

# CONCEPT OF EMOTION

## **Emotion** (some definitions)

A mental state that arises spontaneously rather than through conscious effort and is often accompanied by physiological changes,

A strong feeling (*the emotions of joy, sorrow, reverence, hate, and love*),

A state of mental agitation or disturbance,

The part of the consciousness that involves feeling,

A complex and usually strong subjective response, such as love or hate,

Individual, subjective feeling which dictates moods,

A response to stimuli that involves characteristic physiological changes (such as increase in pulse rate, rise in body temperature, greater or less activity of certain glands, change in rate of breathing), and tends in itself to motivate the individual toward further activity,

An affective state of consciousness in which joy, sorrow, fear, hate, or the like, is experienced,

The end product of perception and autonomic arousal (the nineteenth-century James–Lange theory of emotion).

-----

There is little consistency among definitions of emotion and many definitions are too vague.

Kleinginna and Kleinginna (1981, page: 355) \*) gathered, analyzed and classified 92 definitions and 9 skeptical statements about the concept of emotion, and suggested the following comprehensive definition:

**"Emotion is a complex set of interactions among subjective and objective factors, mediated by neural/hormonal systems, which can:**

- **give rise to affective experiences such as feelings of arousal, pleasure/displeasure;**
- **generate cognitive processes such as emotionally relevant perceptual effects, appraisals, labeling processes;**
- **activate widespread physiological adjustments to the arousing conditions;**
- **lead to behavior that is often, but not always, expressive, goal directed, and adaptive" .**

\*) Kleinginna, Paul R. and Anne M. Kleinginna (1981),  
"A Categorized List of Emotion Definitions, with Suggestions for a Consensual Definition,"  
Motivation and Emotion, 5 (4), 345-359

-----

**Eight primary human emotions: joy, acceptance, fear, submission, sadness, disgust, anger, and anticipation.**

All human emotions can be derived from these eight primary human emotions.

Emotion is the experience that results from perceiving a stimulus and from the bodily changes caused by perceiving the stimulus.

Emotion follows the stimulus and the bodily changes.

Emotion is a response to environmental stimuli that create an intense but short-term affective state.

Each emotion has its own pattern of bodily arousal.

Emotional experience requires both high physiological arousal and emotional interpretation. If either factor is absent, there will be no emotional experience.

Appraisal processes play an important part in emotional reactions to stimuli. Individual differences in cognitive appraisal explain individual differences in emotional reactions.

Emotions can occur in two different ways:

- They can be the result of cognitive processing via the schematic system.
- They can also be produced without conscious processing when the associative system is involved.

#### **Discrimination between motivation and emotion**

**Motivation** internally triggered (fired up), action-oriented affective state

**Emotion** externally triggered, non-action-oriented series of reactions to surrounding (environmental) situations

#### **Discrimination between affect and emotion**

**Affect** (low-intensity) affective state, which is a response to low-intensity stimulus or stimuli

**Emotion** (high-intensity) affective state, which is a response to high-intensity stimulus or stimuli

#### **Discrimination between mood and emotion**

**Mood** affective state with long-term duration and not easily identifiable source of stimulus or stimuli

**Emotion** affective state with short-term duration and relatively easily identifiable source of stimulus or stimuli