Communicating Social Support

When stresses and hassles challenge our abilities to cope, we frequently turn to family, friends, and partners for help. Yet social support from close relational partners does not uniformly benefit recipients or their relationships. By probing the communication processes that link enactments of social support to participant’s reactions, this book provides new explanations for when and how receiving social support will be evaluated as helpful and relationally satisfying. The author’s research addresses a variety of types of relationships and stresses, including young adult friends and romantic partners coping with the stresses of university life; adult friends, family, and spouses responding to everyday hassles; and married couples coping with chronic health conditions. This innovative program of research combines qualitative and quantitative methods to develop a distinctive communication-based framework for understanding why the content, form, style, and sequence of talk matter for our evaluations of the help we receive from others.

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Although scholars from a variety of disciplines have written and conversed about the importance of personal relationships for decades, the emergence of personal relationships as a field of study is relatively recent. *Advances in Personal Relationships* represents the culmination of years of multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary work on personal relationships. Sponsored by the International Association for Relationship Research, the series offers readers cutting-edge research and theory in the field. Contributing authors are internationally known scholars from a variety of disciplines, including social psychology, clinical psychology, communication, history, sociology, gerontology, and family studies. Volumes include integrative reviews, conceptual pieces, summaries of research programs, and major theoretical works. *Advances in Personal Relationships* presents first-rate scholarship that is both provocative and theoretically grounded. The theoretical and empirical work described by authors will stimulate readers and advance the field by offering up new ideas and retooling old ones. The series will be of interest to upper division undergraduate students, graduate students, researchers, and practitioners.

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Communicating Social Support

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For Michael and Graehm
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