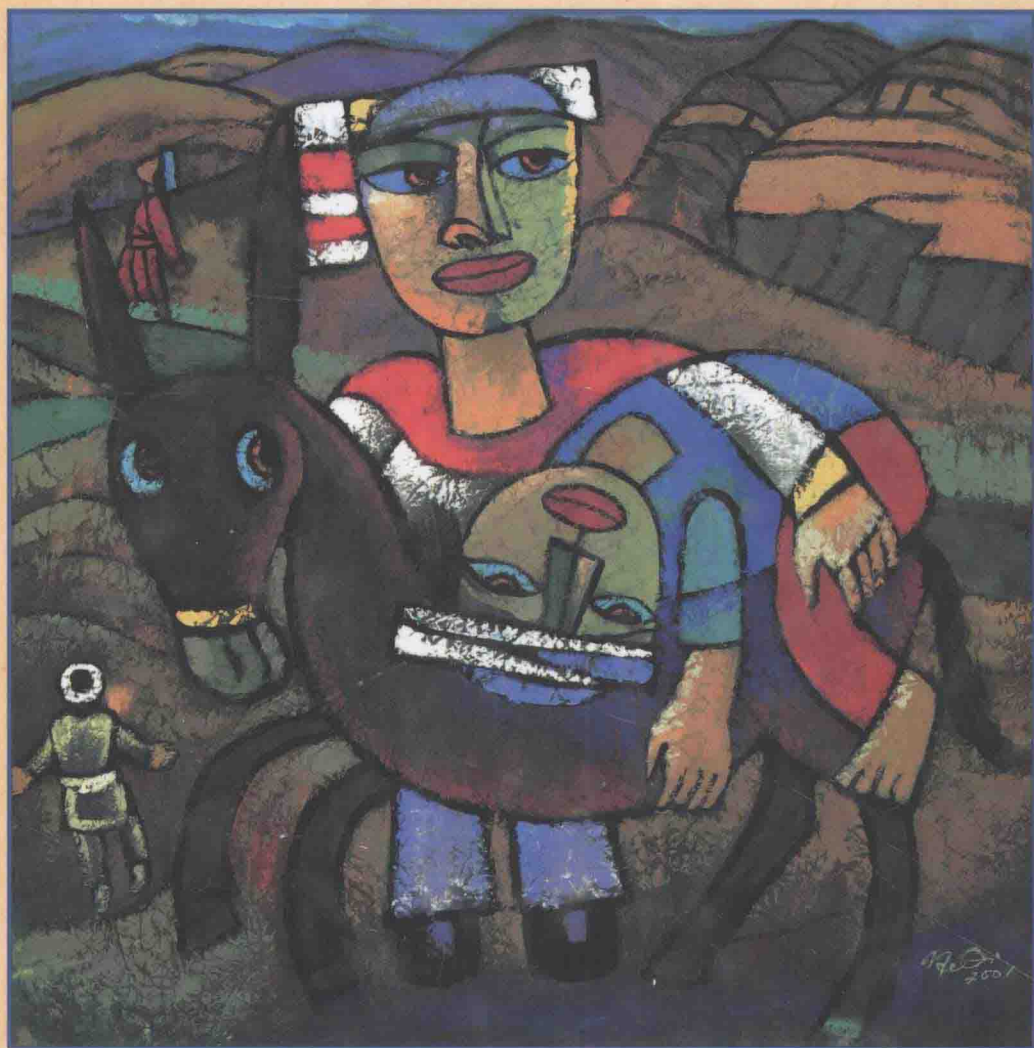


# PROSOCIAL MOTIVES, EMOTIONS, AND BEHAVIOR

*The Better Angels of Our Nature*



Edited by Mario Mikulincer and Phillip R. Shaver

# PROSOCIAL MOTIVES, EMOTIONS, AND BEHAVIOR

*The Better Angels of Our Nature*

---

Edited by Mario Mikulincer and Phillip R. Shayer



American Psychological Association • Washington, DC

Copyright © 2010 by the American Psychological Association. All rights reserved. Except as permitted under the United States Copyright Act of 1976, no part of this publication may be reproduced or distributed in any form or by any means, including, but not limited to, the process of scanning and digitization, or stored in a database or retrieval system, without the prior written permission of the publisher.

Published by  
American Psychological Association  
750 First Street, NE  
Washington, DC 20002  
[www.apa.org](http://www.apa.org)

To order  
APA Order Department  
P.O. Box 92984  
Washington, DC 20090-2984  
Tel: (800) 374-2721; Direct: (202) 336-5510  
Fax: (202) 336-5502; TDD/TTY: (202) 336-6123  
Online: [www.apa.org/books/](http://www.apa.org/books/)  
E-mail: [order@apa.org](mailto:order@apa.org)

In the U.K., Europe, Africa, and the Middle East, copies may be ordered from  
American Psychological Association  
3 Henrietta Street  
Covent Garden, London  
WC2E 8LU England

Typeset in Goudy by Stephen McDougal, Mechanicsville, MD

Printer: United Book Press, Inc., Baltimore, MD  
Cover Designer: Mercury Publishing Services, Rockville, MD  
Technical/Production Editor: Kathryn Funk

The opinions and statements published are the responsibility of the authors, and such opinions and statements do not necessarily represent the policies of the American Psychological Association.

#### **Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data**

Prosocial motives, emotions, and behavior : the better angels of our nature / edited by Mario Mikulincer and Phillip R. Shaver. — 1st ed.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN-13: 978-1-4338-0546-2

ISBN-10: 1-4338-0546-4

1. Helping behavior. 2. Altruism. 3. Empathy. I. Mikulincer, Mario. II. Shaver, Phillip R.

BF637.H4P76 2010

155.2'5—dc22

2009011240

#### **British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data**

A CIP record is available from the British Library.

*Printed in the United States of America*  
*First Edition*

# PROSOCIAL MOTIVES, EMOTIONS, AND BEHAVIOR

# CONTRIBUTORS

- Christopher R. Agnew, PhD**, Department of Psychology, Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN
- Leslie Ashburn-Nardo, PhD**, Department of Psychology, Indiana University–Purdue University Indianapolis
- Daniel Bar-Tal, PhD**, Department of Education, Tel-Aviv University, Tel-Aviv, Israel
- C. Daniel Batson, PhD**, Department of Psychology, University of Kansas, Lawrence
- Lane Beckes, MA**, Department of Psychology, University of Minnesota, Twin Cities
- Yael Ben-David, MA**, Department of Psychology, Tel-Aviv University, Tel-Aviv, Israel
- Nancy L. Collins, PhD**, Department of Psychology, University of California, Santa Barbara
- John F. Dovidio, PhD**, Department of Psychology, Yale University, New Haven, CT
- Nancy Eisenberg, PhD**, Department of Psychology, Arizona State University, Tempe
- Brooke C. Feeney, PhD**, Department of Psychology, Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, PA
- Beverley Fehr, PhD**, Department of Psychology, University of Winnipeg, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada
- Frank D. Fincham, PhD**, Family Institute, Florida State University, Tallahassee
- Máire B. Ford, PhD**, Department of Psychology, Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles, CA
- Samuel L. Gaertner, PhD**, Department of Psychology, University of Delaware, Newark

**Matthew T. Gailliot, PhD**, Faculty of Social and Behavioral Sciences,  
University of Amsterdam, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

**AnaMarie C. Guichard, PhD**, Department of Psychology, California State  
University, Stanislaus

**Samer Halabi, PhD**, Department of Psychology, Zfat College, Zfat, Israel

**Eran Halperin, PhD**, Department of Psychology, Stanford University,  
Stanford, CA

**Gal Harapz-Gorodeisky, PhD**, Department of Education and Psychology,  
Open University, Raanana, Israel

**Grit Hein, PhD**, Center for Social Neuroscience and Neuroeconomics,  
University of Zürich, Zürich, Switzerland

**Gilad Hirschberger, PhD**, Department of Psychology, Bar-Ilan University,  
Ramat Gan, Israel

**Salomon Israel, MA**, Department of Psychology, Hebrew University,  
Jerusalem, Israel

**James D. Johnson, PhD**, Department of Psychology, University of North  
Carolina—Wilmington

**Heidi S. Kane, MA**, Department of Psychology, University of California,  
Santa Barbara

**Johan C. Karremans, PhD**, Behavioral Science Institute, Radboud  
University Nijmegen, Nijmegen, The Netherlands

**Ariel Knafo, PhD**, Department of Psychology, Hebrew University,  
Jerusalem, Israel

**Mario Mikulincer, PhD**, School of Psychology, Interdisciplinary Center,  
Herzliya, Israel

**Arie Nadler, PhD**, Department of Psychology, Tel-Aviv University,  
Tel-Aviv, Israel

**Heather Orom, PhD**, Karmanos Cancer Institute, Wayne State  
University, Detroit, MI

**Adam R. Pearson, MA**, Department of Psychology, Yale University,  
New Haven, CT

**Louis A. Penner, PhD**, Karmanos Cancer Institute, Wayne State  
University, Detroit, MI, and Research Center for Group Dynamics,  
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor

**Caryl E. Rusbult, PhD**, Department of Social Psychology, Free  
University, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

**Tamar Saguy, MA**, Department of Psychology, University of Connecticut,  
Storrs

**Shalom H. Schwartz, PhD**, Department of Psychology, Hebrew  
University, Jerusalem, Israel

**Phillip R. Shaver, PhD**, Department of Psychology, University of  
California, Davis

**Moran Shemesh-Iron, MA**, Department of Psychology, Bar-Ilan  
University, Ramat Gan, Israel

**Nurit Shnabel, PhD**, Department of Psychology, Yale University,  
New Haven, CT  
**Jeffry A. Simpson, PhD**, Department of Psychology, University of  
Minnesota, Twin Cities  
**Tania Singer, PhD**, Center for Social Neuroscience and Neuroeconomics,  
University of Zürich, Zürich, Switzerland  
**Eliane Sommerfeld, PhD**, Department of Behavioral Sciences, Ariel  
University Center, Ariel, Israel  
**Rami Tolmacz, PhD**, Department of Psychology, Bar-Ilan University,  
Ramat Gan, Israel  
**Paul A. M. Van Lange, PhD**, Department of Social Psychology,  
Free University, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

# PREFACE

In a world riddled with greed, crime, violence, and intergroup conflict, the need for a better understanding of prosocial feelings and actions is obvious. Within the social and behavioral sciences, and now within the brain sciences as well, there are several fascinating and empirically supported theoretical and methodological perspectives on prosocial behavior, but they rarely get drawn into a single constructively critical and potentially integrative conversation. Some writers, for example, have considered prosocial behavior from genetic, or evolutionary, vantage points by treating “selfish” genes and selfish human beings as equivalent. We know, however, that selfish (i.e., self-perpetuating) genes can sometimes multiply by promoting cooperation, love, and human kindness in situations in which these prosocial qualities foster survival and reproduction. Similarly, there have been many insight-provoking social-psychological experiments on helping behavior, but the findings are rarely used to craft beneficial interventions in the real world. There are many important findings in research on the development of pro- and antisocial motives and behavior during childhood, but they are not often mentioned in discussions of evolutionary psychology.

The time is therefore right for an open, creative conversation among experts on the variety of approaches to prosocial motives, emotions, and behavior, including the study of basic processes and the evaluation of promising interventions and prospects for social change. The timeliness and social relevance of theory and research related to empathy, compassion, and generous behavior led us to choose this topic as the theme of the inaugural Herzliya Symposium on Personality and Social Psychology. This annual symposium is intended to explore cutting-edge, socially significant topics with the help of a group of world-class researchers who are invited to come to the Interdisciplinary Center, Herzliya, Israel, engage in intense constructively critical but also collaborative discussions, and then create a book that can be shared



with other members of the discipline as well as a broader group of interested readers. The present volume is the first in the Herzliya Series on Personality and Social Psychology.

The chapter authors generously and enthusiastically agreed to deliver lectures, participate in hours of discussion of the lectures, and then return home and prepare chapters based on the lectures and discussion. The Herzliya Symposium was cohosted by the two volume editors, and we worked, together with the chapter authors, to make the book as accessible, coherent, and clear as possible, so that it is suitable for researchers and application-oriented professionals, as well as for university classes and seminars at the graduate or upper-level undergraduate level. The book is well written throughout, so it should also be of interest to journalists and educated readers from diverse professions. The book provides a state-of-the-art review of the major theoretical perspectives on prosocial behavior; the basic psychological processes underlying such behavior; and recent research on core prosocial emotions and their roles in close relationships, groups, and intergroup relations.

We are extremely grateful to everyone who made the first Herzliya conference and the preparation of this book so stimulating and successful. We thank all of the speakers and chapter authors—an amazing group of scholars and admirable human beings. We are especially grateful to Professor Uriel Reichmann, president of the Interdisciplinary Center Herzliya, who generously provided financial and staff support for an annual series of conferences on personality and social psychology. We thank the staff of the New School of Psychology in the Interdisciplinary Center Herzliya—Ziv Ravfogel and Tsachi Ein-Dor—who handled all of the arrangements for the conference, dealt effectively with the many onsite details, and coped masterfully with the inevitable glitches and emergencies. We would also like to acknowledge and thank the Fetzer Institute, which has made studies of compassionate love and human virtues possible. We thank Maureen Adams, senior acquisitions editor in the American Psychological Association Books Department, for seeing the value of this project from the beginning and being a generous, thoughtful, and supportive friend during the book's preparation. Finally, we thank Caroline Barnes, Ron Teeter, Kathryn Funk, and Steve Ingle for their careful copyediting and indexing, respectively.

Mario Mikulincer, PhD  
Interdisciplinary Center, Herzliya, Israel

Phillip R. Shaver, PhD  
University of California, Davis

# CONTENTS

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| Contributors . . . . .  | ix        |
| Preface . . . . .   | xiii      |
| Introduction . . . . .  | 3         |
| <b>I. Theoretical Perspectives . . . . .</b>  | <b>13</b> |
| Chapter 1.    Empathy-Induced Altruistic Motivation . . . . .<br><i>C. Daniel Batson</i>  | 15        |
| Chapter 2.    Evolutionary Perspectives on Prosocial<br>Behavior . . . . .<br><i>Jeffry A. Simpson and Lane Beckes</i>  | 35        |
| Chapter 3.    Enduring Goodness: A Person-by-Situation<br>Perspective on Prosocial Behavior . . . . .<br><i>Louis A. Penner and Heather Orom</i>                                | 55        |
| Chapter 4.    A Behavioral-Systems Perspective on Prosocial<br>Behavior . . . . .<br><i>Phillip R. Shaver, Mario Mikulincer, and<br/>                    Moran Shemesh-Iron</i> | 73        |
| Chapter 5.    Forms of Concern: A Psychoanalytic<br>Perspective . . . . .<br><i>Rami Tolmacz</i>  | 93        |

|             |   |            |
|-------------|---|------------|
| Chapter 6.  | Neuroscience Meets Social Psychology: An Integrative Approach to Human Empathy and Prosocial Behavior . . . . . | 109        |
|             | <i>Grit Hein and Tania Singer</i>   |            |
| <b>II.</b>  | <b>Psychological Processes . . . . .</b>  | <b>127</b> |
| Chapter 7.  | Empathy-Related Responding: Links With Self-Regulation, Moral Judgment, and Moral Behavior . . . . .            | 129        |
|             | <i>Nancy Eisenberg</i>  |            |
| Chapter 8.  | Genetic and Environmental Influences on Prosocial Behavior . . . . .  | 149        |
|             | <i>Ariel Knafo and Salomon Israel</i>   |            |
| Chapter 9.  | The Effortful and Energy-Demanding Nature of Prosocial Behavior . . . . .                                       | 169        |
|             | <i>Matthew T. Gailliot</i>  |            |
| Chapter 10. | Helping Relations as Status Relations . . . . .   | 181        |
|             | <i>Arie Nadler, Samer Halabi,<br/>Gal Harapz-Gorodeisky, and Yael Ben-David</i>                                 |            |
| Chapter 11. | Compassionate Callousness: A Terror Management Perspective on Prosocial Behavior . . . . .                      | 201        |
|             | <i>Gilad Hirschberger</i>   |            |
| Chapter 12. | Basic Values: How They Motivate and Inhibit Prosocial Behavior . . . . .  | 221        |
|             | <i>Shalom H. Schwartz</i>   |            |
| <b>III.</b> | <b>Prosocial Emotions . . . . .</b>   | <b>243</b> |
| Chapter 13. | Compassionate Love as a Prosocial Emotion . .   | 245        |
|             | <i>Beverley Fehr</i>  |            |
| Chapter 14. | Does Gratitude Promote Prosocial Behavior? The Moderating Role of Attachment Security . . . . .                 | 267        |
|             | <i>Mario Mikulincer and Phillip R. Shaver</i>   |            |
| Chapter 15. | The Malleability of Forgiveness . . . . .   | 285        |
|             | <i>Johan C. Karremans and Paul A. M. Van Lange</i>  |            |

|                             |   |            |
|-----------------------------|---|------------|
| Chapter 16.                 | The Subjective Experience of Generosity . . . . .   | 303        |
|                             | <i>Eliane Sommerfeld</i>  |            |
| <b>IV.</b>                  | <b>Prosocial Behavior at the Relational Level . . . . .</b>   | <b>325</b> |
| Chapter 17.                 | Prosocial Motivation and Behavior in Close Relationships . . . . .  | 327        |
|                             | <i>Caryl E. Rusbult and Christopher R. Agnew</i>  |            |
| Chapter 18.                 | Forgiveness: Integral to a Science of Close Relationships? . . . . .  | 347        |
|                             | <i>Frank D. Fincham</i>   |            |
| Chapter 19.                 | Responding to Need in Intimate Relationships: Social Support and Caregiving Processes in Couples . . . . .              | 367        |
|                             | <i>Nancy L. Collins, Máire B. Ford, AnaMarie C. Guichard, Heidi S. Kane, and Brooke C. Feeney</i>                       |            |
| <b>V.</b>                   | <b>Prosocial Behavior at the Group and Societal Levels . . . . .</b>  | <b>391</b> |
| Chapter 20.                 | Empathy and Intergroup Relations . . . . .  | 393        |
|                             | <i>John F. Dovidio, James D. Johnson, Samuel L. Gaertner, Adam R. Pearson, Tamar Saguy, and Leslie Ashburn-Nardo</i>    |            |
| Chapter 21.                 | A Needs-Based Model of Reconciliation: Perpetrators Need Acceptance and Victims Need Empowerment to Reconcile . . . . . | 409        |
|                             | <i>Nurit Shnabel and Arie Nadler</i>  |            |
| Chapter 22.                 | Overcoming Psychological Barriers to Peacemaking: The Influence of Beliefs About Losses . . . . .                       | 431        |
|                             | <i>Daniel Bar-Tal and Eran Halperin</i>   |            |
| Index . . . . .             |   | 449        |
| About the Editors . . . . . |   | 467        |

# PROSOCIAL MOTIVES, EMOTIONS, AND BEHAVIOR



# INTRODUCTION

MARIO MIKULINCER AND PHILLIP R. SHAVER

When each day's news overflows with lurid reports of fraud, theft, rape, domestic violence, and war, it's easy to agree with philosopher Thomas Hobbes (1651/2008) that human beings, unless constrained by an all-powerful sovereign, are destined to live in "continual fear and danger of violent death" (p. 86), an existence that is "nasty, brutish, and short" (p. 86). Almost 2 centuries after Hobbes made that dismal claim, Charles Darwin's (1859) theory of evolution seemed to justify Alfred Lord Tennyson's (1850/1906) poetic image of "nature [including human nature], red in tooth and claw" (p. 72). In 1976, Richard Dawkins's influential book, *The Selfish Gene*, added—partly through readers' misperceptions—the idea that evolutionary theory and genetics imply that human beings and their genes are inherently selfish and hence conducive to Hobbes's imagined "war of all against all" (Hobbes, 1651/2008, p. vii).

In recent years, however, there has been an upsurge of interest in empathy, compassion, altruism, and forgiveness—laudable human capacities that Abraham Lincoln called "the better angels of our nature" in his 1861 call for national unity, a phrase used in a 2009 speech by Barack Obama on his way to being inaugurated as president. These better angels of our nature have been embraced by a new *positive psychology* (e.g., Seligman, 2002). And simultaneously, primatologists (e.g., De Waal, 1996, 2006) and evolutionary biolo-

gists (e.g., Richerson & Boyd, 2005; Sober & Wilson, 1998) have begun to emphasize the evolutionary roots of *prosocial behavior*—voluntary behavior enacted with the intention of benefiting others. It is increasingly clear that “selfish genes” can achieve their goal of self-replication by fostering generous prosocial behavior. Although the genes “selfishly” act to replicate themselves, they often do so by encouraging compassion, kindness, and cooperation.

This emphasis on positive, prosocial aspects of the human mind inspired us to create a comprehensive book on the psychology of prosocial behavior viewed from various levels of analysis, from the neural to the societal. We invited experts on the science of prosocial behavior to explain their ideas and research findings and encouraged them to trace the historical and theoretical background of their research and speculate about where it might lead in the future. Readers of this book will learn a great deal about prosocial motives and values; about emotions such as empathy and compassion; and about the diversity of empathic, generous, and loving behavior—along with the methods and measures used to study these issues. Readers will also learn about forces and processes that impede prosocial behavior.

The volume is organized into five parts. Part I, focusing on major theoretical perspectives, includes six chapters on social psychological, evolutionary, psychodynamic, personality, and neuroscience perspectives on prosocial motives, emotions, and behavior. Part II, focusing on basic processes underlying prosocial emotions and behavior, includes six chapters on genetic factors, developmental processes, self-regulatory mechanisms, power and self-esteem motives, existential anxieties and defenses, and basic values. Part III includes four chapters dealing with theory and research concerning core prosocial emotions (compassionate love, gratitude, forgiveness, and generosity), and Part IV includes three chapters on the role of prosocial motives, emotions, and behavior in close relationships, such as romantic relationships and marriages. Finally, Part V considers the role of prosocial feelings and behavior at the group and societal levels. It includes three chapters on harmonious intergroup relations, intergroup reconciliation following conflicts, and peace making.

In chapter 1, Daniel Batson, one of the most innovative and influential of the researchers who study empathy—or empathic concern, as he calls it—and its role in prosocial behavior, summarizes his provocative studies and innovative theoretical contributions to the understanding of empathy. He argues convincingly that empathy is a natural human capacity that contributes to prosocial behavior, one that cannot be explained away by selfish motives. He also shows that people have different or mixed reactions to their fellow human beings’ suffering, and that some of these reactions, including empathic concern, motivate people to behave prosocially, whereas others, including what Batson calls *personal distress*, may not.

In chapter 2, expanding on Batson’s claim that empathy is an evolved human capacity, Jeffry Simpson and Lane Beckes explain how the capacities



for empathy and prosocial behavior might have evolved in humans. Explaining our exceptional degree of sociality and interdependence requires multiple midlevel evolutionary concepts: inclusive fitness, reciprocal altruism, group-level selection, and gene-culture coevolution. There is no other mammalian species with such large, complex, and highly interdependent groups that depend on an ability to imagine and empathize with each other's experiences. This ability is the subject of several of the other chapters in the volume.

In chapter 3, Louis Penner and Heather Orom summarize the extensive body of empirical evidence for a prosocial personality syndrome, or at least for multiple prosocial personality traits. These specific traits can be conceptualized in terms of two larger traits: Other-Oriented Empathy, characterized by social responsibility, empathic concern, perspective taking (i.e., cognitive empathy), and other-oriented moral reasoning; and Helpfulness, the tendency to engage in prosocial behavior without undue personal distress. The prosocial personality megatraits are stable over time; relate positively to real-world prosocial behavior, such as volunteering in the community; and interact with situational forces in theoretically predictable ways.

In chapter 4, Phillip Shaver, Mario Mikulincer, and Moran Shemesh-iron use attachment theory as a basis for studying prosocial motives and behavior. The theory divides human motivation into several domains, such as attachment, exploration, caregiving, and sex, and considers the evolutionary function of the behavioral system that governs each domain. Emotions such as empathy, sympathy, and caring fall within the domain of the caregiving system. Shaver et al. explain the development of a Caregiving Behavioral System Scale, which measures "hyperactivated" and "deactivated" caregiving. The former pattern is associated, across different kinds of relationships, with personal distress and perceived deficits in emotion-regulation, self-regulation, and social skills. The second pattern, deactivated caregiving, is associated with reduced empathy, more negative appraisals of others, and motives to maintain independence and emotional distance.

In chapter 5, Rami Tolmacz reviews psychoanalytic explanations of concern for others. Whereas Freud and some of his earliest followers (e.g., Klein) considered concern for others to be secondary to, or an offshoot of, aggression, object relations and intersubjectivity theorists paid greater attention to children's innate capacity for empathy. Tolmacz shows how the more recent psychoanalytic theories can be combined with Buber's famous conceptualization of I-Thou relationships (between human subjects, as distinct from objects) and with Bowlby's attachment theory to analyze clinical cases in which a person treats either self or others as objects rather than subjects.

In chapter 6, Grit Hein and Tania Singer move to the neuroscientific level and consider how some of the distinctions made by the other chapter authors are manifested in the brain. They find different neural correlates of cognitive perspective taking, on the one hand, and empathy, or sharing an-