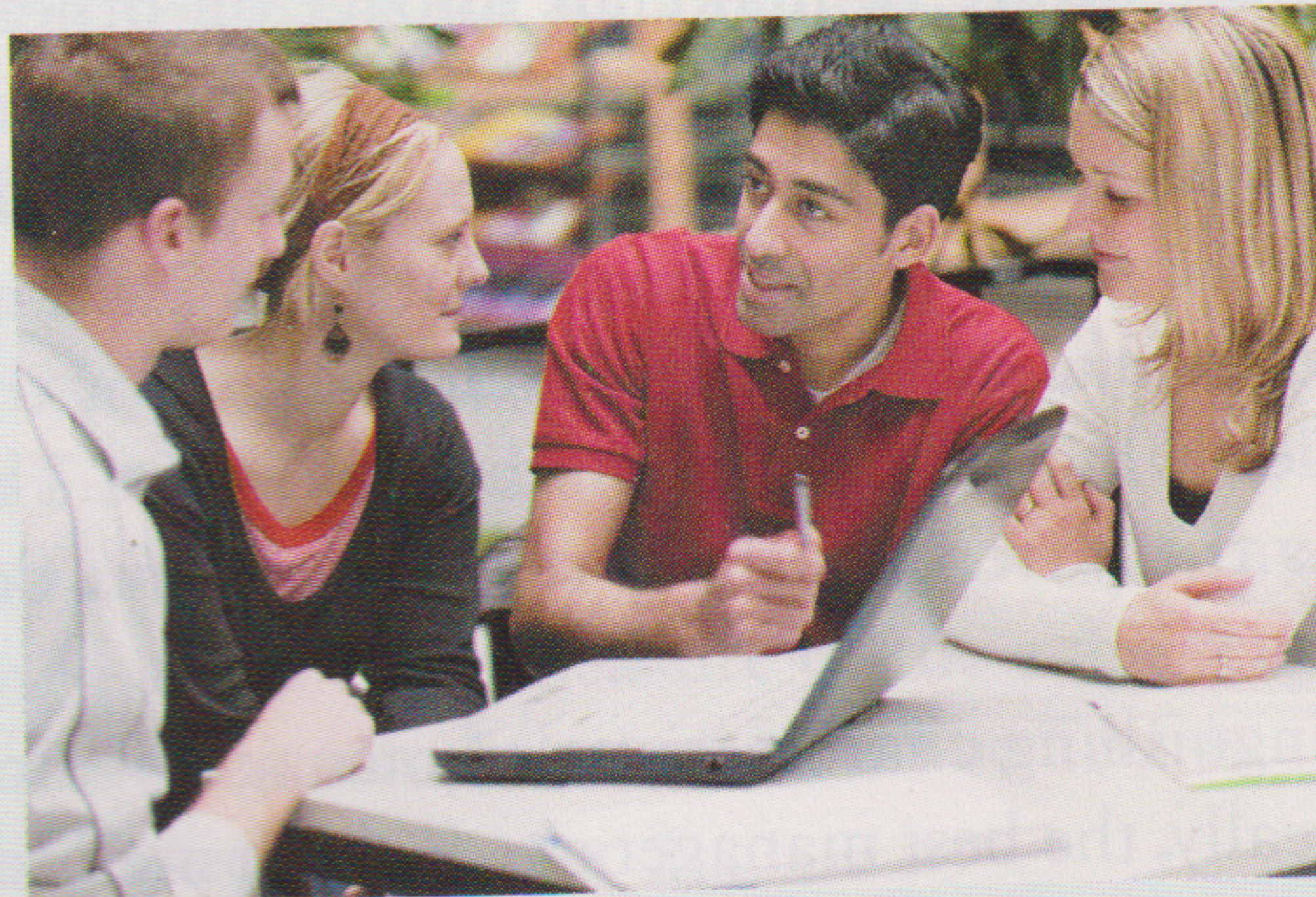


Academic Motivation and Interpersonal Attachment

Academic motivation is not the same for everyone. Some individuals are academically motivated to be with family and friends, and other individuals are motivated to study as a way to establish their independence and autonomy. Similarly, everyone does not have the same style of interpersonal attachment. Some individuals grow up with secure attachments and become paradoxically securely attached interpersonally and autonomous at the same time. Other individuals do not have histories of secure attachments and, therefore, grow up to be more somewhat avoidant or fiercely independent. In two studies of 314 people, the researchers found that the congruence of academic motivation and interpersonal attachment style led to the best GPA and academic well-being results. Specifically, for individuals whose academic motivation was relational in nature (i.e., family and friends), they did better



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academically if their interpersonal attachment style was secure versus avoidant or fiercely independent. For individuals whose academic motivation was to establish their independence, they did better academically if their interpersonal attachment style was avoidant, or fiercely independent, versus secure. The results indicate that individual differences

needs, motivations, and interpersonal styles are important considerations when looking at the relationships between goals and performance outcomes. Studying for classes is goal-directed behavior that requires people to consider their own interest and the interests of others close to them while studying. The degree to which these reasons stimulate effective studying depends upon the person.

SOURCE: J.S. Gore and M.J. Rogers, "Why do I study? The moderating effect of attachment style on academic motivation," *The Journal of Social Psychology* (2010), 150(5): 560–578.

FIGURE 5.2 Need Theories of Motivation

