COPING WITH INTERPERSONAL STRESSORS:
ISSUES OF LOVE AND STATUS

by

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Abstract

Diary data collected over seven days from 81 stepfamily couples were used to examine the relations between stress appraisals and coping responses. Stress appraisals were conceptualized as issues of love and status (Wiggins & Trapnell, 1996). Secondary appraisals of control were also considered. Coping was measured with a Brief Ways of Coping (BWOC) scale developed for use in diary studies. Additional subscales measured empathic responding, support provision, compromise, interpersonal withdrawal, and self-care. Coping strategies were organized on an interpersonal circumplex according to their intercorrelations and their relations to appraisals. Hierarchical Linear Modeling (HLM; Bryk & Raudenbush, 1992) was used to analyze diary data. Appraisals explained significant portions of daily variance in the use of coping strategies as well as significant variance between individuals. The usefulness of conceptualizing coping strategies with reference to their relations to appraisals of stress within a circumplex structure was demonstrated. Relationship-focused coping was shown to be an important category in the study of coping with interpersonal stressors. It was suggested that coping strategies may best be conceived of as Roschian concepts with “fuzzy” boundaries as opposed to clear-cut categories.
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How an individual copes with interpersonal stressors has been shown to be potentially more effective in reducing distress than coping efforts used in other areas (Pearlin & Schooler, 1978). Moreover, whether an individual copes effectively with family stressors or is unable to take such difficulties in stride has powerful implications not only for the individual but also for the well-being of all family members (DeLongis & O'Brien, 1990; Patterson, 1983). However, few studies to date have focused on coping with the day-to-day problems and conflicts that are ubiquitous in family life. As people cope in varied and divergent ways with family stressors, a useful taxonomy of coping behavior should reflect this richness and complexity by considering a large number of typical coping strategies.

Several coping scales have been developed in recent years, each with its own particular strengths (e.g., Bowman, 1990; Carver, Schier, & Weintraub, 1989; Folkman, Lazarus, Dunkel-Schetter, DeLongis, & Gruen, 1986a; Stone & Neale, 1984). However, the use of coping checklists poses some methodological and conceptual concerns. Correlations between coping subscales are often fairly strong (Aldwin & Revenson, 1987), some subscales have quite low reliability (Endler & Parker, 1990), factor structures appear to vary from sample to sample (Tennen & Herzberger, 1985) and items on some scales are inapplicable in specialized contexts (Stone, Greenberg, Kennedy-Moore, & Newman, 1991). The use of different scales by different research teams also creates difficulties in the comparison of results across studies. Further, as the study of large numbers of strategies is both practically and statistically problematic, researchers often group coping strategies into a small number of more manageable clusters, thereby foregoing the possible value of considering more specific strategies (e.g., Parkes, 1986).

The interpersonal circumplex, with its conceptual coordinates of love and status, suggests
an approach to categorization that has not been considered previously with respect to coping (Wiggins, 1980). A circumplex structure allows for the expression of concepts as "fuzzy sets", with scales in close proximity to each other on the circumplex more strongly correlated than those that are further away. In fuzzy sets, individual categories contain both an ideal prototype that contains all the features of the category, as well as marginal examples, falling within the fuzzy boundaries of the category (Rosch, 1973; Rosch & Mervis, 1975). By locating coping strategies used to cope with interpersonal stressors within such a framework, some of the problems inherent in the measurement of coping may be more productively considered.

The cognitive-transactional model of stress and coping (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984) construes cognitive appraisals as the ways that individuals involved in a stressful encounter determine its significance for their well-being (primary appraisal) and assess their coping options (secondary appraisal). According to the theory, these appraisals result from a synthesis of individual characteristics and situational influences and are a key factor in determining the coping strategies used (Folkman, Lazarus, Dunkel-Schetter et al., 1986a). Research has shown that cognitive appraisals can explain both daily variation and individual differences in coping behavior (Folkman, Lazarus, Dunkel-Schetter et al., 1986a, McCrae, 1984). By categorizing appraisals according to the dimensions of love and status, we consider a theoretical placement and ordering of coping strategies within the space defined by the interpersonal circumplex (Wiggins & Trobst, in press), thereby explaining the observed intercorrelations among coping scales.
Coping with Daily Interpersonal Stressors

Conflicts and tensions with others are commonly among the most distressing events in daily life. Bolger, DeLongis, Kessler and Schilling (1989) reported that interpersonal conflicts accounted for more than 80% of the explained variance in daily mood. Coping is defined as an individual's efforts to manage those demands that they appraise as either taxing or exceeding their available resources (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Two broad functions of coping have generally been emphasized: problem-focused and emotion-focused. Problem-focused coping involves attempts to change the person-environment relation directly whereas emotion-focused coping is geared toward managing negative emotions generated by the stressful situation.

In the study of coping with interpersonal stressors, however, an additional function may be required. Previous research has found consistent differences between coping strategies typically used in work situations and those used with interpersonal stressors. For example, in a study examining situational determinants of coping, avoidance was more likely to be used in coping with interpersonal stressors than in coping with practical problems (Mattlin, Wethington, & Kessler, 1990). Folkman and Lazarus (1980) found that work stressors predicted the use of more problem-focused coping strategies compared to stressors involving health or family. Further, Fleishman (1984) found no consistent relation between the use of problem-focused coping and either marital or parenting situations, and suggested that this result may reflect the lack of relevance of problem-solving strategies for many interpersonal problems.

When coping with situations in which the maintenance of good relationships is paramount, forms of coping that focus on understanding and supporting the other person involved may often result in better outcomes for both parties. Relationship-focused coping has
recently been proposed as a third function of coping, describing those modes of coping that are intended to manage, regulate, or preserve relationships during stressful periods (DeLongis & O’Brien, 1990; O’Brien & DeLongis, in press-a, in press-b). One coping strategy that typifies this perspective is empathic responding, which involves efforts to see things from the other’s perspective and to provide support (O’Brien & DeLongis, in press-a). Two other modes of coping that have been identified as relevant to stressful interpersonal situations are compromise (Aldwin & Revenson, 1987; Daylen, 1993), and interpersonal withdrawal (Buss, 1992; McCrae, 1984; Repetti, 1992). The inclusion of scales measuring these constructs should allow for a richer description of the coping strategies used in family situations.

The Interpersonal Circumplex and the Unifying Constructs of Love and Status

Wiggins and Trobst (in press) have stated that to assert that a circumplex is an "interpersonal" circumplex requires both an empirically demonstrated circumplex structure and a plausible substantive rationale for placing an interpersonal interpretation upon the measures used in the creation of the circumplex. On a non-quantitative level, they also propose that a circumplex may be used as a convenient representation of concepts. The circumplex model is used here in the "intuitive" sense that Wiggins and Trobst described: that is, as a heuristic device that may illuminate the intercorrelations among coping strategies as well as their relations to appraisals.

According to the dyadic-interpersonal perspective, as described by Wiggins and Trapnell (1996), the dimensions of status (power, agency, dominance) and love (solidarity, communion, affiliation) define the universe of content of interpersonal behavior. They contend that any dyadic interaction has status and love implications for both participants, and can therefore be
defined within this space. These concepts correspond to the broader constructs of agency and communion that have been used as unifying concepts in philosophical thought and psychological research (Bakan, 1966; Hegelson, 1994; O’Brien & DeLongis, in press-a; Wiggins, 1991). The conceptual coordinates of status and love have been used in the classification of interpersonal traits and behaviors (Wiggins, 1979) and interpersonal problems (Wiggins & Pincus, 1989). In this study, we apply these concepts to the classification of cognitive appraisals of interpersonal stressors.

Social exchange theory proposes that interpersonal transactions can be thought of as occasions of “exchanges” in that individuals give or take away resources from each other (Foa & Foa, 1974). It has also been proposed that “in the family, love and status are the crucial resources” (Foa & Foa, 1974, p. 151). There are important qualitative differences to be noted between the effects of exchanging status or love resources. It has been proposed that the granting of status to another necessarily decreases one’s own status, and vice versa. However, the giving of love to another is associated with the giving of love to the self, so that the amount of love possessed as a resource is not reduced. Conversely, it is suggested that the taking away of love from another is associated with the concurrent taking away of love from the self (Wiggins & Trapnell, 1996). Although most interpersonal stressors probably contain some combination of issues pertaining to status and issues pertaining to love, it is expected that the differences between these two sets of issues will be reflected in their influences on coping behavior.
Primary Appraisals and Coping

The appraised relevance of a stressor has been shown to be an important predictor of intraindividual differences in coping. For example, in a study of general stressors reported by married couples over a six-month period, it was found that when a situation was appraised as a threat to self-esteem, subjects used more confrontive coping, self-control, self-blame, and escape-avoidance and sought less support than when there was no threat to self-esteem. When a loved one's well-being was at stake, subjects used more confrontive and escape-avoidance coping, and less problem-solving and distancing than when a loved one's well-being was not at stake (Folkman, Lazarus, Dunkel-Schetter et al., 1986a). Other research has also shown that individual differences in aggregated appraisals are predictive of psychological symptoms (Folkman, Lazarus, Gruen & DeLongis, 1986b).

In applying the social exchange model to primary appraisals, we made use of Foa's (1965) decomposition of interpersonal variables into: (a) object (self and other), (b) resource (love and status), and (c) directionality [giving (+) and taking away (-)]. To facilitate the theoretical organization of coping responses on the interpersonal circumplex in relation to appraisals of love, status, and control, we employed the following distinctions. Issues appraised as involving the threat of loss of love and security were defined as issues appraised as love(-). Issues appraised as involving a threat to a loved one (and therefore the giving of love) were defined as issues appraised as love(+). Issues appraised as a threat to status were defined as status(+) when the individual also appraised the situation as controllable, and defined as status(-) when the individual appraised the situation as uncontrollable.
Secondary Appraisals and Coping

According to Lazarus and Folkman (1984), after determining the relevance of the stressor, a further appraisal is made as to what coping options are available, whether they will be successful, and whether the individual is capable of using these coping options effectively. For example, in an encounter appraised as "one that they could change or do something about," people tended to use more confrontive coping, problem-solving, positive reappraisal, and self-blame, whereas in a situation appraised as having to be accepted, emotion-focused forms of coping such as distancing and escape-avoidance were more likely to be used (Folkman, Lazarus, Dunkel-Schetter et al., 1986a).

Appraisals of control have also been assessed in other ways that relate to coping. For example, Stone and Neale (1984) found that appraisal of the occurrence of a daily stressor as not under the individual's control was related to larger proportions of coping by catharsis and acceptance (EF coping). Yet another way to consider appraisals of control is in relation to possible outcomes. Terry (1984) asked subjects how much they felt that the outcome of a stressful event was within their control, and found that higher levels of controllability were linked to more self-blame. As the focus of the current study is on coping responses to fairly typical daily stressors, our interest lies in whether individuals believe themselves to have any control over how the situation is handled, which we expect to be related to both daily variation and individual differences in coping.
The Present Study

This study examines daily reports of appraisals and coping used with interpersonal stressors. Primary appraisals of the personal relevance of interpersonal stressors were classified as issues involving a threat of loss of love and security [love(-)], a threat to a loved one’s well-being [love(+)], or a threat to one’s achievement of personal goals (status). In situations appraised as a threat to the individual’s sense of love and security, we hypothesized that negative communal strategies such as self-blame and interpersonal withdrawal, which take love both from the other and from the self, were more likely to be used. Conversely, in situations appraised as a threat to the well-being of a loved one, we expected individuals to use positive communal strategies such as empathy and support provision, that involve the giving of love to the other. We further hypothesized that the appraisal of stressful situations as a threat to status would predict the use of confrontation, problem-solving, and escape-avoidance. As the appraisal of stressors as controllable has previously been found to be related to more active (PF) forms of coping (Folkman and Lazarus, 1980; Carver et al. 1989), it was expected that appraisals of control would be positively related to the use of approach (PF) strategies such as problem-solving, positive reappraisal, compromise, and confrontation, and negatively related to the use of avoidance strategies (EF) such as interpersonal withdrawal, escape-avoidance, and distancing.

By ordering the coping strategies in accordance with their bivariate relations to the four types of appraisals, the applicability of a circumplex structure to the conceptualization of coping strategies will be considered. It was expected that the placement of the coping strategies on the interpersonal circumplex would explain both their intercorrelations and their relations to
appraisals. As the status appraisal scale was unipolar, for the purpose of placing coping strategies on the interpersonal circumplex, the correlations between the strategies and control were also considered. Therefore, strategies correlated with status, and also positively correlated with control were considered appraisals of status (+) and strategies correlated with status, and also negatively correlated with control, were considered appraisals of status (-).

Lazarus and Folkman (1984) emphasized the importance of considering primary and secondary appraisals in tandem, as they are interdependent processes which mutually influence each other. As we expected appraisals to have had their effects on each other prior to measurement, in the multivariate analyses we consider appraisals as a set of perceptions, hypothesized to have independent, additive effects on coping behaviors. We further expected that appraisals would not only explain individual variation in daily coping, but also individual differences in typical coping responses.

Method

Sample

A total of 81 couples completed the measures under study. The requirements for participation were that the couples be married or living together and have at least one child from a previous union living in the home. The median family income for the families in the study was $68,000 (CDN) per year. Mean education of husbands and wives was 13.8 years. For 81% of husbands, and 89% of the wives, a previous marriage had ended in divorce.

Procedure

Couples were recruited from the lower mainland of British Columbia by means of newspaper and radio advertisements, notices in school newsletters, posters on community
bulletin boards, and solicitation at several local stepfamily groups. In our sample, 71% reported hearing of the study through the newspaper or radio, and 29% were notified through posters, a spouse, or a friend. Interested couples were requested to telephone the laboratory for more information. Couples contacting the project office were sent a description of the study’s goals and procedures. This letter also noted that all participating couples would be entered in a random $500 drawing. If couples agreed to participate in the study, telephone interviews were scheduled separately with each spouse.¹

Following the interviews, respondents were mailed a set of structured diaries to be completed two times per day over a period of one week.² The second entry for each day asked about the most bothersome family stressor of the day, the perceived significance of the stressor, and all coping strategies used with regard to the stressor. Respondents were requested to complete these materials and to return them in the stamped envelopes provided. In the instructions accompanying the materials, the importance of each spouse completing these materials independently was emphasized. The instructions read: “We ask that you and your spouse complete all of the study materials separately and that you do not discuss your responses with one another until after the materials have been returned to us.” Each spouse was also provided with a number of adhesive tabs to seal each diary entry after completion. These measures were encourage the independent completion of the forms by each participant.

Measures

Appraisals were measured with 5 items describing various stakes. These items were adapted from items previously used in two coping studies (Folkman & Lazarus, 1980; Folkman, Lazarus, Dunkel-Schetter et al, 1986). Subjects were asked to rate the degree to which these
items described what was of primary concern to them in the situation on a 3-point scale ranging from “not at all” to “a lot.” These items were classified according to the interpersonal axes of love and status as described by Wiggins and Trapnell (1996). The threat of loss of love and security (love-) was rated with two items; “losing someone’s respect or love,” and “losing your self-respect.” These two items, aggregated across the seven days, had a correlation of .47. The concern that a loved one’s well-being was at stake [love(+)], was measured with one item, “something bad happening to someone you care about.” A threat to individual status was also measured with two items, “things not running as smoothly as you would like,” and “not accomplishing something you set out to do.” These two items, aggregated across the seven days, had a correlation of .49.

**Controllability** was conceptualized as the individual’s appraisal of how much control he or she had in the situation. This was measured by one item, “With this problem today, how much control or influence did you feel you had over the way that the problem was handled” and was rated on a four-point scale, ranging from “none” to “a lot.”

**Selection of daily stressors.** The following instructions were used to guide subjects in their choice of a daily stressor:

Please describe briefly the most bothersome event or problem you had with someone in your family today. It might have been something as minor as your child’s distress over something that happened at school or it might have been a major argument or disagreement. Whatever your most serious family problem was today (no matter how minor or trivial it may seem to you), please describe it here.
Coping. Coping strategies were measured using three top-loading items from each of the eight coping scales in a revised version of the Ways of Coping scale (WOC; Folkman et al., 1986a), developed to provide a Brief Ways of Coping (BWOC) for use in diary studies. This version is the result of preliminary psychometric work that was completed on three previous data sets (Bishop, 1990; DeLongis & Kessler, 1986; Preece, 1994). Pursuant to a review of relevant literature on interpersonal behavior and coping (Aldwin & Revenson, 1987; Bishop, 1990; Buss, 1992; Daylen, 1993; McCrae, 1984; O'Brien & DeLongis, in press-a; O'Brien & DeLongis, in press-b), an additional 15 items were also included to tap coping dimensions not assessed by the original WOC. Three items were developed to assess each of the following dimensions: empathy, support provision, compromise, self-care, and interpersonal withdrawal.

The factor analysis used coping data reported over a 7-day period by 81 couples. There were a total of 861 days for which a stressor was reported and coping data obtained. The mean number of days of data per subject was 5.3, ranging from 1 to 7 days. A factor analysis of the 39 items revealed the presence of 10 factors with eigenvalues over 1. One item “talked with the other person involved,” was dropped because it loaded equally on the first two factors. Another item, “Increased efforts to make things work” had similar loadings on three factors: relationship-focused coping, confrontation, and problem-solving. This item was originally a problem-solving item from the Ways of Coping. In order to allow for comparability with other studies, we chose to include it with the other items designed to measure problem-solving in the creation of the coping scales.

The ten factors determined by the factor analysis for use in this study were:

Relationship-focused coping ($\alpha=.87$), Confrontation ($\alpha=.70$), Interpersonal Withdrawal ($\alpha=.75$),
Positive Reappraisal ($\alpha=.80$), Escape-avoidance ($\alpha=.67$), Distancing ($\alpha=.56$), Self-care ($\alpha=.62$), Support-seeking ($\alpha=.71$), Problem-solving ($\alpha=.71$), and Self-blame ($\alpha=.64$). The alphas are similar to those reported for comparable scales of the original 67-item WOC scale (Folkman et al., 1986a, p. 996). Although the items developed to measure empathy, support provision, and compromise loaded together on the relationship-focused coping factor, the three facets were used separately in our analyses as we expect them to be differentially related to appraisals. Cronbach alphas for these facets showed high internal consistency: empathy ($\alpha=.83$), support provision ($\alpha=.77$), compromise ($\alpha=.73$). The coping items and their factor loadings are included in Appendix A, together with the alphas of the comparable WOC scales from which they were derived.

As subjects were represented by multiple occasions in to the factor analysis, the lack of independence was a potential problem. To address this, we conducted a factor analysis that used the mean coping for each item across all days. The only difference in factor structure for this analysis was that was one less factor emerged, with the three self-blame items each loading weakly on a different factor. All other items loaded together on the same factors as in the person-day analyses. An additional factor analysis was conducted using ipsatized scores for daily coping items (the mean coping for each individual was subtracted from the daily coping score), thereby purging the data of all individual and gender effects, as suggested by Kenny (personal communication, August 8, 1996). This analysis provided a solution similar to that for the factor analysis using daily coping scores, with the same problem-solving item ambiguity as described previously.
Results

The results are presented in three sections. The first summarizes aggregated univariate and bivariate analyses of coping and appraisals. We present aggregated scores because of our interest in individual differences in coping and appraisals. The second section presents ipsatized univariate and bivariate analyses of daily coping and appraisals suggesting a theoretical placement of the coping scales on the interpersonal circumplex. These results use ipsatized daily scores because of our interest in examining the relations between specific appraisals and their attendant coping processes, independent of dispositional effects. The third section presents the Hierarchical Linear Modeling multivariate results, which integrate daily processes and individual differences for a perspective than encompasses features of each.

Correlational Analyses of Coping and Appraisals.

Coping. A second-order factor analysis of the aggregated coping scales provided the following clusters: (1) positive reappraisal, support-provision, empathic responding, and distancing; (2) interpersonal withdrawal, escape-avoidance, and self-blame; (3) compromise, problem-solving, and confrontation, and (4) support-seeking and self-care. A second-order factor analysis of the daily ipsatized coping scales provided the same four clusters. Coping scale correlations are presented in the order in which they are placed on the circumplex, as will be seen in the next section. The means, standard deviations and intercorrelations between the coping scales are presented separately for husbands (below the diagonal) and wives (above the diagonal) in Table 1. Results in this table use aggregated coping scores calculated for each individual across the seven days of the study. Consistent with the findings of other studies of coping (Aldwin & Revenson, 1987; Folkman, Lazarus, Dunkel-Schetter et al., 1986; Terry,
the large number of significant correlations indicate that greater use of one strategy is 
related to greater use of certain other strategies. Intercorrelations among daily coping strategies, 
not presented here, were somewhat weaker, but nonetheless significant and in a similar pattern. 
Paired t-tests revealed significant differences between the means for husbands and wives on four 
of the coping scales. Husbands reported using significantly less self-care, t(80) = -3.29, p < .01, 
support-seeking, t(80) = -2.00, p < .05, escape-avoidance, t(80) = -2.40, p < .05, and 
confrontation, t(80) = -2.52, p < .05, than their wives.3

Appraisals. In Table 2, the means, standard deviations and intercorrelations of the four 
appraisal measures are presented. These results are again the aggregated scores reported 
separately for husbands (below the diagonal) and wives (above the diagonal). Aggregated 
appraisals of a threat of loss of love ([love(-)]) were most strongly related to appraisals of status 
for both husbands and wives. For husbands only, appraisals of a threat of loss of love [love(-)] 
were also negatively related to control. For wives, however, appraisals of a threat to a loved 
one's well-being [love(+)] were negatively related to control. Paired t-tests revealed that 
husbands and wives differed significantly only on mean appraisals of issues in terms of status, 
t(80) = -2.15, p < .05, with husbands reporting less appraisals of issues in terms of status than 
their wives across the seven days.

Bivariate Relations between Coping and Appraisals. The correlations between the 
aggregated coping scales and aggregated appraisals are presented separately for husbands and 
wives in Table 3. Note that aggregated correlations suggest dispositional patterns rather than 
daily relations. As predicted, appraisals of love(-) were related to the use of interpersonal 
withdrawal and self-blame for both husbands and wives. Also as expected, appraisals of love(+)}
were related to the use of empathy and support provision. Further, the hypothesized relations between appraisals of issues in terms of status and the use of confrontation, problem-solving, and escape-avoidance were borne out by the correlational results. For appraisals of control, our hypothesis were only partially supported. For husbands, as expected, appraisals of control were positively related to compromise and negatively related to interpersonal withdrawal and escape-avoidance. For wives, the only predicted relations were a positive relation between appraisals of control and problem-solving, and a negative relation between appraisals of control and interpersonal withdrawal. A t-test for dependent correlations revealed that the correlation between problem-solving and status for wives ($r = .61$) was significantly greater than for husbands ($r = .35$), $t(80) = 2.23$, $p < .05$.

Due to the large number of correlations, a Bonferroni correction would allow us only to consider those correlations significant at the $p < .001$ level to be reliable. Therefore, only those non-expected correlations significant at that level will be discussed here. Not as predicted, for wives only, support provision, self-blame, and compromise were related to appraisals of issues in terms of status and escape-avoidance was related to appraisal of issues in terms of love(-). Further, a t-test for dependent correlations indicated that the correlation between status and support provision for wives ($r = .43$) was significantly stronger than the correlation for husbands ($r = .07$), $t(80) = 2.617$, $p < .05$. For husbands only, interpersonal withdrawal was also related to the appraisal of issues in terms of status.

**Coping, Appraisals, and the Interpersonal Circumplex.**

The correlations reported in this section use ipsatized daily coping scores and ipsatized daily appraisals. These scores were created by subtracting each subjects' mean score across the
seven days from their daily rating on each item. In effect, these ipsatized scores control for the individual’s mean use of each strategy across the seven days, thereby allowing for a description of the relations between daily coping and daily appraisals, controlling for dispositional and gender-related tendencies. Table 4 reports the correlations between the daily ipsatized coping scales and daily ipsatized appraisals. The coping strategies were placed on the circumplex according to their correlations with love(-), love(+), status, and control (Figure 1). The use of distancing as a coping strategy was not positively related to any of the appraisal measures, and negatively related to both love(+) and love(-), suggesting its potential inappropriateness with regard to coping with interpersonal stressors in this sample. It has been suggested that scales not related to love and status, are, by definition, not interpersonal in content (Wiggins & Trapnell, 1996). For this reason, distancing was not considered in the placement of coping strategies on the interpersonal circumplex.

First we examined the relations between the coping scales and appraisals of control. As expected, positive reappraisal, confrontation, compromise, and problem-solving were significantly positively related to appraisals of control, placing them in the upper half of the circle (see Figure 1). Also as predicted, interpersonal withdrawal and escape-avoidance were significantly negatively related to appraisals of control, placing them in the bottom half of the circle. Empathy, self-care, support-seeking, and self-blame were not significantly related to control, thereby suggesting their placement near the “equator”. The direction of the non-significant relations with control, as well as their relations to status, were nonetheless considered in the ordering of these strategies. After this preliminary assessment, the coping strategies were ordered according to their relations to appraisals of love(-), love(+), and status. In those cases
where a strategy was related both to love(-) and love(+), it was considered to be a strategy that had a dual purpose. Support-seeking, for example, was related both to love(+) and love(-). The ordering of support-seeking is consistent, however, with a reported finding that the seeking of social support seemed to bridge between the "adaptive" (problem-focused) and "less-adaptive" (emotion-focused) clusters of coping strategies (Carver et al., 1989). For the purposes of ordering the strategies, it was placed in the quadrant suggested by the stronger correlation, but noted in brackets in the other quadrant.

Hierarchical Linear Modeling Analyses.

The final set of analyses examined the multivariate relations between appraisals and coping strategies, examining hypotheses that appraisals explain both daily variation and individual differences in coping. HLM analyses involves the computation of an individual regression line for each respondent, based on the data for that individual (Willms, 1992). Each regression line has its own intercept and appraisal coefficients. The intercept reported is the grand mean of all the intercepts after controlling for appraisals. The slope coefficients reported are the mean slopes of all the individual regression lines. The extent to which the appraisal slopes reduce variance in the dependent variable for each subject determines the percentage of daily variation explained by the appraisal variables when centered on the individual's own means for those variables. The extent to which the appraisal slopes reduce variance in the individual intercepts determines the percentage of between-person variance explained when appraisals are centered on the grand mean. An omnibus test of the significant contribution of the appraisal variables to the explanation of variance over and above the intercept is tested with a multiparameter test distributed as a chi-square (Bryk, Raudenbush, & Congdon, 1996). The
results of the HLM analyses are presented in Table 5. Note that in all cases, the grand mean of the intercepts was a significant predictor of individual coping, suggesting a common response pattern in all subjects, after controlling for appraisals.

Positive Reappraisal. Appraisals as a set predicted 5.3% of the daily variance in the use of this coping strategy, and 13.4% of the variance between husbands. Husbands’ appraisal of an interpersonal stressor as a threat of loss of love [love(-)] was significantly associated with the use of positive reappraisal. A very different pattern emerged for wives, in that appraisals of concern for the well-being of a loved one [love(+)] and control were significant positive predictors of positive reappraisal. However, for wives, appraisals as a set did not explain a significant amount of variance at either the daily or between-person level. The difference in love appraisals between husbands and wives may explain why in the ipsatized correlations positive reappraisal was related both to love(+) and love(-).

Support provision. For husbands, appraisals of concern for a loved one’s well-being [love(+)] and control were significant predictors of support provision, explaining 12.1% of the daily variance, and 13.7% of the variance between husbands. Similarly, appraisals of love(+) and control were also significant predictors of support provision for wives, but for wives only, appraisals of love(-) were significant negative predictors of support provision. For wives, these appraisals explained a non-significant 13.1% of the daily variance, but a significant 22.7% of the variance between individuals, suggesting that the use of support provision in wives may be more related to a dispositional tendency than to variation in daily appraisals.

Empathic Responding. Appraisals of love(+) were a significant predictor of husbands’ use of empathy in response to an interpersonal stressor. As a set, appraisals explained 8.6% of
the within-person variance, and 10.4% of the variance between husbands. For wives, appraisals of love(+) again predicted the use of empathy, but in contrast to husbands, appraisals of control also made a significant contribution to the use of empathy in wives. Appraisals did not explain significant daily variance in the use of empathy for wives, but they did explain a significant 15.6% of the between-person variance.

**Distancing.** Appraisals did not significantly predict the use of distancing in husbands. For wives, stressors appraised as love(+) were negatively related to the use of distancing. Although only a small amount of the variance in distancing was explained by appraisals (2.9% at the daily level, and 2.5% at the between-person level), it was statistically significant. As discussed above, this lack of relations suggests that distancing is not suited to interpersonal stressors. It may be that distancing is used in family situations only when stressors are so minor as to not really be counted as stressors at all.

**Self-care.** In husbands, the use of self-care was positively related to situations appraised as love(-), explaining 6.7% of the daily variability, and 12.7% of the variance between persons. For wives, however, appraisals did not significantly predict the use of self-care as a coping strategy. Recall that this result was suggested by the aggregated correlations, but not found for the ipsatized daily correlations, suggesting that the propensity to engage in self-care may be a dispositional tendency in men who also tend to appraise situations in terms of love(-). An examination of the daily ipsatized scores for each item revealed that one item, "Took some private time out to do something," was significantly positively related to ipsatized appraisals of love(-), another item, "Did something nice for myself," was significantly related to ipsatized appraisals of love(+), while the third item, "Took some time out to be with someone I enjoy,"
was related to neither love(+) or love(-). However, an examination of the daily relations between each item and love appraisals separately for husbands and wives revealed no significant relations with either love(+) or love(-). Taken together, these results suggest that the items used to describe self-care are differentially related to appraisals, but only after controlling for dispositional tendencies. In the study of coping with an interpersonal stressor, it may be necessary to consider additional items that consider more specifically the motive behind behaviors related to self-care.

**Support-seeking.** Support-seeking had much weaker relations to appraisals than some of the other strategies considered. However, for husbands, an interesting and unexpected finding was that issues appraised as involving status were the only significant predictor of support-seeking, explaining 3.5% of the daily variance in support-seeking, and 32% of the variance between husbands. Hegelson (1994) has suggested that in examining help-seeking behavior, one must consider the nature of help desired. The results suggest that husbands are more likely to seek help with a concrete problem involving status issues. For wives, however, appraisals did not significantly predict the use of support-seeking as a coping strategy, either at the daily or the between-person level. The lack of substantive findings for women and support-seeking may also be due to the two-item scale used to measure support-seeking in this study. As one item originally intended to be a support-seeking item “Talked to someone involved about the problem” was deleted because it loaded on several factors, support-seeking in this study only referred to talking to someone not involved about the problem. In a review of the effects of confidant support on stress, (Cohen & Wills, 1985) it was concluded that women experienced the most benefit when husbands and boyfriends were available as confidants. It may be that the
wives in our study tended to seek support primarily from their husbands, and so did not endorse these items.

**Interpersonal withdrawal.** Husbands' and wives' use of interpersonal withdrawal was negatively related to appraisals of control, and positively related to issues appraised as relating to love(-) and status, explaining 20.8% of the daily variance in husbands' coping and 18.9% of the variance in wives' coping. Further, appraisals as a set explained 23.9% of the variance between husbands, and 50% of the variance between wives.

**Escape-avoidance.** Escape-avoidance was negatively related to appraisals of control for both husbands and wives, and positively related to appraisals of stressors in terms of love(-) and status. For wives only, escape-avoidance was also positively related to issues appraised as love(+). Appraisals as a set explained 22.1% of the daily variability for husbands, and 18.9% of the daily variability for wives. Further, these appraisals explained 18.4% of the between-person variance for husbands, and 32% of the between-person variance for wives. The result for wives suggests that they are more likely to engage in escape-avoidance when they experience a lack of control, whether the problem involves a threat of loss of love to themselves or a threat to a loved one's well-being. The interpretation is supported by two studies that found wives to be more physiologically reactive to their partner's feelings as well as to conflict involving their partners (Smith & Brown, 1991; Kiecolt-Glaser, Malarkey, Chee, Newton, Cacioppo, Hsiao-Yin, & Glaser (1993). This physiological reactivity may therefore induce wives to engage in escape-avoidance strategies as a way of coping with their discomfort.

**Self-blame.** For husbands, appraisals of issues as pertaining to love(-) and status were significantly related to self-blame, explaining 14.7% of the daily variance in coping, and 16.4%
of the variation between husbands. The pattern for wives was similar, except that self-blame, was also negatively related to appraisals of love(\(+\)). For wives, appraisals explained 13.5 percent of the daily variance in the use of self-blame, and 44.9\% of the variance between wives.

**Confrontation.** Appraisal of stressors as positively related to love(-), status, and control predicted the use of confrontation in both husbands and wives. These appraisals explained 11.8\% and 14.5\% of the daily variance in coping for husbands and wives respectively. Appraisals also explained 4.0\% of the variance between husbands, and 28.4\% of the variance between wives.

**Compromise.** The appraisals that predicted the use of compromise for both husbands and wives were contrary to our expectations. Although, as expected, appraisals of control and stressors appraised as issues of status were significantly related to compromise in both husbands and wives, this type of coping was also strongly related to appraisals of issues in terms of love(-), suggesting that the use of compromise is not necessarily viewed as a loving act by those who use it. Appraisals explained 5.4\% of the variance in daily coping for husbands, and 4.9\% of the variance in daily coping for wives. More startling was the fact that appraisals explained 65.3\% of the variance between husbands, and 31.9\% of the variance between wives.

An examination of the items making up the compromise scale revealed that each began with the word “tried.” It may be that when individuals “try” to compromise, they do not doing in the generous spirit we had expected. To further understand the relation of compromise to appraisals of love(-) we correlated the aggregated scores for each item making up the compromise scale with appraisals of love(-) for husbands and wives separately. One item, “Tried to meet the other person half-way,” was related to appraisals of love(-) for wives only,
suggesting that wives typical endorsement of that item was related to their typical appraisals of stressors in terms of love(-). For husbands, another item, “Tried to find a solution fair to all involved,” was related to appraisals of love(+), suggesting that husbands typical endorsement of that item was related to their typical appraisal of stressors in terms of love(+). We then correlated the ipsatized daily scores on the three items with love(-) for husbands and wives. These results revealed that for husbands, after controlling for the individual tendency to report the use of compromise, two of the items, “Tried to find a solution fair to all involved,” and “Tried to compromise with the other(s) involved,” were positively related to appraisals of stressors in terms of love(-). For wives, only the item, “Tried to compromise with the other(s) involved,” was significantly related to appraisals of stressors in terms of love(-). From these results, we can theorize that there may be two underlying motivations involved in the use of compromise as a coping strategy, one which focuses on fairness, and another which emphasizes a somewhat reluctant effort to compromise one’s own wishes in order to maintain harmony in the family.

**Problem-solving.** Issues appraised as love(-), issues appraised as involving status, and issues appraised as controllable, all predicted the use of problem-solving in husbands, explaining 18.4% of the within-person variance, and 26.3% of the variance between husbands. For wives, situations appraised as love(+), involving issues of status, and appraised as controllable, predicted the use of problem-solving strategies. Appraisals as a set explained 10.9% of the within-person variance in wives’ use of problem-solving, and 44.3% of the variance between wives. This difference between husbands and wives with respect to appraisals of love(-) or love(+) explains why the ipsatized correlations showed problem-solving to be significantly
related to both types of appraisals. This difference is also consistent with the interpretation of a “self” versus “other” orientation that differs for husbands and wives (Helgeson, 1994).

Discussion

Our results indicate that reports of coping responses were differentially related to appraisals of stressors as a threat to a loved one’s well-being, conceptualized as involving the giving of love [love(+)], a threat to one’s own sense of love and security, conceptualized as the loss of love [love(-)], and a threat to one’s own personal goals, conceptualized as a threat to status, and appraisals of control over how the stressor was to be handled. Further, the relations between coping and these four types of appraisals, when placed on an interpersonal circumplex with the axes of love and status, permitted an ordering of strategies that corresponded to their intercorrelations, in that strategies close to each other on the circumplex were more strongly related than those that were further away. These results are consistent with an emphasis on love and status as important resources of exchange in family contexts (Foa & Foa, 1974), confirming the usefulness of a circumplex model for conceptualizing interpersonal variables (Wiggins, 1980).

Such an ordering may prove useful in the determination of which strategies provide the most information about the ways that husbands and wives cope with family stressors, as well as pointing out some ways of coping that may be underrepresented or not adequately differentiated. Aldwin and Revenson (1987) found that most of the coping strategies they measured had adverse impacts on mental health, and suggested that this may be due to the omission of more adaptive strategies. The measurement of such strategies as empathy and support-provision may allow for the consideration of the effect of more adaptive strategies on mental health, at least when coping
with interpersonal stressors. Other research with the same data set used here has shown that
wives' use of empathic coping in managing difficulties with spouses, children, and step-children
was associated with decreases in marital tension, family tension, and negative mood, even after
controlling for prior levels of these variables (O'Brien, DeLongis, & Campbell, 1996). Further,
wives who reported using higher levels of empathic coping also reported higher levels of both
marital satisfaction and spousal support than those who used less empathic coping.

The results reported here also suggest that the measurement of empathic responding and
support-provision and their relations to appraisals can help to explain the types of perceptions
that precipitate "other" oriented modes of coping. For example, when husbands and wives
interpret a family stressor as a threat to a loved one's well-being, they are more likely to respond
with empathy and support provision. Further, support provision is more likely to be used in
situations that are appraised as controllable.

The relations between self-care and appraisals provide an illustration of the value and
meaning of ipsatized scores. In the aggregated data, self-care was related to appraisals of
love(-) for both husbands and wives. However, in the ipsatized data, self-care is related to
appraisals of love(+). The aggregated relations suggest that individuals who dispositionally
appraise issues as love(-) are also dispositionally inclined to report the use of self-care as a
coping strategy. But the ipsatized correlations reveal that after controlling for an individual's
mean propensity to engage in self-care, increased use of self-care is related to stressors appraised
as love(+). This example illustrates the importance of considering diary data from several
vantage points, as well as pointing out the differences in results that can occur when considering
either individual processes or dispositional coping styles in isolation. This result is further
consistent with the proposition that giving love to the other is associated with giving love to the self (Wiggins & Trapnell, 1996).

The finding that the appraisal of a situation as a threat to one's sense of love and security is related to the use of compromise was unexpected. However, this finding suggests to us that in our search for more adaptive ways of coping with interpersonal stressors, a scale that describes a more communally-oriented type of compromise could also be informative. Social support has previously been considered in relation to love and status, suggesting two types of support: emotional support and esteem support (Cobb, 1976). Consideration of support-seeking with regard to love and status appraisals suggests that two separate scales might be useful. Further, submissive strategies used in a loving spirit are missing from our model. This suggests the development of a scale for deferential, apologetic ways of coping, that may be adaptive in certain situations.

Study Limitations

There are several limitations inherent in this study. First, single-item and two-item scales with unknown reliability were used. In a diary study, where subjects must complete measures daily, it is often necessary to be satisfied with less detailed information in exchange for data on a number of stressors across several timepoints. The use of these items, however, is offset somewhat by the use of a psychometrically sound measure of coping. Another set of issues involve the use of a volunteer sample and the problem of subject attrition, limiting generalizability to the population. However, as the use of diary data allows each person to function as their own control, our results are geared more toward the understanding of intraindividual processes.
Conclusion

The results presented here demonstrate the patterns of appraisals considered explain a large proportion of the variance in coping strategies between individuals. For example, appraisals explained almost half of the variance between wives in the use of interpersonal withdrawal, self-blame, and problem-solving. For husbands, appraisals explained 65% of the between-subject variance in compromise. For coping strategies to effect individual outcomes, it is therefore important to consider not only the strategies themselves, but the typical appraisals that influence these strategies.

The findings of this study also point to the usefulness of the conceptualization of interpersonal stressors in terms of love and status, which also suggest that the metaconcepts of agency and communion may make a valuable contribution to the study of stress and coping more generally. It is our belief that these broad concepts, discussed by Bakan (1966) as organizing principles of life, can contribute to the organization of the stress and coping field, by integrating findings and giving clearer direction to research in one of the most pervasive and influential of human experiences: the stressful situation.
References


Coyne, J.C., & Gottlieb (in press). The mismeasure of coping by checklist. *Journal of Personality* [Special issue].


Appendix

Factor loadings of items from the Brief Ways of Coping (BWOC), their reliability coefficients, and reliabilities of comparable WOC scales.

Factor 1: Relationship-focused coping ($\alpha=.87$)

Facet 1: Empathic responding ($\alpha=.83$)
- Tried to understand how the other person felt. .82
- Imagined myself in the other person's shoes. .68
- Tried to see things from the other person's perspective. .76

Facet 2: Support provision ($\alpha=.77$)
- Tried to help the other person(s) involved by listening to them. .77
- Tried to comfort the other person(s) involved by showing them my positive feelings for them. .72
- Tried to help the other person(s) involved by doing something for them. .62

Facet 3: Compromise ($\alpha=.73$)
- Tried to find a solution that was fair to all involved. .57
- Tried to meet the other person half-way. .54
- Tried to compromise with other(s) involved. .48

Factor 2: Confrontation ($\alpha=.70$) (WOC $\alpha=.70$)
- Stood my ground and fought for what I wanted. .76
- Expressed anger to the person(s) who caused the problem. .70
- Tried to get the person responsible to change his or her mind. .69
Factor 3: Interpersonal Withdrawal ($\alpha=.75$)

- I withdrew from the other person(s) involved. .73
- I gave the other person(s) involved the “silent treatment”. .73
- I sulked. .57
- Tried to keep my feelings to myself. .53
- Tried to keep others from knowing about the problem or about my feelings. .52

Factor 4: Positive Reappraisal ($\alpha=.80$) (WOC $\alpha=.79$)

- Changed or grew as a person in a good way. .82
- Came out of the experience better than when I went in. .81
- Rediscovered what is important in life. .70

Factor 5: Escape-avoidance ($\alpha=.67$) (WOC $\alpha=.72$)

- Hoped a miracle would happen. .75
- Had fantasies about how things might turn out. .69
- Wished the situation would go away or somehow be over with. .63

Factor 6: Distancing ($\alpha=.56$) (WOC $\alpha=.61$)

- Didn’t let it get to me; refused to think about it too much. .71
- Went on as if nothing had happened. .68
- Refused to get too serious about the situation; tried to laugh about it. .61
- Tried to keep my feelings from interfering with other things. .52
Factor 7: Self-care ($\alpha = 0.64$)

- Did something nice for myself.  
  - 0.82
- Took some private time out to do something.  
  - 0.75
- Took some time out to be with someone I enjoy.  
  - 0.56

Factor 8: Support-seeking ($\alpha = 0.71$) (WOC $\alpha = 0.76$)

- Talked with someone not involved about the problem.  
  - 0.86
- I asked someone I respected for advice.  
  - 0.91

Factor 9: Self-blame ($\alpha = 0.64$) (Accepting responsibility, WOC $\alpha = 0.66$)

- Realized I brought the problem on myself.  
  - 0.82
- Criticized or lectured myself.  
  - 0.61
- Made a promise to myself that things would be different next time.  
  - 0.48

Factor 10: Problem-solving ($\alpha = 0.71$) (WOC $\alpha = 0.68$)

- Concentrated on what I had to do next to solve the problem.  
  - 0.64
- Made a plan of action.  
  - 0.61
- Increased my efforts to make things work.  
  - 0.31
Footnotes

1. The present study was part of a larger research project investigating interpersonal relationships in stepfamilies. Only those measures pertinent to this study will be discussed here.

2. The diary was originally designed to be completed three times a day for two weeks. However, due to the low return rate, it was shortened to twice a day, for one week.

3. All t-tests reported in this study are two-tailed.
Table 1

Intercorrelations of Aggregated Coping scales for Wives (above diagonal) and Husbands (below diagonal).

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Table 1

Intercorrelations of Aggregated Coping scales for Wives (above diagonal) and Husbands (below diagonal) (continued)

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*p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001, two-tailed.

N=81

Note: Means with different subscripts differ significantly, p < .05, t-test for paired samples.

Note. 1) PR = positive reappraisal 2) SP = support provision 3) EMP = empathic responding 4) DST = distancing 5) SC = self-care 6) SS = support-seeking 7) IW = interpersonal withdrawal 8) EA = escape-avoidance 9) SB = self-blame 10) CNF = confrontation 11) CMP = compromise 12) = problem-solving
Table 2

Intercorrelations of Aggregated Stress Appraisals for Husbands (below diagonal) and Wives (above diagonal).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Love (-)</th>
<th>Love (+)</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Control</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Love (-)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.24*</td>
<td>.51***</td>
<td>-.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love (+)</td>
<td>.26*</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.22*</td>
<td>-.22*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Status</td>
<td>.54***</td>
<td>.36*</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>-.25*</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| M (Husbands) | 1.21 | 1.44 | 1.71 \text{a} | 2.66 |
| SD           | .25  | .41  | .34            | .67  |
| M (Wives)   | 1.22 | 1.48 | 1.82 \text{b} | 2.73 |
| SD          | .28  | .46  | .38            | .75  |

* \( p < .05 \), ** \( p < .01 \), *** \( p < .001 \)

N=81

Means that differ significantly have different subscripts.
Table 3

Pearson Correlations between Aggregated Coping Scales and Cognitive Appraisals for Husbands and Wives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Love (-)</th>
<th>Love (+)</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Control</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Husbands</td>
<td>Wives</td>
<td>Husbands</td>
<td>Wives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive reappraisal</td>
<td>.29*</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support provision</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>.19</td>
<td>.26*</td>
<td>.32**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empathy</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.28*</td>
<td>.24*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distancing</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>-.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-care</td>
<td>.27*</td>
<td>.29**</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support-seeking</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>.24*</td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Int. Withdrawal</td>
<td>.40***</td>
<td>.45***</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Escape-avoidance</td>
<td>.30**</td>
<td>.61***</td>
<td>.30**</td>
<td>.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-blame</td>
<td>.36*</td>
<td>.57***</td>
<td>.19</td>
<td>.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confrontation</td>
<td>.31**</td>
<td>.37**</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>-.06</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(table continues)
<p>| | | | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.38**</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.34**</td>
<td>.51***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compromise</td>
<td>.25**</td>
<td>.27*</td>
<td>.29**</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>.35**</td>
<td>.61***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.25*</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>.27*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001, two-tailed significance

N=81

Note: Underlined correlations are significantly different for husbands and wives; t-test for dependent correlations, p < .05, two-tailed.
Table 4

Ordered Correlations between Ipsatized Coping Scales and Ipsatized Appraisals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Love(-)</th>
<th>Love(+)</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Control</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pos. Reappraisal</td>
<td>.08*</td>
<td>.10*</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.10**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support-provision</td>
<td>-.13***</td>
<td>.28***</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>.14***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empathy</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.18***</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-care</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.15***</td>
<td>.09*</td>
<td>-.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support-seeking</td>
<td>.07*</td>
<td>.09*</td>
<td>.10**</td>
<td>-.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distancing</td>
<td>-.09*</td>
<td>-.10**</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>-.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Int. Withdrawal</td>
<td>.38***</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.27***</td>
<td>-.20***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Escape-avoidance</td>
<td>.31***</td>
<td>.15***</td>
<td>.29***</td>
<td>-.27***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-blame</td>
<td>.35***</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>.23***</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confrontation</td>
<td>.25***</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.26***</td>
<td>.16***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compromise</td>
<td>-.18***</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>.15***</td>
<td>.12***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem-solving</td>
<td>.18***</td>
<td>.11**</td>
<td>.29***</td>
<td>.19***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001, two-tailed significance
Table 5

HLM Analyses: Daily Stress Appraisals as Predictors of Coping with Interpersonal Stressors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Positive Reappraisal</th>
<th>Support Provision</th>
<th>Empathy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Husbands</td>
<td>Wives</td>
<td>Husbands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average within-person equation:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercept (grand mean)</td>
<td>1.323***</td>
<td>1.362***</td>
<td>1.728***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effect of daily stress appraisals:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love (-)</td>
<td>.211**</td>
<td>-.040</td>
<td>-.056</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love (+)</td>
<td>.014</td>
<td>.075*</td>
<td>.265***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Status</td>
<td>.038</td>
<td>-.017</td>
<td>-.075</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>.045</td>
<td>.071**</td>
<td>.076**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within-person variance explained by appraisals:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5.3%</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>12.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiparameter test (χ²)</td>
<td>13.57***</td>
<td>.028</td>
<td>5.78*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between-person variance explained by appraisals:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13.4%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>13.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiparameter test (χ²)</td>
<td>19.78***</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>8.43**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(table continues)
Table 5

HLM Analyses: Daily Stress Appraisals as Predictors of Coping with Interpersonal Stressors (continued-2)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Distancing</th>
<th>Self-care</th>
<th>Support-seeking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Husbands</td>
<td>Wives</td>
<td>Husbands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average within-person equation:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercept (grand mean)</td>
<td>1.449***</td>
<td>1.495***</td>
<td>1.277***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effect of daily stress appraisals:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love (-)</td>
<td>-.077</td>
<td>-.066</td>
<td>.170***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love (+)</td>
<td>-.033</td>
<td>-.067*</td>
<td>.017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Status</td>
<td>.045</td>
<td>-.019</td>
<td>.050</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>-.024</td>
<td>-.006</td>
<td>-.032</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within-person variance explained by appraisals:</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiparameter test ($\chi^2$)</td>
<td>3.08</td>
<td>12.41***</td>
<td>11.32**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between-person variance explained by appraisals:</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
<td>12.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiparameter test ($\chi^2$)</td>
<td>2.94</td>
<td>6.58*</td>
<td>15.63***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(table continues)
Table 5

HLM Analyses: Daily Stress Appraisals as Predictors of Coping with Interpersonal Stressors (continued-3)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Interpersonal Withdrawal</th>
<th>Escape-avoidance</th>
<th>Self-blame</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Husbands</td>
<td>Wives</td>
<td>Husbands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average within-person equation:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercept (grand mean)</td>
<td>1.275***</td>
<td>1.333***</td>
<td>1.348***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effect of daily stress appraisals:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love (-)</td>
<td>.230***</td>
<td>.301***</td>
<td>.162***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love (+)</td>
<td>-.006</td>
<td>-.041</td>
<td>.038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Status</td>
<td>.090**</td>
<td>.073*</td>
<td>.176***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>-.055***</td>
<td>-.094***</td>
<td>-.068***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within-person variance explained by appraisals:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20.8%</td>
<td>18.9%</td>
<td>22.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiparameter test ($\chi^2$)</td>
<td>30.88***</td>
<td>18.98***</td>
<td>30.21***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between-person variance explained by appraisals:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>23.9%</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>18.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiparameter test ($\chi^2$)</td>
<td>35.30***</td>
<td>20.19***</td>
<td>37.27***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(table continues)
Table 5

HLM Analyses: Daily Stress Appraisals as Predictors of Coping with Interpersonal Stressors (continued-4)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Confrontation</th>
<th></th>
<th>Compromise</th>
<th></th>
<th>Problem-solving</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Husbands</td>
<td>Wives</td>
<td>Husbands</td>
<td>Wives</td>
<td>Husbands</td>
<td>Wives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average within-person equation:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercept (grand mean)</td>
<td>1.458***</td>
<td>1.574***</td>
<td>1.407***</td>
<td>1.458***</td>
<td>1.673***</td>
<td>1.730***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effect of daily stress appraisals:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love (-)</td>
<td>.233***</td>
<td>.307***</td>
<td>.122*</td>
<td>.172***</td>
<td>.176**</td>
<td>.059</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love (+)</td>
<td>-.044</td>
<td>.003</td>
<td>-.020</td>
<td>-.004</td>
<td>.031</td>
<td>.100**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Status</td>
<td>.168**</td>
<td>.213***</td>
<td>.114**</td>
<td>.112**</td>
<td>.278***</td>
<td>.247***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>.077**</td>
<td>.132***</td>
<td>.067**</td>
<td>.070***</td>
<td>.104***</td>
<td>.147***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within-person variance explained by appraisals:</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
<td>14.5%</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
<td>18.4%</td>
<td>10.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiparameter test ($\chi^2$)</td>
<td>32.13***</td>
<td>54.39***</td>
<td>14.78***</td>
<td>14.92***</td>
<td>59.69***</td>
<td>30.09***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between-person variance explained by appraisals:</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
<td>28.4%</td>
<td>65.3%</td>
<td>31.9%</td>
<td>26.3%</td>
<td>44.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiparameter test ($\chi^2$)</td>
<td>38.87***</td>
<td>70.36***</td>
<td>25.82***</td>
<td>35.43***</td>
<td>75.19***</td>
<td>58.44***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(table continues)
Note: Chi-square tests have 1 df. N = 81.

* p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001.
Figure Captions

Figure 1. The placement of coping strategies on the interpersonal circumplex according to their relations to issues of status and love.