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ABSTRACT

Relational intimacy was studied for its influence on choice of interpersonal conflict strategies. Data were collected from 143 speech communication students who were randomly distributed among three groups representing different levels of intimacy (stranger, acquaintance, intimate) and were asked to imagine serious conflict with a person of the corresponding intimacy level. The subjects indicated their likelihood of engaging in 42 different behaviors during an interpersonal conflict. Factor analysis revealed three general conflict strategies: destructive, constructive, and avoidance. ANOVA results showed that acquaintances were significantly more likely than strangers to utilize constructive strategies, and intimates were significantly more likely than acquaintances to use such strategies. Intimacy level accounted for 17% of the variance in the use of constructive strategies. A main effect was not found for the other two factors. In general, the results suggested moderate support for the hypothesis that greater levels of intimacy are exemplified by greater use of constructive conflict strategies. (Author/RL)

INTERPERSONAL CONFLICT: RELATIONAL STRATEGIES AND INTIMACY

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Abstract

This study explored the influence of relational intimacy on choice of interpersonal conflict strategies. Subjects indicated their likelihood of engaging in 42 different behaviors during an interpersonal conflict. Factor analysis revealed three general conflict strategies: Destructive, Constructive, and Avoidance. ANOVA results showed that acquaintances were significantly more likely than strangers to utilize constructive strategies, and intimates were significantly more likely than acquaintances to use such strategies. Intimacy level accounted for 17 percent of the variance in the use of constructive strategies. A main effect was not found for the other two factors.

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Interpersonal Conflict:
Relational Strategies and Intimacy

Conflict is an inevitable and significant feature of human relationships. Interpersonal conflict may be conceptualized as "an expressed struggle between at least two interdependent parties, who perceive incompatible goals, scarce rewards, and interference from the other party in achieving their goals" (Frost & Wilmot, 1978, p. 9). It is clear that perceived differences are endemic to interpersonal relationships. Regarding intimate relationships, Bach and Wyden (1968) argue that:

> The dream of romantic bliss is an anachronistic hangover from the Victorian etiquette that tried to create gentlemen and gentleladies by social pressure. But the notion that a stress- and quarrel-free emotional climate in the home will bring about authentic harmony is a preposterous myth, born in ignorance of the psychological realities of human relationships. Fighting is inevitable between mature intimates. Quarreling and making up are hallmarks of true intimacy. However earnestly a mature person tries to live in harmony with a partner, he will have to fight for his very notions of harmony itself and come to terms with competing notions--and there are always competing interests. (p. 26)

Fortunately, conflict is not inherently detrimental. It is widely recognized that productive ends are often fulfilled by conflict.

Indeed, several authors have characterized conflict as a necessary and unique constituent of intimacy (Oden, 1974; Altman & Taylor, 1973; Greeley, 1973; Bach & Wyden, 1968). As Doolittle (1976) explains:

> ...the fact that conflicts often inspire greater efforts and warmer and stronger relationships suggests that it is not conflict that produces breakdowns in communication but the unwillingness or inability to manage and use conflict for constructive purposes. (p. 10)

The constructive or destructive nature of conflict is exemplified through communication behaviors. Communication is central to relational conflict since it "is the means by which conflicts get socially defined, the instrument through which influence in conflicts is exercised, and the vehicle by which partisans or third parties may prevent, manage, or resolve conflicts" (Simons, 1974, p. 3). Jandt (1973) sums up the position well: "Humans define their relationships by communication, and a relationship characterized by conflict is a relationship--hence, a form of communicative behavior" (p. 2).

The nature of conflict varies with the type of relationship people share. Ironically, as individuals achieve greater levels of intimacy, the potential for conflict increases (Knapp, 1978). This paradox may stem from a number of conditions, including changing needs and values over the course of a developing relationship; greater vulnerability, openness, and interdependence concomitant with intimacy; intimacy anxiety (Feldman, 1979) reflecting unconscious

fears and wishes that accompany intimacy needs; and increased depth and accuracy of interpersonal knowledge and understanding.

Communication behavior in relational conflict exerts significant influence on the ultimate relationship between people. It would seem that constructive conflict facilitates relational growth, development, and stability (Knapp, 1978; Roloff, 1976; Coser, 1956). To the extent that greater levels of intimacy are characterized by greater depths of interpersonal knowledge, understanding, and predictability (Berger, Gardner, Parks, Schulman, & Miller, 1976; Berger & Calabrese, 1975; Miller & Steinberg, 1975), it can be assumed that individuals in intimate relationships are likely to be more successful than non-intimates in their message strategy choices (Miller, Boster, Roloff, & Seibold, 1977). Consequently, successful intimate relationships are more likely to be typified by constructive (negentropic) communication behaviors (Krain, 1975).

On the other hand, "It is obvious that some communication patterns elicit reactions such as fear, distrust, hurt, confusion, etc. which most experts feel are unproductive for relationship growth" (Frey, 1978, p. 14). Destructive conflict behaviors are likely to weaken or destroy a relationship. Miller and his colleagues (1977) illustrate an example:

> ...one might expect that some strategies used in noninterpersonal transactions would be chosen, at most, infrequently in interpersonal relationships. For instance, strategies grounded in punishment are a fairly common persuasive commodity in brief noninterpersonal confrontation. By contrast, choice of such strategies in ongoing interpersonal transactions could

> result in emotional scars which would threaten the stability and health of the relationship. Hence, communicators involved in interpersonal relationships should be reluctant to resort to punishment strategies.... (p. 38)

Thus, examining conflict behavior as being constructive or destructive is consistent with a developmental view of interpersonal communication.

Constructive vs. Destructive Strategies

Several message strategies seem to differentiate constructive from destructive conflict. Deutsch (1969) has noted that: "Destructive conflict is characterized by a tendency to expand and to escalate" (p. 11). In escalating conflict, parties tend to polarize and concentrate on achieving their own personal goals. The result is an automatic trade-off: the greater the concern for self-fulfilling goals, the less concern for the other person and the relationship. In this way, communication behaviors depend upon interpersonal objectives. Clark (1979) found, for example, that high self interest was consistently associated with the exertion of strong pressure for compliance.

Escalatory tactics are aggressive and competitive in nature, including such behaviors as threats, coercion, manipulation, deception, issue-expansion, and name-calling (Frost & Wilmot, 1978; Deutsch, 1973). Coercion is likely to result in counter-coercion and lack of co-operation, thereby escalating conflict (Deutsch, 1969; Deutsch, Epstein, Canavan, & Gumpert, 1967; Deutsch & Krauss, 1960). Hostility in one person generally breeds hostility in another (DeCharms & Wilkins, 1963). Tactics such as sarcasm, insults, and physical violence also typify conflict escalation.

Conflict escalation tactics may serve some positive functions if used judiciously, such as clarifying and focusing issues in the dispute. However, harsh or extended use of such tactics is not likely to facilitate relational growth and development. Continual conflict escalation is associated with relational de-escalation and decay. "People normally do not seek to maintain relationships with others who deceive or force them into changing" (Roloff & Barnicott, 1979, p. 41). Coercive and punitive tactics typically characterize deteriorating relationships, unhappy marriages, and divorced couples (Raush, Barry, Hertel, & Swain, 1974; Locke, 1951; Ort, 1950). Threats tend to induce defensiveness (Deutsch, 1969) and are more likely in noninterpersonal relationships (Miller et al., 1977). Krain (1975) found that entropic forms of communication (defined as hostile themes, exploitation, and teasing) were relatively more frequent in early versus advanced stages of dating. He concluded that such tactics prevent "the processes which establish, maintain, and repair romantic relationships....Under such conditions relationships cannot progress toward greater committedness and affection, and cannot escalate toward seriousness, engagement, and marriage" (p. 611).

It seems reasonable that greater levels of intimacy entail more constructive forms of conflict. Instead of threats and coercion, rational discussion and argument are used to facilitate cooperation and compromise. This corresponds to what Filley (1975) identifies as the problem-solver style of doing conflict:

> The problem-solver believes that his goals and the goals of others are not mutually exclusive, and seeks to maintain the

> relationship and to meet his own goals by searching for solutions which are mutually acceptable. He believes that more can be achieved with two parties working together than when a single party dominates, and acknowledges the reality of facts and feelings as a necessary ingredient for the resolution of conflict. He deals with others in a trusting, open, and candid way. (pp. 54-55).

In order to reduce conflict, one must have a greater regard for the relationship and consequently incur greater self-risk. But the payoff of self-risk is significant. As Roloff (1976) maintains, "Prosocial modes of conflict resolution [in the form of open and rational discussion] are likely to facilitate relational growth and development" (p. 179).

One element of constructive conflict is open and mutual trust (Kaplan, 1980; Doolittle, 1976; Deutsch, 1973). A trusting atmosphere is necessary to encourage individuals to take the existential risk involved in open, constructive confrontation. Trust in relationships displaces the destructive behaviors of threats and defensiveness, thereby enhancing problem-solving potential (Filley, 1975). In addition, trust is conducive to relationship maintenance whereas suspicion is inhibitive (Deutsch, 1973).

Another component of constructive conflict is the use of positive messages. Alexander (1979) reported that "Problem-oriented communication is optimally effective in achieving reductions in conflict. Messages intended to seek another's opinion, state one's own opinion, or obtain or give restatement reflect such an orientation and were positively associated with conflict reduction" (p. 137).

It was also reported by Alexander that supportive communication (Gibb, 1961) had a positive effect on the reduction of conflict. These findings are consistent with those of Billings (1979) who found that "maritally distressed couples make more negative and fewer positive cognitive and problem-solving communications in conflict situations than those reporting a satisfactory marriage" (p. 374). Other studies have also indicated that distressed couples display higher levels of aversive behavior and lower levels of positive reinforcement (Patterson, Hops, & Weiss, 1975).

A further implication stems from the general reciprocity of messages. Just as hostile behavior is likely to draw a hostile response, positive messages are likely to elicit positive responses. In fact, "In most couples, a positively toned mode of response by one partner to the other's aggression evokes a shift in the other's subsequent response" (Raush et al., 1974). Therefore, positive messages by either member of a dyad are likely to prevent or reduce a potentially destructive cycle of conflict. Consequently, it is not surprising that Gottman, Markman, and Notarius (1977) reported that "Reciprocity of positive exchange has been repeatedly implicated as the single most important description of good marriages in the clinical literature (Azrin et al., 1973; Lederer & Jackson, 1968; Rappaport & Harrell, 1972; Stuart, 1969; Weiss et al., 1975)" (p. 463). Thus it would seem that positively-toned messages facilitate more productive relationships between partners in conflict.

A final aspect of constructive versus destructive conflict concerns the strategy of avoidance. As with most strategies, avoidance of conflict is occasionally appropriate, such as when two people disagree on fundamental value positions. Two individuals

can mutually agree to disagree in their co-orientation and still maintain a mutually satisfying relationship (Laing, Phillipson, & Lee, 1966). But this is not likely to occur very often in an intimate relationship. Significant disagreement on basic value positions would indicate a degree of incompatibility. Avoidance of conflict in advanced stages of intimacy tends to be frustrating and dysfunctional (Bach & Wyden, 1968; Greeley, 1973). Therefore, conflict avoidance is usually characteristic of the first stages of relationship development (Frost & Wilmot, 1978) and is more likely in relationships involving low commitment (Fitzpatrick & Winke, 1979). In addition, general avoidance strategies often pervade decaying relationships (Bradford, 1980; Baxter, 1979a; Baxter, 1979b; Knapp, 1978). Clearly, in more intimate relationships, conflict engagement offers the opportunity for expression of otherwise inhibited feelings and thoughts. Constructive conflict engagement may indeed be an index of relationship stability (Angell, 1965; Coser, 1956; Kaplan, 1980). Further, merely communicating disagreements tends to reduce hostility (Thibaut & Coules, 1952). Because conflict engagement is more constructive and creative than avoidance, it may also "offer possibilities for growth and development" of a relationship (Raush et al., 1974, pp. 209-210).

In summary, it is expected that qualitative differences in conflict message strategies generally will differentiate levels of relationship development. The presence of destructive communication behaviors inhibits the escalation of relationships to higher levels of intimacy (Krain, 1975). Since intimacy level is indicative of relational success, it may also be indicative of

success in relational conflict behavior. Consequently, the following research hypothesis is adduced:

H_1: Greater levels of intimacy are characterized by more message strategies associated with constructive rather than destructive conflict.

Constructive strategies include conflict reduction, rational argument, and open and positive messages. Destructive strategies include conflict escalation, use of threats and coercion, negative messages, and conflict avoidance.

Procedures

Sample

Data were collected from 143 undergraduate students enrolled in introductory and intermediate Speech Communication courses. Analysis of demographic data revealed that 99 percent of the sample fell within the age group of 18-23. Thirty-seven percent of the respondents were male, 63 percent female. Subjects consisted of approximately 13 percent freshmen, 25 percent sophomores, 41 percent juniors, and 21 percent seniors.

Questionnaire Construction

A 42-item scale was developed after considering existing instruments (Marwell & Schmitt, 1967; Roloff, 1976; Fitzpatrick & Winke, 1979) and relevant literature. The intent was to construct a self-report measure appropriate for the context of interpersonal conflict, and relatively comprehensive in terms of potential behaviors relevant to that context. The questionnaire (Appendix) was administered during regular class time. Subjects were randomly distributed among three groups representing different levels of intimacy[1] (stranger, acquaintance, intimate), and were instructed to imagine serious conflict with a person of the corresponding

intimacy level. The 42 items elicited subjects' judgments regarding their likelihood of engaging in various behaviors on a scale from one to five, ranging from very unlikely (1) to very likely (5). Two respondents were randomly discarded to achieve equal groups of 47 for statistical calculations.

Preliminary Analysis

Scale items were submitted to a principal factor analysis with iterations, utilizing a varimax rotation. An item was considered to load on a particular factor if it achieved a weight of at least .50 on that dimension with no secondary loading greater than .30. Table 1 presents the unrotated factor solution.

The orthogonal solution rotated three defined factors. The resulting factor loadings are presented in Table 2. Factor 1 clearly represents items associated with destructive patterns of conflict, such as using insults, threats, force, punishment, sarcasm, shouting, and throwing something. Factor 2 reflects items corresponding to constructive conflict behavior, including cooperation, compromise, negotiation, and trust. The third factor contained items reflecting conflict avoidance, such as trying to change the subject, postponing the issue, ignoring the conflict, etc. Factors one, two, and three were respectively labeled destructive tactics, constructive tactics, and avoidance tactics. Only loaded items for each factor were utilized in subsequent analyses. (This included one item on the first factor that achieved a weight of .48 and was virtually uncorrelated with factors two and three.)

The internal reliability of each factor was computed using coefficient alpha. The reliability for factor 1 (destructive) consisting of 16 items was .89. Factor 2 (constructive) and factor 3

(avoidance), each consisting of four items, had respective reliabilities of .64 and .74.

Results

In order to test the stated hypothesis, one-way analyses of variance were computed for each factor, with the level of intimacy as the independent variable. The .05 level of significance was set *a priori*. The scores on factor 1 did not vary significantly among groups ($F = 1.71$; $df = 2, 138$), although the means were in the expected direction (Table 3). There was a mild decreasing trend for use of destructive conflict tactics with increasing levels of intimacy. However, all means were relatively low, indicating that a possible response bias is present due to the negative social perceptions regarding the items in factor 1.

Results of the ANOVA for factor 2 suggest support for the hypothesis. A main effect for level of intimacy was found ($F = 14.53$; $df = 2, 138$; $p < .0001$). A *post hoc* analysis of differences among means, using the Newman-Keuls procedure, demonstrated that all group means for factor 2 significantly differed from one another (Table 4). Acquaintances were significantly more likely than strangers to utilize constructive tactics, and intimates were significantly more likely than acquaintances to use such tactics. Computation of eta squared revealed that intimacy level accounted for 17 percent of the variance in the use of constructive conflict tactics.

The predicted relationship between level of intimacy and avoidance behaviors (factor 3) approached significance ($F = 2.75$; $df = 2, 138$; $p = .067$). There was a trend for greater levels of intimacy to be associated with a decreasing likelihood of conflict

avoidance, although the main effect for intimacy level did not achieve statistical significance (Table 5).

In general, the results suggest moderate support for the hypothesis that greater levels of intimacy are exemplified by greater use of constructive conflict strategies.

Discussion

The factor analysis was undertaken to examine if there was any systematic structure underlying the diverse items of the reported instrument. The 24 items which loaded on the resulting three rotated factors largely fulfill theoretical expectations. Behaviors were clearly distinguished according to their constructive and destructive nature. It is interesting to note, however, that avoidance behaviors (factor 3) constituted a unique dimension; i.e., these items did not cluster with destructive items as anticipated. This implies that avoidance may often be a distinct alternative to clearly destructive or constructive strategies.

Results will be discussed in terms of the three factors that emerged since they comport well with the initial conceptualization of conflict behavior.

Factor 1 appears to be a highly reliable measure of coercive and manipulative tactics. Intuitively, one would think that since factor 2 varied significantly among relational groups, factor 1 would vary significantly in the opposite direction. In other words, if greater levels of intimacy are associated with greater use of constructive strategies, then it is expected that greater levels of intimacy are concomitantly associated with less reliance on destructive strategies. This is not reflected in the data, however. The most obvious explanation is that a response bias is present because of the perceived socially undesirable nature of

destructive behaviors.[2] This would explain why all group means for factor 1 were low and statistically undifferentiated.

A second explanation is that relatively enduring psychological factors may be correlated with the use of certain conflict strategies. It may be that destructive strategies are associated with certain personality types, in which case the effect of intimacy level may become secondary. Among the psychological factors which have received attention in the conflict literature are: dogmatism (Roloff & Barnicott, 1979; Steinfatt, Seibold, & Frye, 1974), machiavellianism (Roloff & Barnicott, 1978), introversion and extroversion (Kilmann & Thomas, 1975), ego-involvement (Sereno & Mortensen, 1969), self-concept (Neuringer & Wandke, 1966), and intolerance of ambiguity and risk taking (Ringuette, 1965).

A third reason may also explain why the means did not significantly differ among levels of intimacy for factor 1. It is plausible that some subjects perceive themselves to be at a high level of relationship intimacy, when in fact they are not, or when they are in a relationship only temporarily (without realizing it). As time passes, it is likely that some subjects will be weeded out of "intimate" relationships as their perception of the relationship and their relational partner becomes more accurate and realistic (Kerckhoff & Davis, 1962). Thus the static view of relational development in this study is a limitation. If this limitation is significant, then some persons who perceive that they are involved in highly intimate relationships will eventually experience relational deterioration. This relationship decay may even be due, in part, to the use of destructive conflict behaviors.

Factor 2, which was actually most closely related to the stated hypothesis, demonstrated the most significant results. Higher levels of intimacy showed significantly and consistently greater reliance on constructive strategies. If the social desirability response bias is at work on this factor, then subjects would consistently mark items high on this dimension (just as they marked the undesirable items low in factor 1). Such a response bias would only camouflage significance of the results. If indeed such a bias is at work for items in factor 2, the absence of that bias would increase the significance of the differences among the means.

Although the factor of avoidance (factor 3) did not quite achieve statistical significance, some support for an inverse relationship between this dimension and intimacy level may be inferred to the extent that the means were in the expected direction. The reason that avoidance behaviors constitute an independent dimension may be that such behaviors are situationally determined. It is reasonable that there are times, even in highly intimate relationships, when conflict avoidance is appropriate. Avoidance may be a temporary strategy which may be used either constructively or destructively, depending upon the context; or it may serve as an alternative to relationship escalation or de-escalation (i.e., maintenance). Nevertheless, the fact that demands for engaging in conflict are relatively stronger in long-term intimate relationships than in non-intimate ones, appears to be reflected in the data.

It is also possible that for some subjects, avoidance was consistently appropriate for them in their intimate relationships.

It is reasonable that in certain relationships, idiosyncratic rules negotiated by dyad members dictate that many types of conflicts be ignored. This again points to the need for longitudinal study where possible when dealing with issues of relationship development.

Viewing the data for all three factors in concert reveals yet another interpretation. As the level of intimacy increases, the use of constructive conflict strategies increases; yet, the use of destructive and avoidance strategies remains relatively constant. The implication is that a greater repertoire of conflict behaviors is available to individuals in more intimate relationships. This is consistent with data recently reported by Sillars (1980). An underlying paradox of countervailing conditions may explain why intimates use all kinds of conflict strategies. On the one hand, successful intimate relationships are characterized by a high concern of the partners for the relationship and for each other--thus the motivation to utilize constructive conflict strategies. On the other hand, the greater the level of relationship intimacy, the stronger the relational bond between partners--ergo the relationship can more easily withstand the risk of some destructive and avoidance behaviors. Furthermore, the more strategic options one has, the more one is able to manage various types of conflict situations. In intimate relationships, it is likely that competition or escalation or avoidance of conflict is sometimes productive and desirable, depending on the issues involved. In addition, destructive and avoidance behaviors are undoubtedly used inappropriately to some degree in virtually all intimate relationships; but the strain is often not enough to destroy a strong relationship. The key to advancing and

maintaining intimate relationships still seems to be an increased use of constructive conflict strategies in certain situations. That intimates do not use constructive strategies exclusively is quite realistic. But overall, the empirical findings suggest that increased constructive conflict behavior is facilitative of interpersonal relationship growth, whereas exclusive utilization of destructive and/or avoidance strategies will generally inhibit the escalation of relationships.

Implications for Future Research

This investigation attempted to demonstrate a relationship between intimacy level and methods for dealing with interpersonal conflict. The data provide considerable support for the hypothesis, indicating that some behaviors do differ in conflict, depending on the type of relationship involved. A number of other questions now arise which are in need of empirical investigation. One such question concerns the extent to which the results here reported are generalizable. Other populations must be surveyed in an attempt to replicate and compare the findings of this study.

Other questions concern the strategies and tactics of relational conflict. We should examine how certain behaviors affect relational outcomes. Further, there is a need to assess how other variables, such as relational intent and communication satisfaction, mediate the use of conflict strategies. It would also seem that strategies vary with the topic of conflict, as well as other situational contingencies.

Finally, interactional patterns of conflict behavior require study. For example, how do conflict patterns vary across contexts and situations? Are different patterns related to different topics

of conflict? What patterns of conflict behavior distinguish decaying relationships from growing ones? And of course there is the problem of working out a reliable coding scheme to investigate these questions. Questions and tasks such as these remain a challenge for interested researchers--a challenge that hopefully will not be avoided.

Notes

1. A manipulation check on the levels of intimcy was conducted during a pilot test of the reported instrument. The sample consisted of 39 different subjects drawn from the same population as the present study. Results indicated that subjects perceived the levels of intimacy significantly different from one another ($p < .0005$).

2. Kilmann and Thomas (1977) discuss the notion of social desirability response bias as it relates to conflict measures.

TABLE 1

Unrotated Factor Loadings

Item	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3
1	-.007	-.243	.532
2	-.029	.273	.029
3	.568	-.070	-.044
4	.369	.273	.099
5	.270	.275	.022
6	.295	.370	.080
7	.624	.159	-.043
8	.506	.194	-.152
9	.463	.125	-.064
10	-.200	.381	.334
11	.599	.135	.080
12	.183	-.269	.563
13	.578	.105	-.187
14	-.202	.383	.004
15	.573	-.094	-.084
16	.114	.306	.342
17	.515	-.081	.333
18	.719	.081	.066
19	.715	-.123	.015
20	.298	.027	.145
21	.550	.073	.056
22	.569	.055	-.065
23	.236	.134	.260
24	.204	-.316	.566
25	.527	-.067	-.204
26	-.320	.420	.170
27	.524	.176	.097
28	-.255	.493	.064
29	.528	.225	.025
30	.341	.549	.112
31	.614	.162	-.124
32	-.287	.435	-.121
33	.612	.051	.136
34	.211	.143	.142
35	-.016	.454	.068
36	.406	.006	-.010
37	.515	.274	.160
38	.161	.389	.272
39	-.036	.297	-.052
40	.019	-.315	.510
41	-.309	.463	.081
42	.453	-.016	-.262

TABLE 2

Varimax Rotated Factor Loadings

Item	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3
1	-.100	-.049	.575*
2	.035	.268	-.059
3	.537*	-.195	.058
4	-.300	.360	-.040
5	.326	.206	-.025
6	.368	.308	.004
7	.645*	.006	-.002
8	.546*	.026	-.132
9	.482*	.001	-.034
10	-.126	.501*	.172
11	.607*	.028	.117
12	.077	-.102	.638*
13	.598*	-.082	-.128
14	-.105	.396	-.140
15	.538*	-.231	.029
16	.161	.371	.246
17	.458	-.071	.410
18	.712*	-.050	.137
19	.663*	-.255	.150
20	.344	.236	.097
21	.546*	-.026	.107
22	.569*	-.086	.000
23	.243	.161	.237
24	.086	-.149	.658*
25	.508*	-.236	-.099
26	-.222	.509*	-.011
27	.543*	.087	.111
28	-.134	.529*	-.124
29	.564*	.108	.028
30	.336	.018	.136
31	.564	-.315	.017
32	-.167	.421	-.286
33	.591*	-.216	-.028
34	.248	.043	-.148
35	.088	.444	-.075
36	.396	-.080	.045
37	.554*	.201	.139
38	.231	.415	.161
39	.039	.265	-.144
40	-.090	-.128	.579*
41	-.195	.517*	-.106
42	.454	-.193	-.179
Eigenvalue	7.48775	2.81163	2.06576

*denotes items loading on each factor

TABLE 3

Mean Scores on Factor 1

Stranger	Acquaintance	Intimate
36.06	33.85	32.19

TABLE 4

Mean Scores on Factor 2*

Stranger	Acquaintance	Intimate
12.94	14.17	15.85

*All means differed significantly from one another ($p < .05$).

TABLE 5

Mean Scores on Factor 3

Stranger	Acquaintance	Intimate
10.19	9.87	8.57

Appendix

Interpersonal Conflict Tactics and Strategies Scale

The following questionnaire represents an attempt to determine how people behave in situations involving interpersonal conflict. Please read the questions carefully and answer them candidly. All responses are strictly anonymous. Mark all answers on the separate answer sheet provided. Do not make any marks on this questionnaire. Thank-you for your cooperation.

Imagine someone whom you consider to be a close and familiar intimate. You should have an affectionate or loving personal relationship with this person. Keep this individual in mind as you respond to the following questions.

Consider conflicts (that is, significant disagreements) you may have with the particular person you have imagined. Think about how you act and respond toward this person when you have conflicts with them. Try to recall specific examples of your behavior. Also try to imagine how you would act with this person during future conflicts.

On the following scales, please indicate your likelihood of performing each behavior in the event of a significant conflict with the intimate person you are thinking of. In each and every case, blacken the appropriate number from one to five on the answer sheet provided.

		VERY UNLIKELY				VERY LIKELY
1.	TRY TO CHANGE THE SUBJECT	1	2	3	4	5
2.	CRY	1	2	3	4	5
3.	INSULT THE OTHER PERSON	1	2	3	4	5
4.	CALMLY DISCUSS THE ISSUE	1	2	3	4	5
5.	PLEAD WITH THE OTHER PERSON	1	2	3	4	5
6.	POUT	1	2	3	4	5
7.	USE THREATS	1	2	3	4	5
8.	THROW SOMETHING	1	2	3	4	5
9.	SHOUT	1	2	3	4	5
10.	COMPROMISE WITH THE OTHER PERSON	1	2	3	4	5
11.	BE SARCASTIC	1	2	3	4	5

		VERY UNLIKELY				VERY LIKELY
12.	TRY TO POSTPONE THE ISSUE AS LONG AS POSSIBLE	1	2	3	4	5
13.	HIT THE OTHER PERSON	1	2	3	4	5
14.	DISCUSS PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING THE DISPUTE	1	2	3	4	5
15.	TRICK THE OTHER PERSON	1	2	3	4	5
16.	ADMIT YOU ARE WRONG (WHEN YOU DO NOT THINK THAT YOU REALLY ARE WRONG)	1	2	3	4	5
17.	LIE TO THE OTHER PERSON	1	2	3	4	5
18.	MAKE THE OTHER PERSON FEEL GUILTY	1	2	3	4	5
19.	TRY TO EMBARASS THE OTHER PERSON	1	2	3	4	5
20.	PRETEND TO BE HURT BY THE OTHER PERSON	1	2	3	4	5
21.	BRIBE THE OTHER PERSON	1	2	3	4	5
22.	FORCE THE OTHER PERSON TO ACCEPT YOUR POSITION	1	2	3	4	5
23.	BARGAIN WITH THE OTHER PERSON	1	2	3	4	5
24.	IGNORE THE ISSUE	1	2	3	4	5
25.	WIN THE ARGUMENT AT ALL COSTS	1	2	3	4	5
26.	COOPERATE WITH THE OTHER PERSON	1	2	3	4	5
27.	PUNISH THE OTHER PERSON	1	2	3	4	5
28.	TRUST THE OTHER PERSON	1	2	3	4	5
29.	TEASE THE OTHER PERSON	1	2	3	4	5
30.	ACT DEFENSIVE	1	2	3	4	5

		VERY UNLIKELY				VERY LIKELY
31.	EXPLOIT THE OTHER PERSON	1	2	3	4	5
32.	DISCUSS THE MATTER OPENLY	1	2	3	4	5
33.	BE HOSTILE	1	2	3	4	5
34.	PERSUADE THE OTHER PERSON	1	2	3	4	5
35.	REWARD THE OTHER PERSON	1	2	3	4	5
36.	LOSE YOUR TEMPER	1	2	3	4	5
37.	TRY TO MAKE THE OTHER PERSON JEALOUS	1	2	3	4	5
38.	FLATTER THE OTHER PERSON	1	2	3	4	5
39.	ESTABLISH RULES FOR ARGUING	1	2	3	4	5
40.	AVOID THE CONFLICT	1	2	3	4	5
41.	NEGOTIATE	1	2	3	4	5
42.	ESCALATE THE CONFLICT	1	2	3	4	5

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43. What is your age?
1. 17 or younger
2. 18-19
3. 20-21
4. 22-23
5. 24 or older

44. What is your class?
1. freshman
2. sophomore
3. junior
4. senior
5. other

45. What is your sex?
1. male
2. female

46. What is your marital status?
1. single
2. married
3. separated
4. divorced
5. widowed

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