

Parkland College

From the Selected Works of Sarah Grison

Spring May 22, 2019

Leaders: Exploring the Who, What, Where, When, Why, and How of Personality Traits

Sarah Grison, *Parkland College*



Available at: <https://works.bepress.com/sarah-grison/51/>

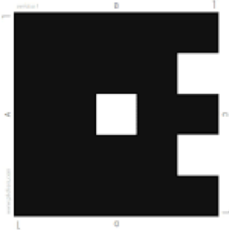
Welcome!



- Did you take the Big Five Personality test from the emailed link? If so, please get out your results.
- If not, as we are getting ready to start, please feel free to complete it (120 items = 7 minutes).
- <https://tinyurl.com/8hvvz9>
- In that case, please copy all of the results and email them to yourself.
- We will be discussing the results soon.
- Please let me know if you have questions!

You should have...

- ▶ A picker card
- ▶ An index card
- ▶ A worksheet that pairs with the presentation
- ▶ An evaluation sheet



This will be an interactive workshop!
Please feel free to ask questions as we talk.

Were you able to do the Big Five test?

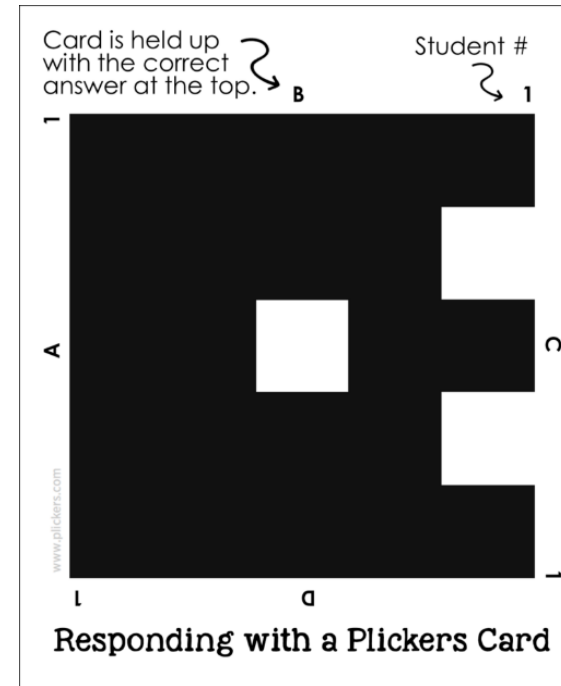
Please rotate the plicker card until the letter you want to answer is at the top and turn it to me.

A – Yes

B – No

C – Not sure

Has anyone taken the Big 5 more than once?



[Learn about using plickers](#) to engage people during a presentation!

Leaders:

Exploring the Who, What,
Where, When, Why, and How
of Personality Traits.

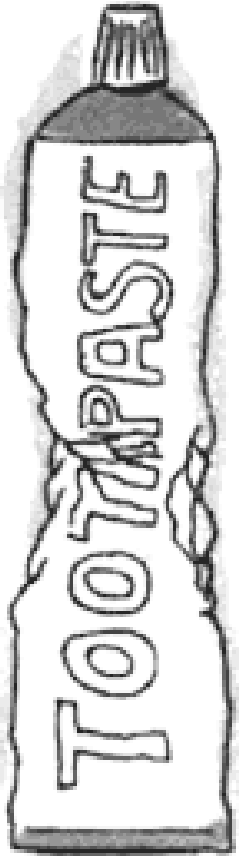


Sarah Grison, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Psychology

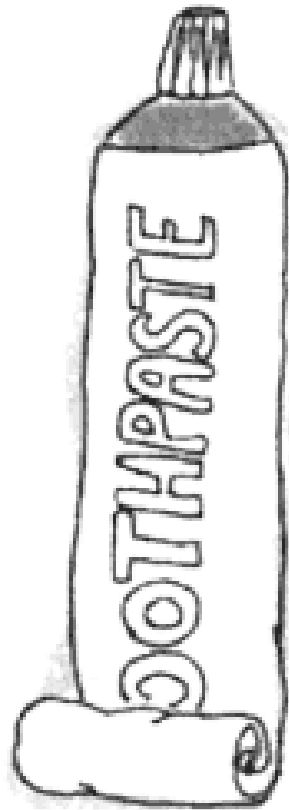
May 22, 2019

This PPT will be accessible at SPARK!
Just search for CETL or Grison.

THE TOOTHPASTE PERSONALITY TEST



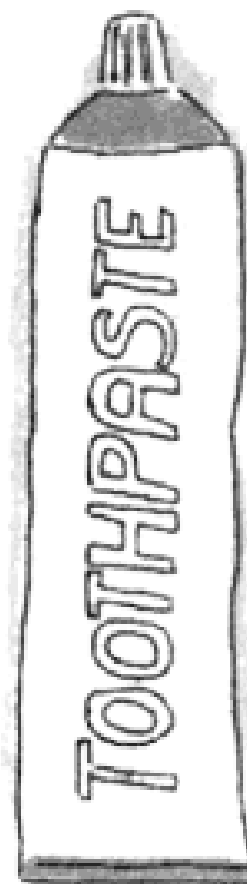
IMPULSIVE,
LIFE OF THE
PARTY



THRIFTY,
PRONE TO
DEPRESSION




STUBBORN,
SLOW WITTED



ANTISOCIAL,
BAD BREATH

© 2014 SH

Our goals for today:

- ▶ Discuss who a leader is. 
- ▶ Discover what our traits are.
- ▶ Explore why understanding traits matters.
- ▶ Consider how we can be better leaders.



Let's all be respectful and supportive of each other as we discuss these topics!



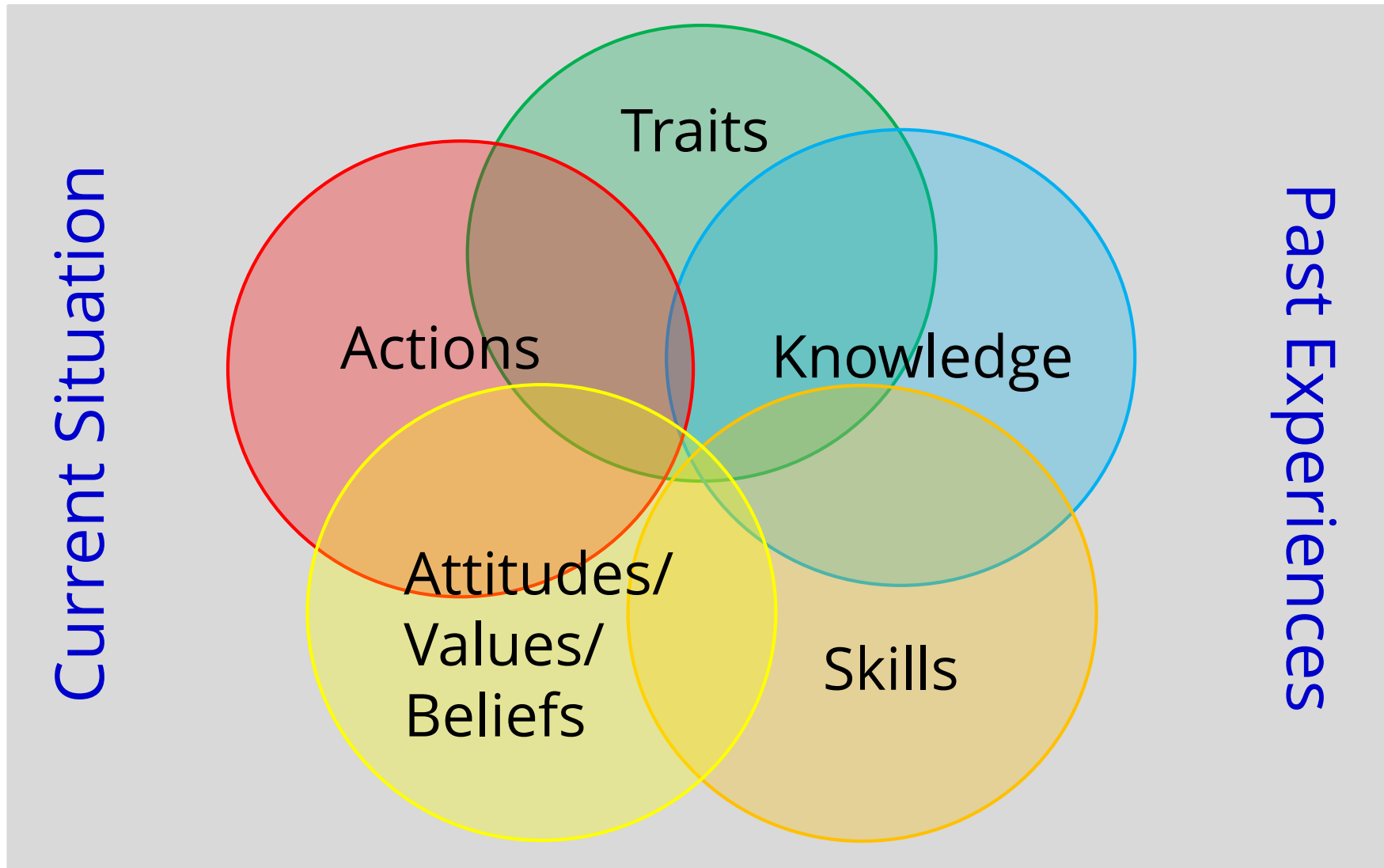
Think-Pair-Share

Who is leader?

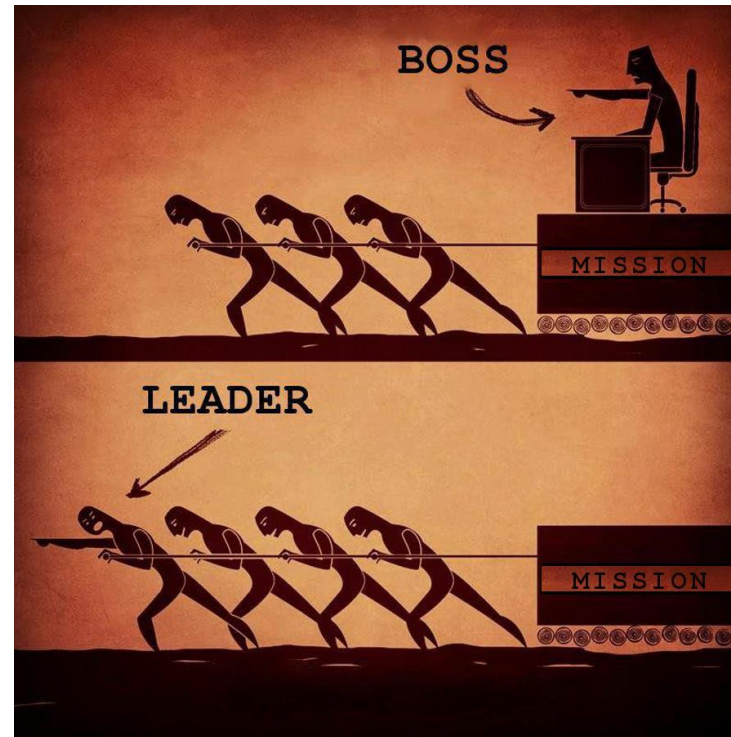
Please turn to your
neighbors and
discuss!



There is no one definition of “leader”.



There are many ways to be a leader!




Quick Write!

We now have ideas
about Question #1
on your worksheet!

Please jot down
thoughts you want
to remember about
what we discussed!



Our goals for today:

- ▶ Discuss who a leader is.
- ▶ Discover what our traits are. 
- ▶ Explore why understanding traits matters.
- ▶ Consider how we can be better leaders.

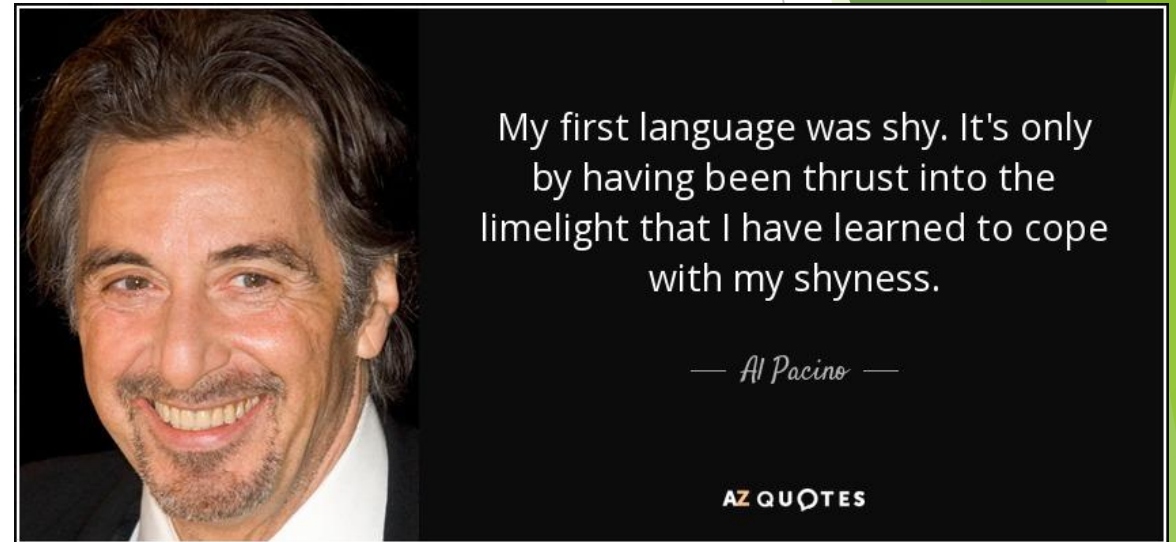


Let's all be respectful and supportive of each other as we discuss these topics!



What are personality traits?

- ▶ Personality traits are the stable ways that we think, feel, & act
- ▶ So, traits make up the core of who we are!
- ▶ Traits are:
 - ✓ Determined by genetics & biology
 - ✓ Changed through learned experiences
 - ✓ Expressed differently across situations



Do you know someone who is shy?
Did they learn to change their
behavior over time?
Are they shy in all situations?

Big Five test reveals personality traits

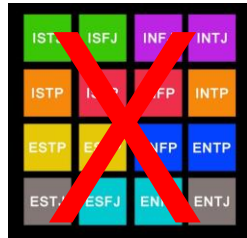
- ▶ Research shows several main categories of traits in Big Five
- ▶ We vary in the degree we show each trait
- ▶ Each trait is associated with many “descriptors”
- ▶ Factor analysis calculates each trait score across many “descriptors”
 - ✓ e.g., A curious person who is also artistic and imaginative will be high in Openness to Experience

O penness to experience	C onscientiousness	E xtraversion	A greeableness	N euroticism
Imaginative vs. down-to-earth Likes variety vs. likes routine Independent vs. conforming	Organized vs. disorganized Careful vs. careless Self-disciplined vs. weak-willed	Social vs. retiring Fun-loving vs. sober Affectionate vs. reserved	Softhearted vs. ruthless Trusting vs. suspicious Helpful vs. uncooperative	Worried vs. calm Insecure vs. secure Self-pitying vs. self-satisfied

The acronym OCEAN will help you remember the Big Five.

Big Five is a good measure of personality

- ▶ Very reliable: Results stable over time
- ▶ Good validity: Results align with other personality measures
- ▶ More predictive of workplace performance than Myers-Briggs
- ▶ Are influenced by both heritability and environment



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The Mini-IPIP Scales: Tiny-yet-effective measures of the Big Five Factors of Personality.

EXPORT ★ Add To My List Database: PsycARTICLES Journal Article

Donnellan, M. Brent, Oswald, Frederick L., Baird, Brendan M., Lucas, Richard E.

Citation
Donnellan, M. B., Oswald, F. L., Baird, B. M., & Lucas, R. E. (2006). The Mini-IPIP Scales: Tiny-yet-effective measures of the Big Five Factors of Personality. *Psychological Assessment*, 18(2), 192-203.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/1040-3590.18.2.192>

Psychological Assessment
Editor Yossef S. Ben-Porath, PhD
Journal TOC

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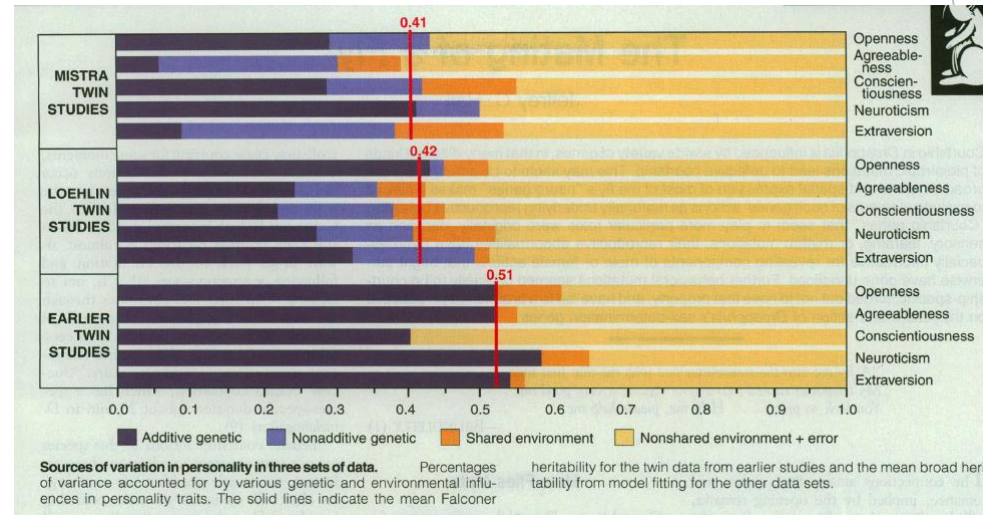
Abstract
The Mini-IPIP, a 20-item short form of the 50-item International Personality Item Pool-Five-Factor Model measure (Goldberg, 1999), was developed and validated across five studies. The Mini-IPIP scales, with four items per Big Five trait, had consistent and acceptable internal consistencies across five studies (α at or well above .60), similar coverage of facets as other broad Big Five measures (Study 2), and test-retest correlations that were quite similar to the parent measure across intervals of a few weeks (Study 4) and several months (Study 5). Moreover, the Mini-IPIP scales showed a comparable pattern of convergent, discriminant, and criterion-related validity (Studies 2-5) with other Big Five measures. Collectively, these results indicate that the Mini-IPIP is a psychometrically acceptable and practically useful short measure of the Big Five factors of personality. (PsycINFO Database Record (c) 2016 APA, all rights reserved)

[Access the article here.](http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/1040-3590.18.2.192)

Heritability and environment both contribute to traits

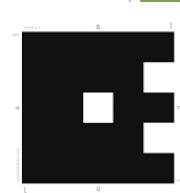
► Much research suggests there is about a 40-60% genetic component to Big 5 traits ([see Jang, et al., 1996](#))

- ✓ Openness 61%
- ✓ Extraversion 53%
- ✓ Conscientiousness 44%
- ✓ Neuroticism 41%
- ✓ Agreeableness 41%



However, the data across studies varies greatly, especially for neuroticism!

What did your Big Five results show?



What trait were you:

Highest on?

What about lowest on?

A – Openness

B – Conscientiousness

C – Extraversion

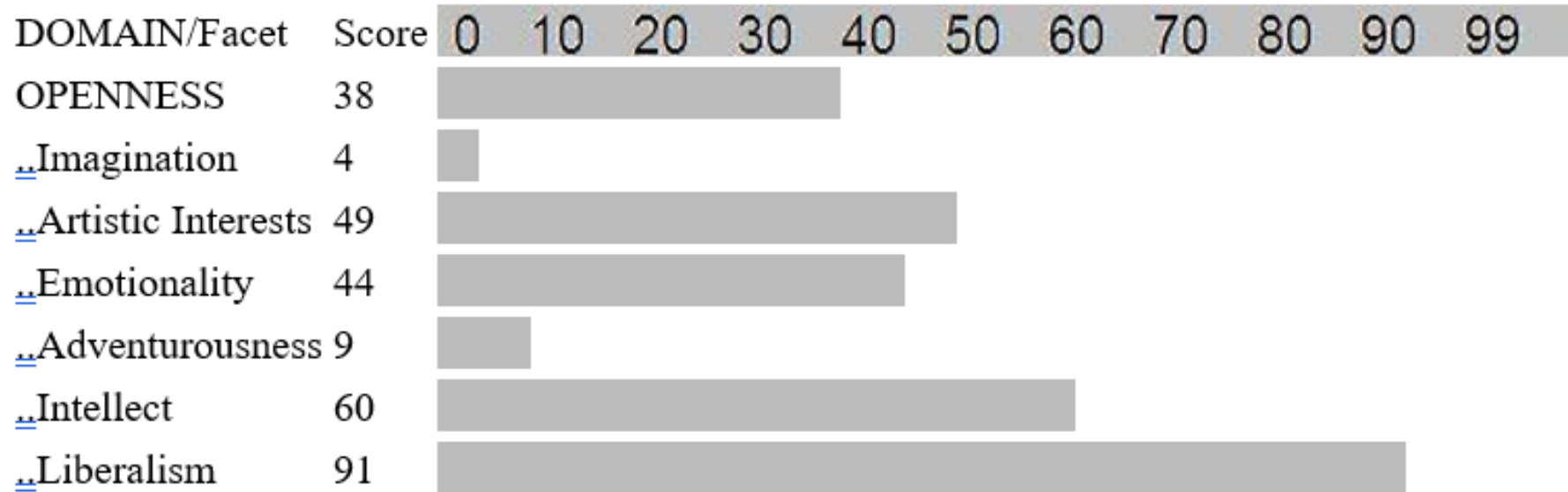
D – Agreeableness



So...You are not alone!

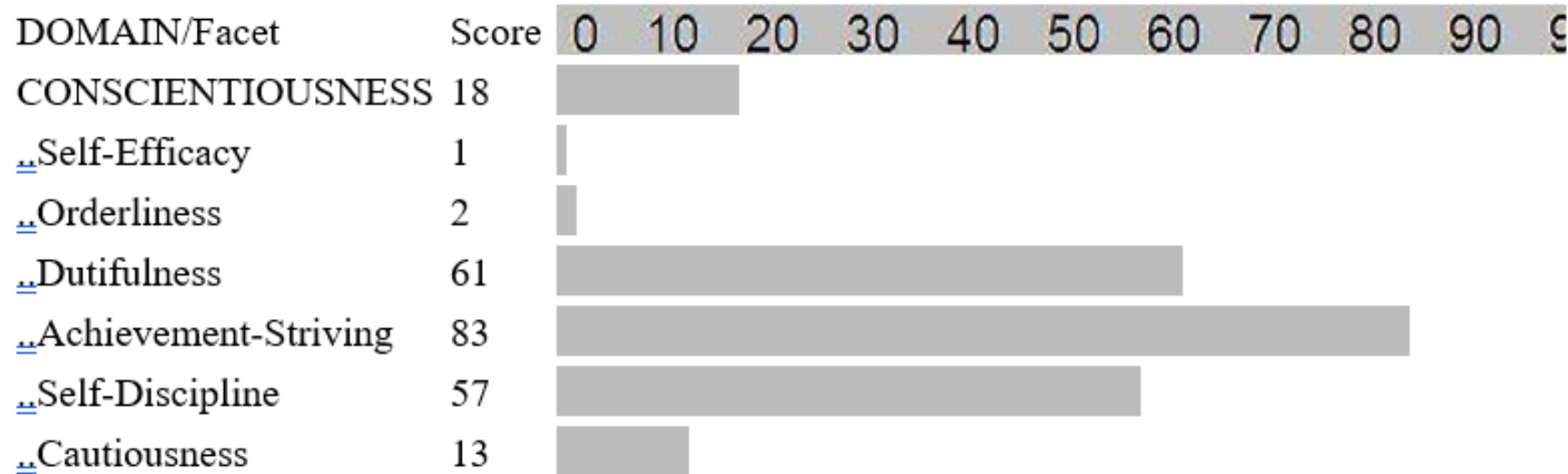
But! It's not just the overall score that shows how a trait affects one's life. Let's look more closely at the descriptors....

Openness to experience

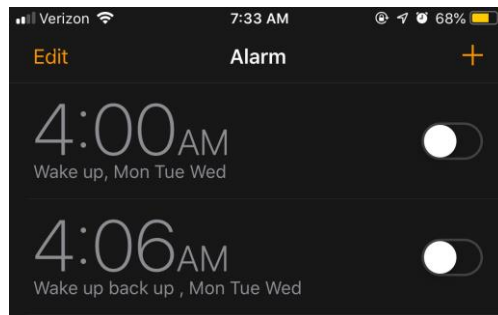


Are we more or less open to ALL of the same things?
How might this affect us professionally (and personally)?

Conscientiousness



Are we equally conscientious about all things?
How might this impact us? Here's my examples ...



Conscientiousness can predict persistence

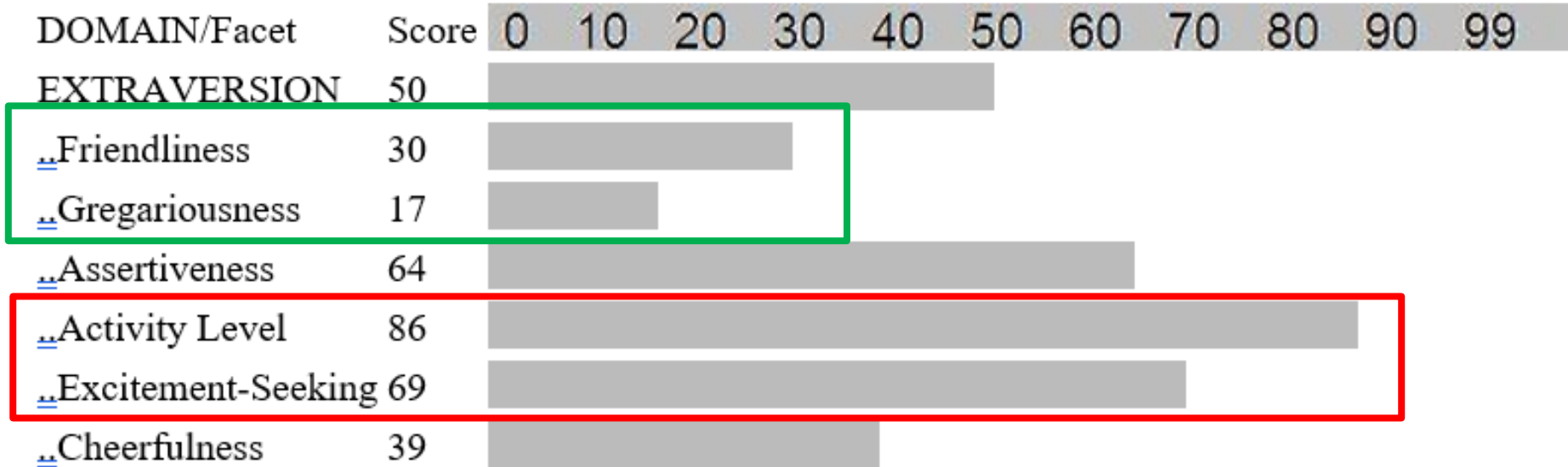
- ▶ Factors of *striving for achievement & having self-discipline* are related to **persistence**
- ▶ Persistence is a key predictor of success in many realms
- ▶ This includes in the workplace!



Will Smith segment on Tavis Smiley

Hear Will Smith discuss
conscientiousness with Tavis
Smiley (@ 4:00)

Extraversion



So, wait...Extraversion is NOT just about being sociable?
How many of us show differences between the sociability
descriptors versus the activity descriptors?

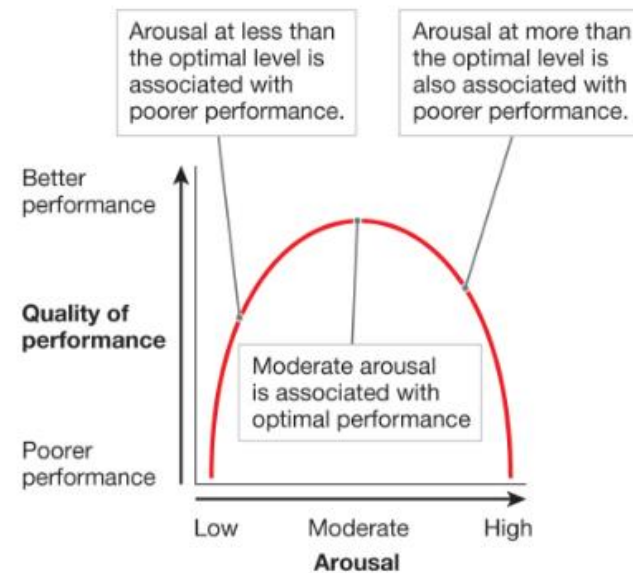
Extraversion may predict a desire for stimulation

- Factors of *excitement-seeking* & *activity level* reflect a **sensation-seeking personality**



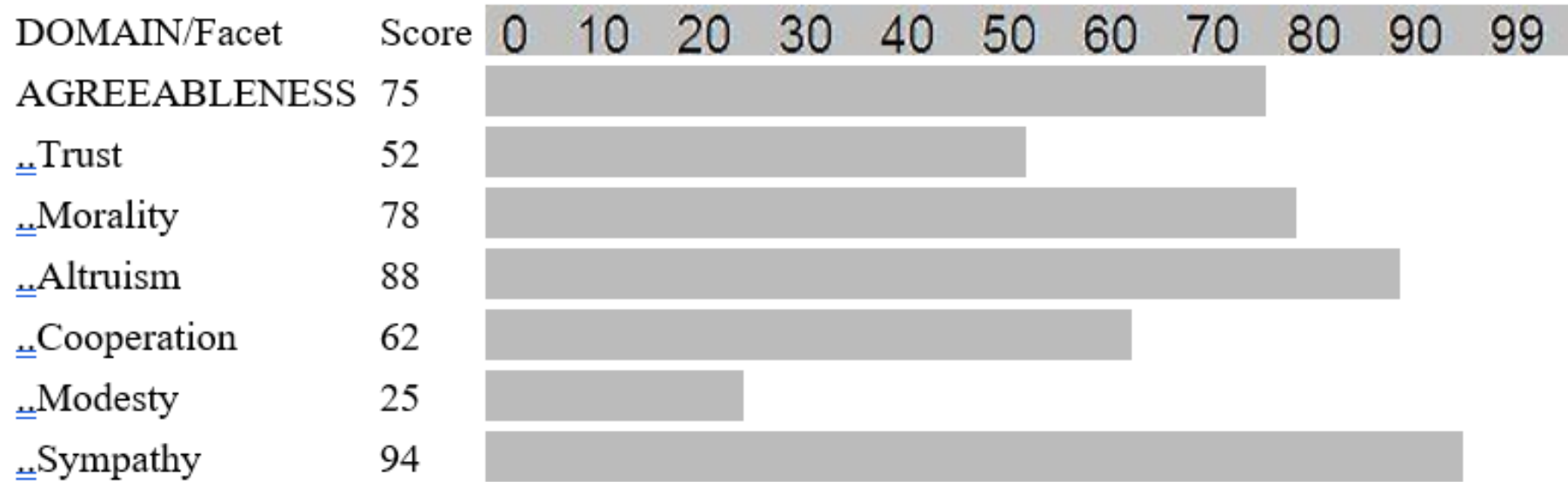
You can hear Brian Little discuss extraversion here (@ 4:50)

- However, too much stimulation (arousal) can affect performance



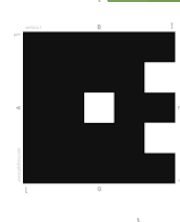
Read about the Yerkes-Dodson law here

Agreeableness



We vary in the factors related to agreeableness.
But this is not a bad thing!
Yet...How might this affect a person's life?

What did your Big Five results show?



What was your
neuroticism score?

A – 0-25

B – 26-50

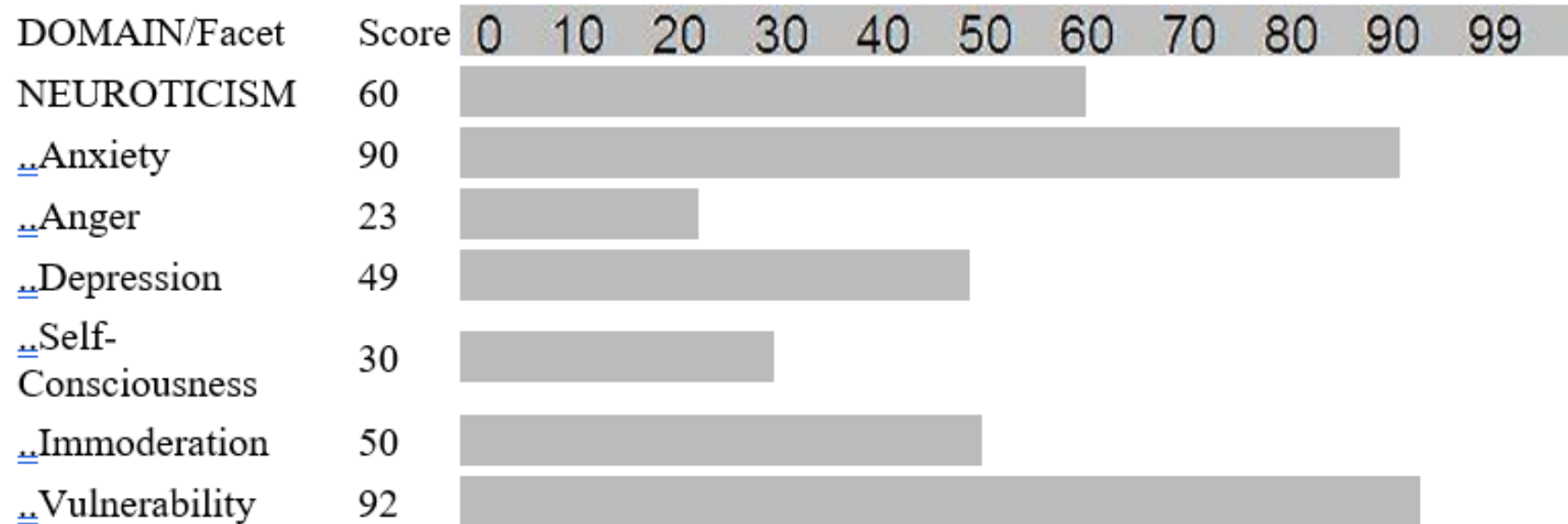
C – 51-75

D – 76-99



Once again...You are not alone!
But, again, the scores on the descriptors matter.
Let's see how...

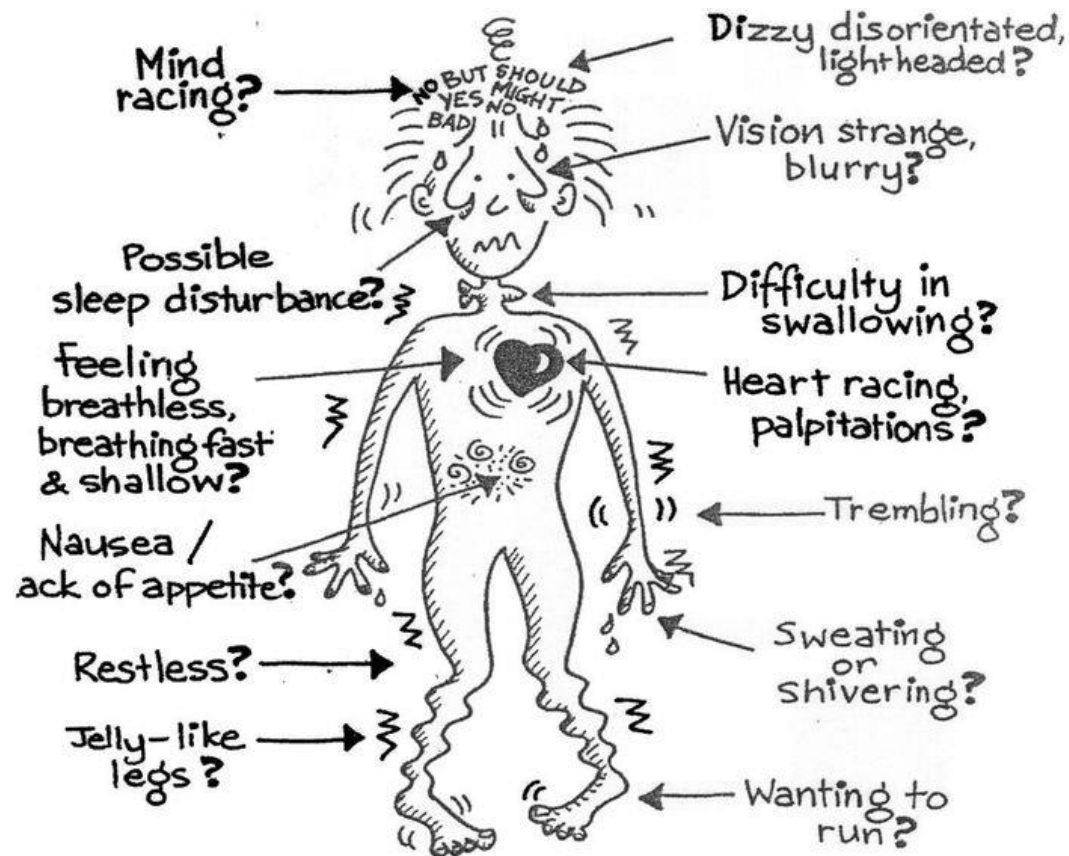
Neuroticism



Worrying is not “bad”! It reveals how we are sensitive to stressors in the environment, so is protective and motivating!

But anxiety can have negative effects, such as...

Neuroticism may predict anxiety symptoms...



What else might we experience?

- ▶ Negative thoughts
- ▶ Thinking the worst
- ▶ Flushed face
- ▶ Anger
- ▶ Desire to run away

Let's learn about each other!

- ▶ Take a look at your results and think about what you learned
- ▶ Please write on the card something about one trait (or descriptor) that will help others know you better
- ▶ Please keep it anonymous!
- ▶ If you do not wish to share, please feel free to write "No, thank you."
- ▶ I will collect your cards and share information anonymously with the group later on




Quick Write!

We now have ideas
about Questions
#2-5 on your
worksheet!

Please jot down any
thoughts you want
to remember!



Our goals for today:

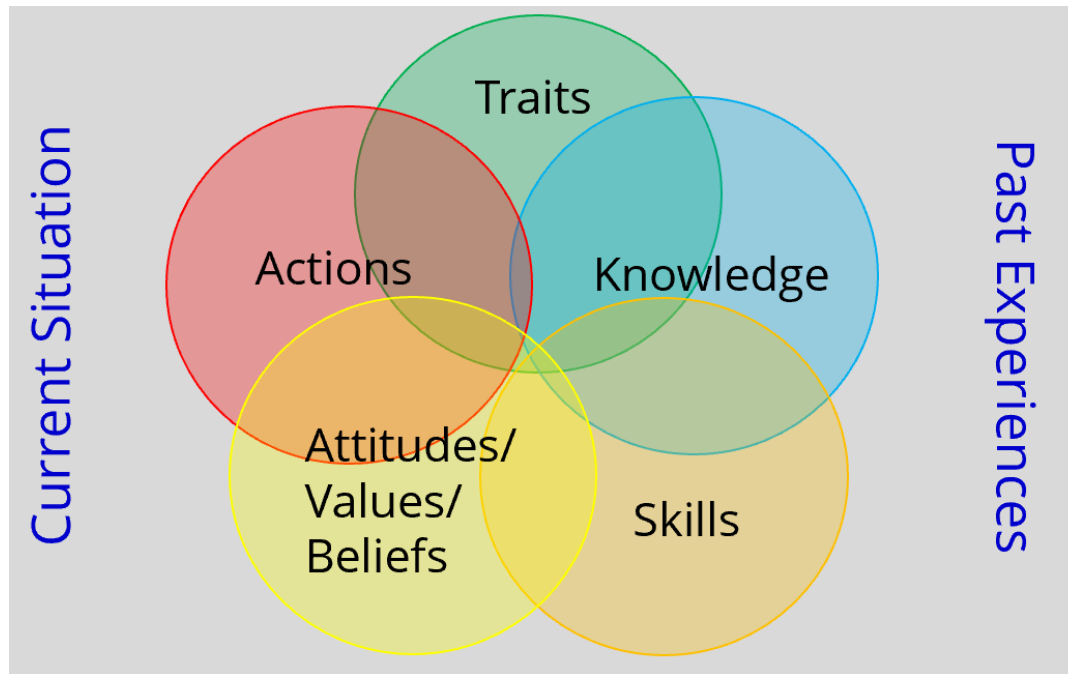
- ▶ Discuss who a leader is.
- ▶ Discover what our traits are.
- ▶ Explore why understanding traits matters. 
- ▶ Consider how we can be better leaders.



Let's all be respectful and supportive of each other as we discuss these topics!



Suggest that understanding personality matters because traits impact everything!



Here's an example from my life
where traits, context,
and past experience intertwined....



Let's look at traits in the Case of the Shy, Independent Thinker!

- ▶ We will make groups of about 4 people each
 - ✓ I will give you a number (1 - 8) & that's your group!
- ▶ In EACH group, half of the people will be:
 - ✓ **Ethan** and decide how he could approach the situation
 - ✓ **Trinity** and decide how she could approach the situation



Case of the Shy, Independent Thinker!

- ▶ **Ethan** has been the supervisor of a unit for 2 years.
- ▶ **Trinity** is an employee in the unit and has been supervised by Ethan for that time.
- ▶ Ethan has been tasked by his boss, Jaden, to get one of his employees to complete a specific project.
- ▶ Last week, Ethan gave Trinity the project task and a clear method for completing it in one month.
- ▶ Trinity believes that she sees a better way to do the project, but has not yet mentioned it to Ethan.
- ▶ Ethan has requested they have a weekly status meeting every week, for 4 weeks, beginning on Monday.
- ▶ Today is Wednesday. Trinity is having lunch with a female friend in the unit, Prachi, & they discuss it.

Let's look at traits in the Case of the Shy, Independent Thinker!

► Questions to discuss:

- ✓ Why might Ethan's/Trinity's traits cause them to think, feel, & act as they do?
- ✓ Will this interaction be positive if they do not consider each other's traits?
- ✓ How might they learn about each other's traits?
- ✓ How might the context of the interaction or past experiences influence each of them?
- ✓ What might each of them do to be more of a leader in this interaction?



We will discuss this together
as a group in a minute.
Then you will “meet” the
other person!

Case of the Shy, Independent Thinker!

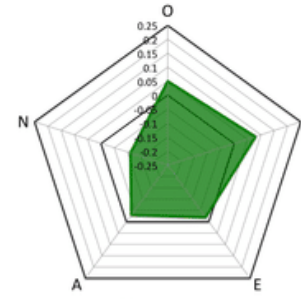
► Ethan:

- ✓ Promoted 2 years ago to be supervisor
- ✓ Enjoy talking & joking with colleagues
- ✓ Exercises at lunch to feel energized
- ✓ Worries he won't do well (lose job/home)
- ✓ Ethan sees the best way to do a project assigned by his boss, Jaden
- ✓ To honor Jaden's request, he asks Trinity to do the project his way
- ✓ Feels Trinity avoids talking with him & tends to complete projects her way
- ✓ Sets weekly Monday status meetings
- ✓ Hopes that she responds to his good humor & that she is doing what he asks



► Trinity:

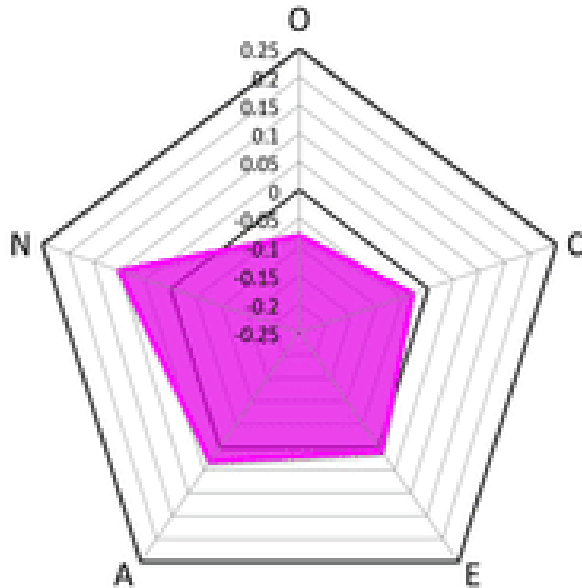
- ✓ She enjoys working independently
- ✓ Diligently looks at problems from many perspectives to find creative solutions
- ✓ Feels her supervisor, Ethan, doesn't like her creative solutions & dismisses them (in an overbearing way) for his plans
- ✓ Does as he says without complaint but doesn't feel very listened to or respected
- ✓ Makes her not want to engage with Ethan & she dreads the Monday status meeting
- ✓ Discusses this with Prachi, a work friend



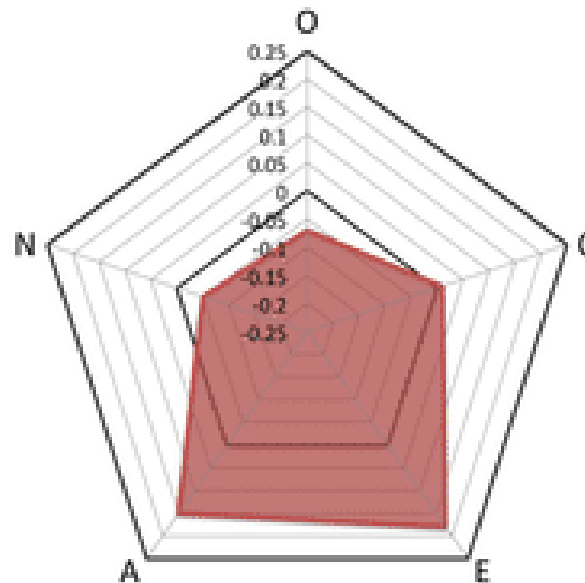
Case of the Shy, Independent Thinker!

- Let's look more at the context in this situation...

How might the traits of **Jaden**, Ethan's boss, impact this interaction?



How might the traits of **Prachi**, Trinity's colleague in the unit, impact this interaction?



Personality interacts with other factors to make people act in certain ways

- ▶ **Reciprocal determinism:**
States that how we act depends on 3 factors:
 1. Current situation
 2. Our traits & cognitive factors
 3. Our behavior
- ▶ So, our actions affect how others behave with us



[Click here](#) to read more about Albert Bandura's theory

So! The current situation & prior experiences affect the expression of traits!

New "marshmallow test" suggests trust matters



Evelyn Rose, 4 of Brighton, N.Y., participates in a reenactment of the marshmallow experiment used in a University of Rochester study published in the journal *Cognition*. The study was conducted at the University of Rochester Baby Lab. / J. ADAM FENSTER / UNIVERSITY OF ROCHESTER

[Watch the video of the marshmallow test here.](#)
[Read the research on the updated marshmallow test.](#)

It matters to understand traits because...

- ▶ It helps us know our strengths and challenges
 - Being high or low on a trait could be a strength or a challenge
- ▶ Traits affect how we think, feel, & act
 - Whether we strive to get specific knowledge & skills, feel threatened or excited by a situation, and engage in or avoid certain situations
- ▶ To have positive interactions we need to understand the traits of others, their past experiences, and the current context
 - Because these all affect positive interactions and influence trust

We all have roles to play at work
(and at home!).

We can do this better when we
understand each other!



Let's learn about each other!

Let me share a bit about
who we perceive
ourselves to be.



The goal is that it helps
us know each other a bit
better.



Quick Write!

We now have ideas
about Questions
#6-7 on your
worksheet!

Please jot down any
thoughts you want
to remember!



Our goals for today:

- ▶ Discuss who a leader is.
- ▶ Discover what our traits are.
- ▶ Explore why understanding traits matters.
- ▶ Consider how we can be better leaders.



Let's all be respectful and supportive of each other as we discuss these topics!



We can use a growth mindset to address challenges in our traits

- ▶ **Growth mindset:** When we acknowledge a challenge and work to improve - we can!
- ▶ Growth mindset predicts:
 - ✓ Brain activity during challenges ([Mangels, et al., 2007](#); [Moser, et al., 2011](#))
 - ✓ Persistence, resilience & success in many domains ([Dweck, 2019](#))
 - ✓ Reductions in anxiety & depression (Schleider & Weisz, 2016)



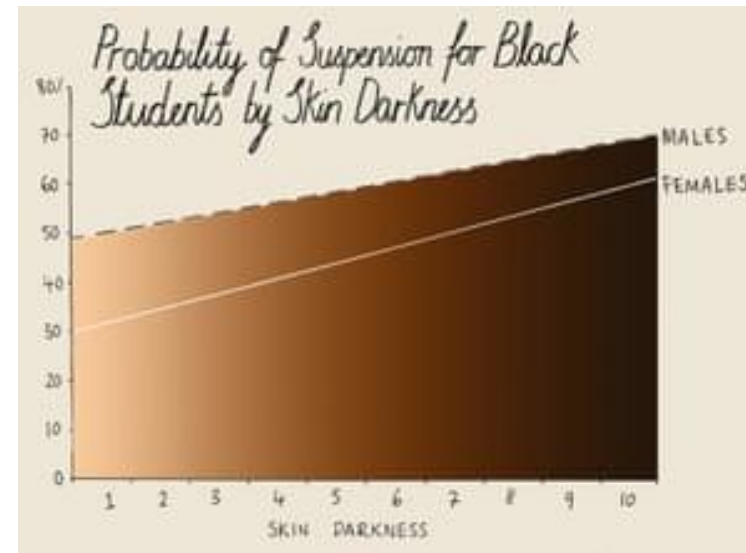
Psychologist Carol Dweck described growth mindset in a [TED talk \(December, 2014\)](#).

Three ways we can use a growth mindset to make improvements

1. Recognize our own **cognitive biases** and actively work against them
2. Strive to understand the **perspectives of others** and develop **empathy**
3. Take the opportunity to **improve communication** with others

We can recognize our cognitive biases and actively work against them

- ▶ **Cognitive bias:** Errors in thought based on how our brains try to simplify the world, for example:
 - ✓ **Stereotypes:** Avoid by focusing on individual traits & disconfirming evidence
 - ✓ **Ingroup/outgroup bias:** Avoid by increasing heterogeneity, cultivating cooperation, and reducing conflict
 - ✓ **Groupthink:** Avoid by assigning one or more “Devil’s Advocates”



See [Lance et al., 2013](#) or the [article on colorism in the Guardian](#)

Avoiding cognitive bias takes active hard work to fight our brains' natural tendency to simplify information!

We can strive to see the perspectives of others & practice empathy

► **Perspective-taking:** Putting ourselves in others' shoes & working to understand their thoughts, feelings, motivations, & actions

- ✓ What are their traits?
- ✓ What experiences have they had?
- ✓ How might the current situation affect them?
- ✓ How can we have/show **empathy**?

Showing empathy helps to develop trust!



Watch the [video on empathy versus sympathy here](#).

We can practice improving communication by using PENs



P = Pause and Prepare: Breathe. Label your intentions.

E = Emotions: Guess (OR share) underlying emotions. 

N = Needs: Guess (OR share) common human values. 

(Courtesy of E. Shpungin, 2017)

Why do we say back the essence of what we hear?

Take Home Messages

- ▶ There is no one type of leader
- ▶ We all have traits – they may be strengths or challenges!
- ▶ It's important to understand our traits and their expression
- ▶ Also must understand other people's traits & their perspectives
- ▶ How we engage with others affects how they engage with us
- ▶ Be aware of past experiences and the current situation and always consider these in all interactions
- ▶ Growth is good, but can be challenging!
- ▶ We can grow by reducing cognitive bias, increasing perspective-taking & empathy, & improving communication (PENs)
- ▶ “Discomfort” doesn't = bad! It means we are growing!!

Quick Write!

We now have ideas
about Questions
#8-9 on your
worksheet!

Please jot down any
thoughts you want
to remember!



How do you plan to work towards growth?



- A – Actively avoiding cognitive bias
- B – Striving for perspective-taking & empathy with other people to understand their traits
- C – Practicing communication with people of different traits through the PENs method
- D – More than one of the above



Consider making a plan for change by using this worksheet!



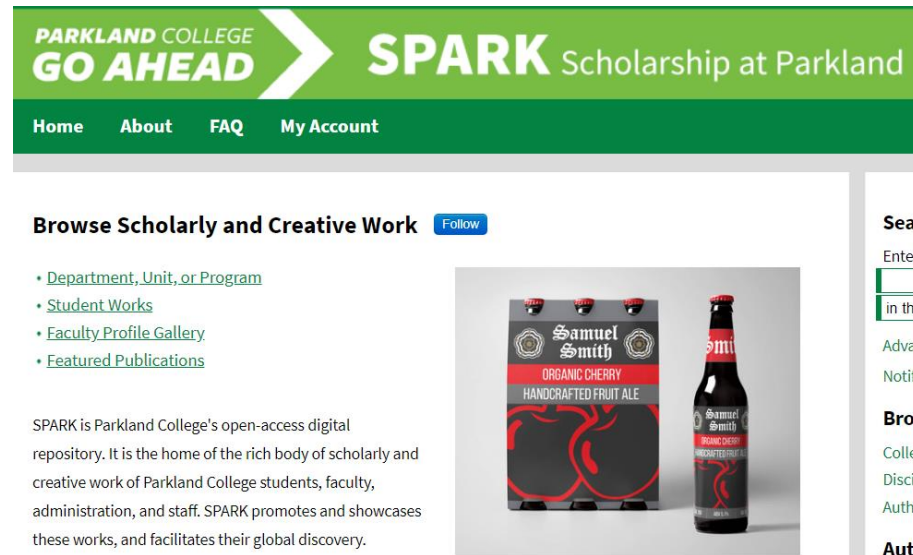
Remember – we are all part of a larger whole!

We cannot control each other!

But we CAN control how we work to understand ourselves & each other to make improvements!

Thank you for participating!

- ▶ Any questions?
- ▶ Or please feel free to email me at: sgrison@parkland.edu
- ▶ You will be able to access this presentation at SPARK
- ▶ Please fill out both sides of the evaluation sheet
- ▶ I look forward to working with you again in the future!



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Additional resources on traits

- ▶ <https://www.psychologicalscience.org/topics/personality-testing>
- ▶ <https://www.psychologicalscience.org/publications/observer/obsonline/cambridge-analytica-story-casts-spotlight-on-psychographics.html>
- ▶ <https://www.psychologicalscience.org/news/minds-business/dominant-leaders-are-bad-for-groups.html>
- ▶ <https://www.npr.org/programs/invisibilia/482836315/the-personality-myth>
- ▶ <https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2016/06/24/481859662/invisibilia-is-your-personality-fixed-or-can-you-change-who-you-are>
- ▶ <https://www.wnycstudios.org/story/91496-who-am-i/>