Slide 1

Title: The Evolution of Emotion

Slide Content:

Narrator: What is the difference between emotions and feelings?

Feelings are just one aspect of the larger emotive process.

The emotive process has served—and continues to serve—a number of important functions throughout human existence.

Certainly, we have all had a moment when we encountered a situation that triggered the “fight or flight” autonomic process in which our body prepared itself physiologically to deal with a presented threat.

Thus, when we experience the very quick, transient emotional experience, we often have changes in our expressive behavior, subjective feelings, body physiology, cognition, and motor behavior as we quickly decide how to react to our environment.

By contrast, feelings, or the subjective experience of emotion, are just one piece of a larger process.

Similarly, emotion can be differentiated from mood in that emotion is a fairly quick and transient experience whereas mood tends to be a longer, more persistent state in which we might experience a range of emotional responses.

Given that humans—regardless of culture—tend to experience similar life events, concerted research has been directed toward identifying those aspects of emotion that are similar across cultures.

Slide 2

Title: Universality in Emotional Expression and Recognition

Slide content:
[a yellow and an orange smiley face and a yellow and an orange sad face]

Narrator: Let’s explore the research that has examined the universal aspects of human emotion, from the experiences that trigger emotion and the cognitive process of appraising emotional reactions to the generation of facial expressions and physiological reactions to emotion.

This extensive line of research has identified the basic human emotional experience, but as your text later explores, there are pronounced differences in emotion across cultures as well.

Consider for a moment that you have just been transported to a different culture in which you do not speak the language or have knowledge of the cultural customs.

How would you go about communicating with members of this culture?

Although responses to this question might vary, most of us would likely carefully select our physical behaviors and facial expressions and may approach members of the different culture slowly, with open arms and generally happy facial expressions so as not to be threatening.

Indeed, having the knowledge that emotions are both universally expressed and also universally recognized would likely guide the manner in which we try to interact with members of this different culture.
Title: Emotion and Language

Narrator: The willingness to express emotion differs from culture to culture, but one of the manners in which we can express or communicate our emotive experience to another is through the words we choose to use.

Many cultures have words or phrases that define specific emotional experiences that have no counterpart in other cultures or languages.

But there is an even deeper connection between language and emotion than just the words that we use to express our emotive responses.

Indeed, many therapists report that when working with culturally different clients who are displaying strong emotive reactions in therapy, these clients often resort to using their native tongue to describe the emotive experience.

Similarly, different cultures may emphasize one aspect of the emotive experience or locate the center of emotion in various parts of the body. American culture often places a premium on the subjective experience of the emotion, or feelings while other cultures may emphasize expressive behaviors, cognitions or motor behavior.

Finally, when describing an emotional experience, many in American culture place the center of the emotional experience in the heart whereas other cultures locate emotion in the stomach or head.

End of Presentation