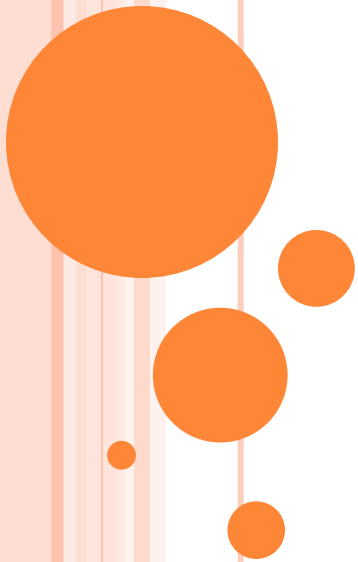
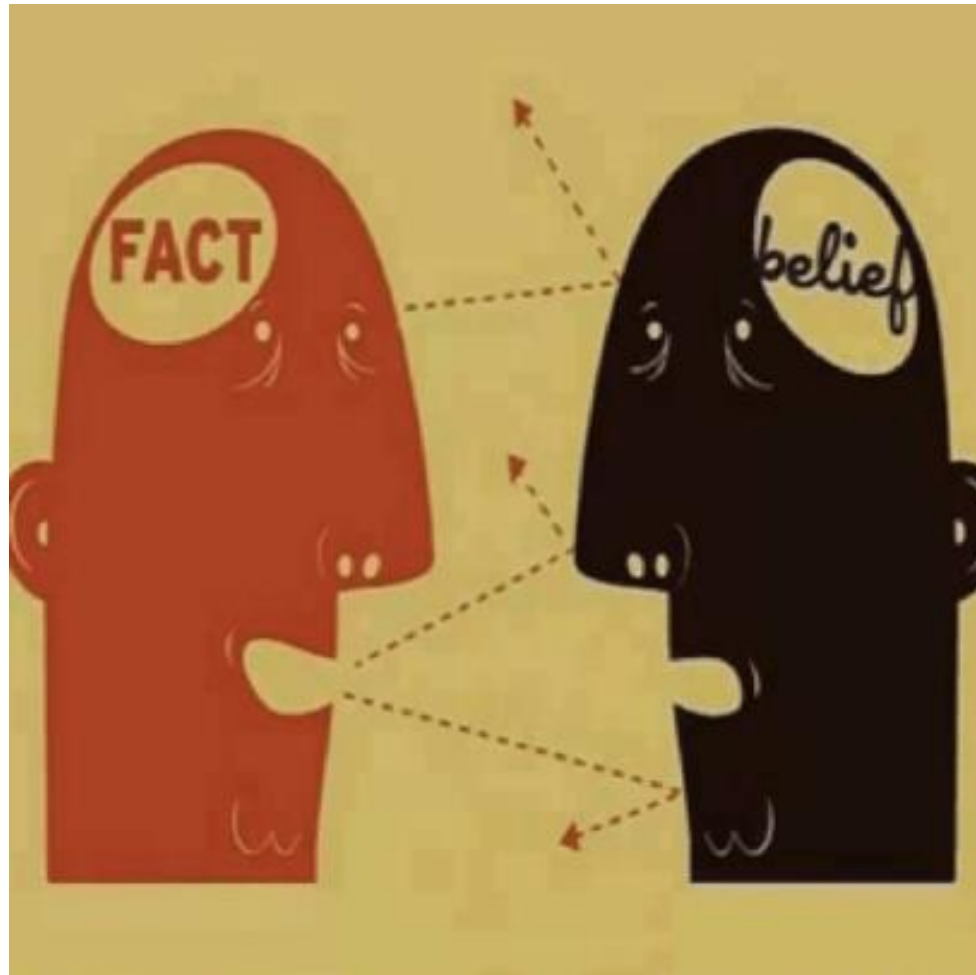


SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY PRESENTATION

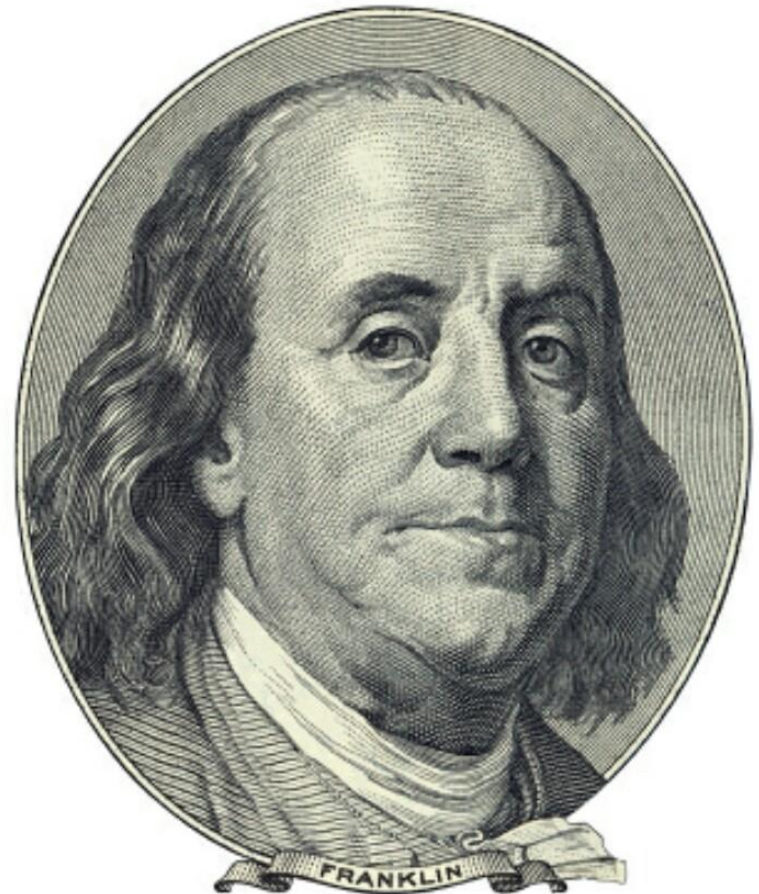
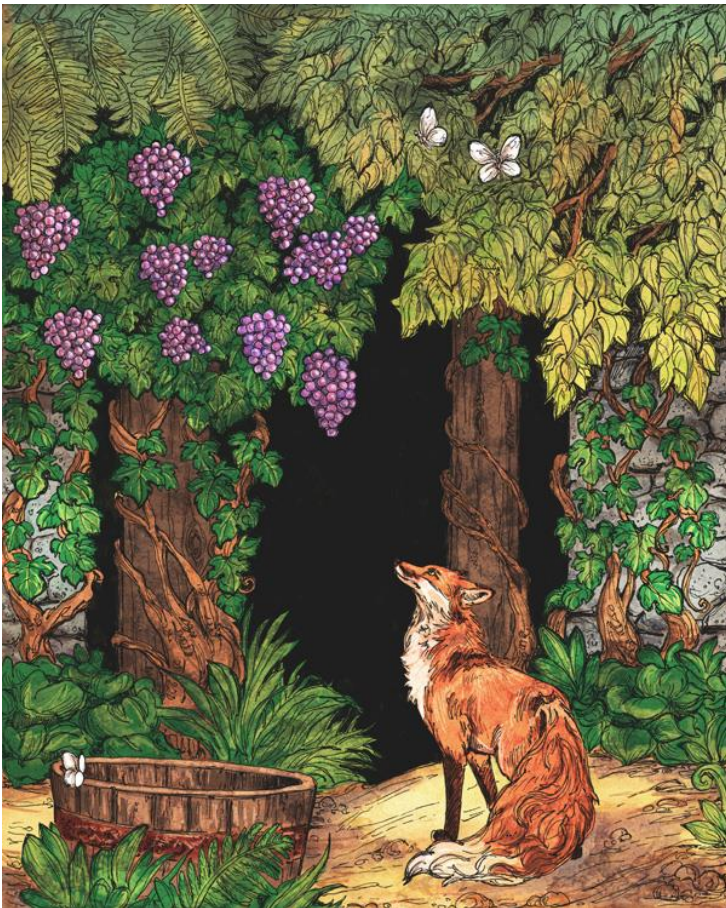


COGNITIVE DISSONANCE



WHAT IS COGNITIVE DISSONANCE ?

Cognitive dissonance is a state of mental discomfort experienced by a person who simultaneously holds two or more contradictory ideas or intuitions.



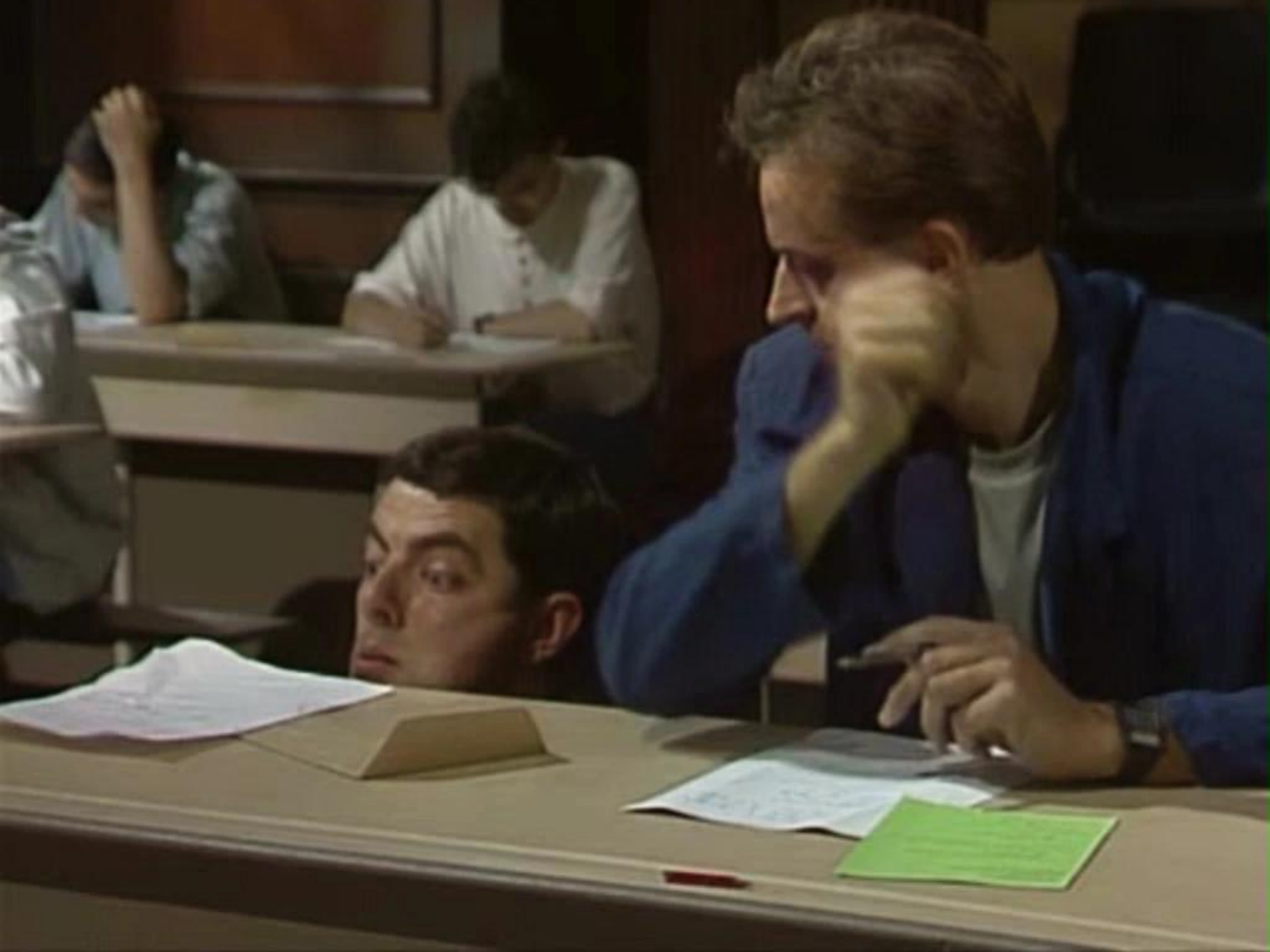
UNDERSTANDING DISSONANCE : CHEATING IN EXAM



**Existing ideology
(Cognition) :**
Copying is bad. I
should never copy in
exams.

Situation : I didn't study
anything for exam. But I
want to pass the exam.
I don't want my peers
to look down upon me.





The Cheating Pyramid *



“It’s not a good thing”

“... but it’s not such a bad thing”



“It’s not so unethical, I need this grade”

“Cheating is really wrong; everybody loses”



“Oh please, it’s no big deal”

“It’s disgusting! Expel cheaters!”

THE FESTINGER AND CARLSMITH (1959) EXPERIMENT

“HIGHLY BORING AND MONOTONOUS”



TASKS

- 1) SHIFTING OF SPOONS (FOR 30 MINS)
- 2) TURNING OF SQUARE PEGS (FOR 30 MINS)

-11
STUDENTS

OPTED
OUT

60
STUDENTS

PHASE
'B'

71

MALE
STUDENT
S

SUBJECTS

PHASE
'B'

60
students

20
STUDENTTS
CONTROL

NO
Task
DIRECT TO
INTERVIEW

20
STUDENTS
1 \$ GROUP

PAID-1\$/ STUDENT
(FOR 1\$ GROUP)

EXPLAIN THE
EXPERIMENT TO
SOMEONE ELSE
AND LABEL IT AS
"VERY
INTERESTING
AND ENJOYABLE
EXPERIENCE"

PAID
20\$/STUDENT
(FOR 20 \$
GROUP)

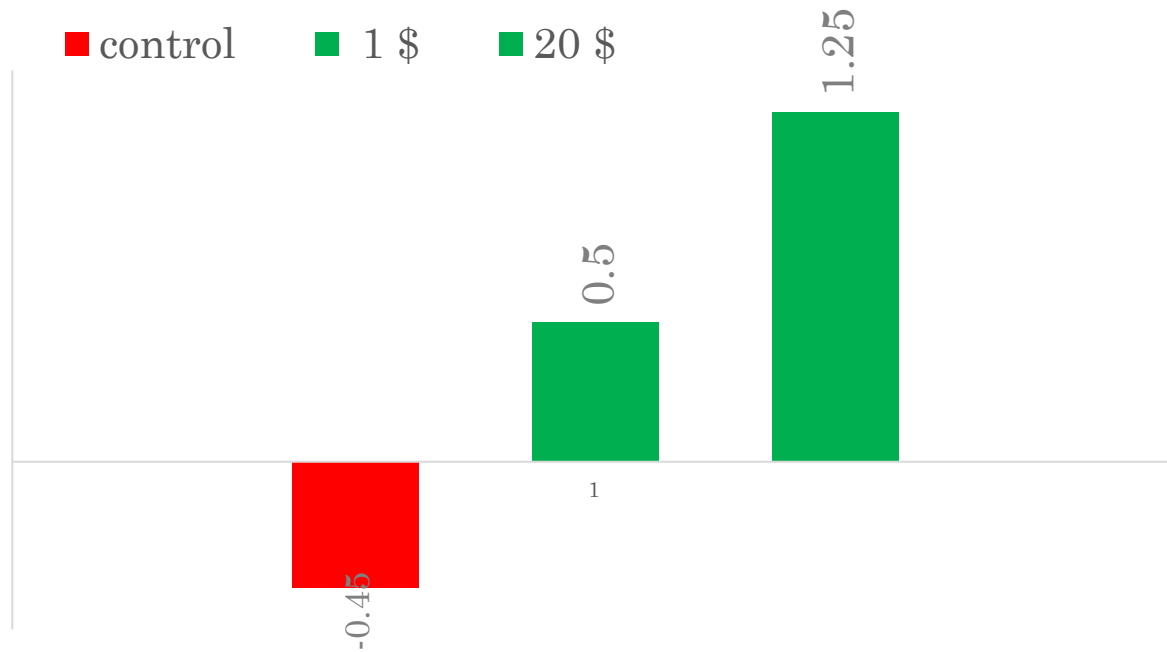
20
STUDENTS
20 \$ GROUP

INTERVIEW

HOW
MUCH YOU
ENJOYED
THE
EXPERIME
NT?
ON THE
SCALE:
-5 TO +5

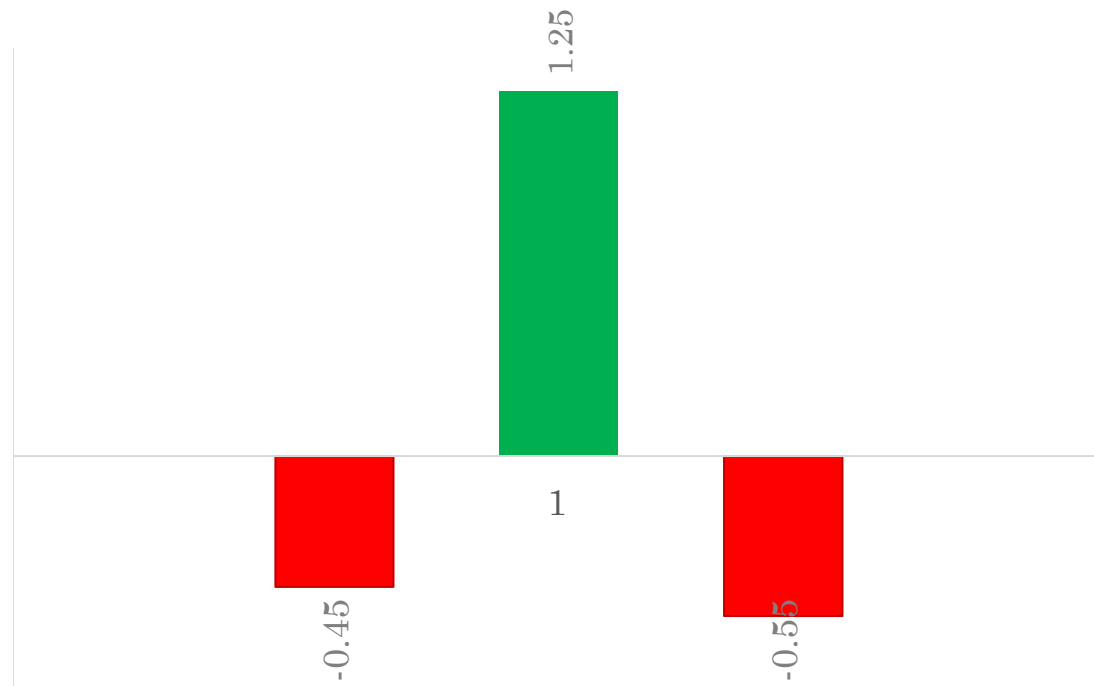


HOW MUCH YOU LIKED IT ? (-5 TO 5) (EXPECTED)

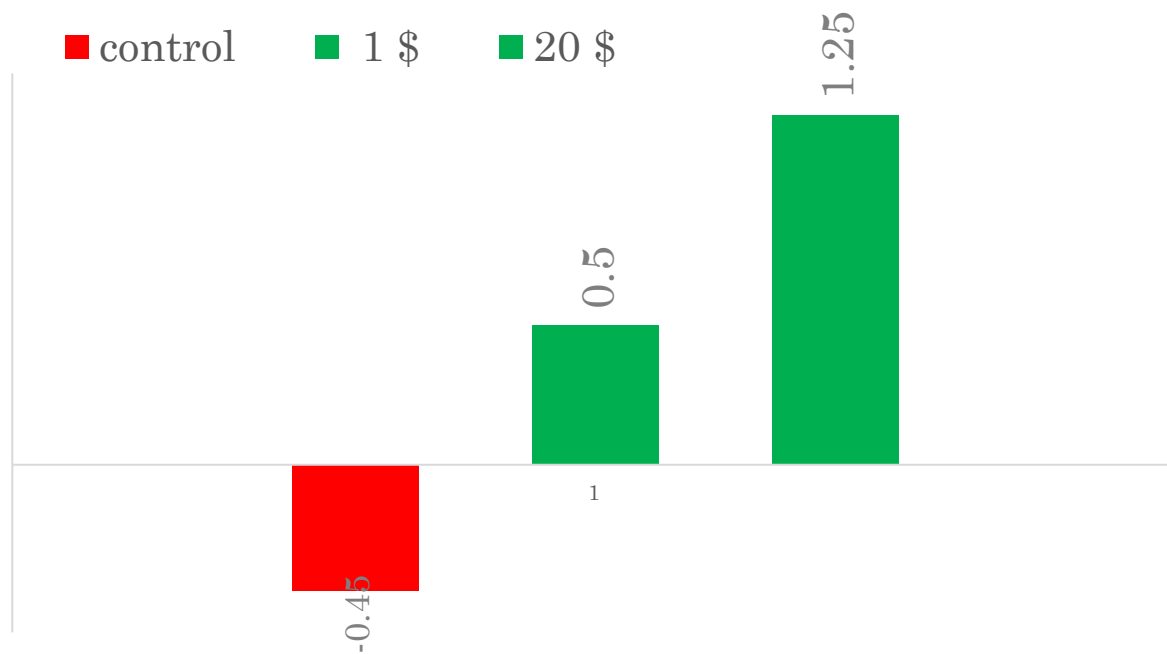


How much you liked it ? (-5 to 5) (results)

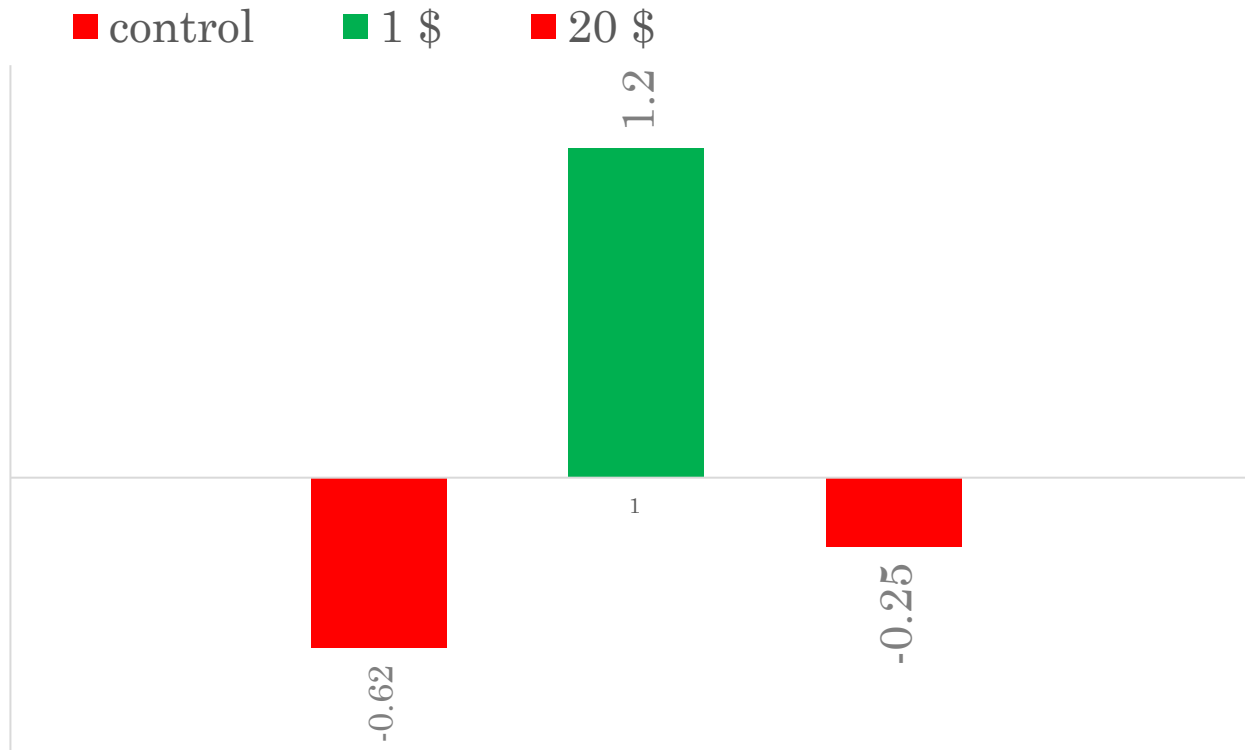
■ control ■ 1 \$ ■ 20 \$



WOULD YOU PARTICIPATE AGAIN ? (-5 TO 5) (EXPECTED)





WOULD YOU PARTICIPATE AGAIN ? (-5 TO 5) (RESULTS)



w h y

?



amount	belief	dissonance
1\$	insufficient	
20 \$	sufficient	



INFERENCES

DO/SAY
SOMETHING
CONTRARY TO
ONE'S
PRIVATE
OPINION

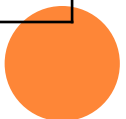


TENDENCY TO MAKE
IT **CONSISTENT**

LARGER THE PRESSURE
(BEYOND A CERTAIN LEVEL)



WEAKER IS THE
DISSONANCE
TENDENCY



STRATEGIES FOR RELIEVING DISSONANCE

- By changing behaviour / attitude.
- By justifying behaviour / attitude.
- By adding new cognitions.
- By denying.



BY CHANGING BEHAVIOUR / ATTITUDE

When inconsistency in cognitions makes one feel uncomfortable, one may change his/her behaviour or attitude to restore the consistency with their cognitions (resolving dissonance).

Example:

- Cognition 1 : I'm fat and I need to reduce my weight.
- Cognition 2 : I like eating tasty food.

Behaviour / Attitude change :

- Favouring 1 : I'll workout daily to reduce weight so that I can continue eating tasty food.
- Favouring 2 : I'll eat tasty food despite being fat (trivializing cognition 1).



BY JUSTIFYING BEHAVIOUR / ATTITUDE

- One may also try to justify their actions and attitudes to resolve the conflict between the cognitions and reduce discomfort caused by inconsistency.

Example :

- Cognition 1 : I smoke.
- Cognition 2 : Smoking leads to cancer.

Justification or Consolation :

- There is not much evidence that smoking leads to cancer.
- I don't smoke often (or I am at less risk than heavy smokers).



BY ADDING NEW COGNITIONS

- Dissonance can also be resolved by adding new cognitions which help in justifying or rationalizing the conflicting cognitions.

Example :

- Cognition 1 : Liars are bad people.
- Cognition 2 : I lied to my best friend yesterday.

Justification by Adding Cognitions :

- Everyone has some secrets that can never be compromised.
- Life is never easy for those tell truths all the time.



COGNITIVE DISSONANCE

*Liars are
bad people...*



But I just lied.

BY DENYING

- One can choose to deny the information that conflicts with his/her existing beliefs to resolve dissonance.

Example :

- Cognition 1 : Drinking water is scarce on Earth.
- Cognition 2 : I use the shower everyday.

Denial :

- I don't care about water scarcity. As long I have sufficient water or money, I'll face no problem.
- I don't waste lot of water while taking shower.



POST DECISIONAL DISSONANCE EFFECT

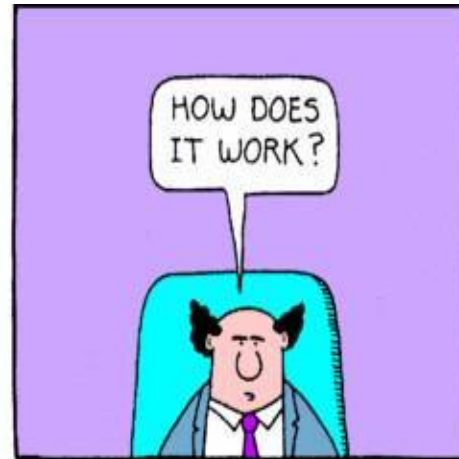
Post-decisional dissonance is a form of regret, a worry that perhaps one didn't make the best choice. Hence, one tries to modify his/her existing cognitions to start liking the choice he/she took in the past.

Example : Liking your college even if its not so good.



I ♥
MY
COLLEGE

DILBERT COMICS



DISSONANCE AS A TOOL FOR BENEFICIAL CHANGE IN BEHAVIOUR

Most of us know and our attitudes are generally favorable towards statements like :

- It is always safer to drive with our seat belts on.
- Smoking is injurious to health.
- Unprotected sex may end up in diseases like AIDS.

Despite having these positive attitudes, they are often not translated into overt actions.

Can dissonance be used to promote beneficial behavioral changes in cases like these?



EXPERIMENT BY STONE, WIEGAND, COOPER, AND ARONSON

Questions Asked :

Participants were asked to think about reasons why they themselves hadn't used condoms in the past (personal reasons)

OR

Reasons why people in general sometimes fail to use condoms (normative reasons that didn't center on their own behavior).

Choices Given :

Then, all people in the study were given a choice between a direct means of reducing dissonance—purchasing condoms at a reduced price.

OR

An indirect means of reducing dissonance—making a donation to a program designed to aid homeless people.



RESULTS OF THE EXPERIMENT

The results indicated that when participants had been asked to focus on the reasons why they didn't engage in safe sex in the past, an overwhelming majority chose direct means of reducing dissonance as in this case they had to confront their own hypocrisy whereas in the other case participants chose the indirect means of reducing dissonance.



EFFECTIVE USE OF DISSONANCE

For maximum effectiveness of dissonance, the procedures for behavioral change must involve several elements :

- People must publicly advocate the desired behaviors
- They need to be induced to think about their own behavioral failures in the past
- They must be given access to direct means for reducing their dissonance



THANK YOU



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