

DESCRIPTION FOR THE GENERAL PUBLIC

Social exclusion is a very current and socially significant problem, especially in light of migrations of people due to economical disproportions and warfare. Research shows that poor quality of relationships and adverse social comparisons lead to stress and multiple negative health consequences. It also turns out that experiencing rejection (when one obtains clear information that the other is not interested in keeping contact) or ostracism/ignorance (when someone is avoiding contact with us despite our efforts) cause negative emotions such as hurt feelings, sadness, but also anger, especially when we think that we have not deserved such treatment. People need to feel control over situation and feel a part of a community or group for wellbeing, but exclusion complicates the fulfilment of both of these needs. To cope with the feeling of control and belonging loss people behave aggressively, take revenge on those who reject them, to feel that they control the situation again, but need to belong also leads to being more sensitive to others' behavior and social information. People also try to regain acceptance of new acquaintances by acting in accordance to social standards. If we know all of these already, then why do we need more studies? Although much was discovered so far and we know how to induce feeling of rejection and ostracism in laboratory, we do it intuitively. Researchers do not describe precisely what conditions must be met for someone to feel rejected and ignored. The aim of the project is to define what makes the ignored and rejected mind. Basing on different theories of social psychology we managed to distinguish several cues related to others' behavior, which lead people to the conclusion that they have been excluded. We think that the most important is attention from the interaction partner and feedback which we obtain. When we are ignored, the person with whom we want to engage in contact do not pay attention to us. We do not get an information on whether this person wants to be in contact with us either. The ignoring person is simply mute and unresponsive or preoccupied with some other issues. The first situation (mute and unresponsive behavior) is less often and more strange than the second one, when someone is involved in other relationships and business. In our studies we will test how these situations influence emotions and needs of control and belonging, but also we will describe how our organism is reacting to exclusion, whether heart accelerates or decelerates, what is happening to our mimic and face temperature. Physiological indicators allow to see changes in emotions which do not have to be conscious. Finally, all the processes, emotional, motivational and physiological may lead to specific behavior toward the person who is excluding. We want to examine in which situation people will be more aggressive and in which situations people will tend to be more helpful. We believe that relationship quality will be also important. If rejecting or ignoring person will be a close and significant person, then people should feel more negative emotions but will not be aggressive toward the other because they care for the threatened relationship and do not want to lose it. We think that in close relation people will rather inhibit helping but strangers will aggress to regain control. Amnesty International have recently published a social advertisement in which the closeness effect on attitude change toward refugees was used. Refugees from Syria and European citizens in pairs were looking into their eyes for 4 minutes – this is one of the closeness induction procedures used in experimental studies. After a while smile emerged on peoples' faces, sometimes also tears. An experiment presented in the advertisement finishes with bringing people from two sides of a barricade close to each other. In our studies we want to explore whether closeness could indeed have so beneficial influence for threatened with exclusion relationships.