Sigmund Freud, Vienna, 1856-1938.

Psychoanalysis. Psyche = the human mind. Analysis = detailed examination of the elements or structure of something.

Model of the mind as consisting of the Conscious (Cs), The Preconscious (Pcs), and the Unconscious (Ucs)

The conscious and preconscious mind together form what is usually understood to be "the self." This is "you" as you know yourself from your own feelings, sensations, thoughts, memories. Memories, in particular, that take a little effort to find but can be recovered, are located in the preconscious. There is no real barrier between the preconscious and the conscious.

The unconscious, in contrast, is entirely separated off from the Cs-Pcs system. It consists of wishes, desires, memories that are inaccessible to the Cs-Pcs system, and cannot be retrieved by introspection. We are unaware of our unconscious desires.

Unconscious desires are much more powerful in determining our behavior than conscious desires. We are more under the control of our Ucs than our Cs.

Our subjectivity is more determined by our Ucs than our Cs.

The Ucs develops as we grow out of infancy. As we grow older, many of the wishes and desires we first have as children are found to be unacceptable to our functioning as social individuals. Those desires are therefore repressed. The act of repression founds the Ucs, which becomes the storehouse for all unacceptable, and therefore forbidden, desires.

Since Cs has no access to the Ucs, these desires will seem to Cs to have disappeared (i.e. forgotten). However, they have not disappeared, but remain embedded deep within us, affecting who we are and what we do at every turn, although our Cs is not aware of this.

Civilization and its Discontents: Freud determines that because we have many unconscious desires that are profoundly unacceptable to society, we are always unhappy within society. Society is not something that guarantees our happiness, but rather something that we suffer under.
The Superego: the part of our mind that is responsible for our moral control over ourselves. It consists of the internalized voices of authority figures who taught us, as children, about acceptable and unacceptable modes of behavior and social codes.

The mechanism of repression of unconscious desires is not always successful. Repressed material is always liable to resurface. Freud calls this the Return of the Repressed. It is responsible for influencing our ordinary behavior in many ways. When repressed ideas return very strongly, they can be responsible for mental disturbances and neurotic illnesses.

The Cs system operates using reason and logic. This mode of thinking is known as Secondary Process.

The Ucs system does not recognize reason or logic. It operates primarily through a wide range of associations. There is no sense of time in the unconscious, and no sense of negation. "There is no no in the unconscious." This mode of thinking is known as Primary Process.

Free association and dreams are some of the ways in which our unconscious thought surfaces. However, since these unconscious thoughts are unacceptable to our superego, and they must be disguised before emerging to our consciousness. Dreams bear their characteristic irrationality as a result of the action of a disguise mechanism (a "dream censor") that hides their true content.

The major content of repressed wishes is sexual. This sexuality begins with infancy, and continues throughout our life. For Freud, the core of human subjectivity, is sexual.

Oedipus complex: the desire to murder the parent of the same gender, and have a sexual relationship with the parent of the opposite gender.

Freud changes our understanding of ourselves in two major ways. In the first place, as individual humans, we are not fully in control of ourselves, but are always subject to other desires over which we have little command. In the second place, we are beings who are influenced more by sexual questions and issues than by anything else.
PERS 5  Freud's View of the Human Mind: The Mental Iceberg

Conscious Level:
- Thoughts
- Perceptions

Preconscious Level:
- Memories
- Stored Knowledge

Unconscious Level:
- Fears
- Unacceptable Sexual Desires
- Violent Motives
- Irrational Wishes
- Immoral Urges
- Shameful Experiences
- Selfish Needs