

I thought about five episodes or situations within the past few years of my life that relate to independence or interdependence. The episodes or situations I chose were graduating from high school, being promoted at work to a managerial position, making what I call my “adult” or “big girl” purchases of my car and my bedroom furniture, being accepted into Old Dominion University, and getting my two youngest cats, one from a friend who found him in her yard, and the other was a surprise that I came home to. I classified three memories as socially disengaged emotions, where the emotions separate you from social relationships and promote self-independence. Graduating from high school, making my car and furniture purchases, and being accepted to ODU were situations that I would associate with socially disengaged emotions. The other two situations, getting promoted at work and getting two of my cats, were situations that I associate with socially engaged emotions, which assimilate the self and promote interdependence of the self with others who are relevant to the situation.

My three situations or episodes that I determined were associated with socially disengaged emotions were situations that prove, or support, my independence from others. Graduating from high school is a major step in every adolescent’s life when they make that big leap from childhood to adulthood. After high school comes college, where many students leave home for the first time and start to make a life for themselves and venture out on their own. In my case, I remained at home to attend community college and a local university, but everything about college fell on me. All financial and work responsibilities fell on me with little to no help from others so that I could prove that I could manage my finances and college academics. I also classified my two major purchases in my life as being associated with socially disengaged emotions. I made the purchase of my car as a gift to myself for my 20th birthday, and I bought my brand new bedroom furniture about a year and a half later. I paid for both in full at the time of purchase as I had been saving for them for a while. I associate this episode with socially disengaged emotions as well because it showcases how I plan my expenses and cover for large purchases. It displays that I am able to support myself and save my money to go towards purchases that will last me many years to come and will travel with me as I move on in my life. My last episode that I associate with socially disengaged emotions was being accepted into ODU. This was another major step for me as I started to attend a university that would launch me into my future career and life. Though I am interacting with others and currently have a major and minor that revolve around people, my current academics at ODU are supporting my push to independent living and removing myself from other relationships.

My two episodes I felt were associated with socially engaged emotions were getting promoted at work and getting my last two cats. I was promoted at work to a managerial position about eight months after I first started there, proving I was excelling at my job and making a difference in the workplace. Becoming a manager meant new challenges and roles that I would have to take and forming new and strong relationships was one of my tasks. I have transferred stores a few times as a manager and have had to form new relationships with the different employees we have, as well as when we hire new employees. Being a manager in a person based store means I am always forming relationships with others and working together with others to

accomplish our goals and responsibilities. I also associated my episodes of getting my last two cats as socially engaged emotions. One of my cats was found by my best friend in her yard when he was only a few weeks old about two summers ago, in the heat of August. When I saw she found him, she told me she did not know what to do with him and I came over to pick him up. We have been friends since kindergarten and her finding a kitten has strengthened our friendship as I now associate this cat with her whenever I see him. My newest cat came into my life during the summer of quarantine thanks to my mother. I came home from work one night and was surprised by seeing a new, fluffy kitten in the house that she obtained from one of her work friends, who was looking for homes for a few kittens. Even though I already have a very strong relationship with my mother, this event strengthened it even more. When I eventually move out on my own these two cats are coming with me as they are very bonded to me and each other. When I am living on my own with these two cats, I will be reminded of how strong my relationships are with the people who allowed me to have the two cats I love and cherish.

The first four images represent my episodes associated with socially disengaged emotions. There is an image from my high school graduation, when I bought my car and my furniture, and the last one from ODU in front of the Webb Center. The last two pictures represent the episodes I associate with socially engaged emotions. There is an image of me at work with my lanyard and keys from when I was employee of the month, and the second image is of my two newest cats who made their way into my life because of someone else.



