George Kelly (1905-1966)

Kelly was responsible for Personal Constructs Theory (PCT), a theory of personality that he developed in the 1950's. PCT states that personality development is a function of our cognitions, specifically of how we construe, or make meaning of, events in our lives. It's almost an entirely cognitive theory. Other aspects of being human, such as learning, affect or emotion, needs, or behavior are subsumed under cognitions. Kelly rejected the drive notion in psychoanalytic theory and stated that we are constantly construing our world in some sort of organized fashion. According to Kelly, freedom is the ability to construe alternatives and to revise our constructs. He would say: "No person needs to be a victim of his or her own biography."

Personal constructs are an individual's conclusions, interpretations, or deductions about life. PCT consisted of one fundamental postulate and 11 corollary assumptions.

The fundamental postulate states: A person's processes are psychologically channelized (like activation patterns) by the ways in which he (or she) anticipates events.

The 11 corollary assumptions state:
1. Construction Corollary—A person anticipates events by construing their recurrent themes, or recapitulations.
2. Individuality Corollary—Persons differ from one another in their construction of events.
3. Organization Corollary—Some constructs may subsume other constructs for the convenience of anticipating events.
4. Dichotomy Corollary—Constructs are finite and are dichotomous in nature.
5. Choice Corollary—An individual will choose the behavioral alternatives that appear to present the greatest possibility for enhancing his ability to predict future events.
6. Range Corollary—One construct can't generalize to all events
7. Experience Corollary—All our interpretations of the universe are subject to revision—we only achieve successive approximation to the truth (Constructs are working hypotheses which can be revised).
8. Modulation Corollary—The variation in a person's construct system is limited by the permeability of its superordinate constructs.
9. Fragmentation Corollary—A person may successively employ a variety of construction systems which are inferentially incompatible with each other.
10. Commonality Corollary—To the extent that one person employs a construction of experience which is similar to that employed by another, his psychological processes are similar to those of the other person—how two people with different experiences can have similar constructions of events, like kindred spirits.
11. **Sociality Corollary**—To the extent that one person construes the construction processes of another, he may play a role in a social process involving the other person—empathy and social relationships.

Psychological health is the ability to revise our constructs based on evidence. The goal of PCT in therapy is to: 1) help the person increase their freedom of movement in life by helping them to revise their constructs when necessary and 2) help the client to make better predictions of their environment.

Kelly also talked about "Man-As-Scientist" and being able to revise constructs based on experience. **The Experience Cycle** was how this occurred, which involved 5 steps:

1. Anticipation (the hypothesis)
2. Investment in the event
3. Encounter with the event
4. Confirmation or disconfirmation of the hypothesis or the anticipation, and
5. Constructive Revision depending on the outcome (confirmation or disconfirmation.)