

We, the undersigned members of the committee, have approved this thesis

Initial Relationship Satisfaction, Self-Discrepancy, and Self-Awareness: Predictors of  
Relationship Satisfaction After Behavior Discrepancy

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### **Abstract**

The current study investigates the ability of three independent variables (initial relationship satisfaction, self-awareness, and self-discrepancy) to predict the level of satisfaction someone experiences with a relationship after a difficult situation. Initial relationship satisfaction and self-discrepancy predicted current relationship satisfaction. Self-awareness was not a significant contributor. Two additional research questions were put forth. The first research question was regarding the predictive capabilities of this model based on the three IVs. Significant relationships were found between initial relationship satisfaction (10.5%) and the DV (current relationship satisfaction), and self-discrepancy and the DV (3.2%), while no relationship was found between self-awareness and the DV. An additional research question sought to determine if self-discrepancy mediated or moderated the association between relationship satisfaction before a difficult situation and relationship satisfaction after a difficult situation, or if self-discrepancy makes an independent contribution to relationship satisfaction after a difficult situation. While a significant interaction was found, the value of that interaction was too small (.004) to be considered important. Thus, it was determined that initial relationship satisfaction and self-discrepancy make unique contributions to the model. This model could be useful in future studies which seek to predict the outcome of difficult situations in relationships with significant others.

*Key words: self-discrepancy, relationship satisfaction, self-awareness, behavior, self*

### **Introduction**

Relationships have many psychological and physical impacts on an individual's well-being, impacts which can be both beneficial and detrimental to a relationship. Individuals often put a lot of work and effort into maintaining their relationships so that they experience the highest possible amount of satisfaction from those relationships. Unfortunately, relationships require a lot of give and take from all partners, and difficult situations and conflict will most certainly arise. Often, these difficult situations are caused by discrepancies between the behaviors an individual performs and the behaviors others (e.g., parents, siblings, friends, romantic partners) expect the individual to perform (Vater & Schröder-Abé, 2015).

To help reduce conflict from difficult situations and maintain the level of satisfaction perceived from relationships, individuals modify and change their behavior patterns to meet the expectations of others (Overall, Fletcher & Simpson, 2006). The ability to meet the expectations of others requires continuous effort at behavior regulation. For example, if someone's significant other told them they want them to quit smoking, and they agreed to do so, then that individual must continually override the impulse to smoke to meet the expectations of their significant other. Self-regulation requires individuals to remain aware of their actions and facilitates appropriate behavioral adjustments (Overall & Fletcher, 2010; Schaffhuser et al., 2016).

In instances where individuals fail to meet the expectations of others, they can experience discrepancy: tension that arises whenever individuals fail to meet any type of expectation (Roe, 2019). Research into discrepancy has shown that it is heavily influenced by an individual's self-awareness (e.g., Fussner, & Smith, 2015), it can impact the satisfaction an individual feels toward a given relationship (e.g., Robins & Boldero, 2003), and that it matters most when the relationship is with a person who is significant (e.g., Overstreet, Quinn, & Marsh, 2015).

Therefore, the amount of discrepancy experienced is influenced by the amount of satisfaction an individual perceives from their relationship with the other person prior to a discrepant behavior situation.

When difficult situations arise where there is discrepancy between the performed and expected behaviors, and that discrepancy is substantial, partners might experience significant dissatisfaction with that relationship or that relationship might end. Current literature and research suggest that the amount of self-discrepancy someone experiences during a difficult situation could act as an intermediary between the initial satisfaction someone has with a relationship before the situation and the satisfaction they have with that relationship after the situation. Hence, this study builds on previous research by presenting hypotheses and research questions regarding the capabilities of the independent variables (initial relationship satisfaction, self-discrepancy, and self-awareness) to explain, or predict, trends in relationship longevity after situations when behavior discrepancy has occurred.

### **Review of Literature**

#### **Self-Regulation and Significant Others**

Research and theory on self-regulation provides a starting point for considering the influence of others on someone's behavior. Some studies propose that individuals in many western cultures compare their own behavior and features of their self with preexisting standards (e.g., Ahadzadeh, Pahlevan Sharif, & Ong, 2017; Overall, Fletcher, & Simpson, 2006; Schaffhuser et al., 2016). These preexisting standards often remain unspoken, but they can be observed: for example, a school dress code, arriving on time, or a handshake at the start of an interview (Fletcher, Simpson, & Thomas, 2000). Preexisting standards allow individuals to

easily align their behavior to what they believe is the correct behavior to display at any given time.

Fleiter et al., (2006), found that those considered significant (e.g., close friends, parents, siblings, or partners) impact individuals considerably more than those not considered significant (e.g., distant friends or acquaintances). Who someone considers to be significant varies from one individual to the next and cannot be generalized in most instances. What can be generalized, however, is that the accuracy with which an individual aligns their behaviors to the others' expectations has been shown to be beneficial to the level of satisfaction an individual perceives toward that relationship (Schaffhuser et al., 2016; Simpson, Fillo, & Myers, 2012), while the inability to enact expected behavior can be detrimental (Brion, Lount, & Doyle, 2015; Overall, Fletcher, & Simpson, 2006). Individuals rely heavily on observations of themselves and others to help guide them toward accurately aligning their behaviors to the expectations of significant persons.

When individuals have not regulated their behavior enough, and have not met the expectations of others, they frequently learn about the discrepancy through criticism from others (Klein, Renshaw, & Curby, 2016). That criticism can be provided through verbal and nonverbal cues and can be from the significant other, mutual acquaintances, or through general perceptions made during interactions (Aldao & Nolen-Hoeksema, 2012; Klein, Renshaw, & Curby, 2016). Klein, Renshaw and Curby (2016) suggests that the type of relationship (e.g., family, friends, romantic partner, romantic interest, instructor, etc.) and the length of that relationship can have significant impacts on how criticism is taken in a relationship and can impact the amount of discrepancy experienced.

A 2016 study by Gibson, Thompson, and O'Sullivan (2016) suggests that significant people can influence how discrepant a person feels when they enact an inappropriate behavior. Gibson, Thompson, and O'Sullivan go on to suggest that individuals who are depressed or neurotic have higher behavioral demands for themselves and believe others have higher demands for their behavior also. Gibson, Thompson, O'Sullivan and others (e.g., Enns, Cox, & Clara, 2005; Laurenti, Brunch, & Haase, 2008), suggest that when there is a discrepancy between the actual behavior and the expected behavior, especially when that discrepancy occurs during a difficult or stressful situation, there could be an impact on the amount of satisfaction an individual perceives from a relationship.

A pilot study (Roe, 2019) found associations between self-discrepancy and relationship satisfaction that supported Gibson, Thompson, and O'Sullivan (2016) findings. First, a negative relationship was found between relationship satisfaction before a situation and self-discrepancy. This suggests that the more someone is satisfied with a relationship before a situation occurs, the less likely they are to experience discrepancy in their actions. Conversely, the less satisfied they are with the relationship, the more discrepant they will likely feel about their behavior. Second, if a person experiences self-discrepancy regarding their behavior, they are likely to experience a decrease in the satisfaction they have with that relationship as well. When the satisfaction level of a relationship changes negatively, it can lead to a change in the type of relationship between the participants (for example, from romantic to friends, friends to acquaintances, close with parents to estranged, etc.), according to Falconier et al. (2015).

### **Awareness of Self and Others**

Successful regulation of behaviors to meet the expectations of others relies heavily on two methods of awareness: an individual's self-awareness (a psychological state in which one

becomes the object of one's own attention) (Duval & Wicklund, 1972), and an individual's social awareness (awareness of the responses of others to their behavior) (Barnett & Womack, 2015; Schaffhuser et al. 2016). Both self and social awareness depend on perceptions made before, during, and after interactions, which lead to evaluations of expected and enacted behavior (DePaulo et al., 1987; Reid, Harris, Graham, & Rock, 2012). These perceptions aid individuals in determining which behaviors are supposed to be performed and when to perform those behaviors (Brion, Lount, & Doyle, 2015; Carlson & Kenny, 2012).

Self and social awareness are relevant when discussing how behavior regulation impacts, or is impacted by, interactions with significant others (Barnett & Womack, 2015; Carlson, Vazire, & Furr, 2011; Overall & Fletcher, 2010). In these interactions, individuals are generally aware of the feedback they are receiving from others regarding their behavior and can modify that behavior according to the expectations they observe (Carlson, & Kenny, 2012; Overall and Fletcher, 2010). Based on this feedback, individuals consistently modify their behavior to decrease infractions and maximize conformity. Schaffhuser et al. (2016) suggest that performing behaviors which match the expectations of others is influenced by relationship satisfaction. If the other person is significant to the individual, the individual is more likely to attempt to conform to the behavior expectations, and more likely to feel that behaviors which do not conform are inappropriate for the setting (Nielsen, 2017). If individuals do not attempt to conform or fail to conform to the expectations of significant others, then satisfaction with that relationship can decrease.

### **Self- and Behavior Discrepancy**

During instances when an individual believes they are not meeting their expectations, they will likely experience some form of discrepancy (Barnett, Moore, & Harp, 2017). One type

of discrepancy that an individual might experience is behavior discrepancy. For example, if the behavior expectation is to wash your hands before dinner and an individual does not wash their hands before dinner, there is discrepancy between the expectation and the actual behavior.

Behavior discrepancy occurs when an expectation for a behavior is not met by an individual. In these instance, the performed and desired behaviors are different from one another and can cause stress to occur in the relationship between the individual and their significant other.

When behavior discrepancy occurs, it can be followed closely by self-discrepancy. Self-discrepancy, or identity discrepancy, occurs when the significant other and the individual who performed the behavior disagree about whether the behavior was appropriate. If an individual does not meet the expectations of others, but they believe their actions were appropriate, they will experience high self-discrepancy between how they see themselves and how the other person sees them. However, if an individual does not meet the expectations of others, and they believe their behavior was inappropriate, there will be low self-discrepancy experienced.

Self-discrepancy theory (Higgins, 1987) looks at the discrepancies that occur when an individual's perceptions of their behavior and others' perceptions of their behavior do not match. Self-discrepancy theory identifies three types of self: *ought self* (the attributes and behaviors others believe an individual should or ought to possess), *ideal self* (the attributes and behaviors an individual believes they should ideally possess), and *actual self* (the attributes and behaviors an individual believes they possess). A fourth type of self, the *undesired self* (attributes and behaviors an individual does not want to possess), was suggested by Ogilvie in 1987. These selves can clash with each other and lead to discrepancy (Higgins, 2013).

Self and social awareness influence the level of self-discrepancy individuals experience during behavior discrepant situations. The more aware an individual is of the discrepancy

between their actual behaviors and their ought behaviors, the more likely they are to try and regulate that behavior. As such, social awareness sets the unwritten standard of the ought self: the goal of which is for it to match the actual self. If the ought self is achieved, self-discrepancy will be low (Barnett, Moore, & Harp, 2017; Carver, Lawrence, & Scheier, 1999); however, if the ought self is not achieved, self-discrepancy will be high. When self-discrepancy becomes an issue, an individual might start feeling guilty or irritated with the other person in the relationship because behavior alignment to the expectation is not occurring (Carver, Lawrence, & Scheier, 1999).

### **Hypotheses and Research Questions**

Throughout the literature, relationship satisfaction has revealed itself to be connected to self-awareness and self-discrepancy. The pilot study (Roe, 2019) supports these connections and found specific associations between the variables. Relationship satisfaction appears to be an antecedent condition influencing the experiences during, and outcomes of, difficult situations in relationships with significant others. Therefore, the following hypotheses and research questions are offered:

*H1:* Initial relationship satisfaction will have a significant and positive association with relationship satisfaction after a difficult situation.

*H2:* Self-discrepancy will have a significant and negative association to relationship satisfaction after a difficult situation.

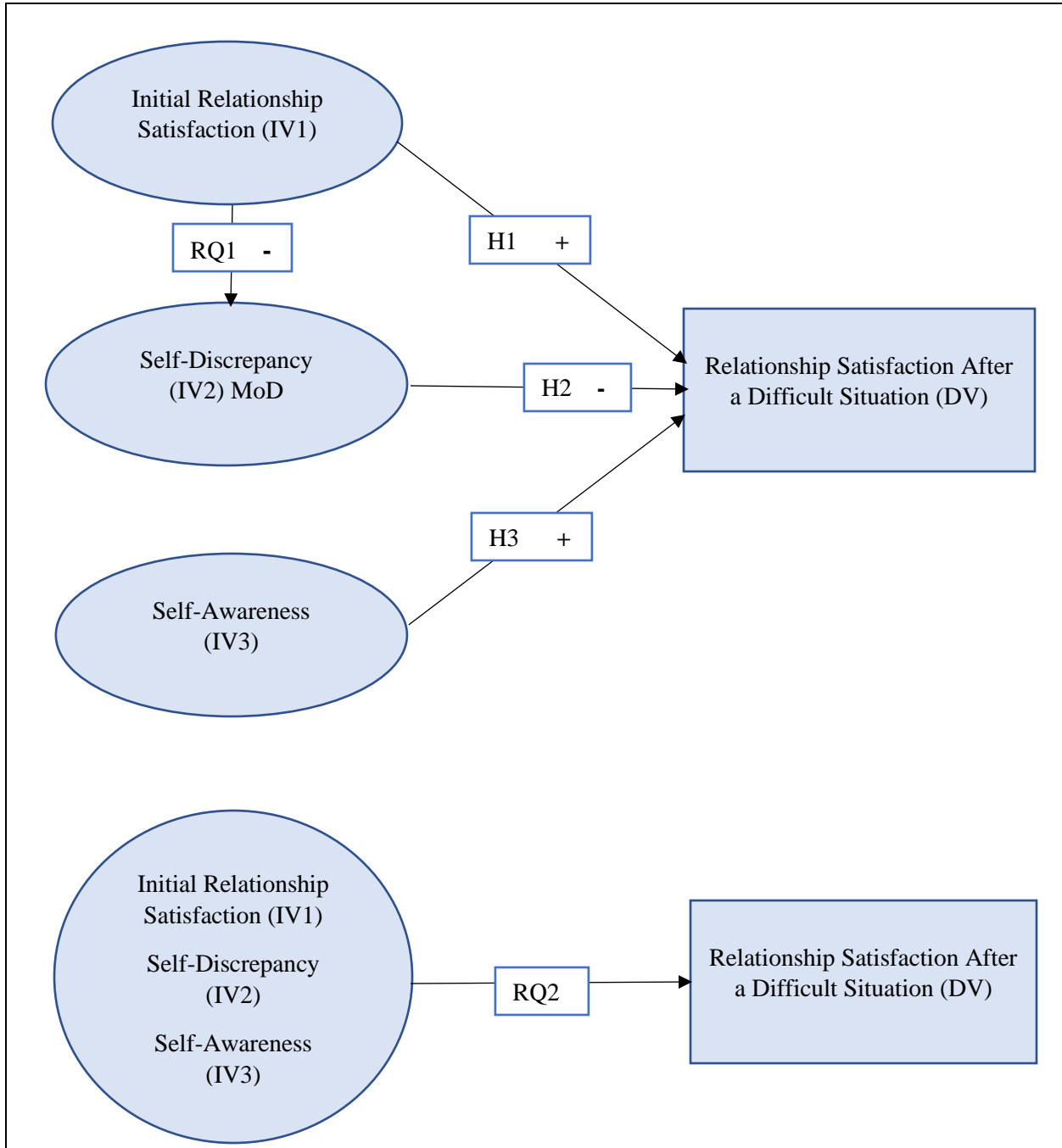
*H3:* Self-awareness will have a significant and positive association to relationship satisfaction after a difficult situation.

*RQ1:* To what extent can the independent variables predict the outcome of satisfaction with a relationship following difficult situations?

RQ2: Does self-discrepancy moderate the relationship between initial relationship satisfaction and relationship satisfaction after a difficult situation?

Table 1

*Description of Variable Relationships*



## Method

### Respondents

Respondents included 212 undergraduate students, between the ages of 18 and 54 years ( $M=20.15$ ,  $SD=3.19$ ), at a medium-sized Midwest university. Respondents were recruited from communication courses and offered extra credit and the chance to receive a gift card for \$10 for their participation. Respondents primarily identified as being white ( $N=173$ , 81.6%), heterosexual ( $N=185$ , 87.3%) and women ( $N=132$ , 62.3%).

### Measures

The complete survey instrument can be found in Appendix A and was released upon receipt of IRB approval. The first portion contains demographic information, including respondent age, gender identity, sexual preference, and ethnic identity. The second portion contains descriptive information about the respondent. The third portion of the survey includes information about a difficult situation, the significant other, amount of time since the situation occurred, and other questions about the situation. The remainder of the survey assesses the variables of interest.

*Self-discrepancy* has been measured extensively using the Higgins's (2013) *Self-Discrepancy Measure*. The Self-Discrepancy Measure asks respondents to assign ten attributes to the categories: *actual self*, *ideal self*, and *ought self*. Categories are then compared with each other. Attributes which occur in more than one category are eliminated and a score is generated based on the remaining attributes. Higgins's Self-Discrepancy Measure is not easily administrable online, as it requires participants to provide up to thirty attributes and write those attributes down. This study seeks to accomplish the same outcome as Higgins by asking respondents to identify a situation in which someone important to them signaled that they had

behaved inappropriately. Respondents answered a single question about how inappropriate they perceived their own behavior to be in the situation. Possible answers translated to *not discrepant*, *a little discrepant*, *somewhat discrepant*, or *very discrepant*, and a discrepancy score was calculated based on the possible answers compared to the identified behavior considered to be inappropriate.

*Self-awareness* was measured with twelve questions about how the respondents view themselves. Questions were drawn from Oltmanns's & Turkheimer's *Multi-Source Assessment of Personality Pathology* (MAPP) tool (2006) (See Appendix B), which has been used to study perception accurately in previous research (e.g., Carlson & Oltmanns, 2015; Oltmanns, Gleason, Klonsky, & Turkheimer, 2005; Usher, Burrows, Messinger, & Henderson, 2018), and modified for this content. A score was generated for each respondent based on their level of agreement (between 1 and 4) with statements regarding their behavior in general.

*Self-regulation.* Respondents answered true or false questions drawn from Snyder's 1974 *Self-Monitoring Scale* (See Appendix C). Snyder's original scale uses 25 true or false questions and assigns the value of true and the value of false either one point or no points for each question (some "true" responses will equal 1 point and some "false" responses will equal 1 point). The total number of points is then summed, and a score is generated for each respondent to determine their level of self-monitoring as either low (0-13 points) or high (14-25). This survey used only 12 of the 25 original questions which pertain to the behavior regulation of respondents. The score values remained the same with some true responses and some false response equaling one point. Points were then summed and a score of 0 to 6 points was given to each respondent to determine if their behavior self-regulation was low (0-3 points), or high (4-6 points).

*Situation.* Respondents were asked to think of a time when someone who is or has been significant in their life had an expectation of them that they were unable to meet. Respondents identified the topic of the situation, the role the other person plays/played in their life, how long they had been in a relationship with that person at the time of the situation, how long ago the incident was, whether they are in the same type of relationship with that person now, and the behavior they were unable to meet at the time of the situation. Respondents were asked to think back on this situation when answering survey questions so that responses were only based on a single situation.

*Relationship Satisfaction* was measured three times, using a single Likert-type item designed to assess the satisfaction the participant had with the relationship before, during, and after the situation. This illuminated any changes to the satisfaction the participant experienced regarding the situation. The question was drawn from the global question from Huston, McHale, and Crouter (1986).

### **Procedure**

Respondents were provided a link, via email or announcement, to the anonymous survey and given approximately two weeks to respond. After providing their consent, respondents answered demographic questions followed by a series of questions regarding how the respondent generally views their own behaviors. Respondents then briefly described a situation where behavior discrepancy occurred, the other participant of that situation, and how satisfied they were with the relationship with that other person before this situation occurred.

Next, respondents answered the single questions related to the respondent's self-discrepancy, and a question about how satisfied they were with the relationship during the situation. Finally, respondents answered a single question regarding how impactful they believe

the situation was on the relationship with the other person, whether they are still in a relationship and the type of relationship they currently have with the other person, and a question asking how satisfied they are with the relationship today.

After completing the survey, respondents were provided a link to another survey, to provide their name, email, and course section number to receive extra credit for their participation and to be entered into a random drawing for one of five \$10 gift cards. Participants who chose not to participate in the survey were navigated to the survey closing screen and provided the link to the extra credit and random drawing. The amount of extra credit students received is determined by their instructor and varied from one class to the next.

### **Results**

*Self-Discrepancy* in behavior was measured by a single question regarding how discrepant a respondent felt during the situation. Possible responses ranged from 0 to 3, with 0 representing a low level of behavior discrepancy and 3 representing a high level of relationship discrepancy. Results illustrated that most respondents experienced moderate amounts of discrepancy ( $M=2.08$ ,  $SD=.88$ ).

*Self-Awareness* was measured by a twelve-item scale to determine how respondents view themselves and their own actions and determine how self-aware they believe themselves to be. Internal reliability of the measure was strong ( $\alpha=.89$ ), so all twelve items were retained.

Respondents were asked to recall a time when their behavior did not meet the expectations of significant others'. Respondents reported about several topics, which were separated into eight subcategories: academic ( $n=74$ , 34.9%), romantic ( $n=38$ , 17.9%), career ( $n=32$ , 15.1%), lifestyle or self ( $n=30$ , 14.2%), sports and recreation ( $n=16$ , 7.5%), friends ( $n=10$ , 4.7%), other ( $n=7$ , 3.3%), and family ( $n=4$ , 1.9%). The single question regarding how

respondents realized they had fallen short of the other persons expectations varied extremely and could not be separated into subcategories.

**Testing**

Hypotheses were tested using Pearson correlation. The full matrix can be seen in Table 2. Correlations demonstrated a significant and positive association between relationship satisfaction before the incident and relationship satisfaction after the incident ( $r [1, 210] = .307, p=.000$ ), which supported the first hypothesis. A significant and negative association between self-discrepancy and relationship satisfaction after a difficult situation ( $r [1, 210] = -.203, p =.000$ ) supported the second hypothesis. Hypothesis three was not supported. There was no significant association between self-awareness and relationship satisfaction after a difficult situation ( $r [1, 210] = .121, p =ns$ ).

Table 2

*Correlations*

		<b>Correlations</b>			
		RelSat1	Discrep	Awareness	RelSat3
Initial relationship satisfaction (RelSat1)	Pearson Correlation	1	-.203**	.059	.307**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.003	.394	.000
	N	211	210	210	210
Self-discrepancy (Discrep)	Pearson Correlation	-.203**	1	-.092	-.252**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.003		.181	.000
	N	210	211	211	209
Self-awareness (Awareness)	Pearson Correlation	.059	-.092	1	.121
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.394	.181		.082
	N	210	211	211	209
Current relationship satisfaction (RelSat3)	Pearson Correlation	.307**	-.252**	.121	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.082	
	N	210	209	209	210

\*. Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed).

\*\*.. Correlation is significant at the .001 level (2-tailed).

*RQI* was investigated by conducting a linear regression (**Table 3**) to predict current relationship satisfaction. Relationship satisfaction before the incident, self-discrepancy, and self-awareness, along with how close the relationship was before the situation, and self-regulation were entered in a stepwise fashion. Two significant predictors were found, which together explained approximately 14% of variance in the final model. Relationship satisfaction before the incident was the strongest contributor ( $F [1, 205] = 23.931, p = .000$ ). Self-discrepancy made the remainder of the contribution ( $F [2, 204] = 16.168, p = .000$ ). The other variables did not make significant contributions to the model.

Table 3

*Linear Regression and ANOVA*

<b>Model Summary</b>						
Model		R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	
Initial relationship satisfaction (RelSat1)		.323 <sup>a</sup>	.105	.100	1.140	
Self-discrepancy (Discrep)		.370 <sup>b</sup>	.137	.128	1.122	
a. Predictors: (Constant), RelSat1						
b. Predictors: (Constant), RelSat1, Discrep						
<b>ANOVA<sup>a</sup></b>						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Initial relationship satisfaction (RelSat1)	Regression	31.079	1	31.079	23.931	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	266.226	205	1.299		
	Total	297.304	206			
Self-discrepancy (Discrep)	Regression	40.678	2	20.339	16.168	.000 <sup>c</sup>
	Residual	256.627	204	1.258		
	Total	297.304	206			
a. Dependent Variable: Relationship satisfaction after a difficult situation						
b. Predictors: (Constant), RelSat1						
c. Predictors: (Constant), RelSat1, Discrep						

*RQ2* sought to determine if self-discrepancy acted as a moderator of initial relationship satisfaction and current relationship satisfaction. Initial correlations did find an association between relationship satisfaction before an incident and self-discrepancy. A series of tests to be conducted to determine how the variables were interacting and an interaction variable was computed for relationship satisfaction before an incident and self-discrepancy\*. Further correlations were then conducted using the interaction variable, initial relationship satisfaction and current relationship satisfaction. A significant change was noted ( $r = .004$ ,  $p = .000$ ) in the relationship between initial and current relationship satisfaction when the interaction variable was included.

### **Discussion**

The current study explored the association between initial relationship satisfaction, self-discrepancy, and self-awareness in interpersonal relationships with significant others, and current relationship satisfaction. The types of relationships and who individuals considered to be significant vary, but the importance of relationship satisfaction remains constant (Schaffhuser et al., 2016). The amount of relationship satisfaction an individual perceives from a relationship fluctuates and can be influenced by the difficulties which occur between the parties. Findings from the pilot study (Roe, 2019) suggested that initial relationship satisfaction, self-discrepancy, and self-awareness can predict, in limited and specific instances, the outcome of difficult situations on the current level of satisfaction an individual perceives from a relationship.

This study built on the pilot study and on previous research by offering a series of hypotheses and research questions to determine the exact role of each variable and the extent of their predictive capabilities. Several key findings emerged.

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\*Please contact primary author for testing details

### **Preliminary Findings**

Preliminary findings suggest that demographics were of little value in this study. This is consistent with the findings in the pilot study (Roe, 2019), but remains inconsistent with previous research using similar measures and tests (e.g., Hu, Kumar, Huang, & Ratnavelu, 2017; Overall, Fletcher, & Simpson, 2006; Overstreet, Quinn, & Marsh, 2006). Previous research of some western cultures suggest that men between the ages of 18 and 28 tend to experience the least amount of discrepancy based on their actions when compared to other groups. This finding was not replicated in the current study. However, in this sample men were more likely than women to feel dissatisfied with their relationship during the situation. This could be due, at least in part, to the types of situations the respondents are choosing to recall, and the role of the significant other in those situations.

### **Hypotheses**

This study explored three hypotheses, put forth based on results from the Roe (2019) pilot study and other research (e.g., Brion, Lount, & Doyle, 2015; Fleiter et al., 2006; Overstreet, Quinn, & Marsh, 2015). The first hypothesis suggested that a significant and positive relationship exists between initial relationship satisfaction and current relationship satisfaction, and results of this study were consistent with this hypothesis. This also supports previous research by Fleiter et al., (2006), which suggests that relationships that are significant to us have the most impact on us, and the amount of satisfaction we have with those relationships before a difficult situation can impact our perceptions of the relationship after that situation. This also supports research by Schaffhuser et al., (2016), which suggests that when we are satisfied with a relationship before difficulties arise we are more willing to work on and try to overcome those difficulties to maintain our perceived level of satisfaction from that relationship.

Our second hypothesis suggested that the level of discrepancy individuals experience between their real-life behaviors and the behaviors they ought to be displaying can relate to current levels of satisfaction they perceive in a relationship. As hypothesized, a significant and negative association was found between these variables. This suggests that those with higher levels of discrepancy between their real-life actions and the expectations others have for those actions can have lower levels of satisfaction with that relationship. This finding supports previous research, including a study done by Gibson, Thompson, and O'Sullivan (2016). Gibson, Thompson, O'Sullivan and others, have suggested that, when there is a discrepancy between the actual behavior and the expected or ought behavior someone enacts, especially when that discrepancy occurs during a difficult or stressful situation, there could be an impact on the relationship satisfaction and long-term damage to that relationship (e.g., Laurenti, Brunch, & Haase, 2008; Enns, Cox, & Clara, 2005),.

The current study also investigated a third hypothesis, which suggested that self-awareness of one's own actions should be positively associated with current relationship satisfaction. This hypothesis was put forth to reproduce results of the pilot study. The pilot study found self-awareness to be significantly and positively related to current relationship satisfaction. This study, however, did not find a significant correlation between self-awareness and current relationship satisfaction. This could be due to additional measures included in this study to obtain a more accurate level of self-awareness than occurred in the pilot study.

### **Research Questions**

A research question was put forth asking, simply, to what extent initial relationship satisfaction, self-discrepancy, and self-awareness could predict current relationship satisfaction. This model had a R square totaling 13.7 when administered to these respondents (**Table 3**). This

is a significant decrease from the pilot study, which had a R square of 24. Some reasons why the R square could have decreased are below for each independent variable in the hypotheses.

The results of the one-way ANOVA suggest a much lower level of prediction for initial relationship satisfaction compared to the pilot study. This decrease could be due to the nature of the study measure. The current study used refined measures and questions in measurement tool to more accurately gauge the changes between initial and current relationship satisfaction. This could account for variations in the predictive capabilities of the model.

Similarly, the results showed a decrease in the predictive capabilities of self-discrepancy in this study when compared to the results of the pilot study. This amount of change is minor and could be the result of the types of issues the respondents were identifying. For example, academic issues were far more common in the pilot study than in this study. This could be one cause of the difference in predictive levels of the model.

Results also showed that self-awareness was excluded from the one-way ANOVA. This is an interesting difference, as self-awareness made a significant, although weak, contribution to the model in the pilot study. Research conducted by Franzoi, Davis, and Young (1985) could explain the lack of a significant finding in this study. They suggest that self-awareness alone does not necessarily impact relationship satisfaction, but it is important when paired with a tendency to share their thoughts and self-perceptions with the other person. The pilot study had a measure of other's perception, which could be why it had a significant finding while the current study did not. This study's lack of a measure of the other person is addressed in the study limitations.

Research question two was put forth in this study because both initial relationship satisfaction and self-discrepancy were significantly correlated to current relationship satisfaction,

and to each other. Exploratory testing was conducted to understand any relationship that might exist between the variables. While a significant finding was noted in the data, the amount of change in the interaction between the variables was considered too small to be relevant. Analysis of these relationships led to the conclusion that both initial relationship satisfaction and self-discrepancy made unique contributions to this model. A lack of a noticeably relevant change does not mean that self-discrepancy is not moderating the association between initial relationship satisfaction and current relationship satisfaction. As such, this interaction is addressed in the future directions section of this study.

While a general decrease in the model's predictive capabilities did occur, the findings of this study were still significant. This research shows that relationship satisfaction and self-discrepancy before a difficult situation can, in certain instances and for certain people, predict how the satisfaction with a relationship might be impacted after a difficult situation.

### **Limitations and Future Directions**

This research offers some important findings about the roles of initial relationship satisfaction and self-discrepancy as influencers of current relationship satisfaction with significant others following difficult situations. However, some important limitations must be addressed. First, this study analyzed college students enrolled in communication courses in a Midwest state, and the sample size was somewhat small and comprised mainly of straight men and women who were white or Caucasian. Future research should analyze more diverse populations beyond this narrow scope to help examine whether these themes are consistent among non-white, non-cisgender, and non-heterosexual populations. Research conducted by Fussner and Smith (2015) suggest that certain topics (body weight, size, and eating disorders) show a gap in the amount of discrepancy experienced. This suggests that the type of discrepancy

could impact a relationship among gay or lesbian couples differently than heterosexual couples. Future research on discrepancy could look at gay and lesbian relationships, or other types of relationships to uncover interesting findings about how discrepancy in behavior is addressed in different groups, and how those differences could impact the amount of satisfaction perceived from relationships.

Second, this study was released over spring break and just after the COVID-19 quarantine went into effect. Research conducted during a quarantine can lead to unique and very specific differences in findings due to unique stressors and a change in respondent goals during quarantines (Hawryluck, Gold, Robinson, Pogorski, Galea, & Styra, 2004). This could have had unforeseen influences on the types of discrepancies identified and the way respondents answered the survey questions. While there is a chance that these specific circumstances influenced the study and the interactions observed, it should not be considered a limitation. Instead, the unique insights granted should be recognized for their own specific addition to the research literature on relationship satisfaction and discrepancy, and on the research pertaining to research conducted during pandemics.

Another consideration is regarding the role of self-discrepancy as a potential moderator of the association between initial and current relationship satisfaction. This study measured initial relationship satisfaction and self-discrepancy separately and treated them as unique. Future research into relationship satisfaction and discrepancy could explore the role of self-discrepancy more specifically as a moderating variable and measure both variables together. Findings from such a study could highlight why a significant but weak relationship was found in this study and lead to new information on the role of self-discrepancy.

Finally, future research which explores relationship satisfaction, self-discrepancy, and self-awareness could focus on instances where, for example, someone is “coming-out” to a person they consider significant. This could add to the current research on coming-out stories by establishing how relationship satisfaction before that coming-out interaction and the amount of discrepancy experienced by an individual during the coming-out process can influence how well the significant other reacts to the situation. Instances of coming-out range in topic, from alcoholism to being homosexual, and the type of relationship that exists, and how satisfied an individual is with that relationship, could impact when and if they come out. Future studies could explore how behavior discrepancy (during coming out instances) influences relationship satisfaction, how individuals believe the discrepancy will be received by the other person, and whether they trust the other enough to come out to them, or if they worry the discrepancy will be too extreme.

### **Conclusion**

Because of the prevalence of behavior discrepancy in significant relationships, researchers are continuously pushing to understand how conflict arises between participants when a desired behavior is not met, and the impact of those conflicts on relationship satisfaction and longevity. Despite some significant limitations, this research yielded meaningful and predictive findings about the association between relationship satisfaction and self-discrepancy which could be key factors in determining how conflict could impact relationship satisfaction. While relationship satisfaction before a difficult situation and self-discrepancy are not the only predictors of relationship satisfaction after the situation, this study supports previous research which suggest they are of primary importance.

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Appendix A  
Survey Instrument

Q1: What is your age: [ Fill in the blank ]

Q2: With which gender do you most identify?

- Man
- Woman
- Non-binary
- Other
- Prefer not to say

Q3: With which sexual preference do you most identify?

- Straight
- Gay/Lesbian
- Bi-sexual
- Asexual
- Other
- Prefer not to say

Q4: Which ethnicity do you identify with most?

- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Asian / Pacific Islander
- Black / African American
- Hispanic / Latinx
- Multi-ethnic

White / Caucasian

Other (please specify)

[     Fill in the blank     ]

Prefer not to say

**Now I would like you to consider yourself in general.**

Q5: *In General*, how often do you think of yourself as...

	Always	Usually	Occasionally	Never
Kind	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Unsuccessful	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Honest	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Understanding	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Financially Secure	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Caring	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Inconsiderate	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Appropriate	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Supportive of others	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Insensitive	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Punctual	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Respectful	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q6: In general, my behavior is usually an expression of my true inner feelings, attitudes, and beliefs.

Strongly agree.

- Somewhat agree.
- Neither agree nor disagree.
- Somewhat disagree.
- Strongly disagree.

Q7: When I am uncertain how to act in a social situation, I look to the behaviors of others for cues.

- Strongly agree.
- Somewhat agree.
- Neither agree nor disagree.
- Somewhat disagree.
- Strongly disagree.

Q8: In different situations and with different people, I often act like very different persons.

- Strongly agree.
- Somewhat agree.
- Neither agree nor disagree.
- Somewhat disagree.
- Strongly disagree.

Q9: I would not change my opinions or behaviors in order to please someone or win their favor.

- Strongly agree.
- Somewhat agree.
- Neither agree nor disagree.
- Somewhat disagree.
- Strongly disagree.

Q10: In order to get along and be liked, I tend to be what people expect me to be rather than anything else.

- Strongly agree.
- Somewhat agree.
- Neither agree nor disagree.
- Somewhat disagree.
- Strongly disagree.

Q11: I have trouble changing my behavior to suit different people and different situations.

- Strongly agree.
- Somewhat agree.
- Neither agree nor disagree.
- Somewhat disagree.
- Strongly disagree.

**Now I would like you to think back to a time when someone who was significant in your life had an expectation for you that you did not meet.**

Q12: Please identify that person's role in your life (e.g., sibling, parent, friend, etc.). **Do not identify anyone by name.** [ Fill in the blank ]

Q13: Briefly identify the topic of the situation (e.g., academics, career, romance, etc.).

[ Fill in the blank ]

Q14: At the time of the situation, about how long had this person been significant in your life (years/months)? [ Fill in the blank ]

Q15: Approximately how long ago did the situation occur (years/months)?

[ Fill in the blank ]

Q16: At the time of the situation, what type of relationship did you have with the other person?

- Friends
- Family
- Romantic partner
- Other? (please specify) [Fill in the blank]

Q17: At the time of the situation, how close were you?

- Extremely close.
- Very close.
- Moderately close.
- Somewhat close.
- Not at all close.

Q18: How did you recognize that you fell short of the person's expectations for your behavior (choose the option that is most accurate)?

- They told me so.
- They seemed angry/disappointed.
- They ignored/ghosted me.
- They became aggressive toward me.
- I heard from a mutual friend/acquaintance.
- Other. (please specify) [Fill in the blank]

Q19: Before the incident, how satisfied were your relationship with this significant person?

- Extremely Satisfied
- Satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied

- Dissatisfied
- Extremely dissatisfied

**Now I would like you to consider your behavior during the situation itself.**

Q20: *During the situation*, I saw my own behavior as...

- appropriate, although the other person thought otherwise.
- not entirely appropriate, but not as bad as the other person thought it was
- not at all appropriate. I agreed with the other person's assessment.

Q21: During the situation, how satisfied were you with your relationship with this significant person?

- Extremely Satisfied
- Satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Extremely dissatisfied

Q22: How much impact did the situation have upon your relationship with the significant person?

- It had a strong negative impact.
- It had a somewhat negative impact.
- It had almost no impact.
- It had a somewhat positive impact.
- It had a strong positive impact.

Q23: *Today*, what type of relationship do you have with the other person?

- Friends

- Family
- Romantic partner
- Other? (please specify) [Fill in the blank]

Q24: *Today*, how close were you?

- Extremely close.
- Very close.
- Moderately close.
- Somewhat close.
- Not at all close.

Q25: *Today*, how satisfied are you with your relationship with this significant person?

- Extremely Satisfied
- Satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Extremely dissatisfied

## Appendix B

## Multisource Assessment of Personality Pathology (MAPP) Measurement

**Measurement Label:** MAPP**Measurement ID:****Filename:****Valid Case Summary**

<b>TIMEPOINT</b>	<b>EVALUATOR</b>	<b># OF CASES</b>
Questionnaire	Significant Other	308

**Variables**

<b>SERIAL NUMBER</b>	<b>QUESTION</b>	<b>POSSIBLE VALUES</b>
mapp1	Is sympathetic and kind to others	0=Never this way 1=Sometimes this way 2=Usually this way 3=Always this way 9=Missing
mapp2	Has a good sense of humor	
mapp3	Is trustworthy and reliable	
mapp4	Is articulate and persuasive in a discussion	

mapp5	Has a cheerful and optimistic outlook on life		
mapp6	Acts as a leader		
mapp7	Seems to be quite independent		
mapp8	Prefers to do things alone		
mapp9	Is superstitious or believes in mind-reading		
mapp10	Is likely to pursue a task diligently until it is completed		
mapp11	Seems to feel empty inside		
mapp12	Spends too much time thinking about gaining unlimited success, power, or love		
mapp13	Is reserved or shy when meeting new people because he/she feels		0=Never this way 1=Sometimes this way 2=Usually this way

	inadequate (not as good as other people)	3=Always this way 9=Missing
mapp14	Needs to have other people take care of him/her	
mapp15	Needs to do such a perfect job that nothing ever gets finished	
mapp16	Is assertive in interactions with others	
mapp17	Is quite feminine; acts in a way you'd expect a female to act	
mapp18	Is not interested in close relationships	
mapp19	Is odd or peculiar in behavior or appearance	
mapp20	Lies to people, or cons people	

mapp21	Lacks a fundamental sense of who he/she is	
mapp22	Has shallow emotions that change rapidly	
mapp23	Needs other people to admire him/her	
mapp24	Worries that other people will criticize or reject him/her	
mapp25	Is unrealistically and persistently afraid of being left alone to care for him/herself	
mapp26	Is very rigid and stubborn	
mapp27	Is compassionate and responds with concern when presented with others' problems	

mapp28	Has frequent doubts about the loyalty of friends; doesn't trust anyone	
mapp29	Does not want to be close physically or emotionally to other people, even his/her family	
mapp30	Thinks other people are talking about or looking at him/her when they aren't	0=Never this way 1=Sometimes this way 2=Usually this way 3=Always this way 9=Missing
mapp31	Does things without thinking; doesn't plan ahead	
mapp32	Has strong mood swings in response to events; frequent periods of feeling intense sadness, irritation, or anxiety	

mapp33	Talks in a vague way that lacks detail and is hard to understand	
mapp34	Is stuck up or 'high and mighty'	
mapp35	Thinks that he/she is clumsy, unattractive, or inferior to other people	
mapp36	After he/she breaks up with a girlfriend/boyfriend, he/she quickly finds someone else to take care of him/her	
mapp37	Is very stingy with money	
mapp38	Is generally agreeable and cooperative with others	
mapp39	Does not want to tell personal information to anyone because they might	

	spread it around or use it against him/her	
mapp40	Doesn't enjoy doing anything	
mapp41	shows emotional responses that seem strange or 'out of sync'	
mapp42	Is irresponsible; can't be counted on to do his/her work or pay bills	
mapp43	Has unstable, intense relationships with other people; often switches back and forth between loving a person and hating him/her	
mapp44	Repeatedly attempts (or threatens to attempt) suicide or to seriously harm him/herself	

mapp45	Behaves as if 'on stage', as if he/she is an actor; exaggerated expressions of emotion	0=Never this way 1=Sometimes this way 2=Usually this way 3=Always this way 9=Missing
mapp46	Is not concerned about other people's feelings or needs	
mapp47	Is unwilling to do new things because they might be embarrassing	
mapp48	Feels helpless or uncomfortable when left alone; afraid that he/she won't be able to take care of him/herself	
mapp49	Needs to do everything him/herself because no one else will do them right	

mapp50	Is aggressive; tends to start arguments with other people	
mapp51	Is gentle with others	
mapp52	Reads hidden meanings into innocent things that people say or do; thinks people are putting him/her down or threatening him/her when they are not	
mapp53	Has no close friends (other than family members)	
mapp54	Has an odd way of thinking, and his/her speech sometimes does not make sense	
mapp55	Gets mad easily and often gets in fights	

mapp56	Is unmoved, and doesn't feel guilt, after hurting someone or stealing	
mapp57	Has sudden, even violent outbursts of anger	
mapp58	Is easily influenced by other people (suggestible)	
mapp59	Thinks other people are jealous of him/her	
mapp60	Is very controlled or inhibited with close friends because he/she is afraid people will make fun of him/her	0=Never this way 1=Sometimes this way 2=Usually this way 3=Always this way 9=Missing
mapp61	Doesn't like to disagree with other people because they might reject him/her	
mapp62	Can't throw out old things even if they are of no use to him/her	

mapp63	Is dominant in his/her interpersonal relationships	
mapp64	Is charismatic and has leadership abilities	
mapp65	Is cold; doesn't show any feelings	
mapp66	Repeatedly gets in trouble with the police	
mapp67	Will do almost anything to keep from being left alone	
mapp68	Gets paranoid or has brief periods of very strange behavior (acts crazy) in response to stress	
mapp69	Considers his/her relationships with other people to be closer (more intimate) than they really are	

mapp70	Feels he/she deserves special favors or treatment	
mapp71	Avoids working in teams, because he/she is afraid someone will criticize or reject him/her	
mapp72	Can't make a simple decision without lots of advice from other people	
mapp73	Is afraid to do things by him/herself	
mapp74	Is much too concerned about details, rules, lists and schedules	
mapp75	Is sensitive to the needs of others	
mapp76	Displays much creativity or artistic talent	<p>0=Never this way</p> <p>1=Sometimes this way</p> <p>2=Usually this way</p> <p>3=Always this way</p>

mapp77	Thinks other people are attacking his/her reputation and reacts with anger, even though his/her friends do not see these attacks	9=Missing
mapp78	Doesn't care whether other people praise or criticize him/her	
mapp79	Is nervous around other people because he/she doesn't trust them	
mapp80	Has a reckless lack of concern for safety of self or other people	
mapp81	Is unhappy when he/she is not the center of attention	
mapp82	Is unwilling to get involved with other people	

	unless he/she is certain of being liked	
mapp83	Goes to excessive lengths (will do almost anything) to get other people to take care of him/her	
mapp84	Works so much that he/she never has fun and has no friends	
mapp85	Is generally a tender person	
mapp86	Is sincere and genuine	
mapp87	Thinks that people are taking advantage of, lying to, or harming him/her	
mapp88	Seems to see, hear, or experience things differently from the way other people do	

mapp89	Lives a reckless lifestyle; does dangerous things without planning	0=Never this way 1=Sometimes this way 2=Usually this way 3=Always this way 9=Missing
mapp90	Is inappropriately sexually seductive when interacting with other people	
mapp91	Thinks he/she is much better than other people (without good reason)	
mapp92	Has very strict and rigid ideas about morals and ethics	
mapp93	Is willing to take a stand for something he/she believes in	
mapp94	Is quite masculine; acts in a way you'd expect a male to act	

mapp95	Is suspicious that his/her sexual partner might be cheating on him/her	
mapp96	Uses physical appearance to draw attention to him/herself	
mapp97	Thinks that he/she is special, so he/she should only hang out with other special people	
mapp98	Remains calm and copes successfully in stressful situations	
mapp99	Seems to be quite understanding	
mapp100	Is overly suspicious or paranoid	
mapp101	Takes advantage of other people with no intention of paying them back	

mapp102	Holds grudges for a long time if insulted or injured	
mapp103	Is jealous of other people	
Paranoid_1	Scoring: Paranoid Personality Disorder	$(mapp28+mapp39+mapp52+mapp77+mapp95+mapp102+mapp87)/7$
Schizotypal_1	Scoring: Schizotypal Personality Disorder	$(mapp9+mapp19+mapp30+mapp41+mapp54+mapp79+mapp88+mapp100)/8$
Schizoid_1	Scoring: Schizoid Personality Disorder	$(mapp8+mapp29+mapp40+mapp53+mapp65+mapp78)/6$
Antisocial_1	Scoring: Antisocial Personality Disorder	$(mapp20+mapp31+mapp42+mapp55+mapp56+mapp66+mapp80)/7$
Narcissistic_1	Scoring: Narcissistic Personality Disorder	$(mapp12+mapp23+mapp34+mapp46+mapp59+mapp70+mapp91+mapp97+mapp101+mapp103)/10$
Avoidant_1	Scoring: Avoidant Personality Disorder	$(mapp13+mapp24+mapp35+mapp47+mapp60+mapp71+mapp82)/7$
Dependent_1	Scoring: Dependent Personality Disorder	$(mapp14+mapp25+mapp36+mapp48+mapp61+mapp72+mapp73+mapp83)/8$

OCPD_1	Scoring: Obsessive Compulsive Personality Disorder	$(mapp15+mapp26+mapp37+mapp49+mapp62+mapp74+mapp84+mapp92)/8$
Histrionic_1	Scoring: Histrionic Personality Disorder	$(mapp22+mapp33+mapp45+mapp58+mapp69+mapp81+mapp90+mapp96)/8$
Borderline_1	Scoring: Borderline Personality Disorder	$(mapp11+mapp21+mapp32+mapp43+mapp44+mapp57+mapp67+mapp68+mapp89)/9$

## Appendix C

## Self-Monitoring Scale

**(This is the original measure of which a modified version was used in the survey. This is not used in this format for this study. See Appendix F for the survey used in this study.)**

Developed by Mark Snyder (1974)

**DIRECTIONS:** The statements below concern your personal reactions to a number of different situations. No two statements are exactly alike, so consider each statement carefully before answering. IF a statement is TRUE or MOSTLY TRUE as applied to you, circle the "T" next to the question. If a statement is FALSE or NOT USUALLY TRUE as applied to you, circle the "F" next to the question.

(T) (F) 1. I find it hard to imitate the behavior of other people.

(T) (F) 2. My behavior is usually an expression of my true inner feelings, attitudes, and beliefs.

(T) (F) 3. At parties and social gatherings, I do not attempt to do or say things that others will like.

(T) (F) 4. I can only argue for ideas which I already believe.

(T) (F) 5. I can make impromptu speeches even on topics about which I have almost no information.

(T) (F) 6. I guess I put on a show to impress or entertain people.

(T) (F) 7. When I am uncertain how to act in a social situation, I look to the behavior of others for cues.

(T) (F) 8. I would probably make a good actor.

- (T) (F) 9. I rarely seek the advice of my friends to choose movies, books, or music.
- (T) (F) 10. I sometimes appear to others to be experiencing deeper emotions than I actually am.
- (T) (F) 11. I laugh more when I watch a comedy with others than when alone.
- (T) (F) 12. In groups of people, I am rarely the center of attention.
- (T) (F) 13. In different situations and with different people, I often act like very different persons.
- (T) (F) 14. I am not particularly good at making other people like me.
- (T) (F) 15. Even if I am not enjoying myself, I often pretend to be having a good time.
- (T) (F) 16. I'm not always the person I appear to be.
- (T) (F) 17. I would not change my opinions (or the way I do things) in order to please someone else or win their favor.
- (T) (F) 18. I have considered being an entertainer.
- (T) (F) 19. In order to get along and be liked, I tend to be what people expect me to be rather than anything else.
- (T) (F) 20. I have never been good at games like charades or improvisational acting.
- (T) (F) 21. I have trouble changing my behavior to suit different people and different situations.
- (T) (F) 22. At a party, I let others keep the jokes and stories going.
- (T) (F) 23. I feel a bit awkward in company and do not show up quite as well as I should.
- (T) (F) 24. I can look anyone in the eye and tell a lie with a straight face (if for a right end).
- (T) (F) 25. I may deceive people by being friendly when I really dislike them.

#### SCORING YOUR SELF-MONITORING QUESTIONNAIRE

Self-monitoring is the ability and desire to regulate one's public expressiveness to fit the clues and/or requirements of the situation.

**SCORING KEY:**

"T" and "F" (below) indicate responses of people who are high self-monitors. To calculate your self-monitoring score, place a check mark next to the questions that match the "T" and "F" responses below. Count the total number of "check" marks that appear in the margin of your survey. That number is your self-monitoring score.

A score that is between 0-12 would indicate that the respondent is a relatively low self-monitor; a score that is between 13-25 would indicate that the respondent is a relatively high self-monitor.

**SURVEY RESPONSES OF PEOPLE WHO TEND TO BE HIGH SELF-MONITORS:**

- (F) 1. I find it hard to imitate the behavior of other people.
- (F) 2. My behavior is usually an expression of my true inner feelings, attitudes, and beliefs.
- (F) 3. At parties and social gatherings, I do not attempt to do or say things that others will like.
- (F) 4. I can only argue for ideas which I already believe.
- (T)  5. I can make impromptu speeches even on topics about which I have almost no information.
- (T)  6. I guess I put on a show to impress or entertain people.
- (T)  7. When I am uncertain how to act in a social situation, I look to the behavior of others for cues.
- (T)  8. I would probably make a good actor.
- (F) 9. I rarely seek the advice of my friends to choose movies, books, or music.
- (T)  10. I sometimes appear to others to be experiencing deeper emotions than I actually am.
- (T)  11. I laugh more when I watch a comedy with others than when alone.
- (F) 12. In groups of people, I am rarely the center of attention.

- (T) ( ) 13. In different situations and with different people, I often act like very different persons.
- ( ) (F) 14. I am not particularly good at making other people like me.
- (T) ( ) 15. Even if I am not enjoying myself, I often pretend to be having a good time.
- (T) ( ) 16. I'm not always the person I appear to be.
- ( ) (F) 17. I would not change my opinions (or the way I do things) in order to please someone else or win their favor.
- (T) ( ) 18. I have considered being an entertainer.
- (T) ( ) 19. In order to get along and be liked, I tend to be what people expect me to be rather than anything else.
- ( ) (F) 20. I have never been good at games like charades or improvisational acting.
- ( ) (F) 21. I have trouble changing my behavior to suit different people and different situations.
- ( ) (F) 22. At a party, I let others keep the jokes and stories going.
- ( ) (F) 23. I feel a bit awkward in company and do not show up quite as well as I should.
- (T) ( ) 24. I can look anyone in the eye and tell a lie with a straight face (if for a right end).
- (T) ( ) 25. I may deceive people by being friendly when I really dislike them.

### **INTERPRETATION OF SCORES**

In any setting, people are generally motivated to behave appropriately (Michener, Delamater, Schwartz, 1986, p. 192). People who are high in self-monitoring look for cues in the situation to tell them how to behave, whereas those who are low in self-monitoring use their own values and motives to guide their behavior. (Michener, Delamater, Schwartz, 1986, pp. 334-335). Self-monitoring involves three major and somewhat distinct tendencies (Greenberg & Baron, 1990, pp. 204-206):

- (1) the willingness to be the center of attention -- a tendency to behave in outgoing, extraverted ways (closely related to the social skill of emotional expressiveness);
- (2) Sensitivity to the reactions of others;
- (3) ability and willingness to adjust behavior to induce positive reactions in others.

We can say that "self-monitoring" refers to a person's ability to adjust his or her behavior to external situational factors. Individuals high in self-monitoring show considerable adaptability in their behavior. They are highly sensitive to external cues and can behave differently in different situations. They are capable of presenting striking contradictions between the public persona and the private self. By contrast, low self-monitors can't disguise themselves this way; they tend to display their true dispositions and attitudes in every situation; hence, there is high behavioral consistency between who they are privately and what they do publicly (Robbins, 1993: 714). High self-monitors are particularly sensitive to other people and alter their responses to others' cues. They are more flexible and responsive to their environment than low self-monitors are. For example, high self-monitors can be expected to demonstrate greater flexibility in adapting their leadership style to changing situations, using a variety of conflict-resolution techniques (Robbins, 1993: 714).

High self-monitors are people who readily adjust their own behavior to produce positive reactions in others and their actions are usually guided by the requirements of a given situation. They are different with different people and in different situations, compared to low self-monitors who seem less aware of or concerned with their impact on others. Low self-monitors' actions usually reflect their inner feelings and attitudes and they are less likely to change or adjust in each new context (Greenberg & Baron, 1990, pp. 204-206).

\* RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SELF-MONITORING AND OB:

Preliminary research evidence suggests that high self-monitors tend to pay closer attention to the behavior of others and are more capable of conforming than are low self-monitors. High self-monitors are more likely to be successful in managerial positions where individuals are required to play multiple, and even contradicting roles. Thus, the high self-monitor is capable of putting on different "faces" for different audiences.

\*\* High self-monitors are often more effective than low self-monitors in jobs that require boundary spanning (communicating and interacting with different groups of people who, because of contrasting goals, training, or skills "speak different languages"). Since they can readily adjust their actions to the norms, expectations, and style of each group, high self-monitors are more successful in dealing with them than are low self-monitors, and this improves performance.

Boundary-spanning roles are very important in most organizations, so assigning high self-monitoring people to such positions may yield substantial benefits.

Examples of occupations or positions that might require high self-monitoring would include HR manager, CEO, organizational development specialist or marketing and sales director. (Robbins, 1993: 108).

\*\* High self-monitors tend to be better at clear communicating than low self-monitors.

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Key point of this exercise is:

**WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS FOR:**

Team behavior? Managerial behavior? Organizational behavior? Effectiveness? Learning?