2.3 The art of noticing: let's have coffee!

Objective

This exercise aims to observe and assess users' emotional responses in a live situation and map those reactions towards the artifacts and the design details that may cause such responses.

We suggest analyzing the experience of having a coffee by comparing two different situations in which people typically drink coffee (e.g. breakfast, with others, at work). The main output should be a description of the users' experience in terms of the causal chains between what they do (behaviour), how they do it (design artifacts), and how they feel (emotion). An additional output is to come up with proposals that could minimize negative emotions by introducing creative improvements in the design of the process and the tools (the comparison between diverse situations can help to import things that work in a case into another similar context).

Figure 2.3a: Café De Flore, an historic coffee shop in Paris frequented by famous writers in the 40s and the 50s such as Sartre and Camus.
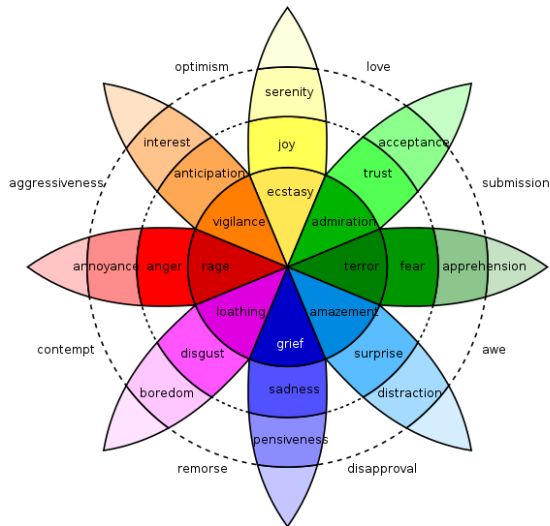
Figure 2.3b: the Plutchick wheel of emotions

Instructions

1. Identify two common situations in which people have coffee. Here are some suggestions, but feel free to pick up something that is not included in this list. Whatever you pick, make sure the experience is accessible to you, meaning that you will have to be able to observe users while they are having coffee:
   a. Coffee at Starbucks versus coffee at Dunkin Donuts
   b. Coffee at home versus coffee in a coffee shop
   c. Coffee at home versus coffee at the office
   d. …
2. Observe users in the situation in terms of
   a. Behaviours.
   b. Emotions you presume they feel or manifest.
   c. Design details of the artifacts that are used in the situations. These include anything that is relevant such as coffee mug, coffee machine, features of the space where users are having coffee including both hard features such as furniture, and soft ones such as ambience and lighting.
3. Collect written and visual notes, including pictures if you can and are allowed to.
4. Following the provided example, summarize your findings in the following table by identifying the relationship between users' behaviour, selected artifacts that are supposed to support the behaviour, and the observed emotional response (for this one you can use your own label or an existing emotions dictionary or framework such as the Plutchick's wheel of emotion – fig. 2.3b). An exhaustive analysis would be very time consuming, so for the purpose of the exercise and depending on the available time and the circumstances, you can limit your analysis to a couple of behaviours and associated artifacts.

Situation: *Coffee at Starbucks VS coffee at Dunkin Donuts*

List of behaviours	Observed emotional responses at Starbuck's		Observed emotional responses at Dunkin Donuts	

	Supporting artifacts	*Observed Emotional responses*	*Supporting artifacts*	*Observed Emotional responses*
Ordering coffee	'Line starts here' sign	Boredom, impatience People checking their phones while waiting	Directed line through stanchion poles	
	Online (app or website) with loyalty points program	Mild excitement		
Paying				
Sitting				
Drinking coffee				
Socializing				
Working				

1. As an additional step, try to identify possible solutions aimed at minimizing users' frustrations for the behaviours analyzed in each situation (one possible way to do this is to import ideas from a situation to another).

References

Plutchik, Robert (1991). *The Emotions*. University Press of America