

To Provost 3/22/07 App 320-07 Summer+Fall 2007
Senate Info. 5-1-07 Sem. 07/14
06-40

Undergraduate Distance Education Review Form

(Required for all courses taught by distance education for more than one-third of teaching contact hours.)

Existing and Special Topics Course

Course: PSYC 374: *Stress & Coping*

Instructor(s) of Record: Dr. Krys Kaniasty

Phone: 724-357-5559

Email: kaniasty@iup Liberal Studies

Received

FEB 15 2007

Step One: Proposer

A. Provide a brief narrative rationale for each of the items, A1- A5.

1. How is/are the instructor(s) qualified in the distance education delivery method as well as the discipline?

Stress and coping is a general area of my research expertise. I have been studying stress, coping and social support for nearly 20 years. As a social and community psychologist, I conducted several studies concerning social support exchanges in the context of stressful life events at both individual (e.g., criminal victimization) and community (e.g., natural disasters) levels. My longitudinal research examined mental health and sociopsychological consequences of severe floods (USA, Poland) and hurricanes (USA, Mexico). I am a co-editor of *Anxiety, Stress and Coping: An International Journal* (<http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/titles/10615806.html>). I taught this particular course in the Spring 2000 semester and a special topics version of it as a study abroad course in 2004 (*Psychological consequences of trauma*; <http://www.iup.edu/psychology/incl/PC481.pdf>).

Although I have not yet conducted a course fully delivered online, over the years I have gained experience in teaching via visual presentation media. I regularly lecture in general stress theory and present my research findings for different forums with the use of PowerPoint presentations. My audiences consisted of IUP students, students at other universities, including schools abroad, and professionals and scholars. Furthermore, since 2005 I have been mentoring and educating researchers entering the field of disaster and trauma research (http://www.redmh.org/about/project_directors.html#kaniasty). In fact, my responsibilities for the initiative named *Research Education in Disaster Mental Health* (REDMH, funded by the National Institute of Mental Health) include developing web-based lectures to accompany a recently published textbook entitled "Methods for Disaster Mental Health Research" (edited by Norris, Galea, Friedman, & Watson, 2006, Guilford Press).

I participated in the distance education workshop that was conducted for the Psychology Department in the Spring of 2006. Finally, I will take part during the spring break (March 12 -15, 2007) in the workshop "WebCT - Getting Your Course Online."

2. How will each objective in the course be met using distance education technologies?

Psychology 378 – Stress & Coping -- is designed to help students combine scientific, theoretical, and personal modes of inquiry to understand issues and evidence about the role, both detrimental and beneficial, of stress in their lives. The course will explore all forms of stress in contemporary life ranging from typical, mundane yet irritating, daily hassles to the extreme of experiencing and surviving trauma of severe criminal victimizations, disasters and wars. Of course, everything between the two bounding poles will not escape our attention either!

After completing the course, the student shall:

OBJECTIVE I:

- * *Appreciate the difficulties inherent in conducting psychological research on stress and coping*
- * *Understand the scientific bases of professional psychology*
- * *Critically evaluate the merit of studies too hastily reported in the media concerning psychological, social, and behavioral factors in stress, health and illness*

The overarching goal of Objective I is **METHODOLOGICAL**. Students must recognize psychology as a science that has created disciplined methods and empirical means of communicating facts, hypotheses, and theories. I believe that teaching methodology is most effective with the use of **GRAPHS, GRAPHS, TABLES, & more GRAPHS, & more TABLES**. My PowerPoint lectures will have numerous examples of research studies conducted in the field that will introduce the students to different methodologies and associated with them difficulties in making strong (causal) inferences. There will be several lectures entirely devoted to methods in stress and coping research (e.g., research design and measurement; moderating versus mediating variables). One of the evaluative requirements for the students will be preparation of a PowerPoint presentation of a published empirical stress study. Students will have to address potential threats to construct and internal validity associated with the examination of their choice.

OBJECTIVE II:

- * *Appreciate the multifaceted nature of stress experience in terms of its biological, psychological, social and cultural underpinning,*
- * *Understand various pathways through which our own cognitions and behaviors, as well as the cognitions and behaviors of those around us, influence the stress process*
- * *Critically assess conventional worldviews regarding stress as individual, not collective, enterprise; worldviews that are responsible for never-ending Lone Ranger folklore and expectations about coping (e.g., pulling oneself up by one's bootstraps) and victim blaming (e.g., "people get what they deserve")*

The overarching goal of Objective II is **EPISTEMOLOGICAL**. Students must learn about the complexity of stress process. To achieve these objectives, students will be required to thoughtfully read the textbook (to be published this Spring, hence most current) as well as to study my PowerPoint lectures that will provide numerous instances of research findings showing (**GRAPHS, TABLES, & PHOTOS**) clear patterns of socio-economic determinants of stress experience and people's successes and failures in coping. One of the students' requirements will be to write a contextual analysis of stress and coping dynamics as experienced by a movie character. I will provide the students with a list of 6 to 8 films to select from (e.g., *The Accused*; *The Burning Bed*; *Death of a Salesman*; *Philadelphia*, *The Pianist*, *Taxi Driver*), and their task will be to evaluate the character's (Kathryn Murphy; Francine Hughes; Willy Loman; Andrew Beckett; Wladyslaw Szpilman; Travis Bickle) challenges, available resources, coping efforts, and responses of others based on the recondition of individual and social/cultural antecedents and concurrent factors influencing the character's experience of stress. For each film, I will provide a small capsule with the most relevant information and a guide on how to conduct the analysis.

OBJECTIVE III:

- * *Appreciate difficulties and complexities in helping others coping with stress*
- * *Understand that the foundation for successful coping is self-efficacy ("I can do it...") and social support ("... with a little help from Tonto")*
- * *Critically evaluate "self-help" and other popular "stress-management" ideologies or programs*

The overarching goal of Objective III is PRACTICAL. Students ought to gain insights into their own coping efforts as well as their "ideologies of how to help others." The students will be asked to keep an optional journal in which twice a week they will answer a few standardized questions concerning the stressors, coping responses, and feelings they might have experienced in the past couple of days. The purpose of the journal is to help students become more self-aware of their own stress, coping strategies (or styles) and responses of their social support networks. The Stress Journal is an OPTIONAL activity and the students will not be expected to share it with me or anybody else. Access to the journal will be password protected and all journal entries will be purged immediately after the class is completed. I will strongly encourage students to conduct this exercise which could help them understand their own expectations and myths about what constitutes success or failure in coping with stressors.

3. How will instructor-student and student-student, if applicable, interaction take place?

The course Homepage will include an email icon that will enable them to send E-mail messages to me. My IUP E-mail address and phone numbers will be listed as well. I may also include a discussion option for this course which would enable students to "talk" to me and with each other about the course.

4. How will student achievement be evaluated?

Student achievement will be evaluated based on their exam performance and the quality of their written assignments. The course will be divided into five units that revolve around the textbook and supplemental materials (e.g., PowerPoint lectures prepared by me). For each unit, the students will take an exam, with questions based on the textbook chapters and all supplemental materials. The students will complete a written analysis of the stress context based on a character from a movie. Each student will also post their PowerPoint presentation summarizing an empirical study in the stress and coping area. I will provide the students with an example of such a presentation and will expect that their products will follow explicitly stated rules.

5. How will academic honesty for tests and assignments be addressed?

Exam questions will be written by me and will include short definitions and essay questions. The two writing assignments will require very specific approach based on the content of each movie and research material covered in the presented published manuscript. Therefore, it is unlikely that such "products" would be ready-made and available for purchase in term-paper writing services. The syllabus includes a statement about IUP's academic integrity policy.

- B. Submit to the department or its curriculum committee the responses to items A1-A5, the current official syllabus of record, along with the instructor developed online version of the syllabus, and the sample lesson. This lesson should clearly demonstrate how the distance education instructional format adequately assists students to meet a course objective(s) using online or distance technology. It should relate to one concrete topic area indicated on the syllabus.

Step Two: Departmental/Dean Approval

Recommendation: Positive (The objectives of this course can be met via distance education)

Negative

Wen Sun 2/12/07
Signature of Department Designee Date

Endorsed: Jewel Burch 2/14/07
Signature of College Dean Date

Forward form and supporting materials to Liberal Studies Office for consideration by the University-wide Undergraduate Curriculum Committee. Dual-level courses also require review by the University-wide Graduate Committee for graduate-level section.

Step Three: University-wide Undergraduate Curriculum Committee Approval

Recommendation: Positive (The objectives of this course can be met via distance education)

Negative

Gail Sedquist 3/20/07
Signature of Committee Co-Chair Date

Forward form and supporting materials to the Provost within 30 calendar days after received by committee.

Step Four: Provost Approval

Approved as distance education course

Rejected as distance education course

Ch Thomas 3/24/07
Signature of Provost Date

After completing the course, the student shall:

OBJECTIVE I:

- * *Recognize difficulties inherent in conducting psychological research on stress and coping*
- * *Understand the scientific bases of professional psychology*
- * *Critically evaluate the merit of studies too hastily reported in the media concerning psychological, social, and behavioral factors in stress, health and illness*

The overarching goal of Objective I is **METHODOLOGICAL**. Students must recognize psychology as a science that has created disciplined methods and empirical means of communicating facts, hypotheses, and theories. I believe that teaching methodology is most effective with the use of **GRAPHS, GRAPHS, TABLES, & more GRAPHS, & more TABLES**. My PowerPoint lectures will have numerous examples of research studies conducted in the field that will introduce the students to different methodologies and associated with them difficulties in making strong (causal) inferences. There will be several lectures entirely devoted to methods in stress and coping research (e.g., research design and measurement; moderating versus mediating variables). One of the evaluative requirements for the students will be preparation of a PowerPoint presentation of a published empirical stress study. Students will have to address potential threats to construct and internal validity associated with the examination of their choice.

OBJECTIVE II:

- * *Recognize the multifaceted nature of stress experience in terms of its biological, psychological, social and cultural underpinning,*
- * *Understand various pathways through which our own cognitions and behaviors, as well as the cognitions and behaviors of those around us, influence the stress process*
- * *Critically assess conventional worldviews regarding stress as individual, not collective, enterprise; worldviews that are responsible for never-ending Lone Ranger folklore and expectations about coping (e.g., pulling oneself up by one's bootstraps) and victim blaming (e.g., "people get what they deserve")*

The overarching goal of Objective II is **EPISTEMOLOGICAL**. Students must learn about the complexity of stress process. To achieve these objectives, students will be required to thoughtfully read the textbook (to be published this Spring, hence most current) as well as to study my PowerPoint lectures that will provide numerous instances of research findings showing (**GRAPHS, TABLES, & PHOTOS**) clear patterns of socio-economic determinants of stress experience and people's successes and failures in coping. One of the students' requirements will be to write a contextual analysis of stress and coping dynamics as experienced by a movie character. I will provide the students with a list of 6 to 8 films to select from (e.g., *The Accused*; *The Burning Bed*; *Death of a Salesman*; *Philadelphia*, *The Pianist*, *Taxi Driver*), and their task will be to evaluate the character's (Kathryn Murphy; Francine Hughes; Willy Loman; Andrew Beckett; Wladyslaw Szpilman; Travis Bickle) challenges, available resources, coping efforts, and responses of others based on the recondition of individual and social/cultural antecedents and concurrent factors influencing the character's experience of stress. For each film, I will provide a small capsule with the most relevant information and a guide on how to conduct the analysis.

OBJECTIVE III:

- * *Recognize difficulties and complexities in helping others coping with stress*
- * *Understand that the foundation for successful coping is self-efficacy ("I can do it...") and social support ("... with a little help from Tonto")*
- * *Critically evaluate "self-help" and other popular "stress-management" ideologies or programs*

The overarching goal of Objective III is PRACTICAL. Students ought to gain insights into their own coping efforts as well as their "ideologies of how to help others." There will be many structured opportunities for students to discuss their own experiences and ideas about coping with stress processes. The students will be also asked to keep an optional journal in which twice a week they will answer a few standardized questions concerning the stressors, coping responses, and feelings they might have experienced in the past couple of days. The purpose of the journal is to help students become more self-aware of their own stress, coping strategies (or styles) and responses of their social support networks. The Stress Journal is an OPTIONAL activity and the students will not be expected to share it with me or anybody else. Access to the journal will be password protected and all journal entries will be purged immediately after the class is completed. I will strongly encourage students to conduct this exercise which could help them understand their own expectations and myths about what constitutes success or failure in coping with stressors.

3. How will instructor-student and student-student, if applicable, interaction take place?

I will use the Discussions Tool option for this course which will enable students to "talk" to me and with each other about issues covered in the course. All my "chapter outlines" and "supplemental lectures and research presentations" will each include several DISCUSSION IDEAS that should initiate relevant discussions among the students. Each student will be required to respond to 3 DISCUSSION IDEAS per covered MODULE for the total of 24 times. The responses must be written professionally and should make a point in 2-3 sentences. I will grade all responses simply as Acceptable (=1) or Unacceptable (=0).

In addition, the course Homepage will include an email icon that will enable them to send E-mail messages to me. My IUP E-mail address and phone numbers will be listed as well. Whenever it will be feasible, the Chat Tool may be used for "live conversations."

4. How will student achievement be evaluated?

Student achievement will be evaluated based on their exam performance, the quality of their written assignments, and their participation in discussions. The course will be divided into five units (a total of eight modules) that revolve around the textbook and supplemental materials (e.g., PowerPoint lectures prepared by me). For each unit, the students will take an exam, with questions based on the textbook chapters and all supplemental materials. The students will complete a written analysis of the stress context based on a character from a movie. Each student will also post their PowerPoint presentation summarizing an empirical study in the stress and coping area. I will provide the students with an example of such a presentation and will expect that their products will follow explicitly stated rules. The students will be able to earn part of their grade based on their participation in discussions.

5. How will academic honesty for tests and assignments be addressed?

Exam questions will be written by me and will include short definitions and essay questions. The two writing assignments will require very specific approach based on the content of each movie and research material covered in the presented published manuscript. Therefore, it is unlikely that such "products" would be ready-made and available for purchase in term-paper writing services. The syllabus will include a statement about IUP's academic integrity policy.

B. Submit to the department or its curriculum committee the responses to items A1-A5, the current official syllabus of record, along with the instructor developed online version of the syllabus, and the sample lesson. This lesson should clearly demonstrate how the distance education instructional format adequately assists students to meet a course objective(s) using online or distance technology. It should relate to one concrete topic area indicated on the syllabus.

Step Two: Departmental/Dean Approval

Recommendation: Positive (The objectives of this course can be met via distance education)

Negative

Signature of Department Designee

Date

Endorsed:

Signature of College Dean

Date

Forward form and supporting materials to Liberal Studies Office for consideration by the University-wide Undergraduate Curriculum Committee. Dual-level courses also require review by the University-wide Graduate Committee for graduate-level section.

Step Three: University-wide Undergraduate Curriculum Committee Approval

Recommendation: Positive (The objectives of this course can be met via distance education)

Negative

Signature of Committee Co-Chair

Date

Forward form and supporting materials to the Provost within 30 calendar days after received by committee.

Step Four: Provost Approval

Approved as distance education course

Rejected as distance education course

Signature of Provost

Date

06-40

March 19, 2007

Professor Gail Sechrist
Chairperson, UWUCC
IUP

Received

MAR 19 2007

Liberal Studies

Dear UWUCC:

Thank you very much for your feedback and ideas about how to improve my DE proposal for PSYC 372 Stress and Coping.

I carefully considered all the concerns and adopted all of your recommendations.

YOUR POINT:

1) *In your response to question 3 of the distance education questionnaire you do not mention the use of the discussion tool. The committee strongly suggests that you consider using discussion in the class, a. because the course material lends itself to class discussion and b. because those members of the committee who have taught online courses have found that students can "drift away" without some interaction. Also those of us who use the WebCt discussion tool have found that you need to award points for the discussion to increase the likelihood of participation and c. It is a part of the traditional course.*

MY REPLY:

(I highlighted all these revisions in my DE proposal and Online PSYC 372 syllabus)

During Spring Break (March 12 – 15) I took 12-hours of workshop "Getting Your Course Online – for the designer" given by IUP's Instructional Design Center. Now I understand the Discussion tool and will use it extensively in my course. All my "chapter outlines" and "supplemental lectures and research presentations" will each include several DISCUSSION IDEAS that should initiate relevant discussions among the students. Each student will be required to respond to 3 DISCUSSION IDEAS per covered MODULE for the total of 24 times. I will grade all responses simply as Acceptable (=1) or Unacceptable (=0) based on whether or not the responses were written professionally and making a relevant point in 2-3 sentences.

YOUR POINT:

2) *The catalog description should appear near the top of the DE syllabus (make sure that the prerequisites are included and that the description appears as it does in the catalog.*
3) *What you have labeled as the syllabus of record does not appear to be the syllabus of record because it has your name and other instructor specific information. Based on your responses to response to DE question 2, you appear to be changing the objectives from the vague description that appears as the objectives on each of the syllabi. Appreciate appears several times and this is an objective that is very hard to measure. The committee was wondering if this is really the syllabus of record or if an official syllabus of record does not exist. If one does not exist, this would be a good time to take advantage of the syllabus of record amnesty policy to revise and*

update the syllabus. Also the committee wanted clarification whether the department has endorsed this as the syllabus of record.

MY REPLY:

My Online syllabus includes now the catalog description of the course (*Fundamental concepts and findings in stress and stress-related disorders. Relationships of stress to disease and methods for coping with stress are presented*). The list of prerequisites is included as well. The language of my ONLINE syllabus was also changed.

There is no Syllabus of Record for this course. My old syllabus will be now be considered THE SYLLABUS of RECORD. It has been endorsed by my Department. As you suggested, I will take advantage of the syllabus of record amnesty policy and revise and update this syllabus. I also changed the language of my ONLINE syllabus. Thank you very much for your trust in this matter.

YOUR POINT:

4) For your module you have just submitted a power point. The module/unit should be more; it should include all of the material that will be with the module/unit including assessment techniques and interaction.

MY REPLY:

I included revised (two) PowerPoint outlines for the required readings associated with MODULE 5 (The Key Resource: Social Support). These outlines illustrate major points made in the readings, as well as introduce more material. Most of the slides are now accompanied with the text (Notes) that should create "narratives" guiding students through the material. The narratives also include DISCUSSION IDEAS and WEB-LINKS for students to explore relevant sites. Study questions are embedded within the text and should guide the students in preparation for exams.

I hope that my revisions adequately address most of your concerns. Thank you very much for you support.

Sincerely,

Krys Kaniasty

Department of Psychology
X 7 5559
kaniasty@iup.edu

REVISÉD ONLINE COURSE SYLLABUS
PSYC 374 Stress & Coping, WebCT
Summer II
July 9 – August 9, 2007

Dr. Krys Kaniasty

Office: 305 Uhler Hall

Phone: (724) 357-5559 [office] & (724) 349-3646 [home]

E-mail: kaniasty@iup.edu

PSYC 374 Stress & Coping

3c – 0l – 3cr

Prerequisite: PSYC 101

Fundamental concepts and findings in stress and stress-related disorders. Relationships of stress to disease and methods for coping with stress are presented.

Our personal contact will take place primarily via e-mail. I will check my e-mail every day and attempt to respond promptly to your questions, comments and other class-related concerns. Please always refer to "PSYC 374" in the subject line when addressing your E-mails to me to assure my immediate attention. I also listed for you 2 phone numbers, should you need to talk to me directly. Whenever it will be feasible, the Chat Tool may be used for "live conversations."

General Aims

This course is designed to provide an introduction to theories and research on stress and coping.

Although we will not cover everything there is to know about the literature on coping with stressful life events, this course will present you with a good background into important issues in this area, and a solid foundation from which you can learn more about the topic.

Through textbook readings and outlines, my supplemental lectures and presentations, your research presentation, analysis of a film character, and a "stress journal," we will explore all forms of stress in contemporary life ranging from typical, mundane yet irritating, daily hassles to the extreme of experiencing and surviving (!) trauma of severe criminal victimizations, disasters, and wars. Of course, everything between the two bounding extremes will not escape our attention either!

The primary goal of this course is to provide valuable, scientifically based information about stress and coping, as well as the health implications of these psychological and social phenomena. It is hoped that this information will be meaningful in the context of students' life experiences.

Specific Objectives

After completing the course, the student shall:

METHODOLOGICAL OBJECTIVES

- * Recognize the difficulties inherent in conducting psychological research on stress and coping
- * Understand the scientific bases of professional psychology
- * Critically evaluate the merit of studies too hastily reported in the media concerning psychological, social, and behavioral factors in stress, health and illness

EPISTEMOLOGICAL OBJECTIVES

- * Recognize the multifaceted nature of stress experience in terms of its biological, psychological, social and cultural underpinnings
- * Understand various pathways through which our own cognitions and behaviors, as well as the cognitions and behaviors of those around us, influence the stress process
- * Critically assess conventional worldviews regarding stress as individual, not collective, enterprise; worldviews that are responsible for never-ending Lone Ranger folklore and expectations about coping (e.g., pulling oneself up by one's bootstraps) and victim blaming (e.g., "people get what they deserve")

PRACTICAL OBJECTIVES

- * Recognize difficulties and complexities in helping others coping with stress
- * Understand that the foundation for successful coping is self-efficacy ("I can do it...") and social support ("... with a little help from Tonto")
- * Critically evaluate "self-help" and other popular "stress-management" ideologies or programs

Course readings

Aldwin, C.M. (2007). *Stress, coping, and development: An integrative perspective* (Second Edition). New York: The Guilford Press.

There will also be additional readings from other sources. All will be readily available as PDF files.

All readings and supplementary materials are organized into 8 Content Modules. The Modules are presented in 5 UNITS corresponding to 5 weeks duration of the course.

Course logistics and requirements

A. Reading the textbook and other required papers

I chose a "just off-the-press" 2nd edition of Carolyn Aldwin's book "*Stress, Coping, and Development: An Integrative Perspective*." I used that text in this course before and the students evaluated it favorably as interesting and easy to follow. Most importantly, this book is not very expensive, which cannot be said about many other scholarly books about stress and coping. However, Aldwin's text is not altogether comprehensive in its treatment of stress dynamics, hence we will need to do some additional readings from other sources. Again, the choices I made were based on interestingness, and user-friendliness of these manuscripts. Frankly, some peoples' writing about stress can be very dense and unnecessarily stressful to read.

Each chapter/reading will come with the CHAPTER OUTLINE I will prepare for you in PowerPoint format. These outlines will ensure that you pay attention to the most important parts of each chapter. They will also serve as a study guide for the tests. You should always start with careful reading of chapters before proceeding to the next study step.

B. Studying PowerPoint lectures and my research presentations

You will be required to carefully study SUPPLEMENTAL LECTURES and RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS that will be associated with topics covered within each of the 8 content modules. These PowerPoint products are based on my numerous invited talks on coping with stress and my research presentations. For each module, there will be a couple or more such supplementary materials. In theory, these materials should be self-explanatory given your prior thoughtful reading of the textbook/reading and my outlines. In practice, some of the slides will also have notes to help you “get the message” more clearly.

In addition, each lecture will have WEB-LINKS for you to explore relevant sites (e.g., see the exact scale/instrument measuring a construct mentioned in the lecture). My chapter outlines, lectures and presentations will also contain “DISCUSSION IDEAS”, suggesting points that may be an interesting initiation for a public exchange of your own experiences concerning the covered topics.

C. Discussions - your class participation

You will be required to initiate or respond to 3 DISCUSSION IDEAS per covered MODULE for the total of 24 times in the course. The responses must be written professionally and should make a relevant point in 2-3 sentences. I will grade all responses simply as Acceptable (=1) or Unacceptable (=0).

If you adequately participate 24 times in discussions you will receive a grade of B (86) for this requirement. Students more actively involved in discussions will be able to earn a higher grade (87 to 100) for class participation. Of course, students who will be less involved in these activities ought to expect a lesser grade (85 or less). Your discussion contributions should be written professionally, and should not include negative remarks about postings of other students.

D. Your presentation of a published paper from a psychological journal

To make this class highly compatible with your interests and needs, you will be asked to make a 15-20 slides PowerPoint presentation of a psychological paper of your choice that is a straightforward examination of a topic relevant to this class. This must be a short (or selected part of a longer) empirical paper (i.e., a manuscript describing an actual study conducted on people from whom some measures were taken and then these data were analyzed using statistical procedures) published in one of the established peer-reviewed psychological journals (not authored or edited books). To avoid any confusion, please e-mail to me by July 23rd bibliographical information from PsycINFO about the paper you are planning to work with (e.g., *Help-seeking comfort and receiving social support: The role of ethnicity and context of need*. Kaniasty, Krzysztof; Norris, Fran H.; American Journal of Community Psychology, Vol 28(4), Aug 2000. pp. 545-581). In fact, you can e-mail it to me directly from the EBSCOhost with the paper's abstract. If I will not be able to find your paper of choice in PsycINFO, you cannot use it for your presentation.

If you were to actually make this presentation in class, it could have not exceeded 20 minutes. Start with a title page (authors' names, affiliations, paper's title and the citation). The second slide will have typed or pasted in the actual abstract of the paper. The following slides will be designed to address the following questions serving as an outline for your presentations:

1. What was the theoretical/practical justification for the study? What was the question posed in the study?
2. What specific hypotheses/predictions were made?
3. Who were the people studied?
4. What were the experimental manipulations or how were the independent variables (predictors) measured?
5. What dependent measures (outcomes) were collected?
6. What were the MOST IMPORTANT results? (skip the numbers, create a narrative about whether or not the main hypotheses were supported, use graphs, tables).
7. What conclusions did the authors draw?
8. What do you think of the study's contribution to our understanding of the stress and coping process.

An example of such a presentation is available with the class materials. Every student in class will have to review all the presentations prepared by other students.

E. Movie analysis - Class paper

A paper of approximately 10 pages is also required. It will involve an analysis of a movie character from one of the feature films I selected for you to watch. All films are available for checkout in the IUP's Library, or in any larger movie rental store near you. The films depict stressful experiences of a person or a group of people. You will attempt a learned analysis of this material and describe the hero(s), the stressor(s), the coping process and resources, and the outcome(s). Each fill will have a set of specific questions posted to aid your analysis. Please consult these "movie guides" before choosing your movie and DO NOT wait until the night before the deadline to watch it. Chances are that the title will not be available, that your DVD player will brake in the middle of the movie, and that there will be a power shortage or tornado -- just to name a few lesser stressors...

The paper must be written in accordance with the APA style.

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>

http://www.vanguard.edu/faculty/ddegelman/index.aspx?doc_id=796

F. Stress Journal – An optional experience

A success of this course would be if students gained insights into their own coping efforts as well as their "ideologies of how to help others." You will be asked to keep a journal in which twice a week you could answer a few standardized questions concerning the stressors and coping responses you experienced in the past couple of days. The purpose of the journal is to help you become more self-aware of your own stressors, coping strategies (or styles), and social support attempts of those around you. The Stress Journal is OPTIONAL and you do not need to share it with me or anybody else, and it will be password protected. It will be purged immediately after the class is completed. I encourage you to conduct this exercise which may help you understand your own expectations and myths about what constitute success or failure in coping with stressors.

Grading and deadlines

Altogether there will be SIX exams. FIVE of them will evaluate your mastery of the material covered in each of the units. Each exam must be taken within the week of the unit's coverage and before the start of a subsequent unit. These exams will not be in the multiple choice format. They will ask you to define key terms and answer short essay questions. Exam # six will be a YES/NO or multiple choice test assessing your familiarity with the PowerPoint presentations prepared by you and other students in class.

All exams will account for 50% of your final grade. ~~Participation in discussions will amount to 10% of the total score.~~ Your presentation will be worth 15% of the grade. The movie analysis will account for the remaining 25% of your final grade. A letter grade for the course will be assigned according to the usual scale of 90-100=A, 80-89=B, and 70-79=C, etc.

Deadlines

Exams

- Exam 1 -- completed by the hour 23:55, July 15th
- Exam 2 -- completed by the hour 23:55, July 22nd
- Exam 3 -- completed by the hour 23:55, July 29th
- Exam 4 -- completed by the hour 23:55, August 5th
- Exam 5 -- completed by the hour 23:55, August 10th
- Exam 6 -- completed by the hour 23:55, August 12th

PowerPoint Presentations

Submit your choice of a paper (or choices) for my approval by July 23rd
Upload your completed presentation by the hour 23:55, August 3rd

Movie Analysis

Upload your completed paper the hour 23:55, August 9th

Final Thoughts

The deadlines for exams and written assignments must be taken seriously and followed. **THERE IS A LOT OF WORK TO DO IN THIS COURSE IN 5 WEEKS. YOU SHOULD EXPECT TO STUDY THE COURSE MATERIALS EVERYDAY.** Late submissions of exams or written assignments will be allowed **ONLY** in the case of a documented emergency, and **ONLY** if you have contacted me before the deadline to make arrangements. For all assignments, we will adhere to IUP's academic integrity policy, as spelled out in the Undergraduate Catalog. You must not share written assignments, turn in another's work as your own, or copy from the textbook or internet. You must take the exams alone. (<http://www.iup.edu/teachingexcellence/nfo/acadintegrity.shtm>)

Notify me immediately if you are experiencing technical problems. I will try to help ASAP. Most of our contact will take place through email. I consider E-mail between faculty and students to be professional communications. Therefore, I expect your email messages to be written clearly, with correct punctuation, grammar, and spelling. Simply, let's be respectful of each other.

THE OUTLINE OF TOPICS AND READINGS

UNIT I > July 9 – 15

MODULE 1: CONCEPTS, TYPES, & THEORIES OF STRESS

Aldwin, Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4

Supplementary lectures

MODULE 1: MEASUREMENT AND METHODOLOGY OF STRESS RESEARCH

Aldwin, Chapters 5 & 9

Supplementary lectures

UNIT II > July 16 – 22

MODULE 3: THE KEY RESOURCE: COPING STYLES & STRATEGIES

Aldwin, Chapters 6, 7, 8

Supplementary lectures

MODULE 4: THE KEY RESOURCE: SOCIAL SUPPORT

Selected parts of the Uchino's *Social support and physical health* (2004)

Supplementary lectures

UNIT III > July 23 – 29

MODULE 5: THE KEY RESOURCE: THE SELF, COGNITIONS & EFFICACY

Benight, C., & Bandura, A. (2004). Social cognitive theory of posttraumatic recovery: The role of perceived self-efficacy. *Behaviour Research and Therapy*, 42, 1129-1148.

Supplementary lectures

MODULE 6: THE KEY RESOURCE: PERSONALITY

Friedman, H. (2007). Personality, disease, and self-healing. In H. S. Friedman & R. C. Silver (Eds.), *Foundations of health psychology* (pp. 172 – 199).

Supplementary lectures

UNIT IV > July 30 – August 5

MODULE 7: HOW THE RESOURCES ACT TO PROTECT HEALTH & WELL-BEING

Aldwin, Chapters 10, 11, 12, 13, 14

Supplementary lectures

UNIT V > August 6 – 9

MODULE 8: STRESS-RELATED GROWTH & BUILDING RESILIENCE

Aldwin, Chapters 15 & 16

Supplementary lectures

SAMPLE LESSON

PSYC 374 ONLINE

Summer II 2007

**THE KEY RESOURCE:
Social Support
Part 1 - Definitions**

Krys Kaniasty
Indiana University of Pennsylvania

1

Please read the first assigned reading for this module (Uchino, chapter 1=Historical perspectives & 2=The meaning and measurement of social support, pp 2 – 32) prior to working with this supplementary material.

This supplementary lecture will illustrate many points raised by Uchino in his chapter as well as, it will introduce additional issues regarding the study and role of social support.

Remember the three links above this presentation

THREE IMPORTANT STUDY RESOURCES:

Take notes Discussions Links

Always take notes!

Click on “Discussions” when I suggest a point that may be an interesting start for an exchange regarding your own experiences concerning the topic of providing and receiving social support.

Click on “Links” when I suggest to visit an external website associated with research or practice of social support.

Social support

- **It is widely accepted that psychological health is sustained at least partially through primary group ties.**
- **In studies of stress, this idea is captured by the concept of social support.**

2

When you do a literature search in PsychINFO with SOCIAL SUPPORT as a term you will end up with close to 27 thousand papers !!!

There is no way one person can do a systematic review of literature on this topic.

Although systematic research on social support is relatively recent, the idea that morale and well-being are partly sustained through primary group ties has appeared in almost every psychological and sociological theory or doctrine.

Across the years, since the original conceptualizations by Cassel (1976), Cobb (1976), and Weiss (1974), social support has been defined in a variety of ways. The names above are the names of founding fathers of contemporary social support. Check references in Uchino's book.

Yet, Emile Durkheim (1858-1917) is often credited as a pioneer of social support research because of his work on importance of social ties and suicide.

SEE THE LINK: <http://www.hewett.norfolk.sch.uk/curric/soc/durkheim/durkw2.htm>

Definition of social support

- **Social support is referred to as those social interactions that provide individuals with *actual assistance* and *embed them* into a web of social relationships *perceived to be* loving, caring, and readily available in times of need.**
 - received support (actual receipt of help)
 - social embeddedness (quality and type of relationships with others)
 - perceived support (the belief that help would be available if needed).

3

Of course the idea that ALL YOU NEED IS LOVE and WITH A LITTLE HELP FROM MY FRIENDS is basically the essence of social support.

The above definition was proposed by Hobfoll and Stokes, 1988.

I like it very much because it points to three major facets of social support:

- received support (the actual help or assistance),
- social embeddedness (the quantity of your contacts with others),
- perceived support (the expectation that help would be available if needed).

Measures of Received Social Support

Inventory of Socially Supportive Behaviors (Barrera, Sandler, & Ramsay, 1981) -- 40 items

3. Provided you with a place where you could get away for awhile
 4. Watched after your possessions when you were away (pics, plants, home, apartment, etc.)
 5. Told you what she/he did in a situation that was similar to yours.
 6. Did some activity together to help you get your mind off of things.
 7. Talked with you about some stresses of yours.
 8. Let you know that you did something well.
 9. Went with you to someone who could take action.
 10. Told you that you are OK just the way you are.
 11. Told you that she/he would keep the things that you talk about private just between the two of you.
 12. Assisted you in setting a goal for yourself.
 13. Made it clear what was expected of you.
 14. Expressed esteem or respect for a competency or personal quality of yours.
 15. Gave you some information on how to do something.
 16. Suggested some action that you should take.
 17. Gave you over \$25.
 18. Comforted you by showing you some physical affection.
 19. Gave you some information to help you understand a situation you were in.
 20. Provided you with some transportation.
 21. Checked back with you to see if you followed the advice you were given.
 22. Gave you under \$25.
- RATE THE FREQUENCY OF EVENTS USING THE FOLLOWING RESPONSE CATEGORIES.

1. Not at all
2. Once or twice
3. About once a week
4. Several times a week
5. About every day

4

Barrera's scale was one of the first instruments used in systematic social support research. It includes 40 items referencing different provisions of help, aid, or support.

SEE THE LINK:

http://chipts.ucla.edu/assessment/Assessment_Instruments/Assessment_files_new/assess_issb.htm

In the last 2 months*, how often did anyone provide you with some transportation? Once or twice?? (2)

We can add these scores over the 40 items and come up with the overall score of the amount of social support a person RECEIVED within a specified timeframe*.

The time frame for assessment can vary. Barrera and his colleagues used the last four weeks (or last month). Others used longer timeframes (e.g., six months) as well as shorter timeframe (e.g., last week).

Measures of Received Social Support

The Inventory of Postdisaster Social Support
(Kaniasty & Norris, 2000; Norris et al., 2001) – 12 items

- *The next questions are also about helping. These questions refer to the two-month period of time between late August and late October 1992 or, in other words, between Hurricane Andrew and Halloween.*
These questions are about the help you actually received from others. The help does not have to be connected to Andrew. We are interested in all your activities, whatever the reason.
First I will ask you whether anyone in your family helped you in a certain way; then I'll ask you questions about how often other people helped you in this way.
The best approach is to answer fairly quickly. Don't try to count up the number of times these things happened, rather indicate a reasonable estimate.

5

We have been using this scale since late eighties. We used it first in late eighties in our study of crime victims in Kentucky.

We also used this scale in most of our studies concerning social support in the aftermath disasters.

It all started with Hurricane Hugo which hit the Carolinas and Georgia as a Category 4 hurricane on September 21, 1989. There were about 3,000 tornadoes embedded within the hurricane, accounting for extensive damage in some areas well outside the eye of the hurricane. Hurricane Hugo caused nearly \$10 billion in damage in the US and another \$3 billion in damage in the Caribbean. Approximately 50 people were killed by Hurricane Hugo.

SEE LINK: <http://www.geocities.com/hurricane/hurricanehugo.htm>

DISCUSSION IDEA: Have you ever been a victim of a natural disaster?
Have you ever been involved in helping victims of natural disasters?

(click on "Discussions")

Later we will explore the difference between natural and human-made disasters.

Measures of Received Social Support

■ The Inventory of Postdisaster Social Support

- R1a. Between Andrew and Halloween, how often did family members suggest some action you should take? Regardless of the reason, did this happen ...
- b. Between Andrew and Halloween, how often did friends suggest some action you should take
- c. Between Andrew and Halloween, how often did people outside your immediate circle suggest some action you should take?

- R2a. Between Andrew and Halloween, how often did family members give, loan, or offer you money? Regardless of the reason, did this happen ...
- b. How often did friends give, loan, or offer you money?
- c. How often did people outside your immediate circle give, loan, or offer you money?

- 1 = never
- 2 = once or twice
- 3 = a few times
- 4 = many times

6

We chose to use the 2-month timeframe in the Hugo study because we wanted to aid people's recall of help they received by bracketing or anchoring the time period within two important dates. The first, of course, is the hurricane. The second is another important date people easily remember: THANKSGIVING.

For the Hurricane Andrew study the 2-month timeframe was anchored by the day it hit south Florida August 24, 1992 and Halloween.

SEE LINK: <http://www.noaa.gov/hurricaneandrew.html>

Hurricane Andrew hit South Florida, particularly the towns of Homestead, Florida City, and parts of Miami. The storm then continued northwest across the Gulf of Mexico and struck the Louisiana coastline. 40 people are believed to have died as a result of the storm, 250,000 people were left homeless, about 100,000 residents of South Dade County permanently left the area in the storm's wake, and in total, it is estimated that the storm caused \$30 billion in property damage.

We use a 2-month time recall for received social support in all our studies. There simply always is an important and thus easy to remember day in peoples' calendars two months after every disaster!

Measures of Perceived Social Support

- Q1. There are several people that I trust to help solve my problems.
1-Definitely true 2-Probably true
3-Probably false 4-Definitely false
- Q2. There is no one that I feel comfortable talking to about intimate personal problems.
- Q3. There really is no one who can give me an objective view of how I'm handling my problems.
- Q4. If I were sick and needed someone to take me to the doctor, I would have trouble finding someone.
- Q5. If I needed a place to stay for a week because of an emergency I could easily find someone who would put me up. Is this ...
- Q6. I feel that there is no one I can share my most private worries and fears with.
- Q7. If I were sick, I could easily find someone to help me with my daily chores. Is this . .

7

As you can see the concept of perceived support is more hypothetical. The questions relate to possible provisions of help. It is often referred to as social support availability. Will support be available when needed?

Of all aspects of social support, perceived support is most frequently assessed.

The above questions come from widely used perceived measures of social support, the Interpersonal Support Evaluation List (ISEL), created by Sheldon Cohen and his co-workers in mid-eighties. It measures the perceived availability of support and has been shown to be a useful predictor of mental and physical health.

SEE LINK: <http://www.psy.cmu.edu/~scohen/>

What kind of correlation, positive or negative, would you expect between perceived support and depression symptoms?

Measures of Perceived Social Support

- Cohen, S., Mermelstein, R., Kamarck, T., & Hoberman, H. (1985). Measuring the functional components of social support. In I. G. Sarason & B. R. Sarason (Eds.), *Social support: Theory, research and application*. The Hague, Holland: Martinus Nijhoff.
- Sarason, I., Sarason, B., Shearin, E., & Pierce, G. (1987). A brief measure of social support: Practical and theoretical implications. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 4, 497-510.
 - Cohen, S., Underwood, L., & Gottlieb, B (Eds.) (2000). *Social support measurement and interventions: A guide for health and social scientists*. New York: Oxford.

8

Another popular scale of perceived social support is Social Support Questionnaire (SSQ) which can provide researchers with different scores:

Total number of support providers and total satisfaction with social support.

SEE LINK: <http://web.psych.washington.edu/research/sarason/index.html>

Types of social support

TABLE 13.1. Comparison of Component Models of Social Support

Weiss, 1974	Cobb, 1979	Kahn, 1979	Schaefer, Coyne, & Lazarus, 1981	Cohen, Mermelstein, Kamarek, & Hoberman, 1985
Attachment	Emotional support	Affect	Emotional support	
Social integration	Network support			Belonging support
Reassurance of worth	Esteem support	Affirmation		Self-esteem support
Reliable alliance	Material support	Aid	Tangible aid	Tangible support
Guidance	Instrumental support		Informational support	Appraisal support
Opportunity for nurturance	Active support*			

* Cobb (1979) defined active support as reflecting the receipt of care or "mothering" by the target person, whereas Weiss (1974) viewed the opportunity for nurturance as reflecting the provision of care to others by the target person.

9

So what exactly is made available or provided by support sources?

The table above lists different types of social support resources that are most often discussed in the literature.


I believe that most of these types can be subsumed within three categories.

Emotional support is probably what most of us imagine when we think of social support – it is defined as expressions of comfort and caring. Eg., "Someone makes you feel better because she listen to you problems."

Informational support is defined as the provision of advice or guidance (You know someone who could give you trusted advice and guidance on an issue").

Tangible support refers to the direct provision of material aid or instrumentals support ("You help a friend to clean up his apartment after a flooding due to broken pipes")

Notice that Uchino (Table 2.2, p 17) promotes also "belonging support" defined as the presence of others with whom to engage in social activities ("A friend with whom you enjoy just "hanging out."



Types of social support

- **Emotional**
 - Interest
 - Assurance
 - Affection
- **Informational**
 - Guidance
 - Suggestions
 - Feedback
- **Tangible**
 - Money
 - Shelter
 - Transportation
- **Sources of social support**
 - Family and relatives
 - Friends, neighbors, acquaintances
 - Outsiders (professionals, charity, social services)

10

Most of our research on coping with natural disasters concentrates on assessing these three most frequently exchanged types of social support: emotional, informational, and tangible.

Who is the person providing support is also very important. The quantity of help varies by donor. Not surprisingly, families usually are the most utilized source of support. Nonkin informal networks, such as friends or neighbors, also appear to play a vital role in assisting people in need. Help provided by professionals (may be people just like you: social workers, psychologists, medical personnel) is least frequent.

DISCUSSION IDEA: Although we will talk about this later in greater extent, let's start talking about why people are reluctant to seek help from professionals?

(click on "Discussions")

Essentially, the most consistent finding in help-seeking literature is that people are quite reticent in utilizing assistance from sources outside their immediate network and rely mainly on their families, relatives, friends, and neighbors. In other words, the pattern of help utilization following disasters resembles a pyramid with its broad foundation being family and other primary support groups and its narrow top being aid provided by formal agencies.

Norris, F.H., Murphy, A. Kanlasy, K., Perilla, J., & Ortis, D.C. (2001). Postdisaster social support in the U.S. and Mexico: Conceptual and Contextual Considerations. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences*, 23, 469-497.

The Inventory of Postdisaster Social Support

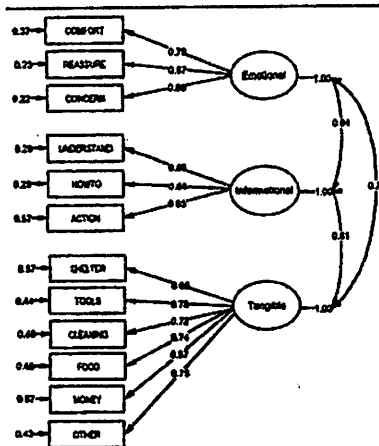


Figure 1. Three-factor measurement model for received social support: Completely standardized solution for the combined sample ($N=1,854$) and all sources of support.

11

We conducted many statistical analyses with our data collected from disaster victims. Basically, in all countries we studied social support (USA, Mexico, Poland), most of it can be described as provisions of emotional support, informational support and tangible support.

Of course there are cultural differences, some of them will be discussed later in the course, but coping strategies people engage in are more similar across cultures than different.



Social embeddedness

- **Represents more structural aspects of support. It refers to the number of connections individuals have with significant others in their social environments.**
- **The existence of social ties based on marital status, number of neighbors and friends, or frequency of participation in community activities are broad indicators of embeddedness.**
 - **Sense of companionship**

12

The third major aspect of social support, social embeddedness, is often assessed with so-called integration or structural measures because these instruments assess the existence and interconnections among differing social ties and roles.

Social integration provides the basis for a strong sense of self-identity, appropriate norms for behavior, and greater meaning or worth of life. Social integration is beneficial in part because of the social roles that accompany such integration. These were the ideas behind Durkheim's analyses of suicide (go back to the "historical perspectives" section of Uchino's reading).

Table 2. 1 (Uchino, p. 12) lists most important indicators of social integration.

Social embeddedness

- **S8. During the past few weeks, how many times did you get together with your friends -- again, I mean things like going out together or visiting each other?**
- **S9. How many friends do you have that you enjoy spending time with?**
- **S10. How about relatives? How many family members do you have that you enjoy spending time with?**
- **S11. What about organizations such as church and school groups, labor unions, or social, civic fraternal clubs? About how many do you take an active part in?**

13

Size (number of people in social network) and contact (amount of contact with network members) are most often assessed aspects of social ties.

The items above come from our studies and serve as indicators of social embeddedness.

Cohen, S., Doyle, W. J., Skoner, D. P., Rabin, B. S., & Gwaltney, J. M. Jr. (1997).
Social ties and susceptibility to the common cold. *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 277, 1940-1944.

Social Network Index

Instructions: This questionnaire is concerned with how many people you see or talk to on a regular basis including family, friends, workmates, neighbors, etc. Please read and answer each question carefully. Answer follow-up questions where appropriate.

1. Which of the following best describes your marital status?
 (1) currently married & living together, or living with someone in marital-like relationship
 (2) never married & never lived with someone in a marital-like relationship
 (3) separated
 (4) divorced or formerly lived with someone in a marital-like relationship
 (5) widowed
2. How many children do you have? (If you don't have any children, check '0' and skip to question 3.)
 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 or more
- 2a. How many of your children do you see or talk to on the phone at least once every 2 weeks?
 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 or more
3. Are either of your parents living? (If neither is living, check '0' and skip to question 4.)
 (0) neither (1) mother only (2) father only
 (3) both
- 3a. Do you see or talk on the phone to either of your parents at least once every 2 weeks?
 (0) neither (1) mother only (2) father only
 (3) both

14

Sheldon Cohen and his team contributed to continuous refinement of the Social Network Index. Interestingly, this measure has been shown to predict morbidity* and mortality.

*MORBIDITY - the proportion of sickness or of a specific disease in a geographical locality

What is MORTALITY within the context of epidemiological studies?

5. How many other relatives (other than your spouse, parents & children) do you feel close to? (If '0', check that space and skip to question 6.)
 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 or more

5a. How many of these relatives do you see or talk to on the phone at least once every 2 weeks?
 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 or more

6. How many close friends do you have? (meaning people that you feel at ease with, can talk to about private matters, and can call on for help)
 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 or more

6a. How many of these friends do you see or talk to at least once every 2 weeks?
 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 or more

7. Do you belong to a church, temple, or other religious group? (If not, check 'no' and skip to question 8.)
 no yes

7a. How many members of your church or religious group do you talk to at least once every 2 weeks? (This includes at group meetings and services.)
 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 or more

8. Do you attend any classes (school, university, technical training, or adult education) on a regular basis? (If not, check 'no' and skip to question 9.)
 no yes

SEE LINK: <http://www.psy.cmu.edu/~scohen/>

SAMPLE LESSON

PSYC 374 ONLINE

Summer II 2007

**THE KEY RESOURCE:
Social Support
Part 2 – How does it work?**

Krys Kaniasty
Indiana University of Pennsylvania

1

Please read the second assigned reading for this module (Uchino, chapter 3 = Theoretical perspectives linking social support to health outcomes) prior to working with this supplementary material.

This supplementary lecture will illustrate many theoretical notions introduced by Uchino in his chapter, as well as it will introduce additional models that describe the mechanics of social support's impact on well-being.

Remember the three links above this presentation.

THREE IMPORTANT STUDY RESOURCES:

Take notes Discussions Links

Always take notes!

Click on "Discussions" when I suggest a point that may be an interesting start for an exchange regarding your own experiences concerning the topic of providing and receiving social support.

Click on "Links" when I suggest to visit an external website associated with research or practice of social support.

Basic functions – Social support may:

- **Prevent the occurrence of stressors**
- **Inoculate against them**
- **Facilitate accurate appraisal of an ambiguous encounter**
- **Facilitate reappraisal as an encounter unfolds**

2

Why and how does social support work?

Your social networks from the very first moment of your life are making sure that you do not get in trouble. Think about parents making their apartment “child proof” when their baby starts exploring her surroundings? Can you imagine what would have happened to you if the stairs to the basement were not blocked with a toddler-proof gate? How about you life today? (*“Friends do not let friends drive drunk.”*)

Yes, not all stressors will be prevented. But people around you will prepare you for their impact. Remember when your mother told you that your heart would be broken one day, though temporarily? Well, she inoculated you (vaccinated you!!) for the eventuality of having romantic relationship difficulties.

Friends, especially friends who are more experienced in a particular domain, help us understand a situation that is ambiguous, not clear, or fuzzy. They will help us see whether the situation is a real stressor (*yes, the boss is out to get you!*), or if it is something that we unnecessarily perceive as threatening (*yes, the boss is routinely very critical to all new employees*). People in your social network will help you adjust and revise the assessments of your coping process as you move along in dealing with the stressor.

DISCUSSION IDEA: Can you recall ever being inoculated by those close to you against a likely stressor? Did it work? If yes, how did it work?

(click on “Discussions”)

Basic functions – Social support may:

- **Act directly to meet demands**
- **Suggest coping options**
- **Help sustain efficacy**
- **Facilitate recovery of emotional equilibrium through either emotional support or diversion**

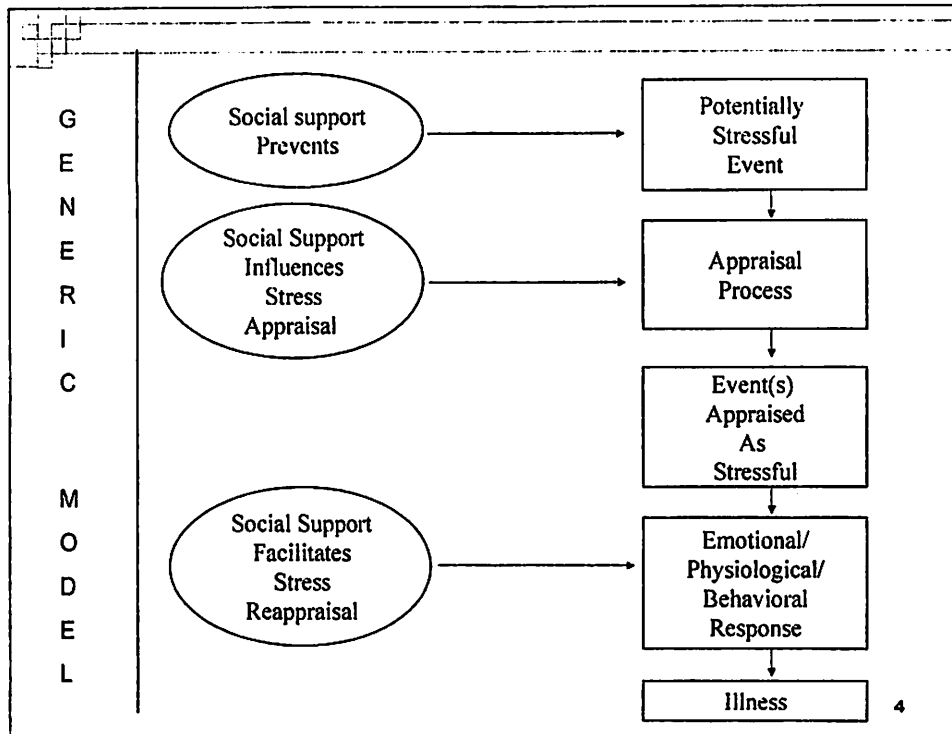
3

Well, this is probably what we think of social support -- it provides what we need when we need it.

Similarly, social support is often “good information” about how to do something, how to solve a problem, how to get out of trouble. In other words, our family and friends suggest coping strategies.

Our social support networks are OUR CHEERLEADERS. We often succeed in life simply because we believe we can do it (a most simple definition of self-efficacy) and others are drumming that message into your heads. “*Yes, you can do it. Just do it!*”

Most importantly, social support networks listen to us and show us their affection, empathy and understanding. They help us find words describing our feelings, or just let us vent, express these emotions without apprehension about being evaluated or rejected.



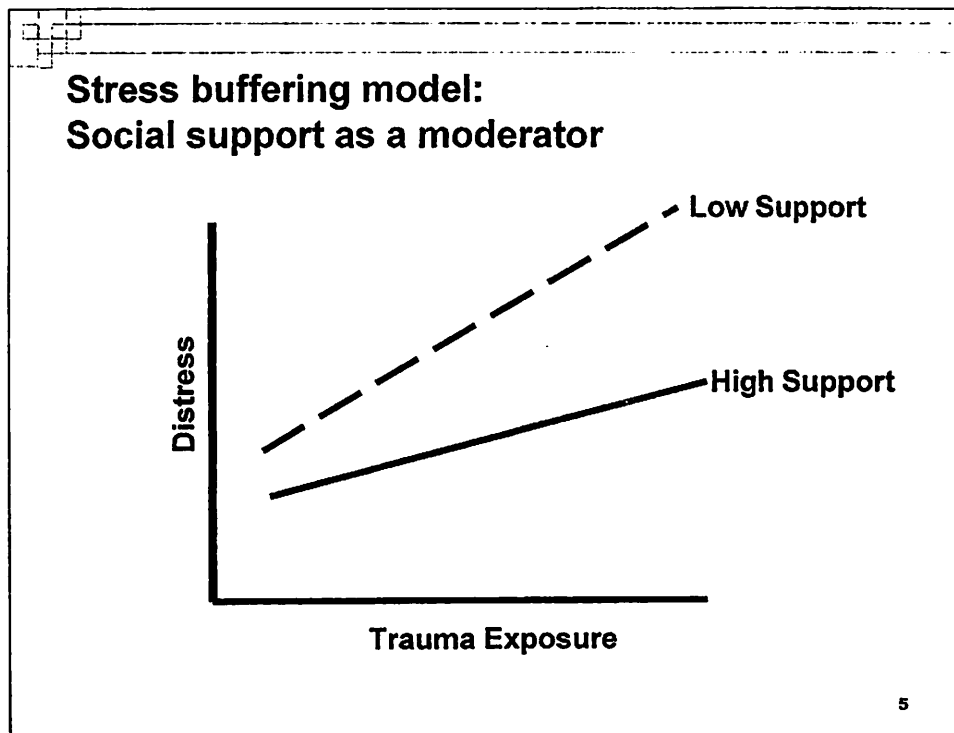
Recall the lectures concerning stress-appraisal theories.

Something potentially stressful is happening. Is it a THREAT? Is it a HARM/LOSS? Or Is it a CHALLENGE?

Social support is part of the PRIMARY APPRAISAL.

Social support is also part of the SECONDARY APPRAISAL. It helps to evaluate our coping efforts, it is involved in our coping efforts.

Social support helps us validate, express, and understand our reactions to the stressor.



Recall the lecture on a distinction between the moderating and mediating variables.

The role of social support as a coping resource has been studied within the context of many stressful life events ranging from individual level stressors (e.g., bereavement, pregnancy, divorce, or illness) to community wide events (e.g., crowding, unemployment, disaster, or war). Reviews of literature often note the limitations of supportive relationships in times of stress but have generally concluded that social support is beneficial to psychological well-being and physical health.

The vast majority of studies that provide evidence for such conclusions were based on two dominant theoretical formulations, the stress buffer (interactive) model, and the main effects (additive) model.

The buffering model predicts that social support “buffers” (shields, protects) us from deleterious effect of stressful events.

The major point of this model is that social support matters ONLY in times of stress! When the level of stress is low (everyday’s variety of stressors) the impact of social support is minimal (see the figure above). The beneficial impact of support emerges in times of stress – people who have more support experience less distress than people who have less support.

Buffer functions

- **Maintaining self-efficacy, mastery, optimism**
- **Appraisal process**
- **Verification/control of physiological, emotional and behavioral reactions**
- **Coping assistance and received support**

6

How does social support serve as a buffer?

The availability of social support, a belief that it will materialize when we need it, motivates people to attempt solving their problems on their own.

"Why not try it by myself? If things will not work out, I can always ask for help later."

This is a "security blanket," or better "a security net," that gives us the courage and will to "walk the rope" on our own. The expectations that others will come to our aid when we need it to instill a sense of optimism and faith in our ability to cope and manage.

We will talk extensively about self-efficacy and belief in self in the next Unit, but –

SEE LINK: <http://www.des.emory.edu/mfp/BanEncy.html>

Of course in times of stress, social networks are also supposed to provide us with concrete, tangible, instances of support. These are the actually provided/received provisions of help that we expect.

DISCUSSION IDEA: Recall an instance when you dealt successfully with a stressor entirely on your own, without any help from others.

How did the fact that others would most likely "bail you out" if you failed impact your reliance on your own coping efforts?

(click on "Discussions")

Prevention & buffering perspectives

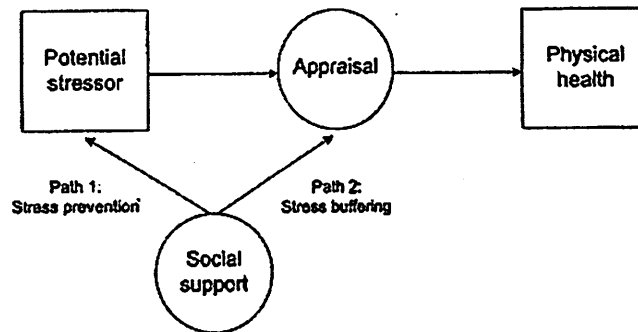


Figure 3.1. Main pathways involved in stress-related models of social support.

Uchino, B.N. (2004). *Social support and physical health: Understanding the health consequences of relationships*. Yale University Press

7

This Uchino's model depicts both:

The Stress Prevention function of social support

&

The Stress Buffering function of social support

Supportive actions perspective

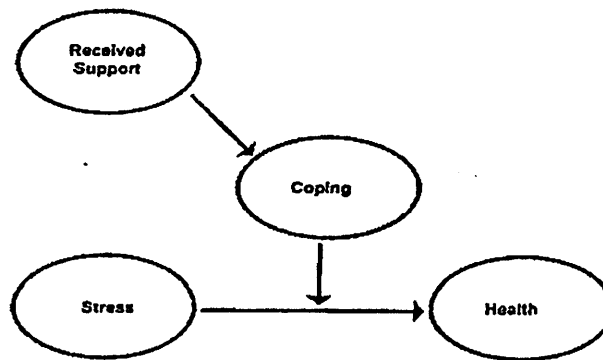


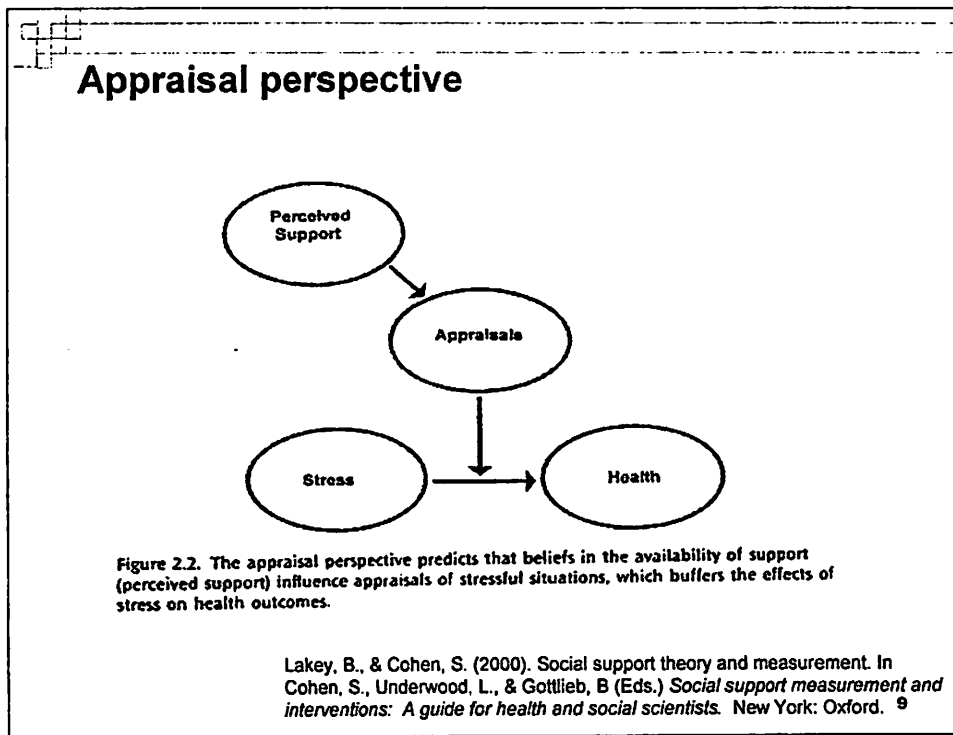
Figure 2.1. The supportive actions approach predicts that received support enhances coping, which buffers the relation between stress and health outcomes.

Lahey, B., & Cohen, S. (2000). Social support theory and measurement. In Cohen, S., Underwood, L., & Gottlieb, B (Eds.) *Social support measurement and interventions: A guide for health and social scientists*. New York: Oxford. ⁸

Here is another way to show (graph) a moderating (buffering) effect of social support.

Received support (aka “supportive actions”) is suggesting or providing means of coping with a stressor.

Those people who are better equipped with their coping options will manage better in times of stress.



This is a general representation of the most frequently mentioned buffering function of social support.

As we said earlier, perceived support or belief that help will be available when needed, affects our primary and secondary appraisals.

In case of primary appraisal, it may present the stressors as less threatening or harming.

In case of secondary appraisal, it may present our ability to cope with the stressor as adequate or even exceeding the demands of the situation. Hence, the sense of optimism and efficacy are augmented.

Do you remember *The Little Engine that Could*?

SEE LINK: <http://tigger.uic.edu/~plotnick/littleng.htm>

Kaspersen, M., Mathiesen, S. B. & Gøtestam, K. G. (2003). Social network as a moderator in the relation between trauma exposure and trauma reaction: A survey among UN soldiers and relief workers. *Scandinavian Journal of Psychology*, 44, 415-423

420 M. Kaspersen et al. Scand J Psychol 44 (2003)

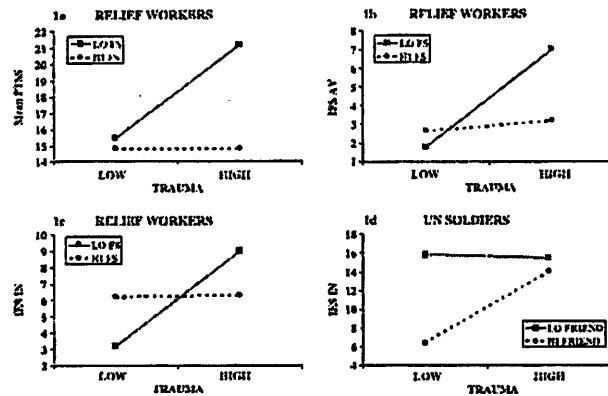


Fig 1
 FS = family support IES IN = IES intrusion
 FRIEND = friend support IES AV = IES avoidance

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Look at the four figures (1a, 1b, 1c, 1d).

In each, the dependent variable is a measure of distress (the extent of PTSD symptoms). The higher the score, the higher the level of symptoms of posttraumatic distress.

FS = family support.

Which graph shows strong social support buffering effects?

How would you interpret the pattern of the results depicted in figure 1d?

What happened to the United Nations' soldiers who experienced high level of combat trauma? Did having high social support from friends protect them from experiencing greater levels of PTSD?

The stress-support matching hypothesis

- **Not many studies can show such pristine and unqualified buffering effects of social support**
- **Stress-buffering properties of social support are quite likely to be confined to specific sources, subgroups, and types of support**

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In a way, having support from friends made it worse for these soldiers.
In other words, in this case, having social support failed!

DISCUSSION IDEA: Can you come up with reasons why social support from friends (or other sources) may actually exacerbate (increase, intensify) feelings of distress?

(click on "Discussions")

The stress-support matching hypothesis

- Consider a man who stands at the edge of a lake to offer sympathy to a drowning friend and who, later, provides the man's grieving widow with a rope.



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One of the reasons why social support sometimes fails is that it is simply mismatched!

To be effective in a variety of circumstances, informal support networks must provide those coping resources that are both most challenged by the stressful event and most needed for coping.

Most studies that showed successful buffering effects are those studies where the type of social support was well matched with the needs of person coping with a particular stressor.

Cutrona and Russell (1990) proposed a theoretical model (*The theory of optimal matching*) where for each category of stressors (negative vs. positive; controllable vs. uncontrollable; affecting different important resources) an appropriate social support provision can be predicted as the most useful.

When you need a loan to pay your bills how helpful would it be if your affluent friend offered you only expressions of regret for your financial difficulties?

How helpful was that \$10 banknote you received from your father (*Go and play some billiard, son*) when you asked him for advice what to do about your girlfriend distancing herself from you?

The stress-support matching hypothesis

Cutrona, C.E. and Russell, D.W. (1990) Type of social support and specific stress: Toward a theory of optimal matching. In B.R. Sarason, I.G. Sarason, and G.R. Pierce (eds) *Social Support: An Interactional View*, Wiley, New York, pp.319-366.

TABLE 13.2. Dimensions of Stress

		Uncontrollable			
		Assets	Relationships	Achievement	Social Role
Negative		Financial strain ^a Unemployment ^a Medical illness ^a Crime victim ^a Military combat ^a	Bereavement ^a	Demotion	Mandatory retirement
Positive		Wins the lottery	Someone phones to ask you on a date	Undeserved promotion	Elected chair of committee
		Controllable			
		Assets	Relationships	Achievement	Social Role
Negative		Overeating	Divorce ^a	Job stress ^a	Caring for elderly in-laws ^a
Positive		Smoking cessation ^a	Marriage	Deserved promotion	Birth of first child ^a

13

The stress-support matching hypothesis

Cutrona, C.E. and Russell, D.W. (1990) Type of social support and specific stress: Toward a theory of optimal matching. In B.R. Sarason, I.G. Sarason, and G.R. Pierce (eds) *Social Support: An Interactional View*, Wiley, New York, pp.319-366.

TABLE 13.3. Dimensions of Stress Predicting Components of Support

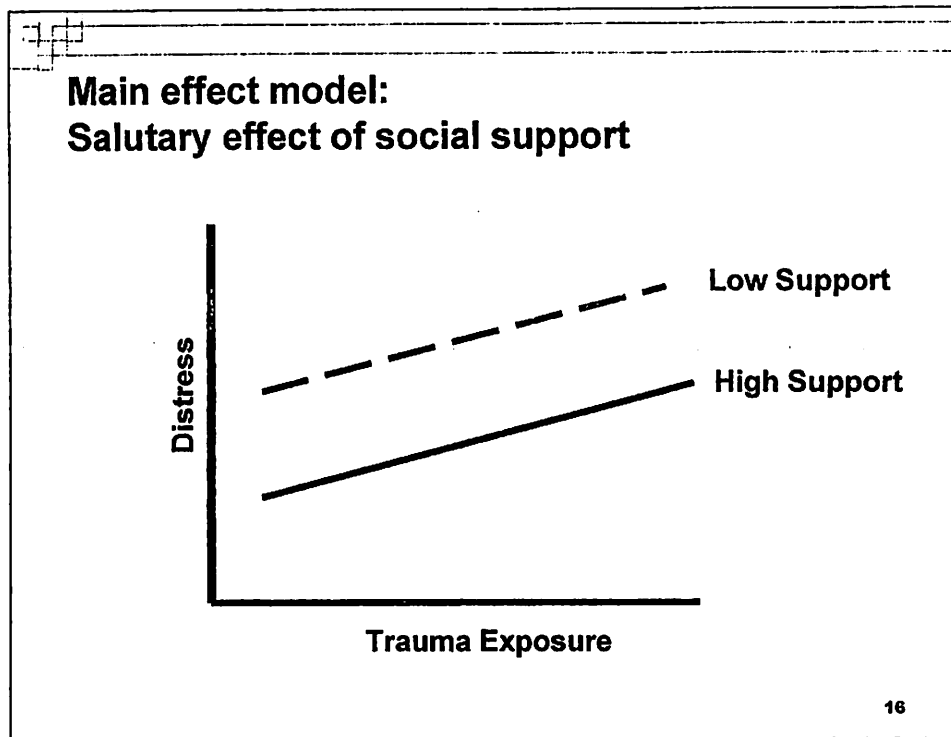
Uncontrollable				
Emotional Support (especially caring)				
	Assets	Relationships	Achievement	Social Role
Negative	Tangible support	Attachment or social integration	Reassurance of worth	Social integration
Positive	"	"	"	"
Controllable				
Instrumental Support (especially information) and Esteem Support				
	Assets	Relationships	Achievement	Social Role
Negative	Tangible support	Attachment or social integration	Reassurance of worth	Social integration
Positive	"	"	"	"

Alternative – Main effect model

- **Whether or not they searched for the evidence of stress-buffering, a great majority of studies of various traumas showed a salutary main effect of perceived social support on psychological well-being**

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In fact, it is rather unusual not to register these effects, at least at a bivariate level. In other words, even if the studies did not support the buffering effect, they usually show that people who have more social support have greater psychological well-being.

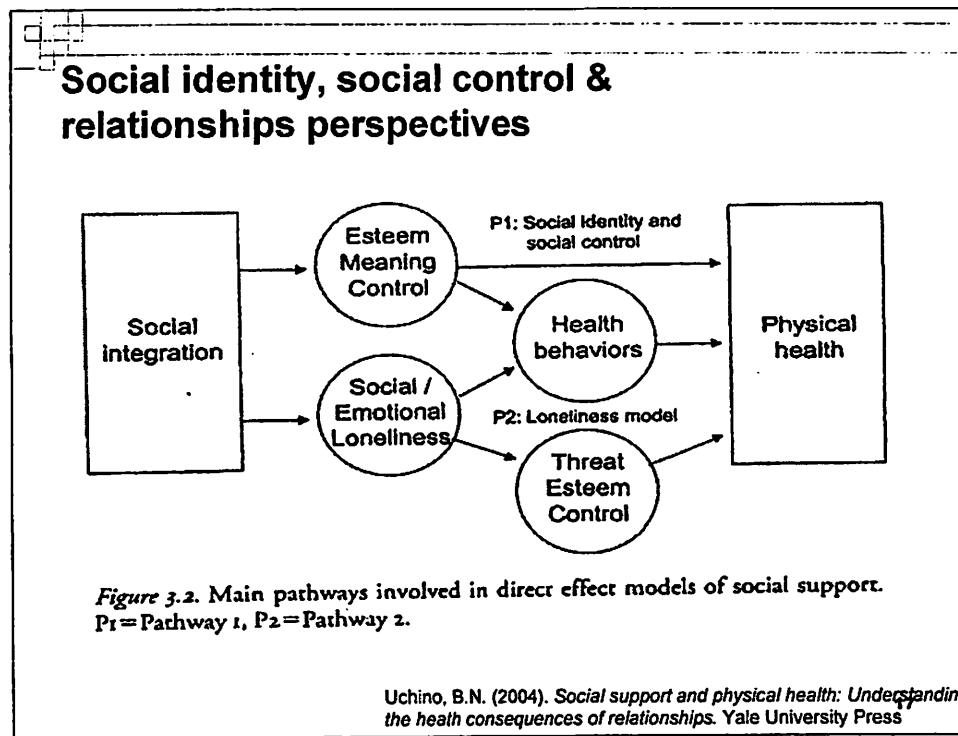


Thus an alternative to the stress buffering model, a main effect, was proposed.

The “main effect” model is labeled that way because it claims that social support acts as a beneficial resource (salutary effects) all the time, regardless of the level of stress. Look at the figure above, people who have social support are always better off than people with lower levels of social support. In statistical terms that means there is no interaction between the level of stress (e.g., trauma exposure) and social support. In other words, our statistical analyses (e.g., ANOVA) show only a main effect of social support on mental health.

Research showed that buffering effects are most likely to be registered with measures of social support functions (so called functional support measures) whereas the main effects are most often found in the studies that assessed structural aspects of social support (social embeddedness and social integration).

In what ways does social embeddedness promote good physical and mental health?



Social integration and being connected to others:

- fill our lives with sense of self-esteem and self-worth (*I am loved by others, I must be a good person*)
- help us understand the rules and laws governing the world (*See the Red light? STOP*)
- function as means of control and motivate or demand that we adopt appropriate behaviors aiming at sustaining good physical and mental health (*Brush you teeth!*)
- counteract the feelings of loneliness and exclusion

Social-cognitive perspective

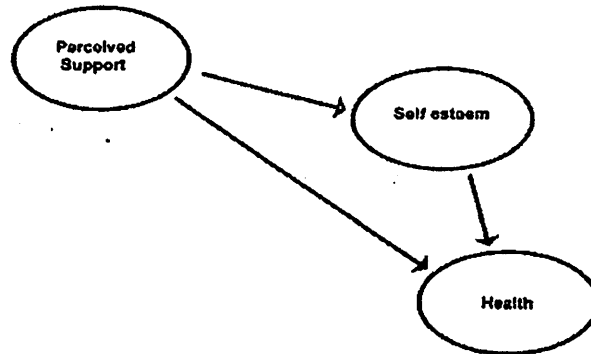


Figure 2.3. The social-cognitive perspective predicts that perceived support promotes self-esteem, which leads to health outcomes. Perceived support also leads directly to health outcomes.

Lahey, B., & Cohen, S. (2000). Social support theory and measurement. In Cohen, S., Underwood, L., & Gottlieb, B (Eds.) *Social support measurement and interventions: A guide for health and social scientists*. New York: Oxford. ¹⁸

Social-cognitive perspective predicts that perceived support promotes self-esteem which then becomes a motivating factor in adopting health-protective behaviors.

Symbolic interactionist perspective

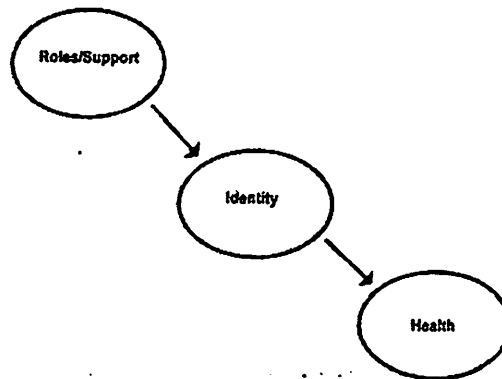


Figure 2.4. The symbolic interactionist perspective predicts that social roles/support identity, which leads to health outcomes.

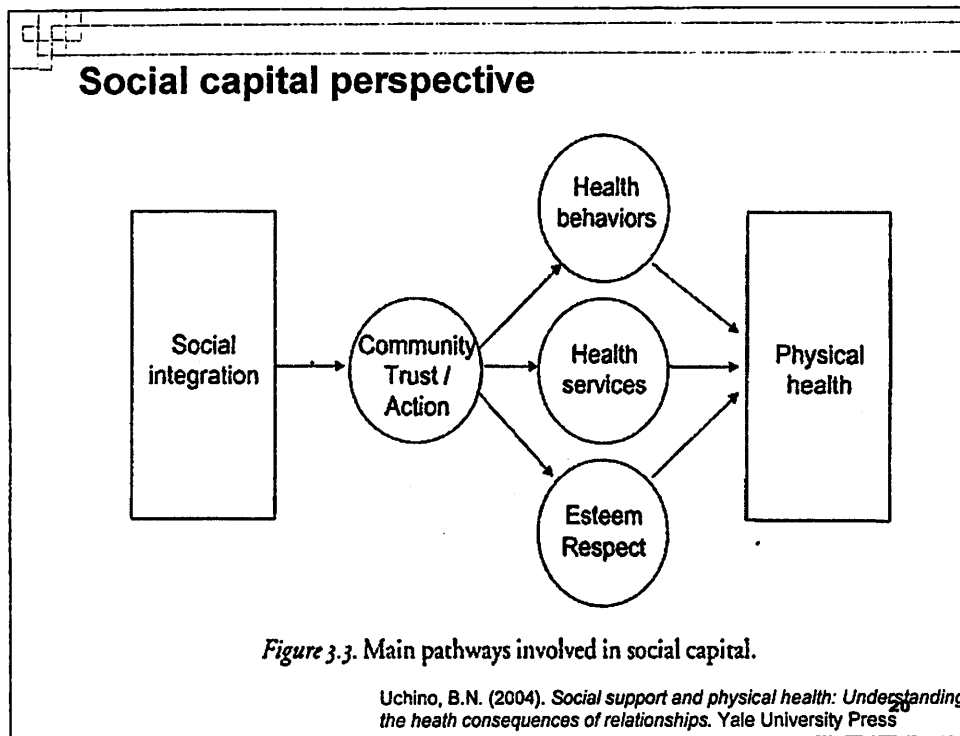
Lakey, B., & Cohen, S. (2000). Social support theory and measurement. In Cohen, S., Underwood, L., & Gottlieb, B (Eds.) *Social support measurement and interventions: A guide for health and social scientists*. New York: Oxford. 19

The symbolic interactionist perspective builds on the idea of social roles and their importance for development of identity. Our personal (e.g., parent, sibling), professional (e.g., teacher, student), and community (e.g., T-ball coach, member of a religious congregation) roles convey a structure and meaning into our lives.

Having a meaningful conception of the world is a foundation of good health.

DISCUSSION IDEA: Having social support is important for physical and mental health. This statement, while true, is most often referring to the idea of being the recipient of social support. Do you believe that providing social support to others has positive health effects? Please provide examples.

(click on "Discussions")



Social capital is defined as those aspects of the social environment (e.g., the degree of integration) that set the foundation for collective actions.

Local communities that are more socially integrated tend to invest more into services and activities that influence healthier behavior.

SEE LINK: <http://www.wright-house.com/psychology/sense-of-community.html>