

# Chapter 16 Notes (Part 2)

## Attitudes

- **The Nature of Attitudes**
  - Attitudes- associations between actions or objects and evaluations
  - 3 components- cognitive component (belief), evaluative component (emotional), and behavioral disposition
  - Attitude Strength
    - Some are resistant to change, others are less resilient
    - Attitude strength- an attitude's persistence and resistance to change and its impact on behavior
    - Attitude importance- the personal relevance of an attitude and the psychological significance of that attitude for an individual; the more importance assigned to attitude, the greater it is in strength
    - Attitude accessibility- ease with which an attitude comes to mind
    - The greater of importance an attitude is, the more accessible it is likely to become
  - Implicit Attitudes
    - Attitudes that regulate thought and behavior unconsciously and automatically
    - Explicit attitudes- conscious attitudes
  - Cognitive Complexity
    - Cognitive components can be specific or general
    - Two people with same beliefs can believe them for different (more or less complex or general) reasons
  - Attitudinal Ambivalence
    - Attitude object is associated with conflicting evaluative responses
    - Emotional component
    - Attitudes include two evaluative dimensions- positive and negative
    - Each can be relative weak or strong; low positive/negative attitudes have minimal impact on behavior b/c person is indifferent
  - Coherence
    - Attitudinal coherence- extent to which an attitude is internally consistent
    - We should like things we believe have positive consequences
- **Attitudes and Behavior**
  - Broad attitudes predict behavior, but not very well
  - People's attitudes do predict behavior if actions and attitude are both relatively specific (ex: attitude toward recycling, rather than environment)
  - People's attitudes are one of many influences on what they do; behavior is also under control of environmental factors
  - Consistency between behavior and attitudes is higher if members of group share and endorse similar attitudes; provides validation for an individual's own attitudes, which are more likely to drive behavior

- Implicit, rather than explicit, attitudes usually regulate people's actions and reactions
- Stronger attitudes are more predictive of behavior than weaker attitudes
- Attitudes shaped by personal experience are more likely to influence actions
- **Persuasion**
  - Deliberate attempts to change an attitude
  - Components of Persuasion
    - Source- speakers are more persuasive when they appear to be credible
    - Message- type of appeal
    - Channel- means by which message is sent
    - Context
    - Receiver characteristics
  - The Elaboration Likelihood Model of Persuasion
    - People can be persuaded through two routes
    - Central route- involves inducing the recipient of a message to think carefully and weigh the arguments
    - Peripheral route- appeals less to rational and thoughtful processes than to automatic or emotional ones
    - Elaboration likelihood model- knowing how to appeal to people requires figuring out the likelihood that they will think much about the arguments
    - When elaboration likelihood is high, appeals to logic are most likely to be persuasive
    - Explicit attitude change- central route
    - Implicit attitude change- peripheral route
      - Can occur through classical conditioning of an object with an emotional response
      - Repeating messages enough times so people believe it
- **Cognitive Dissonance**
  - Person experiences discrepancy between an attitude and a behavior, or between an attitude and a new piece of information incongruent with it
  - Leads to a state of tension, which motivates person to change attitude, behavior, or perception
  - Ex: knowing that smoking is dangerous but still smoking
  - Dissonance Reduction
    - Postdecision regret- worrying whether or not you made the right choice
    - Postdecision dissonance reduction- making decisions and assumptions that support your past regretted decision
    - Effort justification- dissonance is reduced
  - Alternative Explanations
    - Self-perception theory- individuals become aware of their attitudes, emotions, and other internal states by observing their own behavior
    - Ex: people in boring task experiment concluded they must have liked the task because they told others they liked it and only got \$1

- Ex: People with weak attitudes toward Greenpeace strengthened their attitudes after donating to it
- Self-presentation- what appear to be changes in attitudes are really changes in reported attitudes; because people want to be seen as rational and consistent, they report attitudes they do not really hold
- People feel ashamed and guilty after doing something that conflicts with their values; change attitudes to preserve self-esteem

## The Self

- Self- the person, including mental processes, body, and attributes
- Self concept- person's view of him or her self (cognitive)
- Self-esteem- degree to which a person likes, respects, or esteems the self (affective)
- **Self Esteem**
  - We are motivated to maintain high self-esteem
  - Maintained by giving greater emotional weight to areas in which they are most successful
  - Many people overestimate their abilities; think they are better than average
  - Self-handicapping- process by which people set themselves up to fail when success is uncertain to preserve their self esteem; allows them to control attributions others make for performance
  - People attribute lack of success to impediment that prevented success; if they are successful, person is actually talented and seeks others' praise
  - Basking in reflected glory- publicly announcing affiliation with another person or group that is successful, even though they had nothing to do with success of group
  - People with high self-esteem are more likely to help others when in bad mood because it makes them feel better about themselves
- **Self-Consistency**
  - Motivation to interpret information to fit the self-concept and to prefer people who verify rather than challenge it
  - For people with high self esteem, self-consistency and self-esteem motives do not conflict
  - For people with low self-esteem, these motives lead in opposite directions
- **Self-Presentation**
  - Looking glass self- other people are in a mirror in which we see ourselves; much of our self concept is reflected back to us by other people with whom we interact
  - Self-presentation- process by which people attempt to control the impressions that others form of them
  - Self-presentational predicaments- instances in which our desires to influence the impressions other people form of us fail; emotion experienced is usually embarrassment
  - Self-monitoring- individual differences in the degree to which people manage their impressions
  - High self-monitors change how they present themselves according to the situation they are in; low self-monitors are less concerned about the impressions others have of them