

Literature and Coping Skills
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Lecture - 3
Emotional Wellbeing – 1

Hello, everybody, I am Ajit K Mishra your course instructor for Literature and Coping Skills. I am back again with the third lecture of the course. This lecture is called emotional wellbeing. Emotional wellbeing is a very important concept, because it helps us understand the idea of our mental state, our mental wellness and mental health. I must tell you all that when it comes to the phrase mental health, most people are not comfortable with it, because they think the very phrase is indicative of a mental illness.

So, that is the reason why most people are not comfortable with the phrase mental health. Therefore, the idea of emotional wellbeing or emotional wellness serves as a very important, significant and practical indicator to our understanding of our mental health conditions. So, today, I am going to talk about emotional wellness, I must also tell you that it has two parts; we are going to focus on the basics of emotional wellness.

And in the next lecture, I will be talking about the impact of emotional illness on our existence. And with the help of a couple of examples, I will explain how emotional wellness can be achieved. So, let us start.

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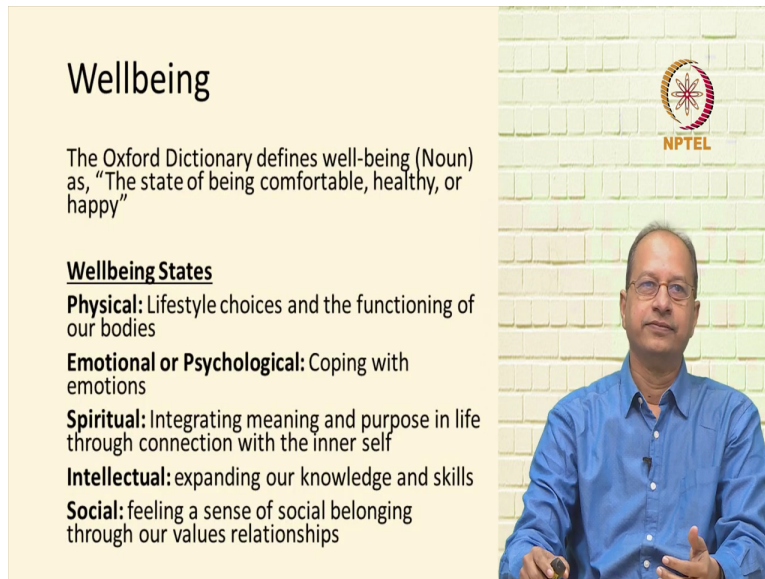


The slide features a light yellow background. On the left, the title "Emotional Wellbeing" is displayed in a dark font. Below the title is a bulleted list with three items: "Wellbeing", "Understanding Emotions", and "Emotional Wellbeing". On the right side of the slide, there is a video inset showing a man with glasses and a blue shirt speaking. Above the video inset is the NPTEL logo, which consists of a circular emblem with a star-like pattern and the text "NPTEL" below it.

Emotional wellbeing has three very important components. Wellbeing, understanding emotions, and emotional wellbeing before we can understand emotional wellbeing, it is important that we understand what wellbeing is all about. And then we move to our understanding of emotions, the power of emotions in our lives, and existence, and how we can ensure our emotional wellbeing so that we can live authentically as functional beings, so that we do not recede into the state of nonbeing. If you remember, while talking about existential concerns, I talked about being and non being. So, we humans, who are constantly moved by the idea, to live through our life instincts or return to the state of safety, protection through the activation of homeostatic drives. We are out to ensure our wellbeing. We always strive to ensure that we live authentically.

And our functional being is not challenged by the emotions that may rattle us that may render us dysfunctional. So, therefore, it is very important that we understand what wellbeing is all about. We understand our emotions, and finally understand what emotional wellbeing is all about. How we can ensure emotional wellbeing for ourselves.

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Wellbeing

The Oxford Dictionary defines well-being (Noun) as, "The state of being comfortable, healthy, or happy"

Wellbeing States

- Physical:** Lifestyle choices and the functioning of our bodies
- Emotional or Psychological:** Coping with emotions
- Spiritual:** Integrating meaning and purpose in life through connection with the inner self
- Intellectual:** expanding our knowledge and skills
- Social:** feeling a sense of social belonging through our values relationships

The slide features a speaker in a blue shirt on the right side, with the NPTEL logo in the top right corner.

So, let us move, wellbeing. So, the Oxford Dictionary defines wellbeing as a state of being comfortable, healthy or happy. I can promptly take you back to the Safe Mode and survival mode questions. So, whenever we are in the safe mode, we are comfortable. We are comfortable because we are feeling healthy and happy. Therefore we are comfortable. So, if we are in the safe mode, we can say we are well or we are doing well.

So, that is an indicator of our wellbeing whenever we are in the safe mode, but even in the safe mode, as we witnessed in our last lecture, that our safe mode can also be challenged by a variety of existential questions which can push us to or into the survival mode. So, therefore, we need to be very clear about whether we are in a state of wellness or wellbeing. Whenever we are in a state of being comfortable or happy or healthy, we can say yes, we are in a state of wellness.

And we are in a state of wellbeing. So, that brings us to the question of a wellbeing state because it has different states, it is not that wellbeing is restricted to just one particular state. The first wellbeing state is a physical state. And we all know that a healthy mind resides in a healthy body. If the body is not healthy, the mind cannot be healthy. If we continue to suffer from illnesses or ailments, the mind will not be healthy anymore, so it is very very important that we ensure our physical wellness or physical wellbeing. And that can be ensured through lifestyle choices, and the functioning, proper functioning of our bodies; so that we ensure our physical wellbeing. The

second type of wellbeing, which we are going to focus on today in this lecture is emotional or psychological well being. This is a very important state, this is a very important thing, because it helps us cope with our emotions.

Once we learn how to cope with our emotions, it will be very easy for us to take care of those emotions, whether they are distressing or disturbing emotions, or pleasing ones. So, the second type of wellbeing is our emotional or psychological wellbeing. The third is spiritual well being. It is very important, because we need to establish a connection with ourselves and the Divine Self. If you remember, Rabindranath Tagore in his Give Me Strength, the poem that we took a look at in our last lecture, he talked about this particular well being because he was invoking the Almighty to come and help him to give him strength.

So, spiritual wellbeing is very, very important. It is absolutely essential, because it helps us integrate meaning and purpose in life. If you remember, we have already talked about purpose in life, if this life is purposeless, the Death Wish or death drive will be overpowering, if we do not have any purpose in life, and then we will promptly move into a state of existential crisis. So, there has to be a connection with the inner self.

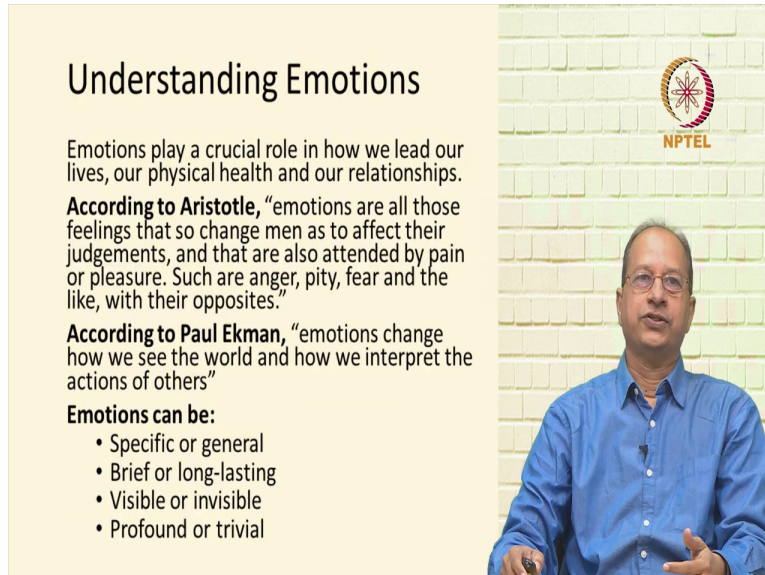
And there has to be a connection with the Supreme Self as well. So, the spiritual wellbeing is very, very important. And then intellectual wellbeing. So, this type of wellbeing helps us expand our knowledge and skills. Because as long as we exist, we live, we have to be knowledgeable. And we have to develop skills, which will help us perform our actions smoothly. And then social wellbeing, this is a very important state.

It is a very important state because if you are in a state of social wellbeing, you feel like belonging to the society. You cooperate with people, and then you value your relationships, relationships beyond the realm of the personal, and the social relationships. So, you act pro socially then. So, there is another wellbeing state. Although I have not included that state here that is equally important. I must tell you, it is economic well being.

So, economic wellbeing is also very important because that leads us to a variety of other well being states. So, these are some of those important wellbeing states that we need to be aware of.

But for the sake of our course, we are going to focus on one wellbeing state here. And as time passes, we will gradually move towards the other well being states. But in this lecture, I am going to focus on emotional or psychological well being. So, let us take a look at those states.

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The slide is titled "Understanding Emotions" and features a yellow background. On the right side, there is a video inset of a man in a blue shirt speaking. The NPTEL logo is visible in the top right corner of the slide area.

Understanding Emotions

Emotions play a crucial role in how we lead our lives, our physical health and our relationships.

According to Aristotle, "emotions are all those feelings that so change men as to affect their judgements, and that are also attended by pain or pleasure. Such are anger, pity, fear and the like, with their opposites."

According to Paul Ekman, "emotions change how we see the world and how we interpret the actions of others"

Emotions can be:

- Specific or general
- Brief or long-lasting
- Visible or invisible
- Profound or trivial

So, our understanding of emotional wellbeing comes to us through a proper understanding of emotions, we need to understand emotions very well. And I must tell you all that emotion in itself is such a huge academic area, and that it is not possible for us to take care of each and every aspect of it in this lecture. We are going to focus on only those aspects that are relevant to our understanding of this course, the idea of this course literature and coping skills, our understanding of how emotions, or emotional management can help us live our lives in a better way, or can help us cope with the challenges of life, including existential challenges.

So, we all know that emotions play a crucial role in how we lead our lives, our physical health, and also our relationships. So, emotions are everywhere. So, if we do not take care of emotions, emotions will stop to take care of us. And once that happens, we will be very, very difficult in terms of our existence, in terms of our physical health, and our relationships. So, therefore, it is important that we take care of our emotions.

So, I have used two very popular quotes by two equally important thinkers. The first one is by Aristotle, the Greek philosopher. Emotions are all those feelings that so change men as to affect their judgments, and that are also attended by pain or pleasure, such as anger, pity, fear, and the like, with their opposites. So, when we look at this, the same, the statement will find that there are a few very important things.

Emotions have the power to change men and their judgment that means they can change humans, and they can also influence our judgments. Emotions have that power. And these emotions are also attended by pain, or pleasure. That means there are certain emotions, that causes pain in us and there are certain other emotions that cause pleasure in us. And at times, you must know that the same emotion can cause either pain or pleasure in us, I will be talking about it in a while.

So, it is important for us to understand that there are a variety of emotions and all these emotions all come together, and they influence our behavior and our approaches towards our existence in a certain manner. So, the next saying is by Paul Ekman, who was the first to talk about the basic human emotions, six of them. He has said that emotions change how we see the world and how we interpret the actions of others. So, that means emotions play a very important role in our lives, they fine tune our behavior.

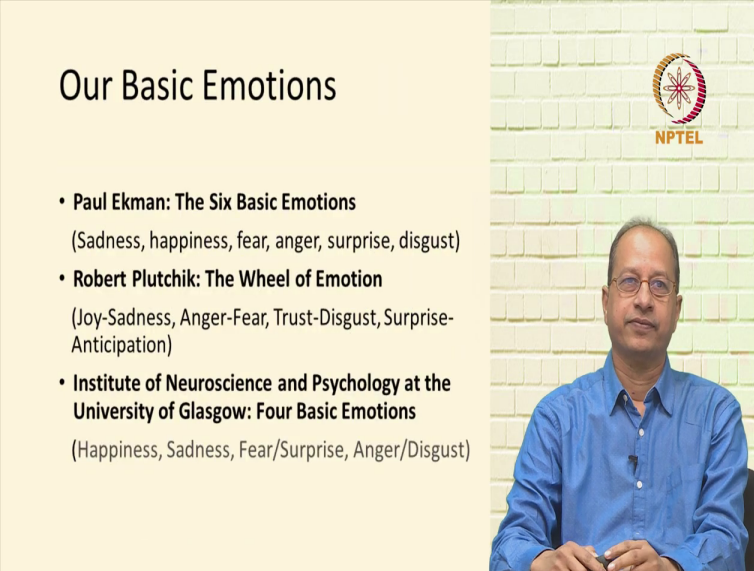
They also fine tune how we understand the world around us and the actions of people around us. So, therefore, it is very important that we understand emotions extremely well. So, emotional states can be specific or general. For example, you are angry with somebody at a certain time at certain point. So, this really specific kind of emotion then and it will go after a while. It can also be general.

For example, you continue to be angry over a certain period of time, over a prolonged period, if you continue to be angry, there is a problem the same is the case with emotional states that are brief or long lasting. So, these emotions can be brief and long lasting. So, they can leave you after a certain time, it can be very short and you will be relieved of that particular emotion. But those emotions can also be long lasting, if they are very long lasting that means, they will begin to influence you in various other ways.

These emotional states can be visible or invisible, for example, you are experiencing a certain type of experience that may be visible on your face, visible through your gestures. Or at certain times, they may not be visible, you may be experiencing some pain, but they may not be visible. And that is the reason why most people fail to read how others are feeling at a certain point in time, because those emotions are not visible.

These emotional states can also be profound and then can be trivial as well. So, profound, that means for example, grief, when it becomes stronger, it becomes profound. So, it can also be you know, there are certain emotions that can be very trivial, they may not be so impactful. So, going by the intensity of a certain emotion or we can say whether it is profound or trivial. So, now that we have taken a look at these emotional states, let us now move to the next.

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The slide is titled "Our Basic Emotions" and features a list of three theories. To the right of the text is a video inset showing a man in a blue shirt speaking. The NPTEL logo is visible in the top right corner of the slide.

- **Paul Ekman: The Six Basic Emotions**
(Sadness, happiness, fear, anger, surprise, disgust)
- **Robert Plutchik: The Wheel of Emotion**
(Joy-Sadness, Anger-Fear, Trust-Disgust, Surprise-Anticipation)
- **Institute of Neuroscience and Psychology at the University of Glasgow: Four Basic Emotions**
(Happiness, Sadness, Fear/Surprise, Anger/Disgust)

That is our basic emotions. It is very important that we understand our basic emotions. I have already talked about Paul Ekman; he was the one who talked about the six basic human emotions, including sadness, happiness, fear, anger, surprise and disgust. So, happiness is something that makes us feel pleasant, safe, protected, happy, contented, joyous, and the other emotions that are so basic, that they do not make us feel happy; they make us feel disappointed, sad.

Now, when we look at the other theory of basic emotions that was developed by Robert Plutchik, he developed this wheel of emotion which is very useful for our understanding of emotions. So, unlike Paul Ekman, Plutchik has arranged his emotions in pairs. So, joy and sadness make one pair anger and fear, trust and disgust, surprise and anticipation from the other payers. So, there are eight basic emotions according to Robert Plutchik, but he has arranged them in four pairs.

So, when we look at each of these emotions, we find that they have more or less the same kind of implications. Sadness is a state that is characterized by disappointment; happiness is a state that is characterized by joy. Fear is a state that is characterized by some kind of anxiety, anger is a state that can that is characterized by frustration, surprise, by some kind of unexpectedness, and disgust is characterized by hatred, loath for something.

So, these emotions are basic emotions are more or less the same. But we have these different theories and I have picked three important theories. Paul Ekman's, Robert Plutchick's theory and then finally the Institute of Neuroscience and Psychology at the University of Glasgow's theory. So, they say there are four basic emotions happiness, sadness, fear and anger. These are the four basic emotions. Fear has another aspect that is surprise. Anger has another aspect that is disgust.

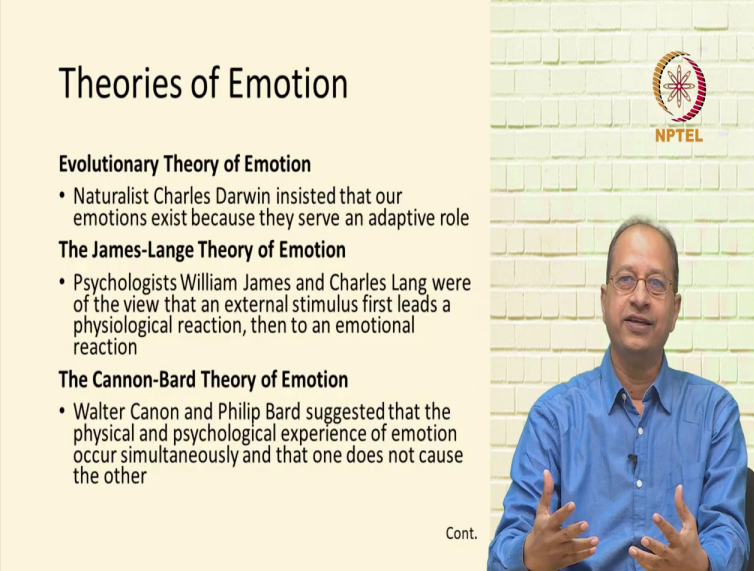
So, it is four basic emotions. Irrespective of the number of basic human emotions, we can always say that happiness, sadness, fear, anger, are the most basic of all our emotions. So, once we understand these basic emotions, we will get to know that there are more disturbing emotions than pleasing ones. For example, if we think, if we accept there are four basic emotions, which are happiness, sadness, fear and anger, you can see, these are the emotions that either make us happy or make us sad.

But I would not like you to classify them as positive and negative emotions, because that classification might not help always. For example, you may be angry at a certain point in time, if your anger has a justification, then it may not be treated as a negative emotion, it can be treated as a positive emotion because it will lead to some positive action, you are angry with somebody and that will lead to positive action. If it is so then it may not be treated as a negative emotion.

For example, hatred is an emotion. So, hatred for evil cannot be treated as a negative emotion. Hatred for humanity can be treated as a negative emotion, but not hatred for evil. So, they have different aspects. So, therefore, it is important that we understand that there is no such classification as positive and negative emotions. And that is the reason why theorists approach this question through the idea of emotional valence.

That means the intensity to which an emotion is either negative or positive. So, that is the reason why I have not classified emotions as negative or positive. They can either disturb us, distress us or please us. So, if the same emotion pleases us, fine, that is a positive emotion for me. If the same emotion displaces us, that is not a positive emotion for me.

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The slide is titled "Theories of Emotion" and is set against a light yellow background with a brick-like pattern. In the top right corner, there is a circular logo with a red and white design and the text "NPTEL" below it. The slide lists three theories of emotion:

- Evolutionary Theory of Emotion**
 - Naturalist Charles Darwin insisted that our emotions exist because they serve an adaptive role
- The James-Lange Theory of Emotion**
 - Psychologists William James and Charles Lang were of the view that an external stimulus first leads a physiological reaction, then to an emotional reaction
- The Cannon-Bard Theory of Emotion**
 - Walter Canon and Philip Bard suggested that the physical and psychological experience of emotion occur simultaneously and that one does not cause the other

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So, let us take a look at these theories of emotion. I am not talking about theories of basic emotions; I am talking about theories of emotion that have evolved through the ages. So, we can start with Charles Darwin's theory of emotion, which is evolutionary theory. So, Darwin insisted that our emotions exist, because they serve an adaptive role. Therefore, we experience emotions. If love is an emotion, we adapt to that particular emotion. And we feel like you know, reproducing, if fear is an emotion, so every time there is danger, we promptly withdraw from it.


We escape, we take ourselves to a safe place, so that it does not destroy us. So, according to Darwin, the evolutionary theory of emotion makes it understand that these emotions are very adaptive in nature, they perform an adaptive function. When we move to the next theory, there is a James Lange theory of emotion. Two psychologists- William James and Charles Lange, they are of the view that the external stimulus first leads to a psychological reaction and then to an emotional reaction.

That means, if I find a ferocious lion right in front of me, while I am walking through a jungle, I will first begin to tremble. When I begin to tremble, I will know that I am experiencing a certain type of emotion, and I will call it fear. So, according to the James Lange theory of emotion, so it

is first a physiological reaction or a physical reaction to that particular stimulus. And then, I experienced an emotional reaction.

The third theory that is the Canon-Bard theory of emotion, they suggest that the physical and the psychological experience of emotion occur simultaneously. Unlike the previous theory, in which it was suggested, that they occur one after the other. The Canon-Bard theory suggests that they happen simultaneously. So, you begin to tremble, you begin to experience that particular emotion in yourself.

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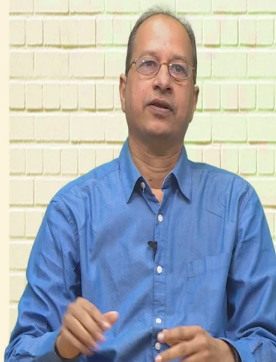


Schachter-Singer Theory of Emotion

- Stanley Schachter and Jerome Singer suggested that the physiological arousal occurs first; identification and labelling occur next

Cognitive Appraisal Theory of Emotion

- Richard Lazarus, the pioneer of this theory, suggested that thinking precedes the experience of an emotion




And then, as we move to the next two theories, the Schachter-Singer theory of emotion, Stanley Schachter and Jerome Singer, they suggested that the physiological arousal occurs first, then we identify that particular feeling. And then the labeling comes, that means the naming of that particular emotion comes afterwards. So, this particular theory belongs to the domain of cognitive emotional theory in which it was suggested that it is, first the physiological arousal, for example, you begin to tremble first, and then you ask this question, why am I trembling?

You get an answer; I am trembling, because I am afraid, I am scared. So, then, you know, since I am afraid, I am scared, it is fear. So, we must understand that in this particular theory, these are the different stages. Then we come to the last theory that I have taken for discussion in this

lecture, this cognitive appraisal theory. So, it was developed by Richard Lazarus. Therefore, this theory is alternately called the Lazarus Theory of Emotion.

So, he suggested that thinking precedes the experience of an emotion. Even before that emotion can be named, or experienced, it is a thinking that actually tells us more about that emotion. For example, you begin to think the moment you are faced with danger; you begin to think about it. Since you are thinking you are performing a cognitive function, therefore, it is called the cognitive appraisal theory of emotion. So, these are some of the most popular theories of emotions, which help us understand emotions well.

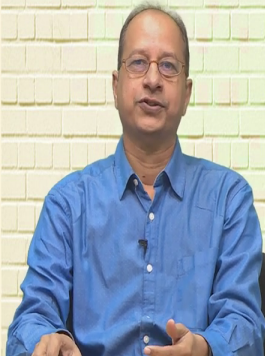
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Emotional Wellbeing

- In 1947 the World Health Organisation defined health as “a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing.”
- It emphasises the importance of emotional wellbeing for health: indeed, health is defined as “being confident and positive and able to cope with the ups and downs of life.”
- Some research show that emotional distress creates susceptibility to physical illness. Exam stress increases susceptibility to viral infection, and stress from lack of control in the workplace or from life events creates susceptibility to cardiovascular disease.

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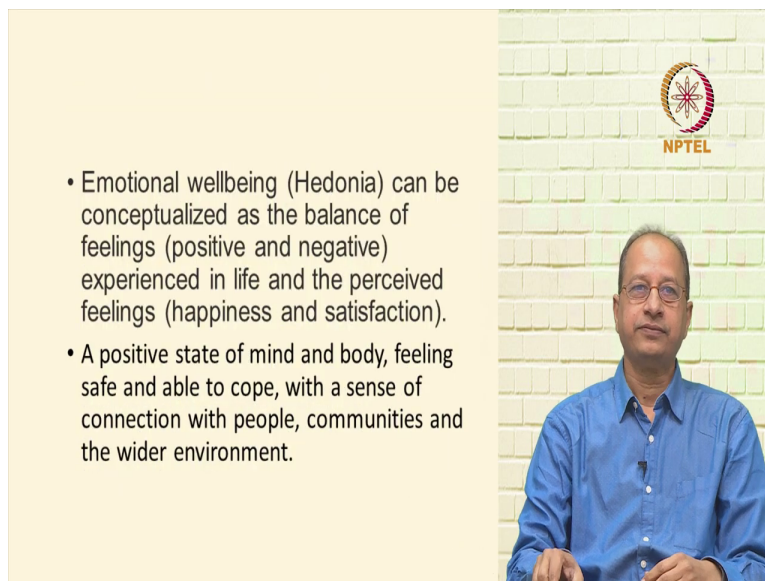
So, now, we come to the idea of emotional wellbeing, as early as 1947, the World Health Organization, defined health as a state of completely a physical, mental and social wellbeing. So, these are the three distinct aspects of our wellbeing, the physical, the mental, and the social. So, it emphasizes the importance of emotional wellbeing. So, we need to understand that emotional wellbeing needs to be emphasized because health is defined, it is also defined as being confident and positive and able to cope with the ups and downs of life. And what are these ups and downs?

Those existential concerns, existential anxiety, existential questions, existential crisis, Safe Mode, survival mode, questions, life instinct and death instinct questions. So, if we are able to

cope with the ups and downs of life, life will always have ups and downs. But it is more about our coping skills or coping strategies that makes us emotionally resilient, and emotionally strong. And that ensures our emotional wellbeing.

At the same time, I must also draw your attention towards the fact that some research show that emotional distress creates susceptibility to physical illness. And that is a fact. Exam stress increases susceptibility to viral infection. And stress from lack of control in the workplace, or from life events, creates susceptibility to cardiovascular diseases, we need to understand these things very, very well; so, that we can understand emotional wellbeing well.

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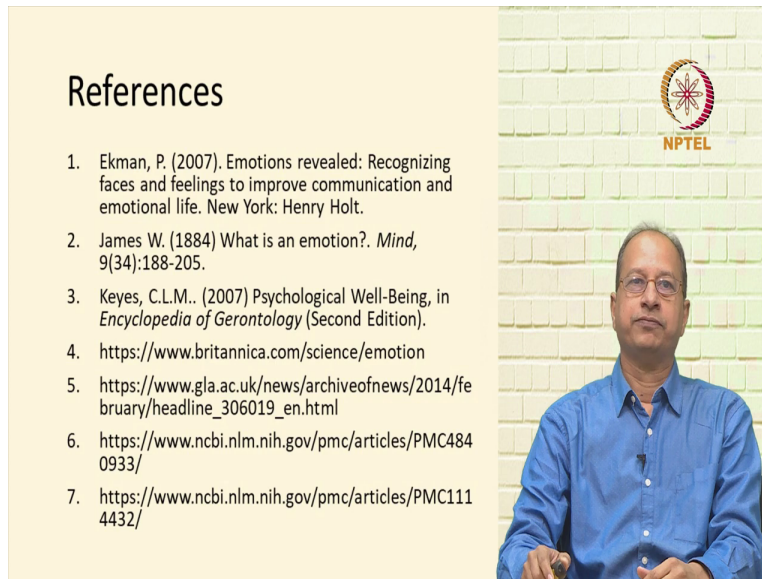
- Emotional wellbeing (Hedonia) can be conceptualized as the balance of feelings (positive and negative) experienced in life and the perceived feelings (happiness and satisfaction).
- A positive state of mind and body, feeling safe and able to cope, with a sense of connection with people, communities and the wider environment.

So, emotional wellbeing which is also referred to as Hedonia can be conceptualized as the balance of feelings, that is positive and negative, experienced in life, and perceived feelings, happiness and satisfaction. So, there has to be a balance between the positive and the negative. There is no need to believe that the negative will disappear forever and the positive will continue to be, that can never happen. So, we need to understand that we need to strike a balance between the positive and the negative.

So, a positive state of mind and body, feeling safe and able to cope with a sense of connection with people, communities and the wider environment is what we mean by emotional wellbeing.

So, the mind has to be in a positive state and you are feeling safe. At the same time, you are also able to cope, you need to develop that ability to learn how to cope with challenges. So, it is only through coping with challenges, you can be safe. And then when you develop a sense of connection with people, communities and the wider environment, you can say, yes, we are in a state of mental wellbeing.

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References

1. Ekman, P. (2007). *Emotions revealed: Recognizing faces and feelings to improve communication and emotional life*. New York: Henry Holt.
2. James W. (1884) What is an emotion?. *Mind*, 9(34):188-205.
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So, that is all for today. So, in this lecture, we talked about what wellbeing is all about. We also talked about what emotions are, how important those emotions are for our lives and our existence. And we also saw how emotional wellbeing is an important aspect of our existence. So, if we have to take care of our existential concerns, it is important that we learn how to ensure emotional wellbeing for us.

So, this is a list of references, the sources from where most of the ideas used in this lecture have been borrowed. So, thank you for joining me. In my next lecture, I will be talking about emotional wellbeing from the perspective of emotional regulation, emotional management, and catharsis. And in order to do so I will be taking the help of a couple of examples. So, thank you very much for joining me.