



Functions of Emotions

Instructor Manual

Editors: Dr. Regan A. R. Gurung and Dr. Aaron Richmond

Contributing Authors: Dawn Albertson, Bethany Fleck, Travis Heath, Phil Kreniske, Linda Lockwood, Kristy Lyons, Aliza Panjwani, Janet Peters, Kasey Powers, Amanda Richmond, Anna Ropp, Jeremy Sawyer, Raechel Soicher, Sunda Friedman TeBockhorst, Courtney Rocheleau

This instructor's manual is designed to provide a helpful strategy for teaching the Functions of Emotions module, focusing on three areas: (1) the intrapersonal (within us), (2) the interpersonal (with others), and (3) the social and cultural functions of emotions (within society). It focuses on the importance of emotions and their effects on individuals, behavior, and social relationships, and their function within society. It provides the instructor with discussion questions, activities, and an accompanying PowerPoint presentation to help lead a successful class.

Learning Objectives

- **Relevant APA Learning Objectives (Version 2.0)**
 - Students will describe key concepts, principles and overarching themes in psychology (1.1).
 - Students will describe applications of psychology (1.3).
 - Students will build and enhance interpersonal relationships (3.2).
 - Students will adopt values that build community at local, national and global levels (3.3).
 - Students will exhibit effective presentation skills for different purposes (4.2).
 - Students will interact effectively with others (4.3).
 - Students will enhance teamwork capacity (5.4).
- **Content Specific Learning Objectives**

- Gain an appreciation of the importance of emotions in human life.
- Understand the functions and meanings of emotions in three areas of life: the intrapersonal, interpersonal, and social-cultural.
- Give examples of the roles and functions of emotions in each of the three areas described.

Abstract

Emotions play a crucial role in our lives because they have important functions. This module describes those functions, dividing the discussion into three areas: the intrapersonal, the interpersonal, and the social and cultural functions of emotions. The section on the intrapersonal functions of emotion describes the roles that emotions play within each of us individually; the section on the interpersonal functions of emotion describes the meanings of emotions to our relationships with others; and the section on the social and cultural functions of emotion describes the roles and meanings that emotions have to the maintenance and effective functioning of our societies and cultures at large. All in all we will see that emotions are a crucially important aspect of our psychological composition, having meaning and function to each of us individually, to our relationships with others in groups, and to our societies as a whole.

Class Design Recommendations

This module can be presented in one 90-minute class or in two shorter class periods (45 to 60 minutes). If it is taught in two class periods, we suggest stopping day one after the activity “Think à Pair à Share” on interpersonal functions of emotions. Please also refer to the Noba PowerPoint slides that accompany this outline.

Overview

- Introduction
 - Three functions of emotions
- Intrapersonal Functions:

- Prepare the body for action
- Influence thought
- Motivate future behaviors
- Interpersonal Functions:
 - Facilitate specific behaviors in perceivers
 - Signal the nature of interpersonal relationships
 - Provide incentives for desired social behavior
- Social and Cultural Functions:
 - Culture
 - Worldviews
 - Cultural display rules

Module Outline

Introduction: Emotions are a strong and important part of our lives. Why do we have emotions and why are they important? They help to inform us of who we are, help us understand our relationships with other people, and guide our behavior in social interactions.

- Three functions of Emotions
 1. Intrapersonal: refers to the role emotions play within each of us individually.
 2. Interpersonal: refers to the role emotions play between individuals within a group.
 3. Social and Cultural: refers to the role emotions play in the maintenance of social order within a society.

Intrapersonal Functions: The emotions we feel allow us to make quick decisions with minimal

thinking. Emotions...

- *Prepare* the body for action: They allow us to move to action without having to deeply process situations. The mechanisms activated by emotions include: subjective awareness, expressive behaviors, physiological reactions, action tendencies, and cognition.
- *Influence* thought: Emotions are the basis for our attitudes, values, and beliefs. They provide meaning for these systems. Emotions can also influence our thinking in helpful and unhelpful ways, facilitating or impeding concentration.
- *Motivate* future behaviors: We strive for good feeling emotions and avoid negative feeling emotions. In this way, emotions provide motivation for what we will do in the future.

Interpersonal Functions: Emotions and their expression (verbal and non-verbal) serve as signals to the people around us and, in doing so, influence them and our social interactions. Emotional expressions...

- *Facilitate* specific behaviors in perceivers: Universal social signals are conveyed through facial expressions of emotions. These signals influence how other people respond or react.
- *Signal* the nature of interpersonal relationships: facial expressions give insights into relationships that can predict long-term outcomes for those relationship.
- *Provide* incentives for desired social behavior: facial expressions are regulators of social interaction. They provide clues for how we want other people to behave.
 - Social referencing: individuals look to others to understand how to react in a given situation (for example, when babies are placed on the visual cliff).

Social and Cultural Functions of Emotion: Individuals are members of many groups, have numerous social roles, and are expected to behave in a multitude of ways, depending on various situations. Culturally moderated emotions help us engage in socially appropriate behaviors, as defined by our cultures, reducing the social complexity of our world and increasing social order.

- *Culture*: Culture coordinates and organizes our complex social world. It provides a system of meaning and information, is shared across generations, and allows people to meet basic needs of survival, pursue happiness, and derive meaning from life.
- *Worldviews*: worldviews include attitudes, values, beliefs, and norms as they are related to emotions. Our cultural background (conveyed through parenting and cultural products)

shapes our worldview about which emotions are ideal to have, to not have, and when to have them.

- *Cultural display rules*: Cultural display rules help people manage or modify their emotions. They are learned early in life and specify how to exhibit emotions in particular social circumstances.

Difficult Terms

Cultural Display Rules

Culture

Emotional Dialects

Interpersonal

Intrapersonal

Social Referencing

Universal Social Signals

Worldviews

Lecture Frameworks

Overview: Begin the class period with a warmup activity introducing students to facial expressions of emotions. Follow this with direct instruction on the three functions of emotions, with many discussion points. Two in-class activities are provided that may be useful for solidifying students understanding.

- **Warmup activity—Identifying Facial Expressions:** To warm the class up, try this fun and easy activity. Give student volunteers specific emotions and have the class attempt to identify what emotions are being expressed. Discussion will center around primary emotions and display rules.
- **Direct Instruction:**First, discuss why emotions are important and then present the smart graphic as a visual aid (showing the three functions of emotions: intrapersonal, interpersonal and, social and cultural. (Refer to the PowerPoint slides.)
- **Discussion:**Three discussion questions will help you lead the class through the role

emotions play in intrapersonal functions (preparing the body for action, influencing thought, and motivating future behaviors).

- **Activity—Theories of Emotion:** Although not in the text of the module, the theories of emotion are interesting and can be covered here with a relatively quick activity. In this activity, teams of students are each given one of the three theories of emotion: Cannon-Bard, James-Lange, or Schachter's Two-Factor Theory. The teams convey the meaning of the theory to the rest of the class by explaining an example of fear. The activity ends with a class discussion.
- **Direct Instruction:** Three slides in the PowerPoint cover this information. Explain how emotions facilitate specific behaviors in people, how they signal the nature of interpersonal relationships, and how they provide incentives for desired social behavior. (Refer to the PowerPoint slides.)
- **Activity—ThinkàPairàShare:** Use the two discussion questions and the directions on the PowerPoint slide to discuss the ideas just presented about interpersonal functions of emotions.
- **Direct Instruction:** Explain to students what culture is and how it organizes our complex social roles. Also, explain the meaning of worldview and cultural display rules. (Refer to the PowerPoint slides.)
- **Activity—Culturally-Based Emotions in Children's Books:** For this in-class activity, provide teams of students with a children's book. Have students analyze the book for culturally relevant information regarding the functions that emotions serve in society as well as display rules.
- **Wrap-up:** Complete the Recall, Summarize, Question, Connect, and Comment (RSQC2; Angelo & Cross, 1993, p.343) CAT as a wrap-up of the module (see the PowerPoint slides). In this CAT, students write short responses for each of the key words (Recall, Summarize, Question, Connect and Comment). Responses are collected and you are able to assess what major ideas stood out and what questions remain.
- **Conclusion:** Describe to students how emotions are an important part of our lives helping to inform us of who we are, to understand our relationships, and to guide our social behavior in culturally appropriate ways.

Activities & Demonstrations

Identifying Facial Expressions: To warm the class up, try this fun and easy activity. Give student volunteers specific emotions and have the class attempt to identify what emotions are being expressed. Discussion will center around primary emotions and display rules.

- Time: 10 minutes
- Materials: Pen and paper for students, flash cards with emotions written on them
- Directions:
 1. Write the following emotions on index cards with the corresponding numbers.
 1. Happiness
 2. Love
 3. Sadness
 4. Disappointment
 5. Anger
 6. Relief
 7. Fear
 8. Desire
 9. Surprise
 10. Pride
 11. Disgust
 2. Have 11 students volunteer to act out the emotions while the rest of the class guesses what emotion is being displayed. The actors are not to use words or their bodies, just their facial expressions.
 3. Have the class write down their answers on a blank piece of paper, using the numbers 1-11.
 4. Discuss the correct answers. Having the volunteers re-enact their facial expressions often gets a few laughs.
- For each emotion, how many people interpreted it correctly? Were some emotions easier to determine than others? Were some emotions easier to express than others?
- The odd-numbered emotions are primary emotions associated with universally

recognizable facial expressions, whereas the others are idiosyncratic and not universally recognizable. Discussion can focus on universal expressions, cultural display rules, and emotional dialect.

Theories of Emotion: Although not in the text of the module, the theories of emotion are interesting and can be covered here with a relatively quick activity. In this activity teams of students are given one of the three theories of emotion: Cannon-Bard, James-Lange, or Schachter's Two-Factor Theory. The teams need to convey the meaning of their assigned theory to the rest of the class.

- Time: 20 minutes
- Materials: Instructional prompt, textbooks or internet sources for research
- Directions:
 1. Divide the class into teams. If you have a small class, make three teams. If you have a larger class, make 6 or 9 teams. Each team is assigned one of the three theories of emotion: Cannon-Bard, James-Lange, or Schachter's Two-Factor Theory.
 2. Give each team the instructional prompt (on a PowerPoint slide or handout). *Prompt: You're driving your car and out of the corner of your eye you see something fall into the road! Your heart starts racing and you jump. Your head jerks to the side to determine what the object was. How does the _____ theory explain how you came to experience fear?*
 3. Students can look up their theory using textbooks or the internet. After discussing their findings and writing them down in their teams, each group explains their assigned theory to the class, acting out the scene and physically demonstrating how their theory explains the emotion of fear.
 4. Have each team demonstrate their theory. If there is more than one team assigned to each theory have them compete in a game of "rock, paper, and scissors" to decide who presents.
 5. Collect the team summaries of their theories at the end of the activity and discuss what they think about each theory. Which one resonates with them (see discussion point #3 below)?
- Instructor notes for each theory:
 - James-Lange Theory: the subjective experience of fear follows the physiological response. For example, your heart races, which makes you nervous about the seen object.

- Cannon-Bard Theory: emotions such as fear or happiness occur simultaneously with their physiological components. For example, we fear we are going to run something over which makes our heart race.
- Schachter's Two-Factor Theory: patterns of physical arousal and the cognitive labels we attach to them form the basis of our emotional experiences. For example, my heart reacts when I see the object fall into the road and I deduce that to be fear.

Culturally-Based Emotions in Children's Books: For this in-class activity, provide teams of students with a children's book. Have students analyze the book for ways emotions serve social functions in cultures *and* for display rules.

- Time: 30 minutes
- Materials: Children's books, handout (see Appendix A of the PowerPoint that accompanies this Instructor Manual), Internet access or developmental/cross cultural textbooks
- Directions:
 1. Break students into teams of 4 to 5 people. Assign each team a children's book. You can gather the books from the library or a personal collection. If possible, use books from various cultural backgrounds. Also, try to find books whose main characters have some emotional reactions, which is often typical of children's stories. The books should be short enough to read within 10 minutes of class time.
 2. Have teams read their book aloud within their group.
 3. Have teams complete the handout, analyzing the book for culturally relevant emotional information and clues about display rules. The team can use the Internet or textbooks to research cultural information (this is optional).
 4. Have teams share their responses with the class at large, depending on how much time is available. Maybe one group presents their whole book and handout, or each team reports on one question apiece.

Additional Activities

Greene, J. O., O'Hair, H. D., Cody, M. J., & Yen, C. (1985). Planning and control of behavior during

deception. *Human Communication Research*, 11, 335–364. doi:10.1111/j.1468-2958.1985.tb00051.x

- This activity has students observe nonverbal cues to try to detect deceptive behavior. Student volunteers lie in their answers to questions while others tell the truth. Some students are given hints about who is being deceptive and some are not.

Klineberg, O. (1937). Emotional expression in Chinese literature. *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 13, 517-520. doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/h0057105>

- This activity allows students to see firsthand how cultures have some emotional expressions that are very similar and some that are very different. It uses unique emotional expressions that were found in Chinese literature published in the 1930s. Students are asked to guess what emotion is being depicted.

Schallhorn, C., & Lunde, J., (1999). The facial feedback hypothesis: Are emotions really related to the faces we make? In B. Ludy, B. Nodine, R. Ernst, & C. Broeker. (Eds.), *Activities handbook for the teaching of psychology*, Vol. 4. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

- This activity allows students to test how the activation of facial muscles influences emotions (called the facial feedback hypothesis). In addition, the activities handbook has other emotion-related activity suggestions.

Angelo, T. A., & Cross, P. K. (1993). *Classroom assessment techniques: A handbook for college teachers*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

- CAT title: Recall, Summarize, Question, Connect and Comment (RSQC2).
- Location: Angelo and Cross (1993, p. 343).
- Description: The RSQC2 CAT will help students review what they have learned and integrate new knowledge with preexisting information from the course. Complete this in class by having the students write responses to each of the key words (Recall, Summarize, Question, Connect and Comment). Collect their responses and see what major ideas stood out to the class, what questions they have, and to gain immediate feedback from the lesson.

Discussion Points

1. Why do we have emotions and why are they important?

- The discussion here is aimed to get students warmed up by thinking about emotions and reflecting on the reading. The students might mention the importance of emotions in influencing their behavior and the behavior of others. They might also mention the cultural importance that emotions play.
2. When have you felt negative emotions so powerful that your behavior changed to avoid feeling them again? Was it in school, a relationship, or another situation?
 - Ask students for specific examples to guide this discussion. They might talk about feeling negatively after failing a test and changing their behavior to study more. They might also talk about a break-up with a significant other and how this affected their behavior or the behavior of the other person. It might be helpful to have your own example prepared here to help lead the discussion.
 3. Which of the three theories of emotion resonates with you? In other words, if you were the person driving the car, what theory do you think explains your fear?
 - The three theories of emotion include Cannon-Bard, James-Lange, and Schachter's Two-Factor Theory. Try to challenge the student's initial answers so they think critically about each theory. You might take an informal poll of the class preferences.

Outside Resources

Alberta, G. M., Rieckmann, T. R., & Rush, J. D. (2000). Issues and recommendations for teaching an ethnic/culture-based course. *Teaching of Psychology*, 27, 102-107. doi:10.1207/S15328023TOP2702_05
<http://top.sagepub.com/content/27/2/102.short>

CrashCourse (2014, August 4). Feeling all the feels: Crash course psychology #25. [Video file]. Retrieved from:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gAMbkjk6gnE>

Hughesm A. (2011). Exercises and demonstrations to promote student engagement in motivation and courses. In R. Miller, E. Balcetis, S. Burns, D. Daniel, B. Saville, & W. Woody (Eds.), *Promoting Student Engagement: Volume 2: Activities, Exercises and Demonstrations for Psychology Courses*. (pp. 79-82) Washington DC, Society for the Teaching of Psychology,

American Psychological Association.

<http://teachpsych.org/ebooks/pse2011/vol2/index.php>

Johnston, E., & Olson, L. (2015). The feeling brain: The biology and psychology of emotions.

New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company.

<http://books.wwnorton.com/books/The-Feeling-Brain/>

NPR News: Science Of Sadness And Joy: 'Inside Out' Gets Childhood Emotions Right

<http://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2015/06/13/413980258/science-of-sadness-and-joy-inside-out-gets-childhood-emotions-right>

Online Psychology Laboratory: Motivation and Emotion resources

<http://opl.apa.org/Resources.aspx#Motivation>

Web: See how well you can read other people's facial expressions of emotion

<http://www.humintell.com/free-demos/>

Evidence-Based Teaching

Grosch, J. W. (1992). Detecting deception: A classroom demonstration. *Teaching of Psychology*, 19, 166-168. doi:10.1207/s15328023top1903_10

- This article describes an activity in which students set up a Polygraph test to learn more about emotions and their physiological responses.

Deffenbacher, J. L. (1990) Demonstrating the influence of cognition on emotion and behavior. *Teaching of Psychology*, 17, 182-185. doi:10.1207/s15328023top1703_11

- In this exercise students visualize themselves at the end of an important relationship. They are exposed to three cognitive scenarios, making them feel either depressed, angry, or sad. The nature and extent of their emotional reactions and behavioral tendencies are discussed.

Links to ToPIX Materials

Activities, Demonstrations, or Handouts:

<http://topix.teachpsych.org/w/page/19980989/Emotion%20in%20the%20Classroom>

Books and Films

<http://topix.teachpsych.org/w/page/39235435/Motivation-Emotion>

In the News

<http://topix.teachpsych.org/w/page/24993705/Emotion%20in%20the%20News>

Videos/Audio

<http://topix.teachpsych.org/w/page/19980989/Emotion%20in%20the%20Classroom>

Teaching Topics

Teaching The Most Important Course

https://nobaproject.com/documents/1_Teaching_The_Most_Important_Course.pdf

Content Coverage

https://nobaproject.com/documents/2_Content_Coverage.pdf

Motivating Students

https://nobaproject.com/documents/3_Motivating_Students_Tips.pdf

Engaging Large Classes

https://nobaproject.com/documents/4_Engaging_Large_Classes.pdf

Assessment Learning

https://nobaproject.com/documents/5_Assessment_Learning.pdf

Teaching Biological Psychology

https://nobaproject.com/documents/6_Teaching_Bio_Psych.pdf

PowerPoint Presentation

This module has an associated PowerPoint presentation. Download it at https://nobaproject.com//images/shared/supplement_editions/000/000/299/Functions%20of%20Emotions.ppt?1505774296.

About Noba

The Diener Education Fund (DEF) is a non-profit organization founded with the mission of re-inventing higher education to serve the changing needs of students and professors. The initial focus of the DEF is on making information, especially of the type found in textbooks, widely available to people of all backgrounds. This mission is embodied in the Noba project.

Noba is an open and free online platform that provides high-quality, flexibly structured textbooks and educational materials. The goals of Noba are three-fold:

- To reduce financial burden on students by providing access to free educational content
- To provide instructors with a platform to customize educational content to better suit their curriculum
- To present material written by a collection of experts and authorities in the field

The Diener Education Fund is co-founded by Drs. Ed and Carol Diener. Ed is the Joseph Smiley Distinguished Professor of Psychology (Emeritus) at the University of Illinois. Carol Diener is the former director of the Mental Health Worker and the Juvenile Justice Programs at the University of Illinois. Both Ed and Carol are award-winning university teachers.

Acknowledgements

The Diener Education Fund would like to acknowledge the following individuals and companies for their contribution to the Noba Project: The staff of Positive Acorn, including Robert Biswas-Diener as managing editor and Peter Lindberg as Project Manager; The Other Firm for user experience design and web development; Sockeye Creative for their work on brand and identity development; Arthur Mount for illustrations; Chad Hurst for photography; EEI Communications for manuscript proofreading; Marissa Diener, Shigehiro Oishi, Daniel Simons, Robert Levine, Lorin Lachs and Thomas Sander for their feedback and suggestions in the early stages of the project.

Copyright

R. Biswas-Diener & E. Diener (Eds), Noba Textbook Series: Psychology. Champaign, IL: DEF Publishers. Retrieved from <http://noba.to/5umjrb28>



Copyright © 2020 by Diener Education Fund. This material is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License. To view a copy of this license, visit https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/deed.en_US.

The Internet addresses listed in the text were accurate at the time of publication. The inclusion of a Website does not indicate an endorsement by the authors or the Diener Education Fund, and the Diener Education Fund does not guarantee the accuracy of the information presented at these sites.

Contact Information:

Noba Project
www.nobaproject.com
info@nobaproject.com