4th Annual
Positive Emotions
Pre-Conference
of the Society for Affective Science

April 27, 2017
Burroughs Room,
Westin Boston Waterfront
Boston, MA
SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

8:15 - 9:00am  CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST

9:00 - 10:35am  WELCOME AND SESSION A

Keely Muscatell, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill 20
Michael Norton, Harvard University 20
BoKyung Park, Stanford University 8
Brendan Gaesser, University at Albany 6
Yang Wu, Massachusetts Institute of Technology 6
Amie Gordon, University of California, San Francisco 6

10:35 - 10:50am  BREAK

10:50 – 12:15pm  SESSION B

Gregory Bryant, University of California, Los Angeles 20
Shelly Gable, University of California, Santa Barbara 20
Claudia Haase, Northwestern University 8
Kuan-Hua Chen, University of California, Berkeley 6
Aaron Weidman, University of British Columbia 6
Adrienne Wood, University of Wisconsin 6

12:15 - 1:30pm  LUNCH (MARINA BALLROOM) AND POSTER SESSION
(GALLERIA ROOM FROM 1:00-1:30)

1:30 - 2:55pm  SESSION C

Jennifer Stellar, University of Toronto 20
Maya Tamir, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem 20
Joel Davies, University of New South Wales 8
Amy Gentzler, West Virginia University 6
Fausto Gonzalez, University of California, Berkeley 6
Suzanne Shdo, University of California, San Francisco 6

2:55 – 3:10pm  BREAK

3:10 - 4:00pm  KEYNOTE ADDRESS: David DeSteno, Northeastern University

20 minute talk  8 minute talk  6 minute talk
4. **Beyond Anhedonia: Links Between Inflammation and Positive Social Experiences**  
*Muscatt, K.*

Why do people give to others? We propose that people may give more to those whose emotional expressions match how they ideally want to feel (“ideal affect match”). Culture has been shown to shape ideal affect, such that European Americans want to feel excited and enthusiastic more and peaceful and serene less than East Asians. We asked 101 European Americans and 65 Koreans to play multiple trials of a Dictator Game with recipients who varied in emotional expression (excited, calm), race (White, Asian), and sex (male, female). Consistent with their culture’s valued affect, European Americans gave more to recipients with an excited smile than those with a calm smile, whereas Koreans gave more to recipients with a calm smile than those with an excited smile. These findings held regardless of recipient race and sex. We then used fMRI to test possible affective and/or mentalizing mechanisms (N = 36). Increased activity in the nucleus accumbens (NAcc; associated with reward anticipation) preceded giving, but so did decreased activity in the right temporoparietal junction (rTPJ; associated with mentalizing). Ideal affect match enhanced giving selectively through decreased rTPJ activity, suggesting that people may give more to strangers who seem to share their affective values, and therefore invoke trust. These findings may have implications for the cultural specificity of appeals for positive emotionality and policy related to the distribution of resources.

3. **Ideal Affect Match Lowers Neural Hurdles to Giving**  
*Park, B., Blevins, E., Knutson, B., & Tsai, J. L.*

5. **Whoa! Aww ... Ohh ... Hee! and Mmm: Infants’ Nuanced Distinctions about the Probable Causes of Emotional Expressions**  
*Wu, Y., Muentener, P., & Schulz, L. E.*

Can infants map diverse positive emotional expressions to their probable causes? Across two studies (including one pre-registered experiment), we used a preferential-looking task to find that infants as young as 12-17 months (mean: 14.8 months) successfully matched non-verbal vocalizations elicited by funny, exciting, adorable, sympathetic, and delicious images to their probable causes (Experiments 1 and 2; N = 64). Do infants also posit unobserved causes of emotional expressions? In both exploratory and pre-registered experiments, an adult peeked into a box and made one of two distinct positive emotional vocalizations (Experiment 3: “Aww!” or “Mmm!”; Experiment 4: “Aww!” or “Whoa!”; N = 118). Infants (mean: 15.0 months) reaching into the box retrieved either a probable or improbable cause of the reaction. Infants were more likely to search again on incongruent trials. These results suggest that infants make nuanced distinctions among emotions, and infer probable causes of emotional reactions.

5. **Sleep and Positive Emotions**  
*Gordon, A. M., Epel, E., Coccia, M., Puterman, E., & Prather, A. A.*

Sleep problems have become a public health epidemic with recent data suggesting that over 69% of US adults get less sleep than they need. Sleep impacts every aspect of our lives, from mood to mortality. Sleep problems have been widely implicated in mood disorders; however, sleep has historically been absent from studies of typical affective experiences, particularly for positive emotions. Three waves of daily experience data from 183 middle-aged women illustrate the importance of considering the role of sleep in positive affective experiences. Across 21 days of diary data, sleepiness is a stronger predictor of positive affect than negative affect. Sleepiness, sleep quality, and objectively-measured sleep predict reduced intensity across a variety of discrete positive emotions. Sleepiness is also associated with being less engaged during positive affective experiences and having positive emotions last for a shorter amount of time after the experience. These findings highlight the important role of sleep in our emotional lives and the need to consider sleep as a variable of interest when studying positive emotions.

Session A

1. **Beyond Anhedonia: Links Between Inflammation and Positive Social Experiences**  
*Muscatt, K.*

2. **Inequalities in Wealth and Well-Being**  
*Norton, M. I.*

3. **Future Simulations of Prosocial Episodes: The Positive, The Negative, and the Neutral**  
*Gaesser, B.*

Research in affective psychology has focused on investigating how our emotional reactions to people in need shape our moral decisions of whether we should help. Yet helping consists of more than responding to a person in a vacuum but rather a specific event unfolding in time and place, within which the person is embedded. Does the way that we experience the episodic details of a helping event, and the affective signals that arise from this episode, also inform our willingness to help? In Experiments 1 (n = 30, lab) & 2 (n = 100, online), manipulating the spatial representation of imagined future episodes was particularly effective at increasing a willingness to help even when controlling for individual differences in empathic concern (IRI) and prosociality (SVO). Path modeling analyses suggested that scene imagery interacted with theory of mind (enhancing considerations of the thoughts and feelings of the person in need embedded in the helping episode) in facilitating prosocial responses. In Experiments 3 (n = 30, lab) & 4 (n =30, lab), manipulating the affective valence associated with the simulated helping episode impacted prosocial responses, increasing a willingness to help following episodes that elicited positive (versus negative or neutral) affect. Scene imagery and theory of mind systematically coupled together depending on the affective valence of simulated episodes. Considered together, these experiments provide new insight into how the affective signal arising from episodic simulation can guide moral decisions about helping others in need.
Session B

1. Perceiving Laughter Around the World
   Bryant, G. A.

2. The Regulation of Positive Emotions in Close Relationships
   Shelly Gable

3. Positive Emotions in Marriage: Changes, Consequences, and Contexts
   Haase, C. M., Verstaen, A., Bloch, L., Lwi, S. J., Saslow, L. R.,
   Svoboda, R. C., Hittner, E., & Levenson, R. W.

   Intimate relationships are hotbeds of emotions. Past research on emotion in couples has often focused on negative emotions, utilized cross-sectional study designs, and focused on middle-class couples. However, we know less about positive emotions in marriage and their age-related changes, consequences, and contextual moderators. We analyzed data from (1) a 20-year longitudinal study of middle-aged and older long-term married couples (N = 156 couples) that used objectively coded interpersonal emotional behavior during marital conflict and performance-based measures of interpersonal empathic accuracy over time, and (2) a study of married couples with large socioeconomic diversity from the Chicagoland area (N = 27 couples) who reported on their positive emotional experiences after marital conflict discussions and their marital satisfaction. Study 1 showed that (a) positive interpersonal emotional behaviors (specifically joy, humor, and validation) increased over 13 years, consistent with socioemotional selectivity theory. Moreover, (b) greater positive interpersonal emotional behaviors at baseline predicted increases in interpersonal empathic accuracy over 20 years, consistent with the broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions. Study 2 showed that positive emotions predicted greater marital satisfaction for high- but not for low-SES spouses, highlighting the diminished benefits of positive emotions in low-SES contexts. These findings contribute critical knowledge about age-related changes, long-term consequences, and socioeconomic contexts of positive emotions in couples.

4. Moments of Shared Positive Emotion are Associated with Greater Physiological Synchrony Between Husbands and Wives During a Conflict Conversation
   Chen, K.-H., Brown, C., Rothwell, E. S., Fredrickson, B. L., & Levenson, R. W.

   In Love 2.0, Fredrickson defines love as the momentary experience of positivity resonance that occurs during interpersonal interactions. In such moments, interactants are connected via shared positive affect, mutual care and concern, and biobehavioral synchrony. We tested the hypothesis that moments of shared positive affect are associated with greater physiological synchrony in a sample of 150 long-term married couples. Couples discussed a conflict in their relationship for 15-minutes while 5 physiological (4 cardiovascular, 1 electrodermal) measures were recorded second-by-second. For each physiological measure, we computed the synchrony between partners in 30-second moving windows using between-subject correlations. These correlations were then averaged to produce a single time series of moment-to-moment physiological synchrony. Couples’ emotional behaviors were coded second-by-second using the Specific Affect Coding System. Moments of shared positive emotion were defined as seconds in which both partners were coded as displaying positive emotion. Results revealed that physiological synchrony was significantly greater in thirty second periods centered on moments of shared positive emotion compared to moments of shared negative emotion and moments of unshared emotion (i.e., either neutral or unmatched emotion). The finding of greater synchrony for shared positive versus shared negative emotion remained significant after controlling for either the magnitude or synchrony of general somatic activity, indicating that these results were not due to body movements. These findings support the notion that moments of shared positive emotion are characterized by physiology synchrony.

5. Hearing Happiness: Fluctuations in Momentary Happiness can be Measured Without Asking People
   Weidman, A. C., & Dunn, E. W.

   A central goal in the study of well-being is to understand the factors that increase happiness. Achieving this goal often requires tracking people’s momentary happiness repeatedly across time and context, yet these types of intensive assessments can activate participants’ lay theories and suspicions, which can compromise the validity of happiness-enhancing interventions and experience-sampling designs. It would therefore be valuable if momentary happiness could be assessed without asking people. To that end, we developed a method for assessing happiness by analyzing acoustic properties of people’s speech. Participants (N=502) completed one-minute recordings in which they described the events of their day and the content of neutral photographs in a conversational tone of voice for six consecutive days (N=3,922 recordings); at the time of each recording, participants also reported whether they were feeling “more happy” or “less happy” than usual. Acoustic features were then extracted from each recording using the Geneva Minimalist Acoustic Parameter Set (Eyben, Scherer, et al., 2016), and random forest analysis (a form of machine learning) with 10-fold cross-validation was used to classify each recording based on these acoustic features. Classification accuracy was above-chance (Mc63%, p<.001, κ=.27), and several specific acoustic features emerged as important in classifying recordings (e.g., average loudness; loudness peaks per second). These findings represent an initial proof of concept by suggesting that it is possible to capture people’s fluctuations in momentary happiness without asking them, and therefore represent a first step in harnessing machine learning technologies to advance the assessment of momentary emotion.
6. Towards a Social Functional Account of Laughter: 
Distinct Acoustic Features Predict Perceptions of Reward, Affiliation, and Dominance

Wood, A., Martin, J., & Niedenthal, P.

Recent work has identified the physical features of smiles that accomplish three tasks fundamental to human social living: rewarding desirable behavior, establishing and maintaining social bonds, and expressing dominance. The current work extends this social functional account to laughter. Participants (N = 156) rated the degree to which reward, affiliation, or dominance (between-subjects) was conveyed by 50 laughter samples acquired from a commercial sound effects website. We reduced 12 acoustic variables via principal-components analysis and related the four extracted components to the subjective ratings using multivariate regression. These analyses suggest that laughs communicating reward and affiliation have greater voicing, harmonicity, intensity, and minimum pitches, but affiliation laughs are unique in their lower centers of gravity, reduced mouth opening, and increased nasality. Perceptions of dominance were uniquely associated with lower mean and maximum pitches, and reduced pitch variability. This work serves as a first step towards identifying the properties of laughter that signal dominance, affiliation, and reward, extending beyond the traditional true-false dichotomy that is predominant in the laughter literature. Considering laughter and smiles as tools that solve similar problems inherent to social living will likely allow for a better understanding of the origins and functions of both.

Session C

1. The Dark Side of Awe

Stellar, J.

2. The Secret to Happiness: Feeling Good vs. Feeling Right?

Tamir, M.

3. “I’m Proud of You”: Empirical Support for Three Functions of Vicarious Pride

Davies, J., & Williams, L. A.

Pride has attracted substantial interest from affective scientists, especially over the last 10 years. However, most conceptualizations of this emotion are overly narrow in that they fail to acknowledge pride felt when others achieve a success (i.e., vicarious pride). To date, no research has systematically investigated the nature and functions of vicarious pride. Filling this gap, two experiments (autobiographical recall, N = 172; hypothetical vignette, N = 260) and a field study at a university graduation ceremony (N = 115) established consistent support for three theoretically-derived functions of vicarious pride: motivating personal goal pursuit (bs = .24-.48), prompting support for the achieving other’s goal pursuit (bs = .42-.51), and encouraging relationship maintenance with the achieving other (bs = .42-.54). These effects emerged when controlling for generalized positive affect, supporting the argument that vicarious pride carries unique effects on these functions. Further, experimental manipulations focused on key theoretical antecedents (i.e., achievement of another, interpersonal closeness with the achieving other) and were robust in inducing vicarious pride (bs = .44-.59). The indirect effects of the experimental manipulations on the three functions via self-reported vicarious pride were non-zero across all functions and across both experiments (bs = .14-.29). These findings are the first to establish empirical support for these functions of vicarious pride and demonstrate that this emotion can be induced as well as captured in naturalistic settings. As such, this research paves the path for continued research into the intrapersonal and interpersonal functions of this emotion.

4. Kids Just Want to Have Fun: Examining Hedonic Motives in Youth


While hedonic outcomes (pleasure, enjoyment) are considered a positive, central component of well-being, it may be costly to excessively pursue them, especially in comparison to other ways of pursuing well-being (i.e., eudaimonia - longer-term goals of achieving and living life to one’s potential). Consistent with dual-systems models (e.g., Steinberg, 2008), greater hedonic motives or pursuing pleasure also may be especially costly in youth when self-control capacities are still developing (e.g., Steinberg & Duckworth, 2015). We examined hedonic and eudaimonic motives in three samples of youth (76 7-12 year olds, 152 12-18 year olds, and 142 14-18 year olds) in relation to broader positive (e.g., self-control, empathy) and negative outcomes (depressive symptoms, substance use). Assessments were child-, adolescent-, or parent-reported surveys. The results showed that, as hypothesized, hedonic motives were related to some positive outcomes (less depressive symptoms in children), but also some negative outcomes (e.g., marijuana use among adolescents). In contrast, eudaimonic motives were only related to positive outcomes (e.g., higher self-competence, empathy). We also tested for moderated effects because higher eudaimonic motives could be protective against higher levels of hedonic motives. Some moderated effects were found, suggesting that hedonic motives were more often associated with negative outcomes when eudaimonic motives were low (e.g., predicting lower self-control in children or self-regulation in adolescents). Overall, this research offers novel and nuanced evidence on when and for whom hedonic motives may be problematic in youth.
5. **Turning Tried and True Into Novel and New: Other-Focused Construals Lead to Dishabituation for the Self**

Gonzalez, F. J., Jung, M. H., & Critcher, C. R.

People become habituated to music, food, art, and even close others with repeated exposure (Epstein, Temple, Roemmich, & Bouton, 2009; Schellenberg, Peretz, & Vieillard, 2008; Redden, 2008; Galak, Redden, & Kruger, 2009). While habituation seems inevitable after repeated exposure and diminishes emotional experiences, evidence suggests that social processes may play a role in determining responses to the repeated exposure of a stimulus (Campbell, O’Brien, Van Boven, Schwarz, & Ubel, 2014). We predicted that other-focused construals would lead to dishabituation across different stimulus domains, but that this dishabituation would depend in part on the habituation of the other person. We first show that information about another person’s novel experience reduces one’s own habituation toward a negative or positive emotional stimulus even after repeated exposure to that stimulus (Study 1, N=366; Study 2, N=305). This effect occurred even when thinking about the perspective of another person who was not experiencing simultaneously (Study 3, N=819). Likewise, the effect was stronger when considering another person experiencing the same vs. different content (Study 4, N=1,742). In Study 5 (N=245) we tested and found the effect was sensitive to information about another person’s liking of the stimulus. We discuss implications for well-being, and suggest that this social path to dishabituation can promote the experience of positive emotions.

6. **Feeling Good? Heightened Positive Emotional Experience in Frontotemporal Dementia Spectrum Disorders**

Shdo, S. M., Datta, S. Sible, I. J., Holley, S. R., Miller, B. L., Rosen, H. J., & Sturm, V. E.

Recent research demonstrates that positive emotions may be preserved, or even enhanced, in patients with frontotemporal dementia (FTD). We investigated positive emotional reactivity in two FTD subtypes, behavioral variant FTD (bvFTD), an FTD subtype that disrupts social behavior and emotion, and semantic variant primary progressive aphasia (svPPA), a left-hemisphere predominant subtype that primarily affects language. Participants (32 bvFTD, 15 svPPA, and 28 healthy controls) watched 90-second blocks of photographs that elicited a discrete positive emotion: awe, amusement, or nurturant love. Patients reported on their subjective emotional experience after each trial. Facial behavior was later coded from video recordings, and total Duchenne smiles were quantified. The results indicated a main effect of diagnosis in self-reported positive emotional experience during the awe ($p<.05$) and nurturant love ($p<.05$) trials. Post hoc pairwise comparisons revealed greater positive emotional experience in svPPA compared to healthy controls during the nurturant love ($p=.05$) and awe ($p<.05$) trials. Regression analyses (controlling for age and sex) found a significant diagnosis X positive emotional experience interaction when predicting Duchenne smiles ($p<.05$). Although higher positive emotional experience during the nurturant love trial was associated greater Duchenne smiles in healthy controls, this relationship was not present in svPPA. These results suggest that certain positive emotions may be more vulnerable to dysregulation in svPPA, a disorder that primarily targets left-hemisphere systems, and that breakdown in emotion systems that link behavior with experience may be compromised in this disease.

**Keynote Address**

1. **Compassion, Empathy, and Resilience: Threading the Needle**

DeSteno, D.
Poster Session

   Bitterly, T. B., & Schweitzer, M. E.

Across four experiments and one pilot study (total N = 1454), we identify humor as a powerful impression management tool. Specifically, we find that humor enables individuals to elevate their perceived warmth when disclosing positive information (i.e., self-promotion) and when disclosing negative information. In addition to signaling topic-related information, humorous disclosures signal social skill, and boost perceptions of both warmth and competence. We analyze interviews with university career services departments to explore expert advice regarding the use of humor as a self-presentation strategy. We use in-person and survey studies to establish the causal link between the use of humor and impression formation. We discuss implications of our findings for interpersonal perception and impression management.

2. Discontent Detects Its Inverse: Unhappy People Quickly Promote Happy Faces into Awareness
   Raila, H., Chen, Y. C., & Scholl, B. J.

Recent work has begun to explore how basic cognitive phenomena differ across happy vs. unhappy people. Perhaps the most fundamental such phenomenon is visual awareness, or conscious perception. Far too much information comes in through our eyes to fully process, and only a subset of that information can be promoted into conscious experience. Might happy vs. unhappy people, even if they share the same environment, become consciously aware of different components of it more readily? We showed people (n=30) emotional faces (happy, sad, fearful, and neutral) that were rendered invisible using continuous flash suppression (CFS) and measured how quickly such faces broke through suppression and into awareness. Trait positivity was assessed by the Subjective Happiness Scale (SHS), the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS), and the Dispositional Positive Emotions Scale (DPES). All three trait happiness measures were negatively correlated with detection speed of happy faces. That is, happy faces (compared to neutral faces) broke through CFS suppression and into awareness faster for unhappy people (ps < .022), and this pattern was specific to happy faces (and not to fearful or sad faces). People who are dispositionally less happy may be biased to automatically process positive information at the unconscious level, and doing so may subsequently promote such information more quickly into their conscious experience. These results support the fascinating possibility that less happy people may experience a different world due to how readily they become aware of certain types of information. [note: Hannah Raila will present this work at the Stress and Health Flash Talk session on Saturday 8:30-9:30am]

3. The Capacity to Savor in the Moment Distinctly Mediates the Relationship Between Low Positive Affect and Depression

Depression is predominantly characterized by low levels of positive affect (PA) and high levels of negative affect (NA). Depression is also associated with a reduction in the perceived ability to savor past, present, and future events. The present study evaluates whether affect and depression are associated via a reduction in specific beliefs about savoring capabilities. Emerging adults (N = 738) completed online questionnaires. The Savoring Beliefs Inventory (SBI; Bryant, 2003) was administered to assess beliefs about the ability to enjoy past, present, and future positive events. PA and NA were assessed with the Mood and Anxiety Symptoms Questionnaire (Clark & Watson, 1991). Two parallel mediation analyses were conducted to evaluate whether temporal domains of savoring beliefs (i.e., past, present, future) mediate the relation between affect (PA and NA) and depression. The relation between PA and depression (beta = -.07) was mediated by the ability to enjoy positive events in the moment (CI -.11 to -.04). PA was positively related to savoring in the moment (beta = .41), and increased savoring was related to decreased depression symptoms (beta = -.18). The other temporal domains of savoring were not significant mediators. The relation between NA and depression was not significantly mediated by savoring. Low PA may represent a distinct, modifiable risk factor for depression. Interventions that increase the capability to savor positive events in the moment may mitigate depression outcomes for individuals who experience low PA.

4. Do Positive Emotions Predict Life Satisfaction?
   Fagley, N. S., Waire, J., & May, S.

Life satisfaction is a conscious assessment of the quality of one's life. It represents the cognitive component of subjective wellbeing. How do emotions relate to this appraisal? Based on responses to an online survey of 345 university students, we examined whether 5 emotions could contribute significant variance in life satisfaction, as measured by the Satisfaction with Life Scale (Diener et al., 1985). The emotions we examined were awe, gratitude, pride, love, and appreciation. Awe, pride, and love were measured using the Dispositional Positive Emotion Scales (Shiota, Keltner, & John, 2006). Gratitude was measured using the GQ-6 (McCullough, Emmons, & Tsang, 2002). Appreciation was measured using the Appreciation Scale (Adler & Fagley, 2005). We also controlled for social desirability, positive affectivity (the tendency to feel positive emotions in general), and the Big 5 personality factors (openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism). A hierarchical multiple regression analysis revealed that together, the 5 emotions accounted for significant variance in life satisfaction (R-sq change = .142, p < .001), beyond the control variables. Four of the five emotions made
significant unique contributions: pride (p < .001), love (p = .001), appreciation (p = .002), and gratitude (p = .005). It is worth noting that these contributions are significant after variance attributable to social desirability, positive affectivity, the Big 5 personality factors and the other emotions were partialled out. These results reinforce the idea that individual positive emotions contribute to key variables like life satisfaction, beyond the general tendency to feel positive emotion.

5. **Those Who Struggle Savor: The Impact of Experienced Hardship on Chocolate Enjoyment**

**Abbaszadeh, Y., Lim, D., & DeSteno, D.**

Although negative experiences are often paired with undeniable negative outcomes, they may also offer adaptive learning and growth opportunities (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 2004). Croft, Dunn, & Quoidbach (2014) find that a past history of hardship predicts higher levels of the positive emotion regulation strategy savoring, which involves enhancing and prolonging a positive experience through one’s own conscious efforts (Nelis, Quoidbach, Hansenne, & Mikolajczak, 2011). We predicted that savoring can be augmented in individuals who have experienced adversity when these individuals are feeling grateful. To test this prediction, we utilized a 2 (grateful or control) x 2 (low or high adversity severity) between-subjects design of fifty-five undergraduates from a large, East Coast University. We experimentally induced state gratitude and subsequently assessed chocolate enjoyment and adversity using self-report questionnaires. An analysis of variance revealed a significant interaction such that those who experienced significant past hardship reported greater chocolate enjoyment when feeling grateful towards an ostensible participant F(1, 54) = 5.18 p = .027. Furthermore, a median split categorizing participants’ past adversity levels into high and low severity groups found that participants in the high severity group reported greater enjoyment of chocolate when feeling grateful towards an ostensible participant F(1,22) = 6.46 p = .019. There was no effect for the low severity group. Our work builds on the work of other scholars on the relationship between adversity, adaptive strategies, and personal growth. Future research may want to utilize larger, more diverse community samples to increase generalizability of findings.

6. **Feeling even Better: Emotion Regulation Differs in Negative versus Mildly Positive Affective State**

**Le Nguyen, K. D., Sheeran, P., & Fredrickson, B. F.**

Most research in emotion regulation has focused on the processes of getting from negative affective states to a baseline state, which tends to be mildly positive (Diener, 2015). Little attention has been paid to how people upregulate positive emotions from a baseline state. We conduct an exploratory study examining whether people employ different regulation strategies to improve their affect when they are in negative affective states versus mildly positive states. MTurk participants (N = 543) were randomly assigned to listing strategies to feel more positive when they feel bad (or negative) versus okay (or mildly positive). People reported higher motivation to improve their affect when feeling bad than okay and listed more strategies (ps < .001). Fischer exact tests reveal that a larger proportion of participants in the negative affect condition reported using behavior strategies such as relaxation, social behavior, watching TV or video, religious activities (ps < .05). Within cognitive strategies, the negative group mentioned strategies such as positive reappraisal, cognitive distraction, and solution finding more, whereas the mildly positive group mentioned gratitude (counting blessings) more (ps < .05). The negative group was more likely to list expressing negative emotions and taking deep breaths to feel better, whereas the mildly positive group was more likely to list expressing positive emotions (ps < .05). Future projects should attempt to elucidate the underlying mechanisms and wellbeing consequences of how people regulate emotions at various affective states.

7. **The Dose-Response Effect of Positive Rounding in Healthcare Work Settings: Associations with Healthcare Worker Burnout, Burnout Climate, and Work-Life Balance**

**Adair, K. C., Frankel, A., Leonard, M., & Sexton, J. B.**

Is the deliberate celebration of successes and recognition of individuals that excel in patient-centered care linked to the well-being of healthcare workers? Senior leader rounding (SLR), in which leaders visit work-settings to resolve patient safety related deficits, has been associated with better safety culture and lower rates of burnout (Sexton et al., 2014). Positive rounding (PR), which is a new variant of senior leader rounding, involves leaders specifically acknowledging what is going well in units and recognizing workers who go above and beyond. In the current study we evaluated the associations between healthcare worker well-being and the extent to which they had been exposed to PR. A healthcare-system-wide survey of 10,496 workers (78% response rate) included measures of burnout (emotional exhaustion), burnout climate, and work-life balance, as well items on whether or not respondents experienced PR or SLR. Workers who reported experiencing PR (62%) reported significantly lower rates of personal burnout, burnout climate, and higher rates of work-life balance, compared to workers who did not. Multiple regression analyses showed that both regular senior leader safety rounding and positive rounding uniquely predict all three of these outcomes. PR is associated with higher healthcare worker well-being outcomes and uniquely contributes to these outcomes, compared to SLR. These findings suggest that PR merits consideration as a potential intervention to reduce burnout, and underscores the importance of positive emotions in promoting well-being in burnout-prone professions.
8. **Gratitude Expressions in the Workplace Increase Perceived Warmth and Competence of the Expresser**

Ocampo, J. M., Gu, Y., Chen, M., Bergstrom, T., Algoe, S. B., & Oveis, C.

Gratitude is an inherently social emotion. Past research has largely focused on gratitude within intimate relationships; however, people spend much of their time in looser social networks where gratitude expression may play a unique role in how recipients and observers perceive one another. In two studies of one such social network—the workplace—we investigated how gratitude expressions influence how the expresser is perceived by their co-workers on the dimensions of warmth and competence. In Study 1, n=400 Amazon Mechanical Turk participants who passed a screen for employment were randomly assigned to recall either a gratitude or control expression from either a high- or low-power co-worker. Only main effects of gratitude were detected, such that gratitude expressers were perceived as warmer and more competent than control expressers, regardless of power. In Study 2, n=163 members of a large organization rated the emotional expressions of their co-workers as well as the warmth and competence of those co-workers. Gratitude expressions positively predicted warmth and competence ratings of the expressers across levels of power and above-and-beyond overall positive emotion expression. These two studies extend the literature on gratitude to social networks like the workplace, where gratitude expression plays a positive role in the social perception of expressers.

9. **Blood Pressure and Positive Emotions**

Gheorma, L., & Algoe, S. B.

Based on robust associations between relationships and physical health as well as longevity, researchers have long been interested in the more every day interpersonal processes through which relationships may influence health. Past research on relationships and blood pressure is nascent, mostly focused on negative phenomena, and the results are mixed. Thus, numerous avenues remain open for exploration. In the current investigation we explore associations between blood pressure and POSITIVE emotional processing, in positively valenced social interactions between romantic couples. To do this we use data from two studies involving a total of 263 couples in romantic relationships. Resting blood pressure was taken prior to a laboratory interaction. In these interactions, one couple member expressed gratitude to the other and then reported on his or her emotional experience. We test associations between resting blood pressure and the emotions experienced in these interactions. Discussion focuses on the extent to which expressed and experienced positive emotions within a romantic relationship may be intertwined with health outcomes.

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**Thank you to IPPA for a generous donation to support the SAS Positive Emotions Pre-Conference!!**

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**2017 Positive Emotions Pre-Conference Chairs**

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Sara Algoe
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