

**Positive Interpersonal Processes**

Sara B. Algoe<sup>i</sup>

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Word count: 2,815

References: 41

*Manuscript In Press at Current Directions in Psychological Science (Oct. 21, 2018). Note that this is the pre-print and final published proofs may have minor modifications.*

## POSITIVE INTERPERSONAL PROCESSES

### ABSTRACT

Good relationships are characterized by frequent positive social interactions, such as having fun together, sharing laughs, doing kind things for one another, and expressing gratitude. Here, building on rapidly-emerging findings, for the first time I articulate core features of *positive interpersonal processes*. This approach leads to useful specificity in predictions about relationship consequences and simultaneously contributes to both affective and relationship science, two domains that span disciplines within the psychological literature. In turn, basic research on everyday positive interpersonal processes points toward new avenues for understanding the well-established links between good relationships and health.

## POSITIVE INTERPERSONAL PROCESSES

### **Positive Interpersonal Processes**

One of the most robustly-supported conclusions from the psychological literature is that social relationships play a vital role in human health and well-being. Beyond their influence on a wide range of behaviors central to everyday functioning (Reis, Collins, & Berscheid, 2000), high-quality relationships are robustly positively associated with happiness and mental health (Thoits, 2011), physical health (Uchino, 2009), and even forecast longer life (Holt-Lunstad, Smith, & Layton, 2010). Yet why? To address this question, many researchers have focused on the well-known link between stress (i.e., highly arousing negative emotion) and health. For example, high-quality relationship partners may help calm you down when things are not going well, or people in high-quality relationships may not fight as frequently or as intensely. But recent research has revealed that high-quality relationships are not simply marked by lower negative emotions. Additionally, the best relationships are infused with doses of positive emotions.

As a thought experiment, consider what *attracts* you to your favorite relationship partners, whether it's a favorite relative, friend, neighbor, or co-worker. I wager that it's the good stuff. Having fun, giving encouragement, sharing laughs, being kind, and celebrating together draws us in and keeps us coming back for more. Over the past several years, I have been using a framework to define and study positive interpersonal processes, influenced by theories from both affective and relationship science. In my own work, it has proven useful for understanding how social interactions infused with positive emotions play out. I describe some foundational theoretical assertions from the framework here to illustrate that pushing for specificity in positive emotions and in aspects of interpersonal processes simultaneously enhances basic research across

## POSITIVE INTERPERSONAL PROCESSES

disciplines. In turn, these new insights may open doors for understanding the puzzle of how high-quality relationships contribute to health.

### **(Positive) Emotions in the Center of the Interpersonal Process**

Many relationships researchers try to understand how certain interpersonal processes produce *beneficial outcomes* for the members of ongoing relationships, and these are sometimes referred to as “positive” processes. However, given recent evidence regarding the value of positive emotions in social life, reviewed here, and other work suggesting objectively “good” behaviors can produce “bad” outcomes (McNulty & Fincham, 2012), I reserve the term “positive” to refer to certain situations: when positive *emotion* is at the heart of the interaction. A positive interpersonal process is a social dynamic in which one person’s thoughts, feelings, and behavior changes another’s, fueled by positive emotion.<sup>ii</sup>

Broadly speaking, to specify “positive” in the label adds opportunities for precision in predictions from relationship scientists whereas to specify “interpersonal process” adds opportunities for precision in predictions from affective scientists. More concretely, two decades ago, Fredrickson advanced the groundbreaking hypothesis that positive emotions – as a class -- help promote survival by *building resources* over time (Fredrickson, 1998), and this novel “build” hypothesis has been confirmed via experimental evidence for change in self-reported *social* resources (among other types of resources) due to change in daily positive emotions (e.g., Fredrickson et al., 2008). In addition to explicit hypotheses about building up or growing relationships rather than merely preventing their decline, subsequent research revealed that theorists can get more specific about both the positive emotion under investigation and the type of social

## POSITIVE INTERPERSONAL PROCESSES

outcome: different types of positive emotions, like joy, gratitude, awe, and curiosity, lead to distinct social consequences (e.g., Algoe & Haidt, 2009; Campos, Shiota, Keltner, Gonzaga, & Goetz, 2013). In part, focusing on the specific positive emotion will be beneficial for theorists because emotions have long been theorized to serve adaptive social functions (e.g., Keltner & Haidt, 1999; van Kleef, 2009), with any given emotion helping to coordinate social interactions in specific ways, in the moment. For relationship scientists, then, understanding emotion theory – and more about the specific positive emotions under investigation – can help with predictions regarding relationship processes.

At the same time, for affective scientists, taking seriously the possibility that emotions coordinate social interactions means getting systematic about predictions for both members of the dyad –that is, recognizing the *inter*-personal process, not only the *intra*-personal process that is typically investigated. This might include taking into account the type of relationship the dyad-members have, for example strangers versus lovers, which would set norms and expectations (e.g., willingness to express emotion; Graham et al., 2008). More fundamentally, this approach encourages systematic predictions regarding Person A's influence (X) on emotion (M), and subsequent impact (Y) *on Person B*. Finally, relationship scientists have argued that emotions happen most frequently and intensely in the context of *ongoing* relationships (Berscheid & Ammazzalorso, 2004), which implies faster gains in discovery might happen from studying positive interpersonal processes in meaningful relationships – such as those with loved ones, friends, and co-workers -- then generalizing to interactions with strangers, rather than vice-versa. Regardless, because in *good, high-quality relationships* positive

## POSITIVE INTERPERSONAL PROCESSES

emotions happen frequently, it behooves researchers to better understand the role of positive emotions in interpersonal dynamics.

Next, to illustrate the potential of this approach, I review evidence regarding three examples of positive-emotion-fueled moments common in high-quality relationships. Existing evidence does not comprehensively test the full positive interpersonal process for each example. However, these examples are useful because one underscores the value of studying both people in the social dyad, another reveals the independence of positive relative to negative interpersonal processes, and a third showcases specificity among positive emotions.

**Amusement: Sharing laughter.** Many people assume that laughter is good for relationships. They may assume this because laughter is highly social — it's more likely to happen around other people than when alone (Provine & Fischer, 1989), and is actually contagious (Provine, 1992). But what if, while hanging out with a friend, one's laughter at an amusing joke is not reciprocated? Can one conclude that the laughter is good for the relationship?

Recent research emphasizes the value in focusing on both members of the social dyad, showing that that *shared laughter* – simultaneous laughter by all members of a social interaction – is a marker of high quality relationships (Kurtz & Algoe, 2015). In one study, couples in romantic relationships talked about how they first met, which kicked up a lot of positive emotion and laughter. Their behavior – actual time spent laughing, either alone or at the same time as the partner – was documented from their videorecorded conversations. Results showed that the extent to which the couple *shared laughter*, over and above time spent laughing alone, was positively associated with their

## POSITIVE INTERPERSONAL PROCESSES

feelings of closeness and safety with their partner (Kurtz & Algoe, 2015). Laughing at the same time as someone else, about the same thing, suggests that you see the world in the same way: whatever event or statement caused the laughter caused it in both of you. In other research, even new acquaintances who laughed together thought they would like each other more specifically because their shared laughter caused them to see themselves as *more similar* to the new potential friend (Kurtz & Algoe, 2017). While there is a growing body of literature on the laughter of one person, this research expanded the investigative lens to incorporate both dyad members, and in so doing introduces new considerations regarding the roles of amusement and laughter in social life.

**Joy: Disclosing good news.** When something good happens to us, up to 80 percent of the time we *share that good news* with someone else (Algoe & Haidt, 2009; Gable, Reis, Impett, & Asher, 2004). This simple and natural act, which researchers call *capitalizing*, typically makes people feel better about the event as well as themselves (Gable et al., 2004; Langston, 1994). More than that, however, capitalizing provides an important opportunity for connection with the social partner with whom you shared the news.

How? First, let's acknowledge the well-established finding that – despite their best intentions – others are not always good at responding well when *bad things* happen to us (e.g., Collins, Dunkel-Schetter, Lobel, & Scrimshaw, 1993). Using videorecorded conversations between romantic partners, researchers showed that this is also true when *good things* happen to us – sometimes even loved ones respond to joyous news by pointing out the downsides of the situation (Gable, Gonzaga, & Strachman, 2006). However, when the partner does respond in a more active and constructive way – that is,

## POSITIVE INTERPERSONAL PROCESSES

when the partner shares in the joy -- the more the discloser feels that the partner understands, validates, and cares about them (Gable et al., 2006; Reis, Smith, Carmichael, Caprariello, Tsai, Rodrigues, & Maniaci, 2010). Critically, having a partner respond well when something goes right signals that this person will be there for you when things go wrong in the future more strongly than their response when things go wrong in the present. The authors suggest that this is likely because we *expect* partners to support us for negative events yet it's harder to effectively provide support for negative versus positive events, thus, when partners respond well to the positive, it's simply a *clearer* signal of their love and support (Gable et al., 2012); in turn, this sense of security that someone will be there for you in the future is one of the most robust predictors of mental and physical health (Uchino, 2009). The research on sharing joy is the clearest example in the literature of the value of positive interpersonal processes relative to negative.

**Gratitude: Kindness begets kindness.** People do things for one another all the time. It might be helping a friend proofread a paper, bringing them coffee, or getting them a birthday gift. These actions may go unnoticed because they are expected, cause negative emotions because they are unwelcomed, or sometimes, such actions trigger the positive emotion of gratitude in the beneficiary (Algoe, 2012). When they do, it's because the kind gesture not only produces a positive outcome ("Mmm – coffee!"), but because the person's gesture momentarily stands out ("You didn't have to do that!"). Gratitude draws our attention to people who have just demonstrated that they get our needs and are motivated to look out for us – they are *responsive to us* (Algoe, Haidt, & Gable, 2008). In turn, the emotion coordinates the thoughts, feelings, and behavior of the grateful person

## POSITIVE INTERPERSONAL PROCESSES

in ways that bind them more closely with the kind person (Algoe, 2012). That is, gratitude strengthens relationships with high-quality partners.

There are many avenues through which this can happen, but just saying “thank you” goes a long way. For example, benefactors who were thanked for helping a stranger were more likely to leave contact information in case of a future encounter (Williams & Bartlett, 2015). And key evidence comes from ongoing relationships: when a benefactor perceives the thank you as being especially responsive, the benefactors themselves are more satisfied in the relationship as long as six months later (Algoe, Fredrickson, & Gable, 2013). Critically, these results were independent from how responsive that same partner was when the benefactor shared good news (i.e., capitalized) during a different lab task. Research on the positive interpersonal process surrounding gratitude provides one of the clearest examples in the literature regarding *specificity among* positive interpersonal processes.

### **Summary of Themes**

I have focused above on moments that are quintessentially interpersonal and for which dyadic evidence exists. However, many other positive emotions should drive various social interactions, such as **love** (Fredrickson, 2016; Gonzaga, Turner, Keltner, Campos, & Altemus, 2006), **awe** (Bai, Maruskin, Chen, Gordon, Stellar, . . . Keltner, 2017), **pride** (Martens & Tracy, 2013; Williams & DeSteno, 2009), **admiration** (Algoe & Haidt, 2009), and **curiosity** or **interest** (Kashdan & Roberts, 2004). Regardless of the positive emotion, key insights from the last two decades of research and theory in affective and relationship science can guide research in this domain, whether you are new to the emotions literature or new to the interpersonal process literature. First, positive

## POSITIVE INTERPERSONAL PROCESSES

emotion is not the same as a lack of negative emotion – it provides fuel for growth (Fredrickson, 1998). Second, not all positive emotions are the same, and neither are all beneficial relationship outcomes, so we can and should get more precise in our theorizing: affective and relationship scientists should be talking to one another regarding constructs and measurement.

Third, since at least the 1980s, relationship scientists have had sophisticated models of social dynamics that are helpful prototypes for thinking through the types of predictions we can and should be making about the intricacies of these interactions (e.g., Reis & Shaver, 1988); we now have the statistical sophistication, too (e.g., Bolger & Laurenceau, 2013; Lederman, Macho, & Kenny, 2011). As such, we will learn much by moving beyond the thoughts or behavior of the individual experiencing the positive emotion and widening the theoretical lens to consider the thoughts, feelings, behavior, and biology of each member of the dyad. Fourth, recognizing that, theoretically, (Berscheid & Ammazalorso, 2004), emotions are most often experienced and expressed in the context of ongoing relationships means researchers can make predictions about how any given type of social interaction could set the stage for the next, and the implications for the relationship, over time. Finally, adding temporal considerations means researchers can consider both short and long-term consequences; for example, a positive interpersonal process that produces short-term benefits (e.g., closer through shared laughter) might produce long-term consequences (e.g., trouble being productive together).

**Why does it Matter? Changing the Story on Pathways to Health**

## POSITIVE INTERPERSONAL PROCESSES

In good relationships, positive interpersonal processes happen frequently (Gable & Haidt, 2005; Gottman, 1994). Because emotions coordinate mind, body, and behavior in the moment (e.g., Keltner & Haidt, 1999), with implications for future interactions with a social partner, this frequency sets the stage for long-term cumulative impact on health. Critically, I suggest that rather than looking at how positive emotions might *reduce stress* to bring about health, instead, deeper understanding of positive interpersonal processes would open the door to a host of other potential pathways to health.

Here are three examples of possible pathways – currently uncharted but theoretically plausible – that have deep roots in our evolutionary history: social affiliation (contrasted with isolation), grooming, and sex. First, people with whom we have more positive interpersonal interactions are more attractive to be around. This may simply lead to spending more time in the presence of the other person (Kirchier, 1988); in turn, a recent review suggests the mere presence of others we like and trust has several concurrent effects that would produce less physiological activation of the body (e.g., vigilance to threat is less necessary than when alone), thus would cumulatively tax the body less (Beckes & Coan, 2011). Second, the attraction or simply time spent may lead to more grooming or affectionate, non-sexual touch, like pats on the back, hugs, and kisses. A recent review suggests that receiving affectionate touch releases endorphins, which make people feel good (Jakubiak & Feeney, 2017); in turn, independent of social context, feeling good is associated with its own downstream physical health benefits, theoretically due to the activation of several psychobiological processes (Dockray & Steptoe, 2010). Finally, in a romantic context, more positive interpersonal processes may promote better

## POSITIVE INTERPERSONAL PROCESSES

sex, which facilitates oxytocin release (Carmichael, Humbert, Dixen, Palmisano, Greenleaf, & Davidson, 1987); in turn, oxytocin has been characterized as cardioprotective (Gutkowska & Jankowski, 2012). Each of these potential pathways is fueled by the positive emotion at the heart of social interactions – not the reduction of negative emotions. The latest theory and evidence merging affective and relationship science to showcase *positive interpersonal processes* therefore opens exiting doors for discovery regarding why good relationships are good for health.

### **Conclusions**

More and more research focuses on processes that people intuitively understand to be important – we are in our favorite relationships because we were and continue to be drawn to those people. We share joys, we share laughs, we feel admiration, we express gratitude. Because of the frequency of these positive interpersonal processes within ongoing high-quality relationships, they have opportunity for impact. One area of impact is on the trajectory of the relationship itself, which is meaningful in its own right (Reis et al., 2000). This recent basic research on everyday positive interpersonal processes reveals another intriguing possibility, too: due to a focus on negative emotional processes, we researchers have overlooked key reasons that good relationships are good for health. I look forward to seeing future evidence from this next exiting frontier.

**Recommended Readings**

Algoe, S. B. (2012). Find, remind, and bind: The functions of gratitude in everyday relationships. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 6(6), 455-469.  
doi.org/10.1111/j.1751-9004.2012.00439

- ❖ An overview evidence for one positive interpersonal process that is dissociable from others.

Gable, S. L., Gosnell, C. L., Maisel, N. C., & Strachman, A. (2012). Safely testing the alarm: Close others' responses to personal positive events. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 103(6), 963-981. doi:10.1037/a0029488

- ❖ Empirical evidence underscoring the unique added value of positive interpersonal processes, over and above those that reduce negative emotions.

Ramsey, M. A., & Gentzler, A. L. (2015). An upward spiral: Bidirectional associations between positive affect and positive aspects of close relationships across the life span. *Developmental Review*, 3658-104. doi:10.1016/j.dr.2015.01.003

- ❖ A review emphasizing the wide variety of relationships for which positive interpersonal processes are relevant and shows how relationships produce further positive emotions.

## POSITIVE INTERPERSONAL PROCESSES

Sbarra, D. A., & Coan, J. A. (2018). Relationships and health: The critical role of affective science. *Emotion Review*, *10*(1), 40-54. doi:

10.1177/1754073917696584

- ❖ Makes the case for emotions as coordinating links between relationships and health.

Shiota, M. N., Campos, B., Oveis, C., Hertenstein, M. J., Simon-Thomas, E. & Keltner, D. (2017). Beyond happiness: Building a science of discrete positive emotions.

*American Psychologist*, *72*(7), 617-643. doi: 10.1037/a0040456

- ❖ Provides an overview of evidence for dissociable consequences of various positive emotions.

**References**

- Algoe, S. B. (2012). Find, remind, and bind: The functions of gratitude in everyday relationships. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 6(6), 455-469. doi.org/10.1111/j.1751-9004.2012.00439
- Algoe, S. B., Fredrickson, B. L., & Gable, S. L. (2013). The social functions of the emotion of gratitude via expression. *Emotion*, 13(4), 605. doi.org/10.1037/a0032701
- Algoe, S. B., & Haidt, J. (2009). Witnessing excellence in action: The “other-praising” emotions of elevation, gratitude, and admiration. *Journal of Positive Psychology*, 4(2), 105-127. doi.org/10.1080/17439760802650519
- Algoe, S. B., Haidt, J., & Gable, S. L. (2008). Beyond reciprocity: Gratitude and relationships in everyday life. *Emotion*, 8(3), 425. doi.org/10.1037/1528-3542.8.3.425
- Bai, Y., Maruskin, L. A., Chen, S., Gordon, A. M., Stellar, J. E., McNeil, G. D., & ... Keltner, D. (2017). Awe, the diminished self, and collective engagement: Universals and cultural variations in the small self. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 113(2), 185-209. doi:10.1037/pspa0000087
- Beckes, L., & Coan, J. A. (2011). Social baseline theory: The role of social proximity in emotion and economy of action. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 5(12), 976-988. doi:10.1111/j.1751-9004.2011.00400.x
- Berscheid, E., & Ammazalorso, H. (2004). Emotional Experience in Close Relationships. In M. B. Brewer, M. Hewstone, M. B. Brewer, M. Hewstone (Eds.), *Emotion and motivation* (pp. 47-69). Malden: Blackwell Publishing.

## POSITIVE INTERPERSONAL PROCESSES

Bolger, N., & Laurenceau, J. (2013). *Intensive longitudinal methods: An introduction to diary and experience sampling research*. New York, NY, US: Guilford Press.

Campos, B., Shiota, M. N., Keltner, D., Gonzaga, G. C., & Goetz, J. L. (2013). What is shared, what is different? Core relational themes and expressive displays of eight positive emotions. *Cognition and Emotion*, 27(1), 37-52.  
doi:10.1080/02699931.2012.683852

Carmichael, M. S., Humbert, R., Dixen, J., Palmisano, G., Greenleaf, W., Davidson, J. M. (1987). Plasma oxytocin increases in the human sexual response. *Journal of Clinical Endocrinology and Metabolism*, Jan;64(1):27-31.

Cohen, S. (2004). Social relationships and health. *American Psychologist*, 59, 676-684.

Dockray, S., & Steptoe, A. (2010). Positive affect and psychobiological processes. *Neuroscience and Biobehavioral Reviews*, 35(1), 69-75.  
doi:10.1016/j.neubiorev.2010.01.006

Fredrickson, B. L. (1998). What good are positive emotions?. *Review of General Psychology*, 2(3), 300.

Fredrickson, B. L. (2016). Love: Positivity resonance as a fresh, evidence-based perspective on an age-old topic. In L. F. Barrett, M. Lewis, & J. M. Haviland (Eds.), *Handbook of Emotions, 4th edition* (pp. 847-858). New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Fredrickson, B. L., Cohn, M. A., Coffey, K. A., Pek, J., & Finkel, S. M. (2008). Open hearts build lives: Positive emotions, induced through lovingkindness meditation, build consequential personal resources. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 95, 1045-1062.

## POSITIVE INTERPERSONAL PROCESSES

- Gable, S. L., Gonzaga, G. C., & Strachman, A. (2006). Will you be there for me when things go right? Supportive responses to positive event disclosures. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 91*(5), 904-917. doi:10.1037/0022-3514.91.5.904
- Gable, S. L., & Haidt, J. (2005). What (and why) is positive psychology?. *Review of General Psychology, 9*(2), 103-110. doi:10.1037/1089-2680.9.2.103
- Gable, S. L., Gosnell, C. L., Maisel, N. C., & Strachman, A. (2012). Safely testing the alarm: Close others' responses to personal positive events. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 103*(6), 963-981. doi:10.1037/a0029488
- Gable, S. L., Reis, H. T., Impett, E. A., & Asher, E. R. (2004). What do you do when things go right? The intrapersonal and interpersonal benefits of sharing positive events. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 87*(2), 228-245. doi:10.1037/0022-3514.87.2.228
- Gottman, J. M. (1994). *What predicts divorce? The relationship between marital processes and marital outcomes*. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Gutkowska, J., & Janowski, M. (2012). Oxytocin revisited: its role in cardiovascular regulation. *Journal of Neuroendocrinology, Apr; 24*(4): 599-608. doi:10.1111/j.1365-2826.2011.02235.x.
- Holt-Lunstad, J., Smith, T. B., & Layton, J. B. (2010). Social relationships and mortality risk: A meta-analytic review, *PLOS Medicine, 7*:e1000316
- Jakubiak, B. K., & Feeney, B. C. (2017). Affectionate touch to promote relational, psychological, and physical well-being in adulthood: A theoretical model and

## POSITIVE INTERPERSONAL PROCESSES

- review of the research. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 21(3), 228-252. doi:10.1177/1088868316650307
- Kashdan, T. B., & Roberts, J. E. (2004). Trait and state curiosity in the genesis of intimacy: Differentiation from related constructs. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, 23(6), 792-816. doi:10.1521/jscp.23.6.792.54800
- Keltner, D., & Haidt, J. (1999). Social functions of emotions at four levels of analysis. *Cognition & Emotion*, 13, 505–521.
- Kirchier, E. (1988). Marital happiness and interaction in everyday surroundings: A time-sample diary approach for couples. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 5, 375–382. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0265407588053007>
- Kurtz, L. E., & Algoe, S. B. (2015). Putting laughter in context: Shared laughter as a behavioral indicator of relationship well-being. *Personal Relationships*, doi:10.1111/pere.12095
- Kurtz, L. E., & Algoe, S. B. (2017). When sharing a laugh means sharing more: Testing the role of shared laughter on short-term interpersonal consequences. *Journal of Nonverbal Behavior*. doi:10.1007/s10919-016-0245-9
- Langston, C. A. (1994). Capitalizing on and coping with daily-life events: Expressive responses to positive events. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 67, 1112–1125.
- Ledermann, T., Macho, S., & Kenny, D. A. (2011). Assessing mediation in dyadic data using the actor-partner interdependence model. *Structural Equation Modeling*, 18(4), 595-612. doi:10.1080/10705511.2011.607099

## POSITIVE INTERPERSONAL PROCESSES

- McNulty, J. K., & Fincham, F. D. (2012). Beyond positive psychology? Toward a contextual view of psychological processes and well-being. *American Psychologist*, 67(2), 101-110. Doi: 10.1037.a0024572
- Martens, J. P., & Tracy, J. L. (2013). The emotional origins of a social learning bias: Does the pride expression cue copying?. *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, 4(4), 492-499. doi:10.1177/1948550612457958
- Provine, R. P., & Fischer, K. R. (1989). Laughing, smiling, and talking: Relation to sleeping and social context in humans. *Ethology*, 83(4), 295–305.
- Provine, R. R. (1992). Contagious laughter: Laughter is a sufficient stimulus for laughs and smiles. *Bulletin of the Psychonomic Society*, 30(1), 1–4.
- Reis, H. T., Collins, W. A., & Berscheid, E. (2000). The relationship context of human behavior and development. *Psychological Bulletin*, 126(6), 844-872. doi:10.1037/0033-2909.126.6.844
- Reis, H. T., & Shaver, P. (1988). Intimacy as an interpersonal process. *Handbook of Personal Relationships*, 24(3), 367-389.
- Reis, H. T., Smith, S. M., Carmichael, C. L., Caprariello, P. A., Tsai, F., Rodrigues, A., & Maniaci, M. R. (2010). Are you happy for me? How sharing positive events with others provides personal and interpersonal benefits. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 99(2), 311-329. doi:10.1037/a0018344
- Thoits, P. A. (2011). Mechanisms linking social ties and support to physical and mental health. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 52(2), 145-161.

## POSITIVE INTERPERSONAL PROCESSES

Uchino, B. N. (2009). Understanding the links between social support and physical health: A lifespan perspective with emphasis on the separability of perceived and received support. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 4, 236-255.

Van Kleef, G. A. (2009). How emotions regulate social life: The emotions as social information (EASI) model. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 18(3), 184-188.

Williams, L. A., & DeSteno, D. (2009). Pride: Adaptive social emotion or seventh sin?. *Psychological Science*, 20(3), 284-288. doi:10.1111/j.1467-9280.2009.02292.x

---

<sup>i</sup> Address correspondence to: Sara B. Algoe, CB #3270 Davie Hall, Chapel Hill, NC 27599; algoe@unc.edu.

<sup>ii</sup> By this definition, a negative interpersonal process has negative emotion at its center, even if the interaction is about *reducing* negative emotion and therefore *increasing* beneficial outcomes (e.g., Graham, Huang, Clark, & Helgeson, 2008).