


Module 10: Social Psychology
Topic 3 Content: Cooperation

Introduction

Cooperation

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Click the **NEXT** button to explore cooperation.

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- Superordinate Goals
- Phase One of Sherif's Study
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Click the **NEXT** button to explore cooperation.

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Conflict

Cooperation

Conflict

Conflict



Although cooperation is prevalent throughout human interactions, conflicts do occur. Social psychologists define **conflict** as perceived incompatibility of goals, ideas, or actions. This relates to individuals, like romantic couples who are involved in a fight, or groups, like when two nations fight over access to scarce resources.

Superordinate Goals

Phase One of Sherif's Study

Phase Two of Sherif's Study

Phase Three of Sherif's Study

Superordinate Goals in the Real World

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Superordinate Goals

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Superordinate Goals

Superordinate Goals



Phase One of Sherif's Study

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Superordinate Goals in the Real World

Psychologists continue to look into ways of making cooperation more likely than conflict. One of the most striking findings relates to the power of superordinate goals to reduce conflict and promote cooperation. **Superordinate goals** allow two parties to overcome differences and work toward a common end goal.

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Phase One of Sherif's Study


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Superordinate Goals

Phase One of Sheriff's Study

Phase One of Sheriff's Study



In the 1950s, Muzafer Sheriff conducted an experiment by randomly dividing twenty-two boys into groups at a summer camp. In the first phase, the boys bonded in their own groups, and formed independent identities. Each group did not know the other existed.

Phase Two of Sheriff's Study

Phase Three of Sheriff's Study

Superordinate Goals in the Real World

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Phase Two of Sherif's Study

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Phase One of Sherif's Study

Phase Two of Sherif's Study

Phase Two of Sherif's Study

In the second phase, Sherif brought the groups together, having them compete through games like baseball. The competition sparked conflict that increasingly worsened over time. For example, one group tried to eat everything at a meal so the other group barely had any food left when they arrived. A few days into the conflict phase, the boys engaged in taunting, fistfights, and cabin raids.



Phase Three of Sherif's Study

Superordinate Goals in the Real World

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Phase Three of Sherif's Study

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Phase One of Sherif's Study

Phase Two of Sherif's Study

Phase Three of Sherif's Study

Phase Three of Sherif's Study



The researcher brought the two groups back together in the third phase. At this point, any type of contact resulted in conflict. Tensions only decreased when the two groups had to face situations that required everyone to come together in a cooperative effort to solve problems. For example, when Sherif created a water supply emergency, the boys worked together to haul water into the camp. This example constitutes a *superordinate goal*.

Superordinate Goals in the Real World

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Superordinate Goals in the Real World

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Superordinate Goals in the Real World



Historical differences can make conflicts between larger groups or nations challenging to resolve. However, the same basic principle about superordinate goals makes it possible. For example, countries in conflict with one another can cooperate when sharing a common goal of defeating an enemy. This was the case during World War II when the United States and the Soviet Union cooperated to defeat Nazi Germany. After the war, however,

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