

(FINAL) Thinking, imagination and creation

Definitions:

a) Thinking is a process whereby we conceptualize, construct, manipulate and communicate symbols.

Others view it as a form of problem solving behaviour which involves the correlations and integration of events in time and space.

b) Imagination is a process of mental manipulation, in which the person recalls memories and rearranges them into a new pattern.

c) Creation is a mental process leading to new original products in any field of human activity.

It is a complex process involving various aspects of mental functions (cognitive, volitional and affective)

Thinking

I. Thought processes (formal thinking):

Any thought process has its goal.

This goal makes the thoughts coherent (makes the proper understanding of the speech), and facilitates the communication.

Thoughts are organized as following:

1) Central idea: This is the core idea around which the related ideas follow.

2) Following idea: It runs along with and is attached to the central idea.

3)Opposing idea: It is particularly contradictory to the original central idea.

4)The parasitic idea: It occupies consciousness simultaneously but it is neither harmonious with nor opposing to the central idea, but it handicaps its fluency.

5)Acentral idea: It is both parasitic and opposing and occupies the same matrix of consciousness.

II. Types of thinking

1. According to nature:

a.Simple thinking: It consists of dealing with present objects according to the meaning, they have acquired in our past experience.

b.Trial and error thinking: When you are faced with problem you try to find a solution.

You keep on until a trial is successful.

Along this course of trials you commit many errors, e.g. geometrical problems.

Insight thinking: In this type we study the situation, put a hypothesis and try it out.

Finding that it does not work, we try another hypothesis.

This will continue until we reach a hypothesis that will solve the problem.

So it is a trial and error on a mental level.

It is manifest in the process of reasoning and in creative thinking.

2. Types of thinking according to the objects it deals with:

a. Egocentric type:

The person relates other objects to oneself e.g. one thinks of others' attitudes as far as they concern oneself and not in

general terms .

b. Objective type: Where we relate objects to each other.

Objective thinking is more successful type of thinking as it enables one to overcome the emotional factor entangling the egocentric type.

3.Types of thinking according to the degree of conformity with reality:

a.Realistic type: In which the object of thinking is formed from reality, and controlled by realistic facts, sometimes called rational thinking.

b. Idealistic type: In which the objects of thinking come from what ought to be rather than what actually is. It follows the thinker's superior standards which may be not practical.

It is not abnormal as by experience it may be modified by reality but if exaggerated and uncontrolled it may lead to mal- adjustment.

c.Autistic thinking: Where the predominant thought content is wish fulfillment.

It does not conform to reality and is sometimes considered as imagination.

III. Factors affecting problem solving

1.How the problem is conceived: The way in which we define a problem.

This depends mainly on insight thinking rather than on trial and error.

2.Intensity of motivation: Intense motivation may be harmful while moderate optimum motivation is helpful. Under extreme conditions of tension our thought processes tend to become so disorganized that we are less likely to

reach a solution.

On the other hand, if motivation is too weak we may not persist long enough in our attempts at solution.

3. Transfer of learned responses: Any problem situation has at least some similarity to previous experienced situations.

As a result the previously learned responses are likely to be generalized to the new situation.

4. Emotional status: If mood is good, it makes our abilities high.

5. Physical status: our physical wellbeing helps us in solving the problems

Imagination

It is a process of mental manipulation.

To imagine the person recalls numerous previously observed in reality and then he rearranges these memories into a new pattern, e.g. I am imagining a mermaid comprises reviving the images of a woman and a fish and combining them together in a new pattern.

Types (free imagination, controlled imagination, inventive production").

A . Free imagination

1. Imaginative play:

Make-believe: Here the child manipulates objects according to the meaning he attaches to them e.g. a girl speaks about her doll as if it were her baby.

Story telling: Here the objects manipulated are simply thought of.

2. Day-dreams: It is a universal phenomenon.

The motives behind day dreams are usually those of mastery and self-assertion.

Also love, sex and hatred may be producers of the day dream.

Day dreams are normal so far as the person is not so preoccupied with them, enhances him towards better achievement, so it has adaptive function for alleviating anxiety and motivating the person.

In pathological use the individual is indulged in day dreaming, escapes his actual problems and responsibilities and loses contact with the environment.

3. Autistic thinking: It means thinking which does not go with the real world.

It gratifies certain desire and is not subject to criticism. It is present to variable degrees in every person and it increases to a larger extent in all mentally ill persons.

Its striking presentation is in delusions, hallucinations and the withdrawal from reality.

B. Controlled imagination

We require imagination to produce art as well as to enjoy it. The appeal of art is partly emotional and partly intellectual. The source of satisfaction in the enjoyment of art is that it satisfies a motive in the individual that may be of mastery, escape, curiosity self-assertion and identification.

Also, invention and creation are types of controlled imagination as well be discussed in details.

Inventive production and creation

Invention is work in the sense that it is directed towards a definite goal and has to stand criticism.

Necessity puts a question without which the inventor would not find the lead to his goal.

What is needed is not only a goal but also a framework in

which data are assembled to fit in.

The process of inventions may pass through:

a. Preparation phase: In this phase the problem is examined and material brought together.

b. Incubation phase: No attention is paid to the problem but unconscious work is done.

c. Inspiration phase: The clue to the solution suddenly presents itself.

d. Verification and elaboration, of the product (hypothesis, apparatus).

Disorders of Thinking

These are classified into:

A. Disorders of Form of Thinking

They are also called Formal Thought Disorders.

They usually occur in psychotic disorders and some organic mental disorders.

The following are the commonest types.

1. Loosening of associations:

Shifting between unrelated and unconnected ideas and subjects.

"Derailment", is a special form of loose association in which the train of thought gradually shifts to another subject without any logical connection.

2. Incoherence :

This is a severe degree of loosening of association.

Thoughts or words run together with no logical or grammatical connection resulting in disorganization.

3. Word Salad:

This is extreme incoherence, i.e. incoherent mixture of words and phrases.

4. Verbigeration :

This is meaningless and stereotyped repetition of specific words or phrases.

5. Perseveration

Persistent repetition of the same response to different stimuli (e.g. repeating same answer to different questions).

Seen in organic mental disorders and deteriorated schizophrenia.

6. Neologism:

New words invented by the patient (often by combining syllables of other words).

7. Gang associations:

Association of words similar in sound not in meaning (may include rhyming).

B. Disorders of Stream of Thinking

These are abnormalities in the progress of thought including its speed (tempo) and continuity.

1. Flight of ideas:

- Rapid continuous flow of thoughts and speech with constant shifting from one idea to another.
- It does not reach a central idea or goal.
- Typically occurs in mania.

2. Circumstantiality:

- Thinking and speech proceed slowly with frequent shifts to side issues and details but finally reaches the central idea or goal.
- Observed in mania, obsessive disorders and dementia.

3. Blocking:

- Sudden arrest of the train of thought before a thought or idea is finished leaving a (blank) or "empty mind".
- Observed in Schizophrenia and severe anxiety.

C. Disorders of Content of Thinking

These are abnormalities in the ideas or beliefs contained in thought.

A. Overvalued idea:

False idea that certain one is ideal.
My football team is the super one.
The idea is shakable.

b. Obsessions:

Obsessions are recurrent, persistent thoughts, impulses or images that cannot be eliminated from consciousness by logic or reasoning although the person is aware that they are unreasonable, absurd and alien to him (ego-dystonic). They are time consuming or associated with distress and anxiety which increase when the person resists them.

Compulsions: If the thought urges the patient to perform a certain act, repetitive compulsion results, e.g., obsession of dirt leads to compulsive washing.

Like obsessions, compulsions are recognized as senseless and alien.

c. Delusions:

- A delusion is a false belief.
- It is based on incorrect inferences about reality.
- It is not consistent with the patient's cultural background.

It cannot be corrected by experience or reasoning

Delusions may be:

Fixed(complete conviction all the time) or **shakable** (lacking full conviction sometimes).

Systematized (i.e. united by or centered on a single theme or idea with many connected details)or **malssystematized** (i.e.. disconnected or shifting from one theme to another).

Bizarre (i.e., with very strange or absurd content) or **non-bizarre**.

NB, Delusions and Hallucinations occur in psychotic disorders such as:

- 1- Schizophrenia.
- 2 - Delusional disorders.
- 3- Psychotic mood disorders.
- 4- Some organic or substance related mental disorders.

Types of Delusions (according to theme):

1. Delusion of persecution:

This is a false belief that one is being harassed, cheated or persecuted.

The patient believes that some other person or organization is plotting to harm him.

2 - Delusion of grandeur (grandiosity) :

This is a false belief of exaggerated one's importance, power or identity.

3 - Delusion of reference:

This is a false belief that the behavior of others refers to the patient, e.g.belief that people on television are talking about the patient.

4 - Delusion of guilt or self-accusation.

This is a false belief that one is sinful or guilty of bad deeds.

5 - Nihilistic delusion:

This is a false belief that self, others or the world is nonexistent. Or, that some part of body does not exist.

6 – Somatic delusion:

This is a false belief involving functioning of the body (e.g.,

that the brain is rotting or melting).

7. Hypochondriacal delusion:

This is a false belief, against all medical evidence, that one is suffering from a disease.

8. Delusion of infidelity (delusional jealousy):

This is a false belief (derived from jealousy) that one's lover or spouse is unfaithful.

9. Erotomania (delusion of love):

This is a false belief that someone is deeply in love with the patient.

10. Delusions of influence & control (Passivity phenomena):

This is a group of delusions in which the patient experiences an outside control or interference with his thoughts, feelings or behavior.

11. Delusions of control:

This is a false belief that a person's thoughts, feelings, actions or will are being controlled by external forces.

- Delusions concerning the possession of thoughts:

i. Thought insertion:

This is a delusion that thoughts are being implanted in one's mind by other people or forces.

ii. Thought withdrawal:

This is a delusion that thoughts are being removed from one's mind by other people or forces.

iii. Thought broadcasting:

Others know his thoughts.