HOW DO YOU THINK?
THEORIES OF COGNITION AND DEVELOPING A COGNITIVE PROFILE
Identify differences in thought

Neurotypical (Normal) vs. Autistic

- The importance of understanding the difference
- How knowing the difference assists in helping
Two Parts......

Literature Review
- Overview of Theories of Cognitive Styles:
  - Neurotypical and Autistic

The Manual
- How do you think? Creating a Cognitive Profile
Literature Review…….

Theories of Cognition (Neurotypical)

Three Theoretical Perspectives
- Cognitive Centered
- Personality Centered
- Activity Centered
Cognitive Centered……

- A cognitive-centered approach can also be recognized as cognitive abilities
- Can appear as a black or white assessment
- An individual possess one “ability” or the other

Reflection – Impulsivity & Field Dependent – Field Independent
Cognitive Centered......

Reflection – Impulsivity

- 2 Extremes on a continuum
- Evaluated by speed and correctness of response

Reflection = Pausing prior to doing
Impulsivity = Reactive, instinctually response
Cognitive Centered......

Reflection – Impulsivity

Recognition assists in:
- Communication
- Asking questions
- Expected response time
- Length of Processing time needed
Cognitive Centered......

Field Dependence – Field Independence

- 2 Extremes on a continuum
- Related to focus of environment
- Internal “knowing” vs. External information

Field Dependence = Focus on the whole then details
Field Independence = Focus on details then the whole
Field Dependence – Field Independence

Recognition assists in:
- Recognizing need for help
- Willingness to request assistance
- Presenting information (details vs. whole)
- Focusing on important aspects
Personality Centered......

- Variations in personality or personality types
- Individual preferences for approaching and functioning in the world
- Similarities to both Cognitive Centered and Activity Centered

Theory of Types & Gregorc’s Energic Style
Personality Centered......

Theory of Types

- Personality Types of Carl Jung
- 2 Distinct Groups – Introverts & Extraverts
- 4 Modes of psychological processing or functioning
  (thinking – feeling – perception – intuition)
- Functions of rational judging & irrational perceiving
  (rational judging functions = thinking & feeling)
  (irrational perceiving functions = intuition & sensation)
Personality Centered......

Theory of Types

Recognition assists in:

- Development of self-awareness
- Understanding preference for interaction
- How an individual makes decisions
Personality Centered……

Gregorc’s Energic Style

- Energic = state of action, acting, operating
- Based on students’ preference of instructors approach
  (step by step & ordered vs. personalized & fluid)
- 2 dimensions; use of time & use of space
  
  Use of Space (perceiving) = concrete or abstract
  Use of Time (ordering) = sequential or random
Personality Centered......

Gregorc’s Energic Style

Recognition assists in:

- Communication
- Planning & organization
- Presentation of information
Activity Centered......

- Crossover of cognition and personality
- Focused on individual learning styles
- More on preferred mode of intake of information vs. processing of information

VARK Learning Styles & Kolb Experiential Learning Theory
VARK Learning Styles

- Learning preferences:
  visual, aural (auditory), reading/writing, kinesthetic

- Individuals capable of each mode with preference for or “go to mode” where they learn most effectively
VARK Learning Styles

Recognition assists in:

- Communication & instruction
- Development of assignments & tasks
- Strategies for effective learning
Kolb Experiential Learning Theory

- Learning is a process = knowledge created through transformation of experiences
- 4 Stage Non-linear Cycle: experiencing, reflecting, thinking, and doing
- Individual preference for beginning the cycle
Recognition assists in:
- Identifying preferential approach or stage to learning
- Understanding places where learning becomes stuck or does not progress
Theories of Cognition - Autistic…

- Appear to focus more on deficits and challenges rather than cognitive differences, style, or preferences
- Attempt to explain challenges in: communication, social interaction, and behavioral flexability
Theories of Cognition – Autistic

Theory of Mind
Executive Function Theory
Central Coherence Theory
Intense World Theory
Theory of Mind

- Reasoning about differences of beliefs, knowledge, and intentions of others
- Challenges in social and communicative interactions due to limited ability to interrupt and understand the minds of others
Theories of Cognition - Autistic…

Theory of Mind

Recognition assists in:

- Current and future difficulties in social communication and understanding
- Learning acceptable behavior in context
- Developing effective communication
Theories of Cognition - Autistic…

Executive Function

- Regulation of thoughts and actions
- Shifting of attention and focus
- Impulse control and initiation of tasks
- Planning, organization, and follow through
Theories of Cognition - Autistic…

Executive Function

Recognition assists in:

- Approaching tasks
- Communication and planning
- Setting expectations based on capacity
- Identification of challenging tasks
Central Coherence Theory

- Ability to process information and apply it within appropriate context
- Tendency to process information in detail and not reach a level of effective integration
- Can account for routines, splinter skills, hyper-focus, etc.
Central Coherence

Recognition assists in:

- Understanding focus of attention
- Preference for certain details
- Identifying need for context or explanations
- Developing a more complete and useful integration of information
Theories of Cognition - Autistic...

Intense World Theory

- Describes cognition as hyper-functioning and overly strong reactions to experiences creating a tendency for very rigid interpretation of new experiences
- Supercharged brain function and processing
- Results in processing of detailed fragments of information
Theories of Cognition - Autistic…

Intense World Theory

Recognition assists in:

- Understanding reactions to environmental stimuli
- Interrupting focus on details
- Developing alternative approaches to “known” experiences and repeating behaviors and responses to similar experiences
Findings & Interpretation……

- Neurotypical theories appear to be black and white, one or the other
- Autistic theories focus more on deficits and challenges rather than
- Neurotypical and Autistic cognition share traits
- Cognition and Thinking is a Spectrum
How do you think?: Creating a Cognitive Profile
The Intent......

- Development of self-awareness
- Identifying personal preferences
- Understanding and accepting differences and preferences of others
- Creating more effective working relationships and subsequent outcomes through acknowledgement of and working within the differences
- Development of a Cognitive Profile as a reference and starting point for identifying and understanding differences
The Assessments......

Formal Assessments
  Gregorc Style Delineator
  Keirsey Temperament Sorter
  VARK Learning Styles Questionnaire

Informal Assessments
  Pew Priority
  Adlerian Concepts
Gregorc Style Delineator……

- An assessment used to assess cognitive processing and identifies two dimensions; use of space and use of time

- Space referring to perceptual quality and intake of information; either concrete or abstract

- Time referring to order and acquisition of information; either sequential or random

- Results given identify a preference in one of four combinations; concrete sequential, abstract random, abstract sequential, and concrete random

- Used to identify individual preferred mode of perceiving information and preferred way of ordering/intake of information

- Can be beneficial in approaching tasks and decision making
- Temperament identification assessment providing results based on the idea that human behavior can be classified into four different groups or temperaments.
- Groups are referred to and Artisans, Guardians, Rationals, and Idealists.
- Use of the Keirsey assists in identifying multiple dimensions of an individuals’ personality and generally preferred mode of interacting within their environment.
- Assessment tool designed to identify an individual's preferred learning style in the domains of: visual, reading or written, and kinesthetic.

- Utilization of a VARK assessment can be found in determining how an individual best learns or their preference.

- Identifying this preference, the presentation of information as well as development of learning tasks and skills can be tailored to the specific individual's needs.
Pew Priority......

- Simple assessment that can provide information on how an individual perceives the world as well as what they value most and would most like to avoid in life
- Assists in identifying one of four psychological priorities and in doing so illuminates an individual’s psychological life style
- 4 priorities: comfort, pleasing, control, superiority
- 4 avoidances: distress, rejection, humiliation, meaninglessness
- Assists in identification of challenges in thought and interactions which can be made aware to self and used to overcome challenges to movement and progress
Adlerian Concepts......

- Adlerian Concepts are meant to compliment formal assessments.
- Basic concepts can be used to quickly and simply identify where difficulties may be.
- Utilization of concepts as interventions can assist in overcoming challenging areas of a thought process.
Adlerian Concepts

**Compensation/Overcompensation** – Drive to overcome feelings of inferiority and perceived experiences of inferiority. Can be seen as striving for power and to be better than others in order to reduce or mask personal feelings of perceived inadequacy. Purpose is not to be equal to others but to be better than others.

Identification of tendencies to compensate and overcompensate can assist in developing insight into personal level of competence and awareness of limitations.

**Discouragement** – Result of feelings of infirmity, lack of significance, meaninglessness and struggles to find success in life tasks.

Common reaction to disappointment and perceived negative experience.

**Encouragement** – Support in changing beliefs and behaviors and empowering the individual to do so from their own perspective and on their own.

Use as a therapeutic technique helps to build a relationship and to foster client change.

**Fictional Final Goal** – An over arching largely unconscious concept based not in reality yet a fictional creation of the individual of an imagined ideal situation of perfection, completion, or overcoming. Represents a subjective, fictional view of the future that guides the person in the present, causing them to strive for perfection and overcome inferiorities.

Identification within thought process can assist in determining drive and purpose.

**Inferiority Feelings** – A conscious awareness of perceived insufficiencies in approach to normal, everyday tasks, especially when and individual compares themselves to others and the awareness of not being able to function in a way that they wish.

Challenging feelings of inferiority can be used to redirect comparison of self to others.

**Life Style** – An account of and an explanation for behaviors and how they fit together to form and individuals unique approach to life and consistency in their actions and can be similar to describing and individuals personality.

Useful in identifying an individual’s approach based on their expenses and perspective.
Adlerian Concepts

**Mistaken Beliefs** — Self-defeating aspects of individuals’ lifestyle that may affect their later behavior. Include avoidance of others, seeking power, a desperate need for security, or faulty values.

Identifying mistake beliefs can assist in removal of barriers due to incorrect assumptions or information.

**Private Logic** — An individual’s concept of self, others, and life and unconscious reasons for thinking, feeling, and behaving as they do and can give meaning to seemingly meaningless behaviors and actions a person exhibits in various situations.

Acceptance of validity of one’s private logic can assist in developing perspective and processing of personal experience.

**Safeguarding** — Behaviors and attitudes used by an individual to protect their feelings of self-worth, and self-esteem, may be in reaction to a perceived threat or experience that could cause feelings of inferiority; perceived or actual. In reaction and relation to daily living or life challenges can appear as; distancing or avoiding, hesitation or ambivalence, detouring or circumventing, or narrowing of vision and ignoring important parts.

Identifying and developing awareness of an individual’s use of safeguarding can help to identify fears related to goals and out comes as well as barriers to making decisions insight.

**Striving** — An individual’s drive to overcome challenges and approach life tasks can be either vertical or horizontal.

- **Vertical** — Over others, possibly at the expense of others
- **Horizontal** — In harmony with others and promoting the betterment of all

Identification of either horizontal or vertical striving can assist in changing approaches to situations.

**Wasting Behavior** — Self-defeating style of life where an individual fails to engage in meeting tasks of life. Difficulty in development of cooperative and contributing relationships to others, limited use of given talents and abilities and relatively unchallenged by life.

Insight into the purpose of such behavior can identify multiple avenues for development of goals as well as identification of skills and abilities perhaps unknown to a individual.

**What is the purpose?** — All behavior is goal directed and has a purpose as well as a desired result or outcome; conscious or unconscious to the individual.

Use as a therapeutic technique can assist in developing recognition of behavior and
- The assessments are designed to assist in development of self-awareness, preferred modes of thinking, and learning.

- Additional considerations are meant to account for variables and individual uniqueness.

- Awareness of mental health related issues promote additional understanding by considering additional factors and viewing a Cognitive Profile within individuals’ unique context.

- By identifying and understanding the unique aspects of mental related issues, you will be better able to understand their Cognitive Profile through the perspective of the disorder.
What is a Cognitive Profile?

- A combination of and summary of data gathered through the use of various assessments, utilizing the tools in the manual and provides a snapshot of an individuals’ preferred mode of gathering, processing, and application of information.

- The Cognitive Profile & Narrative Form provides a central location for recording data and also provides space for development of a Profile Narrative, a brief summary in paragraph form intended to provide a description of an individuals’ profile from the perspective of the assessor.

- Thought Process Flowcharts can be used to diagram an individuals' thought process and identify areas where challenges may occur and where additional steps may be added to overcome challenges in thought. These charts provide a visual tool that can be used to identify where knowledge of the Cognitive Profile can be used.
Using the Manual……

- Identify current thinking through use of Thought Flowchart - Initial
- Gather the data through use of assessments (non-linear process)
- Develop Cognitive Profile & Narrative
- Identify additional/missing steps in thought process through use of Thought Flowchart – Revised
- Apply data from Cognitive Profile to thought process
My Profile......

**Gregorc Style Delineator**

Concrete – Random

- Experiential, divergent thinking, inventive, disordered, instinctual & intuitive, curious
- Begin a project at any point, straight forward and direct, “here and now”

**Keirsey Temperament Sorter**

Healer – INFP (Introversion, Intuitive, Feeling, Perceiving)

- Idealistic, strong values, flexible unless values threatened, catalyst for ideas, appear calm and serene
- Creative, rigid perspective of right and wrong, loyal to causes and person they believe in
My Profile......

VARK Learning Style

- Strong Kinesthetic preference
  - Hands on, experiential, active involvement, doing rather than watching or listening, trial and error

Pew Priority

- Priority - Superiority – Avoids Meaninglessness
  - Competent and knowledgeable, meaning is empowering and motivational, critical of wasting time

Adlerian Concepts

- Private Logic
  - Self concept, unconscious reasons for behavior and actions

- Wasting Behavior
  - Self defeating style of life, get in your own way, limited knowledge of and use of given talent

- Encouragement/Discouragement
  - Frustration with lack of or understanding of meaning, challenged by disappointment
Learning Through the Process....

Importance and usefulness of understanding

- Paralysis of progress trying to do/think from others process or way of thinking about things
- Spectrum of thinking styles – autism more intense and focused
- Neurotypical as a disorder
- More effective when understanding and working from the clients’ perspective
- Apply data to staff meetings/development/creating processes for organization – problem solving
- Bookend of Thought flowchart uses
- Story of me - Personal examples and how the manual/project helped to identify
Questions?
Sources......


Sources


Sources


