

## Selfishness and Positive Psychology:

Living with Oneself vs. Living with Others

Robert Hogan  
Hogan Assessment Systems

## Personality Theory: Models of Human Behavior

- Personality is crucial for understanding management selection and development.
- There are two major schools of personality psychology:
  1. *Intrapsychic theory*—learning to live with oneself (Maslow and Positive Psychology).
  2. *Interpersonal theory*—learning to live with others (Goffman and Socioanalytic theory).

## Intrapsychic Theory

- Positive psychology is a version of intrapsychic theory and is a widely popular model for management development.
- It maintains that it is a mistake to worry about correcting shortcomings—it is too difficult.
- It focuses on learning to live with yourself and nurture your natural inclinations so that you are able to ***flourish***.

## Socioanalytic Theory

- Interpersonal models concern how to live with others—because you have no choice.
- Living with others is a skill; like any skill there are individual differences in:
  1. Innate talent.
  2. Coachability.
  3. The ability to play on a team—the diva problem.

## Strategic Self-Awareness: I

- Socrates advocated self-knowledge.
- He meant:
  1. Understanding one's strengths and shortcomings.
  2. How these compare to those of one's competitors.
- The first is self-awareness, the second is ***strategic self-awareness***.

## Strategic Self-Awareness: II

- Strategic self-awareness depends on performance-based feedback.
- In competitive activities, there is no news in good news.
- Performance can only improve if people know what they are doing wrong.
- And competitors will use your strengths to defeat you. Strengths can become weaknesses.

## Positive Psychology is a Mistake

- Positive Psychology's focus on effectiveness is important. But...
- The focus is not new.
- Effectiveness is NOT flourishing—many effective people are driven by demons.
- If flourishing means self-acceptance, it is probably narcissism.
- If flourishing means self-actualization, it is nonsense.

## Data

- Positive psychology is supported by rhetoric, not data.
- The Adjustment scale of the HPI measures self-acceptance.
- High scorers are self-satisfied, lack a sense of urgency, and ignore feedback.
- Low scorers have a sense of urgency and seek feedback.
- Other things being equal, low scorers are more effective.