

Psychology of Emotions

- Reason and emotion (cognition and affect) are two distinct psychological categories that influence social action.

- Joy, sorrow, hope, love, excitement, anger, hate, shame, and many such feelings are experienced in the course of the day by all of us.

- Emotions are a complex pattern of arousal, subjective feeling, and cognitive interpretation.
- Emotions, as we experience them, move us internally, and this process involves physiological as well as psychological reactions.

- Emotions vary in their intensity (high, low) and quality (happiness, sadness, fear).
- Subjective factors and situational contexts influence the experience of emotions. These factors are gender, personality, and psychopathology of certain kinds.

- Facial expression is the most common channel of emotional communication.
- The amount and kind of information conveyed by the face is easy to comprehend as the face is exposed to the full view of others.
- Facial expressions can convey the intensity as well as the pleasantness or unpleasantness of the individual's emotional state.

- Theatre and drama provide an excellent opportunity to understand the impact of body movements in communicating emotions. The roles of gestures and proximal behaviours are also significant.
- Indian classical dances like Bharatanatyam, Odissi, Kuchipudi, Kathak and others, emotions are expressed with the help of movements of eyes, legs, and fingers. The dancers are trained rigorously in the grammar of body movement and non-verbal communication to express joy, sorrow, love, anger, and various other forms of emotional states.

Managing Emotions

- Enhanced self-awareness : Be aware of one's own emotions and feelings. Try to gain insight into the 'how' and 'why' of feelings.
- Appraise the situation objectively : It has been proposed that emotion is preceded by evaluation of the event. If the event is experienced as disturbing, one's sympathetic nervous system is activated.
- Do some self-monitoring : This involves constant or periodic evaluation of one's past accomplishments, emotional and physical states, real and vicarious experiences.

Managing Emotions contd.

- Perceptual reorganisation and cognitive restructuring : Try viewing the events differently and visualise the other side of the coin.
- Restructure one's thoughts to enhance positive and reassuring feelings and eliminate negative thoughts.
- Be creative : Find and develop an interest or a hobby. Engage in an activity that interests and amuses one.
- Develop and nurture good relationships : Choose one's friends carefully. In the company of happy and cheerful friends one will feel better in general.

- Have empathy : Try understanding other's feelings too. Make one's relationships meaningful and valuable. Seek as well as provide support mutually.
- Participate in community service : Help self by helping others. By doing community service (for example, helping an intellectually challenged child learn an adaptive skill), one will gain important insights about one's own difficulties.