



Grzegorz Godawa

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2283-3965>

The Pontifical University of John Paul II in Krakow, Poland

 <https://ror.org/0583g9182>

Closeness in human relationships from an interdisciplinary perspective

 <https://doi.org/10.15633/pch.15113>

Abstract

Interpersonal closeness is a research issue, the exploration of which requires an interdisciplinary approach. The realisation of this objective has resulted in the presentation of closeness from a proxemic, haptic, psychopedagogical, philosophical and theological perspective. The outcome of the exploration is showing the contexts for understanding and implementing closeness in different areas of life. The article presents an attempt to conceptualise interpersonal closeness, which draws on the author's research. Its findings complement the literature search on the subject. Closeness is the co-presence of people and its purpose is mutual bestowing. The nature of this relationship is determined by internal factors as well as external conditions. What emerges from the analyses are postulates for establishing and strengthening closeness between people.

Keywords

interpersonal closeness, interdisciplinary research, relationships

Closeness is a phenomenon of a general human nature, and at the same time, it is deeply connected to the personal life of a particular individual. It is linked to his or her social relationships that allow him or her to feel and bestow goodness, to his or her inner experiences and to the whole context of his or her daily functioning. The good that is experienced and reciprocated is the very presence of the other, especially when it is full of empathy, commitment and, at the same time, respect for the freedom and sensitivity of others. Thus, interpersonal closeness belongs to a class of research problems that require interdisciplinary analysis. Interdisciplinarity is now regarded as a kind of intellectual obligation of the researcher. Talking about it is fashionable, ennobling and, above all, necessary in the practice of science, especially in the social sciences and humanities.¹

The purpose of this article is to present a scientific reflection on the interdisciplinary dimension of interpersonal closeness based on relationships. The main research problem involves characterising interpersonal closeness in relation to its proxemic, haptic, psychopedagogical, philosophical and theological sources and interpretations. The article takes a theoretical and review-based approach, using methods such as the analysis of scientific literature and existing data from various studies. The interdisciplinary analyses will conclude with the author's attempt to conceptualise interpersonal closeness.

Proxemic and haptic aspects of closeness

The proxemic view of closeness emphasises the importance of space in the communication process. The term *proxemics* was introduced to science by Edward T. Hall, who used it to describe the spatial behaviour of people in their everyday, reciprocal interactions, as well as to describe the importance of the spatial organisation of dwellings, buildings and cities for human communication.² The proxemic approach draws attention to the importance of “silent speech,” which is produced in personal space. Such a space surrounds every human being, and access to it is determined individually. Habits and rules of spatial behaviour influence people's daily lives. The use of space defines that is a member of the inner

¹ J. Kurczewska, *Wariacje na temat interdyscyplinarności*, in: Sz. Biliński (ed.), *Oceny nauki*, vol. 1, Kraków 2014, Polska Akademia Umiejętności, p. 80.

² A. Sztejnberg, T. Jasiński, *Proksemika w komunikacji społecznej*, Płock 2007, Novum, p. 4.

community and who is outside it. Spatial distance signals the degree of mutual familiarity, closeness, and intimacy.

Wiesław Sikorski cites, following Amos Rapoport, three types of space: permanent space, semi-permanent space and non-permanent space.³ The first is expressed in buildings, the spatial layout of towns and villages, the surrounding landscape, and the construction and arrangement of houses and flats. The permanent space is a matrix of part of human behaviour and the quality of communication. The semi-permanent space refers to the location of things in a particular living, office, or other physical environment. The non-permanent space, also known as the informal space, directly surrounds the body, setting boundaries of privacy and intimacy.⁴

The latter space is related to the haptic dimension of human life, which is expressed through touch. The basic premise of haptics, a scientific reflection on the tactile aspect of communication, is that touch as a type of social behaviour can sometimes say more than words.⁵ In this sense, Krzysztof Maliszewski argues that touch can be considered as “a fundamental factor in relationship-building, without which a sense of security, normal development, interpersonal closeness – and sometimes even survival itself – are not possible.”⁶ Touch has its own cultural context, which derives from belonging to a particular cultural circle, and in some ways is also dependent on a given longitude and latitude. A haptic crisis is also evident in education, which affects the process of forming social attitudes.⁷

The link between touch and closeness is emphasised by Cem Ekmekcioglu, who says that touch is an important communication tool that builds mutual trust and brings people together. At the core of human relationships, there “are the physical closeness and sense of security we experience from birth. From this sense of security and inviolable connection, a sense of self-worth can develop,

³ W. Sikorski, *Przestrzeń w kształtowaniu relacji międzyludzkich*, Warszawa 2023, Difin, p. 91.

⁴ W. Sikorski, *Przestrzeń w kształtowaniu relacji międzyludzkich*, Warszawa 2023, Difin, pp. 91–105.

⁵ K. Jarząbek, *Słownik mowy ciała Polaków*, Katowice 2016, Wyd. Uniwersytetu Śląskiego, p. 14.

⁶ K. Maliszewski, *Dotknięcie pedagogiczne – nauczyciel jako wydarzenie*, in: J. Kurek, K. Maliszewski (eds.), *W przestrzeni dotyku*, Chorzów 2009, MDK “Batory”, p. 211.

⁷ G. Godawa, *Znaczenie dotyku w edukacji. Model węgierski*, in: A. Kamińska, P. Oleśniewicz (eds.), *Edukacja jutra. Zróżnicowane obszary rozwoju edukacji instytucjonalnej*, Sosnowiec 2020, Akademia Sztuki Wojennej, pp. 121–122.

allowing us to find our own personality. This, in turn, is an important condition for contentment, enjoyment of life and happiness.”⁸ Touch is important in the realm of higher needs. It is because it is a carrier of content that transcends the touch of the skin. Therefore, a deficit of touch does not just mean a lack of stimuli to stimulate bodily responses. A deficit of touch is a sign of social and cultural changes that undermine social closeness.

Closeness in the proxemic dimension is thus a relationship in which spatial, social and physical conditions are intertwined. The last type of conditioning, in turn, draws attention to the haptic context of proximity, which is expressed in behaviours whose intensity should be proportional to the sense of interpersonal intimacy.

Psychopedagogical perspective of closeness

According to Arthur P. Aron et al. *closeness* may be understood as closeness in physical terms. In a broader context, it can be seen as the inclusion of others in the self, in the personal world of an individual. Greater closeness means that the cognitive representations of self and others overlap and mutually activate, interacting with each other.⁹ Closeness can be understood as a causal relationship between two people. In this context, the use of the term *affiliation* is helpful, as it allows us to consider both closeness and distance as essential parts of the construction of interpersonal relationships. It also highlights the importance of sets of behaviours that reinforce closeness or distance.¹⁰ Trust is necessary to establish closeness and to express it. Józef Stala emphasises that trust is important for the development of an individual and one’s social relations, as well as for the development of societies, which contributes to their welfare.¹¹

⁸ C. Ekmekcioglu, *Dotknij mnie. Dlaczego dotyk jest tak ważny*, Łódź 2019, Feeria, pp. 12–13.

⁹ A. P. Aron, D. J. Mashek, E. N. Aron, *Closeness as including other in the self*, in: D. J. Mashek, A. P. Aron (eds.), *Handbook of closeness and intimacy*, New York 2004, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers, p. 36.

¹⁰ J. A. Hess, A. D. Fannin, L. H. Pollom, *Creating closeness: Discerning and measuring strategies for fostering closer relationships*, “Personal Relationships” 14 (2007) no. 1, p. 26.

¹¹ J. Stala, *Personal and social trust in contemporary poland in the light of empirical research*, “The Person and the Challenges” 11 (2021) no. 2, p. 47.

An important component of closeness is similarity, which is expressed in the sharing of attitudes and opinions. Being affectionate to someone is easier when that person is not too different in the way they see the world and when they reciprocate the affection. Similarity is influenced by personal attributes, which include competencies or physical attractiveness. The closer the relationship, the greater the focus on the other person's needs.¹²

Closeness in developmental psychology is considered a crisis described by Erich H. Erikson. This crisis occurs at the intersection of closeness and isolation in early adulthood, when the need and ability to form close relationships with others is countered by isolation, understood as avoidance of relationships and reluctance to form close relationships. Disorders in establishing an intimate relationship are expressed in keeping people at a distance. Meanwhile, achieving proper intimacy in marriage is a preparation for raising offspring in the atmosphere of love.¹³

Closeness in psychology is also considered attachment, which is most often embedded in the attachment theory developed by John Bowlby. Attachment is understood as the totality of relationships formed between a child and its mother, both in terms of the child's perceptions of his or her mother and, conversely, of the mother in relation to her child.¹⁴ Bowlby's concept of attachment is used by researchers to understand the conditions for the formation of close bonds in romantic relationships, as well as to understand the loneliness of adults and why they do not enter into relationships. Studies of the nature of attachment bonds was deepened by Mary Ainsworth, who distinguished between three attachment styles: secure, avoidant and anxious-ambivalent.¹⁵

Closeness can be defined by the frequency with which individuals experience positive and negative emotions in a relationship. This approach emphasises the emotional element and, thanks to its universal approach, it is applicable to the analysis of relationships in family systems.¹⁶ Emotional

¹² E. Aronson, J. Aronson, *Człowiek – istota społeczna*, Warszawa 2020, PWN, pp. 296–300.

¹³ E. H. Erikson, J. M. Erikson, *Dopełniony cykl życia*, Gliwice 2011, Helion, p. 131.

¹⁴ *izolacja, przywiązanie* in: N. Sillamy, *Słownik psychologii*, Warszawa 1994, Książnica, pp. 229–230.

¹⁵ M. D. S. Ainsworth, S. M. Bell, *Attachment, exploration, and separation: Illustrated by the behavior of one-year-olds in a strange situation*, "Child Development" 41 (1970) no. 1, p. 49.

¹⁶ E. Berscheid, M. Snyder, A. M. Omoto, *The relationship closeness inventory: Assessing the closeness of interpersonal relationships*, "Journal of Personality and Social Psychology" 57 (1989) no. 5, p. 800.

closeness has a clear impact on the development of family members. In the parent-child relationship, it is a particularly important factor influencing the child. Parental warmth mitigates the impact of traumatic stressors and supports development.¹⁷

Noteworthy is the notion of closeness proposed by Alicja Żywczok, according to whom “proximity is the intensified or deepened presence of two or more subjects participating in an affective-spiritual relationship.”¹⁸ This definition draws attention to the relational dimension of closeness. The subjective view of this relationality directs attention to the other individual conceived as a person; hence, the personal character of closeness is born. Closeness also defines the quality of social life, because “future citizens are born in the family, which becomes the place where they first learn about civil virtues that determine the development and growth of every society. By nature, the family opens up to other families and societies, thereby performing its social tasks.”¹⁹

Maria Ryś et al., relating the concept of closeness to marital relationship, distinguish between three types of closeness: emotional closeness, intellectual closeness and action closeness. Emotional closeness is expressed by showing tenderness, sensitivity and understanding. It allows spouses to share experiences of joy and worries, helped by empathy. Intellectual closeness is built by harmonising thinking regarding views, insights and values, giving a sense of a similar grasp of reality. Action closeness builds and strengthens bonds and helps to achieve common goals.²⁰

The psycho-pedagogical view of interpersonal closeness shows it as a value and, at the same time, an attitude that is important in building relationships. The pursuit of closeness is determined by many factors, but it is always possible when an individual is willing to transcend what divides and isolates.

¹⁷ S. Kerr, W. J. Hudenko, D. A. Godfrey, S. N. Lundgren, A. J. O'Malley, C. Sharp, *Validation of the emotional tone index for families (ETIF): A multi-informant measure of emotional closeness*, “Family Process” 60 (2021) no. 3, p. 936.

¹⁸ A. Żywczok, *Hermeneutyka uczuciowej i duchowej bliskości*, in: A. Żywczok (ed.), *Miłość – akt preferencji duchowości człowieka. Studium bliskości duchowej*, Warszawa 2013, Żak, p. 29.

¹⁹ T. Borutka, *Caring for the person and the human family as a priority for the state and the Church*, “The Person and the Challenges” 10 (2020) no. 1, p. 249.

²⁰ M. Ryś, E. Greszta, K. Grabarczyk, *Intelektualna, emocjonalna i działaniowa bliskość małżonków a ich gotowość do rozwiązywania konfliktów oraz przebaczenia*, “Fides et Ratio” 38 (2019) no. 2, pp. 245–246.

The philosophical inspirations of interpersonal closeness

When analysing philosophical reflections on closeness, it is worth quoting the words of Paul Ricoeur, a representative of philosophical hermeneutics. He refers to remoteness as a category that co-creates true closeness:

Remoteness is preserved within *closeness*. Seeing similar is as much about seeing identity despite and through difference. This tension between identity and difference characterises the logical structure of similarity. As can be seen from this, imagination is the capacity to create new kinds through likeness; to create them not over differences, as in the understanding, but in spite of and through differences.²¹

Ricoeur notes that referring to the structure of the process of metaphorical cognition, we can speak of the paradox of remoteness and closeness. Closeness implies confrontation and, at the same time, the need for mutual recognition. This recognition is fundamental to the development of social order and peace and is at the same time an expression of human autonomy.²² The ability to create bonds in spite of and through differences seems to be a very difficult task, but it is helped by an appeal to the imagination, which creates a kind of visualisation of this model of closeness and makes it more accessible.

Emmanuel Lévinas gives a descriptive definition of closeness. Characteristically, he distinguishes it from a static vision of a relationship:

Closeness is not a state, a rest, but, precisely, an incomprehensible lack of space, an exclusion of relaxation that disturbs the peace of being, which is not omnipresent and rests in a certain place. Thus, closeness is never quite as close as a loving embrace [...]. Closeness as 'nearer and nearer' becomes a subject.²³

Dynamic closeness is characterised by a subjectivity that is irreducible only to consciousness. Closeness manifests itself as a relationship with another

²¹ P. Ricoeur, *Proces metaforyczny jako poznanie, wyobrazenie i odczuwanie*, "Pamiętnik Literacki: czasopismo kwartalne poświęcone historii i krytyce literatury polskiej" 75 (1984) no. 2, p. 275.

²² K. Bembenek, *Problem rozpoznania (reconnaissance) Innego w kontekście Ricoeurowskiej dyskusji ze stanowiskami Husserla i Lévinasa*, "Filo-Sofija" 18 (2018) 42, p. 73.

²³ E. Lévinas, *Inaczej niż być lub ponad istotą*, Warszawa 2000, Aletheia, pp. 137–138.

individual that presupposes the existence of a distance necessary to perceive and experience its essence. This distance is not isolation, but rather remoteness, which prevents the boundaries of closeness from being breached.

Józef Tischner draws attention to the dialogical dimension of interpersonal closeness. It implies the need to get to know the other person and enter into a relationship with him or her: "In a sense, we are windowless monads. I don't know what is going on in you, nor do you know what is going on in me. Nevertheless, I know that you – *you* for me – are *I* for yourself, and likewise I – I who am *I* for myself – am *you* for you. This knowledge is a bridgehead on which it is possible to set a bridge between me and you."²⁴ Just as Ricoeur appealed to the imagination, Tischner evoked the importance of knowing another individual in order to build unity with him or her. Achieving closeness thus becomes possible when it is built on a personal yet mutually experienced fundamental knowledge of the other person that initiates the encounter with him or her.

Karol Wojtyła refers to the theory of participation, which explains what true closeness is. This theory is based on the assumption that the other person is a fellow human being and that therefore, everyone's humanity should be recognised and valued. It belongs to everyone and, at the same time, is ontically independent of any human being and any community. The fellow human being is more than a member of a community, because his or her being in the community has a deeper meaning, which is expressed by participating in the community. It is a participation in the personal humanity of each person, a mutual penetration in the subjective dimension of participation.²⁵

A philosophical account of closeness reveals it as an existential experience of humanity and, at the same time, as a category requiring an in-depth reflection. As the understanding of interpersonal closeness is not finalised, the concept can still be discovered and built up in the everyday lives of individuals and communities.

Closeness in theological terms

The transcendental dimension of closeness assumes the legitimacy of relating it to a relationship with God. The validity of this assumption is confirmed

²⁴ J. Tischner, *Filozofia dramatu*, Kraków 2006, Znak, p. 80.

²⁵ K. Wojtyła, *Osoba i czyn*, Kraków 1969, Polskie Towarzystwo Teologiczne, pp. 321–323.

by Romano Guardini, who depicts the Creator as the initiator of a profound relationship with man, while at the same time emphasising the dissonance of human terms to describe this relationship. The expression of this is remoteness. It allows man to experience a closeness to God that is not a blurring of persons, meanings and identities.²⁶ The source of this closeness is the oneness of God in the unity of the Trinity. The three Divine Persons, united by the most intimate bond, are a model of closeness for all professing Christians.²⁷ The relationship with God teaches the meaning of relationships with others, and the image of moving between the poles of life is a content-bearing parable.

A more apophatic emphasis on the understanding of closeness is placed by Thomas Aquinas. According to him, God rises above all being and cognition.²⁸ Making this assumption means that the way of knowing God is through negation. The seemingly pessimistic overtone of these words gives way to admiration for the goodness of the Son of God, who, forsaking his own rights, enters the world of human relationships, transforming them through His death and resurrection. The incarnation of the eternal Logos is the basis for God's healing activity in Jesus Christ. Through physical closeness, it is possible to touch Christ, lay the sick at His feet, talk to Him, or follow Him. This is God's new way of acting. For a human being, the physical closeness of Jesus becomes an as yet unknown opportunity to be healed physically and spiritually.²⁹

The truth of God's closeness was emphatically stressed by Pope Francis in his words:

Our God is a God of closeness, He is a close God who wanders with his people [...]. This is not a God who leaves written ordinances and says: 'Go on.' He gives ordinances, He writes them with his own hands on a stone, He gives them to Moses, He entrusts them to Moses, but it is not that He leaves them

²⁶ R. Guardini, *Bóg daleki, Bóg bliski*, Poznań 1991, W Drodze, pp. 90–91.

²⁷ P. Holc, *Trójca Święta przyczyną sprawczą i wzorcą jedności Kościoła: eklezjologiczne pryncypium na kanwie teologicznego dialogu katolicko-luterańskiego*, in: A. Baron, J. Kupczak, J. D. Szczurek (eds.), *Rozwój dogmatu trynitarnego: perspektywa historycznawcza*, Kraków 2015, Uniwersytet Papieski Jana Pawła II w Krakowie Wydawnictwo Naukowe, p. 235.

²⁸ st. Thomas, *Traktat o Bogu, Summa teologii I, kwestie 1–26*, Kraków 1999, Znak, p. 59.

²⁹ M. Zborowski, *Teologia bliskości Boga – soteryjne implikacje bliskości Boga w Jezusie Chrystusie w komentarzach i homiliach do Ewangelii synoptycznych Orygenes*, "Teologia w Polsce" 9 (2015) no. 2, p. 233.

and goes away – He wanders, He is close by. ‘Which nation has such a close God?’ This is closeness. Our God is a God of closeness.³⁰

God’s involvement in man’s creation and redemption, and accompanying him on the paths of life, is an invitation to closeness. Man’s free response is the condition for building this unique relationship of creation with the Creator. It prompts us to establish closeness with another human being through a bond of love. Showing this love, especially towards those in need of various kinds of support, completes the meaning and scope of the theological understanding of closeness: “All that you did to one of the least of these my brethren, you did to me.” (Mt 25:40). This attitude is out of step with the trends of post-modern culture, in which it is not uncommon for people to declare that they do not need a relationship with another man and can live without love. However, it is still in human nature to be oriented towards another human being.³¹

The issue of closeness is also present in theological studies on mysticism. Christian mysticism describes the experience of extraordinary closeness to God. It is accompanied by intense love and a desire to be completely united with God and even to dissolve in Him as “in a boundless ocean.”³² Such closeness is a gift that the chosen already experience during their earthly life.

Closeness in theological terms, then, is a special relationship with God that presupposes ultimate union with Him, but also contains apophatic elements. They are a form of remoteness that is essential for a profound experience of closeness.

Attempt of an interdisciplinary conceptualisation of interpersonal closeness

The variety of understandings of closeness has necessarily been limited to a fragmented account of the research issue. The cited interdisciplinary approaches

³⁰ Francis, *Our God is close and asks us to be close to each other*, 18 March 2020, https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/cotidie/2020/documents/papa-francesco-cotidie_20200318_pergli-operatorisanitari.html (26.11.2023).

³¹ E. Osewska, *Rodzina i szkoła w Polsce wobec współczesnych wyzwań wychowawczych*, Kraków 2020, Uniwersytet Papieski Jana Pawła II w Krakowie Wydawnictwo Naukowe, p. 55.

³² T. Dola, *Czułość Boga*, “ACADEMIA. Magazyn Polskiej Akademii Nauk” (2020) no. 1 (61), p. 57.

to interpersonal closeness show its depth and wide range of meanings. An exploration of the literature on the subject shows how much of a role closeness plays in social relationships. This becomes particularly evident in situations that threaten the emergence and development of closeness, such as the COVID-19 pandemic state. The social isolation associated with it has undermined interpersonal closeness, while demonstrating that this category requires commitment and effort.

In the pandemic situation of the SARS-CoV-2 virus outbreak, the author's research on interpersonal closeness was conducted.³³ It was carried out according to the methodological assumptions of the theory grounded in its constructivist version.³⁴ The research problem was stated in the form of a question: "What is the conceptualisation of interpersonal closeness in an interdisciplinary context?"

The research was conducted in 2022 in 48 participants selected according to the methodology adopted. The first results of the research were published in a book entitled "Pedagogy of Interpersonal Closeness."³⁵

On the basis of the research carried out, a definition of interpersonal closeness can be proposed that refers to its interdisciplinary nature: Interpersonal closeness is the intense co-presence of people forming a relationship with the aim of mutual endowing. The intensity and way of expressing closeness depend on the individual circumstances and beliefs of the participants in the relationship. The understanding and experience of interpersonal closeness are related to the multidimensionality of human life, which builds its interdisciplinary character.

Closeness is experienced in individual, social, spatial and spiritual contexts, which gives it the status of a highly universal category. It is important to emphasise that closeness understood in this way has a personal dimension. Even if we speak of human closeness from a juridical perspective, it is only the participation of a human being in this relationship that gives it its full

³³ The research was part of a research project called "Closeness and remoteness in the situation of illness and social isolation experienced in a society emerging from the COVID-19 pandemic". The research was approved by the Ethical Committee for Scientific Research of the Pontifical University of John Paul II in Cracow, by the committee's decision of 23 March 2022 KE/01/03/2022.

³⁴ K. Charmaz, *Constructionism and the grounded theory method*, in: J. A. Holstein, J. F. Gubrium (eds.), *Handbook of constructionist research*, New York 2008, The Guilford Press, p. 402.

³⁵ G. Godawa, *Pedagogia bliskości międzyludzkiej*, Kraków 2023, Impuls.

dimension. The purpose of closeness is mutual bestowal, i.e., sharing a good that serves the other person. The pursuit of closeness contains a nurturing context that is expressed in practical behaviour aimed at its constructive fulfilment. Closeness appears as an important social category, the lack or excess of which is harmful. Above all, however, it is an essential value that inspires, attracts and encourages us to explore its mysteries. The reference of closeness to transcendental reality gives it a vertical perspective, the fruits of which are visible in horizontal relationships.

Closeness is a reality that presupposes the co-existence of opposites: courage and withdrawal, dynamism and meekness, determination and concession, heroism and ordinariness. It is a dynamic reality, constantly in the process of becoming and never having a fully “finished” status. This is expressed in the view of closeness as a *continuum* of being close and remote. Moving along the continuum is an expression of the freedom of people forming the relationship and offers the possibility to define the limits of intensity of experiencing another individual’s presence.³⁶

Finally, it is worth emphasising that interpersonal closeness is a fragile and sensitive value, even if it is built on strong bonds. Fragility stems from the threat to life, proximity of death, inevitability of fate and human frailty. Fragility implies the possibility of a rupture of what is good, i.e., a rupture of relationships and falling into conflict. Therefore, closeness requires constant care. The key to its establishment and development is love, which is the essence of any true interpersonal closeness.

Conclusions

The inclusion of an interdisciplinary perspective in research carries the risk of dealing vaguely with particular areas of the phenomenon. This risk is balanced by the benefit of showing a cross-sectional picture of the reality under study. To conclude, the analyses carried out can be assumed to have revealed the theoretical complexity of the phenomenon of interpersonal closeness and, at the same time, the contexts in which it is experienced. From the perspective of psychology, sociology, pedagogy, philosophy or theology, closeness appears

³⁶ G. Godawa, *Pedagogia bliskości międzyludzkiej*, Kraków 2023, Impuls, p. 323.

as a complex phenomenon. There is a need to distinguish this subject matter within the analysed approaches so that they contribute to expanding the scientific foundation related to defining and regulating the intensity of relationships, to the extent relevant to each scientific discipline. The portrayal of closeness as a value and the presentation of its meaning from an interdisciplinary perspective is a scientific result that can also be used to conceptualise further research into the phenomenon of interpersonal closeness.

The interdisciplinary view of closeness also provides a basis for determining the demands for actions to build and deepen interpersonal closeness. These include the need to strengthen family ties, which are the basis for developing closeness. It is important to shape closeness in everyday social relations, education and the mass media. An important recommendation for building closeness is to implement the principles of closeness pedagogy that define its methodology. By pursuing these demands, interpersonal closeness will be further recognised, valued and enhanced, benefiting the social relationships and individual experiences of each person.

References

- Ainsworth M. D. S., Bell S. M., *Attachment, exploration, and separation: Illustrated by the behavior of one-year-olds in a strange situation*, "Child Development" 41 (1970) no. 1, pp. 49–67.
- Aron A. P., Mashek D. J., Aron E. N., *Closeness as including other in the self*, in: D. J. Mashek, A. P. Aron (eds.), *Handbook of closeness and intimacy*, New York 2004, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers, pp. 27–41.
- Aronson E., Aronson J., *Człowiek – istota społeczna*, Warszawa 2020, PWN.
- Bembenek K., *Problem rozpoznania (reconnaissance) Innego w kontekście Ricoeurowskiej dyskusji ze stanowiskami Husserla i Lévinasa*, "Filo-Sofija" 18 (2018) 42, pp. 61–74.
- Berscheid E., Snyder M., Omoto A. M., *The relationship closeness inventory: Assessing the closeness of interpersonal relationships*, "Journal of Personality and Social Psychology" 57 (1989) no. 5, pp. 792–807.
- Borutka T., *Caring for the person and the human family as a priority for the state and the church*, "The Person and the Challenges" 10 (2020) no. 1, pp. 235–251.
- Charmaz K., *Constructionism and the grounded theory method*, in: J. A. Holstein, J. F. Gubrium (eds.), *Handbook of constructionist research*, New York 2008, The Guilford Press, pp. 397–412.
- Dola T., *Czułość Boga*, "ACADEMIA. Magazyn Polskiej Akademii Nauk" (2020) no. 1 (61), pp. 56–59.

- Ekmekcioglu C., *Dotknij mnie. Dlaczego dotyk jest tak ważny*, Łódź 2019, Feeria.
- Erikson E. H., Erikson J. M., *Dopełniony cykl życia*, Gliwice 2011, Helion.
- Francis, *Our God is close and asks us to be close to each other*, 18 March 2020, https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/cotidie/2020/documents/papa-francesco-cotidie_20200318_pergli-operatorisanitari.html (26.11.2023).
- Godawa G., *Znaczenie dotyku w edukacji. Model węgierski*, in: A. Kamińska, P. Oleśniewicz (eds.), *Edukacja jutra. Zróżnicowane obszary rozwoju edukacji instytucjonalnej*, Sosnowiec 2020, Akademia Sztuki Wojennej, pp. 117–129.
- Godawa G., *Pedagogia bliskości międzyludzkiej*, Kraków 2023, Impuls.
- Guardini R., *Bóg daleki, Bóg bliski*, Poznań 1991, W Drodze.
- Hess J. A., Fannin A. D., Pollom L. H., *Creating closeness: Discerning and measuring strategies for fostering closer relationships*, "Personal Relationships" 14 (2007) no. 1, pp. 25–44.
- Holc P., *Trójca Święta przyczyną sprawczą i wzorcą jedności Kościoła: eklezjologiczne pryncypium na kanwie teologicznego dialogu katolicko-luterańskiego*, in: A. Baron, J. Kupczak, J. D. Szczurek (eds.), *Rozwój dogmatu trynitarnego: perspektywa historyczno-bawcza*, Kraków 2015, Uniwersytet Papieski Jana Pawła II w Krakowie Wydawnictwo Naukowe, pp. 235–268.
- Jarząbek K., *Słownik mowy ciała Polaków*, Katowice 2016, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego.
- Kerr S., Hudenko W. J., Godfrey D. A., Lundgren S. N., O'Malley A. J., Sharp C., *Validation of the emotional tone index for families (ETIF): A multi-informant measure of emotional closeness*, "Family Process" 60 (2021) no. 3, pp. 935–949.
- Kurczewska J., *Wariacje na temat interdyscyplinarności*, in: S. Biliński (ed.), *Oceny nauki*, vol. 1, Kraków 2014, Polska Akademia Umiejętności, pp. 80–89.
- Lévinas E., *Inaczej niż być lub ponad istotą*, Warszawa 2000, Aletheia.
- Maliszewski K., *Dotknięcie pedagogiczne – nauczyciel jako wydarzenie*, in: J. Kurek, K. Maliszewski (eds.), *W przestrzeni dotyku*, Chorzów 2009, MDK "Batory", pp. 211–218.
- Osewska E., *Rodzina i szkoła w Polsce wobec współczesnych wyzwań wychowawczych*, Kraków 2020, Uniwersytet Papieski Jana Pawła II w Krakowie Wydawnictwo Naukowe.
- Ricoeur P., *Proces metaforyczny jako poznanie, wyobrażenie i odczuwanie*, "Pamiętnik Literacki: czasopismo kwartalne poświęcone historii i krytyce literatury polskiej" 75 (1984) no. 2, pp. 269–286.
- Ryś M., Greszta E., Grabarczyk K., *Intelektualna, emocjonalna i działaniowa bliskość małżonków a ich gotowość do rozwiązywania konfliktów oraz przebaczenia*, "Fides et Ratio" 38 (2019) no. 2, pp. 221–254.
- Sikorski W., *Przestrzeń w kształtowaniu relacji międzyludzkich*, Warszawa 2023, Difin.
- izolacja, przywiązanie in: Sillamy N., *Słownik psychologii*, Warszawa 1994, Książnica.
- Stala J., *Personal and social trust in contemporary Poland in the light of empirical research*, "The Person and the Challenges" 11 (2021) no. 2, pp. 47–61.

- Sztejnberg A., Jasiński T., *Proksemika w komunikacji społecznej*, Płock 2007, Novum.
- St. Thomas, *Traktat o Bogu, Summa teologii 1, kwestie 1–26*, Kraków 1999, Znak.
- Tischner J., *Filozofia dramatu*, Kraków 2006, Znak.
- Wojtyła K., *Osoba i czyn*, Kraków 1969, Polskie Towarzystwo Teologiczne.
- Zborowski M., *Teologia bliskości Boga – soteryjne implikacje bliskości Boga w Jezusie Chrystusie w komentarzach i homiliach do Ewangelii synoptycznych Orygenes*, „Teologia w Polsce” 9 (2015) no. 2, pp. 231–249.
- Żywczok A., *Hermeneutyka uczuciowej i duchowej bliskości*, in: A. Żywczok (ed.), *Miłość – akt preferencji duchowości człowieka. Studium bliskości duchowej*, Warszawa 2013, Żak, pp. 21–35.