

Glossary

Abnormal psychology	The study of behaviour disturbance, including the causes, classification and description of abnormal types of behaviour.
Abreaction	A term used in psychodynamic theory to refer to the process of reliving, either in speech or action, a previously repressed experience. It also involves the release of the emotion associated with the experience.
Acquisition	The process whereby a conditioned stimulus begins to produce a conditioned response.
Actualising tendency	A propensity described by both Rogers and Maslow. It refers to the human urge to grow, develop and reach maximum potential.
Adaptation	The ability to function effectively in the environment. Adaptations are helpful changes which enable people to cope with others and with their surroundings.
Addiction	A pronounced physical or psychological dependence on, or need for, a particular substance or activity.
Adlerian	Referring to Adler, who was an early follower of Freud, and to the theories developed by him.
Affect	Refers to feelings and emotions.
Affective disorder	Mental disorder characterised by mood changes. Depression is one example, while extreme excitement (mania) is another.
Agoraphobia	An abnormal fear of being alone or in a public place where escape might be difficult. The term is derived from two Greek words: 'phobos' (fear) and 'agora' (marketplace).
Ambivalence	Conflict of feelings or emotions (love and hate) towards another person or object. There may be contradictory impulses as well, and often one of the ambivalent feelings is conscious, while the other is unconscious.
Anal stage	According to psychoanalytic theory, this is the second stage of psychosexual development. Gratification and conflict are experienced in relation to the expulsion and retention of faeces. Control of bodily function and socialisation of impulses are major tasks at this time.
Anima/animus	Jungian terms referring to unconscious opposite sex images. The anima is the unconscious female image in the male psyche,

	while the animus is the unconscious male image in the female psyche.
Anxiety	Feelings of dread associated with physical symptoms including raised pulse and sweating. According to Freud, anxiety is related to unconscious mental conflicts stemming from childhood.
Archetypes	Unconscious images or patterns of thought which, according to Jung, are inherited from our ancestors and are universally present in all of us.
Aversion therapy	The use of punishment to remove undesirable behaviour such as alcoholism. Once used as part of behaviour therapy, but is less popular now.
Basic needs	A term used by Maslow to describe a range of needs which all humans experience. Maslow arranged these needs in a hierarchy, and although it is often assumed that they are in a fixed order, he did not intend that it should be interpreted so rigidly.
Basic trust	A fundamental attitude derived from positive early experience. The term is used by both Erikson and Winnicott and refers to the feelings about self which are formed as a result of an infant's relationship with the primary caregiver.
Behaviourism	The scientific study of behaviour based on observable actions and reactions. The focus is on analysing the relationship between behaviour and the environment, and the way that stimuli provoke responses.
Behaviour therapy	A term first used by Skinner to describe a method of psychotherapy based on learning principles. This is also sometimes called 'behaviour modification'. Clients are taught, through a variety of techniques, to modify or change problem behaviour.
Belongingness need	A term used by Maslow (1954) to describe the human need to give and receive acceptance, affection and trust.
Biological determinism	Freudian concept which states that sexual and aggressive forces govern human experience and behaviour.
Bipolar disorder	This describes two emotional and alternating extremes of depression and mania, which a person may experience intermittently. The condition was formerly referred to as 'manic depression'.
Blind spots	A term often used to describe characteristics, behaviours or areas of personal experience which are (temporarily at least) outside our awareness.

Brief therapy	Counselling which often takes place over six to eight weeks, or it may even be shorter. Brief therapy is characterised by clarity of focus and by the client's motivation in achieving results in the time allocated.
Burn-out	The outcome of accumulated stress, characterised by physical, psychological and behavioural dysfunction.
Case history	Material or information recorded for the purpose of understanding a patient's (or client's) problems. Case histories are often used to help plan helping strategies or treatments, and they are sometimes used for research purposes too.
Castration complex	In Freudian theory, an unconscious fear of genital mutilation or loss, as punishment for sexual attraction to the opposite sex parent. The concept applies to both women and men, and should be interpreted in a symbolic rather than a literal way. Men may, for example, fear a loss of power or potency, while women may actually experience disempowerment because of their relative lack of status or opportunity in society.
Catastrophising	A term used by Albert Ellis to describe a tendency to dwell on negative events or possibilities. An over-emphasis on the worst possible scenario or outcome.
Catharsis	Release or elimination of repressed emotions, usually achieved through crying or verbal expression of anger or resentment. The word is translated from Greek and means 'to clean'. See also Abreaction .
Cathexis	A term used in Freudian theory to describe the attachment of emotional energy or libido to mental representations of other people (object Cathexis) or to aspects of oneself (ego or id Cathexis).
Censor	A Freudian term used to describe an unconscious mechanism used by the ego in the production of defence mechanisms. Also used to denote the mechanism whereby dream content is distorted to make it more acceptable to the ego.
Claustrophobia	An abnormal fear of enclosed spaces.
Client	In psychotherapeutic terms, the word 'client' has come to refer to someone who seeks help in counselling. The word 'patient' was traditionally used for anyone accessing psychological support, and some of the older books (those published before 1960) still feature it. In the process of moving away from a purely medical model of helping, however, both counselling and psychotherapy have adopted the term client, which is increasingly used in the hospital context too.

Clinical psychologist	A psychology graduate who specialises in the understanding, assessment and treatment of emotional or behavioural problems.
Cognition	The experience of thinking, reasoning, perceiving and remembering. Early behaviour therapy highlighted observable behaviour only, while cognitive behaviour therapy stresses that thinking affects how we feel and what we do.
Cognitive dissonance	Conflicts in attitude or thinking which lead to feelings of unease. These feelings then motivate the person to seek ways of achieving consistency.
Cognitive restructuring	The process of replacing stress-producing thoughts with more positive or constructive thoughts. Often taught as a therapeutic technique to clients in therapy.
Collective unconscious	A Jungian concept which postulates that all human beings have, at an unconscious level, shared memories, ideas and experiences, based on the knowledge acquired through time by our common ancestors.
Compensation	The development of personality traits designed to overcome other inadequacies or imperfections. In Freudian terms, a defence mechanism.
Complex	The word 'complex' is used in both Freudian and Adlerian theory. The Oedipus complex is a Freudian term, while the inferiority complex stems from the work of Adler. In both cases the term complex denotes a cluster of interrelated conscious and unconscious feelings and ideas, which affect a person's behaviour.
Condensation	The representation of several complex ideas in a single symbol. Used in Freudian theory to describe aspects of dream imagery.
Compulsion	An overwhelming drive to repeat certain actions or rituals. See also Obsessive compulsive disorder .
Confidentiality	In the context of counselling, the word 'confidentiality' means ensuring that what is told in 'confidence' by a client is not repeated to anyone else, apart from certain exceptional circumstances.
Contract	In counselling, a contract is an agreement made between two people, the counsellor and the client. It may be verbal or written and is made before counselling starts. A contract encompasses all aspects of therapy, including confidentiality, times, dates, fees and the commitment of both counsellor and client to the process.

Conversion reaction	Turning a psychological problem into a physical one so that anxiety is transformed into a tangible form.
Crisis intervention	The procedures used in an immediate response to any psychological emergency.
Counselling	The process of counselling is very different from the dictionary definition of advice giving. In therapeutic terms it refers to a form of confidential helping which values and seeks to elicit each client's innate internal resources, coping abilities and strengths. Counsellors may help clients with specific problems in the present, but they may also support clients with long-term problems stemming from the past too.
Death instinct	A concept introduced by Freud in 1920 to describe aggressive or destructive forces which are directed against 'self' rather than against others. Certain self-destructive forms of behaviour, drug-taking or alcoholism for example, could theoretically be prompted by the death instinct.
Defence mechanism	A method of coping with the threat of anxiety. A pattern of behaviour designed to obscure unpleasant emotions.
Delusion	A false belief or conviction which is firmly held and defended.
Denial	Defence mechanism often used in situations of extreme stress. For example, a person with terminal illness might simply deny the diagnosis in order to reduce intolerable anxiety.
Depression	A feeling of hopelessness, apathy or despair. A mood (or affective) disorder, see also Affect . May include physical symptoms, loss of self-esteem, sleep disturbance, loss of appetite and tiredness.
Depressive position	The second of Melanie Klein's developmental positions (age three months) characterised by a recognition that the object (mother) who was hated is also loved and is, in fact, a 'whole' object rather than just disjointed parts. This realisation is accompanied by depressive anxiety, feelings of guilt, concern and a desire to repair the (imagined) damage done to the object.
Developmental psychologist	A psychology graduate who specialises in the study of development throughout the lifespan. There is a special emphasis on the relationship between early and later behaviour, and on the experiences of childhood and adolescence.
Displacement	A defence mechanism whereby unacceptable motives or impulses are directed towards another target or object.

Dissociation	A lack of integration or connection between mental processes. Loss of contact with reality which may occur during sleep-walking, hypnosis, loss of memory, illness or severe stress.
Dreams	According to Freud, dreams originate in the unconscious, have psychological meaning and can be interpreted. In psychodynamic theory, dreams are said to have a manifest content and a latent content. The former refers to that which is remembered by the dreamer, while the latter refers to the deeper meaning which can only be accessed through interpretation.
Eclectic	An approach used in counselling and psychotherapy characterised by adherence to one preferred theoretical school, while using methods belonging to other schools when appropriate to the needs of individual clients.
Ego	The 'I' or conscious part of personality. In Freud's tripartite theory of personality, the Ego mediates between the impulses of the Id and the strict demands of the Superego.
Ego boundary	The imaginary line which separates 'self' from others. A person who lacks ego boundaries finds it difficult to maintain a separate identity from others.
Ego ideal	How each person would like to be. Often used interchangeably with the term superego. Refers to the parental and other influences which set guidelines for civilised behaviour.
Ego integrity	Refers to the last of Erikson's psychosocial stages (ego integrity versus despair). Indicates equanimity and acceptance of both life and death in old age.
Ego psychology	A branch of psychodynamic theory which stresses the positive, autonomous and creative functions of the ego. This is in contrast to strict Freudian theory, which limits ego function to the arbiter in disputes between the id and superego.
Electra complex	A Freudian term used to describe a constellation of impulses in girls, similar to the Oedipus complex in boys.
Endogenous	Originating from within the person; for example, endogenous depression.
Environment	All outside influences, including other people, which affect the individual.
Environmental determinism	The idea enshrined in behaviourism that people are influenced by external forces.

Esteem needs	From Maslow's hierarchy, where the need for respect for oneself and others is described.
Eros	Used by Freud to denote the life force or sexual instinct. See contrast with the death instinct or 'Thanatos'.
Extravert	Personality type described by Jung. Refers to people who are inclined to direct mental energy and interests outwards towards other people and events. The term was also used by Eysenck (1991) to describe the outgoing personality type.
False memories	Memories recalled during therapy or hypnosis which may, in fact, be dreamlike creations prompted by suggestion (spoken or unspoken) from the therapist.
Family therapy	A psychotherapeutic approach in which the whole family is involved so that common problems can be addressed.
Fantasy	Daydreaming to fulfil a psychological need. A defence mechanism which may be used as a substitute for reality.
Fitness to practise	This term is used by many professional bodies and by BACP in their <i>Ethical Framework for Good Practice in Counselling and Psychotherapy</i> (2013:7). It means that practitioners should have the required skills, knowledge, competence, and supervision to practise as counsellors.
Fixation	In Freudian theory arrested development at an early stage of life. Failure to progress through the stages of psychosexual development; for example, oral fixation.
Flight into health	Describes the way in which clients in therapy sometimes seem to recover rapidly. May be viewed as a defence against introspection or self-analysis.
Flooding	A method used in behaviour therapy to treat clients with phobias. The person is encouraged to stay in the feared situation and to experience all the anxiety that involves.
Free association	A procedure originated by Freud and used in many approaches to therapy. The client is encouraged to say whatever comes to mind in the hope that unconscious ideas and conflicts will surface.
Free floating anxiety	Generalised anxiety of unknown cause or origin.
Freudian slip	A mistake, either verbal or action-based, which indicates some underlying meaning. One example is the student who misses the bus on the way to sit an important exam.
Genital stage	The last of Freud's psychosexual stages of development. It is characterised by an interest in forming sexual relationships.

Gestalt	The word 'gestalt', which is German, means a pattern, shape or configuration. In Gestalt therapy it applies to a person's whole or complete sensory experience which is seen as more important than the parts of that experience in deciding meaning. Gestalt psychology states that <i>the whole is greater than the sum of its parts</i> .
Ground	The background in our visual field. The term is used in Gestalt theory along with the word figure (figure and ground) to describe a whole or pattern, which is known as a gestalt.
Group dynamics	The study of the way in which group members interact.
Group polarisation	A tendency, present in groups, to make decisions which are more extreme than those made by individuals.
Group think	A tendency among group members to lose the ability to be objective and realistic in their evaluation of decisions.
Growth motive	Described by Maslow as a human motive to develop and grow, even when there is no obvious need to continue striving.
Halo effect	A belief in the total goodness of a person possessed of one outstanding quality.
Hallucination	A sensory perception which may be visual, auditory, olfactory or tactile. Experiences which are not present in reality, but are nevertheless believed to be real by the individual. Common in certain forms of illness, including psychosis. May also occur after bereavement when the hallucination is seen as evidence of the dead person's presence.
Hierarchy of needs	The order of importance which Maslow ascribes to human needs. Lower order needs must be fulfilled before higher order needs can be experienced.
Holistic	An approach which emphasises the connection between all areas of experience, including the physical, the emotional and the environmental.
Homeostasis	An organic tendency to maintain a constant state or optimum level of functioning. One example is the physiological mechanism which ensures a uniform body temperature. In Jungian theory, psychological homeostasis or automatic self-regulation also occurs, and is achieved when there is a balance between the conscious and unconscious aspects of the psyche.
Horney, Karen (1885–1952)	A German psychoanalyst who moved to America in 1932. Emphasised the role of cultural and environmental factors

	in the development of mental problems, especially those affecting women.
Humanistic psychology	A psychological approach which emphasises subjective experience and the uniqueness of human beings. Sometimes referred to as the ‘Third Force’ in psychology, after psychoanalysis and behaviourism.
Hypnosis	The trance-like state resembling sleep. Artificially induced state during which a person’s perception, voluntary actions and memory may be altered, and susceptibility to suggestion is heightened.
Hypnotherapy	The treatment of problems or illness through hypnosis.
I	The subjective experience of self similar to the word ‘ego’. However, ‘I’ is a personal pronoun whereas the word ego is used as an objective description of the self.
Id	Refers to the primitive pleasure-seeking part of the personality described by Freud.
Ideal self	A Rogerian concept describing the kind of person one would really like to be. Conflict often arises between the ‘ideal self’ and the ‘false self’, especially when the former cannot be expressed or fully acknowledged.
Identification	A process of modelling personal behaviour on the behaviour of someone else. In extreme cases a person’s identity may be totally merged with that of someone else. In psychoanalysis, primary identification refers to a relationship in which the mother is the object, whereas secondary identification refers to a relationship where the object is seen as having a separate identity. See also Projective identification .
Identity crisis	A term used by Erikson to describe the turmoil which accompanies certain developmental stages, especially in adolescence. Young adults are faced with the task of separating from parents and of finding a suitable place in society. Erikson also describes the tendency to form peer groups at this stage, so that individual identities become merged.
Illusion	A mistaken perception of reality.
Imago	A term used in psychoanalytic and Jungian theory to describe unconscious object representations. Similar to Jung’s concept of the Archetype .
Incorporation	In Freudian theory this refers to a fantasy of having taken in or swallowed an external object or person.

Individuation	A Jungian term which refers to the process of psychic development and growth. A lifelong process which is particularly significant in middle age, when existential issues appear in sharp focus.
Inferiority complex	A term used by Adler to describe a constellation of ideas and feelings which arise in response to personal deficiency. The term is now more commonly used to denote feelings of worthlessness and inadequacy which often lead to lack of self-esteem or aggression.
Insight	In psychoanalytic terms, the capacity to understand mental processes, personal motives and the meaning of symbolic behaviour.
Instinct	Innate, unlearned, goal-directed behaviour arising from a biological source.
Intellectualisation	A defence mechanism which is used to ward off emotionally threatening material.
Internal reality	A person's own subjective experience of events.
Internalisation	The process of acquiring mental representations of people or objects in the external world. Often used in object relations theory to describe the way in which an infant builds up an inner world of images which are derived from relationships, especially the relationship with the mother. These representations are then used to form an image of 'self' which can be either good or bad, depending on the quality of early relationship experience.
Intrapsychic	Refers to mental activity and the processes which occur between the id, the ego and the superego.
Introjection	This is the process whereby objects (or other people) are internalised and become mental representations. The mental structure resulting from this is referred to as an <i>internal object</i> or an <i>introjected object</i> . These internal objects then form the subject's values, beliefs and attitudes and are the basis of the superego.
Introversion	A psychological type described by Freud. Refers to a human tendency to withdraw inwards, especially at times of stress. See also Extraversion .
Isolation	A defence mechanism used by people to separate thoughts from emotions. Experiences are deprived of affect or feeling and can be viewed in a wholly detached way.

James, William (1842–1910)	An American psychologist who wrote the two-volume book <i>Principles of Psychology</i> in 1890.
Latency	Freud's fourth stage of psychosexual development (age 6–12 years) during which sexual interests become dormant.
Law of effect	Refers to a law stating that any behaviour followed by reinforcement is strengthened. Responses which are not rewarded are less likely to be performed again.
Learned helplessness	A state of apathy or helplessness described by Seligman (1975), which develops when a person is unable to escape or avoid a situation in which there is discomfort or trauma.
Libido	In Freudian theory refers to a person's basic life instincts.
Longitudinal study	Research method used to study people over a period of time and taking measurements at different stages of development.
Lucid dreaming	Being aware that we are dreaming while the dream is actually in progress. This indicates that sleep may not always involve a total loss of consciousness.
Mania	An elevated expansive mood with increased levels of restlessness or irritability. There may also be a sense of grandiosity, flights of ideas and marked reduction in the need for sleep. Frequently accompanied by alternating periods of depression. See also Bipolar disorder .
Masochism	A desire for pain, humiliation or suffering inflicted by oneself or by others.
Maturation	The process of growing and becoming fully developed both mentally and physically.
Medical model	Sometimes called a biological model. An approach which states that mental illness and behaviour disorders are due to physical causes which should, therefore, be treated by medical means.
Meditation	An altered state of consciousness induced by intense concentration or the repetition of certain words or actions, and resulting in inner feelings of peace and tranquillity.
Mindfulness	A practice used to alleviate stress and anxiety by paying attention to the present moment. It is a way of stilling the mind and overcoming negative mental thoughts. Teaches self-observation with an emphasis on compassion for self.
Moral principle	Refers to the influence exerted by the superego whose purpose is to restrict free expression of id impulses. Guilt is

	reduced when such impulses are restricted through the moral principle.
Multiple personality	A dissociative disorder in which a person appears to possess more than one identity, all acting and speaking in different ways.
Multidisciplinary approach	A team approach to working with clients. Counsellors working in the public sector frequently liaise with other professionals, including doctors and social workers.
Narcissism	A form of self-love in which there is an investment of energy or libido in oneself. In other words, the subject is preferred to the object. In Freudian theory the term 'primary narcissism' refers to the infantile love of self, which is then followed by 'secondary narcissism' when love of self is replaced by love of an introjected other person or object.
Need satisfying object	An object or other person valued for an ability to satisfy one's basic or instinctual needs, without any regard for the needs or personality of the object.
Negative therapeutic reaction	A term used in psychoanalysis to describe a negative response whereby a client's general condition worsens as a result of interpretation offered by the therapist.
Neo-Freudian	Description of a group of American theorists who re-interpreted Freudian theory and emphasised the influence of society and relationships on people and their behaviour. This group includes Eric Fromm, Karen Horney and Harry Stack Sullivan.
Neurosis	A pattern of behaviour, including fear and anxiety, with no organic basis. Possible psychological causes include past events or traumas, relationship and sexual difficulties.
Neuroscience	The study of the brain and spinal cord, usually associated with medicine, but increasingly relevant into other disciplines, including counselling.
Norm	Average, standard or common. A learned and accepted rule of society which dictates behaviour in various situations.
Object	In object relations theory the word 'object' refers to another person to whom emotional energy, including love and desire, is directed by the subject. An object may also be a part of a person, or a symbolic representation of either a person or part of a person. Additionally, an object may be external, or it may be an internal image derived from an actual external relationship.

Object Cathexis	Investment of emotional energy in another person. Contrast with narcissism .
Object constancy	The tendency to adhere to a specific lasting relationship with another person. In infancy, object constancy refers to the baby's preference for and strong bond with, the mother or primary caregiver.
Object, good	May be internal (as a mental representation) or external. An object perceived as reliable, dependable, trustworthy and loving.
Object permanence	The knowledge that objects exist even when they are hidden from view. Such knowledge is a result of the ability to form mental representations of external objects.
Object, transitional	A substitute for another person or for an important relationship. Winnicott uses the term to describe soft toys, dolls and pieces of cloth or blanket which children value because of the symbolic link to the mother. These objects are effective in helping children move gradually from dependence to independence.
Object, whole	The object or other person who is seen as separate and existing in their own right, with feelings and needs similar to those of the subject.
Observational learning	The process of observing and learning from the behaviour of others.
Obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD)	Persistent thoughts, ideas and impulses which are inappropriate and intrusive, and which lead to anxiety and a compulsion to do certain things. The goal of such compulsive behaviour is to prevent or reduce anxiety. Cleaning rituals and checking are examples of OCD.
Oedipus complex	This is a Freudian concept used to describe the phallic stage of psychosexual development (3–6 years) when a small boy is said to be sexually attracted to his mother. There is accompanying hostility towards the father who is seen as a rival. Fear of retaliation ensures that these incestuous desires are repressed, and the eventual outcome is identification with the father and the adoption of male sex-role behaviour by the son.
Omnipotence	A Freudian concept which indicates a belief that thought can alter the environment or events. At an early stage, infants are said to experience omnipotence of thought, and only later come to realise, through the frustration of everyday living, that reality prevails.

Operant conditioning	The process whereby an animal or person learns to respond to the environment in a way that produces a desired effect. In laboratory research, B.F. Skinner trained animals by immediately rewarding them for correct responses. He later applied the same concept to human learning.
Oral stage	In psychoanalytic theory, the first of Freud's stages of psychosexual development is characterised by an infant's pleasure in feeding and dependence on the mother.
Organismic self	The real inner life of the person which is present from birth and gravitates towards self-actualisation, integration and harmony.
Panic disorder	Sometimes referred to as panic attacks, and include frightening recurrent anxiety which appears without warning and is not associated with a specific phobia. The panic is accompanied by fast heart rate, sweating, shortness of breath, trembling, dizziness and sometimes nausea.
Paranoia	A mental disorder in which delusions of persecution or grandeur are common.
Paranoid–schizoid position	The first of Melanie Klein's positions which occupies the first three months of an infant's life. It is characterised by feelings of persecution and threats of annihilation, along with splitting of the ego into good and bad. In Klein's view, this precedes the depressive position and represents the infant's attempts to deal with destructive impulses which are projected onto the mother (object).
Parapraxis	A term used to denote unconscious mental forces which prompt certain unintended actions or mistakes in speech. These errors are more commonly referred to as Freudian slips, and are seen as evidence of unconscious conflicts or wishes.
Persona	A Jungian term which translated means 'a mask', and describes the characteristics which people assume as part of their roles in everyday life.
Person-centred	This refers to an attitude which counsellors, or ideally anyone in the helping professions, should have. It means paying attention to the real person of the client and identifying their individual experiences and needs, which are quite separate from anyone else's.
Personal construct	A personality theory proposed by the American psychologist George Kelly (1905–1967), which suggests that people construe their own worlds. According to Kelly, we interpret things and

try to understand them, and to do this we employ personal constructs. These represent our own private logic and include deductions and conclusions which determine personality and guide behaviour. When events accord with our expectations we feel comfortable and our personal constructs are validated. If, however, we anticipate wrongly we are obliged to reconstrue, a process which causes discomfort and threat.

Personality	General patterns of behaviour and thought which are characteristic of an individual. Major theories have been forwarded by Freud, Adler, Jung, Klein, Sullivan, Horney and Erikson, though other writers have contributed to the field as well.
Personality disorder	Psychological disturbances in which personality traits or behaviour interfere with social functioning.
Phallic stage	The third of Freud's psychosexual stages of development, preceded by the oral and anal stages. Characterised by the Oedipus complex .
Phantasy	Refers to unconscious mental activity, and differs from Fantasy which takes place at a conscious level. The word is used in object relations theory to describe much of the psychic activity occurring in infancy.
Phobia	Irrational fear of a specific object or situation. An anxiety disorder which interferes with daily life. In psychodynamic theory, the phobic situation or object represents an unconscious fear or impulse which the person is unable to face.
Pleasure principle	In psychodynamic theory this is the operating principle of the id, which prompts people to seek immediate satisfaction of desires and needs.
Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)	The development of symptoms following an extremely stressful experience or situation. It differs from other anxiety disorders because of its specific causation. The traumatic event is usually experienced through recurrent and intrusive recollections, images, thoughts or perceptions. Distressing dreams and nightmares also occur, and there is often persistent avoidance of anything associated with the trauma.
Primary process thinking	A Freudian concept used to describe a primitive form of thinking which is characteristic of early infancy. A very basic form of wishful thinking through which the infant can access images of a desired object (mother).

Projection	A defence mechanism stemming from psychoanalytic theory. It describes the way people often ascribe unacceptable desires or feelings to others instead of to themselves. The result is a reduction in guilt and discomfort. In Kleinian terms, projection has a different meaning, and refers to a normal developmental strategy used in early infancy. In this sense, impulses, including good and bad feelings, are projected by the infant on to the object (mother).
Projective identification	A Kleinian term which describes the way in which clients in therapy may force aspects of their internal world onto the therapist (see Units 3 and 4).
Psychiatrist	A medical doctor with specialist training in the treatment of mental or emotional disorders.
Psychoanalysis	This term refers to two aspects of Freud's work. First, it denotes his theory of human development and behaviour, and secondly it describes the related therapy which is used to help clients gain access to mental conflicts. Among the techniques used in psychoanalysis are <i>free association</i> , <i>interpretation</i> , and the analysis of <i>resistance</i> and <i>transference</i> .
Psychodrama	This refers to the exploration of emotions and situations through actions in a supportive therapeutic environment. When emotions are explored in this way feelings tend to surface quickly, and are re-experienced in a way which leads to new learning.
Psychodynamic	In the context of psychotherapy and counselling the word 'psychodynamic' refers to an approach which originates in Freudian theory. The term is derived from two words <i>psyche</i> (meaning mind) and <i>dynamic</i> (meaning active or alive) both of which are Greek in origin. Put together these two words describe the activity of the human mind, both conscious and unconscious.
Psychologist	A person who has obtained a degree in psychology. May also specialise in different areas of psychology including clinical, developmental, educational, industrial and abnormal psychology.
Psychopathology	The study of mental illness.
Psychosis	A severe mental illness in which a person loses contact with reality and is unable to manage daily living. May include delusions and hallucinations.
Psychosocial	This is a term used to describe Erikson's stages of human development. The first part of the word 'psych' refers to

the mind, while the second part ‘social’ refers to one’s place within society and our relationships with others. Erikson’s stages, therefore, describe mental and social development throughout the life span.

Psychosomatic disorder	Physical illness with a psychological cause.
Rationalisation	Freudian defence mechanism which offers false reasons for unacceptable behaviour. A person who steals might, for example, overcome feelings of guilt by saying that the people he steals from have too much money anyway.
Psychotherapy	The terms counselling and psychotherapy are often taken to denote the same process, and in many instances it is difficult to identify any appreciable differences between them. Traditionally psychotherapy training differed in length from that of counselling and tended to take longer. Psychotherapists use all the skills of counselling, but may have additional specific training, and may be concerned with life patterns relating to the past and its influence on the present.
Reaction formation	Another Freudian defence mechanism in which a person’s views, impulses and behaviour are directly opposite to what she or he really feels.
Reality principle	Describes the operating principle of the ego in Freudian theory. The reality principle is acquired through development and experience, and is that part of personality which seeks to compromise between the unreasonable demands of the id, and the demands of the real world.
Regression	Returning to an earlier less mature stage of development when stressful conditions prevail. An example is the small child who reverts to baby language after the birth of a sibling.
Reinforcement	In classical conditioning, these are strengthening responses through a system of rewards. Rewards increase the likelihood that a person will behave in certain desired ways.
Reparation	A Freudian defence mechanism which involves a process of repair. Guilt is reduced when action is taken to atone for imagined damage to internal objects. One way of doing this is to recreate the object which has been destroyed in Phantasy. In Kleinian theory, reparation is a normal part of the developmental process and is used by the infant to resolve ambivalent feelings (of love and hate) towards the mother.

Repetition compulsion	A Freudian term which describes the tendency to repeat certain patterns of behaviour derived from early experience. Since much of this early experience is based on relationships with parents and other significant figures, later repetitions also tend to occur in the context of relationships.
Repression	A Freudian defence mechanism which involves pushing unacceptable emotions or feelings into the unconscious. This ensures that deeply distressing impulses or emotions do not cause anxiety.
Resistance	A word used in psychoanalytic literature to describe a person's opposition to the process of therapy. It is especially relevant in relation to interpretations offered by the therapist. These interpretations may be rejected for fear that unconscious material will surface and so have to be faced. Resistance may also be present when sessions are missed, or when clients arrive late or talk about totally irrelevant topics.
Rorschach test	A personality test devised by Swiss psychiatrist Hermann Rorschach (1844–1922). The test uses a series of ink blots which the subject is asked to interpret. Answers are meant to provide evidence of the subject's fantasy life and personality structure.
Sadism	A pathological need to obtain pleasure by inflicting pain on others (see also Masochism).
Safety need	From Maslow's hierarchy of needs: the human need to be safe from physical and psychological danger.
Schizophrenia	A severe mental illness characterised by hallucinations, delusions, disorganised behaviour, incoherent speech and withdrawal.
Script analysis	This is based on the idea that everyone has a life plan or 'script' which determines behaviour and life choices. Analysis of scripts brings these, largely unconscious, motivations into conscious awareness.
Secondary gain	Any advantage derived from an illness or condition, or positive side effects which accompany a negative event.
Secondary process thinking	In contrast to <i>primary process thinking</i> , this refers to logical and realistic thought processes (see also <i>primary process thinking</i>).
Self	The way in which a person experiences him or herself. This is in contrast to the concept of 'ego' which is a descriptive term used in psychoanalytic theory to refer objectively to a <i>part</i> of human personality (see also <i>ego</i>).

Self-actualisation	A Rogerian concept describing an innate tendency towards growth and self-realisation.
Self-concept	This is a person's view of self which is acquired in early childhood, and developed through life experience. It is reinforced by the reflected appraisals of other people, especially parents, and other important figures in a person's life.
Self-fulfilling prophecy	Ideas or beliefs about people which influence our attitudes towards them. These ideas and beliefs are then reinforced when people's responses fulfil our expectations.
Sibling rivalry	The competition for parental attention which occurs between children in the same family.
Social psychology	That branch of psychology which studies social interaction, including the thought processes and behaviour of individuals, pairs and groups.
Solution focused brief therapy (SFBT)	This is a form of therapy pioneered by Steve de Shazer which focuses on finding solutions to problems, rather than dwelling on the past, and is described in Unit 8.
Stereotyping	Preconceived ideas, and expectations about certain groups of people, and about male and female behaviour and roles. Although some stereotypes may seem positive, they are always, in fact, negative. This is because individuals should be assessed on personal merit, rather than on judgments about the perceived attributes of their particular group.
Structural analysis	This refers to a theory of personality based on the study of specific ego states. These ego states are: Adult, Parent and Child.
Structural model	Regardless of the theoretical approach, counselling needs a framework in order to provide structure for the process. This framework begins with a contract between counsellor and client, but is more extensive than this and includes consideration of the various stages of counselling and the skills and processes which are relevant to them.
Sublimation	A defence mechanism which involves the conversion of instinctual impulses into socially acceptable activities.
Stack Sullivan, Harry (1892–1949)	An American psychiatrist who emphasised the importance of social factors in the development of personality.
Superego	In the Freudian tripartite structure of personality, the superego is the component which guides ethical and moral behaviour.

Thanatos	The Greek god of death. The term was used by Freud to describe the aggressive instinctual forces which, in his view, motivated human beings towards destructive behaviour and death.
Theoretical approach	Each model of helping is informed by a set of theories about human development and personality. These theories underpin the skills and techniques used by practitioners of the model, and they also determine the kind of training needed to qualify in that approach.
Thorndike, Edward Lee (1874–1949)	An American behavioural psychologist, famous for his studies in animal learning and his research in educational psychology. He established that mental abilities are independent so that, for example, a person who is good at verbal skills might lack an aptitude for maths.
Token economy	A procedure used in behaviour modification for rewarding desired behaviour with tokens which can be exchanged for privileges. These tokens include snacks, gifts, access to television or trips. Sometimes used in institutions, including hospitals.
Transaction	This refers to communication between two or more people in any social situation. Communication can be verbal or non-verbal. Berne used the term ‘strokes’ to denote the exchanges that people engage in socially (Berne, 1964, p.14).
Transactional analysis	This refers to the analysis of a person’s communications style or ‘transactions’ which is carried out with the aid of diagrams so that the specific ego states involved are identified.
Transference	In psychodynamic theory this refers to the process of directing feelings, attitudes and conflicts experienced in childhood to people in the present (see Units 3 and 4).
Transpersonal psychology	An approach to therapy that focuses on experiences which go beyond the purely personal. It is similar in some ways to existential therapy, but is different in that it emphasises the spiritual component of human experience in a way that the existential approach avoids.
Trust versus mistrust	The first of Erikson’s psychosocial stages which corresponds roughly to Freud’s oral stage of development. When early experience is positive and supportive a child is likely to develop a sense of basic trust and confidence in self.
Unconditional positive regard	An attitude described by Carl Rogers in his client-centred approach to therapy. It refers to the way the client should be valued and accepted unconditionally by the counsellor.

Unconditional response	A term used in behavioural psychology to describe the automatic or unlearned response to a stimulus.
Unconditional stimulus	Another term used in behavioural psychology to describe the stimulus which elicits an automatic response with learning or conditioning.
Unconscious	That area of mental activity which, according to Freud, is outside immediate awareness. Contains feelings, memories and motives as well as sexual and aggressive impulses which, although hidden, nevertheless affect behaviour.
Unconscious motivation	As the term implies it refers to a process outside conscious awareness. However, some motives have both conscious and unconscious components and occasionally a motive is discernible in distorted or disguised form.
Wish fulfilment	A term used in Freudian theory to suggest that dreams may express unconscious wishes or desires. Clearly not all dreams could be described as wish fulfilment, since many of them are frightening or disturbing.
Working through	A term used in psychodynamic theory to describe the process whereby a client in therapy gains insight, becomes independent and prepares to change. This process also involves some degree of mourning for the past.