

## Chapter 2

# Self-serving Attributional Bias and Hedonic and Eudaimonic Aspects of Well-Being

Pilar Sanjuán, Alejandro Magallares, and Rodolfo Gordillo

The self-enhancement motive is defined as the tendency to see oneself in a positive way (Baumeister, 1998; Taylor & Brown, 1988). Different phenomena can be viewed as ways of self-enhancement. Thus, people recall information about their successes better than their failures; they rate themselves as above average on positive personality traits and abilities and more favorably than they rate their peers based on identical behavioral evidence (Sedikides, Horton, & Gregg, 2007). One of these phenomena is labeled “self-serving attributional bias” (SSAB), which is defined as the tendency of individuals to explain positive situations with *internal* (the cause of positive situations comes from within them), *stable* (the cause of positive situations will continue in the future), and *global* (the cause of positive situations will arise in lots of different areas) causes, and negative situations with *external* (the cause of negative situations comes from someone or something else), *unstable* (the cause of negative situations will not repeat in the future), and *specific* (the cause of the negative situations only arises in that specific situation) causes.

Research has shown that the different ways of self-enhancement, including SSAB, have as goal the protection or enhancement of self-esteem (Campbell & Sedikides, 1999). Due to this fact, some authors consider that this phenomenon would be a universal human motive (Sedikides, Gaertner, & Toguchi, 2003; Sedikides, Gaertner, & Vevea, 2005, 2007). However, research has shown that different ways of self-enhancement depend on cultural aspects and that are only displayed in societies where self-esteem is the best predictor of well-being, that is,

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P. Sanjuán (✉) • R. Gordillo  
Department of Personality Psychology, School of Psychology,  
Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia (UNED), Madrid, Spain  
e-mail: psanjuan@psi.uned.es

A. Magallares  
Department of Social Psychology, School of Psychology,  
Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia (UNED), Madrid, Spain