Recovering from negative events by boosting implicit positive affect

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Abstract: Upregulation of implicit positive affect (PA) can act as a mechanism to deal with negative affect. Two studies tracked temporal changes in positive and negative affect (NA) assessed by self-report and the Implicit Positive and Negative Affect Test (IPANAT; Quirin, Kazén, & Kuhl, 2009). Study 1 observed the predicted increases in implicit PA after exposure to a threat-related film clip, which correlated positively with the speed of recognising a happy face among an angry crowd. Study 2 replicated increases in implicit PA after exposition to the same film clip, and showed that such increases were enhanced by priming self-referential stimuli. The findings are discussed against the background of personality systems interaction (PSI) theory (Kuhl, 2000, 2001), which emphasises the role of the implicit self in affect regulation. © 2011 Psychology Press.

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