

Chapter 1 : Psychology of Love: 10 Studies Every Lover Should Know

Failed relationships happen for many reasons, and the failure of a relationship is often a source of great psychological anguish. Most of us have to work consciously to master the skills necessary.

Smell We can also insert a 6th sense if we want to - intuition. Can you see an immediate problem that we may encounter with our online relationships as opposed to our offline ones? Unlike the offline world where we use all 5 senses to gain information, when online we can only primarily use one sense to gain information with - sight. We can see words that are typed, we can see someones avatar if they choose to post one and we can watch video or see someone through a webcam. If using a webcam or video we can also use our sense of hearing, but the majority of online communication is through words on a screen. Sensory Information and Body Language So clearly most of our perceptual equipment cannot be utilized in our online relationships. Consequently, we miss out on huge chunks of information about other people that we would normally have. Various studies have been carried out to explore how much of our communication is verbal as opposed to non verbal. The percentage splits have been different, but what is not disputed is that non verbal communication is a very important aspect of communication and the development of human relationships. The major disadvantage of online relationships and communication is that there is no body language to read. This is a bit like trying to fix a car with only a hammer and one socket wrench! How effective can our online relationships really be with such a limited amount of tools at our disposal? Even in the real world our perceptual equipment is far from perfect. Just look at the static image on the right. When thinking about our online relationships and how "real" they are, we need to ask ourselves how much we trust the very limited perceptual information we have to go on. Do we really know or has our perceptual equipment given us false information? Who are you on the internet? Do you show all aspects of your character and personality or just parts of yourself? Who are the people that we "talk" to online? What can we really glean about someone from what they type? Who is looking back at you from your computer screen? How can we tell the difference? In particular, I want to look at psychological defense mechanisms. We all have our favorite defense mechanisms that we use both on and offline, but from my experience the following ones are the defenses that we are most likely to use online. Notice that I include myself in this! Projection Simply put, projection is placing our unacceptable emotions onto someone else. The emotions, thoughts, or beliefs we project onto others tend to be ones that we deny we possess. Projection is slippery and can be very hard to see in ourselves unless we look really hard and are willing to be very honest with ourselves! An example of projection would be denying to ourselves that we are attracted to someone outside of our relationship and then accusing our partner of being attracted to someone else. We see others carrying out the behavior instead of ourselves. Idealization and Devaluation Splitting In simple terms idealization and devaluation means having a strong tendency to see things and people in black and white terms - as either all good or all bad. When idealizing someone, we are unable to see them as a whole person with both positive and negative qualities. We only see the good parts. The opposite is true for devaluation - we only see the bad qualities that someone possesses even though in reality we all possess a mixture of both good and bad qualities. In "splitting", we might feel that we are intrinsically bad and others are intrinsically good or the other way round. This will express itself as someone "putting you on a pedestal" while constantly depreciating themselves. In the reverse it will be expressed as having someone constantly give the impression of "looking down on you" and criticizing your every word - they feel that they are "good" and you are "bad". In the world of the internet it can be hard to challenge these kinds of interactions, since people often present themselves to us as "all good". Ever have a bad day at work and then find yourself shouting at the kids when you get home? Instead of being angry with whoever or whatever upset us at work, we displace it onto something or someone else, allowing us to discharge some of the emotion. This happens a great deal in the online world. Just look into any forum to see how people let their emotions out on other forum members for the smallest things! Displacement can also occur with positive emotions. For instance someone who finds it difficult to be open and honest in their relationships in the "real world", may find they can displace their loving feelings onto their online friends. Distortion There are many types of cognitive

distortions which are all basically exaggerated thoughts or thinking styles. Here are a few distortions and some common online examples to go with them: Sublimation is when we take our angst and difficult emotions and do something positive with them, such as write poetry, blog our worries away, create art or video or helping others through writing articles about difficulties we have overcome. Summing Up Defense Mechanisms The above are just a few examples of defence mechanisms that we all use in both our offline and online relationships, but it seems to me that the online world actually magnifies many of the defense mechanisms because unlike the real world, there are very few consequences for these behaviors and they mainly go unchallenged. Whatever we think about our relationship experiences online, one thing is true - the emotions and reactions we experience in relation to online exchanges are ours and no-one else's. What this means is that the problems that arise in our online communications are an extremely good pointer to our own difficulties, anxieties and distorted thinking patterns. The following are some examples I came up with - you may have more.

Some Advantages of Online Relationships We can meet people we would never have had the chance to connect with before. We can test out different ways of communicating e. There are fewer consequences to our behavior and so we can take more risks. We feel like we can be who we want to be and escape from roles imposed on us in the outside world. We can think more clearly about our thoughts and ideas, since we have to write them down. We can edit what we say a lot more readily by hitting delete. If we are good at writing, we might actually be able to communicate ourselves better in the online world. People online rarely do this - why bother when there are a billion other people you can talk to instead? We can be lied to and manipulated very easily - there are no physical cues to alert us. There is a huge potential for misinterpretation of what people are saying and what people "mean" when they type. Many people are better at expressing themselves verbally than through the written word and so are at a disadvantage online. My aim in writing this was to help us all develop our awareness and understanding of the kinds of psychological hazards that we can experience in our online relationships, and through this awareness, either have a chance of averting problems before they arise or be able to see them for what they are afterwards. Here are my original questions and some brief answers: How is our online perception different to, or the same as, "real world" perception? We use the same perceptual equipment both online and offline, but online we are extremely limited in which perceptual abilities we can utilize. What types of psychological behavior do we exhibit in our online relationships? The same as the real world, but our behavior may be more concentrated online and there are far fewer consequences for it. And what kinds of differences can we see between relationships that are based purely in the online world in comparison to our relationships based mainly in the offline world? There seems to be a lot more room for confusion in the online world and because we can only show parts of ourselves and others can only see a part of the part that we show, the internet has the potential to turn us into caricatures of ourselves.

Chapter 2 : Psychology of Men and Relationships | Our Everyday Life

Creating boundaries in our relationships is an essential path toward finding happiness in our lives. This article offers ways to create the flexible boundaries we need. The hidden psychology.

This is because men and women often have a difficult time understanding each other. However, the key to a successful relationship is to continually work at it. There are several issues that men may come across when dealing with relationships. Although men are often more inclined to ignore issues that arise in their relationships, it is important for men to make an effort to deal with them.

Commitment When it comes to relationships, one of the biggest problems for some men is entering into one. When dating a woman who begins to display signs that she wants a commitment, some men get nervous and want to leave. Men often view being in a committed relationship as a threat to their freedom. Age may also play a role in commitment issues with men. Younger men who are not yet ready to settle down are generally more wary of entering into a committed relationship, whereas older men who have more dating experience may be more willing to settle down and commit to one person.

Physical Intimacy For men, physical intimacy is one of the most important elements in a relationship. In contrast to women who are more verbal by nature, men tend to be more physical beings. They are more inclined to express their feelings about their partner in a relationship through intimate physical contact rather than through words. Disagreements over physical intimacy is a common problem for men in relationships. These problems may develop when a woman feels that the man is overly concerned with physical intimacy or when a man feels deprived of physical intimacy. Therefore, it is very important for couples to address any problems that they have with physical intimacy.

Emotional Intimacy It is stereotypically assumed that men are supposed to be strong and should not show their emotions. In a relationship, however, it is not always healthy for a man to conceal his feelings. It is natural for the stresses of everyday life to make men feel angry, frustrated or melancholy at times, but remaining emotionally disconnected and trying to be tough on the outside may cause some men to eventually take their frustrations out in inappropriate ways. Although it can be difficult for some men to open up to women, emotional intimacy is very important in a relationship.

Responsibility Responsibility will often become an issue for men at some point in their relationship. Men who enjoyed the freedom of being single may have a difficult time getting used to the responsibilities that come with being in a relationship. A man who was accustomed to going and coming as he pleased may become irritated at having to check in with his girlfriend. Responsibility can be an even bigger issue for couples who live together. Men who previously lived alone and moved in with a girlfriend may struggle with remembering to do household chores. When a man begins to feel weighed down by responsibility, conflict may develop in the relationship. Most men however, can handle responsibility as long as they receive an occasional break. That is why in a relationship, it is important for men to spend time with their friends so that they can relax and unwind.

Relationship Type While some men tend to run from relationships, there are many men who consider themselves to be "the relationship type. Men who are "the relationship type" are not scared away by the thought of commitment, responsibility or emotional intimacy. They are looking for a woman who is attractive, independent, fun, and has a good sense of humor. However, these men often feel that a good woman is hard to find in the same way that women feel that a good man is hard to find. She specializes in writing persuasive sales copy, news stories and feature articles for magazines.

Chapter 3 : Do You Understand the Psychology of Online Relationships? | PairedLife

The Unexpected Upside of Getting a Prenup. By Kara M. Bellew on October 23, in Bringing Compassion to Matrimonial Law. If done with care, a prenup can strengthen communication while offering.

They desire to have happy, healthy relationships. However, underneath these good intentions lies a covert struggle with intimacy. With sex and love addiction, there is always a hidden agenda to get needs met that are based in feelings of insecurity. When there is dysfunction in the family of origin, love objects are unconsciously sought out with the goal of replaying unfinished business from childhood. It is not always a relationship with a parent that we are repeating; it can be a relationship with any family member that is unresolved. Mourning childhood losses and allowing oneself to process the pain of past hurt sets us free to select more positive relationships. One way to accomplish this is to spend time getting to know our partners prior to becoming sexually or romantically involved with them. If we emerge from dysfunctional homes, falling in love with someone soon after meeting them can cloud our vision and place us at risk of being with a partner with whom we repeat familiar, unhealthy patterns. Getting to know someone whom we feel sexually attracted to without becoming sexual is a tall order, but one that is incredibly important for love addicts to adhere to. Love addicts need to live in reality. Only time and experiences with another person can provide us with this information. Therefore, a non-addictive relationship will grow and become more settled over time, while an addictive one will burn out. Partners in an addictive relationship have extreme difficulty navigating normal relational difficulties as they arise, whereas partners in healthy relationships frequently navigate difficulties from the beginning. In a love-addicted relationship, honesty is lacking, and the underlying truth regarding the dynamics of the relationship are not safe to talk about openly. This is a relationship that lacks true intimacy. True intimacy involves the ability to talk openly about fears, concerns, and topics that delve beyond the surface, and which are risky to discuss. It does not involve blaming or deflecting to avoid taking responsibility that is so characteristic of an addictive relationship. In early childhood, addicts often found that it was not safe to be authentic and real with another person. Rather, as coping mechanisms, these children learned to preserve themselves by detaching from their feelings. Bringing this coping style into adult relationships creates potentially toxic dynamics. She is the author of *Erotic Intelligence*: Her free Daily Meditations on healthy sex and love are open to the public. Katehakis has studied affective neuroscience with Allan N. Schore, incorporating regulation theory into her treatment of sexual addiction. Alex is the recipient of the Carnes Award, a prestigious acknowledgement for her contributions to the field of sex addiction.

When a therapist understands the meaning that romantic love has in one's life and the traumatic effects of the abrupt and sometimes unexpected end of a relationship, they can address their client's ability to move on and strengthen their resiliency.

Email Psychology of love: Falling in love takes one-fifth of a second It takes a fifth-of-a-second for the euphoria-inducing chemicals to start acting on the brain when you are looking at that special someone. Brain imaging studies of love suggest that 12 different areas of the brain are involved. When looking or thinking about a loved one, these areas release a cocktail of neurotransmitters across the brain, including oxytocin, dopamine, vasopressin and adrenaline. Brain map of love and desire The first study to look at the neural difference between love and sexual desire finds remarkable overlaps and distinct differences. The results showed that some strikingly similar brain networks were activated by love and sexual desire. The regions activated were those involved in emotion, motivation and higher level thoughts. Love is built on top of these circuits, with one key area of difference being in the striatum. This area of the brain is typically associated with the balance between higher- and lower-level functions. Kissing helps us choose Two new studies of kissing have found that apart from being sexy, kissing also helps people choose partners and keep them. In a survey, women in particular rated kissing as important, but more promiscuous members of both sexes rated kissing as a very important way of testing out a new mate. The researchers found a correlation between the amount of kissing that long-term partners did and the quality of their relationship. Couples look more similar after 25 years together People who live with each other for 25 years may develop similar facial features. This may be because of similarities in diet, environment, personality or even a result of empathising with your partner over the years. Long distance relationships can work Contrary to the received wisdom, long distance relationships can work, according to new research. Two factors that help keep long distance relationships alive are that these couples: Tell each other more intimate information. Have a more idealised view of their partner. As a result, those in long distance relationships often have similar levels of relationship satisfaction and stability as those who are geographically close to each other. There are four things that kills relationships stone dead: Modern marriages demand self-fulfilment The face of marriage has changed significantly over the years, according to new research. It used to be more about providing safety and solidity, now people want psychological fulfilment from their marriages. More than ever people expect marriage to be more of a journey towards self-fulfilment and self-actualisation. Unfortunately in the face of these demands, couples are not investing sufficient time and effort to achieve this growth. A simple exercise to save a marriage If your relationship needs a little TLC, then there may be no need to go into therapy watching a few movies together could do the trick. A new three-year study finds that divorce rates were more than halved by watching movies about relationships and discussing them afterwards. Thus, you might not need to teach them a whole lot of skills to cut the divorce rate. You might just need to get them to think about how they are currently behaving. And for five movies to give us a benefit over three years that is awesome. A study of co-parenting post-divorce has found it can go one of five ways, the first three of which are considered relatively functional: Dissolved duos, where usually the father disappears. Perfect pals, where parents continue to be best friends. Cooperative colleagues, where couples move on but remain on a good footing with each other. Angry associates, where the fighting continues after the divorce. Fiery foes, where children become pawns in the fight and usually suffer as a result.

Chapter 5 : The Psychology of Addictive Relationships

Become a Science-Based Practitioner! The Positive Psychology toolkit is a science-based, online platform containing + exercises, activities, interventions, questionnaires, assessments and scales.

When things go wrong: Intimacy, social support, and health Gender and social support When things go right: Capitalizing on positive events Research on Close Relationships Most research on close relationships uses nonexperimental designs. As a result, no causal conclusions among variables can be drawn. This way, mental representations of self and other are linked into a single unit, and partners become cognitively interdependent. This is due to disclosures about the relationship from insiders to outsiders. Transformations in Exchange Changes in the distribution of rewards The nature of exchange of rewards is different in close relationships; rewards are exchanged out of affection and care. Because the partner becomes part of the self, his or her needs and desires are not ignored. As well as the reasons for rewards, the type of reward is also different in close relationships; whereas material rewards are exchanged in casual relationships, love and emotional support are exchanged in close relationships. Attributions in close relationships: Intimacy and Commitment Feelings of closeness change the sense of intimacy and the level of commitment to the relationship. Psychological intimacy Intimacy is defined as a positive emotional bond that includes understanding and support. Intimacy is enhanced by interactions that involve self-disclosure step 1, which is responded to with acceptance, acknowledgment, and understanding step 2. This response, in turn, makes the self-discloser feel understood, valued, and esteemed step 3. Intimate feelings are deeply linked with positive emotions of warmth, connectedness, and caring, and are so important to human needs that this is the most central reward of close relationships. Bowlby; see SP pp. Commitment Commitment reflects the intention and desire to maintain a relationship for the long term, as well as a strong emotional bond to the partner. When partners are committed, they feel comfortable relying on each other for intimacy, advice, and support, and this influences their actions and feelings. Three factors are involved that create and maintain commitment. The first is satisfaction with the relationship. This is an evaluation of the rewards of a relationship compared with the rewards one believes would be available in alternative relationships a comparison level for alternatives. The second factor is seeing the rewards of your relationship as unique, as not available in alternative relationships. For all of these reasons, relationships with stronger commitment last longer. Types of People, Types of Relationships Attachment styles People have an innate tendency to form emotional attachments to others. Our experience with other people influences the ways in which we approach close relationships. Our beliefs about the self, other people, and the nature of relationships are summarized by our attachment style. Four different attachment styles can be distinguished, with two underlying dimensions; view of others and view of self. People with secure attachment styles feel positive about the self and others, and are most likely to feel trust and happiness in close relationships. Those with a dismissing attachment style have positive views of the self, but negative views of others; they are low in expressiveness and intimacy in their relationships. Preoccupied individuals feel negative about themselves, but positive about others. They are high in emotional expressiveness and show the most reliance on other people. Finally, fearfully attached people think negatively about themselves and about others. These different attachment styles influence the way partners give and receive support. Securely attached people seek more support when they are upset and give more support when someone else is upset, whereas people with dismissing and fearful attachment styles seek and give less support. This demonstrates how attachment styles influence the ways people attain intimacy and experience love. More information about attachment styles Differing theories about relationships People differ in their views about what it takes for a relationship to succeed. Research has focused on two types of beliefs i. People who believe in growth, believe that occasional conflicts can be overcome with any partner. These people tend to have a relationship for a longer period of time. People believing in destiny, believe that a particular partner is either inherently compatible or not. Initial satisfaction influences whether the relationship will last for a long period of time or end very quickly. Gender differences in relationships Men and women place different emphasis on the rewards that relationships offer. Women prefer intimacy and sharing feelings, while men

prefer enjoyable activities with their partner. Sources of satisfaction also differ among men and women; men are satisfied when spending time with each other, while women are happiest when arguments and conflicts are successfully avoided. Relationships in cultural perspective Research in Western, independent cultures places an emphasis on voluntary "Western" relationships. However, many cultural differences can be found, for instance in the nature of the bond between mother and child. Gupta and Singh ; see SP p. Cultural differences in relationships Effects of Relationships Because a partner becomes part of the self, relationships influence our feelings, behaviors, and physical and mental well-being. Intimacy, social support, and health Social support increases physical health and psychological well-being because it offers opportunities for self-disclosure, companionship, and enjoyable interactions. Research also demonstrated that people with cancer who participated in support groups had more effective immune systems and lived longer than people with cancer who were not in a support group, but received the same medical treatment. The effects of social support are stronger when given to women, and when provided by family and friends. Gender and social support There are gender differences in the type of support that is provided; women are more likely to provide emotional support, whereas men offer problem-solving advice. This difference is responsible for miscommunication between men and women; women often feel that their feelings are belittled when a man offers problem-solving support, while men feel they are being denied the uniqueness of feelings when women provide emotional support. When people are under stress or ill, emotional support is more helpful. Accordingly, people feel healthier after interacting with women than after interacting with men. When things go right: Capitalizing on positive events Sharing a positive event is an important benefit of close relationships, because it gives an opportunity for re-living and re-experiencing the positive event. When sharing positive events with others, people experience more positive emotions and increased satisfaction in life. So what does this mean?

Chapter 6 : The Psychology Behind Love and Romance

Psychology of love: Brain map of love, the role of kissing, how couples come to look similar, what kills a relationship and more "Love does not consist in gazing at each other, but in looking outward together in the same direction." ~ Antoine de Saint-Exupéry From the initial moment of.

There is no guarantee that a mark question will be asked in this topic though so it is important to have a good understanding of all of the different areas linked to the topic. There will be 24 marks for relationship questions, so you can expect to spend about 30 minutes on this section, but this is not a strict rule. The evolutionary explanations for partner preferences

The relationship between sexual selection and human reproductive behavior

Anisogamy AO1 Anisogamy means two sex cells or gametes that are different coming together to reproduce. Men have sperm cells, which are able to reproduce quickly with little energy expenditure and once they start being produced they do not usually stop until the man dies. Female gametes eggs or ova are, in contrast, much less plentiful; they are released in a limited time frame between puberty and menopause and require much more energy to produce. This difference anisogamy means that men and women use different strategies when choosing their partners.

Inter-sexual Selection AO1 Females lose more resources than men if they choose a sub-standard partner, so are pickier about who they select. They are more likely to pick a partner who is genetically fit and willing to offer the maximum resources to raise their offspring a man who will remain by her side as the child grows to protect them both and potentially provide more children. If they have made a good choice, then their offspring will inherit the positive features of their father and are therefore also more likely to be chosen by women or men in the next generation. To succeed, men must compete with other males to present themselves as the most attractive mate, encouraging features such as muscles which indicate to the opposite sex an ability to protect both them and their offspring.

AO3 Buss conducted a survey of over 10, adults in 33 countries and found that females reported valuing resource-based characteristics when choosing a male such as their jobs whilst men valued good looks and preferred younger partners more than females did. This was supported by research conducted by Waynforth and Dunbar who found that women tended to list physical characteristics when seeking a partner in personal ads and men promoted their wealth or resources.

Clark and Hatfield conducted a now infamous study where male and female psychology students were asked to approach fellow students of Florida State University of the opposite sex and ask them for one of three things; to go on a date, to go back to their apartment, or to go to bed with them.

Factors Affecting Attraction Self Disclosure AO1 Self-disclosure in the context of a relationship refers to how much information someone is willing to share. In the initial stages of a relationship, couples often seek to learn as much as they can about their new partner and feel that this sharing of information brings them closer together. But can too much sharing scare your partner away? Is not sharing very much information intriguing or frustrating? Altman and Taylor identified breadth and depth as important factors of self-disclosure. As the relationship develops, people tend to share more detailed and personal information, such as past traumas and desires for the future. If this sharing happens too soon however, an incompatibility may be found before the other person has reached a suitable level of investment in the relationship. Altman and Taylor referred to this sharing of information as social penetration. An important aspect of this is the reciprocity of the process, if one person shares more than the other is willing to, there may be a breakdown of trust as one person establishes themselves as more invested than the other.

AO3 Aron et al. Sprecher and Hendrick observed couples on dates and found a close correlation between the amount of satisfaction each person felt and the overall self-disclosure that occurred between the partners. However, much of the research into self-disclosure is correlational which means that a causal relationship cannot be easily determined; in short it may be that it is the attraction between partners which leads to greater self-disclosure, rather than the sharing of information which leads to greater intimacy.

Physical appearance can be seen as a range of indicators of underlying characteristics. Women with a favourable waist to hip ratio are seen as attractive because they are perceived to be more fertile Singh, , people with more symmetrical features are seen to be more genetically fit. This is because our genes are designed to make us develop symmetrically, but diseases

and infections during physical development can cause these small imperfections and asymmetries Little and Jones, The halo effect is a cognitive bias mental shortcut which occurs when a person assumes that a person has positive traits in terms of personality and other features because they have a pleasing appearance. Dion, Berscheid and Walster asked participants to rate photographs of three strangers for a number of different categories including personality traits such as overall happiness and career success. When these results were compared to the physical attraction rating of each participant from a rating of students, the photographs which were rated the most physically attractive were also rated higher on the other positive traits. The matching hypothesis Walster et al. This identification of those who have a similar level of attraction, and therefore provide a balance between the level of competition intra-sexual and positive traits is referred to as matching. AO3 Modern dating in society is increasingly visual, with the rise of online dating, particularly using apps such as Tinder. In Dion et al. Landy and Aronson show how the Halo effect occurs in other contexts. They found that when victims of crime were perceived to be more attractive, defendants in court cases were more likely to be given longer sentences by a simulated jury. When the defendants were unattractive, they were more likely to be sentenced by the jury, which supports the idea that we generalise physical attractiveness as an indicator of other, less visual traits such as trustworthiness. Feingold conducted a meta-analysis of 17 studies and found a significant correlation between the perceived attractiveness of actual partners rated by independent participants. The first filter proposed when selecting partners was social demography. People are far more likely to have access to people who come from a similar background to themselves. This could relate to geographical proximity, social class, ethnic group or level of education for example. The second filter that Kerckhoff and Davis suggested was similarity in attitudes. This was supported by their original longitudinal study of two groups of student couples those who had been together for more or less than 18 months. Over seven months, the couples completed questionnaires based on their views and attitudes which were then compared for similarities. Kerckhoff and Davis suggested that similarity of attitudes was the most important factor in the group who had been together for less than 18 months. This is supported by the self-disclosure research described elsewhere in this topic. The third filter was complementarity which goes a step further than similarity. Rather than having the same traits and attitudes, such as dominance or humour, a partner in who complements their spouse has traits which the other lacks. For example one partner may be good at organisation, whilst the other is poor at organisation but very good at entertaining guests. Kerchoff and Davis found that this level of filter was the most important for couples who had been together for more than 18 months. AO3 This theory may be interpreted as similar to the matching hypothesis but for personality rather than physical traits. Some stages of this model may now be seen as less relevant, for example as modern society is much more multi-cultural and interconnected by things such as the internet than in the s, we may now see social demography as less of a barrier to a relationship. This may lead to the criticism that the theory lacks temporal validity. Again, the investigating the second and third levels of the filter theory look at correlation which cannot easily explain causality. Both Davis and Rusbult and Anderson et al. So it may be that the relationship leads to an alignment of attitudes, and also a greater complementarity as couples assign each other roles: Theories of Romantic Relationships Social Exchange Theory AO1 Psychologists Thibault and Kelley proposed the Social Exchange Theory which stipulates that one motivation to stay in a romantic relationship, and a large factor in its development, is the result of a cost-benefit analysis that people perform, either consciously or unconsciously. In a relationship people gain rewards such as attention from their partner, sex, gifts and a boost to their self-esteem and incur costs paying money for gifts, compromise on how to spend their time or stress. There is also an opportunity cost in relationships, as time spent with a partner that does not develop into a lasting relationship could have been spent with another partner with better long-term prospects. How much value is placed on each cost and benefit is subjective and determined by the individual. For example, whilst some people may want to spend as much time as possible with their partner in the early stages of the relationship and see this time together as a reward of the relationship, others may value their space and see extended periods spent together as more of a necessary investment to keep the other person happy. Comparison Levels CL and CLalt The comparison level CL in a relationship is a judgement of how much profit an individual is receiving benefits minus costs. The acceptable CL needed to continue to pursue a

relationship changes as a person matures and can be affected by a number of external and internal factors. External factors may include the media younger people may want for more from a relationship after being socialised by images of romance on films and television, seeing friends and families in relationships people who have divorced or separated parents may have a different CL to those with parents who are still married, or experiences from prior relationships, which have taught the person to expect more or less from a partner. Internal perceptions of self-worth such as self-esteem will directly affect the CL that a person believes they are entitled to in a relationship. If the CL is positive, then the person may not consider the potential benefits of a relationship with another person. AO3 Operationalising rewards and costs is hugely subjective, making comparisons between people and relationships in controlled settings very difficult. Most studies which are used to support Social Exchange Theory account for this by using artificial procedures in laboratory settings, reducing the external validity of the findings. Michael Argyle questions whether it is the CL which leads to dissatisfaction with the relationship, or dissatisfaction which leads to this analysis. It may be that Social Exchange Theory serves as a justification for dissatisfaction rather than the cause of it. Social Exchange Theory ignores the idea of social equity explained by the next relationship theory concerning equality in a relationship – “would a partner really feel satisfied in a relationship where they received all of the rewards and their partner incurred all of the costs? Equity Theory AO1 Equity theory builds upon the assumption of Social Exchange Theory that romantic relationships can be viewed as economic models loss, risk, benefits etc. If one partner is benefiting from more profit benefits-costs than the other, then both partners are likely to feel unsatisfied. They are under-benefiting whilst their partner over-benefits, which is likely to make both people feel uncomfortable. What may be more damaging than initial inequity, which can be identified and dealt with or perceived as normal at the beginning of a relationship, is a change in equity over time. A partner who feels that they are receiving less profit in an inequitable relationship may respond by either working hard to make the relationship more equitable, or by shifting their own perception of rewards and costs to justify the relationship continuing. AO3 Huseman et al. They make a distinction between entitleds who feel that they deserve to gain more than their partner in a relationship and benevolents who are more prepared to invest by working harder to keep their partner happy. Clark and Mills argue that we should differentiate between the role of equity in romantic relationships and other types of relationships such as business or casual, friendly relationships. They found in a meta-analysis that there is more evidence that equity is a deciding factor in non-romantic relationships, the evidence being more mixed in romantic partnerships. Social Equity Theory does not apply to all cultures; couples from collectivist cultures where the group needs are more important than those of the individual were more satisfied when over benefitting than those from individualistic cultures where the needs of the individual are more important than those of the individual in a study conducted by Katherine Aumer-Ryan et al. Some cultures have traditions and expectations that one member of a romantic relationship should benefit more from the partnership. The traditional nuclear family, typical in the early to mid 20th century, was patriarchal, and the woman was often expected to contribute to more tasks, such as housework and raising the children, than the man for whom providing money to the family was perceived to be the primary role. Satisfaction and Comparison with Alternatives discussed above, are the first two factors. They are the extent to which a partner feels a relationship is worthwhile for them when comparing other possible relationships and their investment against the rewards offered by the pairing. The third factor is an addition to the model, investment size, which explains why relationships do not all breakdown when the CL or CLalt are low. Investment in relationships can be measured as a combination of intrinsic and extrinsic investments which have been made over the course of the relationship. Intrinsic investments are those which have been added by a single partner such as money towards a date or a gift, time spent with the person and any self-disclosures which have been made. Extrinsic investments are those which have been created or developed over the course of the relationship which are shared by both partners, such as large purchases a house or car or even children. We can observe this in a relationship through relationship maintenance mechanisms, or behaviors which only couples who are committed to a relationship will exhibit. These include behaviors such as forgiveness, willingness to sacrifice, and being overly positive about their partner. This importance was the same across cultures, genders, and also applied to homosexual relationships. Many of the studies relating to

investment in relationship rely on self-report technique. Whilst this would be perceived as a less reliable and overly-subjective method in other areas, when looking at the amount an individual feels they are committed to a relationship, their own opinion and the value that they place on behaviors and attributes is more relevant than objective observations. Again, investment models tend to give correlational data rather than causal, it may be that a commitment established at an earlier stage leads inevitably to the partner viewing comparisons more favourably and investing more into the relationship. Intra-Psychic Phase In this phase, one of the partners begins to have doubts about the relationship. They spend time thinking about the pros and cons of the relationship and possible alternatives, including being alone. They may either internalise these feelings or confide in a trusted friend.

Chapter 7 : What is RELATIONSHIP? definition of RELATIONSHIP (Psychology Dictionary)

An advanced degree in psychology is the foundation of many interesting career paths within the discipline. In addition, an understanding of the science of psychology “ for example, by earning a bachelor's degree in the subject “ can help students in their careers and their lives.

The Psychology of Relationships: The Science Behind Love Marriage. Luckily love is legal and not harmful to our health! We like to think that love and relationships are more art than science, but there is actually plenty of science involved with falling and remaining in love. Take kissing, for instance. Not all kisses, or kissers, are equal, and we tend to rely on the quality of the kiss as a decision-maker in whether or not to continue dating someone. We also tend to kiss a lot at the beginning of a relationship, but often neglect the power of kissing as we settle into a longterm partnership. But that would be a mistake: As our love relationship evolves, we can do periodic psychological check-ins to make sure we are being nourished by it. Some psychological check-ins might include: Does your partner listen respectfully and offer meaningful feedback, including a plan to meet your needs? Do you do the same for him? Level of emotional intimacy Your marriage should be the most intimate relationship you have, above and beyond the relationships you have with your children, your friends, and your work colleagues. Marriage should be your harbor, your safe haven, your shoulder to lean on. Make sure you remain invested in the emotional intimacy factor of your relationship. Where are we going? Even if you have been together for a long time, it is important for the psychological health of your relationship to have plans for the future. From small plans, like where you will be vacationing this year, to large plans, such as what you would like to be doing ten years from now, imagining your shared future is an important exercise to do from time to time with your partner. The ebb and flow of love Psychologists who specialize in studying love dynamics note that it is entirely normal for couples to experience moments of distance, both mental and physical, during their lives together. If the two people involved are committed to the relationship and proactively communicate their love for each other despite not being physically together, this moment of distance can enhance and strengthen the relationship. Emotional distance Emotional distance can also occur in a relationship, and may or may not be cause for concern. Factors such as a new baby or stress at work are normal events that may temporarily cause some emotional distance to develop between a couple. This is usually short-lived and will decrease with time and adaptation. How does this benefit your relationship? These are teaching moments. Once you have gone through a stretch of emotional distance and come out the other side, the relationship is deepened and both people see that they can weather a storm and survive and thrive. Love is in the smaller acts Often we think that the larger the demonstration, the more love that person is feeling. But love psychologists have found that it is the small acts of love that bind longterm couples. We all know stories of large-scale displays of love: These small acts remind us that someone values us and we are important to them.

Chapter 8 : Social Psychology: Third Edition by Eliot R. Smith and Diane M. Mackie

Understanding the psychology of trust issues will help you stay in a long distance relationship much, much longer. In many terms, long distance relationships tend to be stronger than geographically close ones.

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