

Helping Behaviour

Psychology

Why people help, and the debate about whether altruism is ever pure.

Empathy-altruism

- Empathy produces genuinely other-oriented motivation
- Batson's experiments: help even when escape is easy
- High-empathy participants help regardless of cost

Egoistic accounts

- Negative state relief — helping to feel better
- Social exchange — costs against rewards
- Reciprocity expectations
- Kin selection and inclusive fitness

THE DIFFERENCE THAT MATTERS

Batson's escape manipulation is the key test: egoistic motives predict escape, empathy predicts helping anyway.

Predictors of helping: similarity, mood, time pressure, number of bystanders, and whether the need seems deserved.