

For SPPIPA Netherlands
11 October 2023
With Tony Buckley


Character,
fixation
versus
plasticity



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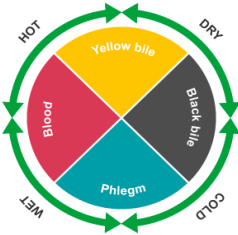
History

- Galen in the 2nd century
- Four humors which contribute to Ethos.
- Ethos translates to Character
- The beginning and end of this journey.



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History begin with Galen 2nd century AD (131-201)




Four humors contribute to formation of character

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Hierarchy of nobility


- Brain.....Intellective soul
- Heart.....Sensitive soul
- Liver.....Vegetative soul



Reisch (1517)

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Durer's melancholia a positive temperament style



Melancholia
Considered a
Positive character


A temperament style

Late others link it to
impairment and more
recently depression

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Other contributors

- Freud 1917 Morning and melancholia
- Bowlby 1977
• The making and breaking of attachment bonds.
- Attachment styles
• Secure, avoidant, ambivalent, disorganized
- Arron Beck: Cognitive triad. Negative view of self, of life around you, of the future.



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History continued

- Wilhelm Reich worked at Sigmund Freud's Psychoanalytic clinic in Vienna in 1922-28 as clinical assistant.
- Moved from bio-psychiatry to sexology and developed own system of body armoring in relation to neurotic functioning.
- First to develop a coherent theory of character. Traits as unitary defense against dangerous emotion.
- Named this character armor.



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Further history

- Lowen studied with him 1940 to 1953.
- 1942 to 1945 Reich was his analyst.
- Out of these experience Lowen developed Bioenergetics.
- With two others Alice Ladas and John Pierrakos created the Bioenergetic Institute in New York.
- Bioenergetics places focus of therapy on the body as an externalization of an internal map.
- Bioenergetics focus on body patterns through stress postures, breathwork, touch release, couch and stool work, hitting energetic practice ball, towel, stretching, grounding and release work of major emotions.



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And a little more: PS/P Pesso system psychomotor

- Albert and Diane Pesso combining dance movement background with former body reading knowledge.
- Therapeutic formula is cycle of becoming: Energy, Action, Interaction, Significance, Internalization.
- As in bioenergetics seeks to discover and restructure areas of deeper psych that are unfulfilled via physical, movement and psychological approach through holding group interactive experience.
- Reparenting work through structures: symbolic stand-in figures roleplay for expression through reenactment.
- Consider Moreno's psychodrama as similar re-con-structions



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Action Systems

•[Action systems] are psychobiological systems that “organize...behaviors by activating or inhibiting motor subroutines and concurrent autonomic-hormonal changes that have proved adaptive in the face of life-challenging circumstances during the evolutionary history of the species”

-Panksepp 1998, p. 49

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Character Strategy

There are a number of contributors to the theory of character as strategy.

These include: Reich, Lowen, Bodella, Lake, Marcher, Kurtz, Ogden

Pat Ogden's Sensorimotor psychotherapy training provides a comprehensive approach for working with character strategy to resolve developmental issues.

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More recent characters

• Hakomi method Ron Kurtz

• Sensorimotor psychotherapy Pat Ogden

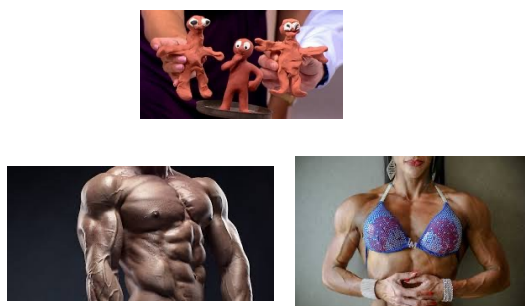
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Morphing through diet and lifestyle



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Sculpting from outside in



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Sculpting from inside out



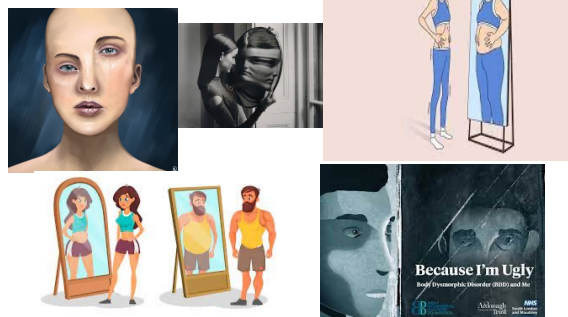
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Mis-matching perceptions societal pressures inside and out



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Body Dysmorphia (BDD) or dysmorphophobia



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Schizoid Character Structure

- Aliveness frozen at core
- Withdrawal from environment almost anesthetized
- Presents fragmented map as though parts ill fitting.
- Mask like face no energy in the eyes.
- Lack of strong positive feelings of security and joy.
- Early caretaker disruption
- Penchant for head over embodied living.
- Belief: closeness threatens existence.



From Alexander Lowen Bioenergetics 1975

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Oral Character Structure

- Orality develops at infancy phase.
- Early deprivation of needs, food, attention, body contact result in deep sadness and grief.
- Being in the world is trying pervading emptiness.
- Unable to be alone, high need for support from the environment.
- Energetically body is underdeveloped with undercharged system.
- Passive pattern of low expectation and difficulty to reach.
- Belief: Warmth and support would be forfeited for independence.

From Alexander Lowen Bioenergetics 1975

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Psychopathic Structure

- Two to four years development conflict with autonomy.
- Mother can not allow differentiation and absence of father emotionally.
- Learn to manipulate and deceive to get what is needed.
- Form acceptable image to survive becoming powerful without feeling.
- Upper body half overdeveloped and charged, watchful telling eyes.
- Control of others and environment imperative.
- Belief: Have to control to be close.

From Alexander Lowen Bioenergetics 1975

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Masochistic Character Structure

- Formed in child exploration of independence versus autonomy.
- Forward will assertions are squashed by parental figures.
- Loved well in other ways at price of compliance and overprotection.
- Lacks privacy and denial of negative feelings.
- Resistance is Modis operandi strategy.
- Withheld energy stuck pattern result in stubbornness and passive aggressive.
- Belief: If I am close to you I cannot be free.

From Alexander Lowen Bioenergetics 1975

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Rigid Character Structure

- Developed around oedipal resolution
- Opposite sex parent dynamic acceptance conflict on love approval.
- Experience heart break and rigidify body as defense.
- Well formed with energetic grace with air of stressed success and pressured achievement.
- Competition driven by passes rose smelling.
- Belief: The head rules the heart stifling freedom.

From Alexander Lowen Bioenergetics 1975

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MBTI

- Myers Briggs Type Indicator
- 16 combinations based on dichotomies
- Extraversion.....Introversion
- Sensing.....Intuition
- Thinking.....Feeling
- Judging.....Perceiving

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KIERSEY

- DAVID KIRESEY'S
- FOUR TEMPERAMENTS

- THE GAURDIAN
- THE ARTISAN
- THE IDEALIST
- THE RATIONAL

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WIDE AS THE OCEAN

This appears to be most scientific

- OPENNESS
- CONCIENIOUSNESS
- EXTRAVERSION
- AGREEABLENESS
- NERUOTICISM



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HEXACO

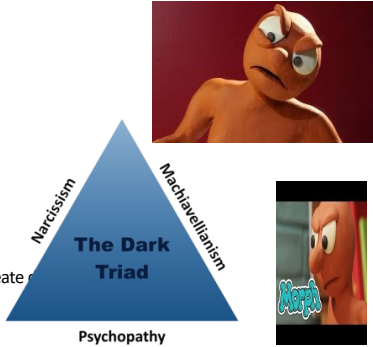


Also studied scientifically in psychology

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DARK SIDE


- Dark triad
- Machiavellianism
- Narcissism
- Psychopathy
- Sadism: added to create



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Enneagram


- Greek for nine and written
- 1. The reformer
- 2. The helper
- 3. The Achiever
- 4. The Individualist
- 5. The Investigator
- 6. The Loyalist
- 7. The Enthusiast
- 8. The Challenger
- 9. The Peacemaker



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Predictive shaping factors continued

- Characteristic
- Personality
- Script
- Schema
- Internal working model
- Representational model



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PREDICTIVE SELF

SPs Adaptive Strategy

- Style
- Pattern
- Habit
- State
- Trait


• Sensorimotor studies, gesture posture, facial expression, energy, movement through mindful attention to all core organisers.

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Sensitive/withdrawn

- Minimises self expression and emotional contact with the world. Pattern reflects fear or threat to survival and core material beliefs, feelings, perceptions will organise around theme of inescapable danger

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Shy people notice everything
but they don't get noticed.

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SW continued

- Traits include withdrawn, shy, prefers isolation, tendency to analyse, theorise, fantasize, may appear cold, without emotion. Movement may be stiff awkward, tense, tight, thin bodied.
- Strengths may include powers of observation, intellectual capacity, writing

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Sensitive/emotional

- In this strategy the person is highly sensitive but instead of withdrawing engages with a fear based emotional intensity. Intensity to relationship fears on the level of danger/catastrophe. Often trauma in infancy underlying. Passionate and preoccupied. Quality of shock and hypervigilant.

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SE Continued

- Traits include intensity in relationship, fearful, forward moving, frenetic, unfocused, uncontained. Bug eyed, body ungrounded, pulled upward, leaning forward.
- Strengths include depth of sensitivity/emotionality, passionate, make very attuned therapist.

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Dependant/endeearing

- Strategy is used in dependant and endearing childlike manner aimed at eliciting support from others. Underlying fear of lack of nourishment and core beliefs, feelings, perceptions become organised around themes of lack, poverty, loneliness, abandonment, loss.

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DE continued

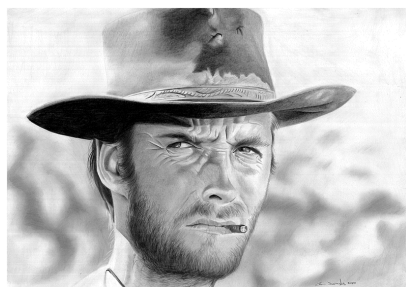
- Traits include propensity to seek help but unable to use it, gives up easily, low expectations, minimizes needs, collapsed posture, thin, soft and low tensioned bodies
- Strengths include high degree of engaging relationship skills/qualities, good at supporting needs of others.

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Self reliant

- Strategy aimed at mobilising self-support and proving self reliance. Early decision to take care of self, never to rely on others. Core material/themes, feelings, perceptions and actions surround going it alone

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SR continued

- Traits include seeks isolation, likes to work alone, active, takes on challenges, does not expect help, thin, strong active body with wide shoulders.
- Strengths
- Hardworking, hi achiever, resourceful, efficient and self sufficient.

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Tough/generous

- A person in this strategy creates impression of being more, tougher, stronger, more intelligent, more in charge and very generous seen to be taking care of others. Pattern reflects a need to avoid vulnerability organising perception, feelings and actions around being in control, respected, authority, using others and being used by them.

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TG continued

- Traits include tendency to secrecy, air of power, authority, need for admiration, inability to be vulnerable showing hurt or weakness, large inflated upper body exaggerated size.
- Strengths include ability to be creative, adventurous, talented, protective and generous.

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Charming/manipulative

- Persons in this pattern use combination of charm, tricks, seduction or manipulation to get what they want or need. The pattern hides authentic need and core material, perceptions feelings and actions are around being attractive, wanted but with underlying concern with being exposed, found out or humiliated.

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CM continued

- Traits include attractive qualities, real charm, sweetness, seductiveness with sexual overtones. Can appear insincere, inauthentic. Lithe, supple movements and attractive body.
- Strengths include charm, relational ability, highly social, entertaining fun to be with.

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Burdened/enduring

- Qualities of this pattern include, bearing up under strain, sense of duty, obligation, resist pressure, endure and outlast, taking on the weight of the world without serious effort to change. Stuck, stubborn resistant and defiant quality. Core material, feelings, actions, perceptions surround themes of guilt, inadequacy, inferiority, lack of expression, being pushed and resistance.

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BE continued

- Traits include feeling stuck, impotent, incompetent, feeling not as good, effective or attractive as others. Martyr quality. Patient dug in quality expecting little or even disappointment. Body tends to be short, thick, compact against pressure.
- Strengths include reliability, enduring coping ability, dutiful with endless patience

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Expressive/clinging

- Quality of dramatizing events and feelings to get and keep attention. Aim to avoid separation. Can be excitable and demonstrative with intensity. Core material organised around themes of separation, rejection, feeling about being loved, cared for, appreciated and attended to. Can have qualities such as girlish, flamboyant, seductive.

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EC continued

- Traits include easily upset and makes a show of this. Can be loud and emotional. Can be caring, motherly especially in ongoing relationships. The body tends to be full and sexually attractive in women.
- Strengths include expressive relationship qualities to engage others, can be attentive to others.

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Industrious/overfocused

- Person of this strategy has propensity of working very hard, persistence and resist distractions. Takes refuge in action. Core material of perception, feeling and action surround themes of perfection, competition, failure, effort and striving. Underlying concern is not to be loved just for oneself.

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Industrious overfocused



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Underlying Beliefs

- Sensitive Withdrawn: I don't belong; it's not safe
- Sensitive Emotional It's not safe to be calm
- Dependent Endearing There's no support; I'm alone
- Self Reliant I have to do it all myself
- Tough Generous I cannot be vulnerable/real
- Charming Manipulative Others will use what I want
 against me
- Burdened Enduring I can't do what I want
- Industrious Over-focused I must perform to be OK
- Expressive Clinging I never get enough attention

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Treatment interventions

- Mindfulness
- Self awareness/insight to strategy
- Interventions to enable clients to become aware of implicit level
- Identifying missing experiences
- Grief for missing experiences
- Clients taking risks to explore new ways of getting needs met in adult relationships

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The End

- Comments
- Questions
- Thank you



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