

# Psychoticism Versus Guile-A Prerequisite of Power

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## Abstract

Using the results of research into personality Thomson (1981,2015, 2017). The most usual assumption would be that people with high psychoticism scores on Eysenck's Personality Questionnaire (EPQ) a development of various earlier personality questionnaires Eysenck & Eysenck (1964.) will be attracted to positions of power, careers which both exploit and provide such people with the various elements in their personalities which need appeasing. However as necessary as these characteristics are there needs to be an appreciation of the variables underlying psychoticism: such as tough mindedness, solitary, not fitting in anywhere, inhumane etc.

This paper revisits psychoticism and attempts to suggest both the merits of high psychoticism scorers but also the deficits and dangers. Furthermore, a suggestion is made that as Eysenck foretold a more suitable word in time would replace psychoticism—the suggestion is guile with its broader application.

**Keywords:** Personality traits • Behaviour • Psychoticism • Guile • Impulsiveness • Tough minded social attitudes • Vigilance

## Introduction

Alzheimer's Disease (AD"Now I am become Death, the destroyer of worlds" J. Robert Oppenheimer remarked when he recalled the explosion where he witnessed the "Trinity test" in New Mexico where the first atomic bomb was successfully detonated on July 16, 1945. He was an American, a theoretical physicist and is often credited as the "father of the atomic bomb" for his role in the Manhattan Project the World War 11 an undertaking that developed the first nuclear weapons. It is estimated that there are approximately 13,080 nuclear warheads in the world today [1]. One fragile finger connected to one psychopathic mindset could detonate a nuclear warhead, power is all to him. The War in Ukraine has brought the planet even closer to total destruction. What are the personality characteristics of that person likely to be? Comparing the importance of personality and behaviour -one person like Alexander Fleming will devote his entire life inventing penicillin, so another can annihilate and take life. Whereas Alexander spent years in his laboratory carrying out meticulous research knowing what he wanted to provide the means to fight infection in the form of antibiotics. With no inclination to gain from it personally, just to serve humanity to save lives and to prevent suffering [2]. Another man with a different mindset has on a plate as it have been provided with the means to destroy and can do so for his / own ends. What can be learnt from the past of those set on wiping out life – the murderers, the

criminals. What characteristic do they have in common but furthermore what are the characteristic necessary in leaders to avert their actions. Trait theory and the individual traits contributes to the canvas which makes up the unique identity of everyone which in turn impacts on communities and the wider spectrum [3]. The definition of a trait for this study is a genetically influenced distinguishing quality or characteristic. A trait is not to be confused with a state, which is a temporary way of interacting and dealing with the self and others.

Understanding traits using the various assessment instruments allows comparisons and various inferences to be made about people, in an objective non-biased manner [4]. Among the theorists who developed tools to investigate traits are Hans and Sybil Eysenck (1975) who developed the Eysenck Personality Questionnaire, and Raymond Cattell, who authored the Sixteen Personality Factor(16-PF) measure. Most of the assessment devices that result from trait theory adopt a self-report type test and incorporate an element which attempts to prevent faking good or lies which may comprise the integrity of the results. The main traits include disorder-related categories such as depression, psychosis, histrionic (neurotic), introversion, masculinity/femininity (gender role), and hypochondriasis. These assessment devices have provided a platform for gathering large amounts of information, which can then be reduced using statistical factoring techniques allowing comparisons regarding a person's personality, interaction, and beliefs about the self and the world [5]. While different theorists may use different terminology, there is some consistency regarding factors or personality traits. Eysenck and Eysenck demonstrated Introversion-Extraversion, Neuroticism and Psychoticism. While there is some agreement between these traits, and those now known as the Big Five, which are Openness to Experience, Conscientiousness, Extraversion/Introversion, Agreeableness, and Neuroticism. Like all these five traits, people will fall somewhere on a continuum, with most falling somewhere in the middle. It is claimed the self-sabotaging trait Thomson (2017) is number six following the big five. Psychoticism which Eysenck hypothesized as an exaggeration psychosis is an exaggeration of some underlying trait which he called psychoticism. He based this hypothesis on two main theoretical considerations psychiatric abnormalities are essentially continuous with normality, and psychosis and neurosis are two independent dimensions of personality. The typical high scorer described by Eysenck (1975) "as being solitary, not caring for people, often troublesome not fitting in anywhere. He may be inhumane lacking in feeling, and empathy. He is hostile to others even to his own kith and kin, and aggressive even to loved ones [6]. He has a liking for unusual things and a disregard for danger: he likes to make fools of people and to upset them. Psychiatric terms which would seem to assimilate this kind of behaviour pattern are schizoid, and psychopathic behaviour disorder' Hare (2003) developed the Psychopathy Checklist, while Karpman in (1931) was interested in separating psychopathy into two distinct clinical types; the symptomatic and the Idiopathic [7]. The Oxford dictionary (References) provides a cornucopia of words related to the word guile. First impressions while reviewing the list would suggest that a person in power should realistically possess some of these attributes as a necessity. Providing them with the leverage to be both effective in power and to remain in power. And to possess the wherewithal to recognise these traits in an opponent - though not necessarily practice them? Furthermore, they need the personality traits to withstand an opponent using these traits against them [8]. While others would perhaps unrealistically opt for the opposite truthfulness, transparency and prefer leadership totally lacking in guile and related attributes maybe? From an intuitive point of view, the collective society can be seen to lag in the selection and recruitment of leadership material. Their choices are biased by the media, propaganda, and the herd mentality. In retrospect the individual who is in tune with his intuitive thoughts will show discernment. Another aspect is the traits needed to fulfil one position or situation may differ. On an intuitive level the nation felt Winston Churchill was the man to lead the country in W11 and how right they were [9-12]. However, the electorate failed to re-elect him after the war despite the adulation of the nation and the recognition

of the debt, they owed him. The collective could be described as fickle on the other hand intuitive and discerning [13]. They had the measure of the man enck lists in Table 1, the experimental and social correlates of the high psychoticism scorer.

**Table 1.** The definition of a person with a psychopathic personality.

Reaction time speed
Reaction time variability
Abnormal perceptual judgements
Impulsiveness
Venereal disease
Aggression in children's drawings
Tough minded social attitudes
Drug addiction
XYY chromosome abnormality
Alcoholism in prisoners.
Good treatment prognosis in neurotics

## Results

Thomson (1981) administered the EPQ, a stress questionnaire, and a bodily symptom questionnaire designed to test a psychosomatic hypothesis, to patients attending a psychiatric day centre. The P score correlated with a stress score, and certain stress items differentiated extreme high and low P scorers. In addition, high P scorers were found to have deteriorated as opposed the low P scorers [14]. After treatment follow up three months after discharge which agrees with the last variable in Table 1. A different approach to treatment for high Psychoticism was suggested [15]. This research demonstrated the correlation between the personality psychoticism factor and stress (Table 2).

**Table 2.** Itemises the types of stress experienced by high psychoticism scorers prior to admission in a psychiatric day unit.

1	Divorce
2	Sex difficulties
3	Business adjustment
4	Change in financial state
5	Change in responsibility at work
6	Trouble with in-laws
7	Change in living conditions
8	Trouble with the boss
9	Change in sleeping habits
10	Change in eating habits
11	Christmas
12	Violation of the law

## Summary

The unique personality and mindset of those in power with high psychoticism scores and exhibiting guile will determine behaviour.

## Discussion and Conclusion

As we have stated at this point in civilisation one finger could change all life on this planet for ever. With the realisation that that finger so fragile on its own but a slave of the mind at the behest of a psychopath. The

definition of a person with a psychopathic personality whose behaviour is antisocial, often criminal, and who lacks a sense of moral responsibility or social conscience. In the extreme they lack the ability to love or establish meaningful personal relationships, they are extremely egocentricity, and fail to learn from experience, etc. In some respects, bearing in mind the characteristics of a high scorer in Eysenck's psychoticism scale with the description of a psychopath we may turn to consider what professions they will be drawn towards and what characteristics they have in common

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