Does Self-Regulation Predict Relationship Quality?
Evaluating the Effects of Cognitive Self-Regulation and Emotion Regulation on Various Social Outcomes

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References
Abstract

OBJECTIVE - This study examines how self regulation and emotion regulation impact various social outcomes.

HYPOTHESIS - I hypothesize that greater self regulation is associated with more optimal social outcomes (H1), measured by considering self-reports about various aspects of a person’s social life. I also hypothesize that emotion regulation would mediate the association between self regulation and satisfaction of social life (H2).

METHODS - Relationships between self regulation, emotion regulation, and numerous social outcomes were explored across three ICPSR datasets using bivariate correlation, simple linear regression, factor analysis, multiple linear regression, and mediation analysis.

RESULTS - In study 1, I found that self regulation constructs were significantly associated with self-reported quality of relationships, social integration, and the length of one’s romantic relationship. In study 2, I found that proxies for self regulation, cognitive control and self control, were significantly associated with affectual solidarity shown to family, friends, and partner, frequency of contact with friends, feelings of closeness to others, and trust between self and friends. In study 3, I found that self regulation was significantly associated with lower assessments of the probability of separating from a partner, contact with family and friends, and fewer disagreements with one’s partner. Across all studies, emotion regulation was found to not be consistently statistically significant mediator between self regulation and social outcome.

CONCLUSIONS - I found self regulation to be a significant predictor of the quality of one’s relationships and the degree to which one is socially integrated within their community. Findings also indicate that emotion regulation does not have a significant effect on these social outcomes nor does it mediate the relationship between self regulations and social outcome.
I. Introduction

This paper explores the associations between an individual’s self regulation and emotional regulation, and various social outcomes. Consider any friends or acquaintances of yours who have a hard time motivating themselves to ever get things done. Is there any systematic difference in the way people with this quality also approach or treat their friends? What about friends who are always ahead of the game, constantly working and preparing for what’s next – do they put as much effort into their friendships and romantic relationships as they do their own personal endeavors? These are both questions that answer the question of how a person’s self regulation affects the quality of their social relationships. Similarly, consider anyone you know who is prone to emotional outbursts or who has a hard time hiding their anger or frustration. Do they categorically have a hard time remaining in long term relationships? Do they reliably react poorly to bad news, have a hard time confronting others, or lose their temper frequently? In contrast, is a person who is so emotionally-self restraining difficult to connect with and relate to? As I considered my classmates and teammates at Northwestern, these are the questions I started to ponder. I felt that there might be something systematic about the ways in which my friends on both sides of the self regulation and emotion regulation spectrums gained and lost in their relationships. I wanted to find a way to systematically understand whether there was any association or predictive power between these variables, or if instead, humans were more unpredictable than not.

Background research indicates that self regulation and emotion regulation have been found to be indicators of a number of social outcomes, however the terminology used in research within the social-emotional field varies widely. One challenge in research on these behavioral characteristics is the inconsistency in their measures. Self regulation and emotion regulation are
most often considered as existing on a scale with no minimum or maximum values. There is no highly regarded scale used repeatedly in psychological research that I could use to assess various social outcomes.

Research Problem

Are a person’s abilities to regulate their emotions and engage in cognitive self control indicators of the quality of their relationships? If so, what kinds of social outcomes are most related to these behavioral qualities?

Objectives

My objective in this paper is to outline and add to the limited understanding we have of how personality and behavior affect the social self via the qualities of our relationships. I seek to understand the extent to which we can use a person’s self regulation or emotion regulation to determine the nature of their platonic, romantic, and familial relationships as well as some other social outcomes like belonging, community involvement, and feelings of acceptance.

Paper Map

In this paper, I first describe current literature on self regulation and emotion regulation and discuss the importance of clearly defined language. I then describe the three datasets used to conduct the analysis and explain my process of analysis and the steps I took to find an answer to my research question. I then provide the results of the data analysis and preliminary answers to these questions, and finally I discuss the implications of the results, the shortcomings of the data and analysis, and the ways in which my results could be strengthened and this topic could be further studied and understood.
II. Literature Review

The literature exploring associations between measures of discipline and measures of social relationship quality varies greatly in focus, specificity, variable terminology, and constructs for variables. While many papers and models provide insight on impulse control, self-regulation, and their effects on a person’s pursuit of various personal goals, they often make shallow contributions that remain disconnected to research in adjacent areas. Overall, the knowledge about the intimate social effects of a person’s self-regulation is scattered. In this thesis, I aim to bridge some gaps by broadening the question and constructs to show that, across the board, increases in behavior that we think of as displaying discipline (whether that be through demonstrations of impulse control, self restraint, or successful goal pursuit) improve the quality and satisfaction of a person’s social relationships, be they platonic, romantic, or familial.

Existing literature on this relationship considers discipline in the form of many different terms and primarily uses self-report data on the quality of a person’s relationships. Perhaps the greatest reason for the insufficient integration of research in this area is because of confusion surrounding terminology. Terms “self-regulation”, “self-control”, “impulse control”, “discipline”, and “willpower” are used distinctly by different researchers to convey different ideas despite the significant overlap. The literature I present here considers the implications of maintaining high degrees of self-control, the associations between self-control, self-regulation, and other like terms, and ratings of various aspects of life, predictors of self-control, neurological mechanisms underlying self-control, and general conceptual ideas about what types of behavior we might expect from a person with high or low levels of self-regulation and emotion regulation.

First, it is imperative to define what I mean by self regulation, emotion regulation, and like terms. Self regulation can be considered a broad term which refers to the dynamic process of
determining a desired end state and then taking action to move toward it while monitoring progress along the way (Carver & Scheier, 1998). Self-regulation encompasses the regulation of not only behavior but also thoughts and emotions because it involves the steering of behavior towards an established goal, which could be a desired behavior, thought, attitude, or even emotional state, such as being at peace. (Inzlicht et al., 2021). Self-regulation embodies any way a person might try to change their thoughts, feelings, or behaviors in the pursuit of their end state, or goal. This includes engaging in effortful self-control, which represents not all, but one form of self-regulation (Inzlicht et al., 2021). Within self-control lies a key determinant, and what Michael Inzlicht considers a trait model: conscientiousness. Conscientiousness is an important component of self-control that is thought to lead to patterns and outcomes that simply avoid any conflict dilemmas (Inzlicht et al., 2021). Thus conscientiousness is not exactly the variable I am interested in but a component of it, and current research on the social effects of conscientiousness can be impactful as I consider what effects my variables of interest have on social outcomes.

In his own attempt to bridge the gap between studies in adjacent areas of self-regulation psychology, Michael Inzlicht references Terrie Moffitt, who concludes that people high in self-control and low in impulsivity are “healthier, happier, wealthier, and more law abiding” than their more impulsive peers (Moffitt et al. 2011, Inzlicht et al. 2021). Inzlicht references numerous studies which demonstrate non-social implications of self-regulation like the above statement. To understand more about the social implications, we can consider more relevant research exploring the previously defined, narrower term that falls within self-regulation and self-control, conscientiousness. A core component of self-control, conscientiousness is thought to “lead to patterns and outcomes that simply avoid any conflict dilemmas” (Inzlicht et al., 2021).
Conscientious people evidently put effort into “socially valued actions” (i.e. achievement) and are good at avoiding temptations which might otherwise result in their deviation from a path towards better socioeconomic status and higher relationship satisfaction (Hill et al., 2014).

Conscientiousness, one of many “sub-terms” of self-regulation, our variable of interest, has been shown to have significant predictive ability on romantic health and marital satisfaction. Patrick Hill’s study, “Are you in a healthy relationship? Linking Conscientiousness to Health via Implementing and Immunizing Behaviors” first articulates the failure of current literature to “explain how the positive effects in one area may help explain those in another” (Hill et al., 2014). Contrary to most health researchers who focus primarily on physical health, Hill believes in the importance in social and romantic “health” for a person to actively engage in their day-to-day life and live a purposeful and worthwhile life. Hill explores the relationship between conscientiousness and social health, exploring the downstream effects on emotional and physical well-being and seeking an answer to the question of which domains are important and how different components of well-being might predict or precede another. Prior to establishing findings, Hill recognizes the fact that individuals experience different degrees of health across various aspects of their lives and seeks to find some measure to foreshadow health in all aspects. Conscientious individuals often experience numerous benefits in their daily lives (Ozer & Benet-Martinez, 2006), but most current research on conscientiousness focuses more on performance independent of others than it does on an individual’s social health.

In his research, Hill creates a framework for thinking about the sequence of “events” of conscientiousness, romantic and relational health, and physical health. His proposed framework suggests that there are “multiple pathways through which Conscientiousness can influence health in any one domain, which can promote other areas of health in the long term” (Hill et al., 2014).
Another study concludes that conscientious adults have been shown to have greater relationship satisfaction and increased marital quality (Dyrenforth et al., 2010). Further, “having a conscientious partner also appears to lead to a more positive relationship” (Malouff et al., 2010), suggesting better relationship quality and satisfaction. Conscientiousness predicts lower divorce rates (Roberts et al, 2007). Teacher and parent reports of a child’s Conscientiousness during their youth have predicted the participants’ likelihood of divorce in later life (Tucker et al, 1998). Conscientious partners are rated as less likely to engage in unfaithful actions in their first year of marriage (Buss & Shackelford, 1997), less likely to describe themselves with traits indicative of infidelity (Schmitt, 2004), and are generally perceived as less likely to cheat on their partners, all of which reasonably suggest higher relationship quality and social life satisfaction.

Conscientiousness has a direct relationship with a person’s willingness to forgive a partner (Balliet, 2010), also supporting the idea that high levels of the trait might be predictive of better relationship quality or duration. On the whole, existing research suggests that conscientiousness is a primary factor in forecasting relationship health.

In attempting to understand and explain the mechanism for this effect, Hill writes that Conscientiousness leads to better relationship outcomes because conscientious people both participate in socially valued activities and avoid activities that are or seem socially frowned upon, such as infidelity (Hill et al. 2014). As such a core component of self-regulation, this understanding of conscientiousness can help us understand self-regulation as not just the overcoming of adversity but also the avoidance of a challenging situation or a temptation to begin with, knowing that one may not have the means to combat a temptation if they encountered it. The finding that people scoring high in conscientiousness are less likely to participate in behaviors that would cause relationships distress support the idea that increased
self-regulation leads to increased relationship quality and satisfaction. Finding these implications of conscientiousness on marital satisfaction and marital relationship quality is important in moving towards a better understanding of impulse control and discipline as a whole. As previously mentioned, conscientious people participate less frequently in unfaithful behaviors while in relationships. I seek to confirm these findings, transforming the independent variable of self-rated and partner-rated conscientiousness to a self-regulation construct and the dependent variable from marital satisfaction to numerous measures of relationship quality and social satisfaction.

In his 2011 study, Terrie Moffitt and others consider the implications of self-control, which they define as “an umbrella construct that bridges concepts and measurements from different disciplines (including impulsivity, conscientiousness, self-regulation, delay of gratification, inattention-hyperactivity, executive function, willpower, intertemporal choice)” (Moffitt et al., 2011). In a study following 1,000 children from birth to 32 years of age, Moffitt and others found self-control to be a significant predictor of physical health, substance dependence, personal finances, and criminal offending outcomes, all following a gradient of self-control (Moffitt et al. 2011). The consistency of this gradient of self-control across all sorts of outcomes suggests a similar effect could feasibly be present as it pertains to relationship outcomes, whether they be in reference to quality, duration, or satisfaction.

Inhibition is another vital component of self-regulation. Inhibition relies upon an individual’s self-awareness and ability to compare oneself to social standards, and is susceptible to fluctuations in willpower resources. Ego-depletion, which is a state of reduced willpower caused by prior exertion of self-control, undermines inhibition by making one’s ability to self-restrain weaker and for urges or compulsions to be felt more intensely than usual. Inhibition
has many studied social effects, especially as it pertains to prosocial and antisocial behavior. Intentional inhibition not only restrains antisocial impulses but can also facilitate optimal performance in a variety of activities including athletic performance or test taking (Baumeister, 2014). Broadly speaking, inhibition is vital to sustain a healthy human social life and whether consciously or not, societies across the world enforce its practice. Baumeister’s findings that ego-depletion and reduced inhibition result in lower measures of performance suggest a multitude of social effects; humans “perform” socially countless times in a single day. Performance can be considered a person’s ability to achieve a goal they have set out for themselves, and because humans are evolutionarily social creatures, we have fundamental social motivations and social goals to exist harmoniously and intimately with the people around us. Baumeister’s findings that strong inhibition improves test taking suggests one’s ability to inhibit also has positive social effects.

As we consider the effects of impulsivity and relationship quality, one important population to study might be those who suffer from attention deficit hyperactivity disorder with the impulsivity subtype. Impulse control, what many might deem a more visible expression of inhibition, is another relevant component of the broader idea of discipline I am constructing, therefore prior to investigation of current literature on ADHD, I hypothesize that individuals with ADHD experience lower quality relationships that their non-ADHD-suffering counterparts. In a study exploring romantic relationship quality for college students with ADHD, researchers found that participants with clinically significant levels of both hyperactivity-impulsivity and inattentiveness (consistent with one of the three subtypes of ADHD, ADHD-C) had lower quality romantic relationships than those whose self-reported symptoms indicated no ADHD diagnosis (Bruner et al., 2015). This outcome appeared to be a result of emotion regulation problems and
ensuing hostile relationship conflict. These findings support the hypothesis that low
self-regulation and discipline (returning to broader terminology) result in lower quality
relationships, particularly in how individuals regulate their emotional impulses.

Various studies use a wide range of terms that all appear to be variations of the same
behavioral tendencies and neurological processes. There may then be some evidence that the
words we use don’t differ all that much, differing only in generality or specificity and all tracing
back to the same brain regions. We see that “neuroscientists study self-control as an executive
function subserved by the brain’s frontal cortex and have uncovered brain structures and systems
involved when research participants exert self-control” (Moffitt et al., 2011). One study used
functional magnetic resonance imaging to observe brain activity while monitored participants
made decisions about food consumption and found that goal-directed decisions have a
foundation in a signal within the ventromedial prefrontal cortex and that exercising self-control
involved modulation of the signal by the dorsolateral prefrontal cortex. Activity in both regions
was involved with goal-value decision making no matter how much self-control was shown
(Hare et al., 2009). The activity demonstrated in this study indicates that to some extent, the
words we use are all simply slight variations of the same behavior and same neurobiology, and
are simply different ways of talking about the same thing.

While terminology used to describe generally “disciplined” or “self-regulated
behavior” may seem distinct, I believe there is much to be gained from analyses which attempt to
integrate findings from multiple studies regardless of the exact term that is used to describe one’s
general disciplined and self-regulated tendencies. In the same way that Moffitt considers
self-control to be an umbrella term, I use self regulation to encompass any terms used in this
paper which reflect a person’s use of their own willpower to accomplish a goal or want and apply
this definition specifically to a person’s social goals and wants. Regardless of the terminology, self regulation and the variables beneath its umbrella influence the way we interact with the people around us. It’s no secret that individuals who act on every impulse, who say every word that comes to mind, or who pursue their own short-term good at the expense of those around them are challenging to be around, much less be in close relationship with. Failures to self regulate seem to often result in expensive social costs and other challenging consequences.
III. Data

In my attempt to broaden the question and expand current research to address the more general behavioral qualities of self-regulation and emotion-regulation, I searched the ICPSR database for datasets containing items related to terms outlined in the literature review – conscientiousness, self-control, impulse control, and discipline, among others – and emotion regulation items (the ability to control one’s temper, to calm down, etc.). This search produced three datasets selected due to their inclusion of various survey items from which I was able to effectively operationalize two independent variables: self regulation and emotion regulation. The three selected datasets also included a number of social outcome variables, including self-reported data on the quality of romantic and platonic relationships, lengths of relationships, and social integration, among others. Each dataset therefore offers an additional opportunity for the relationships between self-regulation and emotion-regulation measures and social outcomes to be assessed or strengthened.

Dataset 1: Research on Pathways to Desistance [Maricopa County, AZ and Philadelphia County, PA] (ICPSR 36800)

The Pathways to Desistance study is a multi-site study which followed 1,354 serious juvenile offenders from adolescence to young adulthood in two locales between 2000 and 2010. Juvenile offenders between 14 and 18 years old from the juvenile and adult court systems in Maricopa County (Phoenix), Arizona (N=654) and Philadelphia County, Pennsylvania (N=700) were enrolled and interviews were conducted from November 2000 to January 2003. Follow-up interviews were then scheduled with the respondents at 6, 12, 18, 24, 30, 36, 48, 60, 72 and 84 months past their baseline interview.
The data collection covered six domains, including background characteristics (e.g., demographics, academic achievement, psychiatric diagnoses, offense history, neurological functioning, psychopathy, personality), indicators of individual functioning (e.g., work and school status and performance, substance abuse, mental disorder, antisocial behavior), psychosocial development and attitudes (e.g., impulse control, susceptibility to peer influence, perceptions of opportunity, perceptions of procedural justice, moral disengagement), family context (e.g., household composition, quality of family relationships), personal relationships (e.g., quality of romantic relationships and friendships, peer delinquency, contacts with caring adults), and community context (e.g., neighborhood conditions, personal capital, and community involvement). The focus of this data allowed me to use a number of individual survey items and create measures for emotion regulation and self regulation. They also included a wide variety of social outcomes allowing me to test the significance of relationships between my independent and dependent variables.

**Dataset 2: Survey of Midlife in Japan (MIDJA), April-September 2008 (ICPSR 30822)**

The MIDJA study is a probability sample of Japanese adults (N = 1,027) aged 30 to 79 from the Tokyo metropolitan area. Survey data were collected on sociodemographic characteristics (age, gender, marital status, educational status), psychosocial characteristics (e.g., independence/interdependence, personality traits, sense of control, goal orientations, social support, family obligation, social responsibility), mental health (depression, anxiety, well-being, life satisfaction), and physical health (chronic conditions, health symptoms, functional limitations, health behaviors). These measures are parallel to those used in a national longitudinal sample of midlife Americans known as MIDUS (ICPSR 4652: MIDUS II and ICPSR 2760: MIDUS I), collected with the intent to compare the Japanese sample (MIDJA) with
the United States sample (MIDUS). The study tests the hypothesis that the construct of interdependence predicts well-being and health in Japan, whereas the construct of independence predicts well-being and health in the United States.

**Dataset 3: Midlife in the United States (MIDUS 2), 2004-2006 (ICPSR 4652)**

As mentioned above, MIDUS studies utilize measures parallel to the above MIDJA study dataset. Between 1995-1996, the MacArthur Midlife Research Network carried out a national survey of 7,108 Americans aged 25 to 74 (MIDLIFE IN THE UNITED STATES (MIDUS), 1995-1996 [ICPSR 2760]) to investigate the role of behavioral, psychological, and social factors in understanding age-related differences in physical and mental health. It was one of the first studies to maintain such a broad scientific scope. It surveyed diverse samples, including twins and siblings of the main sample respondents and involved in-depth assessments in several key areas including daily stress and cognitive functioning. A description of the study and its findings are available at [http://www.midus.wisc.edu](http://www.midus.wisc.edu). The National Institute on Aging later sponsored a longitudinal follow-up of the original MIDUS samples: core sample (N = 3,487), metropolitan over-samples (N = 757), twins (N = 925 complete pairs), and siblings (N = 950), conducted between 2004-2006. The general guiding hypotheses were that behavioral and psychosocial factors are consequential for physical and mental health. MIDUS 2 respondents were aged 35 to 86. Data collection largely repeated baseline assessments (e.g., phone interview and extensive self-administered questionnaire), with additional questions in selected areas (e.g., cognitive functioning, optimism and coping, stressful life events, and caregiving). To add refinements to MIDUS 2, an African American sample (N = 592) was recruited from Milwaukee, Wisconsin, who participated in a personal interview and completed a questionnaire paralleling the above assessments. Survey data for the Milwaukee sample are available in a separate project [ICPSR]
Also administered was a modified form of the mail questionnaire, via telephone, to respondents who did not complete a self-administered questionnaire.

https://www.icpsr.umich.edu/web/ICPSR/studies/4652/summary
IV. Research Overview and Hypotheses

This study is motivated by the idea that individual psychology might predictably influence social interaction and connection. I hypothesize that greater self-regulation is associated with more optimal social outcomes (H1), measured by considering self-reports about various aspects of a person’s social life. Measures for this general satisfaction as stated above include: self-reports of relationship quality, social integration, frequency of contact with family and friends, frequency of disagreements with spouse, affectual solidarity towards family, friends, and spouse, and feelings of fitting in, among others. I also hypothesize that emotion regulation would mediate the association between self-regulation and satisfaction of social life (H2).
V. Study 1: Pathways to Desistance

Methods

In Study 1, I tested the hypotheses that self regulation was associated with the quality of various social outcomes (H1) and that emotion regulation would mediate the association between self regulation and social outcome (H2). I used individual survey items from the Pathways to Desistance dataset to test these hypotheses.

Data Cleaning

I first read through the Pathways to Desistance Codebook and selected all survey items related to emotion regulation, self regulation, and social life. Using RStudio, I cleaned the data to only include these relevant items. Table 2 (see Appendix A) includes all variable names as labeled in both the dataset and output alongside their original variable names and the exact language of the survey question.

Measures

Self Regulation (SelfReg_SelfEval): The overall self-regulation scale was created by taking the average of the following items (all of which were measured on a 1 to 4 scale with 1 denoting "Never True" and 4 denoting "Always True"): “I tend to get caught up in the excitement of the moment” (reversed), “I always seem to be doing things last minute” (reversed), “I make decisions in the spur of the moment” (reversed), “I keep working at difficult tasks if I know they will help me to get ahead later”, “I make lists of things to do”, “Before making a decision, I weigh the good vs the bad”, “I will give up my happiness now so that I can get what I want in the future”, “I would rather save money than spend it now on something fun”, and “I usually think about the consequences before I do something”. ($\alpha = .520$)
Prudence (Factor1_Prudence): Standardized average of the following items (again, measured on a 1 to 4 scale with 1 denoting "Never True" and 4 denoting "Always True"): “Before making a decision, I weigh the good vs the bad”, “I usually think about the consequences before I do something”, “I make lists of things to do”, “I would rather save money than spend it now on something fun”, “I keep working at difficult tasks if I know they will help me to get ahead later” (α = .628)

Impulse Control (Factor2_ImpulseControl): Standardized average of the following items (all of which were measured on a 1 to 4 scale with 1 denoting "Never True" and 4 denoting "Always True"): “I tend to get caught up in the excitement of the moment” (reversed), “I always seem to be doing things last minute” (reversed), “I make decisions in the spur of the moment” (reversed) (α = .513)

Emotion Regulation (EmotionReg): average of scale reversed versions of the following items (measured on a 1 to 5 scale with 1 denoting “Strongly Disagree” and 5 denoting “Strongly Agree”): “I frequently get upset” and “I am somewhat emotional”

Social outcome survey items: Number of Close Friends (truncated to 4), Frequency of Contact: Friend 1, Are you currently married?”, “Do you currently have a boyfriend/girlfriend?”, “How long have you been with bf/gf/husband/wife?”, “How many boyfriends/girlfriends have you had?”, “What is the longest period of time you stayed in one relationship?”,”Have you ever been deeply in love?”, “Friend 1: Rate Quality of Relationship”, “Friend 2: Rate Quality of Relationship”, “Friend 3: Rate Quality of Relationship”, “Community 1: Social Integration”, “Community 2: Social Integration”, “Community 3: Social Integration”, “Community 4: Social Integration”.
Quality of Relationship Index: average of the following items (referenced above):
“Friend 1: Rate Quality of Relationship”, “Friend 2: Rate Quality of Relationship”, “Friend 3: Rate Quality of Relationship”

Social Integration Index: average of the following items (referenced above):

Procedure

I first reversed the scales for several variables (caughtexcitment, dothingslastminute, decisionsspurofmoment), standardized the adjusted individual items, and averaged all to create the self regulation construct. I conducted a bivariate correlation analysis of SelfReg_SelfEval and each social outcome variable outlined above to test Hypothesis 1. I conducted several simple linear regression models, regressing SelfReg_SelfEval on each social outcome for which there was a significant correlation. I then conducted a factor analysis of SelfReg_SelfEval to determine whether there were any distinguishable factors operating within the self regulation construct which might disproportionately account for the variance in the social outcome. Using the results from this factor analysis, I created two new independent variables, labeled Factor1_ImpulseControl and Factor2_Prudence. Using these resulting factors, I ran a multiple linear regression for each social outcome which was significantly correlated with SelfReg_SelfEval, regressing Factor1_ImpulseControl and Factor2_Prudence on each significantly correlated social outcome to determine which factor was primarily accounting for the variability in the dependent variable. Finally, I conducted several simple mediation analyses using PROCESS v.4.0 by Andrew F. Hayes in SPSS in order to test H2. For each model, I used SelfReg_SelfEval as the independent variable and EmotionReg as the single mediator, and
regressed on each significantly correlated social outcome variable to find whether self regulation had an indirect effect through emotion regulation.

**Results**

First, I constructed a self-regulation index using several standardized survey items measuring the following: getting caught up in the excitement of a moment, doing things last minute, making decisions in the spur of the moment, ability to continue working on a difficult task, ability to weigh good and bad, tendency to make lists, willingness to give up happiness, save money, and consider consequences (See Appendix 1 for full survey items).

To test H1, I ran several bivariate correlations to test the associations between the self regulation index and the social outcomes included in the dataset. I found that self-regulation was significantly correlated with a person’s current relationship length ($r = .119, p < .001, df = 822$), total number of partners ($r = -.058, p = .034, df = 1340$), length of longest relationship ($r = .124, p < .001, df = 1340$), community involvement ($r = .100, p < .001, df = 1344$), whether the individual has been in love ($r = -.091, p < .001, df = 1317$), the quality of relationship index ($r = .119, p < .001, df = 1335$), and the social integration index ($r = .156, p < .001, df = 1194$).

Notably, there was no significant correlation between self-regulation and the following social outcomes: number of close friends, marital status, dating status, membership on an athletic team, instances of unfaithfulness towards a partner, and frequency of unfaithfulness.

To further test H1, I ran several simple linear regression models regressing the self-regulation index on various social outcomes to determine the proportion of variance in these social outcomes that could be explained by the self-regulation construct. I found self-regulation to generally not account for any significant amount of variance in these social outcomes. I regressed the self-regulation index on current relationship length ($\beta = .119, F(1, 822) = 11.757, p$
< .001), number of partners (β = -.058, F(1, 1340) = 4.498, p = .034), longest relationship (β = .124, F(1, 1322) = 20.781, p < .001), community involvement (β = .100, F(1, 1344) = 13.675, p < .001), whether the individual has been in love (β = -.091, F(1, 1317) = 11.092, p < .001), the quality of relationship index (β = .119, F(1, 1335) = 19.248, p < .001), and the social integration index (β = .156, F(1, 1194) = 29.928, p < .001).

I then conducted a factor analysis to determine whether there were distinct factors working within the self-regulation construct and which factors within the construct were most highly associated with the correlated social outcomes. Principal Component Analysis extracted two components. Component 1 contained the following survey items: weigh good and bad (.754), think about consequences (.692), make lists (.592), save money (.554), and continue working on a difficult task (.517). Component 2 contained the following survey items: make decisions in the spur of the moment (.728), do things last minute (.673), and get caught in the excitement of the moment (.649). I formed a new variable labeled Factor1_Prudence by averaging the survey items captured in the first component and a new variable labeled Factor2_ImpulseControl by averaging survey items captured in the second component.

Then, I conducted multiple linear regression analyses for the same social outcomes which were significantly correlated with the general self-regulation index to further test H1, investigating the primary factor within the self regulation construct accounting for the variation in specified social outcome. These multiple linear regression models consider the two self regulation factors as separate independent variables and explore the relationships between these factors and the social outcomes already determined to be significant by the original self regulation regressions above. Note that initially, in the self regulation index, the impulse control variables were reversed, however in the multiple linear regression models,
Factor2_ImpulseControl contains only the original, standardized values of the items, not reversed. In the multiple linear regression analysis, I found that Prudence and Impulse Control were not highly predictive of any social outcomes. In the statistics report, $\beta_1$ refers to the regression coefficient for Prudence and $\beta_2$ refers to the regression coefficient for Impulse Control. I found that Prudence was a significant predictor of the quality of relationship index but Impulse Control was not ($R^2 = .028$, $p < .001$, $\beta_1 = .167$, $p1 < .001$, $\beta_2 = .027$, $p2 = .317$).

Prudence was a significant predictor of the social integration index but Impulse Control was not ($R^2 = .031$, $p < .001$, $\beta_1 = .176$, $p1 < .001$, $\beta_2 = -.018$, $p2 = .526$). Prudence was a significant predictor of the length of longest relationship but Impulse Control was not ($R^2 = .021$, $p < .001$, $\beta_1 = .143$, $p1 < .001$, $\beta_2 = -.006$, $p2 = .840$). Prudence was a significant predictor of Been in Love but Impulse Control was not ($R^2 = .014$, $p < .001$, $\beta_1 = -.115$, $p1 < .001$, $\beta_2 = -.027$, $p2 = .319$). Prudence was a significant predictor of community involvement but Impulse Control was not ($R^2 = .013$, $p < .001$, $\beta_1 = .115$, $p1 < .001$, $\beta_2 = -.001$, $p2 = .957$).

To test H2, I conducted a mediation analysis to examine the extent to which emotion regulation, constructed by averaging survey items measuring an individual’s frequency of getting upset and frequency of getting emotional, mediated the significant relationships between self-regulation index and a significantly correlated social outcome. I found that emotion regulation did not have a significant indirect effect on the quality of relationships nor was it significantly associated with this quality of relationships measure.

![Diagram](image)

Indirect Effect: $B = -.003$, 95% CI -.0081, .0002
I found that emotion regulation did not have a significant indirect effect on Social Integration nor was it significantly associated with this social integration measure.

I found that emotion regulation did not have a significant indirect effect on one’s longest relationship.

I found that emotion regulation did have a significant indirect effect on having “been in love”. Self regulation and emotion regulation were found to be significantly correlated (B = .1169, p < .05) and emotion regulation and been in love significantly correlated (B = .4704, p < .001).
I found that emotion regulation did not have a significant indirect effect on community involvement.

**Study 1 Discussion**

Study 1 provides a thorough examination of both hypotheses by testing self regulation and emotion regulation on a wide variety of variables which measure the quality of a person's social life and relationships. In support of hypothesis 1, I found that self regulation was positively associated with current relationship length, the length of one’s longest relationship, the self reported quality of one’s relationships, and feelings of being socially integrated in one’s community. The number of a person’s close friends and their relationship status were not found
to be associated with self regulation, which did not support hypothesis 1 but did lend insight into the types of relationship outcomes which self regulation influences.

Study 1 also examined hypothesis 1 using regression analysis. In support of hypothesis 1, I found that self regulation was a significant predictor of the Quality of Relationship Index, the Social Integration Index, the length of a person’s longest relationship, whether or not they had been in love, and their community involvement within the previous six months. The self regulation measure had significant coefficients for each of these social outcomes, though self regulation accounted for no more than 2.4% ($\text{Adjusted } R^2 = .024$) of the variance in any of these social outcome variables, indicating that although self regulation is significantly correlated with these social outcome variables, they are complex, and self regulation has only a small effect on the overall outcome.

Study 1 examined hypothesis 1 at a more nuanced level with factor analysis and multiple linear regression. Through the factor analysis, I discovered two factors at play within self regulation which could be termed sub variables of self regulation. These included prudence and impulse control. Prudence refers to exercising cautious judgment and impulse control refers to the ability to inhibit one’s spontaneous feelings and restrain themself in a moment of impulse. Supporting hypothesis 1, the multiple linear regression analysis showed the prudence was significantly predictive of: the quality of relationship index, the social integration index, the length of a person’s longest relationship, and their community involvement in the past six months, while impulse control was not predictive of any. This suggests the effect of the simple linear regression of self regulation on these social outcomes is captured entirely by prudence. I also found that
I did not find support of hypothesis 2 in the mediation analysis. Emotion regulation did not have a significant indirect effect on the relationship between self regulation and the social outcome except for the social outcome, “been in love”. Here, emotion regulation had a significant indirect effect, self regulation and emotion regulation were significantly correlated, and emotion regulation and “been in love” were also significantly correlated.

These findings suggest that self regulation does not improve social outcomes across the board. There are certain social outcomes for which self regulation, and more specifically, prudence, is impactful and others for which it is not. Self regulation and prudence predict general measures of relationship quality, belonging and connection (quality of relationship index, social integration index, community involvement), suggesting there are important ways in which self regulation and self control manifest in social interaction and interpersonal communication which allow a person to set aside their own personal desires and agendas for those of the people around them. Higher levels of self regulation and prudence also predict a longer length of one’s longest relationship, suggesting that self regulation helps a person maintain civility and engage positively over a long period of time with their significant other. The pattern appears to be that self regulation is important for general social life quality constructs and is less indicative of detailed measures like the number of friends a person has (which tell us nothing about the quality of those relationships) or their dating status.

It was surprising to see that self regulation was not associated with instances of unfaithfulness. This self regulation construct captured whether individuals thought about consequences, could weigh the good and bad, think about consequences, and get caught in the excitement of a moment. This self regulation construct should therefore reflect an ability to think cautiously and to inhibit poor, spontaneous decision making, which might reasonably predict
cheating in a relationship, but this analysis did not find that association. It was also surprising to see that self regulation predicted lower feelings of having been in love. Self regulation was significantly predictive of whether or not a person had been in love, but this relationship was negative, which does not support hypothesis 1. The findings suggest that individuals higher in self regulation report being in love less frequently. This could be because individuals higher in self regulation are more cautious and restrained in their decision making, leading them to delay defining a relationship as one in which they are in love and thereby attaching strongly to their partner and instead carefully evaluating each aspect of their relationship. It’s also possible that individuals higher in self regulation simply find themselves in relationships less often than those lower in self regulation and for this reason, feel that they have not been in love.

One weakness with Study 1 was that the Pathways to Desistance self regulation measure had relatively low reliability, indicating that all the items included were not necessarily strong measures of the same construct. The subsequent factor analysis and multiple linear regression combatted this challenge by separating factors which resulted in greater measure reliability.
VI. Study 2: Japan Midlife

Methods

In Study 2, I tested the hypotheses that self regulation was associated with the quality of various social outcomes (H1) and that emotion regulation would mediate the association between self regulation and social outcome (H2). I used cognitive control, self control, and emotion control scales taken directly from the Japan midlife dataset to test these hypotheses.

Data Cleaning

I first read through the Japan Midlife Codebook and selected all survey items related to emotion regulation, self regulation, and social life. Using RStudio, I cleaned the data to only include these relevant items. Table 2 (see Appendix A) includes all variable names as labeled in both the dataset and output alongside their original variable names and the exact language of the survey question.

Measures

Self regulation: Variables for self-regulation were the following measures taken directly from the Japan Midlife dataset: “Cognition Control” and “Self-control scale”. These measures were both constructed from numerous items and acted as proxies for self-regulation.

Emotion regulation: Also taken directly from the Japan Midlife dataset, “Emotion Control” was used as a proxy for emotion regulation.

Social outcome variables: “Marital/Relationship Problems in last 12 months”, “Afectual Solidarity Given to Friend”, “Afectual Solidarity Given to Family”, “Afectual Solidarity Given to Spouse”, “Contact with family members” (1-8, 1 = several times a day, 8 =
never or hardly ever), “Contact with friend” (Measured on an 8-point scale with 1 denoting several times a day, 8 denoting never or hardly ever), “I don’t fit in with people and community” (Measured on a 7-point scale with 1 denoting strongly disagree, 7 denoting strongly agree), “Family members criticize you” (Measured on a 4-point scale with 1 denoting never, 4 denoting often), “I felt close to others” (Measured on a 5-point scale with 1 denoting none of the time, 5 denoting all the time), “Friends criticize you” (Measured on a 4-point scale with 1 denoting never, 4 denoting often), “Friendship Affectual Solidarity”, “I can trust friends and they can trust me” (Measured on a 7-point scale with 1 denoting strongly disagree), 7 denoting strongly agree), “Maintaining close relationships is difficult” (Measured on a 7-point scale with 1 denoting strongly disagree, 7 denoting strongly agree).

**Procedure**

I conducted bivariate correlation analyses of cogcontrol with each social outcome variable outlined above and selfcontrolscale with each social outcome to test Hypothesis 1. I then conducted several simple linear regression models, regressing cogcontrol on each social outcome for which there it had a significant correlation, then regressing selfcontrolscale on each social outcome for which it had a significant correlation. Because I did not construct these measures which stood in for self regulation, I did not conduct a factor analysis or multiple linear regression analysis. I conducted several simple mediation analyses using PROCESS v.4.0 by Andrew F. Hayes in SPSS in order to test H2. First, I used cogcontrol as the independent variable, emotioncontrol as the single mediator, and regressed on each significantly correlated social outcome variable to find whether cogcontrol had an indirect effect on the specified social outcome through emotion regulation. I repeated this process using selfcontrolscale as the
independent variable to assess the strength of the relationship between self regulation and each social outcomes (self control is contained within our understanding here of self regulation.)

Results

To test H1, I ran several bivariate correlations to test the associations between cognitive control and self control scales taken directly from the survey and the various social outcomes included in the survey. I found that cognitive control was significantly correlated with affectual solidarity given to family ($r = .145, p < .001, df = 707$), affectual solidarity given to friends ($r = .247, p < .001, df = 1008$), affectual solidarity given to spouse ($r = .223, p < .001, df = 754$), frequency of contact with friends ($r = .074, p < .05, df = 941$), not fitting in ($r = -.140, p < .001, df = 1011$), feeling close to others ($r = .271, p < .001, df = 1006$), friends showing affectual solidarity ($r = .200, p < .001, df = 1015$), mutual trust between self and friends ($r = .322, p < .001, df = 1017$), and feeling that having close relationships is difficult ($r = -.132, p < .001, df = 1011$). Cognitive control had no significant correlation with the following: relationship problems in the last 12 months, frequency of contact with family, being criticized by family, and being criticized by friends.

Additional bivariate correlations showed that self control was significantly correlated with relationship problems in the last 12 months ($r = -.090, p < .01, df = 910$), affectual solidarity given to family ($r = .127, p < .001, df = 703$), affectual solidarity given to friends ($r = .237, p < .001, df = 1003$), affectual solidarity given to spouse ($r = .187, p < .001, df = 748$), not fitting in ($r = -.071, p < .05, df = 1005$), feeling close to others ($r = .189, p < .001, df = 1001$), friends showing affectual solidarity ($r = .155, p < .001, df = 1009$), and mutual trust between self and friends ($r = .260, p < .001, df = 1011$). Self control had no significant correlation with
the following: frequency of contact with family, frequency of contact with friends, being
criticized by family, and feeling that having close relationships is difficult.

To further test H1, I then conducted several simple linear regressions. I found statistically
significant regression coefficients regressing cognitive control on the following dependent
variables: affectual solidarity with family ($\beta = .145$, $F(1, 707) = 15.099$, $p < .001$), affectual
solidarity given to friends ($\beta = .247$, $F(1, 1008) = 65.554$, $p < .001$), affectual solidarity given
to spouse ($\beta = .223$, $F(1, 754) = 39.532$, $p < .001$), not fitting in ($\beta = -.140$, $F(1, 1011) =
20.124$, $p < .001$), feeling close to others ($\beta = .271$, $F(1, 1006) = 79.466$, $p < .001$), friendship
affectual solidarity ($\beta = .200$, $F(1, 1015) = 42.414$, $p < .001$), trust between self and friends ($\beta =
.322$, $F(1, 1017) = 117.373$, $p < .001$), and feelings that close relationships are difficult ($\beta =
-.132$, $F(1, 1011) = 17.794$, $p < .001$).

I repeated this process with the self control scale and found statistically significant
regression coefficients for the following dependent variables: affectual solidarity with family ($\beta
= .127$, $F(1, 703) = 11.575$, $p < .001$), affectual solidarity given to friends ($\beta = .237$, $F(1, 1003)
= 59.630$, $p < .001$), affectual solidarity given to spouse ($\beta = .187$, $F(1, 748) = 27.174$, $p <
.001$), friendship affectual solidarity ($\beta = .155$, $F(1, 1009) = 24.803$, $p < .001$), and trust between
self and friends ($\beta = .260$, $F(1, 1011) = 73.107$, $p < .001$).

No factor analysis or multiple linear regression was conducted here because I did not
construct variables from individual survey items, so there were no potential factors to be
considered in a multiple linear regression analysis.

To test H2, I conducted a mediation analysis to examine the extent to which emotion
control, a scale directly measured by the Japan Midlife survey, mediated the significant
relationships between cognitive control, self control, and significantly correlated social
outcomes. I found that emotion control had a significant indirect effect between cognitive control and affectual solidarity given to family even though there was no direct effect of cognitive control on affectual solidarity given to family.

I found that emotion control had a significant indirect effect on affectual solidarity given to friends.

I found that emotion control had a significant indirect effect on affectual solidarity given to one’s spouse.
I found that emotion control did not have a significant indirect effect on feelings of not fitting in.

I found that emotion control did not have a significant indirect effect on feeling close to others.

I found that emotion control did not have a significant indirect effect on friendship affectual solidarity.
I found that emotion control did not have a significant indirect effect on mutual trust between self and friends.

I found that emotion control did not have a significant indirect effect on close relationships being difficult.

I then tested emotion control as a mediator between the self control scale and the same social outcome variables. As in the cognitive control mediation, I found that emotion control
had a significant indirect effect between self control and affectual solidarity given to family even though there was no significant direct effect of self control on affectual solidarity given to family.

I found that emotion control had a significant indirect effect on affectual solidarity given to one’s friends despite no direct effect of self control on affectual solidarity given to friends.

I found that emotion control had a significant indirect effect on affectual solidarity given to one’s spouse despite no direct effect of self control on affectual solidarity given to spouse.
I found that emotion control did not have a significant indirect effect on feeling close to others.

I found that emotion control did not have a significant indirect effect on friendship affectual solidarity.

I found that emotion control did not have a significant indirect effect on mutual trust between self and friends.
Study 2 Discussion

Study 2 provides an additional examination of both hypotheses by testing cognitive control, self control, and emotion regulation on a number of variables measuring the quality of a person's social life and relationships. In support of hypothesis 1, I found that cognitive control was significantly associated with affectual solidarity given to family, to friends, and to spouse, frequency of contact with friends, feelings of fitting in, feeling close to others, friend’s affectual solidarity given to you, mutual trust between friends, and finding close relationships difficult. Counter to hypothesis 1, I found that cognitive control had no significant association with relationship problems in the last 12 months, frequency of contact with family, being criticized by family, and being criticized by friends. Also in support of hypothesis 1, I found that self control was significantly associated with marital or relationship problems in the last 12 months, affectual solidarity given to family, friends, and spouse, feelings of not fitting in, feeling close to others, friends affectual solidarity towards you, and mutual trust between friends. Counter to hypothesis 1, I found that self control had no significant association with frequency of contact with family or friends, being criticized by family or friends, or finding close relationships difficult.

Study 2 also examined hypothesis 1 using regression analysis. In support of hypothesis 1, I found that self regulation was a significant predictor of affectual solidarity given to family,
friends, and spouse, feelings of not fitting in (negative), feeling close to Others, friends' affectual solidarity towards you, trust between self and friends, and finding close relationships difficult. Although the self regulation measure had statistically significant coefficients for each of these social outcomes, self regulation accounted for no more than 10.3% (Adjusted $R^2 = .103$) of the variance in any social outcome variable, indicating that although self regulation is significantly correlated with these social outcome variables, they are complex, and self regulation has a small contribution to the overall outcome.

Study 2 also assessed hypotheses by regressing self control on each significantly correlated social outcome. In support of hypothesis 1, I found self control to be significantly predictive of affectual solidarity given to family, friends, and spouse, feeling close to others, friends’ affectual solidarity towards you, and mutual trust between friends. Although self control had statistically significant coefficients for each of these social outcomes, self control accounted for no more than 6.7% (Adjusted $R^2 = .067$) of the variance in any social outcome variable, indicating again that self regulation is predictive of the above social outcomes but its effect is small.

In support of hypothesis 2, I again found that emotion regulation consistently mediates relationships between self-regulation (via cognitive control or self control) and social outcomes related to affectual solidarity (feelings of emotional closeness, affirmation, and intimacy) in various relationships. Emotion control had a significant indirect effect on the relationships between cognitive control and affectual solidarity given to family, to friends, and to one’s spouse and a significant indirect effect on the relationships between self control and the same outcomes. Counter to hypothesis 2, emotional control did not mediate any other relationship outcomes not related to affectual solidarity.
These findings support those from Study 1 and again suggest (through looking at sub
variables of self regulation: cognitive control and self control) that self regulation does not
improve all social outcomes across the board. Cognitive control and self control are generally
found to predict affectual solidarity that one shows towards individuals in their life no matter the
type of relationship. Here, giving affectual solidarity is defined as demonstrating one’s feelings
of emotional closeness and intimacy. Cognitive control and self control also consistently predict
individuals having fewer feelings of not fitting in, more feelings of being close to others, greater
affectual solidarity towards you from a friend, and greater mutual trust between the self and
friends. Cognitive control and self control therefore seem to aid an individual in facilitating
connection.

As in study 1, findings demonstrate that cognitive control and self control (aspects of self
regulation) more often influence variables which are broad assessments of relationship quality
but are less reliable predictors of detailed relationship variables like frequency of contact with
family or friends or being criticized by family or friends.

I was surprised to see that social outcome variables like feelings of not fitting in and
feelings of being close to others were significantly associated with self regulation measures but
finding close relationships difficult was not. All of these social outcome measures give some
indication of what an individual thinks about the degree to which they are connected with the
people around them in a relationship, so it is surprising that there is not more consistency in these
findings.

Study 2 is distinct from the others in that its analyses do not use a self regulation measure
constructed from multiple survey items but instead relies on proxies for self regulation, cognitive
control and self control, included in the dataset’s original measures. Because this study uses
proxies, it may not provide an accurate representation of the relationship between social
outcomes and the variable we are more interested in, self regulation. At the same time, it does
not carry with it the fallibility and questionable reliability that comes with constructing a variable
only with seemingly relevant items that are available. For this reason, it could reasonably be
considered a better reflection of self regulation than those used in the other studies.
VII. Study 3: US Midlife

Methods

In Study 2, I tested the hypotheses that self regulation was associated with the quality of various social outcomes (H1) and that emotion regulation would mediate the association between self regulation and social outcome (H2). I used individual survey items from the US Midlife dataset to test these hypotheses.

Data Cleaning

I first read through the US Midlife Codebook and selected all survey items related to emotion regulation, self regulation, and social life. Using RStudio, I cleaned the data to only include these relevant items. Table 3 (see Appendix A) includes all variable names as labeled in both the dataset and output alongside their original variable names and the exact language of the survey question.

Measures

Self regulation: SelfReg is an average of the following standardized items which ask respondents to indicate how well the following describes them: “Even when I feel I have too much to do, I get it all done” (on a 4-point scale, 1 denoting a lot, 4 denoting not at all) (reversed), “Hardworking” (on a 4-point scale, 1 denoting valid, 4 denoting not at all) (reversed), “Even when I feel I have too much to do, I get it all done” (4-point scale, 1 denoting a lot, 4 denoting not at all) (reversed), “I find it helpful to set goals for the near future” (4-point scale, 1 denoting a lot, 4 denoting not at all) (reversed), “I like hard work” (4-point scale, 1 denoting true of you, 4 denoting false) (reversed), “I like to try difficult things” (4-point scale, 1 denoting true of you, 4 denoting false) (reversed), “I keep working on problems after others give up” (4-point scale, 1 denoting true of you, 4 denoting false) (reversed), “My decisions are not influenced by
what others are doing” (7-point scale, 1 denoting agree strongly, 7 denoting disagree strongly) (reversed), “I am quite good at managing the many responsibilities of my daily life” (7-point scale, 1 denoting agree strongly, 7 denoting disagree strongly) (reversed), “I gave up trying to make big improvements or changes in my life a long time ago” (7-point scale, 1 denoting agree strongly, 7 denoting disagree strongly), and a measure for conscientiousness labeled “Conscientiousness Personality Trait” (Documentation of Psychosocial Constructs and Composite Variables n MIDUS 2 Project 1’ “). (α = .799)

Factor1_Capability: Standardized average of “Conscientiousness Personality Trait (“Constructed variable, for details see ‘Documentation of Psychosocial Constructs and Composite Variables n MIDUS 2 Project 1’ “), “Conscientiousness Personality Trait (M1 Items + 1 additional)”, “Please indicate how well the following describes you: Hardworking” (4-point scale, 1 denoting valid, 4 denoting not at all) (reversed), and “Indicate how well the following statement describes you: Even when I feel I have too much to do, I get it all done” (4-point scale, 1 denoting a lot, 4 denoting not at all) (reversed). (α = .786)

Factor2_Hardworking: Standardized average of “I like to try difficult things” (4-point scale, 1 denoting true of you, 4 denoting false) and “I like hard work” (4-point scale, 1 denoting true of you, 4 denoting false). (α = .561)

Factor3_Perseverance: Standardized average of My decisions are not influenced by what others are doing (7-point scale, 1 denoting agree strongly, 7 denoting disagree strongly) (reversed), “I am quite good at managing the many responsibilities of my daily life” (7-point scale, 1 denoting agree strongly, 7 denoting disagree strongly) (reversed), “I gave up trying to make big improvements or changes in my life a long time ago” (7-point scale, 1 denoting agree strongly, 7 denoting disagree strongly), and “Please indicate how well the following describes
you: I find it helpful to set goals for the near future (4-point scale, 1 denoting a lot, 4 denoting not at all) (reversed). (α = .438)

Social outcome variables: “What do you think the chances are that you and your partner will eventually separate? (4-point scale, 1 denoting very likely, 4 denoting not likely at all), “How often are you in contact with any members of your family, that is, any of your brothers, sister, s parents, or children who do not live with you, including visits, phone calls, letters, or electronic mail messages? (8-point scale, 1 denoting several times a day, 8 denoting never or hardly ever), “How much do you and your spouse or partner disagree on the following issues: household tasks, such as what needs doing and who does it? (4-point scale, 1 denoting a lot, 4 denoting not at all), “How much do you and your spouse or partner disagree on the following issues: leisure time activities, such as what to do and with whom? (4-point scale, 1 denoting a lot, 4 denoting not at all), “How much do you and your spouse or partner disagree on the following issues: money matters, such as how much to spend, save, or invest? (4-point scale, 1 denoting a lot, 4 denoting not at all), “I don’t feel I belong to anything I’d call a community (7-point scale, 1 denoting agree strongly, 7 denoting disagree strongly), “How often do you and your spouse or partner have a really good talk about something important to you? (5-point scale, 1 denoting at least once a day, 5 denoting less often than a few times a month), “I know that I can trust my friends, and they know they can trust me (7-point scale, 1 denoting agree strongly, 7 denoting disagree strongly), “I have not experienced many warm and trusting relationships with others” (7-point scale, 1 denoting agree strongly, 7 denoting disagree strongly).

Procedure

I first reversed the scales for a number of variables (specified above) and standardized the adjusted individual items to create the self regulation construct. I then conducted a bivariate
correlation analysis of the self regulation construct and each social outcome variable outlined above to test Hypothesis 1. I conducted several simple linear regression models, regressing SelfReg on each social outcome for which there was a significant correlation. I then conducted a factor analysis of SelfReg to determine any distinguishable factors operating within the self regulation construct which might disproportionately account for the variance in the social outcome. Using the results from this factor analysis, I created three new independent variables, labeled Factor1_Capability, Factor2_Hardworking, and Factor3_Perseverance. Using these resulting factors, I ran a multiple linear regression for each social outcome which was significantly correlated with SelfReg, regressing Factor1_Capability, Factor2_Hardworking, and Factor3_Perseverance on each significantly correlated social outcome to determine which factor primarily accounted for the variability in the specified dependent variable.

**Results**

In the US Midlife study, I used a self regulation index constructed from individual survey items, similar to my process for the Pathways to Desistance dataset. The following items were included in the self regulation measure: I had too much work and still got it done, I’m hardworking, I set goals, I like hard work, I try difficult things, I keep working when others give up, my decisions are influenced by others (reversed), and I’m able to manage my daily responsibilities, I gave up improving on something I was working on (reversed), and a measure of conscientiousness.

To test H1, I ran several bivariate correlations between this self regulation index and various social outcomes. I found that self regulation was significantly correlated with the probability of separating from one’s partner ($r = -.092, p < .001, df = 3047$), frequency of contact with family members ($r = .052, p < .001, df = 4003$), frequency of contact with friends
(r = 0.125, p < .001, df = 3994), disagreement with partner about household tasks (r = -0.130, p < .001, df = 3044), disagreement with partner about leisure activities (r = -0.143, p < .001, df = 3042), disagreement with partner about money (r = -0.131, p < .001, df = 3044), feelings of not belonging to the community (r = -0.260, p < .001, df = 3974), frequency of having a good talk with one’s partner (r = 0.129, p < .001, df = 3039), having mutual trust between oneself and friends (r = 0.283, p < .001, df = 4022), and having no experience in warm relationships (r = -0.291, p < .001, df = 4014).

To further test H1, I then ran several simple linear regression models, regressing the self-regulation construct on significantly correlated social outcomes. I found statistically significant regression coefficients for the following dependent variables: probability of separating from partner ($\beta = -0.092, F(1, 3047) = 25.821, p < .001$), frequency of contact with family ($\beta = 0.052, F(1, 4003) = 10.784, p < .001$), frequency of contact with friends ($\beta = 0.125, F(1, 3994) = 63.470, p < .001$), disagreeing with partner about household tasks ($\beta = -0.130, F(1, 3044) = 52.471, p < .001$), disagreement with partner about leisure ($\beta = -0.143, F(1, 3042) = 63.066, p < .001$), disagreement with partner about money ($\beta = -0.131, F(1, 3044) = 53.468, p < .001$), feelings of not belonging in the community ($\beta = -0.260, F(1, 3974) = 289.040, p < .001$), frequency of having a good talk with one’s partner ($\beta = 0.129, F(1, 3039) = 51.163, p < .001$), trust between friends ($\beta = 0.283, F(1, 4022) = 349.399, p < .001$), and lack of experience in warm relationships ($\beta = -0.291, F(1, 4014) = 371.431, p < .001$).

I then conducted a factor analysis to determine whether there were distinct factors working within the self-regulation construct and which factors within the construct were most predictive of the correlated social outcomes. Principal Component Analysis extracted three components. Component 1 contained the following survey items: conscientious 1 (.919),

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conscientiousness2 (.896), hard working (.795), have too much and still get it done (.451).

Component 1 was titled “Factor1_Capable”. Component 2 contained the following survey items: tries difficult things (.793), keeps working when others gives up (.743), and likes hard work (.567) and was thus titled “Factor2_Hardworking”. Component 3 contained the following survey items: decisions are influenced by what other people are doing (.634), manages daily responsibilities (.608), gave up trying to make improvements in life (-.578), and sets goals (.491). Component 3 was titled “Factor3_Perseverance”.

Then, I conducted multiple linear regression analyses for the same social outcomes which were significantly correlated with the self-regulation index to further test H1, investigating the primary factor within the self regulation construct accounting for the variation in the specified social outcome. These multiple linear regression models consider the three self regulation factors as separate independent variables and explore the relationships between these factors and the social outcomes already determined to be significant by the original self regulation regressions above. Note that $\beta_1$ is the coefficient for I found that Perseverance was a significant predictor of the probability of separating from one’s partner, but Capable and Hardworking were not ($\beta_1 = -.025, p_1 = .246, \beta_2 = .039, p_2 = .056, \beta_3 = -.144, p_3 < .001$). I found that Capable was a somewhat significant predictor of frequency of contact with family while Hardworking and Perseverance were not ($\beta_1 = .057, p_1 = .003, \beta_2 = -.031, p_2 = .079, \beta_3 = .030, p_3 < .095$). Perseverance was the only significant predictor of frequency of contact with friends ($\beta_1 = .000, p_1 = .994, \beta_2 = .030, p_2 = .086, \beta_3 = .137, p_3 < .001$). Perseverance and Capable were both significant predictors of disagreement with partner about household tasks ($\beta_1 = -.056, p_1 = .009, \beta_2 = .001, p_2 = .949, \beta_3 = -.121, p_3 < .001$). All three factors were significant predictors of disagreements with partner about leisure ($\beta_1 = -.056, p_1 = .007, \beta_2 = .056, p_2 = .005, \beta_3 =$
Annest, 50

-.191, p3 < .001). Capable and Perseverance were significant predictors of disagreements with partner about money ($\beta 1 = -.046, p 1 = .029, \beta 2 = .019, p 2 = .357, \beta 3 = -.146, p 3 < .001$) and significant predictors of feelings of not belonging in the community ($\beta 1 = -.036, p 1 = .042, \beta 2 = -.006, p 2 = .737, \beta 3 = -.314, p 3 < .001$). Hardworking and Perseverance were both highly statistically significant predictors of the frequency of having a good talk with one’s partner ($\beta 1 = -.009, p 1 = .678, \beta 2 = .082, p 2 < .001, \beta 3 = .095, p 3 < .001$). Capable and Perseverance were highly statistically significant predictors of having mutual trust between self and friends ($\beta 1 = .101, p 1 < .001, \beta 2 = -.004, p 2 = .828, \beta 3 = .279, p 3 < .001$). Capable and Perseverance were also significant predictors of reporting of no experience in warm relationships ($\beta 1 = -.035, p 1 = .045, \beta 2 = .013, p 2 = .413, \beta 3 = -.378, p 3 < .001$).

This dataset did not include sufficient items measuring emotion regulation so it does not include any mediation models and therefore offers no insight into Hypothesis 2, whether or not emotion regulation is a mechanism by which self regulation affects these social outcomes.

**Study 3 Discussion**

Study 3 provides a final examination of hypothesis 1 by testing self regulation on an additional set of social life and relationship quality variables. In support of hypothesis 1, I found that self regulation was positively associated with frequency of contact with one’s family and friends, frequency of talking with one’s partner, and feeling mutual trust between self and a friend. Also in support of hypothesis 1, I found that self regulation was inversely correlated with the self-reported probability of separating from one’s partner, frequency of disagreeing with one’s partner about household tasks, leisure time, and money, feelings of not belonging in the community, and having no experience in warm relationships. Self regulation was found to be significantly associated with each social outcome variable tested.
Study 3 also examined hypothesis 1 using regression analysis. In support of hypothesis 1, I found that self regulation was again a significant predictor of the probability of separating from one’s partner, frequency of contact with one’s family and with one’s friends, instances of disagreeing with one’s partner about household tasks, leisure, and money, feelings of not belonging in the community, frequency of talking with one’s partner, experiencing trust between one self and friends, and feelings of lacking experience in warm relationships. The self regulation measure had significant coefficients for each of these social outcomes, though self regulation accounted for no more than 8.4% (Adjusted $R^2 = .084$) of the variance in any of these social outcome variables, indicating that although self regulation is significantly correlated with these social outcome variables, they are complex, and self regulation contributes only a small amount to the overall outcome.

As in Study 1, Study 3 examined hypothesis 1 at a more nuanced level with factor analysis and multiple linear regression. Through the factor analysis, I discovered three factors at work within self regulation, which included capability, hardworking, and perseverance. Supporting hypothesis 1, the multiple linear regression analysis revealed which factor was the primary predictor of each associated social outcome. I found that perseverance significantly predicted the probability of separating with one’s partner while capability and hardworking did not. Perseverance was also the primary predictor of the frequency of one’s contact with friends, the frequency of disagreeing with one’s partner about household tasks, leisure, and money, feelings of not belonging in one’s community, and experience in warm relationships. Both hardworking and perseverance were found to be significant predictors of the frequency with which one talks to their partner. Both capable and perseverance were found to be significant predictors of trust between self and friends. These findings simultaneously affirm hypothesis 1.
and specify at a lower level which aspects of self regulation are most impactful on these social outcomes. Study 3 findings indicate that perseverance and the will to endure despite adversity is a driving factor in achieving relationship and social successes.

Study 3 supports the idea that certain aspects of self regulation are more important than others. Study 3 findings support the idea that self regulation affects a broad set of social outcomes, though not always with the same driving forces.

Like Study 1, Study 3 was flawed in using measures with relatively low reliability, indicating that all the items included were not necessarily strong measures of the same construct. While the self regulation construct had solid reliability, the factors used in the multiple linear regression were constructed by averaging very few items, entailing lower reliability especially for the hardworking and perseverance factors.
VIII. General Discussion

These studies allowed an examination of my hypotheses across three datasets. The three datasets included individuals across different age groups and cultural backgrounds, as well as distinct indicators of self-regulation and different types of social outcomes. Results across all studies support hypothesis 1 and indicate that individuals higher in self regulation, especially those who demonstrate perseverance and prudent decision making, reap social rewards. Across all studies, self regulation measures were found to be significantly associated with and predictive of both broad and narrow assessments of social life and measures of relationship quality. Results across studies 1 and 2 also reject hypothesis 2, providing no evidence that emotion regulation mediates the relationship between self regulation and social outcomes.

Findings from this study should be interpreted in the context of a few methodological issues. First, the operationalization of variables, while guided by the literature, entailed subjective judgment regarding which survey items to include and exclude in the independent variable constructs. The fact that the three different datasets had different ways of measuring self regulation and relationship quality means the studies are not direct replications of one another and therefore do not test identical relationships. At the same time, this means that the same small effect using variables which reasonably test the same psychological phenomenon (the ability to regulate oneself cognitively and emotionally, to exhibit discipline, to exercise self control) is reliably showing up in each single dataset. Those with greater self regulation report higher ratings of relationship quality, feelings of being socially integrated, longer relationships, greater emotional closeness in relationships, less disagreement, and greater frequency of contact with social connections. The signal from each self regulation measure remains despite the noise of the data.
Even with these challenges, the results from this study extend knowledge on how self-regulation and emotion regulation influence (and don’t influence) various aspects of a person’s social life, informing the way they interact in relationships. Self-regulation repeatedly proves to be effective in predicting a number of aspects about a person’s platonic and romantic relationships while emotion regulation repeatedly proves insignificant.
IX. Conclusion

This research began with the desire to understand whether or not a person's discipline could be predictive of their relationships. I sought to understand how one's drive to push through adversity, to exercise self restraint, and to do hard things might also manifest in a greater sense of connection and community. Might a person’s self control and their commitment to a good, healthy, sustainable lifestyle also be reflected in a commitment to be a good friend or partner to the people close to them? While these lower level questions might remain unanswered, the findings reported in this thesis provide compelling evidence that self regulation and its many sub-variables routinely and significantly impact a wide variety of social outcomes. Self regulation is associated with higher quality relationships and a better sense of connection and involvement with one’s community.

This thesis assesses general constructs of self regulation and emotion regulation across three datasets, assessing these variables alongside social outcomes available in the dataset, which consist of self-reports on quality of relationships, feelings about one’s place in the community, and the more objective frequencies of contact and disagreement with friends, families, and partners. I found that self regulation is associated with nearly all outcomes such that those higher in self regulation more often experience more optimal social outcomes, including but not limited to reports of higher relationship quality and social integration, longer durations of intimate relationships, decreased probabilities of separating, and fewer instances of disagreement. Regression analysis showed that though these associations are strong, self regulation’s effect is small and these social outcome variables are dependent on a multitude of other factors. I found that emotion regulation was consistently insignificant and did not mediate the relationship
between emotion regulation and most social outcomes nor was it consistently significantly associated with the analyzed social outcomes.

While this study does make clear that self regulation is impactful and gives insight into which aspects of self regulation are most important in predicting social outcomes, it fails to specify and define the exact markers of self regulation and use them consistently across samples. Factor analyses conducted in Studies 1 and 2 led to different sub-variables that proved challenging to compare. While prudence and perseverance were found to be the primary predictors of success in some aspects of one’s social life, and though the constructs have many psychological similarities, they are not the same construct. To amend this challenge, future research might outline and explore several concrete sub variables of self regulation and test measures for these variables across the same social outcomes in order to determine the primary drivers (within self regulation) of optimal social outcomes. By defining multiple variables under the umbrella of self regulation, future research would also bridge the gaps in the literature outlined earlier, which consider sub variables of self regulation like self control, impulse control, hard work, etc. as separate phenomena, not as branches of the same tree. Despite these challenges, this thesis is successful in determining that self regulation has a small but reliable effect on different social outcomes, leading those with greater self regulation to more connection and community, relationship quality, and satisfaction with their social life.
Appendix A

Table 1: Pathways to Desistance Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dataset Variable Name</th>
<th>Variable title</th>
<th>Survey Question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S0REL254 (DS05)</td>
<td>closefriends16</td>
<td>Number of Close Friends (truncated to 16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S0REL255</td>
<td>closefriends4</td>
<td>Number of Close Friends (truncated to 4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S0CONTFR</td>
<td>contactfriend1</td>
<td>Frequency of Contact: Friend 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S0CONTFR2</td>
<td>contactfriend2</td>
<td>Frequency of Contact: Friend 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S0REL99 (DS06)</td>
<td>unfaithful</td>
<td>Have you ever been unfaithful to your partner?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S0REL100</td>
<td>numberunfaithful</td>
<td>How many partners have you been unfaithful to?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S0REL102</td>
<td>married</td>
<td>Are you currently married?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S0REL103</td>
<td>dating</td>
<td>Do you currently have a boyfriend/girlfriend?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S0REL104</td>
<td>relationshiplength</td>
<td>How long have you been with bf/gf/husband/wife?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S0REL105</td>
<td>agesigother</td>
<td>Age of bg/gf/husband/wife</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S0REL107</td>
<td>numberpartners</td>
<td>How many boyfriends/girlfriends have you had?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S0REL108</td>
<td>longestrelationship</td>
<td>What is the longest period of time you stayed in one relationship?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S0REL109</td>
<td>beeninlove</td>
<td>Have you ever been deeply in love?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S0COMIN (DS 08)</td>
<td>communityinvolvementever</td>
<td>Before detention, were you a member of the athletic community or a sports team?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S0COM6MO</td>
<td>communityinvolvementsixmonths</td>
<td>Rate frequency of involvement in community activities in the past 6 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S1COMIN01</td>
<td>memberathleticteam</td>
<td>Are you a member of an athletic team?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S1COMIN04</td>
<td>involvementgroups</td>
<td>Are you a member of other groups/scouts?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S1COMIN07</td>
<td>churchgroups</td>
<td>Are you a member of a church related group?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S0DEM43</td>
<td>cheatingbefore11</td>
<td>Before age 11, did you get in trouble for cheating?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S0DEM44</td>
<td>disturbclassbefore11</td>
<td>Before age 11, did you get in trouble for disturbing class?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S0DEM46</td>
<td>stealingbefore11</td>
<td>Before age 11, did you get in trouble for stealing?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S0DEM47</td>
<td>fightingbefore11</td>
<td>Before age 11, did you get in trouble for fighting?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S0NEARPRO</td>
<td>earlyonsetproblems</td>
<td>Count of early onset problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S0EASI1</td>
<td>frequpset</td>
<td>Rate the degree to which you agree with the following statement: I frequently get upset</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S0EASI4</td>
<td>freqemotional</td>
<td>Rate the degree to which you agree with the following statement: I am somewhat emotional.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Code</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you ever skipped school or classes?</td>
<td>S0DEM41</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you ever cheated on an exam or plagiarized information?</td>
<td>S0DEM48</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Report hours a week spent doing homework</td>
<td>S0SCH7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rate the degree to which you agree with the following statement: I tried hard at school</td>
<td>S0SCH14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Report the length of time you’ve had your current job.</td>
<td>S0NDAY</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Report the longest period of time you’ve held one job</td>
<td>S0DEM54</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Report the longest period of time you’ve held one job (in units: days, weeks, months, years)</td>
<td>S0DEM54A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Report the longest period of time you’ve held one job (converted to days)</td>
<td>S0NDAY2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did you miss work or come in late a lot?</td>
<td>S0DEM59</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you ever been fired?</td>
<td>S0DEM60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How many times have you been fired?</td>
<td>S0DEM61</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How close do you think you will be to your friend in 10 years?</td>
<td>S0CFQUA3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How much do you depend on your friend?</td>
<td>S0CFQUA6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How much can you count on your friend to listen to you when you are very angry at someone else?</td>
<td>S0CFQUA7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How much can you count on your friend to take your mind off your problems when you feel under stress?</td>
<td>S0CFQUA8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friend 1: Rate Quality of Relationship</td>
<td>S0FRDQLT</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friend 2: Rate Quality of Relationship</td>
<td>S1FRDQLT</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friend 3: Rate Quality of Relationship</td>
<td>S2FRDQLT</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rate the degree to which you agree: I keep working at difficult tasks if I know they will help me to get ahead later</td>
<td>S0FOI127</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rate the degree to which you agree: I tend to get caught up in the excitement of the moment</td>
<td>S0FOI130</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rate the degree to which you agree: I make lists of things to do</td>
<td>S0FOI131</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rate the degree to which you agree: Before making a decision, I weigh the good vs the bad</td>
<td>S0FOI132</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rate the degree to which you agree: I will give up my happiness now so that I can get what I want in the future</td>
<td>S0FOI134</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rate the degree to which you agree: I make decisions in the spur of the moment</td>
<td>S0FOI135</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dataset Variable Name</td>
<td>Variable title</td>
<td>Survey Question</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S0FOI136</td>
<td>savemoney</td>
<td>Rate the degree to which you agree: I would rather save money than spend it now on something fun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S0FOI138</td>
<td>dothingslastminute</td>
<td>Rate the degree to which you agree: I always seem to be doing things last minute.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S0FOI141</td>
<td>thinkaboutconsequences</td>
<td>Rate the degree to which you agree: I usually think about the consequences before I do something</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S1FUTURE</td>
<td>FutureOrientationInventoryScale</td>
<td>Future Orientation Inventory Scale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S0MOTSUC</td>
<td>MotivationtoSucceedScale</td>
<td>Motivation to Succeed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S1SOCAP2</td>
<td>SocialIntegration1</td>
<td>Social Integration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S2SOCAP2</td>
<td>SocialIntegration2</td>
<td>Social Integration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S3SOCAP2</td>
<td>SocialIntegration3</td>
<td>Social Integration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S4SOCAP2</td>
<td>SocialIntegration4</td>
<td>Social Integration</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Japan Midlife Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dataset Variable Name</th>
<th>Variable title</th>
<th>Survey Question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>J1SD5S</td>
<td>calmdownfaster</td>
<td>I can calm down faster (1-4, 1 = Almost never, 4 = almost always)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J1SD5Q</td>
<td>controltemper</td>
<td>I can control my temper (1-4, 1 = almost never, 4 = always always)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J1SD5R</td>
<td>keepmycool</td>
<td>I keep my cool (1-4, 1 = almost never, 4 = always always)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J1SC4</td>
<td>drankmorethanintended</td>
<td>Report the number of times you drank more than intended in the past 12 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J1SG7C</td>
<td>cancontrolthoughtsdesires</td>
<td>I can control my thoughts and desires (1-7, 1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J1SG7F</td>
<td>strongmindbody</td>
<td>It is important to be strong in mind and body (1-7, 1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J1SG7A</td>
<td>makeselfdohardthings</td>
<td>I can make myself do things I don’t want to do (1-7, 1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J1SSC_CC</td>
<td>cogcontrol</td>
<td>Cognition Control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J1SSC_SC</td>
<td>selfcontrolscale</td>
<td>Self-control Scale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J1SCONS2</td>
<td>conscientiousness</td>
<td>Conscientiousness Personality Trait</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J1SSC_EC</td>
<td>emotioncontrol</td>
<td>Emotion Control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B1SCONS1</td>
<td>conscientiousness</td>
<td>Conscientious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J1SQ6H</td>
<td>relationship_prob</td>
<td>Marital/Relationship Problems in last 12 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J1SSOGFM</td>
<td>familyaffect</td>
<td>Affectual Solidarity Given to Family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J1SSOGFD</td>
<td>friendaffect</td>
<td>Affectual Solidarity Given to Friend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dataset Variable Name</td>
<td>Variable title</td>
<td>Survey Question</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B1SCONS1</td>
<td>conscientiousness</td>
<td>Conscientiousness Personality Trait (&quot;Constructed variable, for details see <em>Documentation of Psychosocial Constructs and Composite Variables n MIDUS 2 Project 1</em>&quot;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B1SCONS2</td>
<td>conscientiousness2</td>
<td>Conscientiousness Personality Trait (M1 Items + 1 additional)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B1SE1G</td>
<td>decisionsinfluencedbyothers</td>
<td>My decisions are not influenced by what others are doing (1-7, 1 = agree strongly, 7 = disagree strongly)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B1SE12G</td>
<td>havetoomuch_stillgetdone</td>
<td>Indicate how well the following statement describes you: Even when I feel I have too much to do, I get it all done (1-4, 1 = a lot, 4 = not at all)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B1SA26D</td>
<td>feltcalm_peaceful</td>
<td>During the past 20 days, how much of the time did you feel calm and peaceful? (1-5, 1 = all of the time, 5 = none of the time)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B1SE1GG</td>
<td>gaveup_improving</td>
<td>I gave up trying to make big improvements or changes in my life a long time ago. (1-7, 1 = agree strongly, 7 = disagree strongly)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B1SE1T</td>
<td>managedailyresp</td>
<td>I am quite good at managing the many responsibilities of my daily life (1-7, 1 = agree strongly, 7 = disagree strongly)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B1SE6P</td>
<td>hardworking</td>
<td>Please indicate how well the following describes you: Hardworking (1-4, 1 = valid, 4 = not at all)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Code</td>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Scale Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B1SE12R</td>
<td>Please indicate how well the following describes you:</td>
<td>I find it helpful to set goals for the near future (1-4, 1 = a lot, 4 = not at all)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B1SE7R</td>
<td>I like hard work (1-4, 1 = true of you, 4 = false)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B1SE7O</td>
<td>I like to try difficult things (1-4, 1 = true of you, 4 = false)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B1SE7L</td>
<td>I keep working on problems after others give up (1-4, 1 = true of you, 4 = false)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B1SJ1</td>
<td>What do you think the chances are that you and your partner will eventually separate? (1–4, 1 = very likely, 4 = not likely at all)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B1SJ3</td>
<td>How often are you in contact with any of your friends, including visits, phone calls, letters, or electronic mail messages? (1-8, 1 = several times a day, 8 = never or hardly ever)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B1SL9B</td>
<td>How often are you in contact with any members of your family, that is, any of your brothers, sisters, parents, or children who do not live with you, including visits, phone calls, letters, or electronic mail messages? (1-8, 1 = several times a day, 8 = never or hardly ever)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B1SL9C</td>
<td>How much do you and your spouse or partner disagree on the following issues: household tasks, such as what needs doing and who does it? (1-4, 1 = a lot, 4 = not at all)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B1SL9A</td>
<td>How much do you and your spouse or partner disagree on the following issues: leisure time activities, such as what to do and with whom? (1-4, 1 = a lot, 4 = not at all)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B1SH16B</td>
<td>How much do you and your spouse or partner disagree on the following issues: money matters, such as how much to spend, save, or invest? (1-4, 1 = a lot, 4 = not at all)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B1SL10</td>
<td>I don’t feel I belong to anything I’d call a community (1-7, 1 = agree strongly, 7 = disagree strongly)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B1SE1NN</td>
<td>How often do you and your spouse or partner have a really good talk about something important to you? (1-5, 1 = at least once a day, 5 = less often than a few times a month)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B1SE1HH</td>
<td>I know that I can trust my friends, and they know they can trust me (1-7, 1 = agree strongly, 7 = disagree strongly)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
References


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