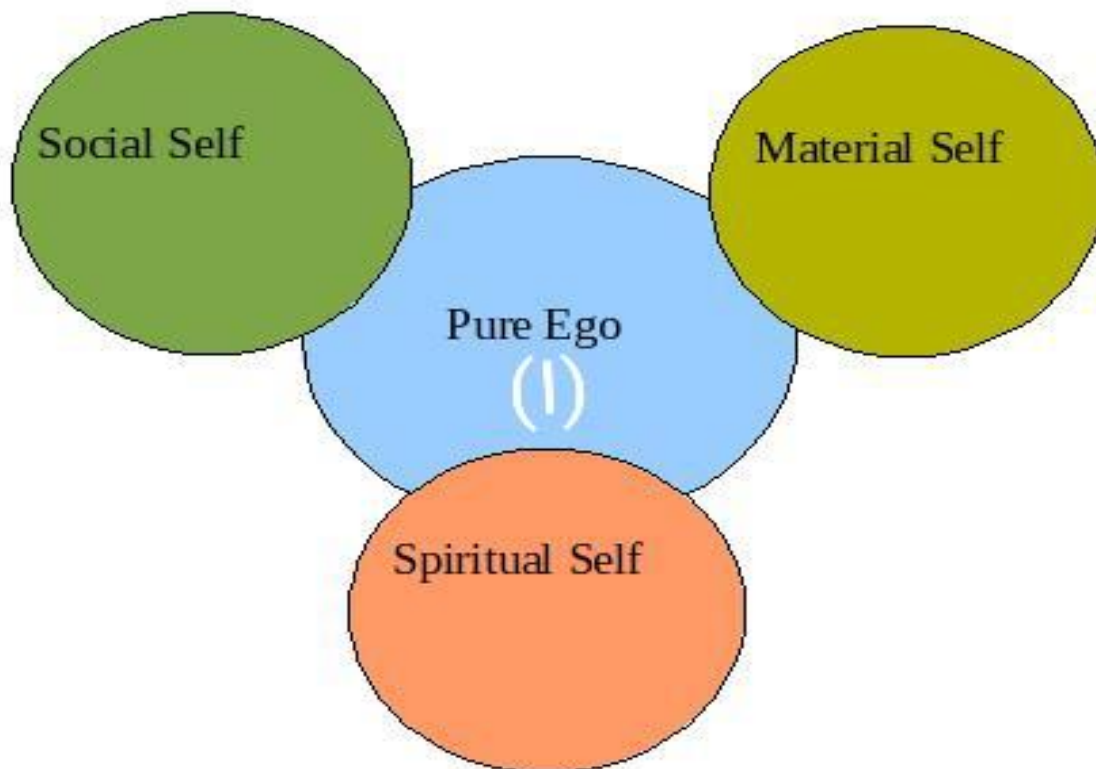
- **Social self**

Our social selves are who we are in a given social situation. For James, people change how they act depending on the social situation that they are in. James believed that people had as many social selves as they had social situations they participated in. For example, a person may act in a different way at work when compared to how that same person may act when they are out with a group of friends. James also believed that in a given social group, an individual's social self

may be divided even further. An example of this would be, in the social context of an individual's work environment, the difference in behavior when that individual is interacting with their boss versus their behavior when interacting with a co-worker.

- **Spiritual self**

For James, the spiritual self was who we are at our core. It is more concrete or permanent than the other two selves. The spiritual self is our subjective and most intimate self. Aspects of a spiritual self, include things like personality, core values, and conscience that do not typically change throughout an individual's lifetime. The spiritual self involves introspection, or looking inward to deeper spiritual, moral, or intellectual questions without the influence of objective thoughts. For James, achieving a high level of understanding of who, we are at our core, or understanding our spiritual selves is more rewarding than satisfying the needs of the social and material selves.



## **Conclusion**

## **Refocus**

- What are the two components of “Self” as described by William James.
- Pure ego refers to which part of the Self.
- The “Me” component of the Self is divided in how many Categories.

- **Michael Lewis: Development of self**

Michael Lewis is University Distinguished Professor of Pediatrics and Psychiatry at RRWJ Medical school. His research has focused on typical and atypical emotional and intellectual development. By focusing on the normal course of development, he has been able to define the sequence of developmental capacities of the child in regard to its intellectual growth and relate this to changes in the organization of its central nervous system functioning. His discoveries of techniques to measure Central Nervous System functioning, through the use of the habituation-dis-habituation method are widely used and have become the standard measurement system used to predict atypical growth as well as typical development. Using these measurement instruments, he has been able to develop computer-based techniques for enhancing intellectual ability in children suffering from a variety of disorders associated with developmental delays. These include children with Down syndrome, preterm infants, and children with cerebral palsy.

- **Self-concept:**

The self-concept is an important term for both social and humanistic psychology. Lewis (1990) suggests that development of a concept of self has two aspects:

(1) **The Existential Self**

This is 'the most basic part of the self-scheme or self-concept; the sense of being separate and distinct from others and the awareness of the constancy of the self'.

The child realizes that they exist as a separate entity from others and that they continue to exist over time and space.

According to Lewis awareness of the existential self begins as young as two to three months old and arises in part due to the relation the child has with the world. For example, the child smiles and someone smiles back, or the child touches a mobile object and sees it move.

## **(2) The Categorical Self**

Having realized that he or she exists as a separate experiencing being, the child next becomes aware that he or she is also an object in the world.

Just as other objects including people have properties that can be experienced (big, small, red, smooth and so on) so the child is becoming aware of him or herself as an object which can be experienced and which has properties.

The self too can be put into categories such as age, gender, size or skill. Two of the first categories to be applied are age (“I am 3”) and gender (“I am a girl”).

In early childhood the categories children apply to themselves are very concrete (e.g., hair color, height and favorite things). Later, self-description also begins to include reference to internal psychological traits, comparative evaluations and to how others see them.

So, the development of the self has two major features. In the first, the infant has to differentiate itself from others. We see this process as completed by the time the infant is capable of maintaining a persistent representation of itself (by the age of 2). This self-other differentiation we have called the existential self. The second major feature of self-development is the acquisition of categories of self. We suspect that some of these categories are common in all species - for example, gender or age - while others are highly different that are a function of culture and developmental level. The development of these categories has begun to be studied and can be considered to form part of what we call social cognition. we would argue that social cognition, that is, cognition about the self, others and the relationship of the self to others, comes before cognition. Indeed, it may well be the case that social cognition is a necessary condition for the subsequent development of other forms of cognition. The development of the categorical self needs further exploration; nevertheless, certain categories appear early (within the first 2 years) and it is these which help, direct and control subsequent interactions. For example, Lewis et. al (1979) have recently argued that the acquisition of gender identity, a self-category acquired early is the important determinant of

subsequent sex-role behavior since the young child utilizes that information, both about itself and others, to affect its behavior, (in this case) to be like same-sex people and not like opposite sex people. The consistencies in gender identity and how same-gender people behave are themselves developmentally linked. Nonetheless, the early acquisition of the self-category of gender, facilitates the process of sex-role behavior. While gender as a self-category appears relatively consistent over the life span, other categories of self and others change, some to be replaced by new categories, others to give way to more complex forms of the same or similar categories. The social or biological forces involved in these categories are not yet clear, however, it is to the self-construction of these categories of self and others that developmental inquiry must be addressed.

### **Refocus:**

- What are the Typical and Atypical emotional & intellectual development?
- Explain the Habituation and Dis-Habituation method.
- What was Lewis's method of enhancing intellectual and emotional abilities of children suffering from a variety of disorders associated with developmental delays.
- What are the two aspects of self-concept from Lewis's perspective.

## **George Herbert Mead's Theory of 'Self'**

George Herbert Mead, a sociologist from the late 1800s, is well known for his theory of the social self, which includes the concepts of 'self,' 'me,' and 'I. Mead's work focuses on the way in which the self is developed. Mead's theory of the social self is based on the perspective that the self emerges from social interactions, such as observing and interacting with others, responding to others' opinions about oneself, and internalizing external opinions and internal feelings about oneself. The social aspect of self is an important distinction because other sociologists and psychologists of Mead's time felt that the self was based on biological factors and

inherited traits. According to Mead, the self is not there from birth, but it is developed over time from social experiences and activities.

George Herbert Mead suggested that the self develops through a three-stage role-taking process. These stages include the preparatory stage, play stage, and game stage.

- **Stage 1: The Preparatory Stage**

The first stage is the preparatory stage. The preparatory stage lasts from the time we are born until we are about age two. In this stage, children mimic those around them. This is why parents of young children typically do not want you to use foul language around them. If your two-year-old can “read,” what he or she has most likely done is memorized the book that had been read to him or her.

- **Stage 2: The Play Stage**

From about age two to six, children are in the play stage. During the play stage, children play pretend and do not adhere to the rules in organized games like soccer or freeze tag. Have you ever played a game with children of this age? It is far easier to just go with any “rules” they come up with during the course of the game than trying to enforce any “rules” upon them. During this stage, children play pretend as the significant other. This means that when they play house, they are literally pretending to be the mommy or the daddy that they know. Or they try to imitate their teachers by playing teacher's role in their plays.

### **Stage 3: The Game Stage**

The third stage is the game stage, which is from about age seven onwards. In this stage, children can begin to understand and adhere to the rules of games. They can begin to play more formalized games because they begin to understand other people's perspective—or the perspective of the generalized other. In this stage, when children play pretend, they may still play house but are pretending to a mommy or a daddy independent of the one that resides in their home. The generalized other refers to the viewpoint of the social group at large. The child begins taking this perspective into account during this stage.

- **Development of Self**

According to Mead, three activities develop the self: language, play, and games.

- **Language:** Language develops self by allowing individuals to respond to each other through symbols, gestures, words, and sounds. Language conveys others' attitudes and opinions toward a subject or the person. Emotions, such as anger, happiness, and confusion, are conveyed through language.
- **Play:** Play develops self by allowing individuals to take on different roles, pretend, and express expectation of others. Play develops one's self-consciousness through role-playing. During role-play, a person is able to internalize the perspective of others and develop an understanding of how others feel about themselves and others in a variety of social situations.
- **Games:** Games develop self by allowing individuals to understand and adhere to the rules of the activity. Self is developed by understanding that there are rules in which one must abide by in order to win the game or be successful at an activity.
- **Two Sides of Self: Me & I**

According to Mead's theory, the self has two sides or phases: 'me' and 'I.'

The 'me' is considered the socialized aspect of the individual. The 'me' represents learned behaviors, attitudes, and expectations of others and of society. This is sometimes referred to as the generalized other. The 'me' is considered a phase of the self that is in the past. The 'me' has been developed by the knowledge of society and social interactions that the individual has gained. It is formed up of all the experiences that we gain in our life.

The 'I', therefore, can be considered the present and future phase of the self. The 'I' represents the individual's identity based on response to the 'me.' The 'I' says, 'Okay. Society says I should behave and socially interact one way, and I think I should act the same (or perhaps different),' and that notion becomes self.

The 'me' and the 'I' have a controlling relationship, like a system of checks and balances. The 'me' exercises societal control over one's self. The 'me' is what prevents someone from breaking the rules or boundaries of societal expectations. The 'I' allows the individual to still express creativity and individualism and understand when to possibly bend and stretch the rules that govern social interactions. The 'I' and 'me' make up the self.

In other words, the "I" is the response of an individual to the attitudes of others, while the "me" is the organized set of attitudes of others which an individual



assumes. The “me” is the accumulated understanding of the “generalized other,” i.e. how one thinks one’s group perceives oneself. The “I” is the individual’s impulses. The “I” is self as subject; the “me” is self as object. The “I” is the knower, the “me” is the known. The mind, or stream of thought, is the self-reflective movements of the interaction between the “I” and the “me. ” These dynamics go beyond selfhood in a narrow sense, and form the basis of a theory of human cognition. For Mead the thinking process is the internalized dialogue between the “I” and the “me. ”

Understood as a combination of the “I” and the “me,” Mead’s self proves to be noticeably entwined within a sociological existence. For Mead, existence in a community comes before individual consciousness. First one must participate in the different social positions within society and only subsequently can one use that experience to take the perspective of others and become self-conscious.

Mead believed that people develop self-images through interactions with other people. He argued that the Self, which is the part of a person’s personality consisting of self-awareness and self-image, is a product of social experience. He outlined four ideas about how the self develops:

1. The Self Develops Solely Through Social Experience. Mead rejected Freud’s notion that personality is determined partly by biological drives.
2. Social Experience Consists Of The Exchange Of Symbols. Mead emphasized the particularly human use of language and other symbols to convey meaning.
3. Knowing Others’ Intentions Requires Imagining The Situation From Their Perspectives. Mead believed that social experience depends on our seeing ourselves as others do, or, as he coined it, “taking the role of the other.”
4. Understanding the Role of the Other Results In Self-Awareness. Mead posited that there is an active “I” self and an objective “me” self. The “I” self is active and initiates action. The “me” self continues, interrupts, or changes action depending on how others respond. Mead believed that the key to self-development is understanding the role of the other.

**Refocus:**

- Explain George Herbert Mead's development of self through social interactions.
- Explain the three stage role taking process in the development of self.
- What are the three activities that develop the self?
- What are the two sides of self in Mead's theory?
- Explain the four ideas about how the self develops.

## **Cooley's Theory of Self**

Charles Horton Cooley was a sociologist who wanted to better understand why human beings behave the way they do. One of Cooley's most important contributions to sociology was his idea that by studying everyday social interactions between people, one could begin to better understand why people behave as they do. This is the basis of the integrationist perspective of sociology. To understand behavior, we must first understand the meanings humans attach to certain situations and, thus, the behavior that is taught to go along with that situation. He believed that societies shape the lives of the people who live within them. Cooley's major contribution to sociology was the study of primary groups. Cooley coined the term 'primary group,' meaning that this is the first group one is introduced to and is the most influential on our learning of ideas, beliefs and ideals. When observing society, Cooley noticed that the more a society became industrialized, the more individualistic the members became. He saw that the people became more distant from each other, more competitive and were losing the connection to traditional family values and that of community. While society has continued to evolve and change even at a more rapid pace, many of the social problems Cooley was concerned with still exist today. However, with Cooley's research, we better understand the importance of social unity and society's influence upon individual Primary Groups.

Like many sociologists, Cooley wanted to understand society better. As mentioned earlier, Cooley found that the more advanced a society became, the more individualistic people became. He witnessed the breakdown of social attachment and traditional family. He believed that it was the small, intimate groups which influenced behavior the most, and with a breakdown of these primary groups, we

also had a breakdown of human behavior. Cooley coined the term primary groups, which is defined as groups characterized by intimate, face-to-face association and cooperation. Primary groups come together for expressive reasons - to provide emotional support, love, companionship and security. It is through these groups that one begins to develop the sense of self. Families are examples of primary groups.

- *The Looking Glass Self*

Cooley is one of the founders of the integrationist perspective, which seeks to explain society by looking at the everyday forms of interaction between individuals. Cooley's theory of self is one in which we learn who we are through our interactions with others. This is known as the looking glass self. This basically means that our self-image comes from our own self-reflection and from what others think of us. Cooley believed that it is through these interactions that one begins to develop an idea of who they are; therefore, the self is a product of our social interactions.

There are three phases to the development of self, according to the looking glass Self theory:

1. We imagine how we present ourselves to others.
2. We imagine how others evaluate us.

We develop some sort of feeling about ourselves based upon our perception of what we think others have of us (other's perception of us). Result is that individuals will change their behavior based on what they feel other people think about them, even if not necessarily true. In this way, social interaction acts as a "mirror" or a "looking-glass," since one's sense of self and self-esteem is built off of others. For example, an individual may walk into a job interview with confidence and attempt to display this confidence. A person in this situation most often examines the reactions of the interviewers to see if they are positively or negatively reacting to it. If the individual notices positive reactions, such as nodding heads or smiles, this might further develop the individual's sense of self-confidence. If the individual notices negative reactions, such as a lack of interest, this confidence in self often becomes shaken and reformed in order to better oneself, even if the perceived judgments were not necessarily true.

From the time they are born, humans define themselves within the context of their social interactions. The child learns that the symbol of his/her crying will elicit a response from his/her caregivers, not only when they are in need of necessities such as food or a diaper change, but also when the child is in need of attention. Cooley best explains this interaction in *On Self and Social Organization*, noting that "a growing solidarity between mother and child parallels the child's increasing competence in using significant symbols. This simultaneous development is itself a necessary condition for the child to adopt the perspectives of other participants in social relationships and, thus, for the child's capacity to develop a social self."

### **3\* Role in social media**

The rise of social media very much reflects the mechanisms of the looking-glass self, as multiple forms of social media offer all different "mirrors" in which individuals present themselves, perceive judgments of others based on likes, follows, etc., and further develop their sense of self. As cyber psychologist Mary Aiken, explains, social media has created a concept named the "cyber self," a version one wishes to portray online and to the public and to others based on the judgments of others. Unlike the real self, different forms of media allow judgments to be clearly posted, so in many cases, judgments may not even need to be imagined. Aiken explains this concept best, noting that "selfies ask a question from their audience: Do you like me in this?"

Far different from face-to-face interactions, social media is intended to be accessible and public at all times. This means social media users are constantly exposed to criticism and judgment from others. Additionally, given the nature of social media, being a platform to share certain aspects of an individual's life at any time and in any means possible, the cyber self can be very easily changed and perfected to fit in the expectations of others.

These aspects of social media and its relationship with the looking-glass self, present a whole range of effects on social media users. Aiken notes that individuals, and particularly teenagers, who are increasingly involved in updating their online personalities, risk damaging the development of their real-world self. She also notes that this effect may be even greater among users who display all different sorts of "cyber selves" among different platforms with different purposes, such as between Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, Tik-tok and LinkedIn. A social media study also found positive effects of the use of social media and in

developing oneself, with dozens of users citing that producing content gave them a sense of self-confidence and self-worth, enhanced their creativity, increased their sense of professionalism, and their platforms offered a positive space to interact with others. The negative effects of the concept of the looking-glass self can be harmful to the people's mentality. The Looking-Glass is Self-Shaming in Borderline Personality disorder, shame is a large factor in the development of Borderline Personality Disorder. The feeling of shame and low self-worth comes from traumatic experiences such as abuse, neglect, abandonment, shaming family situations, and harsh upbringing. The looking-glass self can cause feelings of insufficient self-worth and mental health issues. Self-worth in adolescents is based mainly on their peer's approval of them. In a world of social media, seeking attention and approval from others is how adolescents determine their self-worth. They create an image of themselves they think others will approve of. This is in close relation to the concept of the looking glass self. Adolescents experience anxiety and depression based on a low opinion of self-worth. They base this self-worth from other's opinions of them.

### **Refocus:**

- Explain Cooley's integrationist perspective.
- How societies shape the lives of the people who live within them.
- Explain in detail the role of "primary groups" in the shaping of self.
- Explain the concept of looking Glass self.
- Explain the aspects of social media and its relationship with the looking glass self.

- **Robert Kegan's Theory of Development of Self**

Robert Kegan introduced his theory of self-evolution in 1982 in his book, *The Evolving Self*. The focus of Kegan's (1994) theory is the "evolution of consciousness, the personal unfolding of ways of organizing experience that are not simply replaced as we grow but develop into more complex systems of mind".

Becoming an ‘adult’ means transitioning to higher stages of development. It means developing an independent sense of self and gaining the traits associated with wisdom and social maturity. It means becoming more self-aware and in control of our behavior, as well as increasingly aware of, and better able to manage our relationships and the social factors affecting us.

However, most of us — about 65% of the general population — never become high functioning ‘adults’ and never make it beyond stage 3 (out of all 5 stages). We still lack an independent sense of self because so much of what we think, believe, and feel is dependent on how we think others experience us.

**Before we go into the theory, we need to understand 2 key concepts:**

- **Transformation**

Many of us think that being an adult simply means getting better at what we do (i.e. acquiring more skills and knowledge). Kegan would disagree. According to Kegan, becoming an adult isn’t about learning new things (adding things to the ‘container’ of the mind), it’s about transformation — changing the way we know and understand the world (changing the actual form of our ‘container’).

Transformation is like “personal Copernican shift”. Prior to Copernicus we thought the earth was the center of the solar system. Then Copernicus came along and showed that the sun is at the center. So while nothing physically changed, our entire conception and perception of the world was transformed.

This happens to us all the time. Think, for example, of a book you reread from high school. While the information is the same (same words, same book), the way you experience and understand the book (and the world!) is different every time. This is transformation. It’s only through transformation that we can transition to higher stages of development.

- **Subject -Object Shift**

Transitioning to higher stages requires a subject-object shift — moving what we ‘know’ from Subject (where it is controlling us) to Object (where we can control it).

It’s based on the premise that the more in of our lives we take as Object, the more clearly we can see the world, ourselves and the people in it.

- **Subject (“I AM”)** — Self concepts we are attached to and thus cannot reflect on or take an objective look at. They include personality traits, assumptions about the way the world works, behaviors, emotions, etc.
- **Object (“I HAVE”)** — Self concepts that we can detach ourselves from. That we can look at, reflect upon, engage, control and connect to something else.

For example: Many of us experience a subject-object shift with regards to religion. When we’re young our religion is subjective — i.e. I’m Hindu/Muslim/Sikh or I’m Brahmin/Rajput etc. and dependent on our parents or community. We don’t have the capacity to analyze or question these beliefs. When we’re older, religion becomes more objective — i.e. I’m no longer my beliefs. I am now a human WITH beliefs who can step back, reflect on and decide what to believe in.

### **Six stages:**

**Order0.** Kegan described new-born infants as "living in an objectless world, a world in which everything sensed is taken to be an extension of the infant". As a result, when the infant cannot see or experience something, it does not exist. By the time infants are eighteen months old, they begin to recognize the existence of objects outside themselves, propelling them into the next stage.

**Order1.** Children develop order 1 at about age two, when they realize that they have control over their reflexes and become aware of objects in their environment as independent from themselves. Their thinking tends to be "fantastic and illogical, their feelings impulsive and fluid, [and] their social-relating egocentric" in that they are attached to whatever or whoever is present at the moment. Parents should support their children's fantasies while challenging them to take responsibility for themselves and their feelings as they begin to perceive the world realistically and differentiate themselves from others while moving into order 2.

**Order 2: Instrumental Mind.** Individuals in order 2 are able to construct "durable categories"-classifications of objects, people, or ideas with specific characteristics. As a result, their thinking becomes more logical and organized, their feeling are more enduring, and they relate to others as separate and unique beings. Kegan and others noted that at this time, "rules and sets of directions give shape and structure to one's daily activity". In this order, individuals develop a sense of who they are and what they want. "Competition and compromise" are characteristic themes of the second order and are often played out within peer group settings. Support at

this stage requires confirmation of the person the child has become. Children are encouraged to take into consideration the expectations, needs, and desires of others. Moreover, individuals follow along with rules, philosophies, movements or ideologies because of external rewards or punishments, not because they truly believe in them. For example, a person in Stage 2 won't cheat because they're scared of the consequences, not because it goes against their personal Values .

**Order 3: Socialized Mind.** Cross-categorical thinking-the ability to relate one durable category to another-is evident in the third order of consciousness. As a result, thinking is more abstract, individuals are aware of their feelings and the internal processes associated with them, and they can make commitments to communities of people and ideas. In this order of consciousness, "other people act as sources of internal validation, orientation, or authority". How the individual is viewed by others is of critical importance since acceptance by others is crucial in this order. Support is found in mutually rewarding relationships and shared experiences, while challenge is to become independent and encouraging individuals to make their own decisions and establish independent lives. In Stage 3 the most important things are the ideas, norms and beliefs of the people and systems around us (i.e. family, society, ideology, culture, etc). We get our thoughts, beliefs, morals from external sources. We take too much personal responsibility for how other people experience us. We look for external validation to derive our sense of self. We don't have an independent, strong sense of self. For the first time we begin experience ourselves as a function of how others experience us. For example, we take an external view of ourselves ("They'll think I look stupid") and make it part of our internal experience ("I am stupid").

**Order 4: Self-Authoring Mind:** Cross-categorical constructing-the ability to generalize across abstractions, which could also be labeled systems thinking-is seen in the fourth order of consciousness. In this order, self-authorship is the focus. Individuals "have the capacity to take responsibility for and ownership of their internal authority" and establish their own sets of values and ideologies. Relationships become a part of one's world rather than the reason for one's existence. Support can be given to individual by acknowledgment of his independence and self-regulation. Individuals are encouraged to develop further when significant others refuse to accept relationships that are not intimate and mutually rewarding. We understand that we are a person, with thoughts, feelings and beliefs that are independent from the standards and expectations of our



environment. We can now distinguish the opinions of others from our own opinions to formulate our own “seat of judgment”. We become satisfied with who we are — this is the kind of person I am, this is what I stand for. We develop an internal sense of direction and the capacity to create and follow our own path. We can question expectations and values, take stands, set limits, and solve problems with independent frames of mind. We can explore other thoughts and feelings, creating our own sense of authority or voice. We can take responsibility for our own inner states and emotions. We generate our understanding of the world and realize that we’re always changing, that who we are is something that we can still negotiate.

**Order 5: Self-Transforming Mind:** In this order of consciousness, which is rarely reached and never reached before the age of forty, individuals see beyond themselves, others, and systems of which they are a part to form an understanding of how all people and systems interconnect. They recognize their "similarities and interdependence with others". Relationships can be truly intimate in this order, with nurturance and affiliation as the key characteristics. Only rarely do work environments provide these conditions and long-lasting adult love relationships do not necessarily do so either. Helping people reach self-authorship, the necessary first step on the path to fifth-order. Only 1% of adults reach Stage 5. In Stage 5 one’s sense of self is not tied to particular identities or roles, but is constantly created through the exploration of one’s identities and roles and further honed through interactions with others. We are both self-authoring and willing to work with the authority of others. We are no longer held prisoner by our own identity. We can hold multiple thoughts and ideologies at once.

### **Refocus:**

- Explain the concept of high functioning adults.
- Explain the concept of Transformation.
- What is Subject-Object shift.
- Explain the six stages of Kegan’s theoretical perspectives of self.

## **ROGER'S THEORY OF SELF**

### ***“Becoming a fully functioning person”***

Roger's focus was on human personality. The theory formulated by him played an important role in the emergence of humanistic psychology. It is influential even today. One central assumption of Roger's theory was—

When human beings are left to their own choices, they show many positive characteristics and move toward becoming fully functioning persons. So the most important idea proposed by Rogers is that of a fully functioning person. He believes that fulfillment is the motivating force for personality development or the development of the self. People try to express their capabilities, potentials and talents to the fullest extent possible. There is an inborn tendency among persons that directs them to actualize their inherited nature.

### **Rogers makes two basic assumptions about human behavior-**

- One is that behavior is goal directed and worthwhile.
- The second is that people (who are innately good) will almost always choose adaptive self-actualizing behavior.

Roger's theory grew out of his experiences of listening to patients in his clinic. He noted that self was an important element in the experience of his clients. Thus his theory is structured around the concept of self. The theory assumes that people are constantly engaged in the process of actualizing their true self.

Rogers suggested that each person also has a concept of ideal self. An ideal self is the self that a person would like to be. When there is a correspondence between the real self and ideal self, a person is generally happy. Discrepancy between the real self and the ideal self often results in unhappiness and dissatisfaction.

Roger's basic principle is that people have a tendency to maximize self-concept through self-actualization. In this process, the self grows, expands and becomes more social. Roger views personality development as a continuous process. It involves learning to evaluate oneself and mastering the process of self-actualization. He recognizes the role of social influences in the development of

self-concept. When social conditions are positive, the self-concept and self-esteem are high. In contrast, when the conditions are negative, the self-concept and the self-esteem are low. People with high self-concept and self-esteem are generally flexible and open to new experiences, so that they can continue to grow and self-actualize. This situation warrants that an atmosphere of unconditional positive regard must be created in order to ensure enhancement of people's self-concept. The client centered therapy that Rogers developed basically attempts to create this condition. Rogers suggested that distortions in the self-concept are common, because most people grow up in the atmosphere of conditional positive regards that is they learn that others, such as their parents, will approve of them only when they behave in certain ways and express certain feelings. As a result, many people are forced to deny the existence of various impulses and feelings, and their self-concept becomes badly distorted.

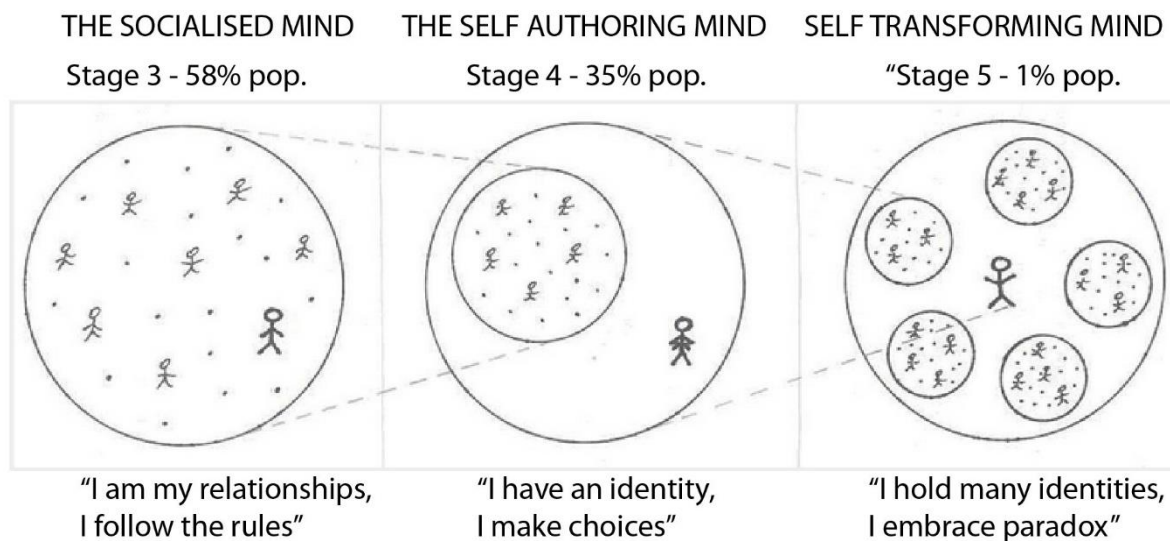
### **WHAT ARE SUCH PERSON'S LIKE?**

Rogers suggested that they are people

- Who strive to experience life to the fullest
- Who live in the here and now
- And who trust their own feelings
- They are sensitive to the needs and rights of others
- But they do not allow society's standards to shape their feelings or actions to an excessive degree.
- Fully functioning people are not saints
- They can---and they do---act in ways they latter regret.
- But throughout life, their actions are dominated by constructive impulses.
- They are in close touch with their own values and feelings and experience life more deeply than most other persons.

If all human beings possess the capacity to become fully functioning persons, why don't they succeed? The answer, Rogers contends, lies in the anxiety generated when life experiences are inconsistent with their ideas about themselves. In short when a gap develops between our self-concept (our beliefs and knowledge about

ourselves) and reality or our perceptions of it people create distorted view of their selves and tend to live in denial.



Excerpt: Constructive Development Theory - Robert Kegan "In Over our Heads"

## Refocus:

- Explain Roger's fully function.
- What are the two basic assumptions of human behavior.
- Explain the role of social influences in the development of self-concept.
- What are the characteristics of Roger's fully functioning persons.
- Explain the concept of socialized mind, the self-authoring Mind and self-transforming Mind.

