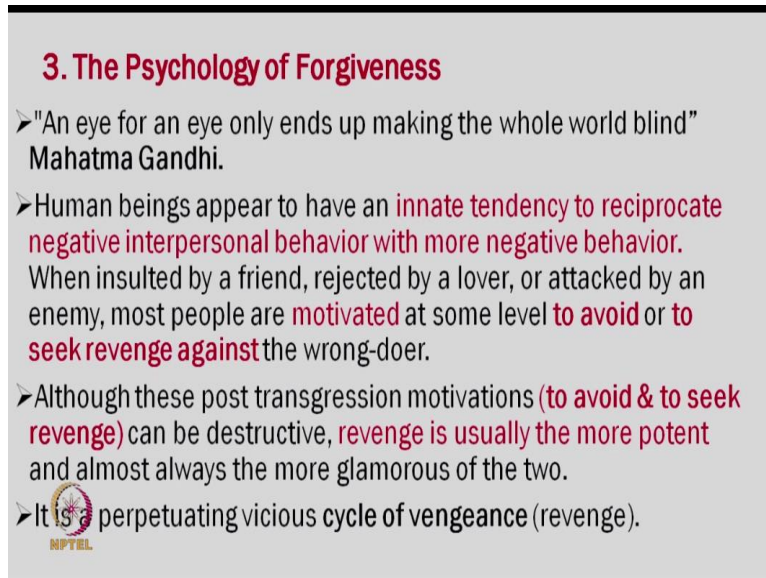


Lecture - 19
Forgiveness, Humility and Gratitude

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3. The Psychology of Forgiveness

- "An eye for an eye only ends up making the whole world blind"
Mahatma Gandhi.
- Human beings appear to have an **innate tendency to reciprocate negative interpersonal behavior with more negative behavior**. When insulted by a friend, rejected by a lover, or attacked by an enemy, most people are **motivated** at some level **to avoid or to seek revenge against** the wrong-doer.
- Although these post transgression motivations (**to avoid & to seek revenge**) can be destructive, **revenge is usually the more potent** and almost always the more glamorous of the two.
- It is a perpetuating vicious cycle of vengeance (revenge).

Namashkar. In this series, our next topic is the psychology of forgiveness. As Mahatma Gandhi stated that, an eye for an eye only ends up making the whole world blind. On the other hand, human beings appear to have an innate tendency to reciprocate negative interpersonal behaviour with more negative behaviour. So, if we have something bad, something negative, we usually give similar kind of response.

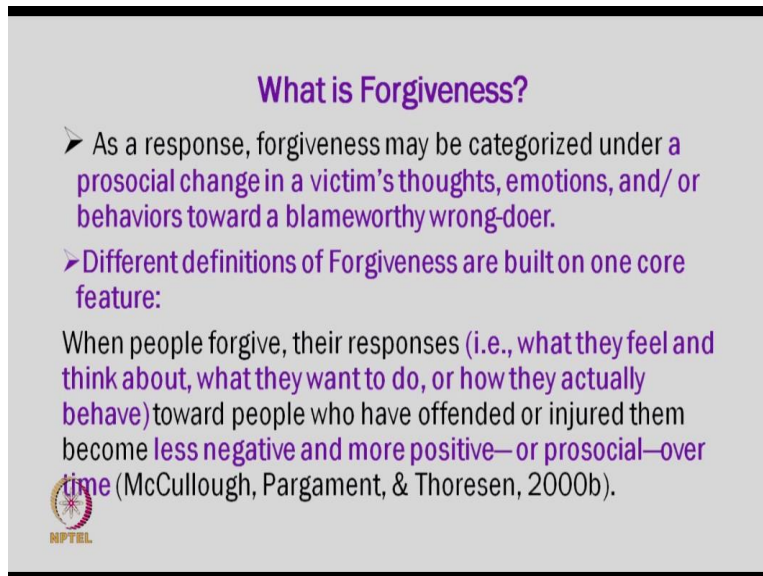
And it is in terms of stimulus response connections, so for bad stimulus or bad event, we usually give similar kind of response. When insulted by a friend, rejected by a lover or attacked by an enemy, most people are motivated at some level to avoid or to seek revenge against the wrongdoer and broadly these two factors are to avoid and to seek revenge against someone, someone who did wrong with you.

These are connected with less level of forgiveness. Although, these post transgression motivations to avoid and to seek revenge can be destructive. Revenge is usually the more potent and almost always the more glamorous of the two because to avoid is to some extent

can say perceive, on the other hand revenge is active action, it is a perpetuating vicious cycle of vengeance or revenge.

So, we can say its negative sense connection between S-R series, someone did wrong with you, you took revenge, again similar kind of stimulus, similar kind of response and this is vicious cycle of revenge or unforgiveness.

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What is Forgiveness?

- As a response, forgiveness may be categorized under a prosocial change in a victim's thoughts, emotions, and/or behaviors toward a blameworthy wrong-doer.
- Different definitions of Forgiveness are built on one core feature:
When people forgive, their responses (i.e., what they feel and think about, what they want to do, or how they actually behave) toward people who have offended or injured them become less negative and more positive— or prosocial—over time (McCullough, Pargament, & Thoresen, 2000b).

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As a response, forgiveness may be categorized under a prosocial change in a victim's thoughts, emotions, and behaviour toward a blameworthy wrongdoer. So, not only external behaviour, but behaviour in your thoughts and emotions or we can say even internal behaviour is towards, you know, forgiveness or prosocial change if we have, then that is forgiveness.

There are different definitions of forgiveness and most of them are built on one core feature. This core feature is when people forgive; their responses toward people who have offended or injured them become less negative and more positive or prosocial over the time. So, it means what they feel and think about what they want to do or how they actually behave, these all must be changed in positive direction.

And less negative, more positive as well as prosocial or in prosocial direction, it should move on - that is forgiveness.

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Three aspects of Forgiveness:

➤ Forgiveness may be defined according to its properties as a response, as a personality disposition, and as a characteristic of social units.

1) As a response, forgiveness may be understood as a prosocial change in a victim's thoughts, emotions, and/or behaviors toward a blameworthy transgressor.

2) As a personality disposition, forgiveness may be understood as a propensity to forgive others across a wide variety of interpersonal circumstances.



There are 3 aspects of forgiveness; forgiveness may be defined according to its properties as a response that is number one. Number two, as a personality disposition and third aspect is as a characteristic of social unit. Number 1 as a response, as I discussed in the previous slide, forgiveness may be understood as a prosocial change in a victim's thoughts, emotions and behaviour towards a blameworthy transgressor.

So, it means you have changed in your thoughts, emotions and behaviour toward prosocial changes. Second is it is understood as a personality trait or personality disposition. As a personality disposition, forgiveness may be understood as a propensity to forgive others across a wide variety of interpersonal circumstances.

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➤ In this sense, people can be scaled along a **forgiving-unforgiving continuum**, with most people (by definition) falling somewhere toward mean of the population. **The disposition to forgive** might itself have several aspects (Mullet, Houdbine, Laumonier, & Girard, 1998).

3) As a **quality of social units**, forgiveness may be understood as **an attribute** that is similar to **intimacy, trust, or commitment**.

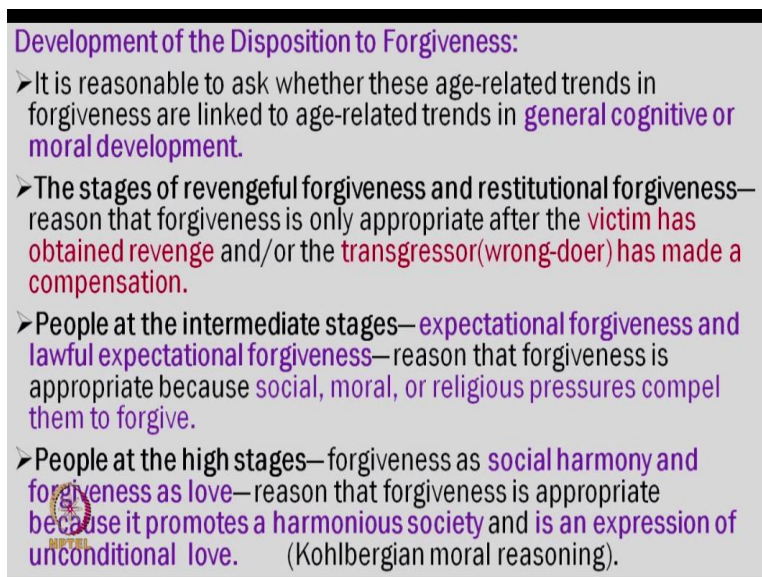
➤ Some social structures (e.g., **some marriages, families, or communities**) are characterized by a high degree of forgiveness whereas other social structures are characterized by less forgiveness.



So, in this case, we count forgiveness as a trait of our personality. In this sense, people can be scaled along a forgiving-unforgiving continuum, with most people by its definition falling somewhere towards mean of the population. So, in this case, we have a scale on which we have number of items relative to forgiving and unforgiving and finally we try to find out where do you stand on this scale of forgiving and unforgiving.

The disposition to forgive might itself have several aspects as stated by various scholars. Third one is as a quality of social units forgiveness may be understood as an attribute that is similar to intimacy, trust or commitment. Some social structures like some marriages, families, communities are characterized by a high degree of forgiveness. On the other hand, some other social structures are characterized by less forgiveness. So, it depends which is the situation and how much chances of forgiving you have.

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Development of the Disposition to Forgiveness:

- It is reasonable to ask whether these age-related trends in forgiveness are linked to age-related trends in **general cognitive or moral development**.
- The stages of **revengeful forgiveness** and **restitutional forgiveness**—reason that forgiveness is only appropriate after the **victim has obtained revenge** and/or the **transgressor(wrong-doer) has made a compensation**.
- People at the **intermediate stages**—**expectational forgiveness** and **lawful expectational forgiveness**—reason that forgiveness is appropriate because **social, moral, or religious pressures compel them to forgive**.
- People at the **high stages**—forgiveness as **social harmony and forgiveness as love**—reason that forgiveness is appropriate because it **promotes a harmonious society** and is an **expression of unconditional love**. (Kohlbergian moral reasoning).

Next point is development of disposition to forgiveness. It has been observed that like other intrapersonal and interpersonal character strengths, it also develops during different stages of our life. It is reasonable to ask whether these age-related trends in forgiveness are linked to age-related trends in general cognitive and moral development and scholars have tried to understand forgiveness in terms of cognitive and moral development theories.

The stages of revengeful forgiveness and restitutional forgiveness - that is first one - reason that forgiveness is only appropriate after the victim has obtained revenge and the transgressor or wrong-doer has made a compensation. So, it means you did wrong, pay for it. Second

stage is when the people are at the intermediate stages. Expectational forgiveness and lawful expectational forgiveness is the hallmark of this stage.

So, you are expected to forgive and lawful expectations is there that is why you are motivated to forgive someone. Reason that forgiveness is appropriate because social, moral or religious pressures compel them to forgive. So, there are some circumstances from the external forces and these forces like social, moral, religious pressures, they compel you to forgive.

Third is people at the high stages. Forgiveness as social harmony and forgiveness as love, so for social harmony as well as for love, you are motivated to forgive. Reason that forgiving is appropriate because it promotes a harmonious society and is an expression of unconditional love. So, you want to get unconditional love as well as you love to have harmonious society or in society harmony that is why you want to forgive people. Let us understand this explanation in detail by Kohlberg's moral reasoning theory.

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Level	Stage	Ages	Social Orientation
Pre-Conventional	1	2-4	Obedience and Punishment
	2	4-7	Individualism, Instrumentalism
Conventional	3	7-10	Good Boy/Girl
	4	10-12	Law and Order
Post-Conventional	5	Teens	Social Contract
	6	Adult	Principled Conscience

This theory has been proposed by Kohlberg. He has mentioned that there are 3 levels. Levels are pre-conventional, conventional and post-conventional. In each level, he has described two stages; stage 1, 2 in pre-conventional; stage 3 and 4 in conventional and 5 and 6 in post-conventional. In pre-conventional, first stage is age 2 to 4 and social orientation at this age is obedience and punishment and second one, individualism and instrumentalism.

Second level, conventional and here stages are third and fourth and age range 7 to 10 and 10 to 12. In this group, good boy and good girl or nice girl issue is there as well as child behaves

as per law and order. Third one is post-conventional level, 5th and 6th stages are there and at the age of teens as well as adult, social contract and principle conscience is there. Let us know Kohlberg's stages of moral development in detail.

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Kohlberg's stages of moral development:

- Kohlberg identified three levels of moral reasoning:
pre-conventional, conventional, and post-conventional level.
- Each level is associated with increasingly complex stages of moral development.
- Level 1: Preconventional:** Throughout the preconventional level, a child's sense of morality is **externally controlled.**
- Children accept and believe the rules of authority figures, such as **parents and teachers.**
- A child with pre-conventional morality **has not yet adopted or internalized society's conventions regarding what is right or wrong, but instead focuses largely on external consequences that certain actions may bring.**

Kohlberg identified three levels of moral reasoning as I discussed in previous slide; pre-conventional, conventional and post-conventional level. Each level is associated with increasingly complex stages of moral development and let us know a little bit more about first level that is pre-conventional. Throughout the pre-conventional level, child's sense of morality is externally controlled.

Externally controlled means reward and punishment would decide what kind of behaviour is expected from a child and what type of behaviour he is supposed to do. Children accept and believe the rules of authority figures, such as parents, teachers or other social agents. Child with the pre-conventional morality has not yet adopted or internalized society's conventions regarding what is right or wrong.

So, he does not learn what is right or wrong but right or wrong will be decided by reward and punishment for him but instead focuses largely on external consequences that certain actions may bring and actions will bring, will decide what he is expected to do and where is his motivation and what he is interested to do.

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Stage 1: (2-4 yrs.) Obedience-and-Punishment Orientation

➤ Stage 1 focuses on the child's desire to obey rules and avoid being punished.

➤ Stage 2: (4-7 yrs.) Instrumental Orientation: Stage 2 expresses the "what's in it for me?" position, in which right behavior is defined by whatever the individual believes to be in their best interest. For example, when a child is asked by his parents to do a task. The child asks "what's in it for me?" and the parents offer the child an incentive by giving him some reward (e.g. pocket money).

Level 2: Conventional: Throughout the conventional level, a child's sense of morality is tied to personal and societal relationships.

➤ Children continue to accept the rules of authority figures, but this is now due to their belief that this is necessary to ensure positive relationships and societal order.

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Then, this level is divided in 2 stages; stage 1, 2 to 4 years, obedience and punishment orientation. Stage 1 focuses on the child's desire to obey rules and avoid being punished. So, child wants to avoid punishment and that is why he is doing certain type of behaviour. Stage 2, 4 to 7 years, instrumental orientation is there and stage 2 expresses the "what's in it for me" position in which right behaviour is defined by whatever the individual believes to be in the best interest, what he will be getting instead of it and this will decide what he's expected to do. For example, when a child is asked by his parents to do a task, that child asks what's in it for me and the parents offer the child an incentive by giving him some reward, for example, pocket money. Level 2 that is conventional, throughout conventional level a child's sense of morality is tied to personal and societal relationships.

Children continue to accept the rules of authority figures, but this is now due to their belief that this is necessary to ensure positive relationship and societal order. So, he wants to manage or he is interested to have positive relationships as well as societal order and that is why he is following forgiveness and moral values.

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Stage 3: (7-10 yrs.) Good Boy, Nice Girl Orientation:

- In this stage children want the approval of others and act in ways to avoid disapproval. Emphasis is placed on good behavior and people being “nice” to others.

Stage 4: (10-12 yrs.) Law-and-Order Orientation:

- In stage 4, the child blindly accepts rules and convention because of their importance in maintaining a functioning society.
- There is an obligation and a duty to uphold laws and rules. Most active members of society remain at stage four, where morality is still predominantly dictated by an outside force.



Stage 3 is 7 to 10 years and good boy or nice girl orientation is there. In this stage, children want the approval of others and act in ways to avoid disapproval. Emphasis is placed on good behaviour and people being nice to others. So, he wanted to do good behaviour and displayed himself or herself like a good boy or nice girl and that is why he has higher level of moral values or moral development in this direction develops.

Fourth stage in this level is 10 to 12 years age and law and order oriented this stage is. In stage 4, the child blindly accepts rules and convention because of their importance in maintaining a functioning society. So, he learnt law and order as well as he is motivated to follow law and order and that is why this stage name is law-and-order orientation. There is an obligation and a duty to uphold laws and rules.

Most active members of society remain at this stage that is the 4th one where morality is still predominantly dictated by an outside force, its outside force because you learnt rule and regulations from external world, from your society, from your culture, from your nation and you are following them.

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Level 3: Post-conventional

- Throughout the post-conventional level, a person's sense of morality is defined in terms of more abstract principles and values.
- People now believe that some laws are unjust and should be changed or eliminated. This level is marked by a growing realization that individuals are separate entities from society and that individuals may disobey rules inconsistent with their own principles.
- Post-conventional moralists live by their own ethical principles—principles that typically include such basic human rights as life, liberty, and justice—and view rules as useful but changeable mechanisms, rather than absolute dictates that must be obeyed without question.

Level 3 is post-conventional. Throughout the post-conventional level, a person's sense of morality is defined in terms of more abstract principles and values. People now believe that some laws are unjust and should be changed or eliminated. So, because at this stage you have internalized the things, you are able to review rule regulations and then could decide what is right for you and what is wrong for you.

This level is marked by a growing realization that individuals are separate entities from society and that individuals may disobey rules inconsistently with their own principles. Post-conventional moralists live by their own ethical principles. Principles that typically include such basic human rights as life, liberty and justice and view rules as useful but changeable mechanism, rather than absolute dictates that must be obeyed without question.

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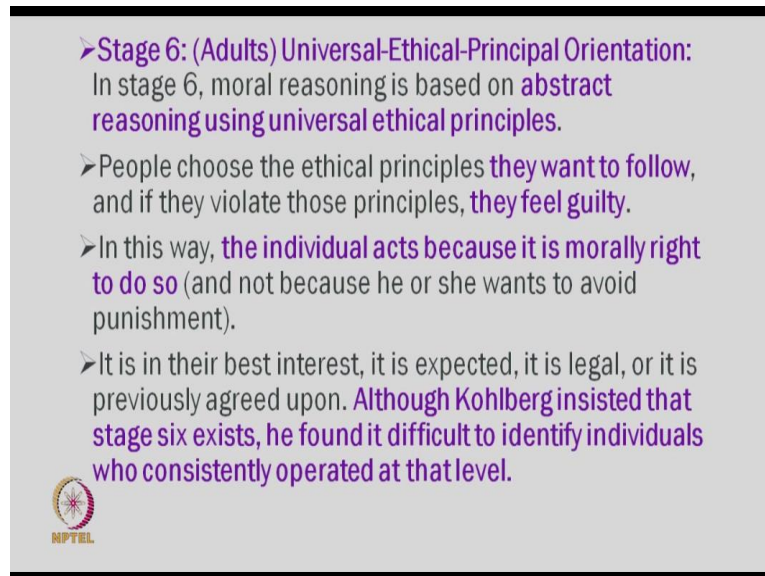
Stage 5: (Teens) Social-Contract Orientation: In stage 5, the world is viewed as holding different opinions, rights, and values.

- Those laws that do not promote the general welfare should be changed when necessary to meet the greatest good for the greatest number of people.
- This is achieved through majority decision and unavoidable compromise. Democratic government is theoretically based on stage five reasoning.




Stage 5, under this level is teens, social contract orientation. In stage 5, the world is viewed as holding different opinions, rights and values and you know variety of rule regulations. Those laws that do not promote the general welfare should be changed when necessary to meet the greatest good for the greatest number of people. This is achieved through majority decision and unavoidable compromise. Therefore, democratic government is theoretically based on stage 5 reasoning.

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➤ **Stage 6: (Adults) Universal-Ethical-Principal Orientation:**
In stage 6, moral reasoning is based on **abstract reasoning using universal ethical principles.**

- People choose the ethical principles **they want to follow**, and if they violate those principles, **they feel guilty.**
- In this way, **the individual acts because it is morally right to do so** (and not because he or she wants to avoid punishment).
- It is in their best interest, it is expected, it is legal, or it is previously agreed upon. **Although Kohlberg insisted that stage six exists, he found it difficult to identify individuals who consistently operated at that level.**



Stage 6, during adulthood, universal-ethical-principle orientation. In this stage, moral reasoning is based on abstract reasoning using universal ethical principles. People choose the ethical principles they want to follow and if they violate those principles, they feel guilty because they have already internalized these moral values, rules, regulations and if they do not follow, then they feel guilty.

In this way, the individual acts because it is morally right to do so and not because he or she wants to avoid punishment because now he has learnt this behaviour and that is why it reflects in his behaviour. It is in their best interest, it is expected, it is legal, or it is previously agreed upon. Although, Kohlberg insisted that stage 6 exists, he found it difficult to identify individuals who consistently operated at that level and its advanced level of.

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Kohlberg's Theory		
Level/Stage	Age Range	Description
I: Obedience/Punishment	Infancy	No difference between doing the right thing and avoiding punishment
I: Self-Interest	Pre-school	Interest shifts to rewards rather than punishment – effort is made to secure greatest benefit for oneself
II: Conformity and Interpersonal Accord	School-age	The “good boy/girl” level. Effort is made to secure approval and maintain friendly relations with others
II: Authority and Social Order	School-age	Orientation toward fixed rules. The purpose of morality is maintaining the social order. Interpersonal accord is expanded to include the entire society
III: Social Contract	Teens	Mutual benefit, reciprocity. Morally right and legally right are not always the same. Utilitarian rules that make life better for everyone
III: Universal Principles	Adulthood	Morality is based on principles that transcend mutual benefit.

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So, if we just summarize this theory, this theory has 3 levels as we have already discussed as well as 6 stages and as per the stages, you could see infancy, preschool, you know school-age, during schooling, teens and adulthood and then their descriptions in short. So, let us once again summarize stages. Obedience, punishment first stage as you know, no difference between doing the right things and avoiding punishment.

Second one interest shifts to rewards rather than punishment and effort is made to secure greatest benefit for oneself. On the other hand, level II stage is the good boy, good girl level is the first one and effort is made to secure approval and maintain friendly relationship with others. On the other hand, next one is orientation toward fixed rules. The purpose of morality is maintaining the social order.

Interpersonal accord is expanded to include the entire society and the third one where you have internalized these moral values, where you are moving towards internalizing these moral values, mutual benefits, reciprocity is there, moral right and legally right are not always the same. You learn during your, you know, experiences. Utilitarian rules that make life better for everyone.

You want to follow all those rules, which are better for all. Morality is based on principles that transcend mutual benefits that is the last one where you have internalized all moral values. Now, next point here is to understand just opposite part of forgiveness and opposite of it is when we have high level of avoidance motivation or revenge motivations.

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Transgression-Related Interpersonal Motivations Scale- 12-Item Form (TRIM-12) McCullough et al. (1998).

For the following questions, please indicate your current thoughts and feelings about the person who hurt you. Use the following scale to indicate your agreement with each of the questions.

1 Strongly Disagree; 2 Disagree; 3 Neutral; 4 Agree; 5 Strongly Agree

1. I'll make him/her pay. 2. I keep as much distance between us as possible.
3. I wish that something bad would happen to him/her. 4. I live as if he/she doesn't exist, isn't around. 5. I don't trust him/her. 6. I want him/her to get what he/she deserves. 7. I find it difficult to act warmly toward him/her. 8. I avoid him/her. 9. I'm going to get even. 10. I cut off the relationship with him/her. 11. I want to see him/her hurt and miserable. 12. I withdraw from him/her.

Scoring Instructions: Avoidance Motivations: Add up the scores for items 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10, and 12. Revenge Motivations: Add up the scores for items 1, 3, 6, 9, and 11.

So, this is a scale which is studying avoidance motivations as well as revenge motivations or you could understand if person has low level of forgiveness, then he would be having such kind of behaviour and can say this person has lower level of forgiveness and high level of avoidance motivation and revenge motivations as I discussed about these two motivations at the initial stage of this chapter.

Let us understand these two motivations, avoidance and revenge through a psychological test. This psychological test is transgression-related interpersonal motivation scale and it has mainly two factors, avoidance motivation and revenge motivation. Instructions are for the following questions: please indicate some current thoughts and feelings about the person who hurt you.

Use the following scale to indicate your agreement with each of the questions. So, who hurt you means you need to forgive this person, to some extent we can say if we discuss it in terms of forgiveness. So, Likert Scale here is strongly disagree to strongly agree. Strongly disagree 1, disagree 2, neutral 3, agree 4 and 5 strongly agree. So, high score means avoidance motivation or high revenge motivation because strongly you are agreeing with this statement, which are related to avoidance motivation and revenge motivation.

Here, I have changed color just to show you, which one are related to revenge, which one related to avoidance motivations. So, let us know through these questions, how do we define avoidance and revenge motivation. First revenge motivation, I will make him or her pay. I

wish that something bad would happen to him or her. I want him or her to get what he or she deserves. I am going to get even. I want to see him or her hurt and miserable.


So, these questions related to revenge. On the other hand, other questions are, or items are related to avoidance motivation. I keep as much distance between us as possible. I live as if he or she does not exist, is not around. I do not trust him or her. I find it difficult to act warmly toward him or her. I avoid him or her. I cut off the relationship with him or her. I withdraw from him or her.

So, you just see in these two - motivation in 1 we are motivated to avoid such kind of person, we are motivated to avoid wrong-doer. On the other hand, in second one, red one, revenge-oriented motivation we have. So, if a person has high score on avoidance motivation and revenge motivations he has such kind of behaviour. On the other hand, he has less level or poor level of forgiveness in his personality.

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Benefits of Forgiveness:

- Forgiving people differ from less-forgiving people on many personality attributes. For example, forgiving people report less negative affect such as anxiety, depression, and hostility.
- Forgiving people are also less narcissistic, less exploitative, and more empathic than their less-forgiving counterparts.
- Forgivers also tend to endorse socially desirable attitudes and behavior.
- Moreover, self-ratings of the disposition to forgive correlate negatively with scores on hostility and anger as well as with clinicians' ratings of hostility, passive-aggressive behavior, and neuroticism.

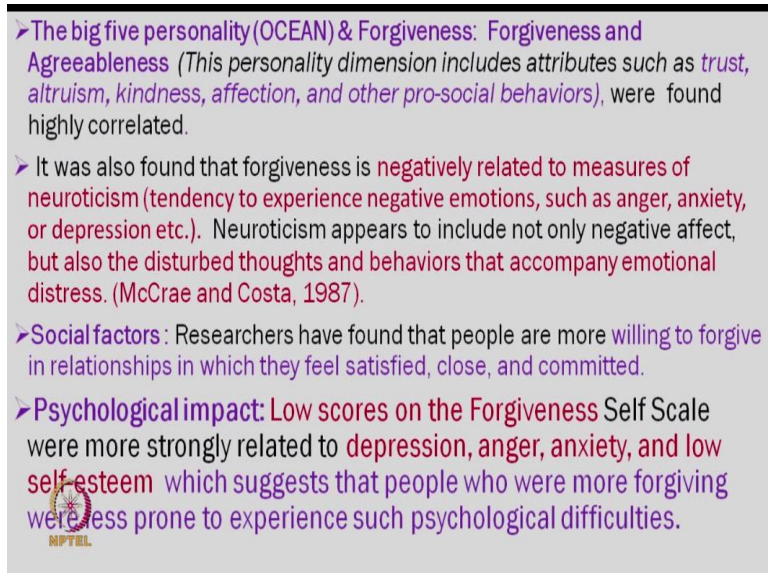


There are various benefits of forgiveness that is why positive psychology is talking about learning forgiveness and give importance to forgiveness as a treat of our personality. These benefits are forgiving people differ from less-forgiving people on many personality attributes. For example, forgiving people report less negative affect or emotion such as anxiety, depression, hostility.

Forgiving people are also less narcissistic, less exploitative and more empathetic than their less-forgiving counterparts. Forgivers also tend to endorse socially desirable attitudes and

behaviour. Moreover, self-rating of the dispositions to forgive correlate negatively with score on hostility and anger as well as with the clinician's rating of hostility, passive-aggressive behaviour and neuroticism. So, it means high level of forgiveness is negatively correlated with negative factors in our personality.

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- The big five personality (OCEAN) & Forgiveness: Forgiveness and Agreeableness (This personality dimension includes attributes such as trust, altruism, kindness, affection, and other pro-social behaviors), were found highly correlated.
- It was also found that forgiveness is negatively related to measures of neuroticism (tendency to experience negative emotions, such as anger, anxiety, or depression etc.). Neuroticism appears to include not only negative affect, but also the disturbed thoughts and behaviors that accompany emotional distress. (McCrae and Costa, 1987).
- Social factors: Researchers have found that people are more willing to forgive in relationships in which they feel satisfied, close, and committed.
- Psychological impact: Low scores on the Forgiveness Self Scale were more strongly related to depression, anger, anxiety, and low self-esteem which suggests that people who were more forgiving were less prone to experience such psychological difficulties.

When we talk about the big five and their correlation with the forgiveness, it has been observed that agreeableness and neuroticism are correlated with forgiveness. You must be knowing about the big five personality factors. These are called as OCEAN, openness to experiences, conscientiousness, agreeableness, extroversion and neuroticism.

Out of them, it has been observed that agreeableness and neuroticism are important for understanding forgiveness relationships. They observed that for agreeableness, agreeableness means it has various dimensions or traits, trust, altruism, kindness, affection and other prosocial behaviours. So, these traits, which has these sub-factors is positively correlated with forgiveness.

On the other hand, it has been observed that forgiveness is negatively related to measure of neuroticism. Neuroticism, tendency to experience negative emotions such as anger, anxiety or depression etc. Neuroticism appears to include not only negative affect but also the disturbed thoughts and behaviours that accompany emotional distress. So, not only you know negative emotions or negative affect but disturbed thoughts and behaviour also connected with neuroticism.

So, it means forgiveness is negatively correlated with negative affects with disturbed thoughts as well as behaviour or we can say if we have lesser level of forgiveness, then we might have load of negative emotions, disturbed thoughts and behaviours. In terms of social factors, researcher have observed or found that people are more willing to forgive in relations in which they feel satisfied, close and committed.

So, the relationship where they are satisfied, they are close, they are committed; in those relationships they are ready to forgive more. In terms of psychological impact, it has been observed that low scores on the forgiveness self-scale were more strongly related to depression, anger, anxiety and low self-esteem, which suggests that people who were more forgiving were less prone to experience such psychological difficulties.

So, if we are higher score on forgiveness, then we have lesser psychological difficulties in terms of anger, anxiety, low self-esteem and that is why we promote to have high level of forgiveness.

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Summary of Current Research Findings:

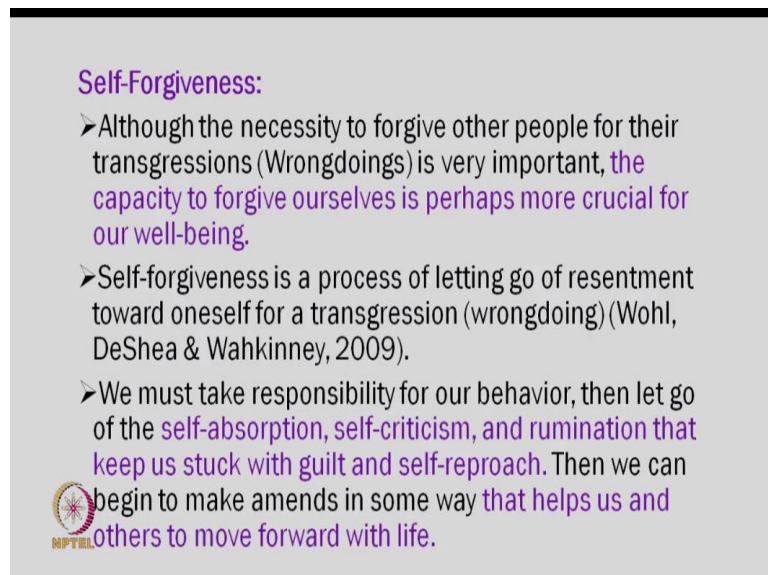
- Psychologists Use various measures and have begun to shed light on several dimensions of forgiveness. In particular, they have explored:
 - how the propensity to forgive develops across the life span;
 - the personality traits that are linked to forgiveness;
 - the social-psychological factors that influence forgiveness;
 - the links of forgiveness to health and well-being.
- **Interventions to Promote Forgiveness:** several research groups have developed and tested interventions for promoting forgiveness.
- They have investigated the promising efficacy of clinical and psychoeducational interventions to promote forgiveness.

When we talk about summary of current research findings on forgiveness, there are various factors. Psychologists use various measures and have begun to shed light on several dimensions of forgiveness. In particular, they have explored how the propensity to forgive develops across the lifespan. As we have discussed as per Kohlberg's moral development theory, in different stages or different age stages we develop you know forgiveness.

The second is personality traits that are linked to forgiveness and you know this forgiveness has been understood as a personality trait as well as scholars have studied various personality traits, how these are correlated with forgiveness. Next, is the social psychological factors that influence forgiveness and the link of forgiving to health and well-being. There are various studies showing the positive relationship between forgiveness and health and well-being.


We have intervention programs, which are promoting forgiveness and several research groups have developed and tested interventions for promoting forgiveness. They have investigated the promising efficacy of clinical and psychoeducational interventions to promote forgiveness. However, there could be advanced level of course in which we could talk about the psychoeducational interventions as well as interventions in clinical set up.

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Self-Forgiveness:

- Although the necessity to forgive other people for their transgressions (Wrongdoings) is very important, the capacity to forgive ourselves is perhaps more crucial for our well-being.
- Self-forgiveness is a process of letting go of resentment toward oneself for a transgression (wrongdoing) (Wohl, DeShea & Wahkinney, 2009).
- We must take responsibility for our behavior, then let go of the self-absorption, self-criticism, and rumination that keep us stuck with guilt and self-reproach. Then we can begin to make amends in some way that helps us and others to move forward with life.

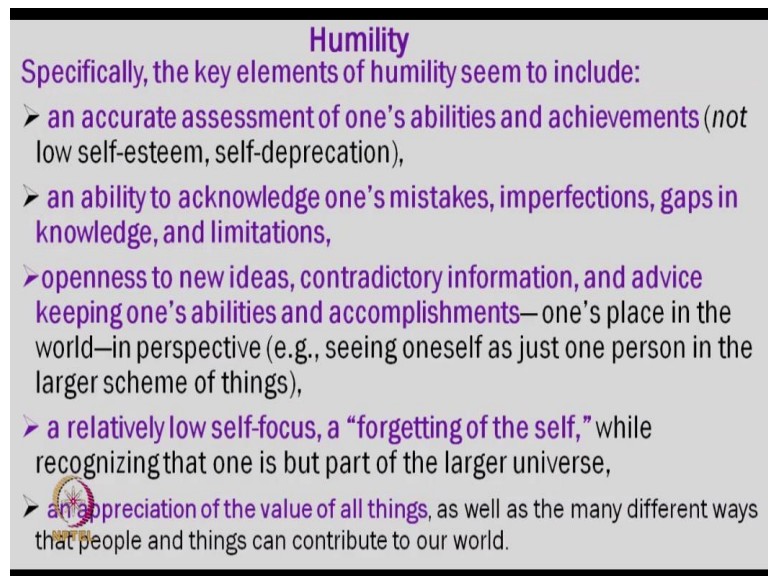
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After knowing about forgiveness, let us talk about self-forgiveness. Like self-compassion, self-forgiveness is also important for us and it is positively correlated with our health, psychological as well as physical health. Although, the necessity to forgive other people for their transgressions or wrongdoings is very important, the capacity to forgive ourselves is perhaps more crucial for our well-being.

Self-forgiveness is a process of letting go of resentment toward oneself for transgression or wrongdoing. So, sometimes even we are not satisfied with our life, sometimes we have, you know, mindlessness and because of this mindlessness, we do something which later on we do not like and if we do not like previous things done by us, then need to forgive. We must take responsibility for our behaviour, then let go of the self-absorption, self-criticism and

rumination that keeps us struck with guilt and self-reproach or self-criticism. Then, we can begin to make amends in some way that help us and others to move forward with life.

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Humility

Specifically, the key elements of humility seem to include:

- an accurate assessment of one's abilities and achievements (*not* low self-esteem, self-deprecation),
- an ability to acknowledge one's mistakes, imperfections, gaps in knowledge, and limitations,
- openness to new ideas, contradictory information, and advice keeping one's abilities and accomplishments—one's place in the world—in perspective (e.g., seeing oneself as just one person in the larger scheme of things),
- a relatively low self-focus, a "forgetting of the self," while recognizing that one is but part of the larger universe,
- an appreciation of the value of all things, as well as the many different ways that people and things can contribute to our world.

One another concept which is not explored much in positive psychology but appreciated a lot, let us discuss this – 'humility' also, because it is positively correlated with forgiveness and other interpersonal character strengths. There are various elements for understanding this concept like an accurate assessment of one's abilities and achievements, not low self-esteem or self-deprecation but accurate understanding about oneself, an ability to acknowledge one's mistakes, imperfections, gaps in knowledge and limitations.

Openness to new ideas, contradictory information and advice, keeping one's ability and accomplishments or one's place in the world in perspective, seeing oneself as just one person in the larger scheme of things, a relatively low self-focus, a forgetting of the self while recognizing one is but part of the larger universe. So, when you understand you are part of this large universe you do not focus much on oneself rather you are counting yourself part of this larger universe and you have ability to know yourself, you know perfection as well as imperfections about you, you accept your mistakes and you have accurate assessment of one's ability and achievements. So, these are certain definitions of humility or characteristics to define humility, an appreciation of the value of all things, as well as the many different ways that people and things can contribute to our world.

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- Humility has not been studied as extensively as other sacred emotions.
- However, some research does support the role of humility in positive behavior and positive emotionality.
- For instance, one study found that greater humility is related to higher self-esteem, gratitude, forgiveness, spirituality, and better health (Rowatt et al., 2006). Recent studies show that humility is connected with many forms of prosocial behavior.
- Another study found that humble people respond better to criticism by taking responsibility for their problems and increasing their efforts to improve their problems (Zell, 2008).
- Humility seems related to forgiveness and enhances social relationships.
- Being humble is important for living a life of quiet joy, satisfaction, wisdom, and contentment.

NPTEL

So, all these factors help us to understand humility. Humility has not been studied as extensively as other sacred emotions as I discussed earlier also. However, some research does support the role of humility in positive behaviour and positive emotionality that is why very important to understand this positive construct for us.

For instance, one study found that greater humility is related to higher self-esteem, gratitude, forgiveness, spirituality and better health. Recent studies show that humility is connected with many forms of prosocial behaviour and that is why they highlight this trait to have in our personality. Another study found that humble people respond better to criticism by taking responsibilities for their problems and increasing their efforts to improve their problem.

Humility seems related to forgiveness and enhanced social relationships and that is why we should address this construct also. Being humble is important for living a life of quiet joy, satisfaction, wisdom and contentment and that is why be humble.

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4. Gratitude and the positive psychology

- Across cultures and time spans, experiences and expressions of gratitude have been treated as both basic and desirable aspects of human personality and social life.
- For example, gratitude is a highly prized human disposition in Jewish, Christian, Muslim, Buddhist, and Hindu thought.
- The Buddha suggested that thankfulness is a core aspect of the noble person.
- Indeed, the consensus among the world's religious and ethical writers is that people are obligated to feel and express gratitude in response to received benefits.
- Cicero (Pro Plancio) held that "gratitude is not only the greatest of virtues, but the parent of all the others," (cited in Emmons & Shelton, 2001, p. 459).

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In this series, our next topic is gratitude and the positive psychology. This is again very interesting construct, to know what it is and how we have borrowed it from different religions and now it is very much part of positive psychology as well as positive psychological interventions. So, let us understand what this trait or what this character strengths or virtue is. Across cultures and time spans, experiences and expressions of gratitude have been treated as both basic and desirable aspect of human personality and social life.

For example, gratitude is highly prized human disposition or human characteristic in Jewish, Christian, Muslim, Buddhist and Hindu thoughts. So, in almost all religious thoughts, it has been highlighted, it has been counted as highly prized human disposition. That is why this has been borrowed from religious spiritual literature and now very much part of positive psychology.

The Buddha suggested that thankfulness is a core aspect of the noble person. Indeed, the consensus among the world's religious and ethical writers is that people are obligated to feel and express gratitude in response to received benefits. Cicero held that gratitude is not only the greatest of virtue but the parent of all the others.

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- In recognition of the importance of gratitude, members of the United Nations General Assembly declared 2000 as the International Year of Thanksgiving.
- Although around the world people experience and express gratitude in diverse ways, they typically feel grateful emotions (i. e., thankful, appreciative) and have developed linguistic and cultural conventions for expressing such gratitude.
- **Gratitude as an Emotional Response to Life:** Gratitude is derived from the Latin “gratia”, meaning grace, graciousness, or gratefulness.
- All derivatives from this Latin root “have to do with kindness, generosity, gifts, the beauty of giving and receiving, or getting something for nothing” (Pruyser, 1976).

So, if you have this virtue, it means you are connected with other virtues also and it has been counted as the greatest of the virtues. In recognition of the importance of gratitude, members of the United Nations General Assembly declared 2000 as the International Year of Thanksgiving and if you know, they have, you know, particular period called Thanksgiving period.

Although, around the world people experience and express gratitude in diverse ways, they typically feel grateful emotions like thankful they are, they appreciate the things and have developed linguistic and cultural conventions for expressing such gratitude. Gratitude has various dimensions. Let us understand one by one. Gratitude as an emotional response to life is the first one.

Gratitude is derived from the Latin term that is gratia; it means grace, graciousness or gratefulness. So, all derivatives from this Latin root have to do with kindness, generosity, gifts, the beauty of giving and receiving or getting something for nothing. So, these are some related meanings of the term gratia which is the root term for gratitude.

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- In addition to its merit as an **intrinsically rewarding state**, gratitude may lead to other positive subjective experiences. Chesterton (1924) stated that “gratitude produced the **most purely joyful moments** that have been known to man”.
- Empirically, gratitude is a pleasant state and is linked with **positive emotions**, including **contentment** (Walker & Pitts, 1998), **happiness, pride, and hope**.
- In a Gallup (1998) survey of American teens and adults, **over 90% of the respondents indicated that expressing gratitude helped them to feel “extremely happy” or “somewhat happy.”**
- Also, Emmons and Crumpler (2000) have reported that a conscious focus on gratitude makes **life more fulfilling, meaningful, and productive**.

As a psychological state, gratitude is a felt sense of wonder, thankful and appreciation for life. So, whenever we experience gratitude, then we feel “oh great, we got it”, feel thankful, and appreciation for life we experience during this period. It can be expressed toward others as well as toward impersonal or nature or non-human resources like God and animals. I think you could easily identify in religious practices we worship various other things like God, animals, nature.

And we feel thankful for all those surrounded things like nature, trees, animals God, Sun, moon and various other surrounded natural things which we think are really contributing to our life. Some of the most profound reported experiences of gratitude can be religiously based or associated with different reverent or respectful wonder toward an acknowledgement of the universe.

As such, gratitude is one of the most common emotions that religions seek to provoke and sustain in believers. Thus, for more people gratitude is at the core of their spiritual and religious experiences. So, this virtue or character strengths has been highlighted, has been appreciated a lot or given importance a lot in spiritual and religious experiences as well as in those domains.

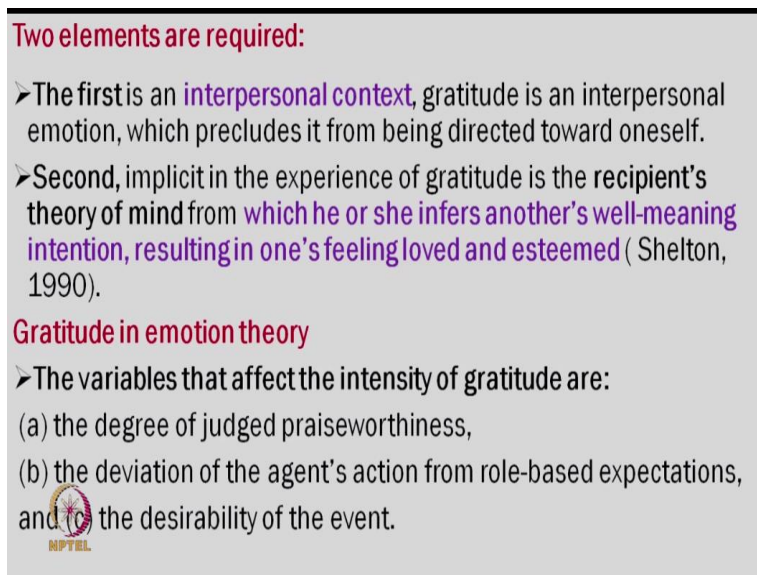
In addition to its merit as an intrinsically rewarding state, gratitude may lead to other positive subjective experiences like Chesterton in 1924 stated that gratitude produced the most purely joyful moment that have been known to man. Empirically, gratitude is a pleasant state and is

linked with positive emotions including contentment, happiness, pride and hope. So, it is positively correlated with various positive traits.

In a Gallup 1998 survey, American teens and adults had participated in this survey. Over 90% of the respondents indicated that experiencing gratitude helps them to feel extremely happy or somewhat happy. So, whenever they express gratitude towards someone, then they feel happy or extremely happy. Also, Emmons and his associates have reported that a conscious focus on gratitude makes life more fulfilling, meaningful and productive.

And that is why even in the intervention programs, gratitude increasing programs are highlighted in positive psychology.

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Two elements are required:

- The first is an **interpersonal context**, gratitude is an interpersonal emotion, which precludes it from being directed toward oneself.
- Second, implicit in the experience of gratitude is the recipient's theory of mind from **which he or she infers another's well-meaning intention, resulting in one's feeling loved and esteemed** (Shelton, 1990).

Gratitude in emotion theory

- The variables that affect the intensity of gratitude are:
 - (a) the degree of judged praiseworthiness,
 - (b) the deviation of the agent's action from role-based expectations, and
 - (c) the desirability of the event.

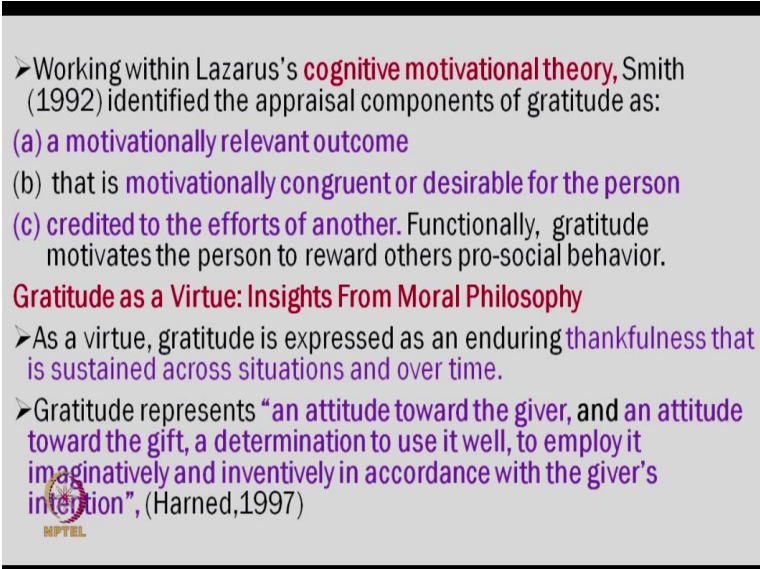
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Two elements are required for gratitude. Number 1, interpersonal context. Gratitude is an interpersonal emotion which precludes it from being directed toward oneself. Second, implicit in the experience of gratitude is the recipient's theory of mind from which he or she infers another's well-meaning intention, resulting in one's feeling loved and esteemed. So, these two elements are required for gratitude.

Gratitude has been understood in terms of motivation, emotion theories and psychological theories and in various other domains to understand this construct. So, first let us discuss about gratitude in emotion theories. The variable that affects the intensity of gratitude are the degree of judged praiseworthiness, the deviation of the agent's action from role-based

expectations and third one is the desirability of the event. So, these 3 components are important to understand gratitude in terms of emotion theories.

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➤ Working within Lazarus's **cognitive motivational theory**, Smith (1992) identified the appraisal components of gratitude as:

- (a) **a motivationally relevant outcome**
- (b) that is **motivationally congruent or desirable for the person**
- (c) **credited to the efforts of another**. Functionally, gratitude motivates the person to reward others pro-social behavior.

Gratitude as a Virtue: Insights From Moral Philosophy

- As a virtue, gratitude is expressed as an enduring **thankfulness that is sustained across situations and over time**.
- Gratitude represents **“an attitude toward the giver, and an attitude toward the gift, a determination to use it well, to employ it imaginatively and inventively in accordance with the giver’s intention”**, (Harned,1997)

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Lazarus and Lazarus in 1994 placed gratitude in the class of empathetic emotions because along with compassion, it depends on capacity to empathize with others. Each emotion is associated with a typical dramatic plot, defining what is happening to the persons and its significance for the person’s well-being. So, this dramatic plot for gratitude is the appreciation of an altruistic gift.

And that is important for the person who has received it. Both giving and receiving of the gift involve empathy because one must sense the donor’s positive intention and the donor must sense the need of the recipient that is why they called it many faces of gratitude. So, broadly if we just talk about this interpretation, it means there are 3 important things. One receiver, another giver, and third is the gift.

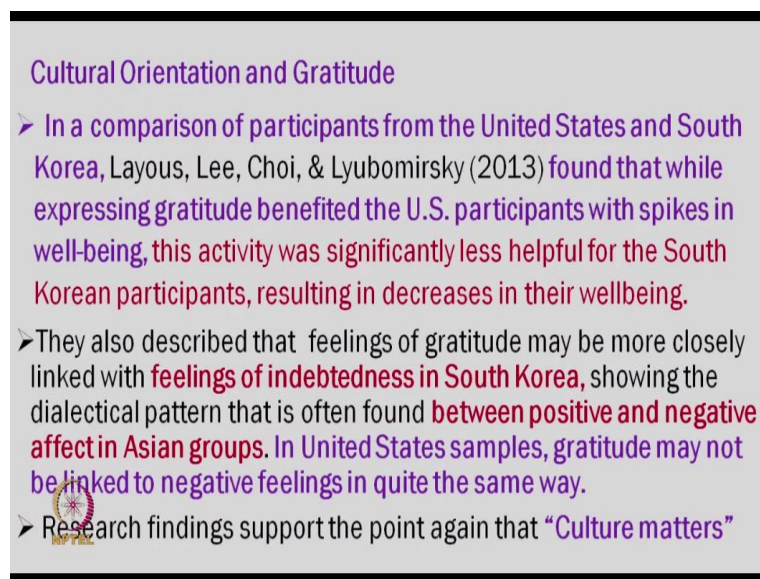
And in these three, there is positive connection. So, receiver as well as giver thinking that this is good for each other, so in this interpretations, there are three important factors, giver and receiver and the gift and giver and receiver both of them are in positive mode, positive emotions because both of them appreciating each other as well as receiver feeling that he is grateful to get this gift from the giver.

Working with Lazarus cognitive motivation theory, Smith in 1992 identified the appraisal component of gratitude as - number one, a motivationally relevant outcome must be there,

(second) that is motivationally congruent or desirable for the person. Third credited to the effort of another. Functionally, gratitude motivates the person to reward others prosocial behaviour.

Gratitude as a virtue or insights from moral philosophy is also important to understand. As a virtue, gratitude is expressed as an enduring thankfulness that is sustained across situations and over time. So, gratitude represents an attitude toward the giver and an attitude toward the gift, determination to use it well, to imply it imaginatively and inventively in accordance with the giver's intention. So, these all aspects are part of gratitude.

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Cultural Orientation and Gratitude

- In a comparison of participants from the United States and South Korea, Layous, Lee, Choi, & Lyubomirsky (2013) found that while expressing gratitude benefited the U.S. participants with spikes in well-being, this activity was significantly less helpful for the South Korean participants, resulting in decreases in their wellbeing.
- They also described that feelings of gratitude may be more closely linked with feelings of indebtedness in South Korea, showing the dialectical pattern that is often found between positive and negative affect in Asian groups. In United States samples, gratitude may not be linked to negative feelings in quite the same way.
- Research findings support the point again that "Culture matters"

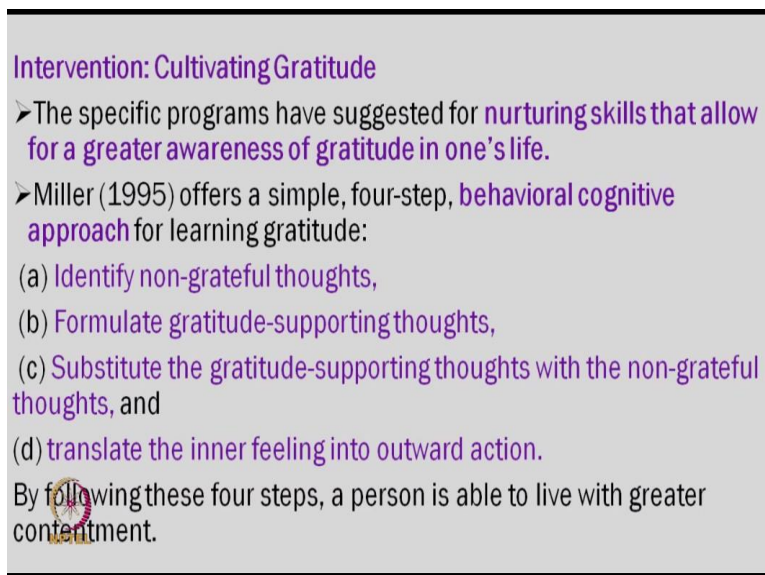
Now, next point is cultural orientation and gratitude. Is it understood differently in different cultures? There are some studies showing that it has cultural orientation. For example, in a comparison of participants from the United States and South Korea found that expressing gratitude benefited the US participants with spikes in well-being means when they expressed gratitude, they increased their level of well-being.

On the other hand, this activity was significantly less helpful for the South Korean participants, resulting in decreases in their wellbeing. So, when they were expressing gratitude, it has been observed that their wellbeing was reduced, decreased. They also described that feeling of gratitude may be more closely linked with the feeling of indebtedness in South Korea, showing the dialectical pattern that is often found between positive and negative affect in Asian groups.

In United States samples, gratitude may not be linked to negative feelings in quite the same way, so they observed that expressing gratitude has different impact in different cultures and maybe in collectivistic cultures like South Korea one may feel indebtedness when he has received a gratitude and need to express such kind of feelings. So, in that case, this person is not feeling positive because somewhere back in his mind is indebtedness or that someone just offered certain help.

And now he is indebted because of that help and that is why it is triggering negative emotions along with positive. However, there should be some more studies which are talking about cultural orientation and gratitude to establish this fact, but from this study we can get one message and the research findings support the point again that culture matters and we should take into account cultural orientation.

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Intervention: Cultivating Gratitude

- The specific programs have suggested for **nurturing skills that allow for a greater awareness of gratitude in one's life.**
- Miller (1995) offers a simple, four-step, **behavioral cognitive approach** for learning gratitude:
 - (a) **Identify non-grateful thoughts,**
 - (b) **Formulate gratitude-supporting thoughts,**
 - (c) **Substitute the gratitude-supporting thoughts with the non-grateful thoughts, and**
 - (d) **translate the inner feeling into outward action.**

By following these four steps, a person is able to live with greater contentment.

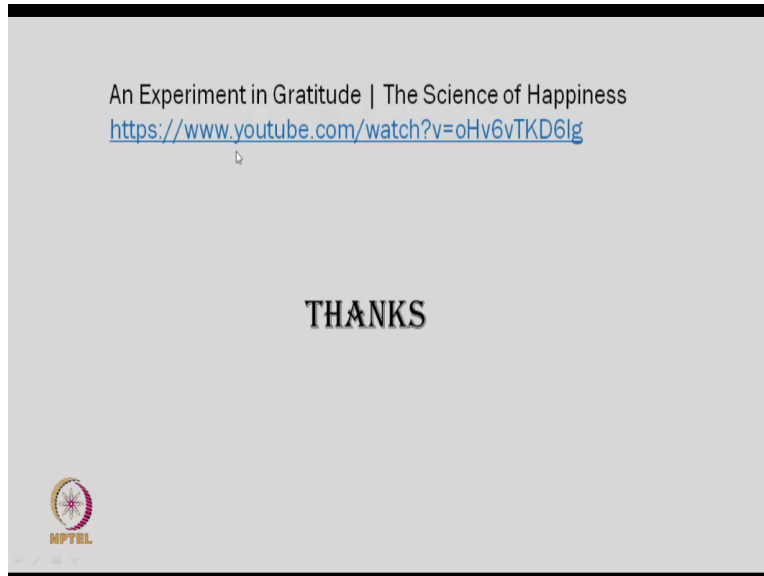
There are some interventions cultivating gratitude, as you know gratitude is very important and in religious spiritual domain as well as in positive psychology it has been highlighted a lot and it has positive relationship as well as positive impact on various positive aspects of human personality. So, the specific programs have suggested for nurturing skills that allow for a greater awareness of gratitude in one's life.

Miller in 1995 offered a simple four-step behaviour cognitive approach for learning gratitude. These 4 steps are, number one, identify non-grateful thoughts. So, you identify in your personality where you are non-grateful in your thoughts. Then, second stage, formulate gratitude-supporting thoughts. So, you just replace those thoughts and formulate gratitude-

supporting thoughts. Third, substitute the gratitude-supporting thoughts with the non-grateful thoughts.

And then fourth one, translate the inner feeling into outward action, the feelings or the thoughts which you have created in your mind, now you convert them into actions. By following these four steps, a person is able to live with greater contentment studied by them.

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Hope you have learnt various aspects of forgiveness and gratitude in today's class. Let us watch this video - an experiment in gratitude, the science of happiness at the end of this lecture. Thank you very much.