

Table 12.1 Characteristics of Groupthink

CHARACTERISTIC	DESCRIPTION
Invulnerability	Members feel they cannot fail.
Rationalization	Members explain away warning signs and help each other rationalize their decision.
Lack of introspection	Members do not examine the ethical implications of their decision because they believe that they cannot make immoral choices.
Stereotyping	Members stereotype their enemies as weak, stupid, or unreasonable.
Pressure	Members pressure each other not to question the prevailing opinion.
Lack of disagreement	Members do not express opinions that differ from the group consensus.
Self-deception	Members share in the illusion that they all agree with the decision.
Insularity	Members prevent the group from hearing disruptive but potentially useful information from people who are outside the group.

Source: Janis (1972, 1982).

Table 12.2 Sample Script Items from Milgram's Classic Experiment

VOLTAGE OF "SHOCK"	LEARNER'S SCRIPT
150	"Ugh!! Experimenter! That's all. Get me out of here. I told you I had heart trouble. My heart's starting to bother me now. Get me out of here, please. My heart's starting to bother me. I refuse to go on. Let me out."
210	"Ugh!! Experimenter! Get me out of here. I've had enough. I <i>won't</i> be in this experiment any more."
300	<i>(Agonized scream)</i> "I absolutely refuse to answer any more. Get me out of here. You can't hold me here. Get me out. Get me out of here."
330	<i>(Intense and prolonged agonized scream)</i> "Let me out of here. Let me out of here. My heart's bothering me. Let me out, I tell you. <i>(Hysterically)</i> Let me out of here. Let me out of here. You have no right to hold me here. Let me out! Let me out! Let me out of here! Let me out! Let me out!"

Source: Milgram (1964a, 1974).

conformity — changing one's own behavior to more closely match the actions of others

- several classic studies (i.e., Sherif, Asch) suggest that individuals will change their behaviors to conform to those of a group
- may be influenced by private vs. face-to-face contact, gender, or culture
- **groupthink**: occurs when people within a group feel it is more important to maintain group cohesiveness rather than critically evaluate facts when making decisions often with dire consequences

compliance — person changing their behavior due to another person or group asking or directing them to change, often in the absence of any real authority or power

- **foot-in-the-door technique**
- **door-in-the-face technique**
- **lowball technique**
- **that's-not-all technique**

Social Influence

(the ways in which a person's behavior can be affected by other people)

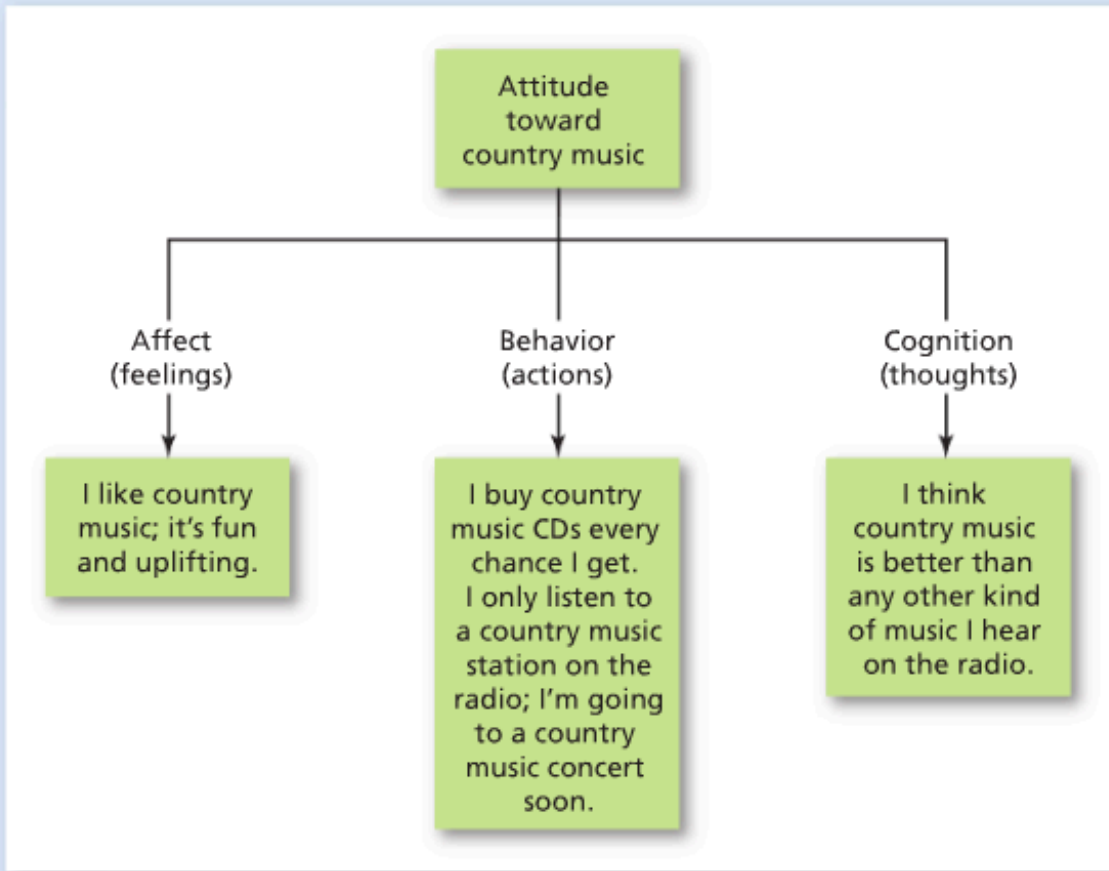
obedience — changing one's behavior at the direct order of an authority figure

- a classic study by Milgram (i.e., teacher/learner electrical shock study) indicated that 65% of "teachers" went all the way through shock levels, despite protest from "learners"

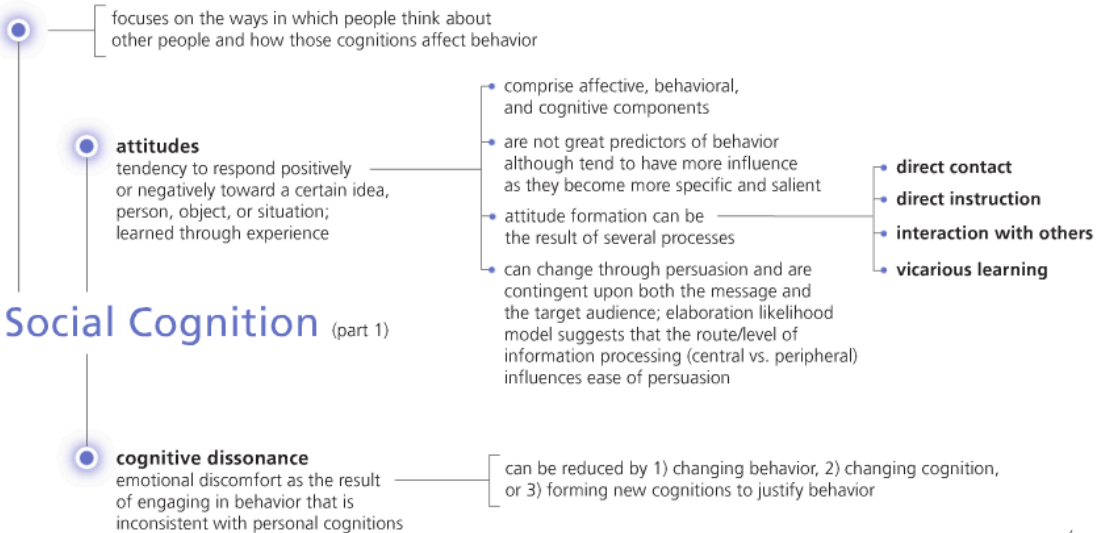
task performance can be affected by social influence

- **social facilitation** = positive influence
- **social impairment** = negative influence
- **social loafing** occurs when people do not work hard when others are also working; easy to "hide" in a group

presence of others increases arousal



12.4-5



(continued)

impression formation
forming of first knowledge about another person; influenced by primacy effect

Social Cognition (part 2) Impression Formation and Attribution

attribution is process by which we explain both our own behavior and the behavior of others; based on attribution theory (Heider)

- **situational:** cause of behavior is assumed to come from external sources
- **dispositional:** cause of behavior is assumed to come from within the individual
- **fundamental attribution error** is the tendency to overestimate the influence of another person's internal characteristics on behavior and underestimate the external/situational factors; influenced by age and culture

social categorization
automatic and unconscious assignment of a new acquaintance to some category or group

- **stereotypes:** set of characteristics believed to be shared by all members of a particular category; can be useful (by limiting information processing)
- categories assigned are based on implicit personality theory, the set of assumptions formed in childhood about different types of people

prejudice
unsupported and negative stereotypes (e.g., ageism, sexism, racism, etc.) about members of a particular social group

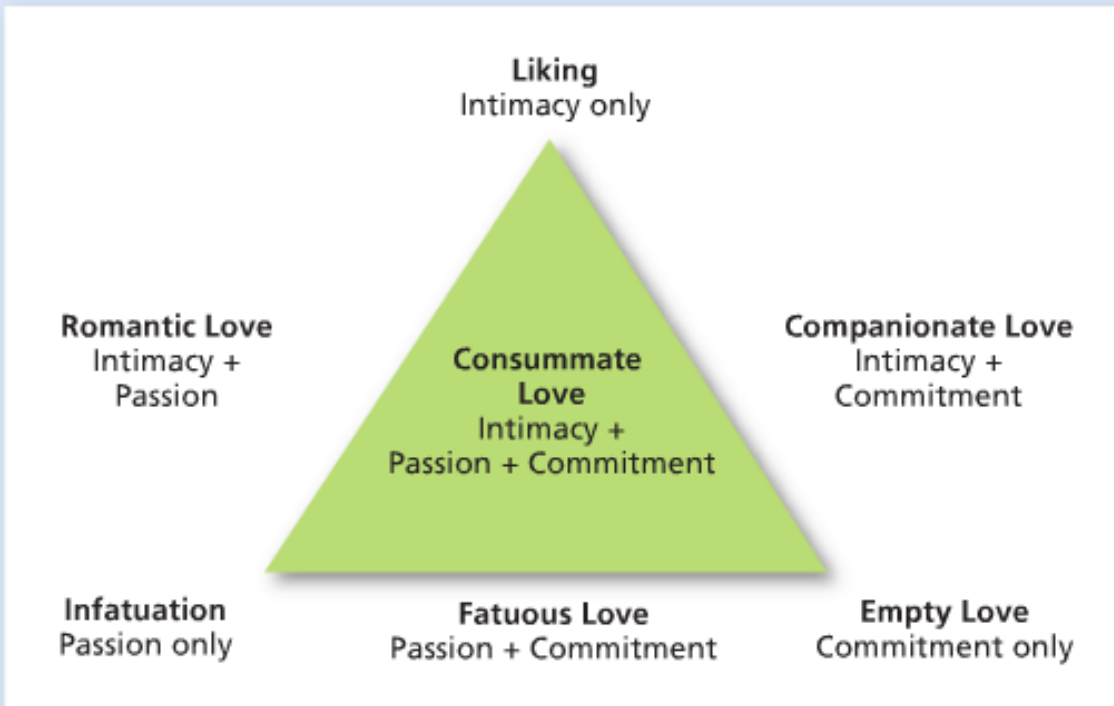
- **social cognitive theory** suggests that prejudice is an attitude formed as others are formed
- **social identity theory** suggests three processes are responsible for the formation of a person's identity within a social group—categorization, identification, and comparison
- **stereotype vulnerability** (knowledge of someone else's stereotyped opinions) can result in self-fulfilling prophecy and is related to stereotype threat when situational anxiety occurs if a person's behavior might confirm a stereotype
- **prejudice** can be overcome through education, equal status intergroup contact, and working together to achieve a specific goal (e.g., the "jigsaw classroom")

Social Interaction (part 1) Prejudice and Discrimination

discrimination
occurs when prejudicial attitudes cause members of a social group to be treated differently than others in situations calling for equal treatment

can vary based on existence of in-groups and out-groups — **scapegoating** (target for frustrations and negative emotions) typically occurs for members of an out-group

realistic conflict theory
suggests that when resources are limited, prejudice and discrimination are closely tied to an increasing degree of conflict between groups that seek common resources



12.10

liking or having the desire for a relationship with someone else; can be influenced by a variety of factors

- physical attractiveness
- proximity
- similarity
- complementary qualities
- reciprocity of liking

Social Interaction (part 2)
Interpersonal Attraction

love
strong affection for another person due to kinship, personal ties, sexual attraction, admiration, or common interests

Sternberg's triangular theory
suggests different components and types of love

- three components
 - intimacy
 - passion
 - commitment
- three types
 - **romantic** (intimacy and passion)
 - **companionate** (intimacy and commitment)
 - **consummate** (intimacy, passion, and commitment)

Table 12.3 Help or Don't Help: Five Decision Points

DECISION POINT	DESCRIPTION	FACTORS INFLUENCING DECISION
Noticing	Realizing that there is a situation that might be an emergency.	Hearing a loud crash or a cry for help.
Defining an Emergency	Interpreting the cues as signaling an emergency.	Loud crash is associated with a car accident, people are obviously hurt.
Taking Responsibility	Personally assuming the responsibility to act.	A single bystander is much more likely to act than when others are present (Latané & Darley, 1969).
Planning a Course of Action	Deciding how to help and what skills might be needed.	People who feel they have the necessary skills to help are more likely to help.
Taking Action	Actually helping.	Costs of helping (e.g., danger to self) must not outweigh the rewards of helping.

12.11–12

aggression
occurs when one person verbally or physically hurts or tries to destroy another person; often the result of frustration

- aggression may be partly attributed to genetics and can be triggered by variations in brain function (i.e., amygdala activation) and internal or external chemical influences (e.g., testosterone, alcohol)
- much of aggression is influenced by learning but not totally deterministic

- partially explained by social learning theory—social roles (expected behavior in particular social situation) determine much of behavior (e.g., Zimbardo's Stanford Prison study)
- childhood exposure to abuse does not necessarily mean that one will grow up to be an abuser
- short-term exposure to violent media (video games, television, movies) has been correlated with increases in both physical and verbal aggression and aggressive thoughts and emotions

Social Interaction (part 3)
Aggression and Prosocial Behavior

prosocial, or socially desirable, behavior benefits others

- **altruism:** helping someone with no expectation of reward and often at personal risk
- can be influenced by helper's mood and victim's gender, attractiveness, or "just rewards"; racial and ethnic differences can decrease probability of helping
- refusal to help another can be negatively affected by the presence of others (bystander effect/diffusion of responsibility) rather than indifference or a lack of sympathy; also influenced by individual's appraisal of situation (see Table 12.3)

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