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Summer 2018

Psychological Adjustment

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East Georgia State College



UNIVERSITY SYSTEM
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Tori Kearns and Debra Lee

Psychological Adjustment

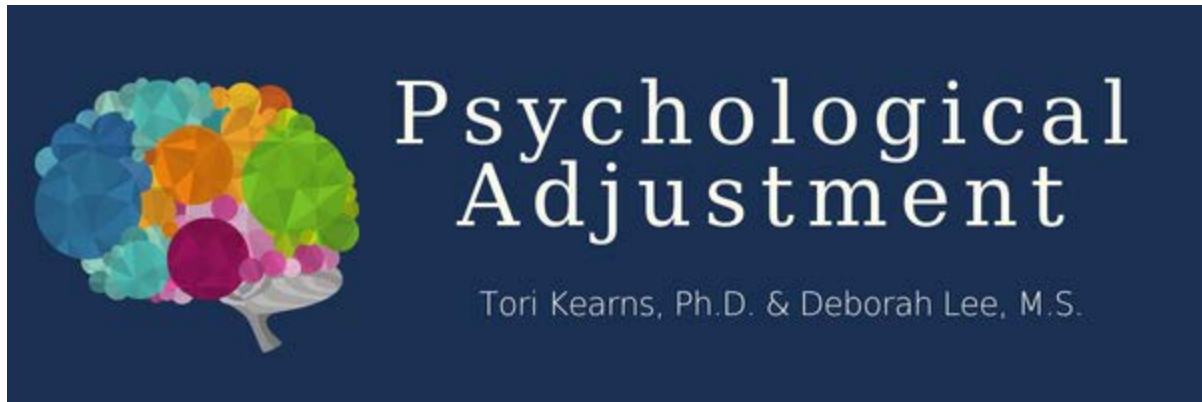


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This compilation of modules is meant to introduce you to the possibility for new growth in your life today and in your future. We will explore the empirical basis for specific pathways to a renewed sense of being. This compilation is considered to be foundational in introducing some of the most groundbreaking approaches to growth. It is not meant to be the final word on this subject but a catalyst for further exploration on ways to improve our lives, relationships, and support others in their journeys.

Objectives:

- Identify and understand some of the key theories related to personal adjustment and well-being. (APA Goal 1, SLO 1.1)
- Apply theories of adjustment to a personal journey of growth. (APA Goal 1, SLO 1.3)
- Identify and understand the obstacles and pitfalls encountered on a journey of personal growth. (APA Goal 1, 1.3)

Keywords: Self-actualization, growth mindset, Hierarchy of Needs, Stages of Change, Life Satisfaction, Happiness

Growth Mindset

“To briefly sum up the findings: Individuals who believe their talents can be developed (through hard work, good strategies, and input from others) have a growth mindset. They tend to achieve more than those with a more fixed mindset (those who believe their talents are innate gifts).” (p2)

Dweck, Carol. (Jan 2016). What Having a “Growth Mindset” Actually Means. [Harvard Business Review Digital Articles](#), p2-4.



“Growth” by Dave Shea, 12/2009,
CC BY NC-ND 2.0 (original)

Reading 1: [Dweck Growth Mindset](#)

(Dweck, C. (2016). What having a “growth mindset” actually means. Harvard Business Review.)

Stanford Psychology professor, Carol Dweck, pioneered the notion of a **growth mindset**. This mindset is in direct opposition to a fixed (or rigid) mindset. With the former, she observed individuals who had outlooks of hope and optimism for positive change. At their core, these individuals believed that they were masters of their universe and fate – in large measure. Although they may not be able to change the things that happen to them, they can retain full command of their reaction and perception of circumstances. Particularly, with a growth orientation, one will be open to developing new talents and tackling new challenges in life whether they feel they have a natural proclivity toward it or not. They do not feel limited, in other words, by perceived innate gifts or talents. The growth potential, in other words, is something they possess and actively pursue.

Key Concepts: Growth Mindset, Fixed Mindset, Growth Zone, Triggers

Stages of Change

“Set realistic goals by moving one stage at a time. A goal for many patients, particularly in a time-limited managed care environment, is to set realistic goals, such as helping patients progress from precontemplation to contemplation. Such progress means that patients are changing if we view change as a process that unfolds over time, through a series of stages. Helping patients break out of the chronic, stuck phase of precontemplation constitutes treatment success, because it almost doubles the chances that patients Stages of Change will take effective action in the next 6 months (Prochaska, Velicer, Prochaska, & Johnson, 2004).” (pp151-152)

Norcross, John C., Krebs, Paul, M., Prochaska, James O. (Feb, 2011) “Stages of change.” *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 67(2), 143-154.



“Change” by Sophia Louise, 10/2012, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0 (original)

Reading 2: **Stages of Change Model**

(<http://www.cpe.vt.edu/gttc/presentations/8eStagesofChange.pdf>)

The concept of stages of change begs the question of whether we can realize true and lasting change without mastering each step along the way. In other words, can an eagerness to quickly reach the summit, bypassing critical pathways, actually cause us to become derailed from achieving the change we want? Does each step along the way play a key role in sustaining the goals that we ultimately obtain? The architects of the Stages of Change model certainly indicate that the process is just as important as the outcome if we have hope of making lasting change.

Key Concepts: Precontemplation, Contemplation, Preparation /Determination, Action/Willpower, Maintenance, Relapse

Happiness

“This article is about happiness in the sense of life-satisfaction; enduring enjoyment of one’s life as a whole. This definition is fundamental to the above-mentioned [World Database of Happiness](#), which serves as an online appendix to this review of the available research findings on this particular subject.” (p382)

Veenhoven, Ruut. (Oct, 2015). Social conditions for human happiness: A review of research. *International Journal of Psychology*, 50(5), 379-391.



“Happiness” by Farrukh, 8/31/2007, CC BY-NC 2.0 (original)

Reading 3: The Science of Happiness

(“What is the Science of Happiness?” by Berkeley Wellness)

What type of goals do you set for yourself? As a college student, you may desire to get the best grades and pass all of your courses. You may also be honing in on your major and trying to find which career best fits your abilities and passions. Perhaps, you are looking to make the most of the extracurricular options to enhance your overall experience and make you more attractive to a future employer. Money is often a go-to goal when people are asked this question. But what are they really saying when they say they want money? Do they want power? Security? More options? A feeling of superiority in relation to others? Money often belies an underlying desire for happiness.

What really makes us happy – especially if we are all directed toward individual pursuits? Are there some universal laws that explain sources of well-being in a generalized way? In other words, without getting into the specifics of one person’s goals in relation to another’s, are there some parallels that help explain the pursuit of well-being for all?

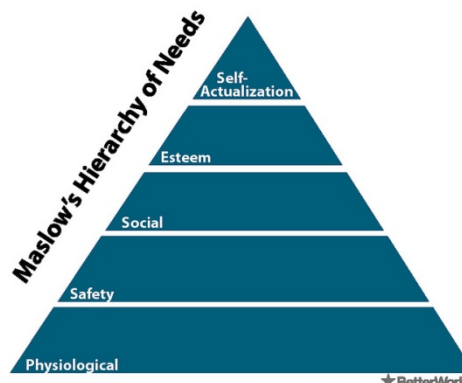
Key Concepts: Life satisfaction, Meaning, Social Connection, Genetic Variance, Perfectionism, Maximizing, Money

Hierarchy of Needs and Self-Actualization

“Instead of focusing on [psychopathology](#) and what goes wrong with people, Maslow (1943) formulated a more positive account of human behavior which focused on what goes right. He was interested in human potential, and how we fulfill that potential.

Psychologist Abraham Maslow (1943, 1954) stated that human motivation is based on people seeking fulfillment and change through personal growth. Self-actualized people are those who were fulfilled and doing all they were capable of.”

Mcleod, Saul (2016). Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs. <https://www.simplypsychology.org/maslow.html>



“Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs” by BetterWorks Breakroom, June, 2011, CC BY 2.0 (original)

Reading 4: Hierarchy of Needs and Self-Actualization

(McLeod, S. (2017). Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. at SimplyPsychology.org)

In his groundbreaking work titled, "A Theory of Human Motivation" (1943)*, Abraham Maslow, looked deeply at the concept of human potential and motivation. In his reflections of clinical patients and society, in general, he identified what appeared to be universal needs. Further, he recognized that not all needs are created equal. There are layers in which some needs necessarily precede others. If we do not achieve our most basic needs, we are in a poor position to try and achieve higher needs. In fact, Maslow suggested that we lacked the motivation to achieve more when our focus is on basic needs. In his Hierarchy of Needs model, he explained that every person must have fulfillment of certain basic needs before they can aspire to higher needs that lead to happiness and truth. The idea is often represented as levels within a pyramid (Figure 1). While most people can conquer their basic needs, not everyone reaches the apex which is narrower by design.

***Maslow, A.H. (1943). A Theory of Human Motivation, *Psychological Review*, 50(4), 370-396.**

Key Concepts: Self-actualization, Characteristics of Self-actualizers, Motivation, Physiological Needs, Safety Needs, Belonging Needs, Esteem Needs, Expanded Hierarchy of Needs Model

Reflections

- 1) In what ways can a growth-mindset be strengthened?
- 2) What are some of the major triggers that negatively affect our ability to maintain a growth-mindset?
- 3) Why do some people who succeed in achieving a wanted change sometimes sink back into previous ways?
- 4) What steps can you take in your own life today in order to succeed in making wanted personal changes?
- 5) What brings you a sense of happiness or life satisfaction?
- 6) Do happy people create happiness or is happiness something that happens to the lucky few?
- 7) Maslow acknowledged methodological weaknesses in development of his theory. Do you think, aside from weak empirical evidence, there are flaws in his theory which call the hierarchy model into question?
- 8) What are some of the most notable characteristics of the self-actualized person?

Module 2: Theories of Humanistic and Personality

Learning Objectives:

- Describe and understand **key concepts**, principles, and overarching themes in psychology. **(APA Goal 1, outcome 1.1)**
- Use basic psychological terminology, concepts, and **theories** in psychology to explain behavior and mental processes. **(APA Goal 1, SLO 1.1b).**
- Be able to recognize major historical events, theoretical perspectives, and figures in psychology and their link to trends in contemporary research. **(APA Goal 1, SLO 1.2c)**
- Relate examples of how a researcher's value system, sociocultural characteristics, and historical context influence the development of scientific inquiry on psychological questions. **(APA Goal 2, SLO 2.5a)**
- Describe the value and limitation of using theories to explain behavioral problems **(APA Goal 2, SLO 2.1A).**

In this module, we will briefly explore the many theories that have painted the portrait of humanistic psychology, as well as the theories of Sigmund Freud, whose personality theories have given us an alternative means by which we can understand how our past shapes who we are. Unlike Freud's psychodynamic theory, humanism emphasizes the ideas that humans can exercise agency over their lives and that we all instinctually hunger to achieve our greatest potential—that we are not enslaved by deterministic forces. "We are the masters of our fate; we are the captains of our soul." As you sift through the biographies of these humanistic pioneers, take note of how their stories paved the way for many of their theories; their own struggles became the fuel that ignited their intellectual curiosity. As you learn the myriad theories contributed by these pioneers, evaluate each theory's relevance to your own life. Is your life fraught with Freudian defenses? Are you living a self-actualized life? Are you hidden behind the Jungian mask? Ponder the theories with intellectual curiosity and embrace the freedom bestowed upon you to explore the great minds that have gone before you.

Reading 1 : Abraham Maslow



“The story of the human race is the story of men and women selling themselves short.”—Abraham Maslow

Key Concepts: Hierarchy of Needs, Self-Actualization, Peak Experiences, Physiological Needs, Safety Needs, Belongingness Needs & Love Needs, Esteem Needs, Deficiency Motivation and Growth Motivation

This article discusses the efforts by several psychologists to modernize Maslow's cornerstone *Hierarchy of Needs* pyramid. Such an endeavor elicited much criticism. The rationale for the modifications rested on the argument that Maslow's understanding of human nature was limited, due to the paucity of scientific evidence surrounding his theory. Many argued that the pyramid must conform to evolutionarily driven needs, which are subject to change. The collaborators on this project contended that we self-actualize, ultimately to find a mate. And we find a mate to procreate, thus parenting should replace self-actualization as the top spot on the pyramid.

Reading 2: Carl Rogers



"Carl Rogers" by Global Change Lab, 11/2016, CC BY-SA 2.0

"In my early professional years, I was asking the question: How can I treat, or cure, or change this person? Now I would phrase the question in this way: How can I provide a relationship, which this person may use for his own personal growth?" -- Carl Rogers

Key Concepts: Biography of Rogers, nondirective client-centered therapy, subjective reality, self-concept, unconditional positive regard, Conditional positive regard, ideal self, real self, congruity, actualizing tendency, "The Good Life"

Reading 3: Eric Fromm



“Erich Fromm for PIFAL” by Arturo Espinosa, 3/2013, CC BY 2.0

“Love is the only sane and satisfactory answer to the problem of human existence.”—Eric Fromm

Key Concepts: Authoritarianism, *Escape from Freedom*, Destructiveness, Automaton Conformity, Symbiotic Families, Withdrawing Families, Social Unconscious, Relatedness, Creativity, receptive Orientation, Exploitative Orientation, Hoarding Orientation, Marketing Orientation, Productive Orientation

Reading 4: Rollo May

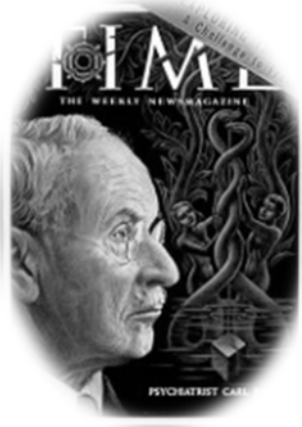


“Freedom is man's capacity to take a hand in his own development. It is our capacity to mold ourselves.”—Rollo May

May Quoting Kierkegaard: “Anxiety is the dizziness of freedom.”

Key Concepts: Innocence, Rebellion, Ordinary, Creative, Anxiety,

Reading 5: Carl Jung



“timejung” by turrido50, 10/2008, CC BY 2.0

“Your vision will become clear only when you can look into your own heart. Who looks outside, dreams; who looks inside, awakes.” —Carl Jung

Key Concepts: archetypes, extraversion and introversion, shadow, collective unconscious, anima, animus, self, individuation, synchronicity, persona

Reading 6: Sigmund Freud



“Freud” by Tim Stahmer, 9/2006, CC BY-NC-SA 2.0

“Dreams are the royal road to the unconscious”—Sigmund Freud

Key Concepts: Unconscious mind, Id, Ego, Superego, Repression, Denial, Regression, Projection, Sublimation, Displacement, Psychosexual Stages of Development

Reflections:

1. Discuss whether you think these theorists developed their theories in an effort to better understand, and thus ameliorate the insidious angst of their own adjustment.
2. Do you find that any of the theories discussed in this module help you to better understand your past or a current situation in which you may be involved?
3. In one of his writings, May quoted Kierkegaard as saying, "Anxiety is the dizziness of freedom." What is your interpretation of this quote? Does this apply to your life? What do you think that Freud would say about this quote?
 4. What makes each set of ideas unique?

Module 3: The Self

Learning Objectives:

- Identify the different theoretical perspectives underlying development of identity. (APA Goal 1, 1.1)
- Apply theories of personal development to individual growth into adulthood. (APA Goal 1, 1.3b)
- Recognize the early childhood and adolescent challenges and obstacles to reaching identity achievement. (APA Goal 1.3d)
- Understand the factors that facilitate positive growth in self-identity. (APA Goal 1, 1.3c)

Keywords: Psychosocial development, parenting style, socio-cultural, self-love, Jungian shadow, Individuation, self-determination, social interest, inferiority complex

Knowing others is wisdom, knowing yourself is Enlightenment.

-Lao Tzu



“Reflections of the self” by Hartwig HKD, 6/2010, CC BY-ND 2.0

Development of Identity

“Those who do not grow up in a healthy environment—perhaps one scarred by [emotional](#) or [physical abuse](#), neglect, or over-parenting—may not develop a sense of self in the same way. Their identities may have been minimally acknowledged, if at all. When feelings and thoughts are ignored in childhood, children may grow up not recognizing that they have their own ideas and sets of behaviors. If children are forced to yield to others’ thoughts, wants, and needs continually over time, the development of their identity may suffer. As they grow into adults, they may question, “Who am I?”

Olesky, Denise. (Dec 2016). I don’t know who I am: Establishing Your Sense of Self. GoodTherapy.org



[“maschere.\(uno.falso\).”](#) by Ludo, 8/2007, CC By 2.0

Reading 1: [Erik Erikson and Self-Identity](#)

(McLeod, S. (2017). Erik Erikson. SimplyPsychology.org)

In his theory of Psychosocial development, Erik Erikson identified 8 distinct but related stages in life in which we face unique challenges that either propel us forward in growth and self-actualization or stall us. Each stage, tied to a particular age-range or developmental period, is thought to be universally applicable though certain cultures may do better or worse in supporting growth in some areas (e.g. collectivist v. individualist). One factor seems undeniable in the preparation for a productive and meaningful adulthood experience – and that is the development of a sense of self during adolescence. As you can see from the reading, self-identity is influenced by many variables. And without a secure sense of self, many adults struggle to maintain intimate relationships or embark on meaningful and fulfilling careers. Knowing the self is the very foundation upon which we build and bolster our adult hopes and dreams. Without it, would we truly know where we were going?

Key Concepts: Trust v. Mistrust, Attachment, Autonomy v. Shame and Doubt, Self-Esteem, Initiative v. Guilt, Industry v. Inferiority, Competence, Identity v. Role Confusion, Identity Crisis, Intimacy v. Isolation, Generativity v. Stagnation, Ego Integrity v. Despair

Parental Influences

“Most parents want their children to succeed. Some narcissistic parents, however, set expectations not for the benefit of the child, but for the fulfillment of their own selfish needs and dreams. Instead of raising a child whose own thoughts, emotions, and goals are nurtured and valued, the offspring becomes a mere extension of the parent’s personal wishes, with the child’s individuality diminished.”

Ni, Preston. (Feb 2016). “10 Signs of a Narcissistic Parent: 10 ways narcissistic parents negatively affect their children.” [PsychologyToday](#)



["Good Housekeeping 1964-Mother/Daughter Hairdos!"](#)
by Heather, 5/2008, CC BY 2.0

Reading 2: [Parenting Styles and Adolescents](#)

(Kopko, K. (2007). Parenting styles and adolescents. Cornell University Cooperative Extension.)

Diana Baumrind, a developmental psychologist, pioneered research distinguishing different styles of parenting and the likely effects on the identity, emotional well-being, and resourcefulness of offspring. The four distinct styles illustrate that the way we are parented truly matters – especially early on. As we mature and are exposed to peer relationships, we may observe and adopt different ways of thinking and behaving. Yet, the principal relationship between parent and child seems to set the tone for how we approach not only future relationships but life, in general. Of course, there are many factors that influence development that go beyond the types of parents we have. There are different cultural factors as well as genetic variables which play a role. Nonetheless, the research is undeniable in demonstrating the critical influence of parenting on the development of independent, self-assured, and driven individuals.

Key Concepts: Parental Control, Parental Warmth, Authoritative, Authoritarian, Permissive, Uninvolved

Socio-cultural Influences

"Young people who are exposed to experiences that promote positive feelings about their ethnic or racial heritage -- such as when minority parents teach their children about their ethnic heritage or instill pride in their race -- may reap not only psychological benefits but also greater commitment and connection to academics. They may also have less risk of unhealthy behaviors such as smoking and drug use, all of which have important long-term implications for health, well-being, and economic opportunity."

Society for Research in Child Development. (Feb 2014). "Positive feelings about race, ethnicity tied to stronger development in minority youth." [ScienceDaily](#).



“Seeing Eye-to-Eye on Diversity” by USAID U.S. Agency for International Development, 3/2013, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

**Reading 3: [Ethnic Identity and Stable Sense of Self](#)
 (“Ethnic identity development development” by ActForYouth.net)**

We do not exist in a vacuum but influence and are influenced by our social environment. Especially once we extend our connection to the community, outside the protection of family, we may be struck by the seemingly incessant categorization and judgment society embraces in order to maintain a preconceived pecking order. Yet, despite perceptions of others our charge in adolescence is to develop a stable sense of self. This is of course important for all adolescents, but for minority youth in particular, an absolutely critical part of this development is understanding and embracing one’s ethnicity. In her research, Jean S. Phinney, identified the stages inherent to this process. For psychologist, William Cross, an emphasis on four racial identity *statuses* may better describe the often non-linear course minorities traverse.

Key Concepts: Diffused or Unexamined Ethnic Identity, Moratorium, Achieved Identity, Racial Identity Statuses

Loving Yourself

“A mother loves her newborn child without reservation, and romantic love, in its first stages of infatuation, can make the beloved seem perfect. But most of us doubt that love without reservation, love completely forgiving and accepting, exists in our everyday lives. Looking in the mirror, all of us see too many flaws and remember too many past wounds and failings to love ourselves without also putting a limit on that love.”

Chopra, Deepak. (Mar 2014). “How to Love Yourself Unconditionally.” [Oprah.com](#)



["love"](#) by Pia Kristine, 10/2010, CC BY-SA 2.0

Reading 4: [Steps Toward Self-love](#)

(Skirry, J. (2016). Self-love. PhilosophicalLiving.com)

Sometimes people confuse the idea of self-love with being selfish. Erich Fromm, philosopher and psychologist, provided evidence that the two concepts are essentially incompatible in his trailblazing work, "[The Art of Loving](#)" (1947). Furthermore, he asserted that in order to love another human being we must first love ourselves. Many people will verbalize their self-love and wear the banner of confidence but still engage in maladaptive practices that show they actually lack self-love. In other words, the profession of self-love is inconsistent with the practice of self-love. For example, they may not practice healthy boundaries, self-care, or even full acceptance of the self (flaws and all). What Fromm shows us is that we do not have to shy away from self-love out of fear of being called self-centered or self-absorbed. Instead, full acceptance of the self gives us the freedom to focus our energies elsewhere because we are content with who we are.

Key Concepts: Care, Responsibility, Respect, Knowledge



["Research"](#) by Thomas Heyman, 10/2009, CC BY-SA 2.0

Facing the Darkness

"The shadow is most destructive, insidious and dangerous when habitually repressed and projected, manifesting in myriad psychological disturbances ranging from neurosis to psychosis, irrational interpersonal hostility, and even cataclysmic international clashes. Such deleterious symptoms, attitudes and behavior stem from being possessed or driven by the dissociated yet undaunted shadow. Robert Louis Stevenson's classic story of *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* can be taken as a cautionary tale *par*

excellence: dissociation of the shadow results in a perilously lopsided development of the conscious personality and renders us susceptible to destructive possession by the disowned shadow. The excessively good (almost saintly) Dr. Henry Jekyll is at times taken over body and soul by his equally evil shadow: the depraved, nefarious, psychopathic, wicked Edward Hyde, his complete opposite. Indeed, the shadow contains all those qualities we hide from ourselves and others, but which remain active within the unconscious, forming a sort of “splinter personality” or *complex*,...

Diamond, Stephen. (Apr 2012). “Essential Secrets of Psychotherapy: What is the ‘Shadow’?” [PsychologyToday](#).

Reading 5: [Jung’s Shadow of Personality](#)

(Shadow (psychology). Wikipedia.org)

People often find it difficult to come to terms with all aspects of who they are. We feel content in acknowledging the myriad ways in which we reflect love, acceptance, achievement, actualization, and all other positive sides of who we are. We may feel great consternation, however, in acknowledging our baser impulses and negative thoughts and behaviors. It is uncomfortable and sometimes, unnerving. Yet, as we learn from landmark Swiss psychiatrist, Carl Jung, knowing the self entails coming to terms with both our positive instincts as well as destructive forces that undergird the part of our personalities that we like to keep hidden from public view. What does it do to us to disregard and pretend as if such forces are not at work – even if swept neatly under the proverbial rug? Can those unconscious forces unleash and control our behaviors when least expected? Could they seep into our public personas in a way that causes irreparable harm to our well-being and relationships? In the reading you will also find that the hidden shadow could contain positive aspects of human nature which those who struggle with self-acceptance and self-love may also keep hidden and seemingly out of reach. What are people with such struggles missing that could bring joy to their lives should they learn to accept all aspects of who they are? As you learned in Module 2, learning to embrace the good and bad of who we are is an essential step in the process toward individuation – a primary goal for self-determination and psychological health.

Key Concepts: Archetype, Ego, Collective Unconscious, Dreams/Visions, Persona, Self

Reading 5: [Inferiority Complex and Personality Development](#)

(“Alfred Adler: Theory and Application” by Adler Graduate School, [alfredadler.edu](#))

A curious thing about understanding the self and knowing who you are is that the quest is not all about you, the individual. In many respects, our identities and self-concepts are shaped and molded in some measure by our environment. One of the challenges in becoming a self-determined and actualized individual is learning who we are in spite of and because of our environments. Famed psychologist, Alfred Adler, who experienced a trying childhood marked by serious physical illness and a near death experience, knew firsthand how what we see around us can fuel a sense of being inferior to others. Yet, it is through hardship, and in particular, the inferiority complex, that we derive the motivation to achieve and surpass perceived limitations. Furthermore, it is by being self-determined as well as developing a social interest in others, that we can effectively deal with our own obstacles in life.

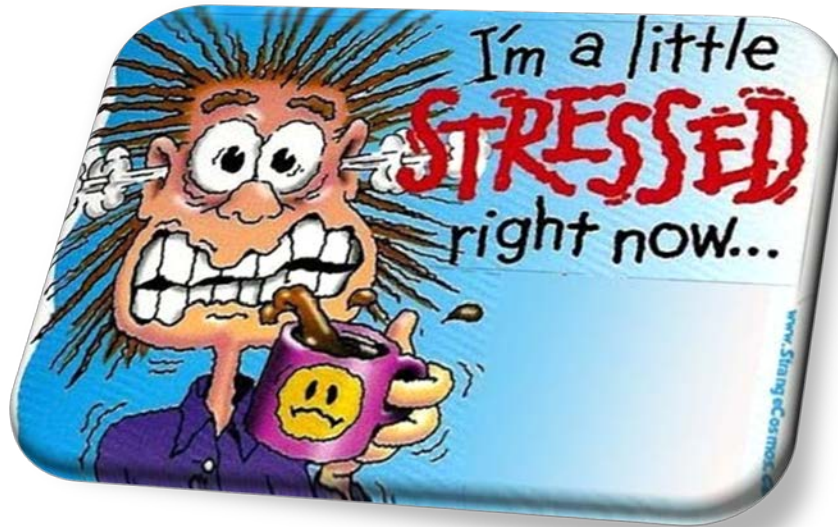
Key Concepts: Self-perceived inferiority, Unity of the Individual, Goal Orientation, Self-determination and Uniqueness, Social Context, Feeling of Community

Reflections

- 1) According to Erikson's theory of Psychosocial Development, achieving a sense of identity is something accomplished during adolescence. What personal and environmental factors do you think delay this accomplishment till later in life?
- 2) Do you think parents assume parenting styles similar to the one's they were exposed to in youth? Why or why not?
- 3) Why do you think some people fail to respond positively to authoritative parenting styles? Do you think parents should tailor their specific style to meet the needs of each child?
- 4) How has your development of ethnic or national identity shaped your perception of self?
- 5) In what ways are the concepts of self-love and selfishness routinely confused? What would you say to dispel the perception that self-love is synonymous with selfishness?
- 6) What did Carl Jung mean by the idea of the shadow archetype? Why is the shadow a powerful concept to embrace on a journey toward self-actualization and individuation?
- 7) In what ways can a sense of inferiority be overcome and used as a catalyst to push past perceived limitations?
- 8) What is the impact of Adler's social interest in the quest to better understand the self?

Module 4

Stress: The Slayer of Sanity



Learning Objectives:

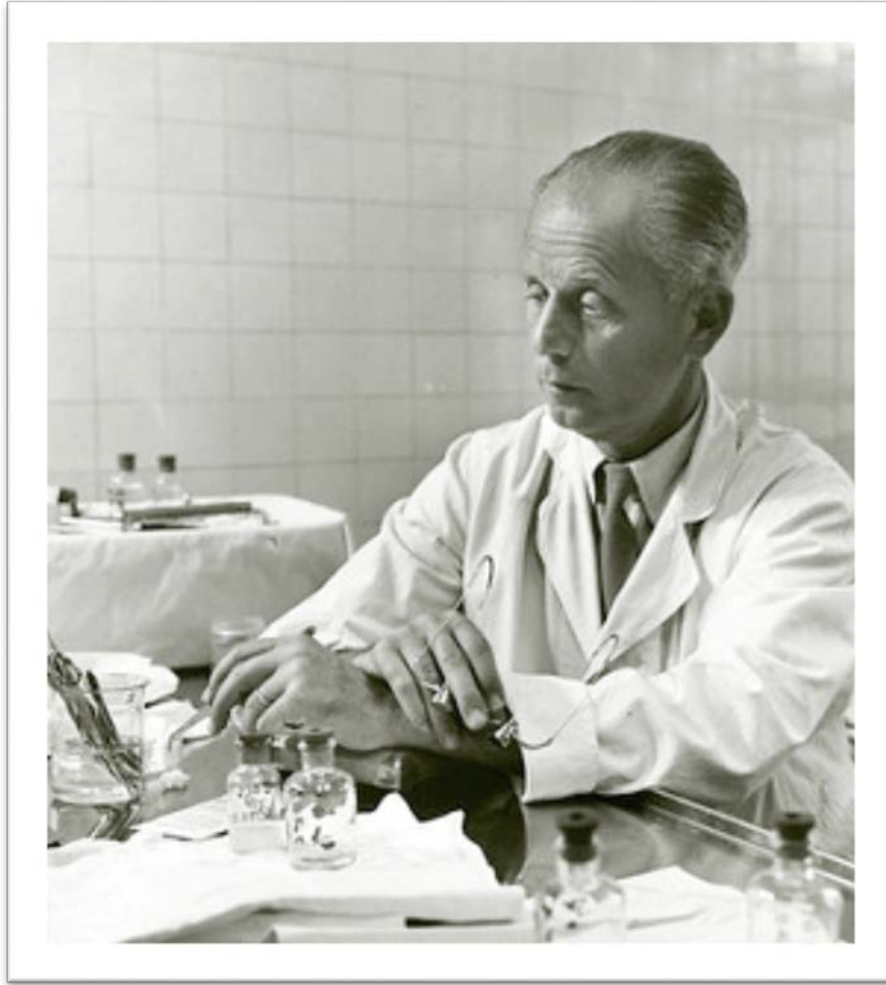
- Evaluate how the mind and body interact to influence psychological and physical health (*APA Goal 1, SLO 1.3B*)
- Describe and understand key concepts, principles, and overarching themes in psychology. (*APA Goal 1, outcome 1.1*)
- Use basic psychological terminology, concepts, and theories in psychology (humanistic) to explain behavior and mental processes. (*APA Goal 1, SLO 1.1b.*)
- Be able to recognize major historical events, theoretical perspectives, and figures in psychology and their link to trends in contemporary research. (*APA Goal 1, SLO 1.2c*)

Most of us can relate to the guy in the picture above. There are times in our lives when we feel as though we simply can't take one more problem to solve; one more relationship to coddle; one more disappointment to process; or one more deadline to meet. We are a culture of stress. We spend most of our time worrying about a future, over which we have no control. We spend hours and hours catastrophizing about the outcomes of life's circumstances, for which we can't possibly predict. Stress is not a new concept. Hans Selye borrowed the term stress from physics, as he observed that many of his sick patients appeared to be under *physical stress*. He is often considered the *Father of Stress Research*. Selye's research opened the door for a better understanding of stress and how it impacts our functioning.

In this module, we will explore:

- ☼ **Reading 1:** The History of Stress
- ☼ **Video 1:** GAS
- ☼ **Reading 2:** Symptoms of Stress
- ☼ **Reading 3:** Types of Stress
- ☼ **Reading 4:** The Biology of Stress: Sapolsky
- ☼ **Reading 5:** : The Social Neuroscience of Stress
- ☼ **Reading 6:** The Ace Score
- ☼ **Reading 7:** PTSD

Reading 1: The History of Stress



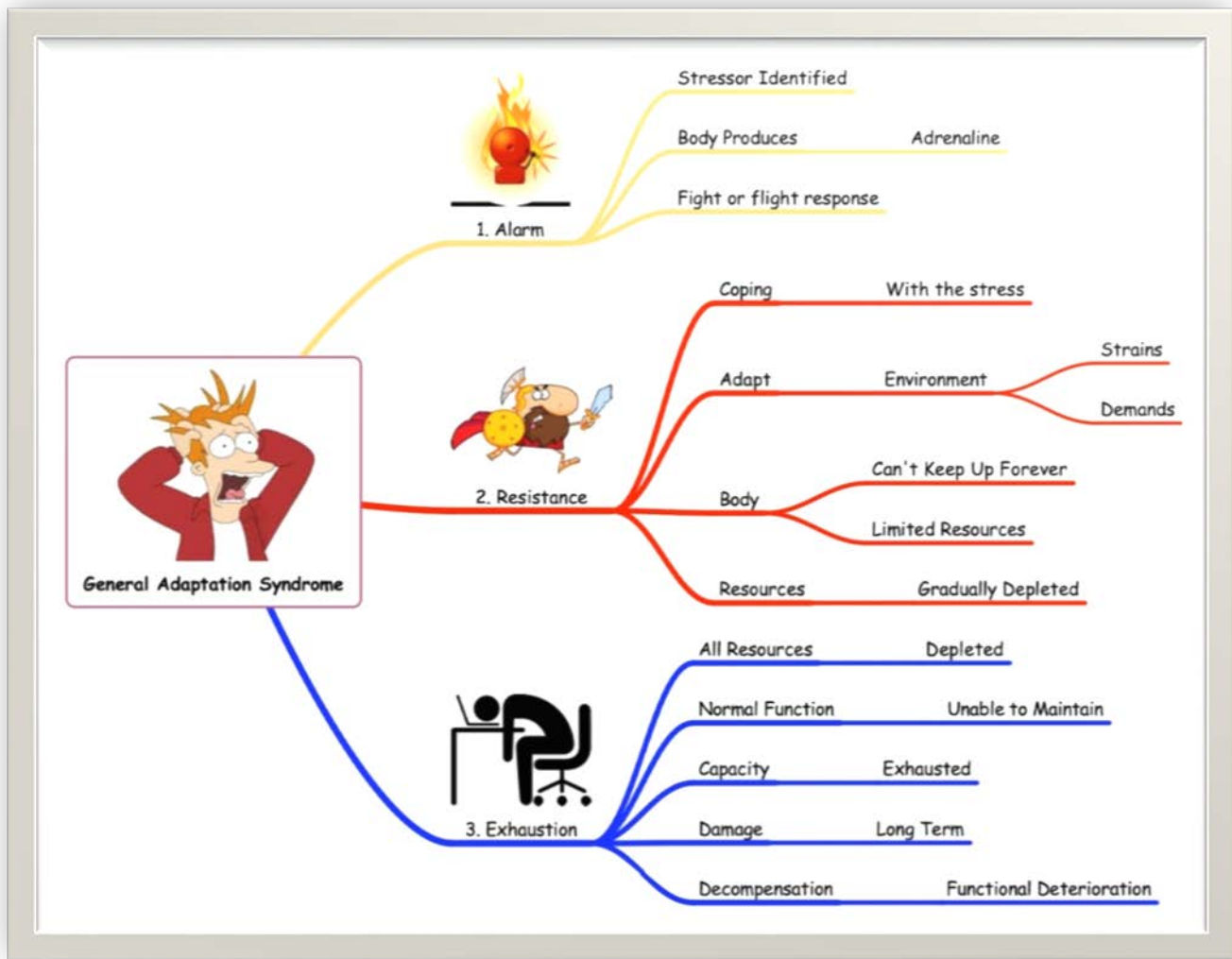
Szabo, S., Tache, Y., & Somogyi, A. (September 2012) “The legacy of Hans Selye and the origins of stress research: A retrospective 75 years after his landmark brief letter to the editor of Nature.” *Stress*, Vol 15(5), pp 472-478.

Although Hans was not the first to use the term stress, he was the first to discover the biological stress response, which he entitled, the **General Adaptation Syndrome**. Decades ago, in a fervent search for a new hormone, Selye serendipitously discovered the syndrome that underpins most medical diagnostic impressions. Selye demonstrated the role of the hypophysis-adrenal cortex in the stress response, thus opening the door for our understanding of how the entire body bears the brunt of even the most basic biological storm. One prolonged cold can wreak havoc on the entire body. One malfunctioning organ can wreak havoc on the entire body. One painful memory, piercing the psyche daily, can wreak havoc on the entire body. Stress is that thing that robs us of our serenity. We must understand the biology of such an enigmatic force, to understand the means by which we must fight it.

Key Concepts: stress, stressor, general adaptation syndrome, distress, eustress, catecholamines, glucocorticoids

Key Scholar: Hans Selye

Video 1: General Adaptation Syndrome



Wakeling, T. (2017, January). General Adaptation Syndrome. Retrieved from <https://youtu.be/gQgjHNOvXLc>.

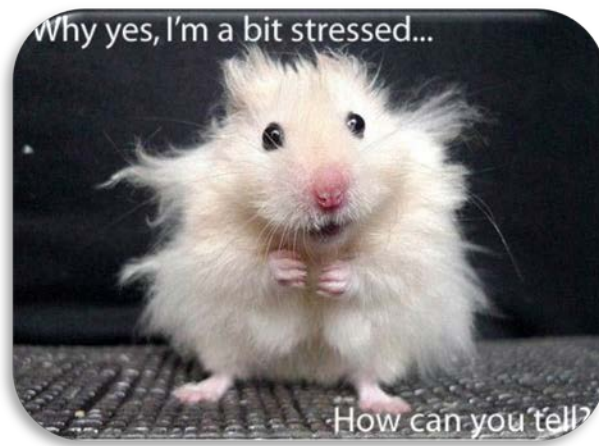
When we experience stressors in life, we have a biological response. If we do not remove the stressors, the phase of exhaustion can insidiously degrade our functioning. What stressors do you struggle with? As you navigate this course, it is important to perform self-evaluations to determine whether you are managing the volume of stressors in your life.

Remember that evaluating your life in terms of what you can control and what you cannot control is the key to investing psychic energy wisely. In other words, stressing about something over which you have no control is futile. Stressing about that which you can control is a wise investment of energy that will often lead to action as opposed to rumination. It is in the doing where we are able to thwart the impact of the resistance stage of the GAS. If the stressor is an upcoming project deadline, do something towards reaching that goal, rather than ruminating about how stressed you feel. The rumination will only prolong the resistance stage; whereas action will bring you more closely to the desired homeostatic balance. If we act against the force of stress, we will offset our body's reaction to stress.

Key Concepts: fight or flight, alarm stage, resistance stage, exhaustion stage

Key Scholar: Walter Cannon

Reading 2: Symptoms of Stress



As you read through the list of stress symptoms, it is interesting to note how encompassing our biological reaction to stress can be. When you read through the list, identify those symptoms that pertain to you. Is the list long? Are there any changes that you can make in your life that might lessen the perceived stress you are experiencing?

Reading 3: Types of Stress



Stress: The different kinds of stress. (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.apa.org/print-this.aspx>

Not all stress is created equally. There are different types of stress and knowing which type you are experiencing can serve to ameliorate the potentially grueling symptoms. Some stress is short-lived. Some stress is episodic. Some stress pounds, and pounds, until the body surrenders. This type of chronic stress can result from struggling within the confines of poverty, not knowing if food will be available from one day to the next; from being entrapped in a controlling and abusive relationship; or from battling the perverse dysfunction that may plague your nuclear family. The prognosis from this chronic state of stress is quite grim. Our bodies cannot survive such prolonged departures from the desired state of homeostatic balance—our organ systems will fail. We must be mindful of the complacency such discomfort breeds. If we reside within the corridors of chronic stress for too long, we become comfortably numb; our new normal is the discomfort.

Key Concepts: Acute stress, Episodic stress, Chronic stress

Reading 4: The Biology of Stress



Shwartz, M. (March 2007). Robert Sapolsky discusses physiological effects of stress.” [Stanford News](#).

Sapolsky is one of the leaders in stress research, with an interest in how cognitive sophistication and free time have tethered us to the calamitous consequences of sustained elevations of adrenaline and glucocorticoids. Sapolsky argues that humans and primates have, “...evolved to be smart enough to make ourselves sick.” Interestingly, he purports that the social hierarchy in which we live, contributes significantly to our potential for elevated stress hormones, which will wreak havoc on our health. The silver lining for humans is that we, unlike baboons, have myriad opportunities for creating experiences for ourselves where we can be at the top of the hierarchy. After decades of research, Sapolsky identified the shield that can protect us from stress-related illness in our hierarchical world: social connectedness. So, that which can kill us, can also heal and protect us.

“We are capable of social supports that no other primate can even dream of. For example, I might say, ‘This job, where I’m a lowly mailroom clerk, really doesn’t matter. What really matters is that I’m the captain of my softball team or deacon of my church—that sort of thing. It’s not just somebody sitting here, grooming you with their own hands. We can actually feel comfort from the discovery that somebody on the other side of the planet is going through the same experience we are and feel, I’m not alone. We can even take comfort reading about a fictional character, and there’s no primate out there that can feel better in life just by listening to Beethoven. So, the range of supports that we’re capable of is extraordinary.”—Sapolsky

Key Concepts: psychosocial stress, non-life-threatening stressors, Type A personality, hippocampus, atrophy
Key Scholar: Robert Sapolsky

Reading 5: Social Neuroscience of Stress



Ito, T. A. & Kubota, J. T. (2017). *Social neuroscience*. In R. Biswas-Diener & E. Diener (Eds), *Noba textbook series: Psychology*. Champaign, IL: DEF publishers. DOI: nobaproject.com

Social neuroscience is a new field that applies the principles of neuroscience in combination with certain theories, to understand how other people influence both mental processes and behavior. Social neuroscientists also explore how we react to social stress and which brain structures are involved in this process. In this reading, you will discover the neuroscience underlying the insidious process of social categorization. Rather than relying on self-reports, researchers evaluate the automaticity of this process using instruments such as EEG and fMRI. Social neuroscientists study how our social interactions breed stress. Neuroendocrinological findings indicate that our perception of being judged by others and categorized by others can be extremely stressful. We are stressed when we give a speech or interact with outgroup members; we are stressed when the prospect of being judged becomes palpable.

Key Concepts: amygdala, fMRI, EEG, social categorization, social neuroscience, mPFC, stereotypes, functional neuroanatomy, neuroendocrinology, outgroup, ingroup

Reading 6: The ACE Score



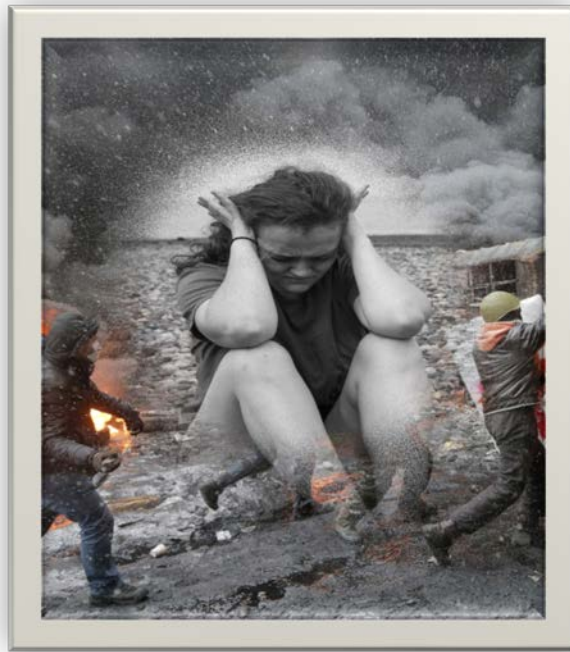
Stevens, J.E. (2012, October). The Adverse Childhood Experiences Study — the largest, most important public health study you never heard of — began in an obesity clinic. Retrieved from <https://acestoohigh.com/2012/10/03/the-adverse-childhood-experiences-study-the-largest-most-important-public-health-study-you-never-heard-of-began-in-an-obesity-clinic/>.

In this landmark study, Dr. Vincent Felitti and Dr. Robert Anda surveyed upwards of 17,000 subjects, inquiring about their childhood history of trauma and familial dysfunction. With ten simple questions, researchers could assign an ACE score to each participant. This score predicted the likelihood of these participants to battle medical problems, mental health problems and social problems as adults. “The stress of severe and chronic childhood trauma – such as being regularly hit, constantly belittled and berated, watching your father often hit your mother – releases hormones that physically damage a child’s developing brain.”

Key Concepts: ACE Score, toxic stress

Key Scholars: Dr. Robert Anda, Dr. Vincent Felitti

Reading 7: PTSD



National Center for PTSD. (June 2016). *Understanding PTSD and PTSD Treatment* [Brochure]. (N.P.) (n.p.).

When faced with a life-threatening experience, we may develop PTSD. For some, trauma may affect their lives for only a few weeks; for others, the effects may be felt for several months or longer. If the symptoms persist for longer than several months, a PTSD diagnosis will most likely be given. Not being able to get over a traumatic event is not a sign of weakness; we all handle trauma differently. It is of paramount importance that you seek treatment if symptoms persist. PTSD is treatable and the prognosis is quite good if you stay with the treatment.

Key Concepts: PTSD, Talk Therapy, Prolonged Exposure Therapy (PE), Cognitive Processing Therapy (CPT), Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR), Stress Inoculation Training (SIT), SSRIs

Reflections:

- 1. Describe what was unique about Selye's conceptualization of the stress response relative to Cannon's model.**
- 2. As you read through the common signs and symptoms of stress, do you see any that pertain to you? How might understanding the biology of stress help you to ameliorate these symptoms?**
- 3. Describe at least one personal example of each of the following: acute stress, episodic stress, chronic stress (if applicable). What are some environmental factors that might breed chronic stress? Do you feel that our culture serves as a petri dish for chronic stress? Explain.**
- 4. Assess the social hierarchies to which you belong. Do you feel that your perceived ranking serves as a stressor in your life? How might you combat this force?**
- 5. If social categorization is an automatic process, to which we all fall prey, why should we persist in trying to understand it?**
- 6. How could knowing your ACE score benefit you? How could knowing your ACE score be harmful? Explain.**

Module 5: Coping and Mental Illness

Learning Objectives:

- Identify the strategies and tools necessary to cultivate a lifestyle of wellness.
- Understand the self-imposed as well as external obstacles to taking personal responsibility for coping.
- Become familiar with positive psychology and behavioral theories of enhancing mental health through perspective taking and daily practice.
- Increase appreciation for the spiritual path to coping and living well.
- Identify Freudian theory of the unconscious and dream analysis as it pertains to self-discovery and understanding.
- Identify the current standards used to assess and diagnose mental illness.
- Understand the benefits of psychotherapy and gain appreciation for the various forms.
- Understand the potential benefits and drawbacks of psychotropic medication.
- Gain greater appreciation for the similarities and differences among individuals who struggle with mental health.

Keywords: Resilience, Learned Optimism, Dream Analysis, Mindfulness, Psychotherapy, Posttraumatic Growth, Psychotropic Treatment

Problems are not the problem; coping is the problem.

–Virginia Satir



["Overcoming Adversity"](#) by Alrman Magazine, 9/2014,
CC BY-ND 2.0

Self-Help Strategies

“If you feel you have control over your own life, you have gotten over the first hurdle to creating change in your circumstances. If you don’t feel you have control over your life, it is important that you take back control. It is very difficult to feel well when you are not in charge of your own life.”

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) (Nov. 2002). *Recovery and wellness lifestyle: A self-help guide*. [SMA-3718](#).

Reading 1: [Recovery and Wellness Lifestyle – A Self-help Guide](#)

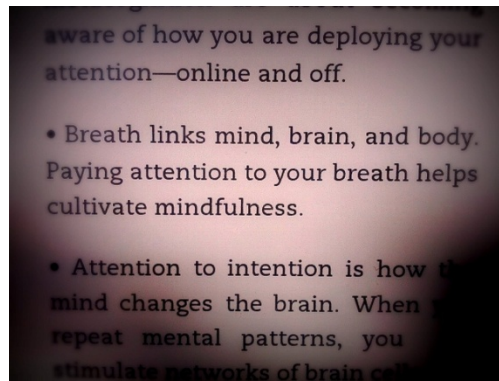
According to the American Psychological Association (APA), [resilience](#) (or being able to adapt and thrive when faced with adversity) is something that we all commonly possess. The problem is that people often fail to apply tools of resiliency when they need it most or consistently over time. As Virginia Satir suggested, the root of problems is failing to employ coping mechanisms that would help us to successfully recover and better manage stress. Especially when it comes to tragedy, natural disaster, or personal trauma learning to use effective strategies can help us to evade a downward spiral into despair, and potentially for some, mental illness. SAMSHA’s self-help guide encourages consumers to assume responsibility and control for personal mental wellness by actively questioning our current dilemmas and habits, determining how we could improve our condition, and seeking the resources and experiences that will effectively move us toward recovery and well-being.



[“Optimism”](#) by Marina del Castell, 5/2016
CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

Reading 2: [Learned Optimism – The Cup Half Full](#)

New York Time’s bestselling author, Christina Dodd, once stated, “If you cannot see the bright side of life, polish the dull side.” You may have heard sayings with a similar message like, “The grass isn’t always greener on the other side. It’s green where you water it.” Optimism may not always seem the most natural choice in the face of difficulty, yet, Seligman suggests that we can learn how to cultivate this spirit and begin to see the hidden rainbow amidst the clouds. The [Learned Optimism Test](#) can help you better understand where you stand on the spectrum of pessimism to optimism. A brief score [interpretation](#) will assist you in determining what aspects of optimism need boosting.



["Breath"](#) by Clint Lalonde, 7/2012, CC BY 2.0

"Mindfulness is attention; it's the capacity to recognize what's happening in each moment. What's happening here is, you are turning on the tap and the water is flowing out for you. In Plum Village, in France, our water supply occasionally gets cut off. Every time that happens, we're reminded that it's a hardship when we don't have water, and a happiness when we do. We can recognize happiness only when we remember the times of suffering!"(p13)

Hanh, Thich Nhat (2011). *Peace is every breath: A practice for our busy lives*. New York, NY: HarperCollins.

Reading 3: [Mindfulness Ways to Find Peace and Happiness](#)

Eckhart Tolle, Best-selling author of *The Power of Now* and *A New Earth*, expressed ideas about coping with life's challenges that have been widely regarded as ingenious in their simplicity and timeless in their relevancy. Could the struggle to tackle our worldly problems be overcome through internal growth and enhanced self-awareness? Are we going about the business of problem solving all wrong by focusing on external solutions? What is the role of spiritual connection with a higher power or the greater universe and humanity? In this reading, writer Sourav Adhikari describes 15 of Mr. Tolle's most powerful practices to build happiness and freedom from the inside-out.

The dream is the liberation of the spirit from the pressure of external nature, a detachment of the soul from the letters of matter.

–Sigmund Freud



[“Dream”](#) by Mirjana Veljovic, 7/2017, CC BY 2.0

Reading 4: [Dream Analysis for Deeper Understanding](#)

Why do we dream? Does it serve a purpose beyond simple escape from life’s pressures? Could dreams hold an uninhibited glimpse into our deepest desires or most gripping challenges? According to Freud, dreams can be deconstructed into [manifest content](#) (or what we actually remember from the dream) and [latent content](#) (the hidden meaning behind what we are seeing and experiencing in the dream). From this perspective, our wildly imaginative and seemingly bizarre dreams could be a window into our [unconscious](#) – which is thought to have a significant impact on our thoughts and behavior. In dealing with life’s trials, dreams may be a valuable tool for self-reflection and discovery.

[Mental Illness and Therapy](#)

“From the prenatal period into early adulthood, there are many opportunities to support the mental health of our young people. From providing support for families, to promoting programs in schools, to providing access to a full spectrum of mental health support in the community, we can address risk factors and intervene early. Unfortunately, signs are often ignored and not met with supports for the child. When we do not act early to support our children and young adults, we face consequences like suicide, incarceration, homelessness, and school drop-out. This is not the result of a particular individual’s actions but of a system that does not yet promote and support mental health as needed.”

Mental Health America (MHA) (2016). *The State of Mental Health in America* [2016 MH in America Final Report](#)



[“Psychological disorder”](#) by Alejandro Mallea, 4/2010, CC BY 2.0

Reading 5: [Mental Disorders](#)

In 2013, the [Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders – Fifth Edition \(DSM-5\)](#) was published to establish new guidelines for assessing and identifying mental disorders along a continuum of symptoms. While the same categorical approach for distinguishing different disorders remain, this new text ushered in a fundamentally progressive approach to understanding the impact of mental illness from a dimensional perspective. Clinicians are now better equipped to understand and describe mental status that is more closely aligned with the unique experience of patients. Currently, mental illness has reached epidemic proportions with a reported 1 in 5 adults meeting diagnostic criteria in any given year ([National Alliance on Mental Illness, 2017](#)).

At the root of this dilemma is the way we view mental health in this country. Whether an illness affects your heart, your leg or your brain, it’s still an illness, and there should be no distinction.

–Michelle Obama

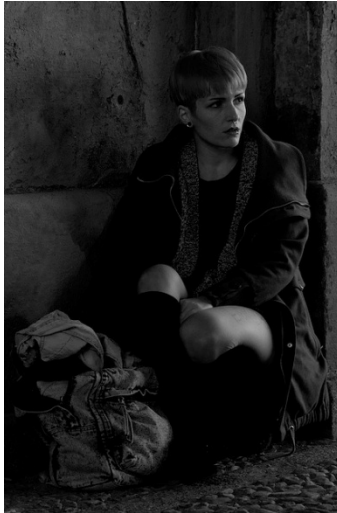


[“Help!”](#) by John Spooner, 12/2008, CC BY 2.0

Reading 6: [Psychotherapy](#)

If you were to stumble, and injure your leg, a helping hand would be welcome. A visit to the orthopedist may reveal a need for rest and elevation or surgery if the injury is bad enough. When you hobble around with a cast for several weeks, you may find that others pity your struggle and want to assist you in doing

tasks that are now measurably more difficult. This is normal and to be expected for physical injury or illness. Somehow, these cases are not attributed to a moral failing, your own distraction, or poor decision-making. They are attributable, rather, to accidents, being in the wrong place at the wrong time, or just bad luck. Mental illness, which could also be brought on by accidents (e.g. brain injury), being in the wrong place at the wrong time (e.g. trauma or assault), or just bad luck (e.g. genetics) do not get the same write off or benefit of the doubt. Yet, a helping hand, compassion, understanding, therapy, and intervention could do every bit as good to the sufferer of mental affliction. In the reading above, explore the proven benefits of psychotherapy as well as the most common types.



["Refugee"](#) by Contra Curva, 12/2012, CC BY 2.0

"Trauma is an emotional response to a terrible event like an accident, rape, or natural disaster. Immediately after the event, shock and denial are typical. Longer term reactions include unpredictable emotions, flashbacks, strained relationships and even physical symptoms like headaches or nausea. While these feelings are normal, some people have difficulty moving on with their lives. Psychologists can help these individuals find constructive ways of managing their emotions."

American Psychological Association, (Aug, 2013). ["Recovering emotionally from a disaster"](#)

Reading 7: [Posttraumatic Growth](#)

Human beings are equipped with a magical power known as resilience. We can wield this power if we choose by becoming informed and seeking resources. However, it can be difficult to exercise resilience when one is plagued by overwhelming grief, regret, and worry. In the darkest of times, it often takes support to realize this resilient spirit. Psychologists Richard Tedeschi and Lawrence Calhoun, who spent many years working with bereaved parents, proffered that through unimaginable loss and pain, people can find the strength to help themselves and others. Posttraumatic Growth is a theory that casts a light on possible benefits of overcoming severe stressors – a divergence from the largely negative view of [Post Traumatic Stress Disorder](#).



"Pills" by Victor, 1/2012, CC BY 2.0

"The pharmaceutical industry has been very successful in marketing psychotropic drugs to physicians and the public. From 1996 to 2005, the drug industry tripled its spending on marketing, including a fivefold increase in direct-to-consumer advertising. Several studies have found that prescription drug ads don't adequately explain side effects and can adversely affect decisions by patients and doctors. In one study, American patients were more than twice as likely to request advertised drugs than patients in Canada, where most direct-to-consumer advertising is prohibited (Canadian Medical Association Journal, 2003)."
Smith, B. (June, 2012). [Inappropriate prescribing](#). *Monitor on Psychology*, Vol. 43(6)

Reading 8: [How to Think About Medication](#)

Proper psychotropic intervention can be integral to a successful mental health treatment program. There are effective medication options for just about all of the major mental disorders. Under close supervision of an appropriately licensed mental health professional (usually a psychiatrist), the right medication can help the sufferer become more receptive to other forms of treatment, including talk therapy. There is a possible downside as well – including a tendency toward overmedication or over-reliance on medication alone to address mental health problems. The article above details important considerations from a consumer perspective specific to the use of anti-depressants.

Reflections

- 1) What are some of the biggest barriers to taking personal responsibility for mental wellness?
- 2) What are some of the best, and most empirically supported, strategies for cultivating a wellness lifestyle when under stress?
- 3) What could you say to someone who dismisses *learned optimism* as simple wishful thinking or a Pollyanna complex?
- 4) What is the role of spirituality in learning to be happy and coping with troubles?
- 5) Describe the concept of mindfulness and how it works in promoting subjective well-being.
- 6) What are your thoughts on religion as a means to cope with life's biggest problems?
- 7) What do you think Sigmund Freud meant by the statement, "Dreams are often most profound when they seem the most crazy."?
- 8) How would you describe the state of mental illness in our country? In what ways does mental health prevention and intervention need to progress in order to meet the needs of the people?
- 9) What are some of the most common forms of psychotherapy? What is the rate of success in using these types of therapy?
- 10) Describe the pros and cons of using psychotropic medication to cope with mental disorders.

Module 6: Positive Psychology's Approach to Wellness



Learning Objectives:

- Briefly describe the evolution of wellness beginning with *Ayurveda* and including at least five major changes. **(APA Goal 1, outcome 1.1)(APA Goal 1, SLO 1.2c)**
- Define wellness and well-being. **(APA Goal 1, outcome 1.1)**
- Identify the dimensions of wellness. **(APA Goal 1, outcome 1.1)**
- Define mind, body and spirit. **(APA Goal 1, SLO 1.1b.)**
- Understand the biological value of sleeping and eating well. . **(APA Goal 1, SLO 1.3a)**
- Understand the science of meditation.
- Define mindfulness and provide an example. . **(APA Goal 1, SLO 1.3a)**
- Identify techniques to increase mindfulness. . **(APA Goal 1, SLO 1.3a)**
- Understand the science of yoga. **(APA Goal 1, SLO 1.3a)**
- Explore the benefits of the ocean breath. **(APA Goal 1, SLO 1.3a)**
- Define spirituality. **(APA Goal 1, SLO 1.3a)**
- Differentiate between spirituality and religiosity. **(APA Goal 1, SLO 1.3a)**
- Identify ways in which one can be spiritual. **(APA Goal 1, SLO 1.3a)**

Reading 1: The History of Wellness:



“India” by Chetan Karkhanis, 7/2013, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

Although a buzzword that has recently dominated health-centered conversations, wellness is a concept that conveys the importance of nurturing the mind, body and spirit, which has been around for thousands of years. *Ayurveda* is a holistic system of natural antidotes that fuel the power of the body’s self-healing powers, which originated in India 5000 years ago. In 500 B.C., Hippocrates emphasized the powerful role played by diet in the preservation of one’s health. The emphasis on wellness has waxed and waned across the centuries, with certain cultures steadfast in their homeopathic protocols and others focusing on the tenets of biomedicine to eradicate disease until the prudence of illness prevention becomes undeniable as a means of containing the swell of rising health care costs. As the concept of wellness became a well-researched alternative to traditional biomedicine, the nascent influence in the 1950s has morphed into a 304 trillion-dollar global wellness industry.

Key Words: wellness, Ayurveda, holistic, homeopathy, osteopathy, Global Wellness Institute (GWI), National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (NCCAM)

Reading 2: Dimensions of Wellness



“FruitShare-Week1” by Christopher Paquette, 8/2009, CC BY 2.0

When we think about wellness, we often think about eating well or exercising; however, the concept of wellness includes multiple dimensions. There is emotional wellness and occupational wellness, just to name a few. You will find as you read the above reading, that wellness is not just about eating well or sleeping well, it is about taking an [inventory](#) of all aspects of our lives and evaluating whether we are engaging in practices that are conducive to wellness. We may ask ourselves, “Is my environment conducive to wellness?” To answer this, we need to evaluate for the presence of violence, toxins, or obstacles to serenity such as clutter and disorganization. Heightening our awareness of the dimensions of wellness can inform us of where we need to look to make changes, and hopefully achieve balance. **Key Words: Emotional Wellness, Spiritual Wellness, Environmental Wellness, Intellectual Wellness, Physical Wellness, Financial Wellness, Occupational Wellness, Social Wellness**

Reading 3: Why Do We Sleep?



“Sleeping” by Luca Prasso, 10/2005, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

We live in a world where we always feel like we never have enough waking hours to accomplish all that we desire. How can we possibly get all of our studying completed; and maintain a close watch on every human’s Instagram account; and compose the myriad texts that keep us connected; and binge watch on our favorite shows; and dare I say it: SLEEP? Sleep, the enigmatic force that we delude ourselves into believing is of little importance. We rationalize our self-inflicted, sleep-depriving regimens by chanting the banal statement, “I will be able to sleep when I’m dead.” The irony is that if we don’t sleep, we will die. Although scientists have not been able to definitively explain the biological significance of sleep, they do know that without it, a human can’t survive. Much of what researchers do

know about sleep comes from sleep [deprivation studies](#) (**Reading 4**). Research has revealed that without sleep, we may find ourselves wandering through a dark corridor to psychosis. When we explore [what happens to our bodies when we don't sleep](#) (**Reading 5**), we become astutely aware of how insignificant all of those things are that rob us of our slumber.

Key Words: Sleep Deprivation Studies, REM sleep, plasticity, glia cells, working memory
Reading 6: College Student's Guide to Nutrition



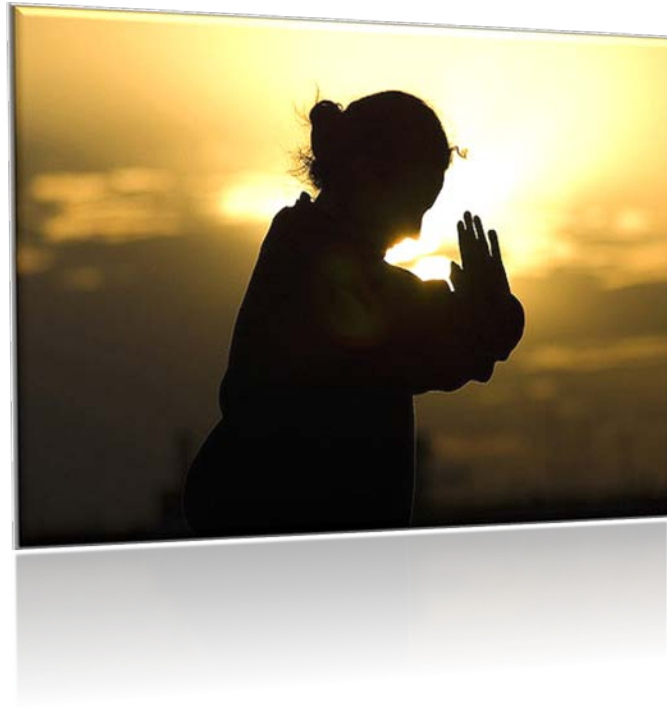
“Vegan Food Pyramid” by Becky Striepe, 3/2010, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

Diet can be one of the most difficult aspects of wellness to manage, especially if you are a college student. The irregularity of a college student's schedule lends itself to unhealthy eating practices. It is not uncommon for a college student to experience significant weight gain during their freshman year of college ([Reading 7](#)). Our food choices can potentially thwart any effort made in improving the other aspects of wellness. If we sleep eight hours, run three miles per day, but consume 4,000 calories of fats and carbs, we are going to feel miserable. Our food choices impact our energy levels, our weight management, and our cognition, just to name a few. College students tend to operate on a very tight budget, making an all organic grocery purchase implausible. As you will discover in Reading 6, there are practical ways in which a college student, with minimal financial resources can eat well. The food pyramid in the above picture was replaced in 2014 with [MyPlate](#). The pyramid provided information about how many servings from each group we should consume. *MyPlate* focuses more on how our plate should look at mealtime. Per the new *MyPlate* guidelines, we should consume less carbs and more veggies and fruits. If you must ask yourself whether you have eaten a vegetable or a fruit in a while, you are not

consuming enough. Another rule of thumb: go for the rainbow. If your plate is colorful, and not as the result of chemical-laden, lab-synthesized foods, but due to nature's dye, then you are making progress towards healthful eating.

Key Words: MyPlate, whole grains, refined grains

Video 1: Science of Meditation



"Meditation" by Tarcio Saraiva, 3/2007, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

If someone told you that you would feel a greater sense of peace, get sick less, and feel less anxious if you blocked extraneous thoughts by meditating for just a few minutes a day, would you do it? Such a minimal commitment, and yet so many of us choose to live in the insanity of our chaotic world because we simply don't have the time or the patience to break from the noise. Meditation, the ancient practice of quieting the mind has the power to physically change the brain. Some practice meditation by reciting a mantra; others by focusing on their breath. The tricky part: focus only on your mantra or your breathing and nothing else. Block all extraneous thoughts. Some avoid sitting alone at all costs, for the reels of the past can produce a cacophony ironically silenced only by noise. Science reveals to us that meditating regularly increases gray matter in the structures of the brain associated with learning, memory and emotional regulation, while decreasing gray matter in areas associated with stress and fear. Meditation changes brain wave activity. Meditation improves our immune response to illness. Meditation protects the telomeres, which act as protective caps on the ends of chromosomes. For a ten minute per day investment, you can engage in a practice that has the power to not only change your brain, but also your DNA. I challenge you to find a meditative practice that appeals to you, and commit to practicing

this for just ten minutes a day, several days per week. Log your experience and evaluate whether there are notable differences in your daily functioning.

Key Words: meditation, gray matter, amygdala, telomere, telomerase

Video 2: Guided Meditation Exercise



"Meditation" by Christos Tsoumplekas, 9/2015, CC BY-NC 2.0

In this video, you will be guided through a meditation exercise. At first, you may find this very challenging; however, if you try it several times per week, you will find that calming your mind will become a more manageable task. Meditation requires practice and persistence. Keep a journal logging your meditative experiences. Perhaps the approach in the video does not appeal to you. Find another approach and log your experience. With persistence, you should be able to see notable changes in your ability to calm your mind.

The written log will allow for you to see the progression.

Video 3: Science of Yoga



"Yoga" by Matt Madd, 6/2014, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

Yoga, a type of meditation has the power to change the brain, increase flexibility, and decrease anxiety levels. This video describes in detail how yoga affects the brain. There are many [different types of yoga](#), and a novice yogi must find the style of yoga with which she/he feels the most comfortable. Some types of yoga, such as power yoga are a way to achieve an intense workout through intense stretching. Yoga takes practice and patience. The different poses can be challenging; however, the rewards are worth the effort.

Key Words:

Video 4: What is Spirituality?



“ Meditation I” by Paul Anglada, 1/2013, CC BY-NC-SA 2.0)

Do you ever find yourself enamored by the beauty of nature? Do you ever find yourself moved by compassion to the point of tears? Do you ever find yourself so connected to another person that you ache at the fleeting thought of loss? Spirituality is not about subscribing to a particular doctrine. It is not about attending worship in the finest of cathedrals. It is not about following protocols for accepting communion. Spirituality is about the search for the *spirit*, that which connects us to other souls; that which connects us to the majestic sun as it dances on the horizon. Jung believed that life has a spiritual purpose beyond material goals. When we saturate our psyche with thoughts of our material world, we establish a spiritual impasse. Chopra discusses in the video how yoga can open the mind to the deeper elements of the self. There are many ways to navigate your spiritual journey; the *how*, is part of your search.

Key Words: Spirituality, Religion

Reflections:

1. What impact will the shift in focus from sickness to wellness have on the future of the healthcare industry?
2. Take a personal inventory of how you are practicing wellness in each of the wellness dimensions discussed your reading. Is there room for improvement? Discuss.
3. Discuss why you feel that some people have an aversion to yoga and other meditative practices even though science highlights the health benefits of such practices.
4. Do you agree with the switch from the nutrition pyramid to *MyPlate*? Explain.
5. Describe the differences between being spiritual and being religious. Describe how spirituality and religiosity vary across generations.

MODULE 7: INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION, FRIENDSHIPS, AND FAMILY

Learning Objectives:

- Explore and understand the many variables involved in interpersonal communication.
- Identify the common barriers to effective communication.
- Increase awareness and appreciation for the influence of gender on communication.
- Identify the ego states that influence the quality of communications according to Transactional Analysis.
- Identify the characteristics of a toxic relationship and strategies to manage it.
- Become familiar with the concepts that impact our interactions with family members according to Family Systems Theory
- Learn ways to improve cross-cultural communication.

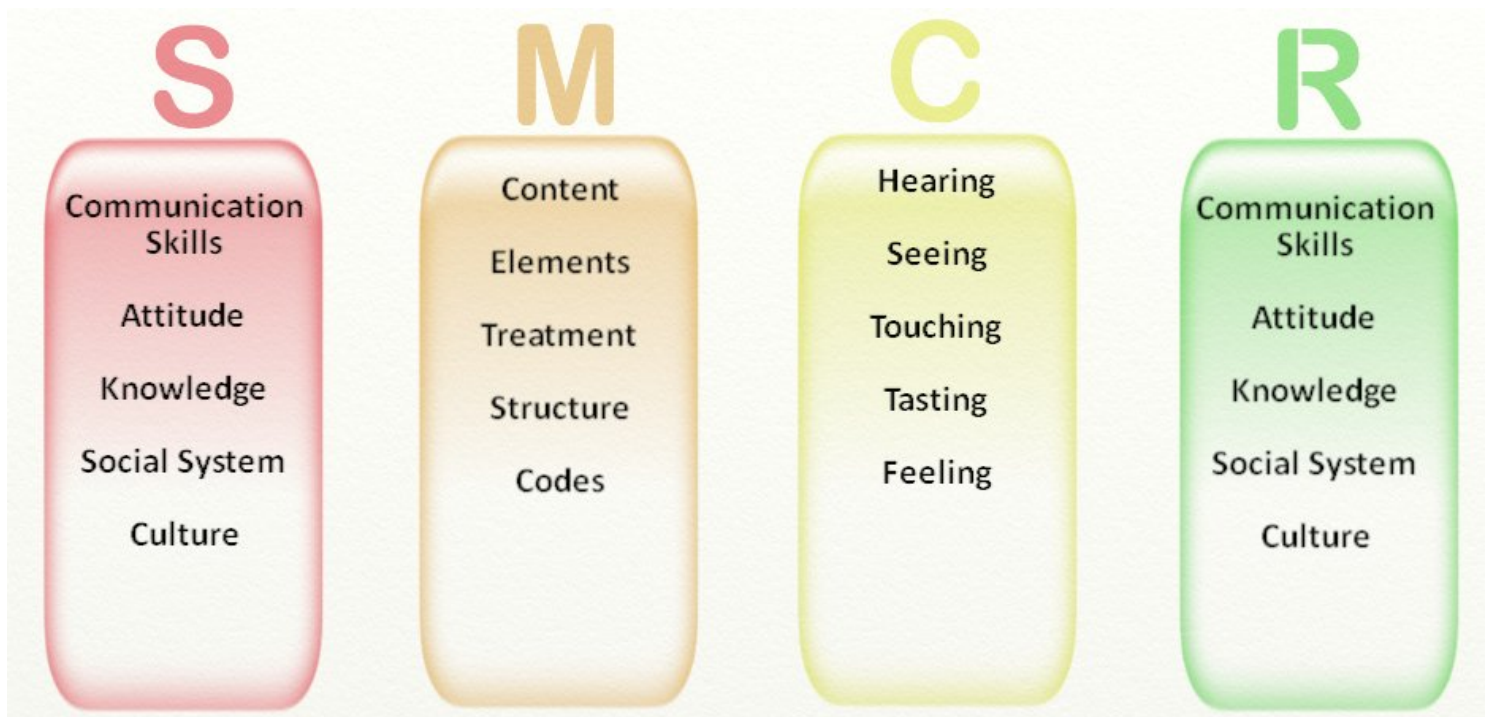
Key Words: Transactional Analysis, Ego States, Family Systems Theory, cross-cultural communication, Toxic friendships, Interpersonal Communication Style, Gender and communication style

“To effectively communicate, we must realize that we are all different in the way we perceive the world and use this understanding as a guide to our communication with others.”

-Tony Robbins



President Barack Obama, Professor Henry Louis Gates Jr. and Sergeant James Crowley toast at the start of their meeting in the Rose Garden of the White House, July 30, 2009 after Crowley was accused of racially profiling Gates. [Official White House Photo by Pete Souza](#)



["Berlo's Communication Model"](#) by JasonSWrench, 12/2009, CC-BY 3.0

Reading 1: [Interpersonal Communication Style](#)

What do we hope to accomplish when speaking to others? Is the intention to persuade? Is there an aim to demonstrate knowledge or status? Or could the intent be to learn more about another person's view? Or perhaps our objective is to strictly inform. Regardless of what brings two people (or more) to a conversation, there are a few essential characteristics involved. There is a directional interaction in which a sender dispenses information to be interpreted by a receiver. Both play an integral role in the effectiveness of communication. Also, shared knowledge can impact the clarity of what is said as well as

what is unspoken. To a large extent, the style of communication will have a direct influence on how well the message is received and understood as well as impact perceptions of the speaker and the target. Again, communication is not always about what is said but also what the speaker is attempting to convey about him or herself or the target. In the model depicted above, you will see that between the Sender (and his various influences of culture and knowledge, for example) and the Receiver are myriad elements of the Message itself and a cluster of different channels through which the message may be communicated. As you may guess, it is remarkably easy to misconstrue messages when so many variables are involved. In this first reading we explore different styles of communication identified by Robert Norton. Consider which best represents your most dominant style and why.



[“elderly men and women discuss”](#) by X1klima, 4/2014, CC BY-ND 2.0

“From the kindergarten classroom to the corporate boardroom, men and women are socialized to communicate differently. Unfortunately, instead of taking advantage of this inherent diversity in a way that might facilitate camaraderie and creativity in the workplace, we often find colleagues at odds with one another because of their different inter-personal communication styles. The most problematic issue that arises from this discrepancy is the disproportionate number of times that men interrupt women.”

Moore, Leslie (Jan 2017). Gal interrupted, why men interrupt women and how to avert this in the workplace. [Women @ Forbes](#)

Reading 2: [Is your communication style dictated by your gender?](#)

Top Three Communication Strengths for Females	Top Three Communication Weaknesses for Females
1. Ability to read body language and pick up nonverbal cues	1. Overly emotional
2. Good listening skills	2. Meandering – won't get to the point
3. Effective display of empathy	3. Not authoritative
Top Three Communication Strengths for Males	Top Three Communication Weaknesses for Males
1. Commanding physical presence	1. Overly blunt and direct
2. Direct and to-the-point interactions	2. Insensitive to audience reactions
3. Effective display of power	3. Too confident in own opinion

Gonman, Carol (3/2016) "Is your communication style dictated by your gender?" [Forbes](#).



["generations"](#) by Paul Varuni, 12/2008, CC BY 2.0

Reading 3: [Transactional Analysis](#)

Who are you when you interact with a parent, friend, partner, or professor? Do you bring your same self to each of these encounters? Are there subtle, and possibly unconscious, changes you make when relating to someone that are based on established behavior patterns or expectancies? We all make slight adjustments to our style of communication. This is due, in part, to unspoken and shared knowledge and both positive and negative past experiences. In the case of a negative past, and possible lingering guilt, shame, or resentment, subsequent interactions can easily ignite and trigger these emotions and sabotage an otherwise mature conversation. Eric Berne, M.D. described the many transactions (independent discourse) we make and how we may unconsciously embody an [ego state](#) predicated on our perceptions.

As you review his theory of *Transactional Analysis*, consider your past interactions with important people in your life. Could you attribute any ineffective discussions to non-complementary transactions? What steps could you take to maintain an Adult ego state -- especially in challenging interactions?



["Friendship"](#) by Rainier Martin Ampongan, 2/2015, CC BY 2.0

There is a famous quote that states: *"You are allowed to terminate toxic relationships. You are allowed to walk away from people who hurt you. You are allowed to be angry and selfish and unforgiving. You don't owe anyone an explanation, for taking care of yourself."* Another popular quote reads: *"You can't just give up on someone because the situation's not ideal. Great relationships aren't great because they have no problems. They're great because both people care enough about the other person to find a way to make it work."* Which one should you abide by when considering your relationships? Are both points of view equally viable?

Reading 4: [Toxic Friends: Less Friend, More Foe](#)

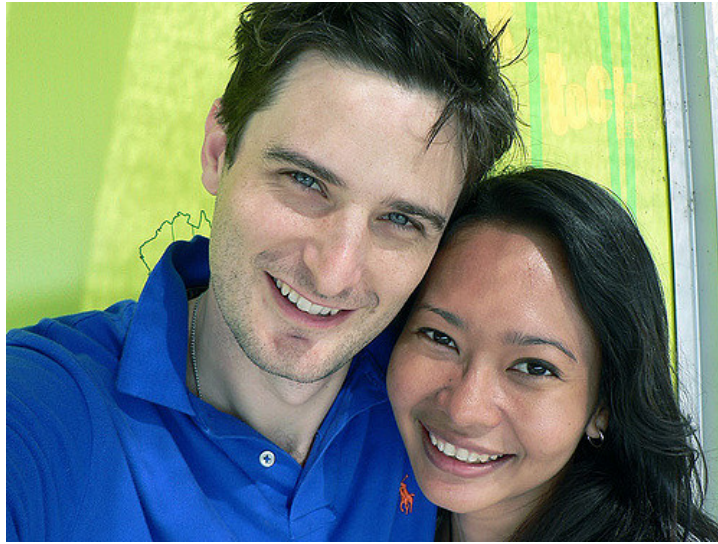
One of our important tasks as human beings is to delineate destructive from strong social connections. As social animals, we are drawn to networks and develop particular bonds with a smaller cohort of individuals. This is important for our survival from a Darwinian perspective, as well as our mental well-being from a sociopsychological perspective. As young children, we may not have been very discerning about selected friendships. It may take an instance (or two) of betrayal to spark a more selective vetting process. Even still, we make mistakes and sometimes befriend those who ultimately hurt us or do not have our best interest in mind. A more drastic version of this is marrying someone and later walking into divorce court after realizing a bad choice was made. So how can you get better at distinguishing the relationships you should put to rest from those you should strive to maintain? Is it the length of the friendship? Should only abusive relationships be terminated? Review the above article from WebMD on the subtle, and not-so-subtle, symptoms of toxicity and suggestions for how to handle it.



["Family"](#) by Patrick Magee, 7/2011, CC BY 2.0

Reading 5: [Family Systems Theory](#)

As we grow into our own identities on Erikson's psychosocial timeline, we may pull from familial and worldly factors to inform our beliefs. As adults, society views our actions in isolation and assigns sole responsibility to our own motivations, thought life, and moral standards. Whether we have a childhood filled with love, affirmation, and thanksgiving or one marred by emotional, physical, or sexual abuse, we navigate our daily adult lives as self-determined individuals with free will. This in no way accounts for any mental or tangible scars from surviving a dysfunctional family unit. In Family Systems Theory, Dr. Bowen established that the family unit has a profound emotional impact on individuals. By understanding this influence, we can better understand how maintaining established roles can either promote bonding or fuel ongoing dysfunction. As you read Dr. Bowen's theory, consider how the [eight interlocking concepts](#) continue to impact you personally and in your communications with family members.



“Together” by Salihan, 3/2009, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

“People fail to get along because they fear each other; they fear each other because they don’t know each other; they don’t know each other because they have not communicated with each other.”

-Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Reading 6: [Cross-Cultural Communication](#)

One of the many benefits of the college experience is meeting people of diverse backgrounds and learning about other cultures. For some, the prospect of communicating with people who seem very different is unnerving and scary. This nervousness can contribute to miscommunication and generally awkward encounters. Perhaps realizing that most people experience a little trepidation when embarking on a new journey alleviates some of the strain of an otherwise enlightening and rewarding experience. As you read the above article on the communicationtheory.org website, consider the barriers to effective cross-cultural communication. In what ways could you work toward more fruitful and positive interactions with people of different backgrounds?

REFLECTIONS

- 1) Using the model of Interpersonal Communication Style, which aspect of communication do you think often leads to impaired understanding? Is the sender or receiver more typically at fault for misconstrued information?
- 2) Aside from the message itself, what else might a sender be attempting to communicate via word choice, body language, or even what is left unsaid?
- 3) Of the identified strengths and weaknesses of gendered communication style, which do you recognize in your own interactions?
- 4) What steps do you think organizations could take to enhance communication of both male and female employees?
- 5) What steps could you take to maintain an Adult ego state -- especially in challenging interactions?
- 6) How might Transactional Analysis explain perpetual dysfunction in families or romantic relationships?
- 7) What are some of the signs of a toxic friendship? How would you address an identified toxic relationship?
- 8) Consider examples of how established family patterns maintain dysfunctional interactions between members and impact our adult relationships.
- 9) What factors do you think prevent effective cross-cultural communication in your community?
- 10) How might a school encourage more fruitful and frequent cross-cultural communication among students?

Module 8: Romantic Relationships & Love



A couple kiss in front of love padlocks on the Pont Neuf in Paris. The city of Paris is organizing an auction of love locks from the Pont des Arts and other bridges, with profits going to groups that aid refugees. NPR
Chesnot/Getty Images

Love: that which we cannot define, that which we cannot understand. Such a simple word, yet such an enigmatic force that human kind has failed to create a language commensurate with its ineffable rapture. When we find it, we want the world to know it. We adorn our fingers with metals and gems hoping that our announcement does not go unnoticed. Or perhaps we engrave a lock and attach it to a bridge in the city of love. Pictured above is the *Pont des Arts*, a pedestrian bridge in Paris, France. For several years, lovers would bring a lock engraved with their names and attach it to the bridge. Once their lock was secured, they would toss the key into the Seine River below. The bridge became known as the “bridge of romance.” Tourists flocked to the bridge to leave their *love padlock*; Parisians balked at the “eye sore” and eventually the *love padlocks* were removed. The weight of the *love padlocks* was too much for the iron panels to bear, so the panels, locks and all, were removed. Upwards of 700,000 *love padlocks* were taken away, leaving behind the matching keys to corrode at the bottom of the river. This is such a beautiful metaphor for how we can clutter our hearts with the frivolity of symbols, and lose our ability to see the simple beauty of the river. Love is not about the cake, the diamonds, the tux, the gown, the revelry, the label, the gifts, etc. Love is about accepting another human being for who they are and for where they are in their lives. Love, in the words of Thich Nhat Hanh, is about “understanding.” Our only hope to grow in love with another human being is to try and to understand them.

Learning Objectives:

- ♥ Describe what kinds of additional information beyond personal experience are acceptable in developing behavioral explanations (i.e., popular press reports vs. scientific findings). (*APA Goal, SLO 2.2b*)
- ♥ Use scientific reasoning to interpret psychological phenomena. (*APA Goal 2, SLO 2.1*)
- ♥ Describe and understand key concepts, principles, and overarching themes in psychology. (*APA Goal 1, outcome 1.1*)
- ♥ Use basic psychological terminology, concepts, and theories in psychology (humanistic) to explain behavior and mental processes. (*APA Goal 1, SLO 1.1b.*)
- ♥ Be able to recognize major historical events, theoretical perspectives, and figures in psychology and their link to trends in contemporary research. (*APA Goal 1, SLO 1.2c*)
- ♥ Be able to identify the neural correlates of the four temperament dimensions.
- ♥ Be able to identify Fisher's stages of romantic love and describe the unique hormonal pattern of each stage.
- ♥ Be able to describe the different personality types identified by **Helen Fisher**.
- ♥ Be able to discuss **Chapman's** five love languages and the implications of his work in both your personal life and a clinical setting.
- ♥ Be able to conceptualize love in terms of **Sternberg's** theory of love.
- ♥ Be able to identify the six things that predict divorce based on the work of John Gottman.
- ♥ Know the role and significance of the **NVADV**.
- ♥ Be able to define domestic violence/abuse.
- ♥ Be able to identify the stages in **Lenore Walker's** *Cycle of Abuse*.
- ♥ Be able to identify **Virginia Satir's** different communication styles.

Reading 1: The Biology of Romantic Love



"romance", by hehaden, 02/2014, CC BY-NC 2.0

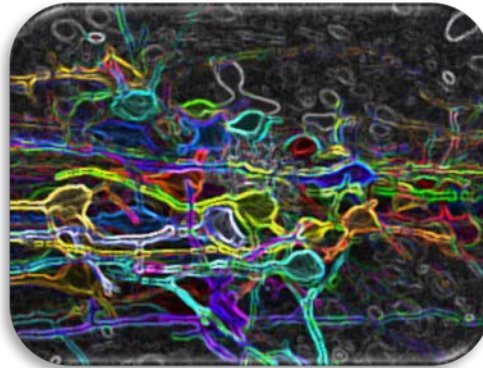
Helen Fisher, Ph.D., a biological anthropologist at Rutgers' University has studied love for decades. She has explored the biology of love as well as the psychology of love. She has looked at why we fall in love, how we fall in love and how we stay in love. She has analyzed the brain patterns of those who are in love, those who have been dumped and those who have never been in love. She has evaluated the differences and concluded that being in love changes the brain chemistry, which often translates into erratic behaviors. Professor Fisher contends that there are three stages to romantic love. First is lust, which is driven by the sex hormones, testosterone and estrogen. The second stage is attraction. This stage is fueled by dopamine adrenaline and serotonin. When you are in this stage you feel extreme euphoria when you are with your partner. You feel stress due to the increased adrenaline levels, which leaves your heart racing and your mouth parched. During this stage, according to Fisher, serotonin levels are reduced, resulting in one obsessing about their partner. At this stage, one's brain looks very similar to the brain of one suffering from OCD. The last stage is attachment. This stage is fueled by vasopressin and oxytocin. Oxytocin is released after copulation, making us feel more

attached to our partner. Fisher reports that “Casual sex isn’t always casual; it can trigger a host of powerful feelings.” *Casual* sex is actually pretty intense given the flood of hormones released afterwards, which can lead to a strong emotional attachment. As you read, be sure to take note of the key neurotransmitters and hormones that define each stage.

Key Terms: lust, attraction, attachment, adrenalin, vasopressin, dopamine, serotonin, testosterone, estrogen

Key Scholar: Helen Fisher, Ph.D.

Reading 2: Neural Correlates of Four Temperament Dimensions



“3D reconstruction of neurons, by ZEISS Microscopy”, 06/2014, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

Why him? Why her? Professor Fisher dedicated much of her research to not only identifying the biology of love, but also to elucidating the why of love. Why is it that we fall in love with one person and not another? She has identified four different temperaments, each associated with a different brain system. In this reading, you will gain insight into how our temperaments are driven by specific systems in the brain. Fisher contends that we may exhibit characteristics from all four systems, but that there will typically be two major temperaments that define our personality. She further contends that not all temperaments are equally compatible. The Fisher Temperament Inventory (FTI) was created to determine couple compatibility. Fisher has contracted with several dating services, such as Match.com, where this data is used to improve the pairing algorithms. In this reading, you will find that Fisher identified specific brain patterns that correlated with responses on the FTI, thus identifying brain regions associated with certain temperaments.

Key Terms: dopamine and related norepinephrine system, serotonin, testosterone, estrogen and oxytocin system, FTI, Four Temperament Dimensions: Curious/Energetic; Cautious/Social Norm Compliant; Analytical/Tough-minded; and Prosocial/Empathetic.

Reading 3: The Five Love Languages



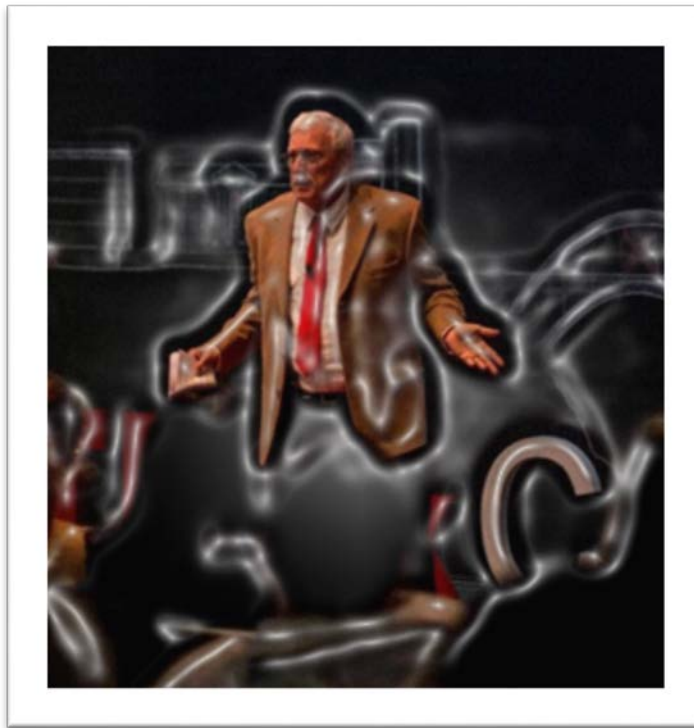
“Love” by Masachito Takemura, 02/2009, CC BY 2.0

Gary Chapman is the author of the NYT bestselling book, *The Five Love Languages*. Dr. Chapman published this book in 1995, with a series of love-language-themed books to follow. Serving as a pastor, Chapman engaged in countless hours of counseling married couples. Chapman theorized that we often show love in the way that we feel love. If you feel loved when your partner praises you, in accordance with Chapman’s theory, you most likely show love by praising your partner. Chapman contends that this can lead to a disconnect, as words of affirmation may not be the way that your partner feels love; words of affirmation may not be your partner’s *love language*. When couples fail to speak each other’s love language, the insidious festering of resentment and isolation can begin. Chapman created a quiz that allows for you to determine your love language. This is a great tool for someone and their partner. In the *Reading*, you will find this quiz along with information about your results. Chapman’s work, backed by qualitative support, is prevalent among clinicians. Many marriage counselors often allude to Chapman’s work to facilitate communication between couples about how love is perceived.

Key Terms: Love Languages, Words of Affirmation, Acts of Service, Physical Touch, Quality Time, Gift Giving

Key Person: Gary Chapman

Reading 4: Sternberg’s Theory of Love



"TedxCornell 2015: Traditions and Transitions by TedxCornell", 5/2015, CC BY-NC-ND-2.0

Robert J. Sternberg, a world-renowned psychologist, has proposed many theories, from theories on intelligence to theories on love. Sternberg's duplex theory of love is comprised of two elements: the triangular theory of love and the theory of love as a story. Using the triangle as a metaphor, Sternberg proposes that there are three components to love: intimacy, passion, and commitment. Sternberg contends that all three components interact with one another to create different kinds of love. Sternberg also proposes that everyone has their own story of what love is and that "...the triangles emanate" from these stories. If our story matches our partner's story, Sternberg states that our relationship will be more successful. The story might be viewed as our framework of love. What is our fantasy of true love? Is it being saved by some princess or some knight in shining armor? Is it a holy union rigidly governed by one's religious beliefs? As you read, you will gain a better understanding of the different kinds of love Sternberg proposed and how the *story* impacts the interaction of the different components.

Key Terms: Nonlove, Liking, Infatuated Love, Empty Love, Romantic Love, Companionate Love, Fatuous Love, Consummate Love, Duplex Theory of Love, Triangular Theory of Love, Theory of Love as a Story

Key Scholar: Robert J. Sternberg

Reading 5: Can We Predict the End of a Relationship?



“Protesting Against The 2013 Budget-Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse”, by William Murphy, 10/2013, CC BY-SA 2.0

John Gottman, Ph.D., has been studying marriage stability and divorce predictors for over 40 years. Both he and his wife head the Gottman institute, where the Gottman method is practiced. The Gottman method is their approach to marriage counseling, and many therapists become certified in the *Gottman Method Couples Therapy*. Gottman identified 6 things that predict divorce (or break-up) while observing couples in the “Love Lab” apartment at the University of Washington. The couples were instructed to revisit an ongoing disagreement. As Gottman observed, he realized that the way couples argue is a key indicator of whether they have the tools to stay together. “Certain kinds of negativity, if allowed to run rampant, are so lethal to a relationship” that Gottman referred to them as the Four Horsemen. As you review the list, it is important to note if any of these patterns exist in your own relationships. Our awareness about faulty patterns can help us to improve how we interact with our partner. Positive communication is a key ingredient to successful relationships. In the next reading, you will read about Satir’s communication styles, which may be an eye-opener for many.

Key Terms: Harsh Startup, The Four Horsemen, Contempt, Criticism, Defensiveness, Stonewalling, Flooding, Body Language, Failed Repair Attempts, Bad Memories

Key Scholar: John Gottman

Reading 6: Satir’s Communication Styles



"satir", by patriziasoliani, 03/2011, CC BY-NC 2.0

Virginia Satir was a famous marriage and family therapist who had an uncanny ability to connect with people. She facilitated family sessions where she would teach family members how to communicate with each other more effectively. Satir identified five different communication styles, with leveling reflecting a healthy way to communicate. As you read about the different communication styles, ponder which one reflects how you communicate. Are you a leveler or a blamer? Gaining insight into how we communicate can help us to better understand what approach may be more effective. If you are a blamer and your partner is a placator, attempts to solve conflicts will be futile. The blamer will attack and the placator will acquiesce just to avoid conflict. As Gottman highlighted, conflict management in a relationship is the barometer for the health of the relationship. Successful conflict management hinges on healthy and effective communication.

Key Terms: placating, blaming, computing, distracting, leveling
Key Scholar: Virginia Satir

Reading 7: Domestic Violence



“Domestic Violence Awareness Month”, by Herald Post, 10/2008, CC BY-NC 2.0

“Domestic violence is the willful intimidation, physical assault, battery, sexual assault, and/or other abusive behavior as part of a systematic pattern of power and control perpetrated by one intimate partner against another. It includes physical violence, sexual violence, psychological violence, and emotional abuse. The frequency and severity of domestic violence can vary dramatically; however, the one constant component of domestic violence is one partner’s consistent efforts to maintain power and control over the other.”



The above definition is provided on the informative website created by the NCADV. While not everyone will find themselves in an abusive relationship, everyone *should* be educated about how to identify a relationship as abusive. It is also very important to note that you may be a victim of domestic violence even if you have never been physically abused; emotional & psychological abuse are also types of domestic violence. The particularly harrowing statistics about abuse should heighten our awareness about the precarious nature of a relationship in which there exists an exploited power differential. Power is not authentic love. Power is not flattering.

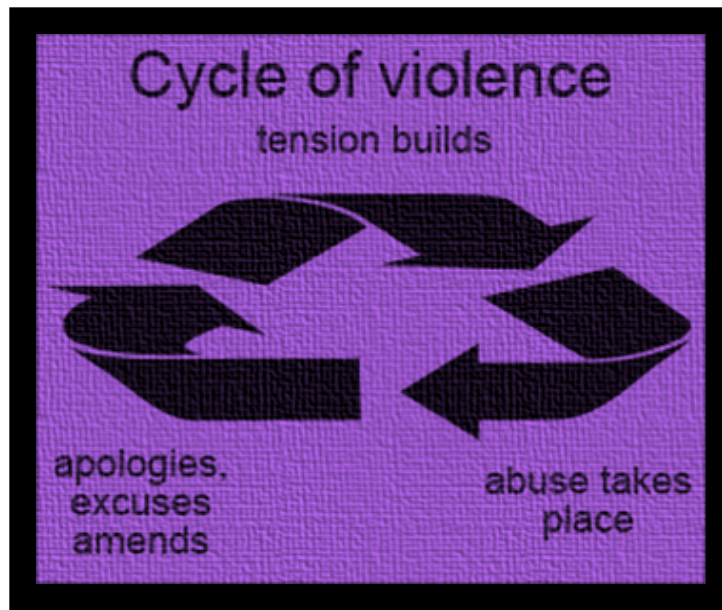
Power is not safety. Power, unchecked in a relationship, can lead to death.

Statistics provided by NCADV.org:

Stats for the state of Georgia:

- In 2013, 29,779 victims were served by Georgia domestic violence services.
- One in 3 women and 1 in 4 men in the United States have experienced some form of physical violence by an intimate partner.
- On a typical day, domestic violence hotlines receive approximately 21,000 calls, 15 calls per minute.
- Intimate partner violence accounts for 15% of all violent crime.

Reading 8: Lenore Walker’s Cycle of Abuse



Abuse:cycle of violence”, by Moggs Oceanlane, 06/2008, CC BY 2.0

Lenore Walker is a leading researcher in studying abused women. After interviewing hundreds of abused women she identified a pattern of behavior that she labeled the ‘battering cycle.’ The battering cycle has since become known as the “cycle of abuse.” This cycle may take months, weeks, or even days. For each abusive relationship, the cycle may manifest differently. It is important to be aware of the existence of such a pattern, so that one does not delude themselves into believing that the saccharine gestures displayed after bouts of abuse are an indicator that the abuse will never happen again. As Walker observed, the abuser will be your ideal mate until tensions begin to mount. Eventually, the tensions will light the fuse, and the ephemeral fairytale will soon melt into the nightmare of abuse. The cycle will repeat itself again...and again...and again.

Key Terms: Cycle of Abuse, Acute Battering episode (abuse), Honeymoon Phase (apologies, excuses, amends)

Key Scholar: Lenore Walker

Reflections:

- 1. Do you feel that knowing the science behind love can mitigate the angst that arises from rejection?**
- 2. Why do we desperately try to figure out love?**
- 3. Although the locks were removed from the *Pont des Arts*, lovers still find bridges to adorn with their engraved locks. This is not limited to Paris, as many**

other cities also have padlock-adorned bridges. Discuss why you think couples are so driven to make such proclamations of their love.

4. How could you replicate Gottman's research?

5. Discuss whether you agree or disagree with Satir's communication styles? Developmentally speaking, how do you think such communication styles develop?

6. If you were the director of a clinic that specialized in treating batterers, what treatment protocol do you feel would result in the highest rates of rehabilitation?

MODULE 9: SEXUALITY

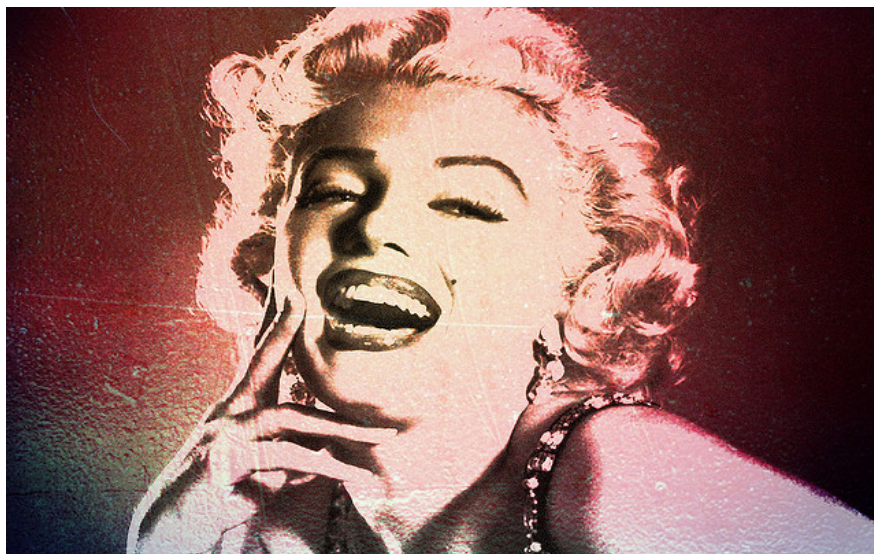
Learning Objectives:

- Consider how early messages about sexuality continue to impact adult sexual health and practices. (APA Goal 3, SLO 3.2c)
- Explore the impact of an evolving culture on perspectives of sexuality. (APA Goal 3, SLO 3.3a)
- Identify the four phases of the human sexual response cycle. (APA Goal 1, SLO 1.1a)
- Increase awareness of differences between care and treatment of men and women experiencing sexual dysfunction. (Goal 3, SLO 3.3b)
- Identify possible causes of sexual harassment and assault and how they could be diminished. (Goal 3, SLO 3.3b)
- Learn about the nature of homosexual relationships and similarities to heterosexual relationships. (Goal 3, SLO 3.3a)
- Increase awareness of the continued impact of discrimination and prejudice on members of the LGBTQ community. (Goal 3, SLO 3.3b)

Keywords: Human sexual response cycle, healthy sexual practice, sexual dysfunction, sexual harassment and assault, sex education, sexual orientation, homosexuality, conversion therapy and stigma

“I think that sexuality is only attractive when it’s natural and spontaneous.”

-Marilyn Monroe



[“Marilyn sonrisa sexy”](#) by Miguel Angel Coronel, 5/2012, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

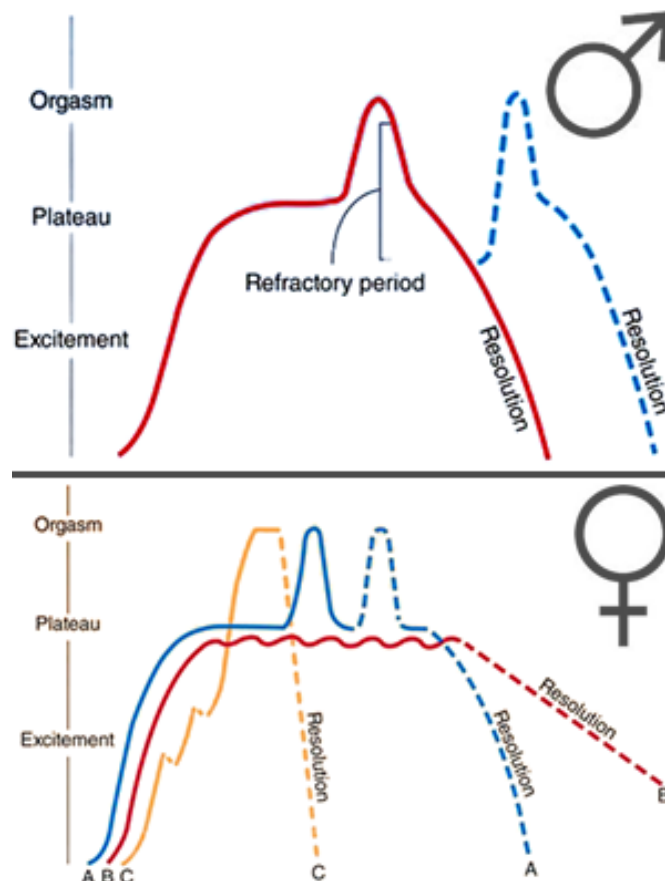
Arguably one of the United State’s most iconic sex symbols, late actress, model, and singer, Marilyn Monroe, knew a thing or two about embracing and expressing one’s sexuality. In addition to her stunning natural beauty, Monroe exuded a confidence that was equally appealing to the masses. Unfortunately, she suffered an untimely and tragic death at the young age of 36 in an apparent suicide. Her life story is a

masterclass in the contradiction between a bubbly, self-assured public persona and a more depressed, and deeply-troubled inner self. It is emblematic of the conflict and turmoil many face when attempting to embrace their natural sexuality in the face of strict, societal rules of engagement. Her remarkable life and tragic ending, in many ways, reflects a societal dissonance between the reality of human sex drive and the guilt and shame often ascribed to individuals (particularly women) who choose to embrace what comes naturally.

Reading 1. [What Americans Believe about Sex](#)

Think back to your childhood and how the topics of sex and sexual health were addressed in your household and school. What aspects were covered and what messages (either spoken or implied) were communicated about appropriate sexual behavior? Almost all of us have a story to tell when it comes to our early introduction to one of the most normative of human experiences. That early exposure often leaves a lasting impression on our approach to adult sexual health and practices. At Indiana University's [Center for Sexual Health Promotion](#), researchers investigated the sex lives of more than 4,000 adolescents and adults throughout the U.S. and discovered a wide range of practices. While many choose to keep such personal activities private, it is clear from survey respondents that Americans, as a whole, are both sexually active and adventurous. And yet, the public discourse on sex remains quite conflicted and, in many ways, inhibited. In the reading above, consider how U.S. views on sex have evolved since the sexual revolution of the 1960's. Think about how such views may have influenced what you were taught about sex and [healthy sexual practices](#). Also, do you foresee changes in perspectives as technology continues to permeate our lives?

Key Concepts: Purpose of Sex, Sexual Ethics, Sexual Revolution (1960's), Generational Differences



["Sexual response cycle"](#), by Avril1975, 4/2014, ©

Reading 2. [The Study of Human Sexuality](#)

Much of what we know about the human sexual response cycle comes from the immensely popular work of Dr. William Masters and Virginia Johnson -- who observed and documented sexual intercourse in their lab beginning in the 1950's. They explored the mechanics of arousal and orgasm and used their knowledge to inform new treatments for sexual dysfunction. Their work was not without controversy but it opened up discussion about the human body's physiological response in a consensual encounter.

Researchers, who have continued the investigation of human sexuality, have gone on to refine the model of sexual response and delineate further differences between men and women. New perspectives suggest that the attempt to condense the richness of human sexuality down to hormonal changes, blood flow, muscle spasms, and release of tension is inadequate. Newer efforts at the [Kinsey Institute](#) for instance, aim to explain the role of love and connection with sexuality. It is worth noting that the groundbreaking work of Dr. Alfred Kinsey, who began surveying Americans about their sexuality in the 1940's, opened the door to understanding this fundamental aspect of humanity. As you read about the four phases of the human sexual response cycle, consider what aspects of sexuality are missing from this perspective. Do you think the methods used in Masters' and Johnson's research might have skewed the results?

Key Concepts: Excitement Phase, Plateau Phase, Orgasm, Resolution Phase



["Claudia nude with red scarf"](#) by Rogerlo Silva, 2/2015, CC BY-NC 2.0

Reading 3: [Sexual Dysfunction in Men and Women](#)

One of the interesting revelations from the work of Masters and Johnson was that, prior to their discoveries, knowledge of the female anatomy and sexual response were particularly misunderstood. Now 60 years later, is it safe to assume that the medical world is far more advanced in the knowledge of female sexuality? According to the [International Society for the Study of Women's Sexual Health](#), female sexual disorders have been largely ignored, historically. There are no specific medical treatments for women while men enjoy 24 FDA approved options for sexual dysfunction. Yet, sexual dysfunction is MORE common in women than men. Do you think this disparity could be explained by continued misunderstanding of female sexuality? Or do you think, as the author suggests, that there is an ongoing gender bias when it comes to valuing certain sexual experiences over others? Aside from cultural bias, what psychological and physiological influences should be considered to address the gender gap in treatment of sexual dysfunction?

Key Concepts: Hypoactive Sexual Desire Disorder (HSDD), Erectile Dysfunction (ED), Pharmacologic Treatment



"IMG_3069.jpg" by Michael, 8/2012, CC BY 2.0

"The insight I came to is that I think there's a tendency for us to look at these cases as isolated incidents of a bad person doing bad things, particularly when it's sexual in nature," he said. "After hearing the #MeToo stories and reading about this, I'm not sure these are isolated incidents, and I think they have less to do with sex and more to do with power and the abuse of power."

Gluckman, Nell (November 2017) How one college has set out to fix 'a culture of blatant sexual harassment. [The Chronicle of Higher Education](#)

Reading 4: [Sex education to prevent sexual violence](#)

According to the [Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network \(RAINN\)](#), every 98 seconds a person is sexually assaulted. Equally alarming is the fact that only 6 of every 1,000 rapists is imprisoned for the crime. While sexuality can be a very fulfilling aspect of humanity, there is a clear dark side. The quote above suggests that sexual deviance has permeated culture in a way that almost normalizes bad behavior. Many want to understand why harassment and assault have been allowed to infiltrate nearly all segments of society. [Stanford's Clayman Institute for Gender Research](#) has recently embarked on a study to break the culture of sexual assault. Anita Hill, Esq. who famously brought her claims of sexual harassment to the Supreme Court in 1991, was appointed in 2017 to head a new [Hollywood commission](#) to combat sexual misconduct. Yet, might the answer to addressing rates of harassment and assault lie in prevention through improved sex education? Review the article above to gain further insight into the culture of sexual deviance and how educating young people may go a long way to reduce the incidence of sexual assault and harassment.

Key Concepts: Risk-reducing Behaviors, Abstinence Only, Sexually Transmitted Infections, Assertiveness Skills, Human Rights, Harmful Practices



["the new horizon: orientation chart, san Francisco \(2015\)"](#) by torbakhopper, 2/2015, CC BY-ND 2.0)

Reading 5: [Sexual Orientation & Homosexuality](#)

Sexuality is not a one-stop shop where one size fits all. Just as individuals are diverse, expression of sexuality spans a wide spectrum. Attitudes are slowly changing to embrace this wide net of sexual expression. It was only in 1975 that the American Psychological Association began to denounce [conversion therapy](#) and the stigma associated with homosexuality. Discrimination is still prevalent as some claim homosexuality is counter to religious beliefs. Misconceptions also abound about the nature of such relationships – often diminishing them to being simply sexual and lacking in the complexity of heterosexual relationships. In the reading above, explore the true nature of homosexual relationships. Consider how prejudice and discrimination continue to impact individuals in their daily lives. How does embracing one's sexuality (rather than hiding or suppressing it) affect mental health?

Key Concepts: Coming Out, Parenting, Stigma, Psychological Impact of Discrimination and Prejudice, Stability and Commitment

REFLECTIONS

- 1) In the United States, what sexual practices are considered normal? What sexual practices are generally considered abnormal?
- 2) What cultural variables seem to perpetuate shame and guilt associated with some forms of sexual expression?
- 3) How have U.S. views of sexuality changed since the sexual revolution of the 1960's? Which views have remained the same?
- 4) What are the biological mechanisms underlying the human sexual response cycle?
- 5) Do you agree with the research methods used by Masters and Johnson? What might you have done differently to learn about human sexual behaviors?
- 6) What factors lead to sexual dysfunction in men and women?
- 7) Why do you think there are FDA approved treatments for male sexual dysfunction but none for females?
- 8) Do you agree that we live in a culture that allows for the proliferation of sexual harassment and assault? Why or why not?
- 9) In what ways could effective sex education reduce the incidence of sexual harassment and assault?
- 10) What could every individual do to diminish prejudice and discrimination against members of the LGBTQ community?

Module 10: Understanding Gender ♂♀

Learning Objectives:

- Be able to differentiate between gender and sex. (APA Goal 1, SLO 1.1).
- Understand the concept of gender socialization (APA Goal 1, SLO 1.1).
- Be able to identify Kohlberg's stages of gender role development (APA Goal 1, SLO 1.1b.).
- Be able to identify contemporary researchers who have contributed to the field of *Gender Studies*. (APA Goal 1, SLO 1.2c).
- Describe psychology-related issues of global concern, such as gender discrimination (APA Goal 3, SLO 3.3d).
- Explore how gender expectations impact adolescent development across the world (APA Goal 3, SLO 3.2c).
- Understand the different perspectives that facilitate an understanding of gender as the product of biology and society (Goal 2, SLO 2.1a).
- Explore the work of Professor Paoletti to better understand how gender became polarized by fashion (APA Goal 1, SLO 1.2e)

Reading 1: Understanding Gender



"It's a girl v2" by MJZ Photography. 1/2014, CC BY-NC 2.0

Understanding the concept of gender can be quite confusing. After all, aren't there just boy humans and girl humans? Unfortunately, the concept of gender is grossly misunderstood by most, which gives rise to discrimination; unrealistic demands imposed by stereotypes; and a loss of self for those who even slightly deviate from society's "norm." In this reading, you will learn about the three dimensions of gender: body, identity and expression. You will explore the differences between sex

and gender. You will also gain insight into how rigid gender ideals can cloud a young person’s understanding of sexual orientation.

“When we confuse gender with sexual orientation, we are likely to make assumptions about a young person that have nothing to do with who they are. For example, when someone’s gender expression is inconsistent with others’ expectations, they are frequently assumed to be homosexual. The boy who loves to play princess is assumed to be gay, and the adolescent girl who buys clothes in the “boys” section and favors a short haircut may be assumed to be a lesbian. These are faulty conclusions. What someone wears is about gender expression; you cannot tell what their sexual orientation is by what they have on (for that matter, you can’t know what their gender identity is, either ... unless they tell you).”

Key Terms: Dimensions of Gender (body, identity, expression), gender expression, agender, non-binary, cisgender, transgender, sexual orientation, gender identity, intersex

Reading 2: Kohlberg’s Theory of Gender Role Development

Kohlberg's Theory of Gender Role Development			
Stage	Age	Cognitive Prerequisite	Characteristics
Gender Identity	3-4	Pre-operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child recognizes biological and external appearance differences in people of different genders • Child thinks that gender is mutable
Gender Stability	4-6	Late pre-operations; early concrete operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child begins to understand that gender does not change over time.
Gender Constancy	6-7	Concrete operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child learns that gender does not change, despite the individual's appearance or activities.

Kohlberg theorized that understanding gender differences is a developmental process. Kohlberg contends that young children

recognize what appear to be gender-specific differences, but still believe that gender is not stable. Young children, according to Kohlberg, believe that if you change your clothes or cut your hair, then you can change your gender. As children mature, they come to an understanding that gender does not change as the result of a change in appearance, and this emergence of gender constancy begins to pave the way to a pronounced gender identity. If you are a girl, you will always be a girl. If you are a boy, you will always be a boy. This theory aids in our understanding of how children may come to conclusions about their own gender identity.

Key Terms: Gender Identity, Gender Stability, Gender Constancy

Key Scholar: Kohlberg

Reading 3: What Is Gender Socialization and Why Does It Matter?

by Leeds
Gallerie's
10/2010, CC

"LEEDM.E.W.4949.5"
Museums and
Photostream,
BY-NC 2.0



Adolescence is that developmental period where Erikson asserts we ask "Who am I?" It is crucial time when we are exploring our vocational interests, our social interests, and our sexual interests. We are looking at the world through our lenses that have been colored by society for years. We evaluate our role in society based on our clouded perception and the

messages that we have mindlessly introjected. If I am a girl, society tells me that I must be kind and loving; aspire to be a good wife and mother; love the color pink; and keep any and all *bossy* impulses suppressed. If I am a boy, first and foremost, society tells me that I must NEVER be like a girl; I must be strong and confident; I must care for my family at all costs; I must be assertive and if necessary, aggressive; and I must never reveal feelings of weakness. In this reading, you will explore the steep costs paid by stereotype-based socialization from a global perspective. If we can only *see* ourselves through the veil of norms, can we really *see* ourselves?

Reading 4: Is Gender Simply a Social Construct or a Biologically-Fueled Reality?



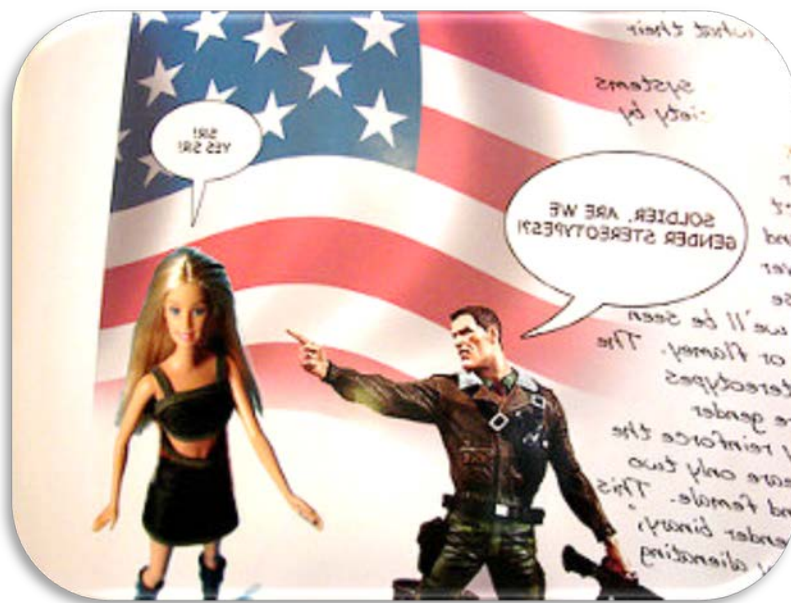
"Lil' Cutesies" by PINKE, 06/2011, CC BY-NC

In this reading, you will read about the case study of David Reimer, born as a male, raised as a girl. When David was an infant his penis was burned off during a routine circumcision. The parents were overwhelmed with concern, as David would grow up without a penis. The parents happened upon the work of Dr. John Money, the doctor who coined the term gender role. Dr. John Money was a famous sexologist delving into the uncharted waters of gender identity, who provided the Reimers with hope. Money believed that gender was exclusively the product of nurture, thus convincing the Reimer's to rear David as a girl. The Reimers renamed their son Brenda, and applied the extensive protocol dictated by society as to what constitutes being female. Money

convinced these desperate parents that if Brenda dressed like a girl and played like a girl that she would feel like a girl. Sadly, this gross misunderstanding of the complexities of gender identity on behalf of Dr. Money, led to the ultimate demise of Mr. David Reimer. While tragic, this case study presents the fascinating question: Is gender biological or simply a social construct? This topic is heavily disputed in the academic arena, with some academicians, such as Debra Soh, asserting that biology determines gender. As a neuroscientist, she purports that prenatal exposure to testosterone is the determinant for what will pique a child's curiosity. If prenatal testosterone levels are high, the child will gravitate towards mechanically interesting objects, such as object with wheels. If the prenatal testosterone levels are low, the child will gravitate towards more socially interesting activities, such as playing with dolls. Lise Elliot, professor of neuroscience at Rosalind Franklin University, contends that biology is important; however, she believes that the plastic nature of our brains allows for us to be molded by society. She does not dismiss the power of biology; rather she acknowledges the strong interaction between biology and society. While we do not know the extent to which society and biology interact, we do know that gender is far more complex than just male and female.

Key Scholars: John Money, Debra Soh, Lise Eliot

Reading 5: How Gender Expectations Shape Early Adolescence Across the World



In this reading, you will read about how gender expectations shape adolescence across the world. The *Barbie and Ken* stereotypes run across global lines. When vulnerability and sexuality become synonymous with femininity, women will invariably be coddled and objectified. When aggression and power become synonymous with masculinity, men will invariably be feared and vilified.

Key Terms: hegemonic masculinity

Video 1: Pink, Pink...and More Pink!



"CCP15A_5" by Bonsoni.com, 12/2010, CC BY2.0

In this video you will explore the history of gender-specific clothing. This video serves as a fascinating summary of the work of Professor Jo Paoletti. Paoletti is a professor in American studies at the University of Maryland. She published a book entitled, *Pink and Blue* in 2012 that chronicled the history of how fashion polarized gender. Many assume that females have always worn pink dresses, while males have always

worn pants and only blue. Interestingly, unisex fashions were the standard decades ago. Paoletti describes in her book that people believed that prematurely identifying with one's gender served as the gateway to sexual depravity. Boys and girls both wore smocks, primarily for practicality. It is interesting to entertain the idea that capitalism may have played a key role in establishing modern-day gender norms.

Key Scholar: Jo Paoletti

Reflections:

1. Explain why you feel that we as a culture so often conflate the two concepts of sexuality and gender.
2. Reflect on the major influences from your past that shaped your conceptualization of gender.
3. Is gender-role transcendence a feasible goal for society? Explain.
4. Discuss your thoughts about the new vernacular that helps to elucidate the nuances of gender, such as gender fluid, cisgender, etc.
5. What challenges do men and women face if we continue to allow ourselves to be governed by the dominant stereotypes that restrict personal growth?

Module 11: Work and Choosing a Career

Learning Objectives:

- Become familiar with occupational development theory. (APA Goal 1, SLO 1.1a)
- Explore Holland's Codes and theory of occupational personality. (APA Goal 1, SLO 1.1a)
- Apply occupational theory to personal career goals. (APA Goal 5, SLO 5.1d)
- Increase awareness of the importance of soft skills in employment. (APA Goal 5, SLO 5.5b)
- Self-identify personal strengths and weaknesses in emotional and social intelligence. (APA Goal 3, SLO 3.2a)
- Understand the concept of *Flow* and deriving meaning and joy from work. (APA Goal 1, SLO 1.1a)
- Explore the gender wage gap and reasons for its persistence. (APA Goal 3, SLO 3.3d)
- Learn ways to improve personal outcomes in career pursuits. (APA Goal 5, SLO 5.1d)

Keywords: Super's theory of occupational development, Holland's theory of vocational personality, soft skills, emotional intelligence, Csikszentmihalyi's Flow, burnout, gender and race discrimination

“People who are passionate about what they do reach financial comfort and wealth more often than those who are not. That argues for doing one of two things. Finding your passion and pursuing it. Or becoming passionate about what you're already pursuing.”

-Jean

Chatzky



[“It's great to be home”](#) by Jean Chatzky, 5/2014 CC BY-NC

Confucius once said, “do a job you love, and you will never work a day in your life.” He was an ancient Chinese teacher and philosopher who died in 479 BC. Could his logic still ring true in our modern world? A world with a rising cost of living where it seems the objective is to make as much money as possible? Or, do most people uphold the ideal of finding meaning through their work? Perhaps, as financial journalist and expert, Jean Chatzky, suggests in the statement above, finding both meaning and financial success through one’s work is more than just a radical idea.



["Career Fair"](#) by HendersonStateU, 10/2017, CC BY-NC 2.0

Reading 1: [Donald Super’s Five Career Development Stages](#)

(“Donald Super Developmental Self-Concept by careersnz”)

Review Super’s theory about our typical progression through five stages of work life. Note that our “work” does not begin after the interview and we settle into our workspace, put on the uniform, or begin plugging away at our assigned duties. Long before we ever step into our formal career, we are building a self-concept and attitudes that shape our future. As you review the stages, think back to your childhood and the views you held about the world of work. How have your classroom experiences, hobbies, or participation in sports informed your passions and honed your unique skills? Consider where you are today and how your trajectory may look as you continue along Super’s pathways in later life.

Key Concepts: Growth, Exploration, Establishment, Maintenance, Decline



["VloggerFair2013 30"](#) by Tyler Pruitt, 6/2013, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

Reading 2: [Holland's Theory of Career Choice](#)

("Holland's Theory of Career Choice and You" by CareerKey)

Young people are bombarded with messages about career pathways. There are numerous lists designed to steer you in a particular direction such as: [Top 10 College Majors](#) or [10 College Majors with the Highest Starting Salaries](#). For older individuals looking to make a career change, even more lists abound such as [10 Best Jobs for a Midlife Career Change](#). Pouring through these myriad suggestions can seem daunting. How can anyone know exactly which career is the right path when there are no guarantees? American psychologist, John L. Holland, offered another way to select a career that has more to do with individual personality and interests than cultural shifts. His Holland Codes have helped individuals identify their vocational personalities and the most congruent work environments. Review his six vocational personality types and some of the associated careers. Take your own vocational personality assessment to explore how Holland's R-I-A-S-E-C theory fits with your career goals at the [Georgia Department of Labor's O*Net website](#). You can also use this site to match potential careers based on your profile.

Key Concepts: Interest Area, Career Interest Inventory, Interest Profile, Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising, Conventional

“The most important single ingredient in the formula of success is knowing how to get along with people.”

-President Theodore Roosevelt



[“Work Meeting”](#) by Amtec Staffing, 1/2017, CC BY 2.0

Reading 3: [Emotional Intelligence and Career Success](#)

(“Why Emotionally Intelligent People are More Successful” by Fast Company)

Work hard and you will do well in your career. Work even harder and you’ll zoom past your competition. This seems accurate and is certainly the mantra espoused by parents and teachers. But is it enough to earn the degree and get into the job you want? Is this mindset adequate to propel you up the professional ladder? According to psychologists, John Mayer and Peter Salovey, EI (for [Emotional Intelligence](#)) is the knowledge and awareness of one’s own emotional state and that of others – and the ability to use this understanding to guide behavior and adapt effectively. The current reading points to research out of the Carnegie Institute of Technology showing the bulk of financial success relates to what some may call [soft skills](#) (i.e. people skills, communication style, social intelligence, and common sense). As you review the importance of EI for your future career, consider how to reconcile the ideas of hard work, field preparation, and technical skill development in light of the purportedly small influence this has on financial success. To learn more about how you might you go

about improving your own EI, visit The EI Institute (www.theeiinstitute.com). Take the [EI test](#) at MindTools.com to see how you stack up in this area.

Key Concepts: Emotional Intelligence, Self-Regulate Emotions, Empathy, Social Skills



["painter"](#) by Sudipta Mallick, 1/2011, CC BY 2.0

“Most enjoyable activities are not natural; they demand an effort that initially one is reluctant to make. But once the interaction starts to provide feedback to the person's skills, it usually begins to be intrinsically rewarding.”

— [Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi](#), [Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience](#)

Reading 4: [Flow and Work](#)

(“Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi: All about Flow & Positive Psychology” by Positive Psychology Program)
In 1990, psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, introduced the concept of Flow – a state of being fully immersed in an engaging and challenging task in body, mind, and spirit. Flow serves as an energy spring that fuels one’s passion and ignites a feeling of joy. In many ways, reaching Flow helps to combat [burnout](#) (a growing disillusionment and state of emotional exhaustion associated with work stress). Review the eight characteristics of Flow and consider times when you may have experienced this sensation? How might you build a career that incorporated more Flow and less busy work?

Key Concepts: Autotelic Activity, Autotelic Personality, Optimal Experience, Intense Concentration, Loss of Reflective Self-consciousness, Distortion of Time, Intrinsic Reward

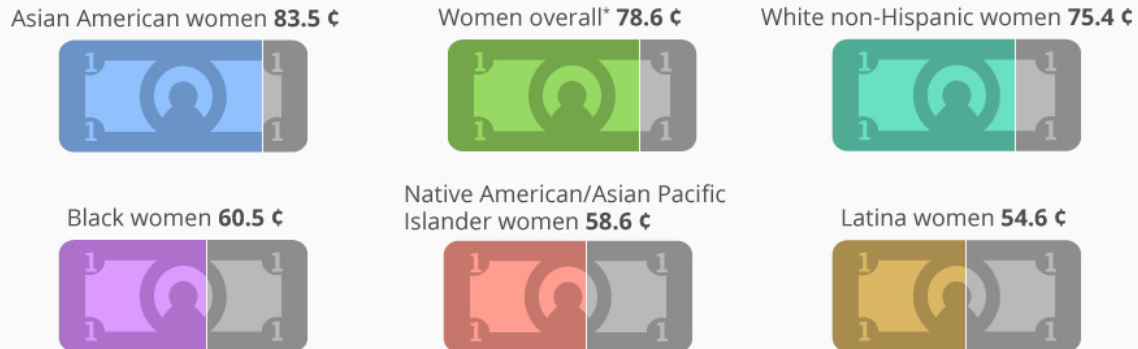


“It’s indisputable that there’s a real pay gap. People can argue about how big, but that’s almost besides the point. The point is that every woman, every girl deserves to get paid what they’re worth.”

-Sheryl Sandberg

The Gender Pay Gap Visualized

For every dollar white, non-Hispanic men earn, women get paid...



To earn what white, non-Hispanic men earned in 2014 alone, they would have had to work until...



* compared to men overall

Based on median annual earnings of full-time, year-round workers in 2014

Source: National Women's Law Center



Mashable statista

["The Gender Pay Gap Visualized"](#) by Statista

Reading 5: [The Simple Truth about the Gender Pay Gap](#)

("The Simple Truth about the Gender Pay Gap by Kevin Miller for AAUW)

Are the occupational decks stacked differently depending on your gender and race? The statistics suggest that, overall, a ubiquitous wage gap persists and is tied to not only being a woman but one's ethnic background. Knowing that the disparity is a reality across occupations and at all levels of education should give everyone pause when considering what has been taught about the road to success. But, particularly for women, this sobering fact may also inform career choice. For instance, the [largest growing group of entrepreneurs](#) in the United States is African American women (by an increased margin of 322% since 1997). One might draw the conclusion that limited mobility in traditional sectors has led many of these women to venture out on their own. Learn more about the gender and race wage gap in the article above. What factors do you think might bridge this gap in the future? What does the wage gap say about our cultural values?

Key Concepts: Fair Wages, Negotiation, Equal Pay Act, Age, Race, Location, Median Annual Earnings

Reflections

- 1) Consider Super's five stages of occupational development. How might stagnation at a particular career stage impact other aspects of one's life?
- 2) When you envision yourself progressing through Super's stage of *Establishment* what career goals do you hope to accomplish? What steps could you put into motion today to ensure those goals are met?
- 3) In your observations of others in Super's stage of *Decline* what changes have been orchestrated effectively, and what changes have caused unnecessary harm, in your opinion?
- 4) After taking the R-I-A-S-E-C vocational personality assessment, explore suggested careers and whether your current path is leading in the right direction. What changes might you have to make to get or stay on track?
- 5) To what extent are you willing to take stock in your vocational personality relative to other career selection factors (e.g. availability of jobs, financial compensation) when determining future goals?
- 6) Do you agree with the statement that if you find a job you love, you will never really have to work? Why or why not?
- 7) What kind of instructional program would you implement for a high school or college to better train students in soft skills and emotional intelligence?
- 8) After taking the emotional intelligence assessment, consider ways you could increase your own EI level to become more successful in your chosen career.
- 9) Do you believe Csikszentmihalyi's Flow can be achieved irrespective of one's type of occupation? Why or why not?
- 10) What role do you think employers could take in bridging the wage gap in their own industries? What could women do independently to address unfair wages?

Module 12: Understanding Loneliness & Solitude

Learning Objectives:

- Describe and understand key concepts, principles, and overarching themes in psychology as they pertain to loneliness and solitude. (APA Goal 1, outcome 1.1)
- Use basic psychological terminology, concepts, and theories in psychology to explain loneliness and solitude. (APA Goal 1, SLO 1.1b.)
- Be able to recognize major historical events, theoretical perspectives, and figures in loneliness research. (APA Goal 1, SLO 1.2c)
- Evaluate how loneliness and solitude impact psychological and physical health. (APA Goal 1, SLO 1.3B).
- Describe psychology-related issues of global concern (e.g., poverty, health, migration, human rights, rights of children, international conflict sustainability, loneliness). (APA Goal 3, SLO 3.3d)
- Relate examples of how a researcher's value system, sociocultural characteristics, and historical context influence the development of scientific inquiry on psychological questions, such as why loneliness is increasing in prevalence. (APA Goal 2, SLO 2.5a)
- Read and summarize general ideas and conclusions from psychological sources accurately. (APA Goal 2, SLO 2.2a)
- Propose and justify appropriate psychology-based interventions in applied settings with regards to how we as a society should address loneliness. (e.g., clinical, school, community, or industrial settings.) (APA Goal 1, SLO 1.3C)
- Propose how we as individuals can ameliorate the symptoms of loneliness. (APA Goal 1, SLO 1.3C)



I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud BY WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the milky way,
They stretched in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced; but they
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:
A poet could not but be gay,
In such a jocund company:
I gazed—and gazed—but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought:

For oft, when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude;
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.

“Alone”

BY EDGAR ALLAN POE

From childhood's hour I have not been
As others were—I have not seen
As others saw—I could not bring
My passions from a common spring—
From the same source I have not taken
My sorrow—I could not awaken
My heart to joy at the same tone—
And all I lov'd—I lov'd alone—
Then—in my childhood—in the dawn
Of a most stormy life—was drawn
From ev'ry depth of good and ill
The mystery which binds me still—
From the torrent, or the fountain—
From the red cliff of the mountain—
From the sun that 'round me roll'd
In its autumn tint of gold—
From the lightning in the sky
As it pass'd me flying by—
From the thunder, and the storm—
And the cloud that took the form
(When the rest of Heaven was blue)
Of a demon in my view—

As described in the poems, you can note that there is a significant difference between feeling lonely and experiencing solitude. Wadsworth so eloquently likens the experience of solitude to the bliss experienced by viewing the sway of thousands of daffodils in the gentle breeze. Poe paints a very different portrait. Poe conveys the layers of darkness that blanket him from others, leaving him entrenched in loneliness seeing “demons” when others see “Heaven’s blue.” While both words, loneliness and solitude, denote a sense of being alone, the connotation of loneliness is far more gut-wrenching. When we are lonely, we feel as though we can’t connect to others; we feel alienated and sometimes unworthy of connection. The UCLA Loneliness scale was created in the late 70s by Russell et.al, to evaluate one’s perceived loneliness. The scale was revised in the 80s. By reviewing the items on this [quiz](#), which are based on the *UCLA Loneliness Scale*, you will gain insight into how researchers define loneliness. When we experience solitude, we may be alone, but we are in a state of peace; we are enjoying the absence of others. It is during the moments of solitude that we can reconnect to ourselves. Solitude is a desired state; loneliness is an undesired state. Both are the product of our perceptions. One who perceives a perpetual state of loneliness struggles with finding the value in solitude; whereas, one who can experience solitude does not perceive themselves as being isolated from others. In this module, you will explore myriad topics pertaining to these concepts, ranging from the types of loneliness to the biological value of solitude.



"Loneliness" by Paloma, 3/27/2010, (CC BY-NC-ND)

Reading 1: *7 Types of Loneliness and Why It Matters*

In this reading, you will read about Gretchen Rubin's 7 types of loneliness. She arrived at these labels while conducting research for her NYT bestseller, *The Happiness Project*. While Rubin is not a psychologist, she provides a clear conceptualization of the many ways in which one can perceive loneliness that can be easily understood by both psychology majors and laypersons. The seven types of loneliness she discusses are: *New-situation loneliness*; *I'm-different loneliness*; *No-sweetheart loneliness*; *No-animal loneliness*; *No-time-for-me loneliness*; *Untrustworthy-friends loneliness*; and *Quiet-presence loneliness*. Rubin contends that by articulating what type of loneliness you are experiencing, you are better able to discover a feasible solution. As you read through these 7 types, think about whether any apply to you. Do you feel lonely, like Poe described in the poem above, because you feel so different from other people? Do you feel lonely because you feel that your old friends no longer have time for you? By taking the quiz mentioned above, you can assess where your level of perceived loneliness ranks. In this reading, you can give score meaning.

Key Terms: New-situation loneliness; I'm-different loneliness; No-sweetheart loneliness; No-animal loneliness; No-time-for-me loneliness; Untrustworthy-friends loneliness; Quiet-presence loneliness.



“00016” by Dong Wha Seo, 5/24/2007, (CC BY-ND 2.0)

Reading 2: 5 Differences between Existential Loneliness and Interpersonal Loneliness

Loneliness can be categorized as interpersonal loneliness and existential loneliness. In *Reading 1*, Rubin discusses the different types of interpersonal loneliness. In this reading, you will explore the difference between interpersonal loneliness and existential loneliness. The two concepts are markedly different. Interpersonal loneliness can often be ameliorated through human connection; existential loneliness’ only hope of amelioration is through a spiritual awakening. Existential loneliness is described in this reading as a type of spiritual loneliness. “It is the sense of longing that cannot be achieved through any type of social interaction. That, despite our solid personal relationships, we still feel empty somehow.” Rollo May contended that we are the only organism that knows we are going to die. It is in this knowledge, where we can sink into a pool of despair. Existential loneliness can be likened to that of a type of spiritual bankruptcy. Without a spiritual core, we can lose our way as we feel the blanket of futility smother us.

Key Terms: Existential Loneliness, Interpersonal Loneliness



“hand in hand-old@new, past@future” by Christian, 5/10/2009, (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0)

Reading 3: Are People Getting Lonelier? Experts Are Divided

Is loneliness a new thing? Are we really lonelier than we were in the past? Does a nation really need a government official to moderate the effects of loneliness? These are all questions presented in this reading. Interestingly, the UK recently appointed a *Minister of Loneliness* to help combat what the UK calls an epidemic of loneliness. Many researchers are trying to understand this by asking certain questions. Is social media decreasing the amount of time we spend interacting, thus leading to deeper isolation than experienced in years past? Is our perceived

loneliness the product of our individualistic culture? We don't really know how advanced technology may be affecting us. As stated in the reading, maybe we are no lonelier than past generations; perhaps researchers are simply trying to address the problem before sophisticated technology diminishes our likelihood for social interaction. Some studies have shown that the more one uses social media, the lonelier they report feeling. While this does not give us definitive evidence that social media is making us lonely, it is an indicator that we must be mindful of our social media tendencies.

In a study conducted by [Chia-chen Yang](#), it was concluded that when researching if social media leads to loneliness, moderators must be considered. Yang found that browsing and posting on Instagram did not lead to loneliness; however, if the user had a proclivity for social comparison, usage did increase the reports of loneliness. This information is valuable, as it provides researchers with evidence that maybe only certain personality types are negatively impacted by social media use. This could allow for a heightened awareness regarding who may be at increased risk for experiencing the potentially deleterious effects of social media exposure.



"Loneliness" by Stefano Montagner, 5/01/2016, (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0)

Reading 4: A Brief History of Loneliness Research

Loneliness was not included in the psychiatric literature until around the early 70s. **Robert Weiss, Ph.D.** began researching loneliness in the 70s, finding that one quarter of Americans surveyed reported feeling lonely. Weiss contended that there were two categories of loneliness:

Emotional isolation: *"...response to the absence of...a close, indeed intimate attachment" (what the rest of us call a partner).*

&

Social isolation: *"It's like a child home sick from school: Everybody else goes off, the neighborhood is suddenly empty, there's nobody to do anything with. There's a problem of maintaining a sense of being meaningful or mattering to other people."*

In the late 70s, **Daniel Russell** began conducting research by surveying people as a way to quantify this historically, under-evaluated construct. Russell discovered that a lot of lonely people were just regular people, often surrounded by other people all day; their mask did not reveal their despair. With the inception of Russell's scale, loneliness research was strengthened. Researchers began to explore who was lonely; the role of expectations in perceiving loneliness; and the difference between being alone and feeling lonely.

John Cacioppo, Ph.D. was a leading researcher in the early 90s interested in how loneliness results from a neuroscientific perspective. He contended that there must be some biological value to its existence. Loneliness, according to Cacioppo, is what serves as the impetus for the Neolithic hunter to return to the group. In theory, loneliness should drive us back to our group, which ensures survival. As Cacioppo delved into the neuroscience of loneliness, he discovered that social situations activate different parts of the non-lonely brain than in the lonely brain. The reward center for the non-lonely brain would light up at seeing smiling faces. The lonely brain would light up at the sight of equally positive objects, such as a cake. Interestingly he also discovered that when

presented with a negative image of an object and a person, the lonely brain's response was much more intense toward the negative person; whereas, the non-lonely brain viewed both negative objects and people in the same way.

Key Scholars: Robert Weiss, Ph.D., Daniel Russell, John Cacioppo



“shyness” by astrangegirl, 10/20/2007, (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0)

Reading 5: What is Shyness and How Can It Breed Loneliness?

The APA defines shyness as:

“... the tendency to feel awkward, worried or tense during social encounters, especially with unfamiliar people. Severely shy people may have physical symptoms like blushing, sweating, a pounding heart or upset stomach; negative feelings about themselves; worries about how others view them; and a tendency to withdraw from social interactions.

Most people feel shy at least occasionally. Some people's shyness is so intense, however, that it can keep them from interacting with others even when they want or need to— leading to problems in relationships and at work.”

When the shyness that one experiences is elevated to the level of compromised functioning, a diagnosis of social phobia may be appropriate. Drs. Lynne Henderson and Philip Zimbardo have studied shyness for many years.

Zimbardo founded the Shyness Institute to conduct research and provide a treatment program to help people combat shyness. The clinic was headed by Lynn Henderson from 1982-2006, during which time she developed the Social Fitness Model.

“The Social Fitness Model views capabilities in demanding social situations as analogous to capabilities in demanding physical situations: one needs to get and remain fit if one expects to be able to function. Social fitness is achieved through practice.

An Excerpt from Henderson's homepage:

“As with physical exercise, there are many ways to exercise socially, and many different kinds of situations in which to practice and find enjoyment. Because shyness is conceptualized as a common emotional state as well as a psychological trait, problematic shyness and social anxiety are neither viewed as a debilitating condition nor as pathology. They are states of mental and emotional fitness that are not optimal in a particular situation. A person may change behavior, thinking patterns, and attitudes, become more skilled at emotion regulation or simply choose a more appropriate social niche in order to attain a state of improved conditioning. With effort and practice, most people can attain an adaptive state of social fitness the same way that most people can attain an adaptive state of physical fitness.”—Dr. Lynn Henderson

According to Henderson, shyness can be combatted much in the same way one might combat an unhealthy physical body: exercise. So, how does one exercise their social skills? Dr. Henderson's *Social Fitness Model* emphasizes CBT to help the client identify their negative thoughts that stymie their efforts to reach out in social

situations. Henderson along with many other therapists, assert that overcoming shyness must involve making an effort to engage; making an effort to put yourself in the arena. Take this [quiz](#) to determine your SHYQ. Where do you rank on this scale? Now read this [article](#) discussing 7 recommendations for overcoming shyness. Review this list and think about how these might help you, if your SHYQ was higher than you expected.

Key Terms: SHYQ, Social Fitness Model
Key Scholars: Philip Zimbardo, Lynn Henderson



“Solitude” by Tralphe XY, 06/15/2013, (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0)

Reading 6: How Solitude Can Enrich Our Lives

Being alone for some can be an extremely pleasant experience; for others, the mere mention of solitude is cringe-worthy. In this article the authors explore the myriad ways that we actually benefit from moments of solitude.

Many researchers contend that solitude allows for us to re-connect to ourselves. It is important, as previously mentioned, to note that solitude differs from loneliness in that solitude is a preferred choice. When one seeks solitude, they can still feel connected to others; they simply choose to be alone. Solitude enhances our well-being;

loneliness compromises our well-being. As you read this paper, think about how often you desire periods of solitude. Do you feel that you experience enhanced creativity from your moments of solitude? Do you feel that you are able to re-connect with you inner self during moments of solitude?

Reflections:

1. Compare and contrast the poems mentioned at the beginning. Which one resonates with you? Explain.

2. Although the research is conflicting, do you feel that we are becoming a lonelier society than generations past?

3. How would you describe your relationships with your friends? Do you feel that you have a deep connection with your friends or do you feel that the connections are superficial? How could you deepen your connection with your friends?

4. Pretend you are a therapist working with a client who is suffering with debilitating shyness. Propose a treatment plan that would enhance their social fitness.

5. Do you feel that knowing your SHYQ is beneficial? Why or Why not?

6. Reflect on your moments of solitude. Describe what you feel are the benefits of solitude. Describe what you feel could be considered the drawbacks of solitude.

MODULE 13: COPING WITH DEATH AND LOSS

Learning Objectives:

- Become familiar with cultural and psychological conceptualization of death and loss.
- Understand the role of Existential Therapy in addressing anxieties about death and meaning of life.
- Explore Kübler-Ross' Five Stages of Grief and application to coping with terminal illness and loss.
- Learn the risks for suicide and how to recognize them in oneself and others
- Become familiar with the debate on physician-assisted suicide and the associated moral, religious, and legal concerns.

Keywords: Existential therapy, death anxiety, Five stages of grief, terminal illness, suicide, euthanasia, Death with Dignity law



["Skull Art, Mexico, Oaxaca"](#) by Chris Ford, 6/2013, CC BY-NC 2.0

In this module we broach a difficult topic for many. As we all will face the end of life (at least as we know it on earth), death is not a subject any of us can skirt or ignore. We all

must discover a way to cope with the prospect. It is not only our own death that concerns us but the death of loved ones. Death brings with it a cruel and utter finality following a lifetime both long and fleeting, depending on perspective. Historically, people have attempted to make sense of death and loss through artwork, writing, and in fictional depictions (such as the iconic Grim Reaper figure). Many turn to religion and beliefs about an afterlife to assuage fears of the unknown. In Mexico, the [Day of the Dead](#) is celebrated every year (beginning October 31st) to honor those who have passed from this life. Rather than shying away from death, families celebrate their ancestors, build alters, and visit cemeteries to adorn graves with flowers. In the poem below, poet and philosopher Kahlil Gibran whose masterful work, *The Prophet* (1923), still enchants readers, composed one of the most enrapturing poems on death:

You would know the secret of death.

But how shall you find it unless you seek it in the heart of life?

The owl whose night-bound eyes are blind unto the day cannot unveil the mystery of light.

If you would indeed behold the spirit of death, open your heart wide unto the body of life.

For life and death are one, even as the river and the sea are one.

In the depth of your hopes and desires lies your silent knowledge of the beyond;

And like seeds dreaming beneath the snow your heart dreams of spring.

Trust the dreams, for in them is hidden the gate to eternity.

Your fear of death is but the trembling of the shepherd when he stands before the king whose hand is to be laid upon him in honour.

Is the shepherd not joyful beneath his trembling, that he shall wear the mark of the king?

Yet is he not more mindful of his trembling?

For what is it to die but to stand naked in the wind and to melt into the sun?

And what is it to cease breathing, but to free the breath from its restless tides, that it may rise and expand and seek God unencumbered?

Only when you drink from the river of silence shall you indeed sing.

And when you have reached the mountain top, then you shall begin to climb.

And when the earth shall claim your limbs, then shall you truly dance.

Reading 1: [Existential Therapy](#)

("Existential Therapy" by www.goodtherapy.org)

What are your expectations of death? Have you ever imagined final thoughts, feelings, or visions? As in the poem above, do you trust that there is an eternity or afterlife to follow? You may be aware of numerous stories of individuals who were pronounced clinically dead (i.e. heart has stopped) yet miraculously brought back to life. They describe similar experiences of having passed over into the afterlife through a bright tunnel, horizon, or other portal. Some say their spirit lifts from the physical body and they can observe what is happening around them as if hovering above. Others describe a brief visit to Heaven seeing

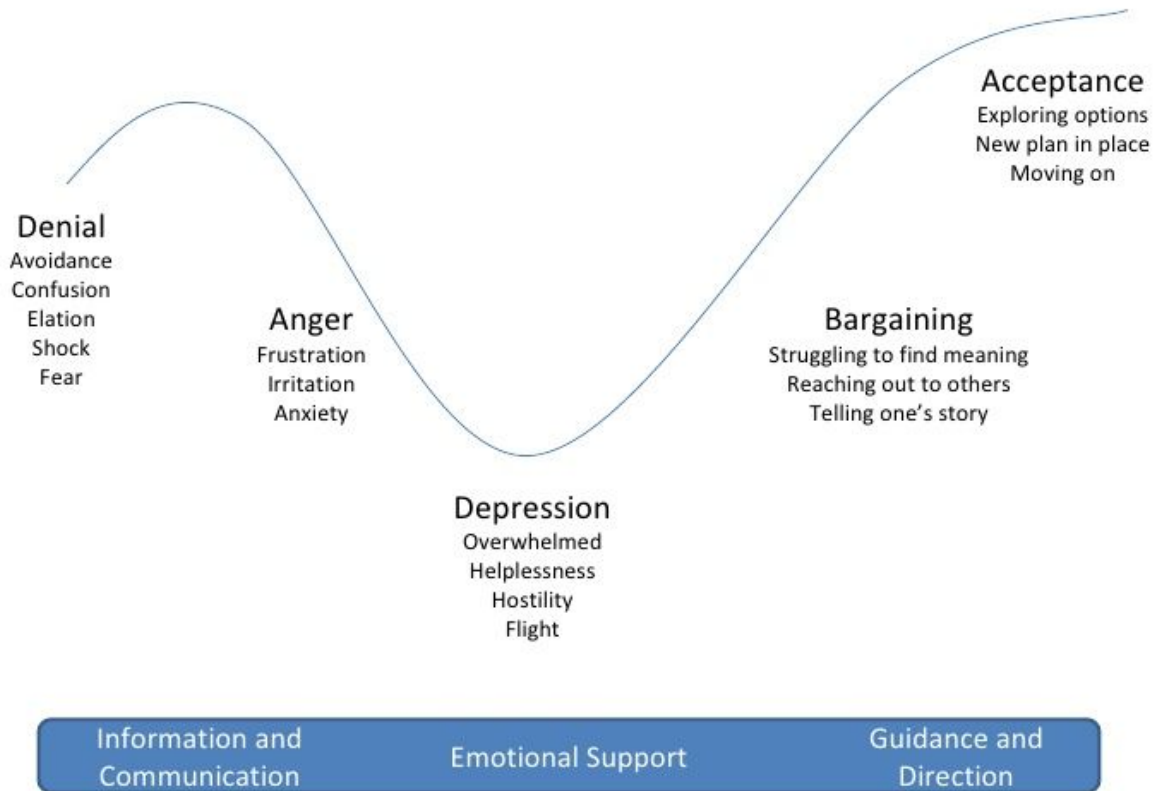
loved ones only to be told their time is not up and they must return to earth. Some of these experiences have been documented in movies and books like, [Miracles from Heaven](#).



["Heaven's gate"](#) by Christian Ruffli, 6/2013, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

The fears surrounding death can be considered part of an existential crisis. In such a crisis, individuals question whether their life has true meaning or value. He may contemplate the *end* and whether he has accomplished what he was put on earth to do. In the reading above, explore the philosophical, spiritual, and psychological influences on existential therapy, a style employed by [Otto Rank](#), a psychoanalyst and close associate of Sigmund Freud. How might a therapist help someone cope with anxieties about death and the unknown? What specific mental illnesses is existential therapy particularly useful in addressing?

Kübler-Ross Grief Cycle



["Kubler-Ross Grief Cycle"](#) by Kim Rowley, 2/2013, (ShoppingKim.com)

Reading 2: [The Five Stages of Grief](#)

("The Five Stages of Grief: An Examination of the Kübler-Ross Model" by Christina Gregory, PhD for www.psycom.net)

In times when death must be faced head-on, as in the case of terminal illness, how does one come to grips with the demystification of when and how we will expire? No longer a mystery, but a given, are there ways in which individuals typically face such dire news? Is there a right or wrong way to grieve one's own limited time left on earth? Learn about the 5 stages of grief devised by Swiss-American psychiatrist, Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, in 1969. Which of the stages do you think would be most difficult to confront? What does the model suggest about how people navigate end-of-life matters?



"[CLG_0662](#)" by Cara, 3/2010, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

I took a deep breath and listened to the old
bray of my heart. I am. I am. I am.

Sylvia Plath

Reading 3: [Risk of Suicide](#)

("Risk of Suicide" by the National Alliance on Mental Illness, www.nami.org)

In 2014, illustrious and wildly successful comedian and actor, [Robin Williams](#), took his own life. This sent shockwaves throughout the world as people viewed him as extremely accomplished and seemingly happy. Would you know the warning signs of someone who is suicidal? As you may have guessed, the signs are often subtle and can be missed if unaware. This is not to say that when a suicide occurs, anyone connected to the victim should harbor guilt. Suicide is ultimately an act of free will that a deeply troubled individual will choose as an immediate solution to a problem; however, if fortunate enough, loved ones can identify signs early enough to intervene. In this reading, review common warning signs of suicide. Consider if you've ever observed these signs in yourself or someone you know. What steps should you take if you notice any of the warning signs?



"Dying is not a crime."

-Dr. Jack Kevorkian



This is a picture of [Brittany Maynard](#) (credit unknown), who at the age of 29 years old was dying of Stage IV brain cancer and fought for the right to end her own life on her terms. Her disease was considered medically incurable with a likely painful ending. She chose to relocate to Oregon -- one of a few states that legalized assisted suicide. With the assistance of her doctor, she ended her life on November 1, 2014.

Reading 4: [Whose Right to Die?](#)

("Whose right to die?" by Ezekial J. Emanuel, 3/1997 for www.theatlantic.com")

Currently, there are only five states and the District of Columbia that have legalized euthanasia or instituted [Death with Dignity](#) laws including: California, Colorado, Oregon, Vermont, and Washington. Whether or not other states will follow suit is a heavily debated issue. There are medical, religious, moral, and humanistic considerations which some say contradict such an approach to terminal illness. Further, what are the limits to its legal application? Could someone with severe clinical depression and intractable suicidal ideation be eligible for euthanasia as an alternative to suicide? In the thought piece above, the author offers a critical perspective on reasons why physician-assisted suicide may not be the right answer in many cases. As you consider his suggestions, think about your own beliefs. Can you think of arguments both for and against this controversial technique to assert some control over terminal illness?

REFLECTIONS

- 1) In your family of origin, how is the concept of death addressed or discussed? Consider rituals, phrases, or beliefs that have been passed down.
- 2) Is there any visual media, music, poetry, or other artistic creation which particularly resonates with your ideas on death and loss? What do you think the artist is reflecting and conveying about their own fears and hopes?
- 3) In Kahlil Gibran's poem on death, what do you think was meant by the phrase, "If you would indeed behold the spirit of death, open your heart wide unto the body of life"?
- 4) How might the unique demands and concerns of our modern world contribute to an existential crisis?
- 5) Knowing Kubler-Ross' five stages of grief, and its often variable and cyclical progression, how might you support someone who has recently experienced loss?
- 6) Using the ideas endorsed in Existential Therapy, what are some ways you might minimize some of your own anxieties surrounding death and loss?
- 7) What are seven of the most common warning signs of suicide?
- 8) Do you think the explosion of social media has complicated or enhanced the ability to help those who are suicidal? Explain.
- 9) How might you intervene in the case of a person who is suicidal and has a plan and the means to complete the act?
- 10) If doctors told you there were only 6 more months to live, what would you do with the time remaining? Would you consider physician-assisted suicide if that time was projected to be extremely painful?

Module 14: Finding Meaning

Learning Objectives:

- Describe examples of relevant and practical applications of psychological principles to everyday life. (APA Goal 1, SLO 1.3a)
- Relate examples of how a researcher's value system, sociocultural characteristics, and historical context influence the development of scientific inquiry on psychological questions. (APA Goal 2, SLO 2.5a)
- Use basic psychological terminology, concepts, and theories in psychology (humanistic) to explain behavior and mental processes. (APA Goal 1, SLO 1.1b.)
- Describe and understand key concepts, principles, and overarching themes in psychology. (APA Goal 1, outcome 1.1)
- Be able to recognize major historical events, theoretical perspectives, and figures in psychology and their link to trends in contemporary research. (APA Goal 1, SLO 1.2c)



"Holocaust Memorial, Ebert Strasse" by Scott Cawley, 10/2008, CC BY-NC 2.0

Reading 1: A Psychiatrist Who Survived the Holocaust Explains Why Meaningfulness Matters More Than Happiness

In this reading you will learn about the story of Viktor Frankl, a Jewish psychiatrist who endured years of torture while imprisoned in Nazi concentration camps. Shortly after his camp was liberated, Frankl penned the famous book, *Man's Search for Meaning*. Frankl surmised from his imprisonment that those who could find meaning in their suffering survived; those who could not, perished.

“This uniqueness and singleness which distinguishes each individual and gives a meaning to his existence has a bearing on creative work as much as it does on human love. When the impossibility of replacing a person is realized, it allows the responsibility which a man has for his existence and its continuance to appear in all its magnitude. A man who becomes conscious of the responsibility he bears toward a human being who affectionately waits for him, or to an unfinished work, will never be able to throw away his life. He knows the why for his existence, and will be able to bear almost any how.”

—Frankl

So, are finding happiness and finding meaning synonymous? Many researchers say no. Frankl was most likely not happy when he was walking for miles in the snow, wearing shoe remnants. He was most likely not happy watching his comrades succumb to death. Although happiness seemingly eluded him, he did describe how he found meaning, even in the darkest of moments. Finding happiness connotes this sense of finding this superficial thing that will make us feel good. The caveat: searching for this “thing” often leads to an ephemeral state that is hinged to that which exists outside of the self. Finding meaning gives us purpose and helps us to comprehend the darkness and the light as we traverse the journey of life. As reported in this reading, the proverbial search for happiness seems to be leading people to unhappiness. Perhaps, we are conflating happiness with joy. Perhaps, if we seek meaningfulness, we will find joy.

Key Scholar: Viktor Frankl



“Infrared HDR Palmer Park Colorado Springs” by David, 04/2010, CC BY 2.0

Reading 2: Making Meaning in Life

In this reading, Michael F. Steger explores the different theoretical models for finding meaning. Steger contends that the broad nature of such theoretical models makes the scientific study of meaning in life quite challenging. In this reading, Steger proposes that the MMM (Meaning Maintenance Model) framework can integrate much of the scholarly work conducted on this topic.

Key Scholar: Michael F. Steger



“Wisdom-Seeds of Light” by Hartwig HKD, 5/2009, CC BY-ND 2.0

Reading 3: How to Find the Meaning of (Your) Life

In this short article, the author summarizes one approach to starting this journey. She proposes that we ask ourselves three questions:

- What is important to me?
- What am I truly good at?
- What is my potential?

To answer the first question, one must undergo the process of introspection through the lens of their value system. What are your values? Have you ever thought about what you feel is important? By analyzing your values, you allow yourself to see what you deem important. Some examples of different values are: love, friendship, justice, loyalty, power, spirituality, respect, just to name a few. Use this [worksheet](#) to help guide you in discovering what is important to you. This worksheet does not include an exhaustive list of values, as anything that you consider important is a value. Value clarification facilitates an exploration into understanding what is important, but also whether one’s lifestyle is congruent with their value system.

The second question must be approached with an understanding that one’s talent is not always the lighthouse in their sea. To quote the famous quarterback, Todd Marinovich, from the nineties whose lighthouse crumbled, “Just because you are good at something, does that mean that is what you are supposed to do?” This is why value clarification can be so important in evaluating your gifts. If you are an amazing runner, but you do not value running, should you still pursue it? Is this a gift that will lead to meaning? This can only be answered if one’s self-awareness has been heightened through value clarification.

The third question ties nicely to the second question. Self-awareness is undeniable in its power to guide you as you seek meaning. Knowing your potential implies that you must explore different opportunities that

challenge you to step outside of your comfort zone. How do you know what you can do, if you never do anything?



"the golden dream" by Alice Popkorn, 02/2008, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

Reading 4: Compassion: Our First Instinct

Is compassion our ticket to finding our life's meaning? Possibly. Viktor Frankl believed that there were three sources of meaning: love, work, and suffering. If we love one another, we can demonstrate compassion. Through our love and compassion we can comfort the suffering and the downtrodden. And through all of this, we can connect. It is within the intricacies of these connections where we can find meaning. In this reading, the author discusses how compassion, unlike empathy and altruism, involves an unrelenting desire to help. To develop compassion, we must explore the world from myriad perspectives. How can I ever understand suffering or injustice if I never experience it? One way is simply to read. Read biographies and autobiographies. Read poetry. Read the stories about the lives of those with whom you identify the least.

In an effort to foster compassion, Peggy McIntosh wrote the essay, *Unpacking the Knapsack of White Privilege*, in the late nineties, highlighting the reality that if one group is on top, another group must lie somewhere below them. McIntosh, who studied the privilege of white males, realized that she too experienced privilege: skin color. She wrote about the many ways that not having to think about one's skin color every second of everyday made the world a little easier; being white is a privilege that is earned by no one. Perhaps if one understands their privilege, they may feel compassion for marginalized groups' pleas for authentic equality. And in this compassion, perhaps in lieu of chanting, "I'm so sorry," they will chant, "I am right here with you."

Key Scholar: Peggy McIntosh
Key Terms: White Privilege



“Firefighters attacking a fire” by Heather Paul, 10/2010, CC BY-ND 2.0

Reading 5: The Banality of Heroism

Philip Zimbardo spent much of his career studying the banality of evil. He purported that given the “...right conditions and social pressures,” even the most ordinary of persons could commit an act of evil; we all have the potential for evil. He conducted the famous Stanford Prison Experiment where he randomly assigned ordinary college students to different groups, and recreated a prison environment. What Zimbardo found was many of those assigned to the role of prison guard did everything in their power to exploit and dehumanize their fellow college students. Zimbardo explored the evil fueling the acts of the perpetrator as well as the tacit approval granted by the observer. If you witness evil and you say nothing, are you engaging in evil by virtue of being complicit? Zimbardo believed that yes, this is an example of evil. This is an interesting idea to explore within our own lives. How often have we observed acts of evil, and remained silent?

After much dedicated research to the *banality of evil*, Zimbardo proposed that if we are all potential evil doers, quite possibly, we may all be potential heroes, thus giving life to the concept of the *banality of heroism*. In this reading Zimbardo and Franco discuss the heroic ideal and the possibility that we could all be a hero waiting for that situation to bring such an ideal to fruition. This new avenue of research has led to the inception of the [Heroic Imagination Project](#).

“Today, HIP’s mission is rooted in the findings of social psychological experiments, such as Asch’s, Milgram’s and the SPE. These experiments, as well as myriad heinous acts throughout history, reveal the “banal” side of evil. No one is exempt from the possibility of being coerced by the dark side of human nature. The line between good and evil is indeed permeable. However, the reverse also appears true. The “banality of heroism”, an idea first explored in a 2006 article written by Dr. Zimbardo and HIP board chair, Dr. Zeno Franco, is a guide for HIP’s work, suggesting that each and every seemingly ordinary person on this planet is capable of committing heroic acts.

*From this core belief, the **Heroic Imagination Project** was born with a mission to use important findings in psychology to equip ordinary people of all ages with the knowledge, skills, and strategies necessary to choose wise and effective acts of heroism during challenging moments in their lives.”*

Key Scholar: Philip Zimbardo

Key Terms: HIP (Heroic Imagination Project), banality of evil, banality of heroism