

Chapter 12 - Emotions (p. 497-526)

I. Introduction

Complex psychological processes consist of 3 distinct components:

1. **Physiological arousal:** (Example: heart-pounding and sweaty palms)
2. **Behavioral component:** (Example: quickened pace)
3. **Conscious awareness:** including thoughts and feelings (Example: sense of fear)

- Emotions can be **adaptive**, essential for survival.
 - Example: if an animal is afraid it runs for its life.
- Emotions are also **maladaptive**
 - Example: someone is so depressed they commit suicide.

People tend to categorize emotions along 2 dimensions:

1. **Valence:** how pleasant or unpleasant the emotion is
 2. **Arousal:** some emotions create higher levels of arousal.
 - Example: joy gives more arousal
- In certain cultures you find certain dimensions
 - Example: in Japan there is an additional dimension; **interpersonal engagement:** part of why we feel the way we feel has to do with the connections and relationships with other people.

A. James-Lange theory

Common sense

Example: See bear → have conscious experience of fear → run → heartbeat increases

According to James-Lange theory:

You see the bear, heart beats fast and then you run and because you're running you feel afraid

Example: physiological arousal then we feel fear

- ★ The arousal causes you to feel afraid
- ★ Every emotion is physiologically distinct from each other
- ★ Our experience of emotion grows from our awareness of our body's arousal

James says "we feel sorry because we cry, angry because we strike, and afraid because we tremble"

B. Canon-bard theory

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We see a bear and simultaneously we run and feel afraid

- Simultaneously have conscious awareness and express the behavior and have psychological arousal
- None of them causes the other

- The physiological arousal is the same regardless of the emotion

C. Schachter's theory

Many psychologists believe that our cognition - our perceptions, memories, and interpretations - are an essential ingredient of emotion.

- Also believed like James and Lange that our experience of emotion grows from our awareness of our body's arousal
- Like Cannon and Bard he also believed that emotions are physiologically similar.

2 components of emotional experience:

- **Physiological arousal:** which is the same for all emotions
- **Cognitive label** we put on the arousal (Example: if we feel sad or happy)

Spillover effect

Arousal from situation 1 is going to spill over to situation 2 and is going to enhance the emotional experience of situation 2

III. Cognition and emotion

- Mental processes, thinking reasoning, etc.

A. Cognitive therapy

- We feel the way we feel because of the way we think
- Sometimes works as well as psychoactive drugs
- The way we evaluate an event causes the emotions

B. Zajonc

Admits that thinking does influence feelings however there are instance where our emotions are so quickly felt that we don't have time to think

- So, our emotional reactions can be quicker than our interpretations of a situation

★ Feel first, think second.

Subliminal studies: when researchers flash stimuli that are frightening, the subject isn't conscious of seeing them, based on fMRI we see the amygdala activates. The emotional experience occurred without the person having a conscious thought about it.

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Neurological research shows:

- Amygdala sends more neural projections to cortex than cortex sends to amygdala
 - The emotion part sends more to the thinking part!

C. Lazarus

- Appraisal happens more consciously and unconsciously

IV. Embodied emotions

A. Emotions and the Autonomic Nervous System (ANS)

- ANS controls physiological arousal which is a super important component of emotions

Sympathetic: prepare us for fight or flight. Heart is beating faster, blood pressure higher, pupil dilated.

Parasympathetic: calms the body down

B. Physiology of specific emotions

- There are physiological similarities between emotions
- There are physiological different between emotion
 - **Example:** both anger and fear increase bp, but anger increases it more
 - Anger increases body temperature where as fear decreases temperature.

Different emotions activate different parts of the brain.

- When happy and goal-oriented, it's linked to high activity in left frontal lobe
- When sad and disgusted, it's linked to high activity in right frontal lobe

V. Expressed emotion

Non-verbal communication

- nature intended us to communicate with each other using facial expression

Emotional facial expressions are innate and universal

- people from different cultures can read facial expressions from others

Cultural and emotional expression

- culture makes a difference like where and when you express emotions

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The effects of facial expressions:

- facial expressions show others what we are feeling
- when we have them they enhance and strengthen the emotional experience

VI. Experienced Emotion

A. Fear

- our ability to fear is key to survival
 - **Example:** afraid of failing so you study hard
- Also can be dysfunctional
 - **Example:** some people can become so afraid of certain things that they don't leave the house
- Fear can lead to death
- many of our fears are learned, through classical conditioning or observational learning
- We are biologically prepared to fear certain things
 - **Example:** ancestor feared snake, stayed away from it, and survived to transmit their genes.
 - **Example Study:** monkey's in the wild are scared of snakes. Monkeys who are born and raised in the lab are not afraid of snakes. They had a video tape of a wild monkey who looked at a snake and was terrified of it, they took that same monkey and made it look like he looked at the flower and was scared of it. They showed both videos to the monkeys in the lab but the monkey only feared the snake afterwards, not the flower.
- Genes play a role in fear
 - due to certain genetic variations that make their amygdala tend to be hyper that makes them more anxious and frightened about certain things.
 - See chapter 2

B. Anger

- Nothing really wrong with anger, it's what we do with it that is the problem
- Catharsis hypothesis
 - by actually venting anger or by fantasizing about venting your anger this releases your anger.
 - Does it work? temporarily
 - However:
 - because it gives you a temporary relief you're more likely to repeat it
 - if we kick the pillow or whatever we overtime will become angrier, more cruel and more vengeful
 - "venting to reduce anger is like using gasoline to put out a fire"
- The best:
 - thing is to not suppress or blow up your anger
 - Step out of the situation
 - take a calm breath
 - honestly ask yourself why am i angry

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- ask yourself "is my expectations reasonable"
- address the other person

C. Happiness

- Happiness is linked with a number of positive correlates
- Positive psychology
 - for a long time, psychology focused on negative emotions.
 - Positive psychology is the focus on studying healthy functions
 - **Subjective well being:** how happy am i with my life and how satisfied?
 - If you're not satisfied you must take action to change that!
- **Feel-good, do-good phenomenon**
 - When we are happy we are more likely to be altruistic and help other people
- **Adaptation level principle**
 - As life circumstances change we after a while adapt to those changes and those changes become our new normal
 - Once they become our new normal, we're going to use this new normal to judge every stimuli that comes our way
- **Relative deprivation principle**
 - what we feel when we compare ourselves that are doing better than us.