

# Interaction Values and Beliefs: An Integration into Social Psychology

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**C O N N E X I O N S**

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# Chapter 1

## Value - Independence<sup>1</sup>

*It is the man who stands alone who excites our admiration.*

Can independence be considered a value? Is independence a core belief? How can independence be defined?

Independence, as related to a persons social interactions, isn't referring to someone being materially independent and able to provide for themselves. It is referring to someone having an inner strength that allows them to be by themselves, mostly. Calling someone independent can mean a lot of things, on the surface it just means they like to be by themselves and rely less on others, but there are many other hidden subtleties of what this word means, all applicable.

Independence could be someones personal belief, they may believe themselves to be independent. That is one way to assess how independent someone is, by what their own belief of it is. It is possible that the person doesn't have any understanding of their own independence, however they are still very independent. Someones understanding could even be wrong, it is possible someone doesn't want to interact with people but really is actually heavily reliant on it.

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<sup>1</sup>This content is available online at <<http://cnx.org/content/m41575/1.2/>>.

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Someone could value independence, believing greatly in their own strength, they could consider being independent to be very important, and that someone not independent is weak and frail. But then how could you say that this person likes interaction with people? If one believes so strongly in their own independence, then would they even like interpersonal interaction at all?

What if separation from people causes anxiety? Is someone weak if they need to be with other people in order to avoid pain? Does the emotion generated from interpersonal interaction make someone weak? What if the people you depended on didn't like you. You could need someone emotionally but not like them very much, though that wouldn't seem to make a lot of sense. It would seem that if you liked them more, they would generate more emotion and provide you more support.

Being invested in life isn't silly or stupid. Being invested in other people is, however because people cannot be relied upon, physically or to generate support and emotion for you. It isn't like other people are there just to provide you with support, people have their own lives and you are just one tiny aspect of that life. It is hard to assess even how much you enjoy interactions, though this could play a role in perceived independence.

People assess how much they enjoy interactions, it is automatic, you "know" if you like someone and you "know" if interacting with them is fun. Your unconscious understanding of how good a relationship is is much more complex than your conscious understanding. Consciously you only have a vague description of how good the relationship is. You might think, "this person is really important to me, he or she is really fun and supportive emotionally". But that is very vague, there are countless ways to measure how helpful various people are to you, yet consciously you can only describe a sentence or two with your idea of how good the relationships are.



How much you enjoy interactions, and how much you need them, is going to play a role in how independent you actually are. That is different from perceived independence, someone may look very independent but actually not be independent at all. How is it that your unconscious assessment of an interaction is much greater than your conscious one? All the emotional benefits of a relationship are felt unconsciously, you only have a simple understanding of how much fun it is, but in reality the emotion it generates is very complex and dynamic.



## Chapter 2

# Values - Tenderness and Passion<sup>1</sup>

*Tenderness is more important than passion in love.*

Someone being tender or experiencing the emotion of tenderness is going to feel quite differently than when they are passionate or are experiencing the emotion of passion. Passion as an emotion could be sexual and stimulating in nature, or it could be an arousal, or a more intellectual passion.

An intellectual passion in love would be a strong appreciation for the target person that generates passion - you are passionate about the other person because you appreciate them for who they are. A sexual passion in love would be more stimulation based, you are passionate for the other person because they make you sexually stimulated. There might be a mix of these two things, in addition to the severity of each or both varying.

Tenderness, on the other hand, isn't either intellectual or stimulation based like passion. Tenderness is just emotional - passion or however emotional "being passionate" makes you comes from

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<sup>1</sup>This content is available online at <<http://cnx.org/content/m41576/1.2/>>.

stimulation or intellect, tenderness is something you feel that isn't a stimulation or something to be intellectually passionate about (which are the two things passion is - so passion is more stimulating or intellectual, and tenderness is more emotional and soft). It would be hard to get sexually aroused from tenderness considering that tenderness is, well, tender and not passionate and stimulating.

Therefore the statement, "tenderness is more important than passion in love" would seem to imply that love involves less sexual, stimulating, violent emotions and more calm, tender and caring ones. You could have a relationship with someone and not feel tenderness and not be in love, just be passionate about the other person. I guess you need to be tender and caring in order for the emotion of "love" to be evoked.

# Chapter 3

## Value - The Immaterial<sup>1</sup>

*The ultimate and true reality is above the senses; immaterial, spiritual, unchanging, and everlasting.*

Valuing things that are "above the senses" shows a more intellectual type of value instead of a physical, pleasure based one. It is interesting that the "true reality" would be this intellectual, above the senses world because that is a world you cannot feel physically, so you would think that the true reality would be a world you can actually literally feel instead of one that you only feel with your mind and imagination. However, considering different viewpoints, it could be viewed that the world you create in your mind is the true reality instead of the world which you can only physically feel.

So things in the real world you can physically feel, and these give rise to pleasurable sensations. From this physical world you create your own rich inner world in your mind, one of thought, intellect, imagination, and senses you feel "in your head". This could mean that emotions and feelings are in your head and above the physical senses like that of touch. So you can still feel things in your mind, it just isn't as tangible as things related to the senses. Which world is more real? The world created in your mind (your thoughts, feelings

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<sup>1</sup>This content is available online at <<http://cnx.org/content/m41581/1.1/>>.

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and emotions) or the world you experience with your senses (your physical reaction to the world)?

Of course there is a mix of emotion and physical, the two worlds combine in feeling. Stimulation is an example of that, if you are sexually aroused, it is a physical sensation but there are going to be associated emotions involved. Stimulation is like a combination of emotion and physical stimulus, which is a sensation. You could say there is at least a little physical sensation in any emotion. The world in which you feel attracted to other people is an emotional one, but there are also occasionally going to be physical sensations mixed in.

What about the immaterial being "spiritual, unchanging and everlasting"? The world of thought and intellect is one that stays in your mind forever. When you touch something, the physical feeling is there and then it goes away once you stop touching it. The feeling could be in your mind for recall, however it wouldn't be the real sensation. There is something wonderful about the world in your mind and how it is always there, surreal (spiritual) and constant (unchanging).

# Chapter 4

## Value - Honor<sup>1</sup>

*An insult to our honor should always be punished.*

There is a difference between honor and glory (though they are similar). Glory is more like fame, you gloat in the admiration of other people - that is glory. Honor, on the other hand, is your own personal belief of how respected you are. That also includes your own respect for yourself, which is why honesty and integrity (and the belief you are like that) is another definition for honor.

It is possible that honor can be gained by achieving glory or fame, or having a high social status. Anything that increases the respect you have would increase your honor. Unless you consider it honorable to be disrespected, everyone could have their own definition of what is honorable to them, however there would probably be a similar ideal of an honorable person in each nation or culture group.

In fact, there could be many ways a society defines or appreciates what qualities would be honorable in a person. Possession of certain goods, doing certain activities, having a certain job might all contribute to the communities perception of how honorable or how

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<sup>1</sup>This content is available online at <<http://cnx.org/content/m41582/1.1/>>.

much glory a person would have. There are also certain people you might wish to present as honorable to more than others, such as your friends or family. Honor and glory could be extremely important to someone personally or to a society. They are worthy goals that might be very meaningful or fun to many different types of people.

The possession of material goods as well as pretty women can be indicators of status. The concepts of honor and glory are critical to understanding the motivation of the heroes in Homer's Iliad. Glory was gained by great, heroic actions and deeds and was conferred upon an individual by others who witnessed and acclaimed the glorious actions. Major battles provided an opportunity for many to find glory at once. Honor was similar to glory, but while the public had to view actions and deem them glorious, each individual maintained their own sense of personal honor which did not always coincide with honor as defined or perceived by the masses. Honor was gained through heroism in battle, but also through compelling speechmaking, loyalty and other noble qualities that a person might demonstrate.



# Chapter 5

## Value - Contemplation<sup>1</sup>

*Contemplation is the highest form of human activity.*

Contemplation means thinking about something, paying attention to something (in a thoughtful manner), or basically just considering something. Saying that contemplation is the highest form of human activity is basically like saying that thought is the most important human activity, but not exactly. Contemplation includes an appreciation, an effort of paying attention to something that thought alone doesn't include.

If you contemplate something, you do more than just "think" about it - you focus on it, consider it, think about it carefully and attentively. So contemplation is just a higher form of thought. Saying it is a high form of human activity is placing intellect above other activities someone could do, such as a physical activity, a physical activity with little thought, or just thinking a little and not really being engaged with that thinking - not "contemplating".

So saying that contemplation is a high form of activity is showing how contemplation is similar to meditation, you are really focusing when you contemplate - showing care and really considering

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<sup>1</sup>This content is available online at <<http://cnx.org/content/m41583/1.1/>>.

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