THE IMPACT OF PERSPECTIVE TAKING ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN NARCISSISM AND AFFECTIVE EMPATHY

By Caileigh N. Zimmerman

The current study aimed to conceptually replicate a study conducted by Hepper, Hart, and Sedikides (2014) that examined the impact of a perspective taking manipulation on the relationship between narcissism and affective empathy. Currently, the nature of the relationship between narcissism and affective empathy is unclear due to mixed findings in the literature. Thus, two competing hypotheses were tested: (1) *the affective empathy malleability hypothesis* in which there is a negative relationship between narcissism and affective empathy, but this relationship is greatly reduced or ceases to exist when participants engage in perspective taking, and (2) *the affective empathy rigidity hypothesis* in which there is a negative relationship between narcissism and affective empathy, and this relationship persists regardless of a perspective taking manipulation. To test these hypotheses, participants were presented with a story about an ostensible person in distress, and were randomly assigned to one of two perspective-taking conditions. Self-reported experiences of state and dispositional empathic concern and personal distress were acquired, and narcissism was measured using two different narcissism inventories. Results indicated partial support for both hypotheses for grandiose narcissism and personal distress, but indicated no support for either hypothesis for vulnerable narcissism and empathic concern.

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Introduction

Psychologists and clinicians have long assumed there exists a negative association between narcissism and empathy. This assumption is most exemplified by the inclusion of lack of empathy as a diagnostic criterion of Narcissistic Personality Disorder in the DSM-IV and DSM-V (American Psychiatric Association, 2000; American Psychiatric Association, 2013). Recent literature, however, has revealed mixed evidence regarding this assumption, particularly within nonclinical populations (e.g., Lishner, Hong, Jiang, Vitacco, & Neumann, 2015; Ritter et al., 2011; Vonk, Zeigler-Hill, Mayhew, & Mercer, 2013).

Classifying Narcissism

In a review of narcissism, Pincus and Lukowitsky (2010) state that narcissism can be classified as adaptive/normal or maladaptive/pathological. Adaptive narcissism involves regulatory techniques that allow for a positive self-image and high self-esteem that motivates an individual to seek out self-enhancement and achievement opportunities. Adaptive narcissism has little negative impact on an individual's everyday life. Pathological narcissism, however, involves mild to severe regulatory deficits in coping with threats to one's positive self-image. Pathological narcissism may entail interpersonal exploitativeness, entitlement, and/or exhibitionism. Thus, pathological narcissists may display a lack of empathy, whereas adaptive narcissists may not (Pincus & Lukowitsky, 2010).

Numerous researchers have attempted to segregate pathological narcissism into more distinct classifications (Pincus & Lukowitsky, 2010). Though they vary somewhat in label and conceptualization, the categories appear to have two overarching themes: grandiosity and vulnerability. Grandiose narcissism is characterized by (a) suppressing or distorting disconfirming information about the self; (b) holding entitled attitudes; (c) having an unrealistic or inflated self-image; (d) engaging in grandiose regulatory fantasies, interpersonal exploitativeness, aggression, and exhibitionism; and (e) experiencing intense envy and low empathy. Vulnerable narcissism is characterized by (a) a depleted self-image; (b) the experience of shame and anger about the self, (c) self-criticality; (d) interpersonal hypersensitivity; (e) social withdrawal; and (f) tendency to experience low empathy (Pincus & Lukowitsky, 2010).

Although both grandiose and vulnerable narcissism are thought to be linked to lower experience of empathy, the theorized source of that lack of empathy differs between the two. It may be that the negative association between empathy and grandiose narcissism is due to a general disregard or lack of caring for the thoughts and feelings of others, whereas the negative association between empathy and vulnerable narcissism may be due to a preoccupation with the self or high self-consciousness (i.e., intense self-focus) that results in a failure to recognize the situations and perspectives of others.

Conceptualizations of Empathy

The term empathy is also used in a wide variety of ways in the literature. Batson (2009) distinguishes eight different ways the term empathy can be used: (a) behavioral

matching between self and others; (b) aesthetic projection of the self onto others and objects; (c) imagine-other perspective taking; (d) imagine-self perspective taking; (e) perspective taking accuracy; (f) feeling empathic concern for another; (g) feeling personal distress in response to another; and (h) feeling a parallel emotion with another in response to his or her situation. These categories are sometimes combined into three higher-order categories: behavioral empathy (a); cognitive empathy (b-e); and affective empathy (f-h; Davis, 1994).

The focus of the proposed research will be on affective empathy, specifically empathic concern and personal distress. Personal distress is self-oriented distress that is evoked by witnessing another individual who is experiencing an unpleasant situation (e.g., another individual is physically suffering, is distraught or upset). Empathic concern is an other-oriented emotional response elicited by the perceived need of another individual (e.g., feeling tenderness, compassion, or sympathy toward another individual; Batson, 2009; Lishner, Batson, & Huss, 2011).

Narcissism and Affective Empathy: Empirical Findings

Much research on narcissism and empathy focuses on affective empathy. For example, Watson, Grisham, Trotter, and Biderman (1984) examined the relationship between narcissism and affective empathy in the initial development of the Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI). In their study, 160 undergraduate students completed the NPI, as well as two measures of affective empathy: The Mehrabian and Epstein Empathy Scale (MEES) to assess dispositional emotion contagion, and the Smith Empathic

Personality Questionnaire (SEPQ) to assess the dispositional "degree of similarity that one person assumes between himself and another person" (p. 302). The results indicated that the overall NPI was negatively correlated with the MEES and the SEPQ. All four subscales of the NPI – Explotiveness/Entitlement, Leadership/Authority, Superiority/Arrogance, and Self-Absorption/Self-Admiration – were negatively correlated with the SEPQ, the Exploitiveness/Entitlement subscale was negatively correlated with all three measures of empathy, and the Superiority/Arrogance subscale was negatively correlated with the MEES.

Watson and Morris (1991) also examined the correlations between narcissism and dispositional empathy by administering the NPI and the Interpersonal Reactivity Index (IRI) to 221 undergraduate students. The IRI assesses the dispositional emotional and cognitive responses an individual has in response to another's emotional experiences. Their results indicated a significant negative relationship between the overall NPI and the empathic concern, perspective taking, and personal distress subscales of the IRI. Both the relationships between narcissism and empathic concern, and narcissism and perspective taking could be accounted for by the Exploitiveness/Entitlement subscale of the NPI. That is, when controlling for this subscale, only the significant negative correlation between narcissism and personal distress remained.

More recently, Vonk, Zeigler-Hill, Mayhew, and Mercer (2013) examined the correlational relationships between two measures of narcissism and two measures of empathy. The researchers administered the NPI, the Pathological Narcissism Inventory (PNI), the IRI, and the Empathy Quotient (EQ) to 368 undergraduate students. Like the

IRI, the EQ measures both dispositional cognitive and affective empathy, but with a more restrictive conceptualization of empathy (Baron-Cohen & Wheelwright, 2004). They found that overall narcissism and the Explotiveness/Entitlement subscale of the NPI were negatively associated with overall empathy and the perspective taking subscale of the IRI. Overall narcissism, as well as all subscales of the NPI were negatively associated with the empathic concern subscale of the IRI. Narcissism overall was related to increased personal distress, and the grandiosity subscale of the NPI was related to greater empathic concern and perspective taking.

Hepper, Hart, Meek, Cisek, and Sedikides (2014) examined the differences in narcissism and empathy between 77 prison participants and 69 control participants. Participants completed the NPI and the Personality Diagnostic Questionnaire (PDQ) to assess narcissism, and the IRI to assess empathy. The researchers found that the prison sample exhibited significantly higher levels of narcissism than the control sample according to the NPI, but did not differ according to the PDQ. They also found that, compared to the control sample, the prison sample exhibited significantly less overall empathy, as indicated by the overall IRI scores, and less empathic concern, as indicated by the empathic concern subscale of the IRI.

As can be observed in the aforementioned literature, when examining the relationship between empathy and narcissism, empathy is almost invariably measured using one or two of a long list of dispositional empathy measures including, but not limited to, the Smith Empathic Personality Questionnaire (SEMP), the Empathy Quotient (EQ), and, most frequently, the Interpersonal Reactivity Index (IRI). However, Batson,

Fultz, and Schoenrade (1987) argue that these dispositional measures of empathy do not truly access the construct of affective empathic experience; instead they measure a "general disposition to feel sympathy or concern for people less fortunate than oneself" (p. 21). Thus, dispositional measures of empathy may not measure the actual extent of affective empathic emotions individuals experience in a given situation. Dispositional measures of empathy may also be highly susceptible to social desirability biases resulting in invalid findings (Batson et al., 1987). Narcissism may be related to positivity biases, resulting in overall more positive ratings on self-reported dispositional measures of empathy. An alternative, and arguably more accurate way to measure affective empathy would be to administer a measure of state mood immediately after an individual encounters an empathy eliciting situation. A measure of state mood can directly measure the empathic emotions that are elicited by an empathic situation, and can be directly related to experiencing affective empathy (Batson et al., 1987; Stocks, Lishner, Waits, & Downum, 2011).

A study conducted by Ritter et al. (2011) evidences this supposed disconnect between dispositional and state measures of affective empathy when examining the relationship between narcissism and empathy. They compared affective empathy in 47 individuals diagnosed with Narcissistic Personality Disorder and 53 healthy control participants by administering both the IRI and a state empathy task: The Multifaceted Empathy Test (MET). The MET, in part, requires participants to report the emotions they experience after being exposed to an image of an individual with a facial expression conveying a discrete emotion (emotion contagion), as well as the extent to which they

experience empathic concern for the individual in the picture. Ritter et al. found no relationship between narcissism and the IRI's measurement of empathic concern. However, the authors did find a negative relationship between narcissism and state measures of both emotion contagion, and empathic concern. It should be noted that though the MET is a state measure of emotion contagion and empathic concern, it also has high face validity (e.g., "How much empathic concern do you feel for the person in the picture?") thus may be susceptible to many of the same biases as dispositional measures of affective empathy.

Ritter et al.'s (2011) study not only further exemplifies the mixed results in the literature on the nature of the relationship between narcissism and empathy, but also suggests that dispositional measures and state measures of empathy may in fact be accessing separate constructs. The authors assert that narcissists may overestimate the extent to which they actually experience affective empathy on dispositional measures. Considering the majority of the research examines the relationship between narcissism and empathy by implementing dispositional measures, further research should consider using more accurate state measures of affective empathy.

A second example of the disconnect between dispositional and state measures of empathy can be demonstrated by a study conducted by Wai and Tiliopoulos (2012) in which they assessed the relationship between the dark triad (narcissism, psychopathy, and Machiavellianism) and affective empathy in 139 undergraduate students. Narcissism was measured using the NPI. Empathy was measured using one dispositional measure, the EQ, and one state measure, the Self-Assessment Manikin (SAM). The SAM is a task in

which participants are presented with a face displaying a discrete facial expression immediately followed by a mood valanced measure to assess affective empathy. Generally consistent with the literature discussed thus far, the results indicated a negative relationship between narcissism and affective empathy as measured by the IRI. Examining the state measure of empathy revealed that narcissism was positively related to a tendency to feel high levels of positive emotions in response to sad faces and angry faces, suggesting those higher in narcissism actually experience an opposite effect, as opposed to no effect, of emotional valence in response to others' emotions. However, this measure of valence only captures the directionality of emotion contagion, and does not indicate specifically which emotions the individual is feeling.

Lishner, Hong, Jiang, Vitacco, and Neumann (2015) closely examined the relationship between narcissism and state affective empathy in a total of 374 undergraduate students across two studies. Narcissism was measured with the PNI. Affective empathy was elicited by presenting participants with a series of stimuli including faces displaying discrete facial expressions (emotion contagion), infant faces (empathic concern), and a story describing an individual in need (emotion contagion, and empathic concern). Each stimulus was immediately followed by a covert mood measure in which the participant reported the emotions he or she was feeling at the time while unaware that their reported mood was in any way related to the faces or stories. A mood response congruent with the emotion exhibited in the image or story indicated emotion contagion, and a mood response across a number of items representative of empathic concern (e.g., warm, compassionate, etc.) indicated participants' experience of empathic

concern. The mood responses for each stimulus were subtracted from the respective mood responses to a neutral stimulus to create a mood change score. One advantage to this approach is it controls for certain method biases specific to the rater, and response scale. Unlike much of the literature discussed thus far, Lishner et al. found relationships near zero between narcissism and emotion contagion and empathic concern, suggesting minimal evidence indicating a negative relationship between narcissism and affective empathy across both studies. They did, however, find several positive associations between narcissism and experience of negative emotions in response to the negative emotions of others (e.g., experiencing sadness in response to sad faces, anger in response to angry faces), which may be indicative of an increased experience of personal distress.

The primarily null findings of Lishner et al.'s (2015) studies makes it clear that further research needs to be conducted using covert state measures of affective empathy instead of overt dispositional measures of affective empathy and their relationship with narcissism. It also seems clear that a preponderance of the literature that examines this relationship is primarily nonexperimental. Thus, it seems necessary to examine this relationship in an experimental context.

Hepper, Hart, and Sedikides (2014) conducted three experimental studies to get a more nuanced perspective on the relationship between narcissism and empathy. In their first study, the authors presented 282 participants with a vignette describing an individual who had ostensibly recently gone through a break up. Within the story, the researchers manipulated the severity of the target individual's suffering (mild or severe), and the extent to which the target individual was in control of his or her situation (low-control or

high-control). After reading the story, participants completed a state empathy measure derived from the perspective taking, empathic concern, and personal distress subscales of the IRI. Participants' narcissism was assessed using the NPI. The results of this Study 1 indicated a negative association between narcissism and empathy regardless of condition. Further analyses indicated that this relationship was accounted for by maladaptive narcissism, measured by the maladaptive subscale of the NPI. That is, there was a negative association between maladaptive narcissism and empathy, regardless of the severity or control of the individual in the story, whereas there was no relationship between adaptive narcissism and empathy.

A second study by Hepper et al. (2014) examined whether the relationship between narcissism and empathy could be impacted by a perspective taking manipulation. Specifically, can the negative relationship between narcissism and affective empathy be nullified by instructing participants to take the perspective of an individual in distress? Ninety-five female participants viewed a short video about a woman in a situation of domestic violence. Prior to viewing the video, the participants were randomized into one of two conditions: an imagine-other condition in which the participant was instructed to imagine what the woman in the video was thinking and feeling, or a natural responding condition in which the participant was given no perspective taking instructions. Immediately following the video, participants completed the same state measure of empathy used in Study 1, excluding the perspective taking subscale with the reasoning that the perspective taking subscale was redundant with the manipulation and would bias the overall empathy scores. Narcissism was again assessed

using the NPI. The results of Study 2 found no main effects of narcissism or condition, but did indicate a significant interaction of narcissism and condition. The interaction showed that the effect of condition was significant for those higher in narcissism, but not those lower in narcissism. That is, there was a negative relationship between narcissism and empathy in the natural responding condition, but there was no relationship between narcissism and empathy in the perspective taking condition. This relationship can again be entirely accounted for by maladaptive narcissism; there were no significant main effects or interactions when examining only adaptive narcissism. According to these results, participants higher in maladaptive narcissism are capable of experiencing empathy to the same extent as those lower in narcissism, but do not tend to naturally.

Hepper et al.'s (2014) third study employed the same perspective taking manipulation as Study 2, but used participants' heart rates to measure affective empathy. An elevated heart rate is proposed to be indicative of an increased autonomic empathic response. Eighty-eight participants were randomly assigned to one of the two aforementioned perspective taking conditions, then listened to an audio recording of a woman who had recently gone through a breakup. While listening to the audio recording, participants' heart rates were measured using an electrocardiograph. Participants again completed the NPI to assess narcissism. The results indicated a significant main effect of narcissism, but no significant main effect of condition and no significant interaction between narcissism and condition; narcissism was negatively associated with heart rate, indicating less affective empathy. The main effect of narcissism could be entirely

accounted for by the maladaptive narcissism subscale of the NPI, as there was no significant main effects or interaction effects for adaptive narcissism.

Hepper et al. (2014) are the first researchers to examine the boundary conditions of the negative relationship between narcissism and empathy using such experimental paradigms. However, their studies of course have limitations. Though the authors did implement a self-report measure of state empathy, the measure they used was derived from the IRI. Because the IRI is traditionally a dispositional measure of empathy, the extent to which it can truly measure state empathy is unclear. As was mentioned earlier, the IRI also has questionable construct validity (Batson et al., 1987), and has high face validity, so it may be highly susceptible to social desirability biases. Though the IRI has specific subscales for empathic concern and personal distress, the authors collapsed these subscales into an overall empathy score. However, as indicated by previous research, narcissism may be related to a lessened experience of empathic concern and increased experience of personal distress (Vonk et al., 2013), thus it is important to differentiate between these two types of empathy in theory and in analyses. The importance of this distinction is further evidenced by the results of Hepper et al.'s third study; research has shown that personal distress is positively correlated with heart rate, whereas empathic concern is negatively correlated with heart rate (Eisenberg & Fabes, 1990). Thus, these two facets of affective empathy may differentially account for Hepper et al.'s (2014) findings.

The Current Study

The goal of the present study was to conduct a conceptual replication of Hepper, et al.'s (2014) Study 2. The aim was to examine how the relationship between narcissism and affective empathy is influenced by implementing an imagine-other perspective taking manipulation compared to a control condition in which no perspective taking directions were provided. This manipulation addressed the question of whether the negative relationship between narcissism and affective empathy can be attenuated by instructing participants to take the perspective of an individual in distress. Two hypotheses were assessed: (1) *the affective empathy malleability hypothesis* in which there is a negative relationship between narcissism and affective empathy, but these relationships are greatly reduced or cease to exist when participants engage in perspective taking, and (2) *the affective empathy rigidity hypothesis* in which there is a negative relationship between narcissism and affective empathy, and these relationships persist regardless of a perspective taking manipulation.

Support for the affective empathy malleability hypothesis would be consistent with Hepper et al.'s research, which suggests narcissism is associated with a tendency to experience lower affective empathy for others, unless one is situationally induced to adopt an imagine-other perspective. Evidence of a negative association between narcissism and affective empathy that is uninfluenced by induction of imagine-other perspective taking would support the affective empathy rigidity hypothesis, indicating that association between narcissism and affective empathy instead reflects an incapacity to adopt the perspectives of others.

The proposed hypotheses, however, are based on the assumption in the literature that, at baseline, there is a negative relationship between narcissism and affective empathy, which has yet to be reliably observed when implementing state measures of affective empathy. A failure to support either the affective empathy malleability hypothesis or the affective empathy rigidity hypothesis in the present study may provide further support for Lishner et al.'s (2015) findings asserting no relationship between state affective empathy and narcissism.

Method

Participants

One hundred twenty-five participants from the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh Department of Psychology Participant Pool were recruited for the present study. Both male and female students were included in the sample; sex was controlled for during analysis due to research that suggests sex differences in narcissism (Grijalva et al., 2015), as well as sex differences in affective empathy (Eisenberg & Lennon, 1983).

Of the original sample, 5 participants were excluded from analyses due to high suspicion, resulting in a final sample size of 120 students, with 61 participants in the No Perspective (NP) condition, and 59 in the Imagine-Other (IO) condition. On average, students were 19.4 years-old (*SD* = 2.25), and were primarily female (*n* = 73, 60.8%). The majority of participants indicated freshmen status (*n* = 73, 60.8%). The remainder indicated their status as sophomore (*n* = 29, 24.2%), junior (*n* = 6, 5.0%), or senior (*n* = 11, 9.2%), with one (0.8%) indicating no response. Ninety-three (77.5%) participants identified as White/Caucasian, 29 (24.2%) as Asian, 8 (6.7%) as Black/African-American, 5 (4.2%) as Multiracial/Other, 3 (2.5%) as Hispanic/Latino, 1 (0.8%) as Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, and 1 (0.8%) did not report their ethnicity.

Procedures and Materials

Participants were run one at a time in individual lab cubicles. Upon arrival, participants were taken to their cubicle and given an informed consent form (see

Appendix B). If the participant agreed to proceed with the study, the participant was instructed to read a brief introduction form that provided information about the study and the cover story (see Appendix C). When the participant finished reading the introduction form, the researcher proceeded to reiterate that the purpose of the study was ostensibly to pilot new columns for the student newspaper, and to understand student reactions to the articles. Participants were told that they will receive one of several articles to read and evaluate, chosen by asking the participant to select a number 1 through 8. All participants received the same article in a folder labeled with the number corresponding to their choice.

Perspective Taking Manipulation. Participants received a folder containing the article, preceded by the instructions for one of two perspective taking conditions: No Perspective (NP; see Appendix D), or Imagine-Other (IO; see Appendix E). The packet was delivered in a folder to ensure the researcher was blind to the participant's condition, and to aid in random assignment. After reading the instructions, participants read an article about an individual in a need situation intended to elicit empathic concern and/or personal distress in the participant (see Appendix F).

Mood Measure. Immediately after the reading the article, participants completed a mood inventory to measure state empathic concern and personal distress. The measure consists of 22 emotions that participants rate on a 7-point Likert scale indicating the extent to which they are currently experiencing a given emotion. The scale ranges from 1, "Not at All," to 7, "Extremely." Six of the items – tender, compassionate, warm, soft-hearted, sympathetic, and moved – were averaged to create an Empathic Concern (EC)

score (α = .68), and six of the items – distressed, disturbed, upset, troubled, worried, and alarmed – were averaged to create a Personal Distress (PD) score (α = .81; Batson et al., 1987). A third scale score that averaged items from both the EC and PD subscales was calculated (α = .80) in an attempt to replicate the findings of Hepper et al. (2014). The remaining nine items were filler items that could be considered relevant to the cover story (e.g., embarrassed, sorrowful, proud; see Appendix G).

Manipulation Check. The mood measure was immediately followed by a manipulation check question among a number of filler questions that matched the cover story (see Appendix H). All of the questions in this section were rated on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1, "Not at all," to 7, "Very much" (or a similar label relevant to the specific item). The question "To what extent did you imagine the thoughts and feelings of the person in the article?" measured the extent to which participants engaged in the Imagine-Other perspective, with a higher score indicating more use of the IO perspective. The manipulation will have been effective if those randomized into the IO condition report significantly higher values on the manipulation check item compared to those randomized into the NP condition.

During the final portion of the study, participants completed the two measures of dispositional narcissism (counterbalanced across participants), a measure of dispositional empathy, and a demographics form.

Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI). The NPI consists of 40 binary response items. Each item presents two options, one of which is indicative of narcissism, the other of which is not indicative of narcissism. The overall narcissism score is

typically calculated by summing the number of items to which a participant responded indicative of narcissism. However, to account for missing values and to prevent artificial deflation of the overall scores, the NPI score was calculated by finding participants' mean scores (ranging from 0 to 1) in the present study (α = .87).

Various researchers have suggested that the NPI consists of 2, 3, 4, or 7 subscales, however the subscales are inconsistent and have low interitem reliability (Pincus, Ansell, Pimentel, Cain, Wright, & Levy, 2009; Pincus & Lukowitsky, 2010). Thus, no subscales, only the overall scale score, were evaluated. The NPI is argued to measure somewhat more adaptive, grandiose narcissism than maladaptive, vulnerable narcissism (Krizan & Herlache, 2017; Pincus & Lukowitsky, 2010; see Appendix I).

Pathological Narcissism Inventory (PNI). The PNI (Pincus et al., 2009) consists of 52 items ranked on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1, "Not at All Like Me," to 7, "Very Much/Totally Like Me." To calculate an overall narcissism score, the mean score of all 52 items was calculated (α = .95). The PNI can also be broken down into 7 factors, 4 of which fall under grandiose narcissism, and 3 of which fall under vulnerable narcissism. Exploitativeness (EXP; α = .72), Entitlement Rage (ER; α = .84), Grandiose Fantasies (GF; α = .85), and Self-Sacrificing Self-Esteem (SSSE; α = .71) relate to grandiose narcissism (α = .88). Contingent Self-Esteem (CSE; α = .94), Devaluing (DEV; α = .79), and Hiding the Self (HS; α = .79) relate to vulnerable narcissism (α = .94; Pincus et al., 2009). All subscales have good interitem reliability. The means of the respective items were obtained to calculate a scale score for each factor. Higher overall

and subscale scores indicate greater overall narcissism or narcissism respective to the subscale (see Appendix J).

Two independent measures of narcissism are included in order to obtain a comprehensive view of the construct. The NPI is argued to access a more adaptive, grandiose type of narcissism, whereas the PNI is argued to access a more vulnerable and maladaptive narcissism compared to the NPI, with little overlap between the two measures (Krizan & Herlache, 2017; Pincus & Lukowitsky, 2010). Both measures are also being included because, though the NPI has nearly been the sole measure of narcissism in past research, the PNI is quickly gaining popularity in the field (Pincus et al., 2009; Pincus and Lukowitsky, 2010).

Interpersonal Reactivity Index (IRI). The IRI (Davis, 1980) measures dispositional empathy and consists of 28 items on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1, "Does not describe me well," to 5, "Describes me very well." The IRI is made up of 4 subscales: Perspective Taking, Fantasy, Empathic Concern, and Personal Distress (see Appendix K). Though the entire scale was administered, only the Empathic Concern (EC; α = .77) and Personal Distress (PD; α = .74) subscales were evaluated in analyses, allowing for direct comparison to the state measures of empathic concern and personal distress. Scale scores were created by calculating mean scores for the respective subscales, with higher scores meaning greater affective empathy on a given subscale. Similar to the state measure of affective empathy, a third scale score that averages items from both the EC and PD subscales was calculated (α = .78) in an attempt to replicate the findings of Hepper et al. (2014).

A dispositional measure of empathy was included along with the state measure of affective empathy to assess whether the negative relationship between narcissism and affective empathy may be accounted for by some discrepancy between the two measure types. That is, if a given hypothesis is supported by one type of measurement of empathy, but not the other, then construct validity of the measures is brought further into question. Of all the available measures of dispositional empathy, the IRI was chosen because it is the most frequently used among the relevant literature, including the studies conducted by Hepper et al. (2014).

Demographics. Participants completed a brief demographics questionnaire to assess participant sex, ethnicity, year in college, and age (see Appendix L).

Suspicion Check and Debriefing. The study concluded with a face-to-face interview to probe for suspicion (see Appendix M). Participants received a short debriefing form to undo deception and to reveal the true purpose of the study before they left (see Appendix N).

Results

Manipulation Check

An independent samples *t*-test indicated no significant differences on the Imagine-Other (IO) manipulation check item between participants in the No Perspective (NP) condition, $M = 5.85$, $SD = 1.06$, and participants in the IO condition, $M = 5.93$, $SD = 0.98$, $t(118) = -0.43$, $p = .67$).

State Affective Empathy

Hierarchical multiple regressions were conducted to evaluate the effect of condition and narcissism on state personal distress (PD), state empathic concern (EC), and a combination of the two (PDEC) as measured by the mood measure. In all hierarchical multiple regressions, sex (0 = male, 1 = female) was entered in Model 1, condition (0 = NP, 1 = IO) and narcissism were added in Model 2, and interaction variables were added in Model 3. See Table 1 for means and standard deviations of all continuous variables.

Personal Distress. The first hierarchical multiple regression examined the impact of sex, condition, NPI narcissism, and the condition X NPI interaction on state PD. Results of the omnibus test indicated that Model 1 did not significantly predict state PD, $R^2 = .01$, $F(1, 114) = 0.55$, $p = .46$. Model 2, however, did significantly predict state PD, R^2 *change* $= .10$, $F(2, 112) = 6.33$, $p = .002$. Model 3 did not significantly predict state

PD, R^2 *change* = .00, $F(1, 111) = 0.15$, $p = .70$. Regression coefficients of Model 2 indicated that both condition, $\beta = .24$, $t(114) = 2.65$, $p = .009$, and NPI narcissism, $\beta = -.26$, $t(115) = -2.82$, $p = .006$, significantly predicted state PD.

A second hierarchical multiple regression examined the impact of sex, condition, PNI narcissism, and the condition X PNI interaction on state PD. Results of the omnibus test indicated that Model 1 did not significantly predict state PD, $R^2 = .00$, $F(1, 109) = 0.07$, $p = .79$. Model 2 was marginally significant in predicting state PD, R^2 *change* = .05, $F(2, 107) = 3.05$, $p = .05$. Model 3 did not significantly predict state PD, R^2 *change* = .00, $F(1, 106) = 0.11$, $p = .74$. Regression coefficients in Model 2 indicated that none of the predictors significantly predicted state PD, p's > .09. When the regression was run with the subscales of the PNI entered in place of the overall PNI score, Model 2 had a marginal effect on state PD, R^2 *change* = .13, $F(8, 101) = 1.94$, $p = .06$, however the regression coefficients indicated that no subscale significantly predicted state PD, p's > .10 (see Table 2).

Empathic Concern. A hierarchical multiple regression examined the impact of sex, condition, NPI narcissism, and the condition X NPI interaction on state EC. Results of the omnibus test indicated that Model 1, $R^2 = .01$, $F(1, 115) = .81$, $p = .37$, Model 2, R^2 *change* = .02, $F(2, 113) = 1.19$, $p = .31$, and Model 3, R^2 *change* = .01, $F(1, 112) = 0.70$, $p = .40$, did not significantly predict state EC.

An additional hierarchical multiple regression examined the impact of sex, condition, PNI narcissism, and the condition X PNI interaction on state EC. Results of the omnibus test indicated that Model 1, $R^2 = .01$, $F(1, 110) = 0.84$, $p = .36$, Model 2, R^2

change = .00, $F(2, 108) = 0.18$, $p = .84$, and Model 3, R^2 *change* = .00, $F(1, 107) = 0.07$, $p = .79$, did not significantly predict state EC. When the regression was run with the subscales of the PNI entered in place of the overall PNI score, PNI narcissism had no effect on state EC, p's > .11 (see Table 2).

Personal Distress and Empathic Concern. In an attempt to replicate the results of previous studies in which personal distress and empathic concern were combined to a single empathy score, additional analyses were conducted to determine if the effect of the individual subscales pervade through a combined score. Thus, a hierarchical multiple regression was conducted to examine the impact of sex, condition, NPI narcissism, and the condition X NPI interaction on state PDEC. Results of the omnibus test indicated that Model 1 was not significant, $R^2 = .00$, $F(1, 115) = .00$, $p = .96$. Model 2, however, was significant in predicting PDEC, R^2 *change* = .09, $F(2, 113) = 5.50$, $p = .005$. Model 3 did not significantly predict PDEC, R^2 *change*= .00, $F(1, 112) = 0.07$, $p = .79$. Similar to the results of the PD subscale, regression coefficients of model 2 indicate that condition, $\beta = .22$, $t(115) = 2.38$, $p = .019$, and NPI narcissism, $\beta = -.25$, $t(115) = -2.68$, $p = .008$, were significant predictors of PDEC.

A hierarchical multiple regression examining the impact of sex, condition, PNI narcissism, and the condition X PNI interaction revealed no significant predictors on state PDEC in Model 1, $R^2 = .00$, $F(1, 110) = 0.15$, $p = .70$, Model 2, R^2 *change* = .04, $F(2, 108) = 2.04$, $p = .14$, or Model 3, R^2 *change* = .00, $F(1, 107) = 0.02$, $p = .89$. When the regression was run with the subscales of the PNI entered in place of the overall PNI score, PNI narcissism had no effect on state PDEC, p's > .12 (see Table 2).

Dispositional Affective Empathy

Hierarchical multiple regressions were conducted to evaluate the effects of condition and narcissism on dispositional personal distress (PD), dispositional empathic concern (EC), and a combination of the two (PDEC) as measured by the Interpersonal Reactivity Index (IRI). In all hierarchical multiple regressions, sex (0 = male, 1 = female) was entered in Model 1, condition (0 = NP, 1 = IO) and narcissism were added in Model 2, and interaction variables were added in Model 3. See Table 1 for means and standard deviations of all continuous variables.

Personal Distress. A hierarchical multiple regression examined the impact of sex, condition, NPI narcissism, and the condition X NPI interaction on dispositional PD. Results of the omnibus test indicated that Model 1 significantly predicted dispositional PD, $R^2 = .17$, $F(1, 115) = 24.02$, $p < .001$. Model 2 also significantly predicted dispositional PD, $R^2\ change = .08$, $F(2, 113) = 5.84$, $p < .001$. Model 3 significantly predicted state PD, $R^2\ change = .04$, $F(1, 112) = 5.57$, $p = .02$. Regression coefficients of Model 3 indicate that sex, NPI narcissism, and the condition X NPI narcissism interaction significantly predicted dispositional PD; the impact of condition on predicting dispositional PD was marginally significant (see Table 3). A simple slopes analysis indicated that those high in NPI narcissism reported significantly less PD than those lower in narcissism, but that relationship was significantly reduced in the IO condition, $\beta = -.12$, $t(115) = -1.39$, $p = .17$, compared to the NP condition, $\beta = -.45$, $t(115) = -3.98$, $p < .001$ (see Figure 1).

An additional hierarchical multiple regression examined the impact of sex, condition, PNI narcissism, and the condition X PNI interaction on dispositional PD. Results of the omnibus test indicated that Model 1 significantly predicted dispositional PD, $R^2 = .18$, $F(1, 110) = 24.36$, $p < .001$. However, Model 2, R^2 *change* = .01, $F(2, 108) = 0.73$, $p = .48$, and Model 3, R^2 *change*= .02, $F(1, 107) = 2.54$, $p = .11$, did not significantly predict dispositional PD. Regression coefficients of Model 1 indicated that sex significantly predicted dispositional PD, $\beta = .43$, $t(110) = 4.94$, $p < .001$. When the regression was run with the subscales of the PNI entered in place of the overall PNI score, PNI narcissism continued to have no effect on dispositional PD, p's > .05 (see Table 5).

Empathic Concern. A hierarchical multiple regression examined the impact of sex, condition, NPI narcissism, and the condition X NPI interaction on dispositional EC. Results of the omnibus test indicated that Model 1, $R^2 = .15$, $F(1, 115) = 19.72$, $p < .001$, and Model 2, R^2 *change* = .08, $F(2, 113) = 5.84$, $p < .001$, significantly predicted dispositional EC. Model 3 did not significantly predict dispositional EC, R^2 *change*= .00, $F(1, 112) = 0.29$, $p = .59$. Regression coefficients of Model 2 indicate that sex, $\beta = .33$, $t(115) = 3.96$, $p < .001$, and NPI narcissism, $\beta = -.31$, $t(115) = -3.69$, $p < .001$, significantly predicted dispositional EC.

A hierarchical multiple regression examining the impact of sex, condition, PNI narcissism, and the condition X PNI interaction on dispositional EC indicated that Model 1 significantly predicted dispositional EC, $R^2 = .17$, $F(1, 110) = 23.05$, $p < .001$. However, Model 2, R^2 *change* = .01, $F(2, 108) = 0.44$, $p = .65$, and Model 3, R^2 *change*=

.01, $F(1, 107) = 1.12$, $p = .29$, did not significantly predict dispositional EC. Regression coefficients of Model 1 indicate that sex significantly predicted dispositional EC, $\beta = .42$, $t(110) = 4.80$, $p < .001$.

When a regression was run with the subscales of the PNI entered in place of the overall PNI score, PNI narcissism significantly predicted dispositional EC, R^2 *change* = .18, $F(8, 102) = 3.52$, $p = .001$, however there were no significant effect of the interaction terms, R^2 *change*= .05, $F(7, 95) = 1.16$, $p = .34$. Regression coefficients of Model 2 indicated that sex, $\beta = .35$, $t(110) = 3.88$, $p < .001$, the Exploitativeness subscale, $\beta = -.26$, $t(110) = -2.72$, $p = .008$, and the Entitlement Rage subscale, $\beta = -.34$, $t(110) = -2.67$, $p = .009$, significantly predicted dispositional EC (see Table 5).

Personal Distress and Empathic Concern. Again, to replicate the results of previous studies in which personal distress and empathic concern were combined to a single empathy score, additional analyses were conducted to determine if the effects of the individual subscales pervade through a combined score. A hierarchical multiple regression was conducted to examine the impact of sex, condition, NPI narcissism, and the condition X NPI interaction on dispositional PDEC. Results of the omnibus test indicated that Model 1, $R^2 = .25$, $F(1, 115) = 38.39$, $p < .001$, Model 2, R^2 *change* = .13, $F(2, 113) = 12.23$, $p < .001$, and Model 3, R^2 *change*= .02, $F(1, 112) = 4.17$, $p = .04$, significantly predicted dispositional PDEC. Similar to the results of the PD subscale, regression coefficients of Model 3 indicated that sex, NPI narcissism, and the condition X narcissism interaction were significant predictors of PDEC (see Table 4). A simple slopes analysis indicated that those high in NPI narcissism reported significantly less PDEC than

those lower in narcissism, but that relationship was greatly reduced in the in the IO condition, β = -.17, t(115) = -2.80, p = .006, compared to the NP condition, β = -.36, t(115) = -4.64, p < .001 (see Figure 2).

A hierarchical multiple regression examining the impact of sex, condition, PNI narcissism, and the condition X PNI interaction revealed that Model 1, R^2 = .27, F(1, 110) = 39.97, p < .001, was the only significant predictor of dispositional PDEC. Model 2, R^2 *change* = .00, F(2, 108) = 0.18, p = .84, and Model 3, R^2 *change*= .00, F(1, 107) = 0.18, p = .67, did not significantly predict dispositional PDEC. Regression coefficients for Model 1 indicated that sex significantly predicted dispositional PDEC, β = .52, t(110) = 6.32, p < .001.

When the regression was run with the subscales of the PNI entered in place of the overall PNI score, Model 2 was marginally significant, R^2 *change* = .10, F(8, 102) = 1.95, p = .06, but Model 3 was not significant, R^2 *change*= .07, F(7, 95) = 1.69, p = .12. The regression coefficients of Model 2 indicated that, similar to the results of dispositional EC alone, sex, β = .43, t(110) = 4.86, p < .001, and the Exploitativeness subscale, β = -.16, t(110) = -2.94, p = .004, were significant predictors of dispositional PDEC (see Table 5).

Discussion

The current study conceptually replicated Hepper et al.'s (2014) Study 2, while testing two competing hypotheses: the affective empathy malleability hypothesis in which there is a negative relationship between narcissism and affective empathy, but these relationships are greatly reduced or cease to exist when participants engage in perspective taking, and the affective empathy rigidity hypothesis in which there is a negative relationship between narcissism and affective empathy, and these relationships persist regardless of a perspective taking manipulation. Partial support was found for both hypotheses.

The findings of Hepper et al. (2014) Study 2 were replicated, but only with the measures they used. That is, the current study found a negative relationship between narcissism and affective empathy, and this relationship was significantly reduced by engaging in IO perspective taking, supporting the affective empathy malleability hypothesis. However, this relationship was only observed with the NPI and the PDEC measure of the IRI, which was accounted for by the PD subscale, and not the EC subscale of the IRI.

When examining the state measures of affective empathy, the NPI negatively predicted state PDEC, which was accounted for by a negative relationship between the NPI and state PD, but not state EC. Unlike the dispositional measure, this relationship was not impacted by engaging in IO perspective taking, supporting the affective empathy rigidity hypothesis.

The discrepancy in the malleability/rigidity of the relationship between NPI narcissism and state and dispositional measures of affective empathy may be due to the high face validity of the IRI. High face validity may have resulted in a high impact of social desirability on the IRI, compared to the more covert mood measure. The impact of social desirability on responding is evidenced by the pervasive sex effects found with the IRI, and the lack of sex effects found with the mood measure. This is consistent with previous literature indicating large effects of sex for affective empathy questionnaires, and an absence of sex effects on other reports of affective empathy (e.g., story/picture techniques, physiological measures, behavioral measures; Davis, 1980; Eisenberg & Lennon, 1983).

Further, individuals higher in narcissism tend to be more susceptible to the effects of social desirability (Fukunishi, Hattori, Nakamura, & Nakagawa, 1995; Konrath, Ho, & Zarins, 2016). This could account for the condition X NPI narcissism interaction seen with IRI PD; IO perspective taking instructions could have primed participants, especially those higher in narcissism, with social norms or socially desirable responding, resulting in greater reported dispositional PD, but no change in state PD (Eisenberg & Lennon, 1983).

Replicating the results of Lishner et al. (2015), no significant relationship was observed between the PNI and any measure of dispositional or state affective empathy. The discrepancy between the findings with the NPI and PNI may be accounted for by recent suggestions that the NPI measures primarily grandiose narcissism, whereas the

PNI measures primarily vulnerable narcissism with little to no overlap (Krizan & Herlache, 2017).

Limitations and Future Directions

Some marginal effects were detected for the PNI in its relation to both state and dispositional affective empathy; insufficient power may have prevented detection of these effects resulting in Type II error in the present study. A direct replication with a larger sample size could determine the likelihood of this error.

There are also clearly issues with reliance on self-report measures; they are subjective and can be highly susceptible to social desirability, which is of concern especially with narcissism (Konrath et al., 2016). It is also unclear the extent to which narcissists are accurate in correctly identifying and articulating their emotional experiences in self-report measures. Finally, dispositional measures of emotion, like the IRI, entail affective forecasting, in which people are often inaccurate (Eastwick, Hunt, & Neff, 2013; Kawakami, Dunn, Karmali, & Dovidio, 2009). Thus, future studies should conduct conceptual replications that utilize self-report measures in conjunction with more objective measures, such as electroencephalograph, heart rate, or skin conductivity.

Additionally, in the present study, participants were presented with a one-shot perspective taking manipulation. Those higher in narcissism may be at a disadvantage if they do not naturally engage in IO perspective taking, as they will have had significantly less practice engaging in IO perspective taking than those lower in narcissism, who presumably have more practice. Thus, to further examine the affective empathy rigidity

versus malleability hypotheses, a longitudinal study in which participants are trained in IO perspective taking may find that, with more practice, those high in narcissism can learn to effectively take the perspective of others which may, in turn, increase affective empathy.

Finally, because the perspective taking manipulation had a significant interaction with narcissism in responding on the IRI in favor of socially desirable responding, it is possible that the manipulation may have impacted other measures prior to the IRI as well. Future studies should consider a more substantial time lapse between the perspective taking manipulation and unrelated self-report measures.

Conclusions

The affective empathy malleability hypothesis was supported, but only for grandiose narcissism and dispositional personal distress, similar to the results found by Hepper et al. (2014). The affective empathy rigidity hypothesis was supported, but only for grandiose narcissism and state personal distress. Given the high face validity and effects of social desirability, it seems likely that the latter is more representative of actual affective experience, though more research must be conducted to better understand this relationship. Replicating the results of Lishner et al. (2015), vulnerable narcissism does not seem to have a relationship with affective empathy, though replication is necessary to evaluate the likelihood of Type II error in the present study.

Appendix A

Tables and Figures

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics for Narcissism and Affective Empathy Measures

Measure	*M*	*SD*
NPI	0.36	0.18
PNI	3.71	0.82
DEV	3.12	1.08
EXP	3.49	1.09
GF	4.38	1.22
HS	4.23	1.22
SSSE	4.33	1.00
ER	3.21	1.18
CSE	3.24	1.34
State PD	3.33	1.31
State EC	4.30	1.00
State PDEC	3.82	0.98
IRI PD	2.29	0.81
IRI EC	3.49	0.76
IRI PDEC	2.89	0.62

Note. NPI = Narcissistic Personality Inventory; PNI = Pathological Narcissism Inventory; DEV = Devaluing, EXP = Exploitiveness, GF = Grandiose Fantasy; HS = Hiding the Self; SSSE = Self-Sacrificing Self-Esteem; ER = Entitlement Rage; CSE = Contingent Self-Esteem; PD = Personal Distress; EC = Empathic Concern; PDEC = Personal Distress Empathic Concern Composite; IRI = Interpersonal Reactivity Index.

Table 2

Hierarchical Multiple Regression for Model 2 Narcissism Subscales (PNI) on State Affective Empathy

	State PD			State EC			State PDEC		
Subscale	*b*	*β*	*p*	*b*	*β*	*p*	*b*	*β*	*p*
DEV	.20	.16	.27	.12	.12	.42	.16	.18	.24
EXP	-.12	-.10	.37	-.09	-.09	.43	-.11	-.12	.30
GF	-.21	-.19	.10	-.03	-.04	.74	-.11	-.14	.24
HS	.11	.10	.39	-.08	-.10	.44	.00	.01	.96
SSSE	.22	.17	.19	.17	.16	.22	.19	.19	.15
ER	.22	.20	.17	.10	.12	.46	.16	.19	.21
CSE	-.15	-.16	.34	-.14	-.19	.27	-.14	-.19	.26

Note. N = 112. Controlled for participant sex in Model 1. PD = Personal Distress; EC = Empathic Concern; PDEC = Personal Distress Empathic Concern Composite; DEV = Devaluing, EXP = Exploitiveness, GF = Grandiose Fantasy; HS = Hiding the Self; SSSE = Self-Sacrificing Self-Esteem; ER = Entitlement Rage; CSE = Contingent Self-Esteem.

Table 3

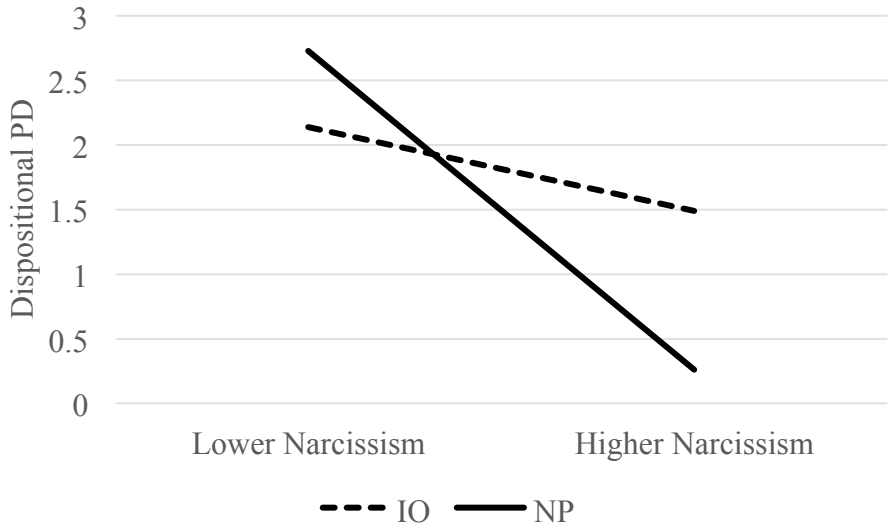
Hierarchical Multiple Regression for Narcissism (NPI) on Dispositional Personal Distress (IRI PD)

Model	R^2(R^2 change)	*b*	*β*	*p*
Model 1	.17(.17)			
Sex		.70	.42	<.001
Model 2	.25(.08)			
Sex		.62	.37	<.001
Condition		.05	.03	.72
NPI		-1.30	-.29	.001
Model 3	.29(.04)			
Sex		.63	.37	<.001
Condition		-.59	-.36	.05
NPI		-2.47	-.54	<.001
Condition X NPI		1.82	.54	.02

Note. $N = 117$. Sex (0 = Male, 1 = Female); Condition (0 = No Perspective, 1 = Imagine-Other).

Figure 1

Simple Slopes Analysis for Condition X NPI Narcissism Interaction on Dispositional PD



Note. $N = 117$. IO = Imagine-Other condition; NP = No Perspective condition.

Table 4

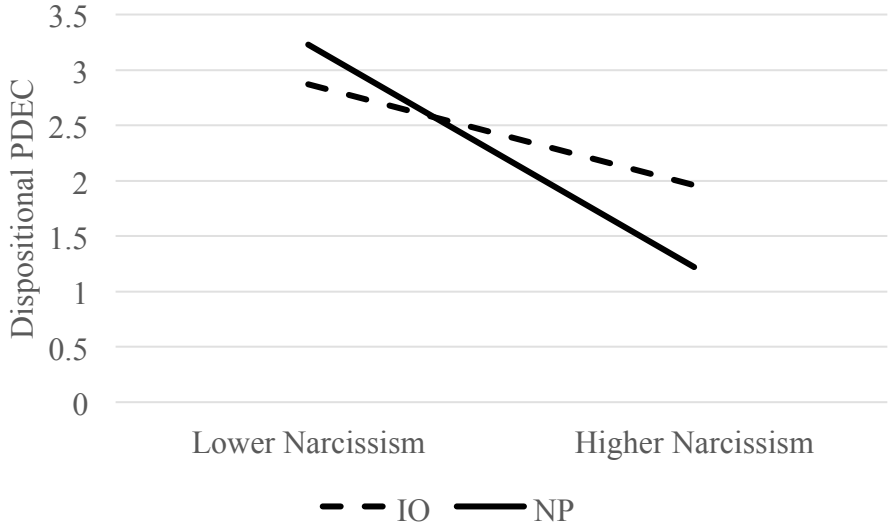
Hierarchical Multiple Regression for Narcissism (NPI) on Dispositional Empathic Concern and Personal Distress (IRI PDEC)

Model	R^2(R^2 change)	*b*	*β*	*p*
Model 1	.25(.25)			
Sex		.65	.50	<.001
Model 2	.38(.13)			
Sex		.57	.44	<.001
Condition		.03	.02	.75
NPI		-1.31	-.37	<.001
Model 3	.41(.02)			
Sex		.57	.44	<.001
Condition		-.36	-.29	.09
NPI		-2.01	-.58	<.001
Condition X NPI		1.10	.43	.04

Note. $N = 117$. Sex (0 = Male, 1 = Female); Condition (0 = No Perspective, 1 = Imagine-Other).

Figure 2

Simple Slopes Analysis for Condition X NPI Narcissism Interaction on Dispositional PDEC



Note. $N = 117$. IO = Imagine-Other condition; NP = No Perspective condition.

Table 5

Hierarchical Multiple Regression for Model 2 Narcissism Subscales (PNI) on Dispositional Affective Empathy

	IRI PD			IRI EC			IRI PDEC		
Subscale	*b*	*β*	*p*	*b*	*β*	*p*	*b*	*β*	*p*
DEV	-.11	-.15	.26	.13	.18	.15	.01	.01	.93
EXP	-.14	-.19	.06	-.18	-.26	.008	-.16	-.28	.004
GF	.04	.06	.59	.02	.04	.72	.03	.07	.57
HS	.03	.04	.72	.06	.09	.38	.04	.07	.46
SSSE	-.09	-.10	.37	.17	.22	.04	.04	.07	.54
ER	.14	.20	.14	-.22	-.34	.009	-.04	-.07	.60
CSE	.13	.22	.15	-.05	-.08	.56	.04	.09	.52

Note. N = 112. Controlled for participant sex in Model 1. IRI = Interpersonal Reactivity Index; PD = Personal Distress; EC = Empathic Concern; PDEC = Personal Distress Empathic Concern Composite; DEV = Devaluing; EXP = Exploitiveness; GF = Grandiose Fantasy; HS = Hiding the Self; SSSE = Self-Sacrificing Self-Esteem; ER = Entitlement Rage; CSE = Contingent Self-Esteem.

Appendix B

Informed Consent

Student Newspaper Pilot Articles Study: Informed Consent
University of Wisconsin Oshkosh

The Department of Psychology supports the practice of protecting human participants in research. The following information is provided so that you can decide whether you wish to participate in the present study. Your participation is solicited but is strictly voluntary. We assure you that your name and responses will remain confidential.

If you decide to participate in this study, you will be asked to read a pilot news article. You will then be asked to complete questionnaires that assess your thoughts about and reactions to the article you read.

The duration of the study will be approximately 1 hour. It is possible that you may experience strong emotional reactions to the news article you will read. If you agree to participate, you will be free to withdraw at any time and will still receive credit for the amount of time spent in the study. If you decide not to participate in this study, please let the researcher know and he or she will excuse you from the study. You do not need to tell the researcher your reasons for choosing not to participate. If you do decide to withdraw from the study, any information collected from you up to that point will then be destroyed.

All results will be recorded confidentially. We will not release information about you in any way or form that could identify you.

If you have any questions, please ask us or contact:

David A. Lishner, Ph.D.
Department of Psychology
University of Wisconsin Oshkosh
Oshkosh, WI 54901
lishnerd@uwosh.edu
920-915-2014

If you have any complaints about your treatment as a participant in this study, please call or write:

Anca Miron, Ph.D., Institutional Review Board for
Protection of Human Participants
c/o Grants Office
UW Oshkosh
920-424-1415

Although the chairperson may ask for your name, all complaints are kept in confidence.

Consent Statement: By signing the statement below, I am confirming that I am at least 18 years old and have received an explanation of the study. I agree to participate. I understand that my participation in this study is strictly voluntary, and that I may withdraw at any time.

_____ _____

Name Date

Appendix C

Introduction to Study

Student Newspaper Pilot Articles Study: Introduction

This study is being conducted by Dr. Lishner in the Department of Psychology, as a service for the student newspaper. The newspaper staff is thinking about adding a new column to the paper: "News from the Personal Side." For the past few years, Dr. Lishner, whose research interests deal with audience response to mass media, has pilot-tested various news columns for the student newspaper.

As a participant in this study, you will be asked to randomly select one of eight brief pilot news articles, either from "News from the Personal Side." Your reactions to the article will be assessed using questionnaires. Although the news articles used in this study are pilot articles, their content is factual. These articles have not and will not be printed in the newspaper; they will only be read by participants in this research.

Appendix D

No Perspective Taking Instructions

Reading Instructions

On the next page is the pilot article you will evaluate. Please turn the page, read the article, and then fill out the reactions questionnaires provided to you**.**

Appendix E

Imagine-Other Perspective Taking Instructions

Reading Instructions

On the next page is the pilot article you will evaluate. Students who participated earlier in the study said they found it useful to read the articles by following the reading instructions listed below. We ask that you try to adopt a similar perspective while you read the article. Please read the following instructions carefully.

> **While you are reading the article, try to <u>imagine the perspective of the person in the article</u>. Specifically, try to <u>imagine how the person thinks and feels about his or her situation</u>. (Try to imagine what the person thinks and feels, <u>do not</u> try to imagine how you would think and feel if you were in the person's situation. Just try to <u>imagine the person's perspective</u> as you read the article).**

Once you have a good sense of the instructions in your mind, please turn the page, read the article, and then fill out the reactions questionnaires provided to you**.**

Appendix F

Article

News from the Personal Side: UWO Student Struggles with Disfiguring Burns
by Amanda Davis

"It is really hard to look at myself in the mirror," states Alyssa Williams, a senior at UWO. Alyssa recently became the victim of a car accident, which resulted in third degree burns on her face and body.

The burns are the result of a fire caused during the accident. Alyssa was returning home to visit her family when a trailer pulled by the car in front of her jarred loose and struck Alyssa's car.

"I was driving on the interstate, and the brake lights to the trailer were not connected. Before I realized what was happening it was too late," stated Alyssa. "My car turned over in the ditch and I was trapped. The flames started as I was trying to get out the driver side window."

Thanks to her seatbelt and airbag, Alyssa suffered only minor bruising, but the more serious life-threatening injuries were third-degree burns on 40 percent of her body. She would spend the next 37 days in the Froedtert Hospital burn unit.

Each day is a struggle, not only because of the disfiguration of Alyssa's face, but its effect on her personal life. "Every day I can feel the stares I get from strangers. I know they are looking at my scars. It makes me feel very self-conscious," says Alyssa. "I don't leave my apartment unless I have to for classes and grocery shopping."

Alyssa's parents have health insurance, but the insurance does not cover the cost of reconstructive surgery to reduce the degree of scarring visible on her face and body. Presently, she is seeking donations from individuals and various state and national organizations in hopes of paying for the reconstructive surgery herself.

Despite her situation, Alyssa tries to remain positive, "I am lucky I survived the accident. I know life will have to go on some way or another. I just have to keep doing the best I can."

Appendix G

Mood Measure

News from the Personal Side: Reactions Questionnaire

Directions: Please circle the number that best describes the degree to which you experienced each of these emotional reactions while reading the news article. Do not worry if you didn't experience several of these emotions; only a few may be relevant to the particular article you read. However, please be sure to circle a response for each emotion.

	not at all						extremely
1. Happy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. Sad	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. Compassionate	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. Proud	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. Troubled	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. Soft-hearted	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. Anxious	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. Successful	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9. Embarrassed	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10. Warm	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11. Worried	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12. Moved	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13. Upset	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14. Tender	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15. Fearful	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16. Disturbed	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17. Ashamed	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18. Alarmed	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

19. Nervous	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20. Sorrowful	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
21. Sympathetic	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
22. Distressed	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Appendix H

Manipulation Check and Filler Items

Evaluation Form: News from the Personal Side

Directions: Please answer each of the following questions.

1. What was discussed in your article? _____

2. How interesting was the news article?

Not at all						Extremely Interesting
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

3. How likely would you be to read an article like this from the student newspaper?

Not at all						Very Likely
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

4. How worthwhile are articles of this nature?

Not at all						Extremely Worthwhile
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

5. How likeable did you find the person in the article?

Not at all						Extremely Likable
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

6. To what extent do you value the person in the article?

Not at all						Very Much
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

7. How much do you value the welfare of the person in the article?

Not at all						Very Much
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

8. To what extent did the person in the article seem vulnerable?

Not at all						Extremely Vulnerable
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

9. How great was the current need of the person in the article?

Not at all						Very Great
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

10. To what extent did you imagine the thoughts and feelings of the person in the article?

Not at all						Very Much
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

11. To what extent did you imagine yourself in the situation of the person in the article?

Not at all						Very Much
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

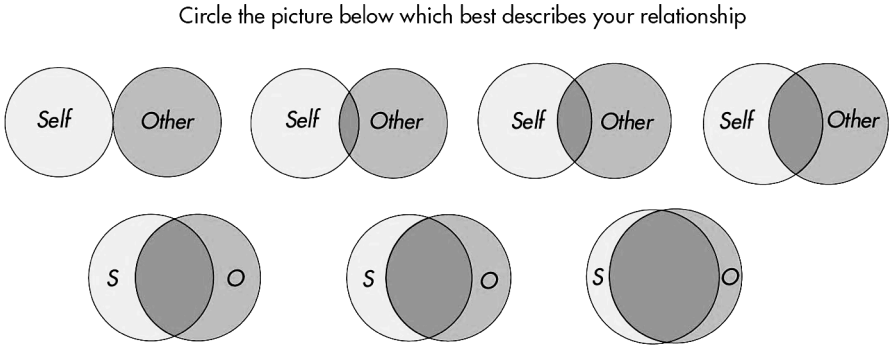
12. To what extent were you objective and detached while reading the article?

Not at all						Very Much
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

13. How similar to yourself did you perceive the person in the article to be?

Not at all						Extremely Similar
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

14. Below are seven pictures that depict possible ways of viewing the relationship between two people. Please <u>circle one</u> of these seven pictures that best indicates the extent to which you feel that you and the person in the article are connected.



15. To what extent do you see yourself and the person in the article as part of the same group?

Not at all						Very Much
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

16. To what extent would you use to term “we” to describe your relationship with the person in the article?

Not at all						Very Much
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Appendix I

Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI)

NPI

This inventory consists of a number of pairs of statements with which you may or may not identify. You may identify with both options A and B. In this case you should choose the statement which seems closer to yourself. Or, if you do not identify with either statement, select the one which is least objectionable or remote. In other words, read each pair of statements and then choose the one that is closer to your own feelings. Indicate your answer by writing the letter (A or B) in the space provided to the left of each item. Please do not skip any items.

1.		A. I have a natural talent for influencing people. B. I am not good at influencing people.
2.		A. Modesty doesn't become me. B. I am essentially a modest person.
3.		A. I would do almost anything on a dare. B. I tend to be a fairly cautious person.
4.		A. When people compliment me I sometimes get embarrassed. B. I know that I am good because everybody keeps telling me so.
5.		A. The thought of ruling the world frightens the hell out of me. B. If I ruled the world it would be a better place.
6.		A. I can usually talk my way out of anything. B. I try to accept the consequences of my behavior.
7.		A. I prefer to blend in with the crowd. B. I like to be the center of attention.
8.		A. I will be a success. B. I am not too concerned about success.
9.		A. I am no better or worse than most people. B. I think I am a special person.
10.		A. I am not sure if I would make a good leader. B. I see myself as a good leader.
11.		A. I am assertive. B. I wish I were more assertive.
12.		A. I like to have authority over other people. B. I don't mind following orders.
13.		A. I find it easy to manipulate people. B. I don't like it when I find myself manipulating people.
14.		A. I insist upon getting the respect that is due me. B. I usually get the respect that I deserve.
15.		A. I don't particularly like to show off my body. B. I like to show off my body.
16.		A. I can read people like a book. B. People are sometimes hard to understand.

17.		A. If I feel competent I am willing to take responsibility for making decisions. B. I like to take responsibility for making decisions.
18.		A. I just want to be reasonably happy. B. I want to amount to something in the eyes of the world.
19.		A. My body is nothing special. B. I like to look at my body.
20.		A. I try not to be a show off. B. I will usually show off if I get the chance.
21.		A. I always know what I am doing. B. Sometimes I am not sure of what I am doing.
22.		A. I sometimes depend on people to get things done. B. I rarely depend on anyone else to get things done.
23.		A. Sometimes I tell good stories. B. Everybody likes to hear my stories.
24.		A. I expect a great deal from other people. B. I like to do things for other people.
25.		A. I will never be satisfied until I get all that I deserve. B. I take my satisfactions as they come.
26.		A. Compliments embarrass me. B. I like to be complimented.
27.		A. I have a strong will to power. B. Power for its own sake doesn't interest me.
28.		A. I don't care about new fads and fashions. B. I like to start new fads and fashions.
29.		A. I like to look at myself in the mirror. B. I am not particularly interested in looking at myself in the mirror.
30.		A. I really like to be the center of attention. B. It makes me uncomfortable to be the center of attention.
31.		A. I can live my life in any way I want to. B. People can't always live their lives in terms of what they want.
32.		A. Being an authority doesn't mean that much to me. B. People always seem to recognize my authority.
33.		A. I would prefer to be a leader. B. It makes little difference to me whether I am a leader or not.
34.		A. I am going to be a great person. B. I hope I am going to be successful.
35.		A. People sometimes believe what I tell them. B. I can make anybody believe anything I want them to.
36.		A. I am a born leader. B. Leadership is a quality that takes a long time to develop.
37.		A. I wish somebody would someday write my biography. B. I don't like people to pry into my life for any reason.

38.		A. I get upset when people don't notice how I look when I go out in public. B. I don't mind blending into the crowd when I go out in public.
39.		A. I am more capable than other people. B. There is a lot that I can learn from other people.
40.		A. I am much like everybody else. B. I am an extraordinary person.

Appendix J

Pathological Narcissism Inventory (PNI)

PNI

Directions: Please rate each of the following statements using the scale provided. **Circle the number that best describes your own opinion of how well each of the following statements describes yourself.**

	Not at All Like Me						**Very Much Like Me**
1. I often fantasize about being admired and respected.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. My self-esteem fluctuates a lot.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. I sometimes feel ashamed about my expectations of others when they disappoint me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. I can usually talk my way out of anything.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. It's hard to feel good about myself when I'm alone.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. I can make myself feel good by caring for others.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. I hate asking for help.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

8. When people don't notice me, I start to feel bad about myself.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9. I often hide my needs for fear that others will see me as needy and dependent.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10. I can make anyone believe anything I want them to.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11. I get mad when people don't notice all that I do for them.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12. I get annoyed by people who are not interested in what I say or do.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13. I wouldn't disclose all my intimate thoughts and feelings to someone I didn't admire.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14. I often fantasize about having a huge impact on the world around me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

15. I find it easy to manipulate people.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16. When others don't notice me, I start to feel worthless.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17. Sometimes I avoid people because I'm concerned that they'll disappoint me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18. I typically get very angry when I'm unable to get what I want from others.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19. I sometimes need important others in my life to reassure me of my self-worth.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20. When I do things for other people, I expect them to do things for me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
21. When others don't meet my expectations, I often feel ashamed about what I wanted.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

22. I feel important when others rely on me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
23. I can read people like a book.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
24. When others disappoint me, I often get angry at myself.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
25. Sacrificing for others makes me the better person.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
26. I often fantasize about accomplishing things that are probably beyond my means.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
27. Sometimes I avoid people because I'm afraid they won't do what I want them to.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
28. It's hard to show others the weaknesses I feel inside.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
29. I get angry when criticized.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

30. It's hard to feel good about myself unless I know other people admire me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
31. I often fantasize about being rewarded for my efforts.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
32. I am preoccupied with thoughts and concerns that most people are not interested in me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
33. I like to have friends who rely on me because it makes me feel important.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
34. Sometimes I avoid people because I'm concerned they won't acknowledge what I do for them.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
35. Everybody likes to hear my stories.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

36. It's hard for me to feel good about myself unless I know other people like me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
37. It irritates me when people don't notice how good a person I am.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
38. I will never be satisfied until I get all that I deserve.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
39. I try to show what a good person I am through my sacrifices.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
40. I am disappointed when people don't notice me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
41. I often find myself envying others' accomplishments.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
42. I often fantasize about performing heroic deeds.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
43. I help others in order to prove I'm a good person.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

44. It's important to show people I can do it on my own, even if I have some doubts inside.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
45. I often fantasize about being recognized for my accomplish-ments.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
46. I can't stand relying on other people because it makes me feel weak.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
47. When others don't respond to me the way that I would like them to, it is hard for me to still feel ok with myself.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
48. I need others to acknowledge me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
49. I want to amount to something in the eyes of the world.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
50. When others get a glimpse of my needs, I feel anxious and ashamed.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

51. Sometimes it's easier to be alone than to face not getting everything I want from other people.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
52. I can get pretty angry when others disagree with me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Appendix K

Interpersonal Reactivity Index (IRI)

Directions: Below is a list of 28 self-descriptive statements. In the space next to each statement please indicate the degree to which the statement describes you by choosing a number from the following scale:

(Does not describe me well) 0 1 2 3 4 5 (Describes me very well)

_____ 1. I daydream and fantasize, with some regularity, about things that might happen to me.

_____ 2. I often have tender, concerned feelings for people less fortunate than me.

_____ 3. I sometimes find it difficult to see things from the "other guy's" point of view.

_____ 4. Sometimes I don't feel very sorry for other people when they are having problems.

_____ 5. I really get involved with the feelings of the characters in a novel.

_____ 6. In emergency situations, I feel apprehensive and ill-at-ease.

_____ 7. I am usually objective when I watch a movie or play, and I don't often get completely caught up in it.

_____ 8. I try to look at everybody's side of a disagreement before I make a decision.

_____ 9. When I see someone being taken advantage of, I feel kind of protective towards them.

_____ 10. I sometimes feel helpless when I am in the middle of a very emotional situation.

_____ 11. I sometimes try to understand my friends better by imagining how things look from their perspective.

_____ 12. Becoming extremely involved in a good book or movie is somewhat rare for me.

_____ 13. When I see someone get hurt, I tend to remain calm.

_____ 14. Other people's misfortunes do not usually disturb me a great deal.

_____ 15. If I'm sure I'm right about something, I don't waste much time listening to other people's arguments.

_____ 16. After seeing a play or movie, I have felt as though I were one of the characters.

_____ 17. Being in a tense emotional situation scares me.

_____ 18. When I see someone being treated unfairly, I sometimes don't feel very much pity for them.

_____ 19. I am usually pretty effective in dealing with emergencies.

_____ 20. I am often quite touched by things that I see happen.

_____ 21. I believe that there are two sides to every question and try to look at them both.

_____ 22. I would describe myself as a pretty soft-hearted person.

_____ 23. When I watch a good movie, I can very easily put myself in the place of a leading character.

_____ 24. I tend to lose control during emergencies.

_____ 25. When I'm upset at someone, I usually try to "put myself in his shoes" for a while.

_____ 26. When I am reading an interesting story or novel, I imagine how I would feel if the events in the story were happening to me.

_____ 27. When I see someone who badly needs help in an emergency, I go to pieces.

_____ 28. Before criticizing somebody, I try to imagine how I would feel if I were in their place.

Appendix L

Demographics

DI

Directions: Please answer each question below to the best of your ability.

1. What is your Gender? (Circle one) Male Female

2. What is your ethnicity (Check one)?

_____ White/Caucasian

_____ Black/African-American

_____ Hispanic/Latino(a)

_____ Asian

_____ Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander

_____ Multiracial/Other (please specify): _____

3. What is your current year in school? (Check one)

_____Freshman

_____Sophomore

_____Junior

_____Senior

4. What is your age (in years)? _____

5. Where is your present residence? (Check one)

_____On campus

_____Off campus (with family)

_____Off campus (not with family)

Appendix M

Debriefing Script

Researcher: Before we end the study, I would like to take a few minutes to get your reactions to the study in your own words. Would it be okay if I wrote down any comments you may have?

[Participants almost always answer "yes" to this question.]

Researcher: Great! So, what were your reactions to the study?

[Any comments made by participant are written down. This open-ended question is followed by more specific questions about different aspects of the study if the participant does not spontaneously discuss them. For example, the researcher should ask about the following:

What were your reactions to the news article?

What were your reactions to the feelings questionnaire?

What did you think about the final questionnaires?

Researcher: At any point during the study did you think there was something more to the study? Did you at any point think that maybe there was something more to the study than what I've told you so far? Now that I mention it, can you think of any aspect of the study that seems strange or unusual?

If they begin to figure out the study*: "Great! That's right! As you are starting to figure out, there is more to the study then you were originally told. What I'd like to do now is have you read over some information that will explain in more depth what the study was about. I will leave you alone to read over this information. When you are finished reading it, just open the door a crack and I will answer any additional questions you might have about the study."*

If yes, and participant brings up an irrelevant deception in study ….*That actually wasn't going on, but you are on the right track. As you are starting to figure out there is more to the study then you were originally told. What I'd like to do now is have you read over some information that will explain in more depth what the study was about. I will leave you alone to read over this information. When you are finished reading it, just open the door a crack and I will answer any additional questions you might have about the study."*

If no, then . . . *That's good! Actually, there is more to the study then you were originally told. What I'd like to do now is have you read over some information that will explain in more depth what the study was about. I will leave you alone to read over this information. When you are finished reading it, just open the door a crack and I will answer any additional questions you might have about the study."*

After the participant has read the Debriefing Information page and has opened the cubicle door the researcher will return to answer any questions the participant may have.

Researcher: Okay, now that you have read everything about the purpose of this study do you have any additional questions or concerns? As you can see there were some misleading aspects of this study. Do you understand the reasons for including those aspects and are you okay with that?

Researcher: Do you have any other questions or comments at this time? Can you think of any ways that we can improve the study?
Researcher: The last thing we ask is that you not discuss this study with anyone, at least until the end of the semester, so that other people have the opportunity to experience the study in a realistic manner. Would that be okay with you?
Researcher: Well, thank you for participating in the study and thank you for telling me about your reactions. It is very helpful for us and we really appreciate it!

Appendix N

Debriefing Information

Student Newspaper Pilot Articles Study: Debriefing Information

Thank you for participating in this study. The purpose of this form is to provide you more in-depth information about the study. The actual purpose of this study is not to study people's reactions to pilot news articles. Rather, the actual purpose of this study is to examine how adopting different perspectives effects people's emotional reactions.

To examine this issue, we had all participants read either a news article about a student who was injured in a car accident. We randomly assigned participants to read the article while (a) trying to imagine his or her thoughts and feelings, or (b) without any instructions in how to approach reading the article. After reading the article, all participants completed various measures of emotion and personality. By doing this, we are able to see how the different perspective conditions influence differences in how participants feel for the person in the article.

As you may have guessed by now, there were a number of misleading things that you were told about this study. First, the study is not being conducted in collaboration with the student newspaper. The student newspaper is in no way affiliated with this study. Second, there was only one article, not eight, and the person and event you read about were fictional. The purpose for giving you this misleading information was not to trick you. Rather, it was given to you to allow us to keep constant the person in need and the need situation that was described so that we could precisely determine whether or not the experimental conditions we created were solely responsible for people's reactions to encountering a person in need. If we told participants the full truth about the purpose of the study in the beginning and that the article is actually not real, then participants may experience the situation as fictional or as pretend. This could lead participants to react very differently from how they would react in real-life situations when encountering people in need. Also, in some circumstances, if participants know about the actual purpose of a study, then they may feel compelled to report their reactions in an untruthful manner. For these reasons, when psychologists examine certain psychological processes, they may withhold some information about a study or provide participants with some information about the study that is misleading.

We realize that you may feel a bit uncomfortable about having been told misleading information, but we want to assure you that it only was done to ensure that your experience in this study was as realistic as possible. Furthermore, it is important to remember that there is no correct or incorrect response to any of the questionnaires or materials in this study. However, if you still have any concerns about this study, then please speak with the research assistant about your concerns or contact Dr. David Lishner (at lishnerd@uwosh.edu). Either of these individuals will be more than happy to talk with you about any concerns you may have.

Again, thank you very much for your participation. We value the time and energy you spent in this study and it is our hope that the data you have provided will help us to better understand human psychology.

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