

Human Adjustment Processes
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Module - 4
Lecture - 4
Human adjustment Process – 2

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Self as a determinant

- Reality assumptions
- Possibility assumptions
- Value assumptions

Today, we would be moving ahead and looking at how, self the individual plays an important role in this whole dynamics. Till now our understanding says that there are certain types of needs, which are important for human being, in terms of helping him or her maintaining the level of adjustment, maintaining ingredients of mental health, but in this whole process. Today, we also discuss there are certain know characteristics, and many of these characteristics basically, is an interplay between the individual and certain elements in the involvement.

Now, when individual becomes important, it is also important to understand that the self of that very individual, also access the determinant. Now, when you look at the individual, you can think of three basic assumptions; the reality assumptions; the possibility assumption; and the value assumptions. So, when you think, in terms of striking balance between different types of needs, when you think in terms of having

certain physical, emotional, social desired characteristic, which would be a considered as the denominators of healthy development. Similarly, we have a certain assumptions. Here, we are trifurcating the assumptions as reality assumptions, possibility assumptions and value assumptions.

Now, reality assumptions basically, reflect the view of the thinks, as the individual thinks, they really are. Yesterday, you remember, we had talked about the frame of reference, that there is a need for an adequacy in the frame of reference, because individual will always look at others and life events, with respect to his or her frame of reference. In case, these life experience are the new experience, that one has does not fit in to that frame of reference, one would know certainly derive certain degree of discomfort, excepting such things.

Therefore, the very idea that your perception of; how thinks actually are; of the kind of person you are; and the nature of the world around you; this constitutes the reality assumptions means, for any given thing, for any given individual, for any given group of individual, for any given stimuli in the environment, you have your way of looking at it and you say that this how it actually is. Then you also consider that this is how you are. Then, you also interpret the world that this is how the world is. For you, this is how you have interpreted things and for you, this is what the reality is... There could be a difference between what you considered to be a real representation of the stimuli of yourself, and what others think of you and the similar type of stimuli, that you are considering to be of a certain time.

How much is the mismatch between perception of two individuals, we will again pose some type of obstacle, in terms of adjustment, would require you to re align your thought, your assumptions; that is inter individual type of situations. There could be intra individual type of situation where, you find that your own reality assumption, and the remaining two assumptions, we have not discussed. You might find at there is a certain know degree of in compatibility between the two where, once again there is a need for you to adjust. Possibility assumption basically, as the nomenclature suggests, possibility assumptions basically, is the view of how thinks could be. So, the possibility that you search, in terms of modifying it, rectifying it; the possibility that you think, can be

induced in the situation or within yourself or within the group to modify certain things to change it.

Then you also think in terms of opportunity, that it can give to you, for your own personal growth and social progress. So, that is the possibility assumption. So, you know how things are, and then you start thinking of; is there a possibility of a change? If yes, then you try to modify it. In the process of modification, you all think either, in terms of that this is how I would grow in the process, or you might think that this is how the community as the whole, the society as whole would progress. Yesterday, you remember, we were talking with reference to intelligence and creativity, and I made statement that researches showed, that for proving certain facts and figures, for may get concepts; in certain fears of knowledge in certain domains, you need to be above certain age.

In certain domains, you need to be much below certain age, because that allows the possibility of thinking of all possible or so called perceived, weird ideas, which usually, somebody who is well informed, would try to fit into one or the other frame. Possibility assumption is too close to similar type of discussion that we had yesterday where, you know how things are, but you now start searching for a possibility of introducing some change.

Now, imagine certain situations; we will take small examples and then we will try to extend it. Say, you go to the school for the first time and within a week; your parents receive a report from the teacher that the child probably, has some problem, because he or she cannot attend to, what is being done in the class, does not participate in the class activities. Usually, the process would be that teachers would, before making the parents know about it, the teachers themselves would try to find out, is there a possibility of modifying it. If it is difficult or if their perception is that it is not possible, then they might report it to the parents, that fine; this is what we are struggling with. Now, there could be multiple ways of handling it; as a group of teacher; or as a single teacher; as one parent; or as both the parents; at their own level or combined effort of both of them, to make the child come up to the level, that is expected in these; that could be one possibility.

The moment you think of this, you are basically, thinking of certain changes that you think, can be induced into the system; into individual. One of the greatest scientists of this world was thrown out of his school. He was expelled, because the teachers thought that he has some intellectual deficit, that does not help him come up to level of, what the teachers teach in the class. The mother had to struggle a lot, to perceive the teacher that fine, I will work hard with my son; you should allow him to continue in the school, but finally, the British school did not agree to it.

Then mother decided that fine, if the schools are not able to handle my kid, and because I have delivered this baby; so, let me handle the child. The mother taught her child, so well that one day this child came up to the level where, the world now, knows him as Newton; now, Isaac Newton. Imagine a situation, as a child; do not think of him as a great scientist; just think of him as a small child where, a set of stake holders, the teachers; they decide that fine, you are intellectually not capable of meeting the need this very school, and hence, I do not see any possibility of any change in you and hence, you should be expelled out of this school. Then, the mother thinks that fine, there is still a possibility of modifying the behavior, and she finally, proves herself. But I am trying to say is that there could be a great degree of variance, if you look at the real life cases.

Of course, we have taken the most celebrated cases, but even in day to day life, you would realize that many people have to struggle. Many of you, I am sure, must have struggled at one point or the other. Some of you, even after qualifying JEE, because of the whole instruction taking place in a foreign language. This is not your mother tongue. The whole demand that you learn a new subject, at a particular phase in foreign language, is too much of a demand. Now, you imagine the situation of somebody, say, who has come all the way from south of India, is given a room where, he has, say, a north Indian room partner. He is introduced to a mess where, you have north Indian food stuff. Child or the boy or the girl, has been staying away from the family for the first time in the life.

So, first time you are in the hostel; first time you are in this chilled winter; you never knew, what winter means; you only heard of it has a season. Then you are told that at morning 8 o'clock, classes begin; It is chilled morning; you know that your friend is from

north India; mother tongue does not match; taste does not match; preference of songs does not match; in the hostel, food does not match; in the lecture, all the board of instructions does not match your taste; too much difficulty, one would, many of you must have experienced. If not all of them, all of us have experienced some of them. Probably, either in one go or discretely; at different time, you have different types of demands against which, you had to go. The importance of possibility assumption is that even though, you are in a difficult situation, it allows you to think that; is there a possibility for me to modify certain things?

I remember, somebody was narrating this experience of one of his spring mates in the class, which he was from rural area in Rajasthan; had great difficulty speaking English, understanding English; had terrible time in the first semester. The boy who was explaining this story, narrating this story said that I and many of our friends were from convent background, and therefore, we were very conversant in English, very comfortable in this foreign language, and we could very easily make a distinction of our comfort level with English, and his great discomfort with English. That boy started watching English movies, reading English books; the whole attempt was to improve English like anything. He said that after one year, his level of English was far superior to us, although, our entire education was from the convent background.

You just try to undo something; this is my deficit, I will over compensate it. Towards the end of this module, we will talk about certain types of mechanisms where, we would be also talking about over doing certain things. You just decide that, fine; this is what I lack; so, I will definitely attain it. In that process, your attempt is so vigorous, that you over attain in that whole process. This is of course, at the individual level; you are thinking in terms of what you can achieve, in terms of your personal growth. Think at a larger level, at a more macro level. When you have a system at place and then somebody decides that; is there a possibility of transforming the whole society?

Is there a possibility of wiping out this type of a feeling, wiping out this type of a thought? Imagine a situation, when Mahatma Gandhi would have conveyed this idea that we should try to get rid of untouchability. Right now it might not seem so sound, but imagine in those days, when there was heightened degree of this feeling in the society,

somebody who searches for a possibility of change in the society, will say that can get rid out of it. So, right from there to say, somebody like Dayanand Saraswathi, for example, the man who at one point of time decides that fine, is there a possibility that society can think of the remarriage of the widows? Now, these were extremely deviant thoughts from that then social perspective, but then you find at rest of the society, still very religiously follows the system. Here, you have somebody who thinks that; is there a possibility of a change?

Now, you are not thinking of personal growth, rather you are thinking in terms of the progress of the whole society. I am sure you must have seen this ad. Now days, I do not remember, it is the ad of one of the automobiles where, a young boy gets down of a bus, in what we call as a rural area and then the tea shop keeper there, says that **beta** you had gone to city to study. He says that, yes, I have completed my study and I have come back to the village. You remember that ad and he says that people go from village to city and he said, but I have come back from the city and then he says, this is the place where, my call center would be and then the whole transformation of the village; this know small tea shop owner becomes a rich man; he is well dressed.

Very emotionally, he shares with the child that, fine, you have transformed the whole village. Remember? This is the ad, very small ad which comes; I do not remember of which products; it is one of the automobiles, I guess, which basically, allows you to conveniently move from one location, the urban to the rural location. But one interesting hidden message there is that there is a great possibility of transformation at the rural level, that instead of having those big offices in the urban area; have it in the rural area. People can stay in the, those who are staying in the urban area, can still commute to this belt, to this rural locality where, the office is situated and they can go back. This is, I will say, this is again; someone who has visualizing this was also probably, thinking of possibility assumption.

Now, reality assumption allows you to perceive things in perspective; who is; where is; what is; we are able to make that distinction with the help of our reality assumptions. The moment, you have the value assumption coming into picture, you start thinking; I now understand that this is what I am. Now, that I understand that this is how things are; is

there a possibility of a change? Say for example, IITs were established to foster technical education in this country, and for long, it was moving on the same lines. When one of the government committees suggested that now, you should start branching of into other areas, besides engineering education. That committee's report; few people explained in one way; few people tried to explain it, the other way. Few people condemned it and few people wanted to justify it; but what is very interesting is that you gradually, realized that something, which is established with a particular motive, runs for certain period of time.

And then you find there are individuals, so would think that is there possibility of modification. Remember, anything that remains stable, will starts stinking, from that point of view. So, you need to have a system which is dynamic, which keeps on evolving over time; So is true for individual cases; so is true for at the macro level, the social cases. Then, we come to the value assumptions. Now, these are the view of the way, people would start looking at things, and would start demarcating things as good or bad, right or wrong, desirable or un desirable. So, these are all basically, value oriented judgments.

By default, whether you want it or not, you would be classified as good or bad. Your behavior would be classified as right or wrong. Certain set of your reactions would be divided as, looked upon as, desirable or undesirable. This is the truth. The only interesting thing, in terms of these assumptions is that you always have a mix of them. It is not that you have reality assumption in isolation; possibility assumption in isolation, or value assumption in isolation. These things will always combine together, and this makes the story of the life, very interesting. We will take couple of examples to see, when you add these three things in a given situation, for different individual; how things become very different. I am not promoting certain ideology, I am not promoting certain ideas, I am just trying to take real life examples, right. One of medical practitioners from Madhya Pradesh, who also happened to be the human right activist, was once arrested by the police forces. The charge against him was that he has been sympathetic to the Naxalites. The charge was that he has been extending services, medical facilities to the Naxalites and basically, being the sympathetic, having that ideology and those things. So, he was arrested.

The local court had sent him to jail. The high court also did not give him bail. This thing was hyped like anything in the media. It was not only the Indian media, it was an international media, who is looking at it, and because people consider that this is basically, violation of the right of a citizen. Being sympathetic or providing medical care is not a crime. Finally, this case went up to the supreme court of India and there, was this interesting way of looking at it. In all the three levels in the judicial system, a set of people, who was basically from the police side, the government side; they said that fine, once, you start extending your expert services to a group, which is anti national, your involvement with such people, also makes you anti national; this was one view point. And this was strongly and repeatedly suggested in the court of law, at all the three levels; right from lower to the Supreme Court. There was a counter view point, which said that see, I as an individual, can be sympathetic to one ideology or the other, but I myself is not involved in anti national act, and therefore, I cannot be clubbed together with the Naxalites. But what was very interesting and why I am quoting this example is that we are talking with reference to self as a determinant.

So, this person says that see, I am a practicing doctor. I have license from the medical council of India, fine. When I look at a patient, I do not discriminate, whether you are a naxalite, whether you are from the police forces or who you are; your profession does not matter to me. Who you are also, does not matter to me. What matters to me as a professionalist, the remedy that is needed for the problem, which you are experiencing. For me, it is basically, the diseases. For me, it is not you; you could be a Naxalite. Your disease cannot be a Naxalite. Now, think of the whole way, the person is looking at it. So, you tried to explain yourself with respect to the reality assumption; who am I? I am a doctor.

You think at it from of possibility assumption; is there a possibility you are providing you expertise to all classes of people, or would it be confined to only a small set of people? You say that fine, there are people who deviate from the government view point, who are fighting the government, but then there could be a possibility a providing medical care, even to them. Because I am looking at the deceased body; I am not looking at individual, and therefore, you say that for you, my behavior could be undesirable. It is a wrong deed, but I considered it to be the most ethical act, because as a doctor, I am

treating the deceased body. The deceased body; I treat the deceased body of the police forces; I also treat the deceased body of the Naxalites.

What I am trying to say is that these assumptions, the moment you put it and you take any, there are 1000s and 1000s of such situations. The moment you put them together, situation becomes extremely complicated, because first, you define yourself; you define the context in which you decide to modify your own behavior, or you demand modification in others behavior, or you demand modification in the social system; that is the possibility assumption, and then you start looking at from the value assumption point of view, whether this is right or wrong. Take the very recent episode; you know a gang rape episode in Delhi. Large number of students who move to a certain location in Delhi, which is otherwise considered to be the power center, where most of the ministries and other icons are there.

Now, the reality assumption is that there has been so many cases; I am also women; or I am also men who have women in the family; in the friends circle; so, I define myself, I look at the situation. I look at my surrounding world and see; this is how the rate of crime against women has increased in the national capital, and overall, throughout the nation. This is what proves the inefficiency of certain stake holders in the government system and therefore, large number people know come forward. You say that fine, and we are now demanding that there should be a change in the system. All you are saying is that system is at place, and you see possibility of changes that can be introduced. You define yourself; the reality assumption. Your possibility assumption; that the system must change.

Because the system is taking long time to change, and you do not trust the people, who are supposed to change the system, change the laws, in the bylaws; you think that they will take more time or probably, very much longer time and therefore, you start applying pressure on them through this mass protest. Then, you have your value assumption that comes, and says that this act is completely justified. Then, on the other side, this person says that fine; this is the line that we have drawn; you should not cross this line. There are barricades put here; you should not cross this line; and if you cross it, I have all right to use water cannons, to use [fl] charge, to use tear gases. I am sure you must have heard

that debate took place around that time.

The people on the other side of line, saying how justified, the act was. People on this side of line, saying how unjustified, this act was. There is nothing like a common type of ground; you just have two bipolar views. Simply, because the way you are defining change, the way you are looking for a possibility of a change, and therefore, the way you are trying to make things value oriented, is different. Now, imagine a situation, if two such people or a set of such people, have to live together; there would be a great demand on you to adjust. Each of these individuals on each of this group will have tremendous pressure on them, to adjust according to the new social realities.

A negative example; twice in our country, it has happened many a time, but twice in our country, I can recollect that. After certain set of mass violence, one section of the society decided to live in a very different way. The first was 1984, anti Sikh riot. Very interestingly, I do not know if you have read about it in details. During the anti Sikh riot in 1984, there were selected places in India where the Sikh community was targeted. One way and very interesting way, of looking at it could be that it was largely economically prosperous areas, because you know that the Sikh community is into business, and they are prosperous business men.

Hence, that most violent type of behavior was seen by the crowd in these localities, otherwise, in small places in small villages, it took place, but for small again, I am saying from a perspective of somebody, who is an outsider, who did not experience it. A small act, what I say as a small could be extremely bad, for somebody who personally experienced it. So, that also you should understand. Now, after this anti Sikh riot in 1984, very different type of alignment took place. In many cities in India, there were specialized colonies where, it will be largely infested by the Sikh people with tall barricades, main gates, very tall walls around it. Basically, you are within a locality; you are trying to create an isolated pocket where, the density of such people, who have been the victims of one type of mass violence, will stay together. Delhi, for example, it has a whole colony.

The government initiated establishing that colony of people, who lost their family

members during the 1984 anti Sikh riot. Similarly, in certain localities, in certain areas of Gujarat also, after this Godra, post Godra riot again, you realized at certain segment of the people; they decide to move to certain locality where, they are in majority. Then, you have that type of defensive structures. Now, think it from how at a certain point in time, you have to redefine, who you are; how painful it could be; who you are; how is the world around you; you lived very happily for 25 years, 30 years, and then suddenly everything breaks down. There is a documentary, sometime if I get time, I will show you a small visual from that. Basically, a sick woman, elderly sick woman, who was a victim of the Bombay riot, talks in front of a camera, and she says that we were young little girls in 1947, when India and Pakistan were separated. There was a mass violence and we lost both heart parents.

We migrated to Bombay and now, I think it was 1991 fact, if I remember correctly, and she says at now, it is 1991, when I am this old and my husband has been stabbed. He is admitted in the hospital and why she is narrating this? She is sitting actually, in the corridors of the hospital. She does not say anything else, but expression on her face, we can see. Now, think of it from this point of view, that we were discussing. That you as a small child, you had one way of what you are; who you are; what the world is around you; one major experience in your life, both the parents are killed; you redefined yourself; you redefined the world around you.

Again, after 45 years, you have to redefine yourself; you have to redefine the world around you; how difficult it is and therefore, you would realize that literature in mental health, literature in trauma psychology, literature in clinical psychology is full of such people, who had extreme life experiences from this point of view, when the society was at unrest. We were talking about it some time back, which you need to have peace and tranquility in the society, if you want many parameters to move on the positive side of the spectrum. The moment you have these disturbances, and higher is the frequency; higher is intensity; more and more people would start deflecting towards that negative end of the aspect. So, it was all about these assumptions.

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Anxieties

- Reality anxiety
- Neurotic anxiety
- Moral anxiety

Now, we come to three types of anxieties that have also to do with these three set of assumptions that we talked about. We talked about reality assumption, possibility assumption and value assumption. Here, we have three set of anxieties; the reality anxiety; neurotic anxiety; and moral anxiety. Now, reality anxiety would arise out of the danger or the threat that you perceive in the external world, that there is a looming danger in your immediate environment, and you are sensing it. You have perceived it. The example of the same sick woman, we were talking about, right now; the whole anxiety comes out of the real life situation that she is encountering in life. Before we come to neurotic anxiety, those of you who have not gone through or who are not familiar with the Freudian view point, just go through his whole theory of psycho analysis, and read the concept of ego and super ego.

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What Fred basically said was initially, he said that we have the unconscious, the preconscious and the conscious structure of the mind. His whole assumption was that we have, he said that the reason basically, gave an iceberg analog, saying that nine tenth of our experiences, remain at the unconscious level. One tenth is our conscious level, and then there is a very thin line in between, what is called as preconscious state of mind.

Conscious, you understand that whatever, you are able to sense it, as of now that would constitute the conscious experiences. Unconscious experiences would comprise of those experiences, which you had earlier in your life, but you are not able to recollect them, even after the best of the effort that you can put it. Preconscious is said that basically, conscious experiences will gradually, be pushed down, because of the incoming conscious experiences and therefore, some of it will go at the preconscious level; so, you have it; you are not able to re collect, but then it can be detected using certain slips. Whereas, conscious, you can very easily recollect; unconscious, he again said that there are ways of even knowing the elements of the unconscious mind.

For preconscious, he said that there could be certain slips like, slip of the pen, slip of the tongue. These slips will reflect the preconscious state of your mind. You are speaking something, and suddenly, you had a slip. Instead of saying something else, you came

forward with the other word and you say, sorry. Then, you respell the other word. Fred says that the initial word which actually, is an outcome of a slip of the tongue reflects your inner feeling. The modified version that you give forward is basically, a socially desirable outcome. Similarly, slip of pen; you wanted to write something else, but wrote something else, and the beautiful example, you can find in the book: introduction to psychology by Morgan Kings and (()), where in the chapter motivation, you find a letter written by a mother to her son where, she wishes, she extends her good wishes to her son, after he gets married to a young girl. Mother, somehow, did not approve of this marriage, and therefore, throughout the letter wherever, rest of the words was spelled correctly, except congratulations.

All congratulations had spelling error, and the errors were random. So, if you write a wrong spelling, could be that you have probably, you are mistaken in terms of what these spelling should be, but if you perform random errors in the spelling of congratulations, then it has conveyed something. At this case, later on came, because the mother had later on developed, some other complications, and in order to understand the nature of the case and the gravity of the case, the origin of it, finally, these letters were deciphered where, this is how the psychologist came to the view, that this mother child relationship is basically, the origin of the problem.

Unconscious, Fred said that it is his sentence where, he says that the dreams are the royal road to unconscious. So, Fred, in fact said, one of their Freudian techniques, is of interpretation of the dreams where, the content of the dream is analyzed to find out the content the unconscious mind. And of course he later on introduced hypnosis as a technique, to extract information from the unconscious mind. We are very quickly, browsing through it. If you want to read it in details, read the books; we will find fantastic description there. Later on, Fred revised it and he came forward with again, three-structure model where, he talked about ego and the super ego. He said that these three structures, they guide our behavior and they themselves, are driven by three different principles.

Eat is governed by pleasure principle; eat by pleasure principle means, I want it, it pleases me and therefore, I would love to have it. Ego is driven by reality principle. So,

ego will always take into account; where am I; who are the people around me; what will happen if I do this; what will happen if I do not do that; so, all such calculations, the ego will do. It is in touch with the reality. Then, super ego which is driven by morality principle; all do's; all do not's; right; wrong; good; bad; all type of moral judgments. Freudian theory says that ego and the super ego, they usually run in contrast, because one works in the pleasure principle. And the other works in the morality principle, and it is the responsibility of the ego to look at the reality, and strike balance between the needs of your super ego. Even for small things it happens, but then this is the major challenge that one experiences, every moment in life. But all of us are successful striking that balance. Say for example, you see a good ball pen in the hand of a friend; I should have it. The ego will ask you to have it, immediately. It is not worried about the means that you adopt to have the pen; it could be stealing; it could be forcefully snatching it. Super ego tells you that it is wrong; how wrong it is; even at this stage, you are thinking of stealing a ball pen. You remember, in class 2, you have done it for a small sharpener; that type of moral anxiety it will induce.

And then ego strikes a balance and he says that fine, may be, that when the shop opens here, in shop I will go and see if this pen is available. Now, later on, if you are going to the details of pathological behavior, you would realize that over satisfying the need of the ego or over satisfying the need of the super ego; both are equally dangerous. You have to strike a balance, and that is your skill, and that is the whole story, why we are studying this psychology of adjustment, fine. So, with that introduction, we come back to neurotic anxiety.

Now, neurotic anxiety is caused by the impulses that threaten to break that control mechanism. Again, coming back to the world of advertisements; control (()) you remember that ad? So, you are trying to put a barrier that no, and you realize at your impulses are overwhelming; it is about to surmount the obstacle that you are putting, the control mechanism that you are putting at place. Now, once you realize that you are incapable of controlling your desire, you come forward with the behavior, which invites punitive results. That is the source of neurotic anxiety. Then comes the moral anxiety where, either it can arise out of the real situation, it could be a contemplated action, which is in conflict, and where you start feeling that what you did was not good; not

right. Gradually, it makes you develop a sense of guilt. Truly speaking, it is very difficult, say if you blame me, I can very well defend myself. All of us are good at that. But imagine a situation where, your inner self starts blaming you, you are defenseless; you cannot know you satisfy your own inner self. And the guilt that comes out of it; the quantum of it is, so huge that people who have this thing large majority of them gradually (()). They need assistance to regain their normal stage. So, we would continue with this next time.