

## Linguistic Synchrony Predicts the Immediate and Lasting Impact of Text-Based Emotional Support

Emotional support is critical to well-being, but the factors that determine whether support attempts succeed or fail are incompletely understood. Using data from more than 1 million support interactions enacted within an online environment, we showed that emotional-support attempts are more effective when there is synchrony in the behavior of support providers and recipients reflective of shared psychological understanding. Benefits of synchrony in language used and semantic content conveyed were apparent in immediate measures of support impact (recipient ratings of support effectiveness and expressions of gratitude), as well as delayed measures of lasting change in the emotional impact of stressful life situations (recipient ratings of emotional recovery made at a 1-hr delay). These findings identify linguistic synchrony as a process underlying successful emotional support and provide direction for future work investigating support processes enacted via linguistic behaviors.