Relational Aggression in College Students

Nicole Parker

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Please submit in duplicate.
Relational Aggression in College Students

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Abstract

Researchers have long theorized that females may be as equally aggressive as males, but the form of aggression most frequently manifested by females may be non-physical. This thinking lead to the examination of relational aggression, which is a type of aggression intended to harm others' peer relationships. Numerous studies over the last 20 years have examined relational aggression in children and the maladaptive behaviors associated with such aggression. However, far less is known about relational aggression in older students or young adults. Thus, this paper reviews the present literature on relational aggression in college students, focusing on three potential predictors (emotion dysregulation, impulsivity, and conduct problems). Seventy-eight undergraduate college students participated in this study. Two hierarchical multiple regression analyses were conducted; the first was to test whether emotion dysregulation predicted relational aggression while controlling for relevant variables, and the second was to test whether the impulse control difficulties Subscale of the Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale predicted relation aggression while controlling for relevant variables. A gender difference in relational aggression behaviors was not found, in contrast to what is usually found in the child literature. Impulsivity and conduct problems were found to positively predict relational aggression while controlling for gender. Emotion dysregulation did not contribute additive predictive value to relational aggression. However, impulse control emotion dysregulation difficulties positively predicted relational aggression, even after controlling for the other variables in the study.
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Relational Aggression in College Students

The ability to regulate and process emotions - emotion regulation (Gross, 1998) - plays an important role in how individuals behave in social situations (Gross, 1998). Relational aggression (RA) occurs when an individual attempts to cause harm to a peer's social relationship(s) through the purposeful manipulation of a relationship (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995). A number of correlates of relational aggression (e.g., impulsivity and conduct problems) have been studied previously to help understand more about the nature of RA; several of these will be examined in this study, focusing on the issue of emotion regulation.

Because relational aggression involves purposeful manipulation the nature of the relationship is questioned; that is, does relational aggression predict emotion dysregulation or because relational aggression is calculated does it actually help increase the person's emotion regulation (Underwood, 2003). The link between emotion regulation and relational aggression in college students has not yet been studied to our knowledge. Thus, the primary focus of this study will be to examine emotion regulation as a predictor of relational aggression in college students.

Aggression

Aggression occurs in various forms and for an assortment of motives (Murray-Close, Ostrov, Nelson, Crick, & Coccaro. 2010); for example, one conceptualization of aggression examines the two discrete forms: overt (physical - hitting, shoving, pushing) and covert (indirect - non-physical aggressive actions). Prior aggression research has focused primarily on male participants and included few female participants (Werner &
Crick, 1999), perhaps due to researchers concentrating on males, who are overtly aggressive at higher rates.

Many girls may be persuaded by societal norms to suppress adverse emotions like anger or physical acts of aggression (Conway, 2005). Conway (2005) theorized that the lower rate of overt aggression found in girls may be due to substantially more boy than girl participants being selected for studies which assess aggression (i.e., the studies may lack power to detect overt aggression in girls). Thus, this methodological problem may underestimate the rate of aggression found in girls.

Crick and Grotpeter (1995) theorized that girls are just as aggressive as boys, but not in a physical manner, as they argued that physical domination and strength is less important to girls. The authors set out to define the form and method by which girls are aggressive; thus, Crick proposed a gender-sensitive conceptualization of aggression (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995). Research to date demonstrates that young girls tend to have higher levels of relational aggression behaviors than young boys, theorizing that young girls have a stronger regard for peer acceptance and the strength of friendships.

**Relational Aggression**

Since Crick and Grotpeter first coined the term in 1995, relational aggression research has received growing consideration. Relational aggression is defined as “harming others through purposeful manipulation and damage of their peer relationships” (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995, p. 711). Relational aggression is intended to cause harm to a peer’s relationship by using manipulation (e.g. threatening the eradication of the relationship) to damage to a person’s peer acceptance or social relationships (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995; Linder, Crick, & Collins, 2002). Relational aggression is used as a
deliberate means to hurt a peer’s relationship through the use of spreading lies/rumors, deception, exclusion, and retreating communication (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995). This type of aggression can be used in a range of circumstances and by a variety of age groups.

Many forms of aggression are similar to relational aggression, but differ in purpose. Relational aggression can occur by an individual or a group and can be direct and covert in nature as well as proactive or reactive (Murray-Close, Ostrov, Nelson, Crick, & Coccaro, 2010). To discriminate relational aggression from other forms of aggression the function of the aggressive act must be examined (Murray-Close, Ostrov, Nelson, Crick, & Coccaro, 2010). Relational aggression can be distinguished from indirect aggression (non-physical acts of brutality), as indirect aggression is not utilized to damage a peer’s relationships (Murray-Close, Ostrov, Nelson, Crick, Coccaro, 2010). The function of instrumental aggression is distinguished from relational aggression, as instrumental aggression is aimed at obtaining a tangible item or privilege (e.g., money), and the aggressor has no willful intent to harm a person (Bushman & Anderson, 2001).

Past scholars have attempted to discriminate between aggressive acts that are planned and appear to provide a goal-directed purpose, such as proactive aggression (the aggressor anticipates a material reward), and relational aggression (Stanford, Houston, Mathias, Villemarette-Pittman, Helfritz, & Conklin, 2003). Individuals who utilize relational aggression are not in pursuit of a physical reward but desire to cause harm to relationships. Furthermore, there are several forms of aggression that can be components of relational aggression: verbal and cyber aggression. Relational aggression is typically exhibited verbally (i.e., communication with the purpose to harm an individual) (Vissing, Straus, Gelles, & Harrop, 1991) but does not have to be. Additionally, relational
aggression can occur on the Internet (aggression through the use of contemporary telecommunications) (Vandebosch, & Cleemput, 2008). However, although verbal and cyber aggression can be components of relational aggression, verbal and cyber aggression is not mutually exclusive to relational aggression, as the intentions of a person who engages in verbal and/or cyber aggression may not be to directly cause harm to a peer(s) relationship.

Numerous research articles demonstrate that relational aggression behaviors in youth are associated with emotion dysregulation and maladjusted behaviors, such as conduct problems and impulsivity (Crick, Werner, Casas, O'Brien, Nelson, Grotspeter, & Markon, 1999). However, little research has assessed the relationship between the problematic behaviors in youth associated with relational aggression in college students (Lento-Zwolinski, 2007). Further research focused on young adult populations is needed.

**College Students**

Although most of this research has been conducted with children, some studies have attempted to examine relational aggression in college students and adults. Morales and Crick (1998) developed the Self-Report of Aggression and Social Behavior Measure (SRASBM) to begin studying relational aggression in adults. Despite the development of the SRASBM, there continues to be a clear lack of research that examines relational aggression in college students and young adults. Like physical aggression, relational aggression has been shown to be harmful to both aggressors and victims and has been shown to lead to depression, anxiety, withdrawal, borderline personality disorder, and difficulties in school (Crick, Ostrov, & Werner, 2006; Gomes, 2007). However, the detrimental effects of relational aggression on victims has only received attention in the
past 20 years, leading to the current limited number of studies looking at relational aggression in young adults.

The vast majority of published relational aggression measures are aimed at children or adolescents, as nearly all of the scales use peer nomination or teacher report (Murray-Close, Ostrov, Nelson, Crick, & Coccaro, 2010). This limitation is most significant if the researcher desires to assess relational aggression in a population who are not in an easily organized group setting (e.g., classroom) or for whom one cannot obtain alternative reporters (e.g., teachers or parents) (Little, Henrich, Jones & Hawley, 2003), such as is the case with college students.

**Relational Aggression and Gender.** In children, higher levels of relational aggression generally have been found for girls; however, the scant research involving older adolescents has found comparable levels of relational aggression in males and females (Prinstein, Boergers, & Vernberg, 2001). The unique role that gender plays in relational aggression amongst young adults has received growing attention. Relational aggression is used more than physical aggression for persons 18 to 22 years in age (Lento-Zwolinski, 2007; Linder, Crick, & Collins, 2002).

Thus far, research demonstrates that as males get older, they display more relationally aggressive behaviors (Prinstein, Boergers, & Vernberg, 2001); Prinstein and colleagues (2001) theorized that males become more relationally aggressive as they get older due to the associated high risks of using overt physical aggression. Liu, Lewis, and Evans (2013) found that male aggressive behaviors continue to increase with age until it peaks in young adulthood, among violent criminals. Perhaps males who do not escalate to using overt aggression use relational aggression to avoid the more severe consequences
associated with overt aggression. Another possibility is that males gain a better understanding of relational aggression during late adolescence, perceiving that behaving in a covert aggressive manner causes less social damage for themselves or others in comparison to overt physical aggression (Weber & Kurpius, 2011). The role that gender plays in relationally aggressive behaviors, why it increases with age, and its independent effect on social-psychological adjustment is far from defined and clearly warrants further research.

The most frequent form of aggression utilized by females is one that harms social relationships (Lento-Zwolinski, 2007); however, the correlates of relational aggression in females and males have been found to differ. Exclusivity is the best predictor of self-reported relational aggression for females (Lento-Zwolinski, 2007). Specifically, females who value exclusive relationships have a greater likelihood to exclude others perceived as social threats (Lento-Zwolinski, 2007). These findings led Crick (1996) to theorize that social difficulties play an important role in who uses relational aggression. Werner and Crick (1999) found that antisocial and stimulus seeking behaviors, instability, self-identity concerns, self-harm, depression, and bulimia symptoms were correlated positively with relational aggression in women; whereas overall life satisfaction was correlated negatively with relational aggression. Based on these results, the authors theorized, “women who are relationally aggressive are relatively dissatisfied with their lives, reflected in feelings of sadness, pessimism about the future, and low positive affect” (Werner & Crick, 1999, p. 621).

**Relational Aggression and Maladjustment.** Studies have identified several maladaptive behaviors associated with relational aggression in young adults. For college
students, higher levels of perspective taking skills and the ability to reflect on and comprehend different viewpoints (Davis, 1983) were correlated negatively with relationally aggressive behaviors (Loudin, Loukas, & Robinson, 2003). Loudin and colleagues (2003) theorized that this finding was due to persons with higher levels of perspective taking being more likely to grasp how others might feel when harmed, causing them to be less inclined to deliberately hurt another individual.

Erstwhile, Bailey and Ostrov (2007) found relational aggression to be associated with a Hostile Attribution Bias. That is, individuals who perceive others’ behaviors to be more hostile than they really are also tend to have higher levels of relationally aggressive behavior. Weber and Kurpius (2011) found that relational aggression was associated negatively with self-esteem and the perception of mattering to friends. Thus, participants who thought that they mattered to their identified friend group and had a higher level of self-esteem were found to have lower levels of relationally aggressive behaviors (Weber & Kurpius, 2011).

These studies demonstrate that social-psychological maladjustment as well as lower levels of prosocial behavior has been associated with relationally aggressive behaviors in young adults, which helps to demonstrate that relational aggression may be problematic for adults. Although many of the maladaptive behaviors that predict overt aggression in children also predict overt aggression in adults, few studies have examined whether the social-psychological factors that predict relational aggression in children also predict relational aggression in adults (Murray-Close, Ostrov, Nelson, Crick, & Coccaro, 2010). More research is clearly warranted.
Emotion Regulation

Emotion regulation is the process in which individuals are able to manage their emotions, such as what, when, and how emotions will be interpreted and expressed (Gross, 1998). Emotion regulation has been conceptualized and analyzed in many ways throughout research; one important model is Gratz and Roemer's (2004). Gratz and Roemer's (2004) model focuses on difficulties in regulating emotions utilizing six features: nonacceptance of emotional responses, difficulties engaging in goal-directed behavior, impulse control difficulties, lack of emotional awareness, limited access to emotion regulation strategies, lack of emotional clarity. Based on their model, the authors created the Difficulties in Emotional Regulation Scale (DERS), which is a 36-item measure of emotion dysregulation (Gratz & Roemer, 2004). The reader should note that the DERS measures emotion dysregulation, rather than emotion regulation; thus, high scores on the DERS indicate more severe problems with regulating emotions.

An insufficient ability to regulate emotions has been demonstrated to be associated with a variety of social-psychological problems and concerns. Prior research has revealed that poor emotion regulation is associated with disruptive behaviors and higher levels of aggressive behaviors (Eisenberg, Spinrad, & Eggum, 2010). Few studies have specifically examined the relationship between relational aggression and emotion regulation. The direction of emotion regulation relationship with relational aggression is questioned throughout the research literature, due to the complex manipulation of peer's relationships that takes place with relational aggression (Underwood, 2003). It is questioned whether relational aggression is calculated, requiring higher levels of emotion regulation abilities, versus impulsive in nature with higher emotion dysregulation. How
an individual regulates their emotions to a challenging situation is a key component as to whether they will exhibit problematic behaviors or not and it is hypothesized that individuals with problematic behaviors tend to have difficulties with emotional functioning, reactivity, and regulation (Conway, 2005).

Bowie (2010) examined emotion regulation association with relational aggression as well as other deviant social behaviors among adolescents. The study was conducted over the span of four years; three different trials were conducted with each participant. Young girls with low levels of emotion regulation were found to display higher levels of relationally aggressive behaviors in early adolescence. In addition, prosocial behaviors were associated negatively with relational aggression and positively with socially deviant behaviors.

Crick and colleagues (2006) found that those who engage in relational aggression are likely to self-report higher levels of distress and anger. Perhaps, those with increased levels of distress engage in relational aggression as a method to regulate their emotions (Conway, 2005). Conway (2005) theorized that the societal norms requiring girls to suppress their anger emotions might decrease the ability to regulate emotions, thus leading to relationally aggressive behaviors. The author further posits that when girls restrict their emotions it leads to increased efforts to maintain attention and focus, which underlie adaptive behaviors, impulse control, and the ability to control emotions. More extensive research is clearly warranted examining the relationship between emotion regulation and relational aggression. One important component of emotion regulation that may be related to relational aggression is impulsivity.
Impulsivity

Impulsivity involves the propensity to act swiftly with the inability to control behaviors and emotions (Ramirez & Andreu, 2006). Initial research with youth conveyed that an increased level of relationally aggressive behaviors is associated with impulsivity (Zalecki, & Hinshaw, 2004).

For children, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is known to cause severe impairment and difficulties within social relationships (Zalecki & Hinshaw, 2004). Research has indicated that persons with ADHD have higher levels of aggressive behaviors (Hinshaw, 1994). Zalecki and Hinshaw (2004) found that girls with ADHD tend to be more relationally aggressive than the normative population. In another study, ADHD- hyperactivity-impulsive type and the combined type were found to lead to interpersonal problems for children as well as predict future maladjustment and serious social impairment (Zalecki & Hinshaw, 2004). Their impulsive style of interacting with peers was found to lead to a high rate of rejection (Hodgens, Cole, & Boldizar, 2000). ADHD’s high comorbidity rate with aggression has been linked to increased relationship problems between children and their peers (Zalecki & Hinshaw, 2004).

Murray-Close and colleagues (2010) found that adults with Intermittent Explosive Disorder (IED) display increased amounts of relational aggression when compared to control samples, even after controlling for physical aggression. That is, those who tend to be impulsively aggressive, tend to use relational aggression at a higher rate. IED is a diagnosable disorder that is described as impulsive acts of aggression (Murray-Close, Ostrov, Nelson, Crick, & Coccaro, 2010).

Furthermore, in studies with young adults participants Bailey and Ostrov (2007)
found that relational aggression and its subtypes (proactive and reactive) are significantly associated with impulsivity, and Murray-Close and colleagues (2010) found that both reactive and proactive relational aggression is associated with impulsivity as well as hostility and anger. Zalecki and Hinshaw (2004) found an association between relational aggression and ADHD symptomology, and theorized that relational aggression may be more impulsive than an organized behavior. However, more detailed research is required to demonstrate that relational aggression is more impulsive in nature than a calculated act.

**Conduct Problems**

Conduct is the manner in which individuals behave, where conduct problems violate the rights of others (Werner & Crick, 1999). Relational aggression has been found to be associated with conduct problems in youth (Crick, Ostrov, & Werner, 2006; Little & Seay, 2014). In a longitudinal study conducted by Crick and colleagues (2006) higher levels of relationally aggressive behavior as a 3rd grader predicted delinquent behaviors as a 4th grader. Antisocial behaviors and poor prosocial conduct were found to be prevalent in college students with higher levels of relational aggression behaviors (Werner & Crick, 1999). Perhaps those high in antisocial traits have higher levels of relationally aggressive behaviors because they display psychopathic behaviors such as being superficially charismatic, manipulative, and controlling (Lau & Marsee, 2012).

Those found to have high levels of psychopathic traits are also found to have antisocial traits as well as impulsive and delinquent behaviors (Paulhus & Williams, 2002). Research has revealed that psychopathic traits in children and adolescents predict higher levels of relational aggression as well as conduct problems and delinquency.
Little and Seay (2014) found that adults who reported higher levels of conduct problems as an adolescent had higher levels of relational aggressive behaviors. Czar and colleagues (2010) found that psychopathic traits, as divided into two factors, Factor 1 (absence of sympathy/understanding, callousness, and manipulation) and Factor 2 (deceit, lying, impulsivity, lack of ambitions, and low frustration tolerance), predict peer relational aggression (Harpur, Hare, & Hakstian, 1989). Further research is needed to define the relationship between conduct problems and relational aggression in college students.

**Current Study and Hypotheses**

The primary goal of the current study was to examine whether emotion dysregulation and maladjustment predict relational aggression in college students. Minimal research is available involving relational aggression and its predictors in young adults, as the research began with the interest of discovering the possible form of aggression in young girls, particularly those in structured school settings (Murray-Close, Ostrov, Nelson, Crick, & Coccaro, 2010). The detrimental effects of relational aggression on victims has only received attention in the past 20 years, leading to the current limited number of studies looking at relational aggression in young adults. A reliable and valid measure for college students was not available until Morales and Crick (1998) developed the Self-Report of Aggression and Social Behavior Measure (SRASBM), beginning research on relational aggression in the adult population. This study expanded the literature on relational aggression in college students and its predictors.
Specifically, this study examined whether emotion regulation, impulsivity, and conduct problems are predictors of relational aggression. Numerous studies conducted with children have demonstrated that relationally aggressive behaviors early in life are associated with future maladjustment (Crick, 1996; Werner & Crick, 1999). Previous studies concerning relational aggression in college students suggest that maladjustment and disruptive behaviors are related to relational aggression (Bailey & Ostrov, 2007; Lento-Zwolinski, 2007; Linder, Crick, & Collins, 2002; Loudin, Loukas, & Robinson, 2003; Weber & Kurpies, 2011; Werner & Crick, 1999).

Due to the complex manipulation of peer’s relationships that occurs with relational aggression, the direction of causality is questioned (i.e., whether poor emotion regulation causes relational aggression or whether relational aggression causes problems with emotion regulation) (Underwood, 2003). Underwood (2003) questioned whether relational aggression is a calculated act, requiring individuals to be high in emotion regulation, or an impulsive act. Research thus far has demonstrated that when young girls have poor emotion regulation it is associated with later relational aggression in adolescence (Bowie, 2010).

Initial research has shown that relational aggression is associated with impulsivity in children (Zalecki, & Hinshaw, 2004). In young adults, relational aggression has been shown to be significantly associated with impulsivity (Bailey & Ostrov, 2007). Additionally, Murray-Close and colleagues (2010) found that adults who tend to be impulsively aggressive, tend to use relational aggression at a higher rate. This study furthers the existing literature by examining whether general impulsivity is a predictor of relational aggression as well as whether the impulse control difficulties subscale from the
Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scales has a relationship with relational aggression.

Relational aggression has been found to be a predictor of conduct problems in children (Crick, Ostrov, & Werner, 2006). Studies show that psychopathic traits amongst adolescents predict higher levels of relational aggression and delinquency (Marsee, Silverthorn, Frick, & 2005). Plausibly, persons high in antisocial traits demonstrate higher levels of relational aggression due to those high in psychopathic behaviors being found to be superficially charismatic, manipulative, and controlling. (Lau & Marsee, 2012). In college students, antisocial and prosocial behaviors were found to be prevalent among those who utilize relational aggression (Werner & Crick, 1999).

It is uncertain whether the same social and psychological factors that have been found to be associated with relational aggression in adolescents are also associated with relational aggression in college students (Lento-Zwolinski, 2007). This study extends the existing literature by specifically examining emotion regulation, impulsivity, and conduct problems as predictors of relational aggression in college students.

Our main hypothesis examined the relationship between relational aggression and emotion regulation; specifically, it was hypothesized that emotion dysregulation (i.e., problems with emotion regulation) would positively predict relational aggression, even while controlling for all other variables. This hypothesis was tested with hierarchical multiple regression; the first block entered was gender. Research thus far has demonstrated that among children, there exists a gender difference; in contrast, male and female college students exhibit comparable levels of relational aggression (Prinstein, Boergers, & Vernberg, 2001). Therefore it was hypothesized that there would not be a gender difference in the level of relational aggression behaviors. The second block
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consisted of external behaviors (impulsivity and conduct problems). Conduct problems and poor impulse control have been found to be correlated with relational aggression amongst children (Crick, Ostrov, & Werner, 2006); thus, it was anticipated that general impulsivity and conduct problems would positively predict relational aggression.

Finally, emotion dysregulation was entered, as it was hypothesized that emotion dysregulation would positively predict relational aggression, even while controlling for the other blocks entered. Thus far, research has demonstrated that a lower level of emotion regulation abilities predicts increased levels of relational aggression amongst children. Additionally, we hypothesized that the impulse control difficulties subscale of the Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale (measures problems with staying in control of one’s behavior while feeling negative emotions) will positively predict relational aggression, while controlling for other blocks entered; this was tested with a second hierarchical multiple regression, with impulse control emotion dysregulation difficulties as the final block.

Method

Participants

The sample initially consisted of 87 undergraduate students recruited through SONA at Eastern Illinois University. Data from 9 participants were eliminated due to excess incomplete data. In terms of gender, 64.1% of the participants (N = 50) were female and 35.9% (N = 28) were male. With regard to relationship status, 87% (N = 68) were single and 13% (N = 10) were married. Of the 78 participants, 42.3% (N = 33) were Black/African American, 41% (N = 32) Caucasian, 6.4% (N = 5) Hispanic/Latino/a, 5.1% (N = 4) Asian or Pacific Islander, 3.8% (N = 3) two or more races, and 1.2% (N = 1)
Arab. With regard to class level, 62.8% (\(N = 49\)) were Freshmen, 21.8% (\(N = 17\)) Sophomores, 9% (\(N = 7\)) Juniors, and 6.4% (\(N = 5\)) Seniors. Participants were ensured during the informed consent process that responses to conduct would not be reported. Course credit was rewarded to participants.

**Procedure**

Data were collected using an online survey on Qualtrics. Participants were asked to provide consent electronically for the study. The questionnaires were counterbalanced to control for possible order effects. A demographics form was used to gather gender, relationship status, ethnicity, and year in school.

**Measures**

**Relational Aggression.** The Self-Report of Aggression and Social Behavior Measure (SRASBM), created by Morales and Crick (1998), was used to examine relational aggression. The measure is comprised of 16 items and responses vary from 1 (not at all true) to 7 (very true) on a 7-point Likert scale, to yield an overall score ranging from 16 to 112. Higher scores are indicative of higher levels of relational aggression, prosocial behavior, and exclusivity (Lento-Zwolinski, 2007).

The SRASBM has displayed satisfactory internal consistency and adequate reliability (Bailey & Ostrov, 2007; Linder, Crick, & Collins, 2002; Murray-Close, Ostrov, Nelson, Crick, & Coccaro, 2010). Internal consistencies for relational aggression have ranged from .72 to .85 (Bailey & Ostrov, 2007; Lento-Zwolinski, 2007; Linder, Crick, & Collins, 2002). One-month test-retest reliability for proactive (\(r = .84\)) and reactive behaviors (\(r = .75\)) for relational aggression was shown to be excellent (Ostrov & Houston, 2008). Overall, this measure has been found to establish reliable reliability and
validity (Murray-Close, Ostrov, Nelson, Crick, & Coccaro, 2010).

**Emotion Regulation.** The Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale (DERS), created by Gratz and Roemer (2004), was used to evaluate emotion dysregulation. The DERS is a 36-item self-report measure using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (almost never) to 5 (almost always), with higher overall scores indicating greater difficulties with emotion regulation, or emotional dysregulation (Gratz & Roemer, 2004). The measure assesses areas in which an individual has difficulties with regulating their emotions and is comprised of six subscales: nonacceptance of emotional responses (propensity to not acknowledge expressive reactions to undesirable emotions) (e.g. “when I’m upset, I acknowledge my emotions”); difficulties engaging in goal-directed behavior (problems focusing and completing responsibilities while feeling negative emotions) (e.g. “when I’m upset, I have difficulty getting work done”); impulse control difficulties (problems staying in control of one’s behavior while feeling negative emotions) (e.g. “I experience my emotions as overwhelming and out of control”); lack of emotional awareness (propensity to attend to and accept emotions) (e.g. “I pay attention to how I feel” [reverse scored]), limited access to emotion regulation strategies (belief that there is minimal that can assist with regulating emotions successfully) (e.g. “when I’m upset, I believe that I will remain that way for a long time”), lack of emotional clarity (degree to which persons understand the emotions they experience) (e.g. “I have no idea how I am feeling”) (Gratz & Roemer, 2004). High internal consistency has been demonstrated (α = .93); adequate construct and predictive validity has been found as well as good test-retest reliability (r = .88) (Gratz & Roemer, 2004).
Impulsivity. To measure impulsivity, the Barratt Impulsiveness Scale (BIS-11) was used. The BIS-11 was created by Barratt and was later amended by Patton and colleagues (1995), and is used to obtain participants self-report of impulsive conduct (e.g. “I don’t pay attention,” “I act on impulse,” “I concentrate easily”). It is a 34-item scale and responses range from 1 (rarely/never) to 5 (almost always/always) and items are scored and then summed to generate a total impulsivity score. Patton and colleagues (1995) reported internal consistency reliability coefficients for impulsive behaviors among young adults ranging from .79 to .83.

Conduct. To measure conduct problems, the Self-Report of Delinquency (SRD) (Elliott & Ageton, 1985) was used. The SRD is a 45-item structured questionnaire that assesses delinquent behaviors and the frequency individuals engage in the criminal behaviors over the past 12 months using an 7-point Likert scale (e.g. never, once a month, once every 2-3 weeks, once a week, 2-3 times a week, once a day, 2-3 times a day) for a total minimum score of 45 and a maximum of 360; higher scores indicate greater levels of delinquency. The SRD examines 6 forms of delinquency: crimes against person (9-items) (aggravated assault); crimes against property (14-items) (vandalism); illegal service crimes (4-items) (prostitution); public disorder (8-items) (disorderly conduct); status offenses (5-items) (alcohol use); hard drug use (5-items) (amphetamine use), to yield a total score. Krueger and colleagues (1994) found that the SRD demonstrates good internal consistency, with $\alpha = .88$ for boys and .82 for girls as well as adequate test-retest reliability and good validity.
Results

Descriptive statistics were calculated, including: means, standard deviations, and internal consistency values (α's). Next, correlations were used to examine links between the main study variables. A hierarchical multiple regression equation tested predictors of relational aggression. Data were examined for missing responses and outliers; none were identified.

Descriptive Statistics

Cronbach's alphas were calculated for all individual scales in the study. Alpha's ranged from α =.77 (Barratt Impulsiveness Scale-11) to α =.98 (Self-Report of Delinquency). The alpha levels for the SRASBM (α =.95), the DERS (α =.93,) impulse control difficulties subscale of the DERS (α =.85), the BIS-11 (α =.77), and SRD (α =.98) were similar to previously reported literature (Table 1).

Gender differences were examined, as hypothesis 1 predicted that there would be no gender differences regarding relational aggression behaviors. An independent-samples t-test indicated that SRASBM total scores were not significantly different between males (M = 47.63, SD = 21.93) and females (M = 48.78, SD = 25.47), t(74) = -0.20, p = .84. Therefore, hypothesis 1 was supported.

Zero-order Correlations

Zero-order correlations examined relationships among main study variables. Hypothesis 2 predicted that relational aggression would be positively linked to impulsivity and conduct problems and the results supported this prediction. A positive relationship was found between relational aggression and impulsivity (r = .50, p <.001). Additionally, relational aggression was correlated positively with conduct problems (r =
Conduct problems and impulsivity were also found to be positively related ($r = .44, p < .001$). Hypothesis 3 predicted that relational aggression would be correlated positively with emotion dysregulation. Relational aggression was found to have a positive relationship with emotion dysregulation ($r = .44, p = <.001$). Additionally, relational aggression was found to have a positive relationship with the impulse control difficulties subscale of the Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale ($r = .51, p = <.001$). Impulsivity and the impulse control difficulties subscale of the DERS were also found to be related positively ($r = .51, p < .001$) (Table 2).

**Hierarchical multiple regression.** A hierarchical multiple regression was used to evaluate predictors of relational aggression. Block 1 consisted of gender. At an alpha level of .05, the relationship between relational aggression and gender was found to be statistically insignificant, $R^2 = .001, F(1, 74) = .039, \beta = .023, p = .84$. Impulsivity and conduct problems comprised Block 2. The total variance explained by this block was significant, $R^2 = .37, F(2, 72) = 20.74, p < .001$, while controlling for gender. Individuals with higher levels of relational aggression behaviors had higher impulsivity scores. This accounted for 11% of the variance, $p = .002$. Individuals with higher levels of relational aggression also had higher conduct problems scores. This accounted for 14% of the variance, $p = .001$. The betas were as follows: sex ($\beta = .05, p = .63$), impulsivity ($\beta = .34, p = .002$), and conduct problems ($\beta = .38, p = .001$).

Emotion dysregulation comprised the final block to determine whether emotion dysregulation predicted relational aggression above all other variables. Emotion dysregulation was found to be statistically insignificant while controlling for all other variables, $R^2 = .03, F(1, 71) = 3.38, p = .07$. The betas were as follows: sex ($\beta = .04, p = .
.63), impulsivity ($\beta = .022, p = .07$), conduct problems ($\beta = .36, p = .001$), and emotion dysregulation ($\beta = .21, p = .07$) (Table 3).

A second hierarchical regression was used to evaluate whether the impulse control difficulties subscale of the Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale predicted relational aggression while controlling for all other variables. The relationship between relational aggression and the impulse control difficulties subscale of the Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale was found to be significant, $R^2 = .07, F(1, 71) = 8.82, \beta = .31, p = .004$, while controlling for all other variables. Individuals with higher levels of relational aggression have more reported impulse control emotion dysregulation difficulties. This accounted for 10% of the variance, $p = .004$. The betas were as follows: sex ($\beta = .03, p = .75$), impulsivity ($\beta = .19, p = .09$), conduct problems ($\beta = .36, p = .001$), and impulse control emotion dysregulation difficulties ($\beta = .31, p = .004$) (Table 4).

**Discussion**

This study examined the relationship between relational aggression and possible predictors. Multiple models were tested. The first model tested utilized gender as step 1, conduct problems and impulsivity as step 2, and each individual subscale total score of the Difficulties of Emotion Regulation Scale (6 subscales) as step 3 (Table 5). When utilizing this model each subscale was found to be insignificant, other than the fourth subscale (lack of emotional awareness), which was found to have an inverse relationship with relational aggression. That is, relational aggression behaviors were found to decrease as lack of emotional awareness increased. A second model examined each individual subscale of the Difficulties of Emotion Regulation Scale individually as the
third step of the hierarchical regression. Four of the five subscales were found to positively predict relational aggression. The fifth subscale (limited access to emotion regulation strategies) was found to have no added predictive validity and again, the fourth subscale of the DERS (lack of emotional awareness) was found to have an inverse relationship.

Scores for relational aggression behaviors on the SRASBM range from 16 to 168, with higher scores indicating more relational aggression behaviors. For this particular study, scores ranged from 20 to 141, with a mean score of, $M = 48.37$, indicating an average answer of “2” out of a 7 point Likert scale, corresponding to “seldom.” Thus, although relational aggression may exist in college students, the self-reported rates are likely to be small. Future studies should examine the function of relational aggression behaviors in college students, specifically examining the differences between married and single college students, as a majority of the students in this study were single, 87% ($N = 68$) and female 64% ($N = 50$). Is relational aggression primarily between intimate partner relationships or between friendships and peer relationships in college students?

This study focused on emotion dysregulation as a predictor of relational aggression in college students, which had not previously been tested. Additionally, impulsivity, conduct problems, and gender were examined in relation to relational aggression. Studies have indicated that ADHD- hyperactivity-impulsive type and the combined type have been found to lead to interpersonal problems and increased relationships problems for children as well as predict future maladjustment and serious social impairment (Zalecki & Hinshaw, 2004). From this, Zalecki and Hinshaw (2004) theorized that relational aggression might be more impulsive than an organized behavior.
Conway (2005) theorized that the societal norms requiring girls to suppress their anger emotions might decrease their ability to regulate emotions, thus leading to relationally aggressive behaviors as a method to regulate their emotions. Conway (2005) further posits that, when girls restrict their emotions, it leads to increased efforts to maintain attention and focus; this is believed to underlie adaptive behaviors and the ability to control impulsivity as well as emotions. Due to the purposeful manipulation of a relationship that takes place by the aggressor, the question remained does higher levels of relational aggression predict emotion dysregulation or is relational aggression behavior calculated, increasing the individuals emotion regulation (Underwood, 2003).

For this study, the results indicated that emotion dysregulation did not have added predictive validity for relational aggression behaviors, while controlling for all other variables, which did not support our hypothesis. This finding did not align with prior research with youth, which has revealed that emotion dysregulation is associated with disruptive behaviors and higher levels of aggressive behaviors (Eisenberg, Spinrad, & Eggum, 2010) as well as Crick (2005) finding that those who engage in relational aggression are likely to self-report higher levels of distress and anger. Bowie (2010) also demonstrated that young girls that self-reported higher levels of relational aggression was associated with emotion dysregulation.

However, during a second hierarchical multiple regression, the impulse control difficulties subscale of the Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale (measures difficulties with remaining in control of one’s behavior when feeling negative emotions) was found to positively predict relational aggression, which supported our hypothesis; the more relational aggression behaviors reported the more impulse control emotion dysregulation.
difficulties. This accounted for 10% of the variance in relational aggression behaviors, while controlling for all other variables. Results also demonstrated that impulsivity and conduct problems predict relational aggression while controlling for gender. This finding follows prior research with youth, which has demonstrated an increased level of relationally aggressive behaviors is associated with impulsivity (Zalecki, & Hinshaw, 2004) as well as research with adults that has demonstrated an association between relational aggression and impulsivity (Bailey & Ostrov, 2007). The current study demonstrated that college students with higher levels of relational aggression behaviors self-report higher levels impulsive behaviors. Additionally, the current study also revealed that persons with elevated levels of relational aggression behaviors self-report more conduct problems. This finding matches prior research, which has shown that relational aggression is associated with conduct problems in youth (Crick, Ostrov, & Werner, 2006; Little & Seay, 2014).

Identification of impulse control emotion dysregulation difficulties as well as conduct problems and impulsive behaviors as a predictor of relational aggression indicates a need to examine the emotional and psychological well-being of adults who struggle developing positive relationships and are relationally aggressive. Impulse control should be of special consideration when examining relational aggression behaviors, as results from this study indicate that relational aggression behaviors are likely more impulsive in nature than calculated. This study demonstrated that as impulsive behaviors increase relational aggression increases as well as impulse control emotion dysregulation difficulties.

Future research should continue to examine emotion dysregulation as a predictor
of relational aggression, as emotion dysregulation was not found to predict relational aggression, which did not follow previous reported research. Prior research has demonstrated a positive relationship between relational aggression and emotion dysregulation. This contradicts prior theories that have posited relational aggression would either be calculated and demonstrate good emotion regulation abilities or impulsive and demonstrate emotion dysregulation. Perhaps relational aggression is impulsive in nature and at times requires good emotion regulation abilities while at other times demonstrates emotion dysregulation or perhaps relational aggression is impulsive in nature and for some individuals it requires high emotion regulation abilities and for others demonstrates emotion dysregulation. Future research should continue to examine the relationship between relational aggression and impulsivity as well as emotion dysregulation.

**Relational Aggression and Gender**

Gender differences were examined and the results indicated that there were not any significant differences between relationally aggressive behaviors exhibited by males and females. This finding supports prior research, which has found comparable levels of relational aggression amongst older adolescent males and females (Prinstein, Boergers, & Vernberg, 2001). Additionally, the relationship between gender and relational aggression was found to be statistically insignificant, as gender explained less than 1% of the variance in relational aggression. Prinstein and colleagues (2001) has theorized that relational aggression behaviors increase from childhood to late adolescence for males due to the associated high risks of using overt physical aggression. Another possibility theorized by Weber and Kurpius (2011) is that males gain a better understanding of
Relational aggression during late adolescence, perceiving that behaving in a covert aggressive manner causes less social damage for themselves or others. While this study supports prior research, demonstrating similar levels of relational aggression behaviors between males and females, further studies should expand to examine the causation of the increase in relational aggression behaviors from early childhood to older adolescence for males.

Prior research has indicated that exclusivity is the best predictor of self-reported relational aggression for females; females who value exclusive relationships have a greater likelihood to exclude others perceived as social threats (Lento-Zwolinski, 2007). Werner and Crick (1999) found that antisocial and stimulus seeking behaviors, social difficulties, instability, self-identity concerns, self-harm, depression, and bulimia symptoms were correlated positively with relational aggression in women; whereas overall life satisfaction was correlated negatively with relational aggression.

Future research should examine gender differences in predictors, as prior research indicates differences. Because prior research has found a link between mental health disorders and relational aggression behaviors, future research should examine specific mental health disorders as predictors of relational aggression. Mental health providers should begin to consider relational aggression and its related negative consequences when working with populations identified as predicting relational aggression (i.e. Borderline Personality Disorder, Bulimia Nervosa, and Intermittent Explosive Disorder).

Limitations and Future Directions for Research

This study had several limitations. The participants were all recruited from the undergraduate psychology pool at Eastern Illinois University and the sample did not
reach the desired a priori power. This study had a sample size of 78 where the a priori power analysis indicated that approximately 115 participants would be needed to find a moderate effect. The majority of participants were single and Freshmen. The geographic location, demographic make-up, year in school, and students from the undergraduate psychology pool may not be an accurate representation of all college students. Future research should recruit participants from a larger college, in different parts of the country. A majority of the participants in this study were freshmen (62.8%); a more diverse population of grades in school could influence predictors of relational aggression. Likewise, a majority of the participants (64.1%) were female and single (87.2%), changes in the diversity in gender and relationship status might impact the results. Additionally, future studies should aim to have a more ethnically diverse participant population to provide a more accurate representation of college students.

With participants completing the questionnaires online, participants were unable to ask questions to verify every participant understood each questionnaire and question. Discussion of the study with other participants was unable to be prevented due to the survey taking place online. It was possible that having prior knowledge of the questionnaires or discussions related to the survey may have influenced participant’s answers. Future studies should create a more controlled testing environment to ensure that all participants understand each questionnaire, question, and have no prior knowledge of the survey. Due to measures being self-report and participants being college students, an additional limitation that may have impacted responses is the social desirability bias, the tendency for participants to respond to questions in a way in which they view as favorable by others.
When examining conduct problems, students may be hesitant to disclose delinquent acts due to social desirability bias as well as fear of retaliation, although the informed consent form clearly explained confidentiality as well as no action would be taken based upon incriminating responses. Additionally, this sample is only representative of college students and not young adults as a whole, as colleges have restrictions related to criminal history and are less likely to have young adults with significant impulse control concerns than the normative population. Future studies should expand to examine predictors of relational aggression amongst young adults as a whole.

Clinical Implications

The results of this study have several clinical implications. Relational aggression and its predictors have not been studied widely in college students. Given that impulse control emotion dysregulation difficulties as well as impulsive behaviors and conduct problems has a positive relationship with relational aggression, these variables should be taken into consideration by clinicians when working with persons with relationally aggressive behaviors.
References


### Table 1

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*Note. SRASBM = Self-Report of Aggression and Social Behavior Measure; DERS-1 = Nonacceptance of emotion responses subscale of the Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale, DERS-2 = difficulties with engaging in goal-directed behaviors subscale of the Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale; DERS-3 = impulse control difficulties subscale of the Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale; DERS-4 = lack of emotional awareness subscale of the Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale; DERS-5 = limited access to emotion regulation strategies subscale of the Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale; DERS-6 = lack of emotional clarity subscale of the Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale; BIS = Barratt Impulsiveness Scale-11; SRD = Self-Report of Delinquency*
Table 2

*Zero-Order Correlations*

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*Note.* SRASBM = Self-Report of Aggression and Social Behavior Measure; DERS-1 = Nonacceptance of emotion responses subscale of the Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale; DERS-2 = difficulties with engaging in goal-directed behaviors subscale of the Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale; DERS-3 = impulse control difficulties subscale of the Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale; DERS-4 = lack of emotional awareness subscale of the Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale; DERS-5 = limited access to emotion regulation strategies subscale of the Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale; DERS-6 = lack of emotional clarity subscale of the Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale; BIS = Barratt Impulsiveness Scale-I1; SRD = Self-Report of Delinquency.

\(p < .001***, p < .01**, p < .05^*\)
Table 3

Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Relational Aggression (N = 78)

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* \( p < .01 \) and ** \( p < .001 \)
Table 4

Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Relational Aggression (N = 78)

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*Note. DERS-3 = impulse control difficulties subscale of the Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale

*p < .01 and **p < .001
### Table 5
Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Relational Aggression (N = 78)

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<tr>
<td>DERS-4</td>
<td>-1.18</td>
<td>.46</td>
<td>-0.32*</td>
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<tr>
<td>DERS-5</td>
<td>-.19</td>
<td>.78</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
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<tr>
<td>DERS-6</td>
<td>.86</td>
<td>.88</td>
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*Note.* DERS-1 = Nonacceptance of emotion responses subscale of the Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale; DERS-2 = difficulties with engaging in goal-directed behaviors subscale of the Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale; DERS-3 = impulse control difficulties subscale of the Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale; DERS-4 = lack of emotional awareness subscale of the Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale; DERS-5 = limited access to emotion regulation strategies subscale of the Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale; DERS-6 = lack of emotional clarity subscale of the Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale

*p < .05, **p < .01, and ***p < .001*
Appendix A

In order for us to collect background information on participants, you will answer a series of demographic questions. Please answer them appropriately.

What is your sex?

- Male
- Female

What is your year in school?

- Freshman
- Sophomore
- Junior
- Senior

How do you usually describe yourself (can choose more than one)?

- American Indian, Alaskan Native, or Native Hawaiian
- Asian or Pacific Islander
- Biracial or Multiracial
- Black or African American
- Hispanic or Latino/a
- White
- Other (please describe):

What is your marital status?

- Single
- Married/Partnered
- Separated
- Divorced
Appendix B

Directions: This questionnaire is designed to measure qualities of adult social interaction and close relationships. Please read each statement and indicate how true each is for you, now and during the last year, using the scale below. Write the appropriate number in the blank provided. IMPORTANT. The items marked with asterisks (*) ask about experiences in a current romantic relationship. If you are not currently in a romantic relationship, or if you have not been in a relationship during the last year, please leave these items blank (but answer all of the other items). Remember that your answers to these questions are completely anonymous, so please answer them as honestly as possible!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Not at All True</th>
<th>Sometimes True</th>
<th>Very True</th>
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1. I usually follow through with my commitments.
2. *I have threatened to break up with my romantic partner in order to get him/her to do what I wanted.
3. *My romantic partner tries to make me feel jealous as a way of getting back at me.
4. *It bothers me if my romantic partner wants to spend time with his/her other friends.
5. I try to get my own way by physically intimidating others.
6. I have a friend who ignores me or gives me the "cold shoulder" when s/he is angry with me.
7. I am willing to lend money to other people if they have a good reason for needing it.
8. *When my romantic partner is mad at me, s/he won't invite me to do things with our friends.
9. My friends know that I will think less of them if they do not do what I want them to do.
10. I get jealous if one of my friends spends time with his/her other friends even when I am busy.
11. When I am not invited to do something with a group of people, I will exclude those people from future activities.
12. I have been pushed or shoved by people when they are mad at me.
13. I am usually kind to other people.
14. I am usually willing to help out others.
15. When I want something from a friend of mine, I act "cold" or indifferent towards them until I get what I want.
16. I would rather spend time alone with a friend than be with other friends too.
17. A friend of mine has gone “behind my back” and shared private information about me with other people.
18. *My romantic partner has pushed or shoved me in order to get me to do what s/he wants.
19. I try to make sure that other people get invited to participate in group activities.
20. *I try to make my romantic partner jealous when I am mad at him/her.
21. When someone makes me really angry, I push or shove the person.
RELATIONAL AGGRESSION IN COLLEGE STUDENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not at All</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>Sometimes True</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>Very True</th>
<th>7</th>
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</table>

22. I get mad or upset if a friend wants to be close friends with someone else.

23. When I have been angry at, or jealous of someone, I have tried to damage that person's reputation by gossiping about him/her or by passing on negative information about him/her to other people.

24. When someone does something that makes me angry, I try to embarrass that person or make them look stupid in front of his/her friends.

25. I am willing to give advice to others when asked for it.

26. *My romantic partner has threatened to physically harm me in order to control me.

27. When I have been mad at a friend, I have flirted with his/her romantic partner.

28. When I am mad at a person, I try to make sure s/he is excluded from group activities (going to the movies or to a bar).

29. I have a friend who tries to get her/his own way with me through physical intimidation.

30. *I get jealous if my romantic partner spends time with her/his other friends, instead of just being alone with me.

31. I make an effort to include other people in my conversations.

32. When I have been provoked by something a person has said or done, I have retaliated by threatening to physically harm that person.

33. *My romantic partner has threatened to break up with me in order to get me to do what s/he wants.

34. It bothers me if a friend wants to spend time with his/her other friends, instead of just being alone with me.

35. *My romantic partner doesn't pay attention to me when s/he is mad at me.

36. I have threatened to share private information about my friends with other people in order to get them to comply with my wishes.

37. I make other people feel welcome.

38. *When my romantic partner wants something, s/he will ignore me until I give in.

39. When someone has angered or provoked me in some way, I have reacted by hitting that person.

40. *I have cheated on my romantic partner because I was angry at him/her.

41. I get mad or upset if my romantic partner wants to be close friends with someone else.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not at All True</th>
<th>Sometimes True</th>
<th>Very True</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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</table>

42. _____ I have a friend who excludes me from doing things with her/him and her/his other friends when s/he is mad at me.

43. _____ I am usually willing to lend my belongings (car, clothes, etc.) to other people.

44. _____ I have threatened to physically harm other people in order to control them.

45. _____ I have spread rumors about a person just to be mean.

46. _____ When a friend of mine has been mad at me, other people have "taken sides" with her/him and been mad at me too.

47. _____ *I would rather spend time alone with my romantic partner and not with other friends too.

48. _____ I have a friend who has threatened to physically harm me in order to get his/her own way.

49. _____ I am a good listener when someone has a problem to deal with.

50. _____ *My romantic partner has tried to get his/her own way through physical intimidation.

51. _____ *I give my romantic partner the silent treatment when s/he hurts my feelings in some way.

52. _____ When someone hurts my feelings, I intentionally ignore them.

53. _____ I try to help others out when they need it.

54. _____ *If my romantic partner makes me mad, I will flirt with another person in front of him/her

55. _____ I have intentionally ignored a person until they gave me my way about something.

56. _____ I have pushed and shoved others around in order to get things that I want.
### Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale (DERS)

Please indicate how often the following statements apply to you by writing the appropriate number from the scale below on the line beside each item.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>almost never (0-10%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>sometimes (11-35%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>about half the time (36-65%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>most of the time (66-90%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>almost always (91-100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. I am clear about my feelings.
2. I pay attention to how I feel.
3. I experience my emotions as overwhelming and out of control.
4. I have no idea how I am feeling.
5. I have difficulty making sense out of my feelings.
6. I am attentive to my feelings.
7. I know exactly how I am feeling.
8. I care about what I am feeling.
9. I am confused about how I feel.
10. When I’m upset, I acknowledge my emotions.
11. When I’m upset, I become angry with myself for feeling that way.
12. When I’m upset, I become embarrassed for feeling that way.
13. When I’m upset, I have difficulty getting work done.
14. When I’m upset, I become out of control.
15. When I’m upset, I believe that I will remain that way for a long time.
16. When I’m upset, I believe that I will end up feeling very depressed.
17. When I’m upset, I believe that my feelings are valid and important.
18. When I’m upset, I have difficulty focusing on other things.
19. When I’m upset, I feel out of control.
20. When I’m upset, I can still get things done.
21. When I’m upset, I feel ashamed at myself for feeling that way.
22. When I’m upset, I know that I can find a way to eventually feel better.
23. When I’m upset, I feel like I am weak.
24. When I’m upset, I feel like I can remain in control of my behaviors.
25. When I’m upset, I feel guilty for feeling that way.
26. When I’m upset, I have difficulty concentrating.
27. When I’m upset, I have difficulty controlling my behaviors.
28. When I’m upset, I believe there is nothing I can do to make myself feel better.
29. When I’m upset, I become irritated at myself for feeling that way.
30. When I’m upset, I start to feel very bad about myself.
31. When I’m upset, I believe that wallowing in it is all I can do.
32. When I’m upset, I lose control over my behavior.
33. When I’m upset, I have difficulty thinking about anything else.
34. When I’m upset I take time to figure out what I’m really feeling.
35. When I’m upset, it takes me a long time to feel better.
36. When I’m upset, my emotions feel overwhelming.
Appendix D

DIRECTIONS: People differ in the ways they act and think in different situations. This is a test to measure some of the ways in which you act and think. Read each statement and put an X on the appropriate circle on the right side of this page. Do not spend too much time on any statement. Answer quickly and honestly.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rarely/Never</th>
<th>Occasionally</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Almost Always/Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 I plan tasks carefully.</td>
<td>2 I do things without thinking.</td>
<td>3 I make-up my mind quickly.</td>
<td>4 I am happy-go-lucky.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 I don’t “pay attention.”</td>
<td>6 I have “racing” thoughts.</td>
<td>7 I plan trips well ahead of time.</td>
<td>8 I am self controlled.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 I concentrate easily.</td>
<td>10 I save regularly.</td>
<td>11 I “squirm” at plays or lectures.</td>
<td>12 I am a careful thinker.</td>
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<tr>
<td>13 I plan for job security.</td>
<td>14 I say things without thinking.</td>
<td>15 I like to think about complex problems.</td>
<td>16 I change jobs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 I act “on impulse.”</td>
<td>18 I get easily bored when solving thought problems.</td>
<td>19 I act on the spur of the moment.</td>
<td>20 I am a steady thinker.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 I change residences.</td>
<td>22 I buy things on impulse.</td>
<td>23 I can only think about one thing at a time.</td>
<td>24 I change hobbies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 I spend or charge more than I earn.</td>
<td>26 I often have extraneous thoughts when thinking.</td>
<td>27 I am more interested in the present than the future.</td>
<td>28 I am restless at the theater or lectures.</td>
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<tr>
<td>29 I like puzzles.</td>
<td>30 I am future oriented.</td>
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Appendix E

This section deals with your own behavior. I'd like to remind you that all your answers are confidential. Please give me your best estimate of the exact number of times you've done each thing during the last year from Christmas a year ago to the Christmas just past. (RECORD A SINGLE NUMBER, NOT A RANGE, AND "O" IF NEVER ENGAGED IN A BEHAVIOR.) Please look at the How Often Scale, and select the one which best describe how often you were involved in this behavior.

Never – 0 Once every 2-3 weeks -1 Once A Month -2 Once A Week -3 2-3 Times A Week -4 Once A Day - 5 2-3 Times A Day -6

1. How many times in the Last Year have you purposefully damaged or destroyed property belonging to your parents or other family members? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6
2. How many times in the Last Year have you (If Working) purposefully damaged or destroyed property belonging to your employer? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6
3. How many times in the Last Year have you purposefully damaged or destroyed other property that did not belong to you, not counting family, or work property? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6
4. How many times in the Last Year have you stolen or tried to steal a motor vehicle such as a car or motorcycle? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6
5. How many times in the Last Year have you stolen or tried to steal something worth more than $50? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6
6. How many times in the Last Year have you knowingly bought, sold or held stolen goods or tried to do any of these things? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6
7. How many times in the Last Year have you purposefully set fire to a building, a car, or other property or tried to do so? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6
8. How many times in the Last Year have you carried a hidden weapon other than a plain pocket knife? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6
9. How many times in the Last Year have you stolen or tried to steal things worth $5 or less? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6
10. How many times in the Last Year have you attacked someone with the idea of seriously hurting or killing that person? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6
11. How many times in the Last Year have you been paid for having sexual relations with someone? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6
12. How many times in the Last Year have you paid someone to have sexual relations with you? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6
13. How many times in the Last Year have you been involved in gang fights? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6
14. How many times in the Last Year have you used checks illegally or used phony money to pay for something? (includes international overdrafts) 0 1 2 3 4 5 6
15. How many times in the Last Year have you sold marijuana or hashish? ("pot", "grass", "hash") 0 1 2 3 4 5 6
16. How many times in the Last Year have you hitchhiked where it was illegal to do so? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6
17. How many times in the Last Year have you stolen money or other things from your parents or other members of your family? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6
18. How many times in the Last Year have you (if working) stolen money, goods, or property from the place where you work? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

19. How many times in the Last Year have you had or tried to have sexual relations with someone against their will? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

20. How many times in the Last Year have you hit or threatened to hit one of your parents? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

21. How many times in the Last Year have you (if working) hit or threatened to hit your supervisor or other employees? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

22. How many times in the Last Year have you hit or threatened to hit anyone else other than parents, persons at work? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

23. How many times in the Last Year have you been loud, rowdy, or unruly in a public place - disorderly conduct? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

24. How many times in the Last Year have you sold hard drugs such as heroin, cocaine, and LSD? (total frequency of all hard drug sales, not limited to these three drugs) 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

25. How many times in the Last Year have you tried to cheat someone by selling them something that was worthless or not what you said it was? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

26. How many times in the Last Year have you taken a vehicle for a ride or drive without the owner's permission? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

27. How many times in the Last Year have you bought or provided liquor for a minor? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

28. How many times in the Last Year have you used force or strongarm methods to get money or things from people? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

29. How many times in the Last Year have you avoided paying for such things as movies, bus or subway rides, and food? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

30. How many times in the Last Year have you been drunk in a public place? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

31. How many times in the Last Year have you stolen or tried to steal things worth between 5$ and 50$? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

32. How many times in the Last Year have you broken or tried to break into a building or vehicle to steal something or just to look around? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

33. How many times in the Last Year have you begged for money or things from strangers? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

34. How many times in the Last Year have you failed to return extra change that a cashier gave you by mistake? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

35. How many times in the Last Year have you used or tried to use credit cards without the owner's permission? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

36. How many times in the Last Year have you made obscene telephone calls (such as calling someone and saying dirty things)? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

37. How many times in the Last Year have you snatched someone's purse or wallet or picked someone's pocket? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

38. How many times in the Last Year have you embezzled money, that is, used money or funds entrusted to your care from some purpose other than intended? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6