

1. Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse - Additional Details

Some of you had asked for additional information on this interesting study. I hope you find the following below useful:

Details of the Study (Gottman & Levenson, 2000)

Who: 79 married heterosexual couples

What: Based on a brief 15-minute conflict resolution topic conversation, presence of these features (i.e. 4 features discussed in class - contempt, stonewalling, defensiveness, criticism) predicted divorce rates across a 14-year longitudinal period at over 90% accuracy

Finding:

Source Article:

<http://relationshipinstitute.com.au/files/resources/A-Two-Factor-Model-for-Predicting-When-a-Couple-Will-Divorce-Exploratory-Analyses-Using-14-Year-Longitudinal-Data1.pdf>

YouTube Video

Gottman discusses his research:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CbJPaQY_1dc

2. Summary of Communal vs. Exchange Relationships

Definitions

-Communal: special responsibility is assumed for a partner. Benefits are given, non-contingently, to support a partner's welfare

-Exchange: no special responsibility for partner needs. Benefits are given with the expectation of receiving benefits as repayment. "Book-keeping" metaphor used in class.

Key Findings

-People express more emotion (i.e., and suppress less emotion) in relationships which have a greater perceived communal strength. This was demonstrated both in individuals (study 1 discussed in class) and married couples (study 2 discussed in class). Additional details from Margaret Clark who pioneered these findings can be viewed in an Expert Interview

here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iBxpOQX2WxM&index=30&list=PLh9mgdi4rNew731mjlZn43G_Y5otqKzJA

3. Key Points from David DeSteno "Virtual Guest Lecture"

1. What is the prosocial function of gratitude?

-Proposition: Gratitude leads to greater prosocial behaviors, by mediating social or economic reciprocity. Specifically gratitude functions to help overcome self-interest and engage in effortful exchanges that will foster relationships (i.e., accept short-term costs for longer-term gains in social capital).

-Experimental Evidence: participant performs tedious computer task, computer dies mid-way through, confederate comes in and fixes computer (i.e., gratitude induction), then participant and confederate play economic game. gratitude induction theorized to lead to greater long-term goal striving in this economic game (i.e., more communal outcome to share rather than short-term gain of taking all for oneself). Participants induced to feel gratitude are more likely to share (i.e., give more tokens to confederate).

2. What is the social function of compassion?

-Proposition: How do we decide who to help, since we cannot help everyone? Compassion helps us answer this question. One way we go about deciding to help someone is by a simple analysis: Do we see ourselves in them? He suggests one way compassion works is through a similarity metric. The more similar someone is to me the more compassion I will feel for them. How much compassion you feel for someone is a function of how similar they are to you. Thus, the more similar we see someone to ourselves, the more likely we are to feel compassion for them. And given compassion increases prosocial behavior, we are in turn more likely to help them.

-Experimental Evidence: Study of motor synchrony (tapping fingers). Participants were assigned to either tap in unison (i.e., more similar) with a partner or tap out of sync (i.e., less similar). Next they saw their partner get cheated on a task, and they measured whether they decided to help their partner or not. Participants in the synchronized tapping condition (i.e., more similar) were more likely to experience compassion for and help their partner. This effect was independent of how much they liked the partner.

3. What do social emotions tell us about our moral character?

-Moral character is flexible, social emotions (like gratitude and compassion) may help push us closer towards virtuous behavior and cement social bonds.

Note: If you missed this special guest lecture, you can come to office hours where we can play it for you to watch again.