

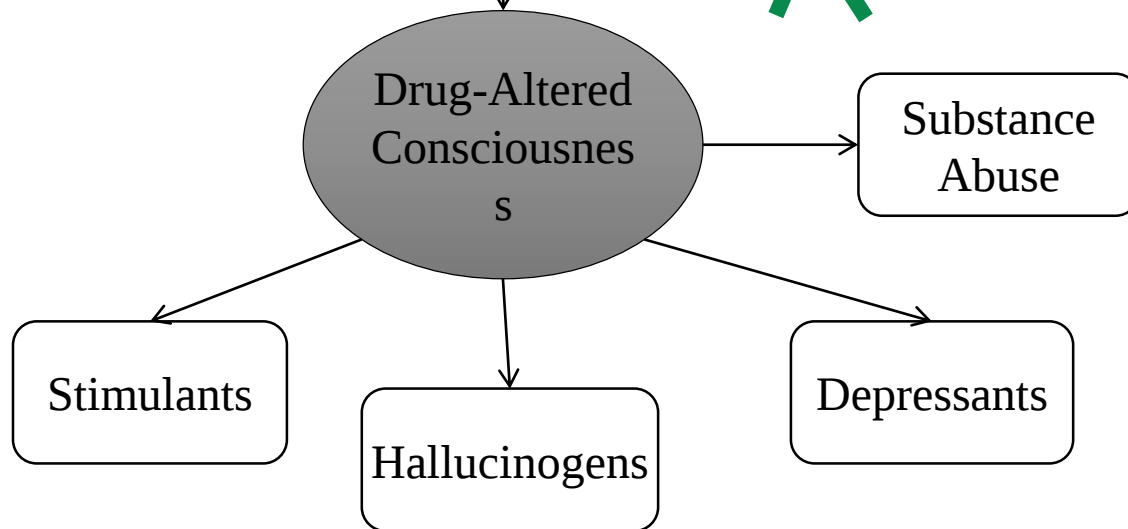
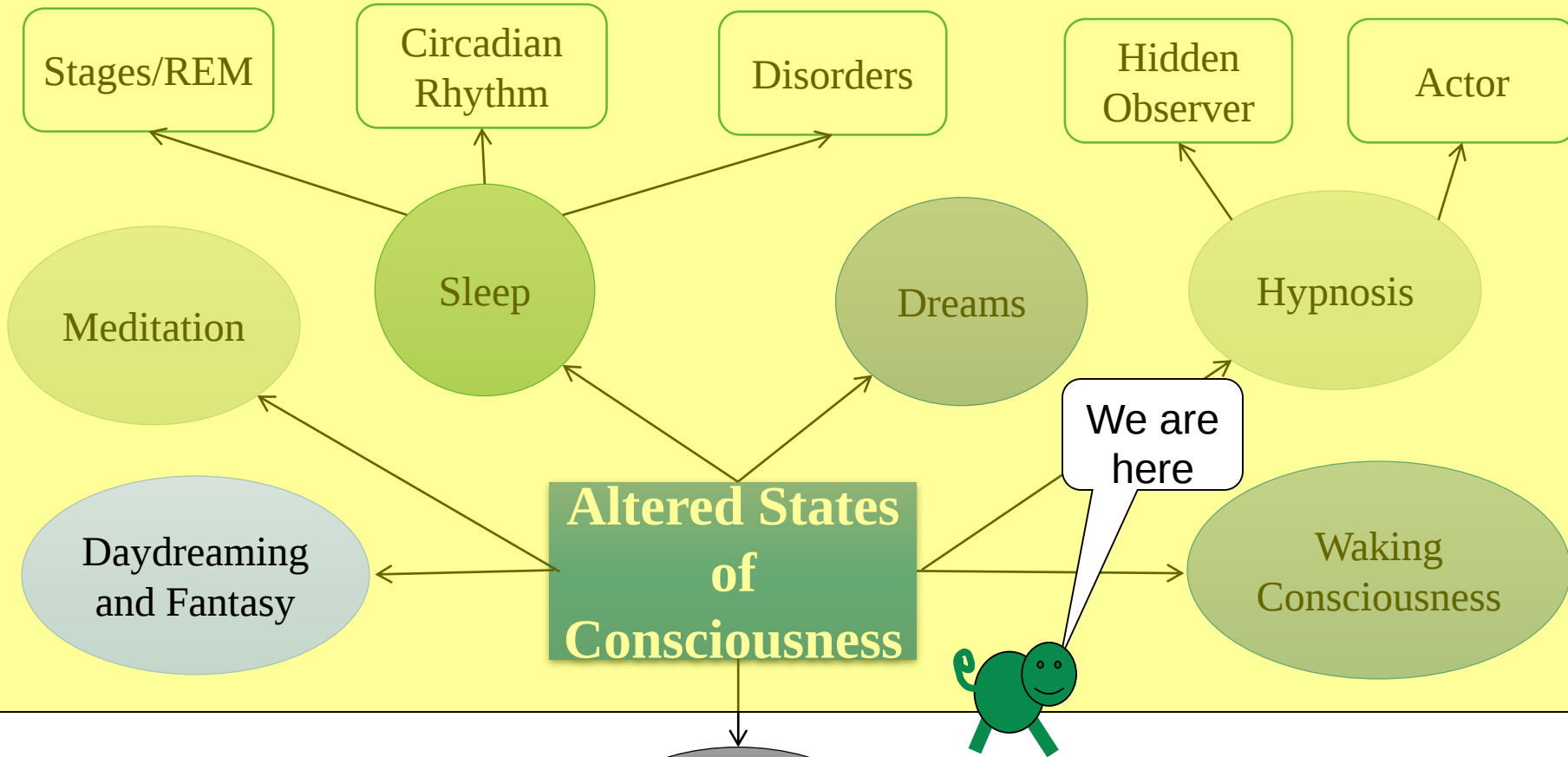


WHS AP Psychology



Unit 5: Sensation, Perception and States of Consciousness

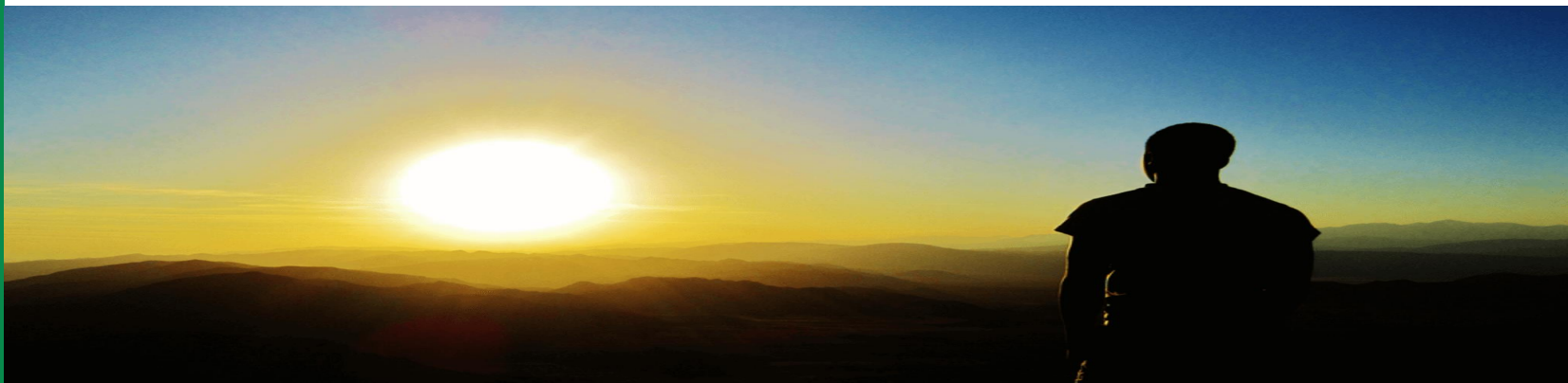
Essential Task 5-7: Describe various states of consciousness and their impact on behavior.





I. Consciousness

- Our awareness of ourselves and the environment
 - **Ourselves** – internal thoughts and feelings
 - **Environment** – external stimuli of the world
- Awareness of objects and events in the external world and of our own existence and mental experience at any given moment







Challenges

- Problem with studying consciousness
 - No clear consensus on what it is (subjective)
 - No one has been able to measure or observe it
 - So can it ever be scientific???



History of Consciousness in Psychology

1. Psychology began as a science of consciousness. (Titchner and Structuralism)
2. Behaviorists argued about alienating consciousness from psychology.
3. However, after 1960, mental concepts (consciousness) started reentering psychology.



II. Different States of Consciousness

- **Waking consciousness**
 - Our awareness of ourselves and our environment
 - Thoughts, feelings, and perceptions that occur when we are awake and alert
 - Allows us to reflect and plan
- **Altered States of Consciousness**
 - A mental state that differs noticeably from normal waking consciousness



Forms of Altered-Consciousness



Some occur
spontaneously

Daydreaming

Sleep

Dreaming

Some are physio-
logically induced

Hallucinations

Orgasm

Food or oxygen
starvation

Some are psycho-
logically induced

Sensory
deprivation

Hypnosis

Meditation



Subconscious processing

- Well-learned tasks become automatic
 - Driving
 - Typing
- When you meet people you unconsciously react to their gender, age and appearance
- Unconscious processing is parallel while conscious is linear



III. Theories on Consciousness

1. Dual Process Theory

- Principle that information is simultaneously processed on separate conscious and non conscious track
 - explicit (controlled), conscious process
 - implicit (automatic), unconscious process



Example of dual processing:



Consciously: “ ooooo... a flower”

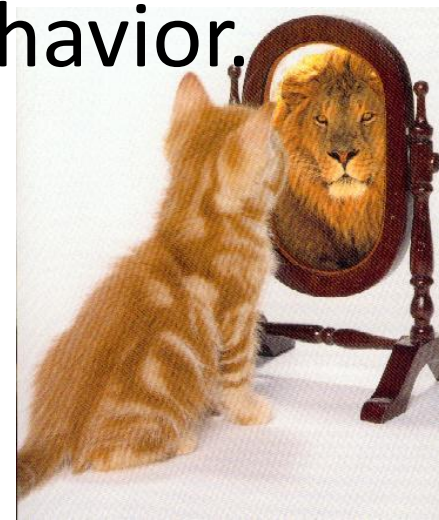
Automatic: “Purple” “I like purple” “I wonder if it smells nice?” “It’s so delicate” “Oh my god I remember that time I try to get flowers to that girl I liked on valentines day... stupid... stupid”
“Ohm” “should I get a tattoo of a lotus flower?”



Evolutionary Reason for Consciousness

2. Evolutionary Perspective

- Consciousness as an adaptation allowing us to get along with others in our group (humans)
- Allows us to 'see' ourselves and therefore moderate our behavior.





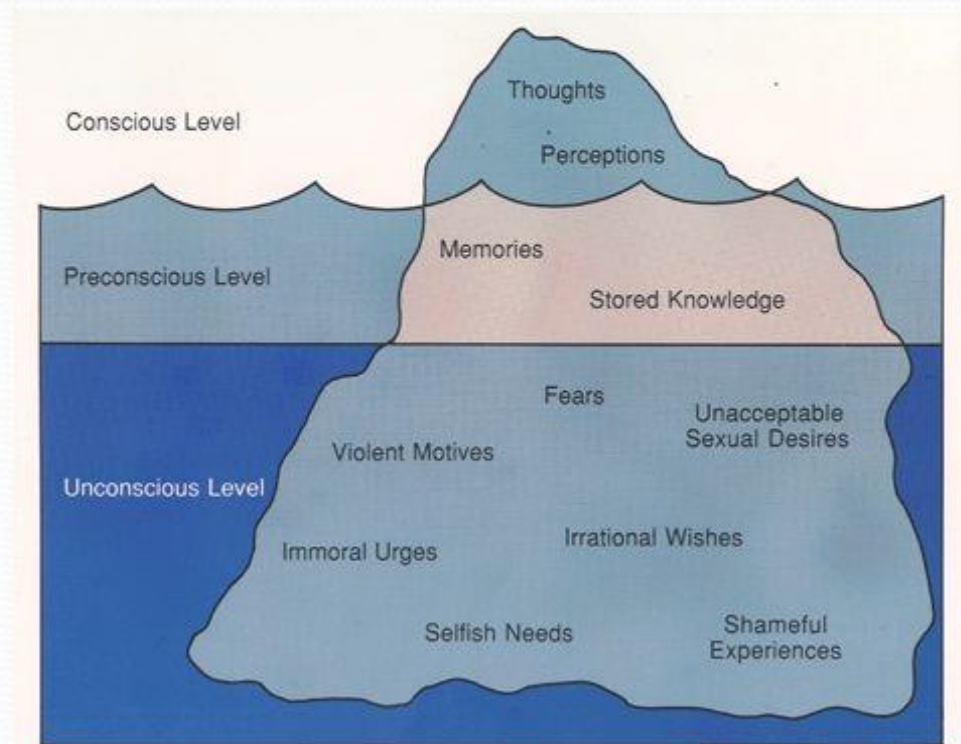
Tripartite Theory

III. Tripartite Theory: Sigmund Freud believed that our mind is divided between three levels of consciousness:

- **Consciousness** – Part that you are aware of
 - Thoughts and perception
- **Pre-consciousness** – Part that you can bring into awareness
 - Memories
- **Unconsciousness** – part that you are unaware of
 - Fears, unacceptable desires and urges

Our Consciousness according to Freud

- Conscious
- Preconscious
- Subconscious





The Stream of Consciousness

- Consciousness results from the activity of the thalamus which analyzes and interprets information in the cerebral cortex.
- “sweeping or scanning” total a rate of 40 times per second
- Each sweep results in a single image or “moment of consciousness”
- Intralaminar nuclei of thalamus, communicates with the cerebral cortex.



Consciousness as a Chord of Subconscious brain events.

- Neuroscientists believe that consciousness emerges from the interaction of individual subconscious brain events much like a chord that is created from different musical notes.





Picture this:

It is a beautiful spring day and you are walking down a country lane, absorbed in thought. Birds are chirping, roses are in bloom and the sun feels warm on your face.

- Adapted from [How the Brain Might Work: A New Theory of Consciousness By SANDRA BLAKESLEE](#)





- This “image” maybe represented by millions of activated cells in many different regions of the cortex
 - The nerve cells in the retina break down the image into separate components
 - The nerve cells in the inner ear respond to each frequency while others compute the direction and intensity of the sound
 - The nerve cells in the skin that respond to warmth channel their input to yet another part of the brain



OA

1. What is hypnosis? Does it work on everybody? Explain. (192)
2. What are the most practical ways of using hypnotism? (193)
3. In the field of psychology “Age Regression” therapy is controversial. Explain why. (194)
4. Explain Hypnosis as social phenomenon (195)
5. How did Ernst Hilgard explain Hypnotism? And explain the concept of Dissociation. (195)



Hypnosis

- Highly suggestable to changes in behavior and thought
 - Participants are not asleep but they are in deep relaxation
 - It works on those who strongly expect that they can be hypnotized.
 - Mutual trust is vital for hypnosis to succeed



Hypnosis

- Hypnotism works only for those who believe it will work.
- Hypnosis have been used for
 - Treating Obesity (Effective)
 - Ease pain (Effective)
 - Addiction (ineffective)
 - Memory recovery (controversial!)



Hypnosis

Social Influence Theory –

Hypnosis is explained as a social behavior, “role play.” The more the person believes in hypnotism the more they allow the hypnotist to direct them.

Divided Consciousness Theory (Dissociation Theory) –

Hypnosis is a combination of role play and dissociation.

- When under a hypnotic state there is a split between different levels of consciousness.
 - Some people are unresponsive to certain stimuli (pain)
 - Some people cannot recall their hypnotic phenomenon.



IV. Altered-Consciousness



Some occur spontaneously

Daydreaming

Sleep

Dreaming

Some are physiologically induced

Hallucinations

Orgasm

Food or oxygen starvation

Some are psychologically induced

Sensory deprivation

Hypnosis

Meditation



Daydreaming

- Spontaneous shifts attention away from the here and now into a make-believe world
- Urge to daydream peaks about every 90 minutes and is highest between 12:00 and 2:00pm
- Daydreams may provide stress relief and encourage creativity



Theories on Hypnosis

- Social Influence Theory
 - Hypnosis is the byproduct of social behavior, “role play.”
 - The more person believes in hypnotism, the more they allow hypnotist to direct them.



Theories on Hypnosis

- Divided consciousness theory (Dissociation theory)
 - dissociation means disconnection/separate
 - individuals experience two or more streams of consciousness cut off from each other
 - Explains amnesia (cannot remember the events that occurred during the state of hypnotism)
 - Some people are not responsive to certain stimuli (pain)
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FsdalaPqP6M>



Meditation

- Set of techniques used to focus concentration away from thoughts and feelings in order to create calmness, tranquility, and inner peace
- EEG shows meditators show alpha waves of relaxed wakefulness (dreamlike state)
- The slowed heartrate, blood pressure may indicate activation of parasympathetic nervous system which is not normally under consciousness