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Prior Negative Mood Buffers Some Individuals from Subsequent Negative Events: The Moderating Role of Neuroticism

PDF (Size: 133KB) PP. 445-449 DOI: 10.4236/psych.2011.25069

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ABSTRACT

The effects of mood on cognition are well-documented. However, would mood influence subsequent emotional reactions? The present research shows that prior moods interact with neuroticism to influence subsequent emotional experiences. Low-neuroticism individuals who initially felt negative subsequently experienced less negative emotions toward a slightly unpleasant task, relative to those who initially felt positive. Conversely, there were no mood effects on high-neuroticism individuals. This demonstrates that surprisingly, a prior negative, rather than positive, mood buffers low- but not high-neuroticism individuals from the effect of a subsequent unpleasant event on negative emotions. The possible mechanism underlying this effect—negative mood repair—is also discussed.

KEYWORDS

Neuroticism, Mood Effects, Buffering Effects, Negative Emotions, Mood Repair

Cite this paper

Ng, W. (2011). Prior Negative Mood Buffers Some Individuals from Subsequent Negative Events: The Moderating Role of Neuroticism. *Psychology*, 2, 445-449. doi: 10.4236/psych.2011.25069.

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