

UNIT  
7

# Social Psychology

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- Chapter 18** Individual Interaction
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The Japanese  
stock exchange

CONTENTS

## Why It's Important

**H**ow and why do we interact with others the way we do? *Social psychology* is an area of psychology in which we first study and seek to explain our own and others' thoughts, feelings, perceptions, and behaviors. Then we study how we are influenced by the presence of and interactions with one another. How do we form impressions? Why do prejudices exist? Why do we perceive social situations the way we do? Social psychologists examine these issues.



CHAPTER  
**18**

# Individual Interaction

## PSYCHOLOGY JOURNAL

Why do people choose to interact with certain people and not with others? How do you communicate with others? In your journal, keep a log for several days of the people you communicate with and how you communicate with them. For example, do you use only verbal communication, or do your friends and family realize what you are feeling by the look on your face or other signs? ■

### PSYCHOLOGY *Online*

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# Interpersonal Attraction

## Reader's Guide

### ■ Main Idea

We depend on others to survive. We are attracted to certain people because of factors such as proximity, reward values, physical appearance, approval, similarity, and complementarity.

### ■ Vocabulary

- social psychology
- social cognition
- physical proximity
- stimulation value
- utility value
- ego-support value
- complementarity

### ■ Objectives

- Discuss why we need friends.
- List and explain the factors involved in choosing friends.

## EXPLORING PSYCHOLOGY

### Alone and Safe?

The . . . story concerns a relative of a friend, who is an extremely wealthy industrialist. He, too, wanted to retire someplace safe from the congestion and crime of Europe. He bought a small island in the Bahamas, built a splendid estate, and surrounded himself with armed guards and attack dogs. At first he felt safe and comfortable, but soon worries began to appear. Were there enough guards to protect him in case his wealth attracted criminals to loot the island? Yet if he strengthened the guards, wouldn't he become increasingly weaker, more dependent on his protectors? In addition, the gilded cage soon became boring; so he fled back to the anonymity of a big city.

—from *The Evolving Self: A Psychology for the Third Millennium* by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, 1993

Is it possible to isolate ourselves to remain safe and also remain happy? As the man in the excerpt above found out, isolation has a price. Being with other people may not be safe, but it is often preferable. That is why we choose friends. This topic is the concern of **social psychology**—the study of how our thoughts, feelings, perceptions, and behaviors are influenced by our interactions with others. **Social cognition**, a subfield of social psychology, is the study of how we perceive, store, and retrieve information about these social interactions. Social psychologists might ask: Why did we choose the friends we have? What attracted us to

**social psychology:** seeks to explain how our thoughts, feelings, perceptions, and behaviors are influenced by interactions with others

**social cognition:** focuses on how we perceive, store, and retrieve information about social interactions



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them in the first place? Every day we are making judgments about others based on our perceptions of who they are. Then, when we interact with these people, we must adjust our judgments to explain their behavior and ours.

## WHY YOU NEED FRIENDS

During infancy we depend on others to satisfy our basic needs. In this relationship we learn to associate close personal contact with the satisfaction of basic needs. Later in life we seek personal contact for the same reason, even though we can now care for ourselves.

Being around other human beings—interacting with others—has become a habit that would be difficult to break. Moreover, we have developed needs for praise, respect, love and affection, the sense of achievement, and other rewarding experiences. These needs, acquired through social learning, can only be satisfied by other human beings (Bandura & Walters, 1963).

### Anxiety and Companionship

Social psychologists are interested in discovering what circumstances intensify our desire for human contact. It seems that we need company most when we are afraid or anxious, and we also need company when we are unsure of ourselves and want to compare our feelings with other people's.

Psychologist Stanley Schachter (1959) decided to test the old saying "Misery loves company." His experiment showed that people suffering from a high level of anxiety are more likely to seek out company than are those who feel less anxious. He arranged for a number of college women to come to his laboratory. One group of women was greeted by a frightening-looking man in a white coat who identified himself as Dr. Gregor Zilstein of the medical school. Dr. Zilstein told each woman that she would be given electric shocks to study the effect of electricity on the body. He told the women, in an ominous tone, that the shocks would be extremely painful. With a devilish smile, he added that the

Figure 18.1

## Solitary and Social Animals

All newborn animals depend on others to fulfill basic biological needs. While snakes are solitary animals, some animals such as elephants and humans remain highly social even after they become self-sufficient. *Why do we need friends?*





shocks would cause no permanent skin damage. For obvious reasons, this group of women was referred to as the high-anxiety group. The doctor was friendly to the other group and told them that the shocks would produce only ticklish, tingling sensations, which they might even find pleasant. These women formed the low-anxiety group.

Zilstein told each participant that she would have to leave the laboratory while he set up the equipment. He then asked each woman to indicate on a questionnaire whether she wished to wait alone in a private room or with other participants in a larger room. Most women in the low-anxiety group chose to wait alone. The majority of high-anxiety women, however, preferred to wait with others. Thus, the experiment demonstrated that high anxiety tends to produce a need for companionship (see Figure 18.2).

### Comparing Experiences and Reducing Uncertainty

People also like to get together with one another to reduce their uncertainties about themselves. For example, when you get tests back, you probably ask your friends how they did. You try to understand your own situation by comparing it to other people's. You learn your strengths and weaknesses by asking: Can other people do it, too? Do they do it better or worse? Many individuals use the performance of others as a basis for self-evaluation. According to this theory, one of the reasons why the women in the shock experiment sought company was to find out how they should respond to Dr. Zilstein. Should they feel fear or anger, or should they take the whole thing in stride? One way to get this information was to talk to others.

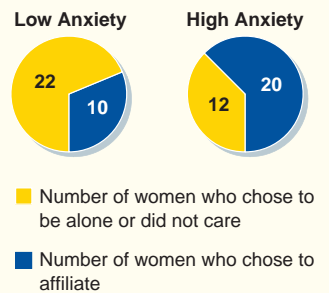
Schachter conducted another experiment to test this idea. It was essentially the same as the Dr. Zilstein experiment, but this time all the women were made anxious. Half of them were then given the choice between waiting alone and waiting with other women about to take part in the same experiment. The other half were given the choice between waiting alone and passing the time in a room where students were waiting to see their academic advisers.

As you might expect, the women who had a chance to be with other women in the same predicament seized the opportunity. These women wanted to compare their dilemma with others. Yet most of the women in the second group chose to spend the time alone rather than with the unconcerned students. As the experimenter put it, "Misery doesn't love just any kind of company; it loves only miserable company."

Other researchers have shown that the more uncertain a person is, the more likely he or she is to seek out other people. Like Schachter, Harold Gerard and J.M. Rabbie (1961) recruited volunteers for an experiment. When the volunteers arrived, some of them were escorted to a booth and attached to a machine that was supposed to measure emotionality. The machine was turned on, and the participants were able to see not only their own ratings but also the ratings of three other participants. In each case the dial for the participant registered 82 on a scale of 100; the dials for the other participants registered 79, 80, and 81. (As you have undoubtedly guessed, the machine was rigged.) A second group of participants was

### Figure 18.2 Schachter's Results

These graphs show the results of Schachter's experiment about the effects of anxiety on affiliation. **Which group was more likely to seek company? Why?**



attached to a similar machine and shown their own ratings but not those of other participants. A third group was not given any information about themselves or other participants in the experiment. When asked whether they wanted to wait alone or with other participants, most of the people in the first group chose to wait alone. They had seen how they compared to others and felt they were reacting appropriately. Most of the participants in the other two groups, who had no basis for evaluating themselves, however, chose to wait with other people.

Friendship also offers support in trying times. Friends may serve as mediators if you have problems with another person. Friends are there to react to your ideas. In your social network, friends are your connections to a broad array of available support.

Yet, as we will see, predicting the effects of friendship can be quite complex. Karen Rook (1987) found that having friends who offer support helped reduce very high stress. On the other hand, friends were no significant help in dealing with average amounts of stress. Perhaps, most surprisingly, the support of friends actually hindered people's ability to deal with low levels of stress. Rook theorizes that reviewing smaller problems again and again with your friends may actually increase your sensitivity to those problems.



## HOW YOU CHOOSE FRIENDS

Most people feel they have a great deal of latitude in the friends they choose. Easy transportation, telephones, and the spare time available to most Americans would all seem to ease communication among them and, therefore, to permit them a wide range of individuals from whom to choose companions, friends, and lovers. In fact, we rarely venture beyond the most convenient methods in making contact with others.

### Proximity

Would it surprise you to learn that one of the most important factors in determining whether two people will become friends is **physical proximity**—the distance from one another that people live or work? In general, the closer two individuals are geographically to one another, the more likely they are to become attracted to each other. Yet it is more than just the opportunity for interaction that makes the difference.

Psychologists have found that even in a small two-story apartment building where each resident was in easy reach of everyone else, people were more likely to become close friends with the person next door than with anyone else (see Figure 18.3). Psychologists believe that this is a result of the fears and embarrassments most people have about making contact with strangers. When two people live next door to one another, go to the same class, or work in the same place, they are able to get used to one another and to find reasons to talk to one another without ever seriously having to risk rejection. To make friends with someone you do not see routinely is much more difficult. You have to make it clear that you are interested and thus run the risk of making a fool of yourself—either because

**physical proximity:** the distance of one person to another person



the other person turns out to be less interesting than he or she seemed at a distance or because that person expresses no interest in you. Of course, it may turn out that both of you are very glad someone spoke up.

## Reward Values

Proximity helps people make friends, but it does not ensure lasting friendship. Sometimes people who are forced together in a situation take a dislike to one another that develops into hatred. Furthermore, once people have made friends, physical separation does not necessarily bring an end to their relationship. What are the factors that determine whether people will like each other once they come into contact?

One reward of friendship is stimulation. A friend has **stimulation value** if he or she is interesting or imaginative or can introduce you to new ideas or experiences. A friend who is cooperative and helpful has **utility value**; he or she is willing to give time and resources to help you achieve your goals. A third type of value in friendship is **ego-support value**—sympathy and encouragement when things go badly, appreciation and approval when things go well. These three kinds of rewards—stimulation, utility, and ego support—are evaluated consciously or unconsciously in every friendship. One person may like another because the second is a witty conversationalist (stimulation value) and knows a lot about gardening (utility value). You may like some people because they value your opinions (ego-support value) and because you have an exciting time with them (stimulation value). By considering the three kinds of rewards that a person may look for in friendship, it is possible to understand other factors that affect liking and loving.

## Physical Appearance

A person's physical appearance greatly influences others' impressions of him or her. People feel better about themselves when they associate with people whom others consider desirable. In addition, we often consider those with physical beauty to be more responsive, interesting, sociable, intelligent, kind, outgoing, and poised (Longo & Ashmore, 1995). This is true of same-sex as well as opposite-sex relationships. Physical attractiveness influences our choice of friends as well as lovers.

In one study (Dion, Berscheid, & Walster, 1972), participants were shown pictures of men and women of varying degrees of physical attractiveness and were asked to rate their personality traits. The physically attractive people were consistently viewed more positively than the less attractive ones. They were seen as more sensitive, kind, interesting, strong, poised, modest, and sociable, as well as more sexually responsive. It

**stimulation value:** the ability of a person to interest you in or to expose you to new ideas and experiences

**utility value:** the ability of a person to help another achieve his or her goals

**ego-support value:** the ability of a person to provide another person with sympathy, encouragement, and approval

### Figure 18.3 Proximity and Friendship

A set of apartments such as this was used in a study of friendship choice. It was found that the fewer doors there were between people, the more likely they were to become friends. **How does physical proximity affect your choice of friends?**





## Figure 18.4 Standards of Beauty

Standards of physical attractiveness vary widely internationally. These photos are of people considered beautiful from Kenya, Japan, and Bali. *Do you believe that your ideal of physical beauty is dependent on your culture? Explain.*



seems, therefore, that although we have heard that “beauty is only skin deep,” we act as if it permeates one’s entire personality.

People who do not meet society’s standards for attractiveness are often viewed in an unfavorable light. Research has shown that obese adults are often discriminated against when they apply for jobs. Even children are targets of prejudice (see Figure 18.5). An unattractive child is far more likely to be judged to be bad or cruel for an act of misbehavior than is a more attractive peer (Dion, Berscheid, & Walster, 1972).

Interestingly, psychologists have found that both

men and women pay much less attention to physical appearance when choosing a marriage partner or a close friend than when inviting someone to go to a movie or a party. Yet neither men nor women necessarily seek out the most attractive member of their social world. Rather, people usually seek out others whom they consider their equals on the scale of attractiveness (Folkes, 1982).

### Approval

Another factor that affects a person’s choice of friends is approval. All of us tend to like people who agree with and support us because they make us feel better about ourselves—they provide ego-support value.

Some studies suggest that other people’s evaluations of oneself are more meaningful when they are a mixture of praise and criticism than when they are extreme in either direction. No one believes that he or she is all good or all bad. As a result, one can take more seriously a person who sees some good points and some bad points. When the good points come first, hearing the bad can make one disappointed and angry at the person who made them. When the bad points come first, the effect is opposite.

### Similarity

People tend to choose friends whose backgrounds, attitudes, and interests are similar to their own. Often, husbands and wives have similar economic, religious, and educational backgrounds.

There are several explanations for the power of shared attitudes. First, agreement about what is stimulating, worthwhile, or fun provides the basis

for sharing activities. People who have similar interests are likely to do more things together and get to know one another.

Second, most of us feel uneasy around people who are constantly challenging our views, and we translate our uneasiness into hostility or avoidance. We are more comfortable around people who support us. A friend's agreement bolsters our confidence and contributes to our self-esteem. In addition, most of us are self-centered enough to assume that people who share our values are basically decent and intelligent.

Finally, people who agree about things usually find it easier to communicate with each other. They have fewer arguments and misunderstandings, and they are better able to predict one another's behavior and thus feel at ease with each other (Carli, Ganley, & Pierce-Otay, 1991).



**Figure 18.5** Subject to Prejudice

In one experiment, women were shown photographs of children participating in a variety of antisocial behaviors. The adults tended not only to see the behaviors committed by the unattractive children as more antisocial but also to attribute a more negative moral character to these children than to the attractive ones (Dion et al., 1972). *Why are we attracted to good-looking people?*

## Complementarity

Despite the power of similarity, an attraction between opposite types of people—**complementarity**—is not unusual. For example, a dominant person might be happy with a submissive mate. Still, most psychologists agree that similarity is a much more important factor. Although the old idea that opposites attract seems reasonable, researchers continue to be unable to verify it (Swann et al., 1994).

**complementarity:** the attraction that often develops between opposite types of people because of the ability of one to supply what the other lacks

## SECTION 1

# Assessment

- 1. Review the Vocabulary** Explain the differences among stimulation value, utility value, and ego-support value.
- 2. Visualize the Main Idea** Using a diagram similar to the one below, list and describe the factors involved in choosing friends.



- 3. Recall Information** Is the saying “misery loves company” accurate? Explain.
- 4. Think Critically** There is a saying stating that “beauty is only skin deep.” Do you think it is true? Do people act as if it is true? Explain.

### 5. Application Activity

Go to a greeting card store and examine several types of cards to send to important people in your life. In a brief essay analyze the following question: What factors of interpersonal attraction do the cards emphasize?

# Case Studies

## *What You See Is What You Get?*

**Period of Study:** 1992

**Introduction:** Even though people are taught that “looks aren’t everything” and “beauty is in the eye of the beholder,” these beliefs do not always seem to be upheld within American society. For many years psychologists have disputed whether the importance of physical appearance is a learned concept, from such influences as television or magazines, or has a biological explanation. One consistency found is that physical attractiveness becomes less important as individuals mature.

There have been many studies focusing on the link between physical attractiveness and the behavior of individuals. In 1972 researchers (Dion, Berscheid, & Walster) administered a test to college students by showing them photographs of people with varying physical appearances. The college students would then describe a type of personality for each photograph. Other researchers (Stephan & Langlois, 1984; Karraker & Stern, 1990) researched feelings and perceptions of adults about the “cuteness” of an assorted group of newborn infants. In 1977 research was performed comparing the annual salaries of men and women of like qualifications but contrasting physical appearance (Dipboye, Arvey, & Terpstra). The results from all of these studies were similar—physical attractiveness was a key factor.

**Hypothesis:** Alan Feingold set out to study and compare personality traits of those individuals who were considered to be physically attractive with those who were not considered physically attractive. Feingold wanted to disprove the myth that attractive or good-looking individuals could possess superior personality traits.



**Method:** Defining the attractiveness of individuals for this type of research is not simple. There are far too many ways in which people can be classified in terms of beauty and personality. Much of this revolves around personal preferences of others. Feingold combined the results of numerous studies dealing with this issue.

**Results:** Feingold’s research indicated no significant relationships between physical attractiveness and such traits as intelligence, leadership ability, self-esteem, and mental health. For unknown reasons, results seem to be reported and discussed more from the studies in which physical attractiveness dominates. Yet in actuality, Feingold’s research indicated those type of results occurred far less. Perhaps relaying the cases in which physical attractiveness prevails shows humans that we still can be superficial when judging other people as a whole. Although Feingold found no relationship between physical attractiveness and distinguished personality traits, he did discover tendencies within the two defined groups. He discovered that those individuals who are considered attractive generally are more comfortable in social settings and are less likely to be lonely and anxious. They seem to be more socially skilled than their counterparts. Therefore, what seems to be important is how we define physical attractiveness and our perceptions of the personalities of those attractive people.

### Analyzing the Case Study

1. What connection between personality and physical attractiveness did Feingold set out to study?
2. What connections between physical attractiveness and personality did Feingold discover?
3. **Critical Thinking** Do you think physical beauty influences a person’s personality? Explain.



## Reader's Guide

## ■ Main Idea

We explain the behavior of others by making judgments about them. Our judgments are influenced by our perceptions of others.

## ■ Vocabulary

- primacy effect
- stereotype
- attribution theory
- fundamental attribution error
- actor-observer bias
- self-serving bias
- nonverbal communication

## ■ Objectives

- Explain how we use first impressions and schemas.
- Describe several factors that influence how we interpret others' behavior.

## EXPLORING PSYCHOLOGY

## First Meeting

We told a waitress that we had come to see Mr. Malcolm X. . . . In a moment Malcolm appeared at the rear door. His aura was too bright and his masculine force affected me physically. A hot desert storm eddied around him and rushed to me, making my skin contract, and my pores slam shut. He approached, and all my brain would do for me was record his coming. I had never been so affected by a human presence. . . .

“Ladies, *Salaam aleikum*.” His voice was black baritone and musical. Rosa shook hands, and I was able to nod dumbly. Up close he was a great red arch through which one could pass to eternity. His hair was the color of burning embers and his eyes pierced. . . .

—from *The Heart of a Woman* by Maya Angelou, 1981

Maya Angelou, a writer, remembers her first impression of 1960s Black Muslim leader Malcolm X. What influenced her first impression of Malcolm X? Based on what she knew and her own thoughts and feelings, Angelou instantly appraised him.

We often cannot explain our own behaviors. How then do we explain the behavior of others? It takes people very little time to make judgments about one another. From one brief conversation or even by watching a person across a room, you may form an impression of what someone is like, and first impressions influence the future of a relationship. If a person

seems interesting, he or she becomes a candidate for future interaction. A person who seems to have nothing interesting to say—or too much to say—does not. We tend to be sympathetic toward someone who seems shy, to expect a lot from someone who impresses us as intelligent, and to be wary of a person who strikes us as aggressive.

Forming an impression of a person is not a passive process in which certain characteristics of the individual are the input and a certain impression is the automatic outcome. If impressions varied only when input varied, then everyone meeting a particular stranger would form the same impression of him or her. This, of course, is not what happens. One individual may judge a newcomer to be quiet, another may judge the same person to be dull, and still another person may think the person mysterious. These various impressions lead to different expectations of the newcomer and to different interactions with him or her.

## FIRST IMPRESSIONS

Imagine that it is the first time you are meeting someone. How do you treat that person? Why? Your first impression of someone is usually based on that person's physical appearance (see Figure 18.6). You instantly make certain judgments based on how he or she looks. For example, if you meet a well-dressed woman in an office building, you might assume that she is a well-paid corporate executive. Should you meet a waiter in a local restaurant, you might assume that he does not make as much money as the corporate executive. You might interact with these people differently, just as you might interact differently with people of different genders, races, or socioeconomic classes.

These initial judgments may influence us more than later information does (Belmore, 1987). For example, one researcher invited a guest lecturer to a psychology class. Beforehand, all the students were given a brief description of the visitor. The descriptions were identical in all traits but one. Half the students were told that the speaker was a rather cold person, as well as being industrious, critical, practical, and determined; the others were told he was a very warm person, along with the other four attributes. After the lecture, the researcher asked all the students to evaluate the lecturer. Reading their impressions, you would hardly know that the two groups of students were describing the same person. The students who had been told he was cold saw a humorless, ruthless, self-centered person. The other students saw a relaxed, friendly, concerned person. The students used *cold* or *warm* to influence the meaning they assigned to the other four words, so *cold* and *warm* – the first words heard – exhibited a **primacy effect** on the other, previously neutral, words. The students interpreted the common words *practical* and *determined* in terms of the different words *warm* and *cold*, giving them greater, or primary, impact. Thus, to be warm and determined was perceived as dedicated; to be cold and determined was perceived as rigid. It also affected their behavior. Students in the “warm group” were warm themselves, initiating more conversations with the speaker than did the students in the other group (Kelley, 1950).

**primacy effect:** the tendency to form opinions on others based on first impressions



What was your first impression of your teacher? Did that first impression ever change? These impressions sometimes become a self-fulfilling prophecy; that is, the way you act toward someone changes depending on your impression of him or her, and this in turn affects how that person interacts with you. For instance, suppose you showed up on the first day of class in a terrible mood. During the class period, you did not really pay attention to the lecture and even made a few jokes in class. Your teacher immediately labeled you as the class troublemaker and, therefore, did not treat you as an attentive and good student. You may have responded to that treatment by not studying nor caring about your grade in class. In reality, you may be a great student; you just had a bad day on the first day of class and now cannot seem to please your teacher. On many occasions we take first impressions into account. For example, when you first start dating someone, you try to look nice. When going for a job interview, you dress well.



**Figure 18.6** Are You Attracted to These People?

Are you drawn to the people in these photos, or is your impression less favorable? Your answer depends in large part on the schemas you have developed. *How do we use our schemas of people?*

Forming impressions about others helps us place these people into categories. The knowledge or set of assumptions that we develop about any person or event is known as a *schema*. We develop a schema for every person we know. When you meet someone who seems unusually intelligent, you may assume she is also active, highly motivated, and conscientious. Another person in the group may have an altogether different schema for highly intelligent people—that they are boring, boastful, unfriendly, and the like. Whatever the person does can be interpreted as support for either theory. You are impressed by how animated your intelligent friend becomes when talking about work; another person does not care for how little attention your friend pays to other people. Both of you are filling in gaps in what you know about the person, fitting her into a type you have constructed in your mind.

## Schemas

Sometimes we develop schemas for people we do not know but have heard about. Schemas can influence and distort our thoughts, perceptions, and behaviors. Think of a person you like. If that person smiles as you pass in the hallway, that smile looks friendly to you. Now think of a person whom you mistrust or do not really like. If that person smiles at you in the hallway, you may not interpret the smile as friendly but instead think of it as a guilty or fake smile.

We develop schemas for people and events. The schemas associated with people are judgments about the traits people possess or the jobs they

 **Reading Check**  
How do first impressions help us form schemas?



perform. Schemas about events consist of behaviors that we associate with certain events. For example, we know that we can yell and cheer at the basketball game but that we should be quiet and subdued at funerals.

What is the purpose of developing these schemas? With your schemas you are able to explain a person's past behavior and to predict his future behavior. Schemas allow us to organize information so that we can respond appropriately in social situations.

**stereotype:** a set of assumptions about people in a given category often based on half-truths and nontruths

**attribution theory:** a collection of principles based on our explanations of the causes of events, other people's behaviors, and our own behaviors

**Stereotypes** Sometimes we develop schemas for entire groups of people. You may have schemas for men, women, Asian Americans, African Americans, or certain religious groups. Such schemas are called stereotypes. A **stereotype** is a set of assumptions about an identifiable group of people. The belief that males are dominant and independent or that females are nurturing and emotional are examples. Stereotypes may contain positive or negative information, but primacy effects may cause stereotypes to bias us. If stereotypes influence our information about people, they may become self-fulfilling prophecies (Hamilton & Sherman, 1989).

Schemas are useful because they help us predict with some degree of accuracy how people will behave. Without them, we would spend considerable energy observing and testing people to find out what they are like, whether we want to pursue a relationship with them, and so on. Like stereotypes, if the assumptions we make about people from our first impressions do not change as we get to know them better, then we are guilty of harboring prejudice.

## More About...

### Shyness

Studies show that about 40 percent of adults are shy (Henderson & Zimbardo, 1996). Shyness is a feeling of distress that results from feeling awkward in social situations and from fearing rejection. People may feel shy in front of authoritative figures, in one-on-one dating scenarios, with strangers, or with groups of people. Shyness is really a form of excessive self-focus. The shy person is preoccupied with his or her own thoughts, feelings, or physical reactions.

Shy people differ from others in how they attribute their own successes and failures. Whereas most people demonstrate the self-serving bias—taking credit for success and blaming failures on external causes—shy people reverse this bias and blame themselves for failure and externalize the causes of success. For example, whereas Roger may credit his strength and skill for winning a tennis match, shy Jackie may attribute her win to luck or to her opponent's poor performance.

Psychologists may treat shyness by exposing the patient to feared situations and teaching the patient how to control anxiety. In addition, psychologists may lead a patient to restructure his or her negative thoughts into positive affirmations.

## ATTRIBUTION THEORY

You are waiting at a traffic light. Somebody behind you honks and gestures frantically for you to get out of the way. Not sure what is happening, you move your car—slowly, so they will not think you are a push-over—to allow the driver to pull even with you. As he does, the driver looks across at you and says, “Thanks. My wife's in labor. We're in a hurry!”

If you are like most of us, you feel foolish, but everyone has moments like that. You were facing a situation that many social psychologists study—trying to interpret and explain people's behavior by identifying what caused the behavior (Jones, 1990). The focus of study in this circumstance is called **attribution theory** (Heider, 1958), an analysis of how we interpret and understand other people's behavior. When you first heard the horn, you undoubtedly attributed the man's pushiness to personal characteristics—often called *internal attributions*. Once he thanked you and gave a

valid reason for his urgency, your analysis immediately changed to credit his behavior to the needs of his wife—often called *external attributions*. Internal attributions are also known as *dispositional*, while external attributions are sometimes referred to as *situational*.

We can make errors when we decide whether behavior is caused by internal or external factors. A prominent example, the **fundamental attribution error**, is the tendency to attribute others' behavior to dispositional causes (Ross, 1977). In the traffic light example, you probably attributed the man's honking to pushiness, an internal cause, without considering possible external causes.

While we tend to focus on internal factors when explaining the behavior of others, we focus more on external factors when explaining our own behavior. This is called the **actor-observer bias** (Jones & Nisbett, 1972). We are an actor when we explain our own behavior, but an observer when we explain the behavior of others (see Figure 18.7). For example, the actor attributes an action to the situation: "I am smiling because it is a beautiful day." However, an observer likely attributes the same behavior to internal causes: "She is smiling because she is a cheerful person."

What causes actor-observer bias? Some psychologists propose that we realize that our own behavior changes from situation to situation, but we may not believe the same is true of others. The point is that we all actively perceive other people's actions. What we conclude about other people depends not only on what they do but also on our interpretations. This is true not just when we deal with individuals but also when we react to groups.

When there is glory to be claimed, we often demonstrate another form of error called a **self-serving bias**. In victory, we are quick to claim personal responsibility (internal attribution); in defeat, we pin the blame on circumstances beyond our control (external attribution). For example, if we receive an A on the test, we attribute our good grade to our hard work and intelligence. When we get a D on the test, however, we blame a biased test for our poor performance. In this way we try to keep ourselves in the best possible light.

### **fundamental attribution error:**

an inclination to over attribute others' behavior to internal causes (dispositional factors) and discount the situational factors contributing to their behavior

**actor-observer bias:** tendency to attribute one's own behavior to outside causes but attribute the behavior of others to internal causes

**self-serving bias:** a tendency to claim success is due to our efforts, while failure is due to circumstances beyond our control

## **NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION**

Central to the development and maintenance of a relationship is the willingness to communicate aspects of yourself to others. Communication involves at least two people: a person who sends a message and a person who receives it. The message sent consists of an idea and some emotional component. Messages are sent verbally and nonverbally. "I like to watch you dance" is a verbal message, while a warm smile is an example of **nonverbal communication**.

Although most people are aware of what they are saying verbally, they are often unaware of their nonverbal messages. They are more aware of the nonverbal messages when they are on the receiving end of them. You have probably heard someone say, "It doesn't matter," speaking in a low voice and looking away; the unspoken message is "My feelings are hurt." You do not need to be told in so many words that a friend is elated or depressed,

### **nonverbal communication:**

the process through which messages are conveyed using space, body language, and facial expression

angry or pleased, nervous or content. You sense these things. People communicate nonverbally, not only through facial expressions but also through their use of space and body language (posture and gestures).

The way you carry your body also communicates information about you. This is your *body language*. If you stand tall and erect, you convey the

impression of self-assurance. If you sit and talk with your arms folded and legs crossed—a closed body position—you communicate that you are protecting yourself. When you unfold your arms and stretch out, your open body position may be saying that you are open to people.

Although the use of body language is often unconscious, many of the postures we adopt and gestures we make are governed by *social rules*. These rules are very subtle. Touching, for example, has rules—not

just where, but who (Duncan, 1969). Your teacher or boss is much more likely to touch you than you are to touch him or her. Touching is considered a privilege of higher status.

### Figure 18.7 Actor-Observer Bias

Our eyes point outward, away from ourselves, so that when we watch someone else perform an action we focus on the actor. When we perform an action, we see the surrounding environment, so we attribute behavioral causes to the situation. **Why then do we attribute internal, or dispositional, causes to others' actions?**



## SECTION 2

# Assessment

- 1. Review the Vocabulary** Explain the errors people sometimes make when using shortcuts to attribute behavior.
- 2. Visualize the Main Idea** Using a diagram similar to the one below, list and describe the two components of attribution theory.
- 3. Recall Information** What are *social rules*? Give an example of such a rule.
- 4. Think Critically** Rate the following situations as external or internal attributions: (a) Your friend helped you wash your car because she is nice. (b) Your friend helped you wash your car because she wanted to impress your parents, who were watching. (c) Your friend helped you wash your car because she owed you a favor.

Types of Attribution



- 5. Application Activity** Use information found in the library, on the Internet, or through personal interviews to find examples of nonverbal communication in other cultures. Be prepared to show at least two such examples to the class.



## Reader's Guide

■ **Main Idea**

People experience different types of love and relationships throughout their lives.

■ **Vocabulary**

- generational identity

■ **Objectives**

- Describe sources of parent-adolescent conflict.
- Describe different types of love.

## EXPLORING PSYCHOLOGY

**Raising Your Family**

They had been so sweet when they were little. Granny wished the old days were back again with the children young and everything to be done over. It had been a hard pull, but not too much for her. When she thought of all the food she had cooked, and all the clothes she had cut and sewed, and all the gardens she had made—well, the children showed it. There they were, made out of her, and they couldn't get away from that. Sometimes she wanted to see John again and point to them and say, "Well, I didn't do so badly, did I?"

—from *The Jilting of Granny Weatherall*  
by Katherine Anne Porter, 1930

In the story above, Granny Weatherall looks back on her life—a life of raising and loving children. The relationships you have with your grandparents, parents, guardians, and others will influence and enrich your life. Your personal relationships with others bring meaning and substance to your everyday experiences.

**PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIPS**

Noted psychologists, including Erik Erikson, believed that early and persistent patterns of parent-child interaction could influence people's later adult expectations about their relationships with the significant people in their lives. If a young infant's first relationship with a caregiver is

Parenting styles vary among different families and different ethnic groups. **Do you think adolescents all over the world experience the same types of conflicts with their parents? Explain.**



**generational identity:** the theory that people of different ages tend to think differently about certain issues because of different formative experiences

loving, responsive, and consistent, the child will develop a trust in the ability of other people to meet his or her needs. In turn, this trusting will encourage the person to be receptive to others. However, a child who has experienced unresponsive, inconsistent, or unaffectionate care in infancy will most likely be more wary or mistrustful of other people. Within the parent-child relationship, we learn how to manipulate others to have our needs met. A parent is likely to satisfy the wishes of a child who is well-behaved, that is, who does what the parent asks. The child may also learn to get attention by pouting or having temper tantrums.

As children develop and form relationships with people outside their families, they apply what they have learned about relationships. As a result of childhood experiences, an individual might, for example, believe that the only way to establish and maintain good relationships with friends is always to say what pleases them rather than speak the truth.

Your parents influence the quality of your adult relationships in other ways. They provide you with your first model of a marital relationship. As you watched your mother and father interacting with each other as husband and wife, you were most likely forming some tentative conclusions about the nature of relationships. Later on, you might use their example as a guide in selecting a future mate or in evaluating your relationships. If your parents have a happy marriage, you will most likely seek to duplicate it by imitating their patterns. Sadly, the reverse may also be true. Evidence suggests that being part of a violent family in childhood increases the likelihood that someone will perpetuate that mode of behavior against his or her children and spouse (Rice, 1993).

### Sources of Parent-Adolescent Conflict

In our society, parent-child conflict may develop during adolescence. Adolescence may be a period of inner struggles—goals versus fear of inability to accomplish them, desire for independence versus the realization that we are only human and have limitations. The adolescent thus needs parents who are sure of themselves, their identities, and their values. Such parents serve not only as models but also as sources of stability in a world that has become complicated and full of choices.

Each generation has a **generational identity**. This refers to the simple fact that adolescents and their parents tend to think differently about some things. Why does this happen? You are part of a generation that is distinct from others. Your generation has shared formative experiences that are different from those of other generations. For example, whereas conflicts such as the Vietnam War and political upheavals such as the civil rights movement shaped other generations' ideas, situations such as economic uncertainty, the prevalence of divorce, technological innovations, or a decreased sense of security may shape your generation's views. Your parents' or guardians' prominent flashbulb memories will not be the same as those for your generation, though all of us share the memory of September 11, 2001. Yet, such differences do not automatically lead to conflict. The conflicts that adolescents experience with their parents may result from a changing parent-child relationship, as well as from different ideologies and concerns.

## LOVE RELATIONSHIPS

While most people say that they love their parents, their friends, and maybe even their brothers and sisters, they attach a different meaning to love when referring to a boyfriend, girlfriend, or spouse. Love means different things to different people and with different relationships.

### Love and Marriage

The idea of love without marriage is no longer shocking. The fact that a couple is developing a close and intimate relationship or even living together does not necessarily mean that they are contemplating marriage. The idea of marriage without love, however, remains unpopular to most Americans. Marrying for convenience, companionship, financial security, or any reason that does not include love strikes most of us as impossible or at least unfortunate.

This, according to psychologist Zick Rubin (1973), is one of the main reasons it is difficult for many people to adjust to love and marriage. Exaggerated ideas about love may also help explain the growing frequency of divorce. Fewer couples who no longer love one another are staying together for the sake of the children or to avoid gossip than did in the past. Let us begin at the beginning, though, with love.

**Love** Reflecting on almost two decades of studies, one psychologist (Hatfield, 1988) identified two common types of love. *Passionate love* is very intense, sensual, and all-consuming. It has a feeling of great excitement and of intense sexuality, yet there is almost an element of danger—that it may go away at any moment. In fact, it does usually fade in any



## Profiles In Psychology

### Sigmund Freud

1856–1939

*“Martha is mine, the sweet girl of whom everyone speaks with admiration, who despite all my resistance captivated my heart at our first meeting, the girl I feared to court and who came toward me with high-minded confidence, who strengthened the faith in my own value and gave me new hope and energy to work when I needed it most.”*

It has been said that a person in love does not see his or her lover as others do. Freud obviously viewed his wife Martha Bernays in a unique manner. Freud believed that we see the lover as our ideal, and the more dissatisfied with ourselves we are, the more we need a lover to make up for our weaknesses, and the more inclined we are to idealize our lover.

Why do we do this? Freud believed that whenever we make a choice—such as choosing a lover—we are governed by hidden mental processes of which we are unaware and over which we have no control.

Freud’s contributions to psychology are controversial. Although his ideas greatly influenced the development of the field of psychology, critics claim that Freud saw people as foolish, weak, and self-deluded. But it may be better to view people as basically good, though injured.



romantic relationship. When passionate love subsides, it may grow into *companionate love*, which includes friendship, liking someone, mutual trusting, and wanting to be with them. Companionate love is a more stable love that includes the commitment and intimacy identified by Robert Sternberg (1988). There are other views of love, however.

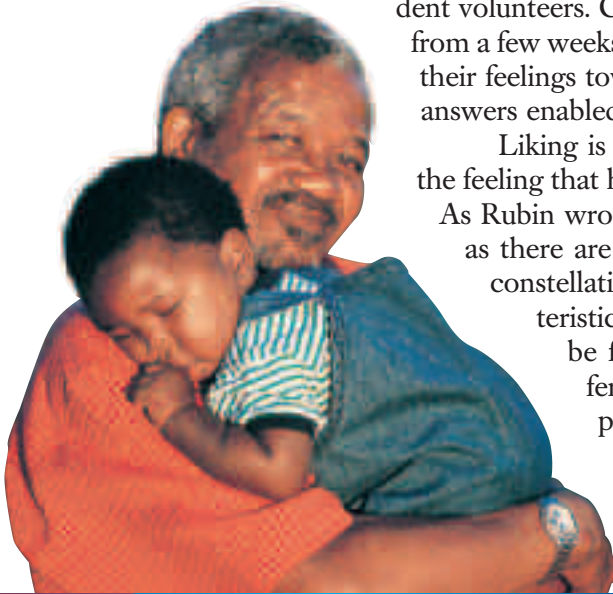
Some years ago Zick Rubin surveyed University of Michigan student volunteers. Couples who had been going together for anywhere from a few weeks to six or seven years filled out questionnaires about their feelings toward their partners and their same-sex friends. The answers enabled Rubin to distinguish between liking and loving.

Liking is based primarily on respect for another person and the feeling that he or she is similar to you. Loving is rather different. As Rubin wrote, “There are probably as many reasons for loving as there are people who love. In each case there is a different constellation of needs to be gratified, a different set of characteristics that are found to be rewarding, a different ideal to be fulfilled” (Rubin, 1973). Looking beyond these differences, however, Rubin identified three major components of romantic love: *need* or attachment, *caring* or the desire to give, and *intimacy*.

People in love feel strong desires to be with the other person, to touch, to be praised and cared for, to fulfill and be fulfilled. That love is so often described as a longing, a hunger, a desire to possess, a sickness that only one person can heal, suggests the role need plays in romantic love.

Equally central is the desire to give. Love goes beyond the cost-reward level of human interaction. It has been defined as “the active concern for the life and growth of that which we love” (Fromm, 1956) and as “that state in which the happiness of another person is essential to our own” (Heinlein, in Levinger & Snoek, 1972). This kind of love is very altruistic, very giving. Without caring, need becomes a series of self-centered, desperate demands; without need, caring is charity or kindness. In love, the two are intertwined.

Need and caring take various forms, depending on individual situations. What all people in love share is intimacy—a special knowledge of each other derived from uncensored self-disclosure. Exposing your true self to another person is always risky. It does not hurt so much if a person rejects a role you are trying to play, but it can be devastating if a person rejects the secret



**Figure 18.9** Different Types of Love

It is easy to think of love in a narrow context and consider only the sexual relationship that exists between a man and a woman. This view, however, omits the kinds of love that exist between children and grandparents, between people and their pets, between siblings and friends, and so on. **Why are caring and need important in love?**



longings and fears you ordinarily disguise or keep hidden. It hurts deeply if he or she uses that private information to manipulate you. This is one of the reasons why love so often brings out violent emotions—the highs and lows of our lives.

Rubin conducted a number of experiments to test common assumptions about the way people in love feel and act. He found that couples who rated high on his “love scale” did, indeed, spend more time gazing into each other’s eyes (while waiting for the experimenter) than other couples did. He was unable, however, to prove that lovers sacrifice their own comfort for that of their partners.


Perhaps the most interesting discoveries in love research concern the differences between men and women. Rubin found that most couples were equal on the love scale; the woman expressed the same degree of love for her partner as he did for her. Women, however, tended to *like* their boyfriends—to respect and identify with them—more than their boyfriends liked them. Women also tended to love and share intimacies with their same-sex friends more often than men did with theirs.

As Rubin suggested, women in our society tend to specialize in the social and emotional dimensions of life. One revelation—that men carry out more romantic gestures than women—may seem surprising, but perhaps it should not. At a time when women usually worked at home, marriage basically determined their style of living. Now earning power is no longer such a powerful concern. More than half of all married women work outside the home, so both men and women contribute to family finance and have the ability to perform more romantic gestures. In fact, two psychologists (Fehr & Russell, 1991) reported that women are no longer different from men as to how “romantic” they are. Women participate equally in varying forms of passionate and companionate love.

A follow-up questionnaire, sent a year after Rubin’s original study, indicated that when both a man and a woman express their interest in each other, the relationship is likely to progress; that is, they become more intimate and committed to each other. What is the implication of this finding? Love is not something that happens *to* you; it is something you seek and create. You must work at it and nurture it.

**Triangular Theory of Love** A more comprehensive theory of the many forms of love has been proposed by Robert Sternberg (1986). Sternberg’s triangular theory of love contends that love is made up of three parts: intimacy, passion, and commitment. The various combinations of these parts account for the many different ways love is experienced (see Figure 18.10).

Using Sternberg’s model, we can see how different kinds of love are made of different degrees of intimacy, passion, and commitment. The love at first sight felt on a first date has a lot of passion but little commitment, whereas the love felt by a couple celebrating their fiftieth wedding anniversary has much intimacy and commitment but probably less passion. Yet, each combination yields a satisfying love for those experiencing it.

 **Reading Check**  
What is the difference between passionate and companionate love?

## What traits are important in a potential marriage partner?

About 90 percent of adults in the United States eventually marry. How do they decide which person is right for them?

### Procedure

1. Ask at least 30 of your classmates and friends to identify one quality they consider essential in a potential mate.
2. Separate the results into responses from females and those from males. Tally the results in a chart.

### Analysis

1. What traits did females consider most important in a potential partner? Males?
2. Based on the information in the chapter regarding love and marriage, do you think the traits listed by the people you surveyed are ones that are likely to result in a successful marriage? Explain.



See the **Skills Handbook**, page 622, for an explanation of designing an experiment.

**Marriage** A couple decides to make a formal and public commitment to each other. They marry. Will they “live happily ever after”? Their chances are good if they come from similar cultural and economic backgrounds, have about the same level of education, and practice (or reject) the same religion. Their chances are better still if their parents were happily married, they had happy childhoods, and they maintain good relations with their families. All of these are good predictors of marital success. Two principles tend to govern behavior leading to successful marriages: endogamy and homogamy.

*Endogamy* identifies the tendency to marry someone who is from one’s own social group. Marriages are more likely to be successful when we marry someone similar to us (Buss, 1985). In addition, *homogamy* identifies our tendency to marry someone who has similar attributes, including physical attractiveness, age, and physique, to our own. A common observation is that people who marry tend to look similar to one another. It is now suspected that social processes operate that tend to cause this matching to happen. At a dance held at the University of Minnesota a number of years ago, a computer randomly matched students. Physical attractiveness was the best predictor of the likelihood that two randomly matched people would continue dating (Walster et al., 1966).

**Marital Problems and Divorce** In general, healthy adjustment to marriage seems to depend on three factors: whether the couple’s needs are compatible, whether the husband’s and wife’s images of themselves coincide with their images of each other, and whether they agree on what the husband’s and wife’s roles in the marriage are.

External factors may make it impossible for one or both to live up to their own role expectations. A man who is unemployed cannot be the good provider he wants to be and may take out his frustrations on his family, who constantly reminds him of this. A woman trying to hold a job and raise a family in a slum tenement may have trouble keeping the kitchen clean with a broken sink, providing good meals for her family, or keeping her children safe.

Often couples just grow apart; the husband or wife may become totally engrossed in work, a hobby, raising children, or community affairs. Let us suppose they are unable or unwilling to fill each other’s needs and role expectations through accommodation or compromise. Perhaps they cannot face their problems. For whatever reasons, they decide on divorce. What then?

In many ways, adjusting to divorce is like adjusting to death—the death of a relationship. Almost inevitably, divorce releases a torrent of

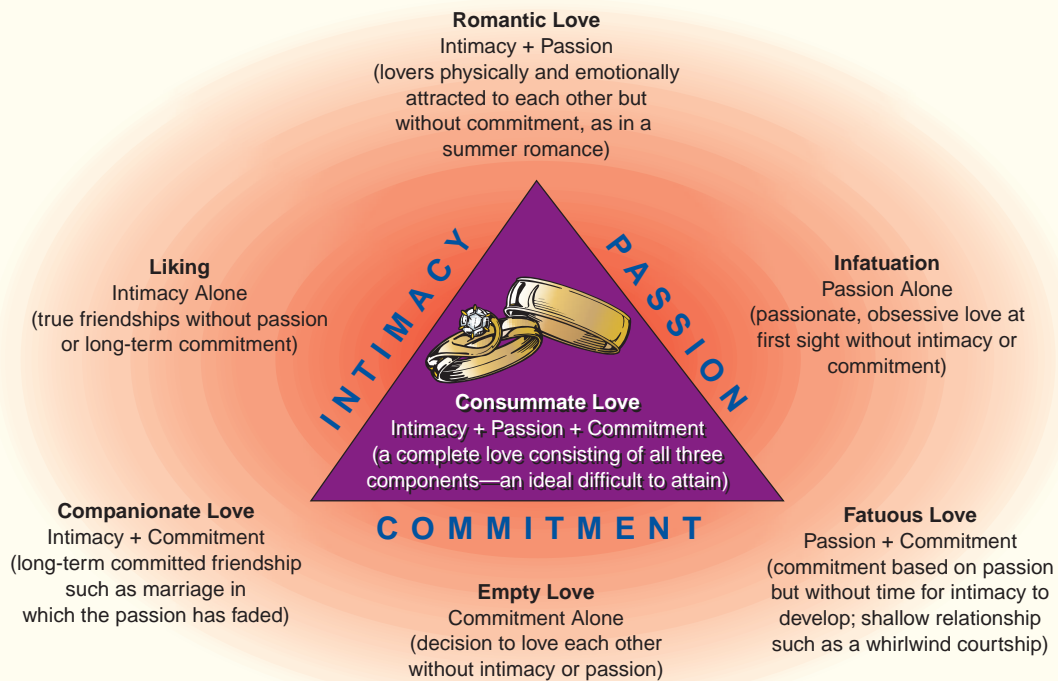


emotions: anger (even if the person wanted a divorce), resentment, fear, loneliness, anxiety, and above all the feeling of failure. Both individuals are suddenly thrust into a variety of unfamiliar situations. A man may find himself cooking for the first time in years; a woman, fixing her first leaky faucet. Dating for the first time in 5 or 10 years can make a formerly married person feel like an adolescent. Friends may feel they have to choose sides. Some divorcing people may find it unsettling to think of giving up on a marriage or being unattached and free to do whatever they like. One of the biggest problems may be time—the free time a person desperately wanted but now has no idea how to fill.

All of this adds up to what Mel Krantzler (1973) calls “separation shock.” Whatever the circumstances, most divorced people go through a period of mourning that lasts until the person suddenly realizes that he or she has survived. This is the first step toward adjusting to divorce. Resentment of his or her former spouse subsides. The pain left over from the past no longer dominates the present. The divorced person begins calling old friends, making new ones, and enjoying the fact that he or she can base decisions on his or her own personal interests. In effect, the divorcee has begun to construct a new identity as a single person.

**Figure 18.10 Triangular Theory of Love**

Intimacy refers to the feeling part of love—as when we feel close to another. Passion is love’s motivating aspect—feeling physically aroused and attracted to someone. Commitment is the thinking component—when we realize that a relationship is love and we desire to maintain that relationship over time. *What is consummate love?*



**Children and Divorce** Adjusting to divorce is usually far more difficult for children than for their parents. First, rarely do children want a divorce to occur; the conflict is not theirs but their parents'. Second, while the parents may have good reasons for the separation, children (especially very young children) are unlikely to understand those reasons. Third, children themselves rarely have any control over the outcome of a divorce. Such decisions as with whom they will live and how frequently they will be able to see the separated parent are out of their hands. Finally, children, especially young ones, cannot muster as much emotional maturity as their parents to help them through such an overwhelming experience.

A child of parents who divorce may exhibit behaviors ranging from emotional outbursts to depression or rebellion. The longevity of these behaviors may be determined by "the harmony of the parents' ongoing relationship, the stability of the child's life, and the adequacy of the caregiving arrangement" (Berger, 1994).

Adolescents experience special problems as a result of their parents' divorce because their developmental stage already involves the process of breaking family ties. When that separation takes place before the adolescent is ready to actively take part in it, the experience can be terribly unsettling. As one young person said, "[It was] like having the rug pulled out from under me" (Wallerstein & Kelly, 1974).

Like their parents, most children do eventually come to terms with divorce. They learn to put some distance between themselves and their parents' conflict, and they learn to be realistic about the situation and make the best of it. Adjustment is made easier when parents take special care to explain the divorce and allow children to express their feelings. Divorce is becoming a problem with which more and more children will have to cope.

## SECTION 3

# Assessment

- 1. Review the Vocabulary** What is generational identity?
- 2. Visualize the Main Idea** Using an outline similar to the one below, explain why children may have difficulty adjusting to their parents' divorce.

### I. Adjusting to Divorce

- A. \_\_\_\_\_
- B. \_\_\_\_\_
- C. \_\_\_\_\_
- D. \_\_\_\_\_

- 3. Recall Information** What is the difference between endogamy and homogamy? Explain.
- 4. Think Critically** In what ways are liking and loving different? Explain.

### 5. Application Activity

Have you heard of "love at first sight"? Write a paragraph explaining what you think this phrase means. Interview an adult about their experience of love in terms of intimacy and commitment.

Psychologists have provided insights into why people choose to interact with some people and not with others. They also have provided insights into why people want to be around other people.

### Section 1 Interpersonal Attraction

**Main Idea:** We depend on others to survive. We are attracted to certain people because of factors such as proximity, reward values, physical appearance, approval, similarity, and complementarity.

- Social psychologists have discovered that people need company most when they are afraid or anxious or when they are unsure of themselves and want to compare their feelings with other people's.
- The closer two individuals are geographically to one another, the more likely they are to become attracted to each other.
- Friendships provide three rewards—stimulation, utility, and ego support.

### Section 2 Social Perception

**Main Idea:** We explain the behavior of others by making judgments about them. Our judgments are influenced by our perceptions of others.

- Forming impressions about others helps us place these people in categories.
- We form first impressions of people based on schemas.
- When people develop schemas for entire groups of people, they are developing stereotypes.
- People often try to interpret and explain other people's behavior by identifying what caused the behavior.
- Communication in a relationship consists of both verbal and nonverbal messages.

### Section 3 Personal Relationships

**Main Idea:** People experience different types of love and relationships throughout their lives.

- Children apply what they have learned from their parent-child relationships to relationships with others.
- There are two common types of love: passionate love and companionate love.
- Robert Sternberg contends that love is made of intimacy, passion, and commitment.
- People tend to marry someone who is from their own social group and who has similar attributes.
- The success of a marriage seems to depend on whether the couple's needs are compatible, whether the husband's and wife's images of themselves coincide with their images of each other, and whether they agree on what the husband's and wife's roles in the marriage are.
- Parents and their children may have difficulty adjusting to divorce.

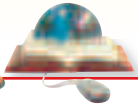
### Chapter Vocabulary

social psychology (p. 519)  
social cognition (p. 519)  
physical proximity (p. 522)  
stimulation value (p. 523)  
utility value (p. 523)  
ego-support value (p. 523)  
complementarity (p. 525)  
primacy effect (p. 528)  
stereotype (p. 530)  
attribution theory (p. 530)  
fundamental attribution error (p. 531)  
actor-observer bias (p. 531)  
self-serving bias (p. 531)  
nonverbal communication (p. 531)  
generational identity (p. 534)



CLICK HERE

**PSYCHOLOGY**  
*Online*



### Self-Check Quiz

Visit the *Understanding Psychology* Web site at [psychology.glencoe.com](http://psychology.glencoe.com) and click on **Chapter 18—Self-Check Quizzes** to prepare for the Chapter Test.

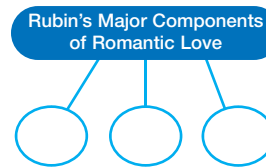
## Reviewing Vocabulary

Choose the letter of the correct term or concept below to complete the sentence.

- |                       |                            |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| a. social cognition   | g. attribution theory      |
| b. physical proximity | h. self-serving bias       |
| c. stimulation value  | i. nonverbal communication |
| d. utility value      | j. generational identity   |
| e. complementarity    |                            |
| f. stereotype         |                            |
- A friend who is able to give you his or her time and resources to help you achieve your goal has \_\_\_\_\_.
  - Waving at someone to get his or her attention is an example of \_\_\_\_\_.
  - A(n) \_\_\_\_\_ is an exaggerated set of assumptions about an identifiable group of people.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ refers to the distance from one another that people live or work.
  - The study of how people perceive, store, and retrieve information about social interactions is called \_\_\_\_\_.
  - Claiming personal responsibility for positive occurrences and blaming circumstances beyond our control for negative occurrences is called a(n) \_\_\_\_\_.
  - The tendency for members of different generations to think differently about things refers to the \_\_\_\_\_.
  - An analysis of how we interpret and understand other people's behavior is called \_\_\_\_\_.
  - A friend who wants to try new experiences has \_\_\_\_\_.
  - An attraction between opposite types of people is called \_\_\_\_\_.

## Recalling Facts

- What is the most important factor in determining the start of a friendship? Why is this factor important?
- In general, are you likely to choose as a friend a person who is similar to you or a person who complements your strengths and weaknesses?
- If you want people to think that you are smart, should you try to do your best on the first, second, or last test in a class? Why?
- Using a diagram similar to the one below, identify Rubin's three major components of romantic love.



- Identify three factors upon which marital happiness depends.

## Critical Thinking

- Evaluating Information** Think of people with whom you are friends. Which rewards do you get from these friendships?
- Analyzing Concepts** We may think that stereotyping does not influence us. Watch a television program about (a) a detective, (b) an African American family, (c) a white family, and (d) an independent woman. What traits does each character have? Are these stereotypes?
- Making Inferences** People sometimes are accused of saying one thing but meaning another. Do you think people's nonverbal communication sometimes conflicts with their verbal communication? Explain.
- Synthesizing Information** Pretend someone has just asked you, "How do I know if I'm in love?" How would you respond?
- Applying Information** How could understanding fundamental attribution error help you better explain the behavior of others?

## Psychology Projects

- 1. Interpersonal Attraction** Prepare a want ad in which you advertise for a friend. Include the main characteristics you look for in a friend in the advertisement.
- 2. Social Perception** In an essay, support or refute the following common-sense sayings with information you learned from the chapter:
  - “Birds of a feather flock together.”
  - “Opposites attract.”
  - “Familiarity breeds contempt.”
  - “Beauty is only skin deep.”
  - “Absence makes the heart grow fonder.”



## Technology Activity

Several sites on the Internet are designed to help parents and teenagers deal with conflicts. Find these Web sites and evaluate the suggestions they offer.



## Psychology Journal

Some claim that nonverbal communication shows true feelings better than verbal communication. Write an essay that argues both sides of the issue. Use standard grammar, spelling, sentence structure, and punctuation.

## Building Skills

**Interpreting a Chart** Ten thousand people from different countries in the world were surveyed about the characteristics they look for in a mate. Review the results in the chart below (1 is most important; 18 is least important), then answer the questions that follow.



**Practice and assess** key social studies skills with **Glencoe Skillbuilder Interactive Workbook CD-ROM, Level 2.**



See the **Skills Handbook**, page 628, for an explanation of interpreting charts.

	Rank Ordering of Desired Characteristics in a Mate					
	China		South Africa Zulu		United States	
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
Ambition and industriousness	10	5	8	7	11	6
Chastity (no prior sexual intercourse)	3	6	13	18	17	18
Dependable character	6	7	3	1	3	3
Desire for home and children	2	2	9	9	9	7
Education and intelligence	8	4	6	6	5	5
Emotional stability and maturity	5	1	1	2	2	2
Favorable social status or rating	14	13	17	14	14	14
Good cook and housekeeper	9	11	2	15	13	16
Good financial prospect	16	14	18	13	16	11
Good health	1	3	5	4	6	9
Good looks	11	15	14	16	7	13
Mutual attraction—love	4	8	10	5	1	1
Pleasing disposition	13	16	4	3	4	4
Refinement, neatness	7	10	7	10	10	12
Similar education	15	12	12	12	12	10
Similar political background	17	17	15	17	18	17
Similar religious background	18	18	16	11	15	15
Sociability	12	9	11	8	8	8

Source: Feldman, Robert. *Understanding Psychology*. Boston: McGraw-Hill College, 1999.

- In which country were males and females most in agreement about the kinds of characteristics they looked for in a mate?
- Which characteristic ranked the lowest among both males and females in each of the three countries included on the chart? How do you explain this?