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Elphinstone College



synapse
...where minds meet



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IN CONVERSATION WITH-
MANYA KRISHNA
RCI CERTIFIED CLINICAL
PSYCHOLOGIST



HBSU

Dr. Homi Bhabha State University

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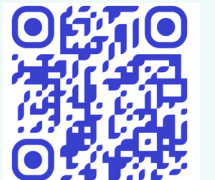


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Foreword



Prof. Vilas Padhye
Head, Department of Psychology

That first time in life! The speech, the interview, the driving test, the date – and the riot of emotions. Those very moments of nervousness, anticipation, fear, hope, and ecstasy are the ones that make us feel more alive than ever. While we humans have infested our lives with gadgets and technology, what drive our behaviour are our emotional urges and impulses. Even as we are manipulated by tech giants and remain hooked to our cellphones and social media thanks to those shots of dopamine, it all filters down to emotions.

Emotions are the defining feature of the human race. From large civilizations to sub-cultures within, and even smaller in/out-groups, there is that invisible hand of emotions that guides group dynamics. Look around and you'll get the 'feel' – *emotional* intelligence in the workplace, *sentiments* driving stock markets, *panic* selling by investors, *hatred* fueling wars, *trolling* on social media, public *outrage* over incidents, *insecurity* among parents, *gut feelings* among clinicians, *burnouts* in students, and yes, those *toxic* relationships!

When Carl Jung said, "Emotion is the chief source of all becoming conscious," he acknowledged the fact that it is emotions that fuel our passions, struggles, dreams, and achievements. For we would cease to be humans without an emotional awareness of our actions. It is ironical that on the one hand we are in the pursuit of bringing machine-like efficiency in our lives, and on the other we are training machines to learn and mimic human emotions. No wonder, phones are getting smarter, and people are becoming dumber.



Concept Note

As we present to you the third edition of Psynapse, we delve into a theme that touches the very core of human experience — Emotions. Psynapse, the official magazine of the Department of Psychology, Elphinstone College, continues its commitment to fostering critical, concise, and credible discussions, while offering a platform where writers can explore ideas beyond the confines of the classroom.

In this edition, we turn our attention to the fascinating world of emotions — their origins, theories, expressions, and their role in shaping human connection.

The study of emotions occupies a vital space within psychology. From the biological underpinnings rooted in the brain's structures and neurotransmitters to the theoretical frameworks that attempt to explain their emergence, emotions are deeply embedded in our understanding of the human psyche. Our writers explore concepts such as the neuroscience behind love, stressing upon the anatomical understanding of the complex emotion of love.

Beyond the scientific study, emotions find profound expression in art, literature, cinema, and popular culture. This edition examines how K-dramas like *Our Blues* skillfully depict complex emotional landscapes, portraying grief, joy, loneliness, and healing with rare authenticity. We also engage with literary explorations of emotions, tracing how writers have given voice to inner emotional worlds across cultures and periods. Additionally, we explore *Inside Out 2*, the much-anticipated sequel that once again brings emotions to life as distinct characters, offering a powerful visualization of the intricate interplay between different emotional states and the evolving self.

Understanding and expressing emotions are crucial aspects of human interaction. Emotions shape the ways in which we perceive ourselves and others, impacting empathy, communication, and relationships. However, for some individuals, conditions like Alexithymia — constituting difficulty in identifying and describing emotions — can pose significant challenges, highlighting the need for emotional literacy in both personal and professional domains.

For budding psychologists, an awareness and understanding of one's own emotional world are not just helpful but essential. The ability to recognize, regulate, and empathize with emotions lays the foundation for effective therapeutic relationships, critical inquiry, and self-growth. Thus, emotional awareness is not merely a subject of study, but a skill to be honed and nurtured.

Dear reader, as you journey through this edition, we invite you to reflect on your own emotional landscapes, engage critically with the ideas presented, and consider the profound role that emotions play — not only in individual lives but in the collective human experience. Through this dialogue, we hope to continue co-creating a space of meaningful connection and insight.

By Team Editorial

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THE MIND MATTERS

Ms. Manya Krishna in conversation with Shreya Tare



Manya Krishna

Manya Krishna is a Clinical Psychologist registered with the Rehabilitation Council of India, bringing over six years of experience to her practice. A Gold Medalist from the National Forensic Sciences University, she completed her M.Phil. in Clinical Psychology in 2022, demonstrating academic excellence and a commitment to mental health care.

Currently, Manya serves as a Visiting Professor at the University of Mumbai, where she teaches psychotherapy for clinical disorders to postgraduate students, integrating theoretical knowledge with practical applications. In her clinical practice, she holds positions as a Senior Clinical Psychologist at Evergro and as a Consultant Clinical Psychologist at DocVita, providing therapy for a range of clinical and non-clinical concerns.

Manya's therapeutic approach is person-centered, aiming to create a safe and non-judgmental space for clients to explore and reshape their narratives. She is trained in various therapeutic modalities, including Narrative Therapy, Mindfulness-Based Therapy, Somatic Experiencing, Schema-Focused Therapy, and Cognitive Behavioral Therapy. Her expertise encompasses working with individuals facing anxiety, depression, trauma, eating disorders, relationship issues, and existential concerns.

“What inspired you to pursue your chosen field of study, and how did your interests evolve over time? Can you walk us through it?”

Once I started studying psychology, I realized I genuinely enjoyed it. It felt natural, and I began doing well without forcing myself. The practicals in 11th and 12th, especially going to special schools for case studies, really left an impact. I loved those experiences, and that solidified my decision to pursue psychology for my bachelor's.

With every semester in my undergrad, my interest kept growing. That passion pushed me toward a master's, and during that time, I started interning in a hospital setting. That's when the clinical side of psychology really drew me in, especially understanding the etiology of disorders, treatment plans, and how everything connects. I found it incredibly intriguing.

As I genuinely loved being in a classroom, learning and discussing, pursuing an MPhil felt like the right next step. It was a phenomenal experience. Working in hospitals during that time reinforced my passion, and that's when I knew for sure that I wanted to be in this field long-term. It wasn't about chasing a specific title or identity, but more about the joy and curiosity the field brought me.

Being a sensitive person has helped. It made me introspective as well as more in tune with others. Like many people who enter this field, I initially thought I'd figure myself out through psychology. But over time, I learned that while we can't exactly “solve” ourselves, the journey of understanding is what makes this field so powerful. It is a field where I have also got to learn so much from the stories of others, from my clients and everyday I feel inspired hearing the stories and hold them close to me.

And now, along with practicing, I love discussing, teaching, and sharing what I've learned. It all just fits



“In the therapy space, how have you observed emotions playing their role? And how did you make the space for them?”

So, I think in the therapy space, uh, emotions play such a central role. All the therapy conversations are situated around addressing emotions: firstly, helping someone identify what they're feeling, eventually labeling them. Initially, in the sessions, we also sometimes use an exercise where we present them with a feeling wheel, because our emotional vocabulary, you know, is so poor in general, right? There are just a few basic emotions that we vocalize; others we don't. So, around identifying, labeling, and then working with those emotions, creating more room for those emotions, seeing how those emotions impact our behaviors.

I think the classic questions, right? Like, how did that make you feel? Because when clients are narrating, often they narrate the incident without what emotions they felt. So, bringing them back to that emotion. Helping them understand the connection of the emotion to also how their body felt holding that emotion. Like the connection between emotion, body, and thoughts. Because sometimes we see that people do speak their thoughts. But the emotions, which are there, like, you know, that day you wouldn't believe, like, *“my friend didn't invite me to her engagement.”* The thoughts or the incidents are often put out, but what did you exactly feel? Did you feel betrayed? Did you feel hurt? Did you feel sad? Because every experience another person will interpret it differently. They'll feel something different and then stay with that emotion, holding space for that emotion, exploring the nuances of that emotion, and working through it as well.

“In your view, how are emotional experiences and expressions shaped by the Indian sociocultural landscape?”

I think, in general, there is a noticeable avoidance of certain emotions—especially those labelled as negative. Often, as therapists, we're asked, *“Oh, you listen to such negative emotions all day, don't you be-*

come negative yourself?” That question, I feel, comes from a deep-seated fear of negativity.

Then comes the guilt associated with feeling or expressing so-called “negative” emotions like sadness, despair, or jealousy. These are very normal emotions—people do feel them—but once they're labeled as negative, they're no longer spoken about openly. Instead, they get internalized and avoided.

As a result, a person might start thinking, *“There must be something wrong with me because I feel jealous,”* or *“I feel despair and emptiness, and that must mean there's something wrong with me.”* This avoidance turns into an isolating experience, as if the emotion is some kind of contagious disease.

There's this belief that if you talk about negativity, you'll become negative—and if you hear negativity, you'll absorb it. But that's not how it works. Talking about emotions helps you release them. It builds connection. It helps you make sense of what you're going through.

So yes, there is a strong tendency to avoid talking about emotions that are perceived as negative. There's also this idea of *“just talk about happy things”*, don't spoil the family environment, don't ruin the vibe of the group. Just stay happy.

But, I think this stems from the lack of comfort or emotional safety built around discussing the full spectrum of feelings. It's not normalized to feel everything. Many clients tell me, *“I feel like a terrible person because I felt jealous,”* and I remind them, *“Jealousy is a human emotion—it can be felt.”*

Even in simply experiencing emotions, people often feel shame. And when it comes to expressing those emotions, it can feel like they're being a burden to others. We, as a culture, experience certain emotions that may not be as frequently experienced—or at least, not in the same way—by people in the Western context.

For example, emotions like guilt and shame. In fact, there are different words in Hindi and Urdu that describe these feelings. For shame, we have *sharm* and *lajja* in Hindi and *haya* in Urdu,—each with its own nuance.

Guilt, too, is experienced quite deeply, often influenced by the structure of our family systems.



There's often a lot of misgivings, like, "*Will you not do this also? I expected you to do this.*" These kinds of statements are common, and as a result, people tend to absorb a great deal of guilt and shame, which can be very detrimental to mental health. It makes the person feel like they are inherently wrong.

When someone is experiencing shame, it often comes with a feeling that they need to hide something. It can make a person feel invisible, as though they've done something terribly wrong and now need to retreat. Together they can create a powerful, isolating experience.

Another layer to this is that many people may not have the emotional vocabulary to name or understand what they're feeling, because we were never really taught how to.

However, things are beginning to change, and that brings hope for the upcoming generations. For instance, in schools now, children are being taught emotion-related vocabulary, something we never learned as kids. There's now a shift where people can say, "*I didn't feel safe,*" "*I didn't feel seen,*" or "*I didn't feel appreciated.*"

Earlier, it was just limited to basic emotions like happy, sad, angry, or love—and even love wasn't something commonly expressed in many Indian families. It wasn't typical to say "I love you" or to openly appreciate each other. But that's beginning to shift.

People are realizing the importance of voicing their emotions and developing vocabulary for them. Previously, when emotions weren't expressed, they would often manifest in other ways, like anger or physical (somatic) symptoms. If someone couldn't voice their sadness, it might turn into physical pain. If they couldn't express anxiety, it might show up as chest pain.

"Do you think there is a gendered lens through which emotional expression is shaped in the Indian context?"

Definitely, men are not sanctioned by society to express emotional vulnerabilities or, "negative" emotions like sadness and despair. They don't talk about these emotions as often in their friend circles, right?

Whereas females, they might. With their girlfriends, they might share; with their sisters, they might share these negative emotions, which becomes such a cathartic experience. But for men, sometimes society doesn't even warrant them the space to share.

And it takes a lot to actually find that kind of community for yourself—where you're able to share and feel that sense of safety as well.

Men sometimes might resort to other means, like anger. It is a result of something that has been happening with them for such a long time, and they don't know how else to express it. I also feel patriarchy has sanctioned them this unspoken permission to go ahead and let it out that way.

Whereas for a woman, anger is also an emotion, right? But it's more like, "*Why would a woman get angry?*" Because from the very beginning, they've been given the messaging: Don't be so loud, don't overreact, be demure.

As a result, a woman's anger is also not received well in society. Right? There's still that idea of, "*Papa ghar mein gussa hote hain. Mummy nahi.*"

There's a silencing of the self in women. A silencing of certain emotions in women which is detrimental to their emotional well being.

"As a clinical psychologist, how do you approach emotional dysregulation when working with individuals experiencing psychological disorders?"

I think when working with individuals with disorders, it's important to remember that every disorder is different. For example, someone with depression will struggle with sadness, someone with GAD will experience anxiety, and someone with BPD may feel intense emotions in general—intense love or intense hate, intense joy or intense despair.

So, emotional regulation becomes very important, because across all of these different disorders, people are struggling with their emotions.

First of all, the approach becomes very disorder-specific. The way we deal with sadness in depression is different from how we regulate mood in someone with BPD. It varies with respect to the disorder.



Based on the diagnosis, we sit with the emotion that the person is experiencing, and we try to understand the context in which it is being experienced. Sometimes we involve the family as well, especially in cases where there are expressed emotions. For example, when families express intense emotions like hostility or criticism, that can interfere with the person's healing process.

Based on the diagnosis, we work through contextualizing and understanding what are the triggers of this emotion? From there, we move toward coping—what coping can be done? What emotional regulation tools can we use?

There are a variety of tools available, ranging from mindfulness of emotions to somatic practices to techniques like opposite action from DBT. Somewhere or the other, we tailor it based on the diagnosis. We also aim to primarily create enough emotional safety for the client to be able to feel their emotions without getting hyper or hypo-aroused. We explore ways in which emotional regulation can be practiced not just through regulation techniques, but also by increasing their distress tolerance, expanding their window of tolerance.

So that, in turn, they are able to manage themselves while experiencing those emotions—and they don't get extremely distracted or overwhelmed by them.

"How have you seen families impact the way clients experience and process difficult emotions in your practice?"

Family plays a pivotal role in this because the family environment, if it sanctions a person to talk about their emotions becomes a big step in itself. Does the family allow a person to express their vulnerabilities? Does the family create an environment where people can talk about difficult things and it's considered normal? Where it's not seen as a weakness? Because a lot of the time, emotional expression is equated with weakness.

So, maybe normalization of even talking about emotions is important, so that emotions don't get internalized. It's okay to talk about these emotions. And if you're talking about them, then you're not internalizing as you have a safe space to vent.

Society and other groups also play a role along with family. But because we're talking about family here—and also expressed emotions, like I said, if expressed emotions in the family, like hostility, criticism, or over-involvement, are high, then the prognosis and the healing of the person are impacted.

If they receive support and warmth, that contributes to healing. If they receive appreciation and acknowledgement of their journey—because a lot of times, mental illness is something you can't see on the outside, and the person is just struggling, they're often given messaging like, *"At least do some work,"* or *"Start yoga or the gym, you'll be fine."*

If their experience is not acknowledged and validated, that adds to their suffering. So the family providing support, warmth, recognizing and validating what they're going through, acknowledging it, becomes very helpful.

"As you are also a narrative therapy practitioner, how does it look at emotions and their expression?"

So, narrative work looks at emotion in a way where the identity of the person sometimes gets very fused with the emotion itself. Like, "Oh, I am depressed," "I am anxious." So, mostly, we start by externalizing this emotion, where a person is able to see themselves and the emotion differently. I tell them, that, *"okay, you are not depressed—you are experiencing depression."*

And that brings about a phenomenal shift, when they're able to see themselves and the emotion separately.

"How can we create a safe and supportive environment for the people around us and those we love, to express and process their emotions freely?"

I think holding space for our loved ones to express emotions: Firstly, conversations, being open to talk, being open to listen, truly listen, not just for the sake of passing judgment or giving a solution, but actually being curious about their experience. People like to be heard in ways where the other person is curious about their experience, where they don't feel judged, where they don't feel like a solution will be thrown at them, .



but actually that the other person is wanting to understand their lived experience and the place they are coming from. I think, normalizing conversations around difficult emotions, taking the leap of faith and talking about difficult emotions with people who you feel safe with is where one can start.

Checking in with people, when we feel like there are changes in behavior we're observing. That means a lot. And of course, not with pressure, that, "Okay, I'm here to talk about it whenever you are ready."

All of these small things. And I think these days a lot of nice literature and movies have come around emotions as well, like *Inside Out*, like how everyone should watch it, right? It also normalizes that. We all experience different emotions and it's normal. How conversations need to happen around emotions and without throwing like a solution to the other person, to our loved ones.

And ourselves also, you know, because we need to practice what we preach.

“What role do you think emotions play in forming the quality and intimacy in a romantic relationship?”

Emotions play a very big role in determining the strength of a romantic relationship because emotional safety is so important in any dynamic, more so in romantic relationships, which involve a lot of emotional intimacy.

A relationship can only foster if both partners are able to share their vulnerable sides as well. Otherwise, it may lead to a sense of disconnect, where one or both partners are not able to be vulnerable because they don't feel emotionally safe.

So, being able to express and manage emotions in relationships becomes very important, because with vulnerability, many emotions can come out.

The whole idea of emotional regulation, how to manage emotions there—is key. Love involves passion, and people may become emotionally reactive when they can't manage such an intense emotion.

So, how to manage emotions, express vulnerabilities, and foster emotional safety, these matter a lot when we look at the success, stability, and quality of a

relationship. It fosters intimacy when people are able to be raw, open, and vulnerable with each other.



Courtesy - Pinterest

The Emotional Abyss: Existentialism and the Human Experience

Existentialist thinking suggests that humans are uniquely free, bearing the responsibility of imbuing meaning into their life. This freedom is also present in the domain of feelings, where people need to face and take responsibility for their emotional life. From an existentialist perspective, emotions are not merely automatic reactions we have to some external event. They are, instead, an innate part of the human condition and something that we must grapple with.

In charging zealously with emotional authenticity, existentialists oriented self to embrace the feelings which are real and true to them instead of using denial mechanisms. Emotional authenticity is considered crucial for a person to navigate life meaningfully. Through emotional ownership and taking responsibility for feelings, one is able to construct personal values and meaning, not imposed or overridden by others or societal standards.

It is important to note that the ability to “paint” one’s emotional experience poses a disturbing dilemma. Existentialist’s understand deeply that life’s uncertainty and vagueness can stir up anxiety, tension, and even panic. In extreme cases, however, it is faced through the lens of these emotions that individuals must accept the fact that they create meaning through the choices they make. This enables people to become more deliberate.



lets catch-up!

What all happened during the first quarter of 2025?

Art of Assessment 2.0

Art of Assessment, 2025, was a memorable and educative exhibition for psychometric tests, from aptitude to personality tests and everything in between. Along with that, the library was also kept open for visitors to skim through the collection. Entertaining over 270+ psychology enthusiasts, made the students see how they themselves understood the tests through teaching.



ROR Workshop



This Rorschach Inkblot Test Workshop was an informative and exploratory session, held for the Masters' students, shed light upon the uniqueness of the test, including its demand of skillful administration and one of a kind interpretation method used. It was held to strengthen their foundation, before beginning their summer internships.



Educational Trip to Matheran



This field trip to Matheran served as an educational getaway from the monotonous classrooms to the serene hills. All the students got a chance to attend a Nature-based Therapy Approach session with Ms. Mukta Joshi, where she engaged them in an insightful discussion, showing how being in the nature together can help them get closer to themselves and their peers. Students were involved in symbolic activities to portray the power nature holds with mental wellbeing. The entire trip was full of sports and fun games, good food and good company.



Reflections on Identity Lecture

The lecture concentrated on how identity is always transitioning, with our emotions, surroundings and experiences and how we as humans should deal with it. The lecture talks in depth about gender, sexuality, the interlink between both and the importance of affirmative counseling. It was anchored by Ms. Kajol Bangera, who dwelled into QACP, Queer Affirmative Counseling Practices, and how as budding psychologists, students can create and empower more inclusive spaces for their clients.



Clinical Note-Taking Workshop

Lead by Dr Sheetal Bidkar, the workshop for clinical note-taking for future clinicians was facilitated. The main focus was on clinical assessments and the corresponding note-making techniques involved in easing the process. The workshop included aspects of psychological assessment tools the numerous testing methods used in the subject. Concepts of Mental State Examination (MSE) and the skills required to acquire a comprehensive case history of the client.

SPSS Workshop

The workshop was facilitated by Dr. Vilas Padhye, the HoD, focusing upon the significance of statistics in Psychology. Statistic tools like ANOVA and Students t-test were stressed upon, teaching the students the procedures to carry out the corresponding tests based upon the data provided. It was extremely informative and crucial, creating a skill. Along with this, the theory behind all of the functions were explained, making it easier to use them answering all the questions- how, when, why.



Mindshift: The Basics of Cognitive-Behavioural Therapy Workshop

It was facilitated by Ms. Irawati Joglekar, a Clinical Psychologist, Therapist and Educator, specializing in REBT, Integral Somatic Psychology (ISP), Internal Family Systems (IFS), and Polyvagal Theory. Spotlight was shed on crucial and various types of cognitive therapies, and the rationale that supports these cognitive therapy styles. Besides the reasoning, the actual functioning and procedur was focused on. All the questions- How? When? Why? What? were answered regarding CBT.

School Outreach

Many of our students volunteered to reach out too various schools, to engage kids in informative and fun discussions regarding multiple topics about self and society. Engaging them in drawing activities, educating them about the wheel of emotions, facilitating a better understanding of self.



Farewell

As a parting celebration to the batch of 2025, all the juniors worked together to organize a fun, emotional and nostalgic event. Various subject-testing games were planned, bringing in a healthy competition between classmates for one last time. All the professors were made to present awards to the nominees for specific categories, bringing in loads of curiosity and laughter.





THE RIPPLE EFFECT OF EMOTIONS

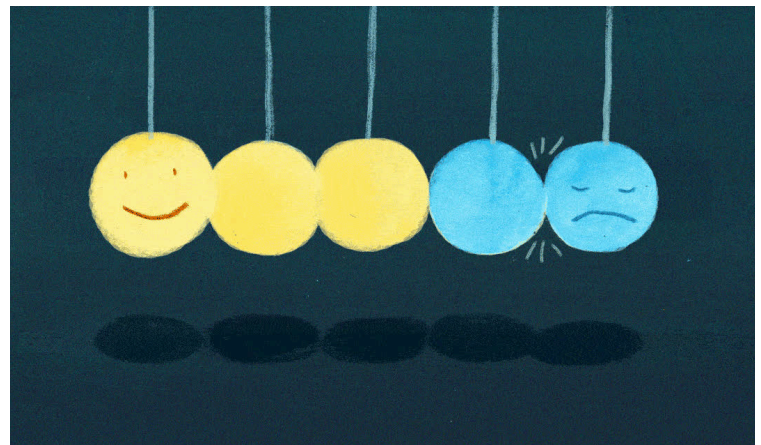
Understanding Emotional Contagion

By Dhriti Mishra, V.G. Vaze College of Arts, Science & Commerce

Imagine walking into a room buzzing with excitement. You feel a surge of energy almost instantly, your mood lifting without conscious effort. Conversely, stepping into a tense, somber environment might leave you feeling inexplicably drained. This phenomenon, where emotions spread from one person to another, often subconsciously, is known as emotional contagion. In an increasingly interconnected world, understanding how emotions transfer between individuals and groups has profound implications for mental health, workplace dynamics, and social interactions.

It stresses about the process of transferring one person's emotions and behaviors to another person. The inclination to mimic and harmonise the behaviour of another individual is involuntary. "Catching on" to others emotions is one of the most natural and primal acts, making us a part of the invisible interpersonal economy. Fascinating, isn't it? Looking at it primitively, contagion of emotions presumably looked like an alarm signal; quickly focussing attention on an imminent danger, like a stalking tiger, which now takes many forms such as alarming drop in sales, a coming wave of layoffs, or a new threat from a competitor.

One of the primary underlying mechanisms is automatic mimicry, i.e. synchronisation of expressions, vocalisations, postures, etc. which can be attributed to the effect of the mirror neurons, which seemingly have no creativity behind their names. When we perform an action and when we see someone else perform the same action, these neurons fire. Like when we see a friend smile, our mirror neurons fire as though we were smiling ourselves, subtly affecting multiple emotions.



Courtesy - Pinterest

It is a multilevel phenomenon that can arise through several reflections occurring at different levels of processing- sensory, motor, affective. Emotional contagion can be a result of multiple psychological and behavioral phenomena which can occur due to complex social stimulation (eg. a mother criticising her child) or an innate nonverbal stimulus (mother's negative facial expressions towards her child).



Presently, emotional contagion can be facilitated through digital media platforms, which hold the power to magnify either positive or negative feelings of every consumer. Hence, social media serves as a potent medium to substantial impact users' moods and by being aware of these factors, users can develop a more positive connection with their digital consumption. Collective emotions, commonly fear or optimism, may spread quickly among crowds, influencing their emotions and public conduct. In interpersonal spheres, partners in relationships frequently go through similar emotional experiences and at times “pick on” the feelings of the other person which thereby impacts their bond.

Emotional contagion tends to connect and even fuse us with others in ways that can cause “losing ourselves” to others and their emotional tone. This is synonymous with experiencing empathy wherein one needs to walk in another’s shoes, feel their predicament or situation, but also keep the autonomy needed to relate to and potentially help that other person.

Emotional weariness may result from highly empathic people's propensity to absorb bad feelings from others around them. This is especially true for occupations involving providing care, because ongoing exposure to upsetting feelings can lead to compassion fatigue and burnout. There are cases of therapists and other helping professionals feeling their clients’ distress so acutely that they become emotionally distressed themselves and can no longer function as helpers

In conclusion, emotional contagion has an immense impact not only on the individual but also on the society. Therefore, the ability to navigate and regulate this phenomenon is a skill worth mastering by understanding its mechanisms and effects which can cultivate a greater awareness and harness the potential to develop our emotional intelligence quotient.



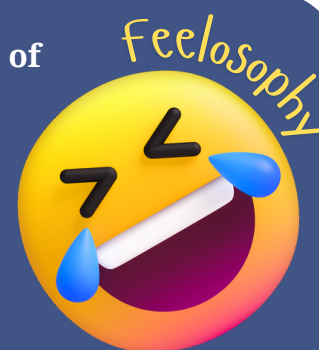
Emotions – nature’s own wi-fi

Even before the advent of the Internet and Bluetooth, mother nature installed in us a certain wi-fi software that works from a distance, acts like a firewall, limits information when the system is overloaded, matches the right wavelength, gets you connected, transfers information, collects data, and works at super speed to take decisions. Emotions indeed!

Imagine walking into a room with perfect strangers. One glance and you know you are uncomfortable and make a hasty retreat. On another occasion you meet someone at a party and get into a conversation right away. What attracts you, what repels you, what alerts you, what comforts you? The gestures, the body language, the gaze, the voice intonation, the facial expressions, the approach. Evolution has worked hard for millennia to get it all right. If only you care to lookup from the mobile screens into the real world. Try it, nourish it, curate it, and you'll never have ‘network’ issues.

Newton’s Third Law of Emotion?

For every male reaction, there is a woman’s overreaction





Animals & Emotions

As animals can't really speak to humans directly and communicate, how can we know what they feel or what they want to say? The way animals depict their emotions to us are predominantly behaviour and the easiest behavior to notice an animal's response to an event is the change in its actions. Humans commonly change their faces and body postures depending on whether they see an event as pleasant or not. By studying the look on your friends' faces, you can typically easily tell whether they are happy, afraid, mad, or sickened. Animals show these same facial expressions also! So-called grimace scales are measurement tools for pain in non-human animals based on changes in several "facial action units," such as the narrowing of eyes. These are developed for horses, pigs, sheep, rats, mice, and cats. For example, changes in the orientation of the ears, sclera visibility, and tension in the jaw muscles can indicate different levels of pain or fear in animals. It is important to remember that animals' facial expressions tend to look other than human ones—happiness is not necessarily expressed by a smile (exposing teeth tends to indicate stress in other primates), and sadness does not necessarily involve tears (pigs do not cry). In addition, prey animals (which include all livestock) generally avoid showing emotions that express pain or distress, since this might make them more vulnerable to predators.



Courtesy- Pinterest

As the picture above showcases, animals sort of have designated actions for each and every emotion they want to communicate. A wagging tail of a dog is a clear sign of joy. Another example of animal behaviour that is linked to emotions involves vocalisations, such as grunts, bleats, and moos, which can indicate stress in many species.

What do you call bears without ears?
B.



REVIEWING **Inside Out 2**

By Sanskruti Tiwari, Elphinstone College

Pixar animation has ways of making you fall into the state of nostalgia, relief, peace and different pockets of emotions possible as an audience. This movie, *Inside Out 2*, delivers a sincere narrative that combines an array of complex emotions with humor. It vividly portrays the emotional turbulence of puberty with introducing new emotions to the already existing prequel *Inside Out* (2015) which followed the management of Emotions Headquarters of Riley, a young kid who is adapting to the relocation of housing with her family, discussing the five basic emotions in the sequel. The most memorable part about this movie is how finely the characters are depicted as different emotions themselves, carrying the entire story.



Courtesy - pinterest

Looking at it, what you will see is a colorful movie that takes place in the grey matter. “*Inside Out 2*” offers the audience such a clever and empirical display of self-recognition and image. It’s full of joy, light on fun, but built on the mess of complicated emotions. This sequel returns to the Emotional Headquarters of 13-year old Riley’s mind and sheds spotlight on emotions that arise during puberty continuing to hold the five emotions; joy, sadness, anger, fear, and disgust. Riley is depicted as an innocent and simple girl, smart, kind, loves her family and is very fond of hockey. But, she is shown working through her sense of self and beliefs that teach her to make mistakes and ask for help.



The movie begins with her playing hockey where her emotions are organized cooperatively. The movie continues the tradition of the prequel where they explore the complexity of emotions that tag along with the new experiences.

The movie portrays an incident where a change in plans occurs, causing the uncertainty of high schools that she was made aware of on the way to camp. Before her emotions could control the panel, Anxiety - an orange ringleader with wide eyes and untamable hair. Anxiety is able to wriggle Riley out of a problem. With anxiety on the control panel, she shrinks herself to fit in with older hockey players. Though she finds acceptance on the hockey rink but hides her interests and drifts apart from her best friends. Anxiety takes over Joy and she becomes more selfish and not such a good person. Anxiety takes the center stage, not as a negative force to be suppressed, but as a crucial emotion that helps Riley navigate the challenges of adolescence, including social pressure and self-doubt. The characters are on a journey to return to Headquarters to rescue the core qualities of Riley that make her the character that we all have watched since the beginning. The prequel also depicts changes in neurons and memories by rising lines and marbles (maybe as in “losing marbles”). The animation is so detailed that

often the audience feel that solid colored cartoon characters are step-off the screen. The conversations between Joy and Anxiety are so captivating, them emotions quarrelling over what they think is better for Riley at the moment. Where Anxiety wants to prepare Riley for everything that could go wrong, and Joy has been trying to be optimistic, the answer or the way to react may be neither of those. Joy returns to Headquarters and reassures Anxiety that she doesn't need a change to secure a brighter future. Joy restores Riley's original sense of self, but the panic attack continues.

Credits/courtesy - pinterest



It dawns on Joy that if anxiety can't define who Riley is, then perhaps Joy can't define herself either. Joy decides to get rid of the former sense of self and allows a new one to merge which also reflects to the audience, teaching them (or reminding them) to let go of things or values that doesn't align with their present self and

A deep dive into *Our Blues*

By Santoshi Pati, MA-I, Elphinstone College

In a landscape often dominated by high-concept romances and dramatic plot twists, Netflix's 2022 K-drama "Our Blues" offers something refreshingly different—a thoughtful exploration of human emotions set against the backdrop of South Korea's picturesque Jeju Island.

"Our Blues" uses a broad concept to intertwine several stories that progressively come together. The show centres on a truck merchant Lee Dong-seok (Lee Byung-hun), who is dealing with the effects of being abandoned as a child; a depressed woman Min Sun-a (Shin Min-a); a ship captain Park Jung-joon (Kim Woo-bin), who is looking for a real connection; and a banker Choi Han-su (Cha Seung-won), who meets his first love, Jung Eun-hui (Lee Jung-eun), when he returns to his hometown. Additionally, we meet Bang Young-joo (Roh Yoon-seo), a teenager dealing with an unplanned pregnancy.

The way "Our Blues" depicts emotions is what makes it peculiar. The show finds great depth in ordinary moments and subtle relationships rather than depending on spectacular confrontations or heartfelt monologues.

Jeju Island is more than just a place for a getaway. The close-knit society demonstrates how personal issues invariably become publicized, providing both challenges and support systems for the people, while deftly externalising the characters' emotional states through the island's scenery.

The way that "Our Blues" explores the propagation of emotional trauma from parents to children is among its strongest facet. Young-joo's father's controlling behaviour is a result of his own challenging upbringing, while Dong-seok's abandonment concerns have a direct impact on his adult relationships. Characters in the play gradually come to understand these trends and occasionally defy them, as seen in the moment when Young-joo's father finally supports her decisions in ways that his own father never did for him.

"Our Blues" believes in the innate strength of real human experiences, in contrast to K-dramas that use fabricated barriers to control emotions. Characters don't suddenly get epiphanies or go through dramatic changes. Instead, individuals experience setbacks and gains that seem realistic as they make tiny efforts towards understanding others and themselves.

The drama's sensitive and nuanced treatment of challenging subjects, such as teenage pregnancy, sadness, and abandonment concerns, is neither overdone for dramatic effect or overly tidy.

Unlike many K-dramas, "Our Blues" provides viewers with a distinct emotional experience. It encourages us to find value in ordinary emotional experiences—reconciliations that are still in the process of being made, relationships that gradually mend, and communities that both challenge and support us—instead of the highs and lows of dramatic narrative twists or romantic gestures.



Korean dramas have long been celebrated for their ability to evoke deep emotions, drawing viewers in with heartfelt storytelling and powerful performances. However, this emotional engagement is often carefully crafted and, at times, manipulated to keep audiences hooked. Many K-dramas use storytelling techniques designed to toy with emotions—whether through heartbreaking love stories, shocking betrayals, or nostalgic setups—creating an emotional dependency that makes it hard to stop watching. The emotional manipulation in K-dramas is not accidental—it is deeply rooted in psychological tactics that trigger strong responses. The thrill of romantic gestures, unexpected plot twists, and unresolved emotions releases dopamine, making viewers crave more. The parasocial connection, where audiences form deep emotional bonds with fictional characters, also plays a role in making it difficult to disengage.

Many people turn to K-dramas for catharsis, using them as an outlet for feelings they might not otherwise express. This is why a well-crafted drama can feel both therapeutic and emotionally draining. While the emotional depth of K-dramas is part of their charm, it is important to recognize when they are deliberately manipulating emotions to keep viewers invested. Shows like *The World of the Married*, *Twenty-Five Twenty-One*, *Moon Lovers: Scarlet Heart Ryeo*, and *Hi Bye, Mama!* masterfully create emotional fluctuations, making it nearly impossible to stop watching. The power of K-dramas lies in their ability to make audiences feel—but in doing so, they also blur the line between meaningful storytelling and emotional addiction.



Picture credit: DramaAsia World



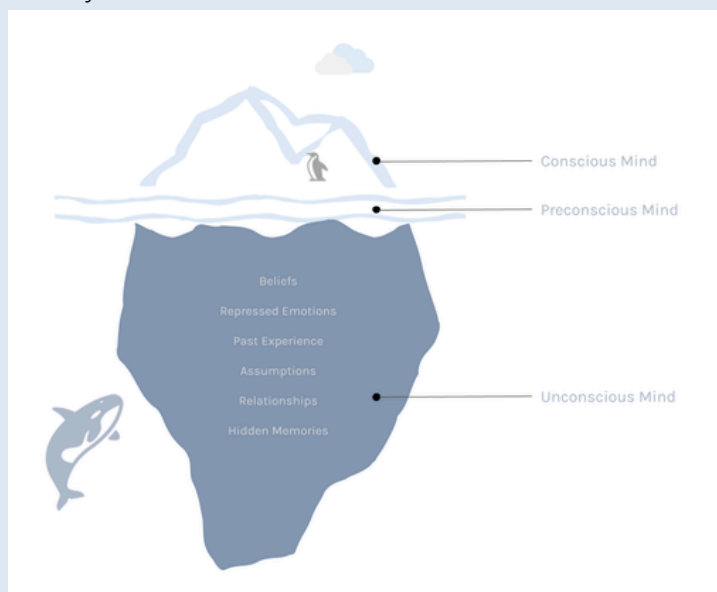
Picture credit: Soompi





Unconscious Emotions, & Conscious Feelings

Courtesy- Pinterest



This can be considered one of the strongest takes on emotions and feelings, but it explains a lot about our cognitive processes. To begin with an *emotion* is an innate, powerful, and principally *unconscious process*. It alerts us to problems but doesn't bother us with processes that don't require conscious attention.

We as humans don't have a choice to be emotionally aroused, or to make ourselves consciously

aroused, because this creates a gap between the task at hand and your attention. Emotional responses are found the most extreme when the information obtained is highly contrasting.

Moving to the next part, we talk about *feelings*. Haven't we all thought that feelings and emotions are the same thing? When an unconscious emotional arousal escalates, *it can activate conscious feelings within our brain*. Emotions can often be publicly observed, but our feelings remain a private mental experience of the emotion. As a classic example, the emotion- anger, which we call as a masking emotion, is what can be observed outwardly by others, but with the help of conscious exploring of self is only how we can see that our feelings mean much more than the emotion of simple rage. Emotions give rise to a set of pre programmed behaviours corresponding to a specific emotion, but conscious efforts to explore current challenge assists us in knowing how we *feel*.



I am collecting every copy of the *Psynapse* magazine.

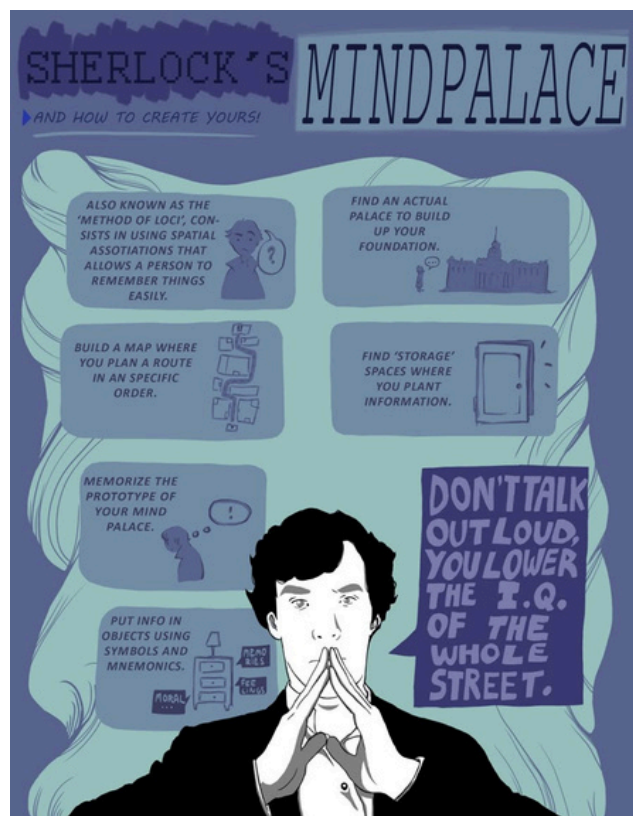
You could say I have a lot of issues.





EMOTIONS IN Literature

By Mohini Basu, ISDI



Courtesy - pinterest

Once upon a time... (or maybe just yesterday), I found myself curled up with a book, lost in a world far more exciting than my own. My literature professor once said, “Every human can live their life only once, but if you develop the habit of reading, you can experience the lives of all the characters you read about.” And she wasn’t wrong. In a span of days I could experience the melancholy of *Prince Hamlet*, the tragedy of *Oedipus*, the bravery of *Prince Caspian*, visit *Sherlock's Mind Palace*, and ride the *Hogwarts Express*.

But why would anyone willingly read a book that might leave us with a gaping hole in our hearts? shatters our soul, drags us into an emotional abyss, or—worst of all—tease us with a fantasy world knowing very well we can’t just “*Wing-gardium Levi-O-sa*” our way through Mumbai traffic? Are we all just emotional masochists?

Turns out, there’s an explanation. Psychologically speaking, literature gives us the thrill of emotional highs and lows without substantial real-life consequences, (substantial because excessive reliance on reading as a coping mechanism may also have long-term consequences.). This is why you and I ugly-cry over fictional characters while conveniently ignoring our real-life responsibilities. Books are a safe space to process emotions, whether it is heartbreak, joy, or that gut-wrenching despair when you finish a novel and realize nothing else will ever compare.

Aristotle had a fancy word for it—*catharsis*—a kind of emotional detox where you confront and release intense feelings in a safe way. We, on the other hand, just call it “*Tuesday night with a novel and three scoops of ice cream.*”

Imagine literature without emotion—it’s like *Roti* without *Ghee*, and *Daal* without *Tadka*. *Devdas*, then, would be a straight forward breakup on Whatsapp, *Gaban* would just be a CA’s nightmare—an uneventful case of misplaced finances, and *Malgudi Days* would be a collection of every boy’s routine errands with no charm or nostalgia.

But, ah, emotions! They bring stories to life, setting characters on fire with passion, grief, jealousy, love, and existential dread (looking at you, Kafka). Without them Achilles wouldn’t have raged over Patroclus’ death and stormed into battle, Romeo wouldn’t have downed that infamous poison, and Jay Gatsby might have just sent Daisy a polite “U up?” text instead of throwing extravagant, angst-ridden parties.



Over several years, when we did not have access to cinema and podcasts, literature—in the form of folklore, poems, prose, and novels—provided what psychologists today call Narrative Transportation. As the name suggests, narrative transportation describes the phenomenon where a reader or listener’s mind is transported into the world of the story. But this isn’t just an ordinary experience—it is deeply influential, shaping attitudes, beliefs, and even behaviors. Through these connections, readers find themselves experiencing the joys, struggles, and dilemmas of fictional figures as if they were their own, making literature a powerful tool for empathy, awareness, and change.

Narrative transportation theory suggests that people often change their perspectives because they empathize with characters, engage their imagination, and connect cause and effect through storytelling (This explains why I was as distraught as Harry Potter when Sirius Black fell into the veil). When emotions are deeply woven into a narrative, they create a strong psychological impact, leading to narrative persuasion—a shift in thoughts and perspectives.

For instance, *To Kill a Mockingbird* influenced generations by immersing readers in the deep racial injustices of 1930s America, creating empathy for the wrongly accused Tom Robinson. *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* played a critical role in changing attitudes toward slavery by making readers emotionally experience the suffering of enslaved people. Closer to home, *Pinjar* by Amrita Pritam captured the devastating trauma of Partition, particularly through the lens of women’s struggles. These books didn’t just narrate events; they stirred emotions, ignited empathy, and inspired action. By evoking intense feelings of sorrow, injustice, and hope, they shaped public attitudes and mobilized people toward social change.

Religious scriptures, another form of literature, also utilized narrative transportation to instill values and ethical teachings. *Bhagavad Gita*, *The Holy Bible* and the *Quran*, employ stories, parables, and allegories to impart wisdom, morality, and guidance. The *Bible*’s parable of the Good Samaritan, the *Quran*’s stories of modesty and faith, and *Bhagavad Gita*’s discourse on duty and righteousness all invoke deep emotional engagement, compelling people to reflect on their actions. These sacred texts have influenced millions across centuries, proving that literature—whether divine or human-made—is one of the most powerful tools in shaping the world through emotions and storytelling.

Literature isn’t just words on a page—it’s a doorway into the human mind, a way to experience emotions we might never encounter or express firsthand. Literature doesn’t just pass time; it stays with us, letting us experience love, loss, and redemption through characters who feel as real as the people around us. Maybe that’s why we keep coming back—because a great story doesn’t just entertain, it *makes* us feel. And really, what’s the point of a life without a little emotional chaos courtesy of a well-written novel?



Courtesy - pinterest

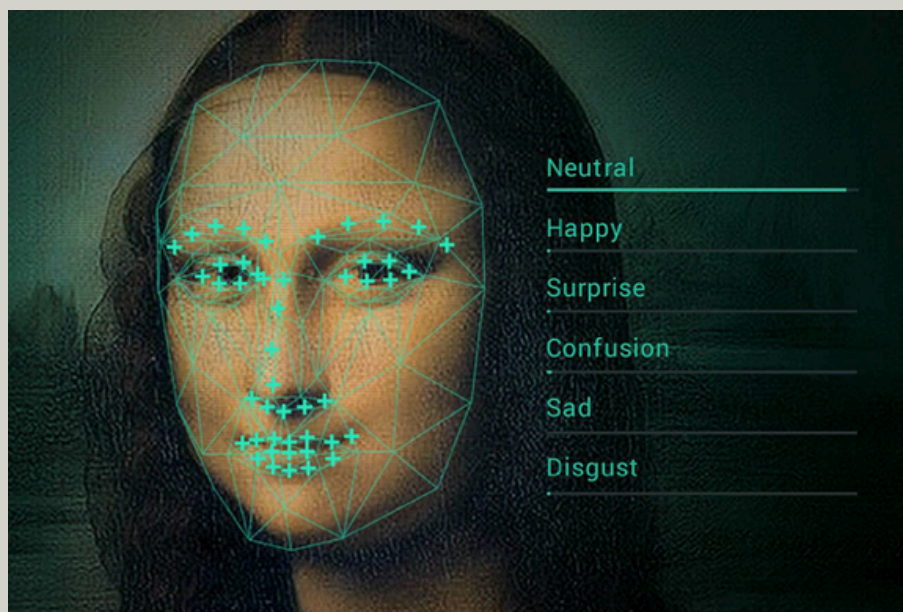


Emotion AI?

Can machines understand you, can they communicate with you without understanding your state of mind? How does looking at your friend's facial expression help you decide what next you want to say? Do you feel recognized and understood talking to bots?

Emotion AI is a tool that allows for a much more natural interaction between humans and machines. But how? It is a subset of artificial intelligence (the broad term for machines replicating the way humans think) that measures, understands, simulates, and reacts to human emotions. It is *artificial emotional intelligence*. Interestingly, this field dates back to 1995.

It the answer to the question- how can a machine effectively communicate with humans without knowing their emotional state. If it doesn't know how you're feeling, it doesn't know how you're going to respond to specific content?



Courtesy - pinterest

This takes us back to

how well your friend can communicate without understanding your expressions, reactions, emotions and behaviours.

But, the ultimate question remains, How? It is proposed that they can listen to voice inflections and modulations, starting to recognize when those changes in speech might correlate with stress or anger. Machines are now made equipped to analyze images and pick up subtleties in micro-expressions on humans' faces that might happen even too fast for a person to recognize. So in a sense, machines are being made to be more emotionally intelligent than humans, inculcating complex concepts like satire and humor into their responses, which can only stem from better understanding of emotional states. This technology is actively used in digital marketing and advertising, using Emotion AI to understand the response of the viewer regarding the object being advertised.



HOW DOES THE BRAIN CREATES EMOTIONAL BONDS?

The Neuroscience of Love

By Khushi Jaiswal, Elphinstone College

Love is one of the most complex human experiences that is often celebrated in music, art and poetry. Love isn't just a singular occurrence, it's a whole spectrum of emotions and experiences. From the first spark to the steady security of attachment and the pain of heartbreak, neuroscience has uncovered how brains respond to it.

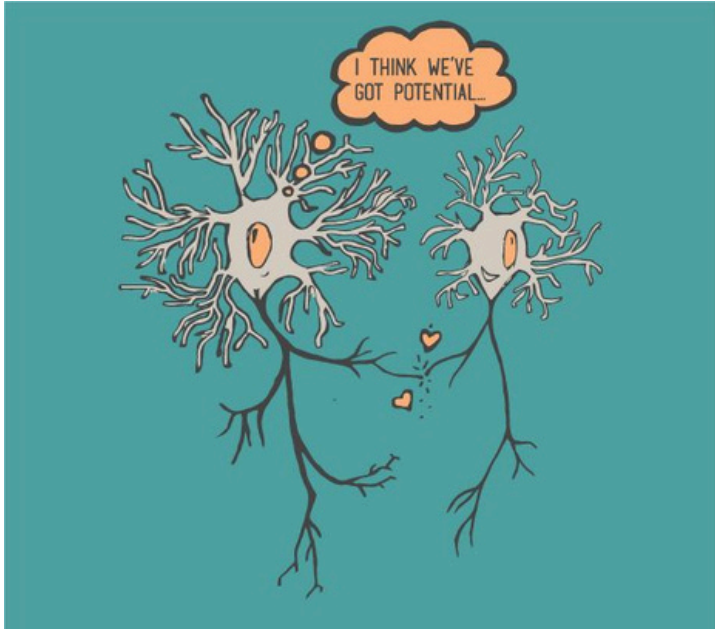
The brain releases various neurotransmitters like dopamine, oxytocin and serotonin that shape our romantic experiences. Dopamine, also known as the "feel good" neurotransmitter, is associated with the pleasure and reward system of the brain. When a person *falls in love*, what it actually is a surge of dopamine, activating the brain's reward system. In friendship, dopamine makes time spent with friends feel rewarding and reinforces long-term bonds and connections.

Oxytocin, also called *bonding hormone or love hormone*, is released during moments of intimacy and as well as during social interactions. It plays an important role in deepening romantic attachments. During childbirth and breastfeeding, oxytocin helps to create a deep bond between parent and child.

There are various brain structures that get activated while processing love and emotional connection. The Ventral Tegmental Area (VTA) is the brain region that is responsible for the dopamine surge that fuels romantic attraction. When experiencing love, the VTA is highly active, making the experience feel rewarding and even at times addictive.

The amygdala is the brain region that processes emotions like pleasure, fear and anxiety. Surprisingly its activity decreases during intense romantic love, which might explain why people in love make *irrational choices or overlook potential relationship issues*.

Strong friendships activate the brain's social bonding networks, including the prefrontal cortex and the anterior cingulate cortex. These regions help us process social cues, empathy, and emotional connection. Endorphins, the brain's natural painkillers, are often released when we interact with close friends, explaining why laughter and companionship can be so uplifting. Just as love activates certain brain regions, pain associated with it, also has a profound neurological impact. The end of a relationship can trigger responses similar to drug withdrawal. Because dopamine fuels love, its sudden absence after can cause withdrawal-like symptoms, including sadness, anxiety, and loss of pleasure in other activities. Unlike in love, where the amygdala's activity is reduced, the pain heightens amygdala function, intensifying feelings of distress, fear and grief. It increases cortisol levels, the body's primary stress hormone. Elevated cortisol can lead to insomnia, appetite changes, and prolonged emotional distress. Studies using brain imaging have shown that individuals experiencing heartbreak exhibit activity in the same neural pathways associated with physical pain. This overlap explains why heartbreak can feel physically painful.



Courtesy - pinterest

If love lasts, this rollercoaster of emotions, and, sometimes, angst, calms within one or two years, said Schwartz. “The passion is still there, but the stress of it is gone,” he added. Cortisol and serotonin levels return to normal. Love, which began as a stressor (to our brains and bodies, at least), becomes a buffer against stress. Brain areas associated with reward and pleasure are still activated as loving relationships proceed, but the constant craving and desire that are inherent in romantic love often lessen. To find out about this a 2011 study conducted at Stony Brook University in New York state found that it is possible to be madly in love with someone after decades of marriage. The research team, which included Fisher, performed MRI scans on couples who had been married an average of 21 years. They found the same intensity of activity in dopamine-rich areas of the brains as found in the brains of couples who were newly in love. The study suggested that the excitement of romance can remain while the apprehension is lost. “A state-of-the-art investigation of love has confirmed for the very first time that people are not lying when they say that after 10 to 30 years of marriage they are still madly in love with their partners,” said Schwartz. In the Stony Brook study, he added, the

MRI scans showed that the pattern of activity in the participants’ dopamine reward systems was the same as that detected in the brains of participants in early-stage romantic love.

While love and human connection remain some of the most profound human experiences , neuroscience has helped to better understand their inner workings. Understanding the brain’s role in love and connection can offer insights into people’s romantic behaviours, strengthen relationships and even help people to navigate the challenges of love and heartbreak. By optimising our brain health through exercise, diet , sleep and mindfulness, we can enhance our capacity for love and deepen our connections with others.



Laughter – the best medicine

Laughing away your blues is serious business. Remember the school days? How do you look back at it all now? When you are in the middle of the school reunion, everyone is narrating some of the ‘worst’ experiences – punished for late submissions, parents called to school, taken to the principal’s room, caught in the act, failed in that exam – and everyone is laughing. So are you. No remorse, no revenge, no guilt, no feelings of lowered self-esteem. Remember, all the things that you consider life and death matters today are going to be fulfilled moments for tomorrow, if only you can laugh it away. You won’t find a better ego defence mechanism. So stop fretting, start laughing!

Why is anger the new hip emotion?

Its all the rage!





“I am fine”

EMOTIONAL SUPPRESSION

Emotional suppression can be both, deliberate and unconscious. It means to prevent yourself from feeling particular emotions, characteristically negative ones. Avoidance is an extremely common way of not touching feelings that one knows will be a trigger. It sounds beneficial, right?

Courtesy - pinterest



Maybe, but for a very limited period of time. Consider a classic example of a glass of water, in which at any occurrence of discomfort, you put in a drop of water. Will it keep you safe for an infinite amount of time, storing unlimited water? No, right. The capacity of us, our capacity to avoid and pile up unresolved emotions is similar to the the glass of water. At any given point, it can spill. Similar with emotions, one may never know when all the locked feelings may surface and cause extreme distress, anxiety, sadness and much more. When is suppression good? Is it ever good? It could be, only if you deal with it in a reasonable amount of time. You feel angry in a social setting, you suppress it and deal with it in a healthy manner when you reach home. There is a very thin line between healthy and unhealthy suppression and its the amount of time.

How do the suppressed emotions manifest themselves into your daily life? In multiple ways. The stress that is induced to keep avoiding travels through your body, for an example- it may tighten your muscles, causing pain and discomfort. There is an equal risk of the person becoming more aggressive, to *mask* the actual reason. Many a times the stress induced can result in varied cardiovascular discomforts.

To conclude on a fascinating note, there is also a study conducted in the 1970 by Grossarth-Maticeck that found links between mortality and emotional suppression, shedding light on long lasting hopelessness, independently associated with cancer, and anger with heart disease.

The Dark Side of Happiness

The quest for happiness is commonly seen as a basic human aspiration, but beneath its apparently harmless exterior is a complicated network of potential traps. The constant focus on happiness can sometimes take the form of toxic positivity, where people are compelled to repress bad feelings in order to present an unshakably optimistic image. This can result in repression of feelings, anxiety, and even depression since the real expression of emotions is offered on the altar of societal norms and when reality cannot match these idealistic standards, people end up feeling inadequate, disappointed, and disillusioned.

Additionally, happiness may manifest differently for some people—it may be intense, overwhelming, and even harmful. Mania is a complicated mental illness that makes it difficult to distinguish between chaos and euphoria. A person's life can be severely harmed by mania, which is sometimes misunderstood as an overly joyful state. Mania, which is characterized by abnormally high levels of arousal, affect, and energy, can show up as unpredictable behavior, poor judgment, and strained relationships. Mania's euphoric sensations may seem alluring, but they can soon give way to irritability, anxiety, and even rage. These symptoms may worsen as the illness worsens, leading to more anxiety or rage. The need for a thorough understanding of

mania and its effects on people who struggle with impulsivity, reckless decision-making, and a diminished ability to function in daily life is highlighted by this intricate interplay of emotions. Additionally, the aftermath of a manic episode. This intricate dance of emotions underscore the necessity of a thorough understanding of mania and its impact on the individual may have difficulty with impulsivity, irresponsible decision making and a reduced capacity to function in everyday life. In addition the recovery from a manic episode can be characterized by feelings of fatigue, remorse and vulnerability.



Courtesy - pinterest





ALEXITHYMIA; *The Challenge of Emotional Expression*

By Swapnil Shinde, Karmaveer Bhurao Patil College

Ever felt like your emotions are speaking a language you just don't understand? Imagine being at a birthday party where everyone's beaming with joy, but you're just there, unsure of what you're supposed to feel. Or picture yourself watching a tearjerker movie while your friends sob uncontrollably, and you're just wondering if you left the oven on. Welcome to the world of alexithymia, where emotions can be as elusive as Wi-Fi in a dead zone.

Alexithymia, a fancy Greek word that literally translates to "no words for emotion", describes a difficulty in identifying and expressing emotions. Sure, while it is not an outright disorder on its own, it can wind up as a trait in people who suffer from other types of issues such as depression, autism spectrum disorder, brain injuries, and neurological conditions. Actually, about one in ten people can identify they struggle with feeling what they're feeling and really understanding their own emotions pretty well. Yet, despite its prevalence, it remains widely misunderstood.

Some people with alexithymia struggle to label emotions, while others might not feel them as intensely as their peers. This doesn't mean they lack emotions—it's more like having a TV that's stuck on mute. Oh you've got the pictures all nice and clear, but the sound is just missing.

Imagine someone asks, "How do you feel?" and instead of answering with "happy," "sad," or "stressed," your mind goes blank. It's not that you don't have feelings—it's just that they're locked in a vault without a key.

People dealing with alexithymia might have a really hard time even with the simplest of emotions. It's like they don't have a readily available traffic light for feelings and navigating those can be as hard for them as following incredibly complicated directions. The gist being that they have some real trouble with the simplest and most natural responses. It's an interesting quirk. For instance, they might not express excitement when receiving a long-awaited promotion, or they may feel nothing but confusion when a loved one expresses affection. Socially, this can lead to misunderstandings, making them seem distant, uninterested, or even cold when that's far from the truth.

If emotions are a puzzle, where does the missing piece go? Scientists suspect that clues to figuring this out could, well, fall in this area of the brain called the Insula—part of the organ where emotions get processed and where there's a lot of empathy happening too. Some studies suggest that damage or underdevelopment in this area might be linked to alexithymia.

It's also been found to occur alongside autism, though it's important to note that alexithymia and autism aren't the same thing. Now, seriously, here's something to know, about 50% of folks on the autism spectrum have something called alexithymia. But now, not everybody who is on the spectrum has trouble understanding or expressing emotions. It'll come up for different folks and in different ways.



The lack of emotional expression often attributed to autism may actually stem from alexithymia. Beyond neurology, childhood experiences play a role too. People who have experienced early trauma, neglect, or emotional suppression may struggle to develop an emotional vocabulary. If feelings were dismissed or ignored in childhood ("Stop crying, it's not a big deal!") being able to recognize and express them might never have really developed.

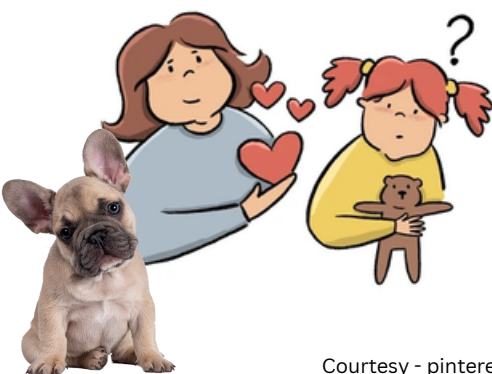
Since alexithymia isn't officially recognized as a disorder in the DSM-5, mental health professionals rely on questionnaires and assessments to evaluate it. One common tool is the Toronto Alexithymia Scale (TAS-20), which measures difficulty identifying and describing emotions.

Neurological exams, such as MRIs, may also be used to study brain activity, particularly in the insula and anterior cingulate cortex, areas linked to emotional awareness. But the truth is there is no single test design where everyone gets the same results, because diagnosing Alexithymia requires a blend of self reports, clinical observations and often brain scans too.

For people with alexithymia, forming and maintaining relationships can feel like a complete minefield with their eyes tightly closed. Friends and family may misinterpret emotional detachment as a lack of care, leading to frustration on both sides.

So, what can help? While there is no magic cure for alexithymia, there are some strategies that can definitely help it feel a lot more manageable too.

Since emotions and bodily reactions are linked, start by noticing how your body reacts in different situations. A racing heart could signal excitement, fear, or anxiety—learning to connect the dots can be enlightening. Keep a log of events and any physical sensations you experience.



Courtesy - pinterest

Over time, patterns may emerge, helping you link physical reactions to emotions. Expand your emotional vocabulary beyond just "good" and "bad." Think of feelings like colors—there are more shades than just black and white

Alexithymia isn't about having no feelings at all, it's just about having a hard time understanding and communicating them too. While emotional awareness can definitely complicate life and relationships, there are really smart ways to handle that and it's definitely worth working on with the right tools and a little support.

So whether you're navigating your own emotions or trying to understand a loved one, patience, curiosity, and a little self-exploration can go a long way. After all, emotions are part of what makes us human—even if some of us need a little extra help decoding them.



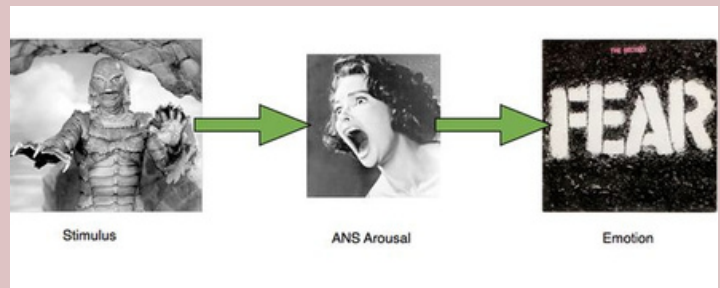
The teacher taught Pavlov's experiment in the class and
I thought, 'Oh, stupid dogs!
And then the bell rang and we all had lunch.



Commendable Contributions

JAMES-LANGE THEORY

This theory was developed by William James and Carl Lange in the 1800s, stating that physiological stimuli (arousal) causes the autonomic nervous system to react which in turn causes individuals to experience emotion. The autonomous nervous system can react through fast heartbeat, tensed muscles, sweating and more.



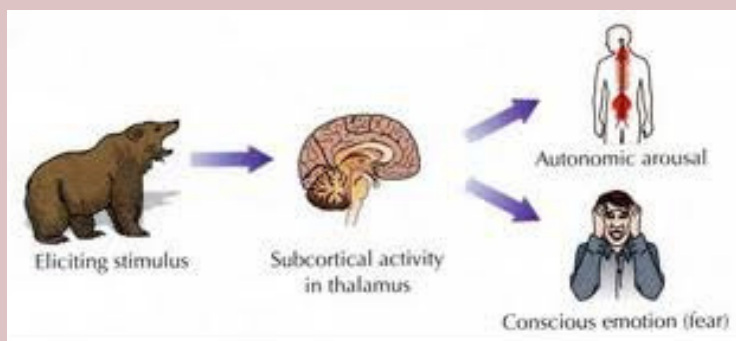
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FACIAL-FEEDBACK THEORY



The Facial-Feedback Theory of Emotion stresses that facial expressions are extremely important to experience an emotion. It is closely related to the work of Charles Darwin and William James that proposed that facial expressions affect emotion instead of being a response to any emotion. It says that emotions are directly tied to physical changes in the facial muscles. Hence, someone who forced himself to smile would be happier than someone who wore a frown.

CANNON-BARD THEORY



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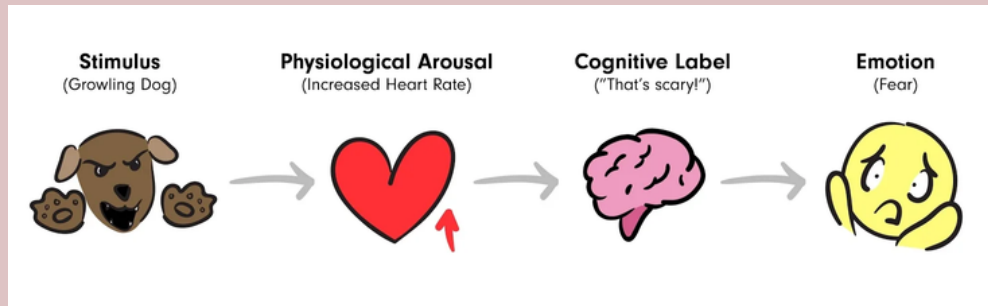
It was proposed by Walter Cannon and Philip Bard, to refute the James-Lange theory. This theory posits that bodily changes and emotions occur simultaneously instead of one right after the other. This theory is backed by neurobiological science that says that once a stimulating event is detected, the

information is relayed to both the amygdala and the brain cortex at the same time. If this holds true, arousal and emotion are a simultaneous event.

Commendable Contributions

SCHACHTER-SINGER THEORY

Popularly known as the two-factor theory of emotion, this theory is a derivation of the cognitive theory of emotion. This theory suggests that



Courtesy - pinterest

physiological arousal occurs first, after which the individual must identify the reason for this arousal to experience and label it as an emotion. A stimulus leads to a physiological response that is then cognitively interpreted and labeled, resulting in an emotion. For example, if you experience a racing heart and sweating palms during an important exam, you will probably identify the emotion as anxiety. If you experience the same physical responses on a date, you might interpret those responses as love, affection, or arousal

COGNITIVE APPRAISAL THEORY



According to appraisal theories of emotion, thinking shall occur beforehand, followed by experiencing emotion. According to this theory, the

sequence of event first involves a stimulus, followed by thought, which then leads to the simultaneous experience of a physiological response and the emotion.



What do you call the unit that measures emotions?

A centimetre.

Why does the Earth keep changing seasons?

Coz it's bipolar.

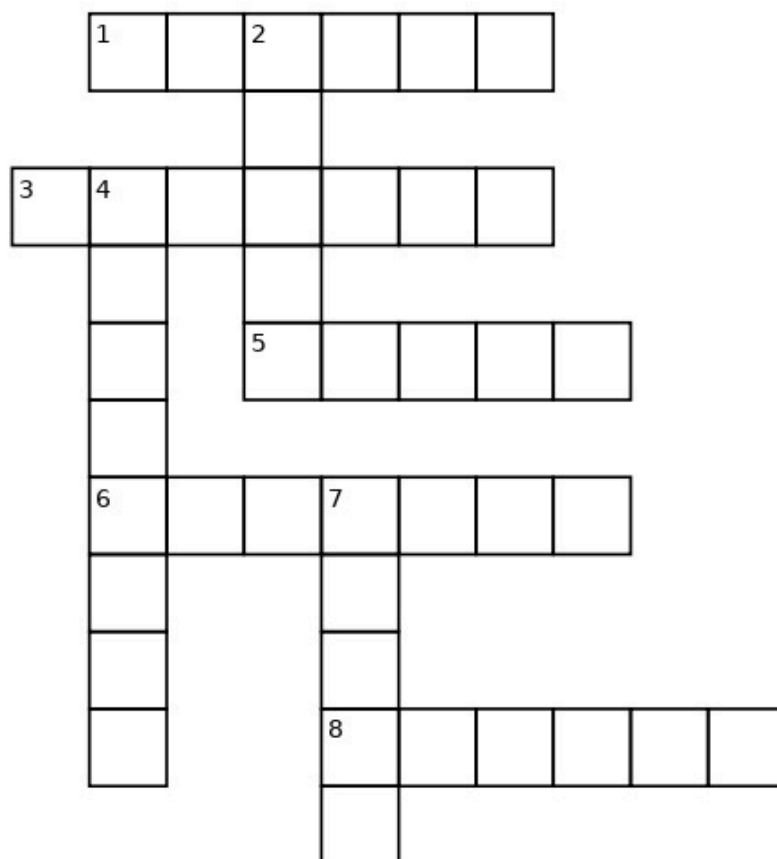
I've recently developed a phobia of my college elevator.

I'm taking steps to avoid it.





CROSSWORD



Down

- 2. An extreme bipolar state
- 4. The brain area responsible for dealing with emotions, like fear
- 7. The primary emotion characterized by strong feelings of sadness and loss

Across

- 1. What is enhanced by strong emotions, especially for negative experiences?
- 3. The longest lasting emotion
- 5. It is a masking emotion
- 6. The primary 8 emotions by Plutchik include anger, fear, sadness, joy, surprise, trust, anticipation and?
- 8. The emotion of fear is associated with what instinct?

Answers on next page



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Answers to the Crossword

- | | |
|-------------|---------------|
| Down | Across |
| 2. Mania | 1. Memory |
| 4. Amygdala | 3. Sadness |
| 7. Grief | 5. Anger |
| | 6. Disgust |
| | 8. Escape |



Government of Maharashtra

Dr. Homi Bhabha State University Elphinstone College DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY



Dr. Homi Bhabha State University



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- Kamat Binet Intelligence Test
- Bender Visual- Motor Gestalt Test
- David's Battery of Differential Abilities
- Conners Continuous Performance Test
- WRAT-5 India Complete Kit
- Beck Depression Inventory-2
- Beck Scale for Suicide Ideation
- Beck Anxiety Inventory-2
- Beck Hopelessness Scale
- MCMI (I/II) (V2)
- Woodcock-Johnson Test of Cognitive Ability
- Children's Personality Questionnaire
- Eysenck's Personality Questionnaire
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