

Mental Contrasting and Conciliatory Behavior in Perpetrators

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Abstract

In the aftermath of interpersonal transgressions conciliatory behavior performed by the perpetrators is an important step towards reconciliation. Conciliatory behavior needs to be wholehearted, sincere and well-timed to be effective, otherwise it could result in further harm to the victims and backfire on the perpetrators. In four studies we established a paradigm to elicit unresolved interpersonal transgressions (Study 1) and showed that mental contrasting (Oettingen, 2012) is an effective strategy for perpetrators to self-regulate their conciliatory behavior (Studies 2, 3, 4). In three studies we manipulated (Studies 2, 4) or measured (Study 3) perpetrators self-regulatory strategies, in both scenario based (Study 2) and elicited idiosyncratic unresolved transgressions (Studies 3, 4). Afterwards we assessed conciliatory behavior by apology letters (Study 2), self-reported conciliatory behavior (Study 3) or multi-perspective behavioral observations (Study 4). Only perpetrators who used mental contrasting performed sensible conciliatory behavior based on their expectations of success: with high expectations they performed early and strong conciliatory behavior and with low expectations they performed delayed and weak conciliatory behavior. The immediacy and strength of the perpetrators' conciliatory behavior predicted the degree of reconciliation reported by both victims and perpetrators (Study 4). Implications for research on reconciliation and mental contrasting are discussed, with an emphasis on mental contrasting as a potential intervention in reconciliation.

Mental Contrasting and Conciliatory Behavior in Perpetrators

Interpersonal relationships are an essential part of human life and culture, all throughout the world. We all have an inherent drive to seek and maintain interpersonal relationships (Buss & Kenrick, 1998). The importance of social bonds is rooted in the development of the human species because humanity evolved in small groups with strong bonds between group members. Living in small groups had and still has many advantages for survival: In groups it is easier to hunt, gather food, defend against predators and other threats, mate, and to raise offspring (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). The innate need to belong is satisfied by relationships that are stable over time and characterized by frequent positive interactions. Stable and unchallenged relationships in which the relationship partners care for each other's well-being are the source of security and joy (Bowlby, 1977). Much of our behavior and our cognitions are driven by the need to build and maintain such intimate relationships (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). As Bowlby (1977) put it "attachment behaviour is held to characterize human beings from the cradle to the grave." (p. 203)

The Effects of Interpersonal Transgressions

Despite our constant effort to maintain our relationships we jeopardize them from time to time by unintended or intended interpersonal transgressions: We forget birthdays, we are inattentive to feelings of loved ones, we break things, lie, berate, and betray. The list of transgressions is almost unlimited, ranging from very mild and unintended transgressions to severe and intended transgressions. In many cases the dimension of severity is correlated with the closeness of the relationship. While mild transgressions are more likely to be committed by strangers, severe transgressions are more likely to occur in close relationships (Jones, Moore, Schratter, & Negel, 2001). Formally, interpersonal transgressions are incidents in which one person or a group of people take action against another person or group of people thereby violating norms, rules, or values (Jones et al., 2001). In many cases the violated

norms, rules, and values are normative social and moral codes. In addition to these normative codes, close dyadic relationships have norms and rules that are unique to the specific relationship. Therefore, in a close relationship a transgression is experienced when one believes that a relationship partner departed from the implicit or explicit norms that govern their relationship (Hannon, Rusbult, Finkel, & Kamashiro, 2010).

Severe and sometimes even mild transgressions of implicit or explicit relationship norms lead to a lack of trust and a feeling of insecurity regarding the relationship (Baumeister, Stillwell, & Heatherton, 1994; Lazare, 2004). The relationship of the victim and the perpetrator is at risk because both parties suffer from an imbalance in their relationship. The perpetrator transgressed norms or values for his or her own benefit and to the disadvantage of the victim. Thereby an injustice gap emerges between the beliefs in a fair relationship and the situation the transgression put both parties in (Worthington, 2006). Resulting from the transgression and the injustice gap both parties experience a deprivation of psychological needs (Shnabel & Nadler, 2008). Victims feel devastated, powerless, and humiliated (Jones et al., 2001; Lazare, 2004; Shnabel & Nadler, 2008). They are exposed to the perpetrators transgression and feel like they have little or no control; thereby their need for power is deprived (Shnabel & Nadler, 2008). Following the transgression, victims seek to restore their sense of power (Foster & Rusbult, 1999). They want the perpetrators to feel guilty, to admit their responsibility, and make amends because that puts the victims into a powerful position allowing them to grant forgiveness and cancel the debt of the perpetrators (Baumeister et al., 1994).

As a result of the injustice gap the perpetrators have feelings of shame, guilt, and embarrassment (Baumeister et al., 1994, Baumeister, Stillwell, & Heatherton, 1995; Tangney, Stuewig, & Mashek, 2007). Furthermore, the perpetrators fear social exclusion by the victim and other group members which leads to a deprivation of the perpetrator's need for

relatedness and belonging (Shnabel & Nadler, 2008). In particular the feeling of guilt is connected to a strong motivation to approach the victim and seek forgiveness (Bybee, Merisca, & Velasco, 1998). By doing so the perpetrators try to set themselves into a better light and restore the damaged relationships (Lazare, 2004; Tabak, McCullough, Luna, Bono, & Berry, 2012).

The Benefits and Process of Reconciliation

Mended relationships are related to increased psychological well-being for the victims and the perpetrators. Granting forgiveness relates to greater life satisfaction for the victims and more positive mood, less psychosomatic symptoms and a decrease in negative affect (Allemand, Hill, Ghaemmaghani, & Martin, 2012; Hill & Allemand, 2011). Furthermore granting forgiveness leads to a decrease in the victims' and perpetrators' blood pressure, indicating a soothing effect of granting and receiving forgiveness (Hannon, Finkel, Kumashiro, & Rusbult, 2012). The perpetrators benefit from reconciliation as well through relief from nagging feelings of guilt and ruminating thoughts (Baumeister et al., 1994, Baumeister et al., 1995; Exline, Root, Yadavalli, Martin, & Fisher, 2011). Additionally, reconciliation enhances the relationship quality for the victims and the perpetrators and enables the duration of their relationship despite the transgression (Hannon et al., 2010; Karremans, van Lange, Ouwerkerk, & Kluwer, 2003; McCullough, Worthington, & Rachal, 1997; Tsang, McCullough, & Fincham, 2006). However, all these benefits depend on a thorough reconciliation process.

The process of reconciliation can be framed as a social-exchange in which each partner satisfies the respective needs of the other partner (Shnabel & Nadler, 2008). By granting forgiveness the victim's need for power is satisfied and by being forgiven the perpetrator's need for relatedness is satisfied; thereby their willingness to reconcile is enhanced (Shnabel & Nadler, 2008). The interplay between seeking and granting forgiveness

is called the *apology-forgiveness cycle* (Tavuchis, 1991). In a study with romantic couples Hannon et al. (2010) found that the perpetrators' conciliatory behavior predicts victims' forgiveness. Furthermore, they found that both partners' behavior (seeking forgiveness and granting forgiveness) account for unique variance in reconciliation. Thereby the conciliatory behaviors of both parties reinforce the reconciliation process (Hannon et al., 2010; Tavuchis, 1991).

Conciliatory Behavior

Conciliatory behavior is a comprehensive concept including any attempt to approach the opponent and restore the relationship. Performing conciliatory behavior in the aftermath of a conflict is deeply rooted in our heritage and not an exclusively human behavior. Many mammals have different forms of body contact or special gestures to show their willingness to reconcile. For example, in nonhuman primates this may include mouth-to-mouth contact, embracing, sexual intercourse, grooming, or handholding (deWaal, 2000). In humans we distinguish between two sets of conciliatory behavior: One set of behavior is performed by the perpetrators who seek forgiveness and the other set is performed by the victims who grant forgiveness. Both sets of conciliatory behavior have their unique mode of expression but they share a foundation of peacefully approaching the opponents and the goal of restoring the relationships (Hannon et al., 2012; Hannon et al., 2010).

Granting Forgiveness: Victims' Conciliatory Behavior

Interpersonal models of forgiveness propose two dimensions of forgiveness: an intrapsychic and an interpersonal dimension (Baumeister, Exline, & Sommer, 1998). The intrapsychic dimension is

the set of motivational changes whereby one becomes (a) decreasingly motivated to retaliate against an offending relationship partner; (b) decreasingly motivated to maintain estrangement from the offender; and (c) increasingly motivated by

conciliation and goodwill for the offender, despite the offender's hurtful actions.

(McCullough et al., 1997, pp. 321–322)

The interpersonal dimension is the performance of conciliatory behavior which includes any friendly behavior towards the perpetrator that signals the willingness to grant forgiveness (Baumeister et al., 1998; Worthington, 2006).

The two dimensions of forgiveness result in four possible responses to interpersonal transgressions (Baumeister et al., 1998). The first option for the victim is to be *unforgiving*: no motivational changes (intrapsychic) occur and no conciliatory behavior (interpersonal) is performed. The second option is *silent forgiveness*: motivational changes towards the perpetrator occur but the victim does not perform any conciliatory behavior. The third option is *hollow forgiveness*: without changing the motivation towards the perpetrator the victim performs conciliatory behavior (e.g., because of social norms). The fourth option is *total forgiveness*: motivational changes occur and the victim performs conciliatory behavior towards the perpetrator (Baumeister et al., 1998). For reconciliation with the perpetrator total forgiveness is most beneficial. In total forgiveness the victim completely abandons any negative feelings or grudges and releases the perpetrator from further obligations and feelings of guilt (Baumeister et al., 1998). Whether the victim grants total forgiveness and therefore perform conciliatory behavior largely depends on the perpetrator.

Seeking Forgiveness: Perpetrators' Conciliatory Behavior

Conciliatory behavior performed by the perpetrator is one of the most important facilitators of forgiveness and reconciliation (e.g., Bono, McCullough, & Root, 2008; Kearns & Fincham, 2005; Tabak et al., 2012; Zechmeister, Garcia, Romero, & Vas, 2004). It includes any attempt to seek forgiveness and to restore the relationship by approaching the victim, apologizing, making amends and/or repairing the damage (Tabak et al., 2012). Like non-human primates, humans make use of embodied conciliatory behavior; they display

remorseful facial expressions, seek the company of the offended and make body contact (e.g., shaking hands, embracing) (Butovskaya, Verbeek, Ljungberg, & Lunardini, 2000; Tabak et al., 2012). Nevertheless, the most important and most comprehensive form of conciliatory behavior in humans is a verbal or written apology (Lazare, 2004; Smith, 2008).

Apologies are ubiquitous in our lives. We receive and offer apologies for all kinds of small missteps daily, such as accidentally bumping into someone, spilling coffee, or arriving a few minutes late. These are rather small transgressions, our apologies usually follow effortlessly and do not need to be elaborate, a simple *sorry* might be sufficient (Smith, 2008). However, privately and publicly offered apologies are also omnipresent in the aftermath of more severe transgressions. Spouses apologize privately for betrayals and politicians apologize publicly for their misdeeds. Apologies even play an important role in our legal system. For example, with some transgressions victims and perpetrators can take part in restorative justice programs instead of going through a trial (Kerner, Eikens, & Hartmann, 2011). Within these programs the victim is willing to drop the charges if the perpetrator is remorseful and offers a meaningful apology to the victim. In the aftermath of severe transgressions some apologies are perceived as insufficient by the victims and society and so may no longer be meaningful (Lazare, 2004; Smith, 2008). Apologies for more severe transgressions seem to need to meet certain requirements, but what distinguishes an insufficient apology from a meaningful one?

Social psychologists, clinicians and philosophers agree that for severe transgressions a meaningful apology needs to entail more than just the phrase *I am sorry* (Fehr & Gelfand, 2010; Lazare, 2004; Smith, 2008). However, Kirchhoff, Wagner, and Strack (2012) were the first who experimentally investigated elements of a meaningful apology. They based their experiments on a comprehensive literature review that identified 10 basic elements of an apology: (1) Giving a statement of apology, which is a phrase that introduces the following

statement as an apology (e.g., I want to apologize). (2) Naming the transgression for which the apology is given. (3) Taking responsibility for the transgression. (4) Explaining the behavior that led to the transgression without applying an external attribution. (5) Revealing the perpetrator's emotions regarding the transgression, such as feelings of guilt, shame and remorse. (6) Addressing the victim's emotions and the damages that have been caused by the transgression. (7) Admitting that implicit or explicit norms, rules or values have been transgressed. (8) Promising to forbear from repeating the transgression. (9) Offering monetary or symbolic restitution for the harm or damage. (10) Requesting acceptance of the apology.

The two experimental studies (Kirchhoff et al., 2012) which were based on the literature review investigated which and how many of these elements make an effective apology. Both studies were scenario based, participants imagined being the victim in a neighbor conflict and afterwards receiving an apology from the neighbor. Between participants the received apologies differed in how many elements they comprised, ranging from one to all ten elements. The results showed that more complete apologies facilitate more forgiveness. Furthermore, participants rated the importance of each of the ten elements, the four most important elements of an apology being: (1) conveying emotions, (2) admitting the transgression of norms, (3) giving a statement of apology, and (4) explaining the behavior.

Although humans perform non-verbal conciliatory behavior, written and verbal apologies are proposed to be an essential part of human conciliatory behavior (Lazare, 2004; Smith, 2008). The research done by Kirchhof et al. (2012) supports the assumption that meaningful apologies need to be elaborated and have to comprise certain elements. Only than apology is perceived as sufficient by the victim and facilitates forgiveness and reconciliation.

The Mechanisms of Conciliatory Behavior

Apart from the elements that make apologies meaningful, conciliatory behavior in general (verbal and non-verbal) facilitates forgiveness and reconciliation by several mechanisms, such as increasing the perceived agreeableness of the perpetrator (Tabak et al., 2012), raising empathy for the perpetrator (McCullough et al., 1997) and establishing new interaction opportunities (Hannon et al., 2010). In the aftermath of an interpersonal transgression the victim has a less favorable view of the perpetrator. The perpetrator is perceived as less agreeable and untrustworthy. By performing conciliatory behavior the perpetrator signals that they are willing to behave agreeably again and that despite the transgression they are warm, considerate and generous (Tabak et al., 2012). These attributes represent valuable relationship partner who will confer benefits and refrain from harming his or her partner. By appearing as agreeable and thus valuable relationship partners, the perpetrator heightens the victim's interest in repairing the relationship by forgiving the perpetrator (Tabak et al., 2012).

Simultaneously, conciliatory behavior helps the victim to empathize with the perpetrator and their feelings of remorse and guilt over the transgression. This empathy for the perpetrator allows the victim to sympathize with the perpetrator's feelings of isolation and loneliness and care for restoring the damaged relationship (McCullough et al., 1997). The victim is thereby released from the passive role and empowered to actively take part in a reconciliation process; the victim's need for power is satisfied (Lazare, 2004; Shnabel & Nadler, 2008). If in turn the victim performs conciliatory behavior and takes care of the perpetrator's feelings of isolation and loneliness the perpetrator's need for relatedness is satisfied (Lazare, 2004; Shnabel & Nadler, 2008). The fulfillment of both partners' needs reestablishes the balance and equality between perpetrator and victim (Shnabel & Nadler, 2008). By reestablishing this equality the conciliatory behavior unblocks the way to forgiveness and reconciliation (Lazare, 2004).

In the aftermath of many interpersonal transgressions the communication between the victim and the perpetrator is disturbed or disrupted. The conciliatory behavior performed by the perpetrator establishes a new situation with immanent interaction opportunities for both parties (Hannon et al., 2010). It might be the first step towards a reinforcing process of seeking and granting forgiveness, at best resulting in reconciliation and restoration of the damaged relationship (Hannon et al., 2010).

Why Perpetrators Might Not Perform Conciliatory Behavior

Despite the manifold benefits of conciliatory behavior for both parties and their relationship perpetrators do not always perform it. Perpetrators might refrain from performing conciliatory behavior because they fail to overcome inner fears and obstacles. Apologizing is a painful experience, which leaves us naked and vulnerable (Tavuchis, 1991). Perpetrators might feel ashamed and guilty and they do not want to disclose their aversive emotions (Worthington, 2006). Performing conciliatory behavior is threatening to our self-worth and conflicts with the motivation to maintain a favorable view of ourselves (Kearns & Fincham, 2005). Furthermore the perpetrators risk that their apologies are evaluated as signs of weakness and exploited by the victims or that they will be rejected (Exline, Deshea, & Holeman, 2007).

Therefore, performing conciliatory behavior might be risky and costly for the perpetrators. The decision to show conciliatory behavior is the result of a cost-benefit analysis depending on the antecedents and consequences of a transgression (McCullough, Luna, Berry, Tabak, & Bono, 2010). For example, in nonhuman primates approaching the former opponents is related to the risk of renewed aggression. Even incidents of *false reconciliation* are reported, where opponents seem to behave in a reconciling manner just to attack at the very last moment (Cords & Aureli, 2000). Nevertheless, the possible costs are notably outbalanced by the rewards of reconciliation when beneficial or close relationships

are at risk (McCullough et al., 2010). In line with these conclusions Exline et al. (2007) found in a human sample that apologies were more likely in close relationships.

However, even if the relationships to the victims is a valuable one, performing conciliatory behavior and thereby recognizing and admitting a transgression still conflicts with the motivation to maintain a favorable self-view (Kearns & Fincham, 2005; Tavuchis, 1991). Perpetrators may therefore not want to take responsibility for an act they evaluate negatively because the confession of a flawed self seems to be an insurmountable threat to their self-worth (Tavuchis, 1991; Worthington, 2006). If the victim reproaches the perpetrator the threat to the self-worth might even be exaggerated (Hodgins & Liebeskind, 2003). As pointed out above, reconciliation is a reinforcing process between victim and perpetrator. The apparent starting point of this process is when the perpetrator performs conciliatory behavior. But even this obvious starting point is already influenced by an interaction between the two, namely by how the victim reproaches the perpetrator. Hodgins and Liebeskind (2003) showed in two studies that if the reproach by the victims is severe the perpetrators tend to behave defensively rather than conciliatorily. This is in particular true for male perpetrators. The suggested explanation for this effect is that when severely reproached by the victim, the perpetrator experiences a serious threat their self-worth. Facing this threat they are too concerned with protecting their own self-worth than satisfying the victim's need for power (Hodgins & Liebeskind, 2003).

Post hoc explanations given by perpetrators for why they did not perform conciliatory behavior supports the points mentioned above. Exline et al. (2007) conducted a study that used personal narratives of transgressions that were either followed by an apology or not. For transgressions the participants had not apologized for they were asked to name the reasons for withholding an apology. The five main reasons were that the perpetrators

viewed their offenses as justified (41%), saw apology as costly (25%), did not have (or want) a relationship with the offended party (21%), felt angry at him or her (7%), saw their offenses as minor (6%), and expressed reluctance to confess misdeeds of which offended parties were unaware (4%). (Exline et al., 2007, p. 492)

Summing up, performing conciliatory behavior is painful and risky. Perpetrators have to overcome many inner obstacles and fears, therefore it is essential for them to evaluate if the benefits outweigh the costs of performing conciliatory behavior. However, this is usually the case, especially in close relationships, and both perpetrators and victims benefit from conciliatory behavior.

Why Perpetrators' Conciliatory Behavior Might Fail

Conciliatory behavior alone does not guarantee reconciliation and forgiveness from the victim. Some apologies may even be worse than no apology, doing further harm to the victim or backfiring on the perpetrator (Smith, 2008). There are several reasons why the conciliatory behavior of the perpetrator may fail to lead to the desired outcomes. Some reasons lie within the victims (e.g., fragile self-esteem) and some within the transgressions (e.g., if it is perceived as intentional) but most are related to the conciliatory behavior performed by the perpetrators (e.g., insincere or manipulative apology).

One reason that lies within the victim is the victim's self-esteem. In an experimental study Eaton, Struthers, Shomrony, and Santelli (2007) created a situation in which a research assistant (a confederate) apparently performed an unintended transgression towards the participants (he pretended that he forgot to lock a room and that the participants' data had been stolen). Afterwards half of the participants received an apology and half of them did not receive an apology. Furthermore participants' implicit and explicit self-esteem was measured. For participants with a combination of high explicit and low implicit self-esteem (fragile self-esteem) receiving an apology impeded forgiveness. They were less likely to forgive the

perpetrator when they received an apology than when they did not receive one (Eaton et al., 2007). This seemed to be due to how the victims with fragile self-esteem perceived the apology. Instead of perceiving it as an expression of remorse they focused on the causal information that the perpetrator indeed committed the transgression (Eaton et al., 2007).

Another circumstance under which an apology may impede forgiveness is when the victim perceives that the transgression was intended (Struthers, Eaton, Shirvani, Georghiou, & Edell, 2008). In a study by Struthers et al. (2008), receiving an apology for an unintended transgression increased forgiveness by the victim. By apologizing the perpetrators appeared more empathic, genuine, and trustworthy; thereby the victims' willingness to forgive the perpetrators was increased. However, apologizing for an intended transgression backfired and further lowered the negative impression of the perpetrators, which made the victims less forgiving (Struthers et al., 2008).

A manipulative or insincere apology is a major reason for why conciliatory behavior does not facilitate forgiveness and reconciliation. Apologies are perceived as manipulative or insincere if for example the perpetrator does not appear remorseful or if the perpetrator does not forbear from reoffending (Lazare, 2004; Smith, 2008). Perpetrators might have diverse motivations for offering manipulative or insincere apologies. For example, perpetrators may respond to social demands or try to derive an advantage from apologizing (e.g., in a trial) (Lazare, 2004; Smith, 2008). Paradoxically, in many cases victims may still grant forgiveness even if they recognize the apology is insincere, but Risen and Gilovich (2007) found that insincere apologies unfold their toxic effect through an indirect mechanism. Victims' responses to apologies might be socially constrained. In a study victims were rated as less likeable by observers if they rejected an apology, even if the apology was insincere (Risen & Gilovich, 2007, Study 3). In a subsequent study this constraint led victims to accept insincere apologies; even though they reported that they would have preferred to reject them

(Risen & Gilovich, 2007, Study 5). These results relate to the concept of hollow forgiveness (Baumeister et al., 1998). The victim does not change the intrapsychic attitudes and motivations towards the perpetrator and therefore may hold grudges and be revengeful, however, they still perform conciliatory behavior and grant forgiveness. Such hollow forgiveness might put the victim in an adverse situation and might bring up further problems for the relationship with the perpetrator. The perpetrator might go back to normal as if no transgression had happened and may be unaware of the victim's resentments (Baumeister et al., 1998). Granting forgiveness without changing the intrapsychic state may actually cause increased pain and resentment, as after granting forgiveness the victim is morally bound not to bring up aspects of the transgression again (Baumeister et al., 1998). In summary, it may seem even an insincere apology can result in forgiveness and reconciliation in the same way a sincere apology does. However, this insincere apology might result in hollow forgiveness and could likely bring up further problems for the victim, the perpetrator and their relationship.

Another reason why apologies might fail is if they are given too hastily. Frantz and Bennis (2005) found in two studies that if the perpetrator offered an apology later during the interaction with the victim it was related to greater outcome satisfaction for the victim. This effect was mediated by perceived voice and understanding. Victims have the need to have a voice, to tell their view of the transgression, and to be heard and understood by the perpetrator. Only then are they ready to accept an apology and forgive the perpetrator (Frantz & Bennis, 2005; Lazare, 2004). If an apology is given too hastily the victim might conclude that (a) the perpetrator did not understand the full impact of the transgression, (b) tries to get off too easily, without being confronted with the distress and negative emotions of the victim, and (c) do not value the relationship (Lazare, 2004). Therefore, the right timing of an apology, which respects the victim's state of mind, is important.

Furthermore, conciliatory behavior might fail because the apology is perceived as incomplete by the victim (Kirchhoff et al., 2012). As stated before, an apology consists of various elements and which differ in their importance. Elements that are of special importance are that the perpetrator conveys emotions, admits the transgression of norms, gives a statement of apology, and tries to explain the behavior without blaming external reasons (Kirchhoff et al., 2012). If the offered apology contains too few elements or if important elements are missing, forgiveness is less likely than for more complete apologies (Kirchhoff et al., 2012).

In sum, if conciliatory behavior is half-hearted or insincere it could be ineffective for fostering forgiveness and reconciliation. In the worst case it could even do further harm. To be effective, conciliatory behavior should be sincere, properly timed, meaningful, and tailored to meet the needs of the victims. That requires proper self-regulation of the perpetrators regarding their emotions and their conciliatory behavior.

Self-Regulation of Conciliatory Behavior

As outlined above the benefits of reconciliation are manifold and conciliatory behavior performed by the perpetrator is an essential step towards this goal. On the other hand apologies that are insincere, halfhearted or poorly timed can further harm the victim, backfire on the perpetrator and further strain their relationship. It is in the hands of the perpetrator to perform sensible conciliatory behavior that at least does no further harm and at best mends the relationship. The motivation to perform conciliatory behavior is determined by the desirability of the outcome (incentive value) and the feasibility of attaining it (expectations of success) (P. M. Gollwitzer, 1990, P. M. Gollwitzer, 2012).

Desirability relates to the incentive value a person ascribes to something. How desirable reconciliation with the victim is for the perpetrator is determined by the perpetrator's feelings of guilt (e.g., Baumeister et al., 1994) and how valuable the relationship

is for the perpetrator (Exline et al., 2007). The stronger the perpetrator's feelings of guilt and the more valuable the relationship is, the more desirable is the reconciliation with the victim.

Feasibility relates to the expectations of successfully attaining the desired outcome. In order to perform sensible conciliatory behavior perpetrators need to take into account their expectations of success before they act. Perpetrators particularly have to take into account their expectations of whether they are capable of performing sincere and categorical conciliatory behavior (self-efficacy expectations; Bandura, 1977) and their expectations as to if the performed conciliatory behavior will lead to the desired outcome; for example, appeasing and not enraging the victim (outcome expectations; Bandura, 1977). Research shows that people tend to not take their expectations of success into account when they indulge in the positive future or dwell on the present reality; they put too much energy into pursuing goals that are not feasible and too little energy into pursuing goals that are very feasible (for an overview see Oettingen, 2012). Oettingen and colleagues (for an overview see Oettingen, 2012) identified mental contrasting as a mode of self-regulatory thought that resolves these issues by making existing expectations salient. Mentally contrasting the desired future with obstacles of the reality enables people to pursue goals in line with their expectations of success.

Mental Contrasting: A Self-Regulatory Mode of Thought

Mental contrasting is a cognitive strategy that facilitates behavior change. It stops people from pursuing goals halfheartedly and enables them to either move forward with them or abandon them. Mental contrasting turns free fantasies about the future into binding goals when people perceive their chances of reaching these goals as high and to let go of goals when they perceive their chances of achieving them are low (Oettingen, Pak, & Schnetter, 2001; Oettingen, 2000). During mental contrasting people first imagine the desired future (e.g., mended relationship) and then reflect on aspects of reality standing in the way of

attaining the desired future (e.g., being too proud to apologize). Thereby they set an anchor in the future and the desired future is perceived as a reference point. If the present reality is contrasted against this reference point it is perceived as an obstacle on the way to that desired future. This procedure links the obstacles of reality to the desired future. As a consequence the desired future can no longer be thought of without acknowledging the obstacles of the present reality (A. Kappes, 2009; Oettingen et al., 2001). For example, after mental contrasting, thoughts about the positive future of a mended relationship will automatically activate thoughts of one's pride as an obstacle standing in the way of reaching this future (A. Kappes, 2009). Furthermore, during mental contrasting the expectations of success are activated if one is capable of overcoming the obstacles and attaining the future. If the expectations of success are high a boost of energy kicks in and people strongly commit to their goal and strive for it. If people perceive their expectations of attaining the desired future as low they feel de-energized regarding that goal and stop pursuing it (Oettingen et al., 2001; Oettingen, 2000).

There are three more modes of thought specified in the fantasy realization theory (see Figure 1): (a) indulging, which means thinking about the desired future without considering any obstacles standing in the way; (b) dwelling, staring at the obstacles without the desired future in mind and (c) reverse contrasting, first thinking about the obstacles of the present reality and afterwards elaborating the desired future (for an overview see Oettingen, 2012; Oettingen, 2000). None of these three modes of thought activates expectations of success and makes them relevant for goal pursuit. Unlike mental contrasting, indulging and dwelling are one sided strategies and do not incorporate the desired future with the obstacles of getting there. Therefore, people do not feel the need to act on overcoming the obstacles to attain the desired future. In reverse contrasting both aspects of the reality and the desired future are elaborated as in mental contrasting but, by first imagining the reality and afterwards the

desired future, the future does not serve as an anchor and the reality is not perceived as standing in the way of attaining the future. Therefore, neither indulging nor dwelling or reverse contrasting activate expectations of success and none of them leads to smart goal commitment (Oettingen, 2012).

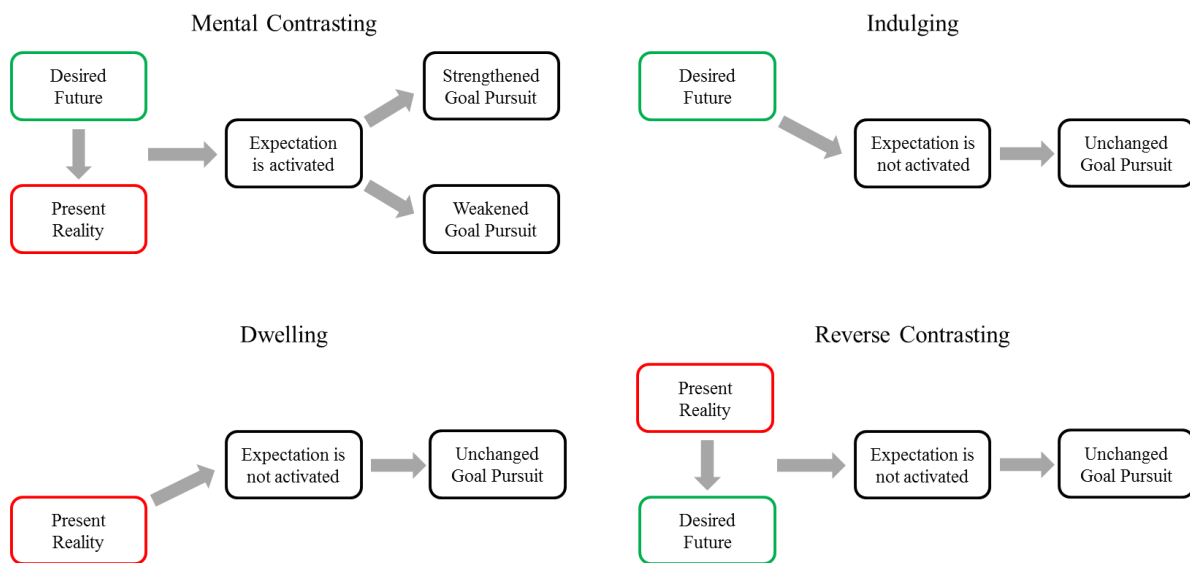


Figure 1. Self-regulatory modes of thought. Adapted from “Future thought and behavior change,” by G. Oettingen, 2012, in W. Stroebe & M. Hewstone (Eds.), *European Review of Social Psychology*, 23, p. 21. Copyright 2012 by European Association of Social Psychology.

The procedure by which the four modes of thought are established in research is similar in all hitherto existing experimental and interventional studies (e.g., Oettingen et al., 2001; Oettingen et al., 2009). First, the wish or concern the participant wants to pursue is specified. Second, all participants name four aspects of the positive future they associate with wish fulfillment and four aspects of the present reality that stand in the way of wish fulfillment. Third, participants indicate their expectations of success and their incentive value. Fourth, participants apply the assigned mode of thought to their wish or concern. In the mental contrasting condition participants start with elaborating on one of their aspects of

positive future. They are instructed to give their thoughts free reign and to imagine the events and experiences as vividly as possible. Then they elaborate on one aspect of present reality and again they are instructed to give their thoughts free reign. Afterwards the participants repeat the procedure with a second positive future aspect and present reality aspect. For participants in the reverse contrasting condition the procedure is almost the same with one critical difference: the order of the elaborated aspects is reverse. Participants first elaborate on an aspect of present reality and afterwards on an aspect of positive future. They repeat the procedure with a second aspect of present reality and positive future. Participants in the indulging condition only elaborate on the four aspects of positive future. For each of the aspects they are instructed to give their thoughts free reign and to imagine the events and experiences as vividly as possible. Participants in the dwelling condition elaborate only on the four aspects of present reality. They are instructed to give their thoughts free reign and to imagine the events and experiences as vividly as possible.

More recent studies (e.g., Johannessen, Oettingen, & Mayer, 2012; A. Kappes, Singmann, & Oettingen, 2012) shortened the procedure and the self-regulatory modes of thought were established without participants naming four positive future and present reality aspects. In the shortened procedure the wish or concern is specified and the participants indicate their expectations of success and their incentive value. Afterwards the participants directly apply the assigned mode of thought to their wish or concern. In the mental contrasting condition they name and elaborate their most important positive future aspect; then their most important present reality aspect. In the reverse contrasting condition they first name and elaborate their most important present reality aspect; followed by their most important positive future aspect. In the indulging condition participants name and elaborate their most important positive future aspect; followed by their second most important positive

future aspect. In the dwelling condition participants name and elaborate their most important present reality aspect; followed by their second most important present reality aspect.

Importantly, irrespective of which of the two procedures is applied, mental contrasting does not change the expectations of success (feasibility) or the incentive value (desirability). Mental contrasting activates preexisting expectations of success and makes them relevant for goal pursuit (Oettingen, Marquardt, & P. M. Gollwitzer, 2012). Cognitive and motivational processes are responsible for translating the expectations of success into selective goal pursuit during mental contrasting.

Processes of Mental Contrasting

Recent research identified underlying processes that drive the effects of mental contrasting on goal commitment and goal directed behavior. On the cognitive level mental contrasting builds cognitive associative links that guide perception and behavior (A. Kappes, Wendt, Reinelt, & Oettingen, 2013; A. Kappes, 2009; A. Kappes et al., 2012). On the motivational level mental contrasting releases the right amount of energy to deal with the present reality and to reach the desired future if possible (Oettingen et al., 2009).

Cognitive processes. Three cognitive processes that underlie the effects of mental contrasting on goal pursuit have been investigated so far. First, mental contrasting establishes a mental associative link between the desired future and the present reality. Second, mental contrasting establishes a mental associative link between the present reality and the instrumental behavior to overcome the obstacles of present reality. Third, mental contrasting changes the meaning of the present reality.

Associative link between desired future and present reality. As outlined above, during mental contrasting people first elaborate on their desired future (e.g., mended relationship) and afterwards on their present reality (e.g., being too proud to apologize). By first elaborating on the desired future this is set as an anchor and determined as the context

for the following elaboration of the present reality. The subsequently elaborated aspect of present reality is contrasted against and elaborated in context of the desired future. Mental contrasting thereby establishes a mental association between the desired future and the present reality (A. Kappes, 2009). This future-reality association is based on the person's expectations of successfully reaching the future. If the expectations are high the future-reality association is strong and if they are low the future-reality association is weak. Thereby, for high expectations of success, thoughts about the desired future will immediately entail thoughts about the obstacles in reality and a need to act is activated (A. Kappes, 2009). For example, after mental contrasting with high expectations of success perpetrators can no longer just dream about the mended relationship. As soon as they start thinking about the desired future the present reality of being too proud to apologize will appear in their mind. This is a permanent reminder for the perpetrators that it is necessary to deal with the present reality if they want to achieve the desired future.

Associative link between present reality and instrumental behavior. A second mental associative link is established simultaneously to the future-reality association during mental contrasting. This second link associates the present reality to the behavior that is instrumental to deal with that reality in order to reach the desired future (A. Kappes et al., 2012). The strength of the link between present reality and instrumental behavior established by mental contrasting is based on the expectations of success as well. If the expectations of success are high the link between the present reality and instrumental behavior is strong, while if the expectations of success are low the link between the present reality and instrumental behavior is weak (A. Kappes et al., 2012). In our example it would be an instrumental behavior for the perpetrators to swallow their pride and apologize to the victims. By mental contrasting the desired future of a mended relationship with the present reality of being too proud, a mental associative link between being too proud and making an apology is established.

Importantly, the future-reality and reality-instrumental means associations mediate the effects of mental contrasting on effort and performance (A. Kappes, 2009; A. Kappes et al., 2012). The strength of the mental associations established by mental contrasting predicts (a) how strongly people commit to attaining the desired future, (b) how persistently they strive for reaching their goals, and (c) how successfully they attain them. Mental contrasting with high expectations of success establishes strong future-reality and reality-instrumental behavior links that mediate strong goal directed behavior. Mental contrasting with low expectations of success establishes weak future-reality and reality-instrumental behavior links that mediate weak goal directed behavior (A. Kappes, 2009; A. Kappes et al., 2012).

Perceiving the present reality as obstacle. By first setting the anchor in the future and afterwards elaborating on the present reality, mental contrasting activates the expectations of success and thereby changes the perception of the present reality (A. Kappes et al., 2013). If the expectations are high the elaborated aspect of present reality is no longer perceived as just one of many aspects of reality; after mental contrasting it is perceived as an obstacle standing in the way of reaching the desired future. With high compared to low expectations of success aspects of reality are implicitly perceived as obstacles and explicitly evaluated as more unpleasant (A. Kappes et al., 2013). Furthermore, mental contrasting with high expectations of success facilitates the detection of further obstacles on the way to the desired future. In the continued example, after mental contrasting the perpetrators perceive their pride as an obstacle on the way to a mended relationship and evaluate this pride as unpleasant. Furthermore, they will immediately detect further obstacles (e.g., the wrong setting for an apology) and are thereby enabled to deal with these obstacles.

For the three cognitive processes to unfold, the order of the elaborations matters. Only during mentally contrasting the desired future with the present reality do the expectations of success determine the strength of the future-reality and reality-instrumental means

associations along with the perception of the present reality as an unpleasant obstacle. If the order of elaborations is changed (reverse contrasting) and the present reality is elaborated first, it is not elaborated in the context of the desired future. Even though the same aspects are elaborated with only their order changed, reverse contrasting does not activate the expectations of success. After reverse contrasting, the strength of the future-reality and reality-instrumental means associations are independent of the expectations of success (A. Kappes, 2009; A. Kappes et al., 2012). Furthermore, the meaning of the reality is not changed; with high expectations of success the present reality is perceived as no more or less of an obstacle than with low expectations of success (A. Kappes et al., 2013). The same results are also found if only the present reality is elaborated (dwelling) or if the aspects of desired future and present reality are only named but not elaborated. Only in mental contrasting are the expectations of success taken into account (A. Kappes et al., 2013; A. Kappes, 2009; A. Kappes et al., 2012).

Motivational process of energization. Beside the cognitive processes, the motivational process of energization is essential to translate the expectations of success into goal commitment and performance (Oettingen et al., 2009). Mental contrasting enables people to identify obstacles of present reality and it activates expectations if it is possible to overcome these obstacles and attain the desired future. Furthermore, based on the activated expectations of success, mental contrasting provides people with energy to deal with the obstacle. If the expectations of success are high, people are highly energized and therefore prepared to overcome the obstacle. If the expectations of success are low people are not energized; they expect the desired future to be unattainable and therefore do not put energy into pursuing this future. Instead, they save energy for other endeavors. In mental contrasting the process of energization mediates the effects of expectation of success on goal pursuit (commitment and performance) (Oettingen et al., 2009). The higher the expectations of

success the more energy is provided and the stronger the goal pursuit (e.g., self-reported goal commitment or performance). This process is not found if people only indulge in the desired future, only dwell on the present reality or contrast the present reality with the desired future (reverse contrasting). For these three self-regulatory strategies the provided amount of energy is independent of the expectations of success (Oettingen et al., 2009). This may lead people to put insufficient energy into attaining feasible goals and too much energy into attaining unfeasible goals. Only mental contrasting enables people to distribute their energy in a smart way; by providing enough energy for feasible goals and not wasting energy on unfeasible goals (Oettingen, 2012).

Effects of Mental Contrasting

There is a growing body of research that shows the effects of mental contrasting in different domains, from academic achievement to interpersonal relations and in diverse populations, from children to health care professionals. Furthermore, the effects of mental contrasting are investigated with different emphases: Mental contrasting is (1) experimentally induced in the lab, (2) applied as an intervention in the field, (3) taught as a meta-cognitive strategy, or (4) the spontaneous use of mental contrasting and its effects are measured. The effects of experimentally induced or spontaneous mental contrasting on goal pursuit are assessed with a wide range of measures. For example, goal pursuit is measured short term and long term; from a subjective (e.g., self-report of goal commitment) or objective (e.g., grades) perspective. Furthermore, the measures of goal pursuit have different emphasis on affective (e.g., anticipated disappointment), motivational (e.g., energization), behavioral (e.g., effort) or cognitive (e.g., planning) aspects (for an overview see Oettingen, 2012).

In the next passages I will give an overview of the manifold research on mental contrasting. First, I will summarize the effects of induced mental contrasting in the domains of achievement and health. Secondly, I will summarize the effects of mental contrasting as an

intervention and as a meta-cognitive strategy. Thirdly, I will summarize the research on self-generated and spontaneous mental contrasting. Finally, I will turn to the effects of mental contrasting in the interpersonal domain as this line of research is of special interest for the present research on conciliatory behavior and reconciliation.

Effects of mental contrasting on academic achievement and health behavior.

Academic achievement and physical health are two domains for which good self-regulation is very beneficial. People need to self-regulate their cognitions, behavior and emotions to prepare for exams, to graduate school, to eat a healthy diet and exercise regularly. Mental contrasting is a self-regulatory strategy that enables selective and therefore smart goal pursuit in the academic and the health domain: It helps people to pursue feasible goals and to disengage from unfeasible goals (e.g., Oettingen et al., 2001).

In the achievement domain mental contrasting showed its effects on different aspects and measures of goal pursuit. In several studies it led participants to commit to goals, to exert energy and to show effort and achievement that were in line with their expectations of success (for an overview see Oettingen, 2012). For example, one study was carried out with first year students at a vocational school for computer-programing. Mathematics was the most critical subject for the students and it was a major concern for many students to improve their math skills; therefore, the study was carried out during the math course. Oettingen et al. (2001, Study 4) first asked the students how important it was for them to improve their math skills (incentive value) and how likely they thought it was that they could do so (expectations of success). Afterwards the students wrote down four positive future aspects they associated with improving their math skills and four aspects of present reality standing in the way of this. The students were then randomly assigned to one of the three experimental conditions: mental contrasting, indulging or dwelling. In all three conditions the students elaborated on four of their eight named aspects in total. Students in the mental contrasting condition first

elaborated on one of their positive future aspects and afterwards on one of their present reality aspects. They repeated the procedure with another positive future aspect and another present reality aspect. Student in the indulging condition elaborated on all four positive future aspects they named before; they did not elaborate on present reality aspects. Students in the dwelling condition elaborated on all four present reality aspects they named before; they did not elaborate on positive future aspects. Right after the self-regulatory strategy the energization of the students was assessed via self-report. Two weeks after the experiment the students' effort and their achievement was assessed via teachers reports.

As predicted only students in the mental contrasting condition reported energization and showed behavior that was based on their expectations of success. Students with high expectations of success reported feeling more energized than students with low expectations of success. Two weeks later the teachers reported greater effort and higher achievement for students with high compared to low expectations of success. The energization and behavior of students in the indulging and dwelling conditions were unaffected by their expectations of success (Oettingen et al., 2001).

The same effects of mental contrasting on goal pursuit are found in the health domain. Only mental contrasting, not indulging or dwelling, enables people to act in line with their expectations of success. These effects are true for an approach orientation (pursuing a positive future) as well as for an avoidance orientation (preventing a negative future). For example, in a study with smokers Oettingen, Mayer, and Thorpe (2010b) implemented two mental contrasting conditions; one condition included fantasies about a positive future and the other fantasies about a negative future. In the positive-future condition the smokers mentally contrasted positive future consequences of having quit smoking (e.g., better lung capacity) with obstacles of present reality that stood in the way of quitting (e.g., being bored). In the negative-future condition the smokers mentally contrasted negative future

consequences of continued smoking (e.g., developing lung cancer) with a positive reality they could lose (e.g., pretty skin). The study consisted of a two (positive-future vs. negative-future) by three (mental contrasting vs. indulging vs. dwelling) design. First, all participants indicated their expectations and incentive to reduce or stop their cigarette consumption. Then, half of the participants named four positive future aspects they associated with reducing their cigarette consumption and four aspects of reality that stood in the way of reducing their cigarette consumption (positive-future condition). The other half named four aspects of negative future they would encounter if they continued smoking and four aspects of positive present reality they could lose due to smoking (negative-future condition).

Afterwards the three self-regulatory strategies were applied. Participants in the positive-future mental contrasting condition elaborated on two aspects of positive future and two aspects of present reality in alternating order starting with an aspect of positive future. Participants in the positive-future indulging condition only elaborated on all four aspects of positive future and participants in the positive-future dwelling condition only elaborated on all four aspects of present reality. Participants in the negative-future mental contrasting condition elaborated on two aspects of negative future and two aspects of positive present reality in alternating order starting with an aspect of negative future. Participants in the negative-future indulging condition only elaborated on all four aspects of negative future and participants in the negative-future dwelling condition only elaborated on all four aspects of positive present reality. As a dependent measure of goal pursuit two weeks later Oettingen et al. (2010b) assessed how immediately the participants had performed the first relevant step towards reducing or stopping their cigarette consumption. In a follow-up questionnaire participants reported all steps they had taken in the last two weeks and the exact day each step was taken.

The immediacy of participants' behavior showed the same pattern in both mental contrasting conditions: it was in line with the participants' expectations of success. The higher the participants' expectations had been, the faster they took the first relevant step towards reducing or stopping their cigarette consumption. The mental contrasting effect was the same for imagining a desired future or an undesired future, as long as the future was contrasted with the corresponding present reality. Participants' immediacy of behavior in the two indulging and the two dwelling conditions was not based on the participants' expectations of success. Therefore, only mental contrasting is effective for self-regulating approach goals as well as for avoidance goals. It supports the pursuit of a desired and feasible future and the prevention of an undesired and unfeasible future (Oettingen et al., 2010b).

Mental contrasting is a self-regulatory strategy that is effective in the domains of academic achievement and health. It enables selective goal commitment, energization and goal directed behavior. Mental contrasting leads to strong goal pursuit in light of high expectations of success and to weak goal pursuit in light of low expectations of success. Thereby, it supports the attainment of feasible goals and helps to preserve resources if goals are unfeasible.

Effects of mental contrasting as an intervention. As outlined above mental contrasting is a very effective self-regulatory strategy to foster selective goal pursuit. If mental contrasting is applied as an intervention the selective nature of the self-regulatory strategy has to be considered. In some settings the goal disengaging effect of mental contrasting with low expectations of success might be unwanted (A. Gollwitzer, Oettingen, Kirby, Duckworth, & Mayer, 2011). For example, high school students should not disengage from pursuing academic achievement; a self-regulatory strategy should support them to hang on and to graduate at their best. Mental contrasting is very suitable to be applied in those settings: if the expectations of success are held high it fosters strong goal pursuit and supports

people to overcome their obstacles and attain their goals. Therefore, the expectations of successfully reaching the goal or solving the concern should be high rather than low if mental contrasting is applied in settings in which goal disengagement is unwanted (A. Gollwitzer et al., 2011). There are different ways to make sure that the expectations of success are high during mental contrasting. One way is to choose a goal that is feasible for all participants and to let them know that it is feasible. Another way is to guide participants to choose an idiosyncratic concern that is challenging but feasible (A. Gollwitzer et al., 2011; Johannessen et al., 2012).

For example, A. Gollwitzer et al. (2011) utilized one of those methods to provide high rather than low expectations of success and chose a solvable task in a mental contrasting intervention for school children. They applied the intervention in two different settings in Germany and in the United States of America. In Study 1 the intervention was applied to facilitate the learning of English vocabulary in German elementary school children with a low socio-economic status. To make sure that all children had rather high than low expectations of success teachers who knew the classes were asked to choose a task that was solvable for all children. Additionally, the task was new to the children and thereby they had no prior experiences of failure that could lower their expectations of success. At the beginning of the intervention the task was explained to the children. The task was to learn 15 English vocabulary words within the next two weeks. Each child received a booklet with 15 cartoons and the corresponding vocabulary for each cartoon picture. At the end of the two weeks training period the children were tested. They had to remember at least four (or seven; depending on the age of the child) English vocabulary words to win a prize. After the children had been familiarized with the task their expectations of success were measured; the measure showed that all children had rather high expectations of success. Afterwards the children were randomly assigned to the mental contrasting or the positive future only

(indulging) condition and the intervention was applied. In the mental contrasting condition the children first named and elaborated “the best thing that they associated with correctly naming the English vocabulary words and winning the prize.” (A. Gollwitzer et al., 2011, p. 405). Then the children named and elaborated a personal behavior that could stand in the way of correctly writing down the English vocabulary words during the test. In the indulging condition the children named and elaborated the best and the second best thing they associated with correctly naming the words and winning the prize. They did not name or elaborate an obstacle. After some training sessions all children took the test two weeks later. The test showed that the children in the mental contrasting condition correctly remembered more English vocabulary words than the children in the indulging condition. As lined out above this main effect for the condition was found because all children had high expectations of success.

Similar results were found in the second study, with middle school students in the United States of America who were taught to say *thank you* in ten different languages. As in Study 1 the expectations of success were rather high for all children and they were randomly assigned to a mental contrasting or an indulging condition. Again, in a test the children in the mental contrasting condition remembered more foreign language words than the children in the indulging condition (A. Gollwitzer et al., 2011).

Johannessen, Oettingen, and Mayer (2012) applied a mental contrasting intervention in the health domain and utilized another strategy to induce high expectations of success: Participants formulated their own challenging but feasible dieting wish. Afterwards the participants were randomly assigned to the mental contrasting condition, the indulging condition or a no-treatment control condition. Participants in the mental contrasting condition first named and elaborated the best future outcome they associated with fulfilling their dieting wish. Next they named and elaborated an internal personal obstacle that stood in the way of

fulfilling the dieting wish. Participants in the indulging condition named and elaborated the best and the second best future outcome; no obstacle was named or elaborated. Participants in the no-treatment condition did not engage in any self-regulatory thoughts. A self-report of eating behavior two weeks later showed that mental contrasting led to a healthier diet than indulging or no-treatment. Participants in the mental contrasting condition reported lower overall calorie intake than participants in the indulging or no-treatment conditions. The decrease of high calorie food consumption and increase of low calorie food consumption was stronger in the mental contrasting condition than in the other two conditions. Additionally Johannessen et al. (2012) found a carry-over effect: Participants who mentally contrasted their dieting wish reported a larger improvement in their physical exercise than participants who indulged or received no treatment.

Mental contrasting as a meta-cognitive strategy. In other settings the mental contrasting effects of selective goal pursuit have been explicitly employed for interventions. For example, in demanding working settings where people have many duties and options, mental contrasting is a very helpful self-regulatory strategy. It enables people to prioritize tasks, to pursue feasible goals and disengage from unfeasible goals (Oettingen, 2012; Oettingen, Mayer, & Brinkmann, 2010a). In a study with health care professionals mental contrasting (or indulging) was taught as a meta-cognitive strategy (Oettingen et al., 2010a). Participants were personnel managers in a large hospital with a very demanding job. They were randomly assigned to the mental contrasting or indulging condition. In a practice session they were taught how to mentally contrast (or indulge) by applying the strategy to different short- and long-term concerns. They thereby learned how to apply the self-regulatory strategy on their own as a tool to regulate their goal pursuit. Furthermore, participants were encouraged to apply the self-regulatory strategy to their idiosyncratic everyday concerns. To facilitate the use of the learned self-regulatory strategy the participants

received a booklet for the next 14 days with one practice session per day. After two weeks the participants in the mental contrasting condition reported better job management than participants in the indulging condition. Specifically they reported better time management, easier decision making and better project management by accomplishing selected projects and letting go of others. In this study mental contrasting showed its strength as a selective and smart goal pursuing strategy. It enables people to manage their jobs and their lives in a resource conserving way by pursuing feasible goals and letting go of unfeasible goals. Furthermore, once people learn how to use mental contrasting they can apply it to everyday idiosyncratic wishes or concerns (Oettingen et al., 2010a).

Effects of self-generated mental contrasting. Since mental contrasting is such an effective self-regulatory strategy, the question emerged as to which situations people may self-generate a mental contrasting mode of thought. Two recent lines of research investigate the frequency and the effects of self-generated or spontaneous mental contrasting. Furthermore, they investigate which situational variables facilitate a self-generated mental contrasting mode of thought in peoples' everyday lives.

In the first line of research H. B. Kappes, Oettingen, Mayer, and Maglio (2011) investigated sad mood as a situational variable that might facilitate the self-generated use of mental contrasting. Sad mood in contrast to neutral or happy mood indicates a deficit or a problem in the status quo and therefore, sad mood should trigger behavior that solves the problem. To self-regulate the problem solving behavior, mental contrasting seems to be an adequate mode of thought because “mental contrasting—rather than indulging, dwelling, and reverse contrasting—is a problem-solving procedure that induces behaviour change” (Oettingen, 2012, p. 42). In six studies H. B. Kappes et al. (2011) induced sad mood by listening to music, reading newspaper articles or writing about hypothetical events. They assessed the self-regulatory mode of thought with a procedure adapted from the experimental

studies that induced mental contrasting (the outlined procedure was used in Studies 1 & 2 and with small changes in Studies 4 & 5). Before mood was manipulated participants had to name their currently most important wish or concern. Afterwards they named four positive future aspects they associated with wish fulfillment and four aspects of present reality that stood in the way of wish fulfillment. Next, mood was manipulated for example, by reading a newspaper article that had either a sad (sad mood condition) or neutral (neutral mood condition) content (Study 1). Following the mood manipulation the participants elaborated on four of their eight named aspects. Departing from the experimental studies in which the order of the elaborated aspects was given, the participants in these studies were free to choose which of the eight aspects they wanted to elaborate first, second, third and fourth. The mode of self-regulatory thought was determined by the order of the elaborated aspects. If participants elaborated two positive future and two present reality aspects and started with a positive future aspect their mode of thought was classified as mental contrasting; if they started with a present reality aspect it was classified as reverse contrasting. If participants predominantly chose positive future aspects their mode of thought was classified as indulging and if they chose predominantly present reality aspects it was classified as dwelling.

In all studies sad mood indeed facilitated the self-generated use of mental contrasting. Participants in the sad mood condition were more likely to generate a mental contrasting mode of thought (on average about 40%) than participants in the neutral mood condition (on average about 20%) and participants in the happy mood condition (on average about 28%). Furthermore, the self-generated self-regulatory modes of thought had the same effects on goal pursuit as did the experimentally manipulated self-regulatory strategies. Only participants who mentally contrasted – and not those who indulged, dwelled or reverse contrasted – showed goal pursuit in line with their expectations of success. Goal pursuit was assessed by self-reported energization (Study 5) and persistence in goal striving (Study 6).

Both indicators of goal pursuit were only related to their expectations of success for mental contrasting participants. With low expectations they reported less energization and showed less persistence than with high expectations (H. B. Kappes et al., 2011).

In the second line of research Sevincer and Oettingen (2013) established a content analyzing system that assesses the spontaneously generated self-regulatory thoughts as they appear in the stream of thought. The method is less constrained than the measure of self-regulatory mode of thought used by H. B. Kappes et al. (2011) because it does not explicitly trigger the generation of positive future and present reality aspects. Instead, Oettingen and Sevincer (2013) asked the participants to freely think about their wish or concern and to write down all thoughts that came to their minds. Afterwards they separated the elaborations into statements and used a coding scheme to code each statement as a positive future, present reality or general statement. Based on the coded statements the self-regulatory mode of thought was determined. If participants generated positive future and present reality statements, starting with a positive future statement they were classified as mental contrasting; but if they started with a present reality statement they were classified as reverse contrasting. If participants only generated positive future statements they were classified as indulging and if they generated only present reality statements they were classified as dwelling.

In Study 1 (no-prompt condition) and Study 2 about 10% of the participants spontaneously mentally contrasted regardless of whether they thought about an interpersonal concern (Study 1) or an achievement concern (Study 2). The percentage of participants who spontaneously mentally contrasted increased in Study 3, reaching 27%. The difference in Study 3 was that the pressure for participants to act on their wish in the immediate future was manipulated. Participants were undergraduate students, whose wish was to be accepted to graduate school. At the start of the study they were informed that in the immediate future

they would have to write an application letter to their favorite graduate school. Right before they wrote the application letter, their self-regulatory mode of thought was assessed. Study 3 showed that the need to act in the immediate future is another situational variable that facilitates the spontaneous use of a problem solving self-regulatory strategy like mental contrasting (Sevincer & Oettingen, 2013).

Furthermore, all three studies confirmed that spontaneously generated mental contrasting has the same effects on goal pursuit as experimentally induced mental contrasting. In Study 1 participants freely wrote about an important interpersonal concern. Only participants who generated a mental contrasting mode of thought, in contrast to the other three modes of thought (indulging, dwelling and reverse contrasting), self-reported goal commitment that was in line with their expectations of successfully solving their interpersonal concern. With high expectations of success they reported a higher goal commitment than with low expectations of success. In Study 2 participants freely wrote about their most important professional or academic achievement wish. One week later their performance was assessed via self-report by asking them how hard they tried and how successful they had been in fulfilling their wish. Furthermore, they had to report all steps they undertook to fulfill their wish. Again, only participants with a mental contrasting mode of thought reported performance that was in line with their expectations of success. In Study 3 undergraduate students freely wrote about their wish to be accepted to their favorite graduate school. Afterwards participants were asked to write an application letter to their favorite graduate school. The quality of the letters was assessed by two independent raters. The effects of the different modes of thought on this observed performance confirmed prior findings. Only participants with a mental contrasting mode of thought performed in line with their expectations of success: the higher their expectations of success, the higher the quality of their application letters (Sevincer & Oettingen, 2013).

Summing up, both lines of research investigated the self-generated or spontaneous mental contrasting mode of thought. With different methods to assess the self-regulatory modes of thought they came to similar conclusions. First, without being instructed people sometimes use a mental contrasting mode of thought while thinking about future wishes or concerns. Second, self-generated or spontaneous mental contrasting has the same effects as induced mental contrasting: it makes the expectations of success relevant for goal pursuit (goal commitment and performance). Furthermore, sad mood and the need to act in the immediate future were identified as two situational variables that facilitate the spontaneous use of a mental contrasting mode of thought (H. B. Kappes et al., 2011; Sevincer & Oettingen, 2013).

Effects of mental contrasting in interpersonal settings. Of special interest for the research on conciliatory behavior and reconciliation are the effects of mental contrasting in interpersonal settings. Several studies investigated the effectiveness of mental contrasting on different interpersonal concerns and wishes. For example, mental contrasting was applied to self-regulate idiosyncratic interpersonal concerns, helping relations and integrative bargaining.

Mental contrasting on idiosyncratic interpersonal concerns. Several studies investigated the effects of mental contrasting on idiosyncratic interpersonal concerns in a straight forward way (for an overview see Oettingen, 2012). For example, in two studies (Oettingen, 2012; Study 1 and Study 3) participants first named their most important interpersonal concern (e.g., moving in with a romantic partner). Afterwards participants named four positive future aspects they associated with having solved the interpersonal concern and four aspects of present reality that stood in the way of solving the concern. Then, participants were randomly assigned to one of three (Study 1: mental contrasting vs. indulging vs. dwelling) or one of four (Study 3: mental contrasting vs. indulging vs. dwelling

vs. reverse contrasting) conditions. Participants in the mental contrasting condition elaborated on two aspects of positive future and on two aspects of present reality in alternating order starting with an aspect of positive future. Participants in the reverse contrasting condition elaborated on two aspects of positive future and on two aspects of present reality in alternating order as well; but they started with an aspect of present reality. Participants in the indulging condition only elaborated on the four aspects of positive future and participants in the dwelling condition only elaborated on the four aspects of present reality.

Again, only participants in the mental contrasting conditions took their expectation of success into account. With high compared to low expectations of success they made more plans how to pursue their desired future (Study 1), reported higher energization (Study 3) and acted faster on pursuing their goal (Study 3). Participants in the indulging, dwelling and reverse contrasting conditions did not take their expectations of success into account. The number of plans, energization and the immediacy of their actions was unaffected by expectations of success. As mental contrasting has the same effects on goal pursuit in the interpersonal domain as in the academic or health domain, it is a suitable self-regulatory strategy for interpersonal concerns.

Mental contrasting in helping relations. Mental contrasting enables people to set feasible goals; but, for effective goal pursuit the “choice of suitable means” (p. 27) to attain the set goals is crucial (Oettingen, Stephens, Mayer, & Brinkmann, 2010c). Seeking help from others might be an instrumental mean to attain personal goals but at the same time asking for help is linked to the risk of being rejected (Nadler, 1991). Likewise, offering help to others might be an instrumental mean to attain interpersonal goals but only if the help giver has the resources and the competence to provide help (Bartlett & DeSteno, 2006). Therefore, a selective choice of instrumental means is beneficial that leads people to only seek help if the chances of receiving it are high and to only offer help if they could effectively provide it.

In two studies Oettingen et al. (2010c) investigated in whether mental contrasting facilitates selective help-seeking and help-giving. In Study 1 the effects of mental contrasting on selective help-seeking were investigated. Undergraduate students named their most important academic concern and identified a person who could provide effective help. They then indicated their expectations that the person would actually help them (expectations of success) and named four positive aspects of successfully seeking help and four aspects of present reality standing in the way of successfully seeking help. Afterwards, participants in the mental contrasting condition elaborated on two positive aspects and two present reality aspects in alternating order, starting with a positive aspect. Participants in the indulging and dwelling conditions only elaborated on four positive aspects (indulging) or four present reality aspects (dwelling). Two weeks later the attainment of help from the named person was assessed by a follow-up questionnaire via e-mail. Participants indicated how much their academic concern had been solved or improved through the help of the named person. Only mental contrasting enabled a selective attainment of help. With high expectations participants successfully attained effective help and with low expectations they had little success in attaining help. Attainment of help was independent of the expectations of success in the indulging and dwelling conditions (Oettingen et al., 2010c).

In Study 2 (Oettingen et al., 2010c) the effects of mental contrasting on selective help-giving were investigated. Pediatric care nurses applied mental contrasting, indulging or dwelling to the concern of giving help to the patients' relatives. Again, only mental contrasting led to a selective giving of help. Nurses in the mental contrasting condition reported that they exerted high effort to give help only if they had high expectations of successfully providing the help. Previous research established mental contrasting as a self-regulatory strategy that enables selective goal commitment. The two studies on help-seeking and help-giving showed another effect of mental contrasting; mental contrasting also

facilitates the selective commitment to instrumental means to achieve those goals (Oettingen et al., 2010c).

Mental contrasting in bargaining. Since mental contrasting is beneficial for pursuing feasible goals and letting go of unfeasible goals it is reasonable to assume that it is also effective for reaching integrative solutions in bargaining. In a study on integrative bargaining two participants had to negotiate over buying/selling a car (Kirk, Oettingen, & P. M. Gollwitzer, 2011). From a pool of participants two participants were randomly paired up in dyads. Within each dyad, one participant was assigned to the role of a buyer and the other to the role of a seller. The focal goal for the buyer and seller was to maximize their gains. It was possible for them to simultaneously maximize their gains by reaching an integrative solution if each partner gave in on issues of the car sale that mattered more to the partner (e.g., making a trade-off regarding the price of the car and the sound system). The bargaining was executed via an instant messenger program, the dyads never met in person. Before the dyads negotiated both partners either (1) mentally contrasted the desired future of maximizing their gains with obstacles of reality standing in the way, (2) indulged in the desired future of maximizing their gains, (3) dwelled on the obstacles of reality standing in the way, or (4) received no treatment.

The dyads in the mental contrasting condition were more likely to find integrative and equitable solutions than dyads in the indulging, dwelling or no treatment conditions. Thereby dyads in the mental contrasting condition reached higher joint gains than dyads in the three other conditions. Supposedly, participants in the mental contrasting condition were enabled to better discriminate between feasible and unfeasible negotiation goals. Thus, they gave up on unfeasible goals (e.g., a lower car price) and actively pursued feasible goals (e.g., the latest sound system). Thereby an integrative solution was reached in which each partner gave in on some issues and successfully enforced other issues (Kirk et al., 2011).

Summing up, mental contrasting is an effective strategy to self-regulate goal pursuit in interpersonal settings. It enables people to self-regulate their cognitions, their energization and their behavior to effectively pursue their individual interpersonal wishes. It aids people to attain help if instrumental for their goal pursuit and to give help if they have the resources and the skills to effectively provide it. Furthermore, in negotiations mental contrasting enables people to discriminate feasible negotiation goals from unfeasible ones. Thereby they are effective in reaching integrative solutions and maximizing the gains for both negotiation partners.

Mental Contrasting and Conciliatory Behavior

The outlined effects of mental contrasting in interpersonal settings are the foundation of our research on mental contrasting as a strategy to self-regulate conciliatory behavior in the aftermath of interpersonal transgressions. As in help-giving situations, the perpetrators need to evaluate their own resources and competences to provide sincere and meaningful conciliatory behaviors. Furthermore, as in help-seeking situations and negotiations the accurate evaluation of the other person is essential. Perpetrators need to evaluate the needs, emotions and cognitions of the victim in order to perform conciliatory behavior that facilitates reconciliation. We hypothesized that mental contrasting is an effective strategy for perpetrators to self-regulate their conciliatory behavior in the aftermath of an interpersonal transgression. Mentally contrasting the desired future of a mended relationship with obstacles of present reality should make the perpetrators expectations of success relevant for their behavior. If they have high expectations of successfully mending the relationship they should immediately and effectively perform conciliatory behavior. If they have low expectations of success they should refrain from performing conciliatory behavior because it might backfire, do further harm or further strain the relationship. We conducted a pilot study to test our

hypotheses for the first time and to generate more detailed research questions and hypotheses (Schrage, 2012).

Pilot Study: Mental contrasting and the Immediacy of Conciliatory Behavior

In a pilot study Schrage (2012) asked 131 participants to report an unresolved interpersonal transgression in which they felt guilty or regretful afterwards. Participants were then randomly assigned to one of four self-regulatory strategy conditions: mental contrasting, indulging, dwelling, or a control group. Participants in the mental contrasting condition first elaborated on one aspect of the desired future they associated with resolving the interpersonal concern. They then contrasted it with an obstacle of reality standing in the way of resolving their concern. Participants in the indulging condition only elaborated on two aspects of a desired future and those in the dwelling condition only elaborated on two obstacles of reality. Participants in the control condition worked on an irrelevant filler task. Afterwards we measured goal commitment to resolve the interpersonal concern by self-report (e.g., “How disappointed would you feel if you did not resolve the interpersonal concern?”). One week later we measured immediacy of conciliatory behavior by self-report.

Only participants in the mental contrasting condition acted in line with their expectations of success. They reported immediate performance of conciliatory behavior if expectations of success were high and delayed performance or none at all if expectations of success were low. Immediacy of action did not depend on expectations of success in the other three conditions furthermore, the interaction effect of expectations by condition on immediacy of action was mediated by goal commitment.

The Present Research

In the pilot study we showed that mental contrasting is an effective self-regulatory strategy for fostering sensible conciliatory behavior, however some issues and additional research questions were raised. First we will briefly outline these issues and questions and

then address them in depth in the following studies. A lingering methodological issue was whether we successfully induced guilt in the pilot study. We assumed that participants would experience guilt after writing down an idiosyncratic interpersonal transgression. Whether participants experienced guilt is important because the mental contrasting intervention assumed that participants would have an incentive to perform conciliatory behavior after experiencing guilt. Although the participants in the pilot study reported feelings of guilt following the manipulation, we had no control group to formally test whether we successfully induced guilt or just negative affect in general. We addressed this problem in Study 1 by experimentally manipulating different emotions (guilt vs. sadness vs. control) in participants' idiosyncratic reports of interpersonal incidents.

The second issue arose from our measure of conciliatory behavior. In the pilot study we only assessed conciliatory behavior by self-report. This could be problematic for two reasons: First, a self-report of conciliatory behavior might be biased because of social desirability. Second, reconciliation in dyadic relationships is a process involving two parties and we only assessed the perpetrators' perspective but not the victims' perspective. We addressed this issue in Study 2 and Study 4, by directly assessing conciliatory behavior in the form of apology letters (Study 2) and observations of dyadic interactions between the perpetrators and the victims (Study 4).

Finally, in Study 3 we investigated if spontaneously applied mental contrasting is successful in fostering sensible conciliatory behavior as well. In the pilot study we experimentally manipulated the self-regulatory strategies the perpetrators used and recent research showed that mental contrasting has the same effects when it is spontaneously applied to a wish or concern (Sevincer & Oettingen, 2013). Therefore, we measured which self-regulatory mode of thoughts perpetrators encounter spontaneously when thinking about their interpersonal concern. Afterwards we assessed conciliatory behavior.

Study 1: Manipulation of Guilt

In the pilot study we manipulated feelings of guilt by asking participants to write down a personal narrative about an interpersonal transgression. Participants were asked to choose an incident in which they felt guilty or regretful afterwards and remained unresolved (adapted from Baumeister et al., 1995). Since we used the same manipulation of guilt for all participants, we could not conclude whether we induced guilt or just negative affect in general. Therefore we experimentally manipulated emotion in the present study. In this online study, we randomly assigned participants to write down an unresolved interpersonal incident. Depending on condition, participants either wrote about an incident in which they felt guilty or sad afterwards. In the control condition, no specific emotion was mentioned. Afterwards we assessed the current affect of all participants. We hypothesized that after writing down their personal narrative, participants in the guilt condition would report stronger feelings of guilt compared to participants in the sadness and control conditions. Furthermore, participants in the sadness condition would report more sadness than participants in the guilt and the control conditions.

Method

Participants. Participants were recruited via MTurk in the United States of America. Of the 245 participants who accepted the HIT and reported an incident, three participants did not finish the study and were excluded from all analysis. Four more participants did not follow instructions (e.g. one participant only wrote nonsense sentences), these participants were excluded as well. The final sample consisted of 238 participants (52.1% male, age $M = 29.63$ years, $SD = 10.48$). Participants were randomly assigned to one of three conditions (guilt vs. sadness vs. control) and received \$0.50 for their participation.

Procedure and measures. Participants were recruited via MTurk for a study on interpersonal concerns. If they accepted the HIT, they were redirected to an online survey.

All participants read an introduction indicating that throughout the study they would discuss an interpersonal concern that was currently on their mind. Afterwards they had to provide consent to take part.

Emotion manipulation. All participants read an instruction that requested a report of an unresolved interpersonal concern. To establish the three experimental conditions (guilt vs. sadness vs. control) we only changed the emotion mentioned in the instructions. The remaining wording was the same for all participants. Participants in the guilty condition read:

Most people value their relationships to other people and are often concerned about maintaining such relationships. Yet sometimes interpersonal relationships are not as one desires. Please describe an unresolved incident with another person in which you felt *guilty* or *regretful* afterwards. Please choose an incident, which is still unresolved and in which you have the wish that the interpersonal concern will be resolved. The event should have taken place within the last six months. Please be as thorough as possible.

In the sad condition the third sentence was changed to: “Please describe an unresolved incident with another person in which you felt *sad* or *distressed* afterwards.” In the control condition the third sentence was changed to: “Please describe an unresolved incident with another person.”

For example, participants wrote: “I told my sister I would visit her but I’m not sure I will....” (guilt condition). “We had a fight about having kids and have never resolved our feelings. It still nags....” (sadness condition). “My girlfriend and I have trouble communicating about our relocating to another state....” (control condition).

Manipulation check. To check if the manipulation of guilt and sadness was successful, we measured the current overall positive and negative affect, as well as current feelings of guilt and sadness by self-report. Immediately after writing down their

idiosyncratic incident, participants indicated how they currently felt by rating 22 adjectives on a response scale ranging from 1 (*not at all/very little*) to 5 (*very much*). From these 22 adjectives we calculated the two general dimension scales of the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS-X; Watson & Clark, 1994). The positive affect scale consisted of 10 adjectives (active, alert, attentive, determined, enthusiastic, excited, inspired, interested, proud, strong) and had high internal consistency (Cronbach's $\alpha = .91$). The negative affect scale consisted of 10 adjectives (afraid, scared, nervous, jittery, irritable, hostile, guilty, ashamed, upset, distressed) and also had high internal consistency (Cronbach's $\alpha = .92$). The guilt scale consisted of two adjectives (guilty and blameworthy) and had a sufficient internal consistency (Cronbach's $\alpha = .77$). The sad scale consisted of three adjectives (sad, distressed and upset) and had a high internal consistency (Cronbach's $\alpha = .84$).

Results

Gender effects. We tested if gender had any effect on one of our variables. There were no gender differences for guilt, $t(213) = -0.55, p = .58$, sadness, $t(213) = 0.99, p = .32$, positive affect, $t(213) = -1.32, p = .19$, and negative affect, $t(213) = 0.64, p = .52$. Therefore, we omitted gender from the following analyses.

Emotion manipulation. Participants in the three conditions did not differ in their overall positive affect and negative affect (see Table 1). To test if our manipulation of guilt and sadness was successful we applied two analyses of variance (ANOVA) with planned contrasts, one for self-reported sadness and one for self-reported guilt. The means and standard deviations for the self-reported guilt and sadness within each of the three conditions are given in Table 1. With the planned comparisons we confirmed our hypotheses: Participants in the guilt condition reported more guilt than participants in the sad and in the control conditions, $t(235) = -2.39, p = .02$. The reported guilt did not differ between the sad and the control condition, $t(235) = 0.55, p = .58$. Participants in the sad condition reported

more sadness than participants in the guilt and in the control conditions, $t(235) = -2.81, p = .005$. The reported sadness did not differ between the guilt and the control condition, $t(235) = 0.49, p = .62$. Therefore the manipulation of the emotions was successful.

Table 1

Means and Standard Deviations of Self-Reported Affect by Condition.

Self-reported Affect	Condition			<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
	Guilt (<i>n</i> = 81)	Sadness (<i>n</i> = 74)	Control (<i>n</i> = 83)		
Positive affect	2.14 ^a (0.87)	2.21 ^a (0.92)	2.38 ^a (0.93)	1.60	.20
Negative affect	1.70 ^a (0.78)	1.84 ^a (0.85)	1.70 ^a (0.78)	0.81	.45
Guilty	2.08 ^b (1.00)	1.72 ^a (0.88)	1.81 ^a (0.98)	2.98	.05
Sad	1.87 ^a (0.96)	2.32 ^b (1.13)	1.95 ^a (1.02)	4.04	.02

Note. Means with different superscripts differ significantly in planned contrasts. Standard deviations in parenthesis. *Df* = 2, 235. Averaged means are given for the scales guilty (2 items), sad (3 items), positive affect (10 items) and negative affect (10 items).

Discussion

In Study 1, we successfully manipulated participants' guilt and sadness separately, as opposed to a general negative affect, through participants' idiosyncratic reports of interpersonal transgressions. Participants in the guilt condition reported more guilt after they wrote down their incidents than participants in the sadness or control condition. Participants in the sadness condition reported more sadness after they wrote down their incidents than participants in the guilt or control condition. All three conditions did not differ in their overall negative or positive affect. Therefore, we can conclude that our manipulation does not just induce negative affect in general but specifically feelings of guilt. Based on these results we utilized this manipulation in further studies.

Study 2: Mental Contrasting and Conciliatory Behavior

As stated above, the measure of conciliatory behavior by self-report might be problematic. Therefore, we attempted to measure conciliatory behavior more directly in a scenario based online study. Conciliatory behavior was assessed by letters that the perpetrators wrote to the victims. The letters were used for two measures of conciliatory behavior: first, perpetrators self-rated the quality of their letter and second, the number of apology elements within the letters was independently rated.

Additionally we used this study for explorative purposes. We decided to test whether the content of the elaborated obstacle would result in different effects of mental contrasting. Specifically, we wanted to compare obstacles that lie within the perpetrators (internal) to those that originate from the victims (external). We theorized that the mental contrasting effect of expectancy dependent goal pursuit (commitment and behavior) is less consistent for external obstacles than for internal obstacles. For internal obstacles the perpetrators are able to reliably evaluate their expectations of success and more importantly; it is in their power to act in line with their expectations of success. If the obstacle is external (e.g., originating from the victims), evaluating the likelihood of success is less reliable. That is, whether or not overcoming the obstacle is feasible depends, to some extent, on the victims. Therefore, the link between expectations of success and goal pursuit should be less consistent for mental contrasting when obstacles are external than when they are internal.

To test our predictions, we manipulated self-regulatory strategy in three experimental conditions: (1) mental contrasting with an internal obstacle (MC internal), (2) mental contrasting with an external obstacle (MC external) and (3) indulging as a control condition. In sum, we hypothesized that mental contrasting with an internal obstacle is an effective self-regulatory strategy to foster sensible (expectancy based) conciliatory behavior. Participants in the MC internal condition should show stronger links between expectations of success, goal

commitment, and conciliatory behavior, than participants in the indulging condition. We hypothesized that mental contrasting with an external obstacle leads to less consistent links between expectations of success and goal pursuit compared to mental contrasting with an internal obstacle.

Method

Participants. Participants were recruited via an announcement on the website of a popular scientific journal in Germany ($N = 88$; 10.2% male; age $M = 26.38$, $SD = 9.69$). It was presented as a study on the development of friendships. For completing the study, each participant received a 3 € amazon gift card. Participants were randomly assigned to one of three experimental conditions, varying in the self-regulatory strategy: mental contrasting internal obstacle ($n = 34$), mental contrasting external obstacle ($n = 28$) or indulging ($n = 26$). Two participants in the indulging condition did not follow the instructions and were excluded from all analysis. Seven participants did not complete all dependent measures and they were only excluded from the corresponding analysis (details are given for the respective analysis).

Procedure and measures. The study was scenario based and throughout the study participants were tasked with imagining themselves in the situation of the main character. To facilitate identification with the main character, we had different versions for female and male participants. Only the names of the characters differed between versions. The main character was named Paula in the female version and Paul in the male version. The best friend of the main character was Anke for females and Tom for males.

Guilt manipulation. To induce feelings of guilt, participants had to read the following scenario of an incident between two friends. While reading the scenario they had the task to put themselves into the situation of the main character (Paula / Paul):

Your name is Paula and you are best friends with Anke since the first grade. As a child Anke spent a lot of time with you and your family because she had a rather difficult

family background. Anke's father is an alcoholic and her mother left the family after Anke was born. Anke was brought up by her grandmother. Anke is very uncomfortable with her family background and she avoids speaking about her family or her childhood in front of other people. You are one of the few persons who know that her father is an alcohol addict. You were always supportive of Anke and you know how uncomfortable she is when it comes to her family background. After graduating from high school both of you moved to a bigger city and went to the same college. In college you are still best friends and spend almost all of your leisure time together. Now the first semester is over and last week Anke and you went to a party. Late at night both of you were sitting together with friends and acquaintances; some friends started telling funny childhood stories. Without giving it a deeper thought you told the story of how Anke's drunken father fell into the village pond. While telling the story you did impressions of the drunken father and the awkward grandmother. Everyone listening to your story was amused and laughing. Not until you finished the story did you realize that Anke had left the party.

You are Paula: How do you feel? What are your thoughts right now? Take your time to put yourself into Paula's shoes.

Afterwards participants were asked to answer the following questions as if they were Paula.

Manipulation check. To test if our manipulation of guilt was successful we asked participants to answer two questions: "Did the incident raise an interpersonal problem between Anke and you?" and "How severe are your feelings of guilt regarding your behavior?" Both questions were answered on a response scale from 1 (*not at all*) to 7 (*very*). The internal consistency of the guilt scale was sufficiently good (Cronbach's $\alpha = .72$).

Incentive value and expectations of success. To measure the incentive value, participants were asked to answer the question: "How important is it to you to resolve the

interpersonal concern?” on a response scale from 1 (*not at all*) to 7 (*very*). To measure expectations of success, participants were asked to answer two questions: “How likely do you think it is that the interpersonal concern with Anke is resolvable?” and “How likely do you think it is that you can resolve the interpersonal concern with Anke?” both on response scales from 1 (*not at all*) to 7 (*very*) (Cronbach’s $\alpha = .87$).

Manipulation of self-regulatory strategy. Participants were randomly assigned to one of three self-regulatory strategies (MC internal vs. MC external vs. indulging). All three strategies consisted of two steps, with the first step being the same for participants in all three conditions. In the first step, participants received the instructions to name the most positive aspect they associated with having resolved the interpersonal concern (“What would be the most positive aspect if you resolved the interpersonal concern with Anke? Please write down your most positive aspect in one or two words.”). Afterwards they were asked to elaborate on this aspect (“Imagine your most positive aspect as vividly as possible. Give your thoughts free reign and take as much time and space as you need to describe the scenario.”)

For the second step, participants in the MC internal condition received instructions to name the most important obstacle within them that stood in the way of resolving the interpersonal concern (“Sometimes things do not work out as we would like them to. Which obstacle within you stands in the way of resolving the interpersonal concern with Anke? Please name YOUR most important obstacle.”) Afterwards they were asked to elaborate on this obstacle aspect (“Imagine the obstacle as vividly as possible. Give your thoughts free reign and take as much time and space as you need to describe the scenario.”). Participants in the MC external condition received instructions to name the most important obstacle from Anke that stood in the way of resolving the interpersonal concern (“Sometimes things do not work out as we would like them to do. Which obstacle on Anke’s side stands in the way of resolving the interpersonal concern with Anke? Please name Anke’s most important

obstacle.”) Afterwards they were asked to elaborate on this aspect of the obstacle (“Imagine the obstacle as vividly as possible. Give your thoughts free reign and take as much time and space as you need to describe the scenario.”). Participants in the indulging condition received instructions to name the second most positive future aspect they associated with having resolved the interpersonal concern. Afterwards they were instructed to elaborate on this second positive aspect.

Goal commitment. Following the manipulation of the self-regulatory strategy, participants indicated their commitment to the goal of resolving the interpersonal concern. The scale consisted of three items, each answered on a seven point response scale from 1 (*not at all*) to 7 (*very much*): “How disappointed would you feel if you did not resolve the interpersonal concern?”, “How hard would it be for you if you did not resolve the interpersonal concern?”, and “How determined are you to resolve the interpersonal concern?”. These items are frequently used to assess goal commitment (e.g., Oettingen, 2000; Oettingen et al., 2001; Sevincer & Oettingen, 2013) and the scale showed a good internal consistency (Cronbach’s $\alpha = .85$).

Letter of apology. Next participants were asked to stay in Paula’s (Paul’s) situation and to write a letter to their friend Anke (Tom): “You (Paula/Paul) decide to write a letter to Anke (Tom). Please write the letter as if you would actually send it. Take as much space and time as you need to write the letter.” Below the instructions participants had a blank box on the screen in which they wrote the letter.

Conciliatory behavior (letter quality). After participants wrote the letter they answered four questions regarding the quality of the letter on a 7-point scale ranging from 1 (*not at all*) to 7 (*very much*). Again they were reminded to answer all questions as if they were Paula (Paul): “Are you satisfied with the letter?”; “Did you put enough effort into writing the letter?”; “Do you think Anke (Tom) will accept the letter as an apology?”; and

“Do you think Anke (Tom) will forgive you after reading the letter?”. The self-rated quality scale had a good internal consistency (Cronbach’s $\alpha = .86$). Following the self-rating of the letter participants were debriefed and thanked for participation.

Conciliatory behavior (elements of apology). According to Kirchhoff et al. (2012) an apology can consist of ten different elements (see Table 2 for elements and their descriptions). The more of the elements present in an apology, the more effective it is for fostering forgiveness and reconciliation. Using this categorization of elements, two independent raters, blind to the condition, rated each letter of apology. Each of the ten elements of an apology was rated as 1 (*present*) or 0 (*absent*) within each letter and afterwards the ratings were summed up. The interrater reliability was high ($r = .72, p < .001$), therefore the average of both ratings served as the dependent variable; the score could range from 0 to 10.

Table 2

Elements of Apology and their Descriptions by Kirchhoff et al. (2012)

Elements of apology	Description
Statement of apology	Using a phrase that states that the given statement is an apology, such as “I want to apologize.”
Naming the offence	Naming the offence(s) for which the apology is given.
Taking responsibility	Stating that one accepts responsibility for the offence(s).
Attempting to explain the offence	Trying to explain one’s behavior that led to the offence(s) without applying an external attribution.
Conveying emotions	Revealing emotions such as shame and remorse that one has committed the offence(s)
Addressing emotions and/or damage of the other	Addressing of emotions and/or damages that the offence(s) caused on behalf of the offended.
Admitting fault	Admitting that with the offence(s) one violated an explicitly or implicitly agreed-upon rule.
Promising forbearance	Saying that one wants to refrain from repeating the offence(s).
Offering reparation	Offering to account for harm and/or damages on behalf of the offended by monetary or symbolic restitution.
Acceptance request	Stating that one hopes, the apology can be accepted by its receiver.

Results

Descriptive analysis. The manipulation of guilt was successful with an average guilt score of 6.03 ($SD = 0.95$) on a 7-point scale. Participants had a very high incentive value ($M = 6.75$, $SD = 0.57$) and they had rather high expectations of success ($M = 5$, $SD = 1.2$). Goal commitment was high for all participants ($M = 6.49$, $SD = 0.74$). On average, the letters had a length of 130.71 ($SD = 82.25$) words and the length of the letters did not differ between conditions $F(2, 79) = 2.64$, $p = .08$. The average self-rated conciliatory behavior (letter quality) was 4.29 ($SD = 1.36$) on a 7-point scale. On average, the letters comprised of 3.66

($SD = 1.56$) elements of an apology (out of the ten possible elements).

The correlations among all variables are given in Table 3. There were no statistically significant differences between the three experimental conditions in feelings of guilt, $F(2, 85) = 0.35, p = .7$, incentive value, $F(2, 85) = 1.55, p = .22$, and expectations of success, $F(2, 85) = 0.92, p = .4$. Therefore, random assignment to one of the three experimental conditions was successful. We tested if gender had any effect on one of our independent or dependent variables. There were no gender differences for guilt, $t(86) = -0.14, p = .89$, expectations of success, $t(86) = -1.33, p = .19$, goal commitment, $t(86) = 0.22, p = .83$, number of words (letter), $t(79) = 1.31, p = .19$, conciliatory behavior (letter quality), $t(79) = 0.77, p = .44$, and conciliatory behavior (elements of apology), $t(79) = 1.93, p = .06$. Therefore, we omitted gender from the following analyses.

Table 3

Correlations Between Key Variables.

	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.
1. guilt	—					
2. incentive	.42***	—				
3. expectations	-.23*	.11	—			
4. commitment	.31**	.45***	.19	—		
5. letter quality (self-rated)	-.11	.09	.35***	.22**	—	
6. elements of apology	.14	.22*	.31**	.14	.42***	—

Note. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Expectancy dependency of goal commitment. We hypothesized that participants in the MC internal condition would show a stronger link between expectations of success and goal commitment than participants in the indulging condition. We had no directional

hypothesis regarding the condition MC external obstacle. We applied a general linear model (GLM) to test the hypotheses. We defined goal commitment as a dependent variable. In a first step we entered feelings of guilt, incentive value, expectations of success and condition as predictors. In a second step we entered the interaction term of expectations of success and condition. The two variables, incentive value and feelings of guilt, were entered because they were correlated with the dependent variable goal commitment. When dropping incentive value and feelings of guilt from the model, all effects that were statistically significant in the full model were statistically significant in this model as well.

There were main effects for guilt, $F(1, 80) = 6.47, p = .01, \eta_p^2 = .08$, incentive value, $F(1, 80) = 12.38, p = .001, \eta_p^2 = .13$ and condition, $F(2, 80) = 9.02, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .18$. The main effect of expectations of success, $F(1, 80) = 6.88, p = .01, \eta_p^2 = .08$, was qualified by the interaction effect of condition and expectations, $F(2, 80) = 7.52, p = .001, \eta_p^2 = .16$. Only in the MC internal condition was the relation between expectations and commitment statistically different from zero, $b = 0.46$ ($SD = 0.12$), $t(33) = 4.01, p < .001$. There was no relation between expectations and commitment in the MC external condition, $b = -0.09$ ($SD = 0.08$), $t(27) = -1.1, p = .28$, or in the indulging condition, $b = -0.001$ ($SD = 0.09$), $t(25) = -0.01, p = .99$. Regression lines for all three conditions are depicted in Figure 2a. Furthermore, the link between expectations and commitment was stronger in the MC internal condition than in the MC external condition, $t(87) = -3.87, p < .001$, and the indulging condition, $t(87) = 2.01, p = .05$. There was no difference between the latter two, $t(87) = -1.57, p = .12$.

Further probing the interaction showed that for low expectations of success (expectations = 2) participants in the MC internal condition had lower commitment than participants in the MC external condition, $t(87) = -4.34, p < .001$, and in the indulging condition $t(87) = -2.49, p = .02$. There was no difference in commitment for the latter two $t(87) = 1.46, p = .15$. If expectations of success were high (expectations = 7) participants in

the MC internal condition had higher commitment than participants in the MC external condition, $t(87) = 2.30, p = .02$. They did not differ from participants in the indulging condition, $t(87) = 0.83, p = .41$. There was no difference in commitment for participants in the MC external condition and participants in the indulging condition, $t(87) = -1.36, p = .17$.

Expectancy dependency of self-rated conciliatory behavior (letter quality). We hypothesized that participants in the MC internal condition would show a stronger link between expectations of success and conciliatory behavior (letter quality) than participants in the indulging conditions. Again, we had no directional hypothesis regarding the condition MC external obstacle. Seven participants (three in the MC internal condition and four in the indulging condition) did not provide a letter of apology and a self-rating of their conciliatory behavior; therefore they were excluded from this analysis. We applied a general linear model (GLM) to test the hypotheses. We defined letter quality as the dependent variable. In a first step we entered feelings of guilt, incentive value, expectations of success and condition as predictors. In a second step we entered the interaction term of expectations of success and condition. When dropping incentive value and feelings of guilt from the model, all effects that were statistically significant in the full model were statistically significant in this model as well.

There were no main effects for guilt, $F(1, 73) = 0.02, p = .88, \eta_p^2 < .001$, incentive value, $F(1, 73) = 0.04, p = .84, \eta_p^2 = .001$, condition, $F(2, 73) = 1.7, p = .19, \eta_p^2 = .04$, and expectations of success, $F(1, 73) = 1.25, p = .27, \eta_p^2 = .02$. The interaction effect of condition and expectations was marginally significant, $F(2, 73) = 2.51, p = .09, \eta_p^2 = .06$.

There was a positive relation between expectations and letter quality in the MC internal condition, $b = 0.58 (SD = 0.17), t(30) = 3.51, p = .002$. There was a negative relation between expectations and letter quality in the indulging condition, $b = -0.62 (SD = 0.28), t(21) = -2.25, p = .04$. Expectations and letter quality were unrelated in the MC external condition, $b = 0.14$

($SD = 0.17$), $t(27) = 0.84$, $p = .41$. Regression lines for all three conditions are depicted in Figure 2b. Furthermore, the relation between expectations and letter quality was different for the MC internal condition compared to the indulging condition, $t(80) = 2.1$, $p = .04$. There were no differences in the relation of expectations and letter quality between the MC internal and the MC external conditions, $t(80) = -1.48$, $p = .14$, or the MC external and the indulging conditions, $t(80) = 1.07$, $p = .29$.

Further probing the interaction showed that for low expectations of success (expectations = 2) letter quality did not differ between the three conditions, $t(80) < 1.65$, $ps > .10$. If expectations of success were high (expectations = 7) participants in the MC internal condition reported higher letter quality than participants in the indulging, $t(80) = 2.52$, $p = .01$, and MC external conditions, $t(80) = 2.49$, $p = .02$. The difference between the latter two was not statistically different, $t(80) = 0.33$, $p = .74$.

Expectancy dependency of conciliatory behavior (elements of apology). We hypothesized that participants in the MC internal condition should show a stronger link between expectations of success and conciliatory behavior (elements of apology) than participants in the indulging conditions. Again, we had no directional hypothesis regarding the MC external obstacle condition. Seven participants (three in the MC internal condition and four in the indulging condition) did not provide a letter of apology; therefore they were excluded from this analysis. We applied a third general linear model (GLM), defining the number of elements of apology as the dependent variable. In a first step we entered feelings of guilt, incentive value, expectations of success and condition as predictors. In a second step we entered the interaction term of expectations of success and condition. When dropping incentive value and feelings of guilt from the model, all effects that were statistically significant in the full model were statistically significant in this model as well.

There was a main effect for condition, $F(1, 73) = 5.05, p = .009, \eta_p^2 = .12$. We found no main effects for guilt, $F(1, 73) = 0.71, p = .40, \eta_p^2 = .01$, incentive value, $F(1, 73) = 0.36, p = .55, \eta_p^2 = .005$, and expectations of success, $F(1, 73) = 1.2, p = .27, \eta_p^2 = .02$. As predicted we found an interaction effect of condition and expectations, $F(2, 73) = 6.11, p = .004, \eta_p^2 = .14$. There was a positive relation between expectations and the number of elements in the two conditions MC internal, $b = 0.97 (SD = 0.22), t(30) = 4.47, p < .001$, and MC external, $b = 0.55 (SD = 0.21), t(27) = 2.57, p = .02$. Expectations and the number of elements were unrelated in the indulging condition, $b = -0.80 (SD = 0.54), t(21) = -1.49, p = .15$. Regression lines for all three conditions are depicted in Figure 2c. Furthermore, compared to the indulging condition the positive relation between expectations and the number of elements was stronger in the two conditions MC internal, $t(80) = 3.47, p = .001$, and the MC external, $t(80) = 2.91, p = .005$. There was no difference between the latter two, $t(80) = -0.82, p = .42$.

Further probing the interaction showed that, for low expectations of success (expectations = 2), the numbers of elements of an apology was higher in the indulging condition than in the MC internal, $t(80) = -2.85, p = .006$, and MC external conditions, $t(80) = -2.78, p = .007$. There was no difference in the number of elements between the latter two, $t(80) = 0.18, p = .86$. If expectations of success were high (expectations = 7), the number of elements was lower in the indulging condition than in MC internal, $t(80) = 3.94, p < .001$, and MC external conditions, $t(80) = 2.56, p = .01$. There was no difference in the number of elements between the latter two, $t(80) = 1.46, p = .15$.

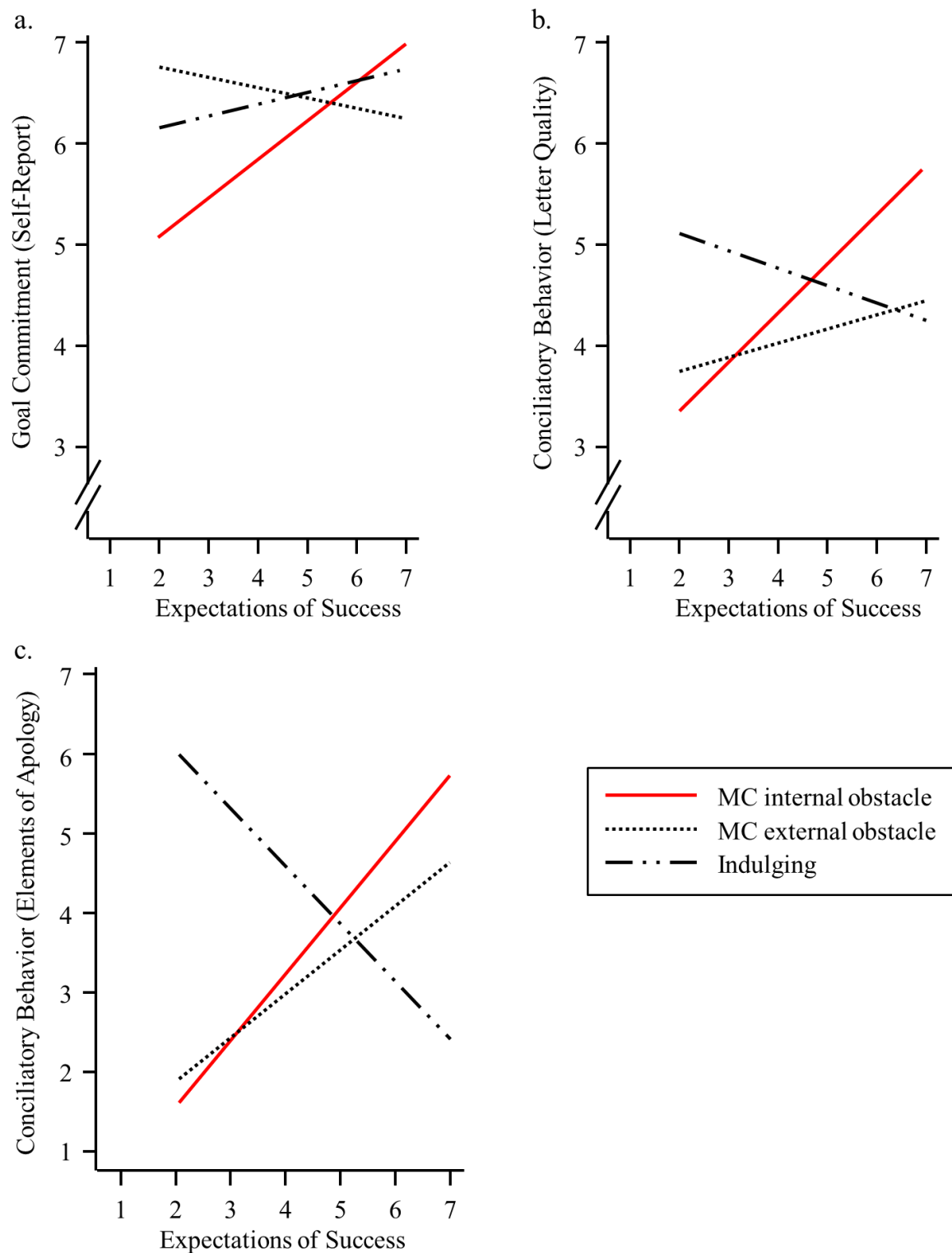


Figure 2. Depicting the relationship between expectations of success and goal-commitment (Panel a) and conciliatory behavior: letter quality (Panel b) and conciliatory behavior: elements of apology (Panel c).

Discussion

In Study 2 we confirmed the results of the pilot study, but with a behavioral measure of conciliatory behavior instead of self-reported conciliatory behavior. As dependent variables we measured goal commitment by self-report and as a measure of conciliatory behavior participants wrote a letter to the victim. Quality of the conciliatory behavior was determined by participants self-rating the letter quality and by independent-raters judging the number of elements of apology within each letter. For all three dependent measures, we consistently found the predicted differences between MC internal and indulging. Compared to indulging participants, mental contrasting participants with an internal obstacle reported goal commitment in line with their expectations of success. Furthermore, participants in the MC internal condition showed conciliatory behavior in line with their expectations of success. If they had low expectations of success they showed less conciliatory behavior: the letter quality was lower and the letter comprised of fewer elements of apology. If they had high expectations of success they showed more conciliatory behavior: the letter quality was higher and the letter comprised of more elements of apology. So far the present results are in line with previous research: the self-regulatory strategy of mental contrasting leads to expectancy dependent and therefore sensible goal pursuit while indulging does not (for an overview see Oettingen, 2012).

Additionally we explored the effects of mental contrasting with an external obstacle, an obstacle originating from the victim on goal pursuit. As we expected, the effects of mental contrasting on goal pursuit are less consistent if the obstacle lies outside the perpetrators. In the mental contrasting with external obstacle condition, we found no link between expectations of success and self-reported goal commitment, or self-rated quality of the letter. However, we did find a link between expectations of success and independently-rated

elements of apology. This link was stronger than in the indulging condition and did not differ from the link in the mental contrasting with internal obstacle condition.

We suggest two processes leading to the inconsistent effects of mental contrasting with an external obstacle. First, if the obstacles originate from the victims then the perpetrators are not entirely in power of overcoming the obstacle. Therefore, it is more difficult for the perpetrators to assess expectations of success and translate them into a goal pursuit. Second, the way in which we assessed perpetrators' expectations of success might have been problematic. In all three conditions, we asked perpetrators how likely they thought it was that they could resolve the interpersonal concern with the victim. In the mental contrasting with an internal obstacle condition, expectations matched the type of obstacle perpetrators elaborated on. That is, they reported if *they* could resolve the concern and then elaborated on an obstacle lying within them. Consequentially, the measure of goal pursuit referred to the match between expectations and obstacle. In the mental contrasting with an external obstacle condition, expectations and the elaborated obstacle matched less congruently. Perpetrators reported if *they* could resolve the concern and then elaborated on an obstacle lying outside them. This mismatch might have led to inconsistent results in the measure of goal pursuit. This issue should be addressed in future studies by matching the measure of expectations of success to the conditions.

Study 3: Spontaneous Mental Contrasting and Conciliatory Behavior

In the pilot study and in Study 2, we manipulated the self-regulatory strategy perpetrators applied to the interpersonal concern. We showed that only mental contrasting led to sensible conciliatory behavior. In Study 3, we sought to expand our focus by measuring participants' spontaneously generated self-regulatory strategies. Sevincer and Oettingen (2013) developed a method to analyze the content of free writings about a wish or concern with regard to the mode of self-regulatory thoughts. They showed that spontaneous mental

contrasting had the same effects as induced mental contrasting. That is, goal commitment and performance were similarly linked to expectations of success in spontaneous mental contrasting. The findings were consistent for academic and interpersonal concerns, as well as professional achievements. In Study 3, we investigated the effects of spontaneously applied self-regulatory strategies in the aftermath of interpersonal transgressions. We hypothesized that spontaneous mental contrasting, compared to indulging, dwelling and reverse contrasting, leads to expectancy dependent goal commitment and conciliatory behavior. Furthermore, we hypothesized that only in mental contrasting the expectations of success would be mediated by conciliatory behavior and predict if perpetrators would resolve their interpersonal concern.

Method

Participants. One hundred-thirteen students of the University of Hamburg (56.6 % major in psychology) participated in the study (22.1% male; age $M = 24.29$, $SD = 4.22$). The study consisted of two lab sessions and, in return for participation, participants could choose between two credit points or 12 € if they completed both sessions.

Procedure and measures. Participants were told the study concerned how interpersonal relationships develop over time. They were informed that their participation would include two sessions, with a period of eight days between the sessions. In the first session, participants filled out a questionnaire containing (in the order listed): (1) guilt manipulation, (2) measure of current guilt (manipulation check), (3) measure of incentive value and expectations of success, (4) assessment of self-regulatory mode of thoughts and (5) measure of goal commitment. At the end of the first session participants made an appointment for the second session and received a reminder via email. In the second session, participants filled out a questionnaire containing measures of (in the order listed): (1) the immediacy and success of conciliatory behavior and (2) proneness to guilt. Afterwards

participants were thoroughly debriefed and thanked for their participation.

Guilt manipulation. To induce feelings of guilt, all participants were asked to write a personal narrative about an interpersonal transgression that was still unresolved. We showed in Study 1 that this is an effective guilt manipulation. The instructions were based on Baumeister et al. (1995):

Describe an incident in which you angered someone —and in which you felt guilty or regretful afterwards. That is, describe an occurrence in which you provoked someone or made someone really angry or mad, and afterwards you felt bad or suffered from a feeling of having done something wrong. Please choose an event, in which you had the wish to make amends afterwards **but you have not yet done anything**. The event should have taken place within the last three months. Please be as thorough as possible. Describe the full story: your behavior, your thoughts and your emotions.

Participants named for example: “I cheated on my partner” (“Ich habe meine Freundin betrogen”) or “I took my mood out on my roommate” (“Ich habe meine schlechte Laune an meinem Mitbewohner ausgelassen”).

Current feelings of guilt. To control if the guilt manipulation was successful, participants indicated how guilty they felt regarding the interpersonal transgression (“How guilty do you feel regarding the interpersonal transgression right now?”). Additionally, we assessed if an interpersonal concern arose from their transgression (“Did an interpersonal concern arise from the interpersonal transgression?”), and if the interpersonal concern was already resolved for them (“Is the interpersonal concern completely resolved for you?”). All responses were made on a scale from 1 (*not at all*) to 7 (*very*).

Incentive value and expectations of success. To measure the incentive value, participants were asked to answer the question: “How important is it to you to resolve the interpersonal concern?” on a response scale from 1 (*not at all*) to 7 (*very*). To measure

expectations of success, participants were asked to answer the two questions (Cronbach's $\alpha = .88$): "How likely do you think it is that you can resolve this interpersonal concern?" and "How likely do you think it is that you will resolve this interpersonal concern in the immediate future?" both on response scales from 1 (*not at all*) to 7 (*very*).

Assessing self-regulatory mode of thoughts. All participants were asked to name the main current concern they associated with their interpersonal transgression ("If you think about your interpersonal transgression which main current concern do you associate with it?"). Afterwards they were asked to freely elaborate on it. Participants read:

Now we would like you to think about your concern. You are free to think about any aspects related to your concern that comes to mind. Let the mental images pass by in your thoughts and do not hesitate to give your ideas free reign. Take as much time and space as you need to describe your thoughts.

Afterwards two independent coders segmented the free elaborations into statements, coded the statements, and classified the elaborations as one of four self-regulatory modes of thought.

Segmentation of the free elaborations into statements. Using the same procedure as Sevincer and Oettingen (2013), two coders segmented each elaboration into statements. Each statement consisted of no more than one subject-predicate-object-adverb sequence. For example, the sentence "because I was wrong I would like to resolve this situation and I would like to apologize" ("da ich mich im Unrecht befand würde ich diese Situation gerne lösen und mich entschuldigen") was segmented into a) because I was wrong b) I would like to resolve this situation c) and I would like to apologize. The two coders agreed on 84.4 % of the segmentations of the elaborations (Cohen's $\kappa = .68$).

Coding of the statements. Next, each statement was coded as a) desired future, b) present reality, or c) other (Sevincer & Oettingen, 2013). The coding system developed by

Sevincer and Oettingen (2013) is described in detail in Appendix 1 and an example is given. In this study the two independent coders agreed on 82.8 % of the coded statements (Cohen's $\kappa = .74$). Afterwards both coders discussed the statements on which they did not agree and reached an agreement on the final coding for the further analysis.

Classifying of the self-regulatory mode of thoughts. Finally, mode of self-regulatory thought was classified based on the coded statements. If participants generated at least one statement of desired future but no statement of present reality their self-regulatory mode was classified as indulging. If participants generated at least one statement of present reality but no statement of desired future their self-regulatory mode was classified as dwelling. If participants generated at least one statement of desired future and one statement of present reality, starting with a statement of desired future, their self-regulatory mode was classified as mental contrasting. If participants generated at least one statement of desired future and one statement of present reality, starting with a statement of present reality, their self-regulatory mode was classified as reverse contrasting. If participants generated only statements that were coded as other their self-regulatory mode was not classified any further (Sevincer & Oettingen, 2013).

Goal commitment. Following free elaboration, participants indicated their commitment to the goal of resolving the interpersonal concern. The scale consisted of five items each answered on a seven point response scale from 1 (*not at all*) to 7 (*very much*): “How disappointed would you feel if you did not resolve the interpersonal concern?”, “How hard would it be for you if you did not resolve the interpersonal concern?”, “How determined are you to resolve the interpersonal concern?”, “How hard will you try to resolve the interpersonal concern?”, and “How energized do you feel to resolve the interpersonal concern?”. The scale showed good internal consistency (Cronbach's $\alpha = .88$).

Conciliatory behavior. In the second session, participants first filled out a

retrospective diary. For each day between the first session and the second session they reported: (1) if they acted on resolving the interpersonal concern (*yes / no*) and (2) if they resolved the interpersonal concern (*yes / no*). Based on the diary we computed two variables, immediacy of conciliatory behavior (immediacy of action) and concern resolving. Immediacy of action was defined as the number of days between the first session and the day of the first action, as reported by participants in their diaries (Oettingen et al., 2010b). Based on Oettingen et al. (2010b) participants who had not undertaken any steps within the monitored eight days were assigned the number of nine days. For concern resolving we computed a dichotomous variable and participants were either assigned a 0 (*concern not resolved*) or a 1 (*concern resolved*).

Proneness to guilt. At the end of the second session participants completed the Test of Self-Conscious Affect (German version of the TOSCA; Kocherscheidt, Fiedler, Kronmüller, Backenstraß, & Mundt, 2002) to control for the possibility that participants with a low proneness to guilt might be unaffected by the guilt manipulation. The TOSCA is a scenario-based questionnaire consisting of 15 brief scenarios, followed by four or five response items. Each response item is rated on a five-point scale from 1 (*not likely*) to 5 (*very likely*). It measures shame-proneness and guilt-proneness, externalization, detachment, alpha-pride and beta-pride. Since we were only interested in the guilt-proneness, we dropped the other scales from our analysis. The guilt scale consists of 15 items and had a rather low internal consistency (Cronbach's $\alpha = .54$).

Results

Descriptive analysis. Throughout the analysis, nine participants had to be excluded. One participant did not follow the instructions and one had difficulties with the German language. Two participants reported a combination of low feelings of guilt and low incentive value to resolve the interpersonal concern; for participants with this combination we

evaluated the guilt induction as not successful. For three participants, the mode of self-regulatory thoughts could not be classified. Finally, two participants did not show up for the second session.

Current feelings of guilt. To test the effectiveness of the guilt manipulation, we asked participants how guilty they felt regarding the interpersonal transgression, if an interpersonal concern arose from their transgression, and if the interpersonal concern was already resolved. All responses were made on a scale from 1 (*not at all*) to 7 (*very*). Regarding their interpersonal transgression, on average participants reported feelings of guilt above the mid-point and all participants reported at least some feelings of guilt ($M = 4.25$, $SD = 1.34$, range: 2-7). Furthermore they reported that an interpersonal concern arose from their transgression ($M = 4.51$, $SD = 1.58$) and that it was not yet resolved ($M = 3.23$, $SD = 1.63$). Therefore the induction of unresolved guilt was successful.

Incentive value and expectations of success. The mean incentive value of resolving the interpersonal concern was 5.46 ($SD = 1.47$) on a seven-point scale. The average incentive value indicates that it was important to the participants to resolve the interpersonal concern. The mean expectation to successfully resolve the interpersonal concern was 4.65 ($SD = 1.85$) on a seven-point scale. Expectation of success was positively correlated with incentive value ($r = .37$, $p < .001$). Incentive value was positively correlated with feelings of guilt ($r = .42$, $p < .001$) indicating that participants with stronger feelings of guilt had a higher incentive value to resolve the concern. The expectations of success were independent of the feelings of guilt ($r = .10$, $p = .30$).

Goal commitment. The average goal commitment reported was 4.95 ($SD = 1.36$) on a seven-point scale. Goal commitment was positively correlated with incentive value ($r = .74$, $p < .001$) and expectations of success ($r = .59$, $p < .001$). Furthermore, goal commitment was positively correlated with feelings of guilt ($r = .48$, $p < .001$).

Proneness to guilt. The analysis of the TOSCA indicated that proneness to guilt in our sample was comparable to findings in other samples (e.g., Tangney & Dearing, 2002). In our sample, we had an average proneness to guilt of 59.02 points ($SD = 5.43$) out of 75 points. Proneness to guilt did not correlate with incentive value ($r = .04, p = .72$), expectation of success ($r = .05, p = .65$), reported feelings of guilt regarding the transgression ($r = .18, p = .07$), goal commitment ($r = .05, p = .65$), or immediacy of action ($r = -.08, p = .43$). Therefore we dropped it from all further analysis.

Self-regulatory mode of thoughts. On average the elaboration of the interpersonal concern was 103.32 words ($SD = 49.46$) long and consisted of 14.45 statements ($SD = 7.58$). Of all statements, 30.3 % were coded as positive future, 32.8 % were coded as negative reality and 36.8 % were coded as other. Based on these coded statements, the mode of self-regulatory thoughts was classified. Forty-two participants spontaneously mentally contrasted (39.3 %), 12 participants indulged (11.2 %), 22 participants dwelled (20.6 %), while 28 participants reverse contrasted (26.2 %). Three participants (2.8 %) generated only statements coded as other and therefore their mode of self-regulatory thought could not be classified as one of the preceding modes.

Analysis of variance (ANOVA) showed that participants who applied different self-regulatory modes of thought initially did not differ statistically significant regarding their incentive value, $F(3, 100) = 1.45, p = .23$, feelings of guilt $F(3, 100) = 0.84, p = .48$, or gender, $F(3, 100) = 0.11, p = .96$. Furthermore, their elaborations did not differ in the number of words, $F(3, 100) = 2.49, p = .06$. The ANOVA for differences in mean expectations of success was significant, $F(3, 100) = 2.71, p = .05$ (means (SD) for subgroups: mental contrasting = 5.06 (1.65), indulging = 5.29 (2.21), dwelling = 4.5 (1.89), reverse contrasting = 3.95 (1.76)). But a post hoc test using Hochberg's GT2 correction revealed no significant pairwise comparisons ($ps > .07$).

Conciliatory behavior. In the retrospective diary, 63 participants (60.6 %) reported performing conciliatory behavior and 41 (39.4 %) reported no action. On average, participants who acted took their first step towards resolving the interpersonal concern after 3.11 days ($SD = 1.56$, range = 1–8). Immediacy of action was negatively correlated with feelings of guilt ($r = -.38$, $p < .001$), incentive value ($r = -.47$, $p < .001$), expectations of success ($r = -.43$, $p < .001$) and goal commitment ($r = -.54$, $p < .001$). Forty two (40.4 %) participants reported resolving their interpersonal concern completely while 62 (59.6 %) reported no goal approach. Figure 3 shows the number of participants who resolved or did not resolve their interpersonal concern by whether or not they took action.

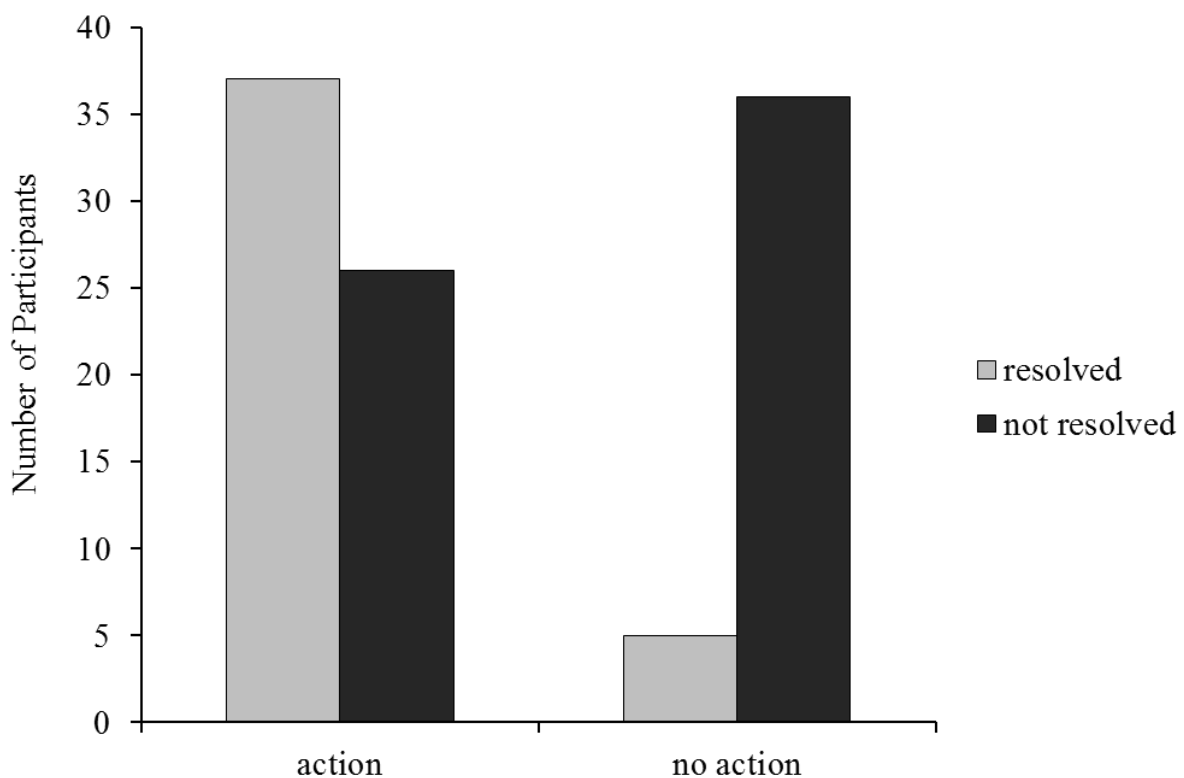


Figure 3. Frequencies of participants who resolved or did not resolve the interpersonal concern grouped by whether they performed conciliatory behavior or not.

Expectancy dependency of goal commitment. We hypothesized that participants who spontaneously mentally contrasted would show a stronger relation between expectation of success and goal commitment than participants who spontaneously applied one of the other self-regulatory modes of thought (indulging, dwelling, or reverse contrasting). For this analysis, a dichotomous variable of self-regulatory mode was computed with two values (1 = mental contrasting and 0 = other modes (indulging, dwelling, and reverse contrasting)). The three self-regulatory modes were collapsed for two reasons. First, the main interest is in comparing mental contrasting against all other modes of thought and second the number of cases in the four modes of thought was especially unequal (e.g., only twelve cases in the indulging condition)

We applied a hierarchical regression to test the hypothesis. We defined goal commitment as the dependent variable. In a first step, we entered incentive value, feelings of guilt, expectations of success, and self-regulatory mode as predictors. In a second step, we entered the interaction term of self-regulatory mode by expectations of success. Ratings of incentive value and feelings of guilt were entered to control for their influence on goal commitment, as they were highly correlated with goal commitment. For the sake of easier interpretation, continuous variables (incentive value, feelings of guilt and expectations of success) were mean centered. Regression lines for all four modes of thought are depicted in Figure 4a.

A summary of the results of the regression is provided in Table 4. In the full model, controlling for feelings of guilt and incentive value, expectations of success had an impact on goal commitment. Confirming our hypothesis, this result was qualified by an interaction effect showing a stronger relationship between expectations and commitment for mental contrasting than for the other self-regulatory modes. The explained variance for the full model was 74 % ($R^2 = .74$) and the model improved after adding the interaction term

(expectation x self-regulatory mode), $R^2_{change} = .02$, $F_{change}(1, 98) = 8.78$, $p = .004$. We further probed the interaction effect for very low expectations (expectations = 1) and very high expectations of success (expectations = 7). For low expectations of success, participants who mentally contrasted showed weaker goal commitment than all other participants combined, $t(98) = 3.08$, $p = .003$. For high expectations of success, participants who mentally contrasted showed marginally stronger goal commitment than all other participants combined, $t(98) = -1.72$, $p = .08$. If feelings of guilt and incentive value were omitted from the model, all effects remained statistically significant.

Table 4

Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analyses Predicting Commitment.

Predictor	<i>B</i>	SE <i>B</i>	β	<i>p</i>	95% CI
Step 1					
Feelings of guilt	.26	.06	.26	<.001	[0.14, 0.38]
Incentive value	.47	.06	.51	<.001	[0.36, 0.59]
Expectation	.28	.04	.37	<.001	[0.19, 0.36]
Self-regulatory mode	.14	.15	.05	.37	[-0.16, 0.44]
Step 2					
Feelings of guilt	.27	.06	.26	<.001	[0.15, 0.38]
Incentive value	.45	.06	.48	<.001	[0.33, 0.56]
Expectation	.45	.07	.61	<.001	[0.31, 0.59]
Self-regulatory mode	.18	.15	.06	.23	[-0.11, 0.47]
Self-regulatory mode x Expectation	-.25	.08	-.27	.004	[-0.42, -0.08]

Note. $N = 104$. CI = confidence interval. SE = standard error.

Expectancy dependency of immediacy of conciliatory behavior. We further hypothesized that participants who spontaneously mentally contrasted would show a stronger relation between expectations of success and immediacy of conciliatory behavior than participants who spontaneously applied one of the other self-regulatory modes of thought

(indulging, dwelling, or reverse contrasting). Again we applied a hierarchical regression to test the hypothesis. We defined immediacy of action as the dependent variable. In a first step we entered incentive value, feelings of guilt, expectations of success, and self-regulatory mode as predictors. In a second step we entered the interaction term of self-regulatory mode by expectations of success. Ratings of incentive value and feelings of guilt were entered to control for their influence on immediacy of action, as they were highly correlated with immediacy of action. Again continuous variables (incentive value, feelings of guilt and expectations of success) were mean centered. Regression lines for all four self-regulatory modes are depicted in Figure 4b.

Table 5

Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis Predicting Immediacy of Action.

Predictor	<i>B</i>	SE <i>B</i>	β	<i>p</i>	95% CI
Step 1					
Feelings of guilt	-.53	.21	-.22	.02	[-0.92, -0.07]
Incentive value	-.56	.21	-.26	.009	[-0.99, -0.17]
Expectation	-.49	.15	-.29	.003	[-0.77, -0.18]
Self-regulatory mode	1.23	.53	.19	.02	[0.20, 2.18]
Step 2					
Feelings of guilt	-.55	.21	-.23	.01	[-0.94, -0.12]
Incentive value	-.49	.21	-.23	.02	[-0.92, -0.09]
Expectation	-.92	.20	-.54	.001	[-1.30, -0.52]
Self-regulatory mode	1.13	.52	.18	.03	[0.08, 2.15]
Self-regulatory mode x Expectation	.62	.24	.29	.007	[0.17, 1.07]

Note. *N* = 104. CI = confidence interval. SE = standard error. SE *B*, *p*-values and

CI are based on bootstrap procedure with 1000 resamples.

A summary of the results of the regression is provided in Table 5. Since the assumption of normally distributed residuals was not met and the assumption of homoscedasticity was questionable, we report bootstrap standard errors, p-values and confidence intervals for the regression coefficients. In the full model, controlling for feelings of guilt and incentive value, expectations of success had an impact on goal commitment as well as self-regulatory mode. Confirming our hypothesis, the effect of expectations was qualified by the interaction effect showing a stronger relationship between expectations and immediacy of action for mental contrasting than for the other self-regulatory modes. The explained variance for the full model was 65 % ($R^2 = .65$) and the model was improved by adding the interaction term (expectation x self-regulatory mode), $R^2_{change} = .03$, $F_{change}(1, 98) = 4.57$, $p = .04$. We further probed the interaction effect for very low expectations (expectations = 1) and very high expectations of success (expectations = 7). For low expectations of success, there was no difference in immediacy of action between participants who mentally contrasted and all other participants combined, $t(98) = -0.93$, $p = .36$. For high expectations of success, participants who mentally contrasted acted more immediately than all other participants combined, $t(98) = 3.21$, $p = .002$. When the control variables, feelings of guilt and incentive value, were omitted from the model all effects remained statistically significant.

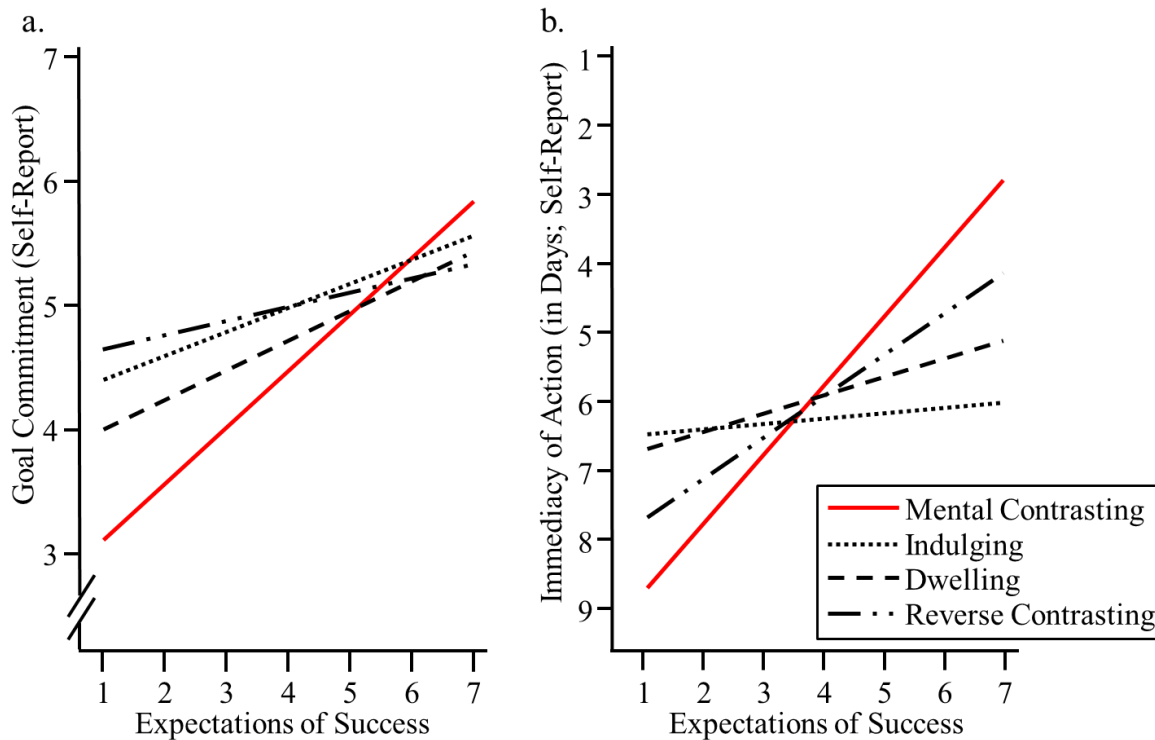


Figure 4. Regression lines depicting the link between expectations and commitment (Panel a) and immediacy of action (Panel b) for all four self-regulatory modes.

Success in resolving the interpersonal concern. Participants reported if they successfully resolved the interpersonal concern (40.4 %) or not (59.6 %). To predict participants success in resolving the interpersonal concern, a conditional process analysis was carried out using Hayes (2012) SPSS macro PROCESS (for the full model see Figure 5). The analysis revealed the predicted mediated moderation. The interaction of expectations of success by self-regulatory mode had no direct effect on whether or not participants resolved the interpersonal concern, $c'_3 = -0.002$, 95% CI from -0.64 to 0.64. As expected the interaction had an indirect effect on resolving the interpersonal concern mediated by immediacy of action, $a_3b_1 = -0.19$, 95% CI from -0.48 to -0.01. Further probing the indirect effect showed that the mediation of expectations by immediacy of action on resolving the interpersonal concern was only true for the mental contrasting condition, point estimate: 0.28, 95% CI from 0.07 to 0.59. There was no indirect effect for the combination of the other three

conditions, point estimate: 0.09, 95% CI from -0.02 to 0.27. For the indirect effects we report bias corrected bootstrap confidence intervals with 10000 bootstrap resamples. The model was computed controlling for incentive value and feelings of guilt. To summarize the findings: only participants who mentally contrasted acted in line with their expectations of success, with high expectations they acted more immediately than with low expectations and the more immediately they acted, the higher was their chance to resolve the interpersonal concern.

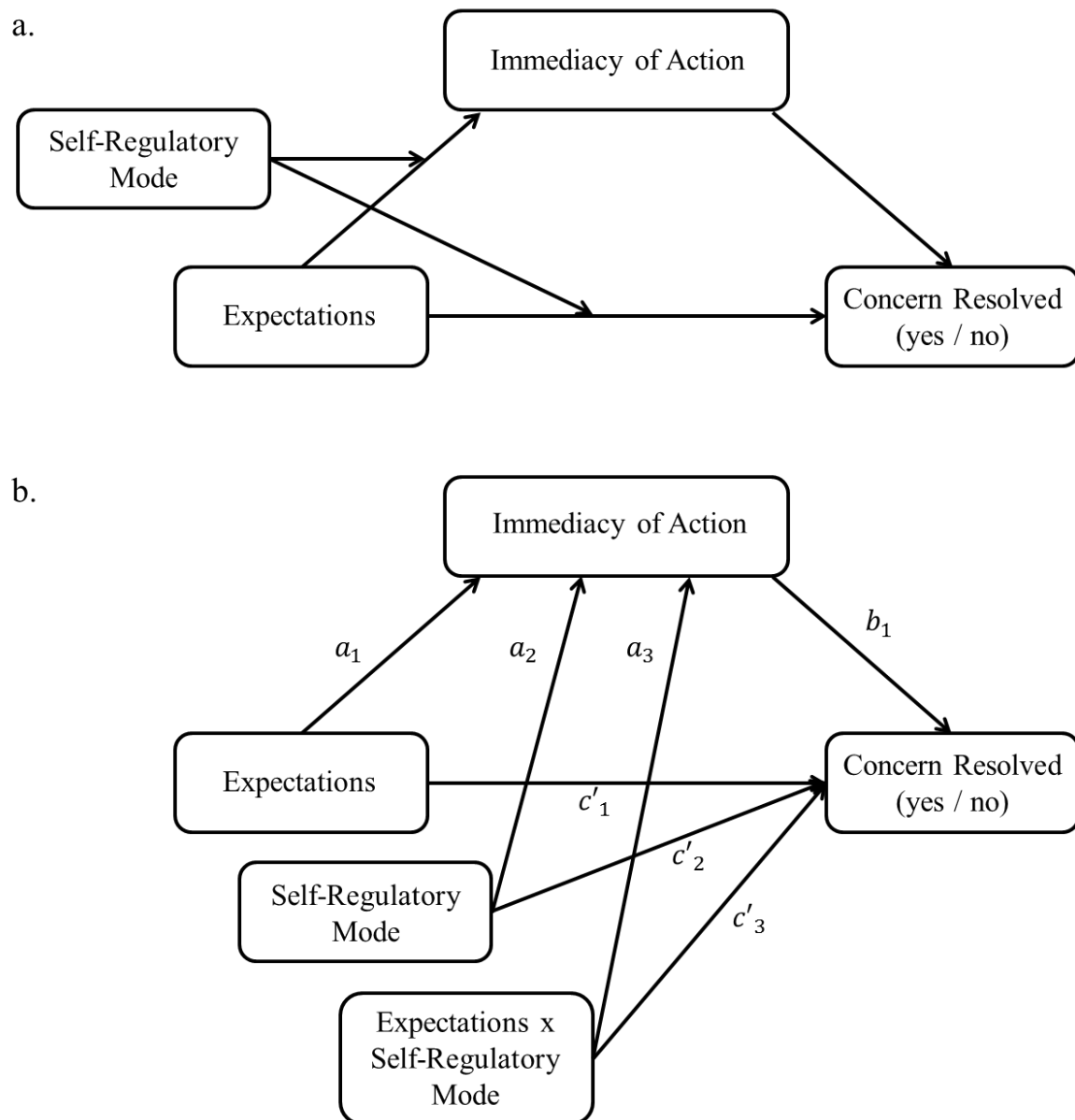


Figure 5. Conceptual model (Panel a) and statistical model (Panel b) of the conditional process analyses based on Hayes (2012).

Discussion

In Study 3 we showed that spontaneously applied mental contrasting is effective in fostering sensible conciliatory behavior. Perpetrators reported an unresolved interpersonal transgression and named the most important concern that arose from their transgression. We assessed the self-regulatory mode perpetrators used while they thought about this concern. If they used a mental contrasting mode of thought, compared to indulging, dwelling and reverse contrasting, they reported goal commitment and immediacy of action that was in line with their expectations of successfully resolving the concern. That is, with high expectations of success they formed strong goal commitment and performed conciliatory behavior right away. With low expectations of success, they formed only low goal commitment and delayed the performance of conciliatory behavior or performed none at all. Additionally, expectations of success had an indirect effect on whether or not perpetrators resolved the interpersonal concern for those in a mental contrasting mode of thought; this effect was mediated by immediacy of action. Perpetrators with high expectations of success, compared to low expectations, performed conciliatory behavior earlier and thereby, the chances to resolve the interpersonal concern were higher.

If perpetrators were in an indulging, dwelling or reverse contrasting mode of thought, goal commitment and immediacy of action were unrelated to their expectations of success. Additionally, there was neither a direct nor an indirect effect of expectations of success on whether or not they resolved the interpersonal concern. By not taking their expectations of success into account, perpetrators might not perform enough conciliatory behavior when the interpersonal concern is resolvable. On the other hand, when the situation is not resolvable or one of the two parties is not willing to reconcile, perpetrators might risk another setback in the relationship if they approach the victim. Study 3 showed that spontaneous mental contrasting is an effective mode of thought for perpetrators in the aftermath of an

interpersonal transgression. This result is in line with the results of Sevincer and Oettingen (2013) who found spontaneous mental contrasting to be effective for regulating goal pursuit in interpersonal wishes and academic concerns.

Interestingly, the percentage of participants who spontaneously engaged in mental contrasting was much higher in our study (39%) than in two comparable studies by Sevincer and Oettingen (2013). In these studies, only 10% of the participants mentally contrasted while thinking about an interpersonal wish (Study 1; no-prompt condition) and only 9% did so while thinking about an academic concern (Study 2). An explanation for these different results could be provided by Sevincer and Oettingen's Study 3 (2013) and the research by H. B. Kappes, Oettingen, Mayer, and Maglio (2011). Both found a higher rate of mental contrasting if the need to resolve a problem was triggered.

Sevincer and Oettingen (2013) manipulated a contextual factor; they increased the pressure for participants to act on their wish. Participants who had the wish to be admitted to graduate school were informed that they had to write a letter of application in the immediate future. Right before they wrote the letter, the self-regulatory mode of thought was assessed. Under this pressure to act 29% of the participants engaged in mental contrasting.

H. B. Kappes et al. (2011) manipulated the mood; they induced sad mood by having participants listen to music, read newspaper articles or write about hypothetical events. After the mood induction, the self-regulatory mode of thought regarding an interpersonal or academic concern was assessed. H. B. Kappes et al. (2011) found that sad mood, in contrast to a neutral mood or happy mood, promoted the use of mental contrasting. Like the pressure to act immediately, sad mood might indicate a deficit and trigger the use of a problem solving strategy, like mental contrasting (H. B. Kappes et al., 2011; Sevincer & Oettingen, 2013).

In Study 3 we manipulated mood and pressure to act. By writing down interpersonal transgressions, participants' feelings of guilt were manipulated. We theorized that like

sadness, guilt indicates a deficit. In particular guilt indicates that one did or said something wrong, that another person might have been hurt by it, and that the incident is unresolved (see Baumeister et al., 1994). Thereby a need to act is evoked in order to restore the relationship with the victim. We suggest that feelings of guilt and the pressure to act triggered the use of mental contrasting as problem solving strategy. Therefore, the percentage of participants who spontaneously mentally contrasted was very high in the present study.

Study 4: Reconciliation in Romantic Relationships

In the previous studies we assessed only the perspective of the perpetrator. But, in the aftermath of an interpersonal transgression, reconciliation is only possible if both parties contribute; perpetrators by making amends and victims by granting forgiveness (Hannon et al., 2010). In Study 4 we wanted to investigate a dyadic model of reconciliation by observing the interaction of romantic couples while they discussed an interpersonal concern in their relationship. Therefore we adapted a procedure developed by Hannon et al. (2010). Couples came into our lab and identified an unresolved incident in their relationship. Then we manipulated the perpetrator's self-regulatory strategy (mental contrasting vs. indulging) before the couple discussed the incident in front of a video camera. To assess conciliatory behavior of both parties from multiple perspectives, perpetrators, victims, and two independent raters watched the videotaped discussion and rated the degree of conciliatory behavior of both parties. Additionally, we assessed reports of reconciliation from perpetrators and victims following the discussion. To capture the long-term effects on reconciliation, perpetrators and victims gave a second report of reconciliation two weeks later via an online based survey.

We hypothesized that only perpetrators in the mental contrasting condition would report goal commitment and perform conciliatory behavior that is based on their expectations of success. Furthermore, we hypothesized that the victims' report of reconciliation depends

on the perpetrators' conciliatory behavior, when controlling for the interdependence of perpetrators' and victims' conciliatory behavior. Additionally, we suggest a conditional process model in which the effect of the perpetrators' expectations of success on the victims' reconciliation is moderated by self-regulatory strategy but only for mental contrasting. At the same time the effect is mediated by the perpetrators' conciliatory behavior.

Method

Participants. Fifty-one couples (102 participants) were recruited for participation at the University of Hamburg via advertisements on campus and an online job exchange. In order to participate, couples had to be in a relationship for at least one year and live together. Each couple received 30 € for their participation. The average age of each participant was 25.77 years ($SD = 5.09$). On average, the couples were in a relationship for 3.88 years ($SD = 2.36$) and lived together for 2.01 years ($SD = 2.2$).

Procedure and measures. Each couple came into our lab for an individual session, which took about 1.5 hours, and answered a short online survey two weeks after the lab session. Upon their arrival in the lab couples were greeted by two experimenters and seated in two separate cubicles. It was emphasized that by signing the informed consent, participants understood that they would be videotaped while interacting with their partner during the study. After signing the informed consent, both partners were instructed to write down three incidents from the last four months in which their partner had broken the rules of the relationship. Participants were informed that the experimenter would randomly choose one of the six incidents (three from each partner) for the videotaped discussion. The instructions participants received were based on Hannon et al. (2010) and translated into German:

All of us have expectations about how our partners should treat us. No matter how well-behaved your partner may be in general, from time to time he or she is likely to "break the rules." For example, your partner may tell a friend something that you think

should have remained private; your partner may do something that is hurtful behind your back; your partner may flirt with another person; or your partner may otherwise violate the rules that govern your relationship.

For each described incident, participants indicated how upsetting it was (“How upsetting was it?”) and how resolved it was (“How resolved is it?”) on a response scale from 0 (*not at all*) to 8 (*very*).

After each partner identified the three incidents in which he or she was the victim and the partner was the perpetrator, we randomly determined from which partner we chose an incident. From the selected partner we chose an incident that was moderately upsetting and not fully resolved. The chosen incident was read to each partner separately and they had to agree to discuss the chosen incident with their partner before we continued.

Incentive value and expectations of success. Following the reading of the chosen incident, we assessed the incentive value and the expectations of success for resolving the interpersonal concern. Therefore both partners answered the following three questions on response scales from 1 (*not at all*) to 7 (*very*). “How important is it to you to resolve the interpersonal concern with your partner?” (incentive value). “How likely do you think it is that the interpersonal concern with your partner is resolvable?” and “How likely do you think it is that you can resolve the interpersonal concern with your partner?” (expectations of success; Cronbach’s $\alpha = .89$).

Manipulation of the self-regulatory strategy. Afterwards the perpetrator was randomly assigned to one of the two self-regulatory strategies: mental contrasting ($n = 25$) or indulging ($n = 26$). Both self-regulatory strategies consisted of two steps. In the first step participants in both conditions received instructions to name the most positive aspect they associated with having resolved the interpersonal concern (“What would be the most positive aspect if you had resolved the interpersonal concern with your partner? Please write down

your most positive aspect in one or two words.”). Afterwards they were asked to elaborate on this aspect (“Imagine your most positive aspect as vividly as possible. Give your thoughts free reign and take as much time and space as you need to describe the scenario.”)

The second step was different for the two self-regulatory strategies. Participants in the mental contrasting condition received instructions to name the most important obstacle standing in the way of resolving the interpersonal concern (“Sometimes things do not work out as we would like them to. Which obstacle on your side stands in the way of resolving the interpersonal concern with your partner? Please name your most important obstacle.”) Afterwards they were asked to elaborate on this obstacle (“Imagine the obstacle as vividly as possible. Give your thoughts free reign and take as much time and space as you need to describe the scenario.”). Participants in the indulging condition received instructions to name another positive future aspect instead of an obstacle (“What would be the second most positive aspect if you had resolved the interpersonal concern with your partner? Please write down the second most positive aspect in one or two words.”). Afterwards they were instructed to elaborate on this second positive aspect (“Imagine your second most positive aspect as vividly as possible. Give your thoughts free reign and take as much time and space as you need to describe the scenario.”). While the perpetrator applied the assigned self-regulatory strategy, the victim was occupied with an irrelevant filler task (completion of the d2 test of attention, Brickenkamp, 2002).

Goal commitment. Following the manipulation of self-regulatory strategy, perpetrators indicated their commitment to the goal of resolving the interpersonal concern. The scale consisted of five items each answered on a seven point response scale from 1 (*not at all*) to 7 (*very much*): “How disappointed would you feel if you did not resolve the interpersonal concern?”, “How hard would it be for you if you did not resolve the interpersonal concern?”, “How determined are you to resolve the interpersonal concern?”,

“How energized do you feel?”, and “How active do you feel?”. The scale showed a sufficient internal consistency (Cronbach’s $\alpha = .62$).

Rating of conciliatory behavior. Following assessment of goal commitment, both partners were guided into another room and placed on opposite sides of a small table. They were instructed to discuss the chosen incident for eight minutes. It was emphasized that they were free to discuss any aspect they associated with the incident but they were asked not to switch to an unrelated topic. During the discussion the experimenter left the room and the entire interaction was videotaped.

Following the discussion, both partners individually watched the videotaped discussion. The video was paused every two minutes and participants rated their own conciliatory behavior and their partner’s conciliatory behavior within the last two minutes. Based on Hannon et al. (2010), we assessed victims’ and perpetrators’ conciliatory behavior with six items, each rated on a response scale from 0 (*strongly disagree*) to 8 (*strongly agree*): “I tried to comfort my partner.”, “I spoke gently/ sympathetically to my partner,” “I behaved in a cold manner with my partner” [reverse], “I wanted to keep as much distance between us as possible” [reverse], “I raised my voice toward my partner” [reverse], “I wanted to cut off the interaction” [reverse] (for the rating of the partner’s behavior the subject and object were switched: e.g., “My partner tried to comfort me”). The same measure was used for victims and perpetrators because (1) conciliatory behavior is the core of seeking forgiveness as well as of granting forgiveness (Hannon et al., 2010; McCullough et al., 1997); (2) to prevent participants from becoming aware of our interest in conciliatory behavior (seeking and granting forgiveness) and (3) if we find different effects of perpetrators’ and victims’ conciliatory behavior they would not be due to different measures.

After the data acquisition, two independent raters blind to the condition, watched the videotapes. They rated the conciliatory behavior of each participant on the same six items as

participants did. Therefore the conciliatory behavior of each participant (victims and perpetrators) was rated from three different perspectives: from their own perspective, their partner's perspective and two independent raters' perspective.

For the calculation of conciliatory behavior, three of the items were excluded from analyses because they showed floor effects from all three perspectives (self-rating, partner-rating and independent-rating). These items were (1) comforting the partner, (2) raising the voice towards the partner (reverse coded) and (3) wanting to cut off the interaction (reverse coded). In particular, both independent ratings of the mean values were low and ranged from 0 to 0.3 on a scale from 0 to 8. Therefore, the scales for conciliatory behavior consisted of the items measuring (1) speaking sympathetically, (2) behaving in a cold manner (reverse coded), and (3) keeping distance (reverse coded). The scales had good internal consistencies (Cronbach's α ranging from .60 to .80 within the two minutes sequences. Cronbach's α ranging from .92 to .96 for the total eight minutes). These consistencies were not further increased or decreased if the three excluded items were included. The two independent ratings of conciliatory behavior had good interrater reliability (higher $r = .94$ for each of the two minute sequences), therefore we used the average of the two ratings for all further analysis.

Reconciliation. Reconciliation was assessed two times; right after participants watched the videotape and two weeks later via an online survey, to measure long-term effects. Participants were asked to indicate on a response scale from 0 (*not at all*) to 8 (*very*) how much they agreed with these four statements: "My partner and I successfully resolved the concern.", "I am satisfied with the course of the discussion.", "I am satisfied with the result of the discussion.", and "The concern is totally resolved.". The reconciliation-scale had good internal consistencies for both time points of measurement (Cronbach's $\alpha = .93$ and $\alpha = .89$).

Control variables. To control for possible effects of participants' relationship commitment level and dispositional forgiveness, we conducted two additional measures. We used the Commitment Level subscale of the Investment Model Scale (IMS; Rusbult, Martz, & Agnew, 1998) to assess relationship commitment level. The IMS subscale consists of seven items, each rated on a response scale from 0 (*do not agree at all*) to 8 (*agree completely*) (e.g. "I am committed to maintaining my relationship with my partner."), Cronbach's $\alpha = .80$). We used the Forgiveness of Other subscale of the Heartland Forgiveness Scale (HFS; Thompson et al., 2005) to assess dispositional forgiveness. The HFS subscale consists of six items each rated on a response scale from 1 (*almost always false of me*) to 7 (*almost always true of me*) (e.g. "When someone disappoints me, I can eventually move past it."), Cronbach's $\alpha = .76$).

After answering the items of the two control variables, participants provided demographic information, were thanked for participating, and reminded to answer the online survey two weeks later. Participants were fully debriefed at the end of the online survey.

Results

Descriptive analyses. Of the 102 participants, 8 perpetrators and 3 victims did not answer the follow up online survey containing the second measure of reconciliation. We only excluded these participants from analyses that relate to the measure of reconciliation at time two. Means and standard deviations for all measures are given in Table 6, separately for victims and perpetrators. Incentive value and expectations of success to resolve the interpersonal concern were rather high. A t-test with paired samples showed that victims and perpetrators differed only in their incentive value to resolve the concern, with a higher incentive value for perpetrators (see Table 6). Correlations between the key measures are given in Table 7.

Table 6

Means and Standard Deviations for all Measures.

Variable	Victim		Perpetrator		<i>p</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	
Transgression severity (0-8 scale)	4.20	1.79	-	-	
Transgression resolved (0-8 scale)	5.84	1.87	-	-	
Incentive value (1-7 scale)	4.90	1.75	5.66	1.41	.01
Expectations of success (1-7 scale)	5.91	1.27	5.62	1.58	.24
Goal commitment (1-7 scale)	-	-	4.62	1.02	
Conciliatory behavior (independent-rating) (0-8 scale)	5.43	1.05	5.26	1.08	.18
Conciliatory behavior (partner-rating) (0-8 scale)	5.72	1.57	5.98	1.46	.24
Conciliatory behavior (self-rating) (0-8 scale)	6.03	1.17	5.66	1.53	.10
Reconciliation t1 (0-8 scale)	5.07	2.45	4.93	2.46	.55
Reconciliation t2 (0-8 scale)	5.86	1.73	5.62	1.86	.85
Dispositional forgiveness (HFS) (0-8 scale)	4.56	1.06	4.67	0.86	.61
Commitment level (IMS) (1-7 scale)	6.51	0.93	6.37	0.64	.34

Notes. *p*-values are for *t*-tests with paired samples.

What we can conclude from the means (Table 6) and correlations (Table 7) is that the ratings of victims' and perpetrators' conciliatory behavior are fairly consistent across the three different perspectives. The self-ratings, partner-ratings, and independent-ratings are highly correlated. Additionally, we found only two differences in the mean degree of conciliatory behavior between the three perspectives. Victims rated their partners' behavior and their own behavior as more conciliatory than the independent raters did, $t(50) = -3.89, p < .001$ and $t(50) = -3.74, p < .001$. Furthermore, victims' and perpetrators' reports of reconciliation at time one and at time two are highly correlated with both partners' conciliatory behavior.

Table 7

Within-Dyad and Within-Role Correlations for Key Measures.

	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.
1. Incen	-.07	-.01	-.02	-.19	-.07	-.20	-.16	.08	.17
2. Exp	.22	.40**	.36*	.23	.28	.31*	.30*	.04	.08
3. CB (sr)	.42**	.24	.50***	.61***	.46**	.44**	.39**	.25	-.10
4. CB (pr)	.37**	.32*	.59***	.64***	.27	.60***	.45**	.24	-.14
5. CB (ir)	.46**	.30	.53***	.51**	.64***	.48**	.32*	.12	.09
6. Rec t1	.30	.46**	.46**	.47**	.52**	.75***	.75***	.09	.20
7. Rec t2	.33*	.38**	.50**	.46**	.53***	.73***	.68***	-.06	-.05
8. IMS	.20	.08	.04	.04	.25	.13	.45**	.22	-.24
9. HFS	.18	-.17	.42**	.20	.09	-.18	-.10	.02	-.22

Note. Correlations among victims above the diagonal, correlations among perpetrators below the diagonal. Correlations within-dyad along the diagonal (in bold). Partial correlations are reported, controlling for participants gender, another distinguishing variable for our couples. Incen = incentive value; Exp = expectations of success; CB (sr) = conciliatory behavior (self-report); CB (pr) = conciliatory behavior (partner-report); CB (ir) = conciliatory behavior (independent-report); Rec t1 = reconciliation time 1; Rec t2 = reconciliation time 2; IMS = Investment Model Scale (Commitment Level subscale); HFS = Heartland Forgiveness Scale (Forgiveness of Others subscale)

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Expectancy dependency. We hypothesized that only perpetrators in the mental contrasting condition would show expectancy dependent goal commitment and conciliatory behavior for each set of ratings (independent-report, partner-report and self-report).

Additionally, we hypothesized that the link between expectations of success, goal

commitment, and conciliatory behavior would be stronger in the mental contrasting than in the indulging condition. To test our hypotheses, we used four general linear models (GLM). In all four models we entered incentive value, expectations of success and condition as predictors in the first step. We entered the interaction term of expectations of success and condition in the second step. As dependent variables, we entered goal commitment (1. GLM) and each set of ratings of conciliatory behavior: independent ratings of conciliatory behavior (2. GLM), partner-reported conciliatory behavior (3. GLM) and self-reported conciliatory behavior (4. GLM). We controlled for incentive value because it was correlated with all four dependent variables. All of the effects that were statistically significant in the full models were at least marginally statistically significant in models without incentive value, as well.

Goal commitment. With goal commitment as a dependent variable there were main effects for incentive value, $F(1, 45) = 7.93, p = .007, \eta_p^2 = .15$, and condition, $F(1, 45) = 4.06, p = .05, \eta_p^2 = .08$. There was no main effect for expectations of success, $F(1, 45) = 0.25, p = .62, \eta_p^2 = .006$. We found the predicted interaction term of expectations and condition, $F(1, 45) = 4.19, p = .05, \eta_p^2 = .09$, indicating a stronger relation of expectations and goal commitment in the mental contrasting than in the indulging condition. In the mental contrasting condition, the difference between the relationship of expectations and commitment was marginally significant from zero, $b = 0.25 (SD = 0.14), t(24) = 1.76, p = .09$. There was no relation between expectations and commitment in the indulging condition, $b = -0.16 (SD = 0.12), t(24) = -1.35, p = .19$. Regression lines for both conditions are depicted in Figure 6a.

Further probing the interaction showed that, for low expectations of success (expectations = 1), perpetrators in the mental contrasting condition had lower commitment than perpetrators in the indulging condition, $t(49) = -1.99, p = .05$. If expectations of success were high (expectations = 7), perpetrators' commitment in the mental contrasting condition

did not statistically differ from perpetrators' commitment in the indulging condition, $t(49) = 1.96, p = .23$.

Independently-rated conciliatory behavior. With conciliatory behavior (independent-rating) as dependent variable, there were main effects for incentive value, $F(1, 45) = 8.71, p = .005, \eta_p^2 = .16$, and for condition, $F(1, 45) = 5.54, p = .02, \eta_p^2 = .11$. There was no main effect for expectations of success, $F(1, 45) = 2.37, p = .13, \eta_p^2 = .05$. We found the predicted interaction term of expectations and condition, $F(1, 45) = 4.85, p = .03, \eta_p^2 = .10$, indicating a stronger relationship of expectations and goal commitment in the mental contrasting than in the indulging condition. In the mental contrasting condition the relation between expectations and conciliatory behavior was significantly different from zero, $b = 0.32 (SD = 0.15), t(24) = 2.15, p = .04$. There was no relation between expectations and commitment in the indulging condition, $b = -0.05 (SD = 0.11), t(24) = 0.66, p = .94$. Regression lines for both conditions are depicted in Figure 6b.

Further probing the interaction showed that for low expectations of success (expectations = 1), perpetrators in the mental contrasting condition showed less conciliatory behavior than perpetrators in the indulging condition, $t(49) = -2.36, p = .02$. If expectations of success were high (expectations = 7), perpetrators' conciliatory behavior in the mental contrasting condition did not statistically differ from perpetrators' conciliatory behavior in the indulging condition, $t(49) = 0.79, p = .43$.

Partner-rated conciliatory behavior. With conciliatory behavior (partner-rated) as dependent variable there was a main effect for incentive value, $F(1, 45) = 6.82, p = .01, \eta_p^2 = .13$, and marginally significant main effects for condition, $F(1, 45) = 3.05, p = .09, \eta_p^2 = .09$, and expectations of success, $F(1, 45) = 3.70, p = .06, \eta_p^2 = .08$. We found the predicted interaction term of expectations and condition, $F(1, 45) = 3.86, p = .05, \eta_p^2 = .08$, indicating a stronger relationship between expectations and goal commitment in the mental contrasting

condition than in the indulging condition. In the mental contrasting condition, the relationship between expectations and conciliatory behavior was significantly different from zero, $b = 0.46$ ($SD = 0.16$), $t(24) = 2.89$, $p = .009$. There was no relation between expectations and commitment in the indulging condition, $b = 0.02$ ($SD = 0.19$), $t(24) = 0.08$, $p = .94$.

Regression lines for both conditions are depicted in Figure 6c.

Further probing the interaction showed that for low expectations of success (expectations = 1), perpetrators in the mental contrasting condition showed marginally less conciliatory behavior than perpetrators in the indulging condition, $t(49) = -1.68$, $p = .10$. If expectations of success were high (expectations = 7), perpetrators in the mental contrasting condition showed marginally more conciliatory behavior than perpetrators in the indulging condition, $t(49) = 1.72$, $p = .09$.

Self-rated conciliatory behavior. With conciliatory behavior (self-rated) as a dependent variable, there was only a main effects for incentive value, $F(1, 44) = 8.32$, $p = .006$, $\eta_p^2 = .16$. We found no main effects for condition, $F(1, 44) = 0.44$, $p = .51$, $\eta_p^2 = .01$, and for expectations of success, $F(1, 44) = 1.26$, $p = .27$, $\eta_p^2 = .03$. Furthermore we did not find the predicted interaction effect of expectations and condition, $F(1, 44) = 0.48$, $p = .49$, $\eta_p^2 = .01$. In both conditions, the relationship between expectations and conciliatory behavior did not differ statistically from zero but showed the predicted tendency for mental contrasting. Mental contrasting, $b = 0.21$ ($SD = 0.17$), $t(23) = 1.20$, $p = .24$, indulging, $b = 0.12$ ($SD = 0.2$), $t(23) = 0.58$, $p = .59$. Regression lines for both conditions are depicted in Figure 6d.

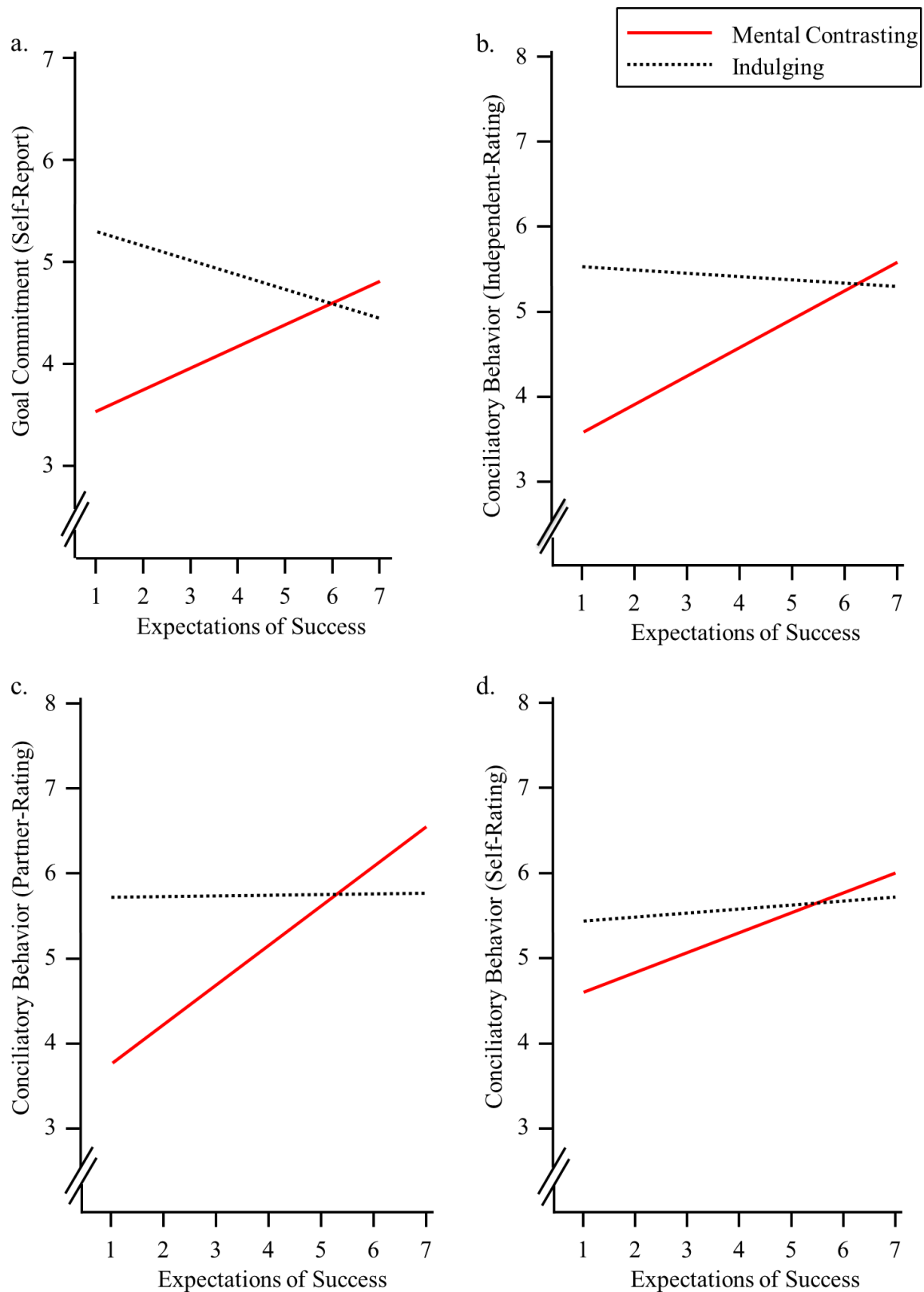


Figure 6. Depicting the relationship between perpetrator expectations of success and perpetrator goal-commitment (Panel a) and perpetrator conciliatory behavior (self-rating Panel b; partner-rating Panel c; independent-rating Panel d)

Conciliatory behavior and reconciliation. We hypothesized that the reconciliation of the victim and the perpetrator would mainly depend on perpetrator conciliatory behavior; the more conciliatory behavior perpetrators perform the more reconciliation victims and perpetrators report. Testing this hypothesis with a standard statistical method like OLS regression or analysis of variance (ANOVA) is not valid because one of the central assumptions those methods have in common is violated: the independence of measurements. “The independent assumption requires that, after controlling for variation due to the independent variable, the data from each individual in a study be unrelated to the data of every other individual in the study.” (Kenny, Kashy, & Cook, 2006, p. 3). In the present study we have dyadic data, which strongly suggests non-independence for several reasons. First, the dyads we investigated have been in a relationship for more than three years on average, which means they share a common history and are likely to share the same attitudes and values. Second, the couples discuss an unresolved incident in which both have been involved. Third, the discussion of the incident is interactive. Therefore, the conciliatory behavior of both members of a dyad is influenced by the relationship history and the present behavior of the partner. Furthermore, the report of reconciliation of both is influenced by the relationship history, the conciliatory behavior of the partners and the partners’ degree of reconciliation. All this suggests that the conciliatory behaviors and the reports of reconciliation are more similar for two individuals that are part of the same dyad than for two individuals that are not part of the same dyad. The nature of our independent and dependent variables is further defined as mixed; the independent variable conciliatory behavior and the dependent variable reconciliation can both vary within each dyad and between the dyads. For example, in Dyad 1 the perpetrator might report more reconciliation than the victim and at the same time, the mean score of reconciliation in Dyad 1 might be higher than the mean score of Dyad 2. Another characteristic of our sample is that within each dyad the members are

distinguishable by the factors role and gender. Role is experimentally manipulated by assigning one of the partners to the role of victim and the other one to the role of perpetrator. Gender is given as male and female for heterosexual couples. Since we were interested in the behavior of victims and perpetrators, role is the distinguishing factor for our further analysis.

To formally test the non-independence of our data, we calculated the correlations between victim and perpetrator conciliatory behavior as well as victim and perpetrator reconciliation. We followed the recommendation of Kenny et al. (2006) and report partial correlations controlling for the second distinguishing factor gender. As can be seen in Table 7, the partial correlation between victim and perpetrator conciliatory behaviors (from all three perspectives) as well as victim and perpetrator reconciliation are highly correlated, $r_s > .50$, $p_s < .001$, indicating a strong dependence of the data.

To take the non-independence of our data into account while testing our hypothesis, we conducted an Actor-Partner Interdependence Model (AIPM; Kenny et al., 2006). The AIPM takes the non-independence of the data into account and was developed for models with mixed variables, variables like conciliatory behavior that vary within and between dyads. We used the multilevel modeling approach with a two intercept model to estimate the AIPM. Carried out with one independent variable (conciliatory behavior), one dependent variable (reconciliation), and distinguishable members of a dyad (victim and perpetrator), the AIPM estimates four effects. Two effects are actor effects. They represent the influence of victim conciliatory behavior on victim reconciliation and perpetrator conciliatory behavior on perpetrator reconciliation. Two effects are partner effects. They represent the influence of victim conciliatory behavior on perpetrator reconciliation and perpetrator conciliatory behavior on victim reconciliation.

The results of the AIMP revealed that only perpetrator conciliatory behavior was predictive of victims' and perpetrators' report of reconciliation (see Figure 7). Victim

conciliatory behavior had no effect on perpetrators' or victims' report of reconciliation. These effects were robust over time; the conciliatory behavior of the perpetrator was predictive of reconciliation right after the discussion of the incidents and also two weeks later.

To rule out alternative explanations, that these effects are due to differences in relationship commitment or dispositional forgiveness, we computed a second model. In the second model we controlled for own relationship commitment and partner relationship commitment (assessed via self-report with the IMS Commitment Level subscale; Rusbult et al., 1998). Furthermore, we controlled for own dispositional forgiveness and partner dispositional forgiveness (assessed via self-report with the HFS Forgiveness of Others subscale; Thompson et al., 2005). In the second model, the two effects of perpetrator conciliatory behavior on perpetrator and victim reconciliation stayed significant for both measurement points ($bs > 0.78, ps < .007$). Additionally the two effects of victim conciliatory behavior on perpetrator and victim reconciliation stayed non-significant ($bs < 0.38, ps > .33$).

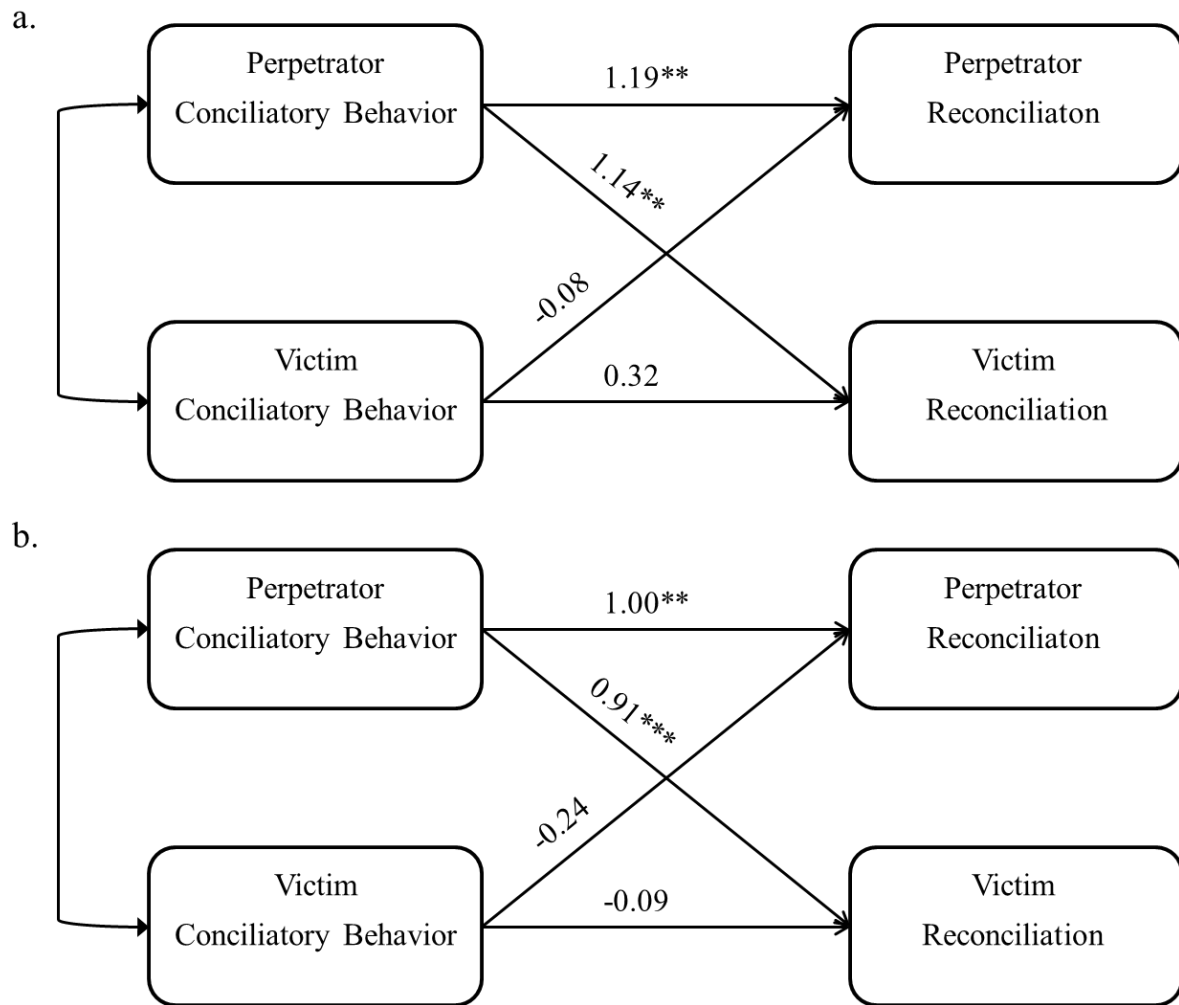


Figure 7. Actor-partner interdependence model linking perpetrator and victim conciliatory behavior to perpetrator and victim reports of reconciliation at time 1 (Panel a) and time 2 (Panel b).

Note. Numbers represent unstandardized *b*-values.

** $p < .01$. *** $p = .001$.

Conditional process model. In a first step, we already showed with the generalized linear models that the effect of perpetrator expectations of success on perpetrator conciliatory behavior is moderated by the self-regulatory strategy (mental contrasting vs. indulging). Only perpetrators in the mental contrasting condition took their expectations of successfully resolving the interpersonal concern into account. If they had high expectations they

performed more conciliatory behavior than with low expectations. In a second step, using an actor-partner interdependence model, we showed that perpetrator conciliatory behavior was predictive of victim and perpetrator reports of reconciliation. The more conciliatory behavior perpetrators performed the more reconciliation victims and perpetrators reported right following the discussion and two weeks later.

Now we wanted to piece everything together in a conditional process model in a third step. This model best represents how mental contrasting could be applied to foster reconciliation. Mental contrasting as a self-regulatory strategy should help perpetrators to perform conciliatory behavior in line with their expectations, thereby fostering reconciliation with victims. We tested these assumptions with a conditional process model using the SPSS tool PROCESS (Hayes, 2012). We specified perpetrator expectations of success as an independent variable, self-regulatory strategy (mental contrasting vs. indulging) as moderator, perpetrator conciliatory behavior as mediator, and victim reconciliation as dependent variable. Perpetrator incentive value was entered as a control variable because it was highly correlated with the mediator conciliatory behavior (for a depiction of the model see Figure 8).

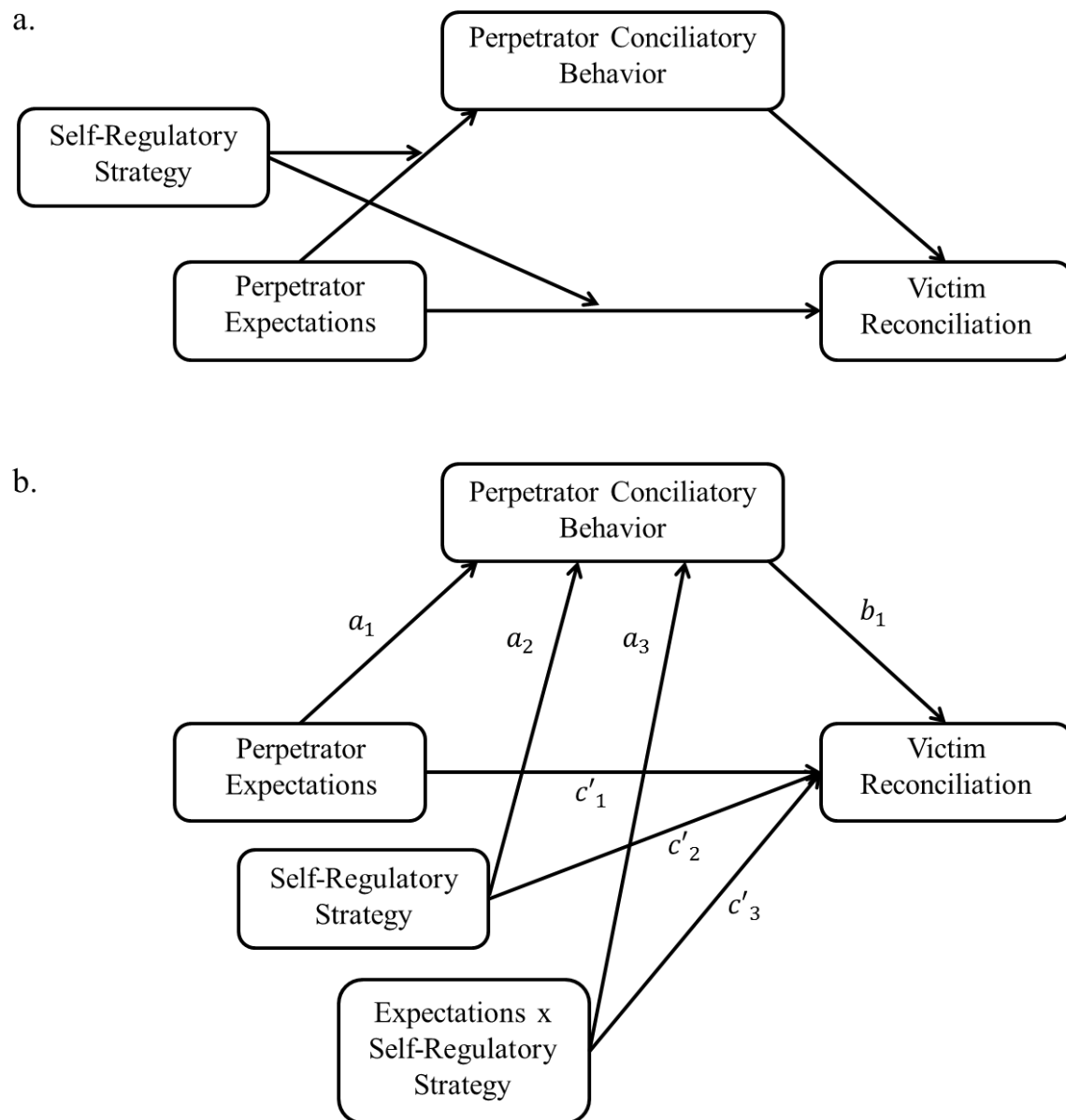


Figure 8. Conceptual model (Panel a) and statistical model (Panel b) of the conditional process analyses based on Hayes (2012).

The conditional process analyses supported our model. The interaction of perpetrator expectations of success by self-regulatory strategy had no direct effect on victim reconciliation, $c'_3 = 0.14$, 95% CI from -0.61 to 0.89. As expected, the interaction had an indirect effect on victim reconciliation mediated by perpetrator conciliatory behavior, $a_3b_1 = -0.42$, 95% CI from -1.07 to -0.06. Further probing the indirect effect showed that the mediation of expectations by conciliatory behavior on reconciliation was only true for the

mental contrasting condition, point estimate: 0.36, 95% CI from 0.05 to 0.84. There was no indirect effect for the indulging condition, point estimate: -0.06, 95% CI from -0.33 to 0.20. For the indirect effects we report bias corrected bootstrap confidence intervals with 10000 bootstrap resamples. The model was computed controlling for incentive value. In sum, only perpetrators who mentally contrasted acted in line with their expectations of success, with high expectations they showed more conciliatory behavior than with low expectations and the more conciliatory behavior they showed the more reconciliation was reported by the victims.

Discussion

In Study 4 we carried out the analyses in three steps. In the first step we only considered the effects of self-regulatory strategy (mental contrasting vs. indulging) on the perpetrators' goal pursuit. Goal pursuit comprised self-rated goal commitment and conciliatory behavior that was self-rated, partner-rated and independently-rated. We showed that only perpetrators who mentally contrasted reported goal commitment and performed conciliatory behavior (partner-rated and independently-rated) in line with their expectations of successfully resolving the interpersonal concern. If they had high expectations of success, they reported high goal commitment and performed strong conciliatory behavior. If they had low expectations of success, they reported low goal commitment and performed little conciliatory behavior. In contrast perpetrators who indulged about resolving the interpersonal concern did not take their expectations of success into account. The effects of self-regulatory strategy on conciliatory behavior were true for partner-ratings and independent-ratings of conciliatory behavior. Although the partner-ratings, independent-ratings, and self-ratings of perpetrator conciliatory behavior were overall reasonably consistent, we found no link between perpetrators' expectations and self-rated conciliatory behavior, neither in the mental contrasting nor in the indulging condition. A reason for these results might be that those perpetrators who did not perform sufficient conciliatory behavior engaged in self-affirmative

ratings of their behavior. Self-affirmation is an ego defensive mechanism that protects the self-worth and supports the maintenance of a positive self-view (Sherman, Cohen, & Zanna, 2006). For example, people tend to be self-affirmative in the face of threats to the need to belong (Knowles, Lucas, Molden, Gardner, & Dean, 2010) or to the self-worth (Sherman et al., 2006). By committing a transgression and being confronted with this transgression the perpetrators need to belong and their self-worth might be threatened (Shnabel & Nadler, 2008). One way to deal with these threats throughout the present study was to perform conciliatory behavior. If perpetrators did not perform conciliatory behavior another way to deal with these threats might have been to provide self-affirmative ratings of the own behavior. Therefore, we found no overall mean difference in the partner-ratings, independent-ratings and self-rating of conciliatory behavior. The difference should be found only for perpetrators who performed little or no conciliatory behavior. Unfortunately we had not enough perpetrators at the low end of the scale to test this hypothesis.

In the second step, we considered the effect of perpetrator and victim conciliatory behavior on perpetrator and victim reconciliation, irrespective of self-regulatory strategy. In an actor-partner interdependence model we showed that only perpetrator conciliatory behavior was predictive of perpetrator and victim reconciliation. Victim conciliatory behavior had no direct effect on reconciliation.

In the third step we pieced everything together. We showed in a conditional process model that mental contrasting, and not indulging, enabled perpetrators to perform conciliatory behavior in line with their expectations of successfully resolving the interpersonal concern. That is, only perpetrators who mentally contrasted fostered sensible reconciliation as reported by the victims. Study 4 added to the previous studies a measure of conciliatory behavior that was based on an actual interaction between a perpetrator and victim discussing an actual interpersonal concern. Thereby, we had a behavioral measure of

perpetrator and victim conciliatory behavior and their reports of reconciliation. In sum, the study again supported our idea that mental contrasting is an effective self-regulatory strategy for perpetrators to foster sensible reconciliation.

General Discussion

In the aftermath of an interpersonal transgression, conciliatory behavior in the form of seeking and granting forgiveness is core to reconciliation. Sometimes perpetrators struggle with performing sensible conciliatory behavior. The present research investigated the effects of the self-regulatory strategy of mental contrasting on perpetrators' conciliatory behavior in the aftermath of interpersonal transgressions. We found that mentally contrasting the benefits of reconciliation with obstacles of present reality standing in the way of reconciliation enabled perpetrators to perform sensible conciliatory behavior. If participants had high expectations of successfully mending the relationship they offered meaningful apologies (Study 2) and performed immediate (Study 3) and strong (Study 4) conciliatory behavior. If they had low expectations of success perpetrators refrained from performing conciliatory behavior (Studies 2-4). We found the same effects of mental contrasting on conciliatory behavior regardless of whether we induced the self-regulatory strategy (Study 2 and Study 4) or if we measured the spontaneous self-regulatory mode of thought (Study 3). We attained these results with different measures of conciliatory behavior, ranging from self-report to behavioral observations.

Relevance for the Research on Mental Contrasting

Previous research showed that mental contrasting effectively activates preexisting expectations of success and makes them relevant for goal pursuit. To date, the major fields in research and application have been academic achievement, physical health, and interpersonal relationships. The present effects of mental contrasting on conciliatory behavior are in line with previous research on mental contrasting. They emphasize the broad coverage of this

self-regulatory strategy and open up a new field of application, namely reconciliation processes. The present research not only replicated the results of previous research in the field of reconciliation but also adds unique evidence for the effectiveness of mental contrasting.

The unique evidence for the effectiveness of mental contrasting stems from Study 4, which investigated the reconciliation process in romantic relationships. It was the first study that utilized a multi-perspective rating of goal pursuing behavior to assess the effects of mental contrasting. Actual goal pursuing behavior (conciliatory behavior) was videotaped and afterwards self-rated, partner-rated and independently-rated. The multi-perspective approach enabled us to make profound statements about the effectiveness of mental contrasting. The victims and the independent raters were blind to the condition (mental contrasting vs. indulging) and the perpetrators' expectations of success. Furthermore, they had very different perspectives on the conciliatory behavior, the victims being the receiver of the conciliatory behavior and the independent raters being neutral observers. From both perspectives the perpetrators' conciliatory behavior in the mental contrasting condition was rated as strong if the perpetrators had high expectations and as weak if they had low expectations of success. In contrast the conciliatory behavior in the indulging condition was rated as equally strong for perpetrators with high and with low expectations of success. The perpetrators' self-ratings showed overall the same tendencies without reaching statistical significance. This multi-perspective evidence supports the effectiveness of mental contrasting and opens up reconciliation as a new field of application.

Perpetrators' Conciliatory Behavior and Reconciliation

The present research furthermore investigated how the perpetrators' sensible conciliatory behavior affects the reconciliation with the victims, therefore we assessed self-reports of reconciliation from both parties. We showed in two studies that the immediacy and

strength of the conciliatory behavior performed by the perpetrators after mental contrasting indeed predicted the degree of reconciliation. The immediacy of conciliatory behavior predicted if reconciliation occurred or not; the faster the performance the more likely the interpersonal concern was solved (Study 3). The strength of the conciliatory behavior predicted the degree of reconciliation reported by the victims and the perpetrators; the stronger the conciliatory behavior the higher the degree of reconciliation they reported short-term and long-term (Study 4).

Meaningful for the research on reconciliation and interventions in the field of reconciliation is that reconciliation is largely depended on the perpetrators' conciliatory behavior. We found in Study 4 that the conciliatory behavior of the perpetrators but not the behavior of the victims predicted how much reconciliation both parties reported. These results fit into the existing literature that proposes interplay between perpetrators' and victims' conciliatory behavior but emphasizes the meaning of the perpetrators' behavior for the reconciliation process. Models of reconciliation as the *apology-forgiveness cycle* (Tavuchis, 1991), the need based model of reconciliation (Shnabel & Nadler, 2008), and a reconciliation model that is based on interdependence theory (Hannon et al., 2010) propose that reconciliation is a process that depends on both parties. Only if the perpetrators seek forgiveness and the victims grant forgiveness is reconciliation is possible. To date there are only a few studies that examine the reconciliation process from perpetrators' and victims' perspective at once. For example, Hannon et al. (2010) found in three studies that perpetrators' and victims' conciliatory behavior are mutually reinforcing during an interaction but perpetrators' behavior more reliably predicted subsequent victims' behavior than the other way round (Study 1). Furthermore, Hannon et al. (2010) found that both, perpetrators' and victims' conciliatory behavior accounted for reconciliation. Our results are partially in line with these findings. We found strong positive correlations between the

perpetrators' and the victims' conciliatory behavior, supporting the assumption that both parties' behavior is mutually reinforcing; but contrary to Hannon et al. (2010) we found only perpetrators' conciliatory behavior to be predictive of reconciliation. Nevertheless, the conclusion that can be drawn from both sets of studies is that both parties' conciliatory behavior is important for the reconciliation process, with an emphasis being on the perpetrators' behavior. This awareness has implications for reconciliation processes between two persons, as well as for reconciliation between groups of people.

Limitations and Future Research

The present research has some limitations and raises questions for future research. First, in most cases the idiosyncratic interpersonal transgressions participants reported were relatively mild transgressions; only a few participants brought up severe transgressions. Since it is more difficult to perform conciliatory behavior and reconcile in the aftermath of severe transgressions, the effectiveness of mental contrasting should be further investigated with severe transgressions. Of special interest would be if mental contrasting is effective in fostering sensible conciliatory behavior for perpetrators in criminal justice cases.

Secondly, the participants in our studies did not actively choose to work on an unresolved transgression. Our studies were advertised as investigating interpersonal relationships and participants did not know that the studies would involve the report of an unresolved transgression until they signed up for participation. By this procedure we intended to prevent a self-selection of participants. Advertising the studies as investigating interpersonal transgressions might have discouraged many people, as it is generally unpleasant to talk about committed transgressions. As a result of our advertising strategy some participants struggled to think of transgressions which were truly unresolved. If they consequently reported partly resolved transgression it might have been less important to the perpetrators to address the transgression and perform conciliatory behavior. Supposedly the

effects of mental contrasting on conciliatory behavior might even be stronger if the pressure for perpetrators to address the transgression is higher. Future research should investigate the effects of mental contrasting on conciliatory behavior and reconciliation with perpetrators who actively seek support for unresolved transgression.

Thirdly, we conducted our studies online and in laboratory settings. In particular holding the study on reconciliation in romantic relationships (Study 4) in the laboratory might have had an influence on how perpetrators and victims behaved. Discussing the unresolved transgression in front of a video camera might have led participants to give a good account of them and limit their mode of expression. Future research should further investigate the effects of mental contrasting on conciliatory behavior in more realistic settings.

Mental Contrasting as an Intervention in Reconciliation: Implications and Future Research

The results of the present research are a first step towards applying mental contrasting as an intervention in reconciliation processes which enables perpetrators to effectively regulate their conciliatory behavior. We have shown in three studies that mental contrasting effectively activated the perpetrators' preexisting expectations of success and made them relevant for goal pursuit. With high expectations perpetrators performed immediate and strong conciliatory behavior and with low expectations perpetrators refrained from performing conciliatory behavior. In order to transform the present results into a mental contrasting intervention for reconciliation processes some practical and ethical issues need to be considered and further research is needed.

Dealing with no remorse over wrongdoing and low incentive value. One practical issue that needs to be addressed is that mental contrasting does not change the incentive value of a goal (Oettingen, 2012). That means in the context of interpersonal transgressions and reconciliation mental contrasting is only effective if perpetrators are remorseful and have

desire to set things right. If perpetrators have no insight that they committed transgressions, are not remorseful or have no incentive value to perform conciliatory behavior, then mental contrasting can hardly affect the conciliatory behavior. If perpetrators are not remorseful or have low incentive mental contrasting might be implemented in collaboration with other interventions. These interventions should precede mental contrasting to foster remorse and increase the incentive value to perform conciliatory behavior.

To give an example, *motivational interviewing* might be such a preceding intervention. Motivational interviewing is a therapeutic approach that was originally created to treat addictive behavior. It is supposed to increase the importance of change for a person – which means increasing the incentive value of a changed future (Miller & Rollnick, 2002). Over the last two decades motivational interviewing was adapted to treat perpetrators in the criminal justice system and has been applied in this context (Austin, Williams, & Kilgour, 2011; Ginsburg, Mann, Rotgers, & Weekes, 2002; McMurren, 2009). Motivational interviewing is utilized in the criminal justice system to (1) foster perpetrators' insight into their transgressions, (2) to increase their desire for a future behavior change, and (3) to increase their motivation to attend therapies and treatments (Austin et al., 2011; Mann & Rollnick, 1996). To date there are only a few studies that investigate the effectiveness of motivational interviewing for perpetrators (Ginsburg et al., 2002; McMurren, 2009); nevertheless, meta-analyses showed that motivational interviewing has small to medium size effects on changing other problematic behaviors (Hettema & Hendricks, 2010; Hettema, Steele, & Miller, 2005). Future research should investigate if the combination of motivational interviewing and mental contrasting is an effective intervention for unremorseful perpetrators or those with a low incentive value to make up for their wrongdoings.

Dealing with low expectations of success. A practical and ethical question arising from the present research is how to deal with perpetrators with low expectations of success in

a mental contrasting intervention. In the present studies we investigated the effects of mental contrasting on perpetrators' self-regulation of conciliatory behavior. Throughout the studies we were interested in how mental contrasting with low and with high expectations of success affects conciliatory behavior; we did not manipulate the perpetrators' expectations of success. As stated above, after mentally contrasting with low expectations of success perpetrators disengage from performing conciliatory behavior. Depending on the context of an intervention this effect might be wanted or unwanted. On the one hand it could be beneficial if perpetrators refrain from the performance of conciliatory behavior in the light of low expectations of success. It might protect them from performing halfhearted and insincere conciliatory behavior that might do further harm to the victims or backfire on the perpetrators. On the other hand it might be unwanted for interpersonal or ethical reasons that perpetrators refrain from performing conciliatory behavior. For example, a sincere apology might be essential for the victims' well-being even in cases in which reconciling with the perpetrators is not an option (Lazare, 2004; Smith, 2008). Some interventions might therefore have the intention to make perpetrators perform wholehearted and sincere conciliatory behavior. In order to attain this effect with mental contrasting the perpetrators' expectations of success need to be high.

Mental contrasting interventions in the field of academic achievement and physical health deploy two strategies to ensure high expectations of success for all participants. One strategy is to assign participants a new task they have no preexisting experiences on and assure them that it is feasible for them to succeed (A. Gollwitzer et al., 2011). The second strategy is to let participants generate an idiosyncratic wish or concern and to emphasize that they should choose a challenging but feasible wish or concern (A. Gollwitzer et al., 2011; Johannessen et al., 2012). The first strategy is not suitable for the context of conciliatory behavior because perpetrators' tasks are idiosyncratic by nature. All perpetrators have

preexisting experiences regarding their capability of performing effective conciliatory behavior. The second strategy might be better suited to ensure that perpetrators have high expectations of success but it has to be considered that perpetrators are in a predicament. It might be too challenging for them to simply choose a feasible but challenging interpersonal wish or concern regarding their relationship to the victims without further support. A way to support perpetrators might be to guide them through the process of breaking the superordinate goal of reconciliation into feasible subgoals. The expectations of success might be higher for subgoals and the mastery of these could further strengthen self-efficacy expectations (Bandura, 1977; Bandura & Schunk, 1981). Self-efficacy expectations refer to the expectations that one is capable of performing the behavior to attain a goal (e.g., performing effective conciliatory behavior) (Bandura, 1977). This strategy might be suitable to foster high expectations of success in perpetrators before they apply mental contrasting. Consequently mental contrasting with high expectations of success should lead to strong conciliatory behavior. Future research should investigate how to reliably manipulate the perpetrators' expectations of success, by this or other strategies, preceding a mental contrasting intervention.

Incorporating perpetrators' and victims' self-regulation of conciliatory behavior.

Another possible implication is to broaden the approach of a mental contrasting intervention. In the present research we focused on the perpetrators' self-regulation and neglected the victims' self-regulation of conciliatory behavior. A line of future research should investigate the effects on reconciliation if we incorporate both partners' self-regulation of conciliatory behavior. For example, in the study on integrative bargaining, that we mentioned in the introduction, the dyads found the most integrative solutions if both partners applied mental contrasting as a self-regulatory strategy (Kirk et al., 2011). Future research could apply this approach to the reconciliation process by letting the perpetrators *and* the victims mentally

contrast the benefits of reconciliation with the present reality standing in the way of reconciling.

Summing up, future research is needed to investigate how it should be dealt with if perpetrators are not remorseful, have a low incentive value to perform conciliatory behavior or have low expectations of success. Furthermore, future research should explore the option to broaden a possible mental contrasting intervention by incorporating the perpetrators' and the victims' self-regulation of conciliatory behavior. However, a mental contrasting intervention that enables perpetrators perform conciliatory behavior and facilitate reconciliation would be a gain for shaping reconciliation processes. Mental contrasting is very effective, it is easy to apply, and does not need many resources.

Conclusions

Interpersonal relationships are the core of humanity, but nevertheless interpersonal transgressions seem to be an inevitable part of these relationships (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Buss & Kenrick, 1998; Jones et al., 2001). More often than not interpersonal transgressions lead to a breach in the relationship and have negative consequences for the well-being of the victims and the perpetrators (e.g., Lazare, 2004; Baumeister et al., 1994). To mend the relationship and to increase the psychological well-being of both parties the perpetrators needs to perform wholehearted, sincere, and well-timed conciliatory behavior (e.g., Jones & Kugler, 1993; Smith, 2008). The present research shows that mental contrasting is a cognitive strategy that enables perpetrators to effectively self-regulate their conciliatory behavior. Mental contrasting leads perpetrators to perform sensible conciliatory behavior that is based on their expectations of success. Thereby perpetrators perform prompt and sincere conciliatory behavior if the chances of mending the relationship are high and they refrain from performing conciliatory behavior if there is a risk of doing further harm or it backfiring.

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Erklärung nach § 9 Abs. 1, Nr. c der Promotionsordnung zur Doktorin / zum Doktor der Philosophie oder der Naturwissenschaften des Fachbereichs Psychologie der Universität Hamburg vom 03. Februar 2004.

Hiermit erkläre ich, dass die von mir vorgelegte Dissertation nicht Gegenstand eines anderen Prüfungsverfahrens gewesen ist.

Hamburg, den _____

Jana Schrage

Eidesstattliche Erklärung nach § 9 Abs. 1, Nr. d der Promotionsordnung zur Doktorin / zum Doktor der Philosophie oder der Naturwissenschaften des Fachbereichs Psychologie der Universität Hamburg vom 03. Februar 2004.

Hiermit erkläre ich an Eides statt, dass ich die vorliegende Arbeit selbständig und ohne fremde Hilfe verfasst habe. Andere als die angegebenen Quellen und Hilfsmittel habe ich nicht benutzt und die wörtlich oder inhaltlich übernommenen Stellen als solche kenntlich gemacht.

Hamburg, den _____

Jana Schrage

Appendix

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Appendix 1

Coding Scheme Study 3

Table 1

Coding Scheme With Examples From Perpetrators' Statements.

Desired future	
Descriptions of the desired future	"I would like to have the same kind of relationship with my mother as my sister has." ("Ich hätte gerne so eine Beziehung zu meiner Mama wie meine Schwester.").
Consequences of attaining the outcomes	
feelings	"Then my guilty conscience would be appeased." ("Dann wäre mein schlechtes Gewissen beruhigt.")
events	"We jointly view pictures from our holiday trip." ("Wir alle gucken gemeinsam Bilder aus einem gemeinsamen Urlaub.")
nonmaterial gains	„Then she can socialize.“ ("Dann kommt sie etwas unter Menschen.")
improvements of current situation	"I really want to change my tendency to withdraw." ("Ich möchte unbedingt meine Tendenz mich zurück zu ziehen verändern.")

Present reality	
Descriptions of the present reality	“I am upset by my somewhat immature behavior.” (“Ich ärgere mich über mein etwas unreifes Verhalten.”)
Obstacles in the present reality to attaining the desired outcomes	
internal	„Currently I am too stubborn for that.“ (“Momentan bin ich viel zu stur dafür.”)
external	„I am concerned that he will turn away from me entirely.” (“Mich sorgt, dass er sich danach gänzlich von mir abwenden wird”)
potential	„I might be refused.“ (“Ich könnte Ablehnung erfahren.”)
Other	
Statements that could not be categorized as pertaining to the desired future or to the present reality:	
ambiguous	“One needs friendships.” (“Man braucht Freundschaften.”)
past	„Due to the time pressure a conflict arose.“ (“Durch den Zeitdruck ist dann ein Streit entstanden”)
self in general	„I have always had many friends.“ (“Ich hatte schon immer viele Freunde.”)
subjunctive	„I could have avoided a lot of stress.“ „Ich hätte viel Stress vermeiden können“

Example of Segmentation and Coding Study 3

I'm going to apologize. Therefore I will invite my flatmate to dinner and confront him with my thoughts and the situation. I hope that he no longer feels the pain the past incident caused and that he will forgive me. But I am also afraid that he is so deeply hurt, that he cannot imagine living together any longer.

(Ich werde mich entschuldigen. Dazu werde ich meinen Mitbewohner zum Essen einladen und ihn mit meinen Gedanken und der Situation konfrontieren. Ich erhoffe, dass er das Ereignis von damals nicht mehr als sehr schmerzhaft empfindet und dass er mir verzeihen wird. Aber auch habe ich Angst davor, dass er so tief verletzt ist, dass er sich ein Zusammenleben mit mir nicht mehr vorstellen kann.)

This elaboration was segmented and coded as follows:

I'm going to apologize (desired future). Therefore I will invite my flatmate to dinner (desired future) and confront him with my thoughts and the situation (desired future). I hope that he no longer feels the pain the past incident caused (desired future) and that he will forgive me (desired future). But I am also afraid (present reality) that he is so deeply hurt (present reality), that he cannot imagine living together any longer (present reality).

(Ich werde mich entschuldigen (desired future). Dazu werde ich meinen Mitbewohner zum Essen einladen (desired future) und ihn mit meinen Gedanken und der Situation konfrontieren (desired future). Ich erhoffe, dass er das Ereignis von damals nicht mehr als sehr schmerzhaft empfindet (desired future) und dass er mir verzeihen wird (desired future). Aber auch habe ich Angst davor (present reality), dass er so tief verletzt ist (present reality), dass er sich ein Zusammenleben mit mir nicht mehr vorstellen kann (present reality).)

Appendix 2

Questionnaire Study 1 (Online)

[Informed consent]

You are invited to take part in a research study in which you will discuss an interpersonal concern currently on your mind and answer questions regarding this concern. Finally you will be presented with a short questionnaire about yourself. All of this will take about 15 minutes. There are no known risks associated with your participation in this research beyond those of everyday life. This research may help the investigators better understand how people think about interpersonal concerns. Participation in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to participate or withdraw at anytime. Confidentiality of your research will be strictly maintained by not asking for any identifying information. The data from the study will be kept at least until 5 years after publication, as recommended by the American Psychological Association. When it is destroyed, this will be done by shredding and deletion of electronic files. If there is anything about the study or your participation that is unclear or that you do not understand, if you have questions or wish to report a research-related problem, you may contact Jana Schrage at jana.schrage@uni-hamburg.de.

If you have read and understood these explanations and agree with them, please click "I accept".

If you do not want to accept, please click "I do not accept". This will cancel your participation in the study.

[Emotion manipulation]

[guilt condition]

Most people value their relationships to other people and are often concerned about maintaining such relationships. Yet sometimes interpersonal relationships are not as one desires.

Please describe an unresolved incident with another person in which you felt guilty or regretful afterwards. Please choose an incident, which is still unresolved and in which you have the wish that the interpersonal concern will be solved. The event should have taken place within the last six months. Please be as thorough as possible:

[sadness condition]

Most people value their relationships to other people and are often concerned about maintaining such relationships. Yet sometimes interpersonal relationships are not as one desires.

Please describe an unresolved incident with another person in which you felt sad or distressed afterwards. Please choose an incident, which is still unresolved and in which you have the wish that the interpersonal concern will be solved. The event should have taken place within the last six months. Please be as thorough as possible:

[control condition]

Most people value their relationships to other people and are often concerned about maintaining such relationships. Yet sometimes interpersonal relationships are not as one desires.

Please describe an unresolved incident with another person. Please choose an incident, which is still unresolved and in which you have the wish that the interpersonal concern will be solved. The event should have taken place within the last six months. Please be as thorough as possible:

How many months ago was the incident?

Please give your answer in 0.25 steps (e.g., 0.25 = 1 week or 1 = 1 month)

How close are you to the person you had the incident with?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
not at all						very

How severe is the interpersonal concern currently?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
not at all						very

Do you have the feeling that the interpersonal concern is already resolved?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
not at all						completely

[Current affect]

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

	very slightly or not at all	a little	moderately	quite a bit	extremely
afraid	O - - - - -	O - - - - -	O - - - - -	O - - - - -	O
blameworthy	O - - - - -	O - - - - -	O - - - - -	O - - - - -	O
active	O - - - - -	O - - - - -	O - - - - -	O - - - - -	O
irritable	O - - - - -	O - - - - -	O - - - - -	O - - - - -	O
excited	O - - - - -	O - - - - -	O - - - - -	O - - - - -	O
determined	O - - - - -	O - - - - -	O - - - - -	O - - - - -	O
proud	O - - - - -	O - - - - -	O - - - - -	O - - - - -	O
sad	O - - - - -	O - - - - -	O - - - - -	O - - - - -	O
scared	O - - - - -	O - - - - -	O - - - - -	O - - - - -	O
jittery	O - - - - -	O - - - - -	O - - - - -	O - - - - -	O
guilty	O - - - - -	O - - - - -	O - - - - -	O - - - - -	O
enthusiastic	O - - - - -	O - - - - -	O - - - - -	O - - - - -	O
strong	O - - - - -	O - - - - -	O - - - - -	O - - - - -	O
ashamed	O - - - - -	O - - - - -	O - - - - -	O - - - - -	O
nervous	O - - - - -	O - - - - -	O - - - - -	O - - - - -	O
attentive	O - - - - -	O - - - - -	O - - - - -	O - - - - -	O
inspired	O - - - - -	O - - - - -	O - - - - -	O - - - - -	O
alert	O - - - - -	O - - - - -	O - - - - -	O - - - - -	O
upset	O - - - - -	O - - - - -	O - - - - -	O - - - - -	O
interested	O - - - - -	O - - - - -	O - - - - -	O - - - - -	O
hostile	O - - - - -	O - - - - -	O - - - - -	O - - - - -	O
distressed	O - - - - -	O - - - - -	O - - - - -	O - - - - -	O

[Demographics]

How old are you?

I am

female.

male.

other:

I do not want to indicate my gender.

Is English your mother tongue?

Yes.

Yes, among others.

No.

I do not want to indicate my mother tongue.

What is your highest level of education?

High School

Associate Degree

Bachelor's Degree

Master's Degree

Doctoral Degree

Other

I do not want to indicate my level of education.

Which of the following best describes your current employment status?

Full time work

Part time work

Unemployed

Full time student

Full time student

Retired

Other

I do not want to indicate my employment status.

Appendix 3

Questionnaire Study 2 (Online)

[Begrüßung]

Liebe Teilnehmerin, lieber Teilnehmer,

wir sind daran interessiert, wie sich Freundschaften entwickeln und wie Menschen mit schwierigen Situationen in Freundschaften umgehen.

Wir werden Sie gleich bitten, sich in einen anderen Menschen hineinzusetzen und Fragen aus seiner Perspektive zu beantworten. Bitte nehmen Sie sich ausreichend Zeit, um sich in die andere Person zu versetzen. Bei der Beantwortung der Fragen gibt es keine richtigen oder falschen Antworten, wir sind an Ihrer Meinung interessiert.

Die Teilnahme an der Studie ist freiwillig und Sie haben jederzeit das Recht, die Teilnahme zu beenden.

Alle Daten werden selbstverständlich vertraulich und anonym gespeichert.

Mit dem Weiter-Button kommen Sie jeweils zur nächsten Seite. Auf manchen Seiten erscheint der Button erst nach einer festgelegten Zeitspanne.

Klicken Sie nun auf Weiter, wenn Sie mit dem Fragebogen beginnen möchten.

Bei Fragen zur Studie wenden Sie sich bitte an: jana.schrage@uni-hamburg.de

[Filter Geschlecht]

Geschlechtsidentität: _männlich _weiblich

[Einleitung (Einleitung_m)]

Liebe Teilnehmerin (Lieber Teilnehmer),

Sie werden gleich eine Geschichte über Anke (Tom) und Paula (Paul) lesen. Ihre Aufgabe ist es, sich in Paula (Paul) hineinzusetzen. Versuchen Sie so gut wie möglich Paulas (Pauls) Perspektive einzunehmen: fühle und denke Sie wie Paula (Paul).

Nach der Geschichte werden wir Ihnen einige Fragen stellen, die Sie jeweils als Paula (Paul) beantworten sollen. In Ihrer Rolle als Paula (Paul) werden wir Sie mit "du" ansprechen.

[Manipulation Schuld]

Stell dir jetzt vor, du bist Paula (Paul) und du hast das Folgende erlebt:

Du bist seit der ersten Klasse mit Anke (Tom) befreundet. Als Kind hat Anke (Tom) viel Zeit bei dir und deiner Familie verbracht, da ihre (seine) eigenen Familienverhältnisse sehr schwierig sind. Ankes (Toms) Vater ist Alkoholiker und ihre (seine) Mutter hat die Familie kurz nach Ankes (Toms) Geburt verlassen. Sie (Er) wurde überwiegend von ihrer (seiner) Großmutter aufgezogen. Anke (Tom) sind ihre (seine) Familienverhältnisse peinlich und sie (er) vermeidet es anderen Menschen gegenüber von ihrer (seiner) Familie oder ihrer (seiner) Kindheit zu erzählen. Du kennst natürlich sowohl den meistens alkoholisierten Vater als auch die mit der Erziehung überforderte Großmutter. Du hast Anke (Tom) immer unterstützt und weißt, wie unangenehm es ihr (ihm) ist, wenn andere Menschen von ihrem (seinem) familiären Hintergrund erfahren.

Nach dem Abitur bist du gemeinsam mit Anke (Tom) in eine größere Stadt gezogen und ihr habt ein Studium begonnen. Ihr seid weiterhin eng befreundet und verbringt fast eure gesamte Freizeit miteinander.

Jetzt ist das erste Semester vorbei und ihr wart letzte Woche gemeinsam auf einer Party. Als ihr zu später Stunde in einer Runde von Freunden und Bekannten steht, erzählen einige der Gäste lustige Geschichten aus ihrer Kindheit. Ohne weiter darüber nachzudenken erzählst du die Geschichte, wie Ankes (Toms) Vater alkoholisiert in den Dorfteich gefallen ist. Dabei parodierst du abwechselnd den alkoholisierten Vater und die unbeholfene Reaktion der Großmutter. Alle in der Runde amüsieren sich und lachen über die Geschichte. Erst als du zu Ende erzählt hast, bemerkst du, dass Anke (Tom) nicht mehr da ist.

Du bist Paula (Paul): Wie fühlst du dich und was denkst du? Nimm dir einen Augenblick Zeit um dich in Paula (Paul) hineinzusetzen.

Wir werden dir als nächstes einige Fragen stellen und eine kleine Übung mit dir durchführen. Beantworte bitte alle Fragen als Paula (Paul).

[Alle Fragen werden auf einer Skala von 1 (gar nicht) – 7 (sehr) beantwortet]

Wie sehr ergibt sich für Dich aus dem Vorfall ein zwischenmenschliches Problem mit Anke?

Wie stark sind Deine Schuldgefühle in Bezug auf Dein Verhalten?

Für wie wahrscheinlich hältst Du es, dass sich dieses zwischenmenschliche Problem mit Anke lösen lässt?

Für wie wahrscheinlich hältst Du es, dass Du dieses zwischenmenschliche Problem mit Anke lösen wirst?

Wie wichtig ist es Dir, dass Du dieses zwischenmenschliche Problem mit Anke löst?

Wie enttäuscht wärst Du, wenn Du dieses zwischenmenschliche Problem mit Anke nicht lösen würdest?

Jetzt bitten wir dich (Paula) ((Paul)) nochmal genauer über einige Aspekte nachzudenken. Bitte schreibe dazu im Folgenden deine Gedanken auf.

[Manipulation Selbstregulationsstrategie]

Randomisierte Zuteilung zu einer der drei Bedingungen

[Bedingung: MC internes Hindernis]

Was wäre das Schönste daran, wenn Du das zwischenmenschliche Problem mit Anke (Tom) gelöst hättest? Nenne den **wichtigsten positiven Aspekt (1 Aspekt)**.

Wichtigster positiver Aspekt (**1-2 Stichwörter**): _____

Male Dir diesen wichtigsten positiven Aspekt jetzt in Deinen Gedanken so intensiv wie möglich aus. Lass Deinen Gedanken freien Lauf! Nimm Dir so viel Zeit und Raum, wie Du zur Beschreibung dieser Szene benötigst. Bei Bedarf nutze bitte auch die Rückseite.

Manchmal klappen Dinge nicht so, wie wir uns das wünschen. Welches Hindernis steht auf **deiner Seite** einer Lösung dieses zwischenmenschlichen Problems im Weg? Nenne **DEIN wichtigstes Hindernis (1 Hindernis)**.

Wichtigstes Hindernis (**1-2 Stichwörter**): _____

Male Dir dieses eine Hindernis in Deinen Gedanken so intensiv wie möglich aus. Lass Deinen Gedanken freien Lauf! Nimm dir so viel Zeit und Raum, wie Du zur Beschreibung dieser Szene benötigst. Bei Bedarf nutze bitte auch die Rückseite.

[Bedingung: MC externes Hindernis]

Was wäre das Schönste daran, wenn Du das zwischenmenschliche Problem mit Anke (Tom) gelöst hättest? Nenne den **wichtigsten positiven Aspekt (1 Aspekt)**.

Wichtigster positiver Aspekt (**1-2 Stichwörter**): _____

Male Dir diesen wichtigsten positiven Aspekt jetzt in Deinen Gedanken so intensiv wie möglich aus. Lass Deinen Gedanken freien Lauf! Nimm Dir so viel Zeit und Raum, wie Du zur Beschreibung dieser Szene benötigst. Bei Bedarf nutze bitte auch die Rückseite.

Manchmal klappen Dinge nicht so, wie wir uns das wünschen. Welches Hindernis steht auf **Ankes (Toms) Seite** einer Lösung dieses zwischenmenschlichen Problems im Weg? Nenne **ANKES (TOMS) wichtigstes Hindernis (1 Hindernis)**.

Wichtigstes Hindernis (**1-2 Stichwörter**): _____

Male Dir dieses eine Hindernis in Deinen Gedanken so intensiv wie möglich aus. Lass Deinen Gedanken freien Lauf! Nimm dir so viel Zeit und Raum, wie Du zur Beschreibung dieser Szene benötigst. Bei Bedarf nutze bitte auch die Rückseite.

[Bedingung: Indulging]

Was wäre das Schönste daran, wenn Du das zwischenmenschliche Problem mit Anke (Tom) gelöst hättest? Nenne den **wichtigsten positiven Aspekt (1 Aspekt)**.

Wichtigster positiver Aspekt (**1-2 Stichwörter**): _____

Male Dir diesen wichtigsten positiven Aspekt jetzt in Deinen Gedanken so intensiv wie möglich aus. Lass Deinen Gedanken freien Lauf! Nimm Dir so viel Zeit und Raum, wie Du zur Beschreibung dieser Szene benötigst. Bei Bedarf nutze bitte auch die Rückseite.

Was wäre das Zweitschönste daran, wenn Du das zwischenmenschliche Problem mit Anke (Tom) gelöst hättest? Nenne den **zweitwichtigsten positiven Aspekt (1 Aspekt)**.

Zweitwichtigster positiver Aspekt (**1-2 Stichwörter**): _____

Male Dir diesen zweitwichtigsten positiven Aspekt jetzt in Deinen Gedanken so intensiv wie möglich aus. Lass Deinen Gedanken freien Lauf! Nimm Dir so viel Zeit und Raum, wie Du zur Beschreibung dieser Szene benötigst. Bei Bedarf nutze bitte auch die Rückseite.

[Alle Fragen werden auf einer Skala von 1 (gar nicht) – 7 (sehr) beantwortet]

Wie sehr fühlst du dich gerade voller Energie?

Wie aktiv fühlst du dich gerade?

Wie angeregt fühlst du dich gerade?

Wie enttäuscht wärest Du, wenn Du dieses zwischenmenschliche Problem mit Anke (Tom) nicht lösen würdest?

Wie entschlossen bist Du, dieses zwischenmenschliche Problem mit Anke (Tom) zu lösen?

Wie schlimm wäre es für Dich, wenn Du dieses zwischenmenschliche Problem mit Anke (Tom) nicht lösen würdest?

[Brief]

Du (Paula) ((Paul)) beschließt Anke (Tom) einen Brief zu schreiben. Bitte schreibe den Brief so, wie du ihn auch tatsächlich abschicken würdest. Nimm dir für den Brief so viel Zeit und Raum wie du benötigst.

[Selbstrating Brief]

[Alle Fragen werden auf einer Skala von 1 (gar nicht) – 7 (sehr) beantwortet]

Bist du mit deinem Brief zufrieden?

Wie positiv findest du deinen Brief?

Hast du genug Anstrengung in den Brief gesteckt?

Glaubst du, Anke (Tom) wird deinen Brief als Entschuldigung akzeptieren?

Glaubst du, Anke (Tom) wird dir vergeben, wenn sie (er) den Brief gelesen hat?

[Demographische Angaben]

Alter

Geschlecht

Beruf

Nationalität

Muttersprache

[Debriefing]

Was glauben Sie, was der Zweck/die Fragestellung dieser Studie ist?

Konnten Sie sich gut in die Person hineinversetzen?

Aufklärung über den Inhalt der Studie:

In dieser Studie sind wir daran interessiert, wie Menschen ihr Schuldempfinden regulieren und sich für ihr Fehlverhalten entschuldigen. Die Erkenntnisse sollen dazu beitragen, den Prozess der Versöhnung besser zu verstehen. Alle Teilnehmer lesen zu Beginn die gleiche Geschichte und sollen sich in die gleiche Person hineinversetzen. Danach wird jedoch jeder Teilnehmer zufällig einer von drei Bedingungen zugeteilt. Die Bedingungen unterscheiden sich in der Art, wie über das zwischenmenschliche Fehlverhalten nachgedacht wird:

- (1) Mentales Kontrastieren mit internalem Hindernis (Elaboration von einem positiven Aspekt + einem persönlichen Hindernis)
- (2) Mentales Kontrastieren mit externalem Hindernis (Elaboration von einem positiven Aspekt + einem Hindernis auf Seiten der anderen Person)
- (3) Schwelgen (Elaboration von zwei positiven Aspekten)

Sollten Sie noch weitere Fragen zu der Studie haben, so können Sie sich jederzeit an mich wenden. Ich bin per E-Mail zu erreichen: jana.schrage@uni-hamburg.de

Appendix 4

Questionnaire Study 3, Part 1 (Paper and Pencil)

Informationen/Informierte Einwilligungserklärung zur Studie “Zwischenmenschlich II“

- (1) In dieser Studie soll untersucht werden, wie Menschen über Beziehungen nachdenken. Die Studie besteht aus zwei Teilen, deren Bearbeitung jeweils ca. 1 Stunde dauert. Zwischen dem ersten und dem zweiten Teil muss ein Abstand von ca. einer Woche liegen.
- (2) die Teilnahme an der Studie ist freiwillig und Sie haben jederzeit das Recht, die Teilnahme zu beenden.
- (3) Die 2 Versuchspersonenstunden beziehungsweise 12 Euro können nur nach Beendigung beider Studienteile gewährt werden.
- (4) Die Daten dieser Studie werden ausschließlich zu Forschungszwecken innerhalb der Forschungsstelle für Motivationspsychologie verwendet. Sie werden anonym und vertraulich behandelt, so dass keine Rückschlüsse auf die einzelne Person gezogen werden können.
- (5) Sollten Sie vor oder während der Durchführung Fragen bezüglich der Studie haben, so wenden Sie sich bitte an den Versuchsleiter. Dieser wird Ihnen Auskunft erteilen, soweit die Informationen nicht den Zweck der Studie gefährden. Nach Abschluss der Studie werden Sie umfassend über den Inhalt der Studie informiert.

Um Ihre Anonymität in der Studie zu gewährleisten, wird diese Einwilligungserklärung unabhängig von den weiteren Daten aufbewahrt.

Bei Fragen bezüglich der Studie wenden Sie sich bitte an:
Jana Schrage, Email: jana.schrage@uni-hamburg.de

Ich habe die oben stehende Information zur Kenntnis genommen und nehme aus freien Stücken an dieser Studie teil.

Name (Vor- und Nachname) : _____

Datum und Unterschrift: _____

Liebe Teilnehmerin, lieber Teilnehmer,

wir sind daran interessiert, wie Leute mit Situationen umgehen, die zwischenmenschlich komplex sind. Dies ist der erste Teil der Studie. Wir bitten Sie im Folgenden uns ein zwischenmenschliches Problem zu schildern. Wir werden Sie dann dazu anleiten, über verschiedene Aspekte dieses Problems nachzudenken. Dazu müssen Sie drei kleine Texte schreiben und ein paar Fragen beantworten.

Bitte lesen Sie die Fragen gründlich und nehmen Sie sich ausreichend Zeit für die Antworten.

Der zweite Teil der Studie folgt in einer Woche, damit wir die beiden Teile der Studie zusammenfügen können, erstellen Sie bitte den folgenden Code

1.	2.	3.	4.

1. & 2. Die ersten beiden Buchstaben im Vornamen Ihrer Mutter

3. & 4. Die letzten beiden Ziffern Ihrer Telefonnummer

Wichtig: Ihre Angaben sind anonym und Rückschlüsse auf einzelne Personen sind nicht möglich. Wir werden alle Antworten vertraulich behandeln.

Denken Sie an ein Ereignis zurück, in dem Sie jemanden ärgerlich gemacht haben und Sie anschließend Schuldgefühle hatten oder es Ihnen sehr leid tat. Damit meine ich, Sie haben jemanden provoziert oder irgendetwas getan oder unterlassen, wodurch Sie den anderen verärgert haben. Anschließend haben Sie sich deswegen schlecht gefühlt und hatten das Gefühl, etwas Falsches getan zu haben.

Wählen Sie bitte ein Ereignis, bei dem Sie anschließend den Wunsch hatten, sich zu entschuldigen oder etwas wieder gutzumachen und dies **bis zum jetzigen Zeitpunkt nicht getan haben**.

Das Ereignis sollte **nicht länger als drei Monate** zurückliegen.

Berichten Sie das gesamte Ereignis und beschreiben Sie Ihr Verhalten, Ihre Gedanken und Gefühle möglichst genau:

Wann war das Ereignis in etwa (Monat/Jahr)? ____/____

Die nächsten Fragen beziehen sich alle auf das Ereignis und Ihr Verhalten, das Sie auf den vorherigen Seiten beschrieben haben. Beantworten Sie bitte alle Fragen so genau wie möglich.

Die Antworten geben Sie jeweils mit einem Kreuz auf einer Skala von 1-7.

1. Wie stark sind Ihre Schuldgefühle in Bezug auf Ihr Verhalten im Moment?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
gar nicht						sehr stark

2. Haben Sie das Gefühl, dass Sie mit dem Ereignis abgeschlossen haben?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
gar nicht						komplett

Die nächsten Fragen beziehen sich auf die Folgen des oben genannten Ereignisses:

3. Wie sehr ergibt sich für Sie aus dem oben genannten Ereignis ein zwischenmenschliches Problem?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
gar nicht						sehr

4. Wie wichtig ist es Ihnen, dieses zwischenmenschliche Problem zu lösen?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
gar nicht						sehr
wichtig						wichtig

5. Für wie wahrscheinlich halten Sie es, dass Sie dieses zwischenmenschliche Problem lösen können?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
gar nicht						sehr
wahrscheinlich						wahrscheinlich

6. Für wie wahrscheinlich halten Sie es, dass Sie dieses zwischenmenschliche Problem in nächster Zeit lösen werden?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
gar nicht						sehr
wahrscheinlich						wahrscheinlich

Wenn Sie jetzt an Ihr zwischenmenschliches Problem denken, welches Anliegen verbinden Sie damit?



Wir möchten Sie bitten jetzt über Ihr Anliegen nachzudenken. Sie können über alle Aspekte, die mit Ihrem Anliegen in Zusammenhang stehen, nachdenken, die Ihnen in den Sinn kommen. Lassen Sie die geistigen Bilder zu Ihrem Anliegen einfach kommen und stellen Sie sich die relevanten Ereignisse und Erlebnisse so lebhaft wie möglich vor. Scheuen Sie sich nicht, Ihren Gedanken freien Lauf zu lassen. Schreiben Sie, was Ihnen in den Sinn kommt, in das unten stehende Feld.



Die nächsten Fragen beziehen sich alle auf das von Ihnen oben genannte zwischenmenschliche Problem.

1. Wie enttäuscht wären Sie, wenn Sie dieses zwischenmenschliche Problem nicht lösen würden?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
gar nicht enttäuscht						sehr enttäuscht

2. Wie schlimm wäre es für Sie, wenn Sie dieses zwischenmenschliche Problem nicht lösen würden?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
gar nicht schlimm						sehr schlimm

3. Wie entschlossen sind Sie, dieses zwischenmenschliche Problem zu lösen?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
gar nicht entschlossen						sehr entschlossen

4. Wie stark werden Sie sich bemühen, dieses zwischenmenschliche Problem zu lösen?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
gar nicht						sehr

5. Wie sehr werden Sie die Initiative ergreifen, um dieses zwischenmenschliches Problem zu lösen?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
gar nicht						sehr

6. Wie sehr fühlen Sie sich voller Energie, wenn Sie an die Lösung dieses zwischenmenschlichen Problems denken?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
gar nicht						sehr

Demographische Angaben

Alter: _____

Geschlecht: _____

Beruf: _____

Studienfach: _____

Semester: _____

Nationalität _____

Muttersprache: _____

Schulzeit in: _____ / _____ (Land / Bundesland)

Haben Sie bereits an anderen Studien der Forschungsstelle für Motivationspsychologie teilgenommen?

☐

Ja

☐

Nein

Questionnaire Study 3, Part 2 (Paper and Pencil)

Liebe Teilnehmerin, lieber Teilnehmer,

dies ist der zweite Teil der Studie. Seitdem Sie uns Ihr zwischenmenschliches Problem geschildert haben ist eine Woche vergangen. Wir sind jetzt daran interessiert, ob sich seitdem etwas an Ihrem Problem geändert hat und wie Sie sich fühlen. Bitte füllen Sie dazu den Wochenplan und die anschließenden Fragen aus.

Damit wir die beiden Teile der Studie zusammenfügen können, erstellen Sie bitte den folgenden Code

1.	2.	3.	4.

1. & 2. Die ersten beiden Buchstaben im Vornamen Ihrer Mutter

3. & 4. Die letzten beiden Ziffern Ihrer Telefonnummer

Alle Angaben in diesem Fragebogen werden natürlich vertraulich behandelt und es können keine Rückschlüsse auf Ihre Person gezogen werden.

Es gibt keine richtigen oder falschen Antworten, wir sind an Ihren Gedanken und Gefühlen interessiert. Bitte versuchen Sie so offen und genau wie möglich zu antworten.

Bitte lesen Sie alle Instruktionen sorgfältig!

Wochenplan

Bitte füllen Sie die Tabelle für jeden Tag aus. Wir möchten gerne wissen, was an den einzelnen Tagen im Bezug auf ihr zwischenmenschliches Problem passiert ist und wie es Ihnen ergangen ist. Versuchen Sie bei den offenen Fragen so genau wie möglich zu antworten. Schildern Sie alle Handlungen, Gedanken und Gefühle die Ihnen in diesem Zusammenhang wichtig erscheinen. Wenn in den Kästchen nicht ausreichend Platz ist, dann schreiben Sie bitte auf der Rückseite weiter.

Sollten Sie an einem der Tage Ihr Problem komplett gelöst haben, müssen Sie im Wochenplan die folgenden Tage nichtmehr ausfüllen.

	Tag 1 (erste Teil der Studie)	Tag 2
<p>Ich habe an diesem Tag etwas unternommen, um der Lösung des zwischenmenschlichen Problems näher zu kommen</p> <p>Wenn ja, was genau haben Sie unternommen?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Ja <input type="checkbox"/> Nein	<input type="checkbox"/> Ja <input type="checkbox"/> Nein
<p>Ich bin der Lösung des zwischenmenschlichen Problems näher gekommen.</p> <p>Wenn ja, woran haben Sie das gemerkt?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Ja <input type="checkbox"/> Nein	<input type="checkbox"/> Ja <input type="checkbox"/> Nein
<p>Ich habe das zwischenmenschliche Problem komplett gelöst.</p> <p>Wenn ja, woran haben Sie das gemerkt?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Ja <input type="checkbox"/> Nein	<input type="checkbox"/> Ja <input type="checkbox"/> Nein
	Tag 3	Tag 4
<p>Ich habe an diesem Tag etwas unternommen, um der Lösung des zwischenmenschlichen Problems näher zu kommen</p> <p>Wenn ja, was genau haben Sie unternommen?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Ja <input type="checkbox"/> Nein	<input type="checkbox"/> Ja <input type="checkbox"/> Nein
<p>Ich bin der Lösung des zwischenmenschlichen Problems näher gekommen.</p> <p>Wenn ja, woran haben Sie das gemerkt?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Ja <input type="checkbox"/> Nein	<input type="checkbox"/> Ja <input type="checkbox"/> Nein
<p>Ich habe das zwischenmenschliche Problem komplett gelöst.</p> <p>Wenn ja, woran haben Sie das gemerkt?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Ja <input type="checkbox"/> Nein	<input type="checkbox"/> Ja <input type="checkbox"/> Nein

	Tag 5	Tag 6
<p>Ich habe an diesem Tag etwas unternommen, um der Lösung des zwischenmenschlichen Problems näher zu kommen</p> <p>Wenn ja, was genau haben Sie unternommen?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Ja <input type="checkbox"/> Nein	<input type="checkbox"/> Ja <input type="checkbox"/> Nein
<p>Ich bin der Lösung des zwischenmenschlichen Problems näher gekommen.</p> <p>Wenn ja, woran haben Sie das gemerkt?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Ja <input type="checkbox"/> Nein	<input type="checkbox"/> Ja <input type="checkbox"/> Nein
<p>Ich habe das zwischenmenschliche Problem komplett gelöst.</p> <p>Wenn ja, woran haben Sie das gemerkt?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Ja <input type="checkbox"/> Nein	<input type="checkbox"/> Ja <input type="checkbox"/> Nein
	Tag 7	Tag 8
<p>Ich habe an diesem Tag etwas unternommen, um der Lösung des zwischenmenschlichen Problems näher zu kommen</p> <p>Wenn ja, was genau haben Sie unternommen?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Ja <input type="checkbox"/> Nein	<input type="checkbox"/> Ja <input type="checkbox"/> Nein
<p>Ich bin der Lösung des zwischenmenschlichen Problems näher gekommen.</p> <p>Wenn ja, woran haben Sie das gemerkt?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Ja <input type="checkbox"/> Nein	<input type="checkbox"/> Ja <input type="checkbox"/> Nein
<p>Ich habe das zwischenmenschliche Problem komplett gelöst.</p> <p>Wenn ja, woran haben Sie das gemerkt?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Ja <input type="checkbox"/> Nein	<input type="checkbox"/> Ja <input type="checkbox"/> Nein

Die Fragen auf dieser Seite beziehen sich auf das zwischenmenschliche Problem, dass Sie am 1. Termin dieser Studie geschildert haben.

1. Wie stark sind Ihre Schuldgefühle in Bezug auf Ihr Verhalten im Moment?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
gar nicht						sehr stark

2. Haben Sie das Gefühl, dass Sie mit dem Ereignis abgeschlossen haben?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
gar nicht						komplett

In diesem Fragebogen sind Situationen beschrieben, denen Sie im alltäglichen Leben begegnen könnten. Anschließend werden mehrere häufig vorkommende Reaktionsweisen genannt.

Wenn Sie die einzelnen Situationsbeschreibungen lesen, versetzen Sie sich bitte so gut es geht in diese Lage. Schätzen Sie dann bitte ein, wie wahrscheinlich jede der genannten Reaktionen für Sie ist. Es ist wichtig, dass Sie alle Reaktionsweisen nach ihrer Wahrscheinlichkeit einschätzen, da in ein und derselben Situation mehr als eine Reaktionsweise auf Sie zutreffen kann. Es ist auch möglich, dass Ihre Reaktion zu verschiedenen Zeitpunkten unterschiedlich ausfällt.

Zum Beispiel:

Sie wachen an einem Samstag morgen früh auf. Draußen ist es kalt und regnerisch.

- | | 1= | 5= |
|--|--|--------------------------|
| | nicht wahr-
scheinlich | sehr wahr-
scheinlich |
| a.) Sie würden einen Freund anrufen, um Neuigkeiten auszutauschen. | 1 -----2-----3-----4-----5 | |
| b.) Sie würden die gewonnene Zeit nutzen, um die Zeitung zu lesen. | 1-----2-----3-----4-----5 | |
| c.) Sie wären darüber enttäuscht, dass es regnet. | 1-----2----- 3 -----4-----5 | |
| d.) Sie würden sich fragen, warum Sie so früh aufgewacht sind. | 1-----2-----3-----4-----5 | |

In dem oben angegebenen Beispiel habe ich alle Reaktionsweisen auf einer Skala von 1-5 durch das Ankreuzen einer Zahl eingeschätzt.

Unter **a.)** habe ich z.B. die 1 angekreuzt, weil ich samstags früh morgens keinen Freund wecken möchte - es ist deshalb nicht sehr wahrscheinlich, dass ich dies tun würde. Unter **b.)** habe ich die 5 angekreuzt, da ich fast immer Zeitung lese, wenn ich morgens mal Zeit dafür habe. Unter **c.)** habe ich die 3 angekreuzt, weil es für mich mal so und mal so sein kann. Manchmal bin ich enttäuscht über den Regen, und manchmal auch nicht. Es hängt davon ab, was ich mir für den Tag vorgenommen habe. Unter **d.)** habe ich die 4 angekreuzt, weil ich mich wahrscheinlich fragen würde, warum ich so früh aufgewacht bin.

Bitte lassen Sie keine Antwort aus - bearbeiten Sie alle Fragen.

1. Sie planen, mit einem Freund gemeinsam Mittagessen zu gehen. Um fünf Uhr nachmittags bemerken Sie, dass Sie Ihn versetzt haben.

- | | | |
|--|-------------|------------|
| | 1= | 5= |
| | nicht wahr- | sehr wahr- |
| | scheinlich | scheinlich |
- a.) Sie würden denken: „Ich bin rücksichtslos.“ 1----2----3----4----5
- b.) Sie würden denken: „Er wird schon Verständnis dafür haben.“ 1----2----3----4----5
- c.) Sie würden versuchen, es so schnell wie möglich wieder gutzumachen. 1----2----3----4----5
- d.) Sie würden denken: „Na ja, mein Chef hat mich kurz vor der Mittagspause noch aufgehalten.“ 1----2----3----4----5

2. Sie haben auf der Arbeit einen Gegenstand kaputtgemacht und verstecken ihn anschließend.

- | | | |
|--|-------------|------------|
| | 1= | 5= |
| | nicht wahr- | sehr wahr- |
| | scheinlich | scheinlich |
- a.) Sie würden denken: „Das ist mir unangenehm. Ich muss ihn entweder selbst wieder in Ordnung bringen oder jemanden finden, der dies für mich tun könnte.“ 1----2----3----4----5
- b.) Sie würden über eine Kündigung nachdenken. 1----2----3----4----5
- c.) Sie würden denken: „Viele Dinge sind heutzutage eben nicht sehr gut verarbeitet.“ 1----2----3----4----5
- d.) Sie würden denken: „Es war nur ein Versehen.“ 1----2----3----4----5

3. Sie gehen abends mit Freunden aus und empfinden sich als besonders witzig und attraktiv. Der Ehepartner ihres besten Freundes/Freundin scheint sich in Ihrer Anwesenheit sehr wohl zu fühlen.

- | | | |
|--|-------------|------------|
| | 1= | 5= |
| | nicht wahr- | sehr wahr- |
| | scheinlich | scheinlich |
- a.) Sie würden denken: „Die Gefühle meines besten Freundes/meiner besten Freundin sollten mich etwas angehen.“ 1----2----3----4----5
- b.) Sie wären glücklich über Ihre Erscheinung und Persönlichkeit. 1----2----3----4----5
- c.) Sie wären erfreut darüber, dass Sie einen so guten Eindruck gemacht haben. 1----2----3----4----5
- d.) Sie würden denken, dass Ihr bester Freund/in dem Ehepartner mehr Aufmerksamkeit schenken sollte. 1----2----3----4----5
- e.) Sie würden wahrscheinlich den Blickkontakt längere Zeit 1----2----3----4----5

vermeiden.

4. Bei der Arbeit verschieben Sie die Planung einer wichtigen Aufgabe auf die letzte Minute und alles geht schief.

- | | 1=
nicht wahr-
scheinlich | 5=
sehr wahr-
scheinlich |
|---|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| a.) Sie würden sich inkompetent fühlen. | 1-----2-----3-----4-----5 | |
| b.) Sie würden denken: „Der Tag hat eben nie genug Stunden.“ | 1-----2-----3-----4-----5 | |
| c.) Sie würden denken: „Ich hätte eine Strafe verdient.“ | 1-----2-----3-----4-----5 | |
| d.) Sie würden denken: „Ich habe alles getan, was in meiner Macht stand.“ | 1-----2-----3-----4-----5 | |

5.) Bei der Arbeit machen Sie einen Fehler. Sie finden heraus, dass ein anderer Mitarbeiter dafür verantwortlich gemacht wird.

- | | 1=
nicht wahr-
scheinlich | 5=
sehr wahr-
scheinlich |
|--|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| a.) Sie würden denken: „Die Firmenleitung mochte diesen Mitarbeiter eben nicht.“ | 1-----2-----3-----4-----5 | |
| b.) Sie würden denken: „Das Leben ist ungerecht.“ | 1-----2-----3-----4-----5 | |
| c.) Sie würden schweigen und diesem Mitarbeiter aus dem Weg gehen. | 1-----2-----3-----4-----5 | |
| d.) Sie wären unzufrieden und sehr darum bemüht, die Situation richtig zu stellen. | 1-----2-----3-----4-----5 | |

6.) Seit mehreren Tagen schieben Sie einen schwierigen Anruf vor sich her. In letzter Minute tätigen Sie diesen Anruf dann doch. Sie sind in der Lage, das Gespräch zu ihren Gunsten zu beeinflussen.

- | | 1=
nicht wahr-
scheinlich | 5=
sehr wahr-
scheinlich |
|---|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| a.) Sie würden denken: „Anscheinend bin ich überzeugender, als ich dachte.“ | 1-----2-----3-----4-----5 | |
| b.) Sie bereuen, den Anruf aufgeschoben zu haben. | 1-----2-----3-----4-----5 | |
| c.) Sie fühlen sich wie ein Feigling. | 1-----2-----3-----4-----5 | |
| d.) Sie würden denken: „Das habe ich gut gemacht.“ | 1-----2-----3-----4-----5 | |
| e.) Sie würden denken, dass sie keine Anrufe machen brauchen, zu denen sie sich gezwungen fühlen. | 1-----2-----3-----4-----5 | |

7.) Sie nehmen sich vor, eine Diät zu machen. In der nächsten Bäckerei, an der Sie vorbeigehen, kaufen Sie einige süße Gebäckteilchen.

- | | | |
|--|-------------|---------------------|
| | 1= | 5= |
| | nicht wahr- | sehr wahr- |
| | scheinlich | scheinlich |
| a.) Bei der nächsten Mahlzeit essen Sie zum Ausgleich Salat. | 1---- | 2-----3-----4-----5 |
| b.) Sie würden denken: „Die sahen zu gut aus, um einfach daran vorbeigehen zu können.“ | 1---- | 2-----3-----4-----5 |
| c.) Sie sind angewidert von ihrer fehlenden Willenskraft und Selbstkontrolle. | 1---- | 2-----3-----4-----5 |
| d.) Sie würden denken: „Einmal ist keinmal.“ | 1---- | 2-----3-----4-----5 |

8.) Während eines Spiels werfen Sie einen Ball. Dieser trifft einen Freund ins Gesicht.

- | | | |
|---|-------------|---------------------|
| | 1= | 5= |
| | nicht wahr- | sehr wahr- |
| | scheinlich | scheinlich |
| a.) Sie fühlen sich unfähig, da Sie noch nicht einmal in der Lage sind, einen Ball zu werfen. | 1---- | 2-----3-----4-----5 |
| b.) Sie würden denken, dass Ihr Freund das Fangen wohl noch ein bisschen üben muss. | 1---- | 2-----3-----4-----5 |
| c.) Sie würden denken: „Es war nur ein Versehen.“ | 1---- | 2-----3-----4-----5 |
| d.) Sie würden sich entschuldigen und dafür sorgen, dass es Ihrem Freund besser geht. | 1---- | 2-----3-----4-----5 |

9. Sie sind kürzlich aus ihrem Heimatort weggezogen, und alle Familienmitglieder haben Ihnen dabei geholfen. Einige Male mussten Sie sich Geld leihen, aber Sie haben es immer so schnell wie möglich zurückgezahlt.

- | | | |
|---|-------------|---------------------|
| | 1= | 5= |
| | nicht wahr- | sehr wahr- |
| | scheinlich | scheinlich |
| a.) Sie würden sich unerwachsen fühlen. | 1---- | 2-----3-----4-----5 |
| b.) Sie würden denken: „Ich hatte eben Pech.“ | 1---- | 2-----3-----4-----5 |
| c.) Sie würden den Gefallen so schnell wie möglich erwidern. | 1---- | 2-----3-----4-----5 |
| d.) Sie würden denken: „Ich bin eine vertrauenswürdige Person.“ | 1---- | 2-----3-----4-----5 |
| e.) Sie wären stolz darauf, Ihre Schulden zurückgezahlt zu haben. | 1---- | 2-----3-----4-----5 |

10.) Sie überfahren auf der Straße ein kleines Tier.

- | | 1=
nicht wahr-
scheinlich | 5=
sehr wahr-
scheinlich |
|--|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| a.) Sie würden denken, dass dieses Tier nicht auf die Straße gehört. | 1-----2-----3-----4-----5 | |
| b.) Sie würden denken: „Ich bin ein schrecklicher Mensch.“ | 1-----2-----3-----4-----5 | |
| c.) Sie würden es als Unfall ansehen. | 1-----2-----3-----4-----5 | |
| d.) Sie würden wahrscheinlich mehrmals darüber nachdenken und sich fragen, ob Sie es hätten verhindern können. | 1-----2-----3-----4-----5 | |

11.) Sie verlassen eine Prüfung und denken, Sie waren sehr gut. Dann finden Sie heraus, dass Sie schlecht waren.

- | | 1=
nicht wahr-
scheinlich | 5=
sehr wahr-
scheinlich |
|--|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| a.) Sie würden denken: „Es war ja nur eine Prüfung.“ | 1-----2-----3-----4-----5 | |
| b.) Sie würden denken: „Der Prüfer mag mich nicht.“ | 1-----2-----3-----4-----5 | |
| c.) Sie würden denken: „Ich hätte mehr lernen sollen.“ | 1-----2-----3-----4-----5 | |
| d.) Sie würden sich blöd vorkommen. | 1-----2-----3-----4-----5 | |

12.) Sie und eine Gruppe von Mitarbeitern haben sehr hart für ein Projekt gearbeitet. Ihr Chef wählt Sie für eine Prämie aus, da das Projekt ein großer Erfolg war.

- | | 1=
nicht wahr-
scheinlich | 5=
sehr wahr-
scheinlich |
|---|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| a.) Sie hätten den Eindruck, dass der Chef ziemlich kurzsichtig ist. | 1-----2-----3-----4-----5 | |
| b.) Sie fühlen sich alleine und getrennt von ihren Kollegen. | 1-----2-----3-----4-----5 | |
| c.) Sie hätten den Eindruck, dass sich Ihre harte Arbeit bezahlt gemacht hat. | 1-----2-----3-----4-----5 | |
| d.) Sie würden sich kompetent fühlen und wären stolz auf sich. | 1-----2-----3-----4-----5 | |
| e.) Sie würden denken, dass sie es nicht akzeptieren sollten. | 1-----2-----3-----4-----5 | |

13.) Während sie mit einer Gruppe von Freunden ausgehen, machen sie sich über einen Freund lustig, der nicht anwesend ist.

- | | | |
|--|-------------|---------------------|
| | 1= | 5= |
| | nicht wahr- | sehr wahr- |
| | scheinlich | scheinlich |
| a.) Sie würden denken: „Das war ja nur Spaß; das ist harmlos.“ | 1---- | 2-----3-----4-----5 |
| b.) Sie würden sich klein und mies vorkommen. | 1---- | 2-----3-----4-----5 |
| c.) Sie würden denken, dass dieser Freund vielleicht hätte dabei sein sollen, um sich verteidigen zu können. | 1---- | 2-----3-----4-----5 |
| d.) Sie würden sich entschuldigen und über die guten Seiten dieses Freundes reden. | 1---- | 2-----3-----4-----5 |

14.) Sie machen auf der Arbeit bei einer wichtigen Aufgabe einen großen Fehler. Andere Leute waren von Ihrer Arbeit abhängig, und Ihr Chef kritisiert sie.

- | | | |
|--|-------------|---------------------|
| | 1= | 5= |
| | nicht wahr- | sehr wahr- |
| | scheinlich | scheinlich |
| a.) Sie würden denken, Ihr Chef hätte die Erwartungen, die an Sie gestellt werden, klarer machen sollen. | 1---- | 2-----3-----4-----5 |
| b.) Sie würden sich am liebsten verstecken. | 1---- | 2-----3-----4-----5 |
| c.) Sie würden denken: „Ich hätte das Problem erkennen und lösen sollen.“ | 1---- | 2-----3-----4-----5 |
| d.) Sie würden denken: „Na ja, es ist eben niemand perfekt“. | 1---- | 2-----3-----4-----5 |

15. Sie helfen freiwillig bei einer lokalen Sportveranstaltung für behinderte Kinder. Die Arbeit erweist sich als frustrierend und zeitintensiv. Sie denken ernsthaft darüber nach, es hinschmeißen, aber dann sehen Sie, wie glücklich die Kinder sind.

- | | | |
|---|-------------|---------------------|
| | 1= | 5= |
| | nicht wahr- | sehr wahr- |
| | scheinlich | scheinlich |
| a.) Sie würden sich selbstsüchtig vorkommen und denken, sie wären im Grunde ein fauler Mensch. | 1---- | 2-----3-----4-----5 |
| b.) Sie hätten den Eindruck, dass sie gezwungen worden sind, etwas zu tun, was sie nicht tun wollten. | 1---- | 2-----3-----4-----5 |
| c.) Sie würden denken: „Leute, denen es nicht so gut geht, sollten mich etwas angehen.“ | 1---- | 2-----3-----4-----5 |
| d.) Sie würden sich großartig fühlen, daß Sie anderen geholfen haben. | 1---- | 2-----3-----4-----5 |
| e.) Sie wären sehr zufrieden mit sich. | 1---- | 2-----3-----4-----5 |

Debriefing Studie „Zwischenmenschlich II“

In dieser Studie sind wir daran interessiert, wie Menschen ihre Entschuldigungen und ihr reparatives Verhalten regulieren. Dazu leiten wir die Teilnehmer an, am ersten Termin dieser Studie über ein zwischenmenschliches Schuldlebnis nachzudenken und uns spontan von ihren Gedanken dazu, zu berichten. Anhand eines Codierungssystems werten wir aus, wie häufig und in welcher Reihenfolge die Teilnehmer Aspekte der Gegenwart oder der positiven Zukunft in Bezug auf dieses Schuldlebnis nennen, d.h. ob die Teilnehmer spontan eine der folgenden mentalen Selbstregulationsstrategien anwenden:

- (1) Schwelgen (mindestens ein Aspekt der positiven Zukunft, aber kein Aspekt der Gegenwart)
- (2) Grübeln (mindestens ein Aspekt der Gegenwart, aber kein Aspekt der positiven Zukunft)
- (3) Mentales Kontrastieren (mindestens ein Aspekt der Gegenwart sowie ein Aspekt der positiven Zukunft, wobei die Zukunft zuerst genannt wurde)
- (4) Reverses Kontrastieren (mindestens ein Aspekt der Gegenwart sowie ein Aspekt der positiven Zukunft, wobei die Gegenwart zuerst genannt wurde)

Am 2. Termin erheben wir, wie sich die Teilnehmer in Bezug auf ihr schuldauslösendes Ereignis verhalten haben und wie sich ihr reparatives Verhalten verändert hat.

☐ Ich wurde ausreichend über den Sinn der Studie informiert. Die Forscherin/der Forscher hat das Ziel der Studie erklärt. Fragen meinerseits wurden zufriedenstellend beantwortet.

Name (Vor- und Nachname): _____

Datum : _____

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Appendix 5**Questionnaire Study 4, Part 1, Male Victim Version (Paper and Pencil)**

Lieber Teilnehmer,

auf den nächsten Seiten bitten wir Sie, drei Vorfälle aus Ihrer gemeinsamen Vergangenheit als Paar zu schildern. Ihre Partnerin hat genau die gleiche Aufgabe. Anschließend werden wir ZUFÄLLIG einen der insgesamt sechs Vorfälle (drei von Ihnen und drei von Ihrer Partnerin) auswählen. Diesen ausgewählten Vorfall sollen Sie dann mit Ihrer Partnerin diskutieren.

Sollten wir einen Vorfall auswählen, den Sie auf keinen Fall diskutieren möchten, so respektieren wir diese Entscheidung natürlich.

Bitte nehmen Sie sich für die Bearbeitung der nächsten Seiten so viel Zeit wie Sie benötigen.

Jeder von uns hat bestimmte Erwartungen, wie unser Partner oder unsere Partnerin uns behandeln sollte. Aber unabhängig davon, wie gut sich Ihre Partnerin normalerweise verhält, ist es wahrscheinlich, dass sie von Zeit zu Zeit „die Regeln bricht“.

Zum Beispiel: sie erzählt einer Freundin etwas, das geheim bleiben sollte; sie macht etwas hinter Ihrem Rücken, das Sie verletzt; sie flirtet mit einer anderen Person oder Ihre Partnerin bricht auf andere Weise die Regeln Ihrer Partnerschaft.

Bitte beschreiben Sie drei Vorfälle, aus den letzten vier Monaten, in denen Ihre Partnerin die Regeln verletzt hat.

Nutzen Sie bitte für jeden Vorfall eine der drei folgenden Seiten (nur ein Vorfall pro Seite) und beschreiben Sie, wie der Vorfall abgelaufen ist.

1. Vorfall

Wann war der Vorfall circa:

Beschreibung des Vorfalls:

Wie schlimm war der Vorfall für Sie?

☐

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gar
nicht☐

1

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2

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3

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4

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5

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7

☐

8

sehr

Wie sehr ist der Vorfall für Sie bereits abgeschlossen?

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sehr

Wann war der Vorfall circa:

Wie schlimm war der Vorfall für Sie?

0 gar nicht 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 sehr

nicht

3. Vorfall

Wann war der Vorfall circa:

Beschreibung des Vorfalls:

Wie schlimm war der Vorfall für Sie?

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sehr

Wie sehr ist der Vorfall für Sie bereits abgeschlossen?

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8

sehr

Lieber Teilnehmer,

wir möchten Sie auf der folgenden Seite bitten, uns noch ein paar Fragen zu dem ausgewählten Vorfall zu beantworten.

Wir sind an Ihrer Meinung und Ihren Gedanken interessiert, es gibt keine falschen oder richtigen Antworten.

Besonders wichtig: Ihre Partnerin erhält niemals (zu keinem Zeitpunkt während oder nach der Studie) einen Einblick in diese Unterlagen.

Wie wichtig ist es Ihnen, den Vorfall mit Ihrer Partnerin zu klären?

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sehr

Für wie wahrscheinlich halten Sie es, dass sich der Vorfall mit Ihrer Partnerin klären lässt?

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nicht

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Für wie wahrscheinlich halten Sie es, dass Sie den Vorfall mit Ihrer Partnerin klären können?

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nicht

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sehr

Wie enttäuscht wären Sie, wenn Sie den Vorfall nicht klären könnten?

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nicht

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4

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7

sehr

Lieber Teilnehmer,

wir werden Ihnen jetzt den Film zeigen, den wir von Ihrer Diskussion gemacht haben. Jeweils nach zwei Minuten unterbrechen wir den Film und bitten Sie, Ihr eigenes Verhalten und das Verhalten Ihrer Partnerin zu beurteilen. Beziehen Sie sich bei Ihrer Beurteilung immer nur auf die zwei Minuten, die sie direkt zuvor gesehen haben.

Besonders wichtig: Ihre Partnerin erhält niemals (zu keinem Zeitpunkt während oder nach der Studie) einen Einblick in diese Unterlagen.

Beurteilen Sie Ihr eigenes Verhalten, in dem Ausschnitt, den Sie gerade gesehen haben.

Beurteilen Sie das Verhalten Ihrer Partnerin, in dem Ausschnitt, den Sie gerade gesehen haben.

[illegible]

Beurteilen Sie Ihr eigenes Verhalten, in dem Ausschnitt, den Sie gerade gesehen haben.

Beurteilen Sie das Verhalten Ihrer Partnerin, in dem Ausschnitt, den Sie gerade gesehen haben.

[illegible]

Beurteilen Sie Ihr eigenes Verhalten, in dem Ausschnitt, den Sie gerade gesehen haben.

Beurteilen Sie das Verhalten Ihrer Partnerin, in dem Ausschnitt, den Sie gerade gesehen haben.

[illegible]

Beurteilen Sie Ihr eigenes Verhalten, in dem Ausschnitt, den Sie gerade gesehen haben.

Beurteilen Sie das Verhalten Ihrer Partnerin, in dem Ausschnitt, den Sie gerade gesehen haben.

[illegible]

Ihre Partnerin erhält niemals (zu keinem Zeitpunkt während oder nach der Studie) einen Einblick in diese Unterlagen.

[illegible]

[illegible][illegible]

[illegible]

Im Laufe unseres Lebens passiert es immer wieder, dass eine andere Person etwas macht, was negative Auswirkungen für uns hat. Diese Tat kann negative Gedanken und Gefühle gegenüber der anderen Person zur Folge haben. Bitte überlegen Sie, wie Sie **normalerweise** auf solche negativen Ereignisse reagieren und kreuzen Sie für jede der folgenden Aussagen an, wie sehr diese auf Sie zutrifft (auf einer Skala von 1-7). Es gibt keine richtigen oder falschen Antworten.

[illegible]

Zum Abschluss bitten wir Sie, noch einige Angaben zu sich und Ihrer Lebenssituation zu machen.

Alter: _____

Geschlecht: ☐ männlich ☐ weiblich

Nationalität _____

Muttersprache: _____

Religionszugehörigkeit: _____

In der aktuellen Beziehung seit: _____

Zusammen wohnen seit: _____

Kinder: ☐ keine Kinder ☐ _____ Kinder

Vielen Dank, dass Sie an unserer Studie teilgenommen haben. Sie ist nun so gut wie abgeschlossen.

In zwei Wochen werden Sie per E-Mail einen Link erhalten, um an unserer Online-Nachbefragung teilzunehmen. Wir werden Ihnen erneut ein paar Fragen zur Diskussion und zur Studie allgemein stellen.

Es ist sehr wichtig für uns, dass Sie an der Online-Nachbefragung teilnehmen, denn nur so erhalten wir ein vollständiges Ergebnis für unsere Auswertung. Bitte nehmen Sie sich die Zeit, die Fragen online zu beantworten! Der gesamte Fragebogen wird nur circa 5 Minuten in Anspruch nehmen.

Zum Abschluss der Online-Nachbefragung erhalten Sie zudem weitere Informationen zu dieser Studie.

Questionnaire Study 4, Part 1, Male Perpetrator Version (Paper and Pencil)

Lieber Teilnehmer,

auf den nächsten Seiten bitten wir Sie, drei Vorfälle aus Ihrer gemeinsamen Vergangenheit als Paar zu schildern. Ihre Partnerin hat genau die gleiche Aufgabe. Anschließend werden wir ZUFÄLLIG einen der insgesamt sechs Vorfälle (drei von Ihnen und drei von Ihrer Partnerin) auswählen. Diesen ausgewählten Vorfall sollen Sie dann mit Ihrer Partnerin diskutieren.

Sollten wir einen Vorfall auswählen, den Sie auf keinen Fall diskutieren möchten, so respektieren wir diese Entscheidung natürlich.

Bitte nehmen Sie sich für die Bearbeitung der nächsten Seiten so viel Zeit wie Sie benötigen.

Jeder von uns hat bestimmte Erwartungen, wie unser Partner oder unsere Partnerin uns behandeln sollte. Aber unabhängig davon, wie gut sich Ihre Partnerin normalerweise verhält, ist es wahrscheinlich, dass sie von Zeit zu Zeit „die Regeln bricht“.

Zum Beispiel: sie erzählt einer Freundin etwas, das geheim bleiben sollte; sie macht etwas hinter Ihrem Rücken, das Sie verletzt; sie flirtet mit einer anderen Person oder Ihre Partnerin bricht auf andere Weise die Regeln Ihrer Partnerschaft.

Bitte beschreiben Sie drei Vorfälle, aus den letzten vier Monaten, in denen Ihre Partnerin die Regeln verletzt hat.

Nutzen Sie bitte für jeden Vorfall eine der drei folgenden Seiten (nur ein Vorfall pro Seite) und beschreiben Sie, wie der Vorfall abgelaufen ist.

1. Vorfall

Wann war der Vorfall circa:

Beschreibung des Vorfalls:

Wie schlimm war der Vorfall für Sie?

☐

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gar
nicht

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1

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sehr

Wie sehr ist der Vorfall für Sie bereits abgeschlossen?

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gar
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3

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4

☐

5

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6

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7

☐

8

sehr

2. Vorfall

Wann war der Vorfall circa:

Beschreibung des Vorfalls:

Wie schlimm war der Vorfall für Sie?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
gar nicht								sehr

Wie sehr ist der Vorfall für Sie bereits abgeschlossen?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
gar nicht								sehr

3. Vorfall

Beschreibung des Vorfalls:

0 gar nicht 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 sehr

0 gar nicht 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 sehr

Lieber Teilnehmer,

wir möchten Sie auf den folgenden Seiten bitten, noch etwas näher auf den ausgewählten Vorfall einzugehen und Ihre Gedanken dazu niederzuschreiben.

Wir sind an Ihrer Meinung und Ihren Gedanken interessiert, es gibt keine falschen oder richtigen Antworten.

Besonders wichtig: Ihre Partnerin erhält niemals (zu keinem Zeitpunkt während oder nach der Studie) einen Einblick in diese Unterlagen.

Bitte bearbeiten Sie eine Seite nach der anderen und blättern Sie währenddessen weder vor noch zurück.

Wie schlimm war der Vorfall für Sie?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
gar nicht								sehr

Wie sehr fühlen Sie sich für den Vorfall verantwortlich?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
gar nicht								sehr

Wie wichtig ist es Ihnen, den Vorfall mit Ihrer Partnerin zu klären?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
gar nicht						sehr

Für wie wahrscheinlich halten Sie es, dass sich der Vorfall mit Ihrer Partnerin klären lässt?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
gar nicht						sehr

Für wie wahrscheinlich halten Sie es, dass Sie den Vorfall mit Ihrer Partnerin klären können?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
gar nicht						sehr

Wie enttäuscht wären Sie, wenn Sie den Vorfall nicht klären könnten?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
gar nicht						sehr

[Bedingung Mental Contrasting]

Was wäre das Schönste daran, wenn Sie und Ihre Partnerin den Vorfall geklärt hätten?

Nennen Sie den **wichtigsten positiven Aspekt (1 Aspekt)**.

Wichtigster positiver Aspekt (1-2 Stichwörter):

Malen Sie sich diesen einen Aspekt in Ihren Gedanken so intensiv wie möglich aus.

Lassen Sie Ihren Gedanken freien Lauf! Nehmen Sie sich so viel Zeit und Raum, wie Sie zur Beschreibung dieser Szene benötigen. Bei Bedarf nutzen Sie bitte auch die Rückseite.

Was ist Ihr Hindernis, was ist es in Ihnen, das verhindern könnte, dass Sie den Vorfall mit Ihrer Partnerin klären?

Nennen Sie das **wichtigste Hindernis (1 Hindernis)**.

Wichtigstes Hindernis (1-2 Stichwörter):

Malen Sie sich dieses eine Hindernis in Ihren Gedanken so intensiv wie möglich aus.

Lassen Sie Ihren Gedanken freien Lauf! Nehmen Sie sich so viel Zeit und Raum, wie Sie zur Beschreibung dieser Szene benötigen. Bei Bedarf nutzen Sie bitte auch die Rückseite.

[Bedingung Indulging]

Was wäre das Schönste daran, wenn Sie und Ihre Partnerin den Vorfall geklärt hätten?

Nennen Sie den **wichtigsten positiven Aspekt (1 Aspekt)**.

Wichtigster positiver Aspekt (1-2 Stichwörter):

Malen Sie sich diesen einen Aspekt in Ihren Gedanken so intensiv wie möglich aus.

Lassen Sie Ihren Gedanken freien Lauf! Nehmen Sie sich so viel Zeit und Raum, wie Sie zur Beschreibung dieser Szene benötigen. Bei Bedarf nutzen Sie bitte auch die Rückseite.

Was wäre das Zweitschönste daran, wenn Sie und Ihre Partnerin den Vorfall geklärt hätten?

Nennen Sie den **zweitwichtigsten positiven Aspekt (1 Aspekt)**.

Zweitwichtigster positiver Aspekt (1-2 Stichwörter):

Malen Sie sich diesen einen Aspekt in Ihren Gedanken so intensiv wie möglich aus.

Lassen Sie Ihren Gedanken freien Lauf! Nehmen Sie sich so viel Zeit und Raum, wie Sie zur Beschreibung dieser Szene benötigen. Bei Bedarf nutzen Sie bitte auch die Rückseite.

Fühlen Sie sich gerade voller Energie?

☐

1

gar
nicht

☐

2

☐

3

☐

4

☐

5

☐

6

☐

7

sehr

Wie aktiv fühlen Sie sich gerade?

☐

1

gar
nicht

☐

2

☐

3

☐

4

☐

5

☐

6

☐

7

sehr

Wie angeregt fühlen Sie sich gerade?

☐

1

gar
nicht

☐

2

☐

3

☐

4

☐

5

☐

6

☐

7

sehr

Wie enttäuscht wären Sie, wenn Sie den Vorfall nicht mit Ihrer Partnerin klären würden?

☐

1

gar
nicht

☐

2

☐

3

☐

4

☐

5

☐

6

☐

7

sehr

Wie entschlossen sind Sie, den Vorfall mit Ihrem Ihrer Partnerin zu klären?

☐

1

gar
nicht

☐

2

☐

3

☐

4

☐

5

☐

6

☐

7

sehr

Wie schlimm wäre es für Sie, wenn Sie den Vorfall nicht mit Ihrer Partnerin klären würden?

☐

1

gar
nicht

☐

2

☐

3

☐

4

☐

5

☐

6

☐

7

sehr

Lieber Teilnehmer,

wir werden Ihnen jetzt den Film zeigen, den wir von Ihrer Diskussion gemacht haben. Jeweils nach zwei Minuten unterbrechen wir den Film und bitten Sie, Ihr eigenes Verhalten und das Verhalten Ihrer Partnerin zu beurteilen. Beziehen Sie sich bei Ihrer Beurteilung immer nur auf die zwei Minuten, die sie direkt zuvor gesehen haben.

Besonders wichtig: Ihre Partnerin erhält niemals (zu keinem Zeitpunkt während oder nach der Studie) einen Einblick in diese Unterlagen.

Beurteilen Sie Ihr eigenes Verhalten, in dem Ausschnitt, den Sie gerade gesehen haben.

Beurteilen Sie das Verhalten Ihrer Partnerin, in dem Ausschnitt, den Sie gerade gesehen haben.

[illegible]

Beurteilen Sie Ihr eigenes Verhalten, in dem Ausschnitt, den Sie gerade gesehen haben.

Beurteilen Sie das Verhalten Ihrer Partnerin, in dem Ausschnitt, den Sie gerade gesehen haben.

[illegible]

Beurteilen Sie Ihr eigenes Verhalten, in dem Ausschnitt, den Sie gerade gesehen haben.

Beurteilen Sie das Verhalten Ihrer Partnerin, in dem Ausschnitt, den Sie gerade gesehen haben.

[illegible]

Beurteilen Sie Ihr eigenes Verhalten, in dem Ausschnitt, den Sie gerade gesehen haben.

Beurteilen Sie das Verhalten Ihrer Partnerin, in dem Ausschnitt, den Sie gerade gesehen haben.

[illegible]

Lieber Teilnehmer,
zum Abschluss bitten wir Sie, noch ein paar Fragen über die Diskussion, sowie generelle
Fragen über sich und Ihre Partnerschaft zu beantworten.

Besonders wichtig:

Ihre Partnerin erhält niemals (zu keinem Zeitpunkt während oder nach der Studie) einen Einblick in diese Unterlagen.

1. Diese Fragen beziehen sich auf die Diskussion und den von Ihnen diskutierten Vorfall.

[illegible]

2. Bitte versetzen Sie sich in Ihre Partnerin. Was denken Sie, wie Ihre Partnerin Sie während der Diskussion wahrgenommen hat?

[illegible]

3. Diese Fragen beziehen sich auf Ihre Partnerschaft. Wenn Sie momentan an Ihre Partnerin und Ihre Beziehung denken, wie sehr treffen dann die folgenden Aussagen auf Sie zu. Bitte geben Sie Ihre Antwort auf einer Skala von 1-7.

[illegible]

[illegible]

Im Laufe unseres Lebens passiert es immer wieder, dass eine andere Person etwas macht, was negative Auswirkungen für uns hat. Diese Tat kann negative Gedanken und Gefühle gegenüber der anderen Person zur Folge haben. Bitte überlegen Sie, wie Sie **normalerweise** auf solche negativen Ereignisse reagieren und kreuzen Sie für jede der folgenden Aussagen an, wie sehr diese auf Sie zutrifft (auf einer Skala von 1-7). Es gibt keine richtigen oder falschen Antworten.

[illegible]

Zum Abschluss bitten wir Sie, noch einige Angaben zu sich und Ihrer Lebenssituation zu machen.

Alter: _____

Geschlecht: ☐ männlich ☐ weiblich

Nationalität _____

Muttersprache: _____

Religionszugehörigkeit: _____

In der aktuellen Beziehung seit: _____

Zusammen wohnen seit: _____

Kinder: ☐ keine Kinder ☐ _____ Kinder

Vielen Dank, dass Sie an unserer Studie teilgenommen haben. Sie ist nun so gut wie abgeschlossen.

In zwei Wochen werden Sie per E-Mail einen Link erhalten, um an unserer Online-Nachbefragung teilzunehmen. Wir werden Ihnen erneut ein paar Fragen zur Diskussion und zur Studie allgemein stellen.

Es ist sehr wichtig für uns, dass Sie an der Online-Nachbefragung teilnehmen, denn nur so erhalten wir ein vollständiges Ergebnis für unsere Auswertung. Bitte nehmen Sie sich die Zeit, die Fragen online zu beantworten! Der gesamte Fragebogen wird nur circa 5 Minuten in Anspruch nehmen.

Zum Abschluss der Online-Nachbefragung erhalten Sie zudem weitere Informationen zu dieser Studie.

Konkretes Verhalten, männlicher Partner.

[illegible]

Questionnaire Study 4, Part 2, Male Victim and Perpetrator Version (Online)

Sehr geehrter Teilnehmer,

Vielen Dank, dass Sie sich noch einmal Zeit nehmen, an dem letzten Teil unserer Studie teilzunehmen.

In diesem Teil bitten wir Sie, noch ein paar Fragen bezüglich des Vorfalls und bezüglich der Studie im Allgemeinen zu beantworten.

Bitte füllen Sie die Studie allein und möglichst in Ruhe aus. Beantworten Sie bitte alle Fragen so genau wie möglich. Es gibt keine richtigen oder falschen Antworten. Überlegen Sie bitte nicht, welche Antworten vielleicht den besten Eindruck machen könnten, sondern kreuzen Sie bitte das an, was für Sie gilt oder dem am nächsten kommt.

Besonders wichtig:

Ihre Partnerin erhält niemals (zu keinem Zeitpunkt während oder nach der Studie) einen Einblick in diese Unterlagen.

Die Befragung wird ca. 5 Minuten in Anspruch nehmen.

Klicken Sie nun auf Weiter, wenn Sie mit dem Fragebogen beginnen möchten.

Geben Sie auf einer Skala von 0 (gar nicht) bis 8 (sehr) an, wie sehr die folgenden Aussagen auf Sie zutreffen.

[illegible]

Versuchen Sie sich nun noch einmal an die Studie zu erinnern und folgende Fragen zu beantworten.

	stimmt nicht 1	2	3	4	5	6	stimmt völlig 7
Mir fiel es schwer, einen Vorfall für die Diskussion zu finden.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ich fand die Studie interessant.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ich habe mich während der Studie gelangweilt.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mir fiel die Diskussion vor der Kamera schwer.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ich habe mich während der Studie wohl gefühlt.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Was glauben Sie, was in der Studie untersucht werden soll?

Ist Ihnen sonst noch etwas während der Studie aufgefallen?

Möchten Sie uns noch etwas bezüglich der Studie mitteilen?

Aufklärung über den Inhalt der Studie:

In dieser Studie interessieren wir uns für den Versöhnungsprozess in einer Partnerschaft. Wir wollen herausfinden, welche Selbstregulationsstrategien effektiv zur Lösung eines Konfliktes beitragen können.

Dazu leiten wir die TeilnehmerInnen an, drei Vorfälle aus der Partnerschaft aufzuschreiben, bei denen der Partner / die Partnerin „die Regeln gebrochen“ hat. Anschließend wird zufällig einer dieser Vorfälle ausgewählt, den das Paar später gemeinsam diskutieren soll.

Einem der Partner wird dann zufällig eine der beiden Selbstregulationsstrategien zugeteilt:

(1) *Mentales Kontrastieren* (Zuerst wird über die gewünschte Zukunft nachgedacht: Was wäre das Schönste daran, wenn Sie und Ihre Partnerin/Ihr Partner den Vorfall geklärt hätten? Anschließend wird über die Hindernisse in der Realität nachgedacht: Was ist Ihr Hindernis, was ist es in Ihnen, das verhindern könnte, dass Sie den Vorfall mit Ihrer Partnerin/Ihrem Partner klären?)

(2) *Schwelgen* (Es wird nur über die gewünschte Zukunft nachgedacht: Was wäre das Schönste daran, wenn Sie und Ihre Partnerin/Ihr Partner den Vorfall geklärt hätten? Was wäre das Zweitschönste daran, wenn Sie und Ihre Partnerin/Ihr Partner den Vorfall geklärt hätten?)

Der andere Partner löst derweil eine Füllaufgabe (Aufmerksamkeitstest).

Im Anschluss werden beide Partner gemeinsam in einen Raum gebracht und sollen den ausgewählten Vorfall acht Minuten lang diskutieren.

Wir sind daran interessiert, ob die Manipulation der Selbstregulationsstrategie einen Einfluss auf das Wiedergutmachungsverhalten des einen Partners, das vergebende Verhalten des anderen Partners und den Blutdruck hat. Wir vermuten, dass Partner, die die Strategie des Mentalen Kontrastierens angewandt haben, den Vorfall angemessen lösen können. In vorherigen Studien hat sich das Mentale Kontrastieren als eine effektive Selbstregulationsstrategie bewährt.

In der Online-Nachbefragung wollen wir herausfinden, ob die Diskussion des Vorfalls dazu geführt hat, dass dieser vollständig geklärt wurde.

Bei weiteren Fragen wenden Sie sich per E-Mail an: jana.schrage@uni-hamburg.de