Differential Roles of Communal and Agentic Narcissism in Affective and Cognitive Responses to Intelligence Feedback

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INTRODUCTION

- Some evidence that agentic narcissism predicts persistence on difficult tasks following negative feedback (e.g., Nevicka et al., 2016)
- Role of communal narcissism (i.e., demonstration goals met through prosocial behaviors) and self-esteem unclear
- **Goal of this study was to explore differences between agentic and communal narcissism in response to intelligence feedback**

METHODS

1. N = 129
2. Participants completed difficult anagram task, followed by randomly assigned positive, negative, or neutral "intelligence" feedback (and second attempt at anagram)
3. Condition x narcissism used to predict negative and positive affect, effort spent on second anagram attempt, and evaluation of task importance

Agentic and communal narcissists respond differently to intelligence feedback; not likely motivated by same goals.

$B = 265.10, p = .043$

$B = .16, p = .05$
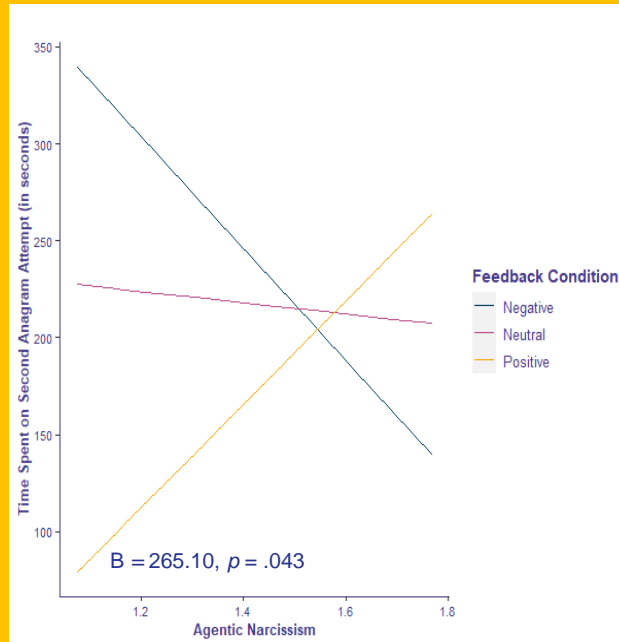
Agentic narcissists thrive on **positive feedback**, exert more effort
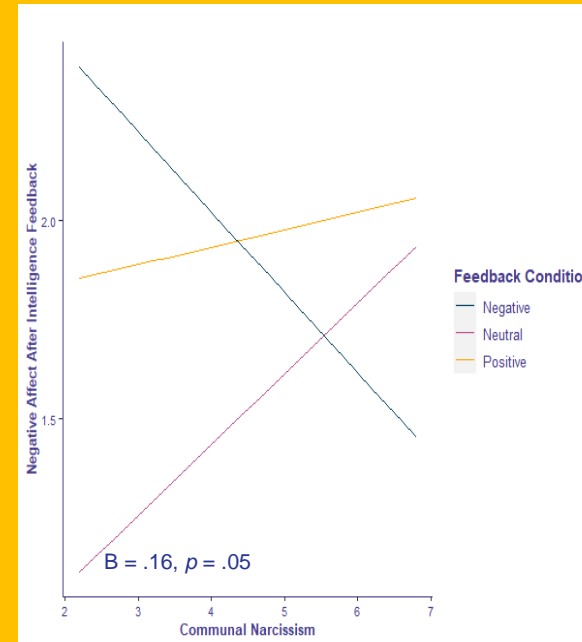
Communal narcissists feel negatively after **neutral feedback**

RESULTS

- In addition to focal results presented in center panel….
- Agentic narcissists feel extreme negativity after negative feedback (see next slide)
- High-self-esteem associated with extreme dip in positivity (not rise in negativity) after negative feedback (see next slide)

DISCUSSION

- Agentic narcissists motivated by success and praise?
- Communal narcissists motivated by uniqueness, comforted by failure?
- Implications for academic, workplace feedback
- Further evidence for theoretical distinction between agentic and communal narcissism
- Replication needed

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Supplemental Results

B = 1.11, p = .002
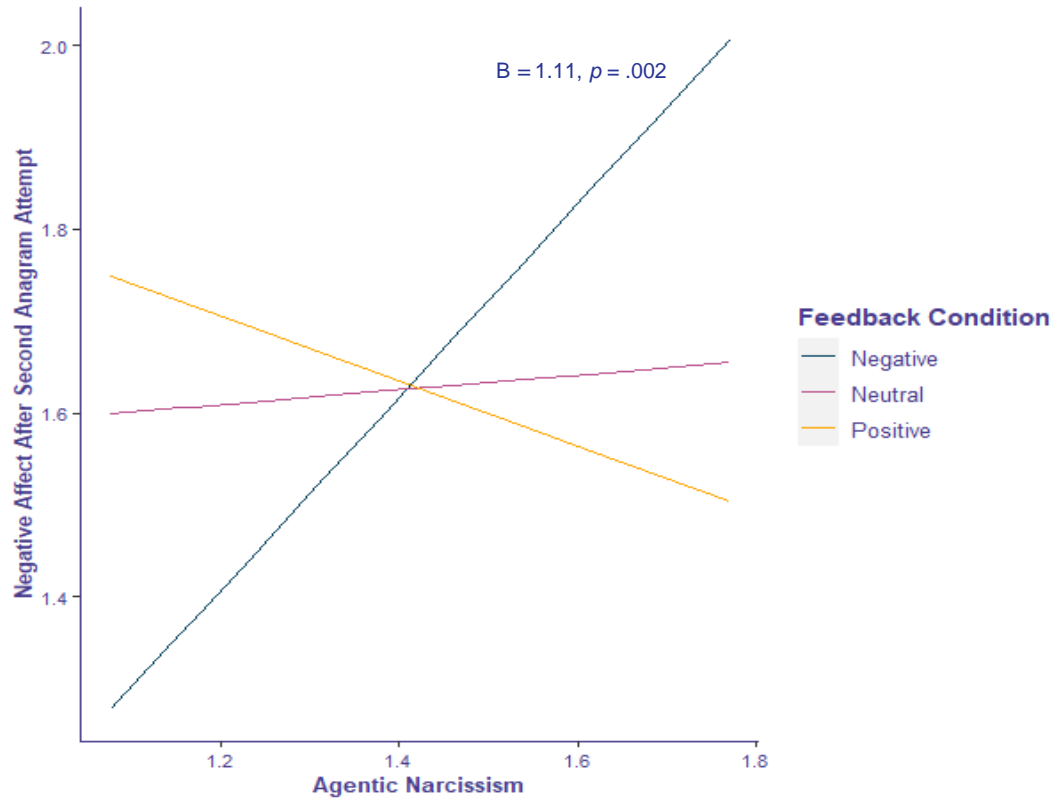
Agentic narcissists experience extreme negative affect following negative feedback, especially after failing at an opportunity to correct earlier errors

B = -.49, p = .027
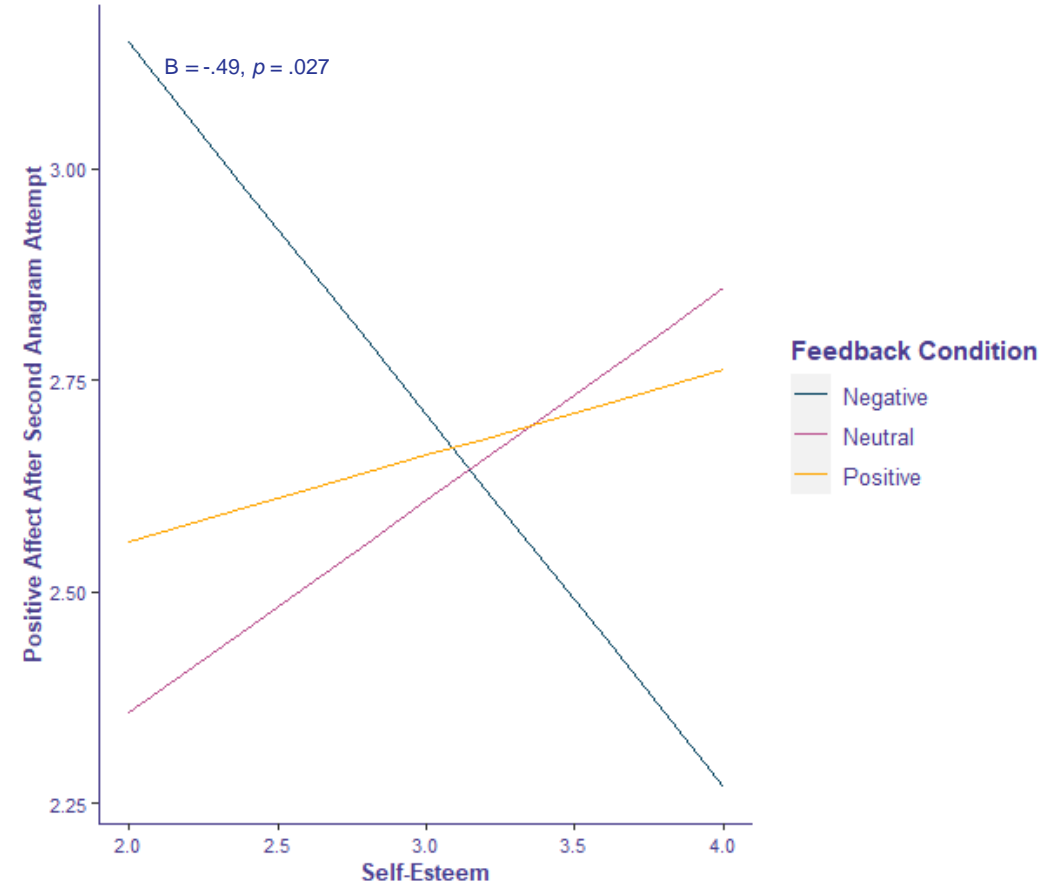
People with high self-esteem experience sharp decline in positive affect following negative feedback, especially after failing at an opportunity to correct earlier errors