

# **The Happiness Class**

**November 19, 2017**

**afternoon session:  
minor emotions**

# Minor emotions are less important to happiness.

- they are relatively weak and short-lived
  - will never be as strong as love or pride
  - last minutes, not months
- they are not key to happiness
  - you could ignore them and still be happy
  - you could maximize them and still be unhappy
- they are appetizers and desserts on The Happiness Menu
  - can make significant difference to your meal
  - but they cannot replace a main course

# Sunday November 19

10:30am – 10:45am last week - questions/comments

10:45am – 12:00pm revenge, anger, criminal guilt  
compassion, selfish guilt

12:00pm – 12:30pm lunch break

12:30pm – 2:00pm pleasing scenery, excitement, boredom  
pleasing taste, hunger, disgust  
startle, fear



You feel pleasing scenery when you see lush scenery.

You feel excitement when you see novel scenery.

You feel boredom when you don't see novel scenery.

# Pleasing scenery is the positive effect you feel when you see lush scenery.



- universal appeal of lush landscapes is well documented
  - low grasses, thickets of bushes, grouping of trees
  - flowering and fruiting plants
  - presence of water
  - animal or bird life
- pleasing scenery encouraged us to live near food and water
  - obviously not needed now, but it was once
- one of the few emotions/sensations to help you
  - as opposed to your genes or group
- narrowing the definition of pleasing scenery
  - general – any scenery that is pleasing to look at
  - narrow – only lush scenery

## Although pleasing scenery is weak, it clearly affects our behaviour.

- we pay real estate premiums to face lush scenery
  - building facing Central Park
- inside, we surround ourselves with lush scenery
  - landscaping
  - paintings
  - windows
  - plants, flowers
- outside, we spend recreational time viewing lush scenery
  - parks
  - golf courses
  - trails

# Pleasing scenery is one of the best sources of happiness.

- although it's only a sensation, it's still a positive effect
  - like affection
- has advantages over other sources of happiness
  - doesn't need others – like affection, pride, humour, love, infatuation
  - cannot lead to problems – like sexual sensations or pleasing taste
  - only downside is strength which can be offset with quantity
- can be a significant contributor to happiness
  - live near scenery
  - seek careers with scenery
  - take vacations to scenery
  - exercise near scenery

# Excitement is the positive effect you feel when you see novel scenery.



- everyone wants to see what's over the hill or around the corner
  - that desire is the desire to feel excitement
- it's weak, but you can feel it when you:
  - visit a city or country the first time
  - experience a change of seasons
  - see a colorful sunset or the northern lights
  - look at glossy magazine filled with photographs
  - see a movie that takes you somewhere new
- you can also notice it's absence when you:
  - visit a city or country or city the second time
  - experience a change of seasons for more than a few weeks
  - look at glossy magazine the second time
- narrowing the definition of excitement
  - general – see lots of stimuli or look forward to positive emotions
  - narrow – see novel scenery



## Excitement sacrificed a few to find new land for thousands.

- if exploring is good for you, you do it without the reward of excitement
  - if your current habitat was no longer safe, you'd look for safer habitat
- excitement encourages unnecessary exploring
  - the reward of excitement makes you willing to take unnecessary risks
- unnecessary exploring harms explorers and their genes
  - they're more likely to die prematurely
- harm to explorers and their genes offset by finding new habitable land
  - new land led to population growth

# Excitement can lead to bad decisions.

- people don't realize that excitement exists
  - don't know first viewing best – all down hill after than
- overpaying for real estate with views
  - you feel excitement when viewing real estate with views
  - that excitement will influence the price you're willing to pay
  - however, you won't feel that excitement ongoing
  - you could buy real estate without a view and travel more
- being disappointed when returning to a vacation destination
  - you feel excitement when first visiting a destination
  - that excitement will influence your desire to return
  - however, you won't feel that excitement when you return
  - to keep feeling excitement you have to keep visiting somewhere new


"The scenery was breathtaking."

## Excitement and pleasing scenery

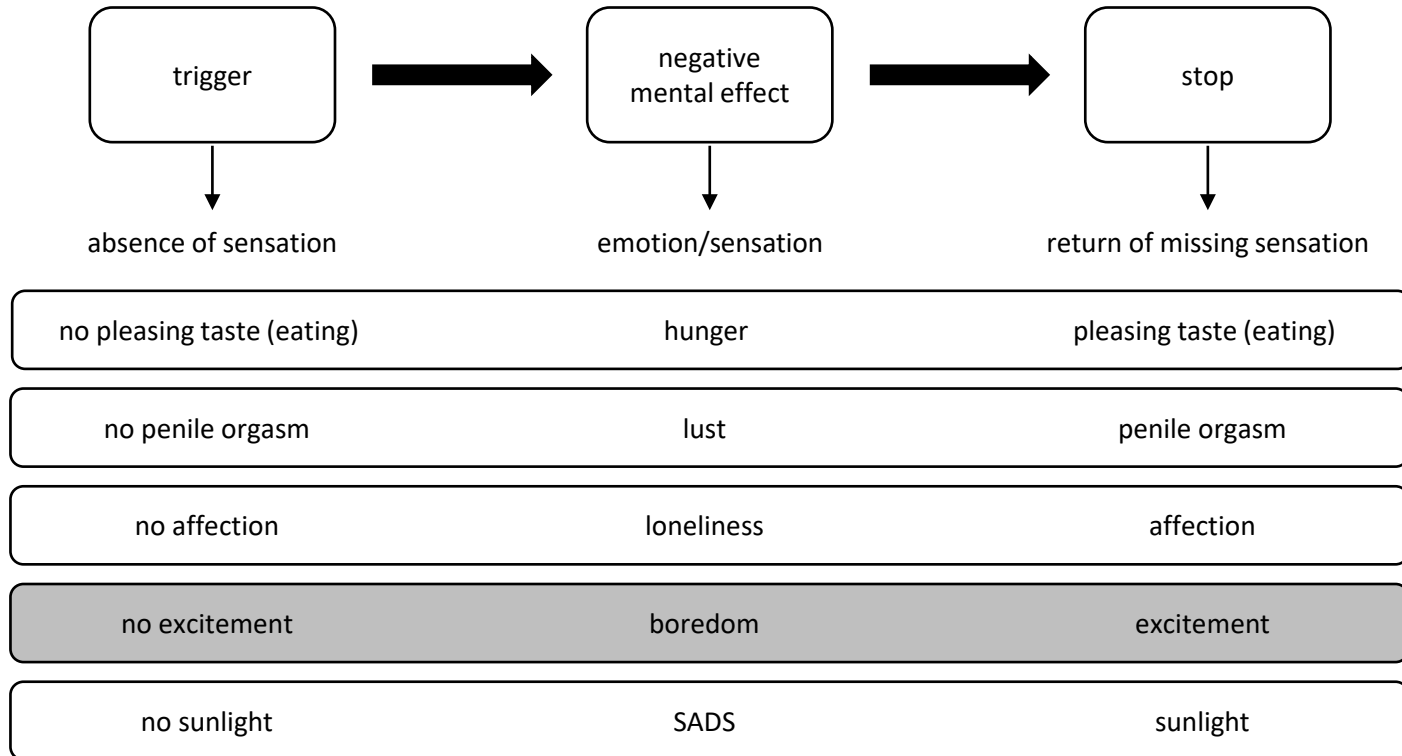
can be combined.

just  
pleasing  
scenery

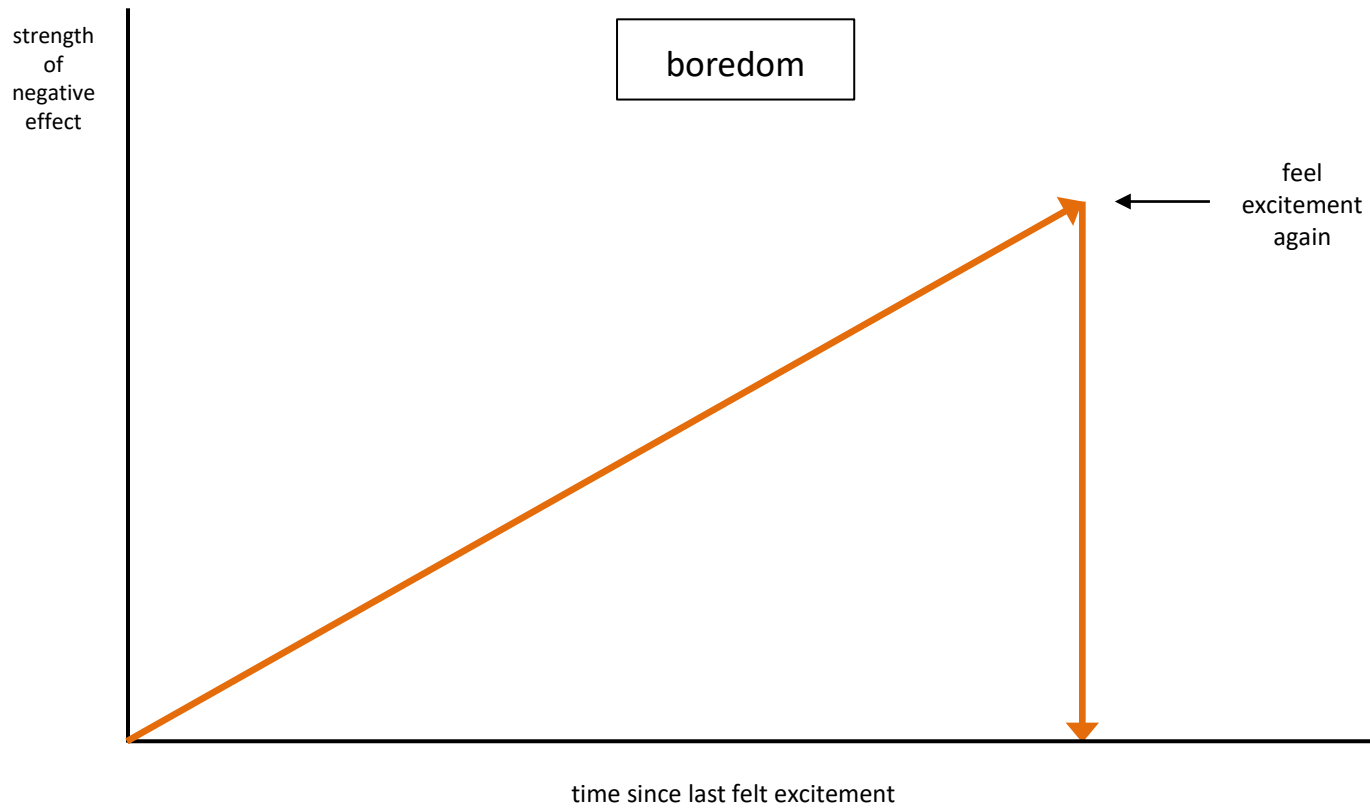
excitement &  
pleasing  
scenery

	not novel	novel	
lush			lush
not lush			not lush
neither	not novel	novel	just excitement

# Boredom is to excitement what hunger is to eating.



And boredom grows stronger  
until you feel excitement again.



## Although boredom is weak, there are two points when you might be able to mentally isolate it.

- detect boredom's presence when it is at its strongest
  - when you haven't taken a vacation to new scenery for many months
  - and you haven't taken weekend or business trips to new cities for months
  - and you haven't seen scenic movies or read glossy magazines
  - you will be in a generally gloomy or depressed mood
  - that's not gloom or depression – that's boredom
- detect boredom's absence right after you take a trip to see novel scenery
  - before a trip you probably feel boredom but don't realize it
  - while on your trip, excitement will stop your boredom
  - excitement will also mask the absence of boredom
  - when back and no longer feeling excitement, you can feel the absence of boredom
  - you will feel better than before your trip – which you will attribute to an afterglow from your trip
  - it's not an afterglow – it's not a positive effect – it's the absence of a negative effect – you are no longer feeling boredom

# Boredom should be managed the same way you manage hunger.

- plan to routinely expose yourself to enough novel scenery regularly
  - like you plan to have routinely have enough food to avoid becoming hungry
- start annually and work down to daily
  - annually, take a vacation to a new destination
  - quarterly, road trip to new city particularly when seasons change
  - monthly, see a movie or television show with new scenery
  - daily, flip through glossy magazines
- consider careers that take you to new scenery
  - travel or consulting careers
- if you don't manage boredom, it will creep up on you and bring you down
  - when combined with loneliness, it can feel like depression

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You feel pleasing taste when you eat food.

You feel hunger when you don't eat food.

You feel disgust when you smell things shouldn't eat.

# Pleasing taste is a positive effect in your head.

- there are four pleasing tastes
  - sweet, salt, fat, umami
  - encourage us eat to appropriate food
- seems like the effect occurs on your tongue
  - food contact with tongue triggers positive effect in your head
  - food also contacts nose to create flavour
- pleasing taste is a source of happiness
  - like pride or affection
  - it's on The Happiness Menu – as proven by behaviour
  - eating to overcome unhappiness, for example

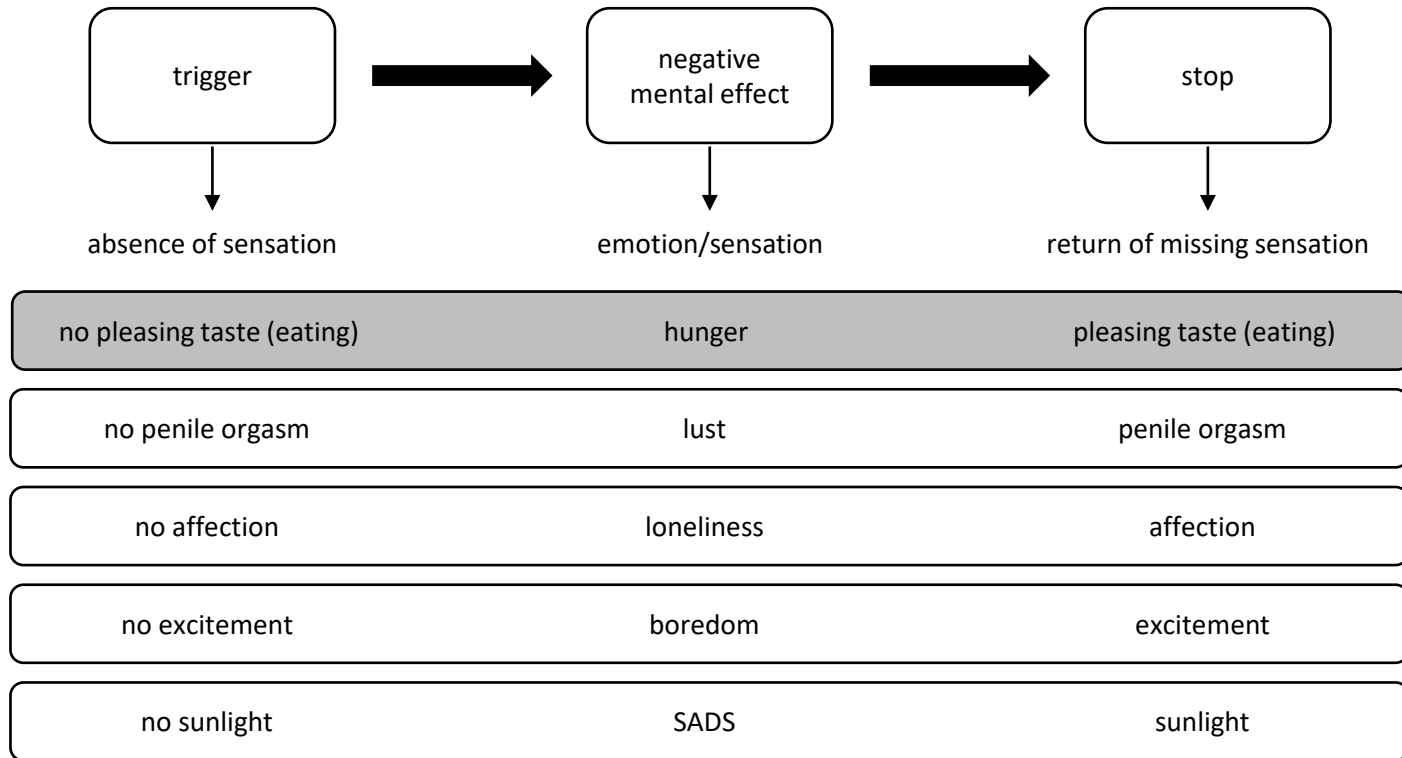
## Pleasing taste is the easiest source of happiness.

- positive effect can be as strong as the strongest traditional emotion
  - ice cream can rival romance or great victory
- all other positive emotions require more work
  - just put food on tongue as opposed to working for pride, dating for romance or socializing for affection
- pleasing taste is an overused source of happiness
  - it's ease of enjoyment is one cause
  - our belief we should always be happy is another
- we exercise more than necessary so we can eat more than necessary

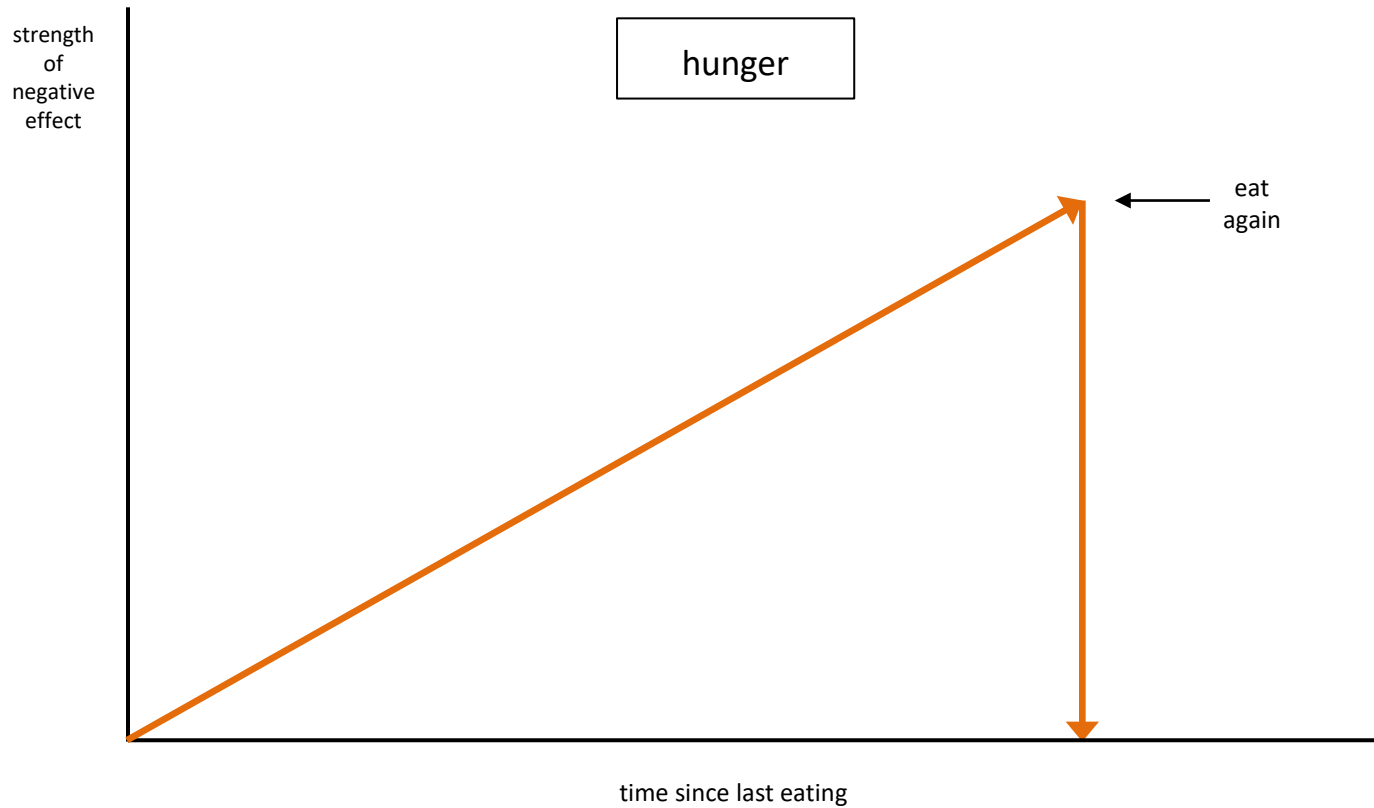
# Reducing food variety reduces overeating.

- the strength of pleasing taste declines with exposure
  - the more you eat a particular food, the weaker the pleasing taste
  - the first mouthful is best – all others are a little less pleasing
  - discourages overeating any one food
- the more variety you eat, the more you maintain strong pleasing taste
  - if every meal is different, you want to finish everything
  - if every meal is the same, you will eat smaller portions
- we have dramatically increased the variety of food we eat
  - evidence: the explosion of food variety in our supermarkets
- explosion of food variety has contributed to our obesity epidemic
  - if we ate like dogs, we'd be skinnier
- eating to avoid hunger is different than eating to enjoy pleasing taste

# Hunger, lust, loneliness, boredom and SADS have the same structure.



And like lust, loneliness, boredom and SADS,  
hunger grows stronger until you eat.



# Like pleasing taste, hunger affects happiness.

- it's a negative effect in your head, not your stomach
  - empty stomach causes you to feel a negative mental effect
  - not clear if the trigger is empty stomach or lack of pleasing taste
  - bulimics seem to suggest it's lack of pleasing taste
- negative effect of hunger adds to unhappiness
  - like loneliness or humiliation
- hanger is an example
  - hangry = hungry plus revenge
  - combined negative effect makes you more likely to retaliate
  - Israeli judges are more example to deny parole before lunch
- also eating to avoid negative emotions or to feel something positive
  - will return to this next week!

# Hunger is a second problem for dieters.

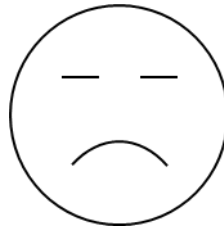
- the first problem for dieters is less pleasing taste
  - they feel fewer positive effects
- the second problem is feeling hunger
  - they feel more negative effects
- the result is two reductions in their happiness
  - unless this reduction is offset, they will stop dieting
- being overweight is a happiness problem, not an overeating problem
  - the extra eating and weight are just symptoms
  - the underlying problem is unhappiness which is masked by eating
  - will return to this problem next week!



# Disgust is triggered by toxins and nothing else.

- you feel disgust when you smell or taste animal toxins:
  - smell fecal matter, smell rotting flesh
  - taste rancid meat, taste sour milk
- bitter, sour and pain are similar to disgust
  - bitter and sour help you avoid toxic plants
  - pain helps you avoid trauma
- you do not feel disgust when somebody:
  - has different morals than you
  - is deceitful, steals from a handicapped person, does not help others
  - there's no biological reason to punish you for the deeds of others
- claiming you're disgusted by others is an attempt to cause others to feel humiliation
  - you're saying their rank has fallen to the level of fecal matter
  - revenge drives these reactions, not disgust

## Disgust makes you frown involuntarily.



- strong disgust will make you frown involuntarily for a moment
  - think of face people make when they smell a diaper
  - bitter, sour and pain also cause involuntary frowning
- your frowning evolved to warn others of toxins
  - if others saw your reaction they might avoid the toxin
- grief also causes involuntarily frowning, but that is prolonged
  - lasts more than few seconds that disgust frowning lasts
  - and it does not occur while eating

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You feel startle when you're surprised.

You feel fear when you're threatened.

# The startle reflex is triggered by sudden changes or surprises.

- sudden changes in what you hear or feel
  - loud noise – even when you expect it
  - jarring physical contact
  - not sudden changes in what you see
- surprises from what you expect to see, hear or feel
  - if you think you're alone and see somebody standing there
  - if you think you're alone and you hear something move
  - if somebody unexpectedly puts their hand on your shoulder

# The physical effects of startle mitigate damage from ambush predators.



- two types of ambush predators
  - cats waiting on the ground
  - eagles swooping in from above
- eyelids close or blink
  - protects eyes from scratching or worse
- neck & face muscles tense
  - less likely to be torn
- arms move to protect the face and torso
  - arms are sacrificed to protect face and throat
  - only raise arms for strong startle

# The physical effects of fear prepares you for fight or flight.

- physical effects

- heart rate increased adrenaline
- palms and feet sweat
- hair stands on end, lips curl
- bladder, bowel evacuation
- fainting



the stronger the fear,  
the more effects are triggered

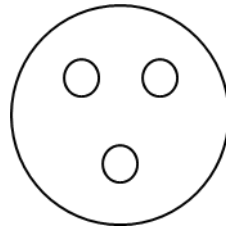
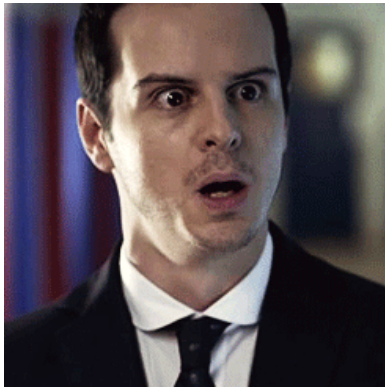
- mental effect

- positive and negative effects suppressed

- fear always follows startle

- but startle does not always precede fear

## When frightened, people involuntarily make the horror expression.



- horror expression is forming three circles
  - easiest expression to distinguish from normal
- fear and horror have different purposes
  - fear prepares you for fight or flight
  - horror warns others of danger
- usually called surprise
  - but it's not caused by surprise, like startle is
  - and startle does not have an involuntary expression – it just looks like it



## When frightened, people involuntarily scream.



- only triggered when fear is extreme
  - you have concluded that harm is probable
- fear and screaming different adaptations
  - fear prepares you for fight or flight
  - like horror, screaming warns others of danger
- good example of group adaptation
  - screaming helps others survive
  - screaming harms your survival
  - only triggered after your future turns bleak

## Fear is triggered by ancient threats, warning expressions or a change in happiness.

- ancient threats
  - sight of snakes or spiders
- warning expressions
  - sight of the horror expression
  - sound of blood-curdling screaming
- happiness change
  - not just “I am about to be harmed.”
  - “My happiness is about change.”
  - “An animal is attacking me.” (change for the worse)
  - “I might be awarded a big prize. (change for the better)
  - change for the worse – purpose is obvious
  - change for the better – purpose not obvious

## Like crying, increased heart rate is useful for self-diagnosis.

- increased heart rate means you feel fear
  - unless you exerted yourself physically
  - no other emotion increases heart rate
- feeling fear means you expect your happiness to change
  - unless your safety is threatened
- expecting happiness to change means you expect to feel a strong emotion
- knowing you're about to feel a strong emotion is useful
  - knowing your about to feel revenge helps avoid retaliating
  - knowing your about to feel love or infatuation helps avoid or accelerate it
  - knowing your about to feel strong affection can help you know your best sources

## Stress is frequently feeling fear.

- when learning you might face a problem, you expect your happiness to change
  - which triggers fear and therefore increased heart rate
  - and you keep feeling fear until the uncertainty is resolved
- if managing multiple projects, you'll face a constant stream of potential problems
- a constant stream of problems triggers constant fear
  - since problems are not severe, the fear will be low level
  - just increased heart rate but just slightly increased
  - maybe persistent slight sweating of hands and feet
  - constant triggering of fear becomes normal

# Worry is not an emotion.

- worrying is imagining a less happy future scenario
  - feeling humiliation because you fail a course
  - not feeling love because a courtship fails
  - feeling pain because you are injured
- worrying is best analyzed by identifying the imagined emotion
  - negative emotion you imagine feeling
  - positive emotion you imagine not feeling
  - fear you imagine feeling

## Next week's topics are:

Sun Oct 22	Monogynic Love Infatuation
Sun Oct 29	Jealousy, Heartbreak Sexual Sensations
Sun Nov 05	Parental Love, Cute, Grief Affection, Loneliness, Crying
Sun Nov 12	Pride, Humiliation Humour, Laughter, Envy
Sun Nov 19	Revenge, Anger, Criminal Guilt Compassion, Selfish Guilt Minor Emotions
Sun Nov 26	Analyzing Happiness
Sun Dec 03	Q & A ?

# Next week will be different.

- no new material
  - will just review or summarize previous material
- focus is easy way to diagnose happiness
  - why you or others are happy or unhappy
  - how you or others can proactively be happier
- will distill all emotions into a few key questions
  - group and prioritize emotions
  - provide diagnostic tools for each
- expect more questions from class
  - now is the time to get clarification
  - okay to be specific to your situation
- The Happiness Menu / The Happiness Checklist
  - will be a good reference – particularly the checklist