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The Level of Relational Self-Construal Moderates the Relationship between Disclosure and Well-Being

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Abstract

The present study was a quasi-experiment studying whether relational self-construal moderates the relationship between dyadic self-disclosure and well-being. Pairs of high or low relationals were randomly assigned to one of two disclosure conditions: closeness-generating or small-talk generating. After the conversation, participants completed well-being measures. It was hypothesized high relationals would experience higher well-being (higher happiness, state self-esteem, positive affect, and life satisfaction, and lower negative affect and loneliness) in a closeness-generating condition than in a small-talk condition. It was predicted low relationals would experience lower well-being (lower happiness, state self-esteem, positive affect, and life satisfaction, and higher negative affect and loneliness) in the closeness-generating condition than in the small-talk condition. Although no support was found for the hypotheses, high relationals rated themselves higher on happiness and positive affect than low relationals. It was also found that those in the closeness-generating condition had higher state self-esteem and life satisfaction ratings than those in the small-talk condition.

The Level of Relational Self-Construal Moderates the Relationship between

Disclosure and Well-Being

Self-disclosure is essential to all stages of relationship development. In the early stages of a relationship, self-disclosure facilitates gaining information about others, while in established relationships self-disclosure allows for relationship maintenance and the assurance that the needs of others are met (Derlega, Metts, Petronio, & Margulis, 1993). Current research on self-disclosure has examined its influence on the relationship between the two individuals involved (e.g., Gore, Cross, & Morris, 2006; Sprecher, Treger, Wondra, Hilaire, & Wallpe, 2013), but less research exists on the benefits of self-disclosure to the individual. Because people value their relationships to different extents, does self-disclosure benefit some individuals more than others?

Relational Self-Construal

Cross-cultural psychologists have established systematic variation across cultures in the extent to which individuals think about themselves in terms of their social world (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). The concepts independent and interdependent self-construal identify the degree to which an individual incorporates aspects of their social world into their understanding of the self (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Western cultures construct more of an independent self-construal, whereas Eastern cultures construct more of an interdependent self-construal (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Western individuals with an independent self-construal often think of themselves as independent or separate of others and close relationships, valuing individual uniqueness over group memberships (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Those in Eastern cultures with an interdependent self-construal think of themselves as interdependent with their important social roles and situations, therefore incorporating group memberships and close relationships into the idea of the self (Markus & Kitayama, 1991).

Although a majority of individuals within Western cultures have high independent self-construals, variation exists among individuals as to the extent of this independence. In particular, Cross, Bacon, and Morris (2000) found people differ in the extent to which they incorporate relationships with others into their self-concept, termed the relational-interdependent self-construal (RISC; also referred to as relational self-construal). The concept of the relational self-construal identifies individuals within independent self-construal cultures who think of themselves as more interdependent or relational (Cross et al., 2000).

Individuals with a highly relational self-construal, called high relationals, think of themselves in terms of their relationship with close others (Cross et al., 2000). In Western cultures high relationals incorporate close relationships into their understanding of the self, as opposed to in Eastern cultures individuals with highly interdependent self-construals incorporate group memberships into their understanding of the self (Cross et al., 2000). Close individual relationships with others, such as with a best friend, coworker, or spouse are included in the understanding of the self (self-definition and self-expression) for high relationals because it reinforces their connectedness to others (Cross et al., 2000; Morry & Kito, 2009).

Research has shown women score higher on the RISC scale than men (Cross et al., 2000; Cross & Morris, 2003; Gore et al., 2006). A review of literature conducted by Cross and Madson (1997) found women more often describe themselves in terms of their relations to others, whereas men more often describe themselves in terms of their independence from others. It was suggested the gendered social roles experienced by women and men as they grow are influential in how they describe themselves (Cross & Madson, 1997). In U.S. society, women are more frequently expected to be nurturing in raising children, maintaining relationships, and providing social support (Cross & Madson, 1997).

Cross et al. (2000) suggest the cognitive processes of high relationals may be different from those who do not include relationships with others into their self-concept (low relationals). High relationals may integrate the information about close others as self-relevant information. By combining the information about close others with information about the self, high relationals are more attentive to and better remember the information of close individuals, thus allowing high relationals to think and behave in ways which indicate their connectedness and strengthen their close relationships (Cross et al., 2000).

It is likely high relationals vicariously experience the emotions of close others because they are more aware of other's emotions, leading them to experience positive and negative affect to a greater degree (Cross & Madson, 1997). Contrary to high relationals, low relationals separate their relationships from their self-concept. With the separation of relationships and the self, low relationals disclose less of their emotions to others and avoid the spillover of social affect into their personal affect (Cross & Madson, 1997).

The motivational processes of high relationals may also differ from low relationals. Positive feelings about the self are likely to surface for high relationals when their goals of developing and maintaining close relationships are reached (Cross et al., 2000; Cross & Madson, 1997). The decisions and social interactions of high relationals, as compared to low relationals, are centered on their obligations and responsiveness to other's needs (Cross & Madson, 1997). Research has not explicitly determined the relationship between high relationals and the intimacy motive or need for affiliation. Theoretically, it is expected the RISC scale would correlate highly with measures of affiliation, but this relationship may not exist in the reverse (Cross et al., 2000). In other words, a high relational should score high on intimacy or affiliation measures, but an individual who scores high on intimacy or affiliation measures does not necessarily recognize

this motive or incorporate this need into their self-concept, therefore they may not be a high

relational (Cross et al., 2000).

For low relationals, positive feelings are likely to surface when they feel autonomous and

appear separate or better than others, especially in relation to self-defining areas (Cross et al.,

2000; Cross & Madson, 1997). Cross and Madson (1997) discuss when the uniqueness or

specialness of low relationals' various behaviors, skills, or attributes are displayed, their self-

esteem is often enhanced. As stated earlier, all individuals desire relationships with others,

including low relationals. Unlike high relationals, the relationships valued by low relationals

center on individualistic goals, providing a gauge allowing the low relationals to recognize where

they stand relative to others in domains such as abilities, attributes, and uniqueness (Cross &

Madson, 1997).

In comparison to low relationals, high relationals work to establish close relationships to

maintain positive feelings about themselves and their self-esteem through self-disclosure of

feelings and thoughts (Cross & Madson, 1997). Low relationals may feel their self-esteem

threatened by interdependent relationships (Cross & Madson, 1997). To avoid self-esteem

threats, low relationals may avoid sharing their feelings and thoughts with others and participate

in a "descriptive" self-disclosure instead of an "evaluative" disclosure (Morton, 1978).

Descriptive self-disclosure consists of the disclosure of private facts about oneself, whereas

evaluative self-disclosure consists of one disclosing "personal or intense feelings or judgments"

(Morton, 1978). Evidence has shown evaluative self-disclosure is central to the existence of

close, intimate relationships (Cross & Madson, 1997). The tendency for low relationals to avoid

this type of self-disclosure allows them to avoid a reduction of autonomy and separateness,

which occurs during interdependent relationships (Cross & Madson, 1997).

The present study defined one aspect of an individual's well-being as *state self-esteem*. Self-esteem "functions as a *sociometer* that monitors the degree to which the individual is being included versus excluded by other people and motivates the person to behave in ways that minimize the probability of rejection or exclusion," according to Leary, Tambor, Terdal, and Downs (1995, p. 518). In this sense, self-esteem acts like a fuel gauge measuring the social relations of an individual (Leary et al., 1995). When the gauge is full, it indicates to the individual they are being included by others. However, when the gauge is closer to empty, the individual is being socially excluded. Leary and colleagues (1995) argue self-esteem is a sociometer which indicates to an individual when they must alter their behavior to return to a status of social inclusion. The sociometer notifies the individual of how well they are maintaining interpersonal relationships because one's state self-esteem produces emotions indicating the degree of social inclusion and motivates the individual to maintain social relationships to avoid the negative emotions of exclusion (Leary et al., 1995). All human beings strive to make connections with others, with human survival dependent on inclusion and connectedness. Self-esteem as a sociometer indicates to individuals when these human needs are not met (Leary et al., 1995).

In a study conducted by Leary et al. (1995), individuals who were accepted by a partner after describing themselves felt more positively than individuals who were excluded by their partner. This study found it did not matter whether or not an individual disregarded another's exclusion and exclusionary comments as inaccurate: self-esteem was still lowered when one was excluded (Leary et al., 1995). The study conducted by Leary et al. (1995) centered on state self-esteem, highlighting that individual's self-feelings and self-esteem can increase or decrease based on social inclusion or exclusion.

Additional research has studied the relational self-construal in other social contexts, such as social support. Heintzelman and Bacon (2015) found relational self-construal moderated the association between social support and life satisfaction. Evidence showed high relationals benefit, in terms of life satisfaction, to a greater extent from social support when experiencing stress as compared to low relationals (Heintzelman & Bacon, 2015). Life satisfaction among low relationals experiencing stress was low no matter the amount of perceived social support (Heintzelman & Bacon, 2015). The moderating influence of the relational self-construal on the relationship between social support and life satisfaction helps to understand the role of the self in a social context. While social support has been found to have many positive benefits for individuals, these benefits, especially in terms of life satisfaction, are influenced by the relational self-construal of the individual receiving the social support (Heintzelman & Bacon, 2015).

Similar to the influence of the relational self-construal on social support and life satisfaction, relational self-construal was found to moderate the relationship between relationship closeness and well-being. Cross and Morris (2003) conducted a study on roommate pairs in which high and low relationals differed in the extent to which relationship closeness increased individual well-being. Roommate pairs who had not previously known each other completed measures pertaining to their individual RISC score, the relationship closeness with their roommate, along with their well-being, measured by the Satisfaction With Life Scale (Cross & Morris, 2003). Cross and Morris (2003) found that for high relationals, greater depth of closeness in the roommate relationship related to a greater life satisfaction. Unlike high relationals, the life satisfaction of low relationals was reduced as the depth of closeness between roommates became greater (Cross & Morris, 2003). In other words, Cross and Morris (2003) found individual's relational self-construal moderated the relationship between closeness and

well-being. It is likely the high relationals viewed the greater depth of closeness in the relationship as fulfilling a goal of developing and maintaining close relationships, thus leading to the increased well-being and satisfaction with their life. For low relationals, it is likely the demands of a close relationship invaded their sense of autonomy and independence from their roommate, thus lowering their satisfaction with life.

Morry, Kito, Mann, and Hill (2013) found the RISC related to how one perceives their friends and friendship quality. The study asked participants to nominate three friends and results found individuals nominated friends who they perceived had similar RISC levels as themselves; high relationals perceive friends to have higher RISC levels, whereas low relationals perceive friends to have lower RISC levels (Morry et al., 2013). Thus, from the nominations individuals preferred friends who they perceived had a similar RISC level whether or not the friends actually had the perceived RISC level.

Morry et al. (2013) also found that although individuals prefer others who they perceive have a similar RISC level, individuals, regardless of their own RISC level (high or low), reported higher relationship quality with friends perceived to be high relationals and have high RISC levels. High relationals prefer being friends with individuals who they perceive are high relationals, and seem to have the highest relationship quality with these individuals. For low relationals the relationship is not as consistent; low relationals prefer being friends with individuals who are perceived to be low relationals, but the low relationals have the highest relationship quality with individuals perceived to have higher RISC levels. It is possible the level and type of disclosure between friends could impact why low relationals prefer friendships with other perceived low relationals, but experience higher relationship quality with higher relationals. Higher levels of disclosure, such as closeness-generating disclosure, are often used

when furthering a friendship or relationship. If high levels of disclosure are discussed between low relationals the disclosure may not be acknowledged and valued to the extent it would be with a high relational.

High relationals think of themselves in terms of their close relationships. High relationals maintain these relationships by incorporating information about close others into self-relevant information, as well as by being responsive to the needs of close others. Low relationals think of themselves as independent from close relationships and work to maintain autonomy and independence from close others. As high relationals maintain close interpersonal relationships, it is likely their sociometer will increase because these relationships will make them feel included and fulfill their goal of developing close relationships. Low relationals will likely experience an increase in their sociometer when they develop and maintain interpersonal relationships which allow them to retain their sense of independence. As past research has shown, if low relationals experience close relationships which invade upon their independence, it is likely their well-being will decrease as their goal of maintaining independence in relationships is not met.

Self-Disclosure

Self-disclosure is an essential aspect of forming relationships. Self-disclosure assists relationship development because it allows individuals to gain information about the other in order to determine if they would get along (Derlega et al., 1993). Self-disclosure is also useful in relationship maintenance because it provides information pertaining to the needs of the other, thus allowing individuals to alter their behavior to either meet or not meet the needs of the other, depending on whether they want to continue the relationship (Derlega et al., 1993). Self-disclosure can provide self-validation to individuals as they talk with another and gain feedback and insight into their feelings, thoughts, and problems (Derlega et al., 1993).

There is a mutually transformative relationship between disclosure and relationships; the information self-disclosed can change the nature of the relationship, as the nature of the relationship can transform the understanding and effects of the self-disclosure (Derlega et al., 1993). Personal self-disclosure could either result in closeness between two newly acquainted individuals or foster objection (or rejection) if the personal self-disclosure is perceived as inappropriate to the relatively new relationship. Self-disclosure can also have positive benefits for the self through stress-reduction and social support. Research has shown that withholding disclosure about traumatic experiences in one's life was associated with greater physical ailments and psychological stress (Derlega et al., 1993). Self-disclosure is vital to relationship development and maintenance, providing a foundation for an individual to build connections with others, to validate themselves, their feelings, and their experiences.

Aron, Melinat, Aron, Vallone, and Bator (1997) created a method for establishing closeness in an experimental manner. In their studies, pairs of participants self-disclosed in response to pre-established questions expected to result in closeness, while other pairs discussed pre-established questions expected to result in small-talk. The results showed that the closeness-generating questions led the pairs to feel significantly closer to their partner than individuals who discussed questions resulting in small-talk (Aron et al., 1997). Contrary to previous research, no support was found for the importance of perceived similarity between the pair, because pairs still experienced closeness with an individual who held disagreeing views (Aron et al., 1997). Furthermore, the results showed that closeness was still experienced by pairs even without an explicit statement that closeness was the task of the interaction (Aron et al., 1997).

Personality was found to relate to the amount of closeness felt by pairs (Aron et al., 1997). Aron et al. (1997) found that when no specific instructions were stated about generating

closeness and extraverts were paired with other extraverts, they reported a greater level of

closeness than introverts who were paired with other introverts. In the same study by Aron et al.

(1997), when extraverted pairs and introverted pairs were explicitly told their task was to

develop closeness, the differences in closeness between personality types disappeared. Thus,

Aron et al. (1997) describe an effective method of generating closeness because closeness was

produced in varied conditions, but not in the small-talk conditions.

The amount of self-disclosure to same-sex and opposite-sex partners differs between

genders. A meta-analysis conducted by Dindia and Allen (1992) found women disclose more to

other women than men disclose to women, and that women do not disclose more to men than

men disclose to men. Among same-sex partners, it was found female-to-female self-disclosure

produced more disclosure than male-to-male disclosure (Dindia & Allen, 1992). It is suggested

that women may avoid self-disclosing when interacting with a man in order to reduce potential

negative relationship outcomes and personal hurt (Dindia & Allen, 1997).

Although research has shown that self-disclosure itself does not predict the stability and

quality of a relationship, it is likely self-disclosure interacts with other variables influencing

whether a relationship continues (Sprecher & Hendrick, 2004). When studying self-disclosure

within romantic couples, Sprecher and Hendrick (2004) found self-disclosure did not predict

whether couples stayed together one to four years after first being interviewed. It is likely other

factors, such as partner listening and understanding, or their relational self-construal level, could

influence the future of a relationship. Additionally, Sprecher and Hendrick (2004) found a

relationship between self-disclosure and well-being when studying romantic couples; it was

found among women that high relational self-esteem (one's self-esteem in terms of their

relationships with others) was associated with high personal self-disclosure and the perceived amount of partner disclosure.

Cross et al. (2000) found evidence supporting that high relationals both disclose more information and elicit more self-disclosure from the relationship partner. While high relationals have been found to be related to higher disclosure, extraversion does not necessarily play a role in the relationship because the RISC is only moderately related to extraversion (Cross et al., 2000; Morry & Kito, 2009). Individuals paired with a high relational as opposed to a low relational found the interaction more satisfying and expressed more partiality and closeness toward their partner (Cross et al., 2000). The amount of self-disclosure that took place between partners was significantly related to the partner's perception of the high relational's responsiveness (Cross et al., 2000). In turn, the amount of satisfaction in the interaction felt by the partner was strongly related to their perception of responsiveness to their disclosure (Cross et al., 2000). These studies provide understanding of how close relationships are formed for high relationals (Cross et al., 2000). High relationals are more likely to disclose to others than low relationals. By doing so, the individual disclosed to by the high relational perceives and evaluates the high relational as more responsive, concerned, and caring (Cross et al., 2000). Individuals who perceive their relationship partner as more responsive and sensitive to their concerns are thus more likely to positively rate the relationship (Cross et al., 2000).

Another study conducted by Gore, Cross, and Morris (2006) further supports the importance of self-disclosure between individuals in the process of creating and maintaining close relationships. High relationals more willingly shared emotional and personal information about themselves with their roommate compared to low relationals. Subsequently, high relationals were viewed as more responsive by their roommates (Gore et al., 2006). Similar to

the research of Cross et al. (2000), Gore et al. (2006) found that the evaluation of relationship quality from the roommate was related to their perception of their partner's emotional disclosure along with their partner's responsiveness (which were related to each other). It can be determined from these findings that emotional disclosure and responsiveness are intricate parts of closeness and commitment in relationships, especially newly initiated ones (Gore et al., 2006). A second study conducted by Gore et al. (2006) provided evidence that disclosure from high relationals elicits similar intimate disclosure from their partner, which causes a reciprocated sense of disclosure, thus supporting the previous study mentioned. In turn, intimate disclosure establishes a cycle which strengthens and maintains the relationship (Gore et al., 2006).

Research conducted by Morry (2005) studied the personal attribute of allocentrism, a collectivistic trait where one centers their focus and behaviors on others instead of themselves, and its relationship with cross-sex friendship satisfaction. Results of Morry's (2005) study found individuals who scored higher on allocentrism reported disclosing more to a friend, their friend disclosing more to them in return, the friendship was reported as closer, and they found more satisfaction with the friendship. The relationship between allocentrism and interpersonal variables is similar to the relationship between high relationals and interpersonal variables. Both high allocentric individuals and high relationals were found to disclose more and perceived the relationship as closer. These results show support for personal attributes influencing interpersonal variables, such as disclosure and closeness, instead of an inverse relationship (Morry, 2005).

Similar to the study conducted by Gore et al. (2006), reciprocity of self-disclosure was further studied by Sprecher, Treger, Wondra, Hilaire, and Wallpe (2013) examining how self-disclosure reciprocity relates to feelings about the interaction (such as liking). Two types of self-

disclosure reciprocity were studied: turn-taking reciprocity and extended reciprocity. Turn-taking reciprocity involves immediate self-disclosure between individuals, therefore after one self-discloses the other responds with their own self-disclosure (Sprecher et al., 2013). In contrast, extended reciprocity involves reciprocating disclosure, but over a longer period of time, an example would be one individual asking the other questions for the entire time then switching roles (Sprecher et al., 2013).

Sprecher et al. (2013) found that after the first interaction, when dyads either took turns disclosing (reciprocal disclosure) or one partner disclosed and the other listened (non-reciprocal disclosure), reciprocally disclosing dyads reported higher liking, levels of closeness, perceived similarity, and enjoyment in the interaction than non-reciprocal dyads. It is likely participants in the reciprocal disclosure dyads reported greater liking and closeness for the interaction because they may have perceived greater responsiveness (Sprecher et al., 2013). As dyad members responded immediately in a turn-taking style to the self-disclosure of the other, there was room for acknowledgement and concern toward what was said by the partner, likely leading to a higher sense of responsiveness and affirmation nonexistent in the non-reciprocal dyads. Among non-reciprocal dyads, higher closeness was reported for those who initially listened to their partner compared to those who initially disclosed (Sprecher et al., 2013). This finding supports that receiving disclosure can be more influential in the amount of closeness generated than giving disclosure (Sprecher et al., 2013).

Additional research has examined which aspect of self-disclosure, giving or receiving, is related to greater liking and closeness of the interaction. Sprecher, Treger, and Wondra (2013) found that receiving rather than giving disclosure is related to increased liking, enjoyment of the interaction, and closeness to the discussion partner. It is likely when one receives disclosure,

knowledge and information is provided about the other, allowing the receiver to become more familiar with the discloser (Sprecher et al., 2013). It was found when roles switched (the receiver disclosing and the discloser receiving), the new receiver experienced similar increases in liking, enjoyment, and closeness as the first receiver (Sprecher et al., 2013).

Vittengl and Holt (2000) found positive and negative affect were related to aspects of social relationship development. After brief dyadic conversations, increases in positive affect were predicted by participants' increased self-disclosure and social attraction (attracted as a potential friend; liking) to their discussion partners (Vittengl & Holt, 2000). It was also found self-disclosure and social attraction to discussion partners were positively related suggesting that self-disclosure is linked to liking or social attraction, and positive emotions (Vittengl & Holt, 2000). Vittengl and Holt (2000) also found negative affect to significantly decrease after conversations, which was predicted by participants' report of their larger contribution to the conversation (how much more they talked during the conversation than their partner). It is possible the relationship between negative affect and contribution to the conversation was present because individuals felt relief by simply contributing to the conversation, instead of specifically self-disclosing information (self-disclosure was not related to negative affect, Vittengl & Holt, 2000).

Self-disclosure is beneficial to relationship development and maintenance as it provides information about the relationship partner and allows the individual to gain insight into the needs of the partner. Past research has shown that while self-disclosure is beneficial in relationships, there are other factors which play a role, such as partner listening and understanding (Sprecher & Hendrick, 2004). Studies have found high relationals disclose more and elicit more disclosure from their partner which likely causes the disclosure to appear appropriate and not overwhelm

the relationship partner (Cross et al., 2000). As high relationals elicit similar intimate disclosure from their partner, there is a sense of reciprocity in disclosure (Gore et al., 2006). The reciprocal sense of disclosure leads relationship partners to perceive their high relational partner as more responsive (than low relationals), thus increasing ratings of relationship quality (Cross et al., 2000).

Study 1

In the current study, it was expected the level of relational self-construal would moderate the relationship between self-disclosure and well-being. When discussing closeness-generating topics, high relationals would likely disclose more and elicit more disclosure from their partner leading to higher levels of closeness. The increased closeness would be related to higher relationship quality and an expected higher well-being among high relationals. When closeness-generating topics were discussed between low relationals, the closeness would interfere with their independence and autonomy, thus relating to lower levels of well-being among low relationals.

The first study was a quasi-experiment in which pairs of high or low relationals were randomly assigned to one of two disclosure conditions: closeness-generating or small-talk generating. The disclosure conditions utilized the interaction designs established by Aron et al. (1997) and revised by Cross et al. (2000). After the disclosure, participants answered questions about their sense of well-being.

Participants were paired with another participant of their same relational level; the high relationals paired with high relationals, and low relationals paired with low relationals. These two extremes were selected in order to increase the power of the designed study.

Hypotheses

It was predicted high relationals would experience higher well-being (higher happiness, state self-esteem, positive affect, and life satisfaction, and lower negative affect and loneliness) in the closeness-generating condition than in the small-talk condition. It was also predicted low relationals would experience lower well-being (lower happiness, state self-esteem, positive affect, and life satisfaction, and higher negative affect and loneliness) in the closeness-generating condition than in the small-talk condition.

This hypothesis was expected to be supported because high relationals would receive an internal "boost" from the disclosure since they would feel their goal of building close relationships being accomplished. If a high relational believed they were meeting one of their relationship goals, they would feel satisfied with themselves and have a higher well-being. As stated earlier, high relationals vicariously experience the emotions of close others and if closeness was increased through closeness-generating disclosure, high relationals would likely enjoy the discussion, and receive increased happiness and positive affect, which would be vicariously experienced by each member of the dyad. Positive affect would also increase in individuals when there was an increase in participant self-disclosure and liking for their partner. It was expected high relational partners would express high levels of responsiveness and take turns reciprocating disclosure which would likely increase the amount of closeness-generating information disclosed and increase liking between partners. High relationals were to feel a large contribution to the conversation which, as stated earlier, was expected to reduce negative affect. As more closeness-generating information was disclosed, it was expected the life satisfaction of high relationals would increase as they found the closeness fulfilling to their goals of developing

close relationships. The developed closeness between the high relational dyad would expectedly reduce feelings of loneliness.

Low relationals do not strive for relationships to a similar extent as high relationals and because of this, low relationals would not experience as high a level of well-being and happiness when disclosing in a situation fostering closeness. Instead, low relationals would feel this intimate disclosure impedes their separateness and hinders their goal to remain separate from others. The impediment of closeness-generating self-disclosure would likely reduce positive affect, and instead increase negative affect because low relationals experience closeness-generating disclosure as distressing rather than enjoyable. As stated earlier, when low relationals disclose closeness-generating information, it was expected the depth of closeness would increase leading to a decrease in life satisfaction. Loneliness was expected to increase among low relationals because, as discussed earlier, the interaction would not result in a high relationship quality as if the low relational was interacting with a high relational.

Conversing with another over trivial life details would foster a high well-being for low relationals compared to low relationals conversing with another over personal life matters because the small-talk between low relationals allow dyad members to retain their sense of independence. Low relationals conversing about trivial matters would not feel as though their partner is infringing upon their autonomous selves, resulting in a higher well-being compared to low relationals who converse about deeper personal matters.

High relationals would experience higher well-being and low relationals would experience lower well-being in the closeness-generating condition than in the small-talk condition.

Method

Participants

Participants were 78 female students, ranging from first-years to seniors, from a small

liberal arts college in the Midwest. Female students were selected to reduce potential confounds

of gender and potential romantic attraction on self-disclosure (similar approaches have been used

by Cross et al., 2000; Cross & Morris, 2002). The participants were enrolled in an introductory

psychology course and received partial course credit for their participation. Only participants

who scored in the top (a score of 63 or above) or bottom (a score of 58 or below) third on the

RISC participated in the study in order to enhance statistical power. To qualify for the study,

participants could not consider their partner a "friend," as this would alter the level and amount

of disclosure experienced during the study. Two pairs of participants were removed prior to

participating in the study because they considered themselves friends. All participants were

paired with a partner of the same relational level (high or low). Pairs were randomly assigned to

one of two disclosure conditions: a condition in which closeness was generated or a condition in

which small-talk was generated. The high relational small-talk condition consisted of 10 pairs,

the low relational small-talk condition consisted of 10 pairs, the high relational closeness-

generating condition consisted of 10 pairs, and the low relational closeness-generating condition

consisted of 9 pairs.

Measures

Relational-Interdependent Self-Construal Scale. The Relational-Interdependent Self-

Construal (RISC; Cross et al., 2000; see Appendix A) scale assessed the extent to which

participants define themselves in terms of close relationships. This measure contained 11 items

responded to on a 7-point Likert scale format, ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly*

agree), with two items reversed scored. Possible scores ranged from 11 to 77, with higher scores

indicating a higher relational self-construal. Instead of referring to specific relationships, the

items on the scale referred to how one defines themselves in terms of general close relationships

(e.g., "My close relationships are an important reflection of who I am"). Cross et al. (2000)

found the scale correlated moderately with the Communal Orientation Scale (Clark, Ouellette,

Powell, & Millberg, 1987), the Interdependent Self-Construal Scale (Singelis, 1994), and the

Empathic Concern Scale (Davis, 1980). These correlations indicated the scale measures

interdependence and awareness of other's feelings and thoughts (Cross et al., 2000). The scale

did not correlate strongly with measures of independence, such as Singelis' (1994) Independent

Self-Construal Scale (Cross et al., 2000). Principal components analysis of the RISC scale

provided support for a single factor of the items in the scale accounting for 47% of the total

variance (Cross et al., 2000). The reliability of the measure was acceptable with coefficient

alphas ranging from .85 to .90, and test-retest reliability over a 2-month period of .73 (Cross et

al., 2000). In the current study the reliability was acceptable with a coefficient alpha of .88.

The Fordyce Emotions Questionnaire. The Fordyce Emotions Questionnaire (Fordyce,

1988; see Appendix B) assessed how happy or unhappy participants were "right now" on an 11-

point scale ranging from 0 (*Extremely unhappy [utterly depressed, completely down]*) to 10

(*Extremely happy [feeling ecstatic, joyous, fantastic!]*), as participants selected one item to

represent their current happiness level. Analysis has shown test-retest reliability after one month

to be .59, and after two months to be .59 (Fordyce, 1988). Coefficient alpha could not be

computed for this one-item measure. Research has shown the questionnaire is sensitive to short-

term change which is beneficial in this study because well-being (including happiness) was

expected to be influenced by a short conversation (Fordyce, 1988). The questionnaire has

acceptable convergent validity with other measures of well-being, such as Diener et al.'s (1985)

Satisfaction With Life Scale and Fordyce's (1986) Psychap Inventory achieved happiness scale

(Fordyce, 1988).

The State Self-Esteem Scale. The State Self-Esteem Scale (SSES; Heatherton & Polivy,

1991; see Appendix C) measured participant state self-esteem. This 20-item measure required

participants to respond using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (*not at all*) to 5 (*extremely*),

and possible scores ranged from 20 (low state self-esteem) to 100 (high state self-esteem). The

items on the SSES pertained to how the participant was thinking and feeling right now or in the

current moment, instead of overall (e.g., "I feel that others respect and admire me," "I feel good

about myself"). The scale contained five areas pertaining to state self-esteem: academic,

performance, social, appearance, and general self-esteem (Heatherton & Polivy, 1991). Analysis

found the items from all five areas to be very homogeneous, with a coefficient alpha for the scale

being .92 (Heatherton & Polivy, 1991). In the current study the internal reliability was excellent

with a coefficient alpha of .91. Three factors within the scale accounted for all 20-items

(performance, social, and appearance self-esteem) and were found to have eigenvalues greater

than 1.00 and accounted for 50.4% of total variability in scores (Heatherton & Polivy, 1991).

Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS). The Positive and Negative Affect

Schedule (PANAS; Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988; see Appendix D) assessed participant

mood in terms of positive affect (PA) and negative affect (NA). The measure contained two 10-

item mood scales with randomly distributed terms related to both positive affect (e.g.,

"attentive," "excited," "enthusiastic") and negative affect (e.g., "upset," "irritable," "scared").

Participants responded to these 20 items based on how much they experienced the mood related

item "right now" (at the present moment), using a 5-point scale, ranging from 1 (*very slightly or*

not at all) to 5 (*extremely*). On the positive affect scale, possible scores ranged from 10 (low

positive affect) to 50 (high positive affect). On the negative affect scale, possible scores ranged

from 10 (low negative affect) to 50 (high negative affect). The PANAS when used under

"moment time" instructions had a Cronbach's alpha of .89 for the PA scale, and .85 for the NA

scale (Watson et al., 1988). In the current study, the PA scale of the PANAS had an acceptable

coefficient alpha of .86, as did the NA scale of the PANAS with a coefficient alpha of .84.

Intercorrelation of the PA and NA scales was -.15 for the "moment time" instructions, indicating

these scales did not share much of their variance because they were independent dimensions.

Correlations between the PA and NA scales were low, and the scales shared roughly 1% to 5%

of their variance indicating quasi-independence (Watson et al., 1988). Two dominant factors

were found which accounted for 62.8% of the common variance in the moment time instructions

(Watson et al., 1988). The test-retest reliability after two months was adequate for "in the

moment" time instructions, .54 for the PA scale and .45 for the NA scale (Watson et al., 1988).

As discussed by Watson et al. (1988), the stability of the retests increased as the instruction time

frame increased because when responding to the "in the past year" instructions compared to the

"in the moment" time instructions, individuals aggregated their experiences over a longer time

frame leading to more stability.

UCLA Loneliness Scale (Version 3). The latest revision of the UCLA Loneliness Scale

(Version 3) assessed participant loneliness (Russell, 1996; see Appendix E). The measure

contained a total of 20 items, with 11 negatively worded (lonely items) and nine positively

worded (non-lonely items) which were reversed scored, and possible scores ranged from 20 (low

loneliness) to 80 (high loneliness). Every question began with "How often do you feel . . ." and

then asked how the individual felt about their relationships with others (e.g., "How often do you

feel you lack companionship," "How often do you feel that your relationships with others are not meaningful"). Participants responded to these items based on a 4-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (*never*) to 4 (*always*). Scale validation was conducted on the UCLA Loneliness Scale (Version 3) by Russell (1996) and he determined the scale provided reliable and valid loneliness assessments for different populations. When the scale was used with college students coefficient alpha was .92 (ranging from .89 to .94 across the other samples), and test-retest reliability for the scale when used with an elderly population sample was .73 (Russell, 1996). In the current study, the internal reliability of the measure was excellent with a coefficient alpha of .90. The scale has shown high convergent validity as it correlated highly with other measures of loneliness: NYU Loneliness Scale, Differential Loneliness Scale, and Social Provisions Scale (Russell, 1996). Discriminant validity was present in the scale as factor analysis has shown the UCLA Loneliness Scale (Version 3) and measures of social support contained distinct factors that related differently to mood and personality (Russell, 1996). The construct validity of the scale was also supported as the scale was significantly related to Neuroticism and Introversion-Extroversion personality traits (Russell, 1996).

      Satisfaction With Life Scale.   The Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS; Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin, 1985; see Appendix F) assessed participant global life satisfaction. This 5-item scale asked participants an overall judgment of their life to determine their satisfaction with it (e.g., "In most ways my life is close to my ideal," "I am satisfied with my life"). Participants responded based on a 7-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*), and possible scores ranged from 5 (low satisfaction) to 35 (high satisfaction). Research has indicated the SWLS has acceptable reliability and validity. Coefficient alpha for the scale in past research has been .87, and two-month test-retest

correlation produced a correlation coefficient of .82 (Diener et al., 1985). In the current study,

the internal reliability of the scale was acceptable with a coefficient alpha of .80. Past research

has determined the scale contained one factor that accounts for 66% of the variance (Diener et

al., 1985). The scale demonstrated high convergent validity as past research has shown

moderately strong correlations with other measures of subjective well-being, Tellegen's (1979)

Differential Personality Questionnaire, and Campbell, Converse, and Rodgers' (1976) semantic

differential-life scale (Diener et al., 1985). Criterion validity determined from past research was

moderately strong with a correlation coefficient of .46 between Adams' (1969) Life Satisfaction

Index and the SWLS (Diener et al., 1985).

> **Ten-Item Personality Inventory.** The Ten-Item Personality Inventory (TIPI; Gosling,

Rentfrow, & Swann, 2003; see Appendix G and H) was used for the cover story and not to

determine personality traits. Each item in the 10-item inventory consisted of two descriptors,

which were separated by a comma (e.g., "extraverted, enthusiastic," "anxious, easily upset").

The items were read using the stem, "I see myself as:". Participants were asked to rate the extent

to which each item listed applied to themselves using a 7-point Likert scale, ranging from 1

(*disagree strongly*) to 7 (*agree strongly*).

Closeness-Generating Induction Task

> **Self-Disclosure.** Participants used slips with disclosure questions established by Aron et

al. (1997; see Appendix I and J), revised for time constraints by Cross et al. (2000), to generate

closeness or small-talk disclosure. Each disclosure condition (small-talk generating and

closeness-generating) contained 15 questions (reduced due to a time constraint of 20 minutes for

disclosure) chosen by the author with insight provided by Cross et al. (2000) from the original 36

by Aron et al. (1997). Through personal communication with Cross (S. Cross, personal

communication, July 1, 2015), the author was provided with the closeness-generating questions

used in Cross et al.'s (2000) study to generate closeness under time constraints, and advised to

replace any of these questions with others from Aron et al. (1997) which might be more

applicable or better suited for the current college student. Items from Aron et al. (1997) found to

induce closeness were used to establish a temporary feeling of closeness between participants as

they required disclosure of deep, personal information (e.g., "For what in your life do you feel

most grateful," "What is the greatest accomplishment of your life," "What is your most treasured

memory"). The small-talk generating slips contained items which initiated superficial and trivial

disclosure (e.g., "How did you celebrate Halloween last year," "What is a good number of

people to have in a student household and why," "What are the advantages and disadvantages of

artificial Christmas trees"). Two of the items in the small-talk condition were changed to refer to

the current environment of the participants; "UCSC (University of California Santa Cruz)" was

replaced with "CSB (College of Saint Benedict)." Research has shown the nature of the

disclosure (whether closeness-generating, or small-talk generating) makes the most significant

difference when inducing closeness (Aron et al., 1997). Research by Aron et al. (1997) showed a

difference in the mean scores of closeness from a closeness-generating condition and a small-talk

condition representing a significant effect size (*d*) of .88 standard deviations.

Manipulation Check

      Evaluation of Disclosure Session Questions. At the end of the questionnaire (see

Appendix K), participants answered four items pertaining to the disclosure they experienced with

their partner. Participants responded to the four items using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from

1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). The first two questions were combined to determine

the extent dyads disclosed closeness-generating information ("I disclosed deep and personal

information with my partner," "I feel my partner disclosed deep and personal information with

me"), and possible scores ranged from 2 (low closeness-generating information) to 10 (high

closeness-generating information). The third and fourth questions were combined to determine

the extent dyads disclosed small-talk generating information ("I disclosed trivial and minor

important information with my partner," "My partner disclosed trivial and minor important

information with me"), and possible scores ranged from 2 (low small-talk generating

information) to 10 (high small-talk generating information). Participants responded to all four

questions regardless of which condition they were in (closeness-generating or small-talk). Two

questions were included to determine how well participants knew their partner before the study

and their opinions toward their partner after the study ("Before today, I would have considered

my discussion partner a(n)," "After today's discussion, I consider my discussion partner a(n)").

Participants responded to both questions by circling the answer from four choices provided:

stranger, *acquaintance*, *casual friend,* or *friend*. A final question asked participants how often

they conversed about their personal lives with their partner before today's discussion ("Before

today, I regularly had in-depth conversations with my discussion partner about our personal

lives"). Participants responded to the last question in the same manner as the first four questions,

using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*).

Procedure

        Participants completed the RISC inventory online as part of the introductory psychology

subject pool prescreening. In the online prescreening participants completed the RISC inventory

to determine whether they scored high, low, or in the middle on relational self-construal.

Participants who scored high randomly selected a time slot (not knowing whether it was the

small-talk or closeness condition) from available time slots with other high-scoring participants,

whereas participants who scored low randomly selected available time slots available to other

low-scoring participants (not knowing which time slots were which disclosure conditions).

Random assignment was ensured as the participants selected their time slots unsystematically.

After arriving at the experimental session participants completed an informed consent

form. Then they were told the purpose of the experiment was to collect insight into whether

certain personality traits allow individuals to better predict the personality of their partner after

conversation. Participants independently completed TIPI questionnaires pertaining to their

personality as part of the cover story (see Appendix G). Next pairs were randomly assigned to a

disclosure condition and received envelopes containing disclosure items, either closeness-

generating or small-talk slips (see Appendix I and J). Before the pairs engaged in self-

disclosure, the experimenter asked the participants if they were friends. If pairs stated they were

friends they were debriefed as to the purpose of the study, both received a PRIA credit, and were

allowed to leave without finishing the study. Asking pairs if they were friends prior to beginning

self-disclosure saved time because the data obtained from these friend pairs would be eliminated

due to the fact the two participants knew each other well prior to participating in the study.

If pairs did not know each other as friends, participants engaged in the disclosure task

(either the closeness-generating or small-talk generating) for 20 minutes without the

experimenter in the room. Again, participants independently completed a second questionnaire

containing the TIPI (which they answered about their partner to enhance the cover story; see

Appendix H), a happiness measure (Fordyce, 1988; see Appendix B), a state self-esteem measure

(SSES; Heatherton & Polivy, 1991; see Appendix C), a mood measure (PANAS; Watson, Clark,

& Tellegen, 1988; see Appendix D), a loneliness measure (Russell, 1996; see Appendix E),

satisfaction with life (SWLS; Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin, 1985; see Appendix F), and a

manipulation check (see Appendix K). Participants returned the second set of questionnaires to

the experimenter and were debriefed as to the true purpose of the study (see Appendix L).

Results

Manipulation Check

After the disclosure task, participants were asked to indicate their level of agreement to

two questions pertaining to the extent to which they and their partner disclosed deep information.

To determine whether the closeness-generating condition made participants perceive the

conversation as more intimate than in the small-talk generating condition, an independent-

samples t-test was conducted. There was a significant difference in ratings of the depth of

closeness-generating disclosure between participants in the small-talk generating and closeness-

generating conditions, $t(76) = -6.76$, $p < .001$, $d = -1.55$. Those in the small-talk generating

condition reported disclosing less closeness-generating information ($M = 4.60$, $SD = 1.89$) than

those in the closeness-generating condition ($M = 7.45$, $SD = 1.83$). There was no significant

difference between disclosure conditions for the ratings of small-talk generating disclosure, $t(76)$

$= -0.16$, $p = .87$, $d = -0.04$. The results suggest the disclosure manipulation was successful

because dyads in the closeness-generating condition reported greater conversation depth than

those in the small-talk generating condition.

Prior to and after the disclosure task, participants rated their opinion of their partner

according to the closeness of their relationship. To determine whether the disclosure conditions

influenced the perceived closeness of the relationship, an independent-samples t-test was

conducted. There was no significant difference between disclosure conditions for the rating of

relationship closeness prior to disclosure, $t(76) = 0.27$, $p = .79$, $d = 0.06$ (see Table 3). There

was also no significant difference between disclosure conditions for the rating of relationship

closeness after disclosure, $t(76) = -0.53$, $p = .60$, $d = -0.12$ (see Table 3). These results suggest

most pairs in both disclosure conditions prior to disclosure were strangers or acquaintances, and

after disclosure opinions of relationship closeness increased for both disclosure conditions as

most participants considered their partner an acquaintance or close friend.

Hypotheses

It was hypothesized high relationals would score higher on happiness when in the

closeness-generating condition than the small-talk generating condition, and that low relationals

would score lower on happiness when in the closeness-generating condition than in the small-

talk generating condition. A 2-way ANOVA was conducted to determine the impact of RISC

scores and disclosure condition on happiness levels. There was a significant main effect of RISC

score on the level of happiness reported; high relationals reporting higher levels of happiness

than low relationals, $F(1, 74) = 4.18$, $p = .045$, $\eta_p^2 = .053$ (see Table 1). Although participants

in the closeness condition had higher ratings of happiness, there was no significant main effect of

disclosure condition on happiness levels, $F(1, 74) = 0.22$, $p = .64$, $\eta_p^2 = .003$ (see Table 2).

Finally, there was no significant interaction between RISC scores and disclosure condition on

happiness levels, $F(1, 74) = 0.77$, $p = .38$, $\eta_p^2 = .01$. Thus, the hypothesis was not supported as

RISC scores and disclosure conditions did not have combined effects on the level of happiness.

It was hypothesized high relationals would score higher on state self-esteem when in the

closeness-generating condition than the small-talk generating condition, and that low relationals

would score lower on state self-esteem when in the closeness-generating condition than in the

small-talk generating condition. A 2-way ANOVA was conducted to determine the impact of

RISC scores and disclosure condition on state self-esteem scores. There was no significant main

effect of RISC score on the level of state self-esteem reported, $F(1, 74) = 0.13$, $p = .72$, $\eta_p^2 = .002$. (see Table 1). There was a significant main effect of the disclosure condition on state self-esteem scores with those in the closeness-generating condition scoring higher than those in the small-talk generating condition, $F(1, 74) = 6.14$, $p = .016$, $\eta_p^2 = .077$ (see Table 2). Finally, there was no significant interaction between RISC scores and disclosure condition on state self-esteem scores, $F(1, 74) = 0.001$, $p = .97$, $\eta_p^2 = .000$. Thus, the hypothesis was not supported as RISC scores and disclosure condition did not have combined effects on the level of state self-esteem.

It was hypothesized high relationals would have higher levels of positive affect when in the closeness-generating condition than the small-talk generating condition, and that low relationals would have lower levels of positive affect when in the closeness-generating condition than in the small-talk generating condition. A 2-way ANOVA was conducted to determine the impact of RISC scores and disclosure condition on positive affect levels. There was a significant main effect of RISC score on the level of positive affect reported; high relationals reported higher levels of positive affect than low relationals, $F(1, 74) = 5.28$, $p = .02$, $\eta_p^2 = .067$ (see Table 1). There was no significant main effect of disclosure condition on positive affect levels, $F(1, 74) = 0.002$, $p = .96$, $\eta_p^2 = .000$ (see Table 2). Finally, there was no significant interaction between RISC scores and disclosure condition on positive affect levels, $F(1, 74) = 0.25$, $p = .62$, $\eta_p^2 = .003$. Thus, the hypothesis was not supported as RISC scores and disclosure condition did not have combined effects on the level of positive affect.

It was hypothesized high relationals would have lower levels of negative affect when in the closeness-generating condition than the small-talk generating condition, and that low

relationals would have higher levels of negative affect when in the closeness-generating condition than in the small-talk generating condition. A 2-way ANOVA was conducted to determine the impact of RISC scores and disclosure condition on negative affect levels. There was no significant main effect of RISC score on the level of negative affect reported, $F(1, 74) = 0.003$, $p = .96$, $\eta_p^2 = .000$ (see Table 1). There was no significant main effect of disclosure condition on the level of negative affect reported, $F(1, 74) = 0.22$, $p = .64$, $\eta_p^2 = .003$ (see Table 2). Finally, there was no significant interaction between RISC scores and disclosure condition on negative affect levels, $F(1, 74) = 0.22$, $p = .64$, $\eta_p^2 = .003$. Thus, the hypothesis was not supported as RISC scores and disclosure condition did not have combined effects on the level of negative affect.

It was hypothesized high relationals would have lower levels of loneliness when in the closeness-generating condition than the small-talk generating condition, and that low relationals would have higher levels of loneliness when in the closeness-generating condition than in the small-talk generating condition. A 2-way ANOVA was conducted to determine the impact of RISC scores and disclosure condition on loneliness levels. There was no significant main effect of RISC score on the level of loneliness reported, $F(1, 74) = 1.54$, $p = .22$, $\eta_p^2 = .02$ (see Table 1). There was no significant main effect of disclosure condition on the level of loneliness reported, $F(1, 74) = 1.15$, $p = .29$, $\eta_p^2 = .02$ (see Table 2). Finally, there was no significant interaction between RISC scores and disclosure condition on loneliness levels, $F(1, 74) = 1.17$, $p = .28$, $\eta_p^2 = .02$. Thus, the hypothesis was not supported as RISC scores and disclosure condition did not have combined effects on the level of loneliness.

It was hypothesized high relationals would have higher levels of life satisfaction when in the closeness-generating condition than the small-talk generating condition, and that low relationals would have lower levels of life satisfaction when in the closeness-generating condition than in the small-talk generating condition. A 2-way ANOVA was conducted to determine the impact of RISC scores and disclosure condition on life satisfaction levels. There was no significant main effect of RISC score on the level of life satisfaction reported, $F(1, 74) = 1.89, p = .17, \eta_p^2 = .03$ (see Table 1). There was a significant main effect of disclosure condition on life satisfaction levels; those in the closeness-generating condition had higher levels of life satisfaction than those in the small-talk generating condition, $F(1, 74) = 5.97, p = .02, \eta_p^2 = .08$ (see Table 2). Finally, there was no significant interaction between RISC scores and disclosure condition on life satisfaction levels, $F(1, 74) = 0.31, p = .58, \eta_p^2 = .004$. Thus, the hypothesis was not supported as RISC scores and disclosure condition did not have combined effects on the level of life satisfaction.

Exploratory Analysis

A 2-way ANOVA was conducted to determine whether there was an interaction between RISC scores and disclosure condition on participants' perception of the depth of the conversation. There was no significant main effect of RISC scores on the perceived depth of the conversation, $F(1, 74) = 0.09, p = .77, \eta_p^2 = .001$. There was a significant main effect of disclosure condition on the perceived depth of the conversation, $F(1, 74) = 49.56, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .40$. As reported earlier, it was found that those in the closeness-generating condition perceived the disclosure task as eliciting more closeness ($M = 7.45, SD = 1.83$) than those in the small-talk generating condition ($M = 4.60, SD = 1.89$). This significant main effect was qualified

by a significant interaction of RISC scores and disclosure condition on the perceived depth of the

conversation, $F(1, 74) = 10.29$, $p = .002$, $\eta_p^2 = .12$. High relationals in the small-talk condition

perceived the conversation lower ($M = 3.90$, $SD = 1.89$) than low relationals in the small-talk

condition ($M = 5.30$, $SD = 1.66$) in terms of the depth of the conversation; high relationals in the

closeness-generating condition perceived the conversation higher ($M = 8.00$, $SD = 1.95$) than low

relationals in the closeness-generating condition ($M = 6.83$, $SD = 1.50$) in terms of the depth of

the conversation. These results suggest the perception of closeness within a conversation might

vary based on an individual's RISC level and will be discussed further in the discussion.

Discussion

It was predicted high relationals would experience higher well-being (higher happiness,

state self-esteem, positive affect, and life satisfaction, and lower negative affect and loneliness)

in the closeness-generating condition than in the small-talk condition. It was also predicted low

relationals would experience lower well-being (lower happiness, state self-esteem, positive

affect, and life satisfaction, and higher negative affect and loneliness) in the closeness-generating

condition than in the small-talk condition.

Although the hypotheses were not supported by the results, there were significant main

effects consistent with past research. The significant main effect of RISC level on the level of

happiness, with high relationals scoring higher on happiness than low relationals, supports past

research that high relationals experience an increase in positive feelings after relationship

forming interactions (Cross et al., 2000; Cross & Madson, 1997). It is likely high relationals

experienced a higher levels of happiness compared to low relationals because after interacting

with another individual they felt they had created a close relationship or friendship regardless of

the information discussed. Consistent with past research, it is possible low relationals did not

experience the high levels of happiness because they felt that by simply conversing with another, regardless of the information discussed, their autonomy from others was violated therefore causing them to experience lower levels of happiness (Cross et al., 2000; Cross & Madson, 1997). High relationals likely viewed the opportunity to converse with another individual as an opportunity to create a close relationship which led to higher levels of happiness, whereas low relationals experienced the opportunity to converse infringing upon their independence from others leading to lower levels of happiness.

It is also possible low relationals were not impacted by the disclosure to the same extent as high relationals. Although the happiness of low relationals slightly increased in the closeness-generating condition as compared to the small-talk generating condition, it is possible low relationals did not express the necessary levels of responsiveness to reaffirm the information disclosed, thus hindering the impact of the disclosure on the low relationals. Low relationals may not have disclosed closeness-generating information to the same degree as high relationals, therefore low relationals partners were perceived as less responsive and concerned, and the disclosure interaction had less impact on the low relationals. Contrary to low relationals, high relationals might have disclosed a larger amount of information which led to partners being perceived as more responsive and the interaction had a greater impact on the happiness of high relationals. Additionally, the alternative explanation still exists that high and low relationals are innately different when it comes to their level of happiness. It is possible that regardless of the type of disclosure experienced, high relationals could be happier whereas low relationals could be less happy. Lastly, it is important to note high relationals might not have been impacted by disclosure and maintained high levels of happiness whereas low relationals might have experienced a drop in happiness.

The significant main effect of disclosure condition on state self-esteem levels, with those in the closeness-generating condition experiencing higher levels of state self-esteem than those in the small-talk generating condition, is related to past research findings. Sprecher and Hendrick (2004) found that in intimate relationships, high relational self-esteem was associated with high personal self-disclosure and the perceived amount of partner disclosure. It is possible after experiencing the closeness condition, participants had high levels of state self-esteem because they felt they and their partner disclosed more personal information and feelings which caused them to experience more belonging and inclusion.

The significant main effect of RISC level on the level of positive affect, with high relationals experiencing higher levels of positive affect than low relationals, finds support with past research. It is likely high relationals felt as though the conversation, regardless of whether it was small-talk generating or closeness-generating, provided the opportunity to build a close relationship which led to feelings of positive affect as they participated in fulfilling a goal of their self-concept (developing close relationships; Cross et al., 2000; Cross & Madson, 1997). Consistent with research by Vittengl and Holt (2000), it is possible high relationals disclosed more information which has been found to relate to higher levels of positive affect. Low relationals, who experience positive emotions when their self remains separate from others, likely felt this separation violated both the small-talk and closeness-generating disclosure conditions (Cross et al., 2000; Cross & Madson, 1997). High relationals experienced higher levels of positive affect because the disclosure conditions allowed them the opportunity to behave according to goals of their self-concept, whereas low relationals experienced a decline in positive affect when the disclosure condition required personal information to be disclosed as it interfered with the goals of their self-concept.

The main effect of condition on the level of life satisfaction, with those in the closeness condition reporting higher levels of life satisfaction than those it the small-talk condition, likely relates to findings of state self-esteem. Those in the closeness condition likely discussed personal and emotional information that their partner responded to with additional personal and emotional information making individuals feel higher levels of belonging and an increased state self-esteem. As Leary et al. (1995) discussed, one's self-esteem acts as a gauge indicating to an individual when they belong and are accepted by others. When individuals felt their closeness responses acknowledged and validated, they experienced an increase in state self-esteem which likely also manifested itself in higher levels of life satisfaction.

While there were significant main effects of RISC levels on well-being variables, it remains unanswered as to whether experiencing disclosure led to specific higher well-being results, high relationals simply began with increased levels of certain aspects of well-being, or low relationals experienced a drop in specific well-being aspects and high relationals were not impacted.

An interesting exploratory finding in this study was that high relationals appeared to be more adept than low relationals at determining whether closeness-generating information was shared during the conversation in both conditions: small-talk and closeness. If this was the case, it could suggest that because high relationals are more skilled at identifying whether a conversation contains small-talk or closeness-generating information, they can seek out interactions with individuals who engage in closeness-generating disclosure in order to facilitate their desire for close relationships. It is also possible low relationals avoided disclosing too much closeness-generating information in both the small-talk and closeness-generating conditions to maintain separation between themselves and their discussion partner. It remains

unanswered whether high relationals are more skilled at determining whether disclosure conversations contain small-talk generating or closeness-generating information. Additionally, it cannot be determined if low relationals avoided sharing closeness-generating information in order to ensure separation between their self and the other.

Study 2

In the second study, it was expected the level of relational self-construal would relate to the level of well-being. The second study gathered well-being levels of high and low relationals without the experience of self-disclosure to determine whether the experience of disclosure in Study 1 influenced the post-disclosure well-being levels.

Hypotheses

It was predicted high relationals would have higher well-being (higher happiness, positive affect, and life satisfaction, and lower negative affect and loneliness) than low relationals (lower happiness, positive affect, and life satisfaction, and higher negative affect and loneliness).

This hypothesis was expected to be supported because in Study 1 high relationals appeared to have higher well-being for a majority of the well-being measures (higher happiness, positive affect, and satisfaction with life, and lower negative affect and loneliness) than low relationals (lower happiness, positive affect, and satisfaction with life, and higher negative affect and loneliness).

Method

Participants

Participants were 38 female students, ranging from first-years to seniors, from a small liberal arts college in the Midwest. Female students were selected to reduce potential confounds

of gender and potential romantic attraction on self-disclosure (similar approaches have been used by Cross et al., 2000; Cross & Morris, 2002). The participants were enrolled in an introductory psychology course and received partial course credit for their participation. Only participants who scored in the top (a score of 63 or above) or bottom (a score of 58 or below) third on the RISC participated in the study in order to enhance statistical power.

Measures

Participants completed the same relational self-construal, Fordyce, state self-esteem, positive and negative affect, UCLA loneliness, and satisfaction with life measure that were used in Study 1.

Procedure

Participants completed the RISC inventory online as part of the introductory psychology subject pool prescreening. In the online prescreening participants completed the RISC inventory to determine whether they scored high, low, or in the middle on relational self-construal. Participants who scored high or low were then able to enroll in the online study. Through the online study participants read and agreed to an informed consent. Then they were told the purpose of the study was to study self-beliefs and personality. Participants then completed a happiness measure (Fordyce, 1988; see Appendix B), a state self-esteem measure (SSES; Heatherton & Polivy, 1991; see Appendix C), a mood measure (PANAS; Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988; see Appendix D), a loneliness measure (Russell, 1996; see Appendix E), and a satisfaction with life measure (SWLS; Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin, 1985; see Appendix F). Finally, participants were debriefed as to the true purpose of the study (see Appendix M).

Results

It was hypothesized high relationals would score higher on happiness than low relationals. An independent t-test was conducted to determine the difference between high and low relationals on happiness levels. There was no significant difference between high and low relationals on happiness levels, $t(36) = -0.63$, $p = .53$, $d = -0.21$ (see Table 4). Thus, the hypothesis was not supported, as there was no difference between high and low relationals on happiness levels.

It was hypothesized high relationals would score higher on positive affect than low relationals. An independent t-test was conducted to determine the difference between high and low relationals on positive affect levels. There was a significant difference between high and low relationals on positive affect levels with high relationals scoring higher than low relationals, $t(36) = -2.11$, $p = .04$, $d = -0.70$ (see Table 4). Thus, the hypothesis was supported as there was a difference between high and low relationals on positive affect levels.

It was hypothesized high relationals would score lower on negative affect than low relationals. An independent t-test was conducted to determine the difference between high and low relationals on negative affect levels. There was no significant difference between high and low relationals on negative affect levels, $t(36) = 0.45$, $p = .66$, $d = 0.15$ (see Table 4). Thus, the hypothesis was not supported as there was no difference between high and low relationals on negative affect levels.

It was hypothesized high relationals would score lower on loneliness than low relationals. An independent t-test was conducted to determine the difference between high and low relationals on loneliness levels. There was no significant difference between high and low relationals on loneliness levels, $t(36) = 1.15$, $p = .26$, $d = 0.38$ (see Table 4). Thus, the

hypothesis was not supported as there was no difference between high and low relationals on loneliness levels.

It was hypothesized high relationals would score higher on satisfaction with life than low relationals. An independent *t*-test was conducted to determine the difference between high and low relationals on satisfaction with life levels. There was a significant difference between high and low relationals on satisfaction with life levels with high relationals scoring higher than low relationals, $t(36) = -2.28$, $p = .03$, $d = -0.76$ (see Table 4). Thus, the hypothesis was supported as there was a difference between high and low relationals on satisfaction with life levels.

Discussion

It was predicted high relationals would have a higher well-being (higher happiness, positive affect, and life satisfaction, and lower negative affect and loneliness) than low relationals (lower happiness, positive affect, and life satisfaction, and higher negative affect and loneliness).

Although not every aspect of the hypothesis was supported by the results, there were two significant differences with high relationals scoring higher than low relationals on positive affect and life satisfaction. This study was useful in determining whether high relationals have innately higher levels of well-being than low relationals. The results support the hypothesis that high relationals might experience naturally higher levels of positive affect and life satisfaction as compared to low relationals.

General Discussion

Study 1 found happiness and positive affect levels to be higher for high relationals than low relationals regardless of the disclosure condition. It is likely high relationals benefited the most from the disclosure opportunity because it was the most conducive environment to

accomplish their goals of developing close relationships. For low relationals, the disclosure condition was not the most beneficial environment for accomplishing their goals of maintaining independence in relationships.

It is possible experiencing closeness-generating self-disclosure caused a boost in satisfaction with life for both high and low relationals. Although the second study found there were initial differences in satisfaction with life scores between high and low relationals, it is likely experiencing self-disclosure, regardless of whether it was closeness-generating or small-talk generating, increased participants' life satisfaction, which lessened the influence of RISC scores on the level of life satisfaction. Both the closeness-generating and small-talk generating conditions provided high and low relationals with the opportunity to converse with another, which was likely modified by the high and low relationals in accordance with their relationship goals. Pairs of high relationals likely viewed engaging in disclosure as an opportunity to get to know another and build a valuable relationship; whereas low relationals likely viewed the disclosure task as an opportunity to covey information about themselves to express individuality and uniqueness.

Although self-disclosure possibly increased the level of life satisfaction for both high and low relationals, life satisfaction was higher for those in the closeness-generating condition as compared to the small-talk generating condition. The closeness-generating condition likely resulted in information which caused the high relationals in this condition to view the disclosure as more substantial to relationship development as compared to the information in the small-talk generating condition. Additionally, it is possible high relationals perceived their partner's disclosed closeness information as a result of their own relationship building abilities reinforcing confidence in their skill and ability to accomplish goals of developing close relationships. Low

relationals in the closeness-generating condition likely experienced higher levels of life

satisfaction because the condition provided them with an opportunity to express considerable

information about their individual uniqueness and skills.

It is important to remember that low and high relationals were paired with another of

their same relational self-construal level. Therefore, it is likely high relationals in the closeness-

generating condition were more responsive and caring towards their partner, inquiring more

about the disclosed information as this behavior would be viewed as essential to develop a close

relationship. It is likely low relationals in the closeness-generating conditions politely

acknowledged their partner's disclosure but did not ask or seek additional information from their

partner, as this would have been behavior inconsistent with their relationships goals to remain

independent from others. The level of responsiveness to disclosure partners was not controlled

in the conditions, therefore high and low relationals could have responded differently to meet the

goals of their own relational self-construal level.

While past research has found the relational self-construal to moderate the impact of

social support on life satisfaction, this study did not find the relational self-construal to moderate

the impact of self-disclosure on life satisfaction (Heintzelman & Bacon, 2015). It is plausible

self-disclosure, regardless of if it was small-talk or closeness-generating, benefited both high and

low relationals to some degree, whereas social support in previous research only benefited high

relationals. Social support might be a more invasive form of interdependent behavior as it

requires one to investigate and question another's feelings and experience, and then express care,

value and belonging the other (Heintzelman & Bacon, 2015). Self-disclosure involves providing

information about oneself to another and has no requirements as to the type of response needed

by the disclosure receiver. The experience of social support might be a more overbearing

experience for low relationals because another individual is invading their autonomy and conveying belonging and value from another. Self-disclosure allows a low relational to provide personal and individual information while remaining independent from the individual receiving disclosure, thus low relationals might benefit more from self-disclosure as their partner does not interfere with their goal of remaining autonomous.

It is likely a similar pattern of behavior existed for the effects of self-disclosure on the levels of state self-esteem for high and low relationals. It is likely the closeness-generating condition provided high and low relationals a greater opportunity to engage in disclosure and respond to their partner's disclosure in ways consistent to their relationship goals than did the small-talk generating condition. High relationals likely experienced higher levels of state self-esteem in the closeness-generating condition than in the small-talk generating condition because the closeness information disclosed was likely perceived by high relationals as a result of their abilities in relationship development (even though it was a result of the condition). Low relationals possibly experienced higher levels of state self-esteem in the closeness-generating condition than in the small-talk generating condition because the closeness information they shared conveyed more uniqueness and individuality than information disclosed in the small-talk condition.

Limitations

There are limitations in the design of this study. Participants cannot be randomly assigned to relational conditions because the participants are inherently high or low relationals to begin with and this was not be manipulated in the present study. The lack of manipulation could have caused high and low relational conditions to have additional innate differences which were not controlled. It is possible high and low relationals might have innately different set points for

well-being, with high relationals likely experiencing higher levels of well-being than low

relationals. If the well-being set points differed between RISC conditions, the disclosure

conditions might have little to no impact on well-being because differences in well-being scores

could be the result of different well-being set points. By not being able to randomly assign

participants to RISC conditions, we were not able to control for participants' well-being prior to

experiencing disclosure.

Additionally, RISC scores tended to be skewed toward the higher end of the scale,

therefore causing few low relationals to be toward the extreme low end of the RISC scale. Low

relational scores ranged from 11 to 58 thus allowing an extremely low relational (e.g., 30) to be

paired with a low relational who scored more towards the middle of the RISC scale (e.g., 53).

By classifying such a wide range of scores as low relational scores, the power of this study was

reduced. It was possible that if true differences did exist between high and low relationals, these

differences were missed when such a large range of scores were grouped together as low

relational scores. It was also difficult to ensure the participants disclosed to the same extent as

other individuals in their respected condition: closeness or small-talk. Although a manipulation

check was included, one participant might perceive a small-talk conversation to be what another

perceives as close conversation.

Due to only using female participants in this study, the results cannot be extended to men.

It is difficult to say for certain whether the results found in this study can represent results that

would be found if the study were to be conducted with male participants. Men do not score as

highly on the RISC and may therefore not be as high of relationals as high relational women. It

is possible men may approach social interactions and relationships differently than women.

Also, men may not disclose to the same extent as women hindering the use of disclosure in this

study. It would be best to run this experiment with male participants to see the separate results

before generalizing the results of this study to men.

The participants in this study interacted and disclosed to another participant causing the

data to lack independence. The lack of independent data could have interfered with the internal

validity because participant responses are dependent upon their interaction with the other

participant. It is likely high relationals provided more responsiveness to the information shared

by other high relationals, whereas low relationals acknowledged, but did not inquire upon the

information shared by other low relationals. By not controlling the behavior in response to

disclosed information it cannot be determined whether high relationals work to foster greater

depth of disclosure through follow-up questions, whereas low relationals might work to express

the more independence by avoiding additional questions to convey uniqueness and autonomy.

The level of responsiveness toward disclosed information, which high and low relationals might

have catered to their own relationship goals, could have fostered different levels of relationship

development.

Future Research

To determine whether experiencing conversation impacts levels of well-being for high

and low relationals, it would be useful to look at levels of well-being for high and low relationals

who have not experienced experimental disclosure conditions. It would be important to

determine whether simply being high or low relational influences levels of well-being or if it is

the experience of disclosure which influences levels of well-being in high and low relationals.

Future research should also study if there are differences in well-being when high

relationals disclose with low relationals. It is likely the responsiveness of high and low

relationals differs when in disclosure situations, therefore it would be interesting if high

relationals would inquire more about the information disclosed by low relationals, and if this would result in a decreased well-being for low relationals as it might produce experiences similar to social support. Low relationals might not engage in responsiveness behaviors toward what is disclosed by high relationals, which might cause lower well-being for high relationals, since they could feel less confident in their relationship development abilities when their partner (the low relational) appears uninterested in pursuing a relationship.

It would further research if a confederate could be used to provide different levels of responsiveness to high and low relationals when disclosing information. By using a confederate the level of responsiveness could be controlled, therefore allowing researchers to determine whether the well-being of high and low relationals is influenced by different levels of responsiveness in disclosure.

Additionally, it would be useful to conduct a study in which high and low relationals observe a dyadic disclosure interaction and determine whether it contains closeness-generating information or small-talk generating information. Such a study would provide further insight into whether high relationals are more adept than low relationals at determining whether closeness-generating or small-talk information is disclosed within a conversation.

It is possible the most advantageous self-disclosure for high and low relationals differs in the information disclosed and the partner's level of responsiveness to the disclosed information. To ensure relationships are most fulfilling and beneficial, high and low relationals should pursue closeness-generating disclosure, since for high relationals this content provides an opportunity to develop close relationships, whereas for low relationals the content could provide an opportunity to convey individuality. Additionally, high and low relationals should be cognizant of their relationship goals; whether to develop close relationships or to maintain autonomy. By

remaining aware of their personal relationship goals, high and low relationals can seek

relationship partners with similar goals to foster the desired relationship.

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Table 1

Means and Standard Deviations of Main Effects of Relational Groups on Well-Being Scores

Well-Being Variable	High Relationals ($n = 40$)	Low Relationals ($n = 38$)
	M (*SD*)	*M* (*SD*)
Happiness	7.60 (0.79)*	6.95 (1.75)*
State Self-Esteem	74.05 (12.89)	74.87 (11.91)
Positive Affect	35.05 (6.16)*	31.55 (7.18)*
Negative Affect	14.85 (4.23)	14.95 (6.45)
Loneliness	38.80 (8.58)	41.16 (8.24)
Satisfaction With Life	25.95 (5.40)	24.29 (5.16)

* $p < .05$

Table 2

Means and Standard Deviations of Main Effects of Disclosure Condition on Well-Being Scores

Well-Being Variable	Closeness Condition ($n = 38$)	Small-Talk Condition ($n = 40$)
	M (*SD*)	*M* (*SD*)
Happiness	7.36 (1.08)	7.20 (1.62)
State Self-Esteem	77.92 (11.56)*	71.15 (12.31)*
Positive Affect	33.37 (6.34)	33.33 (7.41)
Negative Affect	14.61 (4.76)	15.18 (5.97)
Loneliness	38.84 (7.69)	41.00 (9.08)
Satisfaction With Life	26.63 (5.23)*	23.73 (5.07)*

* $p < .05$

Table 3

Means and Standard Deviations of Participants' Opinion of Partner

Manipulation Check	Closeness Condition ($n = 38$)	Small-Talk Condition ($n = 40$)
	M (*SD*)	*M* (*SD*)
"Before today, I would have considered my discussion partner a(n)…"	1.26 (0.55)	1.30 (0.65)
"After today, I considered my discussion partner a(n)…"	2.50 (0.56)	2.43 (0.68)

* $p < .05$ *Note.* 1 = stranger, 2 = acquaintance, 3 = casual friend, 4 = friend.

Table 4

Study 2: Means and Standard Deviations of Differences between Relational Groups on Well-

Being Scores

Well-Being Variable	High Relationals ($n = 16$)	Low Relationals ($n = 22$)
	M (SD)	M (SD)
Happiness	6.81 (2.07)	6.36 (2.22)
Positive Affect	31.75 (7.03)*	26.91 (6.97)*
Negative Affect	17.94 (5.71)	19.05 (8.60)
Loneliness	39.69 (7.82)	43.41 (11.10)
Satisfaction With Life	26.69 (3.32)*	23.32 (5.17)*

* $p < .05$

Appendix A

RELATIONAL-INTERDEPENDENT SELF-CONSTRUAL SCALE

Listed below are a number of statements about various attitudes and feelings. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of these statements using the following scale:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
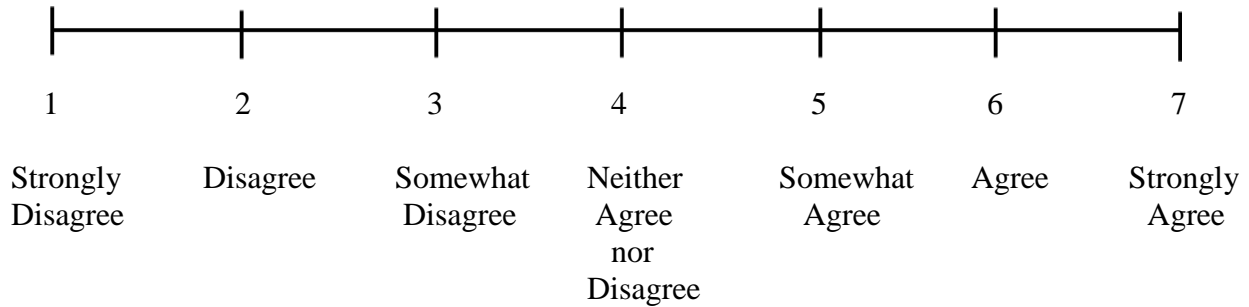
1. My close relationships are an important reflection of who I am. _____

2. When I feel very close to someone, it often feels to me like that person is an important part of who I am. _____

3. I usually feel a strong sense of pride when someone close to me has an important accomplishment. _____

4. I think one of the most important parts of who I am can be captured by looking at my close friends and understanding who they are. _____

5. When I think of myself, I often think of my close friends or family also. _____

6. If a person hurts someone close to me, I feel personally hurt as well. _____

7. In general, my close relationships are an important part of my self-image. _____

8. Overall, my close relationships have very little to do with how I feel about myself. _____

9. My close relationships are unimportant to my sense of what kind of person I am. _____

10. My sense of pride comes from knowing who I have as close friends. _____

11. When I establish a close friendship with someone, I usually develop a

strong sense of identification with that person. _____

**Appendix B**

The Fordyce's Emotions Questionnaire

As of right now, how happy or unhappy do you feel? Circle the number from the scale below that best describes your average happiness:

0 =   Extremely unhappy (utterly depressed, completely down)

1 =   Very unhappy (depressed, spirits very low)

2 =   Pretty unhappy (somewhat " blue ", spirits down)

3 =   Mildly unhappy (just a bit low)

4 =   Slightly unhappy (just a bit below neutral)

5 =   Neutral (not particularly happy or unhappy)

6 =   Slightly happy (just a bit above neutral)

7 =   Mildly happy (feeling fairly good and somewhat cheerful)

8 =   Pretty happy (spirits high, feeling good)

9 =   Very happy (feeling really good, elated!)

10 =   Extremely happy (feeling ecstatic, joyous, fantastic!)

Appendix C

THE STATE SELF-ESTEEM SCALE

This is a questionnaire designed to measure what you are thinking at this moment. There is, of course, no right answer for any statement. The best answer is what you feel is true of yourself at this moment. Be sure to answer all of the items, even if you are not certain of the best answer. Again, answer these questions as they are true for you RIGHT NOW.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	A little bit	Somewhat	Very much	Extremely
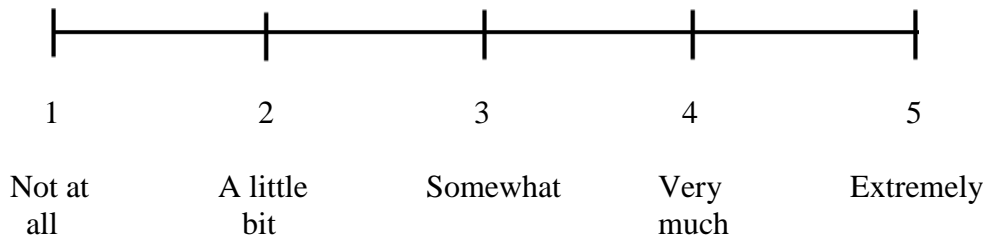
1. I feel confident about my abilities. _____

2. I am worried about whether I am regarded as a success or failure. _____

3. I feel satisfied with the way my body looks right now. _____

4. I feel frustrated or rattled about my performance. _____

5. I feel that I am having trouble understanding things that I read. _____

6. I feel that others respect and admire me. _____

7. I am dissatisfied with my weight. _____

8. I feel self-conscious. _____

9. I feel as smart as others. _____

10. I feel displeased with myself. _____

11. I feel good about myself. _____

12. I am pleased with my appearance right now. _____

13. I am worried about what other people think of me. _____

14. I feel confident that I understand things. _____

15. I feel inferior to others at this moment. _____

16. I feel unattractive. _____

17. I feel concerned about the impression I am making. _____

18. I feel that I have less scholastic ability right now than others. _____

19. I feel like I'm not doing well. _____

20. I am worried about looking foolish. _____

Appendix D

THE POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE AFFECT SCHEDULE (PANAS)

This scale consists of a number of words that describe different feelings and emotions. Read each item and then mark the appropriate answer in the space next to that word. Indicate to what extent you feel this way right now, that is, at the present moment. Use the following scale to record your answers.

1	2	3	4	5
very slightly or not at all	a little	moderately	quite a bit	extremely

_____ interested   _____ irritable

_____ distressed   _____ alert

_____ excited   _____ ashamed

_____ upset   _____ inspired

_____ strong   _____ nervous

_____ guilty   _____ determined

_____ scared   _____ attentive

_____ hostile   _____ jittery

_____ enthusiastic   _____ active

_____ proud   _____ afraid

Appendix E

UCLA LONELINESS SCALE (VERSION 3)

Instructions: The following statements describe how people sometimes feel. For each statement, please indicate how often you feel the way described by writing a number in the space provided. Here is an example:

  How often do you feel happy?

It you have never felt happy, you would respond "never"; if you always feel happy, you would respond "always."

NEVER	RARELY	SOMETIMES	ALWAYS
1	2	3	4

1. How often do you feel that you are "in tune" with the people around you?   _____

2. How often do you feel that you lack companionship?   _____

3. How often do you feel that there is no one you can turn to?   _____

4. How often do you feel alone?   _____

5. How often do you feel part of a group of friends?   _____

6. How often do you feel that you have a lot in common with the people around you?   _____

7. How often do you feel that you are no longer close to anyone?   _____

8. How often do you feel that your interest and ideas are not shared by those around you?   _____

9. How often do you feel outgoing and friendly?   _____

10. How often do you feel close to people?   _____

11. How often do you feel left out?   _____

12. How often do you feel that your relationships with others are not meaningful?   _____

13. How often do you feel that no one really knows you well?   _____

14. How often do you feel isolated from others?   _____

15. How often do you feel you can find companionship when you want it?   _____

16. How often do you feel that there are people who really understand you?   _____

17. How often do you feel shy?   _____

18. How often do you feel that people are around you but not with you? _____

19. How often do you feel that there are people you can talk to? _____

20. How often do you feel that there are people you can turn to? _____

Appendix F

SATISFACTION WITH LIFE SCALE

Below are five statements with which you may agree or disagree. Using the 1-7 scale below, indicate your agreement with each item by placing that appropriate number on the line preceding that item. Please be open and honest in your responding. The 7-point scale is: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = slightly disagree, 4 = neither agree nor disagree, 5 = slightly agree, 6 = agree, 7 = strongly agree.

1. In most ways my life is close to my ideal.   _____

2. The conditions of my life are excellent.   _____

3. I am satisfied with my life.   _____

4. So far I have gotten the important things I want in life.   _____

5. If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing.   _____

Appendix G

Ten-Item Personality Inventory (TIPI)

Here are a number of personality traits that may or may not apply to you. Please write a number next to each statement to indicate the extent to which *you agree or disagree with that statement*. You should rate the extent to which the pair of traits applies to you, even if one characteristic applies more strongly than the other.

Disagree Strongly	Disagree Moderately	Disagree a little	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree a little	Agree moderately	Agree strongly
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

I see myself as:

1. _____ Extraverted, enthusiastic.

2. _____ Critical, quarrelsome.

3. _____ Dependable, self-disciplined.

4. _____ Anxious, easily upset.

5. _____ Open to new experiences, complex.

6. _____ Reserved, quiet.

7. _____ Sympathetic, warm.

8. _____ Disorganized, careless.

9. _____ Calm, emotionally stable.

10. _____ Conventional, uncreative.

Appendix H

Ten-Item Personality Inventory (TIPI)

Here are a number of personality traits that may or may not apply to your discussion partner. Please write a number next to each statement to indicate the extent to which *you agree or disagree with that statement applying to your discussion partner*. You should rate the extent to which the pair of traits applies to your discussion partner, even if one characteristic applies more strongly than the other.

Disagree Strongly	Disagree Moderately	Disagree a little	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree a little	Agree moderately	Agree strongly
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

I see my discussion partner as:

1. _____ Extraverted, enthusiastic.

2. _____ Critical, quarrelsome.

3. _____ Dependable, self-disciplined.

4. _____ Anxious, easily upset.

5. _____ Open to new experiences, complex.

6. _____ Reserved, quiet.

7. _____ Sympathetic, warm.

8. _____ Disorganized, careless.

9. _____ Calm, emotionally stable.

10. _____ Conventional, uncreative.

Appendix I

SELF-DISCLOSURE ITEMS: Closeness-Generating Condition

INSTRUCTIONS

For the next 20 minutes, please read aloud the questions or tasks on each of the cards and please BOTH do what it asks. If the card asks you a question, share your answer with your partner. Then let her share her answer to the same question with you. If it is a task, do it first, then let your partner do it. Alternate who reads aloud and thus goes first with each new slip. If there is a card that is too difficult for you to answer, you may skip it.

It is not important to finish all 15 cards within the time allotted. Take plenty of time with each card, doing what it asks thoroughly and thoughtfully.

You may begin!

Task Slips for Closeness-Generating Procedure

1. Given the choice of anyone in the world, whom would you want as a dinner guest?
2. Would you like to be famous? In what way?
3. For what in your life do you feel most grateful?
4. If you could change anything about the way you were raised, what would it be?
5. Take 2 minutes and tell your partner your life story in as much detail as possible.
6. If you could wake up tomorrow having gained any one quality or ability, what would it be?
7. If a crystal ball could tell you the truth about yourself, your life, the future, or anything else, what would you want to know?
8. Is there something that you've dreamed of doing for a long time? What?
9. What is the greatest accomplishment of your life?
10. What do you value most in a friendship?
11. What is your most treasured memory?
12. If you knew that in one year you would die suddenly, would you change anything about the way you are now living? What?
13. If you were going to become a close friend with your partner, please share what would be important for her to know.
14. Share with your partner an embarrassing moment in your life.

15. Your house, containing everything you own, catches fire. After saving your loved ones and pets, you have time to safely make a final dash to save any one item. What would it be? Why?

Appendix J

SELF-DISCLOSURE ITEMS: Small-Talk Condition

INSTRUCTIONS

For the next 20 minutes, please read aloud the questions or tasks on each of the cards and please BOTH do what it asks. If the card asks you a question, share your answer with your partner. Then let her share her answer to the same question with you. If it is a task, do it first, then let your partner do it. Alternate who reads aloud and thus goes first with each new slip. If there is a card that is too difficult for you to answer, you may skip it.

It is not important to finish all 15 cards within the time allotted. Take plenty of time with each card, doing what it asks thoroughly and thoughtfully.

You may begin!

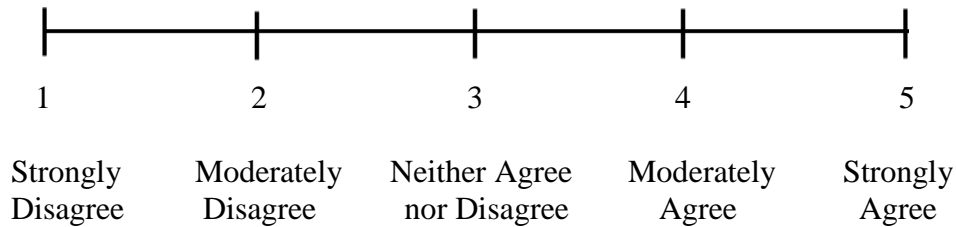*Task Slips for Small-Talk Condition*

1. When was the last time you walked for more than an hour? Describe where you went and what you saw.
2. How did you celebrate last Halloween?
3. What is a good number of people to have in a student household and why?
4. If you could invent a new flavor of ice cream, what would it be?
5. What gifts did you receive on your last birthday?
6. One of you say a word, the next say a word that starts with the last letter of the word just said. Do this until you have said 25 words. Any words will do—you aren't making a sentence.
7. Where are you from? Name all of the places you've lived.
8. What is your favorite class at CSB so far? Why?
9. What was your impression of CSB the first time you ever came here?
10. What is the best TV show you've seen in the last month that your partner hasn't seen? Tell your partner about it.
11. Where did you go to high school? What was your high school like?
12. Do you prefer digital watches and clocks or the kind with hands? Why?
13. What are the advantages and disadvantages of artificial Christmas trees?
14. Do you think left-handed people are more creative than right-handed people?

15. What is the last concert you saw? How many of that band's album do you own?
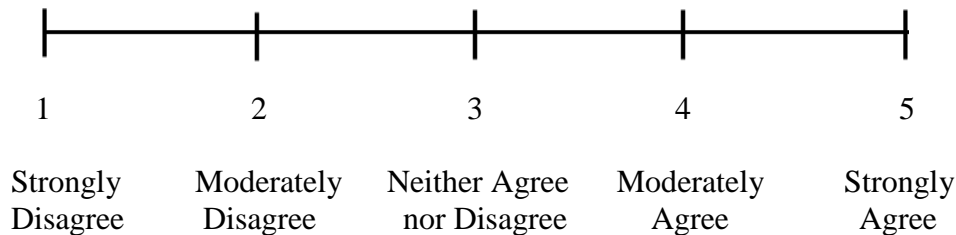   Have you seen them before? Where?
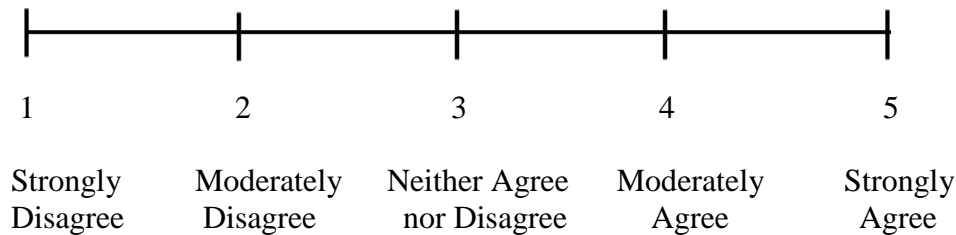
Appendix K

MANIPULATION CHECK

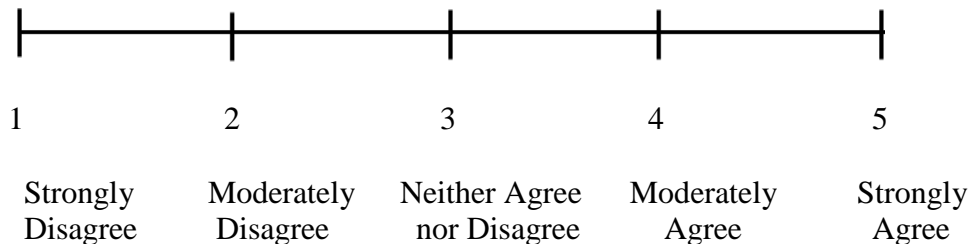1. I disclosed deep and personal information with my partner…

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Moderately Agree	Strongly Agree

2. My partner disclosed deep and personal information with me…

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Moderately Agree	Strongly Agree

3. I disclosed trivial and minor important information with my partner…

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Moderately Agree	Strongly Agree

4. My partner disclosed trivial and minor important information with me…

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Moderately Agree	Strongly Agree

5. Please select the answer that best applies to this statement:

"Before today, I would have considered my discussion partner a(n) . . ."

stranger   **acquaintance**   **casual friend**   **friend**

6. Please select the answer that best applies to this statement:

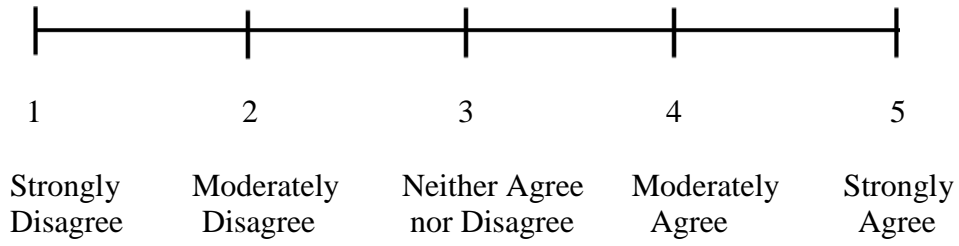   "After today's discussion, I consider my discussion partner a(n)…"

   stranger   **acquaintance**   **casual friend**   **friend**

7. Before today, I regularly had in-depth conversations with my discussion partner about

   our personal lives…

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Moderately Agree	Strongly Agree

Appendix L

DEBRIEFING STATEMENT

Thank you for participating in this study! Before you leave, we want to be certain that you understand the full purpose of this study. Although we told you that we were testing if certain personality traits allow individuals to predict the personality of their partner after conversing, we were actually interested in something different. The purpose of this study is to see if the type of discussion people have (either superficial or deep) influences people's well-being, and also to see if people who define themselves by their close relationships react differently to the type of discussion than people who don't define themselves by their close relationships.

All participants completed the same questionnaires and conversed with a partner. However, participants were assigned to partners based on how they define and think about themselves: those who think of themselves in terms of close relationships were paired, and those who do not think of themselves in terms of close relationships were paired. All pairs were randomly assigned to converse about deep or superficial topics.

We want to see if individuals who define themselves by their close relationships have a greater well-being after conversing about deep topics than superficial topics. It has been suggested that individuals who define themselves by close relationships often receive the greatest boost from deep interactions because a closer relationship is formed, which the individual greatly values. On the other hand, individuals who do not define themselves by close relationships are expected to have a lower well-being after disclosing deep topics. These individuals think of themselves separate from close relationships; therefore it is expected they will feel the deep conversation invades upon their preference to keep close relationships and their self separate.

You were told this study was interested in your personality and how well you could predict your partner's personality, but this is not true. We did this to reduce suspicion and ensure we received your true reactions and feelings toward the interaction.

Because we are interested in how lots of people respond to our experiment, your data will be combined with the data of many other participants. Thus, no one will ever be able to figure out exactly how YOU responded to this experiment.

Because we won't be done with this experiment for a few months, it is very important that you DO NOT discuss it with any other students. Many of them will be participating, and any information they have about the study might contaminate the results. Therefore, please don't talk to anyone about this study!

Once again, thank you for your participation! Please let us know if you have any questions or concerns about this research.

Appendix M

DEBRIEFING STATEMENT

Thank you for participating in this study! Before you leave, we want to be certain that you understand the full purpose of this study. Although we told you that we were testing self-beliefs and personality traits, we were actually interested in something different. The purpose of this study is to see if people who define themselves by their close relationships have higher well-being than people who don't define themselves by their close relationships.

It has been suggested that individuals who define themselves by close relationships often receive the greatest boost from deep interactions because a closer relationship is formed, which the individual greatly values. On the other hand, individuals who do not define themselves by close relationships are expected to have a lower well-being after disclosing deep topics. We are interested in seeing whether individuals who define themselves by close relationships initially have a higher well-being and thus disclosing interactions could have a smaller role on well-being.

You were told this study was interested in your self-beliefs and personality, but this is not true. We did this to reduce suspicion and ensure we received your true reactions and feelings toward the questionnaires.

Because we are interested in how lots of people respond to our experiment, your data will be combined with the data of many other participants. Thus, no one will ever be able to figure out exactly how YOU responded to this experiment.

Because we won't be done with this experiment for a few months, it is very important that you DO NOT discuss it with any other students. Many of them will be participating, and any information they have about the study might contaminate the results. Therefore, please don't talk to anyone about this study!

Once again, thank you for your participation! Please let us know if you have any questions or concerns about this research.