

Helping behavior

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Evolutionary helping

- Evolutionary: the “selfish gene”
- But confounded with culture, because one *should* help one’s family members
- Reciprocal altruism (survive together) shows good non-human evidence

Personal rewards

- Evaluation of costs and rewards (especially in emergencies)
- Benefits of feeling good about oneself
- Moral obligation
- Altruism involves no clear *external* reward, but that isn't the only sort

Emergencies: 5 steps

- Notice something happening
- Interpret event as an emergency
- Take personal responsibility to intervene
- Decide how to help
- Provide the help

A practical application

- Carry a sign
- YOU pick the passer-by
- Know exactly what you need from the person
- Define the situation in terms the person can perform
- Make the commitment time-limited

Factors facilitating helping

- Lower population density
- Cultural values favoring “simpatia”
- Slower pace of life (so, more time)
- Positive personal moods
- Spillover from prior guilt
- Salience of positive values
- Social responsibility norm

The people involved

- Helpers are likely to
 - Be more empathic
 - Have higher moral reasoning
- Helped targets are likely to
 - Be more attractive
 - Be behaviorally “innocent”
 - Be similar or friends