Reflecting on Yourself

Self Conscious Emotion

Appraisal of the Self

- Basic emotions arise from things that happen to us
- Self Conscious Emotions reflect our self evaluation
- Develop later than basic emotions
- Require sense of self and feedback from our trusted others

- Will be culturally variable
- Reflect either:
  - social comparison (envy, jealousy)
  - self evaluation (guilt, shame, pride)

Sense of Self

- Develops around age 2 (rouge test)
- Self conscious emotions emerge about the same time
- Self conscious emotions weave self evaluation and basic emotion together
- Pride: joy and positive self
- Shame: sadness and negative self
- Animals that develop a sense of self (orangutans and chimps)
- Reliably display self conscious emotions

Oops...

- Self punishing emotions after mistakes
- Guilt, shame, embarrassment
- Urge to withdraw/ hide

- How different are they?
  - Similar brain regions activated for each
  - Different situations evoke each one
Embarrassment

- Arises quickly in response to an unexpected error
- Lasts briefly and fades
- Draws unexpected attention from others
- Tend to feel somewhat less personally responsible
- In retrospect it can seem a little funny
- Feel onlookers are typically amused

What embarrasses you?

- Making social mistakes
- Being the center of attention
- Awkward social moments
  - (impacts the ‘presented self’ not the ‘core self’)
- Creates a sense of foolishness and fluster
- Always occurs with others present/ never alone

Display & Function

- Avoid eye contact/ cover face with hands
- Turn head, usually to the left
- Small sheepish smile – as though trying to suppress it
- Flush of cheeks

Function

- Appeasement – to gain forgiveness
- Research shows this works
  - Observers try to help the embarrassed person feel better
    - Report liking and esteem for the embarrassed person
    - Offer examples of situations where they felt similarly
- Videotapes of knocking over pile of toilet paper rolls in a grocery
- Embarrassment with repairs – most liked

Theory

- Temporary Loss of Self Esteem
- Being judged negatively, for a moment, by social audience

Experiment

- Failed at a task in group context/ influenced success of the group
- Group criticized the performance (either publicly or privately)
- Measured self esteem and embarrassment
  - Lower self esteem was associated with higher embarrassment

Is everyone equally susceptible?

- Varies with measures of neuroticism and social self confidence
- No sex differences
- Declines with age
**Shame and Guilt**

- Arises from expected events
- Builds slowly, dissipates slowly
- Can occur alone
- Violated a moral standard
- Felt the situation was serious
- Felt others were angry at them
- Counterfactual thinking: Engage in rumination after to try to understand causes

**Guilt**

- Specific behavior is bad/ hurtful/ immoral
- Counterfactual thinking: change behaviors

**Shame**

- Entire self is bad/ worthless
- Counterfactual thinking: change who they are as a person

**Guilt**

- Feel some control over actions
- Take responsibility for change
- Better than average social problem solving
- Motivated to repair mistakes/ repent
- Promotes forgiveness/ reconciliation

**Shame**

- Feel less control over actions
- Problems in relationships
- Anger/ social anxiety/ less empathy
- Poor social problem solving
- Slower to help others in need
- Promotes hiding/ collapse of self esteem

**Telling them Apart**

- **Guilt**
  - Feel some control over actions
  - Take responsibility for change
  - Better than average social problem solving
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**Theory**

- Regulate Moral Behavior
- Parents induce feelings after transgressions
  - Dispositional Differences
  - In place by middle childhood
  - Reactions of loved ones/ teachers/ siblings during childhood shapes
- Lessens the likelihood of repeating transgressions
- Once internalized become mechanism of self control

Dispositional tendencies

- Tendency to interpret situations as 'bad self' versus 'bad behavior'

**Pride**

- You accept credit for causing a positive outcome that supports your self concept.

- Moral emotion to promote positive action

- Expression
  - Tilt head back slightly
  - Stand tall, puff chest
- Desire to be seen/ self confident
- Tendency to inhibit slightly
Can you be too proud?

- **Bragging and Hubris**
  - Pride – positive feeling based on job well done (behavior)
    - Take credit but for a one-time thing
    - Associated with development of positive self-esteem
    - Leads to self-actualization
  - Hubris – based on arrogant self-satisfaction (self)
    - Take credit in a global ongoing way
    - Associated with highly fluctuating self-esteem
    - Others shun hubris
    - Associated with aggression and hostility

Jealousy & Envy

- **Jealousy**
  - Relationship is threatened by another person or activity
  - People over apply the word
  - Often includes feelings of hurt and rejection

- **Envy**
  - Another person has what you want and don’t have
  - Tend to use this word less (carries very negative religious implications)
  - Often includes feelings of longing and motivation to improve

Envy ... two types

- **Malicious**
  - Wish for the other not to have the desired characteristic
  - Feelings of bitterness
  - Sense of ‘unfairness’; the other is unfairly advantaged

- **Non-malicious**
  - Disappointment with the self
  - Desire to emulate the other
  - Sense of being ‘lesser’
  - Leads to sadness

Jealousy

- **Romantic relationships/ coworkers/ siblings**
- **Loss of attention is viewed as loss of worth to the significant person**

- **Function**
  - Over-reactions can be harmful
  - But... a little jealousy may be good for a relationship
  - Shows value of your loved one
  - Motivates reparations and improvements

- **Sex differences**
  - Men more jealous of sexual infidelity
  - Women more jealous of emotional infidelity
conclusions

- We learn the self conscious emotions
- Require a sense of self and feedback from important people
- Show cultural influence
- Serve important social functions
  - Maintain expected behavior/ moral behavior
  - Maintain relationships
  - Motivate improved behavior (often)