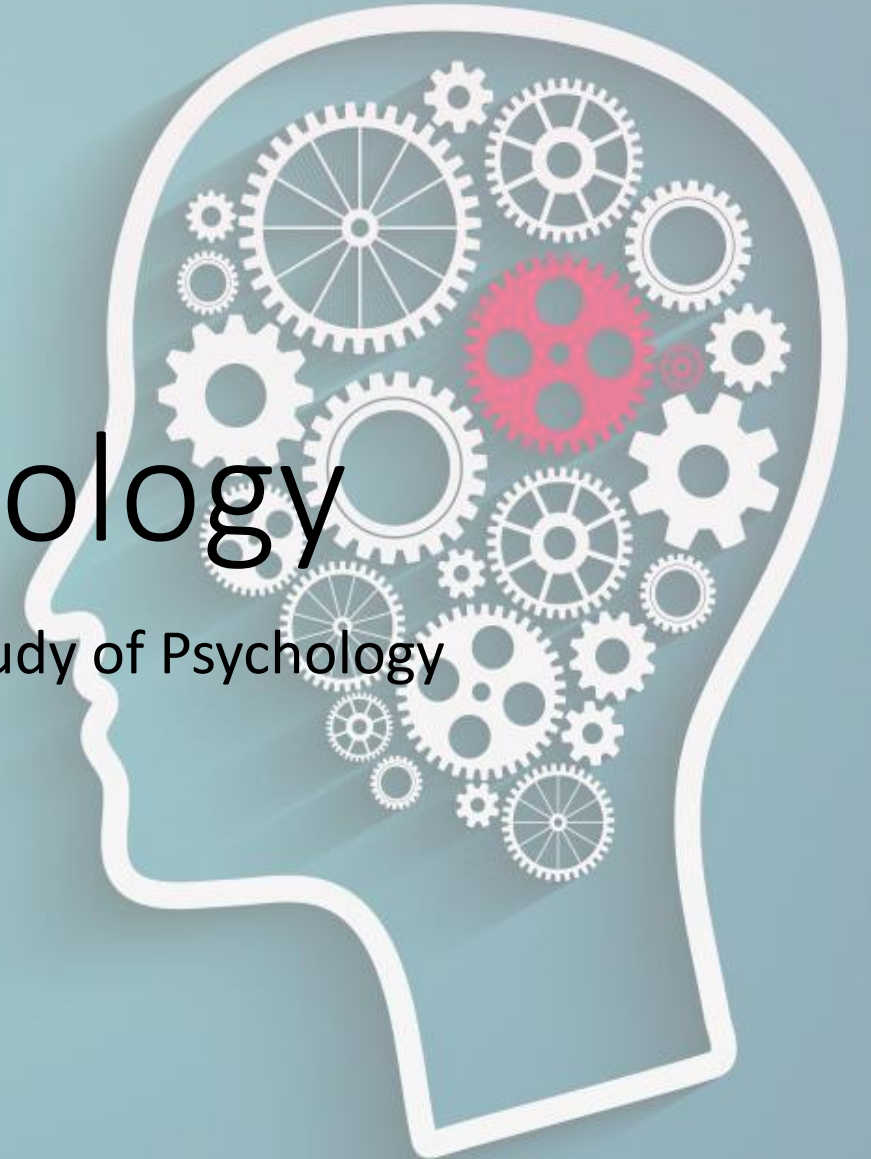


# Basics of Psychology

Overview of Guiding Principles of the Study of Psychology



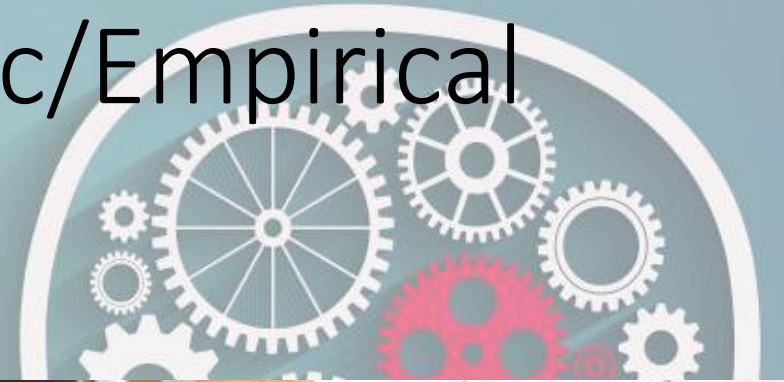
# Psychology Defined

- Psychology is the scientific study of behavior and mental process
  - **Behavior** is any action that people can observe or measure, such as walking, talking, sleeping, and eating.
  - **Cognitive** activities are mental processes. They include dreams, perceptions, thoughts, and memories.
  - **Emotions** can affect both behavior and mental processes.



# Themes of Psychology: Scientific/Empirical

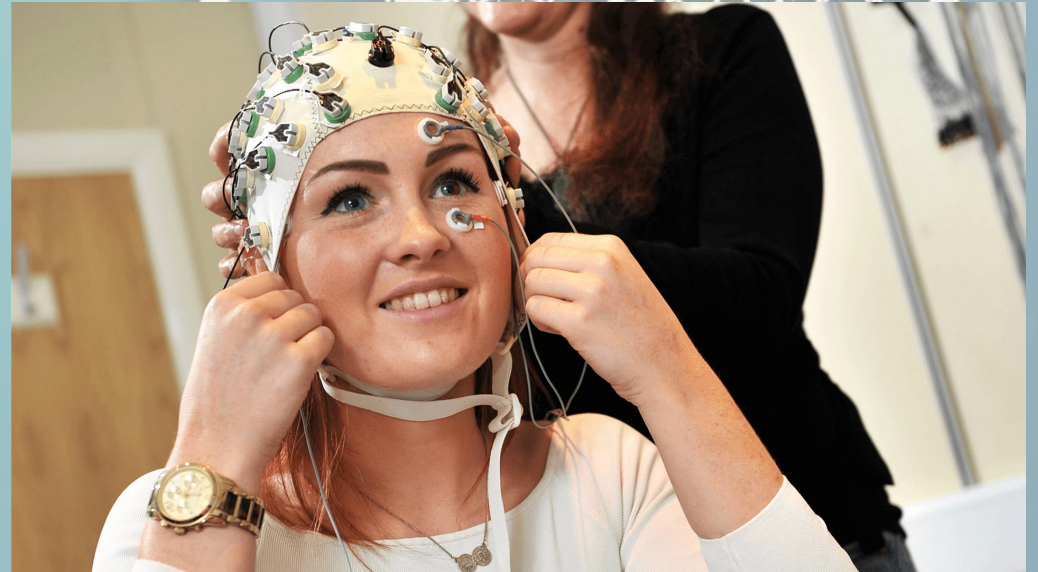
- Psychology demands that we ask questions in a precise manner and find answers through systematic observation
  - Not simply watching people and events in some haphazard, undisciplined, manner
- As a science, psychology focuses on specific issues and seeks cause and effect





# Themes of Psychology: Practical

- Psychology directly takes observations to research to directly explain human behavior and make recommendations for how to improve
  - Ex. Study why people feel stressed and then come up with strategies to better cope with stress



# Themes of Psychology: Theoretical

- A Psychologists collect data in an effort to understand the world around them.
  - Follows scientific method to measure results
- Once they have some information (data), they attempt to link the pieces together into a meaningful whole
  - Requires multiple data sets



# Themes of Psychology: Continually Evolving

- Psychology is very much done by people, for people.
  - Aim is to improve understanding and improve quality of life
- As a result, the discipline of psychology exists and changes according to society.
  - Ex. Psychological focus of studying effects of Social Media on relationships did not exist in 1900s
  - Advances in technology also improve our ability to study and understand psychology
- As societies vary and evolve, so too do our perspectives on behavior and thinking.





# Major Aspects of Psychology: Behavior

- Behavior is any observable activity
  - Ex. Conversation, “People Watching”, Sports
- Psychologists observe and describe behavior and mental processes to better understand and be able to explain them.
  - Ex. Sports Psychologists notices an athlete’s performance severely drops off when team is down when team is performing poorly
- Psychologists try to predict how behaviors will impact a person and be able to control negative behaviors
  - Ex. Psychologist makes recommendations to coach on what events might lead to athlete underperforming and how to work through those with player



# Major Aspects of Psychology: Cognition

- Cognition is any type of mental process
  - Includes learning, memory, attention, perception, reasoning, language, conceptual development, and decision making.
- The modern study of cognition rests on the premise that the brain can be understood as a complex computing system

