Copy-Paste Prompts: A New Nudge to Promote Goal Achievement

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Can we clue people in to learn goal-related strategies from their vast social networks?

- Social contagion research would suggest people are already affected by peers (Carrell, Fullerton, & West, 2009)
- But can we help people get more out of their peers than they normally would?
What if people could learn goal-relevant information from each other?

**Copy**: Learn a new strategy from someone around you

**Paste**: Apply the hack to your own life
Is there value in seeking information from others (vs. passively receiving it)?

- **Copy-paste prompt condition**
  - Participant found exercise strategy from peer
  - Participant tried it out

- **Quasi-yoked control condition**
  - Experimenter gave exercise strategy
  - Participant tried it out

- **Simple control condition**
  - No exercise strategies sought nor provided
We conducted a longitudinal experiment to test copy-paste prompts

Day 1: Enrollment based on eligibility and random assignment

Day 3: Planning exercise strategies

Day 10: Collected DV and mediators

“Overall, how much time did you spend exercising in the past week (in hours)?”

N = 1,028
Receiving information from others (vs. passively receiving it) increased time spent exercising

N = 1,028; Simple control vs. quasi-yoked control: \( p = .031 \); simple control vs. copy-paste: \( p < .0001 \); quasi-yoked control vs. copy-paste: \( p = .0031 \)
Why are copy-paste prompts superior to other methods of obtaining goal-relevant information?

- Stronger *commitment* to using the strategy
- Strategy appears more *useful*
- More *effort* is put into finding the exercise strategy
- *Social interactions* with people who are pursuing the same goal
Thank you!