



23C59000 - Consumer research

Attitudes, emotions, and judgement

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Agenda

- **What are attitudes?**
- **What are emotions?**
- **How attitudes and emotions relate to our judgment?**



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attitude *noun* (CONFIDENCE)

• [U] If you say that someone has attitude, you mean that they are very confident and want people to notice them.

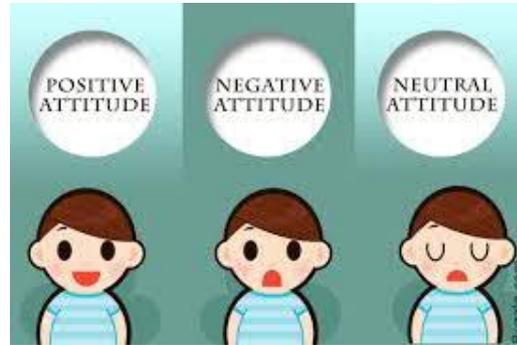
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Simply put:

**ATTITUDE IS THE
PREDISPOSITION TO
EVALUATE AN
OBJECT/SYMBOL
/SITUATION EITHER
FAVORABLY OR
UNFAVORABLY**



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Why do we have attitudes?

- Attitudes **make it easier to cope within the world** and act in our lives. This is because we hold on to our attitudes for longer times.
- Once they are established, they guide our decision making now and in the future: because of our attitudes we make decisions more rapid and effortlessly than without them

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Why do we have attitudes? Four functions

INSTRUMENTAL / UTILITARIAN FUNCTION

- Evaluations of benefits and tradeoffs, punishment/reward

EGO-DEFENSIVE FUNCTION

- Protecting yourself from “harsh truths” about yourself / world

VALUE-EXPRESSIVE FUNCTION

- Satisfaction from expressing attitudes that cohere with values and sense of self

KNOWLEDGE FUNCTION

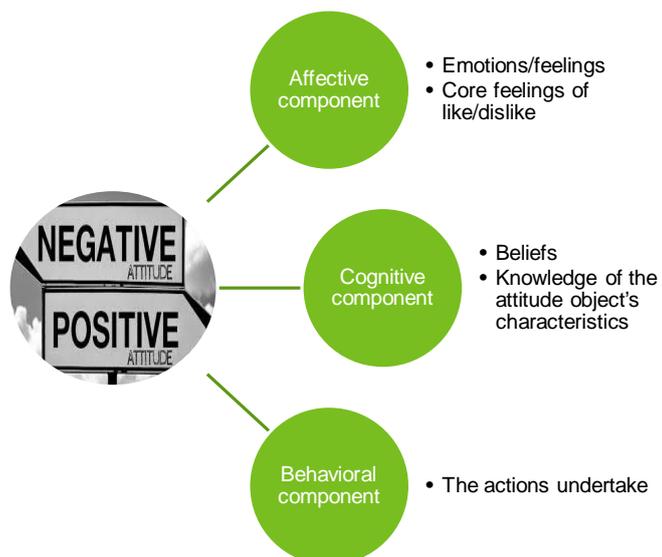
- Making sense of ‘the universe’, meaningful understanding

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Attitude components – ABC-model of attitudes

Based on Rosenberg and Hovland (1960) **tripartite model**, a theory of attitude structure proposing that an attitude is based on, or consists of **affective, cognitive, and behavioral** components

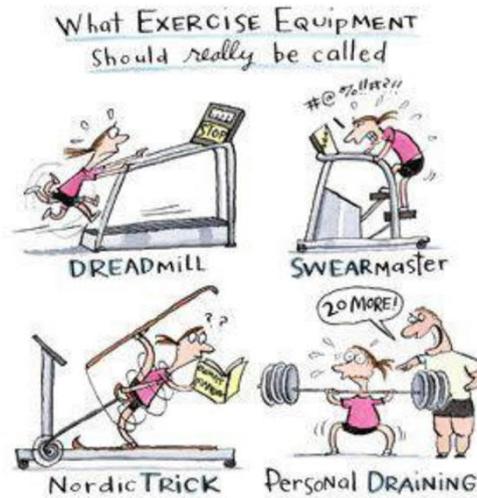
Attitudes organize into value systems



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Example of affect + behavior + cognition

“ I believe going to the gym is good for me (**cognitive**), so I intend to go to the gym at least 3 times a week (**behavior**). But I hate actually going to the gym (**affect**).”



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Marketer perspective? High-involvement context

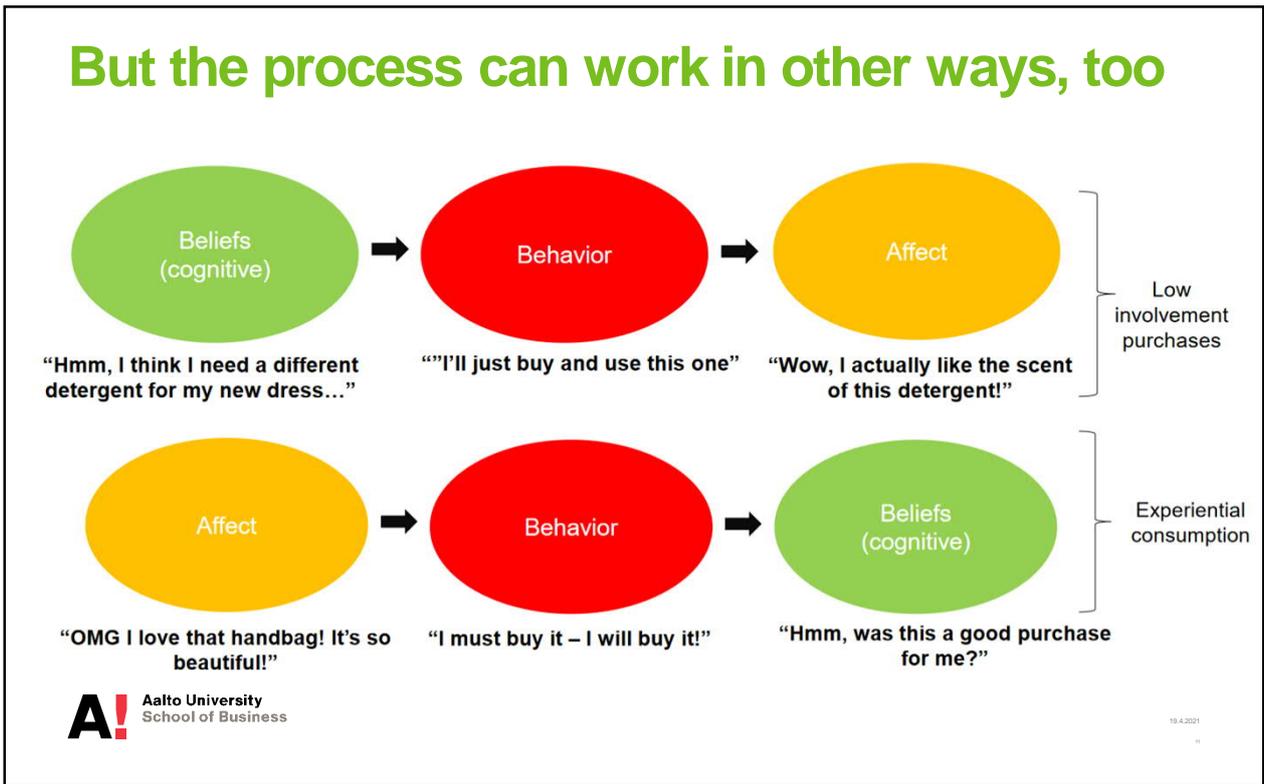


Let's advertise the great attributes of our products, and why they are good for you!
= BUILDING AWARENESS

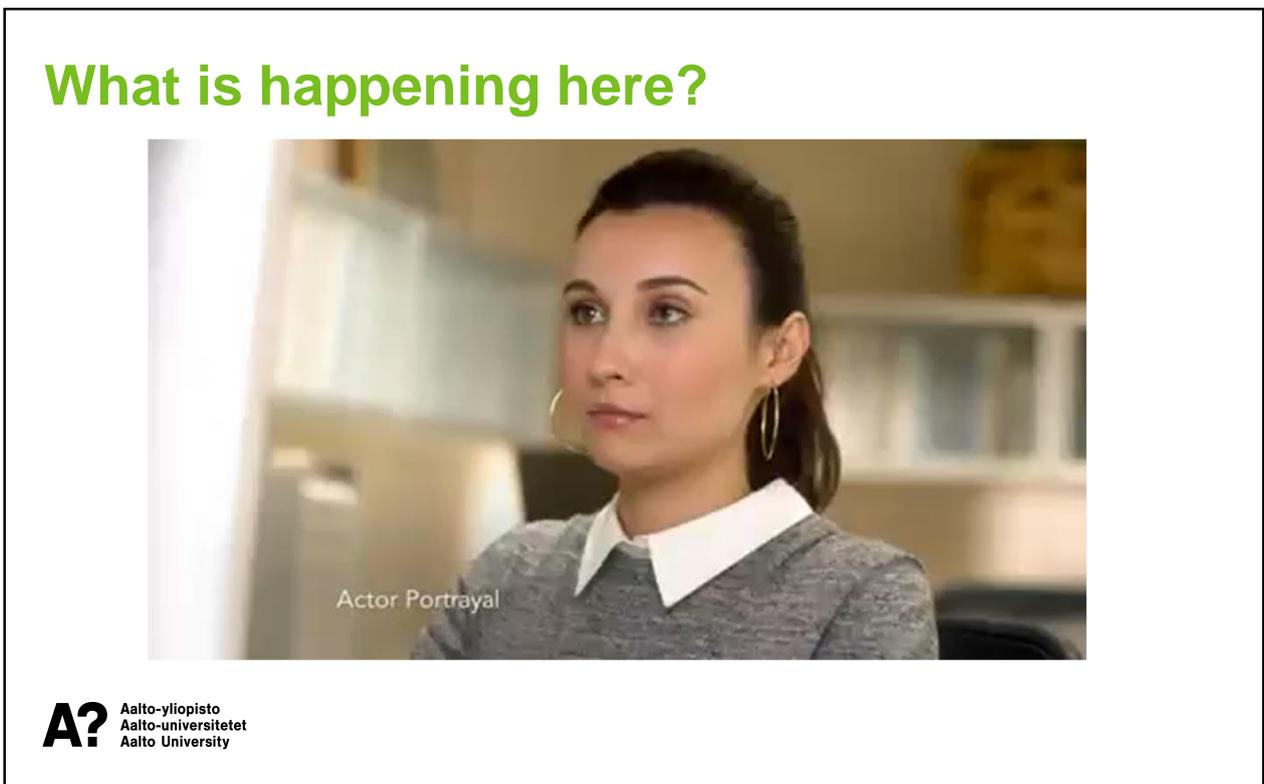
Consumers are getting interested based on the advertisement they see. They start feeling certain ways towards the product
= GETTING INTERESTED

Consumers act based on their beliefs and feelings
= PURCHASING

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How stable are attitudes? Do attitudes predict behavior?

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General and specific attitudes

Psychology often makes a distinction between **general** and **specific** attitudes

- A general attitude: a broad view of something in general (e.g. sustainability)
- A specific attitude: an attitude towards a specific action (e.g. becoming a vegan)

→ Which ones are likely to be **more stable**?

→ Which ones are likelier to **predict** actual **behavior**?

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General and specific attitudes

There seems to be a consensus in literature (psychology and consumer psychology) that

- General attitudes are likelier to be **more stable** → in theory, they should be harder to change
- General attitudes are **poor predictors of behavior** → people can have a very positive/negative general attitude towards something, but it never translates to action

→ What are the implications to consumer research?

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Implications to marketers and researchers

If you want to **predict specific behaviors** through consumer research, you need to **ask about attitudes towards specific behaviors, not their general attitudes** towards larger domains of interests

E.g. Which attitude would be the most likely to predict what consumers do with their old keyboard when they buy a new computer

- What is your attitude towards the environment?
- What is your attitude towards recycling?
- What is your attitude towards recycling old electronics?

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Implications to marketers and researchers

It will be very difficult for marketers to change consumers' general attitudes → easier to influence attitudes towards **specific behaviors**

Getting people to change their attitude toward having their **Very own car** (as opposed to car share) can be hard..



But it could be easier to change their attitudes regarding **switching to an electric car.**

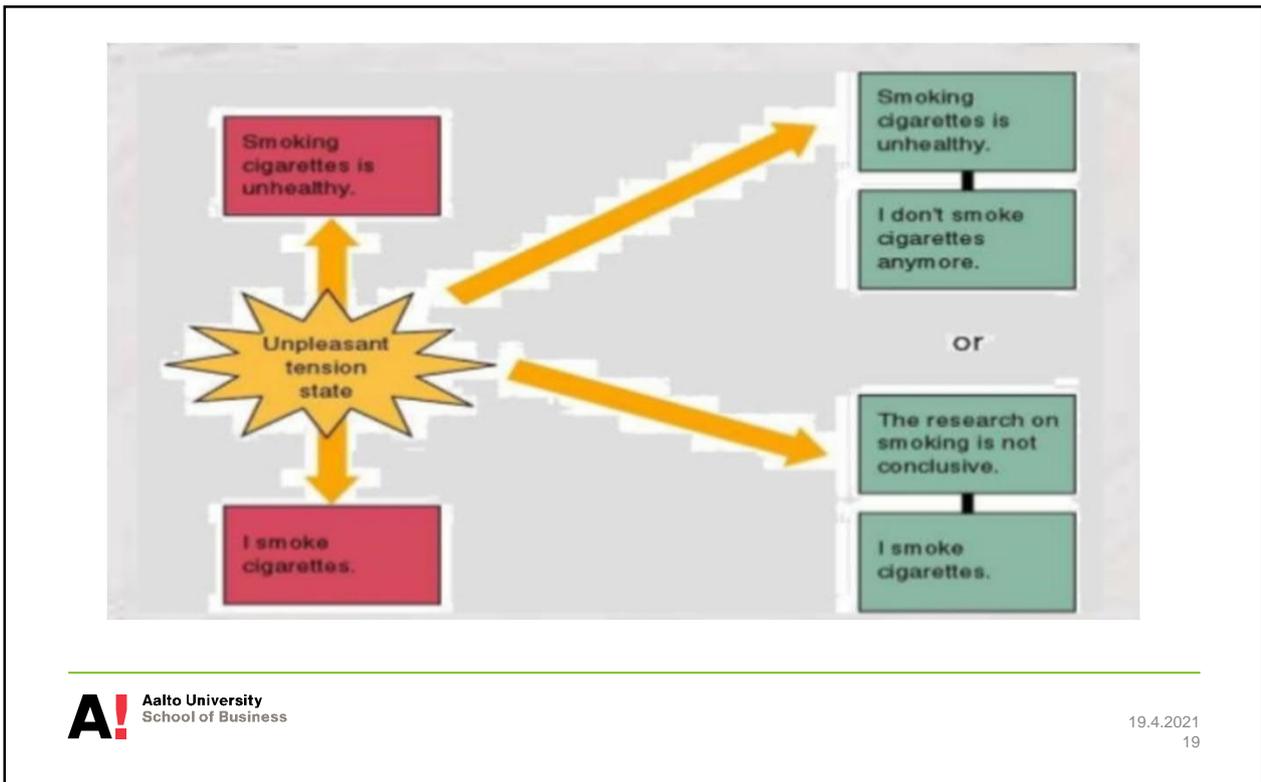
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Consistency principle and cognitive dissonance

- Consumers seek **harmony among attitudes and behaviors** whenever they can and change components to maintain consistency
- COGNITIVE DISSONANCE → “People experience psychological discomfort when there is an inconsistency between “cognitions (attitudes, beliefs, values, opinions, knowledge) about themselves, about their behavior and about their surroundings” (Festinger 1957)
- Consumers take action to resolve dissonance when their attitudes and behaviors are inconsistent: they adjust either one of them



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The attitude–behaviour gap in sustainable tourism

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates why people who actively engage in environmental protection at home engage in vacation behaviour which has negative environmental consequences, albeit unintentionally. The environmental activists participating in the study were highly aware of the negative environmental consequences of tourism in general, but all displayed an attitude–behaviour gap which made them feel uncomfortable. Participants did not report changing their behaviour; instead, they offered a wide range of explanations justifying their tourist activities. Gaining insight into these explanations contributes to our understanding of why it is so difficult to motivate people to minimize the negative environmental impacts of their vacations, and represents a promising starting point for new interventions to reduce environmentally unsustainable tourism behaviours.

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Attitude commitment

People have different levels of "commitment" to attitudes

- **Compliance** – the lowest level; attitudes formed and held to gain rewards and avoid punishments
- **Identification** – "mid-level"; attitudes formed and held to fit in a group or please others
- **Internalization** – the highest level: deep-seated attitudes, that have become part of the individual's value system

In other words – people **report** having an attitude

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Breakout rooms

- Can you think of (personal) examples of internalization (consistent, value-based attitudes), identification (you starting to like/dislike something due to group/peer influence), and compliance (rewards/punishments)?
- Can you recall a time when your attitude has been fundamentally changed? Or a thing that you used to believe and now don't?

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Attitude strength measurement

Lavrakas, P. J. (2008). *Encyclopedia of survey research methods* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc. doi: 10.4135/9781412963947

Researchers have identified several attributes related to attitude strength. Several frequently studied attributes are well suited for survey research because they can be assessed directly using a single self-report survey item. For example, attitude extremity can be conceptualized as the absolute value of an attitude score reported on a bipolar scale that is centered at zero and ranges from strongly negative to strongly positive. Attitude importance is the significance people perceive a given attitude to have for them. Attitude certainty refers to how sure or how confident people are that their attitude is valid. Each of these attributes can be measured with straightforward questions, such as, **To what extent is your attitude about X positive or negative?; How important is X to you personally?; and How certain are you about your attitude about X?**

Recent research suggests that attitude strength also is related to the extent that individuals subjectively associate an attitude with their personal moral convictions.

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Emotions, according to psychology

In everyday language people talk about **feelings**

→ what's the difference?

Emotions, as psychology understands them are **physical and instinctive** (“A subjective sensation experienced as a type of psycho-physiological arousal”)

Feelings are “**cognitively processed**” emotions

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Emotion

Emotion alert us to **immediate** dangers and prepares us for action

Emotions ensure **immediate** survival of self (body and mind.)

Physical states that arise as response to external stimuli

Emotions are **intense but temporary**.

Joy is an emotion

Fear is an emotion

Anger is an emotion.

Attraction is an emotion.

Difficult to hide (as they come with a physical reaction)

Feeling

Feelings alert us to **anticipated** dangers and prepares us for action.

Feelings ensure **long-term** survival of self (body and mind.)

Mental reactions and associations to emotions

Feelings more low-key but sustainable.

Happiness is a feeling

Worry is a feeling.

Bitterness is a feeling

Love is a feeling.

Easier to hide

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Thinking brain
- neocortex

Emotional brain
- limbic system

Survival brain
- basic / reptilian brain

Figure 1. Key areas of the brain (Image © 2014 Soteris).

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Plutchik's Wheel of Emotions

Eight primary emotions, four pairs of polar opposites:

ecstasy	↔	grief
admiration	↔	loathing
terror	↔	rage
amazement	↔	vigilance

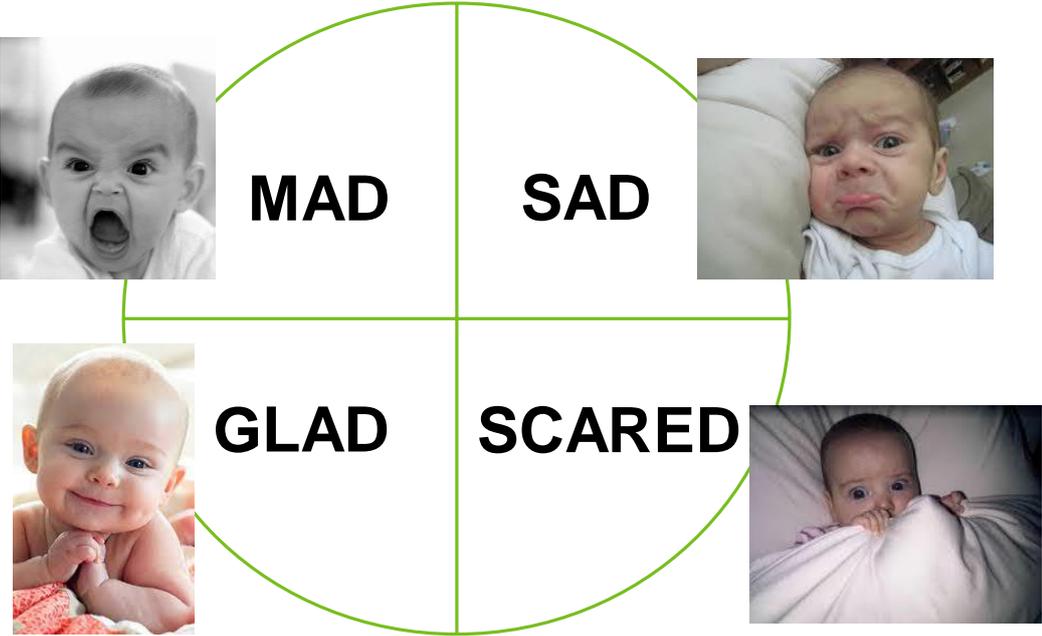
The diagram is a circular wheel with eight primary emotions at the vertices: joy, trust, fear, surprise, sadness, grief, rage, and anger. Each primary emotion is paired with its opposite (e.g., joy vs. grief, trust vs. fear). Between these primary emotions are secondary emotions, which are combinations of two primary emotions (e.g., serenity, acceptance, submission, awe, disapproval, remorse, contempt, aggression). At the outer edge of the wheel are tertiary emotions, which are combinations of three primary emotions (e.g., joy-anticipation, optimism, serenity, joy + trust, love, acceptance, trust + fear, submission, fear + surprise, awe, surprise + sadness, disapproval, sadness + disgust, remorse, boredom, disgust + anger, contempt, loathing, rage, anger, anticipation + anger, aggressiveness, interest, anticipation, anticipation + anger, aggressiveness, joy-anticipation, optimism).

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Plutc (1980). Emotion: a psychoevolutionary synthesis. New York7 Harper and Row.

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MAD **SAD**

GLAD **SCARED**

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How would you study emotions? 

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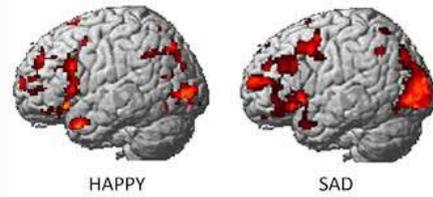
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Affective Science

Affective Science at Stanford University emphasizes basic research on emotion, culture, and psychopathology. To do this, we use a broad range of experimental, psychophysiological, neural, and genetic methods to test theory about psychological mechanisms underlying human behavior.

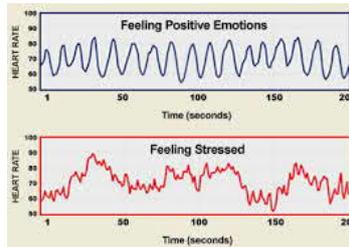
fMRI scan



Galvanic skin response (aka sweating)



Heart rate



Blood cortisol-levels



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Mind in the marketplace - making judgements



Expectations –
brands, placebo & price,
and presentation

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NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER

REVISED AND EXPANDED EDITION

PREDICTABLY IRRATIONAL

CHAPTER 9

The Effect of Expectations

Why the Mind Gets What It Expects

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Coke VS Pepsi taste test

When consumers were told the brands beforehand, they preferred Coca-cola



When consumers did not know the brands, they slightly preferred Pepsi

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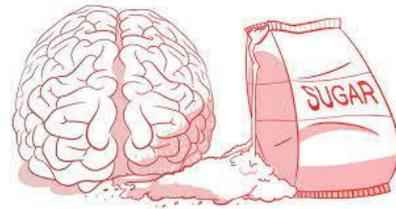
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The **brain activation of the participants was different** depending on whether the name of the drink was revealed or not.

The reaction of the brain **to the basic hedonic value** of the drinks (essentially sugar) turned out to be similar for the two drinks.

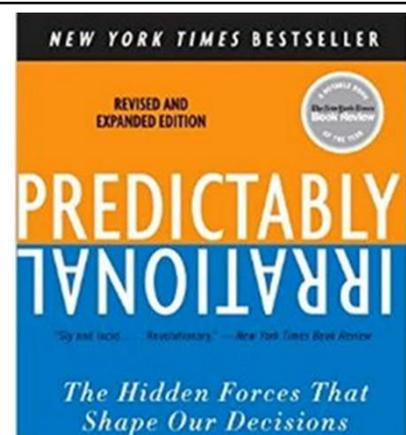
→ But the **advantage of Coke over Pepsi was due to Coke's brand**—which activated the higher-order brain mechanisms.



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The power of price and placebo

- Placebo effect: (in medicine) “a phenomenon in which some people experience a benefit after the administration of an inactive “look-alike” substance or treatment. This substance, or placebo, has no known medical effect.”
- Price of products as the guiding principle for the placebo effect



CHAPTER 10

The Power of Price

Why a 50-Cent Aspirin Can Do What a Penny Aspirin Can't

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"Veladone-Rx are spread out on the table; and nearby is a cup of pens, with the drug's handsome logo. "Veladone is an exciting new medication in the opioid family," you read. "Clinical studies show that over 92 percent of patients receiving Veladone in double-blind controlled studies reported significant pain relief within only 10 minutes, and that pain relief lasted up to eight hours." And how much does it cost? According to the brochure, **\$2.50 for a single dose.**"

"most of our participants found [pain relief]. **Almost all of them reported less pain when they experienced the electrical shocks under the influence of Veladone.** Very interesting—considering that Veladone was just a capsule of vitamin C."

"FROM THIS EXPERIMENT, we saw that our capsule did have a placebo effect. But suppose we priced the Veladone differently. Suppose we discounted the price of a capsule of Veladone-Rx **from \$2.50 to just 10 cents.** Would our participants react differently?"

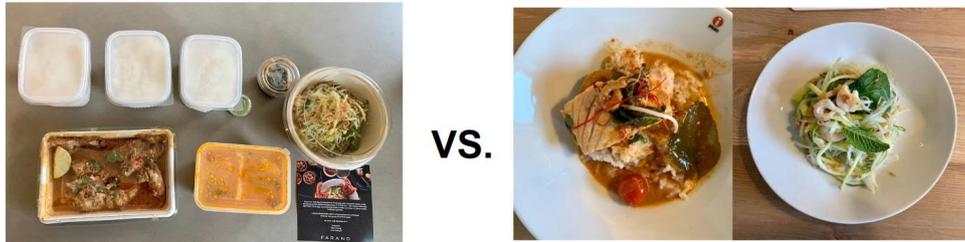
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"In our next test, we changed the brochure, scratching out the original price (\$2.50 per pill) and **inserting a new discount price of 10 cents.** Did this change our participants' reaction? Indeed. At \$2.50 almost all our participants experienced pain relief from the pill. **But when the price was dropped to 10 cents, only half of them did.**"



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Power of presentation



If you tell people beforehand something might be good/bad, the odds are that they will end up agreeing with you – **not because their experience, but because of their expectations**

WHEN WE BELIEVE beforehand that something will be good, therefore, it generally will be good—and when we think it will be bad, it will bad.

EXPECTATIONS > EXPERIENCE



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“Resisting temptation and instilling self-control are general human goals, and repeatedly failing to achieve them is a source of much of our misery.”




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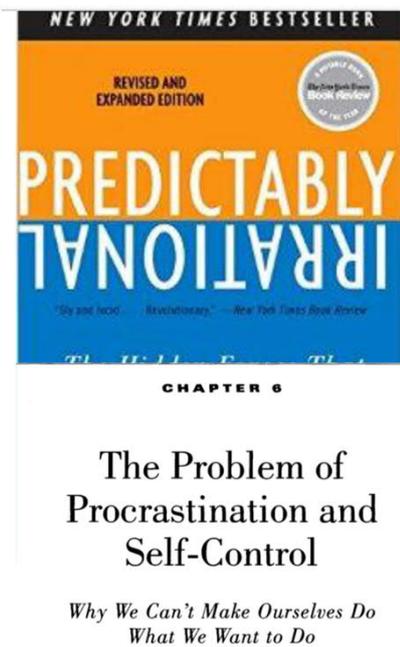
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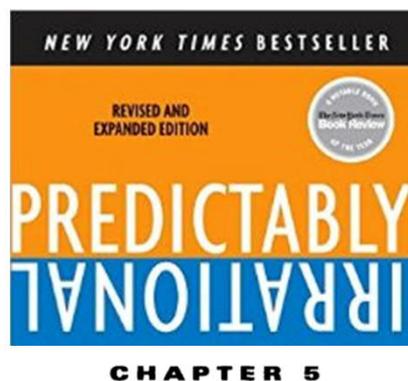
“The road to hell, they say, is paved with good intentions. And most of us know what that’s all about. We promise to save for retirement, but we spend the money on a vacation. We vow to diet, but we surrender to the allure of the dessert cart. We promise to have our cholesterol checked regularly, and then we cancel our appointment.”

We **procrastinate** = give up long-term goals for immediate gratification

→ Especially difficult to resist temptation in hot emotional states



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The Influence of Arousal

Why Hot Is Much Hotter Than We Realize

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#1 set of questions about sexual preferences

[e.g. having sex with older people, fat people, multiple people at the same time, people they hated]

#2 set of questions about the likelihood of engaging in immoral sexual conduct or committing sexual abuse

[e.g. ever committing a date rape; getting someone drunk to get sex; lying to get sex]

#3 set of questions about likelihood of engaging in unsafe sex

[e.g. willingness to use condoms with a new sexual partner]

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“Across the 19 questions about sexual preferences, when Roy and all the other participants were aroused they predicted that their desire to engage in a variety of somewhat odd sexual activities would be nearly twice as high as (72 percent higher than) they had predicted when they were cold. For example, the idea of enjoying contact with animals was more than twice as appealing when they were in a state of arousal as when they were in a cold state.”

Kinda normative language here, no?

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“In the five questions **about their propensity to engage in immoral activities**, when they were aroused they predicted their propensity to be **more than twice as high** as (136 percent higher than) they had predicted in the cold state.

Similarly, **in the set of questions about using condoms**, and despite the warnings that had been hammered into them over the years about the importance of condoms, **they were 25 percent more likely in the aroused state** than in the cold state **to predict that they would forego condoms. In all these cases they failed to predict the influence of arousal on their sexual preferences, morality, and approach to safe sex.”**



Questions, comments, grievances?