

## **Applied Positive Psychology**

**Professor Dilwar Hussain**

**Department of Humanities and Social Sciences**

**Indian Institute of Technology, Guwahati**

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### **Lecture 24: Altruism and Prosocial Behaviour**

I welcome you all to module 8 of this course, which is titled "Applied Positive Psychology." So module 8 is about kindness and prosocial behavior. This is the second lecture of this module, and overall it is lecture number 21. So in this lecture, we will be focusing on understanding the concept of prosocial behaviour, some of its theories, and how it is related to well-being. So, before we talk about today's lecture, let me give you a brief recap of the last lecture.

So the last lecture was also part of the same module, which is lecture number 20, and we discussed the concept of kindness, including its meaning and the kinds of behaviors that are considered acts of kindness. We also discussed the evolutionary mechanisms of kindness and the different evolutionary forces. how it propagates or facilitates kind behavior. We also discussed how kindness and happiness are connected to one another. And we also discussed the concept of random acts of kindness. And at the end, we discussed the concept of self-kindness and compassion. So these are some of the things that we discussed in the last lecture. And in today's lecture, more specifically, we will be focusing on the concept of prosocial behavior or altruistic behavior.

So we will define what prosocial behavior is; we will define what altruistic behavior is. We also discussed why prosocial behavior is so important in the human social context. We will also discuss the relationship between prosocial behavior and well-being. We'll also analyze the literature and empirical findings on how prosocial behavior can lead to well-being. And also, we'll discuss some of the literature on how well-being can actually facilitate prosocial behavior.

So, these are some of the things that we will discuss in today's lecture. Let us start. So, the first important idea is to understand the definition of prosocial behavior or altruistic behavior. Let us see what the meaning of prosocial behaviour or altruistic behaviour is. Now, there are different kinds of definitions available. Some definitions focus on the intention of the individual who is engaged in the action. So some definitions primarily focus on the intention. So, if the intention is there, then the behavior is counted as prosocial

behavior. So, in that context, one definition is given here for prosocial behavior. It covers a broad range of actions intended to benefit one or more people other than oneself.

So whenever there is an intention to benefit someone else, that behaviour can be broadly called prosocial behaviour. So, the focus here is only on intention. So, if your intention is to help someone, benefit someone, or support someone, then that behavior, irrespective of the consequences and other things, will determine that this behavior will be counted under prosocial behavior. Now altruistic behavior is a very specific aspect of prosocial behavior where the focus is from the intentional perspective. It is a voluntary behavior intended to benefit another, which is not performed with the expectation of receiving an external reward or avoiding externally produced aversive stimuli or punishment.

So when we talk about altruistic behavior or altruism, the focus is obviously on the intention to help or benefit someone else. But here, there is no expectation of getting anything in return. So it's a purely helping nature or intention where you don't have any expectation of getting anything out of it. So, that is called purely altruistic behavior. So, it comes in one category of prosocial behavior.

So, these are the definitions which focus on the intention of the individual who is engaged in the action. So, if intention determines whether the action can be called prosocial or not, some definitions emphasize the consequences of the behavior as well. For example, some of the definitions are listed here. One is any action that benefits another person.

So if the consequence of your action is that it benefits someone else, then based on the consequence, we can say it is a prosocial behavior. Another definition is a behavior that is costly to the actor and beneficial to the recipient or recipients. Costs and benefits are defined on the basis of the lifetime direct fitness consequences of a behavior. So here, basically, when we talk about prosocial behavior or altruistic behavior based on the consequences, generally the recipient is benefited, for whom the action is performed, and there may be some cost involved to the person who is doing the helping. The cost may include various things, such as time, resources of the person, risk, physical risk, and so on.

So the person who is engaged in the action has some costs. Some costs are incurred in it, and the recipients generally get benefit out of it. So this is a definition that is based on the consequences of the action. Some definitions emphasize both intention and consequence. This is a kinder and broader approach.

One definition in this category is that it's a voluntary, intentional behavior that results in benefits for another person. So there is also an intention, and there is a positive consequence for another person. Some definitions also look at the broader social context in terms of

defining prosocial behavior. One such definition is listed here. So, it defines prosocial behaviour as no more and no less than behaviour that is valued by the individual society.

So, if the broader social context values an action, then we can broadly call this a prosocial behavior, an action that is valued by the social context. Now, obviously it is beneficial to society and individuals. So there are a variety of definitions. The basic idea is that any action can be called a prosocial behavior provided there is an intention to benefit someone else, whether one person or multiple persons. And most of the time, when the intention is positive, the consequences are also positive.

Overall, such behaviors are valued by society in general or in a broader social context. So all of these definitions kind of summarize the different ideas associated with prosocial behavior. So this is about the definition of prosocial behavior, specifically one particular aspect called altruism that we have also defined. Now when we talk about prosocial behavior, there are various behaviors included. More specifically, there are three aspects to it, or three categories of behavior that can broadly be grouped under the concept of prosocial behavior.

One is called altruism, another is called cooperation, and the third one is called fairness or equity. Each category is defined by its distinct context and motivations influencing its impact on well-being and outcomes, and so on. So, all three of these categories come under the broader umbrella term of prosocial behavior. So, let us see each of them in a little bit more detail. So altruism has already been defined in the definition.

It is a particular aspect or type of prosocial behavior where there is an intention to benefit another individual without any expectation of return. So that is pure prosocial behavior in that sense. Your intention is just to help someone, and you are not expecting anything in return. So that is pure prosocial behavior. So, that is called altruism. More technically, this is called an altruistic behavior. So altruism involves selfless acts that benefit others without expecting external rewards, often incurring a cost to the individual. Generally, a person who is engaged in altruistic behavior incurs certain costs. Certain costs are required. So as I already said, the cost may be giving time, resources, and sometimes helping someone can risk the person who is helping, risking that person's life as well.

So there may be some varieties of costs involved for the person who is engaged in the altruistic action. So that's called altruism. So this behavior stems from genuine concern for the welfare of others driven by intrinsic motivation. Mostly altruistic behaviors are guided by intrinsic motivation with the idea that the person is genuinely concerned with the welfare of another individual and that motivation comes from within without any expectations of reward or external aspects.

So altruism may include things like volunteering when you are not getting anything in return, charitable donations, and blood donations, along with extraordinary forms involving significant personal risks such as organ donation to a stranger. There is no apparent benefit to the person. In fact, there are a lot of costs involved for the person.

So, altruism is strongly associated with well-being, supported by extensive research. Some of these things we will look at a little later. So people who are altruistic generally experience various indicators of well-being. So their well-being generally improves. A lot of empirical research shows that.

We will focus on that a little more. So this is one aspect of prosocial behavior called altruistic behavior, which is one category of prosocial behavior. The second category of behavior that comes under prosocial behavior is called cooperation. So cooperation is mostly discussed in the context of exchange situations when there are multiple individuals involved. So, cooperation refers to prosocial behavior within the exchange context, where individuals work together towards a common goal. When there are multiple individuals, or at least two individuals, working towards a common goal.

So there is an exchange involved between these individuals. So this behaviour often involves short-term sacrifices with the expectation of mutual benefit or future reciprocity. So in this case, it's not a purely altruistic kind of behavior where there is completely selfless behavior. Here it is guided more by the expectations of some mutual benefit, as a group of people are doing, or they may be expecting something in return in the future. So, examples include sharing responsibilities among friends and teammates.

When people work in a group or a team, they divide the responsibilities so that all the work does not come to one person. So, that is called cooperation. You do something; another person does something. So, overall, there is a group goal that is achieved when people contribute together to that group goal. So this is something called cooperation. It is also a kind of prosocial behavior because, you know, there is some intention to benefit each other and whatever it is, or some broader context, and so on. The third category of behavior that comes under prosocial behavior is generally called fairness by many people. When we are fair to people in any context of behavior, we are also engaging in prosocial behavior. So it's a behavior that promotes, you know, positivity and well-being, and that, you know, as a group goal, is also, you know, achieved because of some fairness or equity aspects whenever they are present in a behavior. So, fairness reflects adherence to equitable norms focusing on just outcomes rather than elevating suffering or anticipating reciprocity.

So, the focus of fairness is on how to equitably distribute things so that everybody gets

what they deserve. So, that is what you know: focus is on the outcomes and how those outcomes should be distributed. So, people are fair when this is distributed according to what people need or what people deserve. So, that becomes an equitable kind of fairness in situations where there has to be a distribution of resources and so on. So, acts of fairness such as equal or equitable division of resources emphasize impartiality and justice over personal gains.

So, generally, whenever people are fair, it means they are not biased towards something; people are impartial, and justice prevails, focusing on justice that is given to everybody, not just for someone's personal gain. Then in that situation, fairness prevails. That is a kind of prosocial behavior, a category of prosocial behaviors. So each of these types of behaviour, whatever we have discussed, the three categories—altruism, cooperation, and fairness—all these three kinds of behaviours are driven by the distinct biological, neural, and cognitive mechanisms, while cooperation and fairness may influence well-being. That can also be connected to well-being, but the relationship between altruism and well-being is particularly robust.

This aspect of altruistic behavior is very strongly connected to well-being. This is what empirical research shows. Other aspects are also related to well-being, but altruism is more specific; it has a more robust relationship with well-being. This is what a lot of empirical research indicates. Now, the important question arises: why are a lot of these prosocial behaviors connected to well-being? Why is it so important? Why does it matter in the social context or human life? Why does it matter? Why is it so important? Why is it given collectively, as a social context, or as a community context? Prosocial behaviors are given a lot of importance.

What are the main reasons behind it? So, let us look into some possible reasons behind it. One is about human identity. Now, when we talk about kindness or prosocial behavior or helping other individuals, it is kind of unconsciously, you know, it has become a part of human identity collectively. This is what collective teaching is about.

That it should be a part of human identity. That human beings should be kind and helpful is important. Whether one becomes one or not, that's a different thing. But collectively, if you look at what social norms talk about, it should be an important part of each individual's identity. This is because it is a desirable thing, and everybody rewards such actions or attitudes. So human identity, when we talk about kindness and helpful behavior, is very intrinsic to how we perceive humanity and our best selves.

So this is something idealized in a collective context. Kindness and helpfulness should be present in all individuals. This is what is expected of everybody. So it's an idealized

concept, and that's a part of human perception.

So it's a part of human identity. So most people aspire to be generous and altruistic, reflecting the values of caring for and assisting others, even at a personal cost. So it unconsciously becomes a part of the collective identity that we desire our identity to be associated with kindness and helpfulness. So people sometimes get motivated to engage in such behavior because of the identity that we consciously or unconsciously create around us. And it is, you know, kind of rewarded by the collective social norms.

So, this is one important thing. People are propelled towards such behavior. One of the reasons why it is so important is that it's a part of our identity itself. When this identity is fulfilled, we feel good about ourselves; we feel happy. So, this is one important thing.

Second, there are a lot of psychological benefits. Some of the things we have just slightly touched upon are that when people engage in pro-social behavior, it gives them a lot of psychological benefits. You know, they get a lot of immediate benefits in terms of well-being concepts and so on. Engaging in prosocial acts, a lot of research shows, enhances meaning in life, purpose in life, and happiness. It increases happiness and life satisfaction. Conversely, unkind actions often lead to guilt, shame, and emotions that motivate behavior to change towards prosociality.

So a lot of research shows that prosocial behavior enhances both hedonic and eudaimonic aspects of well-being, which include happiness, life satisfaction, meaning, and purpose in life, and so on. On the other hand, when people engage in unkind behavior, many people, if they have normal developmental processes, may feel a lot of guilt and shame, which are opposite aspects of well-being. So many times, because of this guilt, people also engage in prosocial behavior to remove that guilt. So there are many psychological benefits to prosocial behavior. That is why people engage in prosocial behavior and why it matters, because it also provides many benefits.

So this is another reason. The third reason is about perception, social perception, and relationships. Prosocial behaviour is an integral aspect of social relationships. It facilitates relationships. It is a foundation for social connections, perceptions, and so on. So, being prosocial improves social capital, the so-called social capital that we have in terms of relationships and other aspects.

For example, prosocial behavior may increase the popularity of the person. So, prosocial children are often rated as more popular by their peers. So if people engage in prosocial behavior, they are judged more positively. So, in that sense, we are saying they are more popular.

It also increases the attractiveness of the individual. Altruistic individuals are considered more attractive and valued in long-term relationships, and so on. So people basically find them more desirable because this is a desirable quality; when people show it, it is valued by those around them and by the broader society as well. So this is also another reason many people engage in prosocial behavior: it is important because it enhances positive social perceptions and contributes positively to relationships. Another important reason why it is essential to promote prosocial behavior is that it serves as the foundation of human society. We cannot expect a human society to exist without the concept of kindness and prosocial behavior. Society will disintegrate. If you see that society is disintegrating in a lot of situations or a lot of societies are disintegrating, one of the reasons is that kindness and prosocial behavior are decreasing in those societies which can manifest in the form of various conflicts, doubts, and lack of trust in relationships between groups, between individuals, and so on. All these reflect a lack of kindness and prosocial behavior. So the functioning of society, it is very important that, you know, people at large, at least most of the people or a large chunk of the people, are showing kindness and prosocial behavior. Then a society can exist. Otherwise, it will disintegrate. So, this prosocial behavior underpins social structures. Enabling charitable acts, supporting education, and standing against injustices like bullying; without them, social cohesion would erode. And acts of collective good such as voting for policies that benefit others would diminish. So it is an important aspect of social cohesion.

So people are positively connected to each other in a society. One of the reasons is this sense of kindness and prosocial behavior. So these are some of the reasons why processing your behavior is significant and relevant, and why people should engage in it. So these are very important reasons why people get engaged in it and why people should engage in it. So, these are some of the major reasons behind it.

Now let us look into the relationship between prosocial behavior and well-being. Now, a lot of research shows that prosocial behavior actually enhances the various indicators of well-being. So let us see this relationship. A lot of empirical literature and studies, including systematic reviews and meta-analyses, have demonstrated the beneficial effects of prosocial behavior, such as prosocially spending money on others, making others happy, and performing acts of kindness on well-being. All these kinds of behavior, which can be broadly included under prosocial behavior, have a lot of positive impact on well-being. And this has been demonstrated by various types of research, including systematic reviews, meta-analyses, and so on.

Now, a lot of previous research also indicated that prosocial behavior exerts beneficial effects on a person's well-being, even when the recipient is anonymous and unknown. So

even when people are strangers, helping strangers also has a lot of beneficial impact in terms of well-being on the person who is engaged in that action. While many studies suggest that prosocial action enhances well-being, others indicate that well-being and happiness can actually motivate prosocial behavior. So this relationship between prosocial behavior and well-being can be bidirectional.

So, prosocial behavior can enhance positive well-being. On the other hand, it is also possible that when people experience higher well-being or happiness, they are more likely to help other people, or prosocial behavior may increase. So, it is possible that the relationship between prosocial behavior and well-being can be bi-directional, and we look into the evidence of that. So, emerging evidence generally points that you know that a positive feedback loop where prosocial behaviour and well-being mutually reinforce each other. So, it is possible that each of these two constructs, prosocial behavior and well-being, mutually influence each other. Prosocial behaviour enhances well-being; well-being then further enhances prosocial behaviour, and so on.

So, it is possible. Let us look into the literature on both sides. So we'll see the theoretical link between prosocial behavior leading to well-being and how well-being can also lead to prosocial behavior. So let us look into each of them one by one. So let us look into some of the theoretical concepts that can explain why prosocial behavior leads to well-being. Empirical evidence has already shown that there is a positive relationship between prosocial behavior and well-being.

Now let us see some possible theories that can explain this relationship. Why prosocial behavior increases well-being or indicators of well-being. So, two theories will be discussed in this context. One is called the warm-glow theory. Another model is the negative state relief model. So, let us look into how these two theories contribute to our understanding of how prosocial behavior leads to well-being.

Now, the warm-glow theory was proposed by James Andriani in 1996. This provides a psychological explanation for why individuals engage in prosocial behaviors like charitable giving or helping others. Why do people engage in such behavior, and why does it lead to a positive impact? So this theory talks about the intrinsic emotional reward for prosocial behavior. So this theory says that individuals experience a warm glow or a feeling of satisfaction and happiness from performing prosocial acts. So whenever people engage in prosocial acts, generally they feel a sense of satisfaction, which is a sense of happiness from it. So that is what they call a warm glow experience when people engage in prosocial behavior.

Now this warm glow is the reason people engage in prosocial behavior and why it leads

to positive benefits. This positive emotional response is independent of the tangible or social impacts of the act. So whatever the impact of that act, it may be independent of that. The simple act of kindness or the act of prosocial behavior itself leads to this warm glow experience.

and which may be independent of what whatever the consequence this action has. For example, a person may feel good about donating to charity even if they do not know how their donation will be used. So they may not actually know whether their donation is used rightly or what kind of impact this has. If the person just donates for the sake of or with the intention of benefiting somebody, that itself gives them this warm glow experience. Even if they may not actually know how this is used. So, because of this intrinsic emotional reward, people engage in prosocial behavior, which leads to many benefits for well-being; you know, it enhances well-being.

Now, here, when we talk about warm glow theory, they say that there is no purely altruistic motive for any kind of prosocial behavior. So warm glow theory contradicts the idea of pure altruism, where we said that people engage in prosocial behavior purely without any expectation of reward, which they contradict here by saying that individuals are motivated by a mix of altruistic and self-serving desires. The warm glow effect is part of the self-serving reward as it provides emotional gratification to the giver. So even though the person may not be expecting anything in return in terms of tangible or external reward, this internal emotional reward that they get is what is desired. So it's in that sense that we cannot call it pure altruistic behavior because there is still some desire to get happiness out of it.

So in a broader philosophical sense, we can say we can never consider any prosocial behavior as purely altruistic. Another concept that comes up here is the reinforcement mechanism. So this positive feeling generated by a prosocial act can create a feedback loop, encouraging individual to repeat those behaviour in the future. Since prosocial behavior provides them with a warm glow and positive emotional experience, this positive emotional experience itself becomes a reward for future actions again.

So people are motivated to do them because, again, they want that kind of positive emotional state. Over time, people may develop a habitual tendency to help others because of the consistent emotional rewards. So the main reason why people engage in it is that the emotional reward they get leads to various positive outcomes. So how is it linked to well-being? In that sense, the emotional boost from the warm glow effect enhances subjective well-being by fostering positive emotions and increasing life satisfaction. So this warm glow experience enhances many of these positive emotional experiences and life satisfactions, which are indicators of well-being.

So this is one theory that can explain why people engage in prosocial behavior and why it is linked to well-being. The second theory that can also explain why prosocial behavior is linked to well-being is called the negative state relief model. Now, this negative state relief model was proposed by Cialdini and Kulik in 1981 as a psychological framework to explain why people engage in prosocial behavior. Just like the warm glow theory, the focus was on understanding why people engage in prosocial behavior. Now, according to this model, helping others is primarily motivated by the desire to alleviate one's own negative emotional states, such as guilt, sadness, and distress.

Here, they are just focusing on another aspect of emotion. In the warm glow theory, the focus is on the idea that when people help, they experience positive emotional states, which become a rewarding experience. Here, they are saying that people are more likely to engage in prosocial behavior when they are motivated by the desire to remove their negative emotional states. So whenever they experience guilt, sadness, or distress, they are more likely to help other individuals because they may feel that by helping others, these emotions will be removed or replaced by more positive emotions. So, to remove these negative states or emotions, people may engage in prosocial behavior.

So it's almost talking about the same concept as the warm glow theory, but in a different sense. So more specifically, this theory predicts that, at least under certain circumstances—not in all circumstances, but in some—a temporary feeling of sadness is likely to result in an increased willingness to help others. Not necessarily all the time when people feel sad will they be more helpful in nature, but at least in some circumstances when people experience negative emotions such as sadness and so on, this may result in a greater willingness to help others individually. Now the question is, why would a sad mood lead to an increased willingness to help others? Intuitively, people generally don't make much sense. What should be the reason behind it? According to this theory, this is more for a selfish reason.

Specifically, people have been socialized in such a way that they are rewarded for helping others. Over time, people internalize this and find helping others is more rewarding, especially the emotional reward. When a person is sad, he or she is motivated to repair that mood and anticipate that helping will improve his or her mood. So at least they have this kind of expectation; probably that will enhance their prosocial behavior. More simply, when people are sad, they may be more likely to help others because they believe that doing so will make them feel better. The main selfish reason behind this is that people want to feel good, and this sad mood may promote prosocial behavior, especially when they expect that helping others will improve their mood, and so on.

So this model suggests that witnessing someone in need or suffering can evoke negative

emotions. Many times when you feel someone is suffering or in a negative state, it increases; it kind of mirrors those negative emotions to the person who is observing. A person may feel discomfort, guilt, or empathy-induced distress when they observe someone else in distress. Processual actions such as helping or donating serve as a way to reduce these negative feelings. And restored emotional balance because when they observe other people in suffering, it may induce negative emotions, so people may engage in prosocial behavior to reduce or remove whatever guilt, discomfort, and distress they experience, so the individual evaluates whether helping will effectively reduce these feelings. Their negative state, if they perceive that the emotional relief outweighs the cost of helping, makes them more likely to engage in prosocial behavior.

So this model says not everybody experiencing negative emotions will engage in prosocial behavior. People generally evaluate the costs involved in it. So if they feel that the cost is less than the reward, then they will probably get engaged in prosocial behavior. If they think the cost is too high and it may not reduce their negative emotions, they may not engage in prosocial behavior. So, once the individual acts to help, they experience a reduction in negative emotions leading to a sense of relief and emotional well-being.

So, that enhances emotional well-being, and that may be the main motivation behind prosocial actions. So this is part of the explanation of why prosocial behavior can increase well-being. Now let us look into the other aspect of the same relationship: that sometimes, when we experience well-being or indicators of well-being, it may actually motivate prosocial behavior. So let us look into the other side of the story about how well-being can actually lead to prosocial behavior. Now, a lot of empirical studies show that there is a positive relationship between well-being and social behavior that is not just correlation, but in terms of when people are in a positive emotional state, it enhances their tendency to help other individuals.

So some of the experimental evidence also shows inducing positive emotions. Increased willingness to help both in laboratory and real-world settings. Life satisfaction predicted charitable giving more strongly than the reverse. So people who are more satisfied with their lives are more likely to engage in charitable actions and so on. Even some longitudinal studies show that higher well-being in individuals was associated with greater engagement in altruistic behavior. Longitudinal panel data also showed that greater well-being leads to increased volunteer hours over a year and so on.

So, these are some of the experimental and longitudinal studies that show that when people experience more indicators of well-being, like happiness and satisfaction, it may actually promote their pro-social behavior. Now let us look into the explanation of why this may be the case. Let us look into some theories behind it again.

So, we will talk about two main theories. One is the mood maintenance theory. Second is the broaden and build theory, which we have already discussed in some of the earlier models in detail. But here we will focus more on the prosocial context. This theory has already been covered in detail, but here the focus will be more on understanding or using this theory to understand prosocial behavior. So, this theory generally suggests that positive emotions encourage helping behaviors by either prolonging a good mood or fostering personal resources.

So, let us look at these theories. Mood maintenance theory. Now, according to this theory of mood maintenance or hypothesis, individuals experiencing positive emotions are likely to engage in helping behaviors. Here in the negative state relief model, it shows that people who are in a negative emotional state are often motivated to engage in prosocial behavior to remove that negative emotional state. Here it is saying that individuals experiencing even positive emotions can also engage in prosocial behavior. In the earlier case, the motivation was to remove the negative states.

In this case, the motivation is to maintain that positive emotional state. So the motivation is the very same in both the negative state relief model and mood maintenance theory. So this act provides them with the condition reinforcement, thereby sustaining their positive mood or preventing the negative feeling they might experience if they choose not to help. So just to prolong or maintain a positive mood. When people are in a positive emotional state, to maintain that state, they may often engage in prosocial behavior or so that their mood does not fall into the negative category.

Consider someone feeling down or depressed, seeking to improve their emotional state, which the negative state relief model discusses, such that individuals in negative moods are also motivated to assist others. By helping, they can generate conditional reinforcement to remove their emotional state, so these two theories are basically two sides of the same coin. One says that when you are in a positive mood, you are also more likely to engage in prosocial behavior; the reason is that people want to maintain that positive mood. Helping also increases and maintains their positive mood.

On the other hand, many times a negative mood may also lead to engagement in prosocial behavior. The motivation behind it is to change the negative emotional state to a positive emotional state. So this can also explain that when people are in a positive emotional state, it may lead to prosocial behavior. So, higher positive emotions and well-being can lead to prosocial behavior. Particularly, this model addresses positive emotions. Now, there is some experimental evidence; some of the earlier studies and initial studies that were done for these theories also provided experimental evidence in this direction.

For example, studies have shown that happy individuals are more likely to engage in prosocial actions such as offering assistance or donating resources. Happiness-based helping appears consistent even when individuals believe their mood is fixed and cannot change. So some of this earlier research actually shows that even if they feel that, even if they don't help, their mood is not going to change; still, they are more likely to help when they are in a positive emotional state. Studies demonstrate that sadness increases helping behavior only when individuals perceive that helping can improve their emotional states. On the other hand, people who are in a negative emotional state only help when they believe that helping will improve their mood.

They may not help in every negative emotional state. In this case, helping decreases when the emotional state is perceived as fixed. So, when people are in a positive emotional state, they engage in prosocial behavior even if they perceive it as fixed and unchangeable, but when they are in a negative emotional state, they do not. believe their negative emotions are fixed and are not going to change, and in such cases, the helping tendency may decrease. When they feel that even if I help, it is not going to change my mood, then negative emotions may not motivate people to engage in prosocial behavior. But on the other hand, when people are in a positive emotional state and perceive their emotions as fixed, despite that perception, they are more likely to engage in prosocial behavior.

So there is a difference between when people experience negative emotions and when they experience positive emotions; the tendencies may differ. Another theory that can also explain why positive emotion leads to helping behavior is called the broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions. We have already covered the details of this theory. Now the focus will be on how this can explain helping behavior.

Now, this theory says positive emotions broaden our thought processes and actions. So, it broadens perspective. How will this lead to helping behavior? So positive emotions like joy, gratitude, and love broaden attention and thinking, enabling individuals to consider a wider range of possibilities. So people become broader in their perspectives. They can think about broader things and many more aspects of the situation. So, the range of possibilities increases when people experience positive emotions.

This explains how perspective increases empathy when you are able to understand and look at different or a higher range of things. This may increase your empathy. You may be able to understand the perspective of other people when you are open; when people are closed and rigid, they don't understand others' perspectives. So positive emotions also help people understand the perspectives of other people. And then it makes them open to others' needs, which are all critical for helping behaviors. So when you understand others' perspectives, your empathy increases; when you are open to the needs of other people, you

are more likely to help individuals compared to when you are very rigid, and so on.

So a joyful person, for example, might notice subtle cues indicating someone needs help, leading to acts of kindness that they otherwise might overlook, and so on. So this is an important aspect of this theory. The second important aspect of this theory is that positive emotion builds resources, which may ultimately lead to more helping behavior. Engaging in prosocial behavior under a positive emotional state helps individuals build enduring resources.

So positive emotion builds social resources, strengthens relationships, and social bonds through acts of kindness. Even positive emotions enhance social resources, as they enhance bonding with other people, which in turn is more likely to enhance prosocial behavior. Additionally, psychological resources enhance self-efficacy, resilience, and a sense of purpose from helping others. Thus, both helping behavior and positive emotions can increase psychological resources. It can also increase cognitive resources, improve problem-solving skills, enhance creativity, and broaden the mindset, and so on. So, for example, helping a colleague in a positive mood not only resolves the immediate issues but also strengthens workplace relationships, fostering mutual support in the future and so on.

Positive emotions build resources, which can ultimately be helpful in terms of helping other individuals. Helping individuals can also promote many of these things that are mutually influenced by both positive emotions and helping behaviors. So, what is the mechanism here? When people feel positive emotions, their thought processes become broadened. This positive emotion encourages exploratory and inclusive thinking, making individuals more likely to engage in helping behaviors. When people broaden their perspectives, they are more likely to understand others and help them.

It also increases the perception of other persons' needs. Broadened attention helps individuals become more attuned to others' emotional and physical states. Therefore, they are more likely to help. So, overall, empathy will increase.

Positive emotions enhance social connection which is a very important requirement for social behavior as well. So positive emotions motivate individuals to strengthen social bonds through acts of kindness, promoting reciprocal helping in the future and so on. So these are some of the possible mechanisms by which we can explain why sometimes higher well-being can actually promote helping behavior. So, there are experimental evidences, you know, longitudinal evidences, and there are theories that can explain that.

So, this relationship between well-being and prosocial behavior may be bi-directional. Well-being can promote prosocial behavior. On the other hand, prosocial behavior can

promote well-being. And we have discussed both the theoretical explanation behind it and the empirical evidence around it. So with this, I will stop here. We'll be talking about a few more aspects of prosocial behavior, particularly from the interventional perspective in the next lecture. Thank you.