What attracts us to each other and motivates us to spend more time with each other?

- Do we like someone we are familiar with?
- Do opposites attract, or similarities attract?
- How important is physical attractiveness?
- How important are personality traits?

Social psychologists have found that people, things, locations that are familiar to us tend to be liked more than those that are unfamiliar, and we tend to like to become familiar with people who are similar to us on core values. We are more likely to develop friendships and loving relationship with those who have been around each other for a long time.

Opposites can attract, however, we are much more likely to be attracted to those who are similar to us. People who are similar to us validate our world view by people who are similar to us due to consensual validation - our own attitudes and behavior are supported when someone else’s attitudes and behavior are similar to ours.
Physical Attractiveness

How important is physical attractiveness in establishing and maintaining relationships?

In general, we tend to think that people who are physically attractive as:

- more intelligent
- more likely to do better in school
- happier
- better adjusted
- socially competent
- more successful
- less socially deviant
- sexier
- more vain
- less modest

when compared to those who are less attractive
However attractive people are:
  • more popular
  • given the benefit of the doubt
  • make a better first impression (later impressions are less affected by attractiveness)
  • make more money
  • have more prestigious jobs
  • less lonely
  • less anxious in social situations

However, attractiveness is not related to
  • intelligence
  • happiness
  • mental health
  • self-esteem
Gender and Qualities Sought for an Intimate Partner

What do men and women rate as being important for an intimate partner?

When seeking an intimate partner,
• Heterosexual women rate as important in men:
  o Considerateness
  o Honesty
  o Dependability
  o Kindness
  o Understanding
• Heterosexual men rate as important in women:
  o Good looks
  o Cooking skills
  o Frugality

Keep in mind these are trends. Not all men and not all women rate these as high. Also, we might deny that we consider good looks important and sometimes use physical attractiveness to evaluate others.
Personality Traits and Attraction

Anderson (1968) found we are attracted to people with personality traits such as being
- sincere
- honest
- understanding
- loyal
- truthful
- trustworthy
- intelligent
- dependable

and not attracted to people with personality traits such as
- lying
- phony
- mean
- cruel
- dishonest
- unfaithful
- obnoxious
- malicious
**Benefits of Friendship**

**Friendships:** Close relationships that involve intimacy, trust, acceptance, mutual liking, and understanding

In general the benefits of friendship include:
- reduced loneliness
- a source of self-esteem, and
- the provision of emotional support

Friendships between women and women
- have close friends
- are more likely to listen and be sympathetic
- share their thoughts and feelings

Friendships between men and men are more likely to
- engage in activities and
- show more competition
Gender and Friendship

Cross-gender relationships are more common among adults than among elementary school children. Cross gender friendships can provide both opportunities and problems. Friendships between women and men, problems arise because of different expectations.

For example, women might expect sympathy from a male friend but might receive a proposed solution rather than a shoulder to cry on.

Another problem that can arise due to unclear sexual boundaries which can produce tension and confusion
Gender and Friendship
Adjustment Strategies for Getting and Keeping Friends

1. Be nice, kind, and considerate
2. Be honest and trustworthy
3. Respect others
4. Provide emotional support
What is Love?

What is the difference between liking and love?

- Liking involves
  - Similarity
  - positive evaluation of another person

- Loving involves:
  - being close to someone
  - dependency
  - a self-less orientation
  - absorption and exclusiveness
What is Love?

Sternberg argues passion, intimacy, and commitment can combine to form various patterns of love:
- infatuation
- affectionate love
- fatuous love
- consummate love
### What is Love?

#### Types of Love

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Love</th>
<th>Passion</th>
<th>Intimacy</th>
<th>Commitment</th>
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</tbody>
</table>

- **Present**
- **Absent or low**

Passion, Intimacy, and Commitment are the three dimensions of love, with different levels of presence in each type of love.
What is Love?

Romantic love (passionate love): A type of love that has strong components of sexuality and infatuation, and often predominates in the early part of a love relationship
  - Romantic love includes intermingling of emotions:
    - fear
    - anger
    - sexual desire
    - joy
    - jealousy

Affectionate love (companionate love): A type of love that occurs when individuals desire to have the other person near and have a deep, caring affection for the person
  - In a love relationship, the early stage of romantic love grows into affection
  - Affectionate love includes:
    - secure attachment
    - familiarity
    - a deeply caring relationship

Consummate love: In Robert Sternberg’s view, the strongest form of love that consists of:
  - passion (sexual attraction)
  - intimacy (emotional feeling of closeness)
  - commitment (cognitive appraisal of relationship)
Gender and Love

- Men conceptualize love more in terms of passion
- Women think of love more in terms of friendship
- Women are more expressive and affectionate than men in marriage (see gender communication differences)
- Women disclose more to romantic partners, and wish their husbands would reciprocate more.