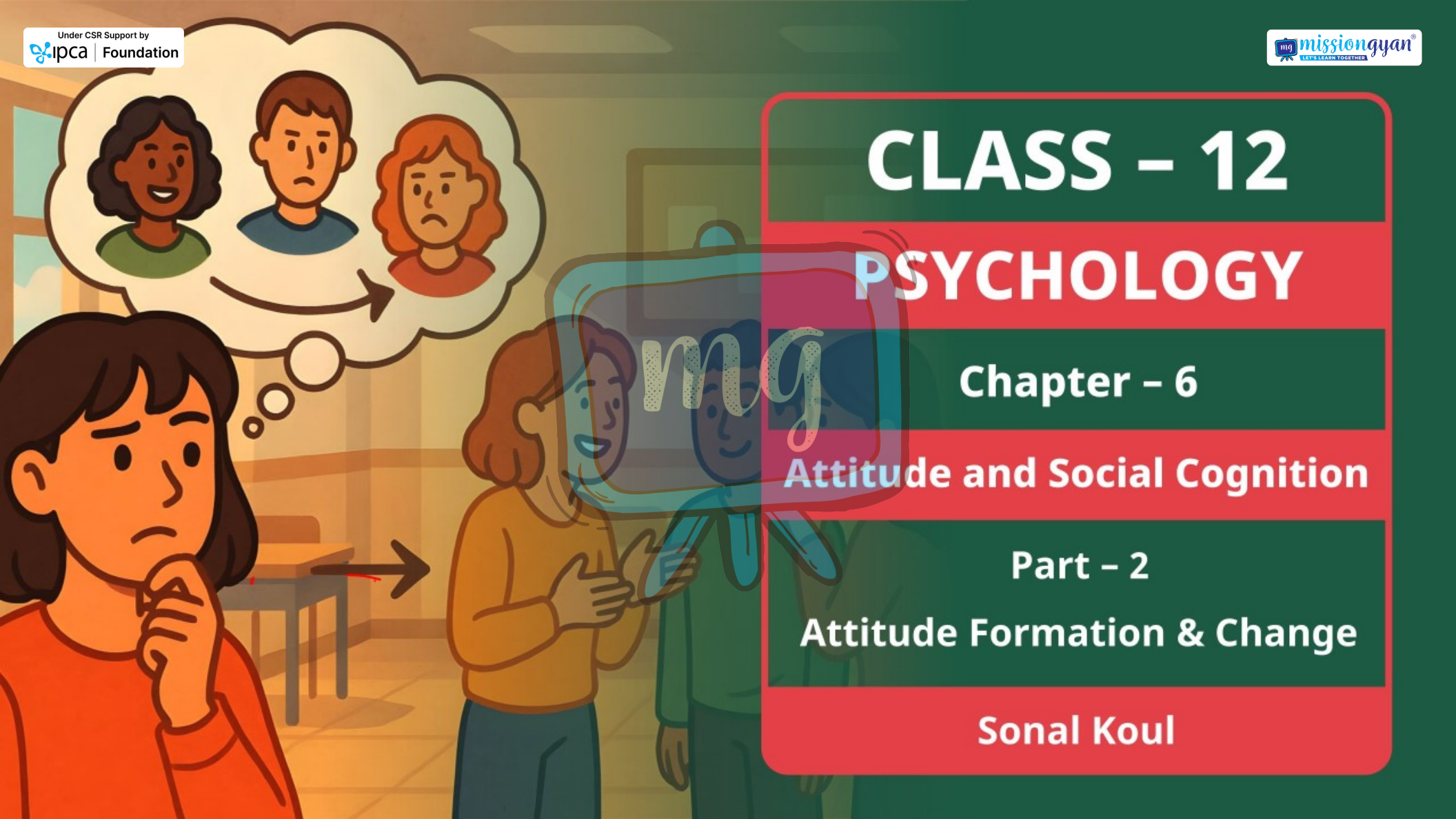
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CLASS – 12

PSYCHOLOGY

Chapter – 6

Attitude and Social Cognition

Part – 2

Attitude Formation & Change

Sonal Koul

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OVERVIEW

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1. Introduction to Social Psychology
2. Nature and Components of Attitude
3. Attitude Formation
4. Attitude Change
5. Attitude – Behaviour Relationship
6. Prejudice and Discrimination
7. Strategies

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I ATTITUDE FORMATION

What is Attitude Formation?

- Attitude formation refers to the development of an individual's predisposition to respond in a favorable or unfavorable manner toward a person, object, idea or situation.

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☛ It involves learning, experience and cognitive processing.

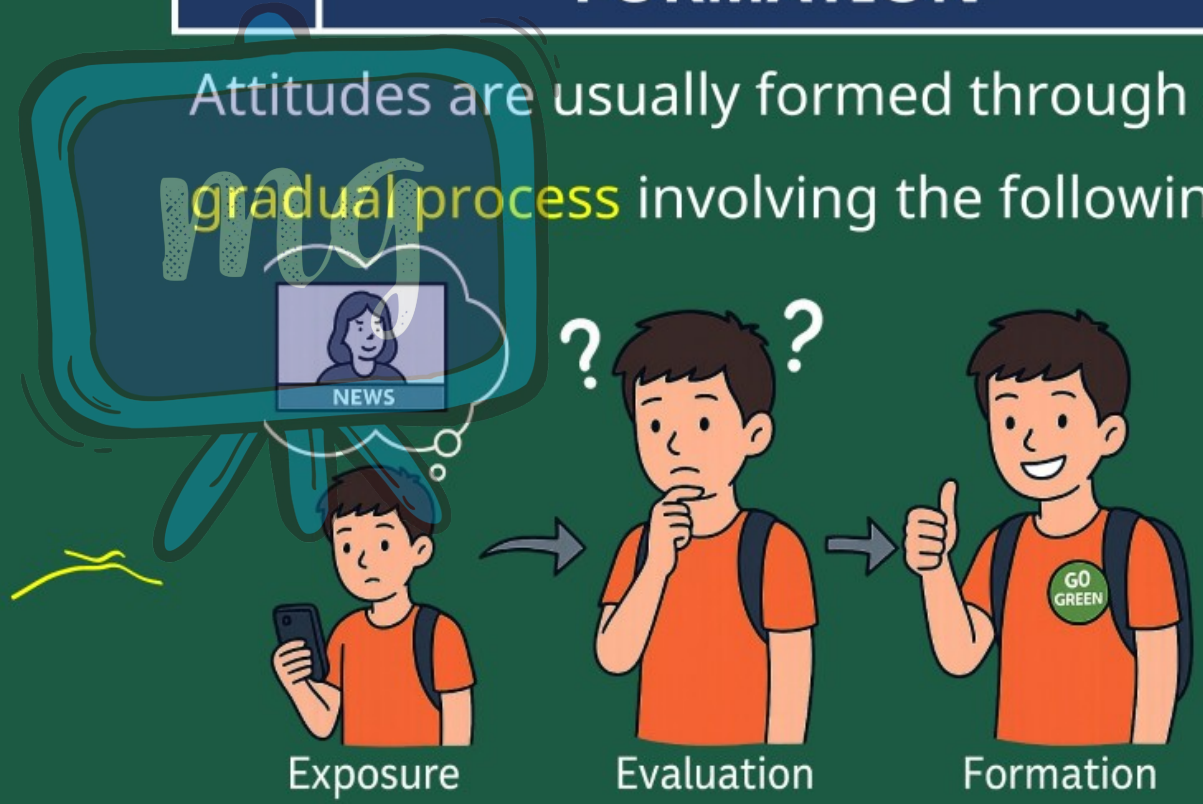


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II PROCESS OF ATTITUDE FORMATION

Attitudes are usually formed through a gradual process involving the following:



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Association

1. Learning through Classical Conditioning

- When a neutral object is paired with a stimulus that elicits a positive or negative response.
- **Example :** A student praised for being environmentally conscious.

LINK

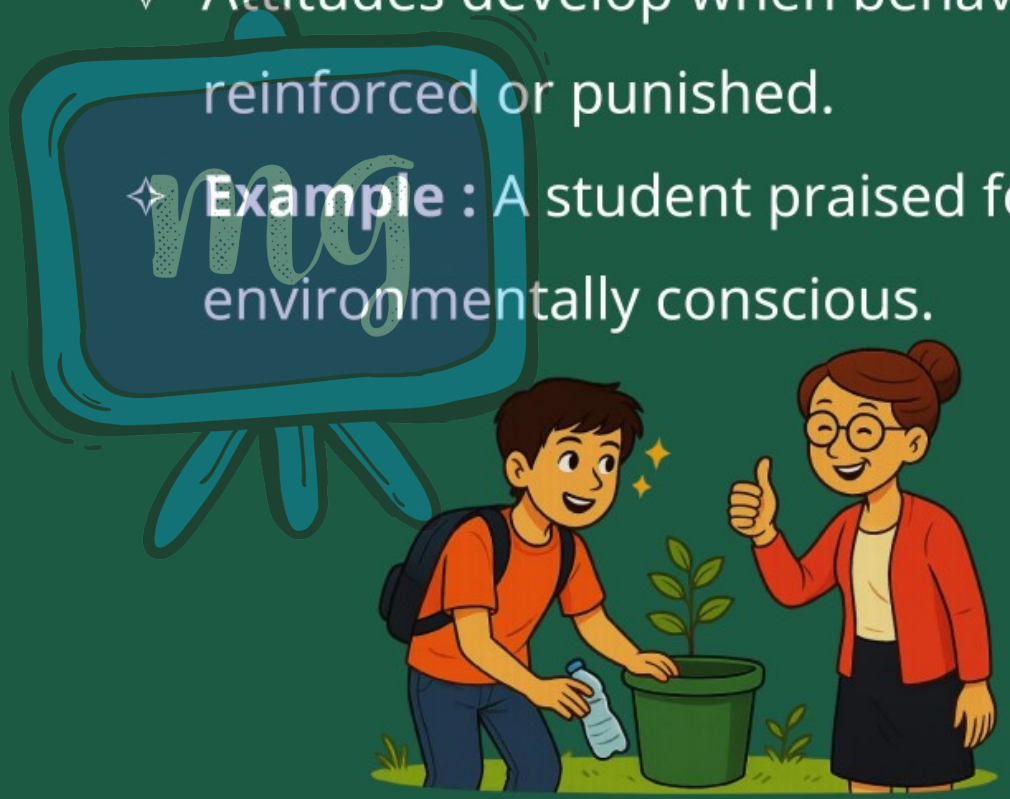


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2. Learning through Operant Conditioning

- Attitudes develop when behaviors are reinforced or punished.
- **Example :** A student praised for being environmentally conscious.



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3. Learning through Observational Learning/Modeling

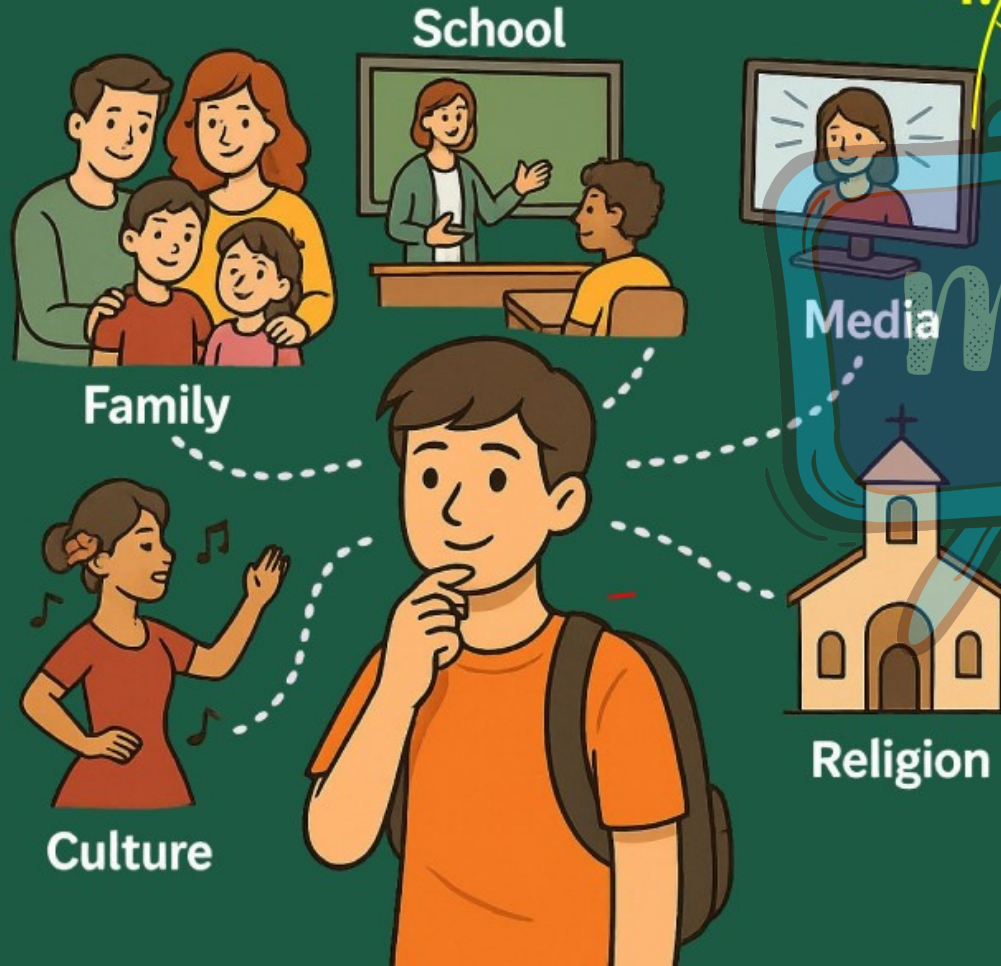
- Learning attitudes by watching others (role models, parents, peers).
- **Example :** If parents respect all religions, children may adopt a similar inclusive attitude.



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4. Socialization



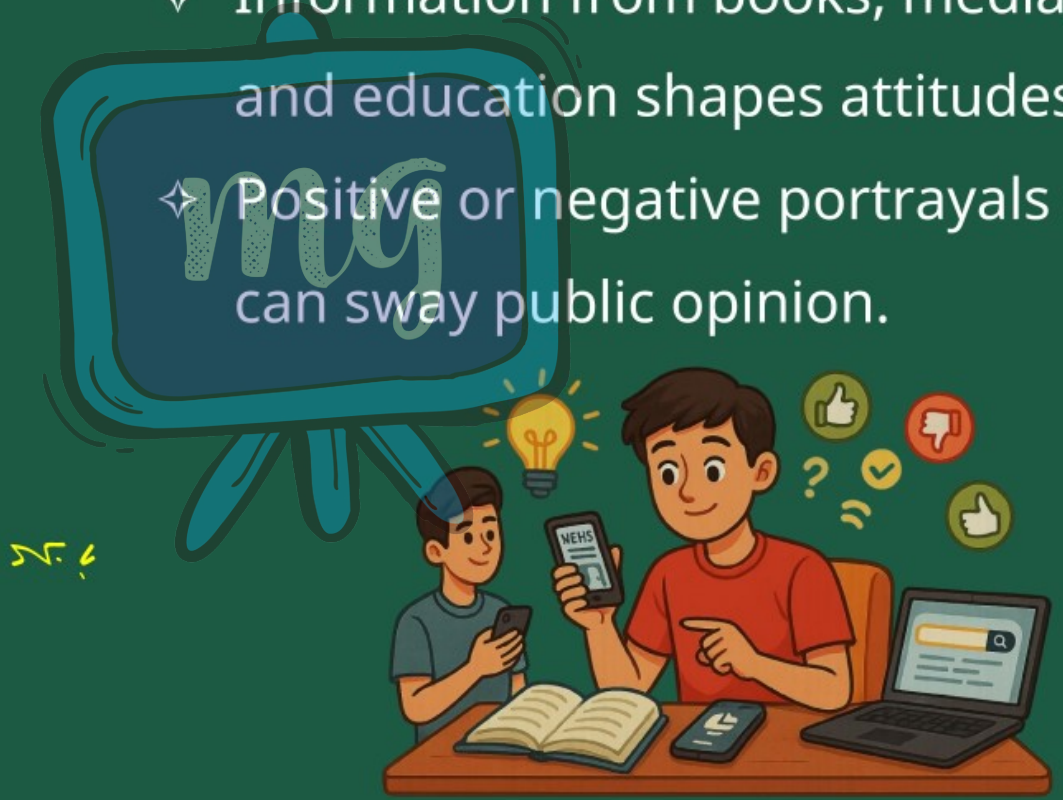
- Attitudes are shaped by family, school, media, culture and religion.
- Values and norms learned during childhood influence long-term attitudes.

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5. Exposure to Information

- Information from books, media, internet and education shapes attitudes.
- Positive or negative portrayals of issues can sway public opinion.



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6. Personal Experience

- Direct interaction with people or objects often leads to stronger and more stable attitudes.
- **Example :** A person who has faced discrimination may develop a strong attitude against racism.



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III FACTORS INFLUENCING ATTITUDE FORMATION



1. Family and Parents

- Primary agents of socialization.
- Children internalize the values and attitudes of parents.

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2. Peers and Friends

Especially during adolescence, peer groups greatly shape attitudes about fashion, relationships, studies, etc.



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3. Conditioning

Both classical and operant conditioning shape attitudes based on associations and consequences.



Classical Conditioning

Operant Conditioning

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4. Mass Media

Television, films, advertisements, and social media play a major role in shaping public attitudes.



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5. Group and Cultural Norms

Cultural beliefs and social norms influence what is acceptable or unacceptable, shaping attitudes accordingly.



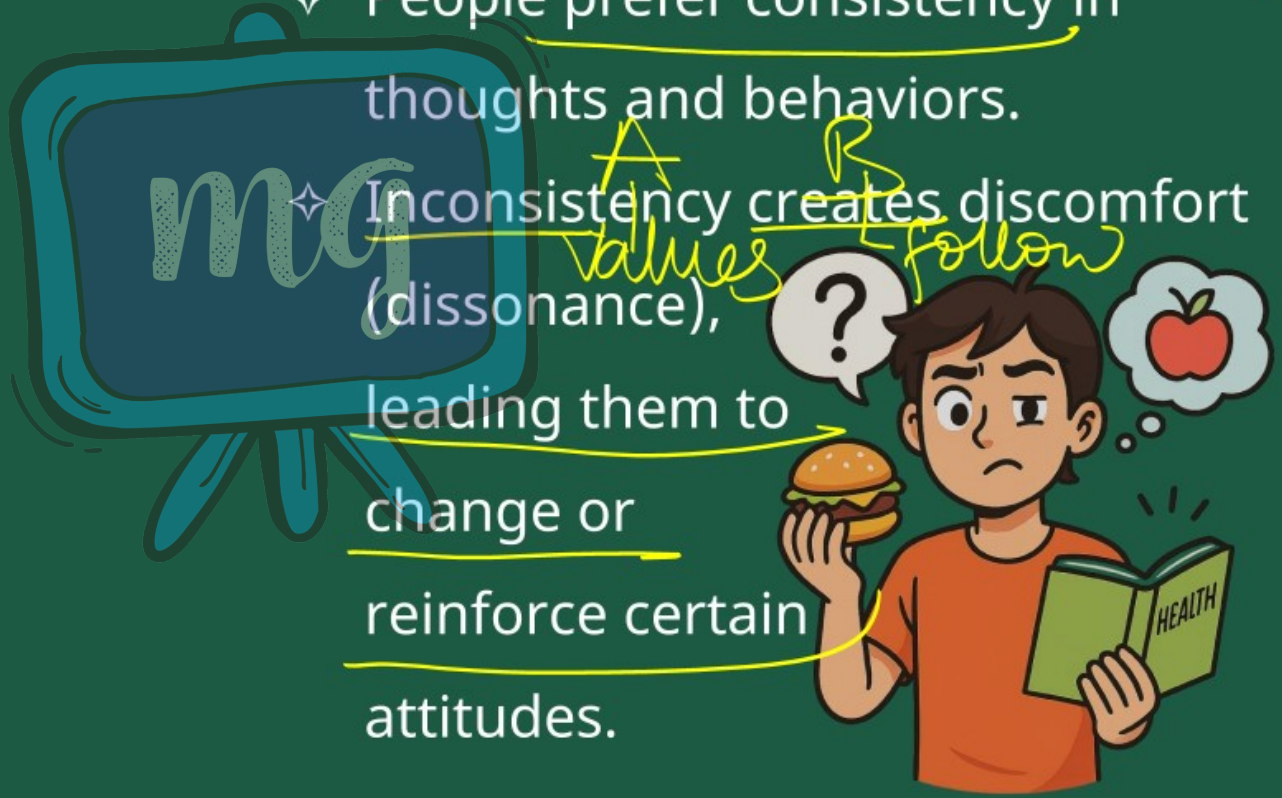
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6. Cognitive Consistency

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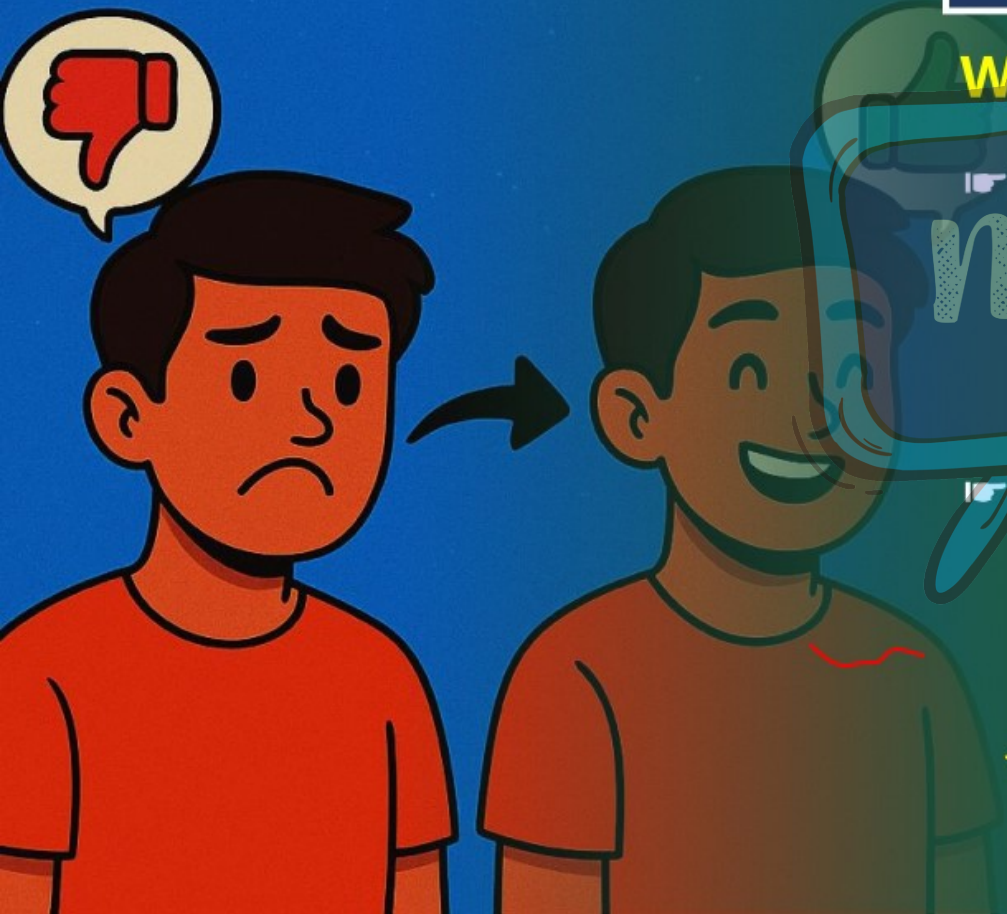
- People prefer consistency in thoughts and behaviors.
- Inconsistency creates discomfort (dissonance), leading them to change or reinforce certain attitudes.



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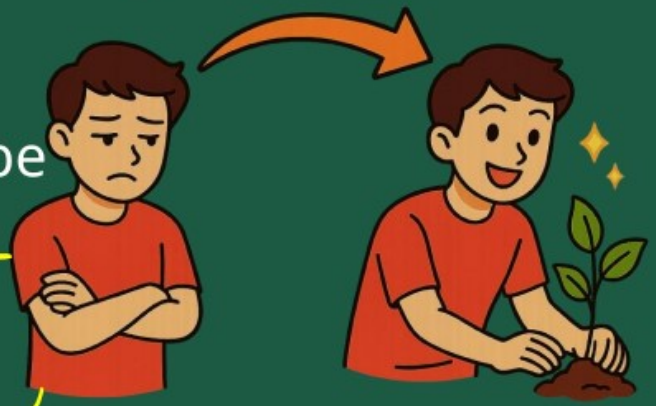
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IV ATTITUDE CHANGE



What is Attitude Change?

- A shift in an individual's attitude, from positive to negative or vice versa.
- Change may be temporary or permanent.



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3) 2 step
SM Mohsin



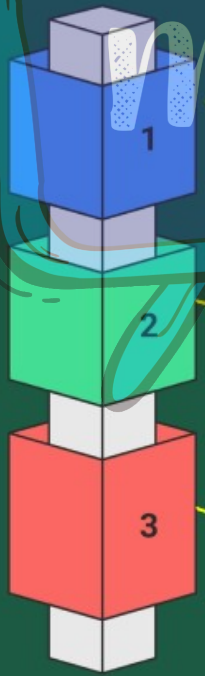
1) Source-target
2) Identify Attitude change

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V FACTORS INFLUENCING ATTITUDE CHANGE

1. Characteristics of the Message Source



Credibility : If the communicator is trustworthy and knowledgeable.

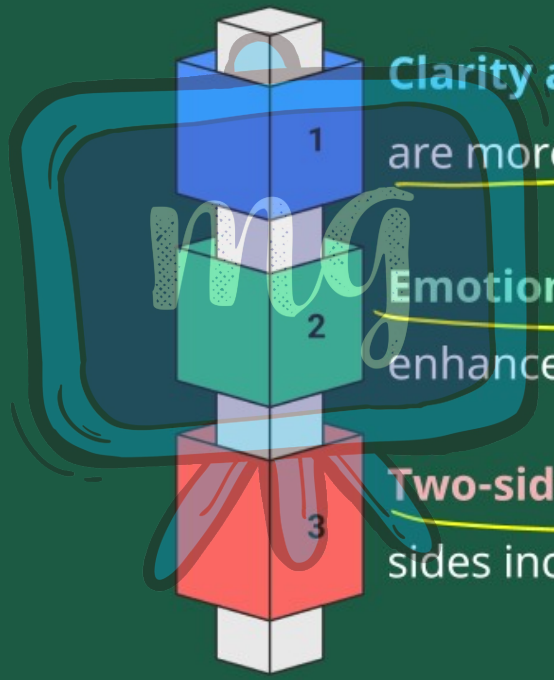
Attractiveness : Physical appeal or likability of the speaker.

Similarity : People are more influenced by those they perceive as similar to themselves.

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2. Message Characteristics



Clarity and logic : Clear, logical arguments are more persuasive.

Emotional appeal : Fear or humor can enhance the impact.

Two-sided messages : Presenting both sides increases credibility.

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3. Audience Characteristics



Self-esteem : Moderate self-esteem people are easier to persuade.

Intelligence : Very high or very low intelligence people are less likely to change attitudes easily.

Motivation and attention : Interested and attentive audiences are more likely to change.

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4. Mode of Communication

- Face-to-face communication is more persuasive than indirect.
- Media (TV, social media) has wide reach but may lack personal touch.



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5. Cognitive Dissonance (Leon Festinger)

- A state of tension caused by holding two inconsistent attitudes or between attitude and behavior.



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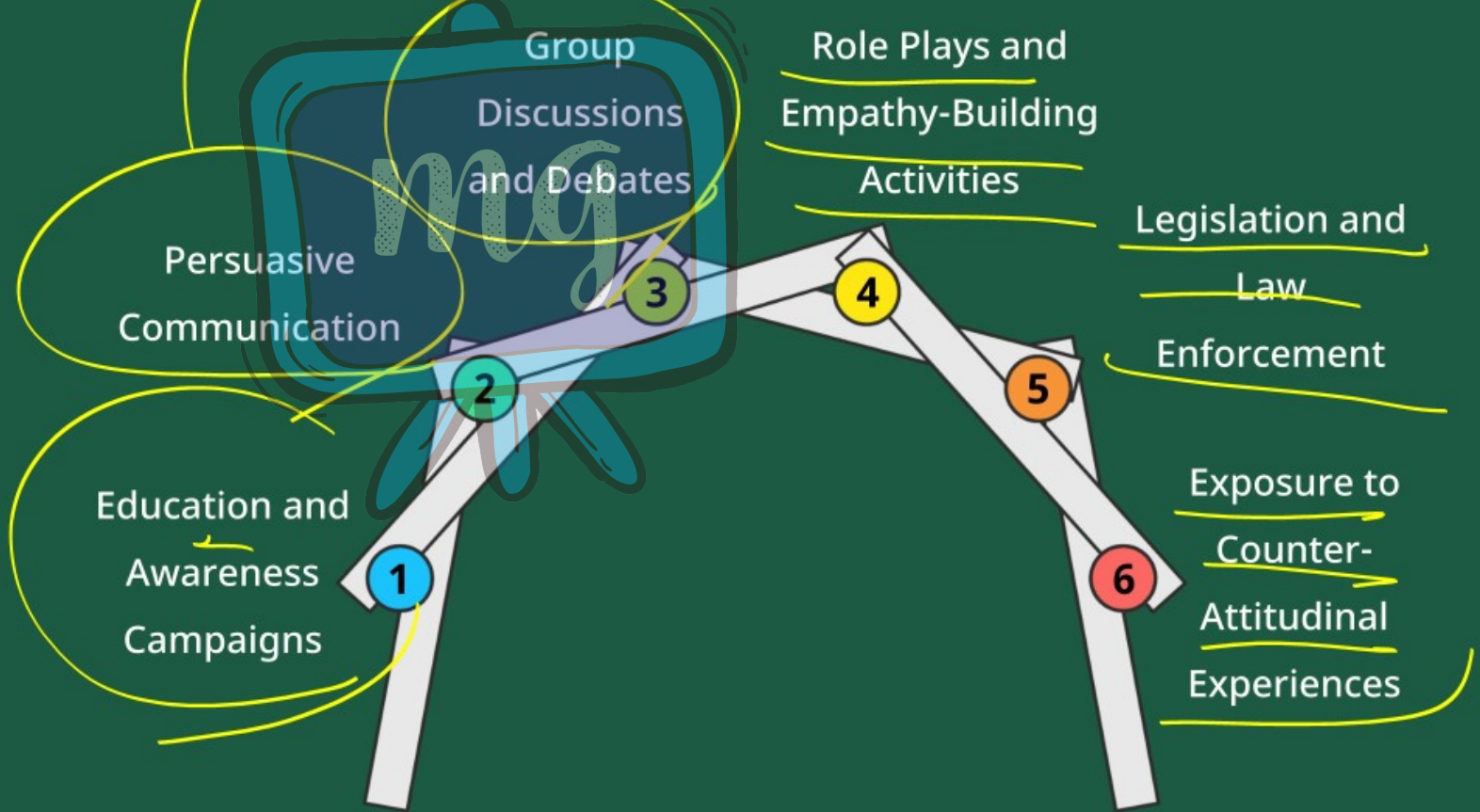
✧ To reduce dissonance, people either :



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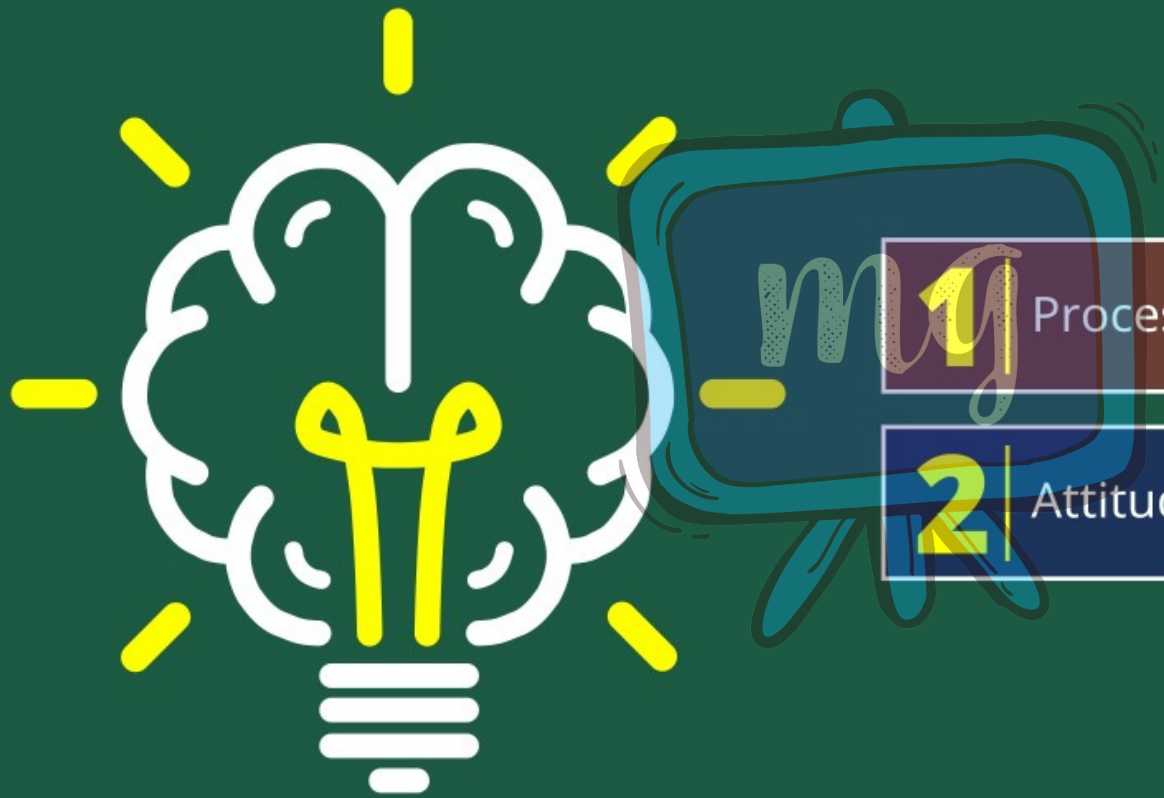
VI | TECHNIQUES TO CHANGE ATTITUDES



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LEARNING OUTCOMES

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1. Process of Attitude Formation
2. Attitude Change



1 A shift in an individual's attitude from positive to negative and vice versa is called –

A Attitude formation

B Attitude change

C Attitude tendencies

D None of the above



2 Leon Festigner gave the concept of cognitive dissonance.

