

THE INSTRUMENTAL HELPER IN GOAL PURUIT: HOW INTERPERSONAL
CLOSENESS AND GOAL INSTRUMENTALITY ARE RELATED?

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Abstract

Individuals are more likely to value and approach other people, when these people are instrumental to their currently active goals and hence can help facilitate the goal pursuit (Fitzsimons & Fishbach, 2010; Fitzsimons & Shah, 2008; Hui, Molden, & Finkel, 2013). In this literature, we are interested in studying the relationship between interpersonal closeness and goal instrumentality. This Study has two major purposes (1) to investigate the fundamental difference between close and distant friends in goal pursuit (2) to investigate how the differences between close and distant friends affect one's seek help behavior. Experiment 1a and 1b found that individuals perceive close friends as more helpful, irreplaceable and with higher physical accessibility than distant friends. Close friends are more helpful to the nominated goals, as well as helping with more alternative goal. Experiment 2 found that individuals are more likely to seek help from close friends when they have more chances to approach for help. Implications for understanding the relationship between interpersonal closeness and goal instrumentality are discussed.

Keywords: interpersonal closeness, goal instrumentality, friends

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