

# Principle of Pleasure, Nature and Definition of Positive affect & Positive Emotion

Definitions:

**AFFECT:** Affect is a person's immediate, physiological response to a stimulus

Typically based on an underlying sense of arousal

Affect involves the appraisal of an event as painful or pleasurable (good or bad)- that is, its valence- and the experience of autonomic arousal (Nico Frijda, 1999).

Affect is a component of emotion and emotion is a more specific version of mood.

# Definition: Emotion



- Emotions involve judgments about important things, judgments in which, appraising an external object as salient for our own well-being, we acknowledge our own neediness and incompleteness before parts of the world that we do not fully control (Nussbaum, 2001).
- These emotional responses occur as we become aware of painful or pleasurable experiences and associated autonomic arousal (i.e., affect; Frijda, 1999) and evaluate the situation.

# Emotion



A feeling state resulting from the appraisal of an external object as salient to our own well being.

An emotion has a specific, sharpened quality as it always has an object (Cohn & Fredrickson, 2009) and it is associated with progress in goal pursuit (Snyder, 1994)

**Mood** is objectless, free floating, and long lasting. Mood is thought to be tied to expectations of future positive or negative affect.

# Happiness and Subjective Wellbeing



**Happiness** is a positive emotional state that is subjectively defined by each person.

**Subjective wellbeing** is a person's judgment about his or her current status in the world. Often used synonymously with happiness.

Its a combination of positive affect and general life satisfaction (Diener, 2000).

**Psychological well being** is a state of well being characterized by self-acceptance, personal growth, purpose in life , environmental mastery, autonomy and positive emotions.

# Positive and Negative

Potentialities of positive affects have received attention in past few decades.

David Watson (1988) studied both negative and positive affects and developed 20 items Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS-X). It measures both valence and content of the affect.

Negative affect content- distress

Positive affect content- joviality, self assurance, attentiveness.

# Positive & Negative Affect



Bradburn (1969): unpleasant and pleasant affects are independent and have different correlates.

Watson found that negative affect correlated with joviality, self assurance and attentiveness at only -.21, -.14, -.17 respectively indicating independence of negative and positive affect.

Size of these relationships may increase when people are taxed by daily stressors.

# Positive emotions: expanding the repertoire of pleasure



When experiencing mild positive emotions, one is more likely to

- help other people (Isen, 1987)
- be flexible in thinking (Ashby, et al., 1999)
- come up with solutions to problems (Isen, et al., 1987)

Experiment:

- who received coins helped more in picking papers.
- Physician who received gift of candy showed superior reasoning and decision making, did not jump to conclusions, cautious but quicker in diagnosis

# Broaden-and-Build Model of Fredrickson (2000)

- Explains social and cognitive effects of positive emotions.
- Positive emotions often are more cognitive (lead flexibility and creativity) than physical.
- Negative emotions (fear, anxiety..) are linked to a fleeing response and termination of activities.
- The model demonstrated that the experience of joy expands the realm of what a person feels like doing at the time; this is referred to as the broadening of an individual's momentary thought-action repertoire.

Experiment: listing of activities to do after film clips producing emotions- joy, contentment, neutral, fear, anger. Joy appears to open up to many new thoughts and behaviours.





Joy increases likelihood of behaving positively toward other people, induces playfulness (Frijda, 1994)

Juvenile play builds

- Enduring social and intellectual resources by encouraging attachment
- Higher levels of creativity
- Brain development (Cohn & Fredrickson, 2009)

Through the effects of broadening processes, positive emotions can help build resources. (Experiment solving problems with creative means)

Positive emotions such as joy may help generate resources, maintain a sense of vital energy and create even more resources.

# The upward spiral of positive emotions



# Undoing potential of positive emotions

Broadening and building effects of positive emotions, joy and contentment might function as antidotes to negative emotions.

Experiment: Ss were aroused negative emotions and immediately after it were randomly assigned to emotional conditions ranging from mild joy to sadness.

Cardiovascular recovery represented the undoing process.

participants in the joy and contentment conditions were able to undo the effects of the negative emotions more quickly than the people in the other conditions.

It suggest that there is an incompatibility between positive and negative emotions and that the potential effects of negative experiences can be offset by positive emotions such as joy and contentment.

# Association of positive emotions with mental health



Experiment: measured 20 emotions each day for 28 days.

Fredrickson and Losada (2005) found that a mean ratio of 2:9 positive to negative emotions predicts human flourishing indicating effects of daily emotional experiences on mental health.

Lyubomirsky et al., (2005) reviewed studies to investigate links between happiness and other positive outcomes such as success and

found that preliminary evidence exists to suggest that success and other beneficial outcomes may be caused by the presence of happiness in a person's life.

# Happiness: Types of theories



- **Need /goal satisfaction theories:** Psychoanalytic and humanistic theorists (Freud, Maslow); reduction of tension or the satisfaction of needs lead to happiness
- **Process/activity theories:** engagement in activity produces happiness (Csikszentmihalyi, 2009); the process of pursuing goals generates energy and happiness. (Emmons, 1986; Snyder, 1994)
- **Genetic/personality predisposition:** Happiness more dependent on temperament; individuals may vary in the type of adaptation to positive or negative external experiences (Diener et al., 2006).
- Links between personality and characteristics of happiness



- Extraversion and neuroticism of Big 5 related to characteristics of happiness ( Lucas and Fujita, 2000)
- Positive affect and adult attachment styles (Shiota and others , 2006)
- Link between personality and life satisfaction in many culture an component is not explained by biological components.

# Subjective Well being & Happiness



- Wellbeing is the subjective evaluation of one's current status in the world (Diener, 1984) or
- Combination of positive affect and general life satisfaction.
- Diener: subjective well being as synonym for happiness

# Determinants of subjective well being

## Finance



- Financial status correlated with satisfaction for students in poor nations than for those in wealthy nations (Diener & Diener, 1995)
- People in wealthy nations generally were happier than those in impoverished nations.
- Once income rises above the poverty line, additional income not necessarily associated with well being
- Association is strong among impoverished but not among affluent (Diener et al., 1995)
- Relationship between Economic status & life satisfaction (Howell & Howell, 2008)



# Determinants of subjective well being



- Married reported more happiness (Lee et al. 1991)
- Marital quality associated with personal well being (Sternberg & Hojjat, 1997)
- Qualities of good mental health and good social relationships among happiest 10% college students (Diener and Seligman, 2002). Good social functioning was necessary but not sufficient for happiness.

# Definitions of Happiness



Happiness + Meaning = Well being

Pleasant and meaningful life can be built on the happiness that results from using psychological strengths.

Lyubomirsky, Sheldon and Schkade (2005): Chronic happiness governed by 3 factors:

1. Genetic 50%,
2. Life circumstances (good and bad) 10%
3. Intentional activities and practices 40%

# Culture and Happiness

- Collectivist (cooperative and group oriented) oriented vs individualistic (competitive and individual focused) predicts differences in subjective well being (Diener et al., 1995).
- Relationship between subjective well being and self esteem strong in individualist nations but weak in collectivist nations (Diener & Diener, 1995)
- Chinese students emphasized spiritual cultivation and transcendence of the present in happiness but US emphasised enjoyment of present life (Suh & Koo, 2008).
- Kitayama & Markus, (2000) reported that predictors of happiness vary from independence, autonomy and agency (west) to interconnectedness of self and close others (east)

# Happiness/ Anand

- Absence of negative emotion-regret,
- Internal, mental positive state
- Peace of mind , stable state, cool, calmness
- Job/ work satisfaction, engagement in work (flow)
- Live in present, developing thought
- Nature closeness
- Meaningful talks
- Gratification of need
- Happy people in our surrounding
- Altruism / helping
- Contentment, routine, past life, music,

# Mental Health: Emotional, Social and Psychological Wellbeing

Ryff and Keyes view optimal functioning as the combination of

- emotional well being (subjective well being defined as the presence of positive affect and satisfaction with life and the absence of negative affect),
- social wellbeing (incorporating acceptance, actualization, contribution, coherence and integration) and
- psychological well being (combining self acceptance, personal growth, purpose in life, environmental mastery, autonomy, positive relations with others).

# Complete mental health



- Combination of high levels of symptoms of emotional wellbeing, psychological well being, and social well being as a well as the absence of recent mental illness ( Keyes & Lopez, 2002)
- The complete state model of Keys and Lopez suggests that combined mental health and mental illness symptoms may be ever changing, resulting in fluctuations in states of overall well being ranging from complete mental illness to complete mental health.

# Model of Complete Mental Health (Keyes and Lopez 2002)

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# Increasing happiness

- Realize that enduring happiness doesn't come from success.
- Take control of your time. Set goals and break them into daily aims.
- Act happy. Smile; talk as if you feel positive self esteem, are optimistic, and are outgoing.
- Seek work and leisure that engages your skills
- Movement, exercise, physical activities
- Enough sleep
- Priority to close relationships
- Focus beyond self
- Gratitude journal
- Nurture your spiritual self: a sense of purpose and hope





- Diener et al., (2002) : it appear that the way people perceive the world is much more important to happiness than objective circumstances.

# Making the most of Emotional Experience



- Both positive and negative emotions may determine how adaptive one is in the daily life and contexts.
- Results depend on how one handles emotions
- One may be benefited from engaging emotions, can learn to process and use emotional material competently and sort good from the bad emotional content of life
- Emotional upheaval helps to overcome traumatic stress and pain

# Terms



- Emotional avoidance: active movement away from, rather than toward, a stressful or emotional encounter
- Emotional expression: free and intentional display of feeling

# Emotional Focused Coping: Discovering the adaptive potential of emotional approach

- emotional focussed coping: coping through emotional approach might be said to carry adaptive potential, the realization of which may depend on ..the situational context, the interpersonal milieu, and attributes of the individual (Stanton et al. 2002).
- Emotional approach: active movement toward, rather than away from, a stressful or emotional encounter.



- 2 Neurobiological system:
  - Approach behaviour (appetitive): behavioural activation system regulates our appetitive motivation, which helps to realize emotional or behavioural rewards
  - Avoidance behaviour: behavioural inhibition system functions to help one avoid negative events and punishment (Depue, 1996)

# Emotional Focused Coping:

Two related processes in approach oriented emotional focused coping (Stanton et al., 2000):

- **Emotional processing** or attempts to understand emotions eg. I acknowledge my emotions
- **Emotional expression** or free and intentional displays of feelings. Eg. I let my feelings come out freely.

# Emotional Focused Coping: Researches

- Women's adjustment to breast cancer better who used emotional focussed coping. Perceived health better, felt lower distress, had fewer medical appointment (Stanton and colleagues, 2002)
- Students dealing with parent's illness coped better with their stressors. Training sessions helped to vent emotions rather than receive facts.
- Who did not report a preference for expressing emotions when dealing with stress did better when place in the information conditions.

**Findings: emotional preferences related to coping may interact with environmental contingencies to determine psychological outcomes**

# Emotional Focused Coping: Researches

- Dealing with stress of chronic racism ethnic minority individuals' positive appraisal of EFC options may intervene in relationship between self esteem, life satisfaction and racial identity development (Outten et al 2009; Peters 2006). Strong identification with racial group were found to be linked with greater life satisfaction and self esteem when minority groups feel they have ways of coping emotionally with experiences of discrimination.
- Emotion focused coping was negatively correlated with the experience of chronic stress emotions as brought on by exposure to racism Peter 2006
- **Conclusion: use of EFC to deal with stressors related to personal racism may increase well being and/or decrease stress for individuals experiencing these types of stressors in their environments**



# Emotional Focused Coping: Researches



- Austenfeld and Stanton 2004 highlighted adaptive potential of emotional expression and processing when coping with infertility, cancer and chronic pain.
- Adaptive potential of emotional approach is realised in dealing with challenges by minor stresses (junk mail, mean people, traffic).
- Most people seem to benefit in short run from expressing their emotions in a meaningful way.
- Emotional processing seems to become more adaptive as people learn more about what they feel and why they feel it (Stanton et al., 2009)

# How emotional approach works to our benefit

- Approach to coping may foster a better understanding of our experiences and direct attention to central concerns (Frijda, 1994)
- Develop tendency to face stressors directly and repeatedly and thereby habituate to certain predictable negative experiences.
- Learn that emotional pain does subside and time heals both psychological and physical wounds.
- Understanding one's emotional experience can help one select optimal relationships and environments (Carstensen, 1998)

# Neurological basis



- behavioural activation system (Depue 1996) and brain structure, the amygdala (LeDoux, 1996) plays significant role in processing matters of emotional significance.
- under stress free life circumstances thinking is governed by the hippocampus but during more stressful times thought processes (aspects of coping) are ruled by the amygdala (LeDoux, 1996).

Case of a Hurricane Survivor

# Emotional intelligence

- An array of noncognitive capabilities, competencies, and skills that help us deal with the demands of the environment, but the related inventory, the Q-I , primarily measures personality and mood variables such as self regard, empathy, tolerance and happiness (Bar-On, 1997 EI)
- Salovey and Mayer constructed a four branch ability model, the skills
  - To perceive and express feelings
  - To use emotions and emotional understanding to facilitate thinking
  - To understand complex emotions, relationships among emotions and relationships between emotions and behavioural consequences
  - To manage emotions.

# Salovey and Mayer's Four Branch Ability Model of Emotional Intelligence

Based on the belief that skills needed to reason about emotions and to use emotional material to assist reasoning can be learned.

## Branch 1: Perceiving Emotions

- Ability to identify emotion in a person's physical and psychological states
- Ability to identify emotions in other people
- Ability to express emotions accurately and to express needs related to them
- Ability to discriminate between authentic and inauthentic emotions

# Salovey and Mayer's Four Branch Ability Model of Emotional Intelligence



## Branch 2: using emotions to facilitate thought

- Ability to redirect and prioritize thinking on the basis of associated feelings
- Ability to generate emotions to facilitate judgment and memory
- Ability to capitalize on mood changes to appreciate multiple points of view
- Ability to use emotional states to facilitate problem solving and creativity

Eg. Conflicts in a relationship

# Salovey and Mayer's Four Branch Ability Model of Emotional Intelligence

Branch 3: understanding emotions (highlights the skills needed to foster an understanding of complex emotions, relationships among emotions and relationships between emotions and behavioural consequences)

- Ability to understand relationships among various emotions
- Ability to perceive the causes and consequences of emotions
- Ability to understand complex feelings, emotional blends and contradictory states
- Ability to understand transitions among emotions

# Salovey and Mayer's Four Branch Ability Model of Emotional Intelligence

Branch 4: managing emotions (involves mood regulation skills)

- Ability to be open to feelings both pleasant and unpleasant
- Ability to monitor and reflect on emotions
- Ability to engage, prolong, or detach from an emotional state
- Ability to manage emotions in oneself and others

Example: Being asked by close friend to betray the confidence of a classmate



# Measurement of Emotional Intelligence

## **Mayer Salovey Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT, 2001)**

- Identify emotions expressed in faces /photographs
- Describe feelings using nonfeeling words and to indicate the feelings that might facilitate or interfere with the successful performance of various tasks.
- Questions concerning the manner in which emotions evolve and how some feelings are produced by blends of emotions
- A series of scenarios eliciting the most adaptive ways to regulate one's own feelings as well as feelings arising in social situations and in other people.

# High Emotional Intelligence

- Better social relations/ effectiveness
- Tend to be somewhat higher in verbal, social and other intelligences
- Tends to be more open and agreeable than others
- Usually drawn to occupations involving social interactions such as teaching, counselling more than clerical or administrative tasks
- Relatively less apt to engage in problem behaviours and avoids self destructive , negative behaviours such as smoking , drug abuse or violent episodes with others
- Likely to have possessions of sentimental attachment around the home and to have more positive social interactions
- May also adept at describing motivational goals, aims and missions

# Researches on Emotional Intelligence



# Researches on Emotional Intelligence



# Socioemotional Selectivity theory



Carstensen's theory that, as compared to younger adults, older adults are more able to focus less on negative emotions, to engage more deeply with emotional content, and to savor the positive in life (e.g., establishing and enhancing relationships)

Reason: able to appreciate these benefits in advanced years when realize that we have a short amount of time left.

# Socioemotional Selectivity: Research Studies

- Younger attended to negative images more quickly, whereas the older participants oriented faster to images laden with positive emotions (smiling face, happy baby). Young (college age) remembered positive and negative material to the same degree, but older recalled the positive material more quickly than the negative material. Charles et al., 2003

Conclusion: process of interacting with emotions is different for young adults and older adults.

# Socioemotional Selectivity: Research Studies

- Carstensen et al., 2000 after monitoring moods of 184 people (age 18 and up) found that older participants did not worry about trivial things and also savored the positive events (experienced the good residuals of positive events for longer periods than their younger counterparts did).

Inference: positive experiences and positive emotions become important as we age and consider mortality.

Older people seem to orient to here and now goals that foster emotional meaning than young people who orient for future goals pertaining to acquiring information and expanding horizons ( Kennedy et al, 2001).

# Socioemotional Selectivity: Research Studies



Ersner-Hershfield et al., 2008 compared experiences of poignancy (mixed emotions related to an ending or of losing something meaningful) in younger and older adults. Both were taken through a series of guided imagery scenarios of being in a personally meaningful location, ending with a final scenario that asked them to imagine that they were at this meaningful location for the very last time. No effect of age was observed.

This strengths of older adults can be a model for successful processing of deep emotional experiences.



# Emotional Storytelling: Pennebaker Paradigm

- Systematic written disclosure of emotional upheaval often involving several timed sessions.
- Pennebaker 1989 conducted an experiment to see effects of expression of story of emotional sufferings taking control (wrote for 15 min nonemotional topic like describing room) and experimental wrote about traumatic experience) groups. Initially the experimental group was more distressed but then, over time (beginning 2 weeks after the study), experienced numerous healthbenefits, (fewer physician visits over the next year) than control group.

# Emotional Storytelling: Researches

Ramirez-Esparza & Pennebaker, 2006 found that when people use more positive emotion words such as laugh or happy, their health improves more. Who used cognitive words specifically associated with insight or causality made greater in roads toward better health as well.

# Emotional Storytelling: Researches



Austenfeld & Stanton, 2008 found that individuals who preferred an emotionally expressive style of coping made fewer visits to a healthcare when assigned to a group that used emotion based writing. But goal oriented writing people had fewer medical visits when instructed to write about their best possible selves.

It indicated vast individual differences that can affect effectiveness of various strategies. Psychological outcomes are partially determined by individuals' emotional preferences related to coping.

# Emotional Storytelling

- Pennebaker paradigm (systematic written disclosure across brief sessions) has been used to address the emotions associated with job loss, diagnosis of illness, and relationship breakup
- People with hostility (which typically suggests personal difficulty managing emotions) have greater positive immune response (Christnesen & Smith, 1998)
- Participants high in trait of alexithymia (difficulty identifying and making sense of emotions) experienced more positive effects (Paez et al., 1999)

**Conclusion: people who typically do not have the tendency to work with the emotionally laden content of life may benefit the most from this means of processing intense negative emotions.**

# Pennebaker paradigm: Theoretical explanations

- Disinhibition (letting go of emotion related stress), cognitive processing, and social dynamics (when disclosure occurs outside the laboratory) are at work (Niederhoffer & Pennebaker, 2002) when someone experiencing emotional upheaval shares his or her story.

Putting upsetting experiences into words allows people to stop inhibiting their thoughts and feelings, to begin to organize their thoughts and perhaps find meaning in their traumas, and to reintegrate their social networks.

Emotional experience, emotional expression, and the benefits and deficits of their various manifestations must always be viewed from within a context in order to properly understand the experience of the individual.

# Personal experiment



- Emotions daily journal: intense emotions per four waking hours for two days. Introspect your approach/ avoidance reactions (processing/ expression).
- Observe emotional intelligent people and see how they behave

# Life enhancement strategies



- Love
- Emotional undercurrents at work. Emotional intelligent behaviour
- Story writing
- meditation

# An Emotional Balancing Act

Dealing with the emotional aspects of life is a balancing act

- Intense emotional experiences that tax our psychological resources might result in avoidant responses and is probably adaptive. Dealing with negative emotions that results in obsessive thinking, may be maladaptive. Balancing avoidance and approach tendencies should be in cultural context.
- Some people are able to manage negative emotions but can't identify any intense positive emotion. Others may ignore negative emotions. These unbalanced attempts at processing feelings may result in missing data and thus lead to poor decision making.



# An Emotional Balancing Act



- Making the most of emotional experiences via emotion focused coping, emotional intelligence, emotional goal setting, emotional storytelling can help to create a balanced means of dealing with the information gained from all emotional experiences.



## Books

- IdkjkRed euksfoKku& Mk e/kq TkSuA vfer ifCyds" kUl] t;iqjA
- Positive Psychology- C R Snyder, Shane J. Lopez & Jennifer Teramoto Pedrotti. Sage South Asia Edition.