

- What is social psychology?
  - The **scientific** study of the way in which peoples thoughts, feeling, and behaviors are influenced by the real or imagined presence of other people
- How do attitude guide behavior?
  - Form attitudes through **experience and socialization**
  - Behaviors are consistent with strong attitudes
  - Discrepancies lead to dissonance
  - Attitudes can be changed through persuasion
- We form **attitudes** through experience and socialization
  - Opinions, beliefs, and feelings are called attitudes
    - Shaped by social context
    - Play an important role in how we evaluate and interact with other people
  - Direct experience of, or exposure to, things shapes attitudes
  - The **mere exposure effect**
    - The more we are exposed to something, the more likely we are to like it
  - Attitudes can be conditioned
    - Advertisers take advantage of this
    - Example: Coke and Pepsi preferring M to Q
  - Attitudes are shaped through socialization—parents, teachers, peers, and others
    - Example: political and religious mindsets based on parents ideologies
- Automatic and controlled processing of stereotypes
  - An automatic process is one over which we have no control
  - Stereotypes are automatically triggered under certain conditions—they just pop into ones mind
  - Since the process is automatic, you can't control it or stop it from occurring
  - However, for people whoa re not deeply prejudiced, their control processes can suppress or override these stereotypes
- Behaviors are consistent with strong attitudes

- An attitude is more likely to predict behavior, to be consistent over time and to be resistant to change
  - The stronger it is
  - The more personally relevant it is
  - The more specific it is
  - If it formed through direct exposure
- Attitude accessibility predicts behavior consistent with the attitude
- Explicit attitudes
  - Those you are aware of can report
- Implicit attitudes
  - Those you are not aware of
  - May be associated with the brain areas involved with implicit memories
  - Implicit association test



#### □ The theory of **Cognitive Dissonance**

- When we are confronted with information implying that we may have behaved in ways that are irrational, immoral, or stupid, we experience a good deal of discomfort
- This feeling of discomfort caused by performing an action that ruins one's well being and life
- **Leon Festinger**
  - Found with the knob turning experiment
- Dissonance is most powerful and most upsetting when people
- There are 3 basic ways we try to reduce cognitive dissonance
  - By changing our behavior to bring it in line with the dissonant cognition
  - By attempting to justify our behavior through changing one of the dissonant cognitions
  - By attempting to justify our behavior by adding new cognitions

#### □ Decisions

- Every time we make a decision, we experience dissonance
  - Distorting our likes and dislikes
  - When given choices, the picked choice is not entirely positive while the one not picked is not entirely negative

- After making the choice, you have doubts
- After the decision, your cognition that you are a smart person is dissonant with aspects that didn't fit your choice
- You reduce dissonance by down playing the negative aspects of the one you chose and the positive aspects of the one you rejected
- **Post decision Dissonance**
  - Dissonance aroused after making a decision, typically reduced by enhancing the attractiveness of the chosen alternative and downplaying the negatives
- Discrepancies Lead To Dissonance
  - Attitude change
    - Researchers have found that people are likely to change their attitudes as a result of dissonance and to provide justifications
- Attitudes can be changed through persuasion
  - In the elaboration likelihood model persuasion leads to attitude change in two ways:
    - The central route
      - People pay attention to arguments, consider all the information, and use rational cognitive processes
      - What's actually being told / facts
    - The peripheral route
      - People minimally process the message
      - Leads to more impulsive
    - 3 critical factors influence the extent to which a message is persuasive
      - **source**
      - **content**
      - **receiver**
- How do we form our **impressions** of others?
  - **Social perception**
    - Study of how we form impressions of and make inferences about other people
- Nonverbal behavior