

Module 8: Personality

Topic 1 Content: Psychoanalytic Theory of Personality Development

Iceberg Analogy



Sigmund Freud compared the human mind to an iceberg.

Most of an iceberg's mass is located under the water.

Only a small percentage of an iceberg is visible above the surface of the water.

Sigmund Freud compared the human mind to an iceberg. As you may know, most of an iceberg's mass is located under the water. Only a small percentage of an iceberg is visible above the surface of the water.

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Top of Iceberg



The top is on the surface of the water, and is easy to see and identify.

Freud believed the conscious mind was responsible for our awareness of ourselves and the world around us.

The conscious mind only represents a small percentage the mind.

The top of an iceberg is on the surface of the water, which makes it easy to see and identify. Freud used this as an analogy for the conscious mind. He believed that the conscious mind was responsible for our awareness of ourselves and the world around us; however, just like the top of the iceberg, the conscious mind only represents a small percentage of the mind.

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Bottom of Iceberg

Freud may argue the real reason for your decisions is connected to your parents.

Perhaps you are unconsciously trying to gain your parents' approval and love.



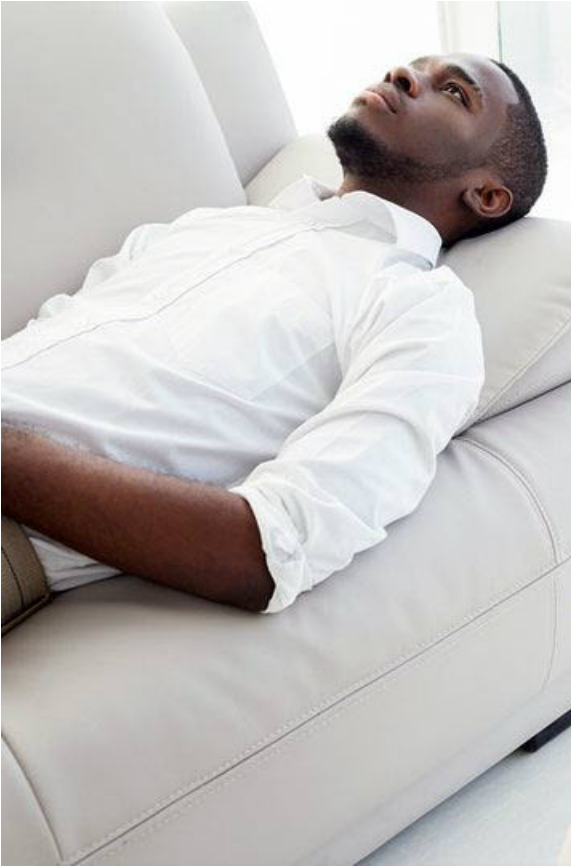
The bottom of an iceberg is much larger than the top, and is hidden below the surface of the water. Freud believed that this resembled the unconscious mind. Although the unconscious mind is actually the dominant part of the mind, we remain unaware of it.

For example, consider why you chose to take certain classes in school. Freud may argue the real reason for your decisions is connected to your parents. Perhaps you are unconsciously trying to gain your parents' approval and love, and by taking certain classes you are attempting to satisfy them.

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Dreams and Free Association



Freud's technique was to have patients relax on the couch and get them to say whatever came to mind.

He believed unconscious thoughts would rise to the surface and be expressed.

Thoughts could then be analyzed and interpreted for hidden meanings.

Freud attempted to uncover and explore the unconscious mind using different methods. He believed dreams were an important key, saying that they were the “royal road to the unconscious mind.” In addition to studying patients' dreams for hidden meanings, Freud also used free association to explore the unconscious mind. In fact, you can credit Freud's free association technique for the couch people lie on during therapy sessions.

Freud's technique was to have patients relax on the couch in his office and get them to say whatever came to mind. He believed one's unconscious thoughts would eventually rise to the surface and become expressed outwardly. Once the thoughts were expressed, they could be analyzed and interpreted for hidden meanings. These revelations would allow the patient to make psychological progress.