Chapter in Review
1. Social psychology is the study of the influence of social situations on the individual and the influence of the individual on social situations. Social psychologists examine the individual alone, in dyads, small and large groups, and entire societies. Social psychologists often focus on the idea of the self—each person's awareness of and ideas about his or her own individual nature.
2. The self-serving bias is the tendency to make judgment errors in your own favor: overestimating your own contributions, overestimating your positive attributes relative to others, and attributing success and good deeds to your own efforts or qualities, but bad deeds and failures to circumstances, bad luck, or other people. Positive illusions present the self to itself in a positive but unrealistic way and also have positive consequences. Positive illusions include: uncritically positive views of the self, illusions of control, and unrealistic optimism.
3. Social comparison theory, created by Leon Festinger, explores the ways that people compare themselves to others for various purposes. Festinger initially believed that people generally make comparisons only with people similar to themselves, and primarily for self-evaluative purposes. However, people may also compare themselves to dissimilar others—particularly downward comparisons—to self-enhance. Upward comparisons generally decrease self-esteem. Although downward comparisons are generally self-enhancing and upward comparisons decrease self-esteem, the opposite may sometimes also be the case.
4. Cognitive dissonance is an anxious or tense state brought about when a person becomes aware that his or her behavior contradicts firmly held attitudes. According to cognitive dissonance theory, in order for this tension to resolve, either the attitude has to change, the behavior has to cease, or beliefs about the discrepancy between them have to change.
5. If negative self-judgments continue over a prolonged period, the self may engage in the difficult work of change. By the time most people reach adulthood, they have made an attempt to change something about themselves. However, many of these attempts fail. Researchers Janet Polivy and Peter Herman suggest that these attempts may often fail because people have unrealistic ideas about the speed with which their self-change will occur, the ease with which they will be able to accomplish the change, the amount of change that is likely or even possible, and the rewards they will experience should change occur. A cycle known as the false hope syndrome is then initiated, where a person attempts to accomplish goals that are unrealistic or even impossible, and then repeatedly alters the methods of self-change attempt rather than altering the goals themselves. However, many goals that are difficult but not impossible require repeated attempts for success to be achieved.
6. Monitoring and attempting to control how we appear to other people is known as impression management. Impression management often occurs below the level of consciousness. According to Mark Leary and Robin Kowalski, impression management consists of impression motivation and impression construction. Impression construction is affected by self-concept and the person's desired and undesired identity images. The spotlight effect is an egocentric judgment about the impression one is making on others. Those experiencing this effect may believe that other people are paying far greater attention to them than is the case. Much self-

presentation occurs in the contemporary world through computer-mediated communication (CMC). Some researchers look at Internet communication as an opportunity to break down racism and national borders and to unite people according to deeply held values and beliefs. Other researchers predict disastrous outcomes for interpersonal relationships in CMC, creating a generation of lonely individuals. Most research supports the view that CMC has generally (but not exclusively) positive benefits, particularly if it stimulates online self-disclosure—an important component of intimacy. Adolescent boys may seem to benefit more than girls from CMC.

7. Attribution theory explores the process by which people explain their or others' behavior in terms of causes that refer to characteristics of the person (dispositional cause), the situation (situational cause), or an interaction between the two; and which also may refer to whether the behavior is intentional or unintentional. The fundamental attribution error (FAE) is the tendency to attribute others' behavior to their (internal) dispositions, while ignoring the possibility that situational (external) factors may have played an important role. The FAE is made primarily when rapid attributions are required. The FAE has been a mainstay of social psychological research. However, the universality of the FAE has been challenged by cross-cultural research, and John Sabini and his colleagues have questioned whether it is even logically possible to divide attributions into categories of "dispositional" and "situational."

8. If the FAE implies that one is mistaking the situation for the person, the actor-observer bias is mistaking the person for the situation. The actor-observer bias occurs primarily when one makes situational explanations for one's own (generally negative) behavior instead of considering that dispositional factors may be at work. Social psychologists suggest that this occurs because we are aware of the many ways circumstances will alter our behavior (while not considering that this may also be true of others). Like the FAE, the actor-observer bias has been challenged recently. Bertram Malle has shown that the bias only occurs inconsistently, and only when certain types of research methods are used.

9. The study of attraction is an important part of social psychology. The tendency to become attracted to others who are similar to oneself is known by biologists as positive assortment and by social psychologists as the matching phenomenon. Researchers have found that people are highly likely to positively assort when they mate, and that these pairings are happier, more stable, have fewer infidelities and divorces, and result in more children raised to maturity. The mere exposure effect, explored by Robert Zajonc, is the tendency to appreciate something more merely as a result of being exposed to it on numerous occasions.

10. Beauty is not entirely in the eye of the beholder. Although there are cultural differences in preferred clothing or adornments, facial scarring or distortion, and body weight (but not shape), people often exaggerate the degree to which there are cultural differences in what is considered beautiful—particularly in women. There are universal standards for specific facial features and body shape for women. This is true for men as well, but to a lesser extent; and women's standards for what is physically attractive in a man may fluctuate as a function of context and the woman's reproductive status. General cues to male and female facial attractiveness include age, symmetry, averageness, and exaggerated femininity and masculinity.

11. Conformity may be motivated by informational or normative concerns, or by the desire to maintain self-concept by protecting feelings of self-esteem. Informational motivations are based on a rational desire to seek realistic information about a situation. Normative motives reflect the desire to obtain approval from the group. Groupthink is a particularly dangerous type of conformity behavior that is sometimes partly responsible for disastrous governmental decisions. Symptoms of groupthink include collective rationalization, pressure to conform, illusion of invulnerability, illusion of moral correctness, bias toward outgroup members, and illusion of unanimous consensus.

12. The bystander effect is the tendency of people to be less likely to help strangers in need if there are other people present at the scene. Research into the bystander effect (as well as beliefs that modern urban environments are populated by uncaring and apathetic citizens) was stimulated by the Kitty Genovese sexual assault-murder case. Research into the bystander effect has produced very useful findings, but beliefs about the Genovese case are exaggerated and in some instances completely unfounded. The initial research on the bystander effect by John Darley and Bibb Latané showed not that urban dwellers were apathetic but that the presence of others at a scene causes each individual to be more likely to believe that "someone else is bound to take care of it" (diffusion of responsibility). Similarly, social loafing may not imply laziness, but the tendency for people to match their effort to their perceptions of the amount of effort being expended by others in a group effort.

13. Human beings may have evolved cheater detection mechanisms, as demonstrated in research by Leda Cosmides and John Tooby using the Wason selection task.

14. Deindividuation is a lessening of self-awareness or identity when in a group, leading to reduced concern with how your behavior will be evaluated by others. Under such conditions a person might behave in ways he or she normally would not. Deindividuation can have disastrous consequences if it occurs in interaction with other social psychological factors such as being assigned a social role (for example, prison guard) that puts a person in a position of power over others. Research on deindividuation was initiated following surprising results of Phillip Zimbardo's uncompleted prison experiment, where students randomly assigned roles as "prisoners" or "guards" came to enact their roles with much greater realism than expected. Debate continues as to whether Zimbardo's experiment does or does not demonstrate that ordinary people, as a result of individuation, can be induced to commit acts that would ordinarily be against their ethical or moral standards.

15. Altruism is the offering of assistance to others without the expectation of immediate reward. It is part of a larger group of behaviors termed *prosocial* because they may promote the well-being of society as a whole. However, it is not clear why people perform altruistic acts, because it seems as though they have little to gain by them. There are two classes of explanations for altruism: proximate causes and ultimate causes. Proximate explanations focus on immediate direct causes of behavior. Ultimate explanations focus on evolutionary causes that allow the proximate mechanisms to exist in the first place. Proximate explanations for altruism include empathy, activity of mirror neurons, and egoism. Ultimate explanations include William Hamilton's theory of inclusive fitness and Robert Trivers' theory of reciprocal altruism.

16. Stereotyping is an intrinsic property of the human mind without which we would have difficulty surviving. But stereotyping can lead to prejudice, a tendency to "prejudge" an individual based on beliefs about, or feelings toward, the group to which the person belongs. Group stereotypes have changed over the past 70 years, becoming more widespread but less negative. According to Susan Fiske and Amy Cuddy, stereotyping exists along two dimensions: competence and warmth.

17. Ingroup bias, which may also lead to prejudice, is the tendency to favor and extend loyalty to members of one's own group (the ingroup) over others. Ingroup bias frequently (but not always) also consists of prejudice against or dehumanization of members of the outgroup. One factor that is present frequently when dehumanization occurs is the emotion of disgust. According to Paul Rozin, while the emotion of disgust evolved to protect the body from contamination, it has evolved in human culture to include objects or individuals that threaten the "purity of the soul." Implicit prejudice is prejudice that is automatic and unconscious. Terror management theory (TMT) proposes that much human behavior is motivated by a need to "manage" or reduce the terror that results from our awareness that one day we will die. According to TMT, human beings accomplish terror management (a) by strengthening beliefs in their worldview and cultural values, and (b) by increasing feelings of self-esteem. However, when we encounter people with different cultural values our management of terror may be challenged. To regain self-esteem and reassert belief in one's cultural values, people often resort to putting others down (ingroup bias and prejudice), attempting to force others to change, or wiping them out entirely through war and genocide.

18. In the Stanley Milgram studies of obedience to authority, a dismaying percentage of individuals were willing to administer what they believed to be highly dangerous levels of shocks to an innocent person when instructed to do so by a person in authority as part of a supposed experiment in the psychology of learning. These studies have been argued about for a half-century. Numerous commentators have suggested that the results of the studies confirm that ordinary people can be induced to commit horrific acts if ordered to do so by an authority figure. These commentators draw parallels between events in Hitler's death camps and other instances of genocide and the Milgram studies. However, it has also been argued that the Milgram studies demonstrated only that the participants, rather than blindly following orders of an authority figure, simply accepted that the supposed Yale University professor was an authority—and believed the man's claims that the participants in the experiment would not be hurt. Others (even Milgram himself) have pointed out numerous, sometimes dramatic, points of differences between conditions that exist during mass-killings or genocidal attacks and the Milgram studies. These commentators suggest that drawing parallels between the studies and actual acts of genocidal violence in the face of commands by authority figures may not be very apt.

Section Summaries
What is psychological self-defense?

1. Social psychology is the study of the ways that situations influence the people's behavior and the way people's characteristics or behavior can influence the situations in which they find themselves. It is the study of the ways in which people interact.
2. People seek to maintain feelings of self-worth in the face of their own negative judgments of themselves. One method of "psychological self-defense" is the self-serving bias, which takes several forms, but allows us to see ourselves as better than we actually are in various respects. Another is positive illusions—biases and mental illusions that are associated with better adjustment and mental health.
3. Social comparisons can be used to evaluate the self rationally or for purposes of self-enhancement and "self-defense." In making self-enhancement and self-defense comparisons, people usually compare themselves with those less competent or less fortunate, known as downward comparison.
4. When one's attitudes are not in accord with one's behavior, cognitive dissonance may arise. People may resolve cognitive dissonance by changing attitudes, behavior, or the way they think about the discrepancy between the two.
5. Self-control is a relatively stable trait that is associated with a great many positive benefits over the life span. Being self-controlled in one area predicts the ability to be self-controlled in other areas.
6. Although people can make self-improvement changes, they often have unrealistic beliefs about the speed, ease, and amount of change likely, and the potential rewards.

How do we present ourselves to others?
1. Attempting to control how we appear to others is known as self-presentation or impression management. Impression management consists of two processes: impression motivation and impression construction.
2. Much self-presentation currently occurs over the Internet in computer-mediated communication (CMC). Most research suggests that CMC enhances communication and relationships, particularly if these relationships already exist, and if self-disclosure results from it.
3. The spotlight effect is the self-centered tendency of people to believe that other people pay more attention to their negative or positive behaviors than is actually the case.

How do we explain our own and others' behavior?
1. Attribution is the process of explaining behavior in terms of causes that are either intentional or unintentional, dispositional or situational.
2. The fundamental attribution error (FAE) is the tendency of people to attribute other people's behavior to dispositional causes, ignoring the possibility that situational factors are primarily responsible for the behavior. Recent research has questioned the universality and even the existence of the FAE.
3. The actor-observer bias is the tendency to attribute one's own behavior to situational causes while attributing other people's behavior to dispositional causes.

Who attracts whom?
1. People tend to be drawn to others with whom they share characteristics, a tendency known as positive assortment or the matching phenomenon.

2. The mere exposure effect demonstrates that people come to prefer things or people with which they are more familiar.
3. People emphasize the face in judgments of attractiveness. The four most important factors in cross-cultural judgments of attractiveness are age, symmetry, averageness, and exaggerated masculinity/femininity (sexual dimorphism).
4. Judgments of male facial attractiveness are more complex than judgments of the facial attractiveness of females. Women's ratings of male facial attractiveness may change according to context and the woman's reproductive status.

How do other people affect our opinions and our actions?
1. Conformity may be influenced and motivated by informational or normative concerns. Normative influences are particularly powerful, and often occur unnoticed by the person conforming.
2. Groupthink is a particularly dangerous type of conformity behavior that occurs because members do not want to make waves, affect group morale, or appear disloyal. Groupthink results in counterproductive (or disastrous) group decisions.
3. The rape and murder of Kitty Genovese precipitated research in the bystander effect.
4. However, the popular conception of the crime against Genovese—that focuses on 38 apathetic bystanders standing by and not intervening—is exaggerated. Bystanders are most likely to offer aid when the situation involves unambiguous physical danger, if males are present, and if the bystanders are known to one another.
5. Social contracts are implicit or explicit agreements among people that call for honesty and fairness. Human beings may have evolved specific mechanisms to detect cheating on social contracts.
6. Deindividuation is a lessening of self-awareness and reduced concern about how your behavior may be evaluated by others in the group. It may occur when people feel anonymous and less accountable for their actions in groups.
7. Altruism and prosocial behavior are as much a part of human nature as are selfishness and cruelty. Proximate explanations of altruism include empathy, egoism, and mirror neurons. Ultimate explanations include William Hamilton's theory of inclusive fitness and Robert Trivers' theory of reciprocal altruism.

How does intergroup conflict lead to aggression?
1. Stereotyping is an important aspect of human cognition, and some group stereotypes hold a degree of accuracy. However, stereotypes are also frequently inappropriately applied to groups or individuals from groups.
2. Ingroup bias is the tendency to favor and show loyalty to one's group over others. Ingroup bias appears to be triggered automatically, as soon as a group identity is created. People who do not consider themselves prejudiced may display subtle forms of bias known as implicit prejudice.
3. Terror management theory proposes that prejudice is one way that people manage the existential problem created by their awareness of the inevitability of their own death.
4. Many parallels have been drawn over the years between the Milgram obedience studies and the fact that seemingly ordinary people may commit monstrous acts during war or genocidal conflict when ordered to do so. However, these parallels

sometimes ignore the many ways the conditions of obedience to authority in the Milgram studies differ dramatically from those in war or genocide.
5. Social psychological principles focusing on the effect of situations on the individual go a long way toward explaining the events of Abu Ghraib, but it is likely that personal characteristics need to be included for a more complete account.