

New Research From Current Directions in Psychological Science

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[Expressing Emotions in Stressful Contexts: Benefits, Moderators, and Mechanisms](#)

Annette L. Stanton and Carissa A. Low

Historically, emotion-focused coping has been linked with negative psychological outcomes; however, better assessment of stressor-related emotional expression has indicated that it can be beneficial. Stanton and Low discuss factors that affect the amount of benefit individuals gain from expressing their emotions and present possible mechanisms through which emotional expression might relieve stress. They conclude by saying that whether emotional expression is beneficial depends on the interpersonal, intrapersonal, and situational contexts of the emotional expression.

[Understanding the Physical-Symptom Experience: The Distinctive Contributions of Anxiety and Depression](#)

Jerry Suls and M. Bryant Howren

Research generally indicates that a global level of negative affect (NA) is associated with increased reporting of negative physiological symptoms. In this article, Suls and Howren examine the effect of breaking down NA into two of its smaller components: depression and anxiety. The authors found that depression was associated with higher retrospective reports of past symptoms, whereas anxiety was related to higher levels of current health symptoms, which suggests that a global approach to NA may mask key cognitive-affective processes relevant to symptom reporting.

[What Is It Like to Have a Body?](#)

Matthew R. Longo and Patrick Haggard

The study of body awareness has been fraught with disagreements and confusion; however, new techniques are allowing a more systematic investigation of human embodiment. Longo and Haggard discuss the structure of body awareness and suggest that it is composed of distinct and dissociable components. They also review evidence suggesting that body awareness is flexible — up to a certain point.