**Positive Psychology Summer Institute 2004 Research Summaries**

**Marc A. Brackett**
My program of research concerns two general issues in social/personality psychology: (a) the measurement, psychological significance, development, and social function human emotions, and (b) the structure and assessment of people's everyday behavior and personal environments.

Emotion-Related Abilities and Social Functioning
My current work on human emotions uses focuses on the links between emotion-related abilities (ERA), well-being, physical health, and the quality of interpersonal relationships. I am interested in: (a) developing performance measures of ERA (b) the links between ERA and social behavior (and mediators/moderators to explain the links), (c) the relationship between perceived and actual ERA (and mechanisms to explain the lack of correspondence between the two), and (d) testing whether ERA training can improve personal lives and academic/work performance. I am currently working on the Discrete Regulation of Emotion Accuracy Model (DREAM), which attempts to explain the associations (and outward manifestations) among people's beliefs and knowledge about their ERA and their actual ERA. I am also the principal investigator on a grant that will examine the short- and long-term effects of emotional literacy training in middle school children.

Environmental and Behavioral Expressions of Personality
My second line of inquiry focuses on a theoretical model of the Life Space (LS), a systematic description and objective measurement of people's everyday behavior and personal surroundings. This model divides the external environment into four broad domains: biological underpinnings, possessions, interactions, and group memberships. Recently, I developed a set of scales that provide a detailed picture of people's LS; these scales are hierarchically organized according to 7 global dimensions: Positive and Social Orientation, Sports Environment, Drug-Culture Environment, Media Consumer, Negative and Unhealthy Lifestyle, Music and Arts Achievement, and Intellectual Pursuits. Currently, I am conducting experiments to confirm the hypothesis that people are less likely to dissemble on LS scales as opposed to traditional self-report scales. I am also using the LS to develop a theory and framework to study personal effectiveness and social competence in children and adults. I am also collaborating with researchers in Canada, Croatia, Italy, Japan, Spain, and Switzerland on a number of research projects to examine cross-cultural differences.

Scholarly Publications (selected):

Brackett, M. A., Mayer, J. D., & Warner, R. M. (2004). Emotional intelligence and its relation to everyday behaviour. Personality and Individual Differences, 36, 1387-1402.

Brackett, M. A., & Mayer, J. D. (2003). Convergent, discriminant, and incremental validity of competing measures of emotional intelligence. Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 29, 1147-1158.

Maurer, M., & Brackett, M. A., & Plain, F. (2004). Emotional literacy in the middle school: A six-step program to promote social, emotional, and academic learning. Portchester, New York: National Professional Resources.

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**Elizabeth Dunn**
What makes people happy? What do people think will make them happy? How, when, and why do the answers to these two questions differ? In my research, I examine what people think will make them happy and what actually makes them happy, with a focus on the role of social relationships and interpersonal interactions.

Social relationships. In a three-year longitudinal field experiment, I contrasted the factors that people focused on when imagining their future happiness with the factors that actually ended up influencing their happiness. Specifically, I asked first-year students to predict how happy they would be living in each of 12 different dorms, and second and third-year students reported their actual happiness in these dorms. I found that participants placed excessive weight on physical features (e.g., location) in predicting how happy they would be living in each dorm, while virtually ignoring social features (e.g., sense of community) when imagining their future happiness. Yet, social features had a far greater impact on participants' actual happiness in the dorms than did physical features.

Interestingly, when asked explicitly about the determinants of their happiness, first-year students correctly predicted that social features of the dorm would be more important than physical features of the dorm. In imagining their future happiness, however, participants exhibited an isolation effect, placing undue weight on physical features because these features varied more across dorms than did social features. Thus, despite consciously recognizing that social features were more important to their happiness than physical features, participants neglected the former and focused excessively on the latter in predicting their future happiness, due to the isolation effect (see Dunn, Wilson, & Gilbert, 2003, PSPB).

Interpersonal interactions. Building on this work, I have become interested in how people misunderstand the affective consequences of everyday social interactions. To facilitate smooth interactions and make a positive impression on unfamiliar others, people are commonly faced with the demand to exhibit positive affect. In contrast, this social demand is relatively low when one interacts with close others; close relationship partners are expected to like us even when we act unlikable (Mills & Clark, 1994). Ironically, then, we may treat less familiar others to our best selves, while leaving family members, romantic partners, and close friends to deal with our less pleasant sides.

To the extent that acting pleasant makes people actually feel pleasant, putting one's best face forward should have beneficial consequences for mood. Yet, people may be relatively blind to the positive affective consequences of engaging in such self-presentation. I have investigated this idea in a series of studies that form part of my dissertation. Participants in long-term relationships were randomly assigned to interact with either their romantic partner or an opposite sex stranger from another couple. Forecasters predicted how good they would feel before or after each type of interaction, and experiencers reported their actual feelings before or after interacting with their romantic partner or the stranger.

In line with my hypotheses, I found that forecasters slightly overestimated the affective benefits of interacting with their romantic partner, while significantly underestimating the affective benefits of interacting with a stranger. All interactions were covertly audiotaped and rated by a team of coders. Interacting with a stranger led people to engage in greater positive self-presentation (as rated by the coders), which in turn produced greater unanticipated well-being. Thus, people systematically erred in estimating the emotional consequences of everyday social interactions because they failed to recognize that putting their best face forward would improve their mood.

Effort. The finding that people underestimate the emotional benefits of self-presentation may represent one instantiation of a broader paradox: effortful activities may be both more rewarding for experiencers and less appealing to forecasters. Engaging in self-presentation requires social effort, just as jogging requires physical effort and writing articles requires cognitive effort. Research on emotional well-being suggests that engaging in effortful activities (e.g., exercise, challenging work) has prodigious affective benefits. Yet, heading for the gym or the library may often seem less appealing than heading for the potato chips or the TV remote. Like the first-year students who recognized that good social relationships would make them happy but ignored this information when envisioning their future happiness, people may consciously recognize that exerting effort will enhance mood, but this conscious knowledge may fail to guide their implicit sense of what will feel good. Thus, I am interested in exploring why people are repelled by effortful, affectively rewarding activities, with an eye toward reducing this forecasting bias.

References:

Dunn, E. W., Wilson, T.D., & Gilbert, D. T. (2003). Location, location, location: The misprediction of satisfaction in housing lotteries. Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 29, 1421-1432.

Wilson, T. D., & Dunn, E. W. (2004). Self-Knowledge: Its limits, value, and potential for improvement. Annual Review of Psychology, 54, 493-518.

**Daniel Heller**
I am interested in understanding personality/self dynamics, and the antecedents of people’s well-being.

Personality/Self dynamics
Is a mother who is also a CEO, the same “person” at home and work? Is a Chinese-Canadian individual the same “person” when different cultural cues are present? I am currently studying both situational (roles, goals, salient cultural identities) and dispositional (self-monitoring, independent/interdependent self-construals) antecedents of cross-situational variability in self-concept. For instance, in a recent experiment, I examined the influence of salient social roles (friend vs. student) on self-concept using a priming methodology. Undergraduate students, who were reminded of their experiences as a friend, subsequently rated themselves as more agreeable, and were also more likely to cooperate in a Prisoner’s Dilemma task, as compared to participants who were reminded of their experiences as a student. I am also currently examining, via a diary study, the link between the pursuit of approach goals as compared to avoidance goals with respect to “state” neuroticism and extraversion. Finally, I am also examining the implications of this cross-situational variability on both hedonic and eudemonic well-being. My overarching theoretical goal is to reframe the person-situation debate in terms of an interactionist approach combining the study of person (personality) and situational factors (roles, cultures).

Well-being
Basic temperamental tendencies may manifest themselves in people’s satisfaction with different aspects of their lives. In several studies, I have tested this idea and examined which psychological processes account for these personality-satisfaction associations. In one study, I established a substantial confounding role for personality traits in the relationship between job and life satisfaction (Heller et al., 2002). In a second related study—which was recently published in Psychological Bulletin—Heller, Watson and Ilies (2004) draw from diverse literatures to examine the relative merit of personality and situational factors in satisfaction. Finally, using a diary design, I investigated how between-person (e.g., personality) and within-person processes (e.g., spillover, life events) and their interactions influence fluctuations in people’s satisfaction (Heller & Watson, in press). I am particularly enthusiastic about this new type of research, as it will enrich considerably our understanding of affective and behavioral carryover processes between different life domains, and our understanding of the role played by personality traits in these processes.

Heller, D., & Watson, D. (in press) The dynamic spillover of satisfaction between work and marriage: The role of time and mood. Journal of Applied Psychology.

Heller, D., Watson, D. , & Ilies, R. (2004). The Role of Person vs. Situation in Life Satisfaction: A Critical Examination. Psychological Bulletin, 130, 574-600.

Heller, D., Judge, T. A., & Watson, D. (2002). The Confounding Role of Personality and Trait Affectivity in the Relationship between Job and Life Satisfaction. Journal of Organizational Behavior, 23, 815-835.

**Eduardo Jauregui**
Since 1993, I have devoted many of my research and professional efforts to one of the most baffling phenomena of human behaviour: the sense of humour. What is laughter? How may the cause(s) of spontaneous laughter be best defined? How should we classify the different types of humour? What are the physical, psychological and social effects of laughter and humour? What meanings do people attribute to instances of laughter and humour? In what ways can laughter and humour be used strategically? What methodologies are most appropriate for the study of these questions?

Recently I have become particularly interested in the issue of the purported therapeutic and personal growth benefits of humour: Can laughter and/or humour contribute to human health and growth? How and in what ways? How can these possibilities be applied to promote well-being? This has drawn me closer to the research aims and efforts of the Positive Psychology field. At the 2004 PPSI, I presented the general theory of humour I have developed over the past ten years: the dramaturgical model of laughter. Though sharing the main insights of several major and lesser-known thinkers (including Aristotle, Bergson, Pirandello, and E.F. Carritt), this model represents a thoroughly novel approach within the current theoretical landscape of humour studies. The theory can be summarized as follows:

I experience spontaneous laughter when I notice some fact or event that discredits the character played by a social actor, unless the discredit is my own or other relevant aspects of the scene engage my attention or my emotions.

I have applied this general causal explanation to the full range of amusing stimuli, from spontaneous mishaps to comedy, verbal wit, nonsense and tickling. Humour is infinitely varied, yet I argue that this variety can be derived from the natural differences in discredit situations and in the way people witness them. I believe that this model not only has the potential for unifying and integrating the field of humour studies, but also provides a key for understanding at least some of the therapeutic benefits attributed to laughter and humour. For example, numerous spiritual and philosophical disciplines such as Buddhism and Yoga have emphasized the importance of adopting the attitude of a "passive spectator" towards one's own life events, thoughts, emotions and the world at large. Various techniques of meditative practice essentially involve such passive self-observation. This attitude, which reportedly allows the individual to achieve greater emotional balance, well-being and contentment, displays an intriguing resemblance to the Goffmanian notion of life as theatrical performance. The dramaturgical theory of laughter would predict that for a person who applied such a perspective, all human life would turn from drama to comedy, as no aspect of "reality" would be taken "seriously" anymore. It would predict, in other words, that those who practiced such an attitude should greatly expand their sense of humour. And indeed the most renowned practitioners of "mindfulness" or the "spectator attitude" -the Buddha and other celebrated mystics-are often pictured or described as smiling or laughing. Eastern and mystical spiritual traditions in general tend to value playfulness and humour, as witnessed by amusing sufi parables, the buffoonery of Zen masters, or the surrealist logic of Taoist writings.

Jauregui, Eduardo (1998) Situating Laughter: Amusement, Laughter and Humor in Everyday Life. Unpublished Ph.D. thesis. European University Institute, Florence, Italy.

Website: [www.humorpositivo.com](http://www.humorpositivo.com/)

**Kareem Johnson**
My research focuses on how emotional states, particularly positive emotions, alter the way we perceive people of a different race. My research is inspired by Barbara Fredrickson's broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions, as well as my own experiences as a bi-racial individual with how people perceive race as a category. In a series of experiments I have shown that positive emotions appear to make individuals less sensitive to racial differences. One goal of my research is to show that positive emotions broaden the mind and make us race blind.

Much of my research has studied the influence positive emotions on the own-race bias in face recognition. The own-race bias (ORB) refers to an empirical finding that it is more difficult to recognize faces of a different race that faces of one's own race. This is colloquially referred to as the "they all look the same to me" effect. The ORB is a highly robust and highly replicated finding, and the phenomena is a practical concern for those interested in the accuracy of eyewitness testimony since cross-race identifications are particularly unreliable.

Because positive emotions have been shown to lead to more inclusive categorizations, a superordinate or common in-group identity, and more holistic attentional processes (related to facial recognition), I hypothesized the positive emotions may moderate the ORB. In two experiments, Caucasian participants were exposed to images of Black and White faces as part of a recognition test. Emotions (joy, fear, or a neutral state) were induced with film clips prior to the learning and testing phases of the recognition task. The result revealed that experienced positive emotion before learning the faces or being tested on the faces, eliminated the own-race bias relative to the neutral and negative emotions. Positive emotions dramatically improved recognition for the opposite race faces, eliminating any recognition difference. Subsequently, I have shown similar effects of positive emotions eliminating the ORB for Asian faces as well.

Generally, race is one highly salient social category. Racial differences are perceived before other social differences such as gender, age, or emotional expression, in fact recent evoked-response potential studies (ERP) have shown that the brain is 50% faster responding to racial differences than gender differences. However, I have also shown that positive emotions appear to decrease the salience of race. Participants performed a racial categorization task after a film-based emotion induction (joy, fear, or a neutral state). The racial categorization task required participants to categorize a set of morphed facial stimuli as either White or Black (the facial stimuli were 20%, 40%, 50%, 60%, and 80% morphs along a continuum of White to
Black). The results showed that participants receiving a positive emotion were significantly less able to categorize by race, suggesting that positive emotions reduced the salience of racial characteristics.

In other work, I have linked the reduction of the ORB to changes in holistic processing and positive emotion. Using a global-local reaction time task in combination with a facial recognition task, I have shown that improvement in holistic processing predict lower levels of ORB, and that the relationship between holistic processing and ORB is mediated by changes in positive affect. Admittedly, my line of research is just beginning to unravel the links between emotions and racial perceptions. In the future I hope to further elucidate these links and explore possible underlying mechanisms for how emotions interact with racial perceptions, including possible changes in automatically activated attitudes, or changes in brain activity such as decreased amygdala activation and/or increased activation of the fusiform face area (FFA) in response to Black faces.

**Markku Jokisaari**
My research interests cover three areas: (i) social networks and social capital, (ii) work socialization and (iii) personal agency and subjective well-being

Social Networks and Social Capital
One approach to examining the embeddedness of individuals' action and personal agency in their social and interpersonal contexts is to use the concept of social capital, which refers to individuals' social networks and related resources. Furthermore, underlying the concept is the suggestion that individuals benefit from their social networks and related resources in many ways. For example, social networks may offer resources that play an important role in an individual's goal setting and attainment.

Current research is related to young adults who were facing the transition to working life (Jokisaari & Nurmi, in press). Research questions included to what extent does young adults' goal-related social capital contribute to their success in the transition to working life.

Upcoming research will focus on the role of adolescents' social networks and related resources in educational and occupational careers. Network-measurements will be used to get information on adolescents' social ties concerning education and future career planning. Research questions include, first, whether network-based resources contribute to adolescents' aspiration levels and self-efficacy beliefs concerning education and occupational career. Second, to what extent the network structure, such as network constraint, is associated with adolescents' educational aspirations? Third, whether network-level perceived efficacy is associated with adolescents' self-efficacy beliefs. Furthermore, I have work in progress with Jukka Vuori which is related to the role of interorganizational networks in diffusion of innovations.

Work socialization
In work socialization literature a pivotal assumption is that work socialization and related adjustment process evolve over time and newcomers' job attitudes and behaviors change during organizational entry. My interest is to model longitudinal changes in newcomers' proximal and distal work adjustment during organizational entry. In addition, I will examine to what extent personal agency, i.e. personal work goals and proactive behaviors, and supervisor relations are related to these changes. According to interactionist view work adjustment should accelerate when both newcomer and other socialization agents, such as supervisor, are active.

Personal agency and Subjective Well-Being
It has been proposed that goal attainment is an important criterion for successful life course development and consequently for subjective well-being. However, not all goals are attained and some goal attainments may have unintended consequences. These aspects of goal-directed action have recently been conceptualized as life regrets or other related concepts. The research in the field has typically focused on the relation between regrets or unattained goals, and well-being. I have focused on examining age differences in regrets, and the ways in which regrets are associated with individuals' subjective well-being (Jokisaari, 2003)

References

Jokisaari M.& Nurmi J.-E. (in press). Company Matters: Goal-related Social Capital in the Transition to Working Life. Journal of Vocational Behavior.

Jokisaari M. (2003). Regret appraisals, age and subjective well-being. Journal of Research in Personality, 37, 487-503.

**Thao Le**
My research explores three areas: 1) the universality of wisdom, 2) the cultural and individual characteristics associated with wisdom, and 3) the circumstances or experiences that facilitate the development of wisdom. Although theorists, philosophers, and researchers have noted how conceptualizations of wisdom have been influenced by the cultural standards and ideals of the time, few studies have explored wisdom cross-culturally. In my dissertation study, I compared two different conceptualizations and operational definitions of wisdom, practical wisdom and transcendent wisdom, that are anchored on the historical focus of Western and Eastern traditions, respectively.

In a sample of 97 European American and 102 Vietnamese middle-aged and older, community adults, confirmatory factor analyses with measurement invariance provided support
for two distinct, but correlated wisdom factors from independent ratings of responses to personal questions and hypothetical vignettes. For practical wisdom, the scoring criteria included factual and procedural knowledge, lifespan contextualism, relativistic thinking, and tolerance for uncertainty (adopted from the Berlin Wisdom Project); for transcendent wisdom, the scoring criteria included self-knowledge, detachment, integration, and self-transcendence. Construct and convergent validity was supported, although ethnic differences in the relational pattern existed.

Both wisdom factors correlated strongly with other wisdom indicators including interviewer’s and insider’s impression, except for practical wisdom and interviewer’s impression in the Vietnamese sample. My research also explores the role of cultural syndromes, particularly individualism (Le & Levenson, in press; Le, 2003), cultural values (Le, 2004), as well as mystical and challenging experiences (Le, 2004; Levenson, Jennings, Le, & Aldwin, in press).

Contrary to the Western emphasis on the self, it seems that the development of wisdom, particularly transcendent wisdom, may require experiences of no-self (or de-emphasis of self) as discussed in contemplative and spiritual traditions. As such, my future research is further exploring the level and depth of transformative experiences, both challenging as well as spiritual/mystical ones, in the development of wisdom, with cross-cultural and subgroup considerations.

Le, T.N. (2004). A cross-cultural study of practical and transcendent wisdom. Doctoral Dissertation. University of California, Davis.

Le, T.N. (November, 2003). Culture, personality, and wisdom. Poster presentation at the Annual Meeting of the Gerontological Society of America. San Diego, CA.

Le, T.N., & Levenson, M.R. (in press). Self-transcendence as wisdom: What’s love & individualism got to do with it? Journal of Research in Personality.

Levenson, M.R., Jennings, P.A., Le, T.N., & Aldwin, C.M. (in press). Contemplative psychologies as theories of self-transcendence in adulthood. In Wulf (Ed.), Handbook for Psychology of Religion.

**Alex Linley**
My research interests began with a focus on posttraumatic growth, or how people change and grow positively following trauma. I conducted a systematic review of the literature, which was published in the Journal of Traumatic Stress (Linley & Joseph, 2004a), as well as collaborating on a review of the literature dealing with religion and spirituality, and posttraumatic growth (Shaw, Joseph, & Linley, in press). These followed a paper I had written which sought to integrate theoretically the literature on wisdom with the posttraumatic growth literature (Linley, 2003). I argued that the development of wisdom following trauma was the result of three particular factors: the recognition and acceptance of human limitations, with death being the ultimate limitation; the recognition and management of uncertainty; and the integration of affect and cognition (meaning that people could be in touch with their feelings without being at the mercy of them).

In terms of empirical work, my research has explored posttraumatic growth in therapists (Linley, Joseph, & Loumidis, in press), as well as funeral directors and disaster workers, the associations between distress and growth in people who have been severely traumatized, the role of emotions in growth, and the role of Yalom's ultimate existential concerns in people's adaptation to trauma and adversity (these studies are under review at the time of writing). I have also co-authored a paper developing the organismic valuing theory of growth, which is currently under second review at the Review of General Psychology (Joseph & Linley, 2004).

This work in posttraumatic growth has led me to explore the humanistic-existential concept of "authenticity", and it was this work that I presented at the Summer Institute. Authenticity is about knowing oneself and being true to oneself, and while it has been criticized from some quarters because the idea of a "true self" is rejected in favor of the situational construction of a self, other schools of thought have posited authenticity as a central aspect of human well-being. Indeed, it features within the VIA Classification as one of the 24 character strengths. My work in this area is in its early stages, where I am engaged with the development and initial validation of an Authenticity Scale.

More broadly, my research interests are focused on understanding and promoting optimal human functioning, and to this end, I have been a leading advocate for positive psychology in the United Kingdom, editing a special issue of The Psychologist on the subject (Linley, Joseph, & Boniwell, 2003). I have also worked to promote knowledge of the applications of positive psychology, and to this end, edited the volume "Positive Psychology in Practice" (Linley & Joseph, 2004b).

References

Joseph, S., & Linley, P. A. (2004). Positive adjustment to threatening events: The organismic valuing theory of growth through adversity. Manuscript under review.

Linley, P. A. (2003). Positive adaptation to trauma: Wisdom as both process and outcome. Journal of Traumatic Stress, 16, 601-610.

Linley, P. A., & Joseph, S. (2004a). Positive change following trauma and adversity: A review. Journal of Traumatic Stress, 17, 11-21.

Linley, P. A., & Joseph, S. (Eds.). (2004b). Positive psychology in practice. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

Linley, P. A., Joseph, S., & Boniwell, I. (2003). In a positive light. [Special Issue on Positive Psychology]. The Psychologist, 16 (3).

Linley, P. A., Joseph, S., & Loumidis, K. (in press). Trauma work, sense of coherence, and positive and negative changes in therapists. Psychotherapy and Psychosomatics.

Shaw, A., Joseph, S., & Linley, P. A. (in press). Religion, spirituality, and posttraumatic growth: A systematic review. Mental Health, Religion, and Culture.

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**Bjorn Meyer**
My research focuses broadly on three topics: (1) The benefits of positive expectancies and active coping strategies among individuals suffering from mental disorders, (2) cognitive and motivational processes in bipolar disorder, and (3) attachment theoretical models of personality disorders.

With regard to the first focus, I have studied how positive expectancies among depressed outpatients can lead to the formation of better therapeutic alliances, which in turn results in better treatment results. For example, in a reanalysis of data from the NIMH collaborative depression project, we found that patients who believed that treatment would be effective were more motivated to actively engage with the intervention, regardless of which modality they received. Such engagement paid off in terms of greater reductions in depressive symptoms by the end of treatment (Meyer et al., 2002). In other studies, I examined how positive expectancies can be beneficial among patients with breast cancer, particularly when combined with certain temperament dispositions (Carver, Meyer, & Antoni, 2000), or how active coping strategies benefit patients with diagnoses such as schizophrenia or major depressive disorder (Meyer, 2001).

With regard to the second focus, I am interested in studying how individuals at risk for bipolar disorder appraise, and respond to, situations that differ in degree of relative threat versus incentive. In one study, we found that individuals who are vulnerable to bipolar disorder tend to emotionally "overreact" to incentives or desirable events (Meyer, Johnson, & Carver, 1999). This tendency may be related to their more sensitive or excitable behavioral activation system (BAS). In another study, we found that BAS sensitivity predicted increases in manic symptoms over time among bipolar patients (Meyer, Johnson, & Winters, 2001). In a more recent study, we found that hypomanic symptoms related to tendencies to appraise personal goals differently (Meyer, Beevers, & Johnson, 2004). Those with more hypomanic symptoms viewed their goals as more controllable, easily attainable, and less stressful (whereas the opposite was true for depression).

With regard to the third focus, I am interested in exploring how personality disorders can be conceptualized from the perspective of attachment theory, and how attachment styles relate empirically to personality disorder traits and symptoms. In one study, we found that personality disorders generally were strongly associated with insecure attachment, and both attachment styles and personality disorder features appeared to complicate the course of treatment over six months (Meyer, Pilkonis, Proietti, Heape, & Egan, 2001). In more recent work, we have articulated in a series of book chapters how attachment theory can inform the process of psychotherapy (Meyer & Pilkonis, 2002) and how personality disorders can be understood from an attachment perspective (Meyer & Pilkonis, 2004).

In addition to these foci, I am conducting research on various positive-psychology-related topics. These studies examine, for example, (a) how attachment styles and temperament function as predictors of empathic, positive responses to relationship threats; (b) how the fulfillment of basic psychological needs is necessary for well-being at the workplace; (c) how cultures (Lybia vs. the UK) differ in need-fulfillment and psychological well-being; and (d) how emotional intelligence (as measured by self-report scales) can predict reactions to emotion-eliciting scenarios, even when controlling for alternative predictors of mood responses.

Selected References

Meyer, B., Johnson, S. L., & Winters, R. (2001). Responsiveness to threat and incentive in bipolar disorder: Relations of the BIS/BAS scales with symptoms. Journal of Psychopathology and Behavioral Assessment, 23, 133-143.

Meyer, B., & Pilkonis, P. A. (2004). An attachment model of personality disorder. In J. F. Clarkin & M. F. Lenzenweger (Eds.). Major theories of personality disorder (2nd ed.), pp. 231-281. New York: Guilford Press.

Meyer, B., Pilkonis, P. A., & Beevers, C. B. (2004). What’s in a (neutral) face? Personality disorders, attachment styles, and the appraisal of ambiguous social cues. Journal of Personality Disorders, 18, 320-336.

Meyer, B., Pilkonis, P. A., Krupnick, J. L., Egan, M., Simmens, S., & Sotsky, S. (2002). Treatment expectancies, patient alliance, and outcome: Further analyses from the NIMH Treatment of Depression Collaborative Research Program. Journal of Consulting and Clinica
l Psychology, 70, 1051-1055.

Meyer, B., Beevers, C. G., & Johnson, S. L. (2004). Goal appraisals and vulnerability to bipolar disorder: A personal projects analysis. Cognitive Therapy and Research, 28, 173-182.

Link to my webpage: [www.roehampton.ac.uk/staff/bjoernmeyer](http://www.roehampton.ac.uk/staff/bjoernmeyer)

**Eshkol Rafaeli, Ph.D.**
I am a clinical psychologist, and my two main areas of research are relationships and affective experience. In the former, I am examining ways of improving the skillfulness of support offered by partners, and am studying the processes by which supportive and hindering acts exert their effect in committed couples. In the latter, I study how affect is organized, how different components of it fluctuate over time, and how these different components behave in both distressed and non-distressed groups. A third area of research addresses the concept of self-complexity as a social-cognitive personality factor.

Support and Hindrance in Committed Relationships

Using daily diary methods, my colleagues, students, and I are studying how positive and negative relationship acts (i.e., support and hindrance) exert their effects on partners in committed relationships. Our initial findings suggest that hindrance has a broader and more powerful effect than does support, and that some individuals (particularly those with
insecure attachment) may be more attentive or more exposed to such hindrance. But another line of work in our lab suggests that this dominance of hindrance over support may be reversible. Specifically, it may be due to well-meaning but ineffective attempts at support, which could be made more effective with proper training or attention. To test this idea, we are developing an intervention program to increase the skillfulness of support in committed relationships.

Affective Structure (and affective experience in borderline personality disorder)

Can positive and negative moods be experienced simultaneously, in mixed states? Do they differ in their temporal patterns and in the discreteness with which they're felt? Our mood diary studies have shown that the answer to all of these is yes. For example, we've found that individuals differ on a dimension we've called "affective synchrony", which reflects the tendency to experience positive and negative moods in sync. Some appear to feel either positive or negative but never both, while others seem to feel more positive and more negative at the same times. This project, and others like it, speak to the basic question of the structure of affect, and support the notion that any examination of mood (or core affect) must take into consideration at least two separate components of positivity and negativity, which are not always in opposition.

A major project in our lab extends this research into the study of psychopathology, and specifically of Borderline personality disorder (BPD). BPD is a disorder characterized by extreme lability in mood, relationships, self-image, and behavior. With funding from the BPD Research Foundation, we are using the tools developed in diary studies of affect to investigate whether individuals with this disorder are characterized by particular patterns of mood or affect fluctuation. This project is conducted in collaboration with researchers at McLean Hospital
and at the New York State Psychiatric Institute.

Self-Concept Structure

In a third line of research, I've been interested in Linville's self-complexity model (SC; 1985, 1987), and examining the effects of structural features of the self. The idea that cognitive structure plays a part in psychopathology is implicit in the cognitive models of depression, anxiety, and other disorders. For example, Beck's (1967) cognitive model implicates "depressive schemata", defined as "organized knowledge structures". My studies on SC included a novel psychometric analysis of trait-sort data, a meta-analysis of 70 studies examining the relation
between SC and well-being, and two prospective diathesis-stress studies. This work challenged existing SC research, demonstrating the need for a multi-faceted SC concept.

Papers

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**Patrizia Steca**
My research interests mainly are on subjective well-being (SWB, as defined by Ed Diener) and psychological well-being (PWB, as defined by Carol Ryff) along the life span. I devoted most of my doctoral dissertation to the identification of SWBs and PWBs indicators and to the development and validation in the Italian context of instruments aimed to measures them, through the classical test theory and item response theory approaches.

For both SWB and PWB, I analyzed sex and age differences, and I also explored the influences exerted by socio-demographic as well as personality factors along the life span. With regard SWB I focused my interest on life satisfaction, and in my recent research I am exploring relationships between general evaluations and specific evaluations relative to significant life contexts, as family, job, and leisure.

I am also working on the development of a new conceptualization of the cognitive SWB component. Recent results tested the validity of a construct, positivity, that is a latent dimension that lies at the core of positive evaluations about oneself (self-esteem), life (life satisfaction), and the future (optimism). I am working on the further validation of this construct on various types of populations.

As part of my collaboration on an Italian longitudinal project, aimed to examine the main aspect of the transition from childhood to adolescence and from adolescence to young adulthood, I am also working on the identification of antecedents and determinants of SWB and PWB, with a special focus on peer and family relationships.

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**Simine Vazire**
My research interests cover three broad areas: accuracy and bias in self-perception, personality assessment methods, and personality manifestations in everyday life.

Self-Perception
Traditional research on self-perception has focused on the biases in people's self-views and self-schemas (e.g., self-enhancement bias). Surprisingly, very little research on self-perception actually measures the accuracy of people's self-perceptions, or the correlates of accurate self-perception. Thus, many questions remain unanswered: Are people with more accurate self-views also healthier? What are the antecedents and consequences of accurate self-perception? How can self-views become more accurate?

My goals in this research area are: 1) to develop methodological tools to measure the accuracy of people's self-perception (Vazire & Gosling, 2003), 2) to examine the correlates of accurate self-perception (particularly the health correlates, broadly defined), and 3) to identify factors that increase self-awareness (accurate self-perception) and examine how increases in self-awareness affect health.

Personality Assessment Methods
Although self-reports are the most commonly-used method in personality assessment, little is known about how self-reports compare to other methods. In my work with Sam Gosling, Matthias Mehl, Jason Rentfrow, and James Pennebaker, I have examined the accuracy of self-reports, ratings by informants, and behavior codings (Vazire, Gosling, Dickey, & Schapiro, in
press). My goal in this research area is to identify which source of information is the best for assessing various traits. For example, self-reports may be best for assessing affective traits (e.g., neuroticism) but reports by friends may be the best method for assessing observable traits (e.g., assertiveness).

Manifestations of Personality in Everyday Life
Why does personality matter? How is personality manifested in behavior? One way to examine the consequences of personality is to determine how personality affects our everyday lives. What can we learn about someone's personality from the traces they leave behind in their environment? In my work with Sam Gosling, Jason Rentfrow, and Laura Naumann, we have examined how personality is manifested in people's websites (Vazire & Gosling, 2004), physical appearance, clothing, and offices.

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**Helen Watt**
Helen is interested in affective, cognitive and social bases for academic choices and has developed two large-scale longitudinal research programs related to this. Key questions for the first project examine (1) gendered achievement-related outcomes in maths and English for Australian secondary school students; (2) key social-cognitive predictors of those outcomes; (3) interrelations between predictors over time; and (4) qualitative exploration of sources for gendered maths self-perceptions. The second program is in collaboration with Dr Paul Richardson from Monash University and investigates (1) motivations for selecting teaching as a career; (2) teaching self-efficacy; and (3) experiences of beginning teachers. She is currently a research scientist at the University of Michigan.

Specific areas of interest include:
- gendered adolescent motivations in mathematics and English
- gendered motivation processes leading to gendered educational and occupational outcomes
- ontology and ontogeny of adolescents' ability beliefs and values in mathematics
- motivations and self-efficacy for beginning teachers
- measurement and scale construction
- mixed-methods research

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LINKS
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