

Sadness ups what people willing to spend

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PITTSBURGH, Pa., Feb. 8 (UPI) -- People who feel sad and self-focused spend more money to acquire the same commodities than those in a neutral emotional state, U.S. researchers say.

Researchers Cynthia Cryder of Carnegie Mellon University, Jennifer Lerner of Harvard University, James J. Gross of Stanford University and Ronald E. Dahl of the University of Pittsburgh say the heightened self-focus drives the connection.

Study participants viewed either a sad video clip or one devoid of human emotion and afterward participants could purchase an ordinary commodity, such as a water bottle, at various prices. The findings, presented at the Society for Social and Personality Psychology's annual meeting, said the participants randomly assigned to the sad condition offered almost 300 percent more money to buy the product than "neutral" participants.

Sadness tends to increase self-focus, making the increased spending prompted by sadness difficult to avoid, the researchers explained.

The "misery is not miserly" effect may be even more dramatic in real life when people feel intense sadness.

The findings are to be published in the June edition of Psychological Science.

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