Unit 4 Cheat Sheet: Social Psychology and Personality

AP® Psychology · Unit 4 Review · Topics 4.1 to 4.7

> **The big idea:** Unit 4 asks how other people and situations shape what we think and do, and what makes each person consistent and different. It is 15 to 25 percent of the multiple-choice section, and scenario questions test look-alike pairs.
>
> **How to use it:** Fill in the blank version from memory first, then check it here. Star anything you missed. Those are your review targets.

KEY TERMS

Attribution and person perception (Topic 4.1)

Dispositional vs. situational	Explaining behavior by the person (traits, ability) vs. the circumstances.
Explanatory style	Optimists see setbacks as temporary; pessimists, as permanent and personal.
Locus of control	Internal: my effort shapes outcomes. External: luck, fate, or others do.
Mere exposure effect	Repeated exposure makes us like something more (a song grows on you).
Self-fulfilling prophecy	An expectation changes how we act, and the response confirms it.
Relative deprivation	Comparing upward and feeling you have less than you deserve.

Attitudes and bias (Topic 4.2)

Implicit attitudes	Attitudes you may not know you hold; they can still shape behavior.
Just-world phenomenon	Believing people get what they deserve, which can lead to blaming victims.
In-group bias	Favoring the groups you belong to.
Out-group homogeneity bias	Seeing other groups' members as more alike than your own group's.
Ethnocentrism	Judging other cultures by your own culture's standards.
Belief perseverance	Clinging to a belief after the evidence for it is discredited.
Cognitive dissonance	Discomfort when actions and attitudes clash; often the attitude changes.

Social influence and persuasion (Topic 4.3)

Normative vs. informational	Going along to be accepted vs. because you think others know better.
Central vs. peripheral route	Persuasion by evidence (lasting) vs. by surface cues like celebrities (fades).
Halo effect	One good trait (attractiveness) colors judgments of someone's other traits.

Groups and culture (Topic 4.3)

Individualism vs. collectivism	Personal goals and independence first vs. group goals and harmony first.
Deindividuation	Anonymity and excitement in a group lower self-awareness and restraint.
Social trap	Everyone chases short-term self-interest, and all end up worse off.

Cooperation and helping (Topic 4.3)

Superordinate goal	A shared goal rivals can reach only together; it reduces hostility.
Bystander effect	Less helping when others are present (diffusion of responsibility).
Altruism	Selfless concern for others' welfare.
Reciprocity vs. responsibility norms	Help those who helped you vs. help those who depend on you.

Personality (Topics 4.4 and 4.5)

Psychodynamic theory	Unconscious processes drive personality; uses projective tests.
Humanistic theory	Unconditional positive regard supports our self-actualizing tendency (Rogers).
Reciprocal determinism	Behavior, thoughts, and environment all shape each other (Bandura).
Big Five	Openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, emotional stability.
Personality inventory	Objectively scored questionnaire; more reliable than projective tests.

Motivation and emotion (Topics 4.6 and 4.7)

Drive-reduction theory	A need creates a drive (thirst); we act to restore homeostasis.
Arousal theory	We seek optimal arousal; Yerkes-Dodson: moderate is best, less if hard.
Incentive theory	Rewards pull behavior toward them.
Instincts	Innate, fixed behavior patterns in many animals; not clearly in humans.
Lewin's motivational conflicts	Approach-approach, avoidance-avoidance, or approach-avoidance (one option, good and bad).
Sensation seeking	Need for novelty: experience, thrill, disinhibition, boredom susceptibility.
Ghrelin vs. leptin	Hunger signal from the stomach vs. fullness signal from fat cells.
Emotion theories	Body response first, both at once, or arousal plus a cognitive label.
Facial-feedback hypothesis	Expressions can shape the emotion you feel; results are mixed.
Broaden-and-build theory	Positive emotions broaden thought and build skills; negative ones narrow it.
Display rules	A culture's norms for when, where, and how strongly to show emotion.

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EGO DEFENSE MECHANISMS (TOPIC 4.4): UNCONSCIOUS WAYS THE EGO REDUCES ANXIETY

MECHANISM	WHAT THE PERSON DOES	EXAMPLE
Repression	Pushes a painful memory out of awareness	Can't recall a frightening childhood event
Denial	Refuses to accept a painful reality	"I don't have a problem."
Displacement	Takes feelings out on a safer target	Snaps at a sibling after a coach yells
Projection	Sees their own unacceptable feelings in others	Feels jealous but calls a friend jealous
Rationalization	Makes up a good excuse to hide the real reason	"I didn't want that job anyway."
Reaction formation	Overdoes the opposite of what they really feel	Is overly sweet to someone they dislike
Regression	Retreats to more childlike behavior	Sucks a thumb again when a new baby arrives
Sublimation	Turns an unacceptable urge into a valued activity	Turns aggression into competitive boxing

DON'T CONFUSE THESE

Conformity vs. obedience	Matching peers or unspoken norms (Asch) vs. obeying an authority's direct order (Milgram).
Attribution biases	Fundamental attribution error: overrating traits and underrating the situation when judging others. Actor/observer: your acts explained by the situation, others' by traits. Self-serving: credit yourself for wins, blame the situation for losses.
Stereotype, prejudice, discrimination	A belief about a group vs. an unjustified negative attitude vs. unjustified negative behavior.
Foot-in-the-door vs. door-in-the-face	Small request first, then a bigger one vs. a big one first, then the smaller real request.
Social facilitation vs. social loafing	An audience helps easy or practiced tasks and hurts hard ones vs. less effort in a group when your own work can't be seen.
Group polarization vs. groupthink	Discussion makes a shared view more extreme vs. the drive for harmony silences doubts.
Self-efficacy vs. self-esteem	Confidence about one task vs. your overall sense of worth; both shape your self-concept.
Intrinsic vs. extrinsic motivation	Doing it because it is satisfying in itself vs. for a reward or to avoid a punishment.

STUDIES TO KNOW COLD

Asch's line studies	Participants went along with a group's obviously wrong answers about a third of the time. One ally who disagreed made resisting much easier.
Milgram's obedience studies	In the best-known study, about two-thirds obeyed to the top shock (450 volts); obedience rose with a close, legitimate authority. Deception and stress raise ethics concerns.
Darley and Latané's seizure study	Most students who thought they were the only listener went for help before the seizure ended; with four others listening, only about a third did. Diffusion of responsibility.
Festinger and Carlsmith	People paid $1 to call a boring task fun later rated it more enjoyable than people paid $20: cognitive dissonance.
Sherif's Robbers Cave study	Rival groups of boys at camp cooperated once shared problems gave them superordinate goals.

FRQ: HOW UNIT 4 SHOWS UP

PROMPT SAYS	WHAT TO DO
Identify or state	Name it. No explanation needed.
Describe	Give its key features or details.
Explain	Say how or why, using evidence or reasoning.
Propose	Make a claim of your own that answers the question.
Support or refute	Say whether the evidence backs the claim, and why.
Use evidence	Give specific results or conclusions from the source.

Likely Unit 4 FRQ angles

- Identify the method, and state how a variable was operationally defined.
- Describe what a statistic shows, like a median helping time.
- Identify an ethical guideline used, like debriefing after deception.
- Explain how far the findings generalize, given who took part.
- Explain how a finding supports or refutes the hypothesis.
- Propose a claim, then support it with two sources and a different concept for each (EBQ).

> **FRQ rules:** Apply each concept to the study or source; a definition alone earns nothing. Cite EBQ sources by number (Source 1, 2, or 3). Write in complete sentences.

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