A field experiment by Regan, Williams, and Sparling (1972) illustrates this point. A male confederate stopped a female passerby and asked her if she would use his camera to take his picture. Just as the woman was about to snap the picture, the camera would break. In a control (no-guilt) condition, the confederate assured the woman it was not her fault, but in the guilt condition, the confederate blamed the woman for breaking his camera. Several minutes later, the participants crossed paths with another confederate whose groceries were falling out of her shopping bag. Although only 15 percent of the participants in the control condition helped, 55 percent of those in the guilt condition did so. Subsequent research has replicated this effect and provided evidence that people who feel guilty do not help more if they are given an alternative opportunity to restore a positive self-image (Cialdini, Darby, & Vincent, 1973; McMillen, 1971).

4. Summary of Moods and Helping

Table 12.3 summarizes the points we have been reviewing in this section. The table shows that different moods and self-relevant experiences promote helping through a variety of means (Cunningham, Shaffer, Barbee, Wolf, & Kelley, 1990). Happiness and success prime positive thoughts, increase social concern and sociability,