

Apathy is a lack of feeling, emotion, interest, and concern. Apathy is a state of indifference, or the suppression of emotions such as concern, excitement, motivation, and/or passion. An apathetic individual has an absence of interest in or concern about emotional, social, spiritual, philosophical and/or physical life and the world.

The apathetic may lack a sense of purpose, worth, or meaning in their life. An apathetic person may also exhibit insensibility or sluggishness. In positive psychology, apathy is described as a result of the individual feeling they do not possess the level of skill required to confront a challenge (i.e. "Flow"). It may also be a result of perceiving no challenge at all (e.g. the challenge is irrelevant to them, or conversely, they have learned helplessness). Apathy may be a sign of more specific mental problems such as schizophrenia or dementia. However, apathy is something that all people face in some capacity. It is a natural response to disappointment, dejection, and stress. As a response, apathy is a way to forget about these negative feelings.[citation needed] This type of common apathy is usually only felt in the short-term and when it becomes a long-term or even lifelong state is when deeper social and psychological issues are most likely present.

Apathy should be distinguished from reduced affect, which refers to reduced emotional expression but not necessarily reduced emotion.

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