

Close Relationships

What makes people happy?

- When researchers ask people what brings them the most satisfaction in their lives, what do they say?
- It isn't money, job satisfaction, religion, fame, or prestige
- It's _____

What makes people healthy?

- Our _____ has also been linked to loving relationships
- People who are happily married _____, even after you take into account many other variables (e.g., smoking, drinking, poor eating habits)

What makes people unhealthy?

- Being _____ married
- Stress is undeniably linked to our immune systems
- Unhappy relationships are filled with conflict and stress – as a result, they can literally _____

Love is important!

- Because of its capacity for making us happy and healthy, choosing a romantic partner is one of the most important decisions we can make
- Yet, many of us cast our fate to the wind
- “If you try to reason about love, you will lose your reason” – French proverb

Two-factor emotion theory

- Many emotions involve similar symptoms of physiological arousal (elevated breathing, sweating, increased BP/heart rate)
 - True of love, joy, anxiety, fear, and stress
- Schachter & Singer reasoned that the same symptoms are labeled differently, depending on the context
- Emotion = _____ + _____

Classic “Adrenalin” Study

- Subjects were given a shot of adrenalin (to induce arousal)
- Randomly assigned to sit in a room while “waiting for the drug to take effect” with either a distressed or elated confederate
- The upset confederate was writing an angry letter, crumpling up balls of paper and tossing them all over the room
- The elated confederate was positively giddy, throwing balls of paper in the air and batting them about the room, giggling like a school boy

Results

- In support of the 2-factor theory, subjects assigned to wait with the angry confederate reported their own arousal as _____ and _____
- Subjects assigned to wait with the giddy confederate reported their own arousal as _____ and _____

More generally

- Other studies have used exercise (or crossing scary bridges) to induce arousal in subjects
- They all seem to suggest that the arousal is attributed to different emotions, depending on the _____

How does this apply to love?

- It’s possible that becoming aroused (for whatever reason) might be _____ to feelings of sexual arousal
- Zillman called this _____
- Arousal caused by one stimulus is literally transferred to another stimulus

The bridge study

- Dutton & Aron (1974) had _____ subjects cross a narrow, wobbly suspension bridge in B.C.
- The bridge was 230 feet high, and spanned a raging river
- Waiting at the other end was a _____ RA, who asked them to fill out a short survey
- When they were through, she gave them her name and phone number and said, “Call me if you want to hear more about the study”

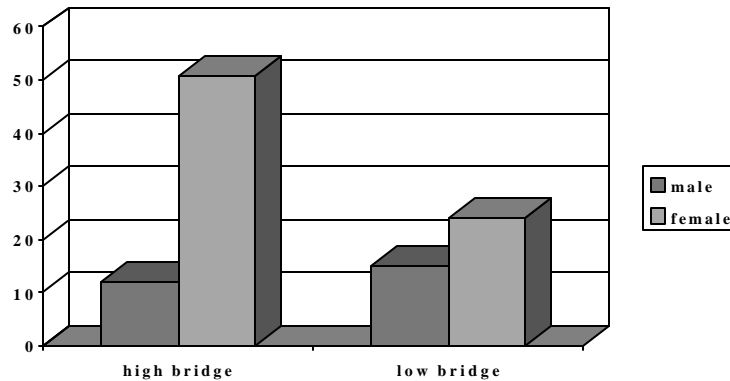
Control conditions

- Other subjects were met by a _____ RA
- And finally, still other subjects crossed a low, solid bridge (10 feet high)

- At the other end, they were met by either a female or male RA
- The dependent variable is how many subjects _____ after the experiment was over

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% of male S's who called



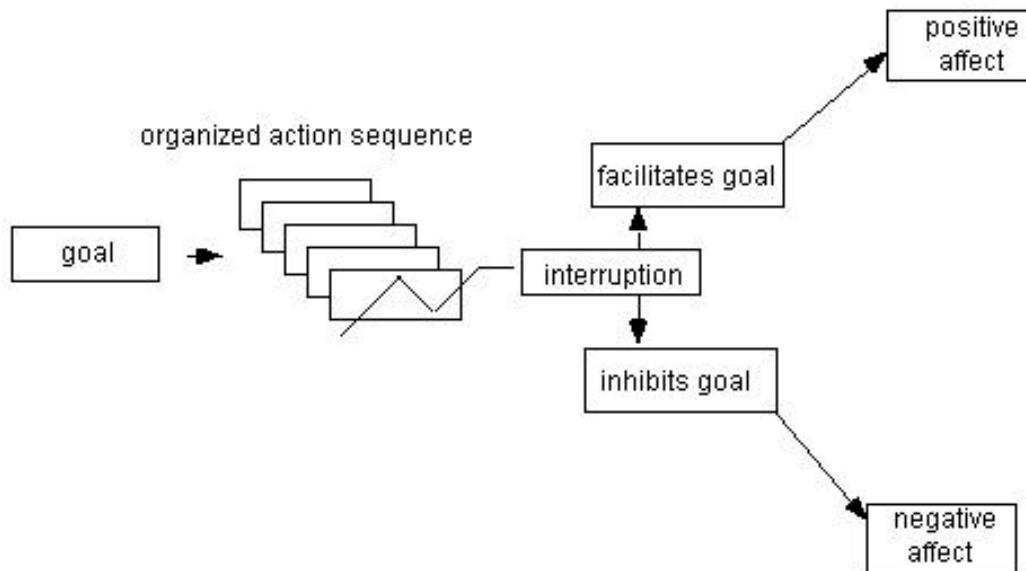
Can we use this information?

- The theory suggests that “adrenaline makes the heart grow fonder”
- If so, maybe you should bring your dates to scary movies or the gym
- Why? The _____ they feel may be misattributed to feeling _____ about you!
- But isn't it more common that we experience emotion as the result of a situation?
- The context and the feeling go hand-in-hand
- Often, we know what is making us angry or happy
- So we need a more general theory of emotion

Mandler's theory of emotion

- A theory with implications for marriage & divorce
- Goal _____ hypothesis
 - People are largely goal-oriented; we make constant plans
 - Emotions happen when these are _____ interrupted
 - If the outcome of the interruption is pleasant, you feel good; if the outcome is unpleasant, you feel bad

Mandler's "goal interruption" hypothesis



Love as Pleasant Surprise

- We fall in love because someone has unexpectedly come along who not only fulfills our need for love, but can help us _____

Falling in love

- Can be thought of as a process of being _____ pleasantly “surprised” by your partner’s thoughtfulness, attentiveness to you, their fascinating body, personality, life story, etc.
- It’s a heavy dose of the twin “drugs” of pleasant surprise and _____
- But in time (about ___ years), the drugs wear off – you come to expect attention and thoughtfulness, so your partner _____ when they occur
- Ah, but there are still plenty of opportunities to be negatively surprised by him or her
- In a hundred different ways, a spouse can disrupt your plans on a daily basis

- Marriage is a situation in which it's _____ for your spouse to surprise you pleasantly (you've come to expect the good things)
- But you're liable to be more often _____ surprised by him or her (e.g., surprised they aren't as thoughtful and attentive as they used to be!)
- Add to that the daily hassles of living together, struggling to make ends meet, getting the car fixed, the kids to the dentist, etc., and you have a recipe for _____
- Long-term love relationships can be those in which the _____ emotions we feel are likely to be _____
- All the positive feelings are not novel – you still get help and support, but you've come to expect it
- Instead, _____ emotions are spurred by negative events
- And this can lead to divorce
- Ellen Berscheid has applied Mandler's theory to relationships in exactly this way
- She finds a lot of couples are _____ after they've divorced because they didn't realize when they were together how much the other was doing for them

What can couples do?

- Whenever possible, introduce pleasant surprise and novelty into the relationship
- Remain aware of the support you receive from your partner, and how _____ you are
- The “silent hum” of a good relationship can easily be overlooked, to dire consequences

Excitement

- Berscheid also notes that people crave excitement
- In our culture, we are bombarded with images of “passion” and sexual energy
- When couples have been together a long time, it takes creativity to keep the excitement because, again, we have come to _____ a sexual union

Love and personality

- _____ theory is a personality approach to close relationships
- Three attachment styles: secure, insecure (anxious/ambivalent), and _____
- The theory started out in developmental psychology (research with infants)

Attachment Styles

- Infants are often strongly attached to their parents (fascinated by them, seek their approval, long for contact, upset by absences)

What does this resemble? _____

- Not all infants are equally attached to their parents, however (attachment styles differ)

The “_____ situation”

- Mary Ainsworth’s paradigm left toddlers alone with a stranger
- When the mother returned, she observed how children reacted
- _____ attached children were relieved to see mom again, and then went on playing
- _____ children cried and clung, and then ran away (anxious/ambivalent)
- _____ children were upset but ignored her (acted detached)

Adult Attachment Style

- Perhaps our infant-parent attachment style _____ to our adult, love relationships
- After all, the mother-child relationship is central to our _____
- So this primal relationship might give us a _____ for how to relate to others, even after we’ve grown
- How measured for adults?
- For each paragraph that follows, rate your agreement with it on the following scale 1 = (not at all true of me); 7 = (very true of me)

Secure

- “I find it relatively easy to get close to others and am comfortable depending on them. I don’t often worry about being abandoned or about someone getting too close to me.”

About _____ of us agree

Insecure

- “I find that others are reluctant to get as close as I would like. I often worry that my partner doesn’t really love me or won’t want to stay with me. I want to get very close to my partner, and this sometimes scares people away.”
About _____ of us agree

- _____
- “I am somewhat uncomfortable being close to others. I find it difficult to trust them completely, difficult to allow myself to depend on them. I am nervous when anyone gets too close, and often, love partners want me to be more intimate than I feel comfortable with.”
About _____ of us agree

Parenting and Attachment Styles

- Research has shown that adult attachment styles are linked to parental upbringing

_____ Attachment Style

If the parent:

Was generally warm and responsive; was good at knowing when to be supportive & when to leave me alone; our relationship was almost always comfortable.

- The child believes:
- “I am likable. Other people are generally good-hearted. Romantic love can last.”

_____ Attachment Style

If the parent:

Was noticeably inconsistent in reactions to me -- sometimes warm, sometimes not. She/he definitely loved me but didn’t always show it in the best way.

- The child believes:
- “I have many self-doubts. I am not sure if I should let someone get to know me. It’s easy to fall in love, but few people are as willing as I am to commit themselves to a relationship.”

_____ Attachment Style

If the parent:

Was fairly cold and distant, or rejecting and not very responsive. I wasn’t the main priority. It’s possible I was not a wanted child.

- The child believes:
- “I am not an easy person to get to know. It’s rare to find someone you can fall in love

with. Romantic love rarely lasts.”

Attachment in the lab

- After identifying people’s attachment styles in advance, researchers brought couples into the lab for an adult version of “the _____ situation”
- The women were deliberately frightened
- They were shown a dark room, filled with complex equipment, and told they would soon undergo “experimental procedures that cause a great deal of fear and distress”

Results - women

- Couples were reunited – unbeknownst to them, their interaction was videotaped
- _____ women quickly told their partners about the danger they faced, seeking support and comfort
- _____ women were less forthcoming, more hesitant to talk about it
- _____ women were least likely to seek comfort (20% of them didn’t mention it at all!)

Results - men

- _____ men offered warm support and solidarity
- _____ men were reluctant to do so, often chiding their partner for being afraid
- _____ men were even more withholding; in fact, the more fear shown by the woman, the less comfort they offered

Summary

- Attachment style may affect the way _____ is experienced
- All of the women who voiced their fears and received comfort experienced relief
- But insecure and (especially) avoidant women were less likely to “reach out” to their partners, and insecure and avoidant men were less likely to comfort

A cautionary note

- Reading your text, you might think attachment style is permanent – a part of your personality that is stable, unchanging
- But it takes two to tango, and research has also shown that _____ people, when coupled with insecure or avoidant partners, experience decreased self-esteem and relationship happiness
- So your “attachment style” is influenced by the person _____, as much as (if not more than) who you were before you entered the relationship

The next slide on airport research is used to test your comprehension of the above

The Dark Side of Love: Unrequited Love

- Because love is so important to our health and well-being, it is particularly distressing to be in love with someone who does not reciprocate
- Not surprisingly, insecure men and women face this pain more often than secures or avoidants
- Nonetheless, we have all been through it (it is much more common than requited love)

Who suffers more?

A. The person who pines for naught?

Or

B. The person who does the rejecting?

- Research by Roy Baumeister shows that _____

Role Models

- Why? Rejecters lack good role models for how to spurn unwanted lovers
- When the culture offers them, they take the form of hapless victims (e.g., Michael Douglas in *Fatal Attraction*)
- The focus is on futility and danger

By Contrast

- The spurned have dozens of scripts to rely on – just listen to popular music, much of which tells us how to play this role
- You grieve, you assign blame, accept the failure, and then get on with your life
- So Baumeister finds that the _____ look back on their experience with both positive and negative emotions
 - By contrast, the _____ had little good to say about their experiences and were likely to feel terrible even years later

The Dark Side of Love – Breaking up

- Suppose your love was requited once, but now your relationship is breaking up
– Now who suffers most?
- The one who _____ feels better – but only after the relationship is over

“Breaking up is hard to do”

- Couples who are headed for break-ups often do not realize the warning signs
- Instead, they lash out at their partners and blame them for “aggravations of the heart”
- Research shows that we can be _____ to those we love than to total strangers

Couples vs. Strangers study

- Couples worked on problem-solving tasks both with their mates and with strangers
- They were much more _____ to the strangers
- They belittled their mates, often interrupting them and openly _____ them
- Over time, this kind of social insensitivity weakens lovers’ emotional bonds

Communication patterns

- 1. _____
- When couples “strike back” at their partners immediately for some hurt (real or imagined), it’s a bad sign (_____ relationship, not communal)
- 2. _____
- When one partner tries to voice their concerns, the other walks away

Who nags? Who withdraws?

- The gender difference here is _____

A less-known gender difference

- Research suggests that men withdraw because talking about ending the relationship causes them _____
- Because it’s more aversive for men to get into arguments that might end the relationship, they prefer to withdraw (to decrease their arousal)

Why?

Your notes here:

Remember who is the more romantic sex? And possible reasons why?

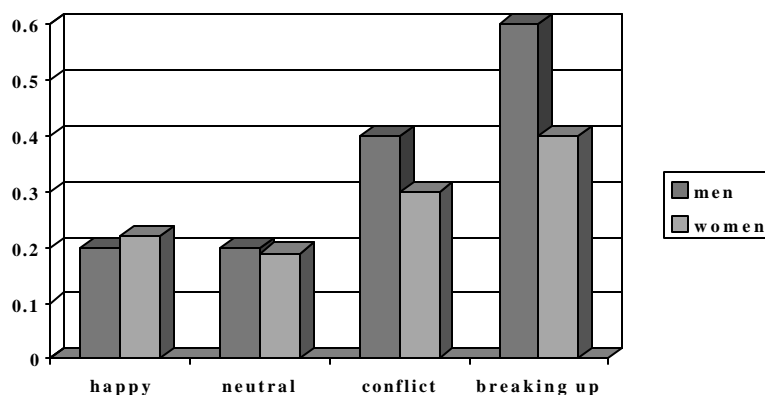
- This is likely a reason why it is harder for men to talk about conflict and breaking up – as research by John Gottman shows

Physiological research

- Couples are hooked up to machines
- They measure BP, heart rate, breathing, sweat – signs of stress
- Couples discuss topics that are mutually satisfying, neutral topics, conflict areas, and breaking up

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Arousal Results



Results

- Men physically react more to conflict and discussions of breaking up
- As a result, they may withdraw to “cool off” and protect themselves
- But if women don’t understand that, they may take the withdrawal as a sign of emotional distancing (and the end of the relationship) – which can become self-fulfilling

Break-up Motives

- In part b/c of misunderstandings and poor communication patterns, roughly 50% of marriages end in divorce
- So let's look at the factors that split us up
- Using the following chart, see if you can guess which sex rated each reason as more important for breaking up

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Break-up motives – gender diffs?

	Men	Women
Lack of support		
Need for more intimacy		
Lack of sex		
Need for more autonomy		
Need for more romance		

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