

# Cognitive psychology

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**Cognitive Psychology:** Cognitive psychology is one of the disciplines in psychology that focuses on studying internal mental processes. How individuals perceive, conceive, recall from memory, articulate their views and arrive at conclusions, etc, are all studied. As opposed to Freudian psychology, Cognitive psychology adopts a scientific analytic method rather than introspective or speculative theorizing. At the outset, it acknowledges the presence of such internal mental states as knowledge, belief, motivation, desire, etc.

Before Cognitive Psychology attained recognition Behaviorism was the dominant school of thought. Intellectuals such as Noam Chomsky and Alfred Adler have contributed enormously to the establishment of this school of thought, by way of critical review of behaviorism. Under Behaviorism, much of human agency is the product of conditioned responses, rewards being used to reinforce desirable behavior and punishments being used to deter unwanted behavior. Chomsky, in particular, challenged these assumptions and offered a radically new model of mental development that draws on the innate and intrinsic human potentialities as opposed to learned behavior.

There are other disciplines in psychology that compete or complement with Cognitive Psychology. Take say, Abnormal Psychology, which is the study of abnormal human mental states such as sustained low mood states (depression) or irrational fears and anxieties (paranoia, panic attacks) and ungrounded fears and hallucinations (schizophrenia). Cognitive Psychology is a great aid to solving many of the therapeutic problems faced in patients exhibiting abnormal psychology. Then there is Developmental Psychology, which is the study of stages of growth of children's developing brain. Jean Piaget's four stages of cognitive development is one of the most influential <https://assignbuster.com/cognitive-psychology/>

theories in this discipline. When this is applied along with the theories of Cognitive Psychology, viable child rehabilitation methods could be devised in the therapeutic setting.

Compared to Cognitive Psychology, Evolutionary Psychology is an offshoot of Charles Darwin's theory of evolution based on the basis of natural selection. In other words, Evolutionary Psychology is closely allied to Evolutionary Biology, and has greatly influenced all other disciplines in psychology. Many apparently aberrant and abnormal human cognitive processes and manifest behavior can be properly understood, when analyzed under the framework of the theory of evolution. Positive psychology is a recently founded school of thought, invented by prominent psychologists such as Martin Seligman and Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi. Having identified many gaps and flaws in existing branches of psychology, positive psychology focuses on positive human functioning – one that identifies and nurtures genius and talent so as to make human lives more fulfilling. Positive psychology is quite different from other schools in that it lays emphasis on human progress, as opposed to curative or therapeutic approach evident in other branches. It endeavors to study human excellence and positive human qualities such as pleasure, virtues, values, etc. as opposed to human abnormalities and mental aberrations.

In my personal opinion, all these various branches of psychology have something to offer to the scholar-practitioner. I would include and incorporate the most proven and salient of theories from all these branches and offer a comprehensive therapeutic package to the patient. I would adopt therapeutic methods that are drawn with an understanding of evolutionary mechanisms and cognitive, developmental theories. All the while, my effort

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would be to help bring out the most positive and constructive tendencies in my patients.

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