

IARR Mini-Conference

Self-Regulation and Close Relationships

9 -11 July 2015, Amsterdam



# Extended Program & Abstracts

Day 1: 9<sup>th</sup> July 2015

## Reception with Datablitz and Posters

<b>17.00</b>	<b>Start Reception</b>	<b>Poster session (snacks and drinks)</b>
<b>17.30 – 17.45</b>	<b>Welcome</b>	
<b>17.45 – 18.15</b>	<b>Datablitz</b>	<b>6 speakers</b>
	Sabrina Thai & Penelope Lockwood	Self-Regulation of the Expanded Self: Partner-Other Comparisons
	Janina Steinmetz & Ed O'Brien.	Annoyingly perfect: when we dislike others with high self-control
	Stefan Bogaerts & Jaap Denissen	Self-regulation and workplace victimization
	Jessica E. Salvatore, Seung Bin Cho, Nathan Thomas, James Li, Amy Adkins, Kenneth S. Kendler, & Danielle M. Dick	Using a genetically informative design to understand alcohol consumption as a function of peer and romantic partner substance use
	Abraham P. Buunk.	A lack of self-regulation? Psychological determinants of intimate violence in a poor population in Nicaragua
	Magdalena Śmieja & Anna Czarna	Don't mess with emotionally intelligent girlfriend! Emotional intelligence and high self-regulatory resources lead women to attractive alternatives when they doubt their partner's caring.
<b>19.00</b>	<b>End Reception</b>	

## Day 2: 10<sup>th</sup> July 2015

9.00-9.35	<b>Keynote speaker:</b> Johan Karremans	<b>Executive control in close relationships</b>
9.35 – 10.50	<b>Symposium Session 1</b>	<b>Declaring Interdependence: Self-Regulation From a Dyadic Perspective</b> <b>Chair: Gertraud Stadler</b>
	Beate Ditzen, Corinne Spoerri, Guy Bodenmann, & Ulrike Ehlert	Effects of Instructed Positive Couple Interaction on Biopsychological Stress Regulation in Everyday Life
	Caterina Gawrilow & Johanna Schmid	Effectiveness of Teacher-Instructed Self-Regulation Strategies
	Gertraud Stadler, Kenzie Snyder, Sarah Burns, & Niall Bolger	Self-Reliance in Close Relationships
	Nina Knoll, Amelie Wiedemann, & Jutta Heckhausen	Good For Me, Bad For You: Couples Use Compensatory Control Strategies to Manage Recovery From Surgery
	Urte Scholz, Corina Berli, Jennifer Inauen, & Gertraud Stadler	Dyadic Versus Individual Action Control: Differential Effects?
10.50 – 11.10	<b>Coffee &amp; Tea</b>	
11.10 – 12.25	<b>Individual papers 1</b>	<b>Regulation of relationship threat</b>
	Emilie Auger, Midori Nishioka, & John E. Lydon	The role of motivation and executive control in devaluing attractive alternatives
	Jeffrey D. Bowen & Nancy L. Collins	The role of construal level in self-control during encounters with attractive alternatives
	April A. Buck & Lisa A. Neff	Play Together or Replenish Apart? The Potential Negative Effects of Shared Leisure on Relationship Dynamics
	Judith Gere, Dave M. Almeida, & Lynn M. Martire	Romantic Partners' Joint Planning: Effects on Daily Arguments and Stress
	Chin Ming Hui, Eli J. Finkel, Gráinne M. Fitzsimons, Madoka Kumashiro, & Wilhelm Hofmann	The Manhattan Effect: When Relationship Commitment Fails to Promote Support for Partners' Interests
12.25 – 13.30	<b>Lunch Break</b>	

<b>13.30 – 14.45</b>	<b>Individual papers 2</b>	<b>Emotion regulation and coping</b>
	John K. Rempel & Christopher T. Burris	A poison tree: The dark side of regulating hate
	Johanna Peetz & Chantal Bacev-Giles	Budgeting self-regulatory resources across several close relationships
	Esther Kluwer, Gerdientje Danner-Vlaardingerbroek, Elianne van Steenbergen, & Tanja van der Lippe	Self-control matters when work spills over into the relationship
	Lara K. Kammrath & Julia Brinton	Work-Family Conflict: Depletion or Spillover?
	Fulya Kirimer Aydinli & Nebi Sumer	The Role of Attachment Orientations on Mattering and Capitalization among Married Couples
<b>14.45 – 15.00</b>	<b>Coffee &amp; Tea</b>	
<b>15.00 – 16.15</b>	<b>Symposium Session 2</b>	<b>Co-Regulation in the couple: the role of language use, disclosure, and dimensions of dyadic coping</b> <b>Chairs: Anne Milek, Andrea B. Horn, Sabine Backes</b>
	Andrea B. Horn, Anne Milek, & Andreas Maercker	Interpersonal emotion regulation mediates the link between depressive symptoms and relationship satisfaction: capitalization in the couple
	Mona Neysari, Marion Landis, Andrea B. Horn, & Mike Martin	Linguistic and non-verbal expressions in couples' discussions: the association of You, I, and non-verbal behavior with relationship satisfaction
	Sabine Backes & Andrea B. Horn	Motivated language use: Implicit motives moderate effects of pronoun use on relationship satisfaction
	Mirjam Kessler, Guy Bodenmann, Fridtjof Nussbeck, & Dorothee Sutter-Stickel	The role of individual and dyadic coping in the relationship between internal stress and commitment in couples
	Martina Zemp, Guy Bodenmann, Sabine Backes, Dorothee Sutter-Stickel, & Tracey A. Revenson	The significance of parental dyadic coping for children

<b>16.15 – 16.35</b>	<b>Coffee &amp; Tea</b>	
<b>16.35 – 17.05</b>	<b>Datablitz</b>	<b>6 speakers</b>
	Gesa Kappen, Johan Karremans, & Ap Dijksterhuis	Mindful acceptance rather than change: accepting negative emotions toward a romantic partner increases relationship satisfaction.
	Niels J. Van Doesum, Francesca Righetti, Jan-Willem Van Prooijen, Lot Verburgh, Mariko L. Visserman, & Paul A. M. Van Lange	Mindful Regulation in Close Relationships
	Reine van der Wal, Johan Karremans, & Greg Maio	Value priorities in romantic relationships
	Niken Linda Dinartika, Dian Wisnuwardhani, & Nurul Arbiyah	The relationship contingency of self-worth and self-efficacy in romantic relationship prediction toward body shame in Indonesian young adulthood
	Mehmet Harma, Nebi Sümer, & Cindy Hazan	Utility of Vocal Synchrony Measure as an Indicator of Coregulation in Adult Attachment
	Matteo Giletta, Paul D. Hastings, Karen D. Rudolph, Daniel J. Bauer, Matthew K. Nock, & Mitchell J. Prinstein	Suicidal ideation among high-risk adolescent females: Examining the interplay between parasympathetic regulation and friendship support
<b>17.05 – 17.40</b>	<b>Keynote speaker: Nickola Overall</b>	<b>Dyadic Regulation in Close Relationships</b>
<b>18.00</b>	<b>Complimentary Dinner</b>	

### Day 3: 11<sup>th</sup> July 2015

9.00-9.35	<b>Keynote speaker: Guy Bodenmann</b>	Dyadic coping: Origin and evolution of the concept
9.35 – 10.50	<b>Symposium Session 3</b>	<b>In Good Times but Especially in Bad Times: The Importance of Self-Regulation in Intimate Relationships</b> <b>Chair: Lesley Verhofstadt</b> <b>Discussant: Gilbert Lemmens</b>
	Celine Hinnekens, William Ickes, Gilbert Lemmens, & Lesley Verhofstadt.	Can we protect ourselves and our relationship by avoiding our partners' inner world? An observational study of couples' conflict interactions.
	Gaelle Vanhee, Gilbert Lemmens, & Lesley Verhofstadt	Conflict in couples: An analysis of the role of goal frustration
	Sara Kindt, Maarten Vansteenkiste, Tom Loeys, Annmarie Cano, Emelien Lauwerier, Lesley Verhofstadt, & Liesbet Goubert	When Is Helping your Partner with Chronic Pain a Burden? The Relation between Helping Motivation and Personal and Relational Functioning Examined
	Olivia De Smet & Ann Buysse	Failing Self-Regulation in the Context of Relationship Breakups: An Investigation of Unwanted Pursuit Behavior
10.50 – 11.10	<b>Coffee &amp; Tea</b>	
11.10 – 12.10	<b>Individual papers 3</b>	<b>Regulation in parent-child relationships and adolescence</b>
	Susan Branje	Emotional variability in parent-child relationships during adolescence
	Emily A. Impett & Bonnie M. Le	Parental Caregiving Goals Shape Responsiveness and Parent-Child Relationship Quality
	Jaap Denissen, Maarten van Zalk, Astrid Poorthuis, Sander Thomaes, & Marcel van Aken	Personality regulates friendship development in adolescence and young adulthood
	Jeffry A. Simpson, Ohad Szepeswol, Ethan S. Young, & William Johnson	The Social and Developmental Origins of Impulse Control

<b>12.10 – 13.15</b>	<b>Lunch Break</b>	
<b>13.15 – 14.30</b>	<b>Individual papers 4</b>	<b>Couple dynamics and self-regulation</b>
	Tom Bradbury	Can Couples Learn to Support Each Other? Unintended Effects of Skill Training in a Randomized Trial
	Steven M. Graham & Frank D. Fincham	Self-Regulation, Revenge, Extradynamic Romantic Behaviors, and Willingness to Sacrifice in Close Relationships
	Madoka Kumashiro	Michelangelo phenomenon: Partner affirmation, clarity of the ideal self, and pursuit of important long term goals
	Roeline Kuijer & Louella Orillaza	Spouses' involvement in their partners' diabetes management: Associations with patient well-being
	Amy Muise, Uli Schimmack, & Emily A. Impett	Sex and Well-Being: Does Having More Frequent Sex Actually Make You Happier?
<b>14.30 – 14.45</b>	<b>Coffee &amp; Tea</b>	
<b>14.45 – 16.00</b>	<b>Individual talks 5</b>	<b>Multi-methods in Self-regulation</b>
	Jeffrey H. Larson, Jeffrey B. Jackson, & Garret T. Roundy	Premarital Predictors of Marital Relationship Distress and Instability: A Meta-Analysis of Couple Factors
	Yuthika U. Girme, Nickola C. Overall, Jeffrey A. Simpson, & Garth J. O. Fletcher.	"All or Nothing": Attachment Avoidance and the Curvilinear Effects of Partner Support
	Peter Hilpert, David C. Atkins, & Guy Bodenmann	Computational Behavioral Science as a New Approach to Study Self- and Co-Regulation Processes During Dyadic Interactions
	Katherine C. Haydon, Cassandra Jonestrask, Haley Guhn-Knight, & Jessica E. Salvatore	Say What You Need To Say: Dyadic Co-Regulation of Romantic Conflict Recovery
	Susan C. South, Kenneth Tan, Amber Jarnecke, Robert F. Krueger, William G. Iacono, & Matt McGue	Individual Differences in Self-control and Romantic Relationships: Evidence from Phenotypic and Genotypic Investigations

<b>16.00 – 16.20</b>	<b>Coffee &amp; Tea</b>	
<b>16.20 – 16.50</b>	<b>Datablitz</b>	<b>6 speakers</b>
	Silvia Donato, Ariela F. Pagani, & Raffaella lafrate	Through thick and thin: Dyadic coping and capitalization in couple relationships
	Darwiche Joëlle, Udry-Jorgensen Laura, & Vial Yvan	The role of dyadic coping in regulating anxiety in early pregnancy
	Kenji, Yokotani & Tai, Kurosawa	Influence of dyadic coping on marital intimacy in Japanese couples: Actor-partner interdependence model
	Kyoung Ok Seol	Dyadic Coping as a Mediator between Romantic Individual Emotion Regulation and Relational Satisfaction
	Karen Prager, Jesse Poucher, Forouz Shirvani, Marissa Pullum, & Zoheb Allam	Post-Conflict Withdrawal and Emotional Recovery from Conflict: A Study of Cohabiting Couples
	Rongqin Yu, Susan Branje, Wim Meeus, Eva-Verena Wendt, & Sabine Walper	Living with an angry partner: Longitudinal actor and partner effects of explosiveness on romantic relationship satisfaction
<b>16.50 – 17.30</b>	<b>Keynote speakers: Eli Finkel &amp; Gráinne M. Fitzsimons</b>	<b>Transactive Goal Dynamics Theory</b>



# Abstracts

## Keynote speakers

**Day 2: 10<sup>th</sup> July 2015**

### **Executive Control in Close Relationships**

*Johan Karremans*

Why do romantic partners sometimes act in ways that potentially threaten relationship satisfaction and stability, even when strongly committed to the relationship? This talk discusses research that has addressed this question by examining the role of executive control. Our findings show that executive control plays a particularly important role in relationship functioning when partners are faced with dilemmas between acting on self-interest and acting on partner or relationship interest. Also, I will discuss recent findings indicating that executive control promotes prorelationship behavior primarily when highly committed to the partner, suggesting that motivation and regulatory ability interact to promote relationship maintenance acts. Do these findings imply that people low in executive control are 'doomed' to have bad relationships? If there is time left, I will discuss some recent findings suggesting that mindfulness training may be an antidote to a lack of self-regulation.

### **Dyadic Regulation in Close Relationships**

*Nickola Overall*

Most research examining regulation processes in relationships considers how individuals regulate their own thoughts, emotions and behavior (self-regulation). However, the ways in which intimate partners regulate each other's thoughts, emotions, and behavior (dyadic regulation) is also central to maintaining relationships. In this talk, I will discuss the importance of two forms of dyadic regulation. The first explores why and how people in relationships try to change each other and the consequences that ensue. The second examines how relationship partners can regulate the destructive emotional and behavioral reactions typically displayed by insecure individuals. To conclude, I will consider how a dyadic regulation perspective can advance understanding and push research in new directions.

## Day 3: 10<sup>th</sup> July 2015

### **Dyadic Coping: Origin and Evolution of the Concept**

*Guy Bodenmann*

Originally the concept of dyadic coping was developed in the context of couples' stress management with daily hassles. An experimental study had revealed that couples' communication was severely affected by the stress experience of the partners and deteriorated significantly under stress. The same study also indicated that some couples, however, the more satisfied ones dealt differently with the impact of the stressor and instead of engaging in dyadic conflict, they tried to understand each other and to deal together with the demands. A number of further studies showed that dyadic coping was a powerful predictor of relationship satisfaction, the developmental course of the relationship as well as of relationship stability. Underlying explaining mechanisms of this effect were assumed to be (a) the reduction of stress by joint efforts and by this means the alleviation of the negative impact of stress on couples' functioning and (b) the experience of *we-ness*, intimacy and trust in those situations. Studies support both processes. It has been shown that dyadic coping helps the stressed partner to recover more quickly from external stress experience and findings also support the notion that dyadic coping covaries with a more intense feeling of *we-ness*. While some aspects of dyadic coping are comparable to *spousal support* in social support literature (e.g., supportive dyadic coping), the concept of *joint dyadic coping* and *we-stress* are unique to this approach. This aspect has further been developed in several recent studies and the concept of *we-disease* builds a promising bridge from the original concept of dyadic coping to dyadic coping in the context of chronic disease and cancer. Several studies support the utility of dyadic coping in this context and show that mental as well as physical illness is always a dyadic matter and needs to be addressed by both partners, within a dyadic coping framework.

### **Transactive Goal Dynamics Theory**

*Eli Finkel & Gráinne M. Fitzsimons*

*Transactive goal dynamics theory* conceptualizes two or more people as a single self-regulating system. The model consists of six tenets that describe the nature of goal interdependence, elucidate its emergence, discern when it will lead to positive goal outcomes during and after the relationship, and predict the consequences for the relationship. Both partners in a transactive system possess and pursue self-oriented, partner-oriented, and system-oriented goals, and all of these goals and pursuits are interdependent. According to the theory, relationship partners' goals, pursuit, and outcomes affect each other in a densely interdependent network, ultimately becoming so tightly linked that the two partners are most accurately conceptualized as components within a single self-regulating system.

# Abstracts

## Symposia

**Day 2: 10<sup>th</sup> July 2015**

### **Symposium Session 1:**

#### **Declaring Interdependence: Self-Regulation From a Dyadic Perspective**

*Chair: Gertraud Stadler*

While self-regulation often occurs within a social context, it has typically been studied in individuals. This symposium brings together five presentations with a dyadic perspective that highlight how close others influence self-regulation processes in everyday life. Beate Ditzen shows with an intervention study that positive couple interactions influence stress regulation in couples. Gertraud Stadler describes that some individuals prefer self-reliance to active support attempts from close others with consequences for their daily relationship processes. Caterina Gawrilow presents findings from lab and field experiments showing that among children with known self-regulation deficits, self-regulatory support from others can improve symptom load and achievement. Nina Knoll reports mixed effects of compensatory control strategies on well-being in couples where one partner recovers from surgery. Urte Scholz compares in a field experiment whether monitoring goal-directed action alone or with the partner facilitates behavior change.

#### **Effects of Instructed Positive Couple Interaction on Biopsychological Stress Regulation in Everyday Life**

*Beate Ditzen, Corinne Spoerri, Guy Bodenmann, & Ulrike Ehlert*

Close relationships influence individual health; the stress-buffering of positive interactions has been hypothesized to mediate this effect. We investigated the effects of a brief communication training on stress levels in couples' everyday life. Couples (N = 40) participated in a 10-minute interaction where they were either asked to discuss areas of joy and fulfillment in their relationship (positive interaction, to be repeated twice in the following week) or to just sit and wait together (control interaction, with no further instruction). Participants then provided saliva samples for cortisol analysis and reported subjective distress six times daily for seven days. Both men and women in the positive interaction condition showed lower aggregated cortisol levels and women expressed improved stress regulation, compared to the control condition. A brief intervention to interact positively can ameliorate couples' stress regulation in everyday life.

#### **Effectiveness of Teacher-Instructed Self-Regulation Strategies**

*Caterina Gawrilow, Johanna Schmid*

Children with and children at risk for Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) suffer from severe self-regulation deficits frequently leading to academic difficulties. If-then plans have been shown to foster self-regulation in various areas (e.g., healthy lifestyle, cognitive performance). In several experiments, we manipulated instructions

for cognitive and motivational tasks so that participants either formed goal intentions or if-then plans. We found that participants with ADHD could improve their performance using if-then plans. In this talk, we present data from recent studies where teachers or other interventionists instructed children with and at risk for ADHD to implement goal intentions and/or if-then plans in their everyday life. Participants benefited from the use of if-then plans, showing reduced symptoms and less academic difficulties within the classroom. Results are discussed with regard to their theoretical and practical implications.

### **Self-Reliance in Close Relationships**

*Gertraud Stadler, Kenzie Snyder, Sarah Burns, Niall Bolger*

Wanting space from a partner may be a more common desire than previously thought within the literature on close relationships. The current study aims to better understand individual differences in the preference for space within close relationships (i.e., in self-reliance). Participants (N = 194 in 97 couples) reported their dyadic support processes in questionnaires and 183 participants filled out daily diaries over 35 days. A subgroup of participants preferred self-reliance to a partner's active support attempts. Participants who preferred self-reliance to active support perceived less support from their partners and others, evaluated support as less beneficial when they received it, and sought less support than participants who did not report wanting space. This pattern held for both emotional and practical support in daily diaries. These results provide a new perspective on the interplay between self-regulation and support processes within close relationships in times of stress.

### **Good For Me, Bad For You: Couples Use Compensatory Control Strategies to Manage Recovery From Surgery**

*Nina Knoll, Amelie Wiedemann, Jutta Heckhausen*

Compensatory primary control is proposed to help manage difficulties in goal pursuit by using technical aids and help, whereas compensatory secondary control is assumed to organize goal disengagement while protecting motivational resources. Patients' compensatory control strategies were examined as correlates of patients' and partners' well-being following radical prostatectomy when urinary incontinence can challenge prostate cancer patients' and their partners' goal pursuit and well-being. Data on patients' use of compensatory control, severity of incontinence and patients' and partners' depressive symptoms (N=169 couples) were assessed four times within seven months following surgery. Patients' use of compensatory primary control was associated with less depressive symptoms in patients and more depressive symptoms in partners. Patients' intense use of compensatory secondary control was related with higher depressive symptoms in patients and lower depressive symptoms in partners. Risks from patients' use of compensatory control for both partners' well-being are discussed.

### **Dyadic Versus Individual Action Control: Differential Effects?**

*Urte Scholz, Corina Berli, Jennifer Inauen, Gertraud Stadler*

One central self-regulation construct in research on behavior change is action control—the ability to monitor and control goal implementation. Thus far, the focus of action control interventions has been on the individual. This study compared the effects of dyadic action control (i.e. involving the partner in action control) to individual action control and to two control conditions with regard to physical activity. Overall, 116 couples were randomly allocated to the four experimental conditions and participated in a 2-week daily intervention phase and a subsequent 2-week daily diary phase. Physical activity levels during the intervention phase as well as during the post-intervention phase were higher for both intervention groups than for the control groups. Dyadic and individual action control conditions did not differ. Action control was confirmed to be important for health behavior change. Involving the partner, however, did not have the expected superior effect.

### **Symposium Session 2:**

#### **Co-Regulation in the Couple: The Role of Language Use, Disclosure, and Dimensions of Dyadic Coping**

*Chairs: Anne Milek, Andrea B. Horn, Sabine Backes*

Recently, an interpersonal view on the co-regulation of stress, and affect has been suggested by many researchers. In this symposium, different studies on two co-regulatory attempts, interpersonal emotion regulation, and dyadic coping, will be presented. First, Horn et al. will present a study on the importance of capitalization in interpersonal emotion regulation. Neysari et al. and Backes et al. will present two studies including an innovative indicator of communal coping i.e. the use of pronouns in couple discussions. Neysari et al. will relate linguistic markers with non-verbal behavior, followed by Backes et al., who investigate the role of implicit motives. The two concluding presentations investigate the role of dyadic coping in couples in the relationship between internal stress and commitment (Kessler et al.), and in the psychosocial adjustment of couples' children (Zemp et al.).

#### **Interpersonal Emotion Regulation Mediates the Link between Depressive Symptoms and Relationship Satisfaction: Capitalization in the Couple**

*Andrea B. Horn, Anne Milek, Andreas Maercker*

The process of enhancing the impact of positive experiences by sharing them with close others (i.e. capitalization) can be seen as a way of co-regulating affect that should be altered in depression. Therefore, we hypothesized that this interpersonal strategy might be a mediator between the known association between depressive symptoms and relationship satisfaction in couples.

211 couples participated in an online questionnaire addressing depressive symptoms, and capitalization; 3 months later relationship quality was assessed.

Mediation analyses in the framework of the APIM revealed that the decrease of capitalization actually mediated actor and partner effects of an increase of depressive symptoms on relationship satisfaction.

Results suggest a genuinely interactive process linking depressive symptoms, and relationship satisfaction. It could be concluded that the known interpersonal impact of depression not only on the depressed individual but also on the partner is also due to altered interpersonal emotion regulation.

### **Linguistic and Non-verbal Expressions in Couples' Discussions: The Association of You, I, and Non-verbal Behavior with Relationship Satisfaction**

*Mona Neysari, Marion Landis, Andrea B. Horn, Mike Martin*

The use of pronouns in couple's has been found to be related to relationship satisfaction, and might reflect certain communal regulation styles. In this study we hypothesized that the relation between we-talk, I-talk and you-talk and relationship satisfaction is mediated by non-verbal communication behavior. Our analyses in a sample of N=368 couples revealed significant actor effects for I, you and we on non-verbal behavior; we-talk was related to less negative, you-talk to more negative and less positive non-verbal behavior. Moreover, the use of first person singular pronouns had a partner effect on relationship satisfaction. In general, findings support the hypothesis that the association between pronoun use and relation satisfaction is, at least partially, mediated by non-verbal behavior. The combined study of linguistic and non-verbal behavior in couples seems to be a promising way to detect interpersonal regulation processes.

### **Motivated Language Use: Implicit Motives Moderate Effects of Pronoun Use on Relationship Satisfaction**

*Sabine Backes, Andrea B. Horn*

Language style of couples, especially pronoun use, has repeatedly been shown to be associated with relationship variables. However, several studies have yielded inconsistent results with regard to whether more frequent use of "we"/ "I" goes along with ameliorated or deteriorated relationship outcomes. We hypothesized that the implicit power motive and the implicit intimacy motive, dispositions that implicitly regulate behavior, moderate the effects of language style on relationship satisfaction. We tested our assumptions in a dyadic data set with N = 368 couples in Actor-Partner-Interdependence Models (APIM), one for implicit power and "I" and one for implicit intimacy and "we". Pronoun use predicted relationship satisfaction (actor effects) in both models. Additionally, supporting our hypotheses, the implicit power motive proved to be a moderator of the relationship between "I" and relationship satisfaction, while the implicit intimacy motive played a significant role for the interplay between "we" and relationship satisfaction (partner effects).

### **The Role of Individual and Dyadic Coping in the Relationship between Internal Stress and Commitment in Couples**

*Mirjam Kessler, Guy Bodenmann, Fridtjof Nussbeck, Dorothee Sutter-Stickel*

Commitment emerged as a strong predictor of the stability of intimate relationships. Maintaining a relationship requires efforts of both partners, e.g., in terms of their dyadic coping with stress. This research examined how couples deal with internal stress and

whether there are gender differences. A total of 300 heterosexual couples (age:20-80 years) completed questionnaires assessing stress, commitment, individual and dyadic coping at T1 and at 1 year follow-up. An actor-partner interdependence model revealed for both partners that the conditional main actor effect of internal stress was negatively, and the respective effects of dyadic coping was positively associated with commitment. The buffering interaction effect of individual coping was significant for men. Knowing that men are often flooded in conflicts, this suggests that high individual coping skills may prevent men from the detrimental impact that stress has on their commitment. Implications for prevention and therapy are discussed.

### **The Significance of Parental Dyadic Coping for Children**

*Martina Zemp, Guy Bodenmann, Sabine Backes, Dorothee Sutter-Stickel, & Tracey A. Revenson*

Stress and coping in couples have received increased attention in research during the past decades. Dyadic coping emerged as a strong predictor of relationship satisfaction and stability. However, less headway has been made in declaring the role of parental dyadic coping for children. In the present study, we address this gap by examining dyadic coping of parents as predictor of children's adjustment based on three samples using the parents' perspective (N = 354 parents), the children's perspective (N = 187 children), and observational data on dyadic coping (N = 69 children and their parents). Among multiple raters and methods, parental dyadic coping was confirmed as a strong predictor of children's externalizing problems, internalizing problems, and prosocial behavior. In sum, the results suggest that parental dyadic coping deserves consideration in the context of child development. The study enhances the knowledge available about family-wide practical implications of supportive parental dyadic coping.

**Day 3: 11<sup>th</sup> July 2015**

**Symposium Session 3:  
In Good Times but Especially in Bad Times: The Importance of Self-Regulation in  
Intimate Relationships**

*Chair: Lesley Verhofstadt*

*Discussant: Gilbert Lemmens*

The present symposium brings together recent lines of research on partners' self-regulatory processes during "bad times" in their intimate relationship. The first contribution focuses on how partners regulate their mind-reading performance in order to protect themselves from their partners' threatening thoughts during conflict. The second contribution involves research on how people deal with the frustration of their needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness in their intimate relationship. In the following presentation, the results of a study on autonomous and controlled motives for helping among partners dealing with chronic pain will be discussed. In a final presentation, evidence for the importance of self-regulation in the context of relationship breakup will be presented.

**Can We Protect Ourselves and our Relationship by Avoiding our Partners' Inner  
World? An Observational Study of Couples' Conflict Interactions.**

*Celine Hinnekens, William Ickes, Gilbert Lemmens, & Lesley Verhofstadt.*

Previous research indicated that empathic accuracy within couples is important to deal effectively with conflict. However, partners' level of empathic accuracy proves to be situation-specific, as perceived threat during conflict seems to decrease the amount of accurate inferences partners make about each other's thoughts/feelings. The current study examined if different forms of threat -to oneself, one's partner or one's relationship- have different effects on one's empathic accuracy during conflict. Second, it was examined if perceived threat was reflected in the content of both partners' thoughts/feelings. Finally, we examined whether partners' self-regulation in terms of avoiding their partner's inner world is related to their level of relationship satisfaction. The results of an observational study in which a sample of committed couples participated in a conflict interaction and video review task will be reported as well as some theoretical and applied implications.

**Conflict in Couples: An Analysis of the Role of Goal Frustration**

*Gaëlle Vanhee, Gilbert Lemmens, & Lesley Verhofstadt*

According to Self-Determination Theory, partners mainly pursue three relational goals in their intimate relationships: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. However, little is currently known about the specific conflict dynamics resulting from the frustration of these three goals within intimate relationships. In the current study we therefore examined the associations between partners' frustrated relational goals (i.e., autonomy, competence, and relatedness) and several conflict dynamics within couples (e.g., conflict frequency, conflict topics, and conflict interaction cycles). A sample of 200 couples participated in a large-scale internet-based survey and provided questionnaire



data on goal frustration and various aspects of conflict within their intimate relationship. Major conclusions and possible theoretical and applied implications will be discussed.

**When Is Helping your Partner with Chronic Pain a Burden? The Relation between Helping Motivation and Personal and Relational Functioning Examined**

*Sara Kindt, Maarten Vansteenkiste, Tom Loeys, Annmarie Cano, Emelien Lauwerier, Lesley Verhofstadt, & Liesbet Goubert*

Pain not only affects individuals with chronic pain (ICPs) but also their intimate relationships. In a sample of 48 couples, of which one partner had chronic pain, we examined the relationship between partners' differential motivation to help (autonomous/volitional - controlled/pressured) and personal and relational functioning, for which partners and ICPs filled in a set of questionnaires. ICPs further reported on pain intensity and disability whereas partners reported on motives for helping and helping exhaustion. Data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling. The results indicated that autonomous, relative to controlled, motives for helping among partners related positively to partners' well-being and relationship quality, and negatively to distress. The experience of helping exhaustion and relationship-based need satisfaction mediated these associations. Moreover, partners' autonomous helping motivation contributed positively to patient-reported relationship quality among ICPs high in pain intensity. Results are discussed in the context of Self-Determination Theory.

**Failing Self-Regulation in the Context of Relationship Breakups: An Investigation of Unwanted Pursuit Behavior**

*Olivia De Smet, & Ann Buysse*

The concept of unwanted pursuit behavior (UPB) is situated within the stalking literature and refers to the persistent and unwanted pursuit of an intimate or romantic relationship. This kind of relational behavior, which is significantly associated with depleted self-regulation, mainly exists in the context of relationship breakups and can be considered as an important social problem that deserves research attention. The current presentation aims to shed light on the occurrence of UPBs among adult ex-partners in Flanders on the one hand and on the risk factors that can explain to what extent ex-partners perpetrate such behaviors when ending their romantic relationships on the other hand. In this respect, the main findings of four recent, Flemish empirical studies on UPB after breakup are summarized. Related to the findings, several theoretical considerations are formulated and some clinical implications are presented.

# Abstracts

## Individual Papers

Day 2: 10<sup>th</sup> July 2015

### Individual Paper 1: Regulation of Relationship Threat

#### **The Role of Motivation and Executive Control in Devaluing Attractive Alternatives**

*Emilie Auger, Midori Nishioka, & John E. Lydon*

Attractive alternatives threaten relationships. A strategy that is employed to ward off temptations consists of devaluing the attractiveness of alternative partners. Although motivation to maintain one's relationship is associated with devaluation, it may not always be sufficient. Recent research suggests that relationship maintenance responses also require executive control. In line with this research, we examined motivation and individual differences in executive control in contexts that challenge controlled responses, to understand when and for whom devaluation is successful. In one study, participants (romantically involved or not) viewed pictures of alternative partners, and indicated under time-pressure and no time-pressure whether they would date them. We found evidence for the interactive role of motivation (relationship identification) and executive control. Among highly motivated participants, those who presented high inhibitory control capacity devalued attractive alternatives more than those who were low. This effect held and was even slightly stronger under time-pressure.

#### **The Role of Construal Level in Self-control during Encounters with Attractive Alternatives**

*Jeffrey D. Bowen & Nancy L. Collins*

The goal of this research was to examine the role of construal level in romantic partners' encounters with attractive alternatives, a self-control dilemma that pits immediate temptation against broader relationship maintenance goals. Across two studies, we manipulated partners' construal level mindset, and subsequently exposed them to attractive alternatives. Study 1 explored the duration of partners' gaze when evaluating print advertisements containing attractive opposite-sex models. Study 2 explored partners' mimicry behavior during scripted interactions with attractive confederates. In both studies, partners were also asked to explicitly rate the desirability of these alternatives. Preliminary results have revealed that relationship partners high in commitment are better able to resist the allure of attractive alternatives when first primed to adopt an abstract, globally focused mindset.

## **Play Together or Replenish Apart? The Potential Negative Effects of Shared Leisure on Relationship Dynamics**

*April A. Buck & Lisa A. Neff*

The current study examined the role of leisure participation for buffering marriages against the deleterious effects of external stress and explored whether engaging in leisure with or without one's partner is best for reducing stress spillover effects. Drawing from previous work demonstrating that stress depletes spouses of the resources necessary for positive relationship functioning, it was hypothesized that whereas greater leisure with one's partner on high stress days may exacerbate negative relationship interactions, leisure without one's partner may prove especially helpful for refreshing stressed spouses and reducing spillover. Results from a 14-day daily diary study of 121 couples revealed no moderating effect of leisure without the partner on stress spillover; however, greater leisure participation with one's partner on high stress days was associated with greater relationship conflict, particularly if spouses endorsed greater avoidance motivations for engaging in the shared leisure time with their partner.

## **Romantic Partners' Joint Planning: Effects on Daily Arguments and Stress**

*Judith Gere, Dave M. Almeida, & Lynn M. Martire*

We examined the effects of setting personal goals jointly with one's romantic partner on the likelihood of having daily disagreements with the partner, and the stressfulness of daily disagreements, using data from the study of Midlife in the United States (MIDUS). At baseline, individuals (N = 717) who were married or living with a romantic partner reported on the degree to which they set their personal goals jointly with their relationship partner, then completed reports on their experiences at the end of each day for 8 days. Results showed that people who did not set their personal goals jointly with their partner were more likely to experience daily disagreements with their partner. Such conflicts were also more stressful and disruptive of daily routines, and were associated with worse feelings about the self that day. These results indicate the importance of considering romantic partners when setting and pursuing personal goals.

## **The Manhattan Effect: When Relationship Commitment Fails to Promote Support for Partners' Interests**

*Chin Ming Hui, Eli J. Finkel, Gráinne M. Fitzsimons, Madoka Kumashiro, & Wilhelm Hofmann*

Research on close relationships has frequently contrasted one's own interests with the interests of the partner or the relationship, and has tended to view the partner's and the relationship's interests as inherently aligned. The present project argues that relationship commitment typically causes people to support their partner's personal interests, but that this effect gets weaker to the extent that those interests misalign or even threaten the relationship. Indeed, our studies show that (a) relationship commitment reliably increases the tendency to support the partner's personal interests when those interests do not pose a strong threat to the relationship, but that (b) this effect becomes weaker—and even reverses direction—as the relationship threat posed

by the partner's interests becomes stronger. The reduction or reversal of the positive link between relationship commitment and pro-partner behaviors in such situations is termed the Manhattan effect.

## **Individual Paper 2: Emotion Regulation and Coping**

### **A Poison Tree: The Dark Side of Regulating Hate**

*John K. Rempel & Christopher T. Burris*

Hate, a motive oriented towards diminishing or destroying another's wellbeing (Rempel & Burris, 2005), is a formidable source of interpersonal harm. Consequently, strong internal and external regulations frequently keep the goal of harming another from being fulfilled. However, if hate is motivational, then regulating goal attainment may maintain or even intensify the desired goal. Two studies tested whether hate will be sustained or increased when the harm goal is unfulfilled. After describing a hate experience, Study 1 participants listed what they thought about doing and what they actually did. When harmful thoughts were not accompanied by commensurate actions, the hate experience was more likely to remain unresolved. In Study 2 participants had the opportunity to write a harsh letter to a soon-to-be-released child sex-offender. Participants who learned that they were in the "letter not sent" group subsequently expressed increased desires for the offender to suffer harm.

### **Budgeting Self-regulatory Resources across Several Close Relationships**

*Johanna Peetz & Chantal Bacev-Giles*

Relationship maintenance requires self-regulatory energy. However, self-regulatory strength is a limited resource and people tend to have not just one but several close relationships they wish to maintain. How do people budget self-regulatory resources across several relationship? Across three studies, we show that self-regulatory resources are budgeted in a form of mental accounting: previous effort invested in one relationship (a friend) lowers willingness to invest more effort into maintaining relationships of the same relational category (another friend) but not willingness to invest effort into other relational categories (romantic partner, family member). We assess relationship maintenance behaviors through hypothetical scenarios (Study 1), recall of behaviors (Study 2) and helping in the lab (Study 3). We also show that the extent to which a behavior drains regulatory resources moderates its effect: if the initial behavior is viewed as non-depleting, it does not influence subsequent willingness to help.

### **Self-control Matters when Work Spills over into the Relationship**

*Esther Kluwer, Gerdientje Danner-Vlaardingerbroek, Elianne van Steenbergen, & Tanja van der Lippe*

Close relationships are not only affected by far-reaching stressful events, but also by daily hassles and strains. We examined how a demanding workday is associated with an individual's psychological condition and subsequently with the ability to positively

interact with the partner. We conducted three studies among dual-earners using both correlational and experimental methods. Consistent with our hypotheses, work demands were negatively related to accommodation, via the depletion of self-regulatory resources, but only for individuals low in dispositional self-control. Furthermore, psychological availability mediated the negative association between depletion and accommodation, again only for individuals low in dispositional self-control. Finally, a writing assignment that was aimed at increasing psychological availability for the partner helped individuals low in dispositional self-control to show more positive relationship behavior. Together, the results show that high self-control can prevent a draining workday to negatively impact the relationship.

### **Work-Family Conflict: Depletion or Spillover?**

*Lara K. Kammrath & Julia Brinton*

Conservation of Resources theory (Hobfoll, 1989) posits that work-family conflict (WFC) occurs because high work demands deplete limited personal resources. Affective Events theory (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996) posits that WFC occurs because high work demands create negative affect that spills over. To date, no research has tested the predictions of each theory against one another, investigating role of depletion versus negative affect in WFC. In 3 studies, we examined how behaviors at home were predicted by psychological states at work. In all studies, negative affect was a much stronger predictor of home behaviors than was exhaustion. This occurred because negative affect persisted from work to home more strongly than did exhaustion. Interestingly, exhaustion strongly predicted people's self-reports of WFC. Thus, people thought they experienced more WFC when they'd gotten tired from work, but actually they experienced more WFC when they'd gotten upset at work.

### **The Role of Attachment Orientations on Mattering and Capitalization among Married Couples**

*Fulya Kirimer Aydinli & Nebi Sumer*

Why do some individuals interpret partners' responses to positive events as subversive whereas the others perceive the same responses as supportive? The current study investigated the dyadic associations between attachment dimensions (i.e., anxiety and avoidance) and two critical processes in close relationships, perceived mattering to partner (PM) and perceived partner responses toward capitalization attempts (PRCA) among married couples (N = 103). Considering culture- and gender-specific roles, the effects of attachment avoidance on PM and PRCA are expected to be stronger than anxiety. Dyadic analyses showed that wives' avoidance negatively predicted their own PM and PRCA, and husbands' PRCA. Husbands' anxiety predicted negatively their own PM. Husbands' avoidance predicted both their own and wives' PM. Wives' attachment avoidance and husbands' attachment anxiety seem to extenuate mattering and capitalization attempts from the partners in Turkish cultural context.

**Day 3: 11<sup>th</sup> July 2015**

**Individual Paper 3:  
Regulation in Parent-child Relationships and Adolescence**

**Emotional Variability in Parent-child Relationships during Adolescence**

*Susan Branje*

Parent-adolescent conflicts are thought to be a means to negotiate relational changes. Real-time (moment-to-moment) dyadic variability in emotions during parent-adolescent conflict interactions is thought to be adaptive, with higher variability in emotions reflecting behavioral flexibility: the ability to effectively adapt and reorganize behavior in response to varying interpersonal and contextual demands. When parents and adolescents can show their anger and annoyance when having a disagreement, but at the same time can laugh about issues and can show affect and interest toward each other, their conflicts might help them to more satisfactorily reorganize their relationship than dyads that are more rigid in their conflict emotions. I will present results from a longitudinal observational study that shows that parent-adolescent dyads that have higher emotional variability during conflict interactions are better able to reorganize their relationship and have a higher psychosocial adjustment, compared to more rigid dyads.

**Parental Caregiving Goals Shape Responsiveness and Parent-Child Relationship Quality**

*Emily A. Impett & Bonnie M. Le*

Parenting can bring people great joy and meaning, but can also feel frustrating and difficult. In three cross-sectional studies (N=1,838) and a daily experience study (N=118), we identified the goals that parents pursue when caring for their children, as well as how these goals shape responsiveness to a child's needs and the quality of the parent-child bond. The pursuit of goals to show a child love and enhance security was associated with higher-quality relationships between parent and child and greater parental responsiveness. In contrast, providing care out of self-conscious concerns about evaluation by others and to promote a child's growth and development predicted lower relationship quality and responsiveness. The findings contribute to a growing body of research seeking to understand when, why, and how parenting is associated with costs or benefits to parents' well-being.

**Personality Regulates Friendship Development in Adolescence and Young Adulthood**

*Jaap Denissen, Maarten van Zalk, Astrid Poorthuis, Sander Thomaes, & Marcel van Aken*

In the talk, a conceptual framework is outlined that links personality traits to various social outcomes, mediated by self-regulatory reference values and associated social dynamics. Following this, two principles of friendship development are introduced: Utility and similarity. Regarding the first principle, findings are presented that indicate that personality traits are associated with friendship formation via maximization of domain-specific utility parameters. Regarding the second principle, the effect of various types of dyadic personality similarity are explored. Findings are presented that

perceived similarity is associated with friendship development but that associations with more objective indicators of similarity depend on the assessment method. While a comparison between two individuals' self-ratings does not predict friendship, whether the social environment regards two individuals as similar does predict relationship development for theoretically expected traits. Overall findings are summarized from a self-functional perspective on friendship development.

### **The Social and Developmental Origins of Impulse Control**

*Jeffry A. Simpson, Ohad Szepeswol, Ethan S. Young, & William Johnson*

What are the key social and developmental origins of impulse control in adulthood? This is one of the most fundamental and important questions in the field of self-regulation research today. In this talk, we present recent findings from the Minnesota Longitudinal Study of Risk and Adaptation (MLSRA; N = 170 individuals followed from before birth into their 30s) that provide provisional answers to this question. Guided by principles of life history theory and attachment theory, we trace the social/developmental origins of impulse control across the lives of MLSRA participants. We focus on how exposure to certain forms of stress early in life, the quality of maternal caregiving early in life, and participants' attachment representations assessed by the Adult Attachment Interview (AAI) in early adulthood systematically predict their self-reported impulse control at age 32.

### **Individual Paper 4: Couple Dynamics and Self-regulation**

#### **Can Couples Learn to Support Each Other? Unintended Effects of Skill Training in a Randomized Trial**

*Tom Bradbury*

Intimate partners interact routinely to promote one another's self-regulatory capacities, and they base important judgments about their relationship on these interactions. I conducted an experiment to determine whether a 15-hour intervention might strengthen these important dyadic processes, by randomizing couples (N = 174) to a 15-hour intervention designed to promote empathy and support; an intervention designed to facilitate conflict-resolution skill; or to an active control condition. Three-year follow-up data indicated that the skill-based interventions may have inadvertently raised couples standards for support and conflict resolution, raising new questions about how relationship scientists might translate their research into effective interventions.

#### **Self-Regulation, Revenge, Extradyadic Romantic Behaviors, and Willingness to Sacrifice in Close Relationships**

*Steven M. Graham & Frank D. Fincham*

Self-regulatory ability has numerous implications for behavior in close relationships, whether romantic or not. In this talk, we will present data from three groups of participants who completed batteries of self-report measures including the following constructs: ability to self-regulate, negative responses to partner transgressions

including physical violence, extradyadic romantic activity when a relationship is understood to be exclusive, and willingness to sacrifice for one's partner. Across all three studies, results indicated that self-reported ability to regulate one's behavior was associated with a host of important relational outcomes. For example, self-regulatory ability was associated with less negative responses to partner transgressions. These outcomes held in all three samples and held both cross-sectionally and longitudinally. These findings have implications for our basic understanding of close relationships and for therapeutic approaches to the treatment of relational difficulties.

### **Michelangelo Phenomenon: Partner Affirmation, Clarity of the Ideal Self, and Pursuit of Important Long Term Goals**

*Madoka Kumashiro*

The current research examines how ideal self clarity, or knowing what kind of person one ideally would like to become, influences Michelangelo phenomenon, an interpersonal model of personal growth (Rusbult et al., 2009). 125 romantic couples completed an 8-day diary records with a year follow-up. As predicted, multilevel modeling (MLM) lagged analyses revealed that previous day's partner affirmation of the ideal self promoted next day's ideal self clarity, which mediated the association between partner affirmation and perceived progress toward important goals. Similar patterns were observed using global measures of partner affirmation, ideal self clarity, and ideal self movement. A year later, MLM lagged analyses showed bidirectional influences: Earlier daily and global ideal self-clarity promoted later ideal self movement, with earlier daily and global partner affirmation also strengthening later ideal self clarity. Broader implications of the findings for interpersonal model of goal pursuit will be discussed.

### **Spouses' Involvement in their Partners' Diabetes Management: Associations with Patient Well-being.**

*Roeline Kuijer & Louella Orillaza*

Management of Type 2 diabetes depends almost entirely on behavioural self-regulation and patients must perform daily self-management tasks to control their illness. Spouses often seek to change or influence their diabetic partners' adherence behaviours, especially when they feel the patient is not adhering well. The current study examines whether and under which conditions (high vs low relationship satisfaction, illness coherence) partner regulation has adaptive or maladaptive effects on patient well-being. 70 patients and their partners completed questionnaires at baseline and 6 months later. Patients with high levels of relationship satisfaction were protected from the negative effects of partner regulation (i.e., they did not show elevated levels of diabetes related emotional distress). Patients with low illness coherence only showed elevated levels of diabetes related emotional distress when their partners attempted or desired to change their health behaviours. No adaptive effects of partner regulation were found.



## **Sex and Well-Being: Does Having More Frequent Sex Actually Make You Happier?**

*Amy Muise, Uli Schimmack, & Emily A. Impett*

Does engaging in more frequent sex lead to greater happiness? Across four studies, having more frequent sex with a romantic partner is associated with greater well-being, but that this association has diminishing marginal utility where the benefits of sex “level off” after couples report having sex about once a week. Using cross-sectional, longitudinal, and dyadic data, we demonstrate that increased sexual frequency has a positive, but non-linear association with happiness, even after accounting for stable individual difference factors. We also demonstrate in a 21-day dyadic daily experience study that on days when couples engaged in sex, they reported greater well-being, both on that day and on the following day. Sex is an understudied contributor to well-being and the current findings suggest that engaging in more frequent sex in a relationship (up to about once a week) is one way couples can enhance well-being.

## **Individual Paper 5: Multi-methods in Self-regulation**

### **Premarital Predictors of Marital Relationship Distress and Instability: A Meta-Analysis of Couple Factors**

*Jeffrey H. Larson, Jeffrey B. Jackson, & Garret T. Roundy*

The purpose of this study was to determine the most important premarital couple protective and risk factors associated with subsequent marital relationship distress and instability by utilizing meta-analytic procedures. Analysis of results from 86,831 participants from 66 independent samples over the last 40 years indicated that the strongest protective factors against marital distress were premarital relationship quality, family-of-origin experience similarity, attitude and value similarity, premarital relationship stability, positive premarital interactions, and religiosity similarity. The strongest protective factors against marital instability were premarital relationship stability, religiosity similarity, premarital relationship quality, and positive interactions. The strongest risk factors for both marital distress and marital instability were negative premarital interactions and cohabitation. No between-subgroup differences for gender, ethnicity, study design, or publication status were identified; some small between-subgroup differences were identified for marriage length.

### **“All or Nothing”: Attachment Avoidance and the Curvilinear Effects of Partner Support**

*Yuthika U. Girme, Nickola C. Overall, Jeffrey A. Simpson, & Garth J. O. Fletcher*

Romantic partners help individuals regulate their distress and facilitate coping. Unfortunately, highly avoidant individuals who strive to prevent dependence often resist partner support, but their automatic defenses can be regulated by unambiguous support. Four dyadic studies (total N = 298) examining the provision of support during couples’ discussions and daily life showed that partners’ support has a curvilinear association with recipients’ outcomes, and this curvilinear association is moderated by attachment avoidance. Partners’ low-to-moderate levels of practical support were associated with highly avoidant recipients’ reporting greater distress, self-efficacy threat

and distancing. However, partners' moderate-to-high levels of support down-regulated avoidant recipients' distress, boosted their self-efficacy, and reduced their distancing. These results illustrate the importance of considering curvilinear dyadic regulation processes, and demonstrate that partners can down-regulate avoidant individuals' automatic defenses by providing high levels of support that offer irrefutable evidence of the partner's availability.

### **Computational Behavioral Science as a New Approach to Study Self- and Co-Regulation Processes During Dyadic Interactions**

*Peter Hilpert, David C. Atkins, & Guy Bodenmann*

Since decades, the behavioral coding technique has been the key approach to examine couples interaction patterns – but this approach is limited: the sparsely data eliminates the temporal nature of the dyadic processes. Nowadays, technological developments allow to take a more computational approach, overcoming this fundamental problem – and dynamical systems modeling can handle such intensive data allowing to examine coupling processes between two or more non-linear dynamical systems (e.g., husband's and wife's behavior). To build a base for Computational Behavioral Science, we extracted vocal signals from an experimental study, where 198 couples were recorded before and after a stress induction (Trier Social Stress Test). Preliminary results show self- and co-regulation processes between the stressed and the non-stressed partner. Overall, findings highlight that computation behavioral science can overcome the current limitations and allow to study couples' self- and co-regulatory processes during dyadic real time interactions.

### **Say What You Need To Say: Dyadic Co-Regulation of Romantic Conflict Recovery**

*Katherine C. Haydon, Cassandra Jonestask, Haley Guhn-Knight, & Jessica E. Salvatore*

This study documented novel interdependent influences of romantic partners' attachment, vagal, and behavioral regulation on conflict recovery (defined as adaptive containment of negative affect following conflict; Salvatore et al. 2011). One hundred couples completed measures of attachment, resting respiratory sinus arrhythmia (RSA), and a standard conflict and cool-down discussion task. Effective conflict recovery was associated with direct conflict engagement, while conflict recovery sabotage was associated with higher attachment anxiety, lower attachment avoidance, and lower partner resting RSA. Conflict recovery was distinctively tied to whether couples aired or suppressed grievances: actor conflict avoidance was associated with better recovery, but partner conflict avoidance was associated with recovery sabotage. This study contributes new evidence of multilevel actor-partner interactions to the growing literature on romantic co-regulation and bears implications for how couples solve everyday problems when situational demands interrupt conflicts and require effective down-regulation to pursue other relationship goals.

## **Individual Differences in Self-control and Romantic Relationships: Evidence from Phenotypic and Genotypic Investigations**

*Susan C. South, Kenneth Tan, Amber Jarnecke, Robert F. Krueger, William G. Iacono, & Matt McGue*

Research demonstrates that personality traits are associated with relationship satisfaction. In this talk, we demonstrate the importance of individual differences in self-control for pro-relationship behaviors and relationship satisfaction. We use data from two studies: 1) a community sample of 100 newlywed couples in which both partners provided information on impulsivity and relationship functioning; 2) a sample of adult twins from the Minnesota Twin Family Study, who provided self-reports on constraint and relationship satisfaction. First, we examine the associations between impulsivity and self- and partner-report of relationship, demonstrating that lower levels of self-control have negative consequences for relationships. Next, we present the genetic and environmental overlap between constraint and relationship satisfaction. Previously, we have shown that genetic influences on constraint were greatest at the highest levels of satisfaction. Here, we extend this work to see if constraint moderates the genetic and environmental influences on relationship satisfaction.

# Abstracts

## Datablitz

Day 1: 9<sup>th</sup> July 2015

### **Self-Regulation of the Expanded Self: Partner-Other Comparisons**

*Sabrina Thai & Penelope Lockwood*

To date, little research has examined whether individuals regulate the expanded self, the self that includes other people. In three studies, we examined whether individuals would engage in strategies to maintain positive perceptions of their romantic partner following comparisons between their partner and another person. Using recalled (Studies 1-2) and actual (Study 3) comparisons about attractiveness (Study 1) relationship skills (Studies 2-3), we demonstrate that individuals high in self-other overlap decrease domain relevance following upward but not downward comparisons to protect their positive partner perceptions. This strategy was absent among those low in self-other overlap. Furthermore, when reminded of their partner's inferiority in a domain, high overlap participants maintained positive global partner perceptions, whereas low overlap participants' global perceptions were negatively affected (Study 2). These results suggest that individuals are capable of regulating evaluations of their expanded self and have important implications for relationship outcomes.

### **Annoyingly Perfect: When we Dislike Others with High Self-control**

*Janina Steinmetz & Ed O'Brien*

High self-control paves the way for living a successful, healthy, and happy life. However, these benefits reaped from exerting self-control may come at a social cost. In Study 1, participants read about a person dieting. When described as having stuck to his diet perfectly, the person was seen as a stronger role-model than when having stumbled a few times—as intended—but he was not liked any better. In Study 2, we show that perceived effort plays an important role. When “perfect” dieters were described as trying hard to stick to their goal, they were indeed liked more than “stumbling” dieters. Critically, this effect reversed in low-effort conditions: “perfect” dieters were liked less than “stumbling” dieters for who it was described as easy to succeed. Hence, high self-control may have unintended consequences: whereas failing still leads people to be liked by others, succeeding can backfire.

### **Self-regulation and Workplace Victimization**

*Stefan Bogaerts & Jaap Denissen*

Self-regulation is a complex mechanism that can lead to several ‘failures’. Under-regulation happens most often in unstable people who have difficulty to control own actions and those of others, and who have insufficient problem solving capacities. Until recently, workplace victimization is rarely related to self-regulatory failures. However, the precipitation theory shows that personality characteristics can be associated with an increased risk of victimization and subsequently associated self regulation failure. In this

lecture, self-regulation failures will be explored among 400 mental health professionals working in three forensic psychiatric centers in the Netherlands, of whom almost 25% reported victimization (verbal/physical) in the past 12 months caused by forensic psychiatric patients. Stress problems in relationship to victimization will be examined and the inability to deal with problems (coping) will be tested as a mediator between stress and victimization. Further, gender and self-perceptions will be examined as moderators.

### **Using a Genetically Informative Design to Understand Alcohol Consumption as a Function of Peer and Romantic Partner Substance Use**

*Jessica E. Salvatore, Seung Bin Cho, Nathan Thomas, James Li, Amy Adkins, Kenneth S. Kendler, & Danielle M. Dick*

Alcohol consumption is part of a cluster of externalizing behaviors characterized by disinhibition (i.e., lack of self-regulation). Peer and romantic partner substance use are associated with this form of self-regulation; however, whether peer and partner influences are independent or interactive is less clear. In a study of emerging adults' (n = 2247) alcohol consumption, we found evidence for an interactive effect. Having a romantic partner who was low in substance use mitigated the impact of having peers high in substance use, and having a romantic partner who was high in substance use amplified the impact of having peers high in substance use. These effects were especially pronounced in males. Forthcoming genome-wide association data in this sample will be used to examine gene-environment interplay processes underlying these effects. These findings illustrate the usefulness of examining multiple, nested social influences on self-regulatory behavioral outcomes.

### **A Lack of Self-regulation? Psychological Determinants of Intimate Violence in a Poor Population in Nicaragua**

*Abraham P. Buunk*

This study examined the psychological determinants of domestic violence in the Department of the Rio San Juan in Nicaragua, using an adapted version of the Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS2; Straus, Hamby, Boney-McCoy & Sugarman, 1996). Respondents were 199 men and 201 women, with a mean age of 38.38 years for men and 34.57 for women. There was a considerable variation in civil status, educational level and type of profession. Of the men 35% and of the women 33% had committed at least one act of minor violence (such as pushing, shoving or slapping one's partner) and 30% of the men and 25% of the women had committed at least one act of serious violence (such as twisted one's partner's arm, beating up one's partner). According to themselves, men had engaged much more often in severe violence than women, and had more often inflicted serious injury on their partner. Overall, among men, violence against one's partner was independently predicted by (1) competitiveness with same-sex others; (2) a short-term life history (a focus on early reproduction and on having many offspring); (3) a negative self-image; (4) a bad relationship with one's mother, and (5) a low income. In contrast, among women violence against one's partner was only predicted by competitiveness with same-sex others. Possessive jealousy was not related to violence

among men nor women. The results are discussed from an evolutionary perspective, and implications for prevention are presented.

**Don't Mess with Emotionally Intelligent Girlfriend! Emotional Intelligence and High Self-regulatory Resources Lead Women to Attractive Alternatives when they Doubt their Partner's Caring.**

*Magdalena Śmieja & Anna Czarna*

For a long time emotional intelligence (EI) has been described as beneficial to those with whom the emotionally intelligent person interacts, however accumulating data increasingly display the darker side of that ability - that used for non-prosocial purposes. In the present research we examined how EI affects relationship behaviors. 78 heterosexual couples took part in the experimental study. We measured EI, and manipulated self-regulatory capacity by supplementing half of the participants with glucose. Target participants were led to believe that their partner was spending an excessive amount of time composing a long list of the participant's faults, a procedure that provokes the uncertainty of the partner's caring and commitment. The results show that being uncertain of their partner's caring, emotionally intelligent women (but not men) with high self-regulatory resources, perceived alternatives as more attractive and wanted to meet a more good-looking stranger.

## Day 2: 10<sup>th</sup> July 2015

### **Mindful Acceptance rather than Change: Accepting Negative Emotions toward a Romantic Partner Increases Relationship Satisfaction.**

*Gesa Kappen, Johan Karremans, & Ap Dijksterhuis*

Romantic partners may not always match one's ideal partner. To deal with this discrepancy, individuals often attempt to change the partner, which may hurt rather than benefit relationship well being. In contrast, the present research examines whether the ability to accept the partner, including shortcomings, benefits relationships. We examine whether mindfulness is positively associated with more partner acceptance, and thus relationship well being. Also, we investigate whether partner acceptance is attained by mindfully dealing with ones own internal states in reaction to relationship problems. In Study 1, we found that dispositional mindfulness was positively associated with relationship satisfaction. This effect was mediated by partner acceptance. In Study 2, a short mindful acceptance induction, targeting participants' inner experiences in reaction to partner shortcomings, reduced the amount of negative partner-related emotions. Together, these findings suggest that mindful acceptance of negative experiences regarding the relationship partner, paradoxically, promotes relationship well-being.

### **Mindful Regulation in Close Relationships**

*Niels J. Van Doesum, Francesca Righetti, Jan-Willem Van Prooijen, Lot Verburgh, Mariko L. Visserman, & Paul A. M. Van Lange*

Social mindfulness helps people to define their relationships with others by being mindful of them or not in relatively subtle yet effective ways. While past research has revealed that social mindfulness is meaningfully associated with a variety of traits, here we examine whether and how variations in emotional investment in others may influence people's manifested levels of social mindfulness. We find that social mindfulness indeed varies with the nature of interpersonal relationships. In Study 1, participants were more mindful of their romantic partner than of strangers, and in Study 2, friends also proved to be more mindful of one another than strangers, although a stranger's physical proximity somewhat reduced this effect. Together, these findings suggest that social mindfulness may play a defining role in the regulation of interpersonal relationships, in which social mindfulness can be upregulated or downregulated as required by the social context.

### **Value Priorities in Romantic Relationships**

*Reine van der Wal, Johan Karremans, & Greg Maio*

In the present research we propose that basic human values play an important role in specific relationship processes that define a well-functioning relationship. Specifically, we examined whether people who prioritize self-enhancement values have qualitatively different relationships than people who prioritize self-transcendence values. 212 Mturkers in a romantic relationship completed a value measure, after which relationship quality and their attitudes towards relationship protective behaviors (i.e.,

sacrifice, fidelity, forgiveness) were measured. Results demonstrated that the endorsement of self-enhancement values was related to less relationship quality, and a more negative attitude towards relationship-protective behaviors than the endorsement of self-transcendence values. Consistent with other studies documenting negative impacts of self-enhancement values and a materialistic focus on moral and social behavior (Pulfrey & Butera, 2013; Vohs, Mead, & Goode, 2006), these findings provide the first data that this role also occurs in people's romantic relationships.

### **The Relationship Contingency of Self-worth and Self-efficacy in Romantic Relationship Prediction toward Body Shame in Indonesian Young Adulthood**

*Niken Linda Dinartika, Dian Wisnuwardhani, & Nurul Arbiyah*

Some people may derive their self-worth from having a romantic partner (i.e. relationship contingency of self-worth) and it could raise their body shame (Sanchez & Kwang, 2007). Therefore, it was important to identify a variable that could lessen this unfavorable effect. This study proposed self-efficacy in romantic relationship (SERR) could reduce someone's body shame which caused by their RCSW. RCSW and SERR predictions toward body shame and SERR's presence as the moderator of RCSW and body shame are examined in this study. A self-report measurement was done to 186 young adulthood individuals aged 21-40 years old in Indonesia. By using hierarchical regression techniques, it was found that RCSW could predict body shame positively and SERR could predict body shame negatively. Yet there was no moderation effect of SERR between RCSW and body shame relationship. The findings are discussed considering relationship status and sex.

### **Utility of Vocal Synchrony Measure as an Indicator of Coregulation in Adult Attachment**

*Mehmet Harma, Nebi Sümer, & Cindy Hazan*

This study aimed to explore the concept of coregulation in adulthood based on the analyses of dyadic conversations. Moderators, which potentially affect vocal coordination between romantic partners, were also examined. Twenty-four heterosexual dating couples ( $M_{age}=21.25$ ;  $SD=1.03$ ) from Cornell University were recruited for the study. Participants communicated with their romantic and stranger partner in a balanced order. Their conversations were recorded and vocal features were extracted. Granger-causality analyses yielded that close partner conversations were bidirectional, signifying that female participants' vocal responses caused male participants' vocal responses and vice versa. In the stranger partner conversations, however, only female participants' vocal responses caused male participants' vocal responses, implying that there was unidirectional association between stranger partners. Two-level HLM analysis indicated that the observed synchrony was moderated by attachment anxiety and relationship satisfaction. Implications for attachment between romantic partners and the literature on behavioral mimicry are discussed.



**Suicidal Ideation among High-risk Adolescent Females: Examining the Interplay between Parasympathetic Regulation and Friendship Support**

*Matteo Giletta, Paul D. Hastings, Karen D. Rudolph, Daniel J. Bauer, Matthew K. Nock, & Mitchell J. Prinstein*

Drawing from multi-level developmental psychopathology theories, this study examined the joint effect of physiological self-regulation (parasympathetic regulation) and interpersonal regulation (friendship support) on adolescent suicidality. Adolescent females with a history of mental health concerns participated in an in-vivo interpersonal stressor and completed self-reports of depressive symptoms and perceived support within their best female friendship. Respiratory sinus arrhythmia was measured before and during the stressor. Suicidal ideation was assessed at baseline and at 3, 6, and 9 months follow-up. Females with more parasympathetic withdrawal to the laboratory stressor were at higher risk for reporting suicide ideation over the subsequent 9 months. Importantly, this effect was moderated by adolescents' perceived friendship support; among females with more parasympathetic augmentation, but not withdrawal, friendship support reduced risk for future suicidal ideation. Findings highlight the crucial role of physiological and external self-regulation sources as protective factors for youth suicidality.

## Day 3: 11<sup>th</sup> July 2015

### **Through Thick and Thin: Dyadic Coping and Capitalization in Couple Relationships**

*Silvia Donato, Ariela F. Pagani, & Raffaella Iafate*

In everyday life partners' communication about and responding to positive events has been called capitalization (Gable, Gonzaga, & Strachman, 2006), while communication about and responding to negative events is known as dyadic coping (Bodenmann, 1995). Close relationship scholars have debated about the relation between the two processes, as some found that partners' capitalization responses contribute to the perception of the availability of support to future negative events (Gable, Gosnell, Maisel, & Strachman, 2012), while others argued that support in positive and negative circumstances influence different outcomes (Collins & Feeney, 2010). The aim of the present study is to analyze the relations between the two processes and their consequences. Fifty-eight married couples completed a self-report questionnaire and a daily diary 2 times a day for 2 weeks containing items capturing partners' positive and negative events; capitalization attempts and responses; dyadic coping; and individual and relational well-being. Analyses are in progress.

### **The Role of Dyadic Coping in Regulating Anxiety in Early Pregnancy**

*Darwiche Joëlle, Udry-Jorgensen Laura, & Vial Yvan*

Introduction: Data show that the distress of infertility may persist throughout pregnancy. The study's aim was to describe the emotional status of parents-to-be and understand the specific role of dyadic coping in regulating prenatal anxiety. Methods: 103 couples (52 with assisted reproductive technology and 51 who conceived spontaneously). Each participant answered questionnaires assessing prenatal anxiety, depression, attachment and dyadic coping before/after the first round of prenatal testing. Results: A significant decrease in anxiety and depressive symptoms and a significant increase in attachment were observed in both men and women from T1 to T2. No differences were observed between the groups at either time point. Conclusion: These results suggest that ART parents are more similar to than different from parents who conceive spontaneously. The results on the mediating role of dyadic coping in regulating prenatal anxiety will help to understand the prenatal emotional dynamics in both groups.

### **Influence of Dyadic Coping on Marital Intimacy in Japanese Couples: Actor-partner Interdependence Model**

*Kenji, Yokotani & Tai, Kurosawa*

Married people frequently cope with problems not for their individual profits but for their partners' and their marital relationships' profits. These coping behaviors were defined as dyadic coping (DC) and were linked with quality of their marital relationships. DC could influence the process of marital intimacy, but the influence processes were not investigated. We aimed to clarify the influence process in marital relationships through actor-partner interdependence model. Participants were 43 hetero-sexual couples in Japan. They answered the Dyadic Coping Inventory as their DC and reported their self-

disclosure and perceived partner responsiveness as their intimacy. The actor effects were that husbands (wives)' stress communication and joint DC increased their self-disclosure and perceived partner responsiveness. The partner effects were that husbands' negative (supportive) DC decreased (increased) wives' self-disclosure and perceived partner responsiveness. Japanese husbands' DC affected both their and their partners' intimacy.

### **Dyadic Coping as a Mediator between Romantic Individual Emotion Regulation and Relational Satisfaction**

*Kyoung Ok Seol*

The main aim of the present study was to determine how individual emotion regulation is related to dyadic coping and relational satisfaction in young adult dating couples. Specifically, we investigated whether dyadic coping strategies mediate the link between individual emotion regulation and relational satisfaction. Two hundred ninety seven heterosexual dating couples (M age = 23.48) in South Korea participated in this study. Couples rated his/her emotion regulation levels, positive dyadic coping strategies and satisfaction with their romantic relationships. Actor-Partner Interdependence Models were used to test our mediation models. First we found the actor effect among male and female partners. That is, individual emotion regulation was positively related to his or her positive dyadic coping strategies. His or her positive dyadic coping strategies, in turn, was linked to his or her own relational satisfaction. Second, we found that individual emotion regulation was positively linked to partner's relational satisfaction directly. Yet, partner's positive dyadic coping strategies did not predict relational satisfaction or did not mediate the link between partner's individual emotion regulation and partner's relational satisfaction.

### **Post-Conflict Withdrawal and Emotional Recovery from Conflict: A Study of Cohabiting Couples**

*Karen Prager, Jesse Poucher, Forouz Shirvani, Marissa Pullum, & Zoheb Allam*

Effectively managing negative emotional arousal following conflict has implications for partners' long-term relationship satisfaction (Prager et al., in press). Post-conflict emotional recovery depends upon at least two relationship resources 1) post-conflict behavior that permits reconciliation, and 2) partners' felt security. However, sustained withdrawal should make reconciliation difficult (Gottman & Levenson, 1999). We sampled 100 cohabiting couples' responses to a 3-week diary with which they kept track of their moods, their relationship satisfaction, and their conflicts. Participants who remained withdrawn into the day after a conflict experienced less satisfaction and less positive affect following the conflict; when a partner remained withdrawn, the impact was similar. Attachment anxiety and avoidance interacted with withdrawal to predict partners' emotional recoveries. For example, if neither partner withdrew after conflict, secure individuals experienced less negative affect than anxious individuals. However, when their partner remained withdrawn, secure and anxious individuals experienced the same negative emotional consequences of conflict.

**Living with an angry partner: Longitudinal actor and partner effects of explosiveness on romantic relationship satisfaction**

*Rongqin Yu, Susan Branje, Wim Meeus, Eva-Verena Wendt, & Sabine Walper*

Individuals who are easily to be angry might be unhappy in their romantic relationship. Such individuals might also contribute to their partner' unhappiness. This study tested longitudinal actor and partner effects of explosiveness (i.e., tendency to anger) on romantic relationship satisfaction. Data were from an ongoing longitudinal study Pairfam (Panel Analysis of Intimate Relationships and Family Dynamics) in Germany. Dyadic self-report data from 788 couples (Mage = 26.13 years at T1) were employed. The Actor Partner Interdependence Model showed significant longitudinal actor and partner effects of explosiveness and romantic relationship satisfaction. Specifically, targets' and their romantic partner' explosiveness affected their own relationship satisfaction five years later. More importantly, change in targets' relationship satisfaction was predicted by their partner's explosiveness and relationship satisfaction, and vice versa. Hence, findings underscore a long-term interdependence between self' tendency to anger and partner' romantic relationship satisfaction.

# Abstracts

## Posters

**Day 1: 9<sup>th</sup> July 2015**

**The Relationship between Attitudes toward Marriage and System Justification Beliefs in Turkish Culture**

*Ece Akca, Merve Gölcük, Esen Yangın*

Marriage is one of the most important milestones in people's lives. The meaning of the "marriage" can vary across cultures. According to traditional views in Turkish culture, marriage is a prerequisite for having a family. However, considering marriage only as a legal procedure became common among the youth. The aim of this study was to test the validity of the "Attitudes Toward Marriage Scale" (ATMS) measuring culture specific attitudes and to investigate its relationship with sexism, system justification beliefs and political orientations. Totally, 250 Turkish university students participated in the study. The factor structure of the ATMS, the relationship between variables and predictive power of system justification beliefs and sexism were investigated. Results revealed that attitudes toward marriage has three components; social, relational and profit. Benevolent sexism and system justification beliefs seemed to be critical predictors of social and relational components. Results were discussed considering cultural values and beliefs.

**Grief response and parents' individual and dyadic adjustment after the death of a child: The mediating effect of dyadic coping**

*Sara Albuquerque, Marco Pereira, & Isabel Narciso*

Background: The impact of the death of a child on parents' relationship and the importance of the marital relationship to parent's individual adjustment highlight dyadic coping (DC) as a relevant concept. In this study we examined the mediating effect of DC in the association between grief and individual and dyadic adjustment. Method: The sample consisted of 152 bereaved parents. Participants completed the Prolonged Grief Disorder Scale, the Brief Symptom Inventory, the EUROHIS-QOL-8, the Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale, and the Dyadic Coping Inventory. Results: Results showed that lower levels of grief were associated with better dyadic adjustment through increased joint DC. No significant indirect effects were found for individual adjustment. Conclusions: DC may be a mechanism through which grief impacts dyadic adjustment. Psychological interventions should be offered on a dyadic level for couples coping with this event and DC should be promoted, in order to facilitate couples' communication and mutual support.

### **Romantic Relationship Advice: About What and From Whom?**

*Ezgi Besikci & Christopher R. Agnew*

The current study took an attachment theory approach to exploring when people tend to talk about a current romantic involvement (or about an alternative to a current partner), and from whom they tend to seek/take relationship advice. Results from 259 undergraduates in a romantic relationship revealed that attachment avoidance was negatively associated with the tendency to share personal information about their current romance, whereas both attachment avoidance and anxiety were positively associated with sharing information about possible alternatives. We also found that higher levels of attachment anxiety predicted greater tendencies to seek advice about one's current relationship, and both attachment anxiety and avoidance significantly predicted participants' tendency to seek advice from others about their alternatives. Finally, based on their most recent experience of seeking advice from a close other, participants with higher avoidance in their attachment to their advisor were less likely to take the advice they received.

### **Self-regulation processes of the newlyweds in Taiwan**

*Szu Chang*

The purpose of this study is to explore the self-regulation process of newlywed couples. Through in-depth interviews with six Taiwanese couples, qualitative data were analyzed using grounded theory approach. A preliminary model is founded that self-regulation process in marital relation is influenced by the principle of "Zhong-yong". That is, in order to achieve relational harmony, various self-regulatory strategies were used depending on the situations confronted.

In order to keep a harmonic relation with their families of origin, newlyweds use strategies such as "changing him/herself" or "adapting a traditional role". Strategies used to reach marital harmony were mutually influenced between husbands and wives. Partner's support can increase the self-regulatory efficacy. Gender differences on self-regulation were found both in goals and in type of strategies used.

### **Stress, Dyadic Coping and Relationship Satisfaction in Late Adolescent Couples**

*Christina J. Breitenstein, Anne Milek, Fridtjof W. Nussbeck, Guy Bodenmann*

In adolescence, one of the most important developmental tasks is to build up sustainable intimate relationships. In adult couples, daily hassles emerging outside the relationship can spill over into the relationship evoking conflicts between partners, which itself has a negative effect on relationship satisfaction. This detrimental effect of stress spillover can be buffered by adequate dyadic coping skills. Using data from 124 late adolescent couples, we examined whether extra-dyadic stress is associated with intra-dyadic stress and relationship satisfaction in this developmental phase, and investigated the potential buffering effect of dyadic coping on these associations. Even as extra-dyadic stress was not directly associated with intra-dyadic stress and relationship satisfaction, dyadic coping moderated this association. This study highlights the importance of investigating dyadic processes in intimate relationships in late

adolescence and emerging adulthood to gain an idea of these relationships and the associated developmental processes.

### **Personality and Emotional Health Predictors of RSR**

*Dean Busby*

Our recent research findings on how neuroticism, family-of-origin dysfunction, parent-child relationship quality, and attachment styles, along with Hazelwood's (2012) research on how partners' negative attributions predict the use of RSR in committed, romantic relationships will be presented and critiqued and future research directions discussed. Results with large samples of couples (N=1,00 or greater) show neuroticism and depression are negatively related to RSR, as well as attachment insecurity, unresolved family-of-origin (FOO) issues, and poor parent-child relationships in the FOO. Moderators and mediators are also presented and future research discussed.

### **Family Conflict and Resilience in Parenting Self-Efficacy among High-risk Mothers**

*Julie F. H. Cassé, Catrin Finkenauer, Mirjam Oosterman, Victor R. van der Geest, & Carlo Schuengel*

The benefits of parenting self-efficacy for parenting and child outcomes in low-risk samples are widely recognized, however, resilience in parenting self-efficacy is understudied. This study considers parenting self-efficacy of mothers institutionalized in adolescence which leads to a focus on current family conflict as a paramount risk factor for losing faith in the ability to be a good parent. Considering the psychological benefits of self-control, this study examined maternal self-control as a protective resource. The negative association between family conflict and parenting self-efficacy was moderated by self-control. The effect of family conflict on parenting self-efficacy was found for low self-control, but not for high self-control. For low self-control, family conflict uniquely explained 6% of the variance in parenting self-efficacy. The findings suggest that self-control plays a pivotal role in enabling high-risk mothers to maintain perceived competence to parent despite having to deal with negative circumstances. Implications for supportive interventions are discussed.

### **Ideals, Perceptions, and Sense of Entitlement in Romantic Relationships**

*Vera Cubela Adoric, Iva Sofija Milos*

This study examined the relationships of several forms of relational entitlement with perceived and ideal characteristics for partner, relationship and self. Croatian versions of the Sense of Relational Entitlement scale (Tolmacz & Mikulincer, 2011) and Overall et al. (2006) adaptation of the Partner Ideal Scales (Fletcher et al., 1999) were administered in an age heterogeneous sample of Croatian respondents. As expected, the entitlement aspect pertaining to high expectations for partner's attention correlated primarily with partner and relationship ideals. Two other forms of inflated sense of entitlement (vigilance of negative aspects and sensitivity to relational transgressions) were more closely related to a less positive evaluation of actual partner and relationship. Self characteristics were found to predict the assertive entitlement (ideals) and, negatively, restrictive entitlement (actual). In sum, the results suggest that specific

forms of relational entitlement are associated with consideration of different ideal and actual self, partner and relationship characteristics.

### **Dyadic Coping and Relationship Satisfaction: A Meta-Analysis**

*Mariana K. Falconier, Jeffrey B. Jackson, Peter Hilpert, Guy Bodenmann*

Meta-analytic methods were used to empirically determine the association between dyadic coping and relationship satisfaction. Dyadic coping is a systemic conceptualization of the processes partners use to manage stressors. A combined sum of 72 independent samples with 17,856 participants were included. The aggregated correlation for total dyadic coping with relationship satisfaction was .45 ( $p=.000$ ). Total dyadic coping strongly predicted relationship satisfaction regardless of gender, age, relationship length, education level, and nationality. Perceptions of dyadic coping by partner and by both partners together were stronger predictors of relationship satisfaction than perceptions of dyadic coping by self. Positive forms of dyadic coping were a stronger predictor of relationship satisfaction than negative forms of dyadic coping. Comparisons among dyadic coping dimensions indicated that collaborative common coping, supportive coping, and hostile/ambivalent coping were stronger predictors of relationship satisfaction than stress communication, delegated coping, protective buffering coping, and overprotection coping.

### **Self-regulation for Effective Relationships Scale: Validation of the German short scale and correlations with relationship outcomes**

*Denzinger Ferdinand, Backes Sabine, Brandstätter Veronika*

Halford and colleagues (Halford, W., Lizzio, A., Wilson, K. L., & Occhipinti, S., 2007; Wilson, K. L., Charker, J., Lizzio, A., Halford, K., & Kimlin, S., 2005) showed that behavioural self-regulation importantly influenced couple outcomes using the Self-Regulation for Effective Relationships (SRfER) Scale. We translated and tested a shortened version of the SRfER Scale in a dyadic data set with  $N = 368$  couples. Analysis of internal consistency suggest the exclusion of one item. Concerning construct validity, the SRfER Scale correlated significantly and in the expected direction with other scales measuring related constructs. Additionally, the SRfER scale significantly predicted relationship outcomes, e.g. relationship satisfaction in an Actor-Partner-Interdependence Model (APIM; actor and partner effects).

### **The Role of Personal Factors and Interpersonal Competence Dimensions in College Freshman's Social Exclusion**

*Jacki Fitzpatrick; Meliksah Demir*

This study examined how personal factors (e.g., shyness) and interpersonal competence (e.g., self-disclosure) dimensions contributed to college freshman's social exclusion. Undergraduates transition into an environment of unknown relationship potential (Paul & Brier, 2001), so social exclusion might be salient during the freshman year. Participants ( $n=907$  US students) completed an online questionnaire packet which included Cheek and Buss' (1981) Shyness Scale, the Interpersonal Competence Questionnaire (Buhrmester, Furman, Wittenburg & Reis, 1988), plus questions (created



by authors) to assess university satisfaction and social exclusion. A regression revealed that the variables accounted for 13% of exclusion variance. Beta values indicated that exclusion was positively associated with shyness, but negatively associated with satisfaction and initiation competence. The lack of unique association with other competence dimensions fits with Buhrmester et al.'s (1988) argument that the dimensions are distinct. Additional research will clarify relationships among intrapersonal factors, interpersonal factors and social exclusion.

### **Preferences for Social Support during Social Evaluation: The Role of Worry about a Relationship Partner's Negative Evaluation**

*Jinhong Guo, Maria T. Lechtreck, Wesley Browning, Bulent Turan*

Individuals seek proximity to support figures when distressed. However, individuals may not want a relationship partner present when their performance in a difficult task is being critically evaluated, because they would worry about negative evaluation by their partner. Participants' performance on difficult tasks was evaluated by independent judges—research assistants who maintained a critical attitude throughout participants' performance. Then participants were asked if they wanted a close relationship partner present when they come back for a similar laboratory task next week. Worry about negative evaluation by the partner predicted not wanting the partner present during the second session. The significant direct effects of distress and of attachment-related anxiety on wanting more support were counteracted (suppressed) by their indirect effects in the opposite direction through the pathway of worry about partner's negative evaluation. Findings contribute to our understanding of social support preferences in different situations for different people.

### **The Role of Close Relationships in Internalized HIV-related Stigma and Adherence to HIV Treatment**

*Christopher Helms, Jinhong Guo, Maria T. Lechtreck, Wesley Browning, and Bulent Turan*

Sometimes persons living with HIV (PLHIV) internalize HIV-related stigma, feeling ashamed and inferior because of their HIV positive status. Previous research suggests that internalized stigma predicts poorer medication adherence, mediated by intrapersonal factors such as depression. However, interpersonal mechanisms may also play a role. In order to examine interpersonal mechanisms involved, 129 PLHIV completed measures of different interpersonal constructs and reported their medication adherence. Analyses controlled for gender, race, age, and socio-economic status. Internalized stigma predicted worse medication adherence, mediated by not wanting others to see taking one's medication. Attachment-related anxiety refers to worry about being abandoned by romantic partners, and also mediated the effect of internalized stigma on medication non-adherence. Given that medication adherence is vitally important for PLHIV to benefit from their treatment, understanding interpersonal factors affecting medication adherence is crucial. Interventions aimed at improving treatment adherence might also target these interpersonal factors.

## **What Doesn't Kill You Makes You Exhausted. Or Mobilized. Exertion Characteristics of Selected Emotion Regulation Strategies**

*Lewczuk Karol, Kobylińska Dorota*

As the research on ego depletion suggests, our ability to self-regulate after initial exertions is limited. But is this also true for consecutive emotion regulation episodes, specifically when regulation involves different strategies and addresses different emotions? Present study, consisted of two tasks, addressed this issue. In the first task, participants were regulating their emotions using suppression or perspective taking (2 experimental groups) or expressed emotions naturally (control group) while watching short clip invoking amusement. In the second task, all participants were asked to regulate their emotions using reappraisal while watching film invoking anger. Opposite to depletion, present study shows the effect of mobilization for both experimental groups – we argue, that, instead of a limited resource, dissimilarity of self-regulatory conflicts between tasks is responsible for depletion effect. As relevance of depletion to close relationships is confirmed, it can be a major contribution to understanding self-regulation in this context.

## **Dyadic Conflict Regulation at the End of Third Age**

*Markus Klingel, Nina Vogel, Denis Gerstorf*

Dyadic conflict regulation is strongly influenced by self-regulation and is crucial for satisfying intimate relationships. Regulatory capabilities might be especially important at the transition from Third to Fourth Age, when high functioning is accompanied by increasing health burden and approaching death. How do conflicts arise and how are they resolved at this unique point in life? Using a convergent mixed-method design combining qualitative interview data (N = 11, 1.5-2.5 hours) and quantitative microlongitudinal data (N = 80, 42 measurement points across one week) from the Daily Life of Couples Study, we examined conflict behavior of older couples ( $\bar{x}$  75 years,  $\bar{x}$  relationship duration 40 years). First results suggest strong heterogeneity concerning unresolved past and current conflicts and regulation behavior across couples, contrary to Gottman's idea of satisfied long-term relationships being conflict-free. We discuss the importance of regulatory capabilities in context of possible mechanisms shaping old age.

## **Predicting Constructive Communication Using the Theory of Planned Behavior**

*Tina Krznarić, Željka Kamenov*

The theory of planned behavior, which emphasizes cognitive self-regulation as an important aspect of human behavior, is one of the most frequently used models in predicting human behavior. However, this theory was not often considered to predict behaviors in close relationships. One of the main aspects of a healthy relationship is constructive communication, especially during conflicts. The ways in which couples resolve conflicts are predictive for divorce, and correlate with the satisfaction and quality of a relationship. The aim of this research was to examine whether constructive communication during conflict, measured by The Communication Patterns Questionnaire, can be predicted by the variables proposed in the theory of planned

behavior. A questionnaire assessing attitudes, subjective norms and perceived control over the constructive communication as the behavior of interest was constructed and applied to young adults in committed relationships. A month later the actual behavior during conflicts was assessed.

### **What is Relationship Self-Regulation & How Do We Measure It?**

*Jeffry H. Larson*

Relationship Self Regulation (RSR) consists of four key meta-competencies: self-appraisal, self-directed goal setting, self-implementation of change, and self-evaluation of change efforts (Halford, Wilson, Lizzio, & Moore, 2002). A new scale for measuring RSR is called the Behavioral Self Regulation for Effective Relationships Scale (Wilson et al, 2005). We demonstrate its psychometric properties and research findings with newly-wed, cohabiting, first married, and remarried couples. We also summarize and critique its use in couple relationship education settings (e.g., Halford, et al, 2007) which has shown much promise for strengthening these relationships and helping couples avoid the "marital slide" in relationship satisfaction over early marriage.

### **Can You Control Your Health? Maybe your Partner Can: Examining the Direct and Indirect Effects of Perceived Control, Perceived Stress and Health Problems among older German Couples**

*Sonia Lech, Alesia Wozidlo, Denis Gerstorf*

This study examined the associations between perceived control, perceived stress, and health among older German couples. Dyadic analyses were conducted on data from 95 older German couples. First, an APIM yielded that higher levels of husbands' and wives' own perceived control were associated with their own lower reports of health problems. No significant partner effects were found. Next, an APIMeM yielded significant actor indirect effects for husbands and wives, but no partner indirect effects. Husbands' and wives' own perceived control was negatively associated with their own perceived stress, which was positively associated with their own reports of health problems. These findings emphasize the role that perceived control has on health outcomes for older German adults and suggests perceived stress is a potential factor that can help explain this relationship. Implications for health-enhancement and intervention programs aimed to improve health and life quality among older adults are also discussed.

### **Narratives on Experiences of Self-regulation in Speaking of Loss Events**

*Masahiro Masuda*

The present research is a qualitative case study on narratives on self-regulation that the narrators of loss events experience in response to attitudes of their audience. Eight informants were invited to interview research aiming at uncovering what motivates bereaved parents to talk about their loss of their children and babies to health professionals or members of peer support groups. Unstructured interviewing revealed turning points of the informants' identity changes, which were determined by their encounters or relationships with significant audiences. Those informants who continue

to play roles of storytellers for health professionals sometimes confront the awkwardness of the divergent views of the self that they present to the audience, and their accounts on their self-regulatory processes describe health professionals' tacit cultural premises, which may puzzle lay people.

**Emotion Regulation and Marital Satisfaction: The Mediating Effect of Emotion Contagion. A Dyadic Analysis**

*Mazzuca S., Livi S., Presaghi F., Kafetsios K.*

Emotion regulation is a critical ingredient for successful interpersonal relationships. How each partner regulates positive and negative emotions has consequences for own and partners' relationship outcomes. The present study examined how emotion contagion, the tendency to feel and share emotions with one's partner, is associated with emotion regulation and marital satisfaction in a sample of 132 young (<44) and old (>44) couples. Results from Actor-Partner Interdependence Models found partners' chronic reappraisal was associated with theirs and their partners' higher marital satisfaction especially in older age couples. Partners' higher emotion suppression was associated with own lower marital satisfaction across age groups. Partners' emotion contagion (especially of emotions of sadness, happiness and love) mediated the observed actor and partner regulation effects. The results point to the sharing of emotion and age as moderators of emotion regulation in couples.

**The Association between Attachment Insecurity, Dysfunctional Cognitions, and Partners' Well-being in Response to a Separation Distress**

*Nathalie Meuwly, Joanne Davila*

Positive close relationships have a positive impact on partners' well-being. However, not every individual seem to benefit in the same extent of being in a close relationship. Insecure attachment is suggested to buffer this effect. Previous studies focusing on extradyadic stress revealed that attachment insecurity is associated with increased negative perceptions of dyadic interactions. This study examined the role of dysfunctional cognitions in the context of a relationship stressor. Current cognitions of 155 participants were recorded while they imagined a separation from their romantic partner. The study design was based on the Articulated Thoughts in Simulated Situations Paradigm (ATSS; Davison, Robins, & Johnson, 1983). Highly anxious individuals were found to think more negative about their romantic relationship while imagining a potential relationship threat. They had also more negative cognitions about themselves after the exposure to the potential relationship threat. We found no gender difference for these associations.

**Self-control and Parenting: Does Type of Self-control Matter?**

*Marleen H.M. de Moor, Asuman Buyukcan-Tetik, Myrte Hamburg, Anja Huizink, Mirjam Oosterman, Carlo Schuengel, Catrin Finkenauer*

Parenting involves regulating the child's behavior, while simultaneously regulating one's own behavior and the family environment (Deater-Deckard, 2014). Parents low on trait self-control, defined as the capacity to override and alter one's inner responses, may

experience more difficulties in parenting. Self-control was suggested to consist of two dimensions: restraint/self-discipline and impulse control (Maloney et al., 2012; Morean et al., 2014), but it is unknown whether these dimensions differentially predict parenting. In a study of 779 Dutch mothers, we replicated the two dimensions of self-control. Self-control was positively related to parenting self-efficacy and negatively to parenting stress. Further, restraint, compared to impulse control, was more strongly related to parenting self-efficacy. Parenting stress was similarly related to both types of self-control, and associations were significant for different sources of stress (e.g., mother-child attachment and relationship with spouse).

### **Gratitude Expression in Romantic Relationships: The Role of Self-control**

*Stephanie D. O'Keefe, Harry T. Reis*

Gratitude is adaptive in close relationships, as it promotes relationship maintenance. Though people often experience feelings of gratitude, they do not always express their feelings to the benefactor. We assessed which factors are associated with gratitude expression in romantic relationships. We found that self-control was positively associated with gratitude expression. Individuals low in self-control who are high in avoidant attachment or have better quality of alternatives report less gratitude expression. The direction of these associations reversed for individuals high in self-control. Furthermore, low self-control was associated with more gratitude expression when relationship satisfaction, trust, and self-esteem were high. These associations did not hold for individuals high in self-control. Thus, gratitude expression is effortful, and is associated with individual differences and relationship attributes for individuals low in self-control. Additionally, high self-control buffers the negative effects of relationship threats and insecurity on gratitude expression.

### **Designing a New Positive Psychology Exercise Intervention to Increase Goal Pursuit and Well Being**

*Laura Patrick, Madoka Kumashiro, Rose McGranahan*

Positive psychology exercises (PPEs), such as reflecting on three good things, have been shown to enhance well-being (Seligman et al., 2005). The current exploratory work sought to examine if PPEs can also enhance goal pursuit motivation and to introduce a new PPE, where people are asked to think about affirming close relationships (c.f., Michelangelo phenomenon; Rusbult et al., 2009). 51 participants were randomly assigned to write daily for a week about three good things, early positive memories, best possible self, or relationship affirmation. The first 3 PPEs have been found to be effective in increasing wellbeing, and the last PPE was developed for this study. Several wellbeing and goal motivation measures were assessed before and after the diary entries, 1 week, 1 month and 3 months later. The findings of 5x4 mixed ANOVAs showed that all conditions reported increases in wellbeing and goal pursuit motivation over 3 months.

## **To Understand the Role of Parental Control on Externalising and Internalising Behavior of 8 Year Old Children across 10 Countries**

*Urmila Pillay*

This is part of a longitudinal study carried out by the Parenting Across Cultures Project (PAC) to understand parenting, child development and the role of parenting on children's adjustment and well-being. Participants were recruited through schools in each country. Mothers, fathers, and children completed interviews. In total 1151 families were assessed. Questionnaires used were: The Parent Acceptance - Rejection / Control Questionnaire - Short Form (PARQ/Control-SF; Rohner, 2005); Youth Self Report (YSR, Achenbach, 1991), measuring children's internalising and externalising behaviour problems. Regression analysis showed that the child's perception of parental control was significantly related to children's internalising and not externalising behaviour. Parents' reports of their control were not significantly related to the child's externalising or internalising behaviour. This difference was found even after controlling for culture. Clinical implications will be discussed.

## **Relational and Personal Outcomes of Affective Dysregulation within Intimate Relationships**

*Eshkol Rafaeli, Eran Bar-Kalifa, Naama Gilat, & Lior Eadan*

"Affective instability has often been considered an intraindividual phenomenon, one tied to various personal outcomes (e.g., high depression, low well-being). The recent decade has brought increased consideration of affect regulation as an interpersonal process that occurs within relationships (e.g., Butler, 2011). Inspired by this consideration, we argue that affective (dys-)regulation in the context of close relationships may be as, or even more, important than general affective (dys-)regulation - for both relational outcomes and personal ones. Instability is best indexed using mean-squared-successive differences computed on repeatedly measured data. We used these indices in two dyadic daily diary studies (N=45/80 couples, over 21/35 days, respectively), comparing instability in negative mood (POMS; Cranford et al., 2006) with instability in negative feelings within the relationship (NRF; Rafaeli et al., 2008). The latter was associated with lower relationship satisfaction and greater depression, whereas the former was not."

## **Role of Regulatory Focus and Commitment in Derogating Attractive Alternatives**

*David Rodrigues, Diniz Lopes, Madoka Kumashiro, Rasyid Bo Sanitioso*

Commitment is important for maintenance of romantic relationships, by activating stability-protection mechanisms such as derogating attractive alternatives (Rusbult, 1983). The current research examines if this commitment-derogation link is influenced by individuals' regulatory focus (Higgins, 1997). Our studies analyzed individuals in a promotion motive, focusing on achieving goals and gains versus in a prevention motive, focusing on meeting security needs, and how these different regulatory focus impact on the derogation of alternatives. Study 1 revealed that dating (vs. single) individuals in a predominantly promotion (vs. prevention) focus reported less attraction, but only when they were highly committed. In Study 2 regulatory focus was primed and participants'

relationship was made salient. Dating (vs. single) participants primed with a promotion (vs. prevention) focus reported less attraction, regardless of their commitment level (Study 2). The findings suggest the importance of considering commitment, promotion or prevention motives and salience for relationship maintenance.

### **Relationship Flourishing: Insight into the Concept, a New Scale, and Its Correlates**

*Cagla Sanri*

The fact that current relationship satisfaction measures have a ceiling effect draws attention to the need to revise the upper end of satisfaction where we aim to explore what constitutes highly nurturing, flourishing relationships. Drawing on concepts from positive psychology, we propose a theoretical model of relationship flourishing with four components which fall under two main dimensions of eudemonic and hedonic well-being. The newly developed measure of relationship flourishing has good internal consistency reliability and shows higher sensitivity at the upper end of satisfaction than the current widely used satisfaction measures. The correlations of flourishing with partner's self-regulation and RSR behaviors will be discussed as well as future research directions with this concept and measure.

### **Relationship Self Regulation Differences by Union Type**

*Kevin Shafer, Douglas Wendt*

Research on RSR in four types of couple relationships is presented. These include pre-marital cohabitators, marrieds, post-marital cohabitators, and remarrieds. Using data from 8,006 individuals who took the Relationship Evaluation questionnaire, we found RSR has more positive effects on relationship satisfaction and stability in unions with more relational uncertainty than less uncertain unions. Our results have research and clinical implications which are discussed.

### **Sexual Intimacy And Emotional Recovery After Couple Conflict: An Attachment Perspective**

*Forouz Shirvani, Julie Biemer*

When romantic partners repeatedly fail to recover their intimate connection after a conflict, their relationship is at risk for deterioration (e.g. Gottman & Levenson, 1999). Previous research revealed a positive association between verbal and emotional intimacy and partners' conflict recovery efforts (e.g. Prager et al., in press). However, less attention has been given to sexual intimacy as a strategy for recovering from conflict. Using multilevel modeling, the current study analyzed diary data from 100 cohabiting couples to investigate (1) the effectiveness of sexual intimacy for improving couple partners' moods and relationship satisfaction following conflict, and (2) the moderating role of sexual contact after conflict on attachment insecurity and emotional recovery. Results indicate that sexual intimacy on the day after conflict is associated with an increase in positive mood. Furthermore, anxiously attached individuals who engage in sexual intimacy following conflict are better able to recover from their conflict.

## **Regulation Processes in Get-Acquainted Interactions**

*Susan Sprecher*

Although regulation processes are pervasive in close relationships, they are also likely to be manifested before a relationship begins, including in initial interactions. For example, people can be forthcoming in their disclosures, openness, friendliness, or be more reticent and guarded perhaps due to sensitivity to rejection. In her lab, the author has been conducting several get-acquainted interaction studies, in which dyads of unacquainted individuals engage in a structured self-disclosure task to become acquainted. Previously unanalyzed from these studies are data on how individual difference variables (e.g., shyness, attachment style) are associated with the degree to which individuals report that they are disclosive, open, and friendly in the interaction (as well as how they are rated by their partners on these same dimensions). Preliminary analyses suggest that people who have social deficiencies (shyness, anxiety) regulate their initial interactions in different ways from individuals who do not.

## **Bidding on a “Biddie”: Social Exchange and for-profit Dating**

*Arrington L. Stoll, Kimberly L. Kulovitz*

Online dating is not a new phenomenon, sites such as *whatsyourprice.com* and *misstravel.com* have “generous men” bidding on “beautiful women,” and the motivation for accepting potential dates is based on compensation with the option of counter-bidding and “free market principles. While scholars can speculate as to the impact of online dating sites that employ monetary bidding, little research has fully explored the motivations for engaging in this type of social exchange or the controversy surrounding it. Since interpersonal interactions are guided by calculations of costs and rewards, this study used social exchange theory to analyze how participant’s use of for-profit dating influenced interpersonal goals, rewards, and sense of obligation. Initial findings suggest that participant’s motivation for engaging in monetary bidding could be labeled as “prostitution.” Although site policy states “no escorts allowed,” users did not hide the fact that they were paid for sex.

## **Why Fear the Reaper? Does the Fear of Death Stem from Anxiety or the Need to Belong?**

*Stanislav Treger*

Death is undoubtedly a scary yet unavoidable fate. Numerous studies have demonstrated that thoughts of death elicit a number of negative affective, cognitive, and behavioral outcomes (for a review, see Greenberg & Arndt, 2012). Still, this line of research has not addressed a particularly important question: just why is it that we fear death? In this study, I explored the relative contribution of anxiety and belongingness (as death may signal the ultimate social exclusion; c.f., Leary, 2004) on worldview defense (evaluations of an anti-American essay). The results of an online experiment with a U.S. sample suggested that mortality salience increased belongingness, but not anxiety. Importantly, belongingness mediated the link between mortality salience and worldview defense. Perhaps we do not want to die because we do not want to be kicked out of the party that will be going on without us.



### **Empathy Moderates the Longitudinal Effect of Adolescent-parent Conflict Frequency on Adolescents' Emotion Dysregulation**

*Van Lissa, Caspar J., Hawk, Skyler T., Meeus, Wim H. J.*

Emotion regulation promotes successful adolescent-parent conflict management (Hodgson & Wertheim 2007; Rivers et al., 2006). However, emotion regulation is effortful (Richards & Gross, 1999), and frequent conflicts might deplete adolescents' emotion regulation abilities. Are some youths especially likely to experience such depletion? Low-empathy youths tend to have poorer recognition that adolescent-parent conflicts are occurring (Van Lissa et al., 2014). Conversely, high-empathy individuals are more attuned to changes in interaction partners' negativity (Richardson et al., 1998). If conflict frequency remains consistently high over time, high-empathy adolescents might therefore be more affected. This five-year longitudinal study found that emotional dysregulation predicted increased conflict frequency over time. This effect was not moderated by adolescents' empathy. Frequent conflict also predicted greater emotional dysregulation for high-empathy adolescents, but not for low-empathy adolescents. These results were replicated when replacing emotion dysregulation with a measure of day-to-day mood variability.

### **We Shall Cope Stress Dyadically: Investigating the Association Among Stress, Dyadic Coping and Relationship Satisfaction in Chinese Couples**

*Feng Xu, Peter Hilpert, Fridtjof Nussbeck, Guy Bodenmann*

Drawn on the couples' stress model and the Systemic-transactional Model, we utilized Actor-Partner Interdependence Model to investigate the association among stress, dyadic coping and relationship satisfaction in a sample of 454 Chinese couples under the collectivistic culture. Results revealed that Chinese spouses' perceived of internal stress is a mediator between their perception of external stress and relationship satisfaction and both Chinese husbands and wives' external stress would cross over to partners. Positive dyadic coping alleviated the link between chronic external stress and internal stress and chronic external stress and relationship satisfaction for spouses, which attenuated the mediator role of positive dyadic coping and provided support for the application of STM to an Eastern culture. Notably, we did not find gender differences in all the links of the two models and positive dyadic coping functioned as a mediator in reducing stress and improving relationship satisfaction equally for both genders.