Aggressive Driving is Emotionally Impaired Driving

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HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE ON AGGRESSIVE DRIVING

In North America, cars have been mass produced for 104 years, and there are 177 million licensed drivers in the United States. Driving is the most dangerous activity for the majority of people in industrialized society. Driving accidents have killed millions of people since 1900, and the number of deaths and injuries increase in proportion to the number of drivers, and the total number of miles driven in a given area (NCSA, 1994). There has been some progress in industrialized countries where deaths and serious injuries from automobile collisions have been reduced as a result of these developments (Rothe, 1993):

1. More and safer roads with better traction, visibility, and maintenance.
2. Improved cars equipped with new safety devices and crash proof designs that save lives—safety belts, air bags, child restraint car seats, shock absorption and

controlled collapse, crash tests with computer sensors, intelligent cruise control, sleep monitors, and collision-avoidance systems.
3. Better medical emergency services and infrastructure on streets and highways resulting in more survivors after crashes.
4. Better law enforcement, including more personnel, use of electronic surveillance on highways and key intersections, sobriety check points, stealth campaigns using unmarked cars and aircraft, new aggressive driving legislation with tougher sentencing, graduated licensing for teenaged drivers, and greater involvement of courts in remedial driver training for offenders (Sherer, Friedmann, Rolider & Van Houten, 1984; Shinar & McKnight, 1985).
5. Mandated driver education and aggressive driving prevention instruction in schools.
6. More sophisticated transportation management systems, including computer controlled lights, traffic calming devices, re-routing schemes, HOV lanes, alternative transportation initiatives, dynamic traffic signs, Geo Positioning Systems, ramp meters, roadside sensors, and traffic flow detectors (Schulz, 1996).
7. Economic incentives for drivers who remain accident free, greater insurance cost for accident prone drivers, special benefits from enrolling in refresher courses and other driver self-improvement activities (Hunter & Stutts, 1982; Wilde, 1985).

It's important to note that despite improvements in these seven areas, when viewed over decades, the rate of traffic deaths and injuries remains relatively constant. For instance, in the 1950s the annual fatality rate due to automobile collisions was around 50,000 while in the 1990s it is near 40,000. Yes, there has been a reduction, but the curve has quickly leveled off and remains high, around 40,000 deaths and approaching 6 million injuries annually.

There are two opposing forces that contribute to these results. External environmental forces operate to increase safety and reduce risk, such as modern highway management and car design. Internal individual forces operate to maintain high risk at the expense of safety, such as:

- Widespread acceptance of a competitive norm that values getting ahead of other drivers.
- A daily round schedule of time pressure and mismanagement with rushing and routinely disobeying traffic laws.
- Incomplete driver education curricula so that most people have inadequate training in emotional self-control as drivers.
- Media portrayals of aggressive driving behaviors in a fun context.
- A psychological tendency to maintain a preferred level of

> risk, so that people increase their risk level when environmental improvements are introduced (also called "risk homeostasis").

Scientists and safety officials attribute this resistance to accident reduction to the attitude and behavior of drivers who tend to respond to safety improvements by driving more dangerously. It has been noted that a critical aspect of driving is the driver's competence in balancing risk with safety. The risk in driving is largely under the control of the driver. The driver decides in each moment what risks to take and which to inhibit or avoid. Risk taking is a tendency that varies greatly among drivers as well as for the same driver under different conditions. Thus, if a road is made safer by straightening it, or by removing objects that interfere with visibility, drivers will compensate for the greater safety by driving faster—the "risk homeostasis" phenomenon (Wilde, 1994; Summala, 1987).

The result is the maintenance of a constant subjective feeling of risk that is the normal habitual threshold for a particular driver. In such a driving environment, the rate of deaths or injuries tends to remain high despite numerous safety improvements. The societal response to the stalemate between road safety and individual risk tolerance has been to increase enforcement activities by monitoring, ticketing, and jailing hundreds of thousands of drivers. Nevertheless, the number of deaths and injuries has remained nearly steady. Besides law enforcement, there has been an increase in litigation due to aggressive driving disputes between drivers, as well as the growth of psychotherapy and counseling services, including anger management clinics and workshops, and community initiatives. These scattered attempts have not caused a change in basic driving patterns.

AGGRESSIVE DRIVING AS A CULTURAL HABIT

Aggressiveness, rage and anger reactions are commonplace on the road because they are learned habits, acquired by children in the backseat, where kids are not merely passive passengers. Kids observe and react internally to their drivers' cursing or yelling, obscene or violent gestures, trash talk, and other common forms of derision and retaliation. Children are also proprioceptively conditioned to levels of speed in an in-car environment that emphasizes rushing and getting ahead of others. This role model distorts attitudes about what is dangerous, and raises kids to be normal aggressive drivers that increase risk for everyone. Aggressive driver role models in the media can also contribute to disrespect for people and traffic regulations. The risky driver role model lowers the threshold for expressing disrespect. It lowers the threshold for endangering others, making it acceptable to run a red light, or to drink and drive. Aggressive driver role models can erode a driver's sense of social responsibility.

Aggressive driving is on the increase because it is a learned habit that is transmitted from one generation to the next, and reinforced in the media. Unchecked, the incidence and severity of aggressive driving and road rage are expected to continue to rise. The

new aggressive driving legislation and new law enforcement programs are putting more pressure on millions of drivers to modify their traffic emotions, their competitive mode of driving, and their acceptance of high-risk that they are willing to impose on others around them. The re-education and continued training of the nation's 177 million drivers must be a priority. Given adequate tools and motivation, most drivers can train themselves to be less competitive and more obedient to traffic regulations.

Without this training, drivers constantly find themselves in psychological states that should be considered emotionally impaired driving. They cannot adequately deal with the rules of engagement on crowded streets and roads. Emotional disturbances at the wheel can be as dangerous as alcohol or drug impairment. We believe that aggressive driving is largely a product of routinely driving in emotionally impaired states due to insufficient training. Of course there is a range from mild to severe degrees of impairment. There is diminished self-control and impaired judgment due to emotions that interfere with objective perception and lead to biased thinking. A variety of impairments are associated with aggressive driving:

1. Under the influence of alcohol, drugs, medication, drowsiness, depression or severe pain.
   Driving under the influence of these mental states is aggressive because they distort perception, reduce self-control, and impose higher risk on other drivers.
2. Under the influence of anger or rage.
   Driving under the influence of anger is aggressive because it loosens inhibitions, intensifies self-righteous indignation, and encourages retaliation and unlawful acts.
3. Under the influence of fear or panic.
   Driving under the influence of fear is aggressive because it promotes irrational thought sequences that misinterpret the behavior of other drivers, perceiving threat where none is intended.
4. Under the influence of stress.
   Driving under the influence of stress is aggressive because it increases irritability and explosive reactions, and reduces self-control.
5. Driving distracted.
   Driving under the influence of distraction is aggressive because it endangers others due to inattention and imposes higher risk on other drivers.
6. Under the influence of speed and risk addiction
   Driving under the influence of speed addiction is aggressive because it imposes higher risk on others.
7. Self-appointed vigilante
   Driving under the influence of vengeance and retribution is aggressive because they encourage retaliation and unlawful acts.
8. Under the influence of habitual rushing mania, including reacting impulsively or unpredictably under time pressure.
   Driving under the influence of rushing mania is aggressive because it reduces self-control, imposes higher risk on others, and endangers them through inattention or opportunistic maneuvers.

9. Habitual disrespect for the law, ignoring regulations and harboring hostility towards officers.
   Being a scofflaw is aggressive because it encourages unlawful acts and imposes higher risk on others.
10. Habitual disrespect for others, holding biased assumptions and making wrong conclusions.
    Driving under the influence of disrespect is aggressive because it encourages retaliation, imposes higher risk on others, misinterprets the behavior of other drivers, perceives threat where none is intended, and denigrates others.
11. Lack of awareness and habitual denial of one's own driving mistakes.
    Driving under the influence of denial is aggressive because it reduces self-control, limits driver self-improvement and imposes higher risk on others.

Driving is emotionally challenging because unexpected things happen constantly, including dangerous things and being picked on. In addition, congestion intensifies time pressure from delays, and there is a greater diversity of drivers, some less competent than others. The rules of engagement on the road are harsh and competitive, even hostile. Most drivers find these conditions emotionally challenging and experience difficulty coping. Therefore, most people routinely drive in an emotionally impaired state. Drivers are filled with competitive motives and explosive intentions that they are not fully aware of. These motives and intentions are emotionally impaired states because they distort the driver's thinking and amplify the emotions beyond adequate self-control. Drivers use these emotions to engage in impulsive and risky behavior, giving little thought to those they endanger by taking more risks. These emotions encourage drivers to be self-serving and opportunistic.

DEFINITION OF AGGRESSIVE DRIVING

Aggressive driving is driving under the influence of impaired emotions, resulting in behavior that imposes one's own preferred level of risk on others. This is aggressive because it assumes that others are capable of handling the same risk level, and that one has the right to increase danger for others. There are three categories of impaired emotions:

1. Impatience and Inattentiveness
2. Power Struggle
3. Recklessness and Road Rage

The majority of motorists drive in an emotionally impaired state at certain times. Some motorists drive in this state more often than others, and pose a serious risk to themselves and others. Driving violations can be identified by reference to these three categories of impaired emotions. Each category of impaired emotion leads to different types of traffic violations.

Category 1: Impatience and Inattentiveness

- Driving through red
- Speeding up to yellow

- Rolling stops
- Cutting corners or rolling over double line
- Blocking intersection
- Failure to yield
- Improper lane change or weaving
- Driving 5 to 15 mph above limit
- Following too close
- Not signaling when required
- Erratically slowing down or speeding up
- Taking too long

Category 2: Power Struggle

- Blocking passing lane, refusing to move over
- Closing the gap to prevent entry
- Threatening or insulting by yelling, gesturing, honking repeatedly
- Tailgating to punish or coerce
- Cutting off to retaliate
- Braking suddenly to retaliate

Category 3: Recklessness and Road Rage

- Chasing in a duel
- Driving drunk
- Pointing a gun or shooting
- Assaulting with the car or battering object
- Driving at very high speeds

The solution to aggressive driving is to develop supportive driving styles that reduce risk and individual competition in favor of teamwork and cooperation (James & Nahl, 2000a). Drivers in traffic are highly dependent on each other's coordinated actions. Supportive driving acknowledges that driving is a group activity and drivers are to some extent responsible for each other's needs. For example, closing the gap in response to noticing a car that wants to enter your lane is counter-productive to facilitating the flow of traffic because that vehicle is not going to disappear. Allowing the car into the lane on request facilitates traffic flow through teamwork and coordination. This is the safer, more rational and more humane alternative, but there is resistance to developing supportive driving styles that must be overcome. Clearly, drivers need to become more knowledgeable and objective about their own behavior since research shows that the majority of drivers are unaware of the extent of their own aggressiveness (James & Nahl, 1998). For instance, in answer to the question: What percent of drivers are aggressive?, respondents say 85%. However, when asked What percent of time do you drive aggressively?, respondents say 35%. This 50% difference represents an awareness gap because it shows that they underestimate their own contribution to the problem.

ANALYZING THE LANGUAGE OF AGGRESSIVE DRIVING LAWS

The trend in new legislation is to require greater personal accountability for specific driving behavior. It makes a big difference whether drivers get a ticket they can pay in the mail, or get arrested and face misdemeanor or felony charges, and maybe have their vehicle impounded or license suspended. The driving public has a knowledge gap and needs to catch-up with new legislation. Surveys show that the majority do not know what the law considers to be aggressive driving, and when they find out, many disagree about what is aggressive. In 1998, nine states introduced a combination of 26 bills on aggressive driving; 4 states had bills pending in 1999 (James & Nahl, 2000b). Most of these bills attempt to define aggressive driving offenses and establish penalties for them.

Many states are struggling with the issue of how to define aggressive driving. This difficulty has led to the death of some bills that are perceived as legally too problematic to define and implement. Some bills proposed *intent* as part of an aggressive driving definition. This creates a problem about how to establish intent. Successful bills adopt a behavioral language that is specific and observable, rather than vague. The following examples exhibit vague references vs. specific behavioral descriptions in some current bills:

Washington (vague)	passing improperly	What is "improperly"? Needs specific behavioral description.
Virginia (vague)	operating a vehicle in a threatening or intimidating manner with the intent to cause others to lose control or be forced off the highway	"Threatening manner" is unclear. "Intent" of driver is unknown to officer and calls for judgment that can be questioned in court. Forcing off the road is observable.
Virginia (vague)	operating a vehicle with a reckless disregard for the rights of others or in a manner that endangers any property or person	"Reckless disregard" is a judgment call. Better to use language that describes the observable behavior.
New York (vague)	driving with intent to harass, annoy or alarm another person in a manner contrary to law	"Intent" is difficult to prove and calls for judgment. Better to describe the driver's behavior, e.g., "honked repeatedly while tailgating"

Arizona (specific)	Drivers could be charged with aggressive driving if they are cited for committing a combination of two or more listed offenses: 1. failing to obey a traffic control device 2. passing on the right or on the shoulder 3. tailgating or following too closely 4. failing to signal lane changes or to change lane properly 5. failing to yield the right-of-way 6. running a red light or stop sign 7. passing a vehicle on the right by traveling off the pavement	Good examples of behavioral language, all are observable by an officer. Notice the difference between "failing to change lanes properly" (vague) and "failing to signal lane changes" (specific). Here both are used for the same offense. The specific part strengthens the vague one.

The Arizona law uses clear behavioral language that depends on actual observation with no judgment on the part of the officer. There is an increasing trend to rely on video evidence as more surveillance equipment is deployed in cars, aircraft, and on highways.

As the legal system attempts to formalize the definition of aggressive driving, the public already has ingrained notions of what is or is not aggressive behind the wheel. When asked to rate specific aggressive driving behaviors listed in the new laws, between 20% and 70% of respondents do not agree that specific violations are aggressive (James & Nahl, 1998). For example, in a survey in Los Angeles, 50% did not agree that speeding up to a yellow light, honking or blocking the passing lane are aggressive (James & Nahl, 2000, 48). One in three drivers did not agree that tailgating or flashing high beams should be considered aggressive. This definition gap creates a disparity in legal versus popular meanings, and excites conflict between public norms and enforcement. Clearly, people need to be re-educated on what the law defines as aggressive, and on the limits of an individual's right to impose one's preferred level of risk on others.

APPLIED PROGRAMS AND TECHNIQUES IN DRIVING PSYCHOLOGY

Driving psychology is an applied field that creates a popular language of behavioral thinking about driving as a societal issue. This issue is complex and overlaps with

technical and non-technical intellectual environments. The theory and concepts of driving psychology are adapted from several disciplines (James & Nahl, 1996a, b):

- Social psychology (e.g., schemas, scripts, attribution error, territoriality, etc.)
- Developmental psychology (e.g., stages of moral development, moral IQ, etc.)
- Health psychology (e.g., resistance to compliance, addictive behaviors, lifestyle management, anger management, etc.)
- Applied psychology (e.g., driving behavior, risk homeostasis, ergonomics of errors, etc.)
- Traffic psychology (driver management, pedestrian behavior, traffic safety education, etc.)
- Clinical psychology (behavior self-modification of maladaptive habits, etc.)
- Traffic sociology (e.g., social conventions on highways, attitudes towards laws, etc.)
- Automotive medicine (e.g., seat belt and child restraint use, effect of cars on health, etc.)
- Transportation engineering (traffic calming devices, alternative transportation initiatives, etc.)

Driving psychology principles and programs are cast in a popularized but scientific language that is suitable for people of different educational level, age, and experience. In order for driver management programs to be effective, the drivers involved must be motivated to cooperate on their own. The desire for cooperation must stem from their understanding and acceptance. Understanding must be instructed, and acceptance must be won. The less the perception of coercion, the greater the need for voluntary compliance, which depends on adequate understanding.

Driving psychology maintains an internal rhetoric of persuasion designed to empower people to overcome their spontaneous inner resistance to its supportive principles. Experiencing feelings of resistance to the principles of driving psychology is part of the process since it involves self-assessment and self-modification. There is a natural and predictable resistance to changing automatized sensorimotor habits. There is resistance to changing one's cognitive norms of criticizing and blaming other drivers. There is resistance to giving up affective norms of hostility and self-assertiveness as a driver. Driving psychology focuses on these forms of internal resistance, and provides drivers with socio-cultural methods for overcoming their own internal resistance to change.

Driving psychology employs several behavior management techniques:

1. Behavioral and transactional engineering
    - teaching principles of self-modification of behavior (short term and long term)
    - developing databases of taxonomic inventories of

affective, cognitive, and sensorimotor driving habits across regions and time

2. Group dynamic techniques for engineering new generational norms
    - Kurt Lewin—group dynamic forces on personality change (Gold, 1999)
    - Albert Ellis—rational-emotive integration (Ellis & Powers, 1998) including emotional intelligence (Goleman, 1996)
    - L. Kohlberg—levels of moral development (1976)
    - Albert Bandura—social influencing mechanisms in the self (1989)
3. Behavioral assessment of skills
    - Formative evaluation of learning or training
    - Summative evaluation of instruction
    - Testing of competencies and licensing
    - Long term self-assessment procedures
4. Mass media communications and interventions
    - Content analysis of media portrayals of driving and their dissemination to the public to increase people's awareness of their potential harmful influence.
    - Musicals and staged neighborhood or school productions to encourage positive role models for young drivers and to allow them to explore the socio-moral dialectic of driving behavior.
    - Radio call-in talk shows during heavy traffic hours to allow drivers a socially approved mechanism for expressing complaints and for sharing solutions and advice.
    - Making available Driving Informatics facilities in public libraries and the workplace to satisfy people's driving information needs (Nahl & James, 1999)
5. Data-driven accountability
    - Accident analysis and reconstruction
    - Mandating standardized police record keeping on a regional or national basis
    - Building national accident databases for scientists
    - Building national, regional, and local data repositories obtained anonymously.

DRIVING PSYCHOLOGY THEORY

In order to achieve significant reductions in crash, injury, and fatality statistics, the focus on the individual must be strengthened. We developed driving psychology in response to the urgent need for managing driving behavior in an industrialized society. The increase in injuries and their cost is preventable, but it requires socio-cultural interventions by government, social agencies, citizen organizations, and especially, individuals. Law enforcement methods alone will not be totally effective because people will revert to aggressive driving styles when detection can be avoided (Bjornskau & Elvik, 1992). Compliance is dependent on constant surveillance.

Internal methods for managing drivers' attitudes and habits of thinking can be used to influence driving norms. Driving psychology provides the theory and methods for creating this type of internal influence by securing the voluntary cooperation and support of drivers for lifelong self-improvement activities. These internal methods can be fully effective in the long run if they are incorporated into the personality and moral philosophy of each driver. Internal influence cannot be coerced since drivers can fake attitudes to comply with tests or inspections. As soon as surveillance is withdrawn or eluded, the negative attitude asserts itself in freedom. Therefore, internal influence is possible only through the voluntary cooperation of each individual. This can be engineered by means of the social influence process that naturally occurs in support groups (Quality Driving Circles (QDCs) (James & Nahl, 2000a). Long term membership in such groups reduces resistance to change and builds enthusiasm for practicing supportive driving scripts, schemas, roles, and norms.

The external view on driving includes road conditions and vehicle manipulation. Data on these is obtainable from instruments, measurements, and observer evaluation. The internal view on driving is the perspective of the drivers themselves: their sensations, perceptions, verbalizations, thoughts, decisions, emotions, and feelings. Data on these live aspects of the behavior of drivers cannot be obtained by instruments, nor by an observer. Instead, some method must be devised by which the drivers can make records of their on-going perceptions, thoughts, and feelings. Our method is to obtain self-witnessing reports made by drivers who talk out loud into a tape recorder while they are driving (James, 1986). These *concurrent* reports are superior to *retrospective* reports obtained by interviewing or testing drivers (Ericsson & Simon, 1984; Bloom & Broder, 1950). After-the fact data depend on recollection and other distortions, while concurrent reports allow drivers to label thoughts and emotions as they occur, thus increasing the reliability, validity, and comprehensiveness of the report.

THREE DOMAINS OF DRIVING BEHAVIOR: AFFECTIVE, COGNITIVE, SENSORIMOTOR

Since Aristotle, philosophers and educators have agreed that human capacities are organized into three distinct areas corresponding to the threefold human nature: the will, the understanding, and the actions of an individual. Modern psychologists also function

within this threefold system of behavior (Bloom et al., 1956; Krathwohl et al.; 1964; Geller & Ludwig, 1990; Jakobovits & Nahl-Jakobovits, 1987). Affective behavior includes the will, feelings, motives, needs, values, preferences and anything that pertains to the goal-directedness of people's actions.

For example, signaling before changing lanes is a sensorimotor behavior embedded in an affective context: the driver is motivated to avoid errors. In the absence of this affective motive, drivers commit errors and fail to signal. Learning to maintain the motive to avoid driving errors is an important affective driving skill. Frequently, affective driving errors occur when conflict between motives is experienced, as when a driver is in a hurry and speeds. The feeling of wanting to be cautious and law abiding is weakened by the feeling of time pressure or urgency.

Cognitive behavior includes understanding, thoughts, strategies, judgments and anything that pertains to the decision-making and analytic aspects of people's actions. For example, signaling before changing lanes is not only embedded in an affective (motivational) context, but also in a cognitive context. The driver processes information with common sense logic. Learning to make correct judgments in routine driving incidents is an important cognitive driving skill (Schuster, 1978). Frequently, cognitive driving errors occur when an illogical sequence of interpretation leads to an incorrect decision, for instance: "I know there is nobody behind me, therefore I won't bother signaling this time." This erroneous decision overlooks several factors that should be taken into account: "There may be somebody in my blind spot" or "There may be somebody from the front that might turn in" or "There may be a policeman watching," etc. A comprehensive theory of driving behavior has the capacity to identify correct and incorrect decision-making, and specify how cognitions interact with affections to produce overt acts.

Sensorimotor (or psychomotor) behavior includes all experience that is mediated through sensory and motor channels. For example, signaling before changing lanes is a complex psychomotor action involving eye-hand coordination, motor readiness to apply the brakes if needed, checking mirrors, twisting of neck to look over the shoulder, breathing changes, and less visible physiological reactions. As well, silent or overt verbalizations may occur (e.g., "Oops, I didn't see that car!" or "OK, now, watch out for that car"). A realistic driving theory includes the specification of the sequence of sensorimotor actions of drivers and how these are influenced by the concurrent affective and cognitive behaviors (James & Nahl, 1988).

Driving psychology defines driving behavior in terms of these three inter-related domains of human behavior. Driver education and training need to explicitly address each of the three domains of driving behavior (James, Nahl & Nerenberg, 1998). Different instructional activities are needed for acquiring driving competence in each of the three domains. Similarly, when testing the competence of drivers, all three domains must be assessed by suitable and valid quiz items (James & Nahl, 1988).

Driving is a complex of behaviors acting together as cultural norms transmitted by parents, other adults, books, movies, TV. Driving inherently involves taking risks, making errors, and losing emotional self-control. Drivers need training in risk taking, error recovery, and emotional control under emergency or provocation conditions. Driving norms exist in three domains: affective, cognitive, and sensorimotor.
The primary affective driving norms are:

- Valuing territoriality, dominance, and competition as a desirable driving style
- Condoning intolerance of diversity (in needs and competencies of other drivers)
- Supporting retribution ethics (or vigilante motives with desire to punish or amend)
- Social acceptance of impulsivity and risk taking in driving
- Condoning aggressiveness, disrespect, and the expression of hostility

These affective norms are negative and anti-social. Socio-cultural methods must be used to reduce the attractiveness of these aggressive norms and to increase the attractiveness of positive and cooperative driver roles.

The primary cognitive driving norms are:

- Inaccurate risk assessment
- Biased and self-serving explanations of driving incidents
- Lack of emotional intelligence as a driver (Goleman, 1986)
- Low or underdeveloped level of moral involvement (dissociation and egotism)

These cognitive norms are inaccurate and inadequate. Self-training and self-improvement techniques must be taught so that drivers can better manage risk and regulate their own emotional behavior.

The primary sensorimotor driving norms are:

- Automatized habits (unselfconscious or unaware of one's style and risk habits)
- Errors of perception (e.g., distance, speed, initiating wrong action)

- Lapses (in attention or performance due to fatigue, sleepiness, pain, drugs, boredom, inadequate training or preparation)

These sensorimotor norms are inadequate and immature. Lifelong driver self-improvement exercises are necessary to reach more competent habits of driving.

CONCLUSION

Obtaining a driver's license cannot be considered the end of driver training. Continued driver training in the form of guided lifelong self-improvement activities is essential for acquiring new skills. New skills are needed as driving gets more complex:

- Multi-tasking
- Reading maps on screens
- Using computers
- Note taking
- Talking on phone
- Allocating adequate driving time
- Coping with hostility

The new driving norms that socio-cultural methods create will be spontaneously adopted by the current generation of children. Individualistic and competitive expectations lead drivers to be aggressive and hostile towards other road users. This aggressive frame of mind can generalize to other interactive settings such as the workplace and the family, creating higher stress and greater conflict. Similarly, the more supportive expectations can be expected to generalize to other social settings, creating less stress and conflict, and more satisfaction and calm. Thus, driving psychology is also a health-enhancing practice.

The enormous driving challenge that is facing our society today can become an opportunity for strengthening the community and evolving more humane and compassionate relations. Instead of mutual antagonism, we can express mutual support. Supportive driving styles can help us make peace on our highways, streets and parking lots. We must, or else we will see an increase of hostile behavior in public places, such as parking lot rage, pedestrian rage, bicyclists rage, air rage, sports rage, neighbor rage, and so on. Let's not go that route! And yet more and more people will be tempted to slide into these dangerous forms of behavior due to social imitation and emotional contagion.

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