Recent theorizing in cultural psychology posits that culture develops in response to the pressures and needs posed by physical and social environments as a way to increase a group’s chances of survival. Reflecting this perspective, we theorize that local environmental demands shape cultural goals that, in turn, loosely foster culture-specific patterns of actions and interactions. In this chapter, we first review the literature connecting cultural characteristics to environmental demands. Based on this review, we propose four cultural goal orientations that vary across cultures: shared versus personal goals, instrumental versus emotional goals, adjustment versus expression goals, and avoidance versus approach goals. Subsequent sections of the chapter describe how these cultural goals shape neural and genetic processes and motivate a wide range of psychological and behavioral processes such as health behaviors and academic and organizational behaviors. In the second half of the chapter, we discuss how cultural goals motivate relationship processes such as relational mobility, social support use, and prosocial behaviors. In so doing, we aim to highlight that a full understanding of human behaviors begins with the consideration of particular demands posed by ecological and historical environments and that the investigation of cultural influence requires contextualizing individuals in their relationships, the primary conveyors of cultural patterns of psychology and behaviors.

Human behaviors are composed of many ingredients. In the study of human behavior, the understanding of motivation occupies a central position because it is the ingredient that provides insights for why people do what they do. Motivation is the direct force that propels individuals to act toward specific goals. Not surprisingly, psychologists have always been interested in motivations and motives. How to make an organism act, and act faster and better, was one of the first questions of social psychology (Triplet, 1898), and it remains a key question (e.g., G. Cohen & Sherman, 2014). Psychologists often grapple with understanding the primary reasons for human behavior, and theorists have proposed a number of basic motives, including belonging, self-worth, and control (e.g., S. Fiske, 2009; Kenrick, Griskevicius, Neuberg, & Schaller, 2010). A quick Internet search suggests that the largest number of proposed basic motives is 16, and once basic biological needs are accounted for, the number typically comes down to five or so. Whether one agrees with any given list of basic human motives, a couple of clear inferences can be drawn from this exercise. One inference is that few psychological motives are universally shared. The second is that the most commonly identified
basic psychological human need is the need to belong, also known as the “belongingness motive” (e.g., Baumeister & Leary, 1995; S. Fiske, 2009; Kenrick et al., 2010).

These two inferences draw attention to the prominent role of culture in shaping and diversifying the primary motives that underlie human behavior. Culture develops in response to the pressures and needs posed by physical and social environments as a way to increase a group’s chances of survival (e.g., Chiao & Blizinsky, 2010; Fincher, Thornhill, Murray, & Schaller, 2008). Specific motives fostered at the cultural level therefore vary depending on the times and where cultures are located. Once these motives are formulated, they provide the framework people use to make interpretations, judgments, and decisions (Bruner, 1990; Geertz, 1973; Shweder, 1995). Successful learning of these motives is therefore likely to impact both the likelihood of belonging and one’s chances of survival. In this chapter, we first outline the literature connecting cultural characteristics to environmental demands. Then, based on this review, we identify a set of culturally varied goal orientations. We then outline in subsequent sections of the chapter how these cultural goals motivate a wide range of psychological, behavioral, and relationship processes.

Although we use classic works in cultural psychology as springboards, we focus the bulk of our attention on recent progress in the field. During the last decade, research has advanced in cultural psychology in both breadth and depth, particularly in four general directions. First, beyond identifying basic psychological processes, notable advances have been made in how knowledge about cultural differences in motives and goals might be utilized in socially relevant domains such as health behaviors and education. Second, remarkable progress has been made in cultural neuroscience. Third, the notion of culture has been broadened to include other social categories such as religion and social class (e.g., A. Cohen, 2009). Fourth, recognizing that one of the main pathways of cultural influences is interpersonal, researchers have begun investigating how culture influences relationship processes (e.g., Adams & Plaut, 2003; Kim, Sherman, & Taylor, 2008; Yuki & Schug, 2012). We have structured the chapter first to review research findings that show how cultural motives shape individual goals, then move on to describe research on culture and relationship goals. In this latter section, we discuss how models of relationships both reflect cultural motives and function as the main carrier of cultural worldviews and expectations.

**WHY DO CULTURAL MOTIVES VARY?**

Although there are many needs shared among all humans, different physical, social, and historical environments determine the priority of needs and demand the achievement of certain goals over others. With the necessity to overcome challenges that are more immediate or severe, certain demands that are more essential in a given environment may become primary over other demands. Psychologists have started to recognize the role of social ecology in the shaping of psychology, and this perspective holds particularly important implications for cultural psychology (see Talhelm & Oishi, Chapter 4, this volume). Extending the questions of cultural psychology to probing the origins of cultural diversity, a number of prominent theories have been proposed to explain cultural orientations such as individualism–collectivism, independent–interdependent self-construals, or analytic–holistic cognitive styles (Chiao & Blizinsky, 2010; Fincher et al., 2008; Kitayama, Ishii, Imada, Takemura, & Ramaswamy, 2006; Talhelm et al., 2014; Uskul et al., 2008). These theories propose ecological and social-historical factors, such as prevalence of pathogens in the environment (Fincher et al., 2008), history of voluntary settlement (Kitayama et al., 2006), or primary modes of subsistence (Uskul et al., 2008), that necessitate social interdependence or promote independence, which in turn form the bases of individualistic and collectivistic cultural orientations across different regions of the world.

Regional differences are not the only source of differential environmental pressures. Other sociocultural factors, such as social class and religion, also shape demands and shift priorities of needs. The working-class context tends to present fewer material and financial resources. Consequently, social networks become a more important
resource in the working-class context, thus fostering more interdependent views of the self compared to middle-class contexts in which social networks are less vital to survival (Stephens, Fryberg, Markus, Johnson, & Covarrubias, 2012; Stephens, Markus, & Townsend, 2007). Religion also increases interdependence by fostering a sense of community within religious groups (Graham & Haidt, 2010; Norenzayan & Shariff, 2008). These examples illustrate the role of environmental demands in shaping the needs that are prioritized in a given local context. Once set, these needs shape specific sets of values, worldviews, and culturally shared patterns of behaviors and interactions (A. Fiske, Kitayama, Markus, & Nisbett, 1998; Kim & Markus, 1999; Kitayama, 2002).

CULTURAL DIVERGENCE IN PRIMARY GOALS

By providing the theoretical framework to understand cultural diversity, the characterization of cultures based on the individualism–collectivism value dimension (Hofstede, 1980; Triandis, Bontempo, Villareal, Asai, & Lucca, 1988) and independent–interdependent self-construals (Markus & Kitayama, 1991) has been responsible for culture becoming a mainstay in psychology. These approaches have inspired a tremendous amount of research investigating the influence of culture on just about every aspect of human psychological processes. How individuals are considered to be connected to their groups forms a basic and fundamental perspective to think about the world and a person’s place in it, and individualism–collectivism is considered the most important cultural value dimension (Triandis et al., 1988).

“Individualism,” as a cultural value dimension, refers to the tendency to prioritize the needs of the individual over those of the group, whereas “collectivism” refers to the tendency to subordinate the individual’s needs to those of the group (Triandis, 1989). “Independent self,” commonly found in individualistic cultures such as those of North America and Western Europe, and especially among the middle and upper class, refers to the view of personhood as an independent, self-contained, autonomous entity that comprises a unique configuration of internal attributes that propel behaviors (Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Oyserman, Coon, & Kemmelmeier, 2002). In contrast, “interdependent self,” commonly found in collectivistic cultures such as those found in many parts of East Asia, Latin America, and Africa, as well as among the working class and the religious, represents a view of personhood as being fundamentally connected with others, inseparable from the social context, and centrally motivated by external and social factors such as social fit and fulfillment of obligations (Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Oyserman et al., 2002).

Countless empirical studies have demonstrated the wide and deep influence of these values and self-construals across myriad psychological processes associated with attention, perception, emotion, cognition, and motivation. Taken together, these studies present a diverse and complex picture of collectivistic and individualistic ways of living. As a field, cultural psychology now knows that personal happiness (e.g., Oishi, Diener, Lucas, & Suh, 1999; Suh, Diener, Oishi, & Triandis, 1998) and high self-esteem (Heine, Lehman, Markus, & Kitayama, 1999; Kitayama, Markus, Matsumoto, & Norasakkunkit, 1997) are easier to achieve, but perspective taking (Wu & Keysar, 2007) and contextual thinking (Masuda & Nisbett, 2001) are harder to develop in more individualistic cultures. Cultural psychologists also know that in more collectivistic cultures, self-adjustment/self-regulation (Morling, Kitayama, & Miyamoto, 2002; Seeley & Gardner, 2003) and enduring, less-mobile relationships (Schug, Yuki, Horikawa, & Takemura, 2009) are more commonly exercised, but generalized trust (Adams, 2005; Yamagishi & Yamagishi, 1994) and emotional support are less common (J. Chen, Kim, Mojaverian, & Morling, 2012; Kim et al., 2008). It is also increasingly clear that collectivism and individualism manifest differently in various parts of the world because cultures cannot be explained by a single value dimension (Schwartz, 1990). Rather, significant ranges of behavioral responses are observed in both collectivistic and individualistic cultures (Campos & Kim, 2017; Glazer, 2006).

Integrating the social-ecological perspective with accumulated knowledge about cultural orientations, it is evident that psy-
Psychological and behavioral characteristics associated with cultural orientations (e.g., individualism and collectivism) are highly functional adaptations to social, historical, and physical environments. Thus, these orientations easily translate into fairly concrete cultural goals. Indeed, we argue that cultures vary in their primary goals, at least loosely, according to these social orientation dimensions. Based on our review of the existing literature, we observe that there are broadly four goal orientations that vary across cultures with collectivistic or individualistic orientations: shared versus personal goals, instrumental versus emotional goals, adjustment versus expression goals, and avoidance versus approach goals.

**Shared versus Personal Goals**

In more collectivistic cultures, social processes are especially geared toward meeting shared social goals, whereas in more individualistic cultures, they are geared toward meeting individual goals (C. Chen, Chen, & Meindl, 1998; Markus & Kitayama, 1991). As a matter of fact, prioritizing group goals over individual goals is one of the core distinctions between collectivistic and individualistic cultures (Triandis, 1989). East Asians, for example, are more motivated to employ a cognitive dissonance reduction process when the relevant actions involve others (e.g., making choices for others) than when the actions involve only themselves (e.g., making choices for oneself), whereas European Americans show the opposite tendencies (Heine & Lehman, 1997; Hoshino-Browne et al., 2005; Kitayama, Snibbe, Markus, & Suzuki, 2004). Social loafing is also less pervasive in more collectivistic cultures than in more individualistic cultures (Karau & Williams, 1993), and a close other’s involvement in decision making increases motivation among Asian American children, whereas personal decision making increases motivation among European American children (Iyengar & Lepper, 1999).

**Instrumental versus Emotional Goals**

Collectivistic cultures prioritize goals to maintain harmonious but not necessarily emotionally positive social ties because social relationships serve as instrumental and pragmatic resources in these contexts (Adams, 2005; J. Chen et al., 2012; Kim et al., 2008; Snibbe & Markus, 2005). Based on social-ecological theories, which propose that cultural characteristics are responses to environmental demands, we infer that the centrality of social relationships common in collectivistic cultures is by and large instrumental in nature because reliance on others is a prerequisite for one’s survival and thriving in these contexts (e.g., historically farming regions or working-class contexts). Therefore, we reason that as long as one’s role and position in the social network is secure, feeling positively, in general and toward oneself, is not a central goal in these cultures (Heine et al., 1999; Suh et al., 1998).

In contrast, in environments in which an individual’s survival and thriving do not depend on social relationships to the same extent, the instrumental function of social relationships is diminished, and the salience of the emotional function of relationships increases. Consequently, individualistic cultures tend to prioritize goals to maintain relationships that serve as emotional resources (e.g., Gable, Gonzaga, & Strachman, 2006; Maisel & Gable, 2009), and the affective and emotional aspects of social processes are highlighted. This emphasis on emotional well-being also ties in with other well-documented cultural goals in more individualistic cultures; both self-enhancement (Heine et al., 1999; Heine & Hamamura, 2007) and life satisfaction depend strongly on the experience of positive emotions (Suh et al., 1998).

**Adjustment versus Expression Goals**

European Americans are highly motivated to express their thoughts and emotions, whereas East Asians are less motivated by expression goals (e.g., Butler, Lee, & Gross, 2007; Kim & Sherman, 2007; Matsumoto, Yoo, & Nakagawa, 2008). Because more individualistic cultures allow people to consider social relationships as more than a resource essential for survival, motives related to an individual’s personal desires and the expression of thoughts and emotions become more central determinants of behavior (Kim & Sherman, 2007; Kim, Sherman, Ko, & Taylor, 2006; Snibbe & Markus, 2005). Furthermore, because people’s behaviors are assumed to correspond with their thoughts
and feelings (Choi, Nisbett, & Norenzayan, 1999; for social class differences, see Kraus, Piff, Mendoza-Denton, Rheinschmidt, & Keltner, 2012), inconsistency between thoughts and behaviors causes dissonance (Heine & Lehman, 1997; Hoshino-Browne et al., 2005; Kitayama et al., 2004), whereas opportunities to express personal thoughts and feelings affirm the self (Kim & Ko, 2007). In collectivistic cultures, in contrast, one’s self-worth is evaluated by how well one functions as a member of a group (Heine et al., 1999). The goals of fitting in and aligning oneself with situations are therefore emphasized (e.g., Morling et al., 2002). Thus, rather than reflecting one’s inner thoughts, values, and preferences, behaviors are often influenced by social demands and expectations (e.g., Reimer, Shavitt, Koo, & Markus, 2014).

**Approach versus Avoidance Goals**

One implication of considering social relationships as a crucial and instrumental resource for survival is that one has to be more aware and mindful of others’ evaluation of oneself and its consequences. In more collectivistic cultures, where a person’s primary concern is to navigate the established social network successfully, other people’s harmful evaluation of oneself is likely to be highly costly, and the potential cost of failure could have a stronger implication than the potential gain from success. In other words, by psychologically privileging others’ perspective over their own, people in more collectivistic cultures may place themselves in a state akin to a powerless psychological state, which in turn fosters an inhibition system (Keltner, Gruenfeld, & Anderson, 2003). Therefore, we propose that avoidance goals are generally more central than approach goals. In contrast, approach goals take priority in more individualistic cultures (Elliot, Chirkov, Kim, & Sheldon, 2001; Lee, Aaker, & Gardner, 2000; Hamamura, Meijer, Heine, Kamaya, & Hori, 2009). Consequently, among people with an interdependent self-construal, failing at a task triggers the motivation to improve more than succeeding on a task does, whereas among people with independent self-construals, success triggers motivations to excel and distinguish oneself (Heine et al., 2001).

Using these four goal orientations as a guide, we review research findings that show concrete psychological and behavioral consequences in both personal (or interpersonal) and relational (or interpersonal) behavioral domains. The review is organized into sections focusing on specific research topics such as health communications and social support use, within which we address how cultural goal orientations explain relevant findings.

**Cultural Goals and Implications for Intrapersonal Processes**

In this section, we focus our review on how cultural goals influence individual motivations in terms of willingness to act, willingness to change or maintain actions, and psychological reactions to these actions. We draw on evidence from studies employing diverse methodological approaches and cover findings from research in cultural neuroscience, health communications, academic and organizational behavior, and choice and decision making.

**Cultural Neuroscience**

The field of cultural neuroscience has grown rapidly in the last decade (Kitayama, Varnum, & Salvador, Chapter 3, this volume). Although technically a methodological approach rather than a content area, the literature often treats the field as such, probably because it is a relatively young field. Following suit in this section, we combine research findings utilizing neuroscience methodology, regardless of the psychological domains of interest. Much of the empirical evidence from cultural neuroscience contributes to the understanding of basic neural processes underlying previously documented culture-specific patterns of behaviors and psychological processes. These studies generally confirm the previous behavioral findings at the neural level, thus providing information about not only psychological but also biological underpinnings of these phenomena.

**Shared versus Personal Goals**

Cultural research with a neuroscientific component has shown that given the im-
portance of others in goal pursuit, being misjudged by close others has a detrimental effect on motivation for Asians and Asian Americans, whereas the same felt misunderstanding does not impact motivation for European Americans (Lun, Oishi, Coan, Akimoto, & Miao, 2010). These results were found in participants’ electroencephalic (EEG) response, specifically in the prefrontal asymmetry of alpha power (pFA), a neural indicator of motivational states (Lun et al., 2010). In response to felt misunderstanding, Asians, who see it as a sign of social disconnection, showed greater right lateralization of prefrontal activity, indicating withdrawal and demotivation, whereas European Americans, who see it as a challenge to one’s own perspective that can be overcome, showed relatively greater left prefrontal activity, indicating an approach-related motivational state (Coan & Allen, 2003).

Activation of independent or interdependent self-construals also impacts how people respond, on the neural level, to receiving a monetary reward themselves or vicariously watching a friend receive a reward. In one study, priming interdependent self-construals resulted in equal activation of the bilateral ventral striatum (vSTR), a region associated with personal rewards (e.g., Bjork & Hommer, 2007), in response to both personal rewards and vicarious rewards. In contrast, priming independent self-construals activated greater bilateral vSTR responses to personal rewards than to vicarious rewards (Varnum, Shi, Chen, Qui, & Han, 2014). Interdependent priming, as compared to independent priming, also activated stronger responses in the right insula (an empathy region) when participants witnessed a friend losing a reward. These studies show that shared goals are secondary motives in individualistic cultures, whereas personal and shared goals are equally dominant motives in collectivistic cultures, and that more personally or socially relevant situations activate motivational states differently at both behavioral and neural levels.

Adjustment versus Expression Goals

Culture has been shown to influence how the brain responds when engaged in emotion suppression. Unlike European American cultures, in which expression is valued, Asian cultures tend to place greater value on the control of emotional expressions (Butler et al., 2007, 2009). In a study (Murata, Moser, & Kitayama, 2013) designed to examine electrocortical responses of emotion suppression, European Americans and Asian Americans were presented with emotionally charged images, with the instruction either to attend to or suppress emotion expression. Focusing on the parietal late positive potential (LPP) of the event-related potential (ERP), an indicator of whether emotional processing is engaged, the study found that Asian Americans showed a decrease of the parietal LPP during emotion suppression compared to when they were instructed to attend to the emotions. Conversely, European Americans did not show any difference with regard to the two sets of instructions. These findings underscore how cultural goals implicate even basic cognitive and neural processes.

Culture also moderates the association between genes and expressive behaviors. The framework of gene × culture interactions offers an approach to address how genetic and cultural factors interact to shape behaviors. Oxytocin influences empathic accuracy (Rodrigues, Saslow, Garcia, John, & Keltner, 2009). Given that, oxytocin is theorized to be associated with the degree to which individuals learn to engage in culturally normative tendencies via emotional cues displayed by other members of their culture (Kim & Sasaki, 2014). Reflecting cultural differences in expression motives, studies investigating gene × culture interactions have found that an oxytocin receptor polymorphism (OXTR rs53576) is associated with higher emotion expression and lower suppression among European Americans but lower emotion expression and higher suppression among East Asians (Kim et al., 2010; LeClair, Janusonis, & Kim, 2014).

Similarly, religion impacts how genes are associated with expressive behaviors. In a study (Sasaki, Mojaverian, & Kim, 2015) using implicit priming of religious concepts (a method adopted from Shariff & Norenzayan, 2011), European American participants were involved in a situation in which they had a reason to be dissatisfied with an interaction with a confederate. In the control condition, participants with the socioemotionally sensitive genotype (GG genotype
of OXTR rs53576) were more expressive of their discontent than were participants without the genotype. However, when primed with religious concepts, presumably activating religious goals of self-adjustment and prosociality, those participants with the GG genotype significantly decreased their expression of discontent, whereas their counterparts, without the GG genotype, did not change their behaviors. This study shows that the expressive behavioral tendency typically associated with a particular genotype may be reversed when a person is in a religious mindset, in which the adjustment goal is prioritized over the expressive goal.

**Health Communications**

Building on these more basic demonstrations of cultural differences, researchers during the last decade have tested how knowledge of culture-specific ways of thinking may be used effectively to promote motivations to engage in socially and personally desirable behaviors. The starting premise of these studies is that people hold different dispositions or mindsets and that the congruent framing of persuasive messages with these existing tendencies will impact individuals’ behaviors more readily than less congruent framing (Aaker & Lee, 2001; Mann, Sherman, & Updegraff, 2004; Sherman, Mann, & Updegraff, 2006) because congruent messages “feel right” (Cesario, Grant, & Higgins, 2004). Applying this idea to the question of cultural congruency, a number of studies have shown that in health communications, the framing of messages in a way that is congruent with cultural goals proves more effective in drawing out the intended behaviors (see Sherman, Uskul, & Updegraff, 2011, for a review).

**Shared versus Personal Goals**

Health problems, as a potential hindrance to meeting important goals, trigger different types of concerns depending on dominant self-construals. Illness tends to trigger more social concerns (e.g., “being a burden to people who are close to me”) for people who hold a more interdependent self-construal but triggers more personal concerns (e.g., “not being able to rely on myself”) for people who hold a more independent self-construal (Uskul & Hynie, 2007). Consequently, health messages may be more effective in motivating targeted behaviors when the potential health risk is framed as a threat to culturally dominant goals. In a set of studies, researchers examined how people respond to an article about the alleged risk of fibrocystic disease from caffeine consumption while they were experimentally primed with either an independent or interdependent self-construal (Uskul & Oyserman, 2010). When the risks were described as personal risks among people with the independent self-prime, they were more likely to accept the information, acknowledge the self-relevance of the risk, and behaviorally reduce caffeine consumption (i.e., choosing fruit candies over coffee/chocolate candies) than when the risks were described as relational risks. The pattern was the opposite for people with the interdependent self-prime. Notably, the effects of the primes were found only when the prime matched the culturally dominant self-construal. Independent self-priming increased the persuasiveness of the message only among European Americans, and interdependent self-priming increased persuasiveness only among Asians and Asian Americans. In other words, cultural primes make the existing culturally dominant self-schemas more salient.

In some cases, however, congruency between persuasive messages and cultural goals may backfire. When the potential risks are too severe, immediate, and self-relevant, people may become too threatened and resort to defensive information processing. This is especially true for European Americans. For example, when culturally diverse groups of sexually active college students read an article describing the risks of AIDS in either personal or relational terms, the opposite of cultural congruency effects was found (Ko & Kim, 2010). In particular, European Americans were more skeptical of the information and less motivated to engage in protective behaviors when the risks were presented as personal. Asian Americans showed a nonsignificant but opposite pattern. However, when European Americans were induced to self-affirm in order to reduce their psychological defensiveness, their skepticism of the personally framed message decreased, and motivation to make positive behavioral changes increased. These
findings suggest that when a potential, highly relevant, and immediate risk threatens a culturally dominant goal, this threat may become too much and lead people to reject the health information altogether.

**Avoidance versus Approach Goals**

Congruency between loss–gain message framings and dispositional avoidance–approach motivation has also been studied extensively (Mann et al., 2004; Rothman & Salovey, 1997; Sherman et al., 2006). Generally speaking, a close match between dispositional orientations and message frames increases the effectiveness of the message. Building on this idea, studies have indicated that the effectiveness of loss and gain message framing in motivating behavioral changes is greater when the frame is congruent with cultural motives. People from independent cultures (i.e., white British) in which approach goals are highlighted tend to be more readily persuaded by gain-framed health messages (i.e., messages highlighting potential gains from engaging in targeted behaviors). Conversely, people from interdependent cultures (i.e., East Asians) in which avoidance goals are prioritized tend to be more readily persuaded by health messages framed in terms of loss (i.e., messages highlighting potential losses from not engaging in targeted behaviors) (Uskul, Sherman, & Fitzgibbon, 2009; for review, see Sherman et al., 2011).

**Academic Motivation and Organizational Behaviors**

**Shared versus Personal Goals**

Cultural goals impact academic and organizational motivational processes as well. Studies show that different factors make different people work harder and longer, and culture is a key determinant of what different people find to be more or less motivating. Whether or not one believes that his or her actions and decisions involve close others makes a significant difference. In general, shared goals tend to motivate those with interdependent self-construals, but personal goals tend to be more motivating for those with independent self-construals. In a classic study, Iyengar and Lepper (1999) demonstrated that personal choice, rather than shared choice with in-group members, increases achievement motivation among European American children, but shared choice is more motivating for Asian American children. A more recent set of studies (Fu & Markus, 2014) probing cultural differences in the relationship between mother and child among Asian Americans and European Americans found similar results. These studies showed that the notion of “controlling” parenting has culturally divergent meanings. European American high school students described their mothers as a source of support, whereas Asian American students described their mothers as a source of pressure and more instrumentally involved in their lives. For example, Asian Americans mothers were described as giving more advice and providing more practical help. Moreover, more involved parenting and pressure were viewed more positively by the Asian American students, and being primed with images of their mother increased their motivation to persist longer on cognitive problems because these tasks were accompanied by interdependent and shared goals (i.e., an image of their mothers working alongside them). In contrast, the same priming decreased task motivation among European American students. These studies clearly demonstrate that social connection and interdependence in the form of shared goals and effort is motivating for those from interdependent cultures, whereas individual pursuit of a goal is more motivating for those from independent cultures.

Whether educational goals are framed as personal or shared also differentially impacts academic motivation for people from different social classes. As noted earlier, the independent self-construal is more prevalent among middle-class Americans, whereas the interdependent self-construal is more prevalent among working class Americans (Stephens et al., 2007; see also Kraus, Callaghan, & Ondish, Chapter 27, this volume). Goals framed as shared and interdependent are thus theorized to be more motivating for working-class Americans, whereas goals framed as personal and independent are theorized to be more motivating for middle-class Americans (Stephens, Fryberg, et al., 2012; Stephens, Hamedani, & Destin, 2014). In certain situations, these social-class-specific goals can clash. American col-
leges and universities, for example, tend to promote independent learning goals, such as self-expression and leadership, over interdependent goals, such as listening to the opinions of others and collaborative learning (Stephens, Fryberg, et al., 2012, Study 1). Inadvertently, the independent goals, espoused in higher educational contexts, create a mismatch with the primary cultural goals of certain students (i.e., first-generation college students). This “cultural mismatch” increases the challenges and adjustment difficulties that these students have to face, compared to students with at least one parent with a college education (i.e., continuing generation college students). The cultural match–mismatch, in turn, has implications for academic performance (Stephens, Fryberg, et al., 2012) and general well-being (Stephens, Townsend, Markus, & Phillips, 2012). More recent research has focused on finding ways to address this problem. Stephens and colleagues (2014), for example, conducted an intervention study in which students were made aware of how their diverse backgrounds may shape their experiences and challenges (difference-education intervention). They found that acknowledging and normalizing this experience of cultural mismatch via this intervention can increase a sense of belonging and attenuate negative impacts. Similarly, representing the learning goals of higher education in language that is more inclusive of interdependent learning goals can also mitigate the negative effects of this cultural mismatch (Stephens et al., 2014).

Adjustment versus Expression Goals

Previous research has shown that the extent to which people value uniqueness varies across cultures (Kim & Markus, 1999). A recent set of studies (Kinias, Kim, Hafnbrack, & Lee, 2014) probed the underlying psychological mechanism for this previously observed difference. These researchers found that East Asians negatively evaluated a potential hire who displayed non-normative behaviors (e.g., being a vegetarian, being left-handed, or even being unusually friendly), avoided interacting with these targets, and made negative hiring decisions based on this information. European Americans, however, did not differentiate their evaluations based on these characteristics. More importantly, these studies indicated that these evaluative differences occurred because avoidance of potential social disruption caused by the necessary accommodating behaviors (i.e., requiring a special arrangement for an individual) was more salient among East Asians than among European Americans. Furthermore, the implied motive underlying such behaviors plays a crucial role in the evaluation process. Standing out by choice (e.g., refusing to eat something because one is a vegetarian) implies willful expression of one’s individuality, whereas standing out due to an unavoidable physical condition (e.g., refusing to eat something because one has an allergy) does not. Pursuing an expressive goal by choosing to be different is readily accepted in a European American cultural context, but pursuit of such a goal, at a cost of social disruption, is frowned upon in an East Asian cultural context. Taken together, these findings show that people’s willingness to act is by and large propelled by culturally influenced goals.

Choice and Decision Making

Choice and decision making have always been at the heart of cultural psychology (e.g., Iyengar & Lepper, 1999; Kim & Drolet, 2003, 2009; Kim & Markus, 1999; Stephens et al., 2007). The questions that are raised in these studies range from what,
why, and how people in different cultures make choices and decisions to how these choices and decisions, in turn, impact their psychology. In this section, we focus our review on how primary cultural goals influence these processes.

Adjustment versus Expression Goals

Relative differences in the importance placed on having choice have been found extensively across national and ethnic cultures (e.g., Iyengar & Lepper, 1999) but cultural differences regarding the importance of choice also exist in other forms of cultures, such as social class and religion. Choice is seen as a form of self-expression among middle-class Americans, so the freedom to choose is at the center of psychological well-being and satisfaction in this context (Snibbe & Markus, 2005; Stephens et al., 2007). Religion, because it generally invokes beliefs in a supernatural being as an external agent in control, also plays a role in the importance people place on having or exercising choice. Even in cultures in which the pursuit of personal goals is highlighted (e.g., the United States), activating a religious mindset reduces the need for control and personal choice; for example, when their choice is not honored, European Americans primed with religious concepts tend to yield their desire for primary control and become more accepting and accommodating of others’ needs (Sasaki & Kim, 2011). On the other hand, among people from cultures in which adjustment is routinely exercised (e.g., Korea), religion does not significantly impact control and need for choice but rather increases social affiliation (Sasaki & Kim, 2011).

Cultural goals also shape the reasons why people choose to engage in certain actions, even when the actions themselves seem identical on the surface. In cultures in which the goal of self-expression is salient, individuals’ actions and decision making, no matter how small and mundane, become forms of self-expression (Kim & Drolet, 2003, 2009; Kim & Sherman, 2007). A strong assumption in these cultures is that one’s behaviors correspond with personal preferences, beliefs, and feelings. However, other cultures do not necessarily hold the same assumptions, and social and situational factors are assumed to play a more important role in determining behavior (Morris & Peng, 1994). With regard to this basic assumption about what drives behavior, cultural differences lead to a number of well-known phenomena such as cultural variations in correspondence bias (Choi et al., 1999) and cognitive dissonance (Heine & Lehman, 1997; Hoshino-Browne et al., 2005). More recently, researchers have investigated cultural differences in the degree to which people’s beliefs and attitudes influence decision making. As imagined, the link between personally held attitudes and decision making is considerably stronger in individualistic cultures than in collectivistic cultures (see Riemer et al., 2014, for review). Examining the role of individualism and collectivism more directly, in a study analyzing World Value Survey data from 42 nations, Eom, Kim, Sherman, and Ishii (2016) found considerable variation in how strongly individuals’ proenvironmental beliefs predict their support for proenvironmental actions. The researchers found that national-level individualism scores mediated this variation such that the link between beliefs and action is stronger in high individualism cultures compared to low individualism cultures. In more collectivistic cultures, such as Japan, proenvironmental actions are more strongly predicted by perceived norms about engaging in proenvironmental actions rather than personal proenvironmental beliefs (Chan & Lau, 2002; Eom et al., 2016).

Similar variation is also found across social classes. Studies have shown that individuals with higher social class tend to assume that actions are driven predominantly by internal states, personal goals, and emotions, whereas individuals with lower social class tend to place greater emphasis on external social constraints and needs (Kraus et al., 2012; Kraus et al., Chapter 27, this volume). A number of social and psychological explanations proposed by researchers are relevant to cultural goals. Social class shapes the relative importance of personal and shared goals, such that individuals with lower social class pursue more shared and communal goals, whereas those with higher social class pursue more personal goals (Stephens et al., 2007; Snibbe & Markus, 2005). Moreover, compared to individuals with higher social class, those with lower social class are more
vigilant with regard to social threats and potential failures (E. Chen & Matthews, 2001; Evans, Shergill, & Averbeck, 2010; see Kraus et al., 2012, for review). Consequently, individuals vary, as a function of their social class, in how much they consider social demands versus their own volition when they act or when they make attributions for the actions of others. Researchers have also found a similar type of variation in attribution style across different religious groups. For example, studies indicate that Protestants, for whom the concept of a soul is salient, tend to make more internal attributions compared to Catholics, for whom the concept is not as salient (Li et al., 2012; A. Cohen & Neuberg, Chapter 32, this volume).

In summary, the first part of our review shows that cultural goals underlie a wide range of cultural differences in psychological and behavioral processes at the intrapersonal level. Previously, the primary focus of cultural psychology has been the investigation of cultural influences on these intrapersonal processes. However, the process by which culture shapes a person, whether through parenting, education, or social norms, is inherently social and interpersonal. Therefore, there exists a great need to understand how interpersonal processes found in different cultures also reflect core cultural goals. The last decade has witnessed active research on the role of culture on interpersonal or relational processes. In the second part of this chapter, we review some of the numerous ways in which social relationships reflect core cultural motives.

CULTURAL MOTIVES AND IMPLICATIONS FOR INTERPERSONAL PROCESSES

The most commonly investigated association between relationships and motivation considers social relationships as the target of human needs. The formation and maintenance of important relationships has been found to be essential to well-being (e.g., Deci & Ryan, 1985; Ryff & Keyes, 1995), and one of the most central human motives (e.g., Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Bowlby, 1969). Belonging is a fundamental and universal human motivation (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Much like hunger and thirst, the motivation to belong is satiated in similar basic ways across cultures; throughout time and space, similar patterns of bonding—mothers and children, lovers, friends, and groups—have been witnessed. Also like hunger and thirst, failure to satiate the need to belong has major negative consequences (for a review of loneliness, see Cacioppo, Hawkley, & Bernston, 2003).

Despite the universal nature of belongingness and interpersonal connections, however, interpersonal relationships, like individual characteristics and behavioral tendencies, take on many different and culturally shaped forms because the exact patterns of social coordination and interactions needed to ensure mutual survival and thriving depend considerably on the specific local environment in which people live. Much cultural influence is conveyed via social relationships. Good relationships, whether they are with caregivers, peers, or romantic partners, are expected to aid individuals in accomplishing their goals. In the following section of this chapter, we provide a review of how culture-specific goals lead to culturally divergent relationship characteristics. Without challenging the basic premise of social relationships as being at the center of human existence, our review examines cultural differences in how people rely on social relationships to accomplish cultural goals. We center our review on specific aspects of social relationships: relational mobility, social support processes, and prosocial behavior. We discuss how the aforementioned dimensions of cultural goals (shared vs. personal goals, instrumental vs. emotional goals, adjustment vs. expressive goals, and avoidance vs. approach goals) shape relationship patterns in these three topic areas.

Relational Mobility

This chapter fits in with the recent resurrection of interest in the psychological sciences on the effects of environments on psychological processes and behaviors (see Oishi & Graham, 2010). Perhaps no theoretical construct regarding social relationships has received more attention from this socioecological approach than “relational mobility,” the degree to which opportunities exist
within a given context to form, maintain, and terminate social relationships according to personal preferences (Schug et al., 2009; Schug, Yuki, & Maddux, 2010; Yaki et al., 2007). Cultures low in relational mobility are characterized by “sticky” long-term and duty-bound relationships, whereas cultures high in relational mobility favor fluid and transient relationships that are easily made and unmade.

Recent years have seen tremendous efforts in documenting regional differences in levels of relational mobility. Typically, East Asian and West African countries measure low in mobility, whereas North America scores high (Adams, 2005; Falk, Heine, Yuki & Takemura, 2009; Schug et al., 2009; Wang & Leung, 2010; Yuki & Schug, 2012; Yuki et al., 2015). Although somewhat weak, a positive association has been found between individualism and relational mobility scores, where individualistic cultures show a tendency to be more socially mobile (Yuki et al., 2015). Within national borders, researchers have found that urban regions are typically characterized by higher relational mobility compared to rural areas (Yamagishi, Hashimoto, Li, & Schug, 2012), and wealthier communities are more socially mobile than low socioeconomic status (SES) communities (Snibbe & Markus, 2005).

Relational mobility offers a useful explanatory mechanism for many previously established behavioral differences across cultures. Although this body of research typically examines relational mobility as a causal factor driving social behaviors, different patterns of relational mobility presumably emerge as adaptive responses to ecological and environmental constraints. Therefore, we see patterns of high and low relational mobility as cultural adaptations to environments that necessitate different types of relationship goals.

**Instrumental versus Emotional Goals**

In an environment that requires individuals to work together in order to survive, a pattern of low relational mobility, which locks individuals into a web of interdependence, would ensure personal and collective success in achieving environmentally motivated goals over the long haul and increase the chances of collective survival. In contrast, high relational mobility is an adaptation to environments in which the instrumental function of relationships is diminished, and expressive and emotional goals are prioritized. When emotional goals are paramount, individuals reap the most benefit from being able to float effortlessly between relationships that make them feel good or terminate relationships that no longer provide these services.

Consistent with this proposition, behavioral outcomes of high relational mobility tend to foster positive emotional aspects of social interactions, whereas behavioral outcomes of low relational mobility tend to foster instrumental aspects of social relationships. In one of the earliest studies on the topic, for example, Schug et al. (2010) proposed that relational mobility may explain why East Asians disclose less personal information to others compared to Westerners. Treating relational mobility as a mediator of the East–West cultural difference, they showed that environments high in relational mobility create incentives for individuals to self-disclose in order to build and strengthen their social ties. Similarly Wang, Leung, See, and Gao (2011) argued that relational mobility is the mechanism behind cultural differences in patterns of rewarding honesty and punishing deception, such that Americans reward honest individuals more than they punish deceptive persons, whereas East Asians reward and punish equally (Wang & Leung, 2010). In high mobility cultures, rewarding behaviors serve a positive and much-needed relationship-promoting function (akin to self-disclosure). Punishment to prevent undesirable behaviors, on the other hand, is not considered worthy of effort in environments in which it is easier to discard a relationship.

Relational mobility has also been found to mediate cross-cultural differences in a range of affect- and emotion-related processes. High relational mobility tends to increase positively valenced and approach-oriented experiences such as self-enhancement (Falk et al., 2009), preferences for homophily (Schug et al., 2009), general trust (Yuki & Takemura, 2013), happiness (Yuki, Sato, Takemura, & Oishi, 2013), self-esteem (Sato & Yuki, 2014), and the desire to be unique (Takemura, 2014). In contrast, low rela-
tional mobility tends to increase negatively valenced and avoidance-oriented experiences such as shame (Sznycer et al., 2012) and sensitivity to social rejection (Sato, Yuki, & Norasakkunkit, 2014).

Rather than promoting mutually positive experiences, primary goals in low relational mobility cultures are instrumental ones, especially to promote self-improvement. In order to improve on something, an individual must first be aware of his or her shortcomings. Relational partners can provide one of the best sources of honest information about one’s personal deficiencies; however, this type of information can be shared only if there is no fear of relationship dissolution. Imada, Rodriguez Mosquera, and Ishii (2015) examined how participants in Japan (a culture with low relational mobility) and the United Kingdom (a culture with high relational mobility) rated friendship partners who provided evaluations that were equal to, better than, or worse than their self-evaluations. The U.K. participants felt good about their relationships when friends’ evaluations either matched or exceeded their self-evaluations. For Japanese participants, however, friendship quality dropped when the friend’s evaluation was above their own. Because self-improvement is a primary goal in Japan, participants felt best about relationship partners who told them the truth, even when the information was negative. This type of truth telling, of course, is only made possible in contexts where relationships are sticky. Similarly, other research looking at physiological responses has found an association between criticism from family and friends and increased inflammatory activity among European Americans but not among Asian Americans or Hispanic Americans (Chiang, Saphire-Bernstein, Kim, Sherman, & Taylor, 2013; Fuligini, Telzer, Bower, Cole, Kiang, & Irwin, 2009).

**Social Support**

A tremendous amount of research shows the benefits of both perceived and received support from close others during stressful times (e.g., Collins, Dunkel-Schetter, Lobel, & Scrimshaw, 1993; Morling, Kitayama, Miyamoto, 2003). People universally rely on each other, and this is especially true during times of heightened stress. “Social support” has been defined as the perception or experience that one is loved and cared for and part of a network of mutual commitment (Cobb, 1976; S. Cohen & Wills, 1985; Wills, 1991). Social support is also considered to be one of the most effective means of coping with difficult situations (Seeman, 1996; Taylor et al., 2004).

A decade of research has confirmed that social support occurs in culturally appropriate and culturally inappropriate forms. Among East Asians and North Americans, who comprise the bulk of studied samples, significant cultural differences have been found in how social support is sought, given, received, experienced, and evaluated (e.g., Kim et al., 2006; Mojaverian & Kim, 2013; Taylor et al., 2004; Uchida, Kitayama, Mesquita, Reyes, & Morling, 2008). In large part, these differences in social support interactions stem from divergent relationship goals across cultures.

**Shared versus Personal Goals**

The primary function of social support differs between more collectivistic and more individualistic cultures. Studies investigating both support seeking (e.g., Ishii, Mojaverian, Masuno, & Kim, 2017) and support provision (e.g., J. Chen et al., 2012) demonstrate that in more collectivistic cultures, the primary function of social support is to enhance and affirm social bonds, whereas in more individualistic cultures, the primary function of social support is to enhance the recipient’s self-esteem. It is important to note that although the motive to prioritize a shared goal is prevalent among those from more collectivistic cultures, how this motive is manifested in specific support transactions varies considerably across collectivistic cultures. Latinos with *convivial collectivism* tend to maintain good relationships by reducing the expression of conflict and emphasizing the expression of warmth and affirming relationship bonds, whereas East Asians with *harmony collectivism* tend to be cautious in support seeking in order to maintain social harmony (Campos & Kim, 2017). Moreover, recent studies show that collectivism may interact with relationship norms in shaping social support use. In India (collectivistic with communal norms), social support is more readily used, but in Japan
(collectivistic with exchange norms), social support is less readily used, compared to the United States (individualistic with exchange norms), where the tendency falls in between (Miller, Akiyama, & Kapadia, 2017). It appears that the motive for shared goals, common in collectivistic cultures, amplifies the influence of communal and exchange norms in social support transactions.

**Adjustment versus Expression Goals**

The earliest studies to investigate culture and social support focused primarily on how social support is sought during stressful events (Taylor et al., 2004; Kim et al., 2006). Compared to European Americans, Asians and Asian Americans were significantly less likely to report drawing on social support to cope with difficult situations. Furthermore, Asians and Asian Americans expected support seeking to be less effective, especially in close relationships. Key to explaining this difference is the element of self-disclosure sometimes involved in support seeking. In cultural contexts in which prioritized goals include expressing oneself, the strategies of disclosing one’s needs and feelings make sense. Indeed, Taylor, Welch, Kim, and Sherman (2007) found that explicit social support seeking, involving disclosure and explicit solicitation of support, is most effective for European Americans. In contrast, explicit support seeking is harmful to the psychological and biological well-being of Asians and Asian Americans, who prioritize adjustment goals because they are concerned that such support seeking burdens their close others or harms others’ evaluation of them. Explicit support seeking, in a laboratory setting, for example, increased production of the stress hormone cortisol in Asian and Asian American participants (Taylor et al., 2007).

**Avoidance versus Approach Goals**

One of the documented reasons for the cultural difference in the likelihood and effects of support seeking is that Asians and Asian Americans worry about the potentially negative consequences of support seeking, such as interference with relationship harmony and the risk of losing face (Taylor et al., 2004). Active and explicit forms of support seeking cause distress in interdependent cultures because individuals are more concerned with avoidance goals over approach goals. This is not to say that Asians and Asian Americans do not benefit from social support. In fact, research shows that perceived social support receipt has more benefits for collectivistic than for individualistic people (e.g., Campos, Schetter, Abdou, Hobel, Glynn, & Sandman, 2008; Uchida et al., 2008). The difference is that Asians and Asian Americans seem to benefit more from implicit forms of support seeking, which do not require making overt and disruptive disclosures and demands. Examples of such implicit forms of support seeking involve spending time with close others, without discussing one’s problem or reminding oneself of close others. This type of support use is more likely to reinforce belongingness, without worry about potential costs.

Directly testing this idea, Mojaverian and Kim (2013) found that support receipt is more effective for Asians and Asian Americans when they do not have to ask for it directly. In one study, participants worked on a set of math problems in the same room with a confederate, who was described as a math major who could potentially help with difficult problems if needed. In a solicited support condition, the confederate gave assistance only if requested directly by the participant, whereas in the unsolicited condition, the confederate offered help before the participant had a chance to ask. Asian American participants who received unsolicited support fared significantly better than Asian American participants who had to solicit support. These individuals reported higher levels of self-esteem and lower levels of stress after receiving the unsolicited support; however, the opposite pattern was observed among European American participants. Clearly, social support is a universally valuable resource, but prioritized cultural goals shape the form of support that is most helpful.

**Instrumental versus Emotional Goals**

Another distinction that has emerged as an important cross-cultural difference is the divergent preference for emotional versus problem-focused support. Compassion, encouragement, and reassurance may be sub-
sumed under the rubric of emotional support. The primary objectives of this type of support provision are to reaffirm the individual, soothe negative feelings, and boost self-esteem. Not surprisingly, this type of support provision is preferred in independent cultures that prioritize emotional goals (J. Chen et al., 2012). Research conducted with North American samples indicates that emotion-focused support provision is typically the most beneficial type of support (e.g., Maisel & Gable, 2009). This same type of support provision is less common in collectivistic cultures. Instead, problem-focused support is more frequently used in these cultures. Problem-focused support, such as giving advice, or providing tangible resources, such as money or shelter, is better suited to contexts that prioritize instrumental goals; therefore, it is more common in collectivistic cultures (J. Chen et al., 2012; Chentsova-Dutton & Vaughn, 2012). Research conducted in the United States and Japan also indicates that Americans’ support provision is motivated by the goal of increasing recipients’ self-esteem, as well as relationship closeness, whereas Japanese support provision is solely motivated by increasing closeness (J. Chen et al., 2012). Interestingly, this analysis suggests that relationship closeness, which was a central motivation of support provision in both cultures, is achieved in culturally divergent ways. Instrumental support provision achieves this goal in Japan, and more emotional support provision achieves the same goal in the United States. Similarly, research comparing advice giving in collectivistic Russia and individualistic America indicated that Russians are much more likely to provide both solicited and unsolicited advice, which is an important form of practical, problem-focused support in a Russian cultural context that fosters practical interdependence (Chentsova-Dutton & Vaughn, 2012).

In summary, social support is an effective means of coping with stress in both independent and interdependent cultures; however, the precise forms that social support interactions take are shaped by the cultural goals that individuals prioritize in their relationships. As indicated, patterns of relational mobility and patterns of social support diverge between cultures with different goal orientations. In the next section, we review cultural differences in patterns of prosociality.

**Prosocial Behavior**

Prosocial behavior is a comprehensive term referring to a variety of activities, including altruism, helping, volunteering, and cooperation, that are advantageous to other persons or society in general (Pilliavin, Dovidio, Gaertner, & Clark, 1982). Most research suggests that humans are universally inclined toward prosocial behaviors (e.g., Batson & Shaw, 1991; MacDonald, 1984). Evolutionary theories see prosociality as an adaptive strategy in environments characterized by recurring interpersonal interactions (e.g., S. Preston & de Waal, 2002; Trivers, 1971). In spite of what appears to be a universal inclination toward prosociality, however, studies also point to significant cultural variation in how much, when, and how individuals choose to help others, and many of these cultural differences may be explained by cultural goals.

**Shared versus Personal Goals**

Although the pattern of findings is complex, one consistent finding is that cultures shape the gist of how and why people help each other. First, studies indicate that there are cultural differences in how much people view helping others as an obligation. In a study investigating the meaning of power across different cultures, Torelli and Shavitt (2010) found that cultures high in horizontal collectivism, such as those of Northern Europe and Latin America, which value interdependence but devalue social hierarchy, embrace socialized power beliefs; that is, they consider power as a means to achieve shared goals such as helping others and taking care of those who are powerless. Conversely, cultures high in vertical individualism, such as the United States, which place great importance on hierarchies of success, view power as a means to achieve personal goals such as advancing self-interest and distinguishing oneself.

Of course, this does not mean that prosocial actions occur less in more individualistic societies. Rather, studies show that culture influences why people engage in prosocial actions. Generally speaking, prosociality
is driven by in-group, concrete, and duty-bound concerns in interdependent cultures and by generalized and abstract justice concerns and free-choice in individualistic cultures (Berman, Murphy-Berman, & Singh, 1985; Kashima, Siegal, Tanaka, & Isaka, 1988; Miller & Bersoff, 1992; Miller, Bersoff, & Harwood, 1990; Miller, Wice, & Goyal, Chapter 16, this volume); that is, the decision to help others is motivated by interpersonal duties and obligations to fulfill shared goals within one’s ingroup in collectivistic cultures and by the need to fulfill one’s internal principles and moral concerns in individualistic cultures (for a related discussion, see Eom et al., 2016).

This difference helps explain some of the seemingly paradoxical phenomena of impersonal prosociality such as volunteering and charitable giving. Unlike helping close friends or family, volunteering typically takes place in a formal organizational context and is a more planned, impersonal, and nonobligatory form of helping (Penner, Dovidio, Piliavin, & Schroeder, 2005). Simon, Stürmer, and Steffens (2000) found that volunteering to help an outgroup is positively associated with viewing oneself as an individualist and is negatively associated with viewing oneself as a collectivist. Similarly, in a meta-analysis of studies conducted in 42 different countries, Allik and Realo (2004) found that social capital, which involves volunteering, increases with individualism.

Beyond the variation in how much people engage in these impersonal prosocial actions, individualism seems to influence the reasons for engaging in these behaviors. More specifically, individualism particularly increases prosocial behaviors that promote others’ pursuit of personal goals. For example, an analysis of regional variations in the United States shows that state-level individualism predicts volunteering and donations to organizations that promote individualistic values (e.g., self-development and self-expression), such as those geared around the arts, workplace, and education; however, individualism does not predict volunteering or donating to organizations that promote health and human services (more instrumental causes) or religious charities (Kemmelmeyer, Jambor, & Letner, 2006); that is, although both types of activities are intended to promote the well-being of society in general, people from more individualistic contexts tend to choose to engage in prosocial activities that aid others in achieving their personal goals, including self-actualization and personal growth, in particular.

Religious cultures also accentuate the importance of shared goals over personal goals. A quickly growing body of research reveals that goals emphasized by religious cultures have substantial implications for how much and whom people choose to help. Religious concepts, such as the concept of God, when primed or personally endorsed, increase a variety of prosocial behaviors and cognitions such as fair decision making in a dictator game (Norenzayan & Shariff, 2008; Shariff & Norenzayan, 2007), prosocial intentions (Pichon, Boccatto, & Saroglou, 2007), and cooperative behaviors (Rand et al., 2014). Xygalatas (2013) also found that merely being in a religious environment, or in view of religious symbols, activates more cooperative behavior. In a recent metanalysis of more than 90 studies, Shariff, Willard, Andersen, and Norenzayan (2016) found robust effects for the positive impact of religion on prosociality.

However, it is important to note that research often reveals that these tendencies are parochial in nature. In fact, numerous studies show that religion sometimes increases prejudice and outgroup derogation (e.g., Demoulin, Saroglou, & Van Pachterbeke, 2008; Hall, Matz, Wood, 2010; Johnson, Rowatt, & LaBouff, 2010; McKay, Efferson, Whitehouse, & Fehr, 2011; Whitley, 2009; see A. Cohen & Neuberg, Chapter 32, this volume). Given that nearly all religions demand adherence to moral codes that encourage the kind treatment of others, these results appear paradoxical. A set of studies that tackled this paradox (J. Preston & Ritter, 2013) found differential effects of activating the concept of God as a personal belief and the concept of religion as a group affiliation. Activating the concept of God increased more generalized prosociality, but activating the concept of religion increased parochial prosociality. Taken together, these findings suggest that religion has both individual and collective elements, and we argue that the relative importance of these different elements underlies different prioritization of personal versus shared goals.
Highlighting God increases principle-based generalized prosociality, a form of prosociality that is common in independent cultures. However, highlighting religious group membership increases prosociality bounded by group membership, a form of prosociality that is common in interdependent cultures (Graham & Haidt, 2010; J. Preston, Ritter, & Hernandez, 2010; Saroglou, 2002).

**Adjustment versus Expression Goals**

Threat is thought to be a trigger for attachment behaviors (e.g., Bowlby, 1969); similarly, under threatening circumstances, interdependence emerges as a strategy for survival; that is, building relationships is a way to deal with threatening circumstances, and ingroup prosociality can be seen as the glue that holds together networks of interreliance. Thus, working-class individuals, who presumably experience more chronic threat, have been shown to exhibit comparatively more prosocial behaviors than do middle-class individuals, and these behaviors are especially directed toward the ingroup.

When one's personal fate is intertwined with that of others, individuals master skills that attune them to the thoughts, feelings, and actions of others, and they adjust their own thoughts and behaviors to be aligned with relevant others. Indeed, research has documented that working-class individuals demonstrate greater empathic accuracy than their upper-class counterparts. In a series of studies, Kraus, Côté, and Keltner (2010) found that lower SES individuals, or individuals who were induced to feel lower in status, performed better on a variety of empathy tasks. Participants who rated themselves as having lower SES were also better able to judge the emotions of their partner in a mock job interview. Page-Gould, Koslav, and Mendes (2010) demonstrated that lower class individuals even experience parallel physiological responses when interacting with others. For example, when playing the board game Taboo, participants from families with lower income and education levels demonstrated cardiac contractility, a measure of sympathetic nervous system activation, following the same response in their gaming partner. However, no such physiological contagion was observed among participants who reported higher levels of income and education.

Religion, with its many norms and proscriptions, also fosters an emphasis on adjustment over expression goals. Saroglou, Corneille, and Van Cappellen (2009), for example, found that subliminal religious primes can make participants more submissive and likely to be susceptible to the demands of an experimenter, even when these demands require a problematic action such as enacting revenge against another participant. In one study, although priming of religious concepts alone increased prosocial behaviors, when the prime was coupled with a request from the experimenter to take revenge on another participant who had been rude, religious priming actually led to more negative behavior. These findings help explain why previous researchers have found that religious primes facilitate both more prosocial (e.g., cooperative) and more antisocial (e.g., prejudiced) behaviors. Religious priming especially fosters prosociality when prosocial actions support harmony, group cohesion, and shared goals, as well as adjusting one's behaviors to social expectations and demands.

In summary, the second part of our review reveals that cultural goals shape how people engage in social interactions and relationships, which in turn foster and reinforce behaviors consistent with culturally central goals. Considering cultural goals in interpersonal processes allows us to place culturally diverse relationship patterns in a larger and more coherent framework.

**CONCLUSION**

In this review we have systematically analyzed the existing literature on cultural differences in psychological processes and behaviors to demonstrate how culturally prioritized goals shape both intrapersonal and interpersonal behaviors. In particular, we have focused on the underlying reasons behind various motivational processes such as behaving in one way over another, increasing or decreasing certain behaviors, and maintaining or changing behaviors. The review has also highlighted some of the ways in which knowledge about cultural
goals may be used to promote desirable outcomes such as positive health behaviors and increased academic motivations.

There are two insights from this review that we would like to underscore. First, we want to stress that across different cultural regions and forms of culture, a full understanding of human behaviors must begin with a consideration of the particular demands posed by ecological, historical, and social environments and the implication that these environmental factors have for culturally prioritized goals. Second, we want to emphasize that the investigation of cultural influences requires contextualizing individuals in their relationships, which are the primary conveyers of cultural patterns of psychology and behavior. In other words, this chapter affirms the wisdom found in seeing a person within a complex web of relational, structural, historical, and ecological influences, which we call culture.

NOTE

1. The influence of religion has been investigated by either comparing patterns of psychology and behaviors associated with particular religious groups (e.g., Protestants vs. Catholics) or examining the role of religion in general by comparing the religious and the nonreligious, regardless of the content of particular religions. In this chapter, we primarily discuss research using the latter approach because of the focus on social functions of religion shared across all religions. For a more detailed review of religion, see A. Cohen and Neuberg (Chapter 32, this volume).

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