Attraction and Intimacy: Liking and Loving Others

Chapter 11

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Love is complicated.
Attraction and Intimacy

- What leads to friendship and attraction?
- What is Love?
- What enables close relationships?
- How do relationships end?
Attraction and Intimacy

- **Need to Belong** – motivation to form positive relationships with others
- **Ostracism** – results in depression, anxiety, sadness, and motivations to affiliate
Friendship and Attraction

- **What influences liking and love?**
- **Proximity** – geographic closeness influences liking
  - **Interaction** – form friendships with those whom we cross paths with
  - **Anticipatory Liking** – increased liking for someone we anticipate interacting with
- **Mere Exposure** – novel stimuli is liked more after repeated exposure
  - Why do people like taking bathroom “selfies”?
Physical Attractiveness

- **Gender and Attractiveness** – a woman's attractiveness is a better predictor of how much they date than a man’s
  - Physical attraction is a strong predictor of liking
  - **Matching Phenomenon** – the tendency to choose partners who are similar in attractiveness and other traits as ourselves
  - Married couples are more similar in attractiveness than dating partners
Physical Attractiveness

- If attractiveness is skewed other traits compensate
Physical Attractiveness

- **Attractiveness Stereotype** – belief that attractiveness is correlated with other positive attributes
  - Attractiveness affects **first impressions**, education, voting, salary, judicial decisions
  - Attractive people benefit from self-fulfilling prophecies
Physical Attractiveness

- Across cultures, averaged and symmetrical features are viewed as more attractive.
Physical Attractiveness

- **Evolution & Attraction** – reproduction and survival influence liking and attraction
  - Men prefer women with softer features, 30% hip to waist ratio
  - Women prefer men with mature and muscular features
  - **Social Comparison** – viewing models and celebrities lowers ratings of mates and others “contrast effect”
  - **Love and Attraction** – love leads to more attraction for loved ones and less attraction to “others”
Similarity vs. Complementarity

- Do we like those who are similar or those who complement us?
- Similar Others - more likely to be friends, get married, and stay married
- Implicit egoism – we prefer things that we associate with ourselves

- Do opposites attract?
- Dissimilar Others – we tend to dislike others who disagree with us or don’t share our attitudes
Mutual Admiration

- Mutual Admiration - we like those who like us
- Ingratiation – self-serving strategy to gain the favor of others
- Self-esteem & Attraction – the approval of others is rewarding after self-esteem blows
- Gaining Approval – we like people more when we win them over
- Laws of Attraction
Relationship Rewards

- **Reward Theory of Attraction** – we like others who reward us and with whom we associate rewards
- **Liking by Association** – we like others with whom we associate positive events
Variations in Love

- **Culture and Love** – love does not always precede relationships and marriage

- **Gender and Love** – men tend to fall in love more easily and are less likely to break up premarital relationships

- **Companionate Love** – enduring affection we feel for those whom our lives are intertwined
Maintaining Close Relationships

- **Equity** – what you receive from a relationship is proportional to what you put in
- **Equity & Satisfaction** – those who perceive their relationship as inequitable feel discomfort, distressed, and depression
Maintaining Close Relationships

- **Self-Disclosure** – revealing intimate aspects of yourself to others
  - **Disclosure Reciprocity** – disclosure leads to feelings of liking and reciprocal disclosure
Ending Relationships

Who Divorces?

- Individualistic cultures divorce more than communal cultures
- Risk of divorce depends on whom and when you marry.
- More likely to stay married if.....
Ending Relationships

- **Detachment Process** – the longer the relationship, the more painful the breakup
- **Divorce Alternatives** – loyalty, neglect, active improvement
- Healthy couples voice concerns, approve and assent, unhappy couples disagree, criticize, and put down
- Unhappy couples can learn communication skills
Personality and Relationships

- **Attachment** – childhood attachment can predict adult relationships
  - **Secure** – leads to stable adult relationships
  - **Avoidant** – leads to less investment/commitment in relationships
  - **Insecure** – leads to less trusting, possessive, jealous
Love

- **Love** – passion, intimacy, commitment, shared understanding, support
  - **Passionate Love** – emotional, exciting, intense longing to be with another
Love

- Two-factor Theory of Emotion – emotion is determined by physiological arousal and its cognitive label
  - Capilano River Suspension Bridge Study