

Exploring the Recipe for a Healthy Relationship: The Impact of Personality Strengths and
Strength Similarity on Romantic Relationships

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By

Kevin C. Young
Master of Arts
George Mason University, 2013
Bachelor of Arts
University of Maryland, College Park, 2010

Director: Todd B. Kashdan, Professor
Department of Clinical Psychology

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George Mason University
Fairfax, VA

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ABSTRACT

EXPLORING THE RECIPE FOR A HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP: THE IMPACT OF PERSONALITY STRENGTHS STRENGTH SIMILARITY ON ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIPS

Kevin C. Young, Ph.D.

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Dissertation Director: Dr. Todd B. Kashdan

This dissertation consisted of two studies designed to investigate the link between individual personality strengths and romantic relationship well-being. Participants from Study 1 included 182 adult undergraduate students in heterosexual romantic relationships (i.e., 91 heterosexual couples), while Study 2 participants included a community sample of 136 adults (i.e., 68 heterosexual couples); both romantic partners participated and each couple was together for at least 6 months. The project examined: 1) the link between individual personality strengths, as measured by the Values in Action Inventory of Strengths (VIA-IS), and multiple indices of romantic relationship well-being and 2) the way in which one partner's personality strengths might influence the relationship well-being of his or her partner (i.e., partner effects). Given previous empirical findings suggesting that similarity between partners across certain personality traits predicted positive relationship outcomes, this dissertation also examined the link between partners'

personality strengths similarity and relationship well-being. In accordance with current recommendations, similarity between romantic partners for each personality strength was operationalized as a profile similarity correlation. Results offer some support for the value of specific personality strengths when predicting romantic relationship well-being in actors, but identified minimal support for the presence of partner effects. Findings also suggested the potential relationship benefits for partner similarity in certain personality strengths. Implications for future research and intervention are discussed while considering significant study limitations.

Exploring the Recipe for a Healthy Relationship: The Impact of Individual Personality
Strengths and Strength Similarity on Romantic Relationships

INTRODUCTION

A healthy romantic relationship can serve as a vital source of satisfaction, support, and fulfillment. Research demonstrates that healthy romantic relationships provide a buffer against daily stressors (e.g., Coombs, 1991), and promote both physical health (for a review, see Loving & Slatcher, 2013) and mental health (for a review, see Braithwaite & Holt-Lunstad, 2017) through various mechanisms. Of course, not all romantic partners identify their relationship as healthy or satisfying. This is concerning, as romantic relationship dissolution is linked to decreased overall well-being for both married (Amato, 2000) and unmarried (Rhoades, Dush, Atkins, Stanley, & Markman, 2011) couples. Yet, remaining in an unhealthy relationship does not appear to be the solution. Longitudinal research over a 12-year period revealed that individuals maintaining an unhealthy romantic relationship reported significantly lower levels of happiness, life satisfaction, self-esteem, and physical health, as well as greater psychological distress, compared to those in healthy relationships and those who discontinued unhealthy relationships (Hawkins & Booth, 2005).

What are the factors that facilitate healthy romantic relationships? There is, of course, no singular answer. As one way to address this question, researchers highlight the importance of exploring the unique personality traits of each partner and their contributions to relationship quality. Support for the interpersonal value of individual

differences in personality traits is based on the notion that interdependence is at the core of romantic relationships (Kelley, 1979; Rusbult & Van Lange, 2003). Undeniably, romantic relationships are awash with frequent interactions between partners, during which each partner affects the other. It is assumed, then, that both partners' personality traits possess the potential to increase or decrease relationship quality for each partner.

In line with this assumption, individual personality traits consistently predict one's own relationship well-being (for a meta-analytic review, see Malouff, Thorsteinsson, Schutte, Bhullar, & Rooke, 2010). Additionally, researchers found that one's own personality traits also influence the well-being of his or her romantic partner (e.g., Botwin, Buss, & Shackelford; 1997; Watson et al., 2004; Watson, Hubbard, & Wiese, 2000). In keeping with the Actor-Partner Interdependence Model (Kenny, 1996; Kenny, Kashy, & Cook, 2006), we refer to the former effect as an actor effect and the latter effect as a partner effect. In addition to individual differences in personality traits, theorists argue that the characteristics of the couple as a unit, such as personality trait similarity between partners, might also confer relationship benefits. Indeed, many studies link greater personality trait similarity to increased relationship quality (e.g., Decuyper, De Bolle, & De Fruyt, 2012; Gaunt, 2006; Gonzaga, Campos, & Bradbury, 2007; Luo et al., 2008).

Given the link between personality traits and relationship quality, it follows that personality strengths - trait-like features of personality that facilitate optimal performance, adaptation, and adjustment (Linley, 2008; Nettle, Schnitker, & Robins, 2011) - might offer relationship benefits. By exploring this possibility in detail, we might

gain further understanding of the individual and couple-level differences that promote healthy romantic relationships. Clarifying the impact of personality strengths on romantic relationships is particularly important, as therapeutic approaches for romantic couples increasingly emphasize the role of each partner's personality strengths in the promotion of relationship quality (e.g., Kauffman & Silberman, 2009, Lomas, Hefferon, & Ivztan, 2014, Niemiec, 2017). These same therapeutic approaches also highlight the clinical value of the association between partners' strengths (e.g., strength similarity).

The purpose of this dissertation is to examine the differential impact of individual personality strengths on relationship well-being using two independent samples of romantic couples. We seek to capture the interdependence between partners by examining both actor and partner effects of personality strengths on various positive relationship outcomes. Additionally, we aim to further research regarding the potential influence of personality similarity on relationship quality. In service of this aim, we explore the possible relationship benefits of personality strength similarity between partners. To increase inferential ability, we will identify findings that replicate across both samples.

Personality Strengths

As noted above, personality strengths are defined as trait-like, positive features of personality. While various classifications of personality strengths exist (e.g., Buckingham & Clifton, 2001; King & Trent, 2013; Peterson & Seligman, 2004), each with their unique strengths lexicon, there is consensus regarding certain fundamental components of personality strengths. Personality strengths manifest as ways of thinking, feeling, and

behaving that facilitate optimal functioning (Linley, 2008; Peterson, Park, & Seligman, 2010). Their appropriate usage feels genuine to the user, is intrinsically motivating, and enhances the chances of obtaining desired outcomes (Linley, Willars, & Biswas-Diener, 2010; Park & Peterson, 2009; Peterson & Seligman, 2004; Rath & Conchie, 2009).

Personality strengths are assessed as individual differences, which can range from absence to excess (Grant & Schwartz, 2011; Peterson, 2006). In line with a recent meta-analysis suggesting the malleability of personality traits via direct intervention (Roberts et al., 2017), personality strengths, while relatively stable, are capable of intentional development. For instance, targeted interventions are shown to increase self-control (Baumeister, Gailliot, DeWall, & Oaten, 2006), creativity (Flood & Phillips, 2007), emotional intelligence (Brackett, Rivers, Reyes, & Salovey, 2012), gratitude (Froh, Sefick, & Emmons, 2008), and forgiveness (Wade, Worthington, & Meyer, 2005).

Measuring Personality Strengths

A multitude of valid measures exists to assess groups of personality strengths (Brook & Brewerton, 2006; Linley, 2008; Rath, 2007; Peterson & Seligman, 2004). Of these, the Values in Action Inventory of Strengths (VIA-IS; Peterson & Seligman, 2004) is rapidly growing in non-proprietary use by the general population. Demographic information from the online, free-access version of the VIA-IS indicates that over five million people completed the measure within the past decade (Niemiec, 2017).

Furthermore, proponents of the VIA-IS market it as a component of strengths-based couples therapy. An overview of positive psychological approaches to couples therapy explicitly identified the VIA-IS as “the best tool available” for exploring romantic

partners' strengths (Kauffman & Silberman, 2009, p. 525). The authors recommend that clinicians administer the VIA-IS to identify both partners' personality strengths and potential relationships between partners' strengths (e.g., strength similarity). The resulting strength data, regardless of which strengths are implicated, are to be leveraged in therapy. This clinical application of the VIA-IS by couples therapists is promoted within applied positive psychology practitioner guides (e.g., Lomas, Hefferon, & Ivztan, 2014; Niemiec, 2017).

Whether the VIA-IS excels beyond the many other reliable and valid strengths assessments is debatable, and this is not a claim we wish to make. Likewise, we do not claim that clinical approaches espousing the use of the VIA-IS represent the gold standard. However, frequent non-proprietary use of the VIA-IS and its marketed clinical application within couples therapy necessitates that we use research to deepen the understanding of the link between VIA-IS personality strengths and relationship quality. Worded simply, we must work to close the gap between research and application by clinicians and the lay population.

Of note, the previously described clinical approach assumes that the personality strengths identified by the VIA-IS are equally relevant to relationship outcomes. Yet, theory and research indicate that the adaptiveness of personality strengths is, to some extent, context dependent. Thus, it might be that certain personality strengths are more beneficial within romantic relationships, and consequently might warrant idiosyncratic therapeutic attention. Moreover, the possibility that personality strength similarity

between partners will promote positive relationship outcomes is an empirical question which has yet to be examined.

Personality Strengths and Well-being

There is considerable evidence that personality strengths promote well-being. Total strength endorsement on the VIA-IS is robustly associated with greater life satisfaction, a key component of subjective well-being (Peterson, Ruch, Beermann, Park, & Seligman, 2007). In addition, overall levels of personality strengths were positively related to satisfaction with the past (Peterson & Seligman, 2004), optimism about the future (Duckworth, Steen, & Seligman, 2005), and meaning in life (Littman-Ovadia & Steger, 2010). The possession of personality strengths may also benefit physical health, as individuals who endorsed higher levels of personality strengths also engaged in significantly more frequent positive health behaviors, such as healthy eating and physical fitness, compared to peers with lower strength endorsement (Proyer, Gander, Wellenzohn, & Ruch, 2013). Studies which assess the impact of individual personality strengths demonstrate that they possess differential associations with positive intrapersonal outcomes. In adults, for instance, the strengths of hope, zest, gratitude, love, and curiosity have all been found to be robustly associated with life satisfaction ($r_s \approx .40 - .60$; Park et al., 2004; Peterson et al., 2007; Shimai, Otake, Park, Peterson, & Seligman, 2006).

Personality Strengths: The Right Tool for the Job

Theorists argue that the value of personality strengths is determined, in part, by context, as various situations require unique strength combinations to obtain optimal

results (Biswas-Diener, Kashdan, & Minhas, 2011; Niemiec, 2013, 2017). At school, for example, curiosity and creativity are particularly beneficial, as they enable thoughtful inquiries and novel discoveries. Within the military, however, curiosity and creativity might appear insubordinate, as questioning orders or seeking unconventional ways to complete missions may endanger other soldiers. Instead, bravery and self-regulation are more likely to be encouraged and rewarded. In this way, character strengths represent tools to be used flexibly to accomplish the jobs for which they are best fit.

There is also empirical evidence to support the differential value of personality strengths across settings. In school, the personality strengths of perseverance, love, gratitude, and hope uniquely predicted academic achievement amongst middle school and college students (Park & Peterson, 2009). Furthermore, college students reporting elevated levels of specific personality strengths (i.e., perseverance, love of learning, humor, fairness, and kindness) also possessed a higher college GPA compared to college students who endorse other strengths (Lounsbury, Fisher, Levy, & Welsh, 2009). On the job, the strengths of zest, curiosity, hope, gratitude, and spirituality all possess significant associations with work satisfaction (Peterson, Stephens, Park, Lee, & Seligman, 2010). The strengths of honesty, bravery, perspective, and social intelligence each explained unique variance in the work performance of executives (Sosik, Gentry, & Chun, 2012). Evidence indicates that personality strengths are not equally valuable in all situations, but rather possess unique relevance in different settings.

Personality Strengths and Romantic Relationships

Considering the role that context plays in determining the utility of individual personality strengths, one might expect that certain personality strengths are more relevant to romantic relationship outcomes compared to others. In line with this assumption, the VIA classification of strengths uses a two-dimension circumplex model, which classifies strengths across two poled axes: 1) strengths with a focus on the self (e.g., curiosity) versus strengths with a focus on others (e.g., teamwork), and 2) strengths with a focus on the intellectual/mind (e.g., love of learning) versus strengths with a focus on emotion/heart (e.g., kindness) (Peterson, 2006). Within this model, strengths considered to fall within the Heart-Other quadrant (i.e., Leadership, Teamwork, Love, Gratitude, Forgiveness, and Kindness) are hypothesized to promote harmonious and healthy interactions with other people above and beyond other strengths. We must acknowledge that there is minimal empirical support for the circumplex model, which is best conceptualized as theoretically-driven rather than empirically-driven. Nevertheless, the interpersonal circumplex model is still frequently used to guide hypotheses and interpretations within research (e.g., Haridas, Bhullar, & Dunstan, 2017) and to assist clinicians in identifying and applying strengths during clinical intervention (Niemic, 2017).

The theorized relationship between a subset of personality strengths and interpersonal functioning is further reflected in efforts to identify the factor structure of the VIA-IS. Nine of the ten factor analyses exploring the VIA-IS latent structure identified a unique subset (i.e., factor) of interpersonal strengths (Azañedo, Fernández-Abascalb & Barracac, 2014; Brdar & Kashdan, 2010; Littman-Ovadia & Lavy, 2012;

McGrath, 2015; McGrath, Greenberg, & Hall-Simmonds, 2017; Park, Tsukayama, Goodwin, Patrick, & Duckworth, 2017; Peterson, Park, Pole, D'Andrea, & Seligman, 2008; Ruch et al., 2010; Shryack, Steger, Krueger, & Kallie, 2010; Singh & Choubisa, 2010). The most recent analysis of the VIA latent factor structure generated a three-factor model of strengths, which, like previous factor analyses, included an interpersonal factor theorized to possess greater relevance to functioning within close relationships (McGrath et al., 2017). Specifically, this interpersonal factor, labeled Caring, consists of strengths reflecting emotional and interpersonal closeness and cooperation, including Gratitude, Kindness, Love, Teamwork, Forgiveness, and Leadership. The strengths comprising this factor are identical to those comprising the Heart-Other quadrant of the interpersonal circumplex. The second factor, labeled Self-Control, reflects strengths that promote one's ability to function effectively in the world, including Prudence, Perseverance, Self-Regulation, Honesty, and Modesty. The third, labeled Inquisitiveness, is comprised of strengths that encourage exploration and innovation, including Curiosity, Creativity, Zest, Bravery, Love of Learning, and Hope. A full definition of each strength is included in the appendices.

McGrath and colleague's (2017) three-factor model replicated across 12 international adult samples consisting of more than one million participants (McGrath, 2015; McGrath, Greenberg, & Hall-Simmonds, 2017), and is currently marketed to clinicians and researchers as the latent factor structure of the VIA-IS (Niemic, 2017). Thus, we opted to use this three-factor model for our analyses. As strengths are applied in daily life and in therapy at the individual level (i.e., as singular strengths rather than

strength factors), we will conduct analyses using individual strengths as predictors. We will not aggregate individual strengths into the three strength factors, but rather use these factors to select specific personality strengths and to guide the interpretation of our results.

We wish to note that the interpersonal value of strengths within the Caring factor is not in question. A wealth of research indicates that the Caring strengths of forgiveness and gratitude are important components of maintaining healthy relationships, and are consistently positively associated with prosocial behavior (Bartlett & DeSteno, 2006; McCullough, 2000) and overall relationship quality (Emmons & McCullough, 2003; Fincham, Paleari, & Regalia, 2002; Watkins, Grimm, & Kolts, 2004). Additionally, the strength of kindness contributes to better social relationships, and is identified by members of romantic couples as a necessary attribute of their romantic partner (e.g., Sprecher & Regan, 2002). Still, we argue that labeling certain strengths as interpersonal might unintentionally lead to an undue focus on interpersonal strengths at the expense of others when exploring the value of strengths within interpersonal relationships. This possibility is concerning, as theorists and researchers highlight the interpersonal value of specific strengths beyond those comprising the interpersonal (i.e., Caring) factor.

Theorists and researchers posit that the facilitation and application of personality strengths within the Self-Control factor might be more important than the provision of clinical skills in couples therapy (Fowers, 2001). For instance, marital therapists often note that effectively implementing relationship maintenance strategies taught in therapy (e.g., communication skills), particularly within conflict situations, is difficult.

Effectively doing so often requires one to resist the urge to avoid unpleasant discussions and related negative emotions, a task that necessitates the use of self-regulation.

Researchers found a link between increased self-regulation among romantic partners and greater relationship satisfaction (Vohs, Finkenauer, & Baumeister, 2011). Furthermore, recent research suggests that both romantic partner's self-regulation predicted the implementation of more effective communication patterns between partners (Bornstein & Shaffer, 2017). Moreover, Honesty, another strength categorized within the Self-Control factor, is typically considered to be a hallmark of a healthy relationship (Anderson, Ansfield, & DePaulo, 1999), and was identified by men and women as a more desirable partner characteristic for romantic relationships than an exciting personality, good health, adaptability, dependability, humor, kindness, and understanding. Greater levels of honesty are shown to promote perceived closeness between romantic partners, while decreased honesty is linked to an increase in relational conflict and abuse (for a review, see Kelley, 2009).

Strengths within the Inquisitiveness factor also might influence relationship well-being. Self-Expansion Theory states that people desire to expand their knowledge and experience of themselves and their world, and that intimate relationships provide a valuable opportunity to achieve this desire (Aron & Aron, 1997). Not surprisingly, studies demonstrate that self-expansion within a relationship corresponds to greater relationship satisfaction (e.g., Aron, Norman, Aron, McKenna, & Heyman, 2000; Graham, 2008). This theory implicates those character strengths associated with enthusiasm for the exploration of new information and experiences, such as curiosity. In

this vein, curiosity has been shown to facilitate feelings of attraction and social closeness (Kashdan & Roberts, 2004), and is associated with decreased aggression toward romantic partners (Kashdan et al., 2013). The personality strength of hope, which when operationalized by the VIA-IS is akin to optimism (Peterson & Seligman, 2004), also demonstrates a link to relationship outcomes. Researchers found a relationship between greater optimism and more satisfying and happy romantic relationships, and optimism predicted increases in relationship satisfaction over a 2-year period (Assad, Donnellan, & Conger, 2007).

Though not intended to be exhaustive, the evidence above offers justification for the proposition that personality strengths beyond those categorized within the interpersonal (i.e., Caring) factor might influence outcomes relevant to romantic relationships. Thus, while it might be unwise to assume that all personality strengths matter equally to relationship outcomes, we also cannot assume that relationship benefits are limited to those interpersonal strengths with an obvious link to relationship functioning. Further research is necessary to elucidate the differential impact of personality strengths from all three VIA-IS strength factors on relationship outcomes.

Personality Strengths and Relationship Science

The proposition that trait-like personality strengths might promote romantic relationship well-being is supported by a multitude of theories on relationship functioning. In fact, the notion that one individual's personality traits predispose him or her to function better or worse within a romantic relationship is so prevalent throughout the relationship science literature, a recent theoretical review identified it as a core

principle (i.e., “the predisposition principle”) of relationship science (Finkel, Simpson, & Eastwick, 2017). One specific theory of close relationship functioning frequently used to illustrate the role of personality traits within romantic relationships is the Vulnerability-Stress-Adaptation Model (Karney, 2009). This theory posits that an individual’s personality traits influence the way in which he or she resolves or maintains relationship stressors. From this perspective, personality traits are conceptualized as distal predictors of relationship outcomes (e.g., Donnellan, Assad, Robins, & Conger, 2007; Karney & Bradbury, 1995; Kelly & Conley, 1987; Robins, Caspi, & Moffitt, 2000), impacting daily partner interactions and the ability of the couple to weather outside stressors. In this way, personality strengths are the tools through which an individual can influence his or her relational environment, whereby hindering or improving his or her own relationship quality.

There is empirical support for the influence of one’s own personality traits on his or her romantic relationship well-being (i.e., actor effects). Early studies found significant correlations between personality traits and actor relationship quality (e.g., Barry, 1970; Bentler & Newcomb, 1978; Burgess & Wallin, 1953; Eysenck & Wakefield, 1981; Kelly & Conley, 1987; Terman & Bittenweiser, 1935). Research exploring the link between Big Five personality traits and relationship outcomes garners significant attention within the literature. A meta-analysis of the Big Five personality traits demonstrated that individuals who are higher in extraversion, agreeableness, and conscientiousness reported significantly greater relationship well-being, while those higher in neuroticism

consistently reported significantly decreased relationship well-being (Malouff, et al. 2010).

These intrapersonal effects, though important, only account for a piece of the picture. The impact of personality traits on romantic well-being extends beyond intrapersonal effects such that one person's traits influence not just his or her own relationship well-being (i.e., actor effects), but the relationship well-being of his or her partner (i.e., partner effects) as well. Theoretical assumptions for partner effects are drawn from Interdependence Theory (Kelley, 1979; Kelley & Thibaut, 1978; Thibaut & Kelley, 1959) and its theoretical extensions (e.g., Social Interdependence Theory; Johnson & Johnson, 2005). This theoretical approach emphasizes the structure of interdependence between partners as a fundamental component of romantic relationships (Kelley et al., 1983), which highlights the ability of one partner's actions to influence the other's experiences in the relationship. This interdependence grants both partners significant control over one another, as it creates a dynamic such that each needs the other to obtain valued perceptual outcomes (e.g., the satisfaction of psychological needs and relationship satisfaction) and functional outcomes (e.g., goal attainment). Given that the behavior of one partner influences the outcomes of the other, and that personality is a strong predictor of behavior (e.g., Paunonen & Ashton, 2001), it follows that one's own personality traits should affect both partners' relationship well-being.

Multiple studies have explored the impact of one's own personality traits on the relationship outcomes of his or her partner (i.e., partner effects). Studies targeting the Big Five traits suggest that individuals report greater relationship satisfaction when their

partners possess higher levels of agreeableness and openness, while greater neuroticism predicts decreased partner relationship satisfaction (e.g., Botwin et al., 1997; Watson et al., 2000; 2004). People tend to be more satisfied with their relationships when partners report greater positive emotionality and less negative emotionality (Robins et al., 2000; Watson et al., 2000, 2004). Furthermore, decreased emotional stability is associated with lower levels of relationship satisfaction (e.g., Barelds, 2005; Botwin et al., 1997; Donnellan et al., 2007; Robins et al., 2000) for one's partner. Importantly, self and partner personality traits consistently make independent contributions to the prediction of relationship well-being (Bouchard, Lussier, & Sabourin, 1999; Robins et al., 2000; Watson et al., 2000, 2004), although the impacts of partner effects tend to be comparatively smaller.

Taken together, previous findings imply that one partner's personality traits influence relationship well-being for both partners. Considering the theoretical and empirical justification for the impact of personality traits on one's own and his or her partner's relationship well-being, the present study examines both the potential actor and partner effects of personality strengths on relationship outcomes. To gain a more comprehensive picture of the way in which personality strengths might influence partners' experiences in their relationship, we will utilize various domain-specific positive relationship outcomes (e.g., relationship satisfaction, relationship commitment, satisfaction of psychological needs by the relationship, goal support).

Personality Similarity and Relationship Quality

When considering the way in which personality strengths might influence romantic relationship well-being, it is necessary to expand beyond straightforward connections between personality strengths and relationship outcomes (i.e., actor and partner effects) and examine characteristics of the couple. The popular adage “birds of a feather flock together” is apropos to one such couple-level characteristic, as several relationship theorists posit that similarity between partners across various personality qualities provides relationship benefits. Assortative mating research provides initial support for the role of similarity in romantic relationships, indicating that individuals in close interpersonal relationships, on average, tend to be more similar than expected by chance in a wide range of characteristics, including age, level of education, race, religion, attitudes, and general intelligence (Caspi, Herbener, & Ozer, 1992; Epstein & Gutman, 1984; Klohnen and Mendelsohn 1998; Mascie-Taylor 1989; Plomin, DeFries, & Lohlin, 1977; Price and Vandenberg 1980; Watson et al. 2004). This congruence between romantic partners has also been demonstrated for various personality traits (e.g., Bleske-Rechek, Remiker, & Baker, 2009; Gonzaga, Carter, & Buckwalter, 2010; Luo & Klohnen, 2005; McCrae et al., 2008; Rammstedt & Schupp, 2008; Watson et al., 2004), though findings suggest that the presence of personality similarity among couples differs depending on the personality trait being assessed. For instance, when exploring Big Five personality trait similarity amongst couples, researchers found that similarity occurred for the traits of agreeableness ($r = .26$), conscientiousness ($r = .31$), and openness to experiences ($r = .30$), but detected minimal similarity on the personality traits of extraversion ($r = .11$) and neuroticism ($r = .06$) (Rammstedt & Schupp, 2008).

Does personality similarity promote higher quality relationships? A review of the research literature on the link between personality similarity and relationship well-being reveals support for the interpersonal value of personality similarity. Several studies found evidence supporting the benefits of personality similarity for romantic relationships, noting that more similar partners report increased perceived relationship quality (Caspi & Herbener, 1990; Decuyper et al., 2012; Gaunt, 2006; Karney & Bradbury, 1995; Gonzaga et al., 2007, Luo & Klohnen, 2005; Luo et al., 2008; Nemecek & Olson, 1999). In two studies, personality similarity across all Big Five personality traits (i.e., extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and openness to experience) significantly predicted greater relationship quality ($d = .76$ in Study 1, $d = 1.01$ in Study 2) for both men and women (Gonzaga et al., 2007). Likewise, partner similarity in the social potency, dependability, accommodation, and interpersonal relatedness personality domains predicted greater relationship satisfaction, regardless of gender (Luo et al., 2008). Similarity in each of the four personality domains predicted between 9% and 23% of the variance in relationship satisfaction. It must be acknowledged, however, that not all studies found significant effects of personality trait similarity on relationship well-being (Donnellan et al., 2007; Gattis, Berns, Simpson, & Christensen, 2004). Thus, while there is empirical support for the impact of personality similarity on relationship outcomes, findings challenging this link suggest the need for continued investigation.

To date, only one study has explored the potential relational benefits of similarity between romantic partners' individual VIA-IS personality strengths. Weber and Ruch

(2012) assessed if partner strength similarity predicted increased life satisfaction among 174 Swiss adolescent romantic partners. They found that similarity in the strengths of perseverance, zest, honesty, and teamwork predicted greater life satisfaction, each explaining approximately 5% variance above and beyond self and partner strength ratings. While such findings encourage the possibility that personality strengths similarity might have positive interpersonal consequences, the researchers used an adolescent sample, and it is unclear whether these results will be similar for adults. Additionally, the researchers selected intrapersonal well-being (i.e., life satisfaction) as their primary outcome, leaving the potential for individual strength similarity to influence relational outcomes unexplored. We seek to fill this gap, adding to the existing literature by examining the differential impact of strengths similarity on indices of relationship well-being among adult romantic couples.

Consideration must be given to the way in which similarity is operationalized. One method employed by relationship researchers is the calculation of absolute value difference scores (ADS), typically computed by subtracting one partner's score on a dimension from the other partner's score, then taking the absolute value of this difference. This technique, though intuitive, is subject to methodological concerns, such as low reliability, spurious correlations, and variance restriction (Cronbach and Furby 1970; Edwards, 1994, 2002). Consequently, statistical experts generally discourage the use of raw difference scores to assess dyadic similarity (Cronbach and Furby 1970; Edwards, 1994, 2002). Furthermore, existing research suggests that there is minimal indication that the ADS is related to relationship quality/satisfaction (e.g., Dyrenforth et

al., 2010; Luo et al., 2008). An alternative approach to calculating similarity is the profile similarity correlation (PSC). These correlations (typically Pearson product moment coefficients) capture similarity in the configuration of personality traits across members of a dyad, and as such, index how well the partners “match” across a set of personality traits or items comprising a trait subscale (see Cronbach & Gleser, 1953). In this sense, profile similarity correlations are thought to capture varying degrees of similarity with a greater level of complexity than do absolute difference scores.

In keeping with the identified advantages, research suggests that the most consistent findings in the literature linking personality similarity to relationship quality are based on studies using the profile similarity correlation (e.g. Gonzaga et al., 2007; Luo et al., 2008; Luo & Klohnen, 2005). For personality domains, four studies have found support for a positive link between personality profile similarity and relationship satisfaction (Caspi & Herbener, 1990; Gaunt, 2006; Gonzaga et al., 2007; Luo & Klohnen, 2005). Moreover, two of these studies found that the personality similarity effects remained after controlling for self and partner effects (Gonzaga et al., 2007; Luo & Klohnen, 2005). Furthermore, studies specifically seeking to compare the ability of the PSC and ADS to predict relationship satisfaction demonstrated the superiority of the PSC, as the ADS added no significant independent contribution in addition to the PSC (e.g., Gaunt, 2006; Luo & Klohnen, 2005). Given that the profile-based similarity approach is deemed to be a stronger, more consistent correlate of relationship measures compared to the ADS, the current project will index strength similarity between partners

via the PSC. The PSC will be used to assess if similarity among individual personality strengths between romantic partners predict greater relationship well-being.

The Present Study

The current project explored the association of individual personality strengths, as measured by the VIA-IS, with indices of romantic relationship well-being among two independent samples of romantic couples. The reliability, replicability, and anticipated increase in the application of McGrath and colleague's (2017) three-factor strength model by researchers and clinicians led us to use this latent factor structure for our analyses. We selected only the 17 personality strengths found to reliably load on one of the three VIA-IS strength factors of Caring, Inquisitiveness, and Self-Control identified by (McGrath et al., 2017). By excluding strengths with consistent cross-loadings, we minimize conceptual overlap between the strength factors, increasing our ability to interpret our findings through the lens of the increasingly applied three-factor strength model.

We specifically wish to assess the ability of individual strengths within each strength factor to predict positive relationship outcomes, as well as which individual strengths within a given strength factor possess the strongest associations with positive relationship outcomes. To incorporate both members of the relationship, we also examine whether one partner's personality strengths influence his or her partner's relationship well-being (i.e., partner effects; Kenny et al., 2006). Lastly, we assess the ability of romantic partner strength similarity, operationalized via profile similarity correlations, to predict romantic relationship well-being.

Hypotheses

H1: Personality strengths from each of the Caring, Inquisitiveness, and Self-Control factors will be positively associated with relationship well-being outcomes (i.e., actor effects).

H2: Personality strengths within each of the Caring, Inquisitiveness, and Self-Control strengths factors will demonstrate partner effects, such that greater personality strengths endorsement by Partner A will predict increased self-reported relationship well-being for Partner B.

H3: Personality strength similarity between partners on individual strengths from each of the three factors, as indexed by profile similarity correlations, will predict increased relationship well-being.

As an additional exploratory aim, we will evaluate and report the relative magnitude of individual strength effects by calculating an estimate of percentage of variance explained (i.e., pseudo-R-squared).

METHOD

Participants

The study consisted of two unique samples of romantic couples: 1) an undergraduate student sample and 2) a community sample. The undergraduate sample included 91 heterosexual couples (182 participants, 50% women); both partners had to participate and we required a minimum relationship length of at least three months. The sample was 57% European/European American, 14% African American, 13% Asian American, 12% Hispanic, and 4% identified as other. The average participant age was 22 years old ($SD = 7.04$) and the average relationship length was slightly less than 2 years ($SD = 2.13$; range: 3 months – 12 years). Only 3% of the participants were married and 7% were engaged.

Participants from the community sample included 68 adult couples (136 participants; 50% women) from the community. The sample was 63% European/European American, 10% Hispanic, 10% African/African American, 9% Asian/Asian American, 2% Native American, and 6% of other races/ethnicities or no reported ethnicity. Again, we required participants to be in their current relationship for at least 3 months. Participants were, on average, 30 years old ($SD = 14.02$; range: 18 - 78) and had been involved in their current relationships for 6 years and 6 months on average

($SD = 10.7$ years; range: 1 year - 61 years). Nearly 30% of participants were married and 15% were engaged.

Procedure

We recruited undergraduate participants via an online undergraduate psychology student research pool at a Northern Virginia university. Students from the same university were also recruited outside of the psychology department using flyers placed at various locations throughout the college campus. Students who completed the study received research credits as compensation for their participation, while each student's romantic partner received financial compensation. We recruited participants from the Northern Virginia community via flyers and advertisements both online and in the local newspaper. Researchers provided financial compensation to all community participants. The study protocol was identical for both participant samples. After providing consent, we separated the participating couple and seated each partner at a computer in a private room. Using their computer, participants completed a demographic questionnaire, the VIA-IS, and various self-report measures of relationship well-being.

Measures

Personality strengths. In both samples, participants completed the Values in Action Inventory of Strengths (VIA-IS; Peterson & Seligman, 2004), a 240-item self-report measure, which includes 24 strengths with 10 items per strength. To respond, participants used a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*very much unlike me*) to 5 (*very much like me*) to answer questions. For example, forgiveness was measured with items that included "I always allow others to leave their mistakes in the past and make a

fresh start” and “I rarely hold a grudge.” Low scores on the VIA-IS indicated high strength endorsement. The internal consistency for each strength subscale assessed was acceptable, ranging from $\alpha = .70$ to $\alpha = .87$ in the undergraduate sample and $\alpha = 0.68$ to $\alpha = 0.90$ in the community sample.

Relationship Satisfaction. We used the 5-item satisfaction subscale of the *Relationship Investment Model Scale* (Rusbult, Martz, & Agnew, 1998) to assess relationship satisfaction within the undergraduate student sample. Participants provided responses ranging from 1 (*not at all true/never true*) to 9 (*very true/true all of the time*). In our undergraduate sample, we found evidence for acceptable internal consistency ($\alpha = .94$).

For the community sample, we assessed relationship satisfaction via a version of the Quality of Marriage Index (QMI; Norton, 1983), which was slightly modified to include romantic relationships between non-married partners in keeping with previous research (e.g., Kalbfleisch, 2001; Stafford & Canary, 1991). The measure consists of 6-items, examples of which include “My relationship with my partner is very stable” and “Our relationship is strong.” Participants responded using a 7-point Likert scale using scores ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). This measure demonstrated acceptable internal consistency ($\alpha = .95$).

Investment, Commitment, and Quality of Alternatives. We measured each partner’s investment in the relationship, commitment to the relationship, and perceived quality of alternative romantic partners using the 10-item investment, 7-item commitment, and 10-item alternatives subscales from the *Relationship Investment Model*

Scale (Rusbult, Martz, & Agnew, 1998). Participants provided responses ranging from 1 (*not at all true/never true*) to 9 (*very true/true all of the time*). The investment items assessed invested time, shared identity, shared memories, self-disclosure, and shared intellectual life, while commitment items represent a sense of allegiance and attachment to a romantic partner. Quality of alternatives items assess the perceived desirability of the best available alternative to one's romantic partner. Investment, commitment, and quality of alternatives are associated with indices of superior couple functioning (e.g., dyadic adjustment, trust level, inclusion of other in the self) (Rusbult, Martz, & Agnew, 1998). Only the undergraduate sample completed the investment, commitment, and quality of alternatives scales. We found that the investment ($\alpha = .80$), commitment ($\alpha = .71$), and quality of alternatives ($\alpha = .85$) scales demonstrated adequate internal consistencies.

Satisfaction of Psychological Needs by the Relationship. Participants completed the 9-item Balanced Measure of Psychological Needs – Relationship Domain (BMPN-RD; La Guardia, Ryan, Couchman, & Deci, 2000), which assesses the degree to which one's romantic relationship satisfies their psychological needs. The measure consists of three 3-item subscales: relatedness (e.g., "I feel loved and cared about."), competence (e.g., "I feel very capable and effective), and autonomy (e.g., "I have a say in what happens and can voice my opinion."). Participants responded to items on a 1 (*not at all true*) to 7 (*very true*) scale. Internal consistencies were acceptable for relatedness ($\alpha = .84$), competence ($\alpha = .70$), and autonomy ($\alpha = .72$).

Perceived Goal Support. We used an 8-item scale developed and validated by Molden, Lucas, Finkel, Kumashiro, and Rusbult (2009) to assess the way participants

perceive their partners to be supportive of their promotion- and prevention-focused goals. Participants responded to items from a 4-item promotion-focused subscale (e.g., “My partner feels confident that I can fulfill my hopes and dreams.”) and a 4-item prevention-focused subscale (e.g., “My partner feels confident that I can fulfill the obligations to which I am dedicated.”) using a scale ranging from 1(*not at all*) to 8(*completely*). This scale predicts dyadic adjustment in unmarried and married couples (Molden et al., 2009). We found acceptable reliability in both the undergraduate (promotion-focused: $\alpha=.81$; prevention-focused: $\alpha=.83$) and community samples (promotion-focused: $\alpha=.85$; prevention-focused: $\alpha=.86$).

Analytic Approach

All participants were recruited as couples, meaning that our data possess natural non-independence. To account for this non-independence, with people nested within couples, we tested research questions using multilevel modeling in HLM 7.01 (Raudenbush, Bryk, Cheong, & Congdon, 2000). In all analyses, we grand mean-centered predictors. This includes both individuals at Level-1 and couple-level (i.e., relationship) variables at Level-2. To ensure that results are not attributable to systematic differences in length of relationship, we included relationship length as a covariate in all multilevel models.

To calculate pseudo-R-squared, an estimate of percentage of variance explained, we chose to use the more parsimonious method proposed by Kreft & Leeuw (1998) and Singer (1998). Notably, however, this method produces reliably smaller estimates than some other methods, such as more complex ones suggested by Snijders & Bosker

(1999). Because none of these methods truly estimate an objective amount of variance explained, but rather compare models to each other, we opted for the more conservative method so as not to offer larger estimates that may mislead the reader.

Calculating Within-couple Profile Similarity Correlations

In keeping with previous researchers' procedural recommendations (e.g., Caspi & Herbener, 1990; Gaunt, 2006; Gonzaga et al., 2007; Klohnen & Mendelsohn, 1998; Luo & Klohnen, 2005), we operationalized personality strength similarity among dyad members by calculating profile similarity correlations between both partners' responses across all items of a given personality strength subscale. We specifically calculated Pearson product moment coefficients for both partners' responses across each of the 17 personality strengths subscales comprising the Caring, Inquisitiveness, and Self-Control factors. These correlations are descriptive indices of similarity between partners, which, like other correlation coefficients, can range from -1 to 1. Negative correlations suggest that partners are opposite to one another on a specific set of attributes, while positive correlations indicate similarity. Correlations close to 0 suggest minimal relationship between partners' strength endorsement. In keeping with our other analyses, relationship length will be included as a covariate in all similarity analyses. Actor and partner strength effects will also be controlled for, allowing us to identify the unique contribution of personality strength similarity.

RESULTS

Descriptive information of variables across both samples is presented in Table 1. To examine potential multicollinearity, we first estimated correlations for all variables relevant to each sample. Though no formal cutoff exists, all correlation coefficients fell below the frequently utilized cutoff of .85 (Kline, 2011). As correlations at or above .85 are often indicative of multicollinearity, but ultimately are not a necessary condition for it, we next examined the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) for each predictor. Like our correlation coefficients, no formal cutoff exists for the use of the VIF to indicate severe multicollinearity. However, researchers frequently interpret a VIF at or above 10 to suggest that multicollinearity must be formally addressed (Chatterjee, Hadi, & Price, 2000; Kutner, Nachtsheim, Neter, & Li, 2005). The VIF for each predictor within both samples was below 10.

H1: Personality Strengths Influence A Person's Relational Well-Being

To address this hypothesis, we examined how individual personality strengths differentially predicted romantic relationship well-being outcomes across two samples of romantic couples. For both samples, we first entered each personality strength separately into unique regression models predicting our interpersonal well-being outcome variables. In instances when multiple personality strengths from a given strength factor significantly predicted the same relationship well-being outcome, we then allowed each

significant predictor to compete for variance by entering them into the same regression model. By entering only significant predictors, we can determine which specific strengths possess the greatest relevance to relationship well-being outcomes without oversaturating our models with nonsignificant predictors. We report results separately for each of the three strengths factors. Of note, results for the univariate analyses for the undergraduate sample and the community sample can be found in Tables 2 and 3, respectively.

Caring Strengths: Univariate Analyses

We found that several personality strengths from the Caring strengths factor significantly predicted our relationship well-being outcomes in both samples. In the undergraduate student sample, greater endorsement of the personality strengths of Love and Kindness individually predicted all six of our relationship well-being outcomes, which include greater relationship satisfaction, support for promotion and prevention goals, investment in the relationship, commitment to the relationship, as well as decreased perceived value of alternatives romantic partners ($ps < .05$). Greater endorsement of the personality strength of Teamwork predicted increased relationship satisfaction, support for promotion and prevention goals, and commitment to the relationship ($ps < .05$). Increased Gratitude scores significantly predicted greater support for promotion and prevention goals, investment in the relationship, and decreased perceived value of alternative romantic partners ($ps < .05$). Likewise, Leadership endorsement significantly predicted a positive relationship with support for promotion and prevention goals, investment in the relationship, and commitment to the relationship, as well as an inverse relationship with perceived value of alternative romantic partners

($ps < .05$). Interestingly, the strength of Forgiveness did not significantly predict any of our relationship well-being outcomes.

The Caring personality strengths demonstrated fewer significant effects in our community sample compared to those seen in our undergraduate sample. Increased endorsement of Teamwork positively predicted feelings of relatedness ($p > .05$), while greater Gratitude predicted increased feelings of autonomy ($p > .05$). Kindness and Forgiveness did not significantly predict any relationship well-being outcomes. Love, however, still predicted all six of our relationship well-being outcomes, including increased relationship satisfaction, support for promotion and prevention goals, and feelings of autonomy, relatedness, and competence (all $ps > .05$).

Caring Strengths: Multivariate Analyses

In our undergraduate sample, findings from our multivariate models containing only significant Caring strength predictors of a given outcome implicate Love and Kindness as the Caring strengths with the greatest relevance to our relationship well-being outcomes. When competing with other significant strengths, Love was the only significant predictor of increased relations satisfaction ($B = 0.30, t = 2.81, p = .006$), the perceived support for promotion goals ($B = 0.25, t = 2.33, p = .022$) and prevention goals ($B = 0.25, t = 2.01, p = .048$), investment in the relationship ($B = 0.31, t = 2.65, p = .010$), and commitment to the relationship ($B = 0.27, t = 2.28, p = .025$). The strength of Kindness was the only predictor to retain significance in predicting the decreased perceived value of romantic alternatives ($B = -0.45, t = -2.44, p = .017$).

Similar to the findings from our undergraduate sample, results from our community sample highlight the interpersonal value of the Love strength. The Love strength was the sole predictor of increased relationship satisfaction ($B = 0.19, t = 2.60, p = .012$), the perceived support for promotion goals ($B = 0.29, t = 3.24, p = .002$) and prevention goals ($B = 0.28, t = 3.61, p < .001$), and feelings of competence ($B = 0.23, t = 2.52, p = .014$). When we entered Love and Teamwork into the same regression model predicting feelings of relatedness, only Love remained significant ($B = 0.26, t = 3.10, p = .003$). Both Love and Gratitude fell to non-significance when both were used to predict autonomy.

Inquisitiveness Strengths: Univariate Analyses

Various strengths from the Inquisitiveness factor predicted relationship well-being outcomes in both samples. In our undergraduate sample, Zest predicted all six of our relationship well-being outcomes. Specifically, Zest predicted increased relationship satisfaction, support for promotion and prevention goals, investment in the relationship, commitment to the relationship, as well as decreased perceived value of alternative romantic partners ($ps < .05$). Increased hope endorsement significantly predicted five of the relationship well-being outcomes, namely increased relationship satisfaction, increased support for promotion and prevention goals, increased commitment to the relationship, and decreased perceived value of romantic partners ($ps < .05$). Greater Bravery endorsement predicted higher levels of support for promotion and prevention goals and investment in the relationship. Creativity positively predicted support for promotion goals and investment in the relationship ($p < .05$), while greater Curiosity only

predicted increased investment in the relationship ($p < .05$). The Love of Learning personality strength did not significantly predict any relationship well-being outcomes.

In our community sample, the strength of Zest again predicted all relationship well-being outcomes, with increased endorsement of Zest predicting greater relationship satisfaction, support for promotion and prevention goals, and feelings of autonomy, relatedness, and competence ($ps < .05$). Higher levels of Curiosity predicted greater support for promotion and prevention goals, feelings of autonomy, and feelings of relatedness ($ps < .05$). Greater endorsement of Hope predicted increased support for promotion and prevention goals, feelings of autonomy, and feelings of competence ($ps < .05$). Bravery demonstrated a positive relationship with feelings of competence ($p < .05$). The Love of Learning and Creativity strengths did not significantly predict any relationship well-being outcomes.

Inquisitiveness Strengths: Multivariate Analyses

When the significant strength predictors of each outcome competed in the same regression models, Hope and Creativity demonstrated the greatest connection to relationship well-being. Hope was the only significant predictor of the increased perception of support for promotion goals ($B = 0.44, t = 3.47, p < .001$) and prevention goals ($B = 0.32, t = 2.45, p = .016$), and the decreased perceived value of alternative romantic partners ($B = -0.36, t = -2.23, p = .028$). Creativity predicted increased investment in the relationship ($B = 0.32, t = 2.29, p = .025$), while Curiosity, Bravery, and Zest fell to non-significance. Though Hope and Zest both individually predicted

relationship satisfaction and commitment to the relationship, neither retained significance when competing for variance in the same regression model.

We next allowed the significant Inquisitiveness strength predictors for each outcome to compete with one another for variance in the outcomes they individually predicted in our community sample. When competing for variance, Zest remained a significant predictor of increased feelings of relatedness ($B = 0.20, t = 2.07, p = .043$), while Hope became nonsignificant. As mentioned above, Zest was also the only significant predictor of increased relationship satisfaction ($B = 0.25, t = 2.48, p = .016$). For the perceived support of promotion goals and prevention goals, feelings of autonomy, and feelings of competence, all predictors fell to non-significance when competing for variance.

Self-Control Strengths: Univariate Analyses

In our undergraduate sample, each of the strengths in the Self-Control factor predicted at least one of the relationship well-being outcomes. Honesty predicted all six outcomes, with higher levels of honesty predicting greater relationship satisfaction, support for promotion and prevention goals, investment in the relationship, and commitment to the relationship, as well as decreased perceived value of alternative romantic partners ($ps < .05$). Greater endorsement of Perseverance predicted greater support for promotion and prevention goals and investment in the relationship ($ps < .05$). The strength of Self-Regulation positively predicted support for promotion and prevention goals ($ps < .05$). Higher levels of Modesty endorsement predicted greater support for prevention goals and decreased perceived quality of alternative romantic

partners ($ps < .05$). Prudence demonstrated an inverse relationship with perceived quality of alternative romantic partners ($p < .05$).

Within our community sample, findings highlighted the interpersonal relevance of Self-Regulation, as it evidenced a significant positive relationship with relationship satisfaction, support for promotion and prevention goals, feelings of autonomy, and feelings of competence ($ps < .05$). Greater endorsement of Honesty predicted more, relationship satisfaction, feelings of autonomy, relatedness, and competence ($ps < .05$). Increased endorsement of Perseverance predicted greater support for promotion goals and competence ($p < .05$). The strengths of Modesty and Prudence did not significantly predict any relationship well-being outcomes.

Self-Control Strengths: Multivariate Analyses

Results from the multivariate analyses of the significant Self-Control strengths suggest the unique importance of Perseverance above and beyond other Self-Control strengths in predicting the perception of support for promotion goals ($B = 0.44, t = 3.75, p = <.001$) and prevention goals ($B = 0.37, t = 3.43, p < .001$) within our undergraduate sample. Honesty was the only significant predictor of relationship satisfaction ($B = 0.28, t = 2.91, p = .005$) and commitment to the relationship ($B = 0.36, t = 3.34, p = .001$). All strengths fell to non-significance when attempting to predict investment in the relationship and the perceived quality of alternative romantic partners.

Honesty and Self-Regulation possessed the greatest connection with relationship well-being in our community sample compared to other strengths comprising the Self-Control factor. Honesty uniquely predicted feelings of relatedness ($B = 0.23, t = 2.47, p =$

.016), and the Self-Regulation strength uniquely predicted the perceived support for prevention goals ($B = 0.27, t = 3.45, p < .001$). Of those outcomes with multiple significant individual strength predictors from the Self-Control factor, the strength of Self-Regulation remained the only significant predictor of the perceived support for promotion goals ($B = 0.27, t = 2.17, p = .034$), while Honesty predicted relationship satisfaction ($B = 0.22, t = 2.12, p = .031$), feelings of autonomy ($B = 0.24, t = 2.03, p = .047$), and competence ($B = 0.23, t = 2.24, p = .028$) above and beyond other Self-Control factor strengths.

Exploratory Aim: Relative Magnitude of Actor Effects

We calculated pseudo-R-squared to examine an approximate estimate of the variance explained by our Caring personality strengths actor effects. Among undergraduates, Love explained approximately 12% of variance in relationship satisfaction, 8% of variance in relationship investment, and 9% of variance in commitment to the relationship. Love also accounted for 9% of perceived support for both promotion goals and prevention goals. Interestingly, Kindness accounted for 36% of the variance in the decreased perceived value of alternative romantic partners. Estimates of variance explained within the community sample were similar. Love accounted for approximately 5% of variance in relationship satisfaction, 7% in feelings of competence, and 8% in feelings of relatedness, while it accounted for slightly more variance in the support for promotion goals (15%) and prevention goals (13%).

In terms of our Inquisitiveness factor, analyses from our undergraduate sample indicated that Hope accounted for 15% of variance in support for promotion goals and

14% for prevention goal support, as well as 6% in decreased perceived value of alternative romantic partners. Creativity accounted for 6% of variance in relationship investment. Analyses involving our community sample indicated that Zest explained 6% of the variance in relationship satisfaction and feelings of relatedness.

For strengths comprising the Self-Control factor, Perseverance predicted 14% of the variance in promotion goal support and 13% of the variance in prevention goal support. Honesty explained 7% of the variance in relationship satisfaction and 9% of the variance in relationship commitment. In our community sample, Honesty explained 6% of the variance in relationship satisfaction, 7% of the variance in feelings of relatedness, 4% of the variance in feelings of autonomy, and 9% of the variance in feelings of competence. Self-regulation predicted 11% of the variance in promotion goal support and 12% of the variance in prevention goal support.

H1: Summary

Strengths within each of the three factors were predictive of positive relationship outcomes, while not all strengths predicted relationship outcomes. There appeared to be little observable difference regarding the relative estimate of variance explained (i.e., pseudo-R-squared), as strengths from each factor explained between 4% and 16% of variance in relationship outcomes. The strengths of Love and Honesty appear to predict positive relationship outcomes above and beyond other strengths from their respective factors in both samples. Taken altogether, these findings might suggest that there are minimal advantages to emphasizing interpersonal (i.e., Caring) strengths over those from the other two strengths factors when assessing relationship outcomes. However, as we

will highlight within the limitations section, the large amount of analyses conducted create the concern for the presence of Type I error. Thus, minimal inferences can be drawn from the findings as is, and speculation will be limited the replicated findings mentioned above.

H2: Personality Strengths Influence Romantic Partner's Relational Well-Being

To capture the interdependence of romantic partners, we completed an additional set of analyses using Actor-Partner Interdependence Models (APIM; Kenny et al., 2006). Doing so enabled us to control for the effects of one partner's personality strengths when examining the effects of the other partner's personality strengths. We specifically examined the effect of whether one partner's personality strengths contribute to his or her own relationship well-being (i.e., actor effects) and the effects of whether one's personality strengths contribute to their partner's relationship well-being outcomes (i.e., partner effects). This is a conservative test, as both actor and partner predictors are examined simultaneously.

Caring Strengths: Partner Effects

Among our undergraduate sample, we found only one partner effect, which suggested that people who scored higher on the personality strength of Kindness had partners who perceived greater support for their promotion goals ($B = 0.17, t = 2.05, p = .044$). In our community sample, we identified three partner effects. Specifically, the partners of those who endorsed higher levels of the Love strength reported greater perceived support for their prevention goals ($B = 0.18, t = 2.63, p = .011$), relationship

satisfaction ($B = 0.17, t = 3.17, p = .002$), and feelings of relatedness ($B = 0.19, t = 2.51, p = .015$).

Inquisitiveness Strengths: Partner Effects

Table 5 shows that only two partner effects were present in our undergraduate sample. Individuals who reported greater Zest paired with partners who endorsed greater perceived support for prevention goals ($B = 0.17, t = 2.00, p = .049$). Those with partners who endorsed higher levels of Bravery reported increased relationship satisfaction ($B = 0.28, t = 2.68, p = .009$). Our community sample evidenced a comparatively larger amount of partner effects. Of note, the finding for Bravery in our undergraduate sample replicated in our community sample, with partners of individuals who endorsed greater levels of Bravery reported increased relationship satisfaction ($B = 0.23, t = 2.78, p = .007$), support for promotion ($B = 0.24, t = 2.34, p = .022$) and prevention ($B = 0.22, t = 2.21, p = .031$) goals, and feelings of autonomy ($B = 0.32, t = 3.88, p < .001$), competence ($B = 0.26, t = 3.62, p < .001$), and relatedness ($B = 0.19, t = 2.02, p = .048$). We also found effects for the personality strength of Creativity, with greater endorsement of Creativity linked to increased relationship satisfaction ($B = 0.19, t = 2.39, p = .020$), support for promotion ($B = 0.22, t = 2.14, p = .036$) and prevention ($B = 0.21, t = 2.37, p = .021$) goals, and feelings of autonomy ($B = 0.22, t = 2.79, p = .007$), competence ($B = 0.19, t = 2.37, p = .021$), and relatedness ($B = 0.22, t = 2.68, p = .009$) for one's romantic partner. Increased endorsement of the Love of Learning strength was also linked to increased feelings of competence ($B = 0.17, t = 2.06, p = .044$). Results for the community sample

Self-Control Strengths: Partner Effects

We identified minimal partner effects among Self-Control strengths. In our undergraduate sample, people endorsing greater Modesty reported decreased interest in potential alternative romantic partners ($B = -0.31, t = -2.55, p = .013$). In our community sample, individuals with partners who endorsed higher levels of Perseverance reported increased feelings of competence ($B = 0.18, t = 2.74, p = .008$) and autonomy ($B = 0.13, t = 2.26, p = .027$).

Exploratory Aim: Relative Magnitude of Partner Effects

In our undergraduate sample, only one partner effect was identified among the Caring factor strengths, which suggested that a partner effect for kindness accounted for an additional 1% of variance in the support for prevention goals compared to the actor effect. In our community sample, the partner effect for Love on greater perceived support for prevention goals, relationship satisfaction, and feelings of relatedness explained an additional 3% of variance beyond the respective actor effects.

For the Inquisitiveness strengths factor within our undergraduate sample, the partner effect of Zest on perceived support for prevention goals explained an additional 2% of variance, while the partner effect of Bravery on relationship satisfaction accounted for an additional 4%. In our community sample, partner effects of Bravery explained an additional 2% of variance in relationship satisfaction, 1% of variance in support for promotion goals, 2% of variance for support of prevention goals, 3% of variance in autonomy, 5% of variance in competence, and 1% of variance in relatedness. Creativity partner effects explained an additional 1% of variance in relationship satisfaction, 2% of

variance in support for promotion goals, 1% of variance in support for prevention goals, 1% of variance in autonomy, 2% of variance in competence, and 4% of variance in relatedness. The Love of Learning strength partner effect explained an additional 1% of variance in feelings of competence.

As previously noted, we identified few partner effects for the strengths of the Self-Control factor. In our undergraduate sample, the partner effect for Modesty on the perceived value of potential romantic alternatives explained an additional 1% variance. Analysis from our community sample revealed that partner effects of Perseverance on feelings of competence and autonomy each explained an additional 2% variance.

H2: Summary

Our findings provide minimal evidence that one's own personality strengths influence the relationship well-being of his or her romantic partner. Specifically, strengths within the Caring and Self-Care strength factors showed evidence of 4 and 3 partner effects, respectively, none of which replicated across samples. Strengths within the Inquisitiveness factor evidenced 15 partner effects, three times as many partner effects as strengths within the other two factors. In line with previous research, the partner effects identified within our samples accounted for less estimated variance than their respective actor effects, explaining between 1% and 5% additional variance. As with our first hypothesis, the possibility of Type I error must be considered.

H3: Does Strength Similarity between Partners Influence Relationship Well-Being?

To assess the impact of strength similarity between partners on relationship well-being, we calculated couple-level profile similarity correlations for each personality

strength subscale. These profile similarity correlations were then used to predict our relationship well-being outcomes. In keeping with best practice recommendations (Furr, 2008; Humbad, Donnellan, Iacono, McGue, & Burt, 2013), we controlled for actor and partner effects when testing the impact of similarity for each strength. In doing so, we can examine whether our composite similarity term accounts for unique variance above and beyond the constituent actor and partner effects.

Caring Strengths: Similarity Analyses

After controlling for both actor and partner main effects (i.e., Partner A and Partner B's standardized scores for a given personality strength) in the analyses, results suggest that similarity between partners on Caring strengths did not predict any of our relationship well-being outcomes among our undergraduate sample. However, similarity among certain Caring strengths predicted five relationship outcomes in our community sample. Specifically, partner similarity in Kindness predicted greater perceived support for promotion goals ($B = 0.85, t = 2.55, p = .013$). Similarity between partners in the strength of Love predicted greater relationship satisfaction ($B = 0.65, t = 1.98, p = .050$), perceived support for prevention goals ($B = 0.63, t = 2.25, p = .028$), and feelings of competence ($B = 0.68, t = 2.08, p = .042$). Those partners evidencing greater similarity in the strength of Teamwork reported greater perceived support for promotion goals ($B = 0.88, t = 2.36, p = .021$).

Inquisitiveness Strengths: Similarity Analyses

In our undergraduate sample, similarity between partners on the strength of Curiosity predicted increased investment in ($B = 0.82, t = 2.14, p = .036$) and

commitment to the relationship ($B = 0.88, t = 3.07, p = .003$). Similarity in the Love of Learning between partners related to increased perceived support for prevention goals ($B = 0.78, t = 2.15, p = .034$) and commitment to the relationship ($B = 1.19, t = 2.84, p = .006$). We also found evidence that profile similarity across certain personality strengths predicted increased relationship well-being among our community sample. Greater partner similarity in the Hope personality strength predicted increased perceived support for promotion goals ($B = 0.78, t = 2.59, p = .012$) and feelings of autonomy in the relationship ($B = 0.66, t = 2.52, p = .015$). Similarity in Zest predicted greater relationship satisfaction ($B = 0.79, t = 2.38, p = .021$) and feelings of competence ($B = 0.64, t = 2.01, p = .049$). partners who were similar on the strength of Bravery seemed to experience the greatest gains within this sample, as they reported greater relationship satisfaction ($B = 0.83, t = 1.95, p = .049$), perceived support for prevention goals ($B = 1.20, t = 2.47, p = .016$), feelings of competence ($B = 0.85, t = 2.01, p = .049$), and feelings of relatedness ($B = 1.05, t = 1.97, p = .050$). Lastly, our findings suggest that greater similarity between partners in curiosity predicted greater relationship satisfaction ($B = 0.81, t = 3.14, p = .003$).

Self-Control Strengths: Similarity Analyses

Analyses using our undergraduate sample suggested that partner similarity in Modesty predicted greater perceived support for promotion goals ($B = 0.49, t = 2.07, p = .042$) and the decreased perceived value of alternative romantic partners ($B = 0.84, t = 2.35, p = .021$). Similarity in the strength of Perseverance predicted greater investment in the relationship ($B = 0.99, t = 2.54, p = .013$). Results from our community sample

indicate that greater similarity in Perseverance is associated with increased perceived support for promotion goals ($B = 0.77, t = 2.23, p = .030$).

Exploratory Aim: Relative Magnitude of Similarity Effects

No similarity effects were identified for our Caring strengths in our undergraduate sample. However, in our community sample, similarity between partners on the strength of Kindness accounted for an additional 9% of variance in perceived support for promotion goals. Similarity in the Love strength explained an additional 5% of variance in relationship satisfaction, and additional 5% in support for prevention goals, and an additional 7% of variance in feelings of competence. Similarity in Teamwork explained an additional 10% of variance in perceived support for promotion goals.

Among the Inquisitiveness strengths in our undergraduate sample, similarity in Curiosity explained an additional 3% of variance in relationship investment and 6% in relationship commitment. Similarity in the Love of Learning strength explained an additional 4% of variance in support for prevention goals and an additional 7% variance in relationship commitment. In our community sample, similarity in Hope explained an additional 8% variance in support for promotion goals and an additional 3% of variance in autonomy. Zest similarity explained an additional 3% of variance in both relationship satisfaction and competence. Similarity between partners in Bravery explained an additional 3% of variance in relationship satisfaction, 5% in competence, 1% in relatedness, and 8% in the support for prevention goals. Finally, similarity in curiosity explained an additional 2% in relationship satisfaction.

When examining our Self-Control strengths results in the undergraduate sample, we found that similarity in Modesty explained an additional 1% in promotion goal support and 2% in the decreased value of potential romantic alternatives. Similarity in Perseverance explained an additional 14% of variance in relationship investment. In our community sample, our one similarity finding indicated that similarity in Perseverance explained an additional 1% in the support for promotion goals.

H3: Summary

Our findings offer some support for the potential interpersonal benefits of partner strength similarity above and beyond actor and partner strength effects. We identified a total of 22 similarity effects: 5 within the Caring factor, 13 within the Inquisitiveness factor, and 4 within the Self-Control factor. As in H2, there was a pattern such that strengths within the Inquisitiveness factor accounted for more similarity effects compared to the strengths comprising the other two factors. Partner strength similarity explained between 1% and 10% additional variance. All findings must be interpreted very cautiously, again due to the possibility of Type I error.

Does Gender Moderate the Effects of Personality Strengths on Relationship Outcomes?

When analyzing distinguishable dyads (e.g., heterosexual couples), it is often recommended to separate dyads by gender and conduct analyses separately for men and women (Kenny et al., 2006). Given that recent reviews suggest few systematic, replicable gender differences among romantic partners when using personality traits to predict relationship quality (e.g., Weidmann, Ledermann, & Grob, 2016), we did not expect any

significant gender differences. However, because some researchers have occasionally found evidence to suggest the presence of certain gender differences in personality qualities between romantic partners (e.g., Solomon & Jackson, 2014), and because the possibility that certain personality strengths might influence relationship well-being differently depending on gender represents an empirical question, we opted to test for gender moderation effects in the analyses described above. In keeping with the majority of previous research in this area, we found that approximately 99% of our analyses in both samples showed no evidence of gender moderation effects. Of the very few (i.e., 1%) gender moderation effects identified, none replicated across both samples. Thus, we do not have sufficient evidence from the current studies to suggest that the impact of individual personality strengths and personality strength congruence between partners on relationship outcomes differs meaningfully by gender.

DISCUSSION

The goal of the current manuscript was threefold: 1) to evaluate if individual personality strengths comprising each of three strength factors (McGrath et al., 2017) predict one's own romantic relationship well-being, 2) to explore whether one's personality strengths within each of the three factors predict the romantic relationship well-being of romantic partners, and 3) to examine if personality strength similarity between partners predicts romantic relationship well-being. Our findings provide some evidence that personality strengths within all three strengths factors predict one's own relationship well-being indices. Moreover, estimates of relative effect magnitude suggest that strengths within each factor account for similar amounts of variance in relationship well-being outcomes. Due to a lack of replicability, evidence cannot be interpreted to suggest the presence of partner effects for personality strengths on relationship outcomes. Additionally, we found some support for the ability of personality strength similarity to account for unique variance in relationship well-being above and beyond actor and partner strength effects. Again, these findings must be interpreted cautiously because of a lack of replicability. The impact of individual personality strengths and strengths similarity on positive relationship outcomes did not differ by gender.

There is incongruence between the equal value placed on all client-endorsed strengths within certain approaches to strengths-based couples therapy (e.g., Kauffman &

Silberman, 2009) and the theoretical perspective emphasizing the differential value of individual personality strengths depending on context (e.g., Biswas-Diener, Kashdan, & Minhas, 2011; Niemiec, 2013, 2017). The latter perspective suggests that a group of interpersonal (i.e., Caring) personality strengths might possess the greatest link to relationship well-being. Our findings, however, indicate that personality strengths within all 3 strength factors identified by McGrath et al. (2017) might predict positive relationship outcomes and account for observably similar estimates of explained variance in these outcomes. This pattern of findings suggests that there might be minimal advantages to emphasizing interpersonal (i.e., Caring) strengths over strengths from the other two strengths factors when predicting one's own relationship well-being. This potential interpersonal value of strengths from all three factors might lend support for strengths-based clinical approaches for couples that focus on the identification and application of personality strengths, with no stipulations as to which specific strengths are emphasized over others (e.g., Kauffman & Silberman, 2009).

To our knowledge, this is the first study to examine which personality strengths in each strength factor possess the strongest connection with romantic relationship quality. Of note, to avoid misrepresenting our findings, we limit our discussion of individual strengths to those effects that replicated across both samples. In this vein, findings from both samples suggested that the strength of Love consistently predicted relationship well-being outcomes, including overall relationship satisfaction, over and above other strengths within the Caring factor. Thus, the strength of Love might possess the strongest link to relationship well-being of the Caring strengths (i.e., Kindness, Forgiveness,

Gratitude, and Teamwork). One possible explanation for this finding is that the strength of Love reflects one's overarching motivation to be in and maintain close relationships. Some theorists posit that relationship quality is driven by underlying motivational strengths that enable and encourage the prioritization of the relationship and catalyze the application of other strengths to sustain the relationship (e.g., Fowers, 2000; 2001). Taking an interpersonal lens, it might be that Love serves this role, motivating an individual to use other strengths in ways that facilitate a high-quality relationship. From an intrapersonal perspective, it is also possible that because individuals high in the strength of Love, by definition, significantly value close relationships, they might find the mere presence of a romantic relationship satisfying and fulfilling. Individuals with high endorsement of the Love strength might consequently be more likely to report greater perceived relationship quality.

Within the Self-Control factor, we found evidence that the strength of Honesty predicted increases in one's own relationship well-being over other Self-Control factor strengths in both samples. This unique importance of Honesty within the Self-Control factor corresponds, to some extent, with a line of research identifying Honesty as the most valued personality strength in a romantic partner for both males and females (e.g., Bodenmann, 2003; Furnham, 2009; Steen, 2003). Furthermore, it is relevant to note that Honesty, as captured by the VIA-IS items, extends beyond overt truth telling. A component of Honesty involves the consistent presentation and application of one's genuine self. In this way, a component of Honesty might overlap with the construct of authenticity, which consistently promotes positive relationship outcomes, including the

engagement in healthy relationship behaviors, relationship satisfaction, and attachment security (e.g., Lopez & Rice, 2006).

As noted above, we found minimal evidence supporting the presence of partner effects of personality strengths on our relationship outcomes. In this vein, only the strength of Bravery demonstrated partner effects across both samples, accounting for only 2% of outcome variance. In the interest of consistency, we offer a potential explanation for this partner effect, though we couch this interpretation within the possibility that this finding might be an artifact due to Type I error. Specifically, the Risk Regulation Theory of relationships posits that romantic partners must constantly balance self-preservation goals (e.g., avoiding rejection) with the reality that relationships require one to be vulnerable (Murray, Holmes, & Collins, 2006). Because of this, they look for partners who possess qualities that appear as though they will offer the greatest benefits with minimal potential costs. Thus, it might be that high levels of Bravery and the daily behaviors in which it might manifest convey to one's partner that he or she is willing and capable of doing what is necessary to protect the partner and relationship. As a result, the Brave individual is viewed as a low-risk, high-reward partner, engendering relationship well-being in his or her partner. Akin to the above discussion regarding the Love strength, some theorists believe that the strength of Bravery might be required to most effectively engage in certain behaviors that promote relationship quality, such as self-disclosure or personal sacrifice (Fowers, 2000; 2001). Worded simply, the strength of Bravery might help one tolerate the vulnerability necessary to disclose intimate information to a partner or make personal sacrifices to sustain a relationship. In this way,

Bravery might function as a mechanism through which relationship maintenance behaviors that benefit one's partner are carried out.

Our study represents the first attempt to assess whether similarity between partners on individual personality strengths assessed by the VIA-IS might account for differences in romantic well-being above and beyond actor and partner effects. Such information is critical, as it helps determine the potential value of identifying and utilizing strength similarity to improve relationship quality, a practice suggested by some strengths-based couples therapy approaches (e.g., Kauffman & Silberman, 2009). Therefore, a novel finding of our study is that personality strength similarity between partners for certain strengths did account for unique variance beyond actor and partner effects. This finding provides some support for previous research identifying relationship benefits of personality trait similarity between partners (Caspi & Herbener, 1990; Decuyper et al., 2012; Gaunt, 2006; Gonzaga et al., 2007; Karney & Bradbury, 1995; Luo & Klohnen, 2005; Luo et al., 2008; Nemechek & Olson, 1999).

Researchers propose several mechanisms through which similarity between partners personality might generate benefits in a romantic relationship. Some scholars posit that personality trait similarity promotes collaboration and decreases disagreements, as spouse's thoughts and behaviors coalesce (Rammstedt, Spinath, Richter, & Schupp, 2013). Another possibility is that personality trait similarity increases the ability for partners to empathize with one another and to perceive the other's emotions accurately (Anderson, Keltner, & John, 2003). For some, personality similarity might strengthen a relationship by increasing the level of understanding between partners, which might

result in a greater likelihood of partners validating one another (Reis & Shaver, 1988) and ultimately encouraging the longevity of the relationship (Arranz & Becker, 2013). It was beyond the scope of this study to explore the possible mechanisms through which personality strength similarity influenced our relationship outcomes, but the exploration of such mechanisms represents a potentially fruitful endeavor for future research.

Clinical Implications

Our findings serve to inform strengths-based therapeutic approaches for couples in several ways. At the simplest level, we found some evidence to support the interpersonal relevance of strengths outside of the interpersonal (i.e., Caring) factor when predicting actor relationship well-being. This finding supports the potential clinical utility of personality strengths within all three strengths factors, rather than the explicit targeting of strengths with an intuitive link to relationship quality. Our findings also indicate that certain strengths might possess a stronger association with actor relationship outcomes compared to other strengths within the same factor. Specifically, the strengths of Love and Honesty predicted actor relationship outcomes above and beyond the other strengths within the Caring and Self-Control strengths factors, respectively. Thus, it might be beneficial for clinicians to integrate specific interventions to target these strengths, such as the loving/kindness meditation (Hofmann, Grossman, & Hinton, 2011). Our results also provide some support for the potential value of strength similarity between romantic partners. As strengths are malleable via intentional intervention (Heckman & Kautz, 2014; Roberts et al., 2017), it might be beneficial for clinicians to not only identify and utilize strength similarity within couples therapy, but to intentionally develop strength

similarity between partners as well. Of course, additional research is needed before such conclusions regarding actor and similarity effects can be definitively drawn.

Limitations/Future Directions

As noted above, the present findings cannot be interpreted without acknowledging several significant limitations. Perhaps most importantly, it must be emphasized that the large amount of analyses conducted within this manuscript create an undeniable threat of Type I error. This potential for Type I error, the threat of which is magnified by minimal replicability across studies, led us to limit interpretation of findings to those that replicated in both studies. Even then, all findings reported should be interpreted very cautiously. To address this limitation, future studies might consider applying a statistical correction designed to address problems caused by multiple comparisons, such as the Bonferonni correction (Dunn, 1961) or the comparatively less conservative Benjamini-Hochberg (B-H) correction (Benjamini & Hochberg, 1995).

Additionally, we collected cross-sectional data, confining our observations to a single time point and further limiting our ability to make causal inferences. In the interest of detecting possible changes over time and assessing causality, future researchers should consider a longitudinal study design. Of note, it might be of interest to explore the impact of personality strengths within romantic partners' daily lives via the use of daily diary methodology. Among other benefits, such information will deepen our understanding of the unique value of personality strengths within daily life.

We acknowledge that our study measured levels of personality strengths based on self-reported endorsement of strengths, rather than strength usage (Wood, Linley, Maltby,

Kashdan, & Hurling, 2011). This measurement likely oversimplifies the interplay between personality strengths and relationships, as the value of personality strengths to relationships is not necessarily in their possession, but rather their application within the relationship. To address this, future studies might include behavioral measures of strength usage to enhance our understanding of the way specific personality strengths relate to relationship well-being. Additionally, recent research on the role of personality strengths within romantic relationships also suggests the value of expanding beyond self-report by assessing a person's perceptions regarding his or her significant other's personality strengths. For example, researchers found that participants who rated their partners as higher in humility, compassion, and positivity experienced increased marital satisfaction (Wallace Goddard, Olson, Galovan, Schramm, & Marshall, 2016). Furthermore, a burgeoning program of research demonstrates the value of expanding beyond the positive, exploring partner perceptions related to both benefits and costs of their significant other's strengths as well (Kashdan et al., in press). In this vein, it might be worthwhile to examine the way in which one person's perceptions of their partner's use of a specific strength and its consequences might moderate the relationship between that strength and positive relationship outcomes.

Building from this last point, it will be beneficial for future studies to explore the proximal emotional, cognitive, and behavioral processes through which distal variables, like personality strengths, impact relationship outcomes. Moreover, it will be relevant to examine whether the effects of such processes result in intrapersonal and interpersonal effects. For instance, recent research suggests that self-control might influence

relationship satisfaction via the promotion of constructive communication between romantic partners (Bornstein & Shaffer, 2017). Increased knowledge regarding such proximal processes will provide valuable insights regarding the way relationship outcomes are impacted by specific personality strengths.

Conclusion

The present study explored assumptions regarding personality strengths and romantic relationships that guide the actions of researchers and practitioners alike. Unfortunately, threat of Type I error and minimal replicability limited our inferential ability. We found some evidence that strengths from all three strength factors contributed to one's own romantic relationship well-being. We also obtained minimal evidence that these benefits extend to one's romantic partner (i.e., partner effects), though a partner effect for Bravery on relationship outcomes was noted. Additionally, this study is the first to explore the potential relationship of personality strength similarity between romantic partners and relationship well-being. Our findings suggest that strength similarity might convey some benefits to romantic partners above and beyond actor and partner strength effects. Thus, we believe that the exploration of partner strength similarity specifically warrants further consideration.

APPENDIX A: TABLES

Table 1: Descriptives for Undergraduate and Community Samples

		Undergraduate Sample			Community Sample		
		<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Range</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Range</i>
56	Predictors						
	Leadership	20.49	5.51	10 – 50	20.23	5.48	10 – 50
	Teamwork	20.32	4.87	10 – 50	20.12	5.22	10 – 50
	Forgiveness	23.78	6.85	10 – 50	23.70	7.45	10 – 50
	Kindness	19.63	4.53	10 – 50	19.61	5.27	10 – 50
	Love	18.33	4.51	10 – 50	18.00	4.69	10 – 50
	Gratitude	20.28	5.38	10 – 50	19.27	5.73	10 – 50
	Curiosity	20.42	5.13	10 – 50	19.13	4.75	10 – 50
	Hope	19.51	5.36	10 – 50	20.70	6.97	10 – 50
	Zest	22.33	5.13	10 – 50	22.47	6.23	10 – 50
	Love of Learn	25.55	6.43	10 – 50	21.94	6.55	10 – 50
	Bravery	21.60	5.73	10 – 50	21.48	6.42	10 – 50
	Creativity	21.03	5.86	10 – 50	21.86	6.18	10 – 50
	Self-Control Strengths						
	Self-Regulation	24.54	5.98	10 – 50	24.72	6.71	10 – 50
	Prudence	24.14	6.65	10 – 50	23.31	5.95	10 – 50
	Honesty	18.78	4.89	10 – 50	18.49	5.35	10 – 50
	Perseverance	20.37	5.41	10 – 50	20.88	6.07	10 – 50
	Modesty	24.93	5.98	10 – 50	23.98	6.66	10 – 50
	Relationship Satisfaction	7.61	1.59	1 – 9	6.28	1.11	1 – 7
	Promotion Goal Support	6.61	1.20	1 – 8	6.69	1.24	1 – 8
	Prevention Goal Support	6.56	1.21	1 – 8	6.06	1.19	1 – 8
	Investment	6.68	1.54	1 – 9	-	-	-
	Commitment	7.95	1.42	1 – 9	-	-	-
	Alternatives	6.44	1.78	1 – 9	-	-	-
	Autonomy	-	-	-	6.08	1.13	1 – 7
	Competence	-	-	-	6.06	1.02	1 – 7
	Relatedness	-	-	-	6.10	1.21	1 – 7

Table 2 – Univariate Results for Personality Strengths Associations with Outcomes in Undergraduate Sample

Predictor	Rel. Sat.			Pro. Goal			Pre. Goal			Investment			Commitment			Alternatives		
	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>p</i>
Caring																		
Leadership	.18	1.80	.076	.29	4.04	<.001	.33	4.64	<.001	.20	1.94	.056	.23	2.22	.029	-.30	-2.22	.029
Teamwork	.23	2.38	.020	.31	4.68	<.001	.31	4.61	<.001	.15	1.38	.171	.25	2.31	.023	-.20	-1.53	.130
Forgiveness	.19	1.95	.055	.12	1.38	.172	.11	1.25	.215	.05	.49	.623	.09	.94	.350	-.30	-2.16	.034
Kindness	.21	2.46	.016	.25	3.11	.003	.27	3.88	<.001	.24	2.51	.014	.30	3.09	.003	-.51	-3.75	<.001
Love	.33	3.70	<.001	.35	4.14	<.001	.35	4.15	<.001	.37	4.00	<.001	.37	3.44	<.001	-.36	-2.50	.014
Gratitude	.09	1.04	.303	.26	2.98	.004	.24	2.80	.006	.31	3.08	.003	.17	-1.52	.132	-.38	-2.79	.006
Inquisitiveness																		
Curiosity	.08	.98	.330	.17	1.93	.058	.14	1.62	.108	.22	2.22	.029	.13	1.31	.194	-.15	-1.21	.229
Hope	.19	2.03	.045	.47	5.69	<.001	.38	4.25	<.001	.17	1.57	.121	.23	2.30	.024	-.39	-3.40	.001
Zest	.19	2.16	.034	.35	4.61	<.001	.31	3.97	<.001	.30	3.15	.002	.25	2.38	.020	-.29	-2.39	.019
Love of Learn	.05	.59	.555	.001	.03	.975	.00	.01	.995	.15	1.50	.137	-.02	-.26	.799	-.11	-.89	.379
Bravery	.09	1.00	.319	.17	2.37	.020	.16	2.34	.021	.21	2.25	.027	.19	1.99	.051	-.11	-.86	.395
Creativity	.00	.035	.972	.16	2.14	.035	.14	1.82	.073	.35	3.50	<.001	.09	1.33	.187	-.06	-.49	.624
Self-Control																		
Self-Reg.	.16	1.46	.148	.27	3.78	<.001	.26	3.19	.002	.13	1.23	.222	.06	.57	.573	-.08	-.64	.525
Prudence	.10	1.28	.203	.10	1.42	.159	.10	1.16	.249	.03	.256	.798	.13	1.43	.156	-.28	-2.18	.032
Honesty	.28	2.91	.005	.26	3.17	.002	.26	3.39	.001	.28	2.99	.004	.36	3.34	.001	-.31	-2.26	.026
Perseverance	.17	1.95	.055	.45	5.85	<.001	.40	6.04	<.001	.32	2.97	.004	.19	1.64	.106	-.21	-1.63	.107
Modesty	.16	1.76	.083	.13	1.50	.136	.14	1.98	.050	.07	.69	.490	.08	.73	.467	-.28	-2.00	.049

Table 3 – Univariate Results for Personality Strengths Associations with Outcomes in Community Sample

Predictor	Rel. Sat.			Pro. Goal			Pre. Goal			Autonomy			Competence			Relatedness		
	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>P</i>
Caring																		
Leadership	-.05	-.52	.607	-.04	-.46	.646	-.02	-.21	.833	-.06	-.66	.511	-.10	-1.01	.318	.03	.540	.591
Teamwork	.06	.77	.447	.10	1.36	.179	.11	1.43	.158	.07	.72	.476	.05	.55	.582	.15	2.44	.018
Forgiveness	.11	1.50	.139	.08	1.00	.321	.07	.88	.384	.07	.68	.496	.01	.093	.926	-.04	-.63	.534
Kindness	.10	1.46	.149	.04	.63	.530	.06	.88	.382	.09	1.22	.226	.12	1.56	.124	.06	1.02	.310
Love	.19	2.60	.012	.29	3.24	.002	.28	3.61	<.001	.27	3.19	.002	.23	2.52	.014	.24	3.75	<.001
Gratitude	.12	1.38	.171	.08	1.18	.241	.08	.93	.354	.25	2.69	.009	.09	1.03	.305	.10	1.05	.296
Inquisitiveness																		
Curiosity	.13	1.56	.123	.28	2.76	.008	.20	2.08	.042	.20	2.14	.037	.11	1.35	.182	.21	2.59	.012
Hope	.24	2.00	.051	.38	2.98	.004	.26	2.34	.022	.28	2.32	.024	.34	3.27	.002	.15	1.37	.175
Zest	.25	2.48	.016	.34	3.13	.003	.26	2.77	.007	.19	2.02	.048	.21	2.31	.024	.20	2.40	.019
Love of Learn.	.06	1.09	.282	.15	2.00	.051	.07	1.00	.320	.01	.105	.917	.10	1.37	.176	.04	.58	.563
Bravery	.08	1.19	.238	.10	1.27	.209	.12	1.57	.122	.15	1.86	.067	.18	2.35	.022	.10	1.53	.132
Creativity	.06	.830	.410	.12	1.36	.180	.04	.55	.585	.07	.98	.329	.06	.71	.480	.03	.487	.628
Self-Control																		
Self-Reg	.21	2.94	.005	.27	3.45	<.001	.14	2.29	.025	.17	2.12	.038	.19	1.96	.050	.10	1.69	.096
Prudence	.11	1.45	.153	.04	.42	.677	.10	1.20	.235	.18	1.93	.058	.15	1.71	.093	.06	.79	.432
Honesty	.26	2.98	.003	.12	1.36	.179	.13	1.43	.158	.29	2.60	.012	.31	3.25	.002	.23	2.47	.016
Perseverance	.09	1.11	.270	.21	2.52	.014	-.14	-1.63	.109	-.08	-.98	.333	.27	2.69	.009	.10	1.40	.167
Modesty	.01	.15	.880	.04	.38	.705	-.01	-.18	.861	-.04	-.51	.615	-.02	-.30	.769	-.02	-.268	.790

Table 4 – Personality Strengths of the Caring Virtue Actor-Partner Interdependence Models in Undergraduate Sample

Strength	Rel. Sat.			Pro. Goal			Pre. Goal			Investment			Commitment			Alternatives		
	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
A. Lead	.24	2.08	.041	.30	4.20	<.001	.33	4.83	<.001	.21	2.06	.042	.24	2.23	.028	-.03	-2.11	.038
P. Lead	.11	.87	.388	.06	.67	.506	.01	.04	.965	.05	.44	.661	.02	.19	.850	-.13	-1.08	.284
A. Team	.32	2.79	.007	.33	5.10	<.001	.33	4.94	<.001	.20	1.76	.082	.17	2.40	.019	-.22	-1.70	.093
P. Team	.15	1.12	.267	.03	.43	.668	.03	.35	.725	.13	1.24	.220	.07	.62	.538	-.01	-.07	.948
A. Forg	.25	2.29	.025	.15	1.70	.092	.15	1.80	.076	.01	.01	.989	.09	.91	.364	-.29	-2.14	.035
P. Forg	.10	.81	.422	.15	1.62	.109	.14	1.59	.115	.13	1.16	.250	.01	.14	.887	-.04	-.32	.747
A. Kind	.27	2.26	.026	.29	3.57	<.001	.31	3.95	<.001	.25	2.35	.021	.33	3.03	.003	-.51	-3.71	<.001
P. Kind	.09	.68	.500	.17	2.05	.044	.11	1.35	.182	.03	.24	.809	.08	.62	.538	.18	1.33	.186
A. Love	.36	3.25	.002	.35	4.18	<.001	.35	4.10	<.001	.40	3.98	<.001	.39	3.60	<.001	-.35	-2.44	.017
P. Love	.06	.51	.613	.04	.50	.617	.01	.10	.919	.09	.80	.430	.12	1.26	.212	-.16	-1.18	.242
A. Grat	.08	.78	.439	.26	2.97	.004	.24	2.82	.006	.26	2.60	.011	.17	1.52	.130	-.37	-2.72	.008
P. Grat	-.02	-.16	.874	.01	.059	.953	.04	.41	.685	-.14	-1.30	.198	.03	.32	.747	.03	.26	.796

Note – A. Lead = Actor Leadership, P. Lead = Partner Leadership, A. Team = Actor Teamwork, P. Team = Partner Teamwork, A. Forg = Actor Forgiveness, P. Forg = Partner Forgiveness, A. Kind = Actor Kindness, P. Kind = Partner Kindness, A. Love = Actor Love, P. Love = Partner Love, A. Grat = Actor Gratitude, P. Grat = Partner Gratitude.

Table 5 – Personality Strengths of the Inquisitiveness Virtue Actor-Partner Interdependence Models in Undergraduate Sample

Strength	Rel. Sat			Pro. Goal			Pre. Goal			Investment			Commitment			Alternatives		
	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
A. Cur.	-.01	.05	.962	.18	2.18	.032	.16	1.95	.055	.19	.178	.078	.12	1.21	.228	.17	1.35	.181
P. Cur.	-.16	-1.43	.157	.04	.45	.653	.07	.94	.349	-.11	-.85	.396	-.04	-.320	.750	-.03	-.23	.818
A. Hope	.27	2.67	.009	.46	5.60	<.001	.40	4.46	<.001	.12	1.05	.295	.25	2.13	.036	-.37	-3.29	.001
P. Hope	.18	1.53	.131	.02	.18	.857	.14	1.76	.083	-.11	-1.09	.277	.12	1.05	.296	-.06	-.52	.605
A. Zest	.22	2.48	.015	.36	4.82	<.001	.35	.45	<.001	.25	2.24	.028	.26	2.50	.014	-.28	-2.35	.021
P. Zest	.06	.55	.583	.08	.93	.354	.17	2.00	.049	.14	1.15	.255	.07	.64	.527	-.19	-1.71	.090
A. Learn.	.15	1.51	.134	.01	.03	.979	.02	.20	.842	.13	1.20	.235	.03	.307	.760	-.13	-1.05	.298
P. Learn.	.23	1.88	.064	.02	.19	.846	.08	.92	.361	-.10	-.82	.415	-.07	-.61	.546	-.13	-1.01	.315
A.Brave.	.14	2.09	.040	.14	2.09	.040	.14	1.93	.057	.13	1.34	.185	.14	1.37	.173	.10	.80	.425
P. Brave.	.28	2.68	.009	.09	.94	.348	.06	.60	.553	.17	.18	.077	.17	1.62	.108	.07	.52	.604
A. Creat.	-.14	-1.40	.166	.14	1.70	.099	.15	1.86	.066	.36	3.21	.002	.12	1.31	.193	-.06	-.51	.612
P. Creat.	-.22	-1.93	.057	.08	.89	.373	.03	.32	.751	.02	.14	.888	.06	.57	.573	.05	.50	.620

Note = A. Cur = Actor Curiosity, P. Cur = Partner Curiosity, A. Hope = Actor Hope, P. Hope = Partner Hope, A. Zest = Actor Zest, P. Zest = Partner Zest, A. Learn = Actor Love of Learning, P. Learn = Partner Love of Learning, A. Brave = Actor Bravery, P. Brave = Partner Bravery, A. Creat, Actor Creativity, P. Creat = Partner Creativity

Table 6 – Personality Strengths of the Self-Control Virtue Actor-Partner Interdependence Models in Undergraduate Sample

Strength	Rel. Sat			Pro. Goal			Pre. Goal			Investment			Commitment			Alternatives		
	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
A. Self.	.27	3.63	<.001	.27	3.63	<.001	.26	3.05	.003	.09	.92	.362	.06	.51	.612	-.10	-.73	.467
P. Self.	-.04	-.48	.630	-.04	-.48	.630	-.02	-.28	.780	-.17	-.14	.172	-.05	-.39	.700	-.17	-1.26	.211
A. Pru.	.14	1.12	.265	.10	1.39	.168	.11	1.36	.176	.04	.36	.719	.14	1.31	.195	-.27	-2.13	.036
P. Pru.	.06	.48	.630	.01	.16	.877	.04	.54	.588	.04	.33	.743	.02	.21	.837	-.03	-.25	.800
A. Hon.	.31	2.89	.005	.25	2.99	.004	.27	3.13	.002	.29	2.87	.005	.38	3.17	.002	-.29	-2.22	.029
P. Hon.	.05	.37	.713	.01	.03	.977	.04	.46	.650	.05	.48	.636	.08	.65	.519	-.12	-.97	.335
A.Per.	.14	1.38	.170	.43	5.83	<.001	.43	5.79	<.001	.31	2.52	.014	.19	1.54	.128	-.18	-1.47	.145
P. Per.	-.04	-.29	.777	-.06	-.59	.559	.07	.78	.435	.01	.08	.933	.03	.20	.843	-.05	-.41	.686
A. Mod.	.28	2.22	.029	.15	1.82	.072	.17	2.38	.020	-.06	-.57	.572	.11	.95	.347	-.25	-1.83	.071
P. Mod.	.25	1.84	.069	.13	1.57	.120	.10	1.28	.203	.01	.11	.910	.17	1.36	.176	-.31	-2.55	.013

Note = A. Self = Actor Self-Regulation, P. Self = Partner Self-Regulation, A. Pru = Actor Prudence, P. Pru = Partner Prudence, A. Hon = Actor Honesty, P. Honesty = Partner Honesty, A. Per = Actor Perseverance, P. Per = Partner Perseverance, A. Mod = Actor Modesty, P. Mod = Partner Modesty.

Table 7 – *Personality Strengths of the Caring Virtue Actor-Partner Interdependence Models in Community Sample*

Strength	Rel. Sat.			Pro. Goal			Pre. Goal			Autonomy			Competence			Relatedness		
	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
A. Lead	-.04	-.41	.682	-.05	-.47	.643	-.01	-.09	.932	-.06	-.67	.503	-.10	-.96	.339	.05	.54	.592
P. Lead	.03	.46	.651	.06	.57	.572	.05	.48	.633	-.03	-.32	.749	.07	.75	.456	.02	.20	.845
A. Team	.10	1.19	.240	.13	1.23	.224	.14	1.56	.124	.07	.71	.480	.05	.59	.559	.18	2.11	.039
P. Team	.11	1.49	.142	.13	.36	.723	.04	.47	.640	-.02	-.20	.845	.11	1.40	.168	.01	.06	.951
A. Forg	.10	1.01	.314	.12	1.05	.297	.10	1.04	.302	.06	.56	.577	-.01	-.10	.922	.06	.61	.547
P. Forg	-.04	-.47	.640	.13	1.20	.235	.06	.526	.601	-.06	-.57	.572	-.01	-.02	.983	.03	.26	.794
A. Kind	.12	1.53	.130	.04	.37	.715	.10	1.19	.237	.11	1.30	.200	.12	1.55	.127	.10	1.24	.221
P. Kind	.03	.50	.622	.16	1.54	.128	.13	1.33	.189	-.07	-.796	.429	-.04	-.41	.683	.08	.89	.378
A. Love	.27	3.41	.001	.37	3.65	<.001	.38	4.52	<.001	.27	3.25	.002	.24	2.63	.011	.37	4.57	<.001
P. Love	.17	3.17	.002	.09	.93	.355	.18	2.63	.011	.03	.44	.660	.03	.44	.660	.19	2.51	.015
A. Grat	.15	1.67	.100	.09	.85	.400	.14	1.40	.167	.25	2.68	.009	.09	.96	.339	.18	1.61	.113
P. Grat	.07	1.00	.320	.15	1.34	.184	.24	2.33	.240	-.07	-.84	.404	.11	1.13	.261	.19	1.98	.052

Note – A. Lead = Actor Leadership, P. Lead = Partner Leadership, A. Team = Actor Teamwork, P. Team = Partner Teamwork, A. Forg = Actor Forgiveness, P. Forg = Partner Forgiveness, A. Kind = Actor Kindness, P. Kind = Partner Kindness, A. Love = Actor Love, P. Love = Partner Love, A. Grat = Actor Gratitude, P. Grat = Partner Gratitude.

Table 8 – Personality Strengths of the Inquisitiveness Virtue Actor-Partner Interdependence Models in Community Sample

Strength	Rel. Sat			Pro. Goal			Pre. Goal			Autonomy			Competence			Relatedness		
	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
A. Cur.	.09	.97	.334	.25	2.40	.020	.20	1.79	.078	.16	1.76	.084	.08	.98	.332	.21	2.04	.045
P. Cur.	-.07	-.76	.451	-.10	-1.02	.311	.01	.06	.956	-.15	-1.62	.110	-.13	-1.41	.165	.00	.00	1.00
A. Hope	.26	2.22	.030	.38	3.28	.002	.26	2.37	.021	.28	2.37	.021	.34	3.36	.001	.17	1.59	.116
P. Hope	.05	.65	.516	.01	.07	.947	.05	.56	.575	.10	1.03	.306	.15	.187	.066	.10	1.08	.284
A. Zest	.24	2.70	.009	.33	3.18	.002	.28	2.71	.009	.17	1.91	.061	.19	2.16	.034	.24	2.47	.016
P. Zest	-.01	-.12	.907	-.02	-.21	.835	.05	.64	.524	-.07	-.89	.378	-.07	-.98	.329	.07	.85	.398
A. Learn.	.02	.25	.805	.16	1.54	.128	.05	.66	.515	-.01	-.138	.890	.12	1.79	.079	.01	.15	.885
P. Learn.	.11	1.28	.204	.14	1.38	.174	.06	.677	.501	.14	1.42	.162	.17	2.06	.044	.07	.769	.445
A.Brave.	-.05	-.55	.582	.05	.45	.656	.02	.18	.858	.05	.62	.539	.09	1.11	.272	.01	.02	.982
P. Brave.	.23	2.78	.007	.24	2.34	.022	.22	2.21	.031	.32	3.88	<.001	.26	3.62	<.001	.19	2.02	.048
A. Creat.	.05	.605	.548	.07	.67	.503	-.06	-.68	.497	.01	.01	.993	-.09	-1.21	.231	.012	.15	.883
P. Creat.	.19	2.39	.020	.22	2.14	.036	.21	2.37	.021	.22	2.79	.007	.19	2.37	.021	.22	2.68	.009

Note = A. Cur = Actor Curiosity, P. Cur = Partner Curiosity, A. Hope = Actor Hope, P. Hope = Partner Hope, A. Zest = Actor Zest, P. Zest = Partner Zest, A. Learn = Actor Love of Learning, P. Learn = Partner Love of Learning, A. Brave = Actor Bravery, P. Brave = Partner Bravery, A. Creat, Actor Creativity, P. Creat = Partner Creativity

Table 9 – Personality Strengths of the Self-Control Virtue Actor-Partner Interdependence Models in Community Sample

Strength	Rel. Sat			Pro. Goal			Pre. Goal			Autonomy			Competence			Relatedness		
	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
A. Self.	.15	1.94	.056	.35	3.27	.002	.19	2.34	.022	.19	2.18	.033	.20	2.01	.048	.15	1.94	.056
P. Self.	.10	1.17	.246	.01	.14	.886	.09	.99	.327	-.06	-.77	.442	-.07	-.83	.409	.10	1.17	.246
A. Pru.	.15	1.96	.055	.05	.47	.641	.14	1.54	.128	.17	1.92	.059	.15	1.63	.109	.12	1.31	.195
P. Pru.	.11	1.26	.213	.14	1.29	.202	.13	1.39	.169	-.06	-.78	.437	-.07	-1.01	.319	.13	1.51	.137
A. Hon.	.20	2.46	.017	.17	1.62	.109	.26	2.74	.008	.27	2.48	.016	.30	3.06	.003	.25	2.55	.013
P. Hon.	.06	.93	.358	.05	.44	.659	.08	.88	.382	-.04	-.42	.675	-.07	-.827	.411	.08	.98	.332
A.Per.	.09	.97	.338	.25	2.43	.018	.12	1.13	.264	.06	.72	.475	.22	2.29	.025	.09	.91	.366
P. Per.	.02	.322	.749	.10	.97	.334	.11	.142	.160	.13	2.26	.027	.18	2.74	.008	.06	.88	.381
A. Mod.	.02	.22	.823	.03	.31	.755	-.00	-.04	.969	-.04	-.512	.611	-.03	-.32	.750	-.02	-.31	.754
P. Mod.	.03	.36	.718	.12	1.14	.259	.05	.59	.555	.01	.08	.933	.04	.47	.638	.17	2.02	.048

Note = A. Self = Actor Self-Regulation, P. Self = Partner Self-Regulation, A. Pru = Actor Prudence, P. Pru = Partner Prudence, A. Hon = Actor Honesty, P. Honesty = Partner Honesty, A. Per = Actor Perseverance, P. Per = Partner Perseverance, A. Mod = Actor Modesty, P. Mod = Partner Modesty.

Table 10 – Caring Personality Strength Similarity Predicting Outcomes in Undergraduate Sample

Strength	Rel. Sat.			Pro. Goal			Pre. Goal			Investment			Commitment			Alternatives		
	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Leadership	.01	.03	.980	.04	.12	.906	.03	.09	.925	-.45	-1.26	.210	.19	.59	.557	-.19	-.42	.673
Teamwork	.72	1.50	.139	.26	.88	.382	.12	.39	.700	-.46	-1.40	.167	-.10	-.32	.749	.13	.28	.784
Forgiveness	.32	.99	.327	.14	.50	.619	-.04	-.15	.883	.17	.48	.636	.22	.80	.428	.43	.98	.330
Kindness	.50	1.20	.234	.11	.40	.691	.12	.39	.701	.05	.12	.902	.14	.42	.679	.24	.63	.531
Love	-.25	-.53	.599	-.33	-1.11	.268	-.43	-1.32	.189	.05	.12	.907	-.29	-.82	.412	.02	.050	.961
Gratitude	-.73	1.41	.161	.07	.29	.775	-.02	-.08	.934	-.19	-.53	.595	-.21	-.61	.543	-.03	-.07	.941

Note: For ease of interpretation within our similarity analyses, we reverse scored our Quality of Alternatives scale such that higher scores indicate decreased valuation of romantic alternatives.

Table 11 – Inquisitiveness Personality Strength Similarity Predicting Outcomes in Undergraduate Sample

Strength	Rel. Sat.			Pro. Goal			Pre. Goal			Investment			Commitment			Alternatives		
	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Curiosity	.09	.27	.789	.21	.73	.465	.24	.84	.404	.82	2.14	.036	.88	3.07	.003	.54	1.18	.240
Hope	.16	.57	.568	.25	1.13	.261	.17	.77	.443	.17	.38	.702	-.16	-.59	.561	-.03	-.07	.942
Zest	-.15	-.42	.677	.16	.60	.551	.13	.47	.638	-.22	-.59	.559	-.02	-.03	.973	.26	.68	.499
Love of Learn	.26	.49	.625	.58	1.57	.119	.78	2.15	.034	.31	.71	.479	1.19	2.84	.006	.20	.38	.706
Bravery	-.13	-.33	.742	-.10	-.39	.700	.26	.98	.329	-.46	-1.07	.288	-.00	-.01	.992	-.70	-1.92	.058
Creativity	-.38	-.82	.414	.44	1.37	.175	.46	1.42	.161	.26	.68	.498	.25	.71	.482	.53	1.29	.202

Note: For ease of interpretation within our similarity analyses, we reverse scored our Quality of Alternatives scale such that higher scores indicate decreased valuation of romantic alternatives.

Table 12 – Self-Control Personality Strength Similarity Predicting Outcomes

Strength	Rel. Sat.			Pro. Goal			Pre. Goal			Investment			Commitment			Alternatives		
	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Self-Reg	.47	1.00	.320	-.18	-.62	.536	-.12	-.39	.699	.05	.12	.904	.01	.03	.980	-.26	-.51	.610
Prudence	-.46	-1.06	.293	-.07	-.25	.802	.01	.02	.986	.19	.55	.584	-.14	-.45	.652	-.24	-.69	.492
Honesty	-.61	-1.63	.107	-.13	-.48	.631	-.13	-.47	.643	.38	1.02	.312	.20	.69	.493	.63	1.67	.099
Perseverance	.53	1.29	.201	.26	.79	.434	.25	.80	.428	.99	2.54	.013	.38	1.03	.306	.49	1.19	.238
Modesty	.15	.50	.621	.49	2.07	.042	.40	1.52	.133	-.10	-.29	.774	.24	.75	.455	.84	2.35	.021

Note: For ease of interpretation within our similarity analyses, we reverse scored our Quality of Alternatives scale such that higher scores indicate decreased valuation of romantic alternatives.

Table 13 – Caring Personality Strength Similarity Predicting Outcomes in Community Sample

Strength	Rel. Sat.			Pro. Goal			Pre. Goal			Autonomy			Competence			Relatedness		
	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Leadership	.56	1.78	.080	.60	1.62	.111	.34	.92	.361	.41	1.17	.246	.58	1.89	.062	.43	1.20	.234
Teamwork	.38	1.00	.321	.89	2.36	.021	.63	1.57	.122	.51	1.45	.154	.05	.14	.892	.44	1.06	.292
Forgiveness	-.07	-.20	.841	-.50	-1.25	.215	-.34	-.97	.334	-.46	-1.40	.168	-.33	-.98	.334	-.25	-.69	.496
Kindness	.21	.50	.617	.85	2.13	.038	.56	1.34	.184	.34	.89	.377	.32	.87	.390	.35	.82	.418
Love	.65	1.98	.050	.38	1.29	.201	.63	2.25	.028	.39	1.54	.129	.68	2.08	.042	.49	1.69	.096
Gratitude	-.17	-.62	.538	-.23	-.76	.448	-.24	-.75	.455	-.32	-1.33	.188	-.19	-.77	.447	-.34	-1.15	.254

Table 14 – Inquisitiveness Personality Strength Similarity Predicting Outcomes in Community Sample

Strength	Rel. Sat.			Pro. Goal			Pre. Goal			Autonomy			Competence			Relatedness		
	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Curiosity	.81	3.14	.003	.17	.58	.564	.45	1.37	.177	.16	.49	.627	.12	.42	.675	.44	1.34	.184
Hope	.35	1.35	.182	.78	2.59	.012	.52	1.77	.082	.66	2.52	.015	.13	.55	.587	.25	.81	.424
Zest	.79	2.38	.021	.77	1.93	.059	.65	1.84	.071	.47	1.29	.203	.64	2.01	.049	.63	1.85	.069
Love of Learn	.13	.80	.428	.20	1.15	.256	.13	.76	.453	.17	1.05	.300	-.02	-.12	.902	.18	1.14	.258
Bravery	.83	1.95	.049	.68	1.38	.172	1.20	2.47	.016	.42	.95	.348	.85	2.01	.049	1.05	1.98	.050
Creativity	.19	.68	.501	.16	.49	.627	-.03	-.07	.941	-.32	-.93	.355	-.22	-.82	.416	.00	.02	.985

Table 15 – Self-Control Personality Strength Similarity Predicting Outcomes in Community Sample

Strength	Rel. Sat.			Pro. Goal			Pre. Goal			Autonomy			Competence			Relatedness		
	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Self-Reg	-.14	-.48	.636	.09	.30	.762	-.07	-.23	.819	-.19	-.62	.536	.00	.00	.999	-.10	-.33	.745
Prudence	-.01	-.09	.928	.08	.55	.583	.18	1.07	.291	.28	1.78	.081	.24	1.97	.053	.24	1.49	.141
Honesty	.12	-.56	.580	.40	.95	.349	.46	1.02	.312	.38	.88	.381	.71	1.77	.083	.48	.93	.359
Perseverance	.40	1.21	.231	.77	2.23	.030	.44	1.17	.246	.57	1.76	.084	.43	1.27	.208	.49	1.27	.210
Modesty	-.10	-.41	.682	.07	.27	.792	-.08	-.25	.805	-.26	-1.10	.277	.05	.18	.857	-.13	-.40	.688

APPENDIX B: STRENGTHS HANDOUT

McGrath and Colleagues' Three Personality Strengths Factors

1. Strengths of Caring

- Leadership: Motivating groups of people whether it is getting things done or improving morale
- Capacity to Love and be Loved: Valuing close, meaningful connections with other people
- Kindness, Generosity, or Compassion: Being kind or generous to other people; desire to take care of other people
- Teamwork and Loyalty: Working well as a member of a group or team; being loyal to the group; doing one's share
- Gratitude: Being aware of and thankful for the good things that happen; taking time to express thanks
- Forgiveness: Accepting others' shortcomings; giving people a second chance; not being vengeful

2. Strengths of Inquisitiveness

- Creativity: Thinking of novel and productive ways to conceptualize and do things; includes artistic achievement but is not limited to it
- Curiosity: Taking an interest in ongoing experience for its own sake; finding topics fascinating; exploring and discovering; takes great pleasure in taking on challenges, acquiring knowledge, or mastering new skills
- Zest: Approaching life with excitement and energy; living life as an adventure
- Bravery: Not shrinking from threat, challenge, difficulty, or pain; speaking up for what's right even if there's opposition; acting on convictions even if unpopular; includes physical bravery but is not limited to it
- Love of Learning: Enjoying academic or intellectual pursuits (e.g., reading, museums, etc.), and seeking out opportunities to obtain knowledge.
- Hope: Expecting the best in the future and working to achieve it; believing that a good future is something that can be brought about

3. Strengths of Self-Control

- Perseverance: Finishing what one starts; persevering in a course of action in spite of obstacles; "getting it out the door"; taking pleasure in completing tasks

- Honesty: Speaking the truth but more broadly presenting oneself in a genuine way and acting in a sincere way; being without pretense; taking responsibility for one's feelings and actions
- Modesty & Humility: Letting one's accomplishments speak for themselves; not regarding oneself as more special than one is
- Prudence: Being careful about one's choices; not taking undue risks; not saying or doing things that might later be regretted
- Self-Regulation: Regulating what one feels and does; being disciplined and resisting impulses; effectively handling one's thoughts and feelings

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BIOGRAPHY

Kevin C. Young received his Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from the University of Maryland, College Park in 2010. He went on to receive his Master of Arts in Clinical Psychology from George Mason University in 2013. After finishing his Doctor of Philosophy in Clinical Psychology at George Mason University in 2017, he will begin his postdoctoral fellowship in behavioral medicine and advanced clinical psychology at the University of Kansas Medical Center.